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# CITY PORTRAITS: BEIJING 北京



**City  
portraits:  
Beijing 北京**

**15 > 16 dicembre 2010  
Venezia, Palazzo Badoer**

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SCUOLA  
DI DOTTORATO

Università Iuav di Venezia

con la collaborazione

UNIVERSITÀ  
CA' FOSCARI, VENEZIA  
DIPARTIMENTO  
DI STUDI SULL'ASIA  
ORIENTALE



With the participation of:

- > Institute for Urban Design, Urbanism and Landscape, Faculty of architecture, Technical University of Munich
- > Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia, Dipartimento di Studi sull'Asia Orientale, Scuola di Dottorato in Lingue, Culture e Società.
- > PhD Program in spatial Planning and Urban Development, Politecnico di Milano
- > Scuola di dottorato in scienze integrate per la sostenibilità territoriale, Università degli Studi di Trieste
- > Facoltà di Architettura UNO, Politecnico di Torino
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- > SAD, School of Advanced studies, University of studies of Camerino, Areas, Architecture, Environment and Design, PhD Curriculum - Knowledge and Design of Urban Landscape
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## City portraits: Beijing 北京

15 > 16 dicembre 2010

Università Iuav di Venezia

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## City portraits: Beijing 北京

**DECEMBER 15TH, 2010**

- 9.30 Welcome  
**AMERIGO RESTUCCI**, Rector of Università Iuav di Venezia  
**ALBERTO FERLENGA**, Director of Iuav School of Doctorate Studies  
**MARCO CERESA**, Confucius Institute at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Director, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, International Relations Office, Rector's Delegate  
**ANNA LAURA GOVONI**, Curator, PhD student of the Iuav School of Doctorate Studies
- 10.00 **PANEL 1**  
**GIOVANNA CURCIO**, Università Iuav di Venezia  
*La città della Porcellana*  
Screening: Video 1 (10')  
editing **CRISTINA PERAINO**, Università Iuav di Venezia  
**DANIEL B. ABRAMSON**, University of Washington  
*Historical Legacies of Urban Settlement and the Recent Transformation of the Old City*  
**FRANCO MANCUSO**, Università Iuav di Venezia  
*Urban projects*  
**CLAUDIO GRECO**, University of Rome Tor Vergata  
*Future Beyond the Olympic Games*  
**FILIPPO ROMANO**, Photographer, Luzphoto Agency, Milan  
*Adrift in the Capital City*  
**YA PING WANG**, Heriot-Watt University of Edinburgh  
*Urbanisation, Housing and Residential Changes*  
**DONATA MARIA TCHOU**, Architect Prox&Tchou architettura, Rome  
*Streets: art – public space*  
**XIAODU LIU**, Architect, Urbanus Architecture & Design Office, Beijing  
*Reality, Strategy and Creativity*

LUNCH BREAK

- 14.30 **PANEL 2**  
Screening: Video 2 (10'), editing **CRISTINA PERAINO**, Università Iuav di Venezia

**ALDO AYMONINO**, Università Iuav di Venezia  
*Mao's Grey City: the New Capital of Socialist Empire*

**GIOVANNA PUPPIN**, Ca' Foscari University of Venice  
*The East (Re)goes Red, the City Goes Shuang*

**SHAN SHAN SHENG**, Artist based in Shanghai, San Francisco and Venice  
*From Great Wall to Open Wall*

**XIN YI**, PhD candidate, Technical University of Munich  
*Achieved Development Concepts via Olympics?*

**SHANNON BASSETT**, University of South Florida, Tampa  
*Mega-regional System*

**MARGHERITA TURVANI**, Università Iuav di Venezia and **IGOR CERSOSIMO**, PhD, Science and Technology Fellowship Programme China, Tsinghua University  
*Urban Growth and Environmental Challenges*

### POSTERS

**MENG SUN**, PhD, Urban Planner, Johnson Fain Partners, Los Angeles  
*The Production of Art Districts and Urban Transformation in Beijing*

**SOL ANDREW STOKOLS**, B.A., University of California, Berkeley  
*Harmonious Tourism: Analyzing the Potential for Local Ownership of Cultural Tourism in Beijing and Pingyao*

**DECEMBER 16TH, 2010**

- 9.30 **BEIJING ...**  
**MENG SUN**, PhD, Urban Planner, Johnson Fain Partners, Los Angeles poster presentation (videoconference)  
**XIN YI**, PhD candidate, Technical University of Munich  
*Transition from Olympics to Urban Development*  
**TOBIA MASCHIO**, PhD student, Ca' Foscari University of Venice  
*Illness of the Soul – A Brief History of Spaces and Powers*

**LIU YU**, PhD student, Politecnico di Milano

*Research on the Social-spatial differentiation in the Transition Period*

**GABRIELE PITACCO**, PhD student, University of Trieste

*Apples, blu castels and red lines, vivre ensemble in a gated community*

**CUI LIU**, PhD student, Politecnico di Milano

*Transport Issues and Policies*

**FRANCESCA DIANO** and **ALBERTO**

**LESSAN**, Facoltà di Architettura UNO, Politecnico di Torino

*OlympeKed. Design Studio on the 2008 Olympic Venues Redevelopment*

#### LUNCH BREAK

#### 14.30 ... AND OTHER CASES

**SOL ANDREW STOKOLS**, B.A., University of California, Berkeley  
poster presentation (videoconference)

**SOSSIO DE VITA**, PhD student  
Seconda Università di Napoli, Aversa  
*Underground Analogies: Beijing and Naples*

**SARA CIPOLLETTI**, PhD student,  
University of studies of Camerino  
*Thousand Gardens. Regenerative strategies of public spaces for the city of Zhongshan*

**GIORGIA AQUILAR**, PhD student,  
University of Naples, Federico II  
*Superimpositions in Amsterdam. "Unstable" portrait of the contemporary Dutch City*

