

## Modernity and Collage of City Non-Core Area: the Case of Suzhou River Area in Shanghai

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### 1 ABSTRACT

Modernity is not only the theme of the world development, but also the main feature of China's development nearly 100 years. It has contributed to the economic development, as well as formed an unstable system of internal city, especially on non-core area of city. The modern process constantly changes the driving force of development, rather than continues as a linear, with different interpretation of the modernity in different periods. On the spatial dimensions, the non-core area reflected different modern characters from core area that have enormous influence and powerful attraction. It changed from the original stable structure to a kind of mosaic state as the collage. With the influence of industrialization and information, the non-core area has always been formed by the changing economic and political power. Important here in this context is that the urban system is viewed not as a static structure, but as a system in flux, characterized by interdependencies and uncertainties about the nature and the direction of change. This creates a doubt that emphasis on the factors what promote the unending changing of Non-core area and made it become a kind of unstable space.

To demonstrate the reality of the modernity of non-core city area, we choose one special area of Shanghai—Suzhou River area, which has a synchronous development history of Shanghai but has not become the core area still now, to explore the inner force what promote the reform and the reconstruction of here. Under the power and economical influence, the both side of Suzhou River was enveloped by increasing intensity, to meet the need of modernity. This changing has also made this area lost its natural scene bit by bit, like the never stop flow of the river.

At the beginning of this paper, we introduce the general features of modernity, which displays the different characteristics on the spatial dimension and temporal process. Then, through the case study of the Suzhou River area, we present a real scene of the modernity in China. It reflected the stable and flowing characteristic of non-core areas which do not have enough developmental potential to prevent the unending change. The history has been divided into three periods, we analyse the background of the politics & economy, main forces and promoters of development, the specificity of spatial character and social situation on each period. Obviously, when we talk about modernity, we should not only pay attention to its present, but also look back upon history and look forward to future.

### 2 MODERNITY

#### 2.1 The characteristic of modernity

'Modernity', 'The painter of modern life is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is the one half of art, the other being the eternal and the immutable.' Baudelaire wrote in his essay. Similarly, Berman's description: There is a mode of vital experience – experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life's possibilities and perils – that is shared by men and women all over the world today. I will call this body of experience 'modernity'. To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world – and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. We shall leave aside the question why modern life might be characterized by this, but that the condition of modernity is not generally disputed.

If modern life is indeed so suffused with the sense of the fleeting, the ephemeral, the fragmentary, and the contingent, then a number of profound consequences follow. To begin with, modernity can have no respect even for its own past, let alone that of any pre-modern social order. The transitoriness of things makes it difficult to preserve any sense of historical continuity. If there is any meaning to history, then that meaning has to be discovered and defined from within the maelstrom of change. Modernity, therefore, not only entails

a ruthless break with any or all preceding historical conditions, but is characterized by a never ending process of internal ruptures and fragmentations within itself.

Raban describes an essential aspect of urban life as 'Aesthetic practices and judgements fragmented into that kind of 'maniacal scrapbook filled with colourful entries that have no relation to each other, no determining, rational, or economic scheme,'. Where, in all of this, could we look for some sense of coherence, let alone say something cogent about the 'eternal and immutable' that was supposed to lurk within this maelstrom of social change in space and time?

But what promote the modernity change all the time .Marx provides one of the earliest and most complete accounts of capitalist modernization.Marx insists, there is a single unitary principle at work that underpins and frames all of this revolutionary upheaval, fragmentation, and perpetual insecurity. The principle resides in what he calls, most abstractly, 'value in motion' or, more simply, the circulation of capital restlessly and perpetually seeking new ways to garner profits. By the same token, there are higher-order co-ordinating systems that seem to have the power – though in the end Marx will insist that this power is itself transitory and illusory – to bring order to all this chaos and set the path of capitalist modernization on a more stable terrain.

