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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Rediscovering Shanghai modern: Chinese cosmopolitanism and the urban art scene, 1912–1948

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## Abstract

Republican Shanghai was a renowned art capital. This article is based on a large-scale digital mapping project of the residential locations of 1,349 Shanghai artists. We analysed the transformative spatial distribution patterns of artists in relation to the city's social and urban conditions, and developed an artists' habitation approach to elucidating the issues of Republican-period Shanghai urban and art history from the perspective of Chinese cosmopolitanism. We mapped areas of high artist concentration and identified a higher percentage of artists residing in the concessions (compared with the Shanghai general population) and the incremental convergence of art clusters in the concessions. We argue that the concessions provided a favourable environment for cultural diversity and the ungovernable, elite spirit of the literati tradition. The mainstream Shanghai art practices, known as *haipai*, were modern, as they were rooted in the urban modernity of the concessions and embodied Chinese cosmopolitanism.

Shanghai's Republican period was a golden age of art and culture. Located on the eastern end of the Yangtze Delta, Shanghai rose to prominence after the former urban centres of commerce and culture along the Jiangnan Grand Canal declined during the late Qing period.[1] Shanghai inherited the cultural accumulation and

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[1]Cities such as Yangzhou and Suzhou declined as the Qing authority abandoned the Grand Canal in the condition of rising international influences and the Taiping rebellion. See M. Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires* (Minneapolis, 2006).

vitality from those former centres of literati culture[2] and developed ties to global cities through Western colonization after the first Opium War (1839–42). Shanghai's reputation as an art capital rose meteorically and was emblematized by iconic artists, such as Wu Changshi, Zhang Daqian, Liu Haisu and Wu Hufan. In its early days, twentieth-century Chinese art history scholarship discussed 'Shanghai modernity' through the lens of 'China vis-à-vis the West', perceiving art as a part of Chinese society under pressure to achieve national salvation against Western colonial powers. Some of the literature explored the Western features of Chinese artworks in order to uncover the modern components of Chinese art.[3] Since the late 1990s, however, the modernity of Chinese art is believed to lie not only in the nature of art itself but also within the art world, an emerging paradigm shift.[4]

In the meantime, the growing field of Shanghai studies celebrated Republican Shanghai as a city of 'modernity' and modern culture. The term 'Shanghai modern' describes a literary attitude that embraces Western ideas and expressions; it centres on the *selves* of the literati by appreciating historical progress, popular culture, cultural consumption and material modernity in the context of urban culture.[5] In contrast, modernity is embodied in the material settings of the concessions, and is expressed within hygienic, security and entertainment facilities.[6] Samuel Liang suggests that Shanghai modernity includes a spatial perspective, dubbed 'spatial modernity'.[7] 'Modernity entails a new consciousness of space and materiality and a new kind of visual experience', one linked to an 'imaginative geography' of material conditions.[8] He advocates for a cultural map of urban cultural production

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[2]Literati painting and its theories, distinctive from court painting, were formulated in the Northern Song period (the late eleventh century) and received recognition as the Chinese cultural backbone in the late Ming period (sixteenth to mid-seventeeth century). Despite the scholar elite class's demise at the end of the Qing dynasty, artistic practices along the literati lineage reached a new aesthetic climax during Republican Shanghai. For literati painting, see S. Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037–1101) to Tung Chi-chang (1555–1636)* (Cambridge, MA, 1971).

[3]R. Croizier, 'Art and society in modern China: a review article', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 49 (1990), 587–602; C. Roberts, 'Tradition and modernity: the life and art of Pan Tianshou, 1897–1971', *East Asian History*, 15 & 16 (1998), 67–96; J.L. Cohen, 'Painting the Chinese dream: Chinese art thirty years after the revolution', Exhibition Catalogue (Northampton, MA, 1982); M. Sullivan, *Chinese Art in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1959); M.C. Kao, 'China's response to the West in art: 1898–1937', Stanford University Ph.D. thesis, 1972.

[4]D. Clarke, *Modern Chinese Painting* (Oxford, 2000); J. Hay, 'Painting and the built environment in late nineteenth-century Shanghai', in K.H. Maxwell and G.S. Judith (eds.), *Chinese Art Modern Expressions* (New York, 2001), 61–101; J. Zheng, *The Modernization of Chinese Art: The Shanghai Art College, 1913–1937* (Leuven, 2016).

[5]See, for example, L.O.F. Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1949* (Cambridge, MA, 1999).

[6]See, for example, R. Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity* (Berkeley, 2004); F.E. Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai 1927–1937* (Berkeley, 1995).

[7]S.Y. Liang, *Mapping Modernity in Shanghai: Space, Gender, and Visual Culture in the Sojourners' City, 1853–98* (New York, 2010); S.Y. Liang, 'Where the courtyard meets the street: spatial culture of the li neighborhoods, Shanghai, 1870–1900', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 67 (2006), 482–503.

[8]Liang, *Mapping Modernity*, 26, 181. Modernity is not simply equal to Westernization but reflects Western influence in management and organizational structure, technology and philosophy. See C. Yeh, *Shanghai Love: Courtesans, Intellectuals, and Entertainment Culture, 1850–1910* (Seattle, 2006).

and consumption.[9] 'Haipai' or 'Shanghai style/school of art', a term originally derived from regional opera, was applied to describe the city's distinctive modern cultural atmosphere and artistic attainments along with the literati tradition in new social and urban conditions, by a mixing of the elite and mass cultures.[10] Can we understand *haipai* from the perspective of Shanghai's urban history?

Habitation study has attracted rising academic interest within the urban historical research field and has the potential to engender implications for both Chinese urban and art histories. Lu Hanchao notes that past scholarship of Shanghai studies discussed modernity mainly from the 'occupational or vocational criteria' perspective. However, in Shanghai, residential location was crucial for labelling people's socio-economic status, thus creating identities and shaping self-expressions. Lu's work reveals a panoramic view of ordinary Shanghai people's daily lives centring on their rowhouse residences and demonstrates the importance of habitation.[11]

Similarly, the European scholarship of art history has considered habitation as one dimension of art-historical research for decades. This reflects modernist historiographic interest in how artists inhabited cities. Artists' participation in modern cities' everyday activities and their embeddedness in the transformation of urban fabrics (e.g., art studios) illuminate inquiries about the artistic zeitgeist in historical communities.[12] A recent digital mapping project of artists' residential locations in Paris' eighteenth-century art world, for instance, demonstrates artists' way of living and the makeup of their communities' geographic scope.[13] Drawing on the perspective of urban history, art scholarship demands attention due to its role in urban development.[14] Studying artists' lives and habitation represents a new approach to narrating urban history, bridging art history and urban history.[15]

However, there is a dearth of Chinese historical literature that touches on the topic of artists' residential locations. The Chinese scholarship relies solely on qualitative methods, and consequently fails accurately to determine the artists' residential locational patterns.[16] This constitutes a significant knowledge gap because most artists

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[9]Lee, *Shanghai Modern*.

[10]'Cosmopolitanism' is another buzzword, referring to a blend of Chinese and Western cultural components. See W.R. Moore, 'Cosmopolitan Shanghai, key seaport of China', *National Geographic* (Sep. 1992), 310–35; M.C. Bergère, *Shanghai: China's Gateway to Modernity* (Stanford, 2009).

[11]H.C. Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, 1999), 62.

[12]J. Milner, *The Studios of Paris: The Capital of Art in the Late Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, 1988); H. Williams, 'Artists and the city: mapping the art worlds of 18th-century Paris', *Urban History*, 46 (2019), 106–31; E.C. Mansfield, *The Perfect Foil: François-André Vincent and the Revolution in French Painting* (Minneapolis, 2012), 23–45; K. Scott, 'Parade's end: on Charles-Antoine Coypel's bed and the origins of inwardness', in E. Lajer-Burcharth and B. Söntgen (eds.), *Interiors and Interiority* (Berlin and Boston, 2016), 17–47.

[13]Williams, 'Artists and the city'.

[14]New urban history focuses on social issues. J.P. Lorente, 'Galleries of modern art in nineteenth-century Paris and London: their location and urban influence', *Urban History*, 22 (1995), 187–204.

[15]A high profile in the arts raises the historical reputation of a city. D.J. Olsen, 'The city as a work of art', in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds.), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983), 264–85; D.J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna* (New Haven, 1989).

[16]Xu Hongxing and Lin Zhuo both examine the neighbourhoods surrounding the Shanghai Art College, using qualitative methods. See H.X. Xu, 'A study of the surrounding neighborhood of the Shanghai Art College', paper presented in the Restless Transitions: 100th Anniversary of the Shanghai Art College International Conference (Shanghai, 2012), 84–108; Z. Lin, '20 Shiji Qianqi Ximenlu de Yishujia Jiju'

engaged in artistic practices and socializing activities at home; only a small subsection of them worked in institutions in a full-time manner during the Republican period.[17] What kind of urban conditions, geographic facilities and features favoured artists? In which areas of the city did artists choose to live? Answers to these questions will shed new light on the collective characteristics and lifestyles of these Shanghai artists, which in turn will provide insights regarding their artistic expressions.

This article is based on a large-scale digital mapping project of Republican Shanghai artists conducted over the past four years. It is the first computer-facilitated project on twentieth-century Chinese art history that has adopted quantitative spatial analyses using GIS and R. We set the city as the foreground of the Republican Shanghai art scene and we address the correlation between the city's social and urban conditions and the artists' spatial patterns, whilst exploring issues in both Chinese urban and art history. The main argument is that the Republican-period Shanghai art world blossomed due to the conducive environment of the concessions, and the modernity of *haipai* essentially embodies Chinese cosmopolitanism. This argument is supported by three points. First, the Shanghai art world featured a prosperous (*fanhua*) art landscape as demonstrated by identifiable artists' densely habited areas (art clusters) and a trend of art clusters' convergence in the concessions. Second, the concessions provided favourable environments for artists and fostered cultural diversity. Third, facilities rooted in the traditional Chinese culture and society (not Western-style facilities) were the contributing factors of artists' spatial concentration, which indicates that the concessions allowed *haipai* artists to continue the traditional literati lifestyle and to pursue the unruly, individualistic and scholarly spirit of literati painting.

## The lens of Chinese cosmopolitanism

The scholarship of Shanghai studies provides a unique Chinese cosmopolitan perspective (three dimensions) for our research. To begin with, Chinese cosmopolitanism features prosperous urban culture or lively festive urbanism, known as *fanhua* (prosperity).[18] Most importantly, *fanhua* embodies quantitatively thriving commercial, social and cultural activities that were concentrated in focal points that circulated goods and services through trading and merchants. In such places, economic vibrancy and extravagant materiality underpinned the consumption of urban entertainment and artistic production, thus aesthetically connecting wealth to the vitality of the human world. A city of *fanhua* features flamboyant beauties, decorations, urban amenities for singing and dancing and the display of visual arts, and the luxury consumption of drinks and delicacies.[19] The enclave-centred nature of Shanghai created the conditions for prosperity.[20] We applied the perspective

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(Agglomeration of artists in the Xi Men Road area in the early twentieth century), Shanghai University Ph.D. thesis, 2018.

[17] J. Zheng, 'Transplanting literati painting into the modern art school system: Guohua education at the Shanghai Fine Arts College, 1924–1937', *Studies in Art Education*, 52 (2010), 34–54.

[18] Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*.

[19] *Ibid.*,

[20] R. Wagner, 'The early Chinese newspapers and the Chinese public sphere', *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, 1 (2001), 1–33.

provided through the analysis of clusters to determine if Shanghai's art world complied with the cosmopolitan principles in terms of *fanhua*.

A 'cluster' refers to the spatial concentration of actors (individuals or organizations) surrounding focal points within a certain geographic scope. A geographic cluster indicates a higher density of actors due to the convergence of actors with evidently shorter inter-actor physical distances when compared with the density outside of that area. Cluster theory explains the advantages of staying inside clusters.[21] The main theoretical building blocks are agglomerative economies, endogenous development theory and systems of innovation.[22] For instance, the classical Marshallian model explains that firms cluster to share a 'commons' of services and a skilled labour pool. The Californian School argues that the spatial concentration of activities enables the minimization of transactional costs. In other arguments, clusters allow actors to have flexible specializations and to create an innovative milieu.[23] An 'art cluster' is the clustering of artists housed by residential buildings or workplaces such as studios, cultural institutions and/or facilities. The locational art cluster, often devalued by the scholarship, is the simple geographic co-location of artists without inter-actor connections. Advantageous art clusters feature abundant inter-actor linkages and synergies that enable knowledge/skill sharing, co-learning activities and collective problem solving.[24] Vibrant art clusters often attract talent to join the clusters through magnetic cultural effects, leading to the growth of clusters in terms of geographic scale, cultural production and the branding effect.[25] In order to identify and classify art clusters, we proposed a new method that consists of four steps, including K density analysis, district-based density analysis, hot spot analysis and social network analysis.[26]

Second, Chinese cosmopolitanism features multiple centres of influence that diffuse culture into everyday urbanism. This leads to a landscape of cultural diversity and hybridity.[27] Shanghai was a cosmopolis of diversity: the foreign settlements were

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[21]M. Perry, *Business Clusters: An International Perspective* (London and New York, 2005).

