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# The Social Dimension of Urban Transformation in Shanghai: Population Mobility, Modernity, and Globalization

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Christian Henriot, Lu Shi, and Charlotte Aubrun (2019). *The Population of Shanghai (1865-1953): A Sourcebook*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 188 + vi pp., sources, £87.00 (hardback).

Isabella Jackson (2017). *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 274 + xiv pp., 10 figures, 2 maps, 2 tables, Bibliography, £75.00 (hardback).

James Farrer (2019). *International Migrants in China's Global City: The New Shanghailanders*. Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 210 + vi pp., index, £120.00 (hardback).

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## Keywords

Shanghai, immigrants, modernity, mobility, transnational municipalism

Shanghai's history of urban development forms a grand chapter of the rural to urban transition in Asia. Studies pertaining to Shanghai's history and social evolution have become an important topic for discussion in the study of modern Chinese cities. Since 1843, when its treaty port opened and twenty-six British merchants arrived in Shanghai, transnational exchanges accompanying Western migration to this city have continued, leading a series of urban changes. Among many historic events and moments, including the Sino-Japanese War started in 1937, the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, and China's Economic Reform in 1978, three historical periods stand out and had far-reaching impacts on Shanghai's urban formation.

In the first period, between the first Opium War in 1842 to the early 1930s, changes in population and municipal operations were influenced by colonialism and characterized by both the advantages and disadvantages of autonomy in Shanghai's concessions. National and international forces coexisted and were entangled in Shanghai's politics and public affairs, and formed an embryonic stage for the city's developing modernity. Two books, *The Population of Shanghai (1865-1953): A Sourcebook*, by Christian Henriot, Lu Shi, and Charlotte Aubrun (2019), and *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*, by Isabella Jackson (2017), focus on the urban transformations of this period. The second period started in 1949 and lasted decades, during which China went through a socialist transition in the context of wider capitalist globalization. In 1988, the promulgation of a land leasing policy marked Shanghai's embrace of a new stage of urban development, comprising the third significant historical period. In the wake of the new policy, its distinguished geographical conditions brought ports and a thriving maritime trade to Shanghai, making it an Asian city with sustained economic growth and the cradle of

industrial bourgeoisie. This city's vibrant working environment in Chinese society attracted regional migration, and the population grew. In China, people often say that "the economic basis determines the superstructure" (经济基础决定上层建筑). This saying partially reveals the fact that economic development and financial supports are the main internal driving forces of urbanization, allowing social mobility. Immigration and consequent population diversity in Shanghai has promoted a diversified daily life, which is analyzed by James Farrer in his book *International Migrants in China's Global City: The New Shanghailanders* (2019). These changes have made of Shanghai not only an economic center but also a place for inhabitants' living, and the service industries that support them, creating a sustainable urban area with an inherent vitality. Shanghai has been evolving in these ways up to the twenty-first century, being thriving in increasingly globalized circumstances.

These three recently published books reveal the multiple social factors influencing Shanghai's urban transformations. Each with its own focus, the books together give readers complementary and comprehensive perspectives, providing an in-depth understanding of Shanghai's population history, immigration flows, and modernization in its urban development much affected by globalization. In *The Population of Shanghai (1865-1953)* by Christian Henriot, Lu Shi, and Charlotte Aubrun, rich and diverse demographic data serve as the primary source. By analyzing the data, including population natality and mortality, and the population distributions of Shanghai from 1865 to 1953, the authors demonstrate the interrelation between population changes, spatial distributions, and social structure. In the second book, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, Isabella Jackson examines colonial power and the rights and obligations of social institutions in Shanghai during the concession period. She analyzes the roles that the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) played in Shanghai's governance and its role in constructing modernity in a traditional Chinese society. The third book *International Migrants in China's Global City* by James Farrer concerns personalized narratives in the community formed by new foreign immigrants who were always actively participating in Shanghai's urban development. Farrer focuses on foreign inhabitants' sense and recognition of personal identification in Shanghai and the influences that dynamic immigrant identities had in the developing cosmopolis, reflecting the vicissitude of a globalizing Shanghai. The three books revolve around the same place, Shanghai, and the research on which they are based involves changing population and the process of modernization there. On the basis of what they have in common, and what differentiates them, this article follows three interrelated but shared themes to review the content and contributions of the three books.