**FILIPPO DE DOMINICIS**, PhD student,  
La Sapienza University of Rome  
*Oasis urban form between permanence and transformation: the case of Figuig, Morocco*

**IRENE GUIDA**, PhD student, luav  
School of Doctorate Studies  
Baltimore

## Abstract

Cristina Peraino, Università Iuav di Venezia  
Daniel B. Abramson, Associate Professor, Urban Design and Planning, University of Washington  
Claudio Greco, University of Rome Tor Vergata  
Filippo Romano, Luzphoto Agency, Milan  
Ya Ping Waing, Professor, School of the Built Environment, Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh  
Donata Maria Tchou, Architect Prox&Tchou architettura, Rome  
Aldo Aymonino, Università Iuav di Venezia  
Giovanna Puppini, Ca' Foscari University of Venice  
Shan Shan Sheng, artist  
Xin Yi, PhD candidate, Technical University of Munich  
Margherita Turvani and Igor Cersosimo, Università Iuav di Venezia  
Meng Sun, PhD, University of Chicago  
Xin Yi, PhD candidate, Technical University of Munich  
Shannon Bassett, University of South Florida, Tampa  
Tobia Maschio, PhD student, University Ca' Foscari of Venice  
Liu Yu, PhD student, Politecnico di Milano  
Gabriele Pitacco, PhD student, University of Trieste  
Cui Liu, PhD student, Politecnico di Milano  
Francesca Diano and Alberto Lessan, Facoltà di Architettura UNO, Politecnico di Torino  
Sossio De Vita, PhD student, Seconda Università di Napoli, Aversa  
Sara Cipolletti, PhD student, University of studies of Camerino  
Giorgia Aquilar, PhD student, University of Naples, Federico II  
Filippo De Dominicis, PhD student, La Sapienza University of Rome  
Irene Guida, PhD student, Università Iuav di Venezia

## **CRISTINA PERAINO**

### **screening: video 1**

This is the account of a trip to Beijing made throughout cinema.

"..when we speak of site-seeing we imply that, because of film's spatio-corporeal mobilization, the spectator is rather a voyageur, a passenger who traverses a haptic, emotive terrain" wrote in Atlas Giuliana Bruno, professor at University of Harvard.

I consider the two videoclips I made as a sort of journal, whose reminiscences have been arranged through editing significative sequences drawn from movies shot in Beijing.

The result is an image tale divided in two parts: the first is about life in the ancient siheyuan, traditional grey stone houses with big red decorated wooden gates. They have been replaced during Mao Zedong period with more sober buildings, in which life is simple and modest, as we can see in Antonioni's documentary, shot in the beginning of 1970's.

The second part is about the loss of ancient Beijing, and the demolition of its hutong. The government is replacing the old City with ultra-modern buildings, typical of a globalised western town, removing, in a sort of way, the history of the town.

Movies:

*The Story of Qiu Ju*, director Zhang Yimou, year 1992.

*Beijing Bicycle*, director Wang Xiaoshuai, year 2001.

*Loach is a Fish Too*, director Yazhou Yang, year 2005.

*Chung Kuo Cina*, director Michelangelo Antonioni, year 1972.

*Sunflowers*, director Zhang Yang, year 2005.

*Together With You*, director Chen Kaige, year 2002.

*I love Beijing*, director Ning Ying, year 2001.

*To Live*, director Zhang Yimou, year 2004.

*The Blue Kite*, director Zhuangzhuang Tian, year 1993.

*Perpetual Motion*, director Ning Ying, year 2005.

*In the Heat of the Sun*, director Jiang Wen, year 1994.

*Little Red Flowers*, director Zhang Yuan, year 2006.

*The Making of Steel*, director Lu Xuechang, year 1995.

*My Memories of Old Beijing*, directors Wu Yonggang, Wu Yigong, year 1982.

*Seventeen Years*, director Zhang Yuan, year 2000.

*Shower*, director Zhang Yang, year 1999.

*The World*, director Jia Zhang Ke, year 2004.

*Lost in Beijing*, director Yu Li, year 2007.

*Keep Cool*, director Zhang Yimou, year 1997.

*And the Spring Comes*, director Gu Changwey, year 2007.

*Summer Palace*, director Lou Ye, year 2006.

*The Days*, director Wang Xiaoshuai, year 1993.

*You and Me*, regia di Ma Liwen, year 2005.

**DANIEL B. ABRAMSON**

## **Historical Legacies of Urban Settlement and the Recent Transformation of the Old City**

Beijing is a famously ancient city, as well as a famously planned, ancient city. Plans for its modernization in the 20th century, however, have encountered great difficulty incorporating the built legacy of its historic planned development. This presentation argues that it is the nature of Beijing's planning legacy itself that are partly responsible for the difficulty of preserving the physical products of its historic plans – the actual built environment of the Old City. This presentation reviews some of the most influential findings and interpretations of Beijing's actual historical development from before the 13th Century through the 20th Century, and focuses on how those interpretations shaped 20th-century debates about the preservation value of the Old City as well as actual preservation and redevelopment policy and practice. After the traumatic and disruptive decades of Maoist revolution in the late 1950s – mid-1970s, a renaissance of historic preservationist and urban design thinking came to characterize plans for the Old City in the 1980s. However, the most important historical inflection point occurred in the early 1990s, when the city's new master plan turned out to be quite unsuited to deal with emerging market-oriented political-economic forces in urban development – forces which were hardly predicted by the architects, planners, officials and even developers who were themselves implementing them. Beijing's master plan in the 1990s ambitiously attempted to define the preservation-worthy image of the entire old city, but did so in narrowly picturesque terms. The practice of "protecting" designated historic structures by clearing the space around them, and the dependence on a totalizing view-from-on-high to define Beijing's overall characteristic form (as opposed to an experience of the city from its myriad public and private spaces), produced a city-wide preservation policy that was particularly handicapped in its ability to accommodate change. The result was a physical transformation of the historic center of Beijing on a scale more radical than any movement accomplished during the decades of revolution under Mao. At the same time, however, certain fundamental patterns of Beijing's pre-modern planning have continued to persist in ways that are not so obvious to the eye. By identifying these patterns, and associating them with political-economic power relationships that have existed both before and after the 20th century, it is possible to define the actual legacy of Beijing's historic planning.



