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Competing Visions of the Modern: Urban Transformation and Social Change of
Changchun, 1932-1957

By

Yishi Liu

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Architecture
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Nezar AlSayyad, Chair
Professor Greig Crysler
Professor Wen-Hsin Yeh

Fall 2011

Abstract

Competing Visions of the Modern: Urban Transformation and Social Change of Changchun, 1932-1957

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Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Nezar AlSayyad, Chair

Examining the urban development and social change of Changchun during the period 1932-1957, this project covers three political regimes in Changchun (the Japanese up to 1945, a 3-year transitional period governed by the Russians and the KMT respectively, and then the Communist after 1948), and explores how political agendas operated and evolved as a local phenomenon in this city. I attempt to reveal connections between the colonial past and socialist “present”. I also aim to reveal both the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism vis-à-vis Western colonialism from the perspective of the built environment, and the similarities and connections of urban construction between the colonial and socialist regime, despite antithetically propagandist banners, to unfold the shared value of anti-capitalist pursuit of exploring new visions of and different paths to the modern.

The first three chapters relate to colonial period (1932-1945), each exploring one facet of the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism in relation to Changchun’s urbanism. Chapter One deals with the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism as manifested in planning Changchun are the subject of the next chapter. Chapter Two charts out the plurality of architectural styles in the city, and analyzes the diversities, ambivalences, and ambiguities of urban construction in relation to the colonial rule. By using Yamamuro’s analogy of the client state to a hybrid beast of chimera, I examine in Chapter Three the nature of Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo from a perspective of state rituals and public pageantries.

The last two chapters depict Changchun’s development since 1945. Chapter Four pictures how the downtown of Changchun was reconstructed to meet new political agenda when Socialist Realism took sway of aesthetic programs in the city. Chapter Five explores Changchun’s urban expansion under Maoism: the construction of the First Automobile Works, a key project of Maoist industrialization. The purposes of the dissertation have been anchored by an overall objective to fill up this vacancy from the perspective of urban construction and urban life.

This dissertation has unfolded a proliferation of competing formulations of the modern in Changchun's urban history, some of which were inspired by Western paradigms while others were in sharp contrast with Western notions. In the competition for the dominance of the world, Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo and Chinese socialism both represented massive anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist qualities.

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Introduction

When I first went to Changchun in June 2004 as a graduate student of the School of Architecture at Tsinghua University, I was a member of a team that aimed to produce the twenty-year (2005-2025) strategic general plan for Changchun. We were introduced to local collaborators and were toured everywhere in the city. In order to complete the plan for architectural preservation as part of the larger project, I returned in August again, spending about forty days during that summer photographing and surveying old buildings, guided by two colleagues from Changchun's Bureau of Cultural Artifacts and Changchun's Institute of Urban Planning respectively. The three of us worked pleasantly, and I was impressed by the mild weather of early autumn in the Northeast. Despite Changchun's relatively short history of approximately two hundred years, I was surprised to discover the high standard of her buildings and the diversity of architectural styles that had been overlooked for a long time.

Soon after my arrival in Changchun, I was attracted by the well-planned urban space. In local people's words, the city is characterized by "wide avenues with rows of trees, circular plazas, red-roofed houses, and concrete structures." Before I first came to Changchun (and the Northeast), I had only sporadic information about the city: I heard of the Japanese client state of Manchukuo and knew Changchun was its capital, also the last emperor of the Qing was enthroned there by the Japanese as a puppet emperor, and then the city was the base of automobile industry under Communism. However, except for very little literature, colonial legacies had sunken from the sight and memory of the Chinese people for decades, especially that colonial architecture and city planning that, as a form of visual politics, continue to function in present-day Changchun. As David Buck noted, the Chinese encyclopedia volume on architecture, city planning and gardening published in the late 1980s contained no entry on Manchukuo, its capital city or Japanese colonial architecture.¹ It was not until 2000 when topics as such surfaced to public attention, partly because of the national policy to explore the Great West and Northeast, and they soon gained popularity in academia as well as in mass media. Fundamental change of research on Manchuria in general and Changchun in particular was underway when I was there in 2004.

As I gradually familiarized myself with the old buildings, I was intrigued by the historical evolution of the city and its built environment, which eventually became the subject of my graduate thesis filed in 2006. Most of the buildings we visited were built in the era of the puppet state of Manchukuo (1932-1945), but in order to balance 14-year Manchukuo era with the rest of Changchun's urban history, the Tsinghua team tried hard to add other buildings to the list, especially those of the early Communist era, and drew the preservation limits for them in the general plan. As such, I became especially

¹ David Buck. "Railway City and National Capital: Two Faces of the Modern in Changchun". In Joseph W. Esherick, ed. *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999.

interested in how political agenda, first colonialism then socialism, operated and evolved as a local phenomenon in Changchun? And how the relationships between Chinese architecture and the history of China's politics in the 20th century, having been first planned by the Japanese, and appropriated to different ideological effects in the People's Republic of China in the early 1950s, are made manifest in Changchun's urban history?

Attempts to answering these central questions have undergirded my years as a doctoral student on the other side of the Pacific. This dissertation thus centers on Changchun City and discusses how the city was imagined, built and changed during the period between 1932 and 1957. 1932 was the year Changchun was made the capital city of Manchukuo and was renamed "Xinjing," or New Capital, while 1957 was the ending year of Communist first Five-Year-Plan which marked the transformation of Changchun from a consumptive "capital city" to a socialist industrial city. In investigating Changchun's urban history of that period which covered as many as four regimes (the Japanese colonial rule from 1932-1945, the Russian military 1945-1946, the Kuomintang 1946-1948, and the Communist since 1948), I found some interesting connections between the modernizing programs of the colonial times and different decolonizing efforts. Therefore, the timeframe of my dissertation moves beyond the collapse of Manchukuo in 1945 and ends in the First Five-Year Plan (1953-57) of the People's Republic of China.

In a time when a few new nation-states were established in the aftermath of the World War I to represent the will of the people, the Manchukuo regime claimed instead to represent the essence of Asian culture, hence an inevitable connection between the Japanese colonial construction and later Chinese reconstruction of Changchun's urban landscape in the 1950s. To better understand the statecraft of the colonial rule and related urban construction, it is crucial to examine the idea of Pan-Asianism and its unique manifestation in Manchukuo, i.e. Wangdaoism or the Kingly Way, as crystallized in the declaration of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosporous Sphere" in 1940.

In the case of Changchun, like many other cities, the city (and state) building process involved the attempt to redefine and repackage the notion of "identity" and "modernity" under different regimes. As the title suggests, Changchun's urban transformation epitomized competing forces of exploiting and developing, Western and Eastern, colonizing and decolonizing, into new visions of the modern as alternative to Western civilizational discourses. The tension between different definitions and practices of cultural identity and modernity is a significant theme that weaves throughout the dissertation. I aim to reveal both the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism vis-à-vis Western colonialism from the perspective of the built environment, and the similarities and connections of urban construction between the colonial and socialist regime, despite antithetically propagandist banners, to unfold the shared value of anti-capitalist pursuit of exploring new visions of and different paths to the modern.

In order to better understand the urban transformation during the colonial and early Communist years, I will first outline Changchun's urban history since 1800 to the

1950s as the backdrop. In each phase of Changchun's urban development after the twentieth century, modernity found different forms in building and rebuilding the city, revealing that the vision of modernity is not constant or isolated from the larger political and cultural fabrics. Influenced by factors both indigenous and foreign, modernity is constantly reinvented to fit in new contexts and meet new needs.

I. A Brief History of Changchun until the 1950s

Changchun lies in the central plateau of the Northeast (dongbei), which region is also known in the West as Manchuria. Changchun was part of the property of Mongol princes with no admittance to Han Chinese immigrants until the late eighteenth century when such policy gradually got loosened. The first administrative office was set up on the far southern outskirts of present-day Changchun in 1800, to take care of the increasing number of Han Chinese immigrant peasants.² In the nineteenth century, Changchun remained a small trading town, except that the seat of the administrative office was moved to the north, a place local people called "Kuangchengzi" (broad walled town), due to frequent flood of Yitong River.

Changchun existed as only a small trading town in central Manchuria in the most part of the nineteenth century, and had established its status as a frontier garrison and a trading center of beans.³ The Sino-Russian Secret Treaty signed in 1896 allowed Russia run a chain of settlements along the to-be-built Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) across Manchuria with extraterritorial jurisdiction along. The Russians began the construction of a settlement around 1900 at the northern part of today's Changchun, so-called Kuanchengzi at the time.

In the wake of the victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, Japan gained control over the southern half of the railway and Changchun became the breaking point between the two halves of the line, and the urban status of Changchun was elevated to a new height suddenly. The South Manchurian Railway Company (SMR, or better known as Mantetsu in Japanese), a quasi-official corporation created as an equal of British Eastern India Company to take charge of modernizing programs in this region, became the most important driving force behind the pursuit of modernity along the railway.⁴ Having abandoned the existing Russian railway station and settlement, the Japanese built in Changchun their own railway settlement, or annexed land railway (Ch: *fushudi*; Jp: *fuzokuchi*). Guided by modern planning principles and technologies such as broad streets, urban parks, plazas and all sorts of amenities needed for modern urban life, it became the most prosperous part of Changchun and Japanese immigrants were

² Yu Jing. *Changchun shi hua* (historical stories of Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 2001. see also Wang Jiping (ed.). *Chronicles of Jilin Provinces*. Changchun: Jilin People's Press, 1989.

³ Yu Jing. Also Bill Sewell. "Reconsidering the Modern in Japanese History: Modernity in the Service of the Prewar Japanese Empire". *Japan Review*, 2004, 16:213-258. David D. Buck. "Railway City and National Capital". Joseph W. Esherick (ed.). *Remaking The Chinese City: Modernity and Nationality Identity, 1900-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999, pp.65-68.

⁴ Such as operated ports, shipping lines, warehouses, telegraphic communications, urban construction, and other endeavors.

attracted to settle in this small town.

However, Changchun's SMR town was not the only part of Changchun to boast modernity in Western notion after 1905. Some progressive Chinese officials developed a new area between the Japanese railway town and old walled Chinese city, and named it a "commercial district" (Ch: *shangbudi*), where Chinese visions of modernity can be found in this area for economic and political completion with the Japanese.

It was during the 1920s that the rising tide of Chinese nationalism under the warlord regime of Zhang Zuoling and Zhang Xueliang clashed violently with Japan.⁵ As a result of a chain of conflicts, the Japanese Guandong Army (also spelt as Kwantung Army) occupied the whole Manchuria in 1931 in the aftermath of Manchurian Incident (known also as "9/18 Incident"), and a puppet state of Manchukuo was established the next year.

Arising from the basis of a previous railway city, Changchun was made the capital city of Manchukuo, also known as Xinjing (or Hsinking), and became the venue to display "new" modernity to the outside world, as indicated by its name. Despite all sorts of modern amenities found in Western metropolis, the previous fragmented urban sections were incorporated into a larger plan, so called the 1932 Capital Plan, and various urban construction were initiated under the banner of Wangdaoism (the way of the king, or the kingly way), the specific form of pan-Asianism in Manchukuo that embraced ethnic harmony and Confucian values such as filial piety and loyalty. As such, Confucian virtues and moralities rather than materialistic concerns occupied a more conspicuous place in Wangdaoism or the Kingly Way, the state ideology of Manchukuo as demonstrated in physical form of and people's life in the city. The construction and urban life of the capital city at Changchun will be one of the main subjects of this dissertation.