First, this article reviews what the three books have to say regarding the autonomy of foreign concessions in modern Shanghai, which was granted between 1845 and 1943 by two generations of Chinese authorities, and discusses the formation and continuity of early modernity generated by such a specific semi-colonial history in the context of globalization. It then studies how the three books engage in a comprehensive discussion of the activities of foreign inhabitants of Shanghai and of various historical periods from the middle nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century. The three books lay out a thorough layered account of the city's urban narratives, influenced by foreign forces and international trends. Second, looking at the mechanisms of urban management, this article discusses the role and duty of the SMC as the main institution of governmental and administrative management between the middle nineteenth and the early twentieth century, and its contribution to population management. It is worth noticing that under the supervision of the SMC and local administrative departments governed by France, rather complete demographic data between 1842 and 1949 were recorded and preserved, providing sources for the analysis of Shanghai's population changes during the transition of power (or privileges) in the treaty port era and analysis of interpersonal mobility in today's society. Third, this article investigates the intrinsic connection of the three books' topics and offers a different perspective seeing the urban mechanism: the explicit spatial distribution and the implicit social

structure, elaborating the interaction between the spatial layout and the city's economy, immigration, and cross-cultural experiences.

### **Local Autonomy, Rising Modernity, and Globalization**

As Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun indicate in their book, Shanghai is “the place where a new urbanity emerged and where Chinese modernity took shape” (p. 87). The three books together fully demonstrate how, through a globalized narrative, a temporal and spatial coherence for Shanghai, formed by foreign immigrants, developed out of its history of concessions, local autonomy, and transition to modernity. In the history of modern China, the foreign concessions in Shanghai were established earliest and have the longest history, with the largest area, and the most developed and best suited facilities, compared with concessions in other treaty ports, such as Guangzhou, Xiamen, and Tianjin. This sufficiency exerted a profound influence on the urban history of Shanghai and adjacent regions. From the establishment of the Shanghai International Settlement in November 1845 to the revocation of the concessions by Wang Ching-wei in August 1943, Shanghai's concessions lasted about one hundred years. Henriot et al. believe that colonial power importantly influenced Shanghai's history of immigration, and the rise and fall of economic, cultural, and entertainment activities in the foreign settlements that immigrants initially established. Using demographic data between 1865 and 1953 as analytical sources, in particular those of the International Settlement and the French Concession, they note that population growth during this period suggests the city was “a powerful magnet for people in search of jobs, opportunities, pleasure or even adventure” (p. 1). Isabella Jackson's focus, the SMC and Shanghai's governance, offers similar reasons explaining the city's population and sociocultural prosperity. These two books intersect in many ways, complementing and corroborating each other's analysis, and also confirming the connection between Shanghai's local autonomy, modernization, and position in a globalizing world.

Jackson argues that Shanghai, one of the largest global cities and cosmopolitan centers in the world today, was shaped by the history of combinations and interactions of the specific forms of local governance there. Its tripartite political form, composed of the SMC, the Municipal Council of the French Concession of Shanghai (MCFCS), and the Chinese local authority, promoted Shanghai's evolving process of modernity and transnational governance. In her book *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, Jackson also argues that “Through its policies, the SMC shaped the development of Shanghai in terms of the politics of its inhabitants, their everyday lives and the built environment that still survives today” (p. 2). She defines Shanghai's unique hybrid form of colonial governance as a kind of “transnational colonialism” and affirms the positive impact of such “colonialism” on future generations. To emphasize the remarkable influence of the SMC (during 1854-1943), Jackson, in Chapter Four (“Public Health and Hygiene”) and Chapter Five (“Industry, Welfare and Social Reform”), elaborates how the SMC undertook responsibility for the administration of public health, welfare, and industrialization in Shanghai's modern society. Jackson, in this respect, affirms the same position as that of general Western justifications for the expansion of their overseas colonies, and grants recognition to the foreign settlements for an important contribution to the early modernity of Shanghai, promoting the transformation of China from a feudal society to a sovereign country.