## **CLAUDIO GRECO**

### **Future beyond the Olympic Games**

The 2008 Olympic Games were the highlight of the extraordinary China and Beijing renewal process, started in 1992.

Architecture was one of the the key players in this process, in a balance between past and future, innovation and continuity, public and private, collectivism and capitalism.

Such a fast and crude transformation displayed, at times in an extreme way, some fundamental problems for the local situation, but also some extraordinary opportunities to consider universal problems about architecture and contemporary city's evolution.

Before and in preparation for the Olympics Games, a constellation of new architectures suddenly rose; "objects" aiming to add strong and innovative images to the urban scene, in competition with western capitals and, inside China, with Shanghai and Hong Kong.

The process underwent three phases: first, the international 'archi-star' production; then, the results of a cooperation between the main Chinese Offices and big western Companies; and last, the first works of a new generation of Chinese architects.

These latter ones are experiments to define a new and authentic local identity.

This phenomenon, however, represented only a small part of city changes.

The main change was an intensive urbanization for the new middle class and for the new migrant population.. A wild building speculation in the suburbs (the new Xiaogu) and a violent replacement of the urban fabric in the historical centre (Qianmen).

Beside this transformations, some marginal events created another "invisible" (quoting Chang Yung Ho) change, and suggested different models and possibilities.

Art enclaves, although quickly turned into commercial phenomenon (798, China Art Center); punctual and counter-current transformations of small suburbs (Caochangdi); spontaneous rehabilitation of the historical fabric in the old city centre (the case of Gulou).

These latter instances show some hints of an original and different path for the future Chinese architectural scene.

## **FILIPPO ROMANO**

### **Adrift in the Capital City**

I have been travelling and exploring Beijing looking for a sense of memory in its contemporary urban transformation. I plunged, myself in the capital's daily life, since 2005, walking for days and weeks, documenting moments of ordinary life, often street life, landscapes, portraits, trying to find symbols and contradiction of the so called modernisation of China. A visual diary, done by

snapshots and architecture's views, searching for the future identity of this city and for its new landmarks. A urban reportage that goes around the light and the dark side of the chinese economical miracle where richness and poverty are evident visual paradoxes. What's the sense of living in the miraculous new China?. Beijing as the capital, with its modern skyscrapers and shopping malls, is the official facade of the powerfull country that is going to run the world. What's the sense of living in Beijing,? What's the real face of Beijing? What's the portrait of this capital? A series of necessary question I carried with me along the visual journey of this endless city of aproximatly 15 milions of people, walking trough the Building site of the olimpic games area or drifting trough CDB area feeling often in a tipically anonimous north american downtown more than anywhere else.

**YA PING WANG**

### **Urbanisation, Housing and Residential Changes in Beijing**

Abstract: Housing provision in Chinese cities has changed directions several times over the last 60 years. From the 1950s to the 1970s, the Communist Government established a socialist welfare housing system in all cities; during the 1980s and 1990s urban housing reform and privatisation programmes was carried out in urban areas to develop housing markets; over the last 10 years, the government has been actively involved in regulating the urban housing market and at the same time reintroduce some social housing ideas and schemes to assist the low income groups and the urban poor. This lecture uses Beijing city as an example to highlight these dramatic changes. It starts with a brief review of the traditional and socialist welfare housing practice in the city, which will be followed by discussion of the privatisation and the features of the urban housing market in the context of urbanisation and land development. Finally, the emerging housing problems and the future directions of the housing provision in the city will be discussed. Residential areas are one of the most prominent land uses in Chinese cities. Residential differentiation is a key feature of urban development under the market economy. Discussions will give emphasis to special areas such as the cottage/luxury housing, low income and affordable housing, migrant and urban poor enclaves of the so-called urban villages.

**DONATA MATRIA TCHOU**

### **Streets: art – public space**

Chinese people focus their attention on the inside part of the house, here are their love, lives and colours, leaving the back side of the hose to the outside, to the streets; but, could be, that the border to the outside space is not wherever

so solid. Here took place the traditional works in the roads of Beijing. Actually on the streets there two types of sellers: the streets where there are "abusive sellers" without any particular tools or cart or umbrella, and the specialized commercial roads, changed in pedestrian roads to facilitate these commercial activities. Dongzhimennei street, Chenfulu in Wudaokou are of the first type, while Wangfujing street and Qianmen street have been transformed in pedestrian areas, as Sanlitun Village.

Shi Jian in "Street life and the people's city" talks of Beijing as schizophrenic town that pushes every citizen to the schizophrenia: excitement for the changes, amazement and pride of the new shopping center, and sadness for the demolitions, the creation of new point of view but loss of the memory of the spaces that were there before. In this mood it's necessary re-find an actual cultural identity to recreate and re-manage the public places, squares and roads. The cases of factory 798 and then SongZhuang and CaoChang laboratories show what could be a way of experiencing contemporary public space. Some installation and photo tell us of imaginary urban landscape, where symbols mix together, fading true and real in other messages (Wang Yishu, Jiao Jan, Ma Honge, MAD architect Ma Yan Song, or the work of the artist Liu Bolin, Meiya Lin, and Ai Weiwei).

## **ALDO AYMONINO**

### **La città gregia di Mao: la nuova capitale dell'impero socialista**

Quando le truppe dell'Esercito Popolare di Liberazione entrano a Pechino, nel gennaio del 1949, ereditano una città che è sostanzialmente ancora quella disegnata dagli imperatori della dinastia Qing.