Indeed, when the Pacific War broke out in 1941 most of the urban construction had come to a halt and resources were drained to the war. When the Japanese were defeated in August 1945, the city was taken over by the Russian Red Army, and shortly it once again became the battle field of Chinese Civil War. The deterioration of the city continued into the early 1950s when Manchuria was the home front for the Korean War (1950-1953). However, the Commission of the first Five-Year-Plan selected the outskirts of Changchun for the site of the First Automobile Works, which effectually changed the image of the city into a socialist industrial base. In the meantime, fundamental changes occurred in the middle and late 1950s when a number of public buildings were erected in downtown Changchun to house administrative, educational and cultural facilities, as well as the renaming and reusing of many colonial buildings for similar purposes. It is since then that Changchun has been recalled as China's famous "Auto City," "Movie City," and "City of Science, Technology and Culture,"⁶ instead of a

⁵ Rana Mitter, 2000. *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁶ State Departments of the PRC. "On the Urban Status of Changchun". 2003-5-17.

colonial capital city that bore infamous stigma, although some of colonial legacies are still functioning today.

II. Two Overarching Themes of the Dissertation

It is apparent that the study of architecture and city planning is a complex cultural formation that is part of a larger discursive field by which it is influenced and in which it actively participates. I intend to discuss below two interrelating themes that embrace the main issues of this research: the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism, and the relationship of the colonial and socialist rule as manifested in the built environment. I argue that Japanese pan-Asian ideology in Manchukuo is central to understand physical construction and cannot be simply dismissed as a camouflage of the brutality of Japanese imperialism. I also argue the built environment of Changchun offers visual interpretation to the idiosyncraticies of Japanese colonial practices in Manchukuo and Communist modernizing projects, and uncovers connections between the two.

Japanese Imperialism in Manchukuo

Anti-imperialist nationalism became popular amongst colonial and semi-colonial countries in the wake of World War I. In China, the nationalist sentiment was, in Liang Qichao's words, awakened in the aftermath of China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), and attained a new height in the May 4th movement in 1919. Although the May 4th movement was mainly directed against Japanese imperialism, an equally nationalistic and anti-imperialist movement was bred in the Japanese home islands to resist the West.

That the Western powers refused to recognize Japan as an equal in the Washington Naval Conference and passed anti-Asian immigration laws in the US in the early 1920s disillusioned many Japanese. Under the slogan of "Returning to Asia," experimentation associated with new colonial policies emerged in Korea in the 1920s. The new strategy of "Cultural Rule" marked a shift in colonial cultural policy from the one based on coercion to the one based on pacification.⁷ This associative policy was epitomized in the 1929 Seoul Exposition which was an emblem of "Japan-Korea cooperation" and gathered "the spirit of the Far East" in order to prosper on its own.⁸

The new Japanese politics of colony became full-fledged in Manchukuo after its establishment in 1932. As Prasenjit Duara has observed, "Japanese exploitation of colonies was accompanied by increases in productive capacity. ... [T]he accumulated per capita British investment in India and Japanese investment in Korea were eight dollars and thirty-eight dollars respectively in 1938. ... (While the Japanese) maintained ultimate control of their dependencies through military subordination, they created and maintained

⁷ Michael A. Schneider, "The Limits of Cultural Rule: Internationalism and Identity in Japanese Responses to Korean Rice," in Gi-wook Shin and Michael Robinson ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999.

⁸ Hong Kal. "Modeling the West, Returning to Asia: Shifting Politics of Representation in Japanese Colonial Expositions in Korea". *Comparative Study of Society and History*, (2005):507-531.

a legally sovereign nation with political and economic structures that resembled their own.”⁹ It was the fact that massive investments and resources helped the process of industrialization which Prasenjit Duara calls “new imperialism” that differs from “theories of neocolonialism, which continue to emphasize underdevelopment and traditional forms of exploitation.”¹⁰ And Manchukuo was the “very first full-blown instance” of this new imperialist practice that heralded the Soviet Eastern bloc since the end of World War II.¹¹ Indeed, the Japanese made considerable economic investments in Manchuria, even while exploiting these regions, and attended to the modernization of institutions and identities. Deviated from previous imperialist experiences, Manchukuo heralded both the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere announced in 1940 to form regional bloc that promoted economic autarky as a means to gain global supremacy.

In the rhetoric of Japanese imperialism in Manchukuo, an anti-Western pan-Asian sentiment was ubiquitous. As Cemil Aydin argues, pan-Islamic and pan-Asian thought was the product of the “legitimacy crisis of a single, globalized, international system”, and also the content of alternative approaches of world order was shaped by the challenge to the intellectual justifications of late-nineteenth-century imperialism, especially through discourses of Orientalism and racism.¹² The ideology of pan-Asianism successfully depicted Japan’s role as both a victim to Western imperialism, legitimizing the Japanese to lead neighboring Asian nations against the West in a “Holy War” as their obligation.¹³

In Manchukuo, pan-Asianism had a unique manifestation of the “kingly way.” “Kingly way” first appeared in *The Mencius* as an ideal form of governance in classic old times. This conception in relation to pan-Asianism came out from a famous 1924 speech of Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of republic China, in Kobe, Japan, entitled “Greater Asianism” (*Da Yaxiyazhuyi*).¹⁴ Sun urged that Japan would have to choose between becoming “a willing handmaiden of Western imperialism or the great bastion of East Asia’s kingly way”. Sun Yat-sen’s conception of pan-Asianism drew inspirations from Confucian virtues of the “kingly way” (*wangdao*), an ideal that has long been used to designate virtuous governance based in benevolence, an approach contrasted with despotic rulership (*badao*).

⁹ Prasenjit Duara. “The Imperialism of ‘Free Nation’: Japan, Manchukuo, and the History of the Present”. In Aron Stoler, Carole McGranahan and Peter Perdue ed. *Imperial Formation*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid. In Duara’s words, “Although the U. S. is hardly a regional power any longer, as a global empire it employs ... a vast system of ‘political and military vassalage’ and fosters a ‘functional specialization between the imperial and vassal (nation) states....’ In this respect, the post-war US represents the apogee of the new imperialism.”

¹² Cemil Aydin. *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. “Introduction,” p.6.

¹³ The root of pan-Asianism went back to Meiji era when the Sinocentric world order collapsed, advocating the ideal of “solidarity with Asia” and the idea of “raising Asia” (*ko A*) or “developing Asia” (*shin A*), to align with other Asian nations to establish a new global order under Japanese leadership. For the historical development of pan-Asianism, see Sven Saaler. “Pan-Asianism in modern Japanese History”. In Sven Saaler and Victor Koschmann ed. *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

¹⁴ See Sun Yat-sen. Sun depicted Wangdao as benevolent way of rulership under ethical monarchs, as opposed to violent hegemon of the West (*badao*), calling for a return to the previous Sinocentric world order.

Therefore, Puyi, the last emperor of Qing dynasty was installed for the benevolent king, though he soon realized his role as merely a puppet head of the state while the Japanese military was the real owner of the client state. In Manchukuo's official accounts, not only the Western powers but previous warlord Zhang regime and Kuomintang regime were dismissed as despotic rulers.

It was reported that when the construction of the colonial capital was underway, Zheng Xiaoxu, Manchukuo's first Prime Minister and an ardent Confucian advocate, gave main streets "proper and beautiful names" based on Confucian ideals.¹⁵ For example, both the most important street of the city and the civic center were named after Confucian ideal of *datong*, or Great Unity, and the name of the main street of Manchukuo's administrative quarter was Shuntian (following the way of heaven), while its terminal vista plaza was Anmin (bringing peace to the people), showing the principle of the Kingly Way was a comprehensive concept based primarily on ethnic harmony, "following the way of heaven and bringing peace to the people" (*shuntian anmin*), and the principle of people as the basis of the state.

In addition to an Asian unity to overcome Western colonialism and materialism, the Japanese highlighted in Manchukuo the cultural and racial continuity with themselves, and Japanese pan-Asianism emphasized a cultural independence and the revival of indigenous tradition and ethics. In this vein, the content of a new modern was itemized, such as frugality and diligence, filial piety (*xiao*), loyalty to monarch (*zhong*), chastity of widowed women (*jie*), etc. The state of Manchukuo embodied the pursuit of the ideal of a moral state.

Duara notes the fluidity and vulnerability of colonial states under the new imperialism, "in part because the rapidly changing demands of global competition could, depending upon the circumstances".¹⁶ The status of Manchukuo evolved (or degenerated) from an ally of the Japanese Empire to "the eldest son of the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere". In Confucian language of "family state," the ethics of paternalism, such as children must obey their father and the younger obey the elder, should be practiced on a larger scale in national political life.

In investigating Japanese colonial rule in Manchukuo, the colonial built environment is an effective vehicle to observe how Japanese colonialism related to and differed from "classical" Western colonialism. The state makers of Manchukuo impugned the despotic and predatory nature of Western modernity, insisting the superiority of Confucian values and Asiatic moral systems emphasizing ethical responsibilities. In order to distinguish themselves from Western colonialism in the 1930s, the Japanese consciously looked into indigenous sources for inspiration and legitimacy from the very outset. In planning colonial Changchun, the siting and

¹⁵ Yang Zhaoyuan, *Changchun shi guihua zhi*. Unpublished manuscript; also Mantetsu keizai chosakai. *Shinkyō toshi kensetsu hosaku*, 1935, "Street," pp. 10-11.

¹⁶ Prasenjit Duara. "The Imperialism of 'Free Nation': Japan, Manchukuo, and the History of the Present". In Aron Stoler, Carole McGranahan and Peter Perdue ed. *Imperial Formation*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007.

orientation of the emperor's palace became a significant issue that defined the form of the city. Despite higher construction cost, the realized scheme located the palace at the center of the city, and a due north-south axis was closely observed as in traditional practices of Chinese capital building.

This juxtaposition of indigenous and Western elements in buildings was also practiced in British, French, Italian or Dutch colonies, but it was the preserved and temporarily-built buildings for ritual purposes that made Xinjing distinct, and indigenous traditions were revitalized and made an essential part of national political life. The most distinct example of this kind is the preservation of *xiao zi fen* (Temple of Dutiful Child), the symbolic representation of Confucian ideal of familial piety. Despite its intrusion into the newly-planned central avenue, *xiao zi fen* was, after rounds of debates, eventually preserved by the authority and was widely circulated for Manchukuo's new modern of a moral state. (Fig 1)

So far, I can conclude that, in the light of theories of New Imperialism, though Manchukuo as a client state was militarily subordinate to the metropole, the Japanese did intend to build a modern colonial state of Manchukuo both economically or institutionally. Through spatial interpretation of Manchukuo's state ideology of the Kingly Way, the pattern of planning Changchun differed not only from classical colonial urban planning, as the absence of obvious racial segregation to resonate the ideal of ethnic harmony; but differed from theories of high modernism, which emphasizes the zealous pursuit of rationality and efficiency in spite of existing cultural layers. The built environment thus serves a useful vehicle to study the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo.

In colonial Changchun, the dominant architectural style for governmental buildings, *Shin-A* (Developing-Asia) style (Fig 2), displays striking characteristics such as large sloping roofs on a functional plan. However, an aesthetic pluralism was omnipresent in the colonial capital, involving various ethnic, religious and cultural representations. In terms of architectural multiplicity, Changchun had an established tradition of incorporating different sources since the turn of the twentieth century, as Neo-classicism, Art Nouveau, bungalow, and eclecticism were all introduced in Changchun to compete with each other for modernization. However, since Changchun became the capital city in 1932, East Asian elements were elevated to boast the new mode of Japanese colonialism in unifying the Asian peoples to resist against Western incursions. I will try to prove in the following chapters that the ideals of the Kingly Way, such as cultural independence, ethnic harmony, and economic autarky, respect for the king, etc. all found distinct demonstration in the colonial built environment.