The relatively stable political environment in the concessions also fostered Shanghai's population development. Although Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun's sourcebook reveals the difficulty in collecting and filtering demographic data because of the complex census information, the authors managed to convey reliable and rather comprehensive accounts of population composition and distribution in Shanghai through sociological and statistical means, such as charts, maps, and tables, constituting the most important research contribution of this sourcebook. The data included in the sourcebook came mainly from the SMC, the MCFCS, and the French consulate

in Shanghai at the time. The mission of these councils was “initially to run basic services such as roads and jetties and manage the foreign residents” (p. 3), while they had the right to govern affairs in the foreign settlements autonomously, with independent administrative and judicial systems and police forces. After the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864), “the two settlements received a huge influx of Chinese refugees” (p. 3), and there was a population explosion in the foreign settlements. Up until the early twentieth century, before the Sino-Japanese War, when it was affected by advanced transportation systems and urban planning, population fluctuations in Shanghai displayed a positive and even dramatically growing diversity. Continual population growth thus became a non-negligible factor in Shanghai’s urban history. Population distribution thenceforth dominated urban planning and design in concession districts, as well. For example, in the chapter “Shanghai in Four Spatial Steps,” Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun give details about three main densely populated areas in the French Concession, and their spatial characteristics, population, and its spatiality constructed under the guidance of the municipal departments of France. Ranging from more dense to sparse population distribution, respectively, the Eastern District had the highest population and construction density, and the Central and Northern Districts, where newly built and more spacious *Lilong* housing lined up on the streets, represented the most typical type of Shanghai’s modern dwellings with fewer inhabitants. The least populated area of the three, mainly located in the south and the “Pétain area” (p. 30), was where most French residents lived and the most upscale housing was erected, especially villas with gardens. This part of the sourcebook, together with Jackson’s work, clearly suggests that Shanghai was once indeed a paradise for Western adventurers from 1845 to 1937.

Population growth and mobility have promoted frequent cross-cultural communication. Shanghai has thus become a crucial center for China’s economy and urban social development, as trends of nationalism and anti-imperialism declined in Chinese society. Through a hundred years of development, Shanghai has evolved from a city that has passively participated in global mobility compelled by colonial power into a metropolitan center, which proactively engages with global competition. James Farrer shows readers the diverse changes in attitude of foreign inhabitants who live in Shanghai. From a sociological perspective, this book describes “the contexts and forces that would shape the trajectories of those foreigners who did stay, working in these fields, becoming long-term migrants in China’s booming global city” (p. xi). The group portrait of “new Shanghainese,” composed of residents from different countries, presents a vivid scenario and accompanying urban narratives in the context of globalization, and in the meantime constitutes a modern ethnography of this metropolis on the rise.

## **Urban Management, Transnational Municipalism, and Demographic Transition**

A tripartite political power in Shanghai, with its checks and balances, acts fundamentally to maintain urban management in a stable form, providing favorable conditions for urban development. Government institutions, especially the SMC, as a political tool and a machine for governing, had played an important role during the turbulent treaty period of Shanghai. Administrative departments in both the International Settlement and the French Concession recorded an enormous archive of valuable material for future generations to study.