Intatte sono le grandi mura con le porte d'accesso monumentali, così come l'asse Nord – Sud, gli elementi primari del disegno urbano, le emergenze storiche (Città Proibita e complesso dei Templi del Cielo e dell'Agricoltura su tutti), e soprattutto il tessuto urbano degli hutong formato dalla tipologia degli siheyuan, declinata in tutte le varianti e le aggregazioni possibili.

La nuova capitale della Repubblica Popolare è ancora sostanzialmente una città orizzontale, in cui soltanto il colore differente delle tegole che ricoprono i tetti indica all'esterno le differenti modalità d'uso.

I radicali cambiamenti urbani effettuati negli anni che vanno dal 1950 alla morte di Mao nel 1976, trasformano Pechino dalla città del consumo dei servizi nel centro politico, scientifico, produttivo ed economico del paese.

Tuttavia il prezzo che la città paga in termini di radicali modificazioni e nello stravolgimento anche brutale di cospicue parti della sua immagine e del suo carattere urbano è pesantissimo: abbattute le mura (spesso definite dai viaggiatori del XIX e del XX secolo come una delle meraviglie del pianeta), distrutte le porte così come il Tempio dell'Agricoltura, aperto il nuovo asse Est – Ovest

che cancella l'impostazione geomantica della cultura tradizionale cinese, inizio della distruzione sistematica del minuto tessuto storico a favore di emergenze (ministeri, musei, edifici di rappresentanza, etc.) e abitazioni intensive multipiano di stampo ideologico/stilistico prettamente sovietico, la creazione della "piazza più grande del mondo".

Solo l'equilibrata posizione e il carisma personale all'interno del governo di Zhou Enlai impedirà, sia dopo la proclamazione della Repubblica Popolare che durante la Rivoluzione Culturale danni ancora maggiori al volto di Pechino.

### **GIOVANNA PUPPIN**

#### **The East (Re)goes Red, the City Goes *Shuang***

Red is the colour of China, the colour of the Communist revolution, the colour of Beijing 2008 Olympics. Red is also the colour of something traditionally non Chinese, but which has still become a major household name in the country: red is the colour of Coca Cola.

Having had its first involvement with Olympic marketing back in 1928, the Coca Cola company is now considered the longest continuous partner of the Olympic Games, and this 80-year-old partnership was celebrated right in concomitance with Beijing 2008. The American soft drinks giant is also one of the first foreign companies to have entered the Chinese market, grasped its importance, and invested heavily in advertising campaigns. This was particularly true in 2008, when Coca Cola's participation as a TOP partner of Beijing Summer Games led to a 24% increase in advertising expenditure: the commitment to the Chinese Olympic movement was seized as an opportunity to further strengthen the company's presence in the country.

Being a standard-bearer of the "Think Local, Act Local" strategy, Coca Cola was present and celebrated every significant moment in the pre-olympic and Olympic period, thanks to a sophisticated integrated marketing plan involving outdoor advertising, Beijing fan zones, Internet experiences, bottle design contests, and so on; many of these events were themed to *shuang*, a Chinese expression meaning "refreshment", such as the famous TV commercial "Welcome to *Shuang* City".

This paper focuses both on the presence of Coca Cola's advertising in the streets of Beijing, and in the representations of Beijing in Coca Cola's advertising campaigns, paying particular attention to the communication strategies employed in order to exploit and transmit the genuine passion Chinese people (and the American giant) felt for their Olympics. One of the most significant findings that emerge from this study is that the "redness" and "shuangness" that invaded and animated the streets of the Olympic Beijing resemble, in some

aspects, the city's revolutionary past; nonetheless, they are able to reach beyond national borders: from Beijing to China; from China to the world.

## **SHAN SHAN SHENG**

### **From Great Wall to the Open Wall**

Visual artist Shan Shan Sheng's Open Wall is a large-scale glass installation, restaging a single section of the Great Wall in Beijing into a large scale outdoor work in historic Island of Venice.

Sheng's Open Wall project captures an interval of China's Great Wall, translating the historic structure as a temporary zone of glass architecture.

Sheng's installation engages in dialogue with this period of relative openness in contemporary China, engaging this dynamic and pivotal moment in history.

A temporary work, Open Wall reconstructs a moment of China's Great Wall as an assemblage of glass bricks. The glass bricks become a kind of cultural currency, to be distributed and redistributed in the process of installation. Open Wall suggests the possibility of China's contemporary moment, opening the culture to the global economy and an unprecedented exchange of ideas. Sheng's Open Wall is an uncanny, iridescent sculpture, indicating a threshold of both transparency and opacity, as a critical symbol of China's intersection with Western culture. Easily dissembled and reassembled, Sheng's Open Wall evokes a moment of flux and mutual consumption. Open Wall consists of 2,200 glass bricks, corresponding to the 2,200 years of the Great Wall's construction.

Sheng reimagines the Great Wall as a temporary pavilion of stacked glass; her installation evokes the exquisite yet transitory flux of globalized time.

Open Wall is an example of Shan Shan Sheng's fascination with architecture, material, national memory, and the perception of time. China's historic Great Wall was originally built as a series of discontinuous, autonomous zones. Each section corresponds to a dynastic phase. As a discontinuous sequence of materials and styles, the Great Wall is distributed along 6400 km (4,000 miles). It is the only human build architectural structure can see from the space.

Sheng's Open Wall project is part of the Venice Biennale's La Città Ideale at La Certosa Island from June 6 to November 30, 2009

Open Wall project ( 33 tons Murano glass ) travelled from Venice to Shanghai, following Marco Polo's the silk road by the sea. Exhibited in Shanghai World Expo, Chinese Theme Pavilion – Urban Foot Print Pavilion, from May 1 to November 15, 2010.

Approximately 6 million people visit the artwork.

A trailer of Open Wall documentary film by Venice base award winning filmmaker Savino Cancellara, Music by Romeo Scaccia, will presented in the conference.