[22]See F. Moulaert and F. Sekia, 'Territorial innovation models: a critical survey', *Regional Studies*, 37 (2003), 289–302; D. Power and D. Hallencreutz, 'Cultural industry cluster building in Sweden', in P. Oinas and A. Lagendijk (eds.), *Proximity, Distance and Diversity* (London, 2017), 25–45; P. Lundequist and D. Power, 'Putting Porter into practice? Practices of regional cluster-building in Sweden', *European Planning Studies*, 10 (2002), 685–704.

[23]See R. Ratti, M. Baggi and M. Perriard, *Innovation technologique et développement régional: base théorique et étude de cas* (Bellinzona, 1992); R. Camagni, *Innovation Networks: Spatial Perspectives* (London and New York, 1991.

[24]N. Rantisi, 'The competitive foundations of localized learning and innovation: the case of women's garment production in New York city', *Economic Geography*, 78 (2002), 441–63; A. Scott, *The Cultural Economy of Cities* (London, 2000).

[25]T. Fleming, 'Supporting the cultural quarter? The role of the creative intermediary', in D. Bell and M. Jayne (eds.), *City of Quarters: Urban Villages in the Contemporary City* (Aldershot, 2004); H. Mommaas, 'Cultural clusters and the post-industrial city: towards the remapping of urban cultural policy', *Urban Studies*, 41 (2004), 507–32.

[26]Further description can be found in the research method section and a journal article (forthcoming) that focuses on methodological innovation of this research project. See J. Zheng, J. He, Z. Fan, S. Zhang, H. Lin and Y.S. Leung, 'Mapping the most influential art districts in Shanghai (1912–1948) through clustering analysis', *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society* (2022).

[27]A. Dirlik, 'Markets, culture, power: the making of a "second cultural revolution" in China', *Asian Studies Review*, 25 (2001), 3–33.

constructed particularly for the colonialists but ended up being inhabited by a mixed population of Chinese and foreigners with diverse ways of expression and vocabularies.[28]

Furthermore, the lens of Chinese cosmopolitanism helps to explain how the mainstream Shanghai art world, in the literati tradition,[29] flourished in the concessions. Meng Yue perceives Shanghai as the refuge of the former Great Canal-based urban centres of cosmopolitanism in the context of globalism.[30] Through immigration, the cultural vitality of Yangzhou and Suzhou, the former heartland of Chinese cultural centres, was brought to Shanghai.[31] Hence, Shanghai modernity retained its Chinese roots and continued its traditional socio-cultural conceptions. Lu Hanchao writes that 'the persistence of tradition in the life of the people of Shanghai only continues if we are fully aware that such continuity exists'.[32] The extraterritorial rights of the concessions empowered the foreign powers to maintain the legal codes and capitalistic devices of their respective home-country governments,[33] staying away from both of the dominant Qing imperial and colonial orders.[34] Prior to 1927, Shanghai continued its historical trajectory established during the Qing dynasty. However, it was the absence of Qing hegemony that enabled the city to grow from a peripheral town into the cultural centre of China; it was 'a *de-centric* process' that featured prosperous and unruly cultural practices.[35] After 1927, the concessions were exempted from the social order of the Chinese municipality that embodied Chiang Kaishek's ambition to create 'monopolizing power' in command of all municipal affairs.[36] The foreign authorities of the concessions were determined to maintain the 'law and order which is necessary to protect life and property in the Settlements'.[37] Shanghai's concessions became the haven of outlaws and subversive anarchists.[38]

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[28]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*; M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin, 1981).

[29]89.8% of our researched artists practised traditional Chinese art.

[30]After the Taiping unrest in 1850, over 500,000 refugees moved from Suzhou and Yangzhou into the International Settlement (X.M. Yu, *Shanghai, 1962 nian* (Shanghai in the Year 1862) (Shanghai, 1991)). Shanghai was less the original creator of urban entertainment facilities than the refuge of similar activities from other parts of the country. See Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*, 66. See also R.G. Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community in the Chinese public sphere', *China Quarterly*, 142 (1995), 423–43.

[31]Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*.

[32]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 18.

[33]The first concession, the British Settlement, was set up in 1845. The land area was 830 *mu*, east of the Huangpu River, south of Yangjingbang, north of Lijiachang. It expanded to 1,080 *mu* in the second year and expanded again to encompass 2,080 *mu* in 1848. The American Settlement was established in 1848. In 1863, the British Settlement was merged with the American Settlement, changing its name to 'International Settlement' and enlarging to 33,503 *mu* in 1899. Two-thirds of the expanded area was taken over by the International Settlement and one third by the French Concession in 1900. The French Concession was established in 1849. It expanded to 15,150 *mu* in 1914. See Z.H. Zhou, *Shanghai Lishi Ditu Ji* (A Collection of Shanghai Historical Maps) (Shanghai, 1999).

[34]Discussions on public affairs can only be published in foreign-run media in the concessions. Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community'; R.G. Wagner, 'Introduction', in R.G. Wagner (ed.), *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870–1910* (Albany, NY, 2008).

[35]Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*; Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community'.

[36]Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*.

[37]A statement of the US Department of State, 1928; see Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 60.

[38]Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*; DeBary notes that late imperial Qing had a form of 'liberal tradition'. Shanghai is a key contributing factor. See W.T. DeBary, *The Liberal Tradition in China* (New York, 1983).

Literati culture originated from scholar officials' leisure activities, known as amateur painters' art. It was often the expression outlet for underprivileged officials who were excluded from the mainstream ruling circle, and hence it embodied the ungovernable, irrepressible spirit of the cultural elites. Su Shi (1037–1101), recognized as the originator of literati painting, was versatile in painting, calligraphy and poetry, and experienced numerous demotions and hardships in his official career. Other iconic masters in the literati painting tradition, such as Ni Zan (1301–74), Zhu Da (1626–1705) and Shi Tao (1642–1707), were either expelled officials or ruling family members at the end of their dynasties. They practised painting that valued a blend of individuality, literary scholarship and nature-oriented joy-seeking that facilitated an escape from the real-world rigid, hierarchical and hegemonical cultural orthodoxy. Yue writes that literati painting exemplifies 'the uncontrollable cultural and social practice' with 'its own cultural logic embedded in China's late imperial history'.[39] As Yue notes, early immigrants to Shanghai were 'men of letters' (literati culture), who opted to reside in the foreign settlements as a way to escape conventional career paths serving the imperial Qing; these painters cultivated *haipai* painting.[40] The concessions became a haven for the blossoming of the ungovernable elite spirits who expressed the literati cultural logic.

One of the crucial conditions of the concessions was the growth of public spheres. The foreign authorities restricted their roles within public administration, focusing instead on issuing and maintaining regulations.[41] Moreover, the municipal councils in the concessions created a legitimate structure that allowed the free expression of viewpoints and the hosting of public hearings.[42] This was a necessary precondition to the success of the publishing industry as well as other cultural sectors.[43] Although literati painters followed the aesthetic criteria of highbrow culture,[44] unlike subvention art, they demanded the freedom of self-expression within specific types of public sphere, such as the 'third realm'.[45] These public spheres were essential to extra-bureaucratic organizations associated with elites, literati groups, such as poetry and painting organizations, and related organizations dedicated to academic and artistic pursuits.[46] Accordingly, the public spheres of the concessions expanded to shield the non-institutional networks, including literati art organizations and individual artists.[47]

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[39]Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*, xx.

[40]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*.

[41]Wagner, 'The early Chinese newspapers'.

[42]C. Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927–1937: Municipal Power, Locality, and Modernization*, trans. N. Chastelino (Berkeley, 1993).

[43]Newspapers under foreign management could only thrive in the concessions out of the Chinese authorities' reach. See Wagner, 'The early Chinese newspapers'.

[44]See S. Veg and E.W. Cheng, 'Alternative publications, spaces and publics: revisiting the public sphere in 20th- and 21st-century China', *China Quarterly*, 246 (2021), 317–30; Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*.

[45]According to P. Huang, 'third realm' refers to the value-free type of public sphere connected to elites, gentry and merchants. See P. Huang, 'Public sphere/civil society in China? The third realm between state and society', *Modern China*, 19 (1993), 216–40.

[46]*Haipai* painters were situated between the state, the elites and the art profession. See Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*. Rankin discusses the 'public management' for local elites' activities, including education and social betterment. See M.B. Rankin, 'Some observations on a Chinese public sphere', *Modern China*, 19 (1993), 158–82. Art organizations' activities also fit into this concept. W.T. Rowe, 'The problem of "civil society" in late imperial China', *Modern China*, 19 (1993), 139–57.

[47]Veg and Cheng, 'Alternative publications, spaces and publics'.

## Digitally mapping and analysing the art worlds in Republican Shanghai

The interdisciplinary nature of urban-historical research often challenges specialized scholars.[48] We built an interdisciplinary team comprising experts in Chinese art history, Shanghai history, geographic information systems (GIS) and quantitative geography. We created four databases of Shanghai art maps in the first phase, and defined the term 'artist' as a practitioner of visual art (e.g., painters, sculptors and calligraphers) each with public profiles.[49] Historical data were collected from 156 biographies, 22 autobiographies, 9 Republican-period newspapers, 33 types of Republican-period magazines, 652 academic books, 288 academic papers, 94 memories and 57 volumes of archives housed in the Shanghai Archive House. Based on the residential locational information derived from this treasure trove of historical documents, we constructed Database I, a database of historical-locational data for 1,349 artists. Meanwhile, this trove of historical documents provided us with substantial qualitative data about individual living experiences, including clues for analysing artists' motives for their residential location choices. Database II contains the residential addresses of artists' 'social contacts', defined as persons within/related to the art field that had social ties to Shanghai artists. We identified 1,373 pairwise social connections. Database III contains the records of artists whose annual residential location records were available. Only 45 (out of 1,349) artists' yearly residential addresses were discovered, and we used these records in our analysis of artists' relocation trajectories. To explore the environmental attributes that contributed to artists' spatial distribution patterns, we created the Database IV that contains the addresses of entities/businesses in three broadly defined categories, i.e., social facilities, cultural facilities and cultural organizations,[50] including 591 addresses of food and beverage venues, 445 addresses of leisure and recreational venues and 1,116 addresses of cultural facilities and art shops. The information comes from 18 types of Republican-period business guides, such as the *Da Shanghai Zhinan* (Shanghai Business Guide).

To prepare spatial data, we selected the 1937 and 1947 editions of *Zuixin Shanghai Jieshi Tu* (The Latest Shanghai Neighbourhood Map) at a 1:20,000 scale[51] due to their high resolution. We then performed heads-up digitizing and geo-registered our base maps using 50 control points each. Our digitized 1937 map comprises 1,087 streets, and the 1947 map comprises 675 streets. We also digitized four maps of varying administrative units in five years: 1908, 1910, 1926, 1928 and 1948, and the 1936 Shanghai transportation map. Based on Database I, we created point data shapefiles by locating artists on the base maps. The 1937 and 1947 editions of *Hanghao Lutu Lu* (Shanghai Commercial Guide) labelled all the residential buildings with street numbers. Based on these maps, we determined artists'

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[48]Z. Celik and D. Favro, 'Methods of urban history', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 41 (1988), 4–9.

[49]These artists were reported in Republican-period newspapers and periodicals, documented in exhibit brochures or recorded in art school archives and/or art organizations' membership lists.

[50]Our identification of environmental variables was influenced by the creative city theory. Peter Hall examined cosmopolitan cities in European history and proposed key attributes. See P. Hall, *Cities in Civilization: Culture Technology and Urban Order* (London, 1998).

[51]Virtual Shanghai (www.virtualshanghai.net/), launched by the University of Lyon, is a research and resource platform that collects and publishes digitized high-resolution Shanghai historical maps.

residential locations. For density and hot spot analyses, we created a map (based on the street system and administrative units) that divides the Shanghai territory into 55 sub-districts for the purpose of spatial statistics.

We proposed a new method for identifying and analysing art clusters by combining four statistical methods. The K density estimation (or K function) is the standardized cumulative average number of data points for the typical point within a specified distance. The district-based density of artists maps the density of artists in the 55 statistical districts that we created. The G statistics measure the similarity between values of artist density in statistical districts and their adjacent locations (i.e., 'hot' or 'cold' spots), defined as spatial autocorrelation. Clusters are scored on the vibrancy of social networks based on the quantity of social contacts. Combining the four dimensions, a cubic model classifies the identified clusters, the scale of their spatial scopes and social network vibrancy (Figures 5–7, 9, 13).

