

# Shaping Modern Shanghai

Colonialism in  
China's Global City

Isabella Jackson





'Isabella Jackson has written a superb study of one of the most important cities in both Chinese history and British imperial history. Her meticulous study of the way that colonial and sovereign China interacted shows the complexity of the interaction between foreign and Chinese during the Republican era. This book is a major achievement.'

**Rana Mitter**, *University of Oxford*

'Isabella Jackson provides a richly detailed and fluidly written account of treaty-port era Shanghai via a close look at one of its most influential institutions. This alone makes *Shaping Modern Shanghai* a valuable book. The author also shines in providing an astute analytical framework for making sense of the distinctive sorts of colonial forces in play in this fascinating metropolis.'

**Jeffrey Wasserstrom**, *University of California, Irvine*

**Isabella Jackson** is Assistant Professor in Chinese History at Trinity College Dublin, having previously held positions at the Universities of Oxford and Aberdeen. She has published her research in *Modern Asian Studies* and in edited collections on Chinese treaty ports, Britain and China, the Scottish experience in Asia and the 'habitable city' in China.

Cover image: View of the Bund [postcard]  
上海外滩, 1930–1935, photographed by René  
Antoine. Permission courtesy of the Virtual  
Cities Project.

**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS  
[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

ISBN 978-1-108-41968-0



9 781108 419680 >

Jackson

# Shaping Modern Shanghai

CAMBRIDGE

# Shaping Modern Shanghai

*Colonialism in China's Global City*

---

Isabella Jackson

*Trinity College Dublin*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

**CAMBRIDGE**  
**UNIVERSITY PRESS**

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
4843/24, 2nd Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi – 110002, India  
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108419680](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108419680)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108303934

© Isabella Jackson 2018

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2018

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-108-41968-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## Shaping Modern Shanghai

*Shaping Modern Shanghai* provides a new understanding of colonialism in China through a fresh examination of Shanghai's International Settlement. This was the site of key developments of the Republican period: economic growth, rising Chinese nationalism and Sino-Japanese conflict. Managed by the Shanghai Municipal Council (1854–1943), the International Settlement was beyond the control of the Chinese and foreign imperial governments. Jackson defines Shanghai's unique, hybrid form of colonial urban governance as transnational colonialism. The Council was both colonial in its structures and subject to colonial influence, especially from the British empire, yet autonomous in its activities and transnational in its personnel. This is the first in-depth study of how this unique body functioned on the local, national and international stages, revealing the Council's impact on the daily lives of the city's residents and its contribution to the conflicts of the period, with implications for the fields of modern Chinese and colonial history.

ISABELLA JACKSON is Assistant Professor in Chinese History at Trinity College Dublin, having previously held positions at the Universities of Oxford and Aberdeen. She has published her research in *Modern Asian Studies* and in edited collections on Chinese treaty ports, Britain and China, the Scottish experience in Asia and the 'habitable city' in China.



For my grandmother, E. P. M. M.





## Acknowledgements

---

My research for and writing of this book were supported by numerous people and institutions. My first and deepest thanks go to Robert Bickers at the University of Bristol, who inspired my interest in Chinese history and encouraged me to take this interest ever further. He has always been generous with his time, personal collection of source materials and wealth of knowledge. Most of the research for this book was conducted during my PhD, supervised by Robert and funded by the Economic and Social Research Council through the British Inter-university China Centre. I am grateful to both organisations.

I have learnt a great amount from Rana Mitter at the University of Oxford. Rana helped me hone my skills as a historian and encouraged me to see the bigger picture of why my research matters. I am very grateful for all his guidance. I would like to thank my former colleagues at what was then the Institute for Chinese Studies at Oxford for their encouragement and support as I finished my dissertation alongside my first academic position, particularly Margaret Hillenbrand and Laura Newby. I am grateful to the members of the Leverhulme Trust-funded 'China's War with Japan' project in the History Faculty for helpful comments on Chapter 3, especially Helen Schneider and Karl Gerth. I would also like to thank Henrietta Harrison for helping me to undertake later research in Oxford.

I am grateful to my friends and former colleagues at the University of Aberdeen, particularly Andrew Dilley and Robert Frost who read and provided valuable advice on parts of the book. I would like to thank my colleagues at Trinity College Dublin, particularly Carole Holohan and Ciaran O'Neill in History and Lorna Carson in the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies, for their encouragement and friendship. My thanks also go to my students at both Aberdeen and Trinity for their insightful questions and ideas as we discussed Republican China.

I am indebted to the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences for hosting me while I conducted the bulk of my research. Wang Min, Ma Jun and Xu Tao deserve particular thanks. I am very appreciative of the work done by the staff of the Shanghai Municipal Archives, who helped make it a pleasant place to conduct research, and I appreciated Yuan Zhe's friendship when

we were both working there. My thanks also go to members of faculty at the University of Sydney for welcoming me and helping me clarify many of my ideas, especially Kirsten McKenzie and Alison Bashford. The Kluge Center at the Library of Congress was an inspiring place to work and I am very grateful to the people there for helping me expand my source base and the horizons of my intellectual enquiry. I would like to thank Tom Mann at the Library in particular for his enthusiastic help in finding diverse materials that enhanced my research. The librarians at Trinity, Aberdeen, Oxford and Bristol have all provided valuable materials, as have staff at the British Library, The National Archives in Kew, the US National Archives and the State Library of New South Wales in Sydney. I am grateful to Marcia Ristaino for her friendship and to Cecil Uyehara for his kind assistance with my research on his father. Christian Henriot and Simon Potter provided valuable suggestions for refining the project. Sincere thanks to Lucy Rhymer at Cambridge University Press for her efficiency, advice and enthusiasm at every stage of bringing the book to publication, and to the anonymous reviewers for the Press for their constructive feedback on the manuscript.