**XIN YI**

### **Achieved development concept via Olympics?**

This lecture aims to review the transformation of the social and spatial development in the city and region in Beijing in relationship with the host of Olympic Games and corresponding reflection on the urban development concept.

Based on the extensive communication among the world-wide stakeholders for hosting the Games, a special framework was built and led to the short- and long-term adjustments in the political, economical and cultural understanding for the organizer and Chinese society. Moreover, these changes denote the further transformation in China's urban transition's process.

The discussion will concentrate both in the Olympic related projects and in the parallel extensive aspects of urban development. With the strengthening of global influences in the preparation period, the urban development requirements and the value systems of the organizers and local society have undergone the profound changes and these will contribute to the renovation of urban development concept.

With achievements acknowledged, the author argues that the limited impulse via the Games encounters a series of deep-seated social and institutional factors as the barriers for the further urban development in Beijing. In this viewpoint, the host of Olympic Games will be seen as a chance to rethinking the existing Chinese development pattern.

**SHANNON BASSETT**

### **Emerging "mega-regional territories" (Beijing-Tianjin)**

The Chinese government has begun a project of developing northern China's yellow river delta in a strategic regional corridor plan to rival that of both the Pearl River and Yangtze River deltas. This mega-regional strategic plan was catalyzed, in part, by the determination that Shanghai, China's economic engine has too much power and that economic power as distributed along the Yangtze River strategic corridor, ending at the Shanghai port should be shifted.

Part of this plan has included the decentralization of Beijing to a model more like DC. Under the Maoist city, Beijing became the industrial city. Under this current governmental plan, Beijing is decentralizing its programmatic functions. The Capitol s\Steel factory has been moved out of Beijing to Tangshan where the new Caofeidian eco-city is, and Tianjin has become the new business center.

The centralist city of Beijing, first under the imperial city of Beijing and then

the centralist Maoist city Beijing has thus become part of a decentralized mega-regional system connected by high-speed rails.

This presentation will explore the concept of the new mega regional territory of Beijing with the decentralization of its former programmatic function. What is the possibility of a new mega-regional territory connected by high-speed rail for regional planning which uses larger landscape systems and a new regional territory? This will look a collaborative urban design studio between the University of South Florida School and Tianjin School of Architecture and planning for the Tianjin-Singapore eco-city using landscape and ecological systems as design.

### **MARGHERITA TURVANI AND IGOR CERSOSIMO** **Beijing: growth and environmental challenges**

In the last few decades, the growth of Beijing has been stunning in terms of population, wealth and dimension, and transformed the city into one of the most relevant world economic centres.

The population grew from around 9 Million at the beginning of the 80's to almost 20 Million today (22 million for the whole municipality), no matter the attempts to control the flux of migrants operated by the local authorities.

In the same period, city's GDP grew around 17 times, overcoming 1000 Billion Yuan in 2008, while per capita GDP is more than 10 times bigger than in 1978 (around 63 thousands Yuan in 2008). The average yearly growth rate of GDP at constant prices (in real terms) over the considered period is more than 9%, with values constantly above 3%. Moreover, Beijing's per capita GDP is around three times the same indicator at the national level (63029 against 22698 Yuan per person in 2008), testifying the capability of the city to offer higher quality of life and giving a concrete explanation for the migration of people towards Beijing that contributes significantly to its growth.

This extremely fast development came at the high price of a critical and quickly increasing environmental stress. The environment around the original city has been, in fact, deeply modified to meet the city's demand for land (the city actually occupies more than 16 thousands squared kilometres) and resources. Moreover, large amounts of pollutant substances have been released in the environment, seriously compromising the conditions of land, water sources and air. Final result is that, today, Beijing is considered as one of the most polluted cities of China and of the entire world.

The recent organisation of the Olympic Games has contributed to shift the development of the city to a more sustainable path. Beijing's authorities, in fact, allocated 12.2 Billion US\$ for funding projects aimed to the improvement of city's infrastructure, with special attention to their environmental impacts.

The most important actions involved infrastructure for transports, a shift to cleaner energy sources, the enhancement of sustainable water policies and the protection of urban ecosystem.

Despite the effectiveness of some of these policies, the city is still plagued by many critical, interrelated, environmental problems:

- Traffic is a constant problem and, despite the relatively small dimension of car fleet and its average good quality, highly affects city life and air quality because of an extremely negative traffic cycle, characterised by long commuting distances and frequent traffic jams.

- Air quality suffer for a combination of extremely polluting energy sources, traffic congestion and dust particles in the atmosphere due to local building sites and to wind-carried dust from external sources.

- Water sources are insufficient to fully support city population, because of local climate condition and to the depletion, in terms of quantity and quality, of existing reservoirs and groundwater basins.

The presentation will go through these aspects showing the most recent available data. The presented data are part of a larger analysis conducted through a set of sustainability indicators. This set is constructed using the advanced urban metabolism model, a conceptual instrument that helps conducting sustainability analysis at the urban level by giving a structured interpretation of the main urban dynamics.

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**DECEMBER 16TH, 2010**

**MENG SUN**

## **The Production of Art Districts and Urban Transformation in Beijing**

Key Words:

Beijing, Urban Transformation, Cultural Creative Industry, Artistic Seeds, Dynamic Mechanisms

This study examines the dynamic between the production of art districts and the urban transformation in Beijing. The study tests western generated theories in a Chinese context, by taking Henri Lefebvre's the production of space theory as framework, situating in the urban regime theory, the space of capitalism, and global discourse of creative industry. This study chooses China's capital and cultural center Beijing as single case with three sites: the Liulichang historical cultural district, the Songzhuang art district, and the 798 art district. The study concludes that art districts benefit Beijing's urban life through cultivating and spreading "artistic seeds" and demonstrating artistic life styles to society. Space of art districts is not a new space type in Beijing, but rather a re-emerged urban space after China's economic reform. The art district is both a product and a producer of urban transformation. Good urban conditions include the existence of cultural producers and consumers, a supportive and tolerant government, supportive property owners, and available cheap land. However, the mechanism under the current political regime is an unbalanced interaction among artists, enterprises and government forces. While artists are a crucial driving force at the beginning of production, their role rapidly becomes subjective to the coalition between government and market forces. Art districts contribute to urban transformation in economic, political, spatial, and socio-cultural dimensions, by different extents and mechanisms, and in different historical conditions.