## 2.2 Modernity on the time process and spatial dimension

On the time process, modernity Show the different game rules at different periods. The development of modernity is not a liner process. The change from Fordism to flexible accumulation trigger the transform from industry to post-industry development. The more flexible motion of capital emphasizes the new, fleeting, ephemeral, fugitive, and contingent style in modern life, rather than the solid values implanted under Fordism. To the degree that collective action was thereby made more difficult – and it was indeed a central aim of the drive for enhanced labour control to render it thus – so rampant individualism fits into place as a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for the transition from Fordism to flexible accumulation.

And on the spatial dimension, it also has different characters of modernity between core area and non-core area. On Non-core area, the lack of original stable social elite system and capital accumulation system leads to their constantly changing status.Capital investment here will not face many obstacles for infringing upon the interests of other elite groups. So non-core areas are usually

## 2.3 China's situation

International and Globalization have had direct or indirect impacts on China's economic and urban transformations. From the global perspective, China's economic reform is more than simply a transition from central planning to a "market economy with Chinese characteristics" as Deng Xiaoping envisioned, although this trend has been clearly evident. On the other hand, socialist countries' shift away from state socialism can be seen as part of the massive global change in the mode of regulation and the regime of accumulation that began in the advanced capitalist states. Viewed on this way, China's urban transformation involves not just one but several global processes occurring simultaneously that have affected the production of space, urban consumption and the circulation of capital, people and technology.

Each of these shifts has strongly impacted one or more aspects of the social, economic and spatial structures of the Chinese city. The consequences of such restructuring processes are manifested in new urban realities that together constitute a new urban mosaic and spatiality for China which, despite lingering elements of the past, is visibly very different from that of the pre-reform era. The new urban realities have been created by the transfer of massive amounts of global and domestic capital to the built environment. The sunken capital is spatially fixed, and as usual, the spatial fixity of the newly reconfigured urban elements ensures their existence for at least decades to come until they become dilapidated, dated or are otherwise rendered unfit for the city. As long as it exists, the existing spatiality of the city will have reciprocal effect on the forces of economic and urban transformation that created it in the first place.

## 3 THE MODERNITY HISTORY OF SUZHOU RIVER DISTRICT

Shanghai, as China's earliest open port city, establishes and led the development of China's modern industry, in the frontier of the China's modernization. Among this city, there is a river, winding flow over 5000 years, breed almost more than half of the ancient Shanghai. Then, she spend 100 years "build" the initial frame of

international metropolis of modern Shanghai. It's the Suzhou River, the downstream of WuSongJiang, flows through Shanghai downtown reach into the Huangpu River. It also be called "Suzhou Creek" by British and American who find its superior geographical position very suitable for a inland shipping port. Due to Shanghai's role as trade port, the coast of Suzhou river started her urbanization process, with the expansion of the foreign settlement, from the the east mouth to the west gradually. Since the 1930s, Suzhou Creek became an important shipping route. For more than one hundred years, the process of urban rapid development together with human influence have controlled this area. It covered by the need of social and economic structure change. The modernity history of Suzhou river district reflect the modernization of Shanghai, it also became the typical representative of the course of Chinese modernity.



Fig. 1: The position of the Suzhou River and the area for research.

Suzhou river area is located on non-core areas of city, although some part of it adjacent to the downtown area of Shanghai, it reflect the unrest and unending redevelopment condition that different with core area which always have the stable capital accumulation and elite relationship. In the push of modernity, the region has experienced several evolution. On early period, the colonial economy, national industrial economy and warehousing on both sides of Suzhou river estuary area created the Suzhou river coast's early brilliant. After the founding of China, Industry, Shipping and Business get further development, sustained the economy property of both side of river. It became the important areas for Shanghai to expand modern industrial development. But at the end of last century, the shipping commerce and industry along Suzhou River receded. With relocation of the industry in Shanghai city center to the suburb, the economic hollow phenomenon of Suzhou River region after withdrawing from industrialization is conspicuous. Plus the water pollution, Suzhou River region declines. But at the turn of this century as the river water and the nearby areas underwent comprehensive treatment along with the rise of creative industry and the redevelopment, Suzhou River region will be hot cake once more. Below is a brief account and analysis of the development background in three periods, the driving force, changes of spatial and social structures, which reflect the features of modernization in Suzhou River region.

