SU INSEDIAMENTI E AMBIENTE RIVISTA INTERNAZIONALE DI CULTURA URBANISTICA





Vol.6 n.2 (Dicembre 2013)



http://www.tria.unina.it/index.php/tria

Direttore scientifico / Editor-in-Chief

Mario Coletta Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II

Condirettore / **Coeditor-in-Chief**

Antonio Acierno Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II

Comitato scientifico / Scientific Committee

Robert-Max Antoni Seminaire Robert Auzelle Parigi (Francia)

Rob Atkinson University of West England (Regno Unito)

Tuzin Baycan Levent *Università Tecnica di Istambul (Turchia)*

Pierre Bernard Seminaire Robert Auzelle Parigi (Francia)

Roberto Busi Università degli Studi di Brescia (Italia)

Sebastiano Cacciaquerra Università degli Studi di Udine (Italia)

Luisa Maria Calabrese Delft University of Technology (Olanda)

Clara Cardia Politecnico di Milano (Italia)

Maurizio Carta Università degli Studi di Palermo (Italia)

Pietro Ciarlo *Università degli Studi di Cagliari (Italia)*

Biagio Cillo Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli (Italia)

Massimo Clemente CNR IRAT di Napoli (Italia)

Giancarlo Consonni Politecnico di Milano (Italia)

Enrico Costa Università degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria (Italia)

Giulio Ernesti Università Iuav di Venezia (Italia)

Concetta Fallanca *Università degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria (Italia)*

José Fariña Tojo ETSAM Univerdidad Politecnica de Madrid (Spagna)

Francesco Forte Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II (Italia)

Patrizia Gabellini Politecnico di Milano (Italia)

Adriano Ghisetti Giavarina Università degli Studi di Chieti Pescara (Italia)

Francesco Karrer Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza (Italia)

Giuseppe Las Casas Università degli Studi della Basilicata (Italia)

Giuliano N. Leone Università degli Studi di Palermo (Italia)

Francesco Lo Piccolo *Università degli Studi di Palermo (Italia)*

Oriol Nel.lo Colom Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona (Spagna)

Eugenio Ninios Atene (Grecia)

Rosario Pavia Università degli Studi di Chieti Pescara (Italia)

Giorgio Piccinato Università degli Studi di Roma Tre (Italia)

Daniele Pini Università di Ferrara (Italia)

Piergiuseppe Pontrandolfi Università degli Studi della Basilicata (Italia)

Amerigo Restucci IUAV di Venezia (Italia)

Mosè Ricci Università degli Studi di Genova (Italia)

Giulio G. Rizzo Università degli Studi di Firenze (Italia)

Ciro Robotti Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli (Italia)

Jan Rosvall *Università di Göteborg (Svezia)*

Inés Sànchez de Madariaga ETSAM Univerdidad Politecnica de Madrid (Spagna)

Paula Santana Università di Coimbra (Portogallo)

Michael Schober Università di Freising (Germania)

Paolo Ventura Università degli Studi di Parma (Italia)



Comitato centrale di redazione / Editorial Board

Antonio Acierno (Caporedattore / Managing editor), Teresa Boccia, Angelo Mazza (Coord. relazioni internazionali / International relations), Maria Cerreta, Candida Cuturi, Tiziana Coletta, Pasquale De Toro, Gianluca Lanzi, Emilio Luongo, Valeria Mauro, Raffaele Paciello, Francesca Pirozzi, Luigi Scarpa

Redattori sedi periferiche / Territorial Editors

Massimo Maria Brignoli (*Milano*); Michèle Pezzagno (*Brescia*); Gianluca Frediani (*Ferrara*); Michele Zazzi (*Parma*); Michele Ercolini (*Firenze*), Sergio Zevi e Saverio Santangelo (*Roma*); Matteo Di Venosa (*Pescara*); Antonio Ranauro e Gianpiero Coletta (*Napoll*); Anna Abate, Francesco Pesce, Donato Viggiano (*Potenza*); Domenico Passarelli (*Reggio Calabria*); Giulia Bonafede (*Palermo*); Francesco Manfredi Selvaggi (*Campobasso*); Elena Marchigiani (*Trieste*); Beatriz Fernández Águeda (*Madrid*); Josep Antoni Báguena Latorre (*Barcellona*); Claudia Trillo (*Manchester*); Maurizio Francesco Errigo (*Delft*).