Fig 1 Xiaoqifeng at Datong Street with the railway station in the far background. Note the intrusion of the temple into the street.

Source: Shinkyo tokubetsushi chokan somuka. *Kokuto Shinkyo*. Shinkyo: Manshu jijo annaisho, 1940.



Fig 2 Hall of State Council, the typical building in Developing Asia style.

Source: Minami Manshu Tetsudo Kabushiki Kaisha. *Manshu shashincho*. Dalian: Chunichi Bunka Kyokai, 1925

The Manchukuo's national capital was designed as the chief exhibit displaying the magnanimous and progressive character of Japan's new leadership amongst Asian races. Its creators had hoped the model could be transferred back to Japan to purify the political and social corruptions.¹⁷ Gwendolyn Wright has characterized a similar mode among French colonial planners in which they saw colonies "as a terrain for working out solutions to some of the political, social, and aesthetic problems that plagued France."¹⁸ Years of rapid construction had attracted numerous talented Japanese architects to the nascent state of Manchukuo, amongst whom Maekawa Kunio, Sakakura Junzo, and Tange Kenzo, pioneers of post-war Japanese modernism, were most well-known. With the transfer of personnel and experiences, Manchukuo's new capital had fulfilled its role as what Gwendolyn Wright termed "an experiment yard".

Contradiction, Competition, and Correlation of Japanese Colonialism and Chinese Socialism

The central contradiction of Japanese colonial rule in Manchukuo was that the Japanese represented themselves as "victims of Western imperialism and racism" while building their own empire through the discourse of continuous culture and race as well as progressive science and technology. Much of the dissertation has been devoted to examining the discrepancies between the idealist ideology of the Kingly Way and the realities of urban life in the city. For example, based on the principle of "harmony of the five races" (*gozoku kyowai*), Manchukuo's highest educational institution, Nation Founding University (Kendai), aimed to promote ethnic harmony amongst students and

¹⁷ David D. Buck. "Railway City and National Capital". Joseph W. Esherick (ed.), *Remaking The Chinese City: Modernity and Nationality Identity, 1900-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999, pp.65-67

¹⁸ Gwendolyn Wright. *Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*. Chicago and London :The University of Chicago Press, 1991, p.3

“pioneering leaders in the establishment of a moral world.”¹⁹ The propagandized stipulations of campus life and spatial arrangement of dorms were said to enhance brotherhood of students of various ethnicities in Manchuria. However, discrimination of treatment such as food was generally practiced, and secret anti-Japanese associations questioning Japanese rulership in Manchuria were popular among young Chinese students, an indicator that Kendai failed to match its declared creed. Common inhabitants in the city were also put under close surveillance of the colonial government as an effective way for mobilization by means of various ritual and all sorts of volunteer work.

Yamamuro Shin'ichi in his famous work *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion* suggests that Manzhouguo can be likened as “the mythical chimera, a beast with the head of a lion, the body of a sheep, and the tail of a dragon. ... The lion is comparable to the Guandong Army, the sheep is the state of the emperor system, and the dragon the Chinese emperor and modern China.”²⁰ Manchukuo’s state pageantries and rituals, such as the coronation and worshipping rituals of Confucius (replaced by worshipping Amaterasu after 1937), indicated the ambiguities and conflicts among various forces at work in Manchukuo. It is explicit that the Japanese Guandong Army was above all the real master of the clumsy beast of chimera. As a result, the reality upholding the “harmony” of races in Manchukuo aimed to expel the heterogeneous elements to enforce obedience by bayonets. In this way, the divorce from political reality has made it manifest that Confucian ideals of virtuous governance and the Kingly Way become “little more than opportunistic idiom of Japanese aggression.”²¹

Though never explicitly elaborated in Manchukuo’s official accounts, the principle of the Kingly Way can be summarized as a comprehensive concept based primarily on following the way of heaven and bringing peace to the people (*shuntian anmin*), people as the basis of the state (*minben*), and ethnic harmony. The three principles, which as Yamamuro astutely understands, bore significance as each was to be the antithesis of the Three Principles of the People (*sanmin zhuyi*). Thus, one can easily see that the principle of the Kingly Way was used as a countermeasure against the Three Principles as well as against the Nationalist government and Republic of China as the sole legitimate government.²²

Competition of the visions and practices of the modern was an underlining theme throughout the Manchukuo era. The self-contradictory stance of Manchukuo’s pan-Asian ideology and Japan’s paternal practices was a characteristic of Manchukuo from its birth, and they constantly competed with, rather than complemented, one another within the colonial state. Also, the fear of an imminent war first with Russia and then

¹⁹ ZFGB, 1939, *Jianguo daxue ling* (Decree on the establishment of national founding university)

²⁰ Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006, “Introduction,” p.7.

²¹ Roger Brown. “Visions of a virtuous manifest: Yasuoka Masahiro and Japan’s Kingly Way”. In Sven Saaler and Victor Koschmann ed. *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

²² Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006, pp. 89-91.

with the West, and anxiety of legitimacy crisis in Manchukuo had normalized Japanese competition with the West, the Nationalists, and the Communists.

Ironically, this competition mindset saw interesting continuities from the colonial buildup to the socialist reconstruction in the built environment, despite totally different ideologies and propagandistic banners of the two regimes. First, in Manchukuo, Japanese statesmen enshrined pan-Asianism as the alternative to excessive Western individualism and materialism.²³ Moreover, Asiatic moralities were celebrated in governmental discourse to emphasize ethical responsibilities as alternatives to capitalism whose mercantile consequences grievously plagued in the home islands of Japan. As a result, Changchun's city plan of 1932 aimed to prevent land speculation by procurement of all necessary land by the colonial government before Changchun was announced as the capital city, and put all commercial activities under a national economic program, much like that in authoritarian states such as the Soviet Union. For example, the Manchukuo government had initiated two Five-Year-Plans for industrial development in 1932 and 1938 respectively, and the construction for the capital was also carried out under a Five-Year Plan of Capital Construction, ended with a spectacular commemorate in 1937.

On the other hand, city planning in socialist countries was incorporated in the state's economic planning, based on the tenets of Marxism-Leninism. Socialist planning, as some scholars argue, can be termed "active planning," that is, the active arrangements of economic activities (welfare provision, allocation of resources, transportation, etc.), to correct the ills of capitalism and to develop "new men" in socialist cities to embrace the ideal of socialist egalitarianism.²⁴ Upon the establishment of the PRC, the Soviet sent numerous technicians and officials to help China building socialism. Under Chinese socialism, the predominant role of state and its ownership of means of production including land preclude capitalist speculation, and ideally all part of the city should be standardized with no sharp distinction as in capitalist cities. Both Manchukuo and the communist regime shared an anti-capitalist ideology that corroborated a centralized economic and political system.

Second, the role of the city's center to serve principle public buildings and monuments as well as the site for military and public parades and for gathering to celebrate state holidays. In planning colonial Changchun, as the general principles of socialist planning dictates, the prominent character of the central plaza with Tiananmen Square the most distinctive example, was that it was no more a commercial concentration but used as the political, administrative, and cultural center of the government. In socialist reconstruction of pre-capitalist city's center, normally the only commercial elements added were "the hotel for tourists, the single department store, and perhaps a

²³ Warren Smith. *Confucianism in Modern Japan: A Study of Conservatism in Japan's Intellectual History*. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 1959, pp.123-156.

²⁴ Jack Fisher. "Planning the City of Socialist Man". *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*. Vol XXVIII, No 4, 1962. p.251-265.

restaurant and coffee shop”²⁵.

When the central Datong Plaza was erected in the early 1930s, it was surrounded by Manchuko’s institutional buildings: the central bank, the Capital Construction Bureau office, municipal police office, and the office of telegraph and communication. After the Communist took over Changchun, its name was changed into “Stalin Plaza,” and a hotel and the People’s Palace of Culture were added to complement the complex. The central plaza as a significant exhibit of national pride and its place in grand political movement and state building however remained. (Fig.) The absence of commerce and retail in the center was evident in both colonial and socialist times, a radical departure from the concept of central business district in capitalist cities, while commerce was equally distributed because land costs and goods prices were uniform under an authoritarian regime.

Third, the neighborhood unit in colonial Changchun provided another source for the socialist invention of work unit, or *danwei*, among other traditional and recent practices. As I will elaborate in the next chapter, the theory of neighborhood unit planning of the late twenties and relevant practice such as that of Redburn was soon introduced to capital Changchun, as implemented in governmental housing districts in the back of Manchukuo’s offices. On a larger scale, the whole urban residents were organized into neighborhood units (*ling zu*) under the surveillance of Concordia Association to maintain social stability and make preparations for war. The similar mechanism, so-called *bao-jia* system, had been practiced for thousand years in rural China, and had been recently revived by the Kuomintang (KMT) to replant to urban areas.²⁶ Various forms of neighborhood unit, either Chinese *bao-jia* or Japanese *ling zu*, resonates to the Confucian ideal of corporal life (*shouwang xiangzhu*).

During the first years of the PRC, the socialist regime reorganized the society into self-sufficient communities affiliated to production or administrative units, hence the specific *danwei* system. Dividing the city into self-contained units with equally distributed amenities and resources was a common practice in all socialist countries, and socialist planners aimed to create “urban uniformity” through a pattern similar to neighborhood unit. However, as scholars have noted, Chinese *danwei* had played a much more active role in stabilization of the society and mobilization of the mass, partly due to similar cultural practices in the long past. In Changchun, socialist *danwei* did not only come from new urban communities of socialist institutions, but saw smooth transformation of well-built neighborhood units in relation to renewed offices, both of which means promoted urbanization and modernization under Maoism.

Moreover, the decentralization of commerce in the Manchukuo era fit well into the socialist restructuring of city planning which demanded an equal distribution of social resources. When Changchun as colonial capital was built up, commercial buildings

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ For the bank community in Shanghai during the 1920s, see Wen-hsin Yeh. “Republican origins of the *danwei*”. Xiaobo Lu (ed.). *danwei: the changing Chinese workplace in historical and comparative perspective*. London: M.E.Sharpe, 1997.

were unusually restrained both in small number and modest style, and few were seen along the most important Datong Street, while another widest street, Shuntian Street, was exclusively for governmental use. An absence of concentration of commercial buildings along vital arteries of the city is somewhat deviated from the normal practice in Western colonies where commerce and consumption were of paramount concern. However, commercial decentralization in Changchun eased socialist transformation targeting at standardization of all parts of the city.

Fourth, the unique architectural forms of the Manchukuo era featured by traditional elements were modified and applied in the attempts to achieve socialist goals. At the time, imported Stalinist monuments and socialist realism played a central role in new construction in Chinese cities. Realism and tradition were two of the fundamental principles of socialist realism, which called for “socialist content and national form”. Theorists dismissed modernism as a product of capitalism, and instead looked into recent practices of Chinese Revival and Japanese Developing Asian buildings for inspiration. (Fig 3) The past cannot be erased or escaped.



Fig 3 Main Teaching Building of Agricultural College of Changchun, 1958.

Source: photo by the author in 2009.

In Changchun, the most striking newly-erected building was the massive Workers' Palace of Culture facing the central plaza. In the PRC, like all other socialist countries, workers became the leading class, while in Changchun the most important break from the colonial regime was the replacement of ethnicity with class. The Cultural Palace was built as a symbol of the new political order in socialist realism with tiled gabled-roof and omnipresent traditional decorations. On the one hand, socialism gave priority to Chinese nationalism; on the other hand, there were not plenty of technical means available to choose from, a fact that simplified sloping roofs and concrete brackets were used again in the late 1950s, despite a nation-wide political movement of 1955 to criticize construction waste due to imitating traditional motifs.