**XIN YI**

## **Transition from Olympics to the urban development**

The author tries to provide a general hypothesis of transitional impulse of Olympic Games for the urban development with the case studies in Beijing and other European cities, Munich, Barcelona and London.

As one of the most important global communication's activities in the world, the exogenous factors on the national and global levels will exerts profound and far-reaching influences both on the successful preparation of the Games and on the following development of the host city.

In this perspective, the contemporary pattern to host the Games will be reviewed. It is argued that the limited goals set of the large projects with the economic priorities should be balanced with the parallel cultural and political

communication, so that the contributions to the social cohesion and to the renovation of a long termed development concept will be achieved in the globalization's period.

Moreover, the further accomplishment of the development concept depends on the extensive basic conditions of the host city and country, especially the institutional system. Based on the discussion of the respective situations in the case study cities, the different performances of their own development in relation with the Games will be reviewed.

### **TOBIA MASCHIO**

#### **Illness of the Soul – A Brief History of Spaces and Powers**

The history of hospitalization of the mentally ill begins in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century together with the establishment of psychiatric hospitals. The supposed utility and necessity of these particular kinds of structures played a main role in their diffusion wherever Western medicine, or biomedicine, has arrived.

Mental asylums began to spread throughout the Chinese territory a century after their appearance in the Old Continent. This process was started by American missionary doctors in collaboration with local police forces and administrators, due to a lack of similar social security services and facilities.

The psychiatric hospital space has often been the object of attention and influence by state authorities. This tendency caused an overflow of historical, social and epistemological studies. In this field of research it is impossible to leave Michel Foucault's work out of consideration. He voiced many doubts concerning the power that has been conferred to psychiatry beyond the medical field. Under this point of view, the Chinese context is no exception.

In this interesting yet problematic scenario some mental health centers based on theories and practices introduced by the Italian psychiatrist Franco Basaglia started appearing in China. The first of them has been opened in Beijing on 20th January 2010, thanks to the cooperation between Chinese and Italian medical institutions. The main features of this kind of structure are the constant dialogue with the local population in order to contrast the widespread stigma on the mentally ill and the peroration of anti-psychiatric thought.

The whole process is still at an embryonic stage and consequently far from being completed. However, the opening of the Chinese medical system towards more ethical ways of dealing with mental illnesses and diseases is vital from many points of view. Amongst these, the academic one, of course, is not the most important.

**LIU YU**

## **Research on the Social-spatial Differentiation in the Transition Period**

The social-spatial differentiation can be understood as the phenomenon of unbalanced distribution of different social factors. (Feng Jian, 2005, p176) Interest in socio-spatial differentiation has recently resurfaced in the literature (see Hamnett, 2001; Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000; Walker, 2001). Social differentiation in the western countries can be summarized in terms of economic status, family status, and ethnicity and these three dimensions of social differentiation are spatially distributed in terms of sectors, zones, and clusters, respectively (Xu Xueqiang, 1989; Yeh et al, 1995).

However, this trend is not totally applicable in urban China. Chinese cities present very different histories and political economies of urban development. In China, during the last 20 years, with the transition from the planned-economical system to the market-economical system, great changes take place on the aspects of economical structure, housing markets, population constitution and etc. Accordingly, the changes also reflected in the social-spatial structure. The paper takes Beijing as the case and tries to analyze the features and the causes of social-spatial differentiation. At first, it outlined the background of the transitional period from planned economy system to market economy system. And concluded that immigrants (the floating population), occupation status and living conditions could be the proper social factors to reveal the features of social-spatial differentiation in this transitional period. In the following section, it more focused on the geographic distribution patterns of social factors based on the data of 2000; In the next section, it tries to analyze the statistic feature of social-spatial differentiation by comparing a group of indexes based on data of two 1982 and 2000. And finally, explores the causes of social-spatial differentiation in Beijing from the perspectives of policy, economic situation and housing market.

**GABRIELE PITACCO**

## **Apples, Blu Castels and Red Lines, *vivre ensemble* in a Gated Community**

During the last Shenzhen Biennale O.P.E.N. Office presented "Red Line Park". Red Line Park is the project for a linear park rising on the plot line (traditionally shown in red in China) of the gated communities in Beijing. The project fosters the idea of breaking the wall, introducing new (designed) open gates and opening to the facilities inside the compound.

This project offers the chance to discuss the topic of the gated communities in Beijing focusing on the quantitative, qualitative and architectural relationship between private spaces and collective facilities inside this topological device. Beijing's gated communities, with their collective facilities, dimensioned to fit the compound users, designed to foster the idea of community and, at the same

time, CCTV systems and unbreakable walls, do present most of the controversial and discussed features of the contemporary debate on the topic.

On one side the facilities are meant to trigger the identification, gathering inside the compound units a provision of various, intriguing and characterizing function and services both designed and self generated.

Different devices are used in the various solution to contribute to make compatible the concentration of people and functions allowed by the legislative existing apparatus. A density necessary to justify the scale of the land cost and investments. A concentration that otherwise would sharpen the social confrontation.

At the same time surrounded by walls that keep the others out, the perception of a reality secluded by the context is the other side of the story a possible formal declination of the desire of security and privacy diffused worldwide.

On this topic the use of wall, fences or other technical devices instead of other forms of soft control, naturally present in crowded areas can be read as a way to give form to the fear of urbanity that is spreading in the last years.

Different examples (Red Line Park, Pinguo, Blue Caste, Linked Hybrid, Jianwai Soho, Soho New Town and others) are used to define the common features and the devices that are able to make this settlement type a possible solution to foster urbanity in dense contexts.