Responsabili di settore Centro L.U.P.T./ Sector managers L.U.P.T Center

Paride Caputi (*Progettazione Urbanistica*), Ernesto Cravero (*Geologia*), Romano Lanini (*Urbanistica*), Giuseppe Luongo (*Vulcanologia*), Luigi Piemontese (*Pianificazione Territoriale*), Antonio Rapolla (*Geosismica*), Guglielmo Trupiano (*Gestione Urbanistica*), Giulio Zuccaro (*Sicurezza del Territorio*)

Responsabile amministrativo Centro L.U.P.T./ Administrative Manager LUPT Center

Maria Scognamiglio

Direttore responsabile: Mario Coletta| print ISSN 1974-6849 | electronic ISSN 2281-4574 | © 2008 | Registrazione: Cancelleria del Tribunale di Napoli, n° 46, 08/05/2008 | Rivista cartacea edita dalle Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane e rivista on line realizzata con Open Journal System e pubblicata dal Centro di Ateneo per le Biblioteche dell'Università di Napoli Federico II.

il mare e la città/sea and the city

Sommario/Table of contents

Editoriale/Editorial

Città-Porto-Mare. I caratteri evolutivi di un rapporto complesso / *The City-the Port-the Sea. The evolutive features of a complex relation*Mario COLETTA

Interventi/Papers	
Città e mare: identità marittima per una rigenerazione urbana sostenibile/Sea and the city: maritime identity for urban sustainable regeneration Massimo CLEMENTE	19
Questioni spaziali: la forma urbana della città influenza le possibilità economiche, in particolare Venezia, la città e la Laguna: un rapporto smarrito?/ <i>Venice, the city and the lagoon: a lost relationship? Piero PEDROCCO</i>	35
Vista dal mare. La riqualificazione del waterfront di Marsiglia, tra edifici-icona e Mediterraneo/A view from the Sea. The regeneration of Marseille waterfront: iconic buildings and Mediterranean sea	4-
Maria Elena BUSLACCHI	47
Tra regole e misteri, del mare e dell'urbano / Between rules and mysteries, of the sea and of the city Francesco FORTE	61
Haliç, il mare urbano. Paesaggio e trasformazione delle aree centrali di Istanbul /Haliç, the urban sea. Landscape and transformation of the central areas of Istanbul Gianluca FREDIANI	75
Relazione città-porto-waterfront: complessità e complicazioni/ <i>Relationship beetween city-port-waterfront: complexity and complications</i> Bianca PETRELLA	89
Portofino, fra turismo d'élite e spopolamento/Portofino, between elite tourism and depopulation Francesco GASTALDI	103
La conservazione e l'innovazione nella rigenerazione urbana. Un caso studio: "La costa ionica da Torre Merlata all'abitato di Torre Melissa"/The conservation and innovation in urban regeneration. A case study: The Ionian Coast from Torre Merlata to the village of Torre Melissa Domenico PASSARELLI, Vincenzo Alfonso COSIMO	115
Rinaturactivazione urbana nel Mediterraneo: nuove strategie da antichi genomi/ <i>Urban rinaturactivation in Mediterranean: new strategy from ancient genomes Emanuela NAN</i>	131
Impatti delle energie rinnovabili sul paesaggio. Eolico, alternative offshore in ambiti marini/Impacts of renewable energy on landscape. Alternative of offshore wind in marine areas Francesca MORACI, Celestina FAZIA	145
LIVERPOOL @ SHANGHAI. Il waterfront come un <i>brandscape</i> nel caso studio di Liverpool Waters /LIVERPOOL @ SHANGHAI. The waterfront as a brandscape in Liverpool Waters case study Annie ATTADEMO	157

La rigenerazione dell'area urbana costiera di Scheveningen: Pearl by the Sea /Regeneration of the Urban Coastal area of Scheveningen: Pearl by the Sea Leo OORSCHOT	171
Underwater: il rapporto città-acqua nella Zuid Holland/Underwater: the relationship city-water in Zuid Holland Maurizio Francesco ERRIGO, Fabiola ARCURI	185
Quartieri in conflitto e tradizioni marittime: può la rigenerazione del waterfront aiutare a ri-progettare un futuro di pace? Approfondimenti da Belfast /Conflicting neighbourhoods and maritime traditions: does the waterfront regeneration help to re-design a peaceful future? Insights	
from Belfast Gabriella Esposito DE VITA, Alona MARTINEZ-PEREZ, Claudia TRILLO	201
Porto, città, territorio: sviluppo economico e qualità urbana nel caso studio di Salerno /Port, city, territory: economic development and urban quality in the case study of Salerno Andrea ANNUNZIATA, Massimo CLEMENTE, Eleonora GIOVENE DI GIRASOLE, Elena VALENTINO	219
Valutazioni e processi decisionali per una portualità turistica sostenibile nel Mediterraneo/Assessments and decision-making processes for sustainable touristic ports in Mediterranean Maria CERRETA, Pasquale DE TORO, Francesca FERRETTI	239
Rubriche/Sections	
Recensioni/Book reviews	255
Studi, Piani e Progetti/Studies, Plans and Projects	
Riconquistare il mare e guardare ad Oriente. Un progetto per Rigenerare Crotone/ Regaining the sea and look to the East. A project to regenerate Crotone Michele MANIGRASSO	267
Programma Epos della Regione Basilicata. Una rete per il cambiamento/ Epos program by the Region of Basilicata. A Network for Change Margherita SARLI	271
Progetti di waterfront/ Waterfront projects Antonio ACIERNO	275
La riqualificazione del lungosenna parigino: le Projet des berges de Seine/ <i>The redevelopment of the riverbanks of Seine: le Projet des berges de Seine Candida CUTURI</i>	283
Dibattiti, convegni, interviste e conferenze/Debates, meetings, interviews and conferences	
Il senso di Louise per i rifiuti / The sense of Louise for waste Francesca PIROZZI	289
II viaggio immaginario. 1979 - 2013 / <i>The imaginary journey</i> <i>Tiziana COLETTA</i>	293
Rassegna legislativa/ Legislative review	
Il Piano Regolatore Portuale nella L. 84/94/ The Port Master Plan in the Law 84/94 Antonio ACIERNO	297

