

Reconfiguring Productive Media Use: urban renewal and being on the move in China

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Over the last twenty years, Chinese cities underwent rapid infrastructural and economic transformation. In Beijing, projects of urban redesign accelerated during the years of preparation for the Olympic games in 2008 and similar to Beijing, Shanghai currently undergoes large-scale urban renewal as the city prepares for the Expo in 2010. For many years, these developments have been subject of public and academic discourse depicting China as a nation redesigning its face as it envisions an increasingly central role for itself in the global market. These projects of urban renewal not only shape the landscape of China's cities, but also become sites of negotiation of ownership, belonging and memory. In this panel we discuss the role digital media plays for various socio-economic groups and their involvement in the urban renewal in China. We raise questions such as what can be learned through participation in digital environments that extends beyond the digital? How do people on the move, from rural to urban, urban to rural, and transnational act across digital and physical spaces to negotiate their own positions in relation to large-scale urban and economic restructuring? Who is participating in state-scale urban interventions in China and who resists their implementation, and through which technological means?