To determine the environmental attributes that contributed to artists' spatial patterns, we built global and local regression models for each of the three selected years, 1920, 1930 and 1948, based on the variables' data availability. Geographically weighted regression (GWR) models performed better than others. The GWR models not only establish a statistical relationship between artists' density (the dependent variable) and multiple causal factors but also weigh local spatial heterogeneity.

Critical realistic and constructivist approaches influenced our interpretation of the triangulated data analysis results. Quantitative approaches scientifically uncover relationships by analysing variables, while qualitative methods describe the actual experience through hermeneutics or case-oriented analyses.[52] A constructivist perspective suggests the co-existence of different valid yet contradictory explanations of the same reality.[53]

## *Fanhua:* the formation and transformation of art clusters

Adopting the methods above, we converted our hypothetical conceptualization (from the Chinese cosmopolitan perspective) into a quantitatively testable art world model and the outcome underpins the *fanhua* hypothesis.

We identified art clusters adopting the K density analysis and visualization. The output (Figure 1) that consists of irregular, concentric polygons with varying colour values of blue delineates the spatial scope of the clusters and the escalated density of artists' residences (darker blue equals higher density). We found that the 36-year span of history comprises two phases when it comes to the formation and transformation of art clusters. Phase I, from year 1912 to 1936, witnessed the steady increase in the density of art clusters. On the 1912 map, the K value range of the densest cluster is 0.000004656 to 0.000004573,[54] whilst this range hits 0.000031243 to 0.000035146 in 1936. This K function analytical result aligns with our district-based density analytical result (Figure 2). The artist density

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[52]A.J. Onwuegbuzie, R.B. Johnson and K.M. Collins, 'Call for mixed analysis: a philosophical framework for combining qualitative and quantitative approaches', *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 3 (2009), 114–39.

[53]M.L. Small, 'How to conduct a mixed methods study: recent trends in a rapidly growing literature', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37 (2011), 57–86.

[54]This reports the difference in the values of observed and expected K. A bigger value indicates a higher degree of concentration.
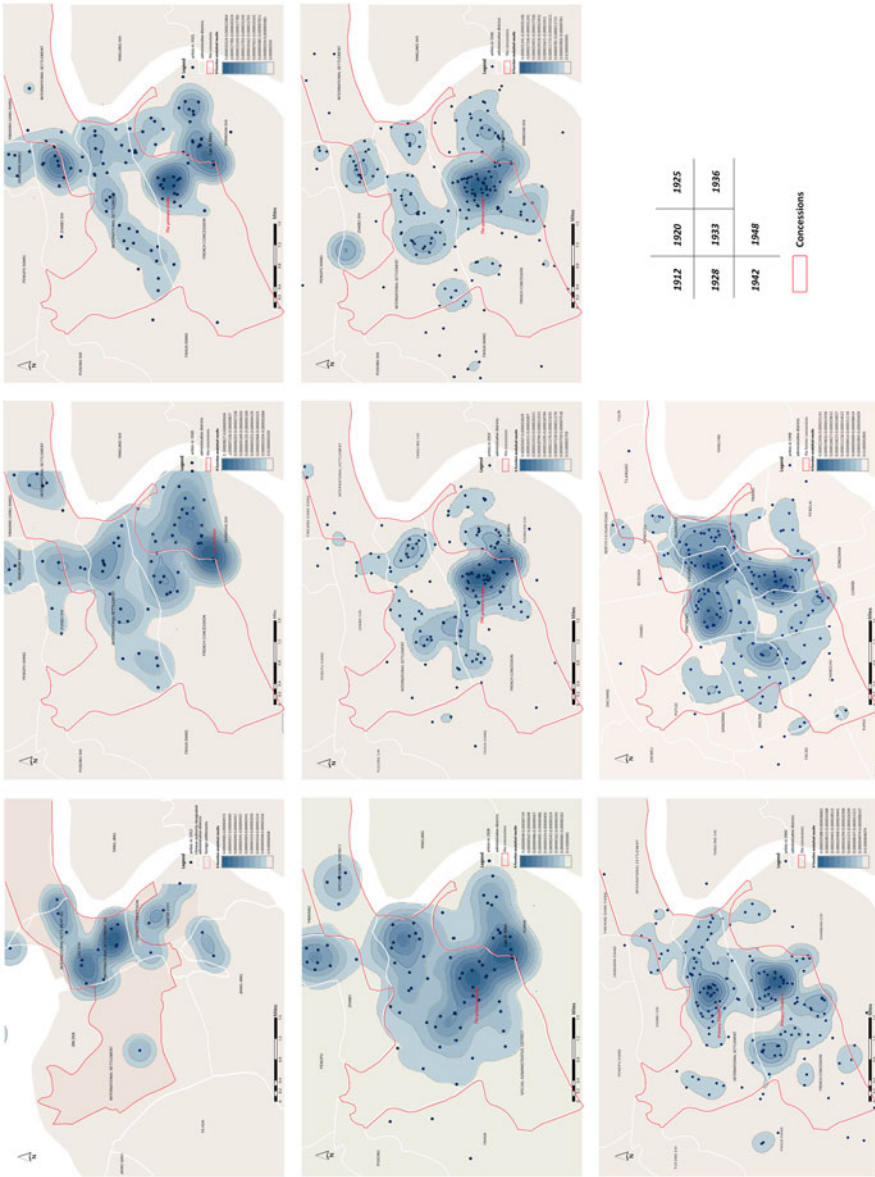
**Figure 1.** Visualization of the K function analytical result, 1912–48, by the authors. All the images in this article were produced by Jane Zheng.
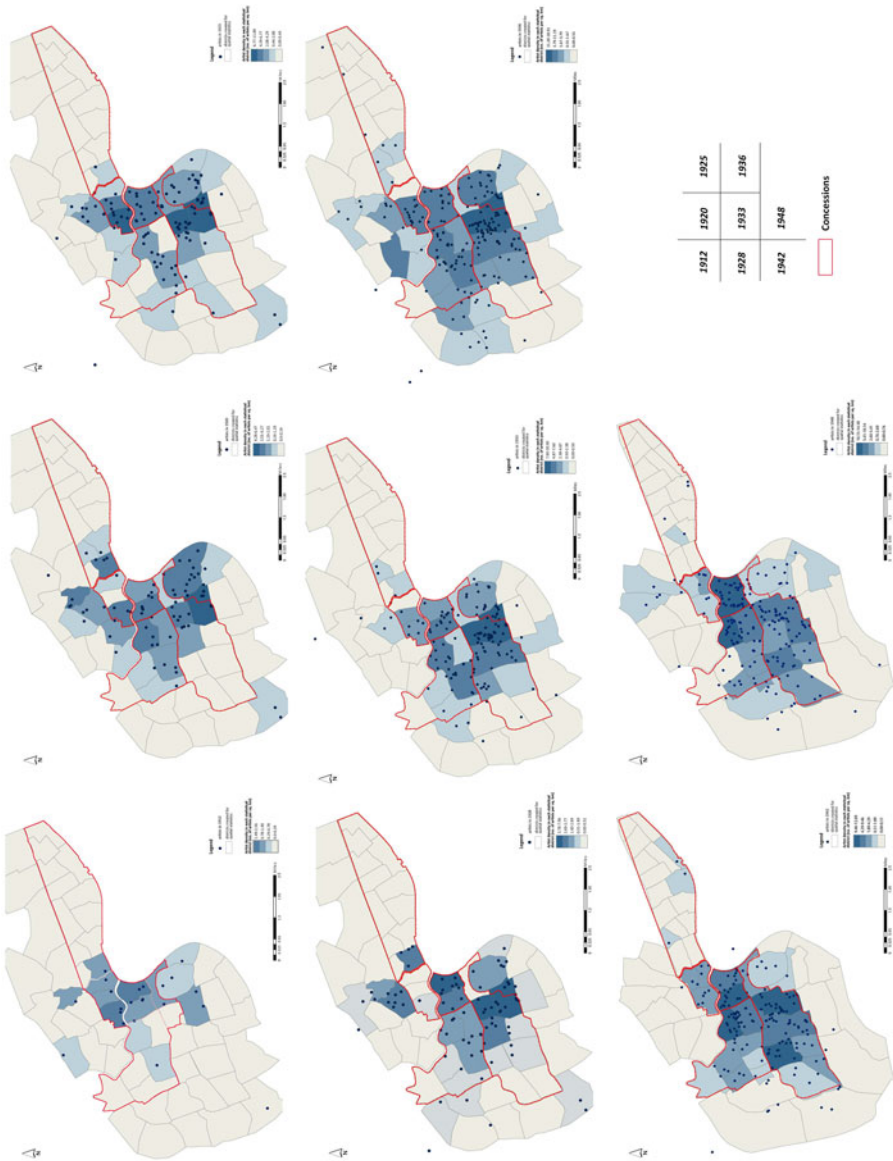
**Figure 2.** District-based density analysis.

range increased from 1.49–2.56 artists per square kilometre in the most densely inhabited districts of artists in 1912 to 11.2–18.91 artists per square kilometre in its 1936 counterpart. This reflects the growing artist population in Shanghai[55] on one hand and the uneven neighbourhood attractiveness across districts on the other hand. The cluster located in the north-central French Concession, in particular, achieved ascent to prominence and became the leading art hub from the early 1920s onwards. During Phase II, from 1936 to 1948, the density of artists decreased after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937. The K values of the densest art clusters went down from 0.000031243–0.000035146 in 1936 to 0.000022436–0.000025431 in 1948. Accordingly, the district-based density of artists slightly declined from 11.2–18.91 (1936) to 10.15–14.18 (1948) artists per square kilometre in the densest districts. In contrast, the size of artist residents in our database grew slightly from 312 to 319 during this 12-year period.

Secondly, there was a trend towards art cluster convergence in the concessions. From 1912 to the end of the 1920s, the locations of art clusters were not limited to the concessions. Instead, three areas all contained art clusters (Figure 1): (1) Zhabei, the area extending north to the International Settlement, (2) the walled city,[56] and (3) the Lao Xi Men area (Old Western Gate) located between the walled city and the south-east border of the French Concession. In 1920, the largest art cluster was located in Lao Xi Men. However, the leading role of this cluster was quickly overtaken by a new one, the north-central French Concession cluster. The cluster in Zhabei disappeared after the Japanese invasion in 1931. By 1936, the cluster in Lao Xi Men incrementally moved towards the French Concession and eventually merged into the new north-central French Concession cluster. The cluster inside the walled city declined by the end of the 1930s after the master Wang Yiting's[57] (1867–1938) departure. The total number of identifiable clusters was 11 in 1933 (Figure 1); 8.5 clusters were located within the concessions.[58] By 1936, there were 14 identifiable clusters varying in sizes (Figure 9); 11 of them were located inside the concessions. In the 1940s, most identifiable art clusters were located within the concessions. The same trend is found in the district-based density analysis (Figure 2) and the hot spot analysis (Figure 3). By 1942, the boundary of artists' densely inhabited areas (0.5 artists per square kilometre and above) aligns with the borders of the concessions (Figure 2). Districts with a continuous density of artists (90% of confidence level and above per hot spot analysis) were all located within the concessions (Figure 3).

According to Rudolf Wagner, the intrinsic dynamics of Shanghai were embodied in its urban agglomeration and there was a tendency for Chinese people to move into the concessions.[59] In 1930 for instance, Shanghai's population was 2,980,650

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[55]Our Database 1 includes 88 records for 1912 and 312 records for 1936 with an increasing trend over the 24 years.

[56]Also known as the 'Chinese city' ruled by Chinese authorities. Active art society activities took place in the walled city during the late Qing period.

[57]Wang Yiting was a leading artist of painting and calligraphy in the literati heritage. He also had extensive commercial and political connections.

[58]One medium-sized cluster was located inside the walled city, one was in Lao Xi Men (half in the French Concession) and one evolved from Cluster 3 (in 1925).