TRIA 11 (2/2013) 157-170 / print ISSN 1974-6849, e-ISSN 2281-4574



DOI 10.6092/2281-4574/2046 Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial License 3.0 - www.tria.unina.it

LIVERPOOL @ SHANGHAI

The waterfront as a brandscape in Liverpool Waters case study

Annie Attademo

Abstract

Since the 18th century, Liverpool was an important maritime city. In the 20th century, this economic model declined and the waterfront started shrinking, eroding the core centre of the city. Since then Liverpool administration started stimulating new investments: the symbolic marine background, a central place of the city of production, was turned into a benchmark of the city of consumption.

The waterscape was transformed into a brandscape: Liverpool created a twin-city relationship with Shanghai (China), trying to attract new investors to accelerate the regeneration. With the "One city, Nine towns" plan (2001), Shanghai created a branding strategy and an efficacious urban planning perspective all at one time, using well-known European styles to realize its expansion areas along the waterfront.

Working on this model, Liverpool Waters project proposes a Shanghai-alike waterfront skyline, with disproportionate towers, refusing the city waterscape heritage, listed as World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The main landmark of the area -a skyscraper called Shanghai Tower, is not an attempt to embody Shanghai cultures or its urban environment, but rather to line up to its lifestyle and social-economic conditions, to put the city onto the global market with a positive etiquette.

The overall proposal establishes a generic relation with the water, neglecting Liverpool marine heritage, moving the attention from the historic waterscape (with its centre in the Pier Head) to a new town brandscape. The entire city dematerializes, as a mere background of the new proposal.

The paper tries to evaluate the balance between branding strategies and related re-



Liverpool waterfront skyline

generation actions, also according to an analytical verification through a project: the proposal for a new tower in Shanghai waterfront, aimed to create a balance between the proposition of a successful and vibrant brandscape and the respect of geographical and historical factors.

LIVERPOOL @ SHANGHAI

Il waterfront come un brandscape nel caso studio di Liverpool Waters

Sin dal XVIII sec. Liverpool è stata un'importante città portuale. Nel XX sec. questo modello economico è entrato in crisi e le aree portuali sono state abbandonate, corrodendo così il cuore pulsante del centro città. Da allora le amministrazioni locali hanno cercato di stimolare gli investimenti, valorizzando le testimonianze del passato mercantile, trasformandole in capisaldi per il commercio ed il tempo libero.

Il paesaggio portuale lascia il posto ad un *brandscape*, e Liverpool ricerca nella città di Shanghai un gemellaggio per attrarre investimenti cinesi ed accelerare la rigenerazione urbana. La città cinese si è fornita a partire dal piano "One city, Nine towns" del 2001, sia di una strategia di city branding che di un'efficace prospettiva pianificatoria, attraverso la realizzazione di zone di espansione lungo il waterfront, imitando stili di architettura europea.

Basandosi su questo modello, Liverpool propone il progetto Liverpool Waters, riproducendo Shanghai attraverso uno skyline di torri abnormi, a discapito dei vicini frammenti del passato portuale, classificati World Heritage Site dall'UNESCO. Il caposaldo principale, la Shanghai Tower, è progettato per raggiungere il livello socio-economico della città cinese, per assicurare a Liverpool una permanenza solida nel mercato globale delle città più forti e competitive.

In generale, il progetto individua un rapporto generico col mare, trascurando l'eredità portuale, spostando l'attenzione dal passato paesaggio portuale (che aveva il suo centro nel Pier Head) ad un nuovo brandscape. La città scompare alle spalle della nuova immagine proposta.

Questo articolo cerca di valutare in parallelo le strategie di branding e le connesse azioni di rigenerazione urbana, avvalendosi inoltre di una verifica progettuale, fornita dalla proposta di una nuova torre per il waterfront di Shanghai, che costruisca un equilibrio tra la costruzione di un brand di successo e il rispetto delle immanenze geografiche e storiche.

Keywords: brandscape, waterscape, heritage, towers

LIVERPOOL @ SHANGHAI The waterfront as a *brandscape* in Liverpool Waters case study

Annie Attademo

The first urban regeneration wave

In 2008 Liverpool (UK) hosted the *European Capital of Culture* (hereafter abbreviated to ECoC), becoming a peculiar *best practice* of regeneration. Although there was no much transformation *for* the event, the event was a reflection of the regeneration of the waterfront and the core city, meant to build the *brand* of Liverpool as a *competitive* and *innovative* city (Jones, Wilks-Heeg, 2004).