Rebuilding downtown Changchun abounded with colonial legacies put great challenge to socialist planners, as the new regime intended to eliminate the residues of infamous history of Manchukuo. Techniques were developed for this purpose, such as renaming of streets, changing functions of colonial buildings, complimenting the colonial planning rather than demolition at significant sites of the city, etc. However, the most

effective decolonizing effort to erase Changchun's colonial past was the construction of a large modern factory community in the southwestern outskirts of the city, i.e., the First Automobile Works and housing compounds for its workers. Tens of thousands of worker were brought to Changchun due to the automobile factory and a huge industrial town was built in the outskirts of Changchun which was freed of heavy industry because of its political status. In this way, Changchun was eventually transformed from a colonial cancer of consumption to a prosperous industrial center under Chinese socialism. However, the application of traditional elements in factory buildings became the most infamous instance of extravagance at that time.²⁷

In building and rebuilding Changchun, both the Japanese and the Communists envisioned their modernizing schemes through several rounds of modernizing programs endowed with political and cultural meanings. It was the ideology of competing and overcoming the West to achieve the modern that activated bold experiment. And it was the driving force to explore something new and different from the West stipulated the connection between different modernizers through various modernizing projects, hence similarities of their approaches to the modern.

In the meantime, the cultural attitude of “the modern” did not tally with its notion in the West: in Manchukuo era, Asiatic virtues such as frugality and filial piety were the key part of Japanese modernizing project, while in the PRC standardization and urban uniformity became the norm of socialist planning. The competition of Manchukuo with the West eventually turned into Japanese fifteen-year war (1931-1945), while the socialist competition with capitalism was an essential part of a much prolonged Cold War. In Changchun, it is explicit that the socialist built environment was tangibly affected by the inherited spatial arrangements as well as previous architectural and planning practices, and intangibly by the cultural attitudes of identity and the modern.

The references of the dissertation come from three groups of literature. The first is historical research on Japanese expansion in Manchuria and related theorization of pan-Asianism.²⁸ For example, Eri Hotta situated Manchukuo in a larger background of Japan's fifteen-year war that called for a propagandistic banner to unify Asian countries. Historians have found rapture between Japanese pan-Asian ideology and brutal colonial realities in Manchukuo, amongst whom Yamamuro likens the client state as a hybrid beast of chimera. These books do not have an explicit focus on spatial construction, but provide a solid background for the study of Changchun's built environment as the study

²⁷ See Chapter Six.

²⁸ To name just a few, see Louise Young. *Japan's total empire : Manchuria and the culture of wartime imperialism*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1998. Rana Mitter. 2000. *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Yoshihisa Matsusaka. 2001. *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904-32*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Mariko Tananoi (ed.). 2005. *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*. University of Hawaii Press. For Japanese pan-Asianism and its historical origin and development, see Eri Hotta. *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007; Cemil Adyın. *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006; Sven Saaler and Victor Koschmann ed. *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

of architecture and city planning is a complex cultural formation that is part of a larger discursive field by which it is influenced and in which it actively participates.

The second camp of literature involves those on colonial urban history in general and Japanese colonial cities in particular. Books on British, French, Dutch, Italian colonialism inform the structure and issues to be studied in this project,²⁹ while I have become aware of the departure of Japanese colonial rule as manifested in spatial arrangement from classical colonial model. Japanese architectural historian Koshizawa Akira produced his book on the city planning of Manchurian cities and later on colonial Changchun specifically³⁰. And Nishizawa Yasuhiko, who has been working on modern Chinese architectural history since the 1980s and included construction methods and production and use of materials as part of his study on Japanese colonial architecture, brought up an analytical framework of imperialism to study cities and architecture in Manchuria³¹. Both of them mainly consulted Mantetsu and Manchukuo official accounts, as the majority of Chinese materials were not available to the public until up to 2000.

Two dissertations on the built environment of colonial Changchun are of particular relevance to my own project.³² Tucker details how Changchun's planning, parks, political and cultural facilities emerged in the larger context of state and nation building of Manchukuo. Making a good use of two contemporary journals, *Manchurian Architectural Magazine* (*manshu kenchiku zashin*) and *Urban Problem* (*toshi mondei*), Sewell's work concerns more on Changchun's spatial dimension under Japanese colonialism (1905-1945) and the evolution of idea of modernity. Both works mainly concern the period before the year of 1945. Sewell's 2004 paper³³ is also illuminating on the evolution of the concept and content of modernity in Changchun, which is particularly helpful with my theorization of "the modern" across 1945.³⁴

Third, I consult different sources on political and urban life of Changchun published in Japanese and Chinese. For colonial era, the mammoth 144-volume Manchukuo's Governmental Bulletins, *zhengfu gongbao*, along with two widely circulated official newspapers of Shengjing Daily (*shengjing shibao*) and Datong News

²⁹ Thomas Metcalf. *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*. University of California Press, 1989. Zeynep Celik. *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations: Algiers under French Rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997. Gwendolyn Wright. *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. Abidin Kusno. *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space, and Political Cultures in Indonesia*. New York: Routledge, 2000. Brian McLaren. *Architecture and tourism in Italian colonial Libya : an ambivalent modernism*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006.

³⁰ Koshizawa Akira. *manshukoku no shuto keikaku: tokyo no genzai to mirai o tou* (The planning of Manchukuo's capital: an inquiry into the present and future of Tokyo). Tokyo: nihon keizai hyoronsha, 1988.

³¹ Nishizawa Yasuhiko. *manshu toshi monogatari* (Manchuria's cities). Tokyo: kawade shobo shinsha, 1996

³² Bill Sewell. 2000. *Japanese Imperialism and Civic Construction in Manchuria: Changchun, 1905-45*. dissertation, The University of British Columbia; David Vance Tucker. 1999. *Building "Our Manchukuo": Japanese City Planning, Architecture, and Nation-building in occupied Northeast China, 1931-45*. diss, The University of Iowa.

³³ Bill Sewell, "Reconsidering the Modern in Japanese History: Modernity in the Service of the Prewar Japanese Empire". *Japan Review*, 2004, 16:213-258.

³⁴ The original version of this dissertation contained unquoted, misquoted and inappropriately credited part when first submitted in 2011. Thanks to Professor Sewell and others' comments, I made corrections to the original version according to a higher citation standard, without making any change to its structure and arguments.

(*datong bao*), provide official view of major issues in Manchukuo and its capital. Other contemporary publications offer a more comprehensive understanding of Manchukuo's culture, religion, ethnic policy and so forth, such as the Mantetsu-edited *Contemporary Manchuria*, an English bimonthly magazine that discussed latest political events and the theories of the Kingly Way, while Japanese commemorative brochures are informative for critical events like the Decennial ceremonies in 1942.

For the communist era, I mainly depend on my fieldwork in the archives and libraries in Changchun. City planning and architectural blueprints of the First Automobile Works are kept in the factory's own archives, where people were earnest to tell visitors the stories of the factory they knew. *Wenshi ziliao* (Accounts of Culture and History) is an oral-history-style collection of personal experiences supplementary to gazetteers, which many urban historians have found useful. I rely on *Wenshi ziliao* to restore a vivid picture of urban life in Changchun from Manchukuo to the PRC.³⁵

In investigating the urban history of Changchun, I put a conscious focus on the built environment to explore the ways it represents and conditions different ideological effects on societies and cultures in Changchun. Examining urban development and social change of Changchun during the period 1932-1957, I aim to trace how the urban region of present-day Changchun came into formation during these culminating years of political turbulence, and reveal connections between the colonial past and socialist "present".

Following an introduction, the dissertation goes into five chapters. The first three chapters relate to colonial period (1932-1945), each exploring one facet of the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism in relation to Changchun's urbanism. The idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism as manifested in planning Changchun are the subject of the next chapter. Two cases, the siting of the palace and the preservation of *xiaozifen* (Temple of a Dutiful Child) will be examined to demonstrate how Japanese colonialism differed from its Western counterpart.

Chapter Two charts out the plurality of architectural styles in the city, and analyzes the diversities, ambivalences, and ambiguities in the practice of statecraft and urban construction. I argue that the limitations of Manchukuo's state ideology of the Kingly Way embracing egalitarianism fell short of Japan's paternalism.

Chapter Three focuses on cultural practices in Changchun under Japanese colonial rule, which delineates three state ceremonies: the coronation, worshipping Confucius before 1937, and worshipping Japanese deity, Amaterasu, as the founding Goddess after 1937. I propose that Japan's ideological stance towards the rest of Asia was crystallized through ceremonies, exhibitions, and expositions.

The last two chapters examine Changchun's transitional years (1945-1948) and the period under Chinese socialism in the 1950s. Chapter Four gives a picture of how

³⁵ For example, there are special volumes of Changchun's *wenshi ziliao* on topics such as Nation Founding University (Kendai), colonial Changchun's industry and commerce, the establishment of the First Automobile Works, and stories on the FAW.

the downtown of Changchun was reconstructed to meet new political agenda when Socialist Realism took sway of aesthetic program. Chapter Five further explores Changchun's urban expansion under Maoism: the construction of the First Automobile Works, a key project of Maoist industrialization. I argue that although Maoist socialism aimed to reorganize Chinese society at large and indeed presented many unique aspects of the new life, the socialist inventions were yet restricted and diluted by the past. I conclude the dissertation with some general reflections on the study of Manchukuo and ongoing preservation in the city.

Chapter 1 Idiosyncratic Colonialism: Planning Changchun under the Kingly Way

Following the military conquest of the whole Manchuria in 1931 (9/18 Manchuria Incident) and the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo the next year, Changchun was made the capital and renamed *Xinjing* (“new capital,” Japanese: *Shinkyo*). Like many Chinese port cities at the time, Changchun was territorially divided by ethnical sovereign as a collage city before 1931, while the integral planning in 1932 then incorporated all the older elements of Changchun into the site of massive construction and magnificent monuments as a Japanese colonial capital city.

Backed by the limited access to economic and governmental sources in the colonial regimes, the progressive capital planning was put into reality in a short period of time in the First Five-Year Plan for Capital Construction (1933-37). Being the most magnificent exhibit of the Japanese colonial order in Manchuria, most part of the city was built from scratch.¹ It was because of the scale and speed of colonial Changchun’s urban construction that scholars such as David Buck refer the modernizing project as a high modernist scheme, wherein “no compromise is made with the preexisting city, the new cityscape completely supplants its predecessor.”²

However, I will probe into the detail of the 1932 Changchun Planning and argue that it differed from high modernism when situated in the 1930s in the lieu of Japanese pan-Asianism. The process of decision making and implantation of the 1932 Plan demonstrated the idiosyncratic nature of Japanese colonialism. With this in mind, this chapter attempts to disassemble the relevant parts of the 1932 Plan, identify daily life in the city in relation to Manchukuo’s nation-building ideals, and reassemble them as components of Changchun’s urban history under Japanese colonial rule.

This chapter begins with a brief review of the formation of Manchukuo, which was transmogrified from a military annexation to a nominally independent state, reflecting competing thoughts and forces at work in Manchukuo’s early state building. The state-founding (Japanese: *kengoku*, Chinese: *jian guo*) principles, the Kingly Way, deserve an elaboration and is a key to understand the idiosyncrasies of the 1932 Plan and Japanese colonialism as a whole.

