• Paper / Proposal Title: Branded Heritage

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• Presentation Method. I would like to:
  i. present in person (with a written paper)

• Abstract (300 words):

The paper discusses the visual rhetoric used in the advertisement of housing regeneration schemes in London and Shanghai, especially when they recall notions of memory and heritage. It is argued that the expanding allusion to heritage has an active role in supporting the economic value of the interventions through culture. It is also argued that the ‘imaginification’ of architecture has practical qualities and spatial consequences which affect the way we can inhabit the city, and influence our understanding of property matters, citizenship rights and urban accessibility. The relationship between visual culture and the built environment, reveals some of the mechanism though which democracy, sense of belonging and civic space are progressively put at stake.
Advertisement rhetoric in Shanghai and London reveals a striking sameness in
communication techniques, but also share similar trends on contents, first of which
being the reference to notions of culture and memory, increasingly used as
redevelopment drivers to justify operations which are in fact financial. Heritage is
simultaneously a reason for the conservation of some parts of the city and for the
demolition of some others, a symbolic asset to be returned to the collectivity and an
economic value to be privatized. Its use is particularity significant in a moment when, on
a wider stage of global politics, national states embed cultural values into popular
rhetoric against an increasing consent, and cultural references are included into
promotional materials addressing at the same time local and global audiences.
The case studies observed are two: Battersea Power Station in London and the Suhe
Creek in Shanghai. The luck of these projects is built partially thanks to their central
position, and partially thanks to a dedicated narrative which disguises exclusive
operations behind operation of “urban restitution”.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Michela Pace is an Italian researcher with interdisciplinary expertise in the fields of urban
design and photo reportage as critical tools of investigation. She collaborated with
international research groups (Iuav, Venice; UEL, London; PoliMi, Milan; PoliTo, Turin;
UHHasselt, Hasselt; Tongji University, Shanghai); and design practices (muf
architecture/art). She realized photographic campaigns worldwide, exhibitions, videos,
participatory activities with groups of citizens focusing on global real estate dynamics
and the branding of heritage. Her current academic research concentrates on the
global real estate market, the effects of financializing on spatial justice, the role of
heritage within redevelopment projects, and the role of images as places where the
city is produced and imagined.
Her contributions and pictures appeared in books, specialized journals and
newspapers: Conzett Bronzini Gartmann: Forms of Structures (Electa, 2011), Spazi del
Welfare (Quodlibet, 2013), Esplorazioni nella città dei ceti medi: Torino 1945-80
(Lettera22, 2015), Storie di case: abitare l’Italia del boom (Donzelli, 2013), CITY, Candice,
Territorio. Her works were part of collective exhibitions at: London Festival of
Architecture and Free World Centre, London (2015); Ducal Palace, Venice (2015);
Caracol Arte, Turin (2014); Bilbao (2008), Medellin International Global Fair, Columbia
(2009).