Liverpool was an important mercantile city since the 18th century; its wealth was based on trades, connections with other places and cultures. Liverpool docks were connected by lock gates, along the River Mersey for 12 Km. There was basically no distinction between public and private spaces: the waterfront was a mixed pattern of maritime uses; exotic trades and foreign people encouraged multi-culturalism and integration of practices (McBane, 2008).

In the 20th century this economic model declined quite sharply and urban areas around the waterfront started shrinking: most of the docks were closed in the '70s, because of the introduction of containers in the stocks of goods, and the port itself was moved to the Seaforth Dock, north of Liverpool, where it was transformed into a container terminal. The *thriving* city, that reached almost one million inhabitants before the Second World War, became a *shrinking city* with a population in decline (McBane, 2008; Parkinson, 1985). This condition changed the look of the city, uncovering a series of abandoned areas and brownfield lands.

Since then Liverpool administration started stimulating new private investments, firstly through *flagship projects* (Jones, Wilks-Heeg, 2004), like the Albert Dock, the Victorian dock complex, whose restoration was characterized by a deep respect of the old maritime remains as a new strong *brand*. When the Local Government, Planning and Land Act (1980) was launched, the administration started purchasing abandoned waterfront areas, not put to profitable uses, on a compulsory base. Later the administration sold those lands to the private sector (Jones, Wilks-Heeg, 2004). A crucial moment was a change in urban authority in 1996, with the Liberal Democrat taking power and embracing an entrepreneurial model of government, directing energies in the attraction of investments, positioning Liverpool, in a symbolical way, as a renovated city everyone could do business with.



Fig. 1 - The shrinking waterfront hinterland.

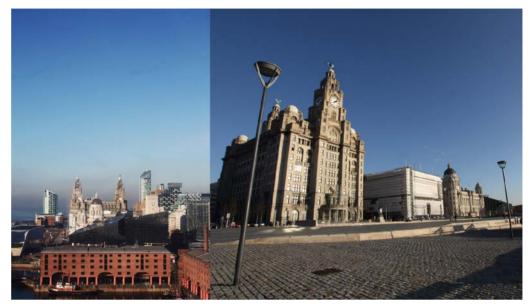
With the designation of the Merseyside Objective 1 region and the arrival of the European structural funds (1993-99 and 2000-06), Liverpool started a transformation process, guided by Liverpool Vision, the first Urban Regeneration Company in the UK, which developed the *Strategic Regeneration Framework* (1999), a 20-years-long strategic plan, promoting a new image of the city (Garcia, 2010). Meanwhile some docks started to be filled in to create land for new buildings at Pier Head, Kings Docks, Harrington Docks and Herculaneum Dock.

In 2004 Liverpool waterfront was designated as UNESCO World Heritage Site, as a testimony of the times of the great British merchant fleet. The re-evaluation of the old *genius loci*, in addition to the new opportunities provided by the waterfront lands losing their previous destination, led to a complex re-design of the waterfront itself, whose core centre remained the traditionally meaningful Pier Head, dominated by three great historic Edwardian buildings, the Three Graces, in combination with the design of the new Liverpool Museum.

The new heart of the waterfront is a post-modern congested commercial complex, called *Liverpool 1*, a whole new neighbourhood exemplifying a brand new *public realm economy*, i.e. an economy based on open spaces and connections, as it was in the ancient times within the docklands.

The slogan used for the 2008 ECoC was "Liverpool, The World in One city", working on the idea of the port city, shaped by exterior fluxes and interior multiculturalism. As a window open to the exterior, the waterscape worked as a signal and a complex landmark, reflecting the transformation of the entire city (Bayley, 2010). The regeneration of the city, following a concentric structure, due to the city specific morphology, started from brownfield sites all along the waterfront, followed by the systematic redevelopment of public spaces and the realization of a new business and financial development at Princes Dock. Beyond the waterfront, the regeneration wave hit old

Fig. 2 - Re-designing the waterfront: the Pier Head as the core centre of the regeneration.



warehouses neighbourhoods, boosted as new *cultural quarters*, gradually demolishing and replacing old housing with new buildings (Allen, 2008). In the meantime housing market collapsed, leading to the approval of the national program called Housing Market Renewal (2003-2011), aimed to raise property values. Following a precise branding strategies, regeneration privileged *middle class* models of development, trying to attract vibrant young professionals. Overall the regeneration of these areas was carried out through open disputes with communities of residents, unable to re-establish themselves in new expensive settlements (Fitzpatrick, 2009): recent regeneration actions in Liverpool, from the waterfront to the inner areas, produced just a landscape of unsold brand new neighbourhoods (Nevin, 2010).