Ambitiously building Changchun as a modern city to justify the colonial rule and Japan’s leadership in Asia, the Japanese constantly consulted indigenous sources to compete with, and overcome, the Western notion of modernity. Two examples merit a close examination: the siting of the imperial palace and the preservation of a Taoist temple (*xiaozifen*) along the most important and magnificent street. Indeed, the contradictory stance of Manchukuo’s pan-Asian ideology and Japan’s paternal practices was a characteristic of Manchukuo from its birth, and urban life in the city vividly revealed the rupture between smoke screen of the Kingly Way and realities. I conclude

¹ David Buck. *Railway City and National Capital: two faces of the modern in Changchun*. In Joseph Esherick (Ed.). *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900 to 1950*. University of Hawaii Press, 2002.

² James Scott. *Seeing like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

that building Manchukuo's capital is a vast and varied socio-politico-cultural project as explicitly manifest in the planning practice and people's daily life in the city.

I. Manchukuo and Its Nation-Founding Ideals

In 1905, Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War and won the control of southern part of Manchuria, with rich resources of natural resources, particularly wood, coal, copper and iron. In the following year, Japan took over the southern half of Manchuria with Changchun the dividing point, and rebuilt the former Russian rail network as the South Manchurian Railway (SMR) as the major part of the Japanese imperial plan. In 1919, Japanese troops known as the Guandong Army (GDA) became a decisive player in Manchuria and later the formation and operation of Manchukuo.

The American China scholar Owen Lattimore in the 1920s called the area of Manchuria a "cradle of conflict."³ The policies of the Japanese government aimed to separate Manchuria and Mongolia from China's proper, while the Chinese nationalist movement which rapidly arose following the May Fourth Movement intend to bring about national unity domestically and recovering national sovereignty vis-à-vis the foreign powers. However, it was during the 1920s that the rising tide of Chinese nationalism under the warlord regime of Zhang Zuoling and Zhang Xueliang clashed violently with Japan.⁴ As a result of a chain of conflicts, the Japanese GDA occupied the whole Manchuria in 1931 in the aftermath of Manchurian Incident, and a puppet state of Manchukuo was established the next year.

Despite their initial military victory in the 1931 Manchurian Incident, however, faced with the ardent opposition of Army Central in Japan to the plan of annexation, the GDA had to move to an alternative for the establishment of an independent state.⁵ On March 1, 1932 the government of Manchukuo declared it an independent nation and Puyi, the last emperor of the Qing overthrown in 1911, was installed as chief executive (*zhizheng*). On March 14, Changchun, which had been designated as the capital, was renamed Xijing, and Manchukuo made its debut for the first time.⁶

Multiple ideologues contributed to the formation of nation-founding principles of Manchukuo. Pan-Asian ideologues in the Japanese military such as Ishikawa Kanji comprised a pan-Asian ideology born of the earlier effort to reject capitalist influence, which emphasized a cultural independence and indigenous tradition to overcome Western colonialism and imperialism. As the state of Manchukuo embodied the pursuit of the ideal of a moral state, the content of a new modern should be itemized, such as frugality and diligence, filial piety (*xiao*), loyalty to monarch (*zhong*), ethnic harmony, and agrarian autarky. It was this state-founding ideal that indicated in a straightforward way

³ Owen Lattimore, *Cradle of Conflict*. New York: The Macmillan company, 1932.

⁴ Rana Mitter, 2000. *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁵ for more detail of the shift from annexation to an independent state after the seizure of Manchuria, see Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, Chapters 1-2.

⁶ Wang Jiping (ed.). *Chronicles of Jilin Provinces*. Changchun: Jilin People's Press, 1989.

how Manchukuo envisioned itself and its own internal logic.

Another camp of Manchukuo's ideologues consisted of Chinese monarchists. Of whom Zheng Xiaoxu, an ardent Confucianist and the first Prime Minister (1932-1935) of Manchukuo, was representative. In Zheng's opinion, Manchukuo was founded as a state for morality and justice, main components of the Kingly Way. After appointed as the Premier, Zheng also established a Ministry of Culture and Education and esteemed moral education in curriculum. He issued a State Council order of March 25, 1932, calling for "the use and teaching of the Four Books and Classic of Filial Piety in school curricula and the honoring of Confucian morality".⁷ However, as it became clear later, Zheng's position that Manchukuo to be open to both Japan and the West with equal opportunity clashed with Japanese imperial interests, and he was deposed by the GDA and confined to his death in 1938.⁸

Since its establishment, the Manchukuo has made the Kingly Way (Japanese: *odo rakudo*, Chinese: *wangdao*) its ideal, and expressed it at every opportunity. The three principles of the Kingly Way were a comprehensive concept based primarily on ethnic harmony, "following the way of heaven and bringing peace to the people" (*shun tian an min*), and the principle of people as the basis of the state.⁹ It was seen as a new approach as Manchukuo emerged in the chaotic face of contemporary world politics.

On the principle of ethnic harmony (Ch: *minzu xiehe*; Jp: *minzoku kyowa*), the State-Founding Proclamation issued on the day of the establishment of Manchukuo, stated:

*As a whole, the people who now reside on the terrain of the new state make no distinctions among races or between superiors and inferiors. In addition to the Han, Manchu, and Mongolian peoples who were originally from this region and the Japanese and Korean -- that is, people from other lands--those who wish to reside here in perpetuity shall enjoy equal treatment. The rights they receive shall be protected and shall not be violated in the least.*¹⁰

This is the basis for the principle of ethnic harmony or the harmony of the five peoples whereby the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Japanese, and Korean ethnic groups would plan for coexistence and co-prosperity all together and equally. In the meantime, the State-Founding Proclamation stated:

In implementing the principle of the Kingly Way, we enable all the peoples within the borders to ascend the spring dais in great splendor [namely, rule will be peaceful and beneficent]. Protecting the eternal honor of East Asia,

⁷ Weiman shiqi ziliao chongkan weiyuanhui. Weimanzhou guo zhengfu gongbao (Governmental Bulletins)(ZFGB): 1932-4-1. Shenyang: Liaoshen Press, 1990.

⁸ See Puyi. *From emperor to citizen : the autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989, pp.281-283.

⁹ The content of the Kingly Way was never explicitly expressed in any governmental document, but scholars and officials had touched on its manifestations in political and everyday life on many occasions. For example, see the analysis of Jin-ichi Yano. "Wantao – the Kingly Way". *Manchoukuo Yearbook*. Published by Toa-keiza chosakyoku (East Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau). Tokyo: Uchiyamashita-cho, kojimachi-ku, 1934.

¹⁰ ZFGB; Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, p.89

*we are about to create a model for the government of the world*¹¹.

However, as Dr. Yano Jin'ichi, a contemporary scholar in Manchukuo in the 1930s observed, it was surprising that as to the explanation of what was meant by the administration of the Kingly Way, no general interpretation had yet been made in the name of Manchukuo. But the features of the Kingly Way, a political system that has long been considered ideal in China, may be recognized by comparing it with the policies of Western countries based on the principle of legal administration and capitalism. Jin'ichi has illustrated some eight differences between the Western Despotic Way and Eastern Kingly Way, meriting the prominent status of moral and cultural education, spiritual happiness, anti-individualism and mutualism and so forth in the administration of the Kingly Way.¹² Contained in this construction was the idea that the warlords, the KMT, and their Western counterparts all ruled in the way of despots or hegemons, and by contrast the government of Manchukuo brought peace, harmony and a paradise of the Kingly Way to its people. To represent moral and technological superiority of the administration of the Kingly Way, the Japanese urged to build the capital city of Manchukuo as the harbor of new modernity.

II. Planning the Modern Capital of Manchukuo

Concentrating on political and economic conflicts among Chinese, Russians and Japanese, Changchun was spatially and administratively fragmented as a collage city before 1931. (Fig. 1-1) After Changchun was made the capital of Manchukuo, this new capital was designed to reflect the vision, power, and non-western modernity of the Japanese-controlled state of Manchukuo. All the urban sectors before 1932 – the Russian railway town, the Japanese railway settlement, the old walled city, and Chinese commercial district – were incorporated into a grandiose plan. (Fig. 1-2)

It was the Guandong Army that dominated the 1932 Plan in the capital. Sano Riki (also known as Sano Toshikata), an architecture professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo was commissioned to work with the Guandong Army for production of a master plan. Besides, two more schemes, by Manchukuo's Capital Construction Bureau (CCB) and the Mantetsu, respectively were decided in 1932 too. All three schemes displayed distinct traits of Beaux-Arts and City Beautiful popular in the West at the time, which continued with the past planning features of the SMR settlement in the north, and a new master plan that combined the three schemes was made public in 1933.¹³

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Jin-ichi Yano. "Wantao – the Kingly Way". *Manchoukuo Yearbook*. Published by Toa-keiza chosakyoku (East Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau). Tokyo: Uchiyamashita-cho, kojimachi-ku, 1934

¹³ Mantetsu keizai chosakai. *Shinkyo toshi kensetsu hosaku*, 1935. See also Guo, Qinghua. "Changchun: unfinished capital planning of Manzhouguo, 1932–42". *Urban History*, 31, 1 (2004).

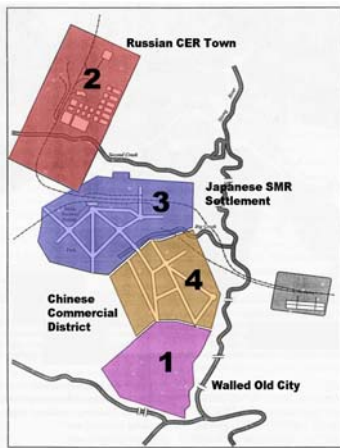


Fig 1-1 a “collage city” at Changchun before 1932

Source: redrawn on David D. Buck. p.71



Fig 1-2 Xinjing Planning in 1932

Source: Courtesy of Changchun Urban Planning Institute

Based on a geometrical composition and enormous plazas and generous green system, the plan included multiplied the former railway town (about 21 km² of the built area before 1931) several times to an area over 100 km² with a population of 300,000.

Its urban structure was decided by Puyi's palace and Manchukuo's governmental quarter, and the railway station and wide avenues radiating from it. The previous Mantetsu settlement became the northern part of the new capital, and set the model of rational Beaux-Arts planning for the latter. For example, the street layout of the SMR settlement became incorporated into the new fabrics and the main street started from the railway station in north built in 1909 to the an artificial lake in south.

As such, the new capital was planned to extend over square kilometers (including the 21 square kilometers of the built area before 1931) and to The plan was meant to be realized by several stages, and the first period of a five-year plan between 1932-1937 aimed at laying out a foundation for further construction, which will be discussed in the next section. However, after the Sino-Japanese War was escalated in 1937, especially after Pacific War broke out in 1941, war exigencies resulted in diminished resources for the construction of the capital, except for a series of spectacular events in 1942.¹⁴

Changchun as a capital was not only ambitious in scope to exhibit East Asian modern and Japanese leadership, but the Japanese described Changchun an “experiment yard” to use the planned capital city as a futuristic model for both Japanese home islands and a Japanese-controlled Asia. New trends of thoughts and theories on urban planning appeared in a continuous stream in the early twentieth century, and they were introduced to Japan immediately, including Ebenezer Howard's Garden City in England and the Garden City Movement sweeping the world, Raymond Unwin's theory of satellite cities,

¹⁴ See Chapters 2-3.

neighborhood unit and the practice in Redburn in 1928, etc. Drawing nutrition on these theories, Japanese urban planners were well prepared to fulfill these theories in the early 1930s, reflecting Japanese conceptions of the modern city. The new capital city at Changchun was also built on basis of many imported planning concepts as such.