### 3.1 The early stage

The development along the bank of Suzhou River started from the land to the southwest of the junction of Suzhou River and Huangpu River. After the Opium War, George Balfour, consul of the British Consulate in Shanghai, thought highly of this land, which was not far from Shanghai and which served as a strategically important rear. Upon being taken as the British concession, this area started the construction of economic facilities, with various foreign firms making investment here. With the Bund being the center, the construction extended westward. Based on the spatial pattern, cultural, recreational, and public facilities were gradually established, making this area a comprehensive business residential zone. In the 1930s, the area between the Garden Bridge of Shanghai and the north bank of Henan Road developed into a sophisticated business and residential area. The area along the eastern section of Suzhou River thus became a cluster area of foreigners and businessmen in Shanghai.

However, with Henan Road as a boundary, there appeared two situations along the bank of Suzhou River, particularly the area in the southern bank: in the east stood tall and spacious western buildings; in the east lied low and clustering Chinese constructions. There was a massive flow of refugees due to the war. The concession took the opportunity to build a large number of houses and sell them to the Chinese. As a result,

the concession gradually turned to a place where the Chinese and foreigners lived together, showing an evident divergence in the spatial pattern.

In the 1920s and 1930s, a great number of quay sheds emerged along the riverbank. After Shanghai opened its ports, British businessmen stopped opium trafficking and focused on the trading of raw silk and tea. The light industrial products produced in the upper reaches of Suzhou River were also transported here for storage. As a result, lots of transit sheds and warehouses were built in the 1920s. When it comes to the 1930s and 1940s, numerous Chinese and western banks built frame-structured capped warehouses made of reinforced concrete and without girders, at the back of which the old lanes were renovated into the new-style Shikumen (literally “stone gate”) houses.



Fig. 2: The old Suzhou River as a hustling trade port

During this process, there formed three obvious sections along Suzhou River: the first section is the Bund between the estuary and the bridge of Henan Road, which is a “golden district” with foreign consulates, parks, foreign banks, churches, post offices, etc.; the second section is the quay between Henan Road and the present Shimen Road, which is a “storehouse business zone” with numerous transit sheds and warehouses; the third section is the “storehouse industrial zone” in the west of Shimen Road with a cluster of large enterprises.

It cannot be denied that Suzhou River area is developed with a capitalistic promotion. External capital inflow changed the original farming culture, and attracted many nonlocal population, and changed the social environment here. Though it's the beginning of the one-hundred history of Suzhou River, similar stories happened from then on.

### 3.2 The Industry period

#### 3.2.1 The background of Industry development

The formation of Shanghai modern industrial, originated from the first opium war of china, is push forward by Treaty of Nanjing , which signed to western country,that Shanghai was forced to open the treaty port. After the treaty, the Western Imperial Powers made Shanghai as the center to achieve the trade aggression of China, this is the first important cause that accelerate Shanghai modern industrial development. The other cause is the power from the China's national entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs hope to increase the comprehensive national strength of China through the development of industry. So such industrial development has been the support by the national patriotic groups and the government of at that time.