The Shanghai experience

Since 1999, Liverpool entrepreneurial administration had been working on a strong and innovative brand to present the city. The slogan of multiculturalism and vibrancy were just the first step to transform the old waterscape into a brandscape. The next step was the twin-city relationship with the city of Shanghai in China: it began in 1999, when the UK city administration started a search for new investors from China. The choice of the Chinese city was above all motivated by its being the designated city to host the 2010 World Expo (Caswell, Taylor, 2011). Nevertheless, the choice was not just provoked by the Expo, but it was also a natural evolution to transform Liverpool previous maritime waterfront into a business destination, with commodification of public spaces and a brand new skyline (Bayley, 2010).

Liverpool started basically replicating Shanghai new towns. These towns were a decentralized planning model of classic Western European Post-war new towns (den Hartog, 2010), born to give an answer to the unsustainable pressure of increasing population and to prevent the countryside from urban sprawl. Shanghai proposed the "One city, Nine Towns" plan in 2001, based on the idea of a shift from the central city model to a multi-polar plan. What was new in the model was that each town was drawn to aesthetically replicate a European country, in the attempt to start a thematic identity and create a landscape by using well-known international brands (Xiang Ming, 2003).

Therefore, the sisterhood between the two cities became not only a guarantee of a privileged way for investments, but moreover a unique and combined interpretation of urban regeneration as a tool to achieve a new identity (*stolen* from other thriving identities).

With regards to the waterfront, Shanghai has always been an embanked riverfront, with its core centre in the area of the so-called Bund, an historic ensemble of buildings and docks, today one of the most important tourist destinations within the city. It is a reminiscence of Shanghai's colonial period, and the result of the work of a group of European architects, mixing Western alike architectural styles: three of these ancient buildings were built in resemblances to Liverpool Three Graces.

In the last twenty years the city has expanded itself on the other side of the river, starting the development, still ongoing, of Pudong waterfront, a sort of modern mirror for The Bund. In a few years this part of the city has seen a mushrooming of skyscrapers, changing the perception of the old marine Chinese city in a new business-like capital: strong, competitive and successful. New Pudong waterfront is a brandscape designed to attract investment, tourists, and to strengthen the image of the city as a serious contestant in the global market, even in the attempt to clean up the image of the city from the incumbent perception of an old style dictatorship (den Hartog, 2010). In Pudong waterfront, as in the other developments of the "One city, nine towns" plan, Shanghai city launched competitions to achieve great architectural results. In each of these competitions, there was a total absence of contextual references. The only element which was used as a restraint and a reference, was the geographical one: the water, the river and its banks (Cagnardi, 2003).

Liverpool is just one of 70 sister-cities of Shanghai, but it was the only UK city, except for London, to participate to the 2010 Shanghai Expo. As Mike Taylor and Jonathan Caswell, respectively the Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Public Relations of Liverpool Vision, states: 'Liverpool made a bold decision, to sell itself on the biggest stage of all, the 2010 World Expo, in the most economically dynamic city, Shanghai, in a country whose economy is growing faster than any other' (Caswell, Taylor, p. 1). The patent purpose of the exhibition was to attract Chinese investors, showing them a paradigm of competitive and strong city, with a brand new business and financial centre, peculiarly influenced by the Shanghai waterfront and skyline.

During the 2010 Expo, the sensory-driven Liverpool pavilion was widely recognized, winning several awards and being one of the most popular among the public. The theme for the World Expo exhibition pavilion was "Better City, Better Life", describing the effort of the UK city to regenerate its urban core while preserving its historical heritage. During the exhibition a clear sister-city relationship was presented, merging Liverpool

and Shanghai's waterfront, with the UK city becoming like a natural extension of Shanghai brandscape. Overall, Liverpool was presented in the international event through three key words (*Visit*, *Study*, *Invest*), carrying on the concept of a vibrant and competitive city, quite distant from the genuine legacy of the *maritime and mercantile city*.

Brandscaping Liverpool: Liverpool Waters redevelopment plan

Although the 2010 Expo resulted in an increase of visits of Chinese investors in Liverpool (Taylor, Caswell, 2011), issues can be raised about the kind of image conveyed on the back of the exhibition, influenced by an aggressively entrepreneurial policy. This image is currently best summarized in the project of $Liverpool\ Waters$, the re-design of several brownfield areas in the north of Liverpool waterfront. The masterplan for a large scale £5.5 bln development has been drawn by the Peel Group with the assistance of the London-based architectural firm Chapman Taylor. A new container terminal will be realized by Peel Group, in addition to Seaforth, with the function of handling the large container ships coming from Panama Canal to the North West. In this regards, there's a huge expectation² for the city to reclaim its role of UK premier port.

The proposal will create new commercial and residential spaces. In this model, the private interest leads an unsustainable transformation, particularly risky in a *shrinking city* because it proposes the doubling of the current housing stock, even if the existing new housing is largely unsold.