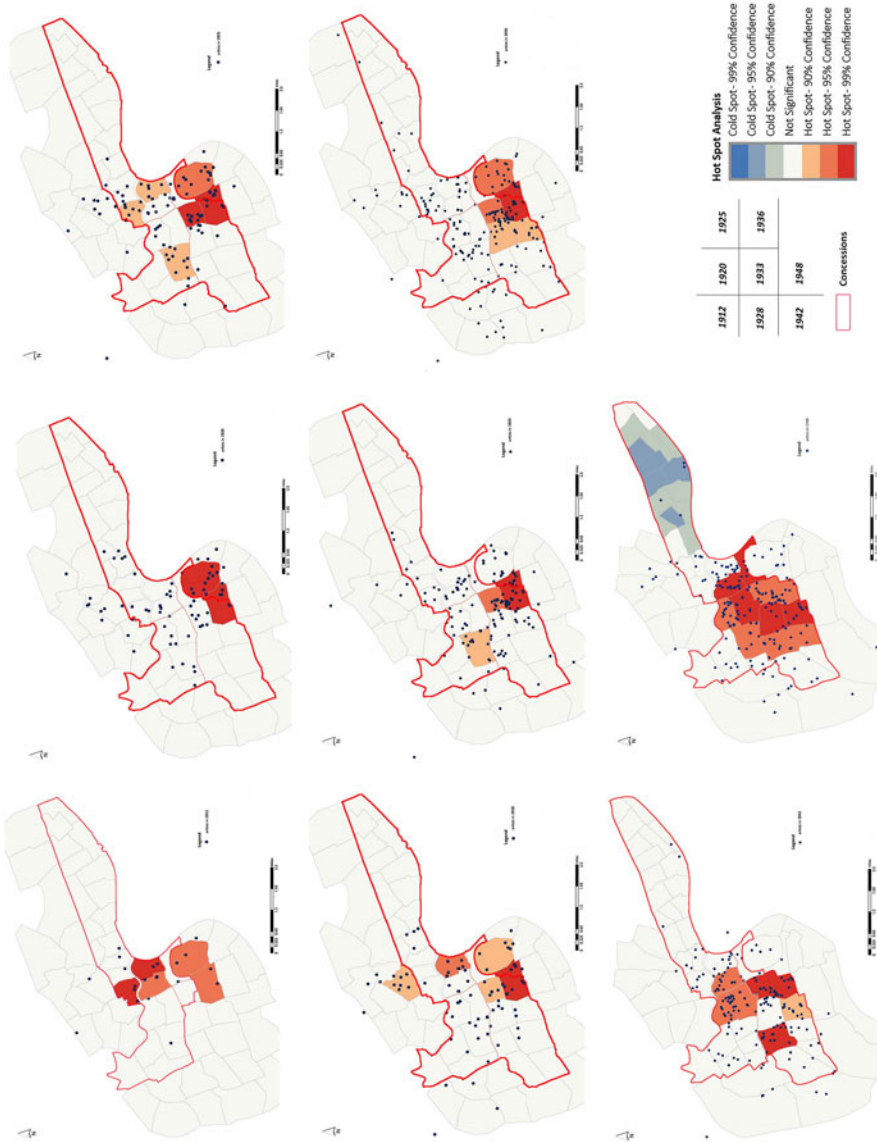[59]Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community'.

**Figure 3.** Hot spot analysis.

(registered inhabitants), of which 33.8% lived in the International Settlement and 15% lived in the French Concession, whilst 51.18% lived in the Chinese Municipality.[60] However, we found that there was an evidently higher percentage of artists residing within the concessions. Database I includes 88 artists' residential records from 1930: 43.18% were located in the International Settlement, and 46.6% were in the French Concession; only 10.22% were in the Chinese Municipality.

## The dynamics of art clusters and cultural diversity

The concentration of art clusters in the concessions hypothetically suggests certain unique social conditions of the concessions that favoured a diverse body of artists. Wagner proposes security, conformity and access to urban entertainment as the main contributing environmental attributes.[61] We examined individual artists' location choices and their relocation trajectories in relation to art clusters, and identified the contributing factors within three historical periods from a political-economic perspective. Our findings also reveal how the concessions' cosmopolitanism underpinned the cultural diversity of the Shanghai art world.

### *The emergence of art clusters in the concessions (1910s and 1920s)*

When establishing the concessions, the foreign powers envisioned a cosmopolitan style of authority that disrupted the foundational logics of Qing governance while simultaneously maintaining its rule.[62] Accordingly, they cautiously avoided subversion of the regime and advocated a collective prosperity of commerce.[63] We found that economic growth, a booming art market, influx of immigration, commercial and urban amenities and new neighbourhoods constructed under the European standards were the key factors contributing to the emergence of art clusters in the 1910s and 1920s.

The concessions underwent rapid economic growth during the 1910s. Foreign companies were incorporated, and banks responded to the rising monetary demand for active commerce. Increased financial-resource circulation boosted the real estate market. Abundant capital flowed into the concessions, initiated industrialization and nurtured entrepreneurs as well as the middle classes. The 1911 Revolution's dethroning of the Qing government catalysed Shanghai's increasing prosperity.[64] The concessions adopted an outlook of 'cosmopolitanism' and 'entrepreneurialism',[65] and this influenced the Shanghai art market, which prospered and entered its booming age.

Shanghai attracted immigrants from inland cities and underwent rapid population growth from 75,000 (late Qing period) to 500,000 (early Republican period).[66]

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[60]Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 9.

[61]Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community'.

[62]R.L. Jarman (ed.), *Shanghai Political and Economic Reports, 1842–1943: British Government Records from the International City* (Slough, 2008).

[63]C. Roskam, *Improvised City: Architecture and Governance in Shanghai, 1843–1937* (Seattle, 2019).

[64]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

[65]J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labor Movement, 1917–1927* (Stanford, 1968); N. Arkaraprasertkul, 'Power, politics, and the making of Shanghai', *Journal of Planning History*, 9 (2010), 232–59.
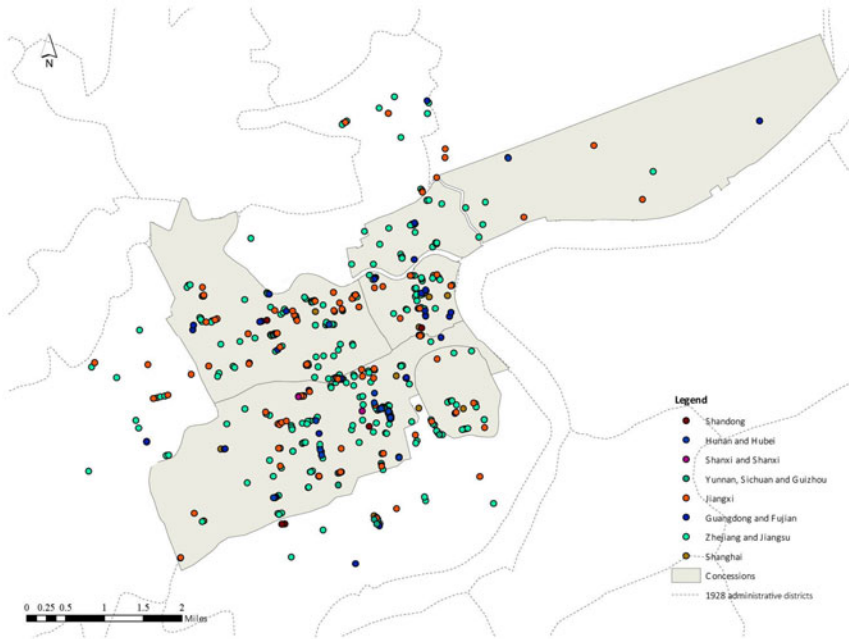
[66]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

**Figure 4.** The provincial origins of artists, 1912–27.

Figure 4 maps 500 computer randomly sampled Shanghai artists' provincial origins. Local artists only accounted for 4.4%; the others came from 13 different Chinese provinces. During the 1910s, several highly influential artists within the field of twentieth-century Chinese art history moved to Shanghai. The leading literati tradition painter Wu Changshi (1844–1927), for instance, used to live in Suzhou. His friend, Wang Yiting[67] (1867–1938) invited him to move to Shanghai. Wang exemplified the booming art market, and helped Wu to find residence in 1913.[68] Li Ruiqing (1867–1920), known as 'Monk Qing', a calligrapher and former officer of the Qing regime, moved to Shanghai in 1911. He invited his close friend Zeng Xi (1861–1930)[69] to Shanghai. Both sold their paintings and calligraphy for a living. The leading traditional Chinese-style painter Wu Daiqiu (1879–1949), known as 'Three Wu and One Feng' (*san Wu yi Feng*), moved to Shanghai in 1916, one year after his home art market of Zhejiang Congde started declining.[70]

Lu Hanchao identifies a transition in the composition of immigrants from the 'social-elite type of immigrants' to commoners during the late Qing to

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[67]See n. 57.

[68]See Wang's letter to Wu, included in G.T. Zhu (ed.), *Wu Changshi Nianpu Changbian* (A Drafted Chronology of Wu Changshi) (Hangzhou, 2014).

[69]Both Zeng and Li achieved high reputations in calligraphy. They were called 'Zeng Li'.

[70]L.Y. Jiang, 'Wandi yanyun wushi qiu: Ji Wu Daiqiu de yisheng' (50 years doing paintings: the whole life of Mr Wu Daiqiu), *Art Cloud*, 3 (1990), 138–42.

Republican transitional period.[71] This also applies to the artist immigrants. In the 1910s, Shanghai's art world was dominated by social elites, i.e., former Qing government officers, including Zheng Xiaoxu (1860–1938), Li Ruiqing and Zeng Xi.[72] They specialized in calligraphy and poetry. In the early 1900s, a rapid influx of people of high social standing into Shanghai introduced a refined lifestyle, one which appreciated talented singers, writers, painters and sculptors; this new art scene hosted social gatherings of art and cultural activities in the neighbourhoods near Fuzhou Road ('No. 4 Horse Road' then) in the International Settlement (eastern coast). These neighbourhoods occupied the bustling core of Shanghai city from the 1860s to the 1910s, as they birthed urban spectacles featuring a mixture of commerce and entertainment, e.g., dining services, publishing houses and brothels.[73] Hundreds of newspapers and magazines were established in the concessions, and they embraced the newfound freedom of discussion of public affairs.[74] Two major art clusters and one medium-scale cluster were located in the International Settlement (Figure 5). The talented poet Su Manshu (1884–1918), for instance, lived in Cluster 2. One medium-scale cluster was located in the walled city, accommodating three influential artists. These were the aforementioned Li Ruiqing, Zhao Shuru (1874–1945)[75] and Yang Baimin (1874–1924).[76]

In 1914, the Shanghai art scene prospered by hitching itself to the bandwagon of the third expansion of the French Concession, the same year that the city wall was torn down. Lin Zhuo describes a trend of extending the city's prosperity from the walled city into the Lao Xi Men area through bus line construction.[77] Our mapping project for the year 1920 affirms Lin's argument: the biggest cluster emerged in the Lao Xi Men area (Cluster 1) in that year, accommodating 13 artists, e.g., Zhang Yuguang (1885–1968), Wang Jiyuan (1893–1975), Ni Yide (1907–70) and Chu Changyan, all living within a seven-block area (Figure 6). Most were Western-style painting instructors from the Shanghai Art College, located within the same district.[78]

However, we argue that the expansion of the French Concession had far more far-reaching influences on the Shanghai art scene than the wall demolition. The French colonial power structure sought to create its own independent urban autonomy separate from its British rival, from the moment of the signing of the treaty.[79] The French started to build neighbourhoods according to French construction standards on its newly acquired land, and quickly attracted artists, mostly new immigrants, belonging to the 'petty urbanites' class (middle or lower middle

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[71]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 156.

[72]We ranked the number of social networks of each identifiable artist. In 1912, the leading artists were Li Ruiqing, Wu Changshi, Zheng Xiaoxu and Zeng Xi.

[73]Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*.

[74]Veg and Cheng, 'Alternative publications, spaces and publics'.

[75]Zhao, master of calligraphy and seal cutting, achieved a high reputation as on par with Wu Changshi.

[76]Yang, trained in Japan, established one of the earliest women's art schools in China and advocated art education.

[77]Lao Xi Men is located between the French Concession's south-east boundary and the walled city's south-west border. Lin, '20 Shiji Qianqi Ximenlu de Yishujia Jiju'.

[78]Zheng, *The Modernization of Chinese Art*.