Taylor and Francis granted permission to use work originally published under their Routledge imprint. Material for Chapter 2 is drawn from 'Who Ran the Treaty Ports? A Study of the Shanghai Municipal Council', in Robert Bickers and Isabella Jackson (eds.), *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 43–60; and material for Chapter 3 is drawn from 'Expansion and Defence in the International Settlement at Shanghai', in Robert Bickers and Jonathan Howlett (eds.), *Britain and China, 1840–1970: Empire, Finance and War* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 187–204. I am grateful to the *Virtual Cities Project*, Institut d'Asie Orientale, Lyon and Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol, for the use of their images.

My friends, particularly Felicitas von Droste zu Hülshoff and Nicola Leveringhaus, have been a constant source of support and inspiration. Some of the people I have met in the course of my research, including Hoito Wong and Sophie Loy-Wilson, have offered direct assistance in locating sources; Sophie also kindly commented on the manuscript, as did Catherine Phipps. For comments and questions when presenting parts of the research, I am grateful to Felix Boecking, Chris Courtney, Sarah Dauncey, Jon Howlett, Pamela Hunt, Hirata Koji, Toby Lincoln, Jo Smith Finley, Norman Stockman, Jeffrey Wasserstrom and many more. Erika Hanna generously shared her expertise on global cities with me.

I would like to extend warm thanks to all my family, particularly my mother, father and grandma, for encouraging me throughout this lengthy project. My most heartfelt thanks go to Adam, for supporting me tirelessly and for having so much faith in me.

## Note on Chinese Usage

---

Chinese names of places and people are Romanised using the standard pinyin form in most cases except where the transliteration in contemporary use is the only form available or the preferred form, primarily for personal names such as for Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi). Where appropriate and possible, Chinese characters are also provided in the main text and index for clarity.

# Contents

---

<i>List of Figures</i>	page ix
<i>List of Maps</i>	x
<i>List of Tables</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
<i>Note on Chinese Usage</i>	xiv
 Introduction: The Transnational Colonialism of the Shanghai Municipal Council	 1
1 Funding Transnational Colonialism	22
Organising the Municipal Finances	25
Spending Priorities	28
Sources of Revenue	31
Taxation	31
Licence Fees and Dues	38
Loans	41
Opposition and Protest	47
Financial Difficulties	55
Conclusion	59
2 Electing and Serving: The Municipal Councillors and Staff	62
Election to the Council	65
Chinese Representation	73
Council Members	81
Municipal Staff	96
Conclusion	111
3 Policing and Conflict in Shanghai	113
Policing Conflict	115
Volunteering and Conflict	122
Expansion	128
Frustrated Expansionism	131
Conflict over Jurisdiction	136
Defence in Difficult Times	139
Anti-imperialism	141
Communist and Nationalist Threats to the Settlement	149
Japanese Imperialism	153
Conclusion	162
	vii



4	Public Health and Hygiene	164
	Laying the Groundwork: The Infrastructure of Public Health	167
	Assuming Greater Responsibility for Public Health	170
	Limited Powers	175
	Medical Research, the Municipal Laboratory and Scientific Modernity	180
	A Transnational Department	184
	Imperial Influence	187
	<i>Entente Cordiale?</i> Relations with the French <i>Conseil Municipal</i>	189
	A New Neighbour: The City Government of Greater Shanghai	194
	Assessing Success	199
5	Industry, Welfare and Social Reform	203
	Managing Industrial Conditions and Growing Expectations	206
	The Factory Law: Chinese Initiative and the SMC's Response	215
	The Work of the Industrial Section: The Power of Persuasion	224
	Transnational Influences	228
	War and Labour	232
	Conclusion	237
	Epilogue: Dismantling and Remembering Transnational Colonialism	239
	<i>Bibliography</i>	251
	<i>Index</i>	268

## Figures

---

0.1 Shanghai municipal flag	<i>page 7</i>
1.1 Municipal spending by department	29
1.2 Percentage of SMC rates paid by Chinese and foreign ratepayers	36
1.3 Sources of ordinary municipal income	37
1.4 Percentage of municipal revenue from taxation, 1910–1940	42
1.5 Municipal income from rates paid inside and outside the Settlement limits	51
2.1 <i>Rattle</i> cartoon of campaigning candidates for the municipal election of 1901	68
2.2 The Town Hall from 1896 to 1922, Nanjing Road	72
2.3 The administration building, 209 Kiangse (Jiangxi) Road, erected in 1921	72
2.4 The Council of 1936–1937	84

## Maps

---

3.1 Plan showing External Roads areas	<i>page</i> 130
3.2 Map of defence sectors, 1932	154

## Tables

---

2.1 SMC chairmen and their business interests, 1900–1942	<i>page</i> 83
2.2 Prominent Chinese SMC members and their affiliations	92