The prospect is completed by the Liverpool Waters' sister project, over the river Mersey, in Birkenhead. This city is a stunning *terrace* overlooking Liverpool waterfront,



Fig. 3 - Liverpool waterfront skyline and the Pier Head, seen from Birkenhead.



Fig. 4 - Liverpool Waters skyline (The Pier Head is on the right). Draft of the Shanghai Tower in Liverpool.

and it will be the scenario of the Wirral Waters redevelopment plan. This project will be even larger in scale than Liverpool Waters proposal, consisting in a new business start-up hub, aimed to attract foreign investments, especially from growing countries such as China, India and Brazil, each looking for a privileged route for trades into Europe.

In Liverpool Waters proposal, the design of the waterfront skyline will be in close contact with the historic Pier Head of Liverpool, nevertheless it will consist of Shanghai-style towers, over 50 storeys high. The overall proposal seems to seriously contradict the preservation of the historical values of Liverpool waterfront. Therefore UN-ESCO delegates put Liverpool waterfront under a watch-list, because of the fear of a serious loss of historic authenticity³. Nonetheless, in March 2013, the Liverpool Waters project was approved by central government.

The explicit reference for the project is the paradigm provided by Chinese international style: the main landmark of the area will be a skyscraper called Shanghai Tower, in a clear exploitation of the associated brand. It is planned to be at least 200 meters high and the tallest tower in North West England. It is designed to contain 93,000 square meters of mixed uses, commercial and leisure facilities, a rooftop helipad alongside and an underwater basement car park.

The tower will basically rise on the edge of the waterfront site, dwarfing the existing historically iconic buildings of the Pier Head, the Edwardian Three Graces. English Heritage, the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, and UNESCO delegates formally objected to the project of the Tower as well. In particular a delegation from UNESCO concluded that the skyscraper proposal would result in a serious loss of historic authenticity, putting into risk the more or less symmetrical profile of the city's waterfront, with the Three Graces at the core centre and historical docklands to the north and the south. In addition, the Tower will be built on the area of Princes Half Tide Dock, which is a site operating since 19th century. This ancient dock is not the most iconic historical complex of the city, but it is relevant because it represents a piece of a mosaic due to be destroyed.

The Peel Group explicated that the conception of the city was largely influenced by the impressive Shanghai waterfront, clearly referring to Pudong skyline towers. The twinning between the two cities is underlined even in the naming of the skyscraper: a Shanghai Tower is due for completion in Pudong too, and it will be the tallest building in China, on the edge of Shanghai waterfront.

'In Liverpool we have the Three Graces facing the Mersey, in Shanghai there must have been at least "Thirty Graces" on the waterfront; beautiful historic buildings set against a backdrop of modern skyscrapers creating a thriving, bustling and vibrant city for commerce, living and tourism'4.

The significance of the name will catch new investments, in the attempt to secure the new image of the city. It is not an effort to embody Shanghai culture or urban environment, but rather to line up to its lifestyle and social-economic conditions. The name will just act as a branding strategy, to put the city onto the global market with a positive etiquette related to the successful Shanghai waterfront.

In 2008 Peel Group launched an architectural competition between four UK-based architecture firms (AFL, Broadway Malyan, Chapman Taylor and Benoy), based on a preliminary draft for the Tower⁵. Preliminary drafts⁶ were largely disconnected from the functions: they were creatively drawn by a group of graphics (Rust Studios). The purpose of these images was just to establish a generic relation with water, not with Liverpool marine heritage. The core city stands right on the back of the Pier Head, which has always been the heart and the centre of the waterfront: in Rust Studios images, the core centre of the waterfront becomes Liverpool Waters development, moving the attention from the old waterscape to a new town brandscape. The Pier Head stays on the right of the picture, just like a tiny memory of an irrelevant past. This way, Liverpool brandscape gets rid of the rest of city, which stays on the back of the waterfront.

'We are a city which has always looked outwards and sought inspiration from other cities. This proposal reflects the 21st century skyline of Shanghai in a way that will mirror its new and dramatic architecture among the buildings of the Bund which themselves pay homage to our own Three Graces'⁷

The opportunity of a project: a competition in Shanghai

In September 2013, Associazione LOA in cooperation with Shanghai Institute of Italian Culture launched a competition to design a new tower for Yang Pu, the extension of Pudong waterfront. The aim of the competition was to build a relationship between European interpretation of waterfront and architecture and already existing Yang Pu masterplan. As in the case of Shanghai new towns, the purpose of the existing masterplan was to exploit Western culture, to realize a creative district in which to enhance foreign investments and the establishment of art and design firms from Europe. The Tower of the competition was not the tallest building of the surroundings, but it had to be designed as a unique occasion to strengthen the relationship with Western culture.

The selected project for the competition by formatoa3 studio, did a conceptual analysis of the urban structure in the principal Western cities and in the historic European-alike



Shanghai area, the so-called Bund, to identify the constants of a style, eventually realizing a personal "Piranesi variation"⁸: maritime towers and fortifications, fences and arcades, relation between public realm (squares and promenades) and architecture, connections with the water, etc.