Modernity of the 1932 plan for Changchun consists of the following aspects:

Functional zoning system

A significant feature of the 1932 Plan of Changchun was functional zoning which became prominent in the 1930s. All lands in the city were divided into two purposes of use: official and public. In CIAM IV in 1933, a major theme of that conference was modern urban planning and the principles for functional zoning were systematically summarized for the first time. The 1932 Plan of Changchun was one of the first examples in China, and another prominent case of the time was the reconstruction of Nanjing in 1929, produced by the Republican regime in Nanjing. For the 1932 Plan for Changchun, land was divided into two large categories: governmental (guanyong) and private (minyong). The former included lands for governmental offices, roads, public facilities, public green spaces and military uses, while the latter included residential districts, commercial areas, industrial areas, special uses (farming) and reservations, with specific requirements for lot ratio and building height. In regard to residential districts, they were subdivided into four classes, while commercial areas were also subdivided into lands for wholesale, retail and business.

However, the zoning system applied in the new capital was less complex than Western models. In the United States, zoning gained a suburban constituency that wished to control residence or land use. Land use in colonial Manchukuo, not unlike in Japan and Republic China, applied more to cities than to suburbs. Besides, modern planning techniques such as zoning are also a form of control over the environment and activities of the population. As Anthony King notes, in the West the society gave rise to modernity while in the colonies cities became of the exhibit of modernity.¹⁵ It was certainly more efficient for cities rather than rural areas to demonstrate the modernizing achievements of the government and in turn to legitimize it.

The Network of Streets and Circular Plazas

Like in the Mantetsu era, magnificence and monumentality were realized by adopting Beaux-Arts planning theories of street grids and circular plazas to shape the modern profile of the city. This became a major feature of the new capital, which still works actively in present-day Changchun.

Japanese planners made classification for urban roads, and divided all roads into main streets, branch streets and auxiliary roads, subdividing them into 4 levels totally 11

¹⁵ Anthony King, *Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World-Economy*. London and New York: Routledge, 1990, "Introduction," p.7.

kinds, with width of the cross section ranging from 60 meters down to 5 meters.¹⁶ (Fig. 1-3) Planning wide avenues in Changchun for automobiles was a tradition that could be dated back to Mantetsu era under the supervision of its founding president Goto Shimepi¹⁷. In addition to width, Japanese planner introduced “street gardens” to Changchun, that is, separation belt in the center of the avenue was planned for pedestrians as playground or rest place. A comparison with the road classification of Canberra indicates that the Japanese learned their lessons from the precedents of their Western counterparts. (Fig. 1-4)

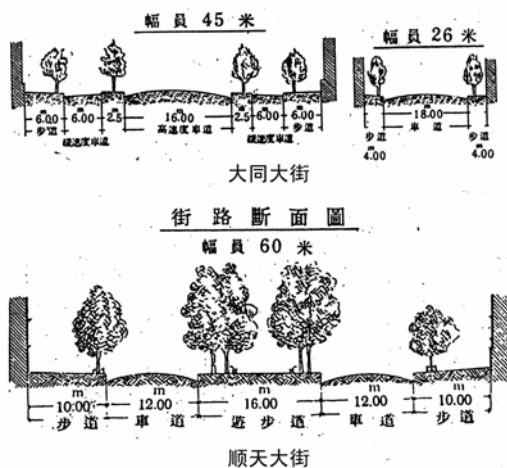


Fig 1-3. Road system in capital Changchun

Source: Koshizawa Akira, 1978

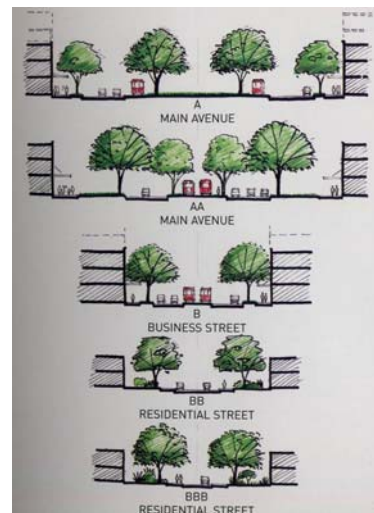


Fig 1-4. Road system from Griffin's Canberra Plan
Source: Stuart Mackenzie, p.134

In planning Changchun as a colonial capital, the Japanese drew on many sources, and were aware of contemporary city planning of Angora (known also Ankara) and Canberra.¹⁸ One bold modernist city plan in the early twentieth century was Walter Griffin's design for Canberra. The original Griffin plan featured a multiple-centered city where government, commerce, education and residence each had a core district built around circular plazas from which streets radiated. The Japanese planners for the capital at Changchun apparently learned a lot from the precedent in Canberra, such as combing the city's plan with its topography, the hierarchy and classification of street system, the grid and diagonal streets, and the urban structure that defines the new capital. In the comparison of the downtown parts of the two cities, the similarities are apparent

¹⁶ Mantetsu keizai chosakai. *Shinkyō toshi kensetsu hosaku*, 1935.

¹⁷ For more on the Mantetsu town of Changchun and an imitated modernity, see Bill Sewell. 2000. *Japanese Imperialism and Civic Construction in Manchuria: Changchun, 1905-45*. dissertation, The University of British Columbia.

¹⁸ As a review reported, the capital “It reveals a rate of development never equalled elsewhere, even more striking in the speed and extent of work than previously ought the imagination of the world when Australia went to work on the building of its new capital at Canberra, and Turkey began to build a new seat of government at Angora.” See “First Five Year of capital Construction”. *Contemporary Manchuria*, Jan 1938, Vol.II, No. 1, p.2.

along the lines of a hexagonal central plaza and its relationship to the major boulevards around the circular plaza. (Fig 1-5)

Two major parallel streets, Datong and Shuntian Streets running from north to south, defined the skeleton of the city. Datong Street stretched from the railway station to the far south, spanning over six kilometers.¹⁹ The name of the central plaza, *da tong*, or “great unity” in Chinese, was a utopian ideal in Confucianism as well as the fundamental guideline of the Kingly Way in Manchuria, suggesting its importance in the cityscape. (Fig 1-6) Datong Street was an extension of the broadest main street of 36.3 meters in Mantetsu settlement, which ran due south of the station and reached the very end at a large park.²⁰

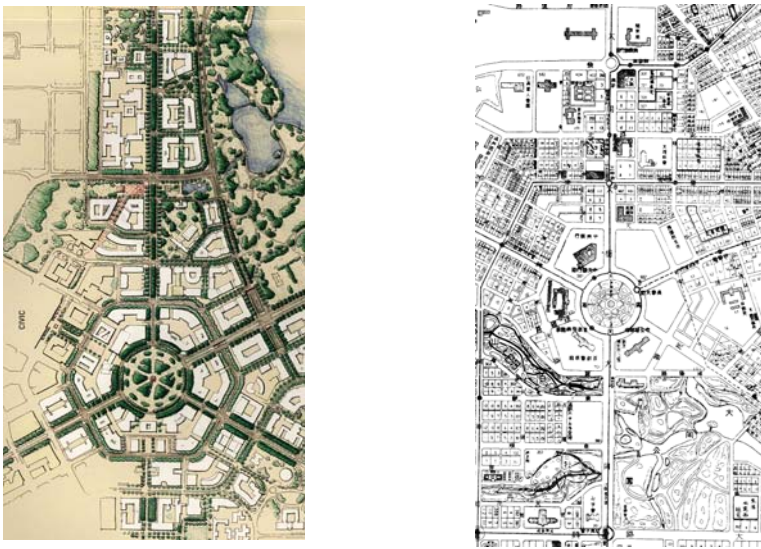


Fig 1-5 Comparison of Griffin's Canberra Plan (left) in 1915 and Xinjing Planning in 1932
Source: Stuart Mackenzie, Akira Koshizawa, 1978



Fig 1-6 Datong Plaza under construction, 1933

Source: Shinkyō tokubetsushi chokkanbo shomuka hensan. *Kokuto shinkyō: kenkoku jushunen kinan*. Shinkyō: Shinkyō tokubetsushi kosho, 1942.

¹⁹ “First Five Year of capital Construction”. *Contemporary Manchuria*, Jan 1938, Vol.II, No. 1, p.5.

²⁰ Thanks to Goto Shimpei's insistence, this street was wider than any street in the Japanese home islands in the 1910s. The street was initially called Changchun Avenue (*Choshun Taikai*) and later was known as Central Avenue (*Chuo Dori*).

Corresponding to the rolling topography of Changchun, elevated plateaus were made circular plazas at the intersections of streets as the vistas in Western Baroque cities. With a diameter of 100 meters, the enormous Datong Plaza was among the first places to be constructed to showcase the colonial rule. Placed at the middle of the north-south artery of Datong Street to connect the SMR settlement with the newly developed area, the circular plaza was the core of the capital city despite the palace for Puyi to its west, providing a perfect public space for mass gathering and ceremonies as a manifesto of Japanese modernist goals.

Upon completion, Datong Street which connected directly railway station in the north became an integral part in national political life. The new road was designed to boast Japanese colonial politics visually and spatially. In public celebrations, processions were directed to sweep over Datong Street, and important mass assemblies were staged at Datong Plaza, frequently inspected place by the emperor. In 1937, Datong Park, right at the southeast side of Datong Plaza, was made the site for the ceremony that the emperor would attend to confer honors and awards to people who contributed to urban construction. Five years later, it became the primary site for the 1942 Manchuria Exposition.

Using street as a major exhibit of modernizing accomplishment of anti-capitalism was not unusual in the 1930s. As Mussolini referred to the newly built promenade of Via dell'Impero at a ceremony on it in June 1933, "streets are also born under a sign of destiny. The Roman Via dell'Impero could not more speedily affirm the fate implied by its name. No sooner born, it has become the true heart of Rome. And here beats the most ardent life of the capital city of Italy."²¹ Datong Street and the central plaza were not assigned for retail or commercial concentration, and most buildings flanking the street were military and governmental offices; it was designed to promote a modern façade of the city through the movement along the street, promoting a modern imagery to its inhabitants and visitors. In the meantime, Datong Plaza was planned as the central political plaza "designed to provide room for parading troops and for the throngs of people on holidays and political events"²², surrounded by major public buildings and monuments,. These characters radically departed from the traditional capitalist planning. However, as war exigencies drained resources and labor away to the front after 1941, construction on the street ceased and the street did not thrive again until the Communists began new modernizing projects after 1948.

On the other hand, Shuntian Street, to the west of Datong Street, formed the administrative quarter of Manchukuo. Puyi's palace was situated in the northern, overlooking this quarter from a vast plaza. Offices for six ministries were erected along the street which terminated at the circular Anmin Plaza in the southern. The names,

²¹ Heather Hyde Minor. "Mapping Mussolini: Ritual and Cartography in Public Art during the Second Roman Empire". *Imago Mundi*. Vol. 51 (1999), pp. 147-162

²² Jack Fisher. "Planning the City of Socialist Man". *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*. Vol XXVIII, No 4, 1962. p.251-265.

Shuntian and Anmin, came from one of the principles of the Kingly Way, that is, following the rule of the heaven and bring peace to the people. In the 1942 Decennial, Puyi was invited to stand at Anmin Plaza to symbolically inspect the administrative quarter, the power center of Manchukuo, while in fact it was dwarfed by the nearby Datong Street where Japanese institutions such as the headquarters of the GDA and the Concordia Society were located.