From 1860s, foreign businessmen began to open factories in China, mainly north to Suzhou River and west to Huangpu River. It stimulated people of insight to develop national industries. With the ideal of “saving the nation by engaging in industry”, national capital in Shanghai started. With shipping advantage connecting rivers, seas and the mainland, Suzhou River became an earlier national industry center of China. Along the river west to Xizang Road, many factories were built. By 1920s, there were dozens of big spinning mills, flour mills, oil pressing mills, and engineering works along the banks; according to statistics, in the 21 flour mills of the city, 18 flour mills along Suzhou river produced 90 % flour of the industry. Big chemical companies and 70 % of small and medium-sized dye works located along Suzhou River. By 1949, there were 1914 factories and companies in Huxi Industrial Zone, and many of them are important in their industries in China. By the reform and opening-up, Huxi Industrial Zone was an important old industrial zone and the

most important textile industry center of Shanghai. Therefore, Suzhou River is the birth place of Shanghai's national industries.

Almost one hundred years, Shanghai modern industrial development bit by bit, began with the passive push of the war, go through the main construction after the founding of new China, then undergo the rapid development after since the reform and opening-up of China. Then Shanghai became the main industrial center of China among.

The industrialization development of Suzhou river area was supported by the government, and here both private and state-owned collective economics seeks the benefits of industrialization development. At this time, the development of Suzhou River was promoted jointly by the government and private enterprises.

### 3.2.2 The specificity of spatial character & social situation

#### Industrial expansion caused heavy environmental pollution

After the founding of the nation, Shanghai gradually changed to a single industrial center city. By expanding existing factories and building new factories, the industry developed faster, especially after the great leap forward in 1958. According to the investigation in 1936, there were more than 2200 factories in Shanghai, and in the 2039 factories in urban area, there were 1186 factories in midstream and downstream area of Suzhou River, accounting 58 % of the urban factories. These factories were administrated by seven bureaus including textile, machine and electricity, light industry, metallurgy, chemical industry, instrument, and manual, and especially the chemical industry, metallurgy and machine and electricity account more significant of the urban factories.

The industrialization along the river developed with more poor-efficiency, high-energy, high-pollution and water-consuming papermaking, chemical and casting companies, at the same time, as a poor area of Shanghai, Suzhou river area has the most immigrate population. Emission of industrial waste and sanitary sewage made Suzhou River heavily polluted. With more reeling mills, flour mills, iron factories and paper mills, Shanghai's industries and commerce grew. As freight volume increased, then function of Suzhou

River as inland transportation was enhanced, and many timber docks, fruit docks, rice docks and rubbish docks were built along the river. Soon, the river became black and smelly, fish and shrimp disappeared, and Suzhou River became a stinking river.

In 1930s, a reporter Dong Ping wrote in his book Interviews of the Slum: Suzhou river of Shanghai rotted like a dead snake. From Caojiadu to Fanwangdu, the erosion was too heavier too be recognized that the water polluted by sludge became terribly black and stinking.



Fig. 3: The early factories and river pollution after industrial boom

#### A lot of shanty towns

Textile mills and textile machinery factories spread along the Suzhou River in Shanghai. Women from other cities worked in textile mills while men in the textile machinery factories. They came batches after batches with fellow villagers and relatives, then slowly gathered and built private houses which are now villages. Consequently on the wastelands, ruins, cemeteries, garbage sites and places including both sides of the Suzhou River and other river banks, there appeared a variety of shanty towns. And during the Anti-Japanese War, a large number of civil houses were destroyed in Shanghai eastern downtown area and batches of displaced refugees poured into the shanty towns, setting up rows of houses on the remaining empty lands.

According to then social bureau's incomplete statistics, shacks totaled 50000. After the civil war, ruined peasants from the rural war zones swarmed into Shanghai for survival, thus shanty towns saw another large expansion of residents.

Till the 1940s, Shanghai traditional shanty towns basically formed: by referring to then social bureau's incomplete statistics, poor migrants and refugees especially from Jianghuai watershed built or rent cheap shacks on the north shore of Suzhou River, both sides of railways and the surrounding wild wastelands, which gathered and later became urban slums besieging Chinese downtown and concession inside Shanghai. And the reason why these refugees crowded here was because on the one hand the Chinese downtown's protection, on the other the industrialization here can provide lots of jobs. Shanghai municipal authorities once tried to control the spread of shanty towns, but the clearing and settlement measures cannot stop the influx of refugees as well as the their demands and determinations of building shacks.