Fig. 5 - Competition for a Tower in Shanghai waterfront (formatoa3 studio).

In the proposed masterplan, the fence of buildings constitutes the border of courtyards buildings (fortifications) and special buildings (towers), designed with green roofs to guarantee thermic isolation. The urban mixitè is guaranteed within the buildings: commercial spaces are in the arcades, offices are in the other levels. The combination of green spaces and water creates a natural microclimate. Green areas on the waterfront create a wind barrier. Basins and fountains in the square in front of the tower are used to collect rainwater and to favour coolness during the hot months, with an open commercial courtyard.

The tower re-interprets the idea of maritime towers, characterized by routes at the borders and an open core. It is designed as a chimney for natural ventilation, whose skin has vegetation to protect people from sun rays, while the interior core is made in glass and is used as a heat accumulator. The courtyards in the interior are almost open in the superior parts, to favour the exit of rising hot air. The skin is inspired by an ancient European masonry, the rustication, used for palaces and towers, and it is realized with colored tecu panels, in the shape of a quadrilateral with interior triangles (as in the historical rustications). This skin creates shadow in the routes reaching the top, protects from the wind, donates coolness and protects from dusts and pollution, and is filled with vegetation, dematerializing into the sky.

The building is open to the waterfront, with a promenade directly related with the interior areas; during the night, the promenade becomes a runway and a space for exhibition for design and fashion firms, establishing a successful public realm economy. The public realm project privileges the relationship with the waterfront, as a testimony

of the coexistence between different cultures and local heritage.

Conclusions

The proposal for the Shanghai competition works on creating a balance between the proposition of a successful, vibrant brandscape and the respect of waterscape factors: the geographical data (the water), the historical heritage (the Bund as a European scheme), the human resources (the public realm economy, the different cultures, etc.).

It underlines the difference between *urban regeneration waves* in Liverpool:

- the first wave began in 1999 and it put the heritage at the centre of the transformation, basing itself on a sustainable re-development, capable of building a brand new image of the waterfront;
- the second wave, which is still on going, hit aggressively the existing built environment, to achieve a deeper transformation and to consolidate investments.

As Neil Smith points out (Smith, 2002), this is a process of creative appropriation of places: on one hand it enhances existing values, working on the post-industrial appeal; on the other hand, it produces a dislocation (sometimes a proper gentrification) of existing values (and people), carried away by further waves of cultural regeneration. Smith argues that gentrification is used to reconstruct the economy of places, 'retaking the city for the middle classes' (Smith, 2002, p. 443), and it is used by administrations in a multi-sectoral way.

Liverpool administration's purpose was to give a reply to the crisis of the waterfront system, as the most relevant market for business. The regeneration process started in the 2000s led not only to change the exterior waterscape, but also to establish a new economy, based on culture and leisure as in others simultaneous European examples (Montgomery, 2003). This leisure and cultural regeneration of the waterfront led to the diversification of economies: it guaranteed not only the preservation of city maritime heritage, but it also allowed the co-existence of diverse cultures within the city, as in the old times of great British fleet. The common ground in Liverpool transformations became the renovation of waterfront public realm, characterized by a system of open spaces and public facilities (museums, concert halls), the new business card for tourists and investors.

On the contrary, nowadays wave of gentrification evolved into a vehicle for transforming whole areas into new landscape complexes, integrating housing with shopping, restaurants, facilities, offices, that appeal to similar private markets all over the world and are obviously in direct competition (Tallon, 2010).

The commercialization and commodification of cultures, the construction of creative clusters, has encouraged entrepreneurial regeneration waves, basically displacing the local and cultural premises. During the 2000s this process has been a leitmotiv of Tony Blair *urban renaissance* (Imrie, Raco, 2003), 'reinventing gentrification as urban regeneration' (Smith, 2002, p. 443), increasing global ratings in UK shrinking cities. In

this perspective, while 2008 European Capital of Culture opened Liverpool waterfront to Europe and the United Kingdom, the twinning with Shanghai, had the patent goal to attract new Chinese investors to achieve thriving innovation and economic competitiveness, substituting not only the docklands economy of ancient times, but also the nineties and 2000s leisure and culture economy.

But the difference is that with the "One city, Nine Towns" plan, Shanghai provided itself with a branding strategy and with an efficacious urban planning perspective all at one time. This was partially due to the reference to well-known and successful European urban models, but also to the scale of the development and the character of the process: Shanghai was already a successful city, trying to accommodate its expansion with a pragmatic and attractive method. Property development and renovation improved Shanghai's outskirts, providing scope for new employments and further investments. The process was appropriated to land shortage and sprawl prevention. With regards to the waterfront, Shanghai embanked riverfront (The Bund) remained basically untouched by the city expansion, because of the extent of Shanghai city region. Liverpool recent transformations will basically substitute the maritime city horizon, in the attempt to achieve the growth of the financial services industry as in the urban landscapes of London or New York. This effort is symbolically represented by the Shanghai Tower project: it refers not to local roots, but to global etiquettes. In the proposed images, a stunning and relevant architecture imposes itself on the waterfront, rather than *grow*ing from it. The brand dominates the water.