## **CUI LIU**

### **Transport Issues and Policies**

The traffic problem, as a common challenge in growing mega cities around the world, has been puzzling Beijing in the past decades, with annoying urban traffic congestions and severe environmental pollution. This talk aims to present the trend of rising motorization in Beijing, analyze the transport issues and policies facing the city, and make some reflection from the perspectives of spatial planning.

First, there is an introduction of the rising motorization in Beijing. Domestically, it has grown in accordance with the fast population growth and rapid economic development in Beijing, and became an important driving force for the GDP growth. Internationally, compared with the other metropolitans, the motorization in Beijing still has a great potential.

Then, the talk focuses on the current transport issues and policies in Beijing. It's analyzed from the following aspects: roads are over-loaded by car-based traveling; private cars run in an over-loose environment; public transit develops very slowly; ambiguous policies about bicycles, official cars and taxis.

After that, there are some reflections from the perspectives of spatial planning: change the urban form and land use pattern; integrate transportation and land use planning; open the enclosed neighborhood.

## **FRANCESCA DIANO AND ALBERTO LESSAN**

### **OLYMPEKed. Design Studio on the 2008 Olympic Venues Redevelopment**

Eight students from the Polytechnic of Turin's first Faculty of Architecture and eight students from the Tsinghua University of Beijing have been participating on a five month workshop whose aim was the reuse of the Chinese Olympic Structures. The venues included among others the Olympic Park (with the stadium of Herzog & de Meuron and the Water Cube of the PTW architects), the area of the Worker's Stadium (built under Mao's regime). This Workshop held between both faculties has been organized with the support of the Beijing Planning Bureau. The final presentation, including the different proposals panels, videos, models and a documentary on how the work had taken place (when the teams worked together and apart), has been the occasion for a face to face discussion of the projects with students, tutors and external critics.

How can the open public space survive in the city, what identity does it assume, how does it create virtuous relationships between the big out of scale objects and the daily lifestyle?

How to assume the monumentality of the Olympic venues, involved in the process of urban reconstitution, confronting and comparing the idea of permanency, very present in the occidental culture against the contemporary oriental one. Do we have to underline the symbolic value of the exceptional architecture of the Star System?

How is sustainability going to have a mayor role in all of the Olympic venues architecture during the urban transformation of the different areas? As an example the usage of water, typical element of the Chinese garden, risks to decrease the very fragile water resources of the metropolitan area that approaches a territorial scale. As the main theme is the integration of the techniques of accumulation and recycling of the water with the new landscape redefining the program of the sites in an almost programmatic way.

## **SOSSIO DE VITA**

### **Anderground Analogies: Beijing and Naples**

The meaning, the shape of the city. What in art is defined *Kunstwollen*, the artistic form of a city, its will of form that it's not chronicle of urban life.

Beyond streets, buildings, monuments, the city is its artistic, cultural content, of meaning in form. Certainly its memory, before historical then imaginary (Where the elements are disappeared).

The text of the Pekinese poet Shan Sa, entitled "Pechino and colours" recites: "...Let the winter return, let the snow refresh the pain. Let the kite fade away the nostalgia, poison of memory.

I will sleep in the white hair of the city that is no more mine. The eternity is a

dream that will surround sites, skyscrapers, highways, hanging bridges. Modernity ignores the regret. Venice is pink, the marble, the dawn, chilly lips, domes, bells, saints, Virgins. Naples is black, soot, ink, light and joy, violent death and voluptuous faithfulness".

The Pekinese image, built on its sites up to the sixties of the twentieth century, had, as an height limit, the highest pagoda of the "Forbidden City" so that, the institution par excellence, in the centre of the valley surrounded by hills at the edge of the Gobi desert, was an identity-making.

A generic Beijing, as other planetary contest, that can be assimilated to Sana', to Orte, to Sabaudia. A typical "pasoliniana" shared fear. That one to lose his reading (as a writing text, a lot of times, interrupted looking forward to a continuous) his vision (of a strengthened image as a block palisade of walls, with emergency- monument that stands out toward an horizon of roofs or woods).

The same distance of perception felt by Roberto Pane to perceive with seight the building of Real "Albergo dei poveri"(Poor's Palace) in Naples. Bigger as any other building in Naples, almost as a city, prospectively with synthesis.

Itself a contradictory city because "city in the city". So big its pretence to compete against the utopias of Ceausescu's power. Enormous as the pretence of being the city in a reign. The poor 's capital of the "Two Sicily".

In 1969 Beijing develops an original necessity, that is that one to protect itself from a Soviet's atomic attack. The plan to mobilize the city foresees that the 40% of the population gets away to the mountain, and the 60% hides inside underground bunkers. In a decade it will be built the Underground City. Schools, hospitals, houses, shops, factories, mushrooms growing, streets and tunnels. A structure that actually doesn't have its own public image. It's allowed to reach its 30km almost long tunnels. It's allowed to enter and cross its surface of 85km<sup>2</sup>.

Forbiddances that generate an unauthorized, invisible and heroic, life needs. Free rooms are used as garçonnieres, covered with rock posters, at least ten meters on its real. A threshold that leads to different way of life. It is used as a labyrinth for hide and seek plays, as an underground depot of the shops of the center's streets.

Analogous the fugitive and adventurous character with the fastboat trough the cavities of Cenito, of Tony Pagoda in the recent novel " Hanno tutti ragione" ( Everybody 's right) written by Paolo Sorrentino. The underground's tunnel is a perfect place to discover fear and life.

Underground's analogies that supports the need to ask ourselves if Calvino's fear of the form's lack in our hasty city can be considered real, and which role will have the choices of relinquishment and recovery of the urban life space.