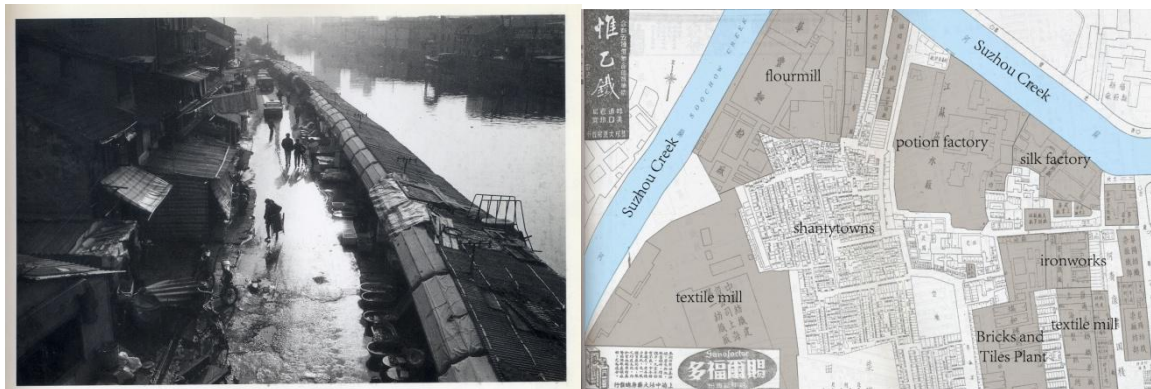


Fig. 4.: A lot of shanty towns packaged by industrial plant

### 3.2.3 The influence of modernity on Industrial period

Industrialization is considered to be the contributor to the progress of modernity. In the period of industrial prosperity, a large amount of capitals flood into the Suzhou River Area and many people are attracted to live here, which rapidly boost the modernization progress in this region. This is also one of the important approaches for China and other cities in the world to advance their modernity. In addition, what else does industrialization leave for cities? The previous farmlands are replaced by factories in a flash. The original social system of agricultural civilization is gradually disappearing, instead, there are full of workers from different regions and of different backgrounds. They care neither the history of this land nor the continuity of such history. Just like the capitalists making investment and development here, they are also interest-oriented. Therefore, these lead to the region's unstable future. The industrial recession and serious environmental pollution will reduce the value generating by the region. Bothe investors and workers hope to seek better living space without any attachment. It is just this kind of industrial modernity that separate people from space and become independent to each other.

Obviously, it is capitals that promote all the reforms in the boom period of the Suzhou River Area. Since Suzhou River is located at the edge of the core zone, plenty of land is the foundation for the concentration of industrial factories, and sparse farmlands serve as the unstoppable social basis for the rapid development of industrial agglomeration. Generally speaking, capital investment here will not face many obstacles for infringing upon the interests of other elite groups. This explains why non-core zones are usually more unstable compared with core zones in the modernization process.

The essence of capital lies in its pursuit of maximized interests. The intervention of capital turns agricultural civilization into industrial civilization. The pursuit of capital without any control has completely ignored the ecological environmental value, which turned the Suzhou River into a heavily polluted black river. Moreover, the large population introduced for the purpose of industrial construction has also upgraded the social and space structure in this region. A large number of shanty towns are scattered among the factories, which is a problem for future urban development.

### 3.3 The Post-Industry period

#### 3.3.1 The background of redevelopment

Around 1995, Shanghai started a strategy of withdrawing from the secondary industry and progressing into the tertiary industry. It replaced contaminative manufacturing industry with service sectors. With the changes of history, a large number of flour mills, paper mills and old warehouses built in the industrial age near Suzhou River were abandoned. The once bustling industrial space gradually silenced. On the other hand, the cleaning of heavily polluted Suzhou River gained the government's attention and support to improve the overall image of the city and develop urban waterfront areas. Thus, the city space near Suzhou River stepped into a new stage of development.