[79]H. Brunschwig, *French Colonialism, 1871–1914: Myths and Realities* (New York, 1964).
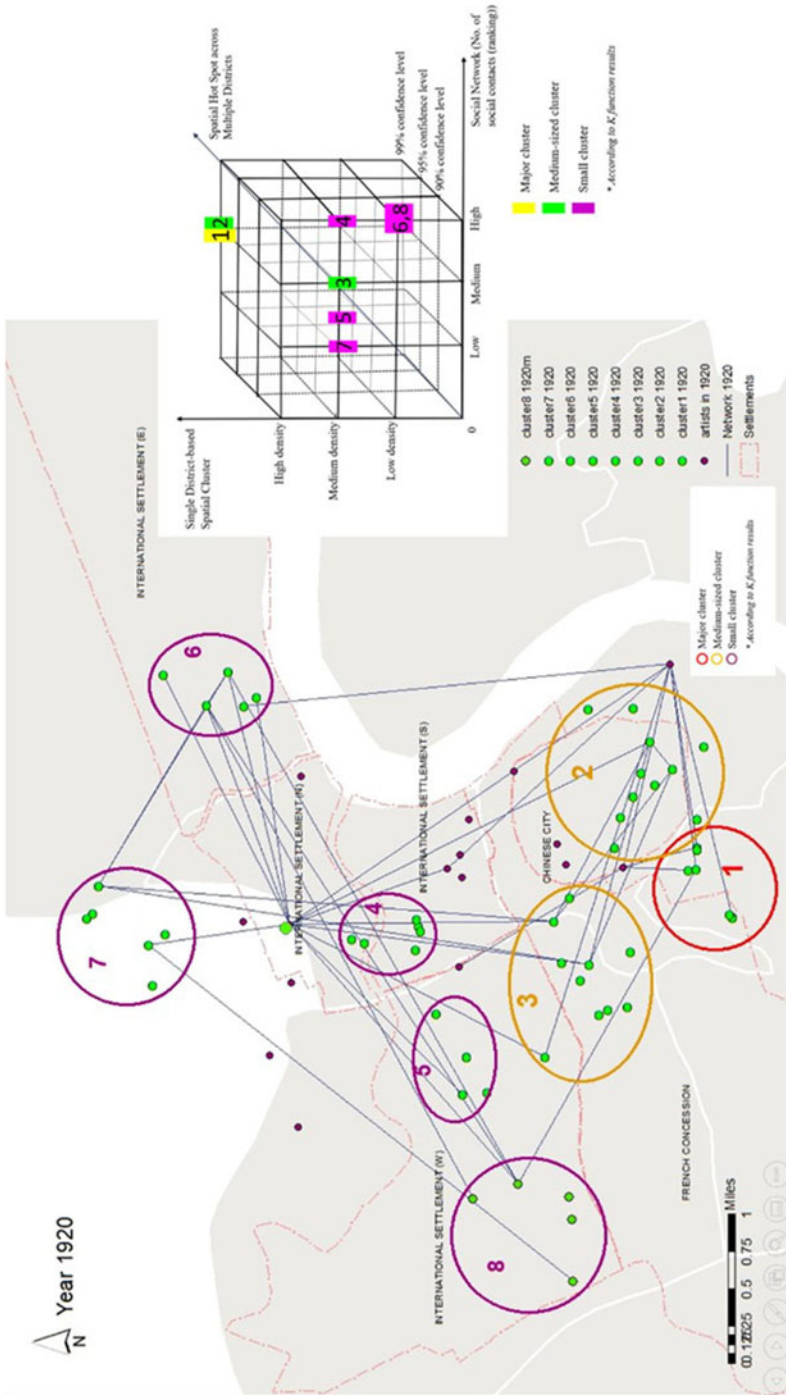
**Figure 5.** Cluster analysis, 1912.

**Figure 6.** Cluster analysis, 1920.

income).[80] To them, those newly built neighbourhoods in the form of *shikumen* (stone portal or alleyway houses)[81] provided affordable housing. Moreover, alleyway neighbourhoods housed daily life facilities and services, such as commerce, food stores, bookstores and alley schools, supporting residents' daily lives with material space and everyday conveniences.[82]

Cluster 3, which later grew to be the leading art cluster or hub, was an emerging cluster of artists in 1920 (Figure 6). A comparison of the 1912 and 1920 maps shows that few artists lived in this area before the French Concession's expansion. Also, it did not constitute a statistical 'hot spot' district by 1920 (Figure 3).[83] However, the relocation trajectories of the 45 sampled artists (Figure 10) show that, in contrast to none in 1912, 16.7% of new artist immigrants lived in the newly expanded French Concession in 1920. By 1925, 53.8% of the new immigrant artists opted for this residential area. The relocation trajectories of some of the existing artists also matched that of the French Concession's expansion. Feng Chaoran (1882–1954), an established literati tradition painter, for instance, lived at Li Pingshu's (1854–1927)[84] house near the walled city before 1914. He moved to the Baxian Qiao area within the old territory of the French Concession in 1914. When the bank comprador Gong Ziyu built the Grosse Rue neighbourhood in the expanded French Concession, Feng moved into the building at Gong's invitation (Figure 10).[85] Wagner notes that the walled city was not comparable to the concessions in terms of cultural innovation, and also social and economic conditions, and that its residents moved to the concessions.[86] By 1925, Cluster 3 (Figure 6) had become dominant (Cluster 1, Figure 7) after Wu Hufan's (1894–1968) (Figure 14) arrival in 1924. Wu, born in an imperial official's family in Suzhou, inherited extensive antique collections and moved to Shanghai to avoid warfare. He achieved a meteoric rise in the following 10 years and became a leading literati tradition professional painter. He lived next door to Feng Chaoran (Figure 14) on the same lane in Grosse Rue.[87] In addition to Wu and Feng, this cluster accommodated 20 artists in 1925, such as Xiong Songquan (1884–1961), Qian Shoutie (1897–1967), Xiao Xian (1902–97), He Xiangning (1878–1972), Shen Maishi (1891–1986) and Teng Gu (1901–41).[88] In 1920, the geographic scope of Cluster 1 (Figure 6) was largely congruent with Cluster 3 (Figure 5), covering 22 blocks. However, its spatial connection to the walled city was reduced. The

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[80]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*.

[81]*Shikumen*, the most common type of residence, are a type of rowed houses with a mixture of Western and Chinese styles of decorations. *Xinshi Lilong* (new-style alleyway houses) with sanitary fixtures were constructed in 1924.

[82]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*.

[83]This means that it did not border other districts with a similar density of artists, unlike Clusters 1 and 3.

[84]A local political elite.

[85]W. Zheng and T.Q. Feng (eds.), *A Chronology of Feng Chaoran* (Shanghai, 2007).

[86]Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community'.

[87]Interview with Wu's stepson by the first author, 10 Dec. 2001.

[88]Xiao was a literati tradition landscape painting master. Xiong was also a traditional-style landscape painter. Qian was known for seal-cutting, a follower of Wu Changshi. He Xiangning was a female painter and famous political activist. Shen was a calligrapher. Teng was an art historian, receiving his Ph.D. from Germany.

**Figure 7.** Cluster analysis, 1925.

emergence of this primary cluster also marked the end of the dominance of the former imperial officers in the Shanghai art world, giving way to professional artists.

In the early 1920s, the Lao Xi Men area (Cluster 3, Figures 6–7) continued a growth trend, but artists began to move into the French Concession.[89] These artists' social ties were largely based on their colleagueship at the Shanghai Art College, the city's main Western-style art-education institution under the influence of Cai Yuanpei's (1868–1940), the minister of education, aesthetic education policy.[90] Some 27 artists, e.g., Zhang Yuguang (1885–1968), Liu Haisu (1896–1994), Wang Yachen (1894–1983), Xie Gongzhan (1885–1940), Ding Song (1891–1972), Zhu Wenyun (1895–1939), Pan Yuliang (1899–1977) and Chen Hong (1898–1937),[91] lived in this cluster. Relative to 1920, this cluster decreased two ranks by 1925, having been outpaced by Cluster 1 (Figure 7) in terms of artist density. The two clusters' geographic proximity enhanced their legibility as statistically defined 'hot spots' (Figure 3).

### The golden age of Shanghai's art world (1930s)

From 1927 to 1937, Shanghai stood at the apex of its prosperity. We argue that the prosperity of the art landscape within the concessions was enabled by the city's fragmented governance framework, the low intervention level of the authorities, the accumulated cultural atmosphere, modern urban amenities, public transport and personal security during wartime.

In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek came to power and aspired to advance the national construction programme. The Kuomingtang regime manipulated boycotting and resistance, cracked down on activists' movements and undermined the unruly character of the city.[92] The foreign authorities' low intervention level into personal lives and expressions inside the concessions contrasted with the Kuomintang regime's new policies of censorship.[93] Also, the unique extraterritoriality of the concessions created 'fissures' or asylums caused by the interplay among different political forces.[94] The concessions, labelled as 'the special municipality' in 1927, became

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[89]The artists moved after the Shanghai Art College was relocated to Rue du Marché in the French Concession's south-east in 1923. See Xu, 'A study of the surrounding neighborhood of the Shanghai Art College'.

[90]See J. Zheng, 'A local response to the national ideal: aesthetic education in the Shanghai Art School (1913–1937)', *Art Criticism*, 22 (2007), 29–56.

[91]Zhang, a cartoonist, was the head of the Shanghai Art Academy, 1914–17. Liu was Zhang's successor, the principal of the Shanghai Art College. Liu was an active painter socializing with artists, politicians and businessmen. Ding, another cartoonist, was the head of the teaching affairs of the College during Zhang's term. Wang was also a founding member of the College and a committed art educator; he received art training from Japan, doing both Western-style and traditional-style paintings. Zhu was the first head of the Chinese Painting Department of the College. Pan was a globally renowned female Chinese painter. She was trained in Europe and established her reputation. She taught at the College in the early 1930s and later moved back to Paris. Chen was also a European-trained Chinese artist, teaching at the College.

[92]Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*.

[93]After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1931, the Kuomintang regime required censorship in military affairs, diplomacy, local governance and public decency, although it acknowledged the importance of democracy in 1929. J.X. Zhao, *Xinwen Zhengce* (News Policy) (Shanghai, 1941). See also Veg and Cheng, 'Alternative publications, spaces and publics'; Wagner, 'The early Chinese newspapers'.

[94]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

**Table 1.** The number of artist residents in 14 clusters (1936) within a 300-metre and 500-metre distance of the tramway; percentage of artists within a 500-metre distance to the total number of artists in the clusters

| Cluster ID Distance (metre) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 300 | 0 | 11 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| 500 | 0 | 12 | 12 | 7 | 10 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| Percent | 0 | 85.7 | 70.6 | 70 | 76.9 | 0 | 66.7 | 0 | 0 | 66.7 | 100 | 0 | 100 | 100 |

the resort for rowdy cultural and social activities.[95] Some artist-related cases exemplify this concept. Wang Yiting, for instance, was deemed a wanted fugitive by Yuan Shikai (1859–1916) as he was opposed to Yuan's restoration of the imperial system. He fled into the International Settlement.[96] Similarly, Pang Xunqin (1906–85) (Figure 14)[97] was considered a wanted delinquent by Chinese police in the 1930s. He was alerted to their intentions by his art friends and then he fled into the French Concession.[98]

Also, the material conditions of the concessions were improved during this time period. During the 1930s, the presence of public transport was influential in artists' residential site selection process. We analysed the tramway map of 1936 and its relation to artists' residential location, using ArcGIS to create 300-metre and 500-metre bubbles surrounding the tramway and verified a positive relationship: 59.39% of the whole artist population lived within a 500-metre distance from the tramway; 35.37% of the artist population lived within a 300-metre distance (Table 1 and Figure 8). We also examined the correlation of the art clusters and the tramway and found that 9 out of 14 clusters were located adjacent to the tramway. Most of the artists (66.7% to 100%) residing within the clusters were located within a 500-metre distance of the tramway. Hence, access to mass transit explains 64.3% of the clustering pattern of artists.

Warfare was another factor that caused the influx of artists into the concessions. In 1926 and 1927, warlords forced intellectuals and artists to seek refuge in Shanghai, thereby contributing to its population growth.[99] In 1932, the Wusong-Shanghai War of 1932 (known as the '128' war) broke out on 28 January. Japanese armies invaded Zhabei, devastating art schools and cultural facilities among thousands of buildings.[100] As a result, the former art cluster that was centred on the Lida Art Academy in Zhabei had disappeared by 1933.

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[95]Chinese police were not allowed to go straight into the concessions to arrest suspects without foreign authorities' permission. The fragmentation of governance created more time to escape, which is indicative of extensive latitude in multiple aspects of social life. See Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 8.

[96]Z.E. Chen and H.X. Li, *Bailong Shanren Wang Yiting Zhuan* (Biography of Bailong Mountain Resident Wang Yiting) (Shanghai, 2007).

[97]Pang, a modernist painter, trained in Europe, was one of the leading Western-style artists.

[98]X.Q. Pang, *Jiushi Zheyang Zouguolaide* (Getting through in This Way) (Beijing, 2005).