Public Green Space, Drainage System and Neighborhood Unit Housing

Like the street hierarchy, the 1932 Plan provided for a hierarchy of parks throughout the new city. The two projects, roads and public green spaces and parks, commingled, as some of the roads in the city were parkways (“park roads”) that linked the parks into a single network. (Fig. 1-7) At the top of the park hierarchy were large parks built around artificial lakes. Below them were middle-sized parks, then traffic rotaries, and neighborhood gardens. Around it all was a greenbelt and beltway road in the suburbs – mostly agricultural land under land use control with tree nurseries.



Fig 1-7 Green belt and drainage system in Xinjing Planning
Source: redrawn based on Akira Koshizawa, 1978

There was a quite generous area of public green spaces in the capital city, like parks and gardens. The vegetation area per capita reached a distinguishing 31 square meters, paralleling most western famous cities such as Chicago, Canberra and Paris. According to the urban topography, slightly depressed areas were made for parks with natural or artificial ponds to receive and reserve rain water, and they were connected as green belts throughout the whole city with little or no buildings in them. Some large lakes came into being in this way, such as South Lake and the lake in Chaoyang Park. This combination of green belt and drainage system constituted another significant character of the city.²³ The 1932 Plan set aside “7% of its city area for parks, playgrounds and stadiums, against 2% of Berlin, 2.8% of Tokyo, 1.4% of Washington,

²³ Li Baihao. 1997. *Historical Research of urban Planning in Japanese Occupations in China* (Dissertation), Shanghai: School of Architecture and Urban Planning of Tongji University, p. 212, and David Vance Tucker. 1999. *Building “Our Manchukuo”: Japanese City Planning, Architecture, and Nation-Building in Occupied China, 1931-1945*. PhD thesis in the University of Iowa. pp. 354

and 9% of London.”²⁴ Generosity of provision of green space was obviously regarded as part of new modernity in the capital city, as a way to enhance sanitary level and public space for healthy entertainment as qualified citizenry.

In order to attract more Japanese immigrants, Xinjing Planning put much emphasis on the construction of residential districts. In the planning, Japanese drew many sources, for instance, Garden Apartment in 1926, the concept of “Neighborhood Unit” in 1929 proposed by C. A. Perry. Shortly after these theories were put forward, the Japanese planners practiced with guidance of these theories in the construction in the capital city. Such “experiments” cast profound impacts on another urban planning, Datong Planning in 1938. Later on, Sakakura Junzo, a prominent modernist architect produced the planning for a luxury resident district near by South Lake in 1939 that will be discussed in the following chapter.

By 1937, the site of 21.4 square kilometers in area was completed with construction, which brought the first five-year program of Capital Construction to an end. Aside from the modern infrastructure, the city boasted a population of 304,994, an increase of 99 per cent over 1932. An impressive ceremony in celebration of the capital’s successful completion of construction was needed, so that “this memorable event will certainly color the pages of Manchukuo’s early history and will always be remembered as a shining symbol of the inception of the world’s newest state.”²⁵

III. The Commemorate for the Completion of Capital Construction in 1937

The central concern of the colonial authority of planning Changchun was its role as a national capital. On March 1, 1937, a modest celebration was held in the capital to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the establishment of Manchukuo. As the colonial state had been established for five years, the official propaganda advocated the allying relation between Japan and Manchukuo, industrial and economic development, and a new social order based on Asiatic virtues. All these ideas were demonstrated in a poster produced for that event. In the poster, different ethnic peoples in silhouette were waving national Manchukuo flags in jubilation in the forefront to a few cavalry troopers in high profile, as Manchukuo’s military forces were the guardian of the state.

However, except for front-page headlines in official newspapers,²⁶ the fifth anniversary was not much played up, and a much grander ceremony was saved until September for the completion of the Five-Year Plan of capital construction. In the capital city at Changchun, Japanese wanted to create a city that glorified their colonial rule. Making a few concessions to Chinese sensitivities, this new vision focused idealistically on the creation of a new civic order, one that championed rational state planning, mass mobilization, and Japanese leadership. For five years, shortly after the outbreak of anti-Japanese War in 1937, it was widely conceived that the Manchukuo

²⁴ “First Five Year of capital Construction”. Contemporary Manchuria, Jan 1938, Vol.II, No. 1, p.5.

²⁵ “First Five Year of capital Construction”. Contemporary Manchuria, Jan 1938, Vol.II, No. 1, p.1.

²⁶ *Shengjing Shibao* (SJSB), 1937-3-2 (1).

government had achieved to articulate this vision.²⁷

On September 16 and 17, 1937, a grand commemorate ceremony was held in the capital. The purpose of the ceremony was not only to celebrate the completion of the first five-year plan that “transformed a small village in the wild to a magnificent capital,” but also intended to “convey to the world the message of the capabilities and potentials that Manchukuo has.”²⁸ Since most Western nations disavowed the legitimacy of Manchukuo when it was established in 1932 which resulted in Japanese withdrawal from the League of Nations the next year, this ceremony was thought an exceptional opportunity to announce to the international audience Japanese prowess in its “civilizing mission” there. Furthermore, as the establishment of the capital and the coronation were not attended by the public, the ceremony to celebrate the completion of capital construction was also deemed the public ceremony in the place of the 1934 coronation.²⁹

In order to prepare for such a crucial event, the Manchukuo government set up a special committee for this purpose on February 18th, 1936.³⁰ The committee members included two pre-eminent Chinese officials, Zheng Yu, son of Zheng Xiaoxu and head of Capital Construction Bureau, and Han Yujie, mayor of Xinjing at the time. Preparations included siting, constructing temporary buildings, deciding the agenda and participants, security, propaganda, and above all, the tour of the emperor. The total cost for the ceremony reached 149,565 Yen.³¹

In the agenda, the first day included an official ceremony in Datong Park attended by Puyi, followed by his visit to the building of CCB and the State Council building. When the emperor returned to the palace, the GDA and Manchukuo government officials had dinner banquet, and public celebrations started in the evening. The emperor’s inspection tour on the 16th was the focal activity of propaganda. As scheduled, the emperor first arrived at Datong Park around ten o’clock and received the salute and congratulations of 3000 of his officials. Then he walked to the Building of Capital Construction Bureau (CCB) and rose to its top terrace to look at Datong Plaza, the heart of the capital, and its surrounding buildings and radiating avenues. (Fig 1-8) Zheng Yu, the former Chief of CCB, accompanied him and reported the course of construction. Next, the emperor moved to the State Council from whose top terrace he could see a series gardens and ministry buildings in the governmental quarter, and inspected the exhibits of the construction achievements housed in the State Council. Around noon the emperor visited Anming (appeasing people) Plaza, the terminus of the avenue of the governmental quarter and then went back to Datong Park. The officials had banquet together while the emperor returned to the palace.³² (Fig 1-9)

²⁷ “First Five Year of capital Construction”. Contemporary Manchuria, Jan 1938, Vol.II, No. 1, p.4.

²⁸ Lin shi guo du jian she ju (Temporary Capital Construction Bureau). *Guo du jian she ji nian shi dian zhi* (Commemorative Collection of the Ceremony for Capital Construction). Xinjing, 1937, p.3.

²⁹ 关屋悌藏. “Introduction”. *Manshu teikoku kensetsu kyoku: kokuto kensetsu junnen*. 1938. For the coronation of 1934 see Chapter 3.

³⁰ ZFGB,

³¹ *Guo du jian she ji nian shi dian zhi*, pp.185-202.

³² *Manshu teikoku kensetsu kyoku: kokuto kensetsu junnen*. 1938.



Fig 1-8 Pu Yi, the emperor, inspected at the roof level of the CCB.

Source: ichiji kokuto kensetsu kyoku.
Kokuto kensetsu junen. Shinkyo, 1937

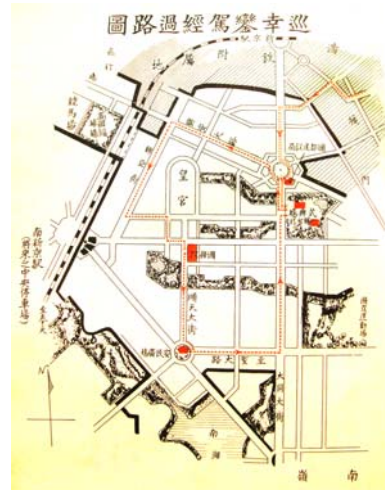


Fig 1-9 The itinerary of the emperor in the city.

Source: *Kokuto kensetsu junen*

The emperor's itinerary covered the most magnificent part of the city – Datong Plaza and surrounding buildings, the governmental quarter along Shuntian Street, Datong Street, and a series of smaller circular plazas. Scholars on world's fairs have noticed the city's image and reputation depends upon how well it represents the nation "to the rest of the world, while the nation, in order to evaluate the success or failure of that symbolic representation, had to consider the basis of its own character".³³ Built from scratch in five years, the new capital was the embodiment of Manchukuo's progress and spirit, and epitomized the major forces that were shaping the nation. The rise of Changchun mirrored metropolitan growth as well as national ambition and pride, in the accumulation of which resulted the ceremony. By this token, the most felicitous commemorative activity was to show the audience, both domestic and international, what accomplishments Japanese colonialism had obtained in the culmination of an "exhibitionary edifice". The emperor's itinerary evoked the city and its grandeur, bringing it to life, remaking it each time as a meaningful cultural landscape in the eyes of participants and spectators.

The photos of the emperor's inspecting at the top terrace of CCB Building and the itinerary of the emperor and his retinue were circulated in printed sources for this ceremony. The presence of the emperor at the building forcefully announced the urban construction of capital Changchun was under the tutelage of the state power, and in turn it represented the image of a powerful and ambitious state.

The ceremony attracted the interest of common citizens, most of whom had

³³ Reid Badger. *The Great American Fair*. Chicago : N. Hall, 1979, p.19.

moved here not long before due to the opportunities and jobs provided by the large scale construction of the new capital. A lot of people joined the parade procession and other activities, and even before September 16th, stamps and souvenir postcards with special postage—stamps for this ceremony were all sold out.³⁴ The most influential local newspaper, *Shengjing shi bao*, had been covering news about preparations and the agenda several months before, and radio broadcast the ceremony in Datong Park and elsewhere simultaneously, as commoners had no access to those areas that day.

On the evening of the 16th, a bonfire tower at the center of Datong Plaza was lit up by the Prime Minister at 7:00pm, formally signaling the start of civic celebration.³⁵ More than 10,000 students from schools throughout Xinjing gathered in the plaza around the tower awaiting the flame that night. The shape of the tower resembled the memorial in Lushun dedicated to those died in the Russo-Japanese War. On the tower body, the four Chinese characters, *yi xin yi de*, or “heart and virtue in unity,” were eye-catching in the day and flashing in the night. The bonfire tower at Datong Plaza as a temporary monument extended the propaganda of “co-existence and co-prosperity” in an imposing manner that symbolically unified the youth under the colonial banner.

After the tower was lit up, citizens were mobilized to pour into the streets in Xinjing and organized into a “lantern parade,” led by governmental and school music bands. The parade resumed the next day, succeeded by a mass congregation to celebrate the accomplishments in construction. Flag ritual took place in several places and the parade procession began shortly after the ritual.³⁶ It was prescribed that these mass movements be carefully organized to maximize the grandeur of the colonial state and capital city.