By analyzing the region's early development after withdrawing from industrialization, spontaneity and chance could be clearly found in the early agglomeration. During this period, the water quality was poor and surrounding environment terrible, while the main reasons why creation practitioners concentrated could be attributed to the charm of architectural art for architects, the intrinsic history of buildings, laid-back environment as well as cheap rent. The agglomeration contributed to the spontaneous concentration of art warehouses, communities along Suzhou River, which gradually developed to a scale.

With the later startup of environmental renovation project, this place became the hot cake for a new round of real estate investment. Of the real estate along Suzhou River from 1998 to 2002, the western section was originally industrial land later turned into residential land while the middle section was originally storehouse land converted into residential land and renovated. After reconstruction in several early years of new century, old warehouses and factory buildings along the banks were demolished to a large extent.

Because the overall cost of the Suzhou River renovation project was huge, Shanghai municipal government could not depend only on the government finance to appropriate such a large sum of money. Therefore, the capital for the treatment of Suzhou River could only be obtained through attracting investments from developers. There was nothing wrong in inviting outside investment and let capital involve in the renovation of Suzhou River. When the water became clearer, and small swimming fishes reappeared in the river, from the government and media to the residents living near Suzhou River all cheered for it. However, with the proceeding of the investment attraction job and the constant involvement of capital and power, new contradictions started to appear. First, eager for quick success and instant benefits, and haunted by political achievement consciousness, local government approved some of the projects that even themselves felt inappropriate. Second, the planning of Suzhou River lagged, but the real estate development along the river were proved before the planning, which led to a disordered state.

Although the land redevelopment of the region along the Suzhou River had started, its pace significantly lagged behind the water body treatment and lagged behind the other parts of the city. The reason was that under the condition of market economy, the major force that drove the development and construction of the city was real estate developers. And the success or failure was the key factor for the developers to make decisions about development activities. Even the redevelopment of common areas had the problems of high cost and complicated implementation links and operating procedures which make the success or failure of development difficult to predict, the riverside areas had more odious environmental conditions (including black and dirty river water and unpleasant smell.) which could not be solved with the power of individual developers. Because of the huge risks, most of the developers took a wait-and-see attitude and did not dare to rashly get involved in. The government, on the other hand, did not have enough capital, which led to the lag of land redevelopment of the riverside areas. Therefore, in the nearly 20 years of development after 1995, the Suzhou River Area did not form a unified development pattern. Instead, bits and pieces of creative industrial development zone and high-grade residential areas appeared.

#### 3.3.2 The specificity of spatial character & social situation

##### Creative Industry Development along Suzhou River

Along Suzhou River, creative industry agglomeration forms a creative industry band along the river gathering area, like pearls threaded into one string. In early times, Suzhou River banks attracted a lot of artists and creative personnel to engage in creative activity. Along the Suzhou River from west to east, influential creative industry parks listed by the Shanghai government are concentrated here such as Zhoujia Bridge creative center, M50 and Laosihang warehouse. This creative industry band spans several

administrative regions, forms a group of creative industries feature design, animation, games, media and advertising, and reflects the integration of warehouse culture and riverside culture. Creative activities with creative personnel as the main body gather along the river. The historic buildings rent for self use initially by the artists and creative personnel are gradually leased to other studios. Creative cluster areas form through large-scale investment and creative enterprises settle down as a result of friends' or clients' introductions, so this tightens the social network relationship between enterprises. Therefore, Suzhou River region constitutes the synonym for creative industry as well as culture and art industry, also a must for foreign visitors to hunt for old Shanghai's culture.