[99]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

[100]T. Cai, 'The nation and artists' Huanghe Building Mural: a transition in the contemporary Chinese art in the early Sino-Japanese War', Hangzhou Chinese Art Academy Ph.D. thesis, 2013; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*.
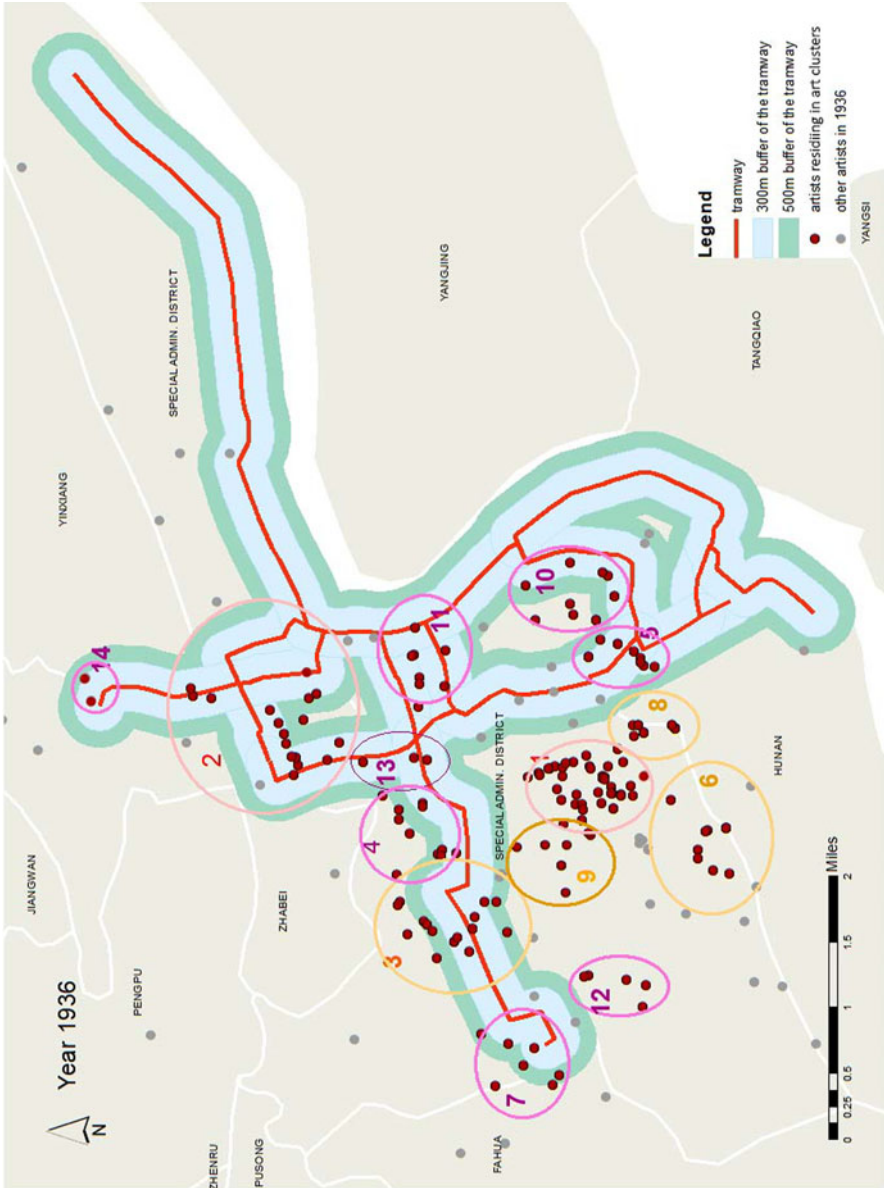
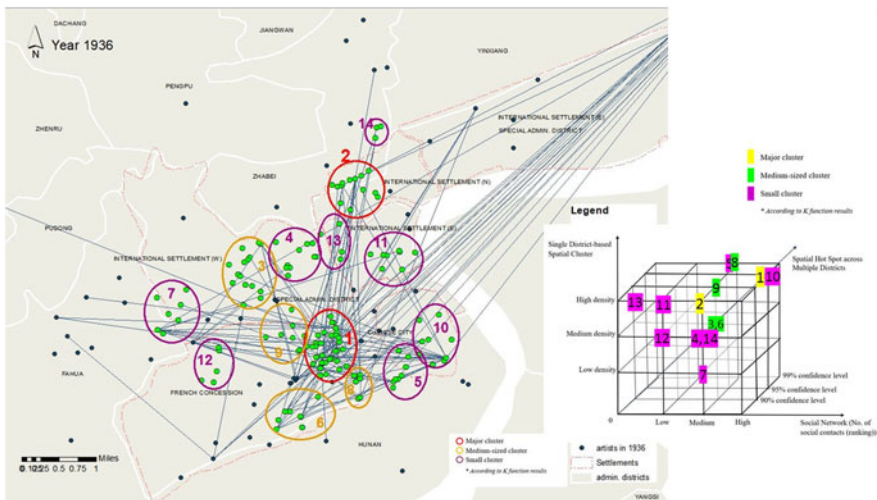**Figure 8.** Art clusters and the tramway in 1936.

**Figure 9.** Cluster analysis, 1936.

Refugees, including some artists, poured into the concessions that provided shelters. The concessions warded off turmoil and disruptions to businesses[101] and were found to be 'a precarious haven for the refugees'.[102]

From the late 1910s onwards, European- and Japanese-trained Chinese artists later returned to China. Many of them chose to reside in Shanghai's concessions and were actively engaged in Western-style urbanism. Although this group of artists only accounted for 10.2% of the total artist population in our databases, they contributed to the cultural diversity of the concessions. Frederic Wakeman notes that Republican Shanghai, as a metropolis, featured modern urban and entertainment facilities, such as movies, theatres and ballrooms, sheltered by the concessions.[103] These amenities, with low statistical significance,[104] were favoured mainly by Chinese artists dedicated to Western-style painting and design. We found evidence for this amongst our collected historical documents. One essay documented Zheng Zhenduo (1898–1958) and Feng Zikai (1898–1975) who enjoyed drinking brandy at the Jinlong Western-style Restaurant in the 1930s.[105] Zheng Mantuo (1888–1961), a commercial artist and cartoon designer, had an adventurous personality and a broad range of hobbies. He often visited ballrooms and photo shops in the International Settlement where he lived (Figure 9).[106] As Bergère notes, cityscapes

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[101]Wagner, 'The role of the foreign community'; Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927–1937*. After the fighting, rebuilding Zhabei was not on the Kuomingtang municipal government's agenda. Hence, most Zhabei refugees settled down in the International Settlement.

[102]Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927–1937*, 31.

[103]Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*.

[104]See the section on the literati tradition and Chinese cosmopolitanism.

[105]Zheng was a writer and Feng was known for his cartoon paintings. Feng was trained in Japan. X. Chen, *Feng Zikai Nianpu Changbian* (A Drafted Chronology of Feng Zikai) (Beijing, 2014).

[106]S.Q. Gui, 'Zheng Mantuo yu Yuefenpai' (Zheng Mantuo and calendar paintings), Jiangxi Normal University Ph.D. thesis, 2014.
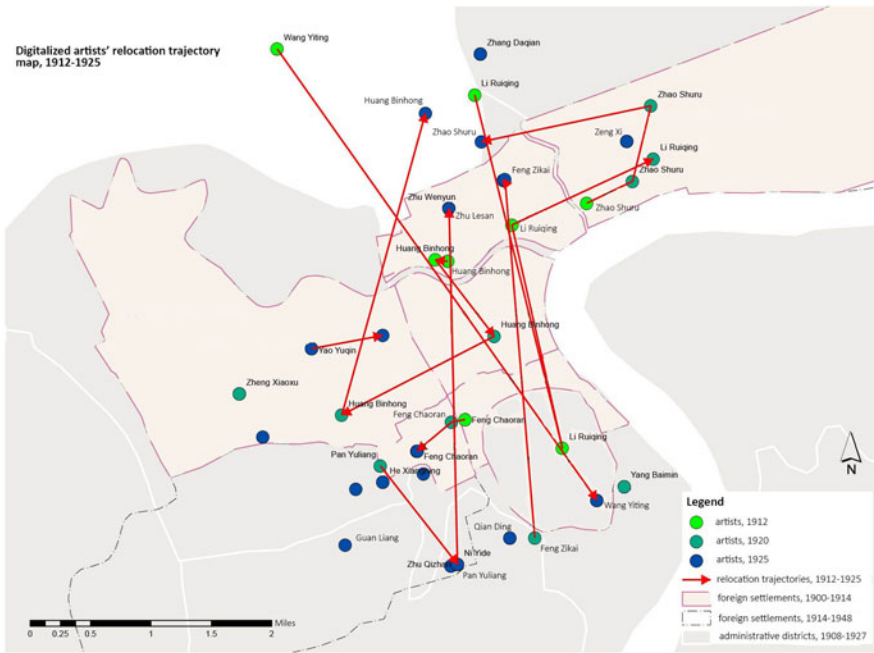
**Figure 10.** Relocation trajectories of artists, 1912–25.

resplendent with neon lighting and cars were overflowing with symbolic capital and intoxicating delights that inspired writers and artists, or at least a subsection of them. The concessions facilitated cultural transmission as well as original creation.[107]

Our analysis of the relocation trajectories of the 45 sampled artists, from three different historical periods,[108] indicates that the late 1920s (*c.* 1928) was a pivotal turning point from which artists began to recognize the desirable environmental conditions of the concessions. The territorial concessions became the prestige destination for artist relocation. From 1912 to 1925, 7 out of 45 artists relocated, and their settlement patterns revealed no particular preference towards the concessions (Figure 10). At that time, only three out of the seven artists relocated to the International Settlement (Li Ruiqing, Zhu Wenyun and Feng Zikai); two moved out of the concessions (Huang Binhong and Zhao Shuru) (Figure 10). In contrast, the 1930s saw a high frequency of relocation: 62.8% of the artists moved at least once, and all the destinations were located within the concessions (Figure 11).

Furthermore, the art clusters were *the* major attractors for artists. A high-resolution map of the largest cluster (located in the north-central part of the French Concession)[109] shows that over 60% of the artists living there in 1936 moved there

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[107]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

[108]We divided our study period into three broader periods. These periods were (a) 1912, 1920 and 1925; (b) 1928, 1933 and 1936; and (c) 1942 and 1948. On GIS maps, dots represent artists. Darker colour indicates residing in a later year.

[109]The background picture is a K function map in 1936: darker zones indicate a higher density of artists.
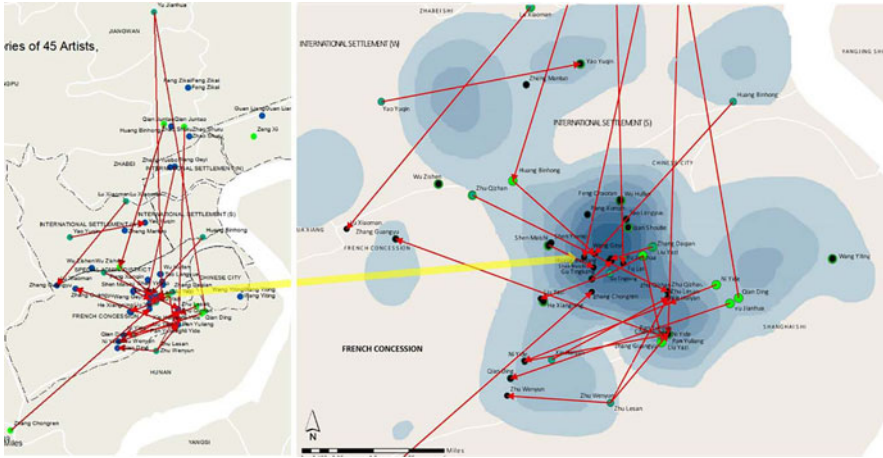
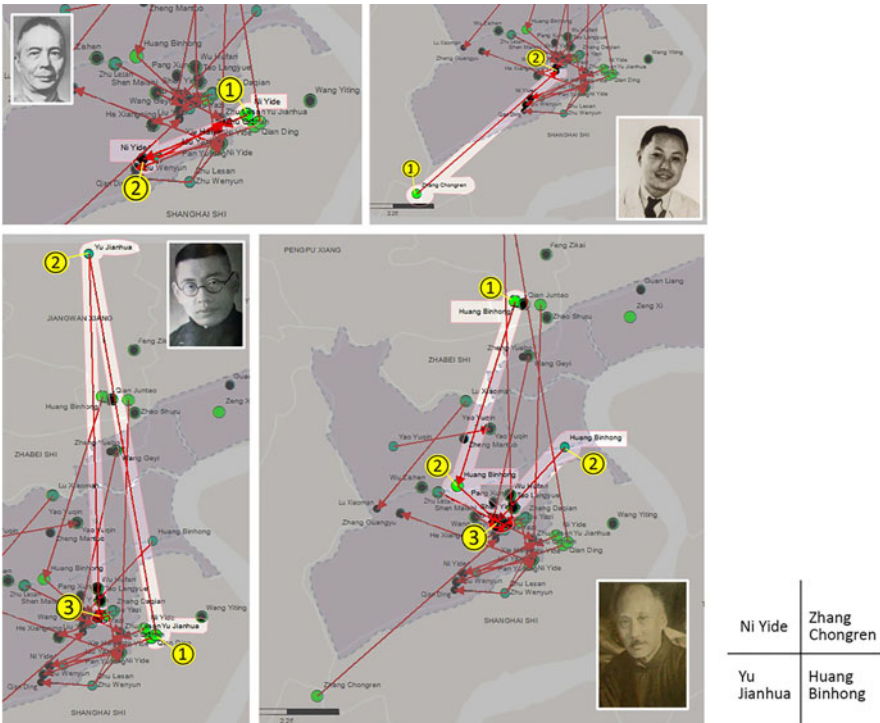**Figure 11.** Relocation trajectories of artists, 1928–36.