Isabella Jackson successfully draws upon historical demographic statistics to illustrate the effectiveness of governmental institutions in management during Shanghai’s concession period. Between 1842 and 1854, because of the distribution of foreign forces, a small enclave of the British East India Company, an American settlement and a French settlement successively appeared in Shanghai. In 1854, to manage the social disorder and population mess caused by Taiping Rebellion and Small Sword Society Uprising that swept through China, a committee of

Western merchants established the SMC (formally the Council for the Foreign Settlement North of the Yang-king-pang). Financially supported by the foreign residents, the SMC functioned independently to strengthen the management and control of the population in the foreign settlements. Led by committee members mainly from the Great Britain, the SMC took responsibility for both municipal construction and the formation of police forces and a voluntary army. Seeing its similarity to British practices more broadly, Jackson compares its scope of power and duties with those of the Birmingham municipality. Jackson in this respect demonstrates that the SMC governed a wide range of municipal life, and “joined in the global developments in municipal governance . . . some of its functions would be familiar in cities from Manchester to Melbourne” (p. 5). In this respect, Jackson applies the concept of “transnational municipalism” (p. 5), so named by Shane Ewen, to describe the foreign authorities and administrative system in Shanghai’s concessions, since they had similar functions and duties to many European municipalities and managed a considerable population at the time.

Urban management is always tightly related to population management. From 1842 to 1949, the urban population of Shanghai grew from about 250,000 to more than five million. In their population-related sourcebook, Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun use the quinquennial census data from 1865 as their main research material to study the life of foreign and local inhabitants from different perspectives. Based on these primary sources, the three authors of the sourcebook “produced more than 240 individual spreadsheet files each originating from a given historical source” (p. 4). In the first chapter of *The Population of Shanghai (1865-1953)*, the authors discuss in detail how they proceed from methodology to data proofing, which provides a valuable database for subsequent researchers. There are, however, two major deficiencies to this book. First, there are a number of data gaps. For example, assessing the mortality rates is an enormous task, since death registration was not mandatory by the SMC until 1928. Second, demographic data for areas outside of the foreign settlements were not well documented by Shanghai’s local government and could not provide a comprehensive source for urban analysis. There is no direct way to obtain comparable death data of Chinese people at the time, and these data could only be estimated from the records collected by cemeteries, police officers, and corpses. In this respect, various existing records, which are published in the name of Shanghai, mainly reflect the history of Shanghai’s concessions, without unfolding the entire scenario of the city and its history.

By analyzing these available statistics, the sourcebook mainly answers questions about three factors: population quantity, immigration, and population diversity. While there are insufficient or no segmental statistics, these original sources still help the authors “to paint a faithful picture of demographic change in modern Shanghai” (p. 4). The demographic data depict a growing trend of movement to Shanghai’s concession areas by a foreign population, as “they could afford better housing, better food, and better education” (p. 87). Having such privileges, people in foreign settlements enjoyed the dividend brought by the early industrialization of Shanghai and its job opportunities. Extraterritoriality and the superiority of living in foreign settlements became the engine to attract foreign investors, driving broad urban population growth.

There was a deep transnational character attached to the SMC. In 1863, when the original British and American settlements merged into one large International Settlement, the SMC, dominated mostly by British people in Shanghai’s treaty port era, participated in the global development of municipal governance, playing a seemingly important role as other municipal administrations formed in most British overseas colonies. The SMC was like a consistent elastic institution, stubbornly standing in the turbulent old Shanghai. Although this municipal council consolidated and increasingly expanded its political influence and had moral and legal rights that could not be found in any “counterpart in the whole world” (p. 113), it did not functionally respond when facing external invasion. Jackson argues there was no absolute neutrality of the British-dominated SMC. “The SMC was, however, ineffective against Japanese aggression. Municipal actions were a significant factor in the growing Sino-Japanese tensions . . . and the

Council's declaration of a state of emergency was instrumental in accelerating tensions in 1932" (pp. 162-63). Municipal management and external defense were two important functions that the SMC was responsible for. However, the SMC revealed its weakness and incompetence in resistance while facing aggression, expansion, and belligerence. Such weakness was tied up with the essence of colonialism, since Great Britain and Japan actually enjoyed the same position in China in the early twentieth century. After 1937, when Japan waged its full-scale invasion of China and brought about urban crises in various Chinese cities, foreigners gradually lost their privileges in Shanghai's concessions. This led to "a significant drop in 1942" (p. 13). Immigrants from Russia, Europe, North America, Australia, or Japan withdrew from Shanghai and began to look for new settlements.