Fig. 5: The distribution of the creative industry along Suzhou river area

### High-grade Close Residential

The profit-chasing of capital is quite manifesting in the coastal development of Suzhou River. With the constant listing of new houses in market, the Suzhou River area has been divided into blocks by land agents. Property developers lose no time to hang out the banner of Private Garden, the intention of which is quite obvious. They want to take possession of Suzhou River which belongs to the public by themselves. At the same time, most of the new districts alongside the Suzhou River are characterized by Two High and One Low, namely high density, high volume rate and low greening rate. The motivation of property developers is to maximize profit, so they are constantly decreasing the distance between the building and Suzhou River and increasing the height of buildings. Suzhou River will become the Building Canyon in city.



Fig. 6: The image of High-grade Close Residential along the riverside that made the river landscape into private

At the same time, independent high-grade residential districts cut off social connections between areas and turn them into groups with no relationship with each other. The high-grade residential and the hardly developed shantytowns around turn up alternatively. Fraternization of social structure and privatization of riverside space become the new social space characteristics alongside the Suzhou River. People who have lived there for half of their life have to move. The public life involving turning coal ball furnace, cooking, eating, chatting, bowl washing and playing cards has also been dissolved.



### 3.3.3 The influence of modernity on Post-Industrial period

The industrial transformation in Shanghai has brought an end to the era of capital accumulation when industrial mass production was prevalent. What come as a consequence are land economy and a kind of production method that lay emphasis on individuals, diversity and flexibility. As a result, real estate development and creation industry come to the historical stage of a new round of modernization development. Without stopping for a rest after the industrial era, the Suzhou River area sees large amounts of capitals flooding into the area again. With the success in wastewater treatment several years ago, bulldozers are approaching to the old warehouses and factories along the bank of the river. This area once again becomes an ideal destination for investment pursued by estate agents. The development of upscale closed regions and the establishment of creation studios have turned today's Suzhou River area into a place that is combined with private possessions and architectural canyon. Located in Shanghai, the River is affiliated to the capital rather than Shanghai residents.

The intervention of capital separates not only the Suzhou River area alone, but also the old residents living along the bank of the river. The comprehensive improvement of the Suzhou River also involves the relocation of tens of thousands of residents. The social structure of original residents is crumbled. This is another great change of space and social structure in this region pushed by the capital. The stable essence that capital pursues profits in this region has not been fundamentally changed, while the characteristics of modernity such as transience, flowage and separation are still on the stage in this region. In the post-industrial era, the capital accumulation methods have been changed to a new round of flexible capital investment, which separate this region into many independent capital territories and further result in a fragmented urban space.

### 3.4 Stable and flowing of Suzhou River area

The development of the Suzhou River area is a continuously upgrading history. From commodity logistics in the colonial period, to the large scale modern industrial development, and to the post-industrial upgrading, the Suzhou River area has seen great changes in its space and social structure. The earliest colonial banks, warehouses and ports were transformed into factories with fumes everywhere in short period of time. The banks of the river were filled with large numbers of factories and scattered shanty towns. But industrialization cannot keep its story going. With Shanghai's industrial development becoming a history, Suzhou River used to be abandoned due to the heavy pollution. But later, with the post-industrial development, it becomes hotbed for the creation industry, informal economies and a new round of estate development. At the same time, people here are changing along with the ups and downs of capital investment. Located in the non-core zone, it lacks the strong and stable society root and capital accumulation. Therefore, the area located at the edge of the core zone is, on the one hand, an ideal destination for investment, and the most volatile region on the other.

