

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PUBLIC ART AND SOFT CITY
CONSTRUCTION IN CHINA: AN
EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS BASED ON
BEIJING AND SHANGHAI**

DENG JIANFENG

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ABSTRACT

This research, based on an interdisciplinary perspective, employs methods including literature analysis, case studies, questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and interventional research to systematically explore the inherent connections between public art and soft city development in China. Chapter 1, Introduction, details the research's background, motivation, questions, significance, limitations, and research hypotheses. Chapter 2 provides a detailed literature review of the literature needed for this research topic and, based on this, summarizes the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology. Chapters 4 through 7 further explore the soft city era—opportunities for public art development, approaches to building soft cities from a public art perspective, and case studies of Chinese public art within the context of soft cities. Through analysis of representative cases in Beijing and Shanghai and cross-national comparisons, the paper reveals the core role of public art in shaping urban safety, comfort, and enjoyment and enhancing urban cultural identity. It also identifies three key principles for soft city development: art-driven spatial creation, multi-participatory governance mechanisms, and sustainable development empowered by humanities. This research innovatively constructs a theoretical framework for "public art driving soft cities," proposing a three-dimensional methodology encompassing policy support, community collaboration, and artistic intervention, providing a practical path for building soft power in Chinese cities in the new era. The conclusion confirms that public art has become a key carrier for the construction of soft city systems through the dual dimensions of optimizing material space and shaping spiritual values.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Currently, 3.9 billion people live in cities in the world. According to scientists' calculations, it is expected that the world's population will rise to 6.5 billion by 2050, and the proportion of urbanized population will reach 70%. China's urbanization rate in 2022 will be 65.22%, an increase of 0.50 percentage points from the end of 2021. China's urbanization is also very rapid. With the continuous expansion of urban physical space and the continuous creation of hard cities, China's urban diseases have also begun to appear. Therefore, Chinese urban researchers and sociologists are working hard to call on the public to re- Think about the way urban life, urban management and urban design ensure that cities are humane, warm, safe, rich and sustainable.

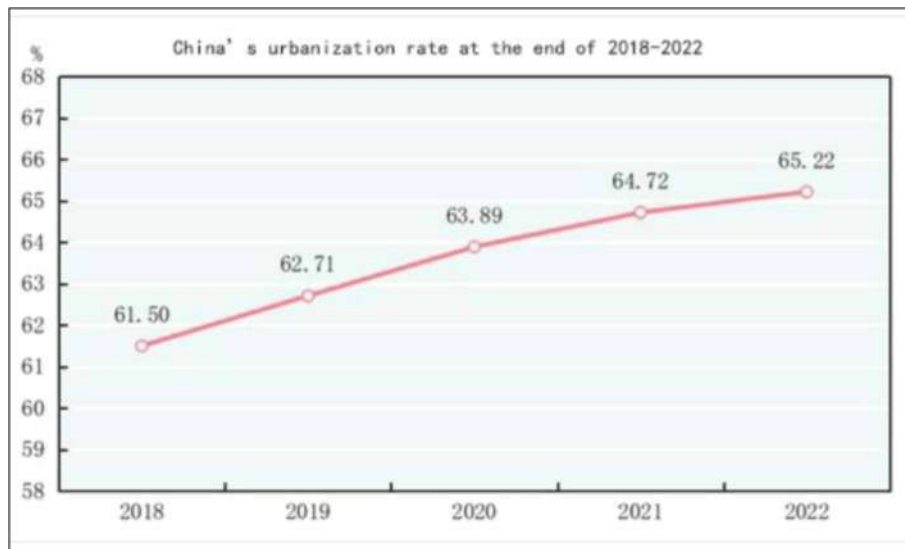


Figure 1.1 China's Urbanization Rate at the End of 2018-2022

Sources: Statistical Bulletin of the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China in 2022. (p.7)

In the context of world urbanization, cities around the world are moving from large-scale to intelligent and sustainable development. Current urban researchers categorize the systematic structure of cities into hard cities, soft cities and resilient cities. The hard city is the framework and filler of physical space construction, the soft city is the carrier of urban culture, civilization, aesthetics and humanism, and the