As the city grew into a cosmopolis, "who came to Shanghai?" is a question repeatedly asked and investigated by scholars. In the chapter "Shanghai in Four Spatial Steps," Henriot et al. answer this question by focusing on the nature of interpersonal mobility which is also an important principle structuring the book *International Migrants in China's Global City* by James Farrer. Differently, Farrer's research is not based on statistics but focuses instead on qualitative study by collecting plentiful individual interviews to discover characteristics of images of Shanghai's immigrants. Starting in the 1990s, Shanghai once again started to attract thousands of foreign immigrants, regaining the multiculturalism of the past. As skilled immigrants, foreign settlers were integrated into various fields of China's modern society. Local residents in Shanghai no longer name the districts where foreign people usually live as "Zujie" (租界, concessions), but as "expatriate communities" (外籍社区). Following responses from interviewees, Farrer reveals the driving forces and motivations of Shanghai's migration flows. He depicts both the reality and the imagination of the "expatriate narratives" (p. 28), which are influenced by Shanghai's policy and inhabitants' urban life experience, and which concern foreign immigrants' sense of belonging to Shanghai.

## Urban Structure, Economy, and Transnational Exchanges

The process of urbanization in Shanghai has had close relationship with different historical events, times, and opportunities, keeping up with the rhythm of the city's social changes. Urban structure is an integrated system, including the explicit and tangible aspects of spatial structure, and the implicit and intangible social structure. Spatial structure and social structure in a city are tightly connected and complement each other. The two dynamically affect and restrict each other's distribution and processes of growth and development, achieving between them a balanced and stable state. In the book *The Population of Shanghai (1865-1953)*, Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun elaborate the close relationship between certain spatial characteristics and historical population changes in concession areas by analyzing historical maps drawn at different periods of urban evolution. Influenced by Shanghai's natural topographical conditions (the existence of the Huangpu River), with the influx of foreign population, the urban space and landscape evolved through several phases. The authors select five particular maps to illustrate and analyze four historical periods. Between 1875 and 1884, the maps show that, adjacent to the old walled city, foreign settlements started to expand to the north, running north-south along the Huangpu River. The 1902 map depicts the development of the storage dock area on the west side of the Huangpu River. As the French Concession had expanded westward, Shanghai's overall urban landscape transformed into an east-west pattern at this time. The International Settlement and the French Concession had become the two main urban forces in Shanghai, and we saw the old walled city losing its opportunity to develop. Between 1911 and 1945, after more than thirty years, Shanghai's population and urban structure reorganized, expanding to the west and to the Huangpu River in the south with enhanced dense road networks, becoming a rising global city.



Toward the end of the treaty period, “Shanghai had developed into a modern metropolis” (p. 5) as Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun state, and the French Concession area had the highest population density. In 1948, when a large number of refugees flooded into Shanghai, the spatial distribution changed dramatically. Foreign immigrants evacuated, while Zhabei, Penglai, Taishan, and Tilanqiao became population centers, “which compounded the housing crisis in the city and led to the development of large slum-like hutments all around Shanghai” (p. 47). The persistent imbalance in population distribution had led to the fragmentation and uneven growth of Shanghai’s urban space. The two books about Shanghai’s history indicate the shared problem that the parallel management mechanisms of Shanghai by the Chinese authority and the SMC had caused unequal development in different districts. Furthermore, in focusing on urban management, including infrastructure, health, hygiene, or welfare, municipal institutions did not devote sufficient efforts to systematic urban planning and design. Between 1946 and 1950, the government of Shanghai worked on the reformulation of the “Grand Shanghai Urban Plan” (大上海计划), which had been initiated in 1929 by the Nationalist government. In revisiting it, the government aimed to rediscover Shanghai’s urban history, land use strategy, and other urban issues, and predict the trends of population development in Shanghai for the following sixty years. Although this plan was not conducted, the local administration’s action opened a new chapter for Shanghai’s urban planning in the post-treaty era, and attempted to correct the fragmented urban environment.

Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun believe that urban development in Shanghai “clearly reflected the political and social stability that the foreign settlements enjoyed through much of their history” (p. 87). When it comes to the twenty-first century, the former foreign communities are still playing an important role in Shanghai’s inhabitants’ modern life. In addition to shaping urban space, and serving as core areas for financial and cultural activities as always, the former foreign settlements were crucial endogenous urban drivers. Jackson affirms the indispensability of sufficient funds for urban development and argues that “all the activities of the SMC as it shaped the city of Shanghai depended on its ability to fund them” (p. 23). Financial independence was the cornerstone of SMC’s independent operation. The stable state of the economy in Shanghai’s concessions had consolidated the power of the SMC’s governance, and in turn had attracted more immigrants and investors. In the 1930s, when the impact of the war and the global economic depression led to a financial crisis, the SMC remained self-confident. J. W. Morcher, the finance director, even declared in the last year before the abolishment of the SMC: “The year 1942 judged from the financial point of view will rank as one of the most successful in the long history of Shanghai” (p. 59).

Stable financial support and vibrant economic activities in the treaty period shaped the identity of Shanghai, having a profound impact on its development. Farrer’s book, *International Migrants in China’s Global City*, emphasizes the economic advantages of contemporary Shanghai and regards them as the most fundamental reason immigrants are attracted to the city. Farrer analyzes how the new generation of elite immigrants, in the context of China’s rapid economic development, participates deeply in commercial, cultural, and social activities. Since China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, the number of expatriates in Shanghai has exploded. Foreign settlers again exert influence in various fields and carry out transnational cooperation, “including trade, manufacturing, retailing, consulting, catering, and education” (p. 14). In foreign communities, most people, such as the Western restaurant operators of Anfu Road and Urumqi Road, have shared in the profits derived from “expatriate economy” (p. 69) for a considerable time. Farrer makes note of the trend that foreign residents have gradually lost their privilege and the bonus from belonging to those specific foreign communities. China’s economic takeoff has promoted transnational exchanges and brought back overseas students, ethnic Chinese, and Chinese families who had settled abroad for long. This return wave of human resources and talents has brought competitive pressure to foreign immigrants. In many fields, the advantages of foreign labor are disappearing. Participation of “Chinese with global mobility and

global academic credentials" (p. 205) in market competition is threatening the former "white privilege" and foreigners' sense of superiority in Shanghai, leaving them more marginalized than before. Foreign immigrants' living areas have become more dispersed than ever before.

Transnational exchanges have brought not only vibrant economic activities but also thriving cultural fusion. Since the nineteenth century, Shanghai's concessions have become important centers for cross-cultural communication, continuously shaping Shanghai as an "international" city. In the chapter "Expatriate Society," Farrer elaborates on the scenarios of cross-cultural exchange between expatriates and local inhabitants. He classifies these activities into two levels. First, such exchange takes shape in people's daily lives, including interpersonal communication, marriage, education, and diet. Foreign people, the "New Shanghainese," enjoy living in Shanghai for "English practice, a mixed social life, intercultural dating, and a relative cultural freedom" (p. 87). Second, from a social perspective, cross-cultural exchanges are mainly reflected in social capital, social relationships, and cultural media. Intercultural activities involve regard issues of interpersonal networks, new forms of self-identification, and environmental adaptation. Transnational exchange is a dynamic process that requires adjustment and reorientation based on a new context and cultural environment, to build stable, mutually beneficial, and healthy relationships. In this respect, Farrer states that one of his worries that "one underexplored question is whether foreigners do or do not have access to Chinese *guanxi* (中国式关系)" (p. 81). This worry reflects the author's hesitation about expatriate identity, and the name *New Shanghaianders* Farrer settles on, which is included in the book's title, is the word agreed upon by Farrer and his friend, the septuagenarian Betty Barr, as a proper term to refer to the foreign settlers in the contemporary Shanghai (p. 199). Since the 1990s, an increasingly vibrant global economy and transnational exchanges have changed the urban structure of many big cities, including Shanghai. The existence of foreign communities can no longer determine Shanghai's urban landscape and structure: to the contrary, all residents are deeply influenced by the holistic urban planning and design strategy of the city.