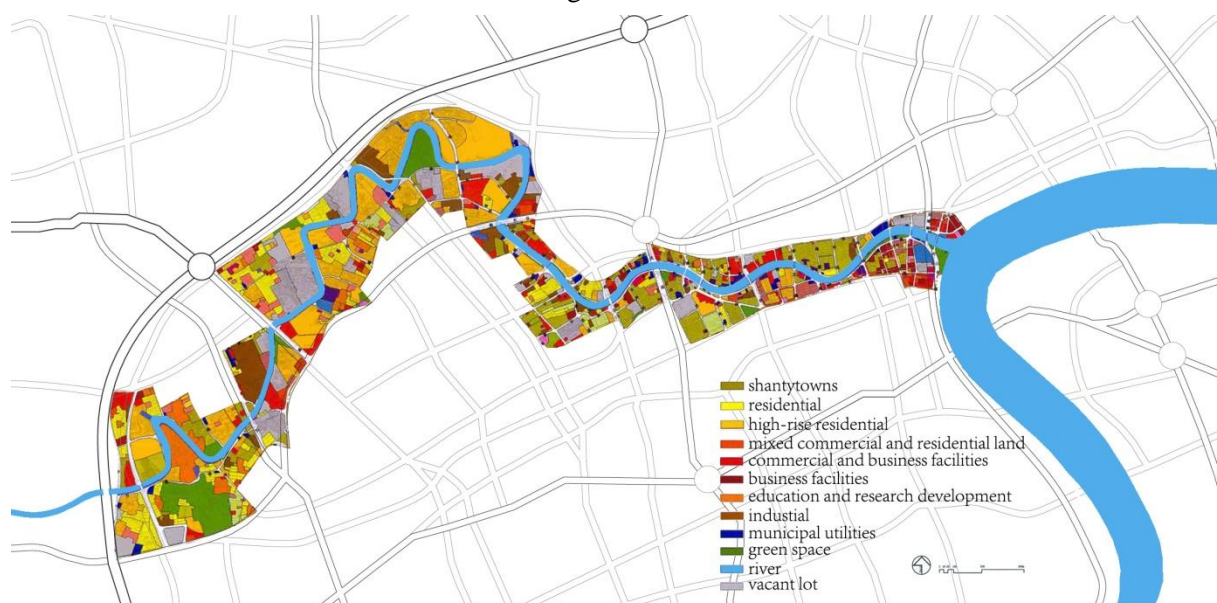


Fig. 7: The fragmentatized land use of suzhou creek area

In all the transience, flowage, separation and accidents, the only stable thing is the continuously emerging impetus of capital. Both the colonial investment and the later alliance of government and estate agencies are the powerful alliance of political and capital elites who deem urban space as the capital growth machine. Finally, under the continuous stimulation and erosion of capital, urban space becomes an aggregate for value investment. Independent urban functions and closed residential apartments form a fragmented collage here.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

Modernity shows the features of transience, flowage, separation and accidents. “Change” becomes the everlasting element of modernity. In the pursuit of modernity, cities are faced with constant changes. People and space are separated into two mobile entities. The location sense of space has been greatly removed. It is the essence of profit pursuit that pushes the city’s constant change and become the only stable thing in all the changes.

The each stages of China’s modernization are influenced by the push from capitals from different kinds of promoters. From the earliest foreign colonial capital flooding, to the national capitals and the later state-owned collective capitals, then to the combination of post-industrial national investment and private investment, all these show the impetus of the alliance of capital and political elites acting on modernization progress. On this process, the daily living space of common people was placed at an inferior position. This is also one of the essential characteristics of modernity development.

The development of Suzhou River is a special but typical case represented a common phenomenon in the modernization of non-core urban zones. The lack of original stable social elite system and capital accumulation system leads to their constantly changing status. This district was firstly opened up by the foreign capital, and then achieved rapid urbanization and population accumulation with the development of industrialization. But as the value decline of this kind of scale accumulation, the original investment capital and population began to flee. Then the new capital will get involved to find scattered investment values on the wasteland. Neither the government nor capitalists are capable of carrying out an all-round large-scale reform. Therefore the city is transferred into a fragmented state becoming a piece of collage. This is described as a post-modernity, which is only a new round of modernity “change”, a continuity of its stable essence of “profit pursuit”.

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