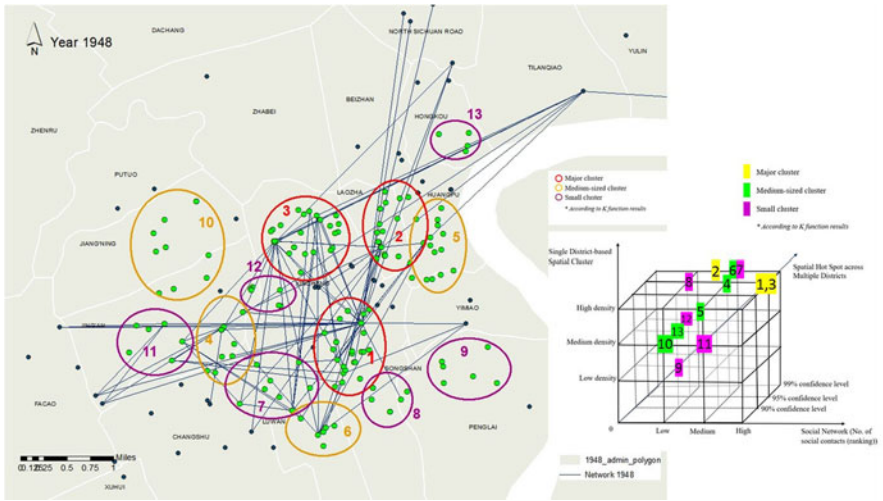**Figure 12.** Four artists' re-locational trajectories, 1928–36.

**Figure 13.** Art cluster analysis, 1948.

from other parts of the city after 1928 (Figure 11). For instance, Ni Yide (1901–70), a Japanese-trained Western-style painter, moved from Lao Xi Men into the French Concession. Zhang Chongren originally lived in Xu Jiahui and settled in the major French Concession cluster after returning from Europe. Traditional-style artists also opted for the major art cluster. Yu Jianhua (1895–1979) moved from Lao Xi Men into Jiangwan (North Shanghai, outside of the concessions) in 1931 and then moved to No. 32 Xi Cheng Li in 1932. Two years later, he moved again, into No. 66 Xi Cheng Li.[110] In 1928, Huang Binhong moved from Zabei to the International Settlement, and then moved again into Xi Cheng Li in 1929. This trajectory mapping reveals a dynamic process of cluster growth through the inward flow of artists (Figure 12).

During the 1930s, a favourable cultural atmosphere was forged in the concessions along with a prosperous outlook for art schools and organizations.[111] Starting from the late 1920s, we identified 17 spatial clusters where artists were affiliated solely with one or two art organizations. For instance, commercial artists were highly concentrated in the eastern International Settlement. In 1928, 10 artists lived in this district and all of them were included in the *Shangye Minglu* (Business Directory). In 1933, the south-eastern part of the French Concession accommodated 21 artists, most of them members of the *Zhongguo Huahui* (China Painting Association). In 1936, the International Settlement's north-central part (Cluster 3) was affiliated with the *Zhongguo Nüzi Shuhuahui* (China Female Artist Association). Prominent female artists such as Chen Xiaocui (1907–68), Li Qiujun (1899–1973) and Gu Qingyao (1896–1978)[112] lived there. A number of

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[110]J.Y. Zhou, *Zhou Jiyin Meishu Wenji* (An Anthology of Zhou Jiyan Art Essays) (Nanchang, 1998).

[111]Art schools were discussed in a previous section.

[112]Chen Xiaocui, born in a scholar and artist family, was talented in classical Chinese literature and painting. Li Qiujun and her brother Li Zuhan, both painters, were close friends of Zhang Daqian. Gu Qingyao was also known for her traditional-style paintings.
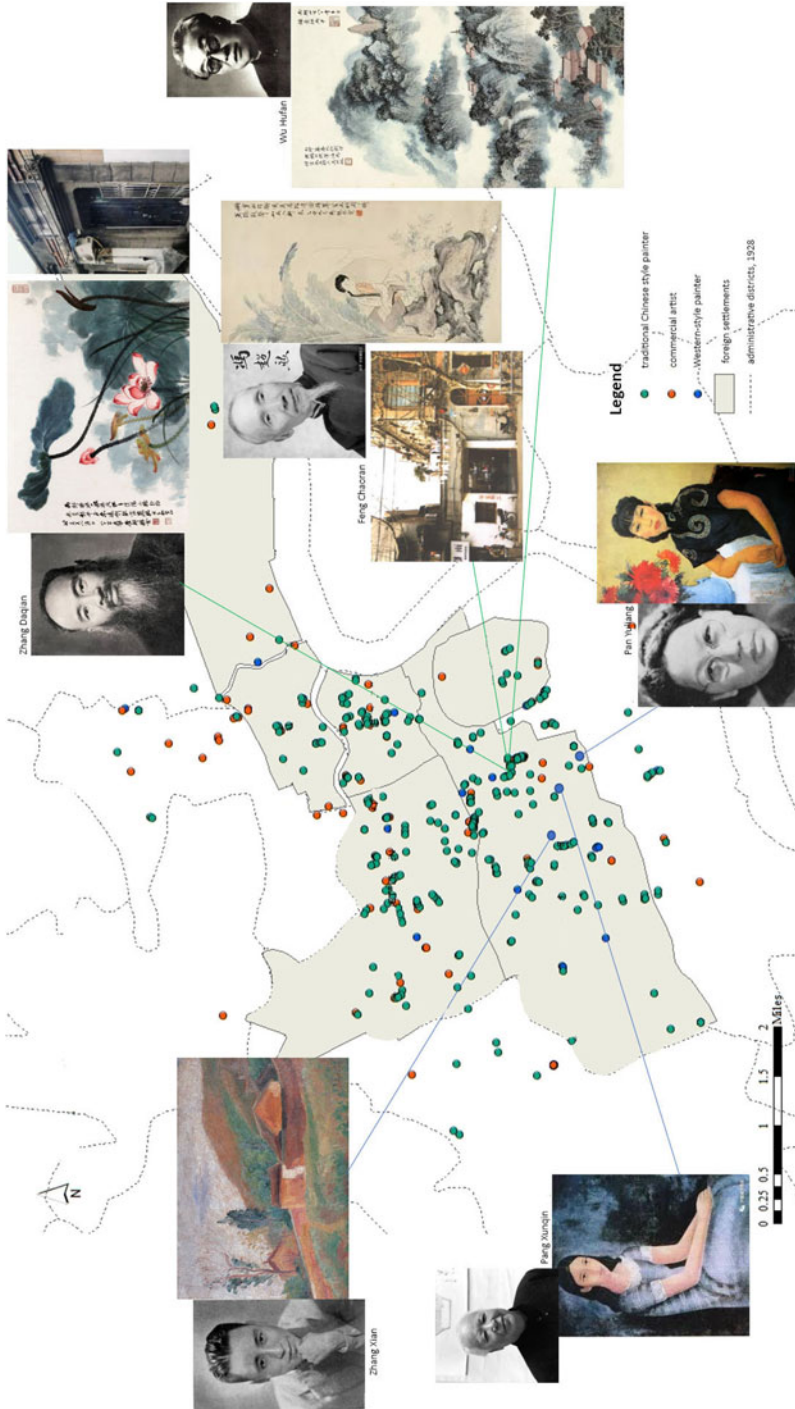
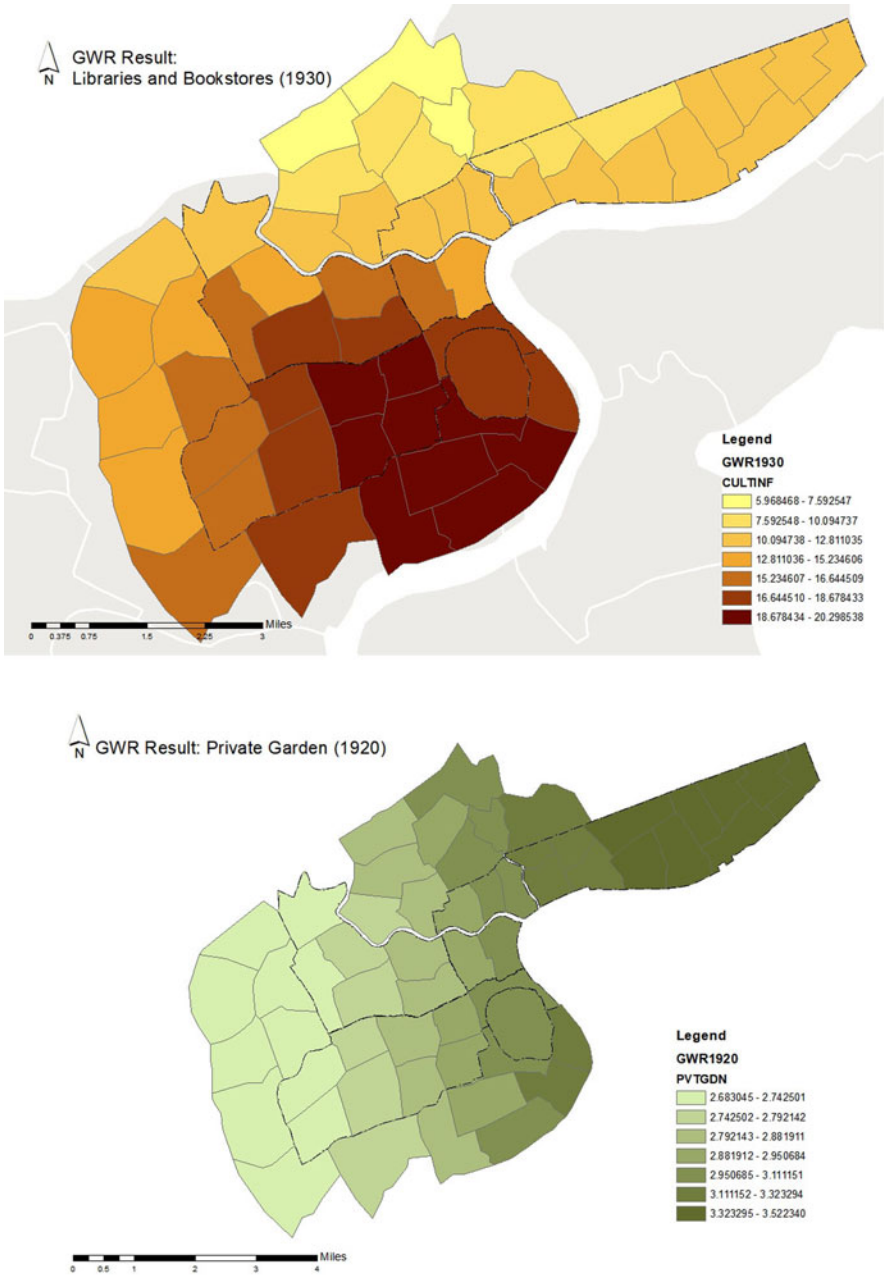**Figure 14.** Mapping artists of various artistic genres.

**Figure 15.** GWR results: private garden and bookstores.

Figure 16. Paintings by Wu Changshi, Wu Hufan, Huang Binhong and Zhang Daqian, 1920s and 1930s (left to right).

art organizations committed to advocating Western-style art were established, exemplified by the Heaven Horse Society (1919)[113] and the Storms Society (1932).[114]

## The end of the concessions and the decline of the Shanghai art scene (1940s)

The Sino-Japanese War, formally declared in 1937, heralded the decline of Shanghai's concessions. The Japanese army made incursions into the concessions and caused the partial loss of the foreign powers' authoritative control over these territories. The concessions were cut off from the rest of Shanghaiese territory, became isolated islands and entered a harrowing period, despite an apparent transient and fragile prosperity in 1938 and 1939.[115] Artists' clusters were mostly located in the concessions, which were the last resort for the security and expression of the artists who remained in Shanghai.