In addition to being mobilized into the parade, common inhabitants were encouraged to participate in the celebration in various ways, not just as spectators. Elementary students were organized to compete for composing a song eulogizing the new capital; artists were asked to design a poster for the ceremony; all were required to clean up the streets and plant trees for the upcoming ceremony. However, these public activities were under close surveillance.³⁷ Thus, the colonial authority induced citizens to abide by the rule of a “progressive” colonial government but also the social and ethnic hierarchy of the capital that reinforced Japanese control through citizen participation in the festivals.³⁸

The 1937 ceremony aimed at legitimizing Japanese colonialism by showcasing accomplishments of urban construction in a short period of five years. What were distinctly missing in the ceremony are commercial and entertaining units, commonly a

³⁴ Manshu teikoku kensetsu kyoku: *kokuto kensetsu junnen*. 1938, p.61.

³⁵ Ibid, p.104-105.

³⁶ Ibid, p.110-115.

³⁷ SJSB

³⁸ The encouragement of citizens to perform in political and cultural events as a mechanism of making new citizenry is by no means a Japanese invention. Spanish had used the same techniques in colonizing Mexico and especially in Mexico City. For more detail, see Linda Curcio-Nagy. *The Great Festivals of colonial Mexico City: performing power and identity*. Albuquerque : University of New Mexico Press, 2004, pp.40-45

major concern in similar occasions such as world's fairs elsewhere. The student bands on streets diluted the graveness for such an event of celebration, but no consideration was given to the marketplace, at least from the official perspective, an expression of anti-capitalism and anti-consumerism. The colonial state monopolized the ceremony and offered expression and interpretation for them.

IV. Competing Visions of the Modern: Building the Kingly Way

Backed by the authoritarian colonial government, the progressive design was put into reality in a very short period in the First Five Year Plan (1932-1937).³⁹ The construction boom and rapid urbanization of the capital city attracted people to move in, and by 1937, the size of population reached 335,000, including 20 per cent Japanese, and the total number of inhabitants jumped to 415,000 in 1939.⁴⁰

It is the scale of massive construction and speed of construction under the auspices of a totalitarian government, along with the modern aspects delineated above, that scholars came the conclusion that the 1932 Plan of Changchun was an early version of high modernism, not unlike Brasilia or Chandigarh.⁴¹ In this section, however, I will argue that the delicate treatment of indigenous elements attached special quality other than high modernism to colonial Changchun, and they also signified some of the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism.

As aforementioned, the planners of colonial Changchun showed that the new order in Manchuria continued to depend on modernist vision based on rational progress and material development. Applying most recent and advanced planning techniques from the West to the new capital of Manchukuo, however, the Japanese were determined to build the new capital city from scratch according to principles not seen in classic Western practices, by installing a new set of political and cultural manipulations to exhibit state power and the new modern unknown in Western paradigms.

The state makers of Manchukuo impugned the despotic and predatory nature of Western modernity, insisting the superiority of Confucian values and Confucian moral principles as alternatives to capitalism and Marxism, both Western doctrines. As expressed by the "Kingly Way" and "obedient to the Heaven" whereas the king was the surrogate of the Heaven, the construction the king's palace was one of the paramount concerns in planning the capital city.

In order to court people from different walks, the colonial government constructed a series of cultural idioms embodying those concepts through and by which the colonial authority was to be represented to Manchurians. In the pursuit of a moral state, the rhetoric of Manchukuo emphasized on a cultural independence and the revival of traditional values and ethics, such as filial piety (*xiao*), loyalty (*zhong*), chastity (*jie*),

³⁹ in the year of 1937, the Sino-Japanese War broke out and lasted till 1945 when the Japan was defeated.

Construction in a grand scale in Xinjing became a standstill after 1937.

⁴⁰ Guo Qinghua. "Changchun: unfinished capital planning of Manzhouguo, 1932-42". *Urban History*, 31, 1 (2004)

⁴¹ For example, see Buck David D. Buck. "Railway City and National Capital". Joseph W. Esherick (ed.). *Remaking The Chinese City: Modernity and Nationality Identity, 1900-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999.

frugality and diligence, etc.. As a contemporary tourist pamphlet stated:

*Herein lies the significance of the important mission to be played by culture in Manchoukuo, for concord through culture is not only the easiest, but also the most desirable means whereby complete harmony among the five races may be attained. Consequently cultural progress in the future is expected to be made with this end in view. Considering the phenomenal strides with which the new State has advanced in all lines of activity, it is not difficult to predict that culturally, Manchukuo will continue to make steady progress in the future.*⁴²

Survival of these customs and historical sites rendered them venerable in an age of rapid change, which was regarded useful to gain wider support. As the majority of Manchukuo's people were Han Chinese, a few Chinese indigenous customs and shrines were carefully preserved.

In this section I will elaborate on two examples in the city planning of colonial Changchun: the siting of Puyi's palace, and the preservation of a Taoist temple on Datong Street. I argue that the ideal of the Asiatic Kingly Way (*wangdao*) in opposition to the Western Despotism Way (*badao*) was made explicit in these two examples, and they in part demonstrate the idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo. In order to distinguish themselves from Western colonialism in the 1930s, Japanese consciously looked into indigenous sources for inspiration and legitimacy from the very outset, amongst which Chinese Confucianism was accorded a distinct place in the state ideology. The construction of Changchun as a capital was then a spatial representation that made visible the shift in colonial cultural policy from the one based on coercion to the one based on the ideology of the Kingly Way.

The Siting of the Palace

In imperial China, the principles and methods for the planning and construction of capital cities became matured as early as in the fifth century BCE. As the most important rule of all, the palatial compound of the king should be placed at the very center of the city, surrounded by multiple rings of walls, while imperial altars and markets should be laid out in specific locations, as exemplified in Beijing of Ming and Qing dynasties. As shown in Beijing, governmental buildings were symmetrically arranged in front of the main gate of the Forbidden City, i.e. Tiananmen Gate, to form an introverted T-shaped square as the major administrative quarter, and to honor the reign of the emperor⁴³.

It was unanimously agreed that the palace for Puyi should be built up first when he lived in a former tax bureau office and the siting for the palace was of paramount importance in the planning scheme. However, the location of the palatial compound had been a highly controversial issue in planning Manchukuo's capital. As the city grew out

⁴² Matsumoto Toyozo. *A Pictorial Outline of Manchuria*. Dalian: Mantetsu Press, 1939. Introduction.

⁴³ Wu Hung. *Remaking Beijing. Tiananmen Square and The Creation of a Political Space*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.

of a previous railway pivot, the Mantetsu planners who gained enough experience between 1905 and 1932 in planning and construction settlements along the railway, proposed to place the palace on a slightly elevated plateau on the southwestern corner of the city, to take full advantage of the topographical features to minimize earthwork and maximize the efficiency of railway transportation. A new, grander railway station would be built in the western part of the city, close to the administrative quarter and the palace. (Fig. 1-10)

The biggest problem of the Mantetsu scheme was that its location diverged too much from the center of the city, separated from the ministerial buildings. To make it worse, the palace did not align to a due north-south axis, but conformed to the terrain and the to-be-built railway station. It was not unusual that the Japanese Imperial Palace in Tokyo was not put at the center of Tokyo and it roughly followed a west-east axis, but this was the part that Puyi and the monarchists denied most as they insisted the location and orientation of the palace must accord with traditional capital cities in imperial China.

Under the support of Prime minister Zheng Xiaoxu and later the GDA, the Capital Construction Bureau produced an alternative scheme that placed the palace at Xinghuacun, then a suburban area but its location was much closer to the center within the capital's limits. The palatial halls and most auxiliary buildings were set on the north-south axis, and all important ministerial buildings were able to flank Shuntian Street emanating from the an open front square added to the palace, to accommodate modern needs of public gatherings, which formed Manchukuo's administrative quarter.⁴⁴



Fig 1-10 The Mantetsu scheme for the capital, which was the most economic one of the four proposals.

Source: Yu Weilian, p. 124

Though Puyi gradually realized his role as a puppet head of state (“Chief Executives”),⁴⁵ he had insisted on the centrality of his palace and its due north-south orientation. The location and orientation finally became a deciding factor for the 1932 Plan. The Guandong Army, Mantetsu and Manchukuo’s Capital Construction Bureau proposed their schemes respectively and made alternations according to the location and

⁴⁴ Guo, Qinghua. “Changchun: unfinished capital planning of Manzhouguo, 1932–42”. *Urban History*, 31, 1 (2004)

⁴⁵ Puyi. *From emperor to citizen : the autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989.

shape of the palace.⁴⁶ Much part of this scheme was adopted for realization, despite its higher cost, as it became an appropriate opportunity to prove to the outside world that the ideology of the Kingly Way had been translated in city planning and physical construction.

In Western colonial capital planning, it was the house of the Viceroy as in New Delhi and Rabat defined the form of the city, while in Changchun the palace for an emperor occupied one of the conspicuous locations. The other central locations included Datong Plaza and railway stations to prioritize Japanese colonial rule, despite the nation-founding ideals of Kingly Way. However, so long as Manchukuo was predicated on the tenet of “following the heaven and bringing peace to the people” under benevolent kingship, overt disrespect of the emperor was not acceptable in spatial arrangement. In planning the New Capital, the palace became the best manifestation of a new model of colonial rule, an updated Japanese colonial policy from assimilation to co-existence and collaboration.

The Preservation of Xiao Zi Fen

Though most part of Changchun was built from scratch with the gigantic and spectacular strides as the foundation of the new state, the Japanese planners deliberately preserved old temples and shrines that related to the Kingly Way before 1937. For example, rituals in the Temples of Confucius and Guan-Yue were regularly practiced as national holidays, a subject I will turn to in Chapter Four. However, these temples were located in the old walled city, while the preservation of *Xiaozifen* (The Grave of a Dutiful Child, hereafter XZF) was quite a different and difficult decision to make, which explicitly embodied the ideal of the Kingly Way (*wang dao*) in opposition to traditional capitalist planning pursuing efficiency and productivity.

The main artery of colonial Changchun, Datong Street, stretched from the railway station in a straight line for over six kilometers to Nanling, lined on both sides by large modern office buildings and department stores. XZF was located on the west side of Datong Street, not far from the spacious thoroughfare Datong Plaza, the heart of Manchukuo’s capital, standing a small earthen mound solitarily on one side of the street. In the end, the difficult decision to preserve XZF became the most conspicuous official propaganda of promoting the Asiatic virtue of filial piety. (Fig. 1-11)

⁴⁶ For specific detail of how the final plan was decided and its long debate, see Bill Sewell. 2000. *Japanese Imperialism and Civic Construction in Manchuria: Changchun, 1905-45*. dissertation, The University of British Columbia; David Vance Tucker. 1999. *Building “Our Manchukuo”: Japanese City Planning, Architecture, and Nation-building in occupied Northeast China, 1931-45*. diss, The University of Iowa.



Fig 1-11 the XZF, from the view it is clear the mount intruded into Datong Street, with its edge aligned to the median.

Source: *Shinkyo gaikan shashin*. Tokyo: Taisho shashin kojisho, 1942

The XZF had existed at the site for decades before Capital Construction started and the story of the temple goes as follows. A dutiful son, under the surname of Wang, was a local villager of some sixty years ago where the district was then a farming land. Wang was very much devoted to his mother and did his best to make her happy and comfortable by buying her the things she liked. His Filial piety, however, could not sustain the weight of years and the aged mother finally died under his tender care. Wang was greatly grieved over the loss of his mother and buried his mother in the place where later XZF would be. After a short journey to a Taoist temple to pray for the repose of her soul, Wang returned home to find his mother's grave was to be transferred elsewhere owing to the readjustment of land. Wang tried to persuade his fellow villagers not to relocate the grave and mysterious phenomena happened when some tried to cut the tree. All were greatly surprised and believed that the spirit of Wang's mother still and forbade the removal of the remains, and they decided to leave the grave intact. Subsisting on only boiled millet