**SARA CIPOLLETTI**

### **Thousand Gardens. Regenerative strategies for public spaces in the city of Zhongshan**

In a wide perspective, Zhongshan constitutes a city-laboratory to think and to experiment, regarding considerations of primary importance, the very fast urban transformations in China, in an often self-contradictory reality, hanging between the past and the future, strongly restored by contemporary art much like in the artist Weng Fen's series of young schoolgirls.

Open and public spaces, places which represent identity, are essential for grasp the desired urban quality, especially at a time when it's deeply feared that cities might lose their features, become dully homogeneous and their images trivialized.

The scientific-technological collaboration between Italy and China requires a progress in the search of a sharable code, emancipated from prepackaged mutual cultural readings.

In Cheng Yong's art works, black dots on undressed white bodies ordered as the Braille alphabet, show a failure in communication at the beginning, a meaning that we can't understand where everything is reduced into the smallest and most abstract form. One dot, that is originally is deprived of any sense, allows, by its reiteration, the recognition of a universal order, which originates from things, defining a possible skyline of the design ; a new tactile writing on for the city.

Then according to Italian tendency to investigate and to interpret the sense of place, it codifies an inalienable identity in the care and in the use of natural element, which can define a methodology and determine new processes.

The city center of Zhongshan, is submitted to an operation of writing on, which uses green material, sprawl and powdered, as an element of urban regeneration. A new story for the city made by rethinking tradition, exactly the same as in the deconstruction of Chinese textual structure in the Gu Wenda's art works.

This action isn't ordinary and trivial street furniture, but it must be an organizational structure of open spaces, capable of pointing out and improving existing situations and of orienting future actions.

**GIORGIA AQUILAR**

### **Superimpositions in Amsterdam. Unstable portrait of the contemporary Dutch City**

"In architecture almost all buildings are subjected to phenomena of viral aggression that transform them. The elimination of some parts, the addition of others, the superfetation of volumes that parasitize the original ones, configure a destructive process that is surely a manifestation of the extreme vitality " (Purini, 2008).

In the Dutch city, contamination also acts on the urban scale: without continuous processes of parasite overlaying, the city could not live. By acting vertically, a kind of artificial topography is defined, following a model of stratification which strictly belongs to the contemporary changing city, from spontaneous practices to planning. That is a city growth process that avoids use of the territory while maintaining the identity of the past (Marini, 2009). In this sense the addition can be seen as a prototype for a further densification of the old and existing city: "it adds a roof life to the city" (Mvrdv, 2007).

Amsterdam is a city grown up by adding single parts, strictly recognizable, according to the typically Dutch logic of the defined urban design.

The industrial area of Storkterrein partially throws into crisis this conception. This site, in a strategic position between the historical inner centre and the modern expansion of the Eastern Docklands, has been involved in a process of transformation due a typical problem of dismissal of the industry and harbour and the modification of the railway infrastructure. The aim is not just designing an addition but acting on the layers of the city, in a logic of superimpositions that involves margins, junctions, morphologies, by articulating different elements in a unified complex composition.

The re-configuration of this piece of the city leads beyond the ordinary relation between rule and exception, dealing with dialectics of homogeneous/inhomogeneous, finished/unfinished, natural/artificial, continuous/discontinuous, that give to this area a strong urban role in the transformation of the city.

## **FILIPPO DE DOMINICIS**

### **Oasis urban form between permanence and transformation: the case of Figuig, Morocco**

Figuig is a city in Morocco, which is part of an urban system of oasis from Ghadames (in Libia), to Tata (in Morocco). These cities at the edge of the West Sahara represent a human attempt to construct a bordering urban system and stop the advance of the desertification.

Due to the changes of migration pattern which causes a decline in economic activities, Figuig is subject to rapid changes that effect directly the body of the city.

Figuig has a population of twenty-thousand people, and it is located 2 km from the Algerian border. It is not a medina city (the historical centre of the Islamic city). It was developed to be self-sufficient, according to a direct relationship between economic resources and population.

The concept of the oasis is an artificial living environment that survives thanks to the work of man and provides the base of human survival.

Figuig is divided into seven ksour, which are autonomous districts originally set up in the sourrounding territory according to the availability of water which influences the agricultural activities, in particular the cultivation of palm trees



and the production of dates.

The ksar is the foundation of a social structure based on the communal management of resources. The ksar is a defense, and a set of common values against the hostile nature of the desert.

After the beginning of people emigration, the ksour system starts to break down. It affects the entire survival of the oasis and its self-sufficient nature, with a reduction of economic activities. When migrants return to the oasis, they bring back new economic activities which are different from the traditional agricultural ones. The abandoned ksour become a symbol of a society that is transforming itself, as well as the returning migrants look in the urban areas between ksour for new ways of life. In this environment between ksour a new human approach emerges: the contact between the urban and the nomadic sections of the population increases, resulting in different activities which shape great parts of oasis environment.

It is in the spaces between the abandoned ksour that one can see the potential of urban renewal, specifically in the areas around the tombs, cemeteries and the ksour-gates. It is in these new physical spaces that new dwellings emerge and, in the process, foster new urban social and economic activities.

## **IRENE GUIDA**

### **Baltimore**

The paradoxes of the corridor.

Baltimore is part of the Megalopolis (Gottman, 1961); Megalopolis is the name given to the extensive urbanization, which includes rural, urban and suburban area, spreading along the Northeastern Seaboard of the United States. Megalopolis has a symbolic role, it is the beginning of the Westward Course of the Way of the Empire (Emerson, 1861). In this Westward Course, Baltimore is what is left behind. It is the place where all the paradoxes of Megalopolis are most evident (Olson, 1976).

Among three branches, in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay, on a sandy wet bank of easily workable soil, the City is where all the contradictions flow before sight. Social segregation is seen as unavoidable in a deeply progressive cultural environment; the city is black, close, poor, while the counties are white, open, rich.

Slums are urban black holes near the world most influent State Capital.

This shows the paradoxes of the corridor. My description is aimed towards two basic questions, what is the role of the urban designer and which forms of collaboration are possible among different knowledges and urban design.

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