Therefore the skyscrapers economy proposed by Liverpool Waters plan, will replicate a property-led regeneration characterized by the concentration of corporate ownership, failing to provide the development of human resources, or a long-term investment in infrastructures and public facilities.

Liverpool economic strategy is still aggressively entrepreneurial, focused on attracting capitals. The existing circular zone, right along the waterfront, once the centre of multiculturalism and public trades, is at the centre of the biggest sell off of urban spaces, moved from public into private hands. Symbolically this inversion of the public role of Liverpool waterscape, is exemplified by the absence of an integrated public realm project in Liverpool Shanghai Tower proposal. The leisure and culture economy privileged the relationship with the open spaces and the waterfront, while the property-led development is in danger to generate a landscape of brands and private amenities.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Cfr. Liverpool Culture Company, The World in One City, LCC publishing, 2004.
- 2 Cfr. Kenn Taylor, The breathtaking potential of Liverpool (and Wirral) Waters, The Guardian, 7 March 2013. 3 Cfr. Helen Nugent, Liverpool Waters skyscraper plans get council go-ahead despite heritage fears, The Guardian, 6 March 2013.
- 4 Cfr. Liam Murphy, £300million tower planned for Liverpool, Liverpool Daily Post, 27 July 2007.
- 5 At the moment, no winner has been announced, due to the delay in government approval for the whole plan. 6 See "Artists impression of Shanghai Tower dominating the Liverpool waterfront" by Rust Studios, on Liverpool Waters website.
- 7 Cfr. liverpoolwaters.co.uk presentation.
- 8 Peter Eisenman revisited Gianbattista Piranesi works through the "Piranesi Variations" during the 13th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice.



REFERENCES

- Allen Chris, Housing Market Renewal and social class, Routledge, Londra, New York, 2008
- Bayley Stephen, Liverpool, Shaping the City, RIBA Publishing, Londra, 2010
- Cagnardi Augusto, "Un'avventura affascinante", Urbanistica, 122/2003, pp. 63-74
- Caswell Jonathan, Taylor Mike, "Liverpool at Shanghai: The Expo experience", Local Economy, 26/2011, pp. 423-430
- Den Hartog Harry, Shanghai New Towns, Searching for community and identity in a sprawling metropolis, 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 2010
- Fitzpatrick Susan, "Between rhetoric & reality", Variant, 36/2009, pp. 20-24
- Garcia Beatriz, Creating an Impact, Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, 2010
- Imrie Rob, Raco Mike, Urban renaissance?, New Labour, community and urban policy, The Policy Press, Bristol (UK), 2003
- Jones Paul, Wilks-Heeg Stuart, "Capitalising Culture, Liverpool 2008", Local Economy, 19-4/2004, pp. 341-360
- Jones Paul, Wilks-Heeg Stuart, Re-creating Liverpool, Regeneration and Culture(s) in a Rebranding City, in Grunenburg Cristoph, Kifton Robert (a cura di), Centre of the Creative Universe. Liverpool and the Avant-garde, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2007, pp. i-xvii.
- Jones Paul, Wilks-Heeg Stuart, "Putting Architecture in its Social Place, A Cultural Political Economy of Architecture", Urban Studies, 46-12/2009, pp. 2519–2536
- McBane Jack, The rebirth of Liverpool, The Eldonian Way, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2008
- Montgomery John, "Cultural Quarters as Mechanisms for Urban Regeneration, Part 1: Conceptualising Cultural Quarters", Planning Practice and Research, 18-4/2003, pp. 293–306
- Nevin Brendan, "Housing Market Renewal in Liverpool, Locating the Gentrification Debate in History, Context and Evidence", Housing Studies, 25-5/2010, pp. 715-733.
- Parkinson Michael, Liverpool on the brink, One city's struggle against government cuts, Policy Journals, Hermitage (UK), 1985
- Smith Neil, "New globalism, new urbanism, Gentrification as global urban strategy", Antipode, 34-3/2002, pp. 427-450
- Tallon Andrew, Urban regeneration in the UK, Routledge, London, 2010
- Xiang Ming Huang, "One city, nine towns, alla ricerca di periferie locali ideali in Cina", Urbanistica, 122/2003, pp. 75-81

Annie Attademo

PhD at Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II annieattademo@yahoo.it

Annie Attademo (Naples, 1983) is an architect and a PhD in Urban and Spatial Planning at the University of Naples "Federico II". She did part of her research in the United Kingdom. Her work and research focuses on the urban recycle of contemporary cities, through a landscape sensitive perspective. She was a speaker in international conferences and seminars, with published research papers about abroad case studies.