Between 1937 and 1944, intellectuals' social gatherings partially ceased. The artist population dwindled as many fled Shanghai. Feng Zikai (1898–1975), for example, took his family to Hangzhou and described Shanghai as a city filled with an atmosphere of 'killing'.[116] In 1937, Qian Juntao (1907–98), a staff member at the Kaiming Bookstore, resigned from his post and moved inland with his family.[117]

From 1938 to 1941, the concessions were able to shelter artists and some of their anti-Japanese, patriotic art practices.[118] The International Settlement, in particular, was transformed into a 'concentration camp'.[119] Jiang Danshu (1885–1962) returned to Shanghai in 1938, and resided in the upper floor of a candle and incense shop. The lodging was small, shabby and noisy; but often served as a gathering spot for artists stranded by the war. Chen Baoyi (1893–1945), Wang Yachen, Zhu Qizhan (1892–1996) and Qian Ding (1896–1989), all former Xinhua Art College faculty members and Western-style painters, remained for the purpose of book and historical-document preservation. In 1939, they hosted a collective exhibit at the International Settlement's Shanghai Da Sun Corporation.[120] Traditional-style Chinese artists organized art exhibits displaying preserved masterpieces that accentuated national patrimony and spirit.[121] These activities ceased after 1941, and

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[113]B.Y. Chen, 'Yanghua Yundong guocheng lueji' (A brief history of the Western Painting movement), *Shishi Xinbao*, 15 Mar. 1943, reprinted in S. Gu and S.S. Li (eds.), *Bainian Zhongguo Meishushi Jingdian Wenku* (Collection of Classical Art Essays over the Past Decade), vol. III (Shenzhen, 1998), 30–42.

[114]R. Croizier, 'Post-Impressionists in pre-war Shanghai: the Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the fate of modernism in Republican China', in J. Clark (ed.), *Modernity in Asian Art* (Broadway, NSW, 1993), 135–54.

[115]Japanese occupation resulted in food shortages in the concessions.

[116]Z.K. Feng, *Feng Zikai Zishu* (Self-Narratives of Feng Zikai), ed. H. Li (Zhengzhou, 2003), 116; C.T. Hung, 'An artistic exile: a life of Feng Zikai (1898–1975)', *Chinese Literature Essays Articles Reviews*, 26 (2004), 190–2.

[117]G.H. Wu, *Qian Juntao Zhuan* (Biography of Qian Juntao) (Beijing, 2001).

[118]P. Fu, *Passivity, Resistance, and Collaboration: Intellectual Choices in Occupied Shanghai, 1937–1945* (Stanford, 1993).

[119]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

[120]C. Li, 'Chinese Impressionism movement: Zhou Bichu's oil paintings', *Art Research*, 3 (2015), 77–85.

[121]H.S. Liu, 'Tireless gardener Xie Haiyan', in S.N. Chen (ed.), *Renowned Professors in the Nanjing Art Academy Art Subject* (Nanjing, 2012), 28–38.

artists again fled inland.[122] Art schools and organizations were dismissed, destroyed or relocated inland.[123] Artistic gatherings yielded to dispersed, individual, artistic creation.

On another level, the wars brought a new tide of refugees into the concessions and the real estate sector prospered in response. By the early 1940s, most newly constructed dwellings in the Nanjing Road area of the International Settlement were built in the new alleyway house configuration.[124] A critical mass of new housing led to the emergence of another big art cluster in 1948, i.e., Cluster 2 (which emerged from 1936's Clusters 3 and 4) (Figure 13). Zhang Daqian and his associates as well as a group of professional and commercial artists lived in this area. Except for this Cluster 2 emergence, the remainder of the artists' spatial distribution pattern did not show significant change during this period. The primary cluster (north-central French Concession cluster) remained the centre of Shanghai's art world. The convergence of Clusters 1 and 9 (Figure 9) is clearly detectable. Following Wang Yiting's departure in 1937, the spatial influence of the walled city's artists had completely collapsed by the early 1940s; he had been the keystone artist whose presence sustained that district's last remaining influence.

## The literati tradition and Chinese cosmopolitanism

Bergère's work suggests close connections between prolific literary production and a cosmopolitan urban environment.[125] Lu Hanchao observes that the traditional modes of Chinese people's daily lives persisted inside the concessions; this phenomenon is indicative of Shanghai's multifaceted modernity.[126] A combination of these perspectives engenders a hypothesis that the concessions' environment was conducive to the growth of traditional Chinese art, as the perspective of Chinese cosmopolitanism informs us. We have verified this hypothesis. We argue that most Chinese artists favoured the facilities embedded in the Chinese social tradition and continued their literati lifestyle and artistic pursuits within the concessions, which embodies the 'Chinese cosmopolitan' conception.

We hypothesized 21 variables constituting a creative milieu and created combinations of 12–14 variables (according to data availability) in order to model data for our three selected years. We found that the presence of most Western-style facilities and urban amenities are statistically insignificant to artist density; alternatively, the facilities that facilitated literati lifestyle are significant.

In the category of cultural facilities, 'library and bookstore' is a significant variable (MLR and GWR) for the models of the years 1930 and 1948. The impact of this variable on artist density is ranked #2 among variables in 1930 and #1 in 1948. The French Concession's central districts are the most highly correlated to libraries and bookstores, indicating the continuation of prior reading habits.[127] In contrast, museums were negatively correlated to artist density in 1920, suggesting

[122]H.Y. Xie, 'Jiang Danshan: the forerunner of Chinese art education', *Art Garden*, 4 (1991), 8–12.

[123]Liu, 'Tireless gardener Xie Haiyan'.

[124]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*.

[125]Bergère, *Shanghai*.

[126]Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*.

[127]See for example Q.Y. Feng and G.H. Yin, *A Chronology of Zhu Qizhan* (Shanghai, 1999).

that artists relied on private networks for borrowing paintings and books.[128] This explains why some leading artists like Wu Hufan and Zhang Daqian, who had lavish collections of antiques, became the core of the art cluster, not museums.

In the category of urban amenities, only *Chinese-style restaurant* is a statistically significant variable; *Western-style food and beverage venue* is not.[129] Similarly, in theory, *parks*[130] fostered a modern bohemian lifestyle to showcase the visions of globality advanced by the Western bourgeois.[131] Activities such as strolling in public parks, leisure complexes, amusement parks and a craze for cafés and bars reflect Western customs. *Private gardens*, in contrast, represent the literati tradition of the elegant gathering (*yaji*) of poetry, calligraphy and antiques within the private circles of scholars.[132] Garden spaces largely escaped the purview of the Western imperialists.[133] Our research indicates that the presence of *private gardens* is a statistically significant variable for increasing the density of artists (Figure 15), whilst the presence of *public parks* is not. We found examples in various historical documents. One case was Wang Yiting's walled-city residence, named 'Zi Garden', that included a building complex and a traditional-style Chinese private garden (built in 1682). Wang hosted receptions for political and cultural elites, including Albert Einstein in 1922.[134] A number of traditional-style artists lived in the surrounding neighbourhood of the Zi Garden.

In the category of entertainment venues, only *ballroom* is statistically significant for the year 1930;[135] others (e.g., *cinema*, *theatre*) are not. This lack of significant variables contradicts the allure of the modern city, and its attendant charms, and bolsters the evidence for a literary milieu where Chinese literati lifestyles continued. Traditional literati artists found quiet spaces for reading, reflection, art practice and socialization with literati painters and elites in private gardens. They shunned the glamour of the concessions' urban festivities and were less enthusiastic about embracing novel urban experiences.

With the continuity of literati lifestyle, the *haipai* artists found a sanctuary for their pursuit of the literati aesthetic ideals. The resultant artistic production was the essence of tradition, purity and individuality, that sought transcendency and escape from the real world. The three primary genres of literati painting, viz., *landscape*, *figure and flower* and *bird*, continued to dominate the art practices of *haipai*. Being unresponsive to the vicissitudes of the socio-political environment indicates an oppositional attitude towards the hegemony of both Chinese and Western authorities, and suggests philosophical insights into the essence of the world. Distancing oneself from orthodoxy enables these painters to centre on human, individual and literati aesthetics. The leading *haipai* artist, Wu Hufan, rarely stepped

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[128]Zheng, *The Modernization of Chinese Art*.

[129]We tested six variables in this category: tea houses, dim sum shops, restaurants, Western-style restaurants, Chinese-style restaurants and Chinese-style restaurants providing local cuisine.

[130]Rankin, 'Some observations on a Chinese public sphere'.

[131]J.L. Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities* (Minneapolis, 1999).

[132]J. Zheng, 'Art and the shift in garden culture in the Jiangnan area in China (16th–17th century)', *Asian Culture and History*, 5 (2013), 1–15.

[133]Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*, 168.

[134]Chen and Li, *Bailong Shanren Wang Yiting Zhuan*.

[135]Ballrooms are not significant in 1948; the GWR significance test result is also low in 1930.

out of this residence; however, he received many visitations from his peers on a daily basis. He said that 'a scholar does not leave his house but knows everything of the world'.[136] Wu believed that the same held true for the landscapes of the world.[137] Their artistic endeavours focused on a fusion of poetry, calligraphy and painting; these disciplines marked the signature features of literati painting traceable to the master Su Shi (Figure 16).[138]

Past scholarship on individual *haipai* artists recognizes the continuity of the literati tradition, but it interprets the modernity of *haipai* paintings either from the perspective of nationalism or from Shanghai commerce.[139] Our research approaches this issue from the perspective of habitation by artists and it shows how Chinese cosmopolitanism enabled the scholar artists – who relocated from former cultural heartlands (like Yangzhou and Suzhou) to take refuge in the Shanghai concessions – to pursue literati aesthetics and express the persistence of the elites' ungovernable spirits. In other words, the mainstream artistic practices of the *haipai* were modern because the fundamental philosophy of literati painting, viz., individual-centred, irrepressible, scholarly spirit in opposition to the material world, was sheltered and advanced by the material, locational and social modernity of the concessions.

## Conclusions: towards a new approach to twentieth-century Chinese urban and art history

This article develops an artists' habitation approach to understanding twentieth-century Chinese urban and art history. Artists' residences were an essential component of the urban modernity of the city, whilst their artistic production contributed to the imaginative geography of Shanghai and the modernization of Chinese art.

The implications for Chinese urban history scholarship are substantial. Our research shows that the urban art landscape, which consisted of a series of spatially concentrated areas of artists, was a crucial dimension embedded in the urban fabrics of Shanghai's urban and cultural cosmopolitanism, known as *fanhua*. The Republican period witnessed the incremental congregation of art clusters within the concessions with an evidently higher percentage of artist habitants in the concessions (compared with the overall Shanghai population). We identified the exact locations and spatial scopes of the art clusters with varying degrees of social contact vibrancy, as well as their transformative patterns over that historical period. This research also reveals the environmental attributes of the concessions that contributed to the influx of a diverse body of artists: including a thriving economy (growing trade and commerce, increasing job opportunities, a booming art market), favourable urban conditions (accessible transport, decent housing, modern amenities), relative security in wartime, low intervention levels from the authorities

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[136]Interview with Wu's stepson by the first author.

[137]*Ibid.*

[138]Zheng argues that literati artistic criteria continued in Republican Shanghai, different from artists' advocacies in other places of China. See Zheng, 'Transplanting literati painting'.

[139]See for example, C. Von Spee, *Wu Hufan: A Twentieth Century Art Connoisseur in Shanghai* (Berlin, 2008); C. Roberts, 'The dark side of the mountain: Huang Binhong (1865–1955) and artistic continuity in twentieth century China', Australian National University Ph.D. thesis, 2014.

(the 'third realm' public sphere), cultural atmosphere (abundant inter-artist social networks, accessibility to art organizations and schools). Our research also uncovers a literati tradition-dominated art landscape possessing cultural diversity: while the Western-trained, returning artists actively engaged with modern urban amenities, most traditional-style painters located their residences in proximity to Chinese-style amenities that sustained a literati style of living.

In relation to the totality of twentieth-century Chinese art history, our perspective on urban history engenders insights regarding the modernity of *haipai*. We argue that *haipai* was modern because it essentially reflected what Meng Yue called 'Chinese cosmopolitanism', an insubordinate elite spirit that underscored individualistic and scholarly souls who embodied a profound sense of disconnection from the Western imperialist orthodoxy and their imperialist semi-colonies. Ironically, such a spirit was enabled to flourish by the urban modernity of the concessions.

Additionally, we pioneered methodological innovations, using large-scale computer-aid mapping and quantitative spatial analysis (e.g., K function, hot spot, GWR) to test hypotheses derived from the Chinese urban history scholarship (e.g., *fanhua*, diversity, social network). Although these methods are not new in GIS or quantitative geography, they are utilized to analyse the art world for the first time.