## Conclusion

The physical development of its urban structure enriched the intangible content of Shanghai. Compared with urban physical construction, the formation of immaterial social structure deserves more attention. Demographic changes and population mobility are the external manifestation of invisible urban tensions. Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun's *The Population of Shanghai (1865-1953)* provides the most comprehensive and systematic demographic data of modern Shanghai, and also describes how people from different backgrounds lived together by occupying an overseas settlement. Using the SMC's census records and the INSEE's (French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies) classification terms, the authors comb through various social functions in Shanghai and divide them into six categories. A large number of immigrants were involved in public services, commerce, administration, and manufacturing, while few were involved in agriculture, and the French Concession itself was never friendly to industry. The three books, whether they analyze Shanghai's history or contemporary scene, all reveal the penetration and promotion of immigration in Shanghai's early industrialization, service industries, and advanced technology. Capital from foreign entrepreneurs and the wealthy class enhanced such transition and development even more. Their capital drove the localization of the advanced technology and multiple industries, and dominated labor markets and the local economy, fundamentally building up Shanghai's position in global urban history—a prosperous international metropolis. Domestic and international immigrants indeed created a hybrid and adaptive urban landscape. This complexity is also core to understanding the social structure and urban nature of Shanghai for scholars from different fields.

However, the authors' perspective as foreign elites brings limitations for critical thinking. For example, in the chapter "Funding Transnational Colonialism," Jackson suggests that the reason for Shanghai's economic recession during the war came down to the natural disadvantage of concessions; she argues that if Shanghai has been a formal colony, the SMC, as a transnational authority, could have sought help from the British and American governments to overcome difficulties. When inspecting Shanghai's process of modernization, industrialization, urbanization, and globalization, the authors cannot discard Western ideas of superiority, and believe that the establishment of multiple concessions helped China get rid of a feudal monarchy and imperial power. Nevertheless, the three books together provide unique and vivid research. They develop from lively and direct sources with a comprehensive picture of population structure and mobility, to depict the social dimensions of a city's transformation. Their methodologies have significance for urban study, for enlightening a deep social structure, and for understanding the entanglements between physical and non-physical urban structure.

### Author Biographies

**Leilei Sun** worked as an architect in Shanghai and guest researcher at Delft University of Technology (2018-2019). She is now an associate professor of architecture at Soochow University in China, and the author of papers *Multi-transparency and Pervasion: The Potentials of Non-functional Space* (2017, *Journal of Architecture*) and *The Standpoint of "Light-Weight": Humanistic Connotation and Derivative Elicitation of New-Bud System* (2019, *New Architecture*).

**Kaiyi Zhu** is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology (The Netherlands). Her current research focuses on transnational exchanges of heritage studies and generated diverse discourses. Her research case is about urban transformation of historic residential districts in Chinese big cities, and her recent publication in the *Journal of Built Heritage* is *Temporalities and the Conservation of Cultural Relic Protection Units: Legislative, Economic and Citizen Times of the Bugaoli Community in Globalising Shanghai*. She can be reached at K.Zhu-1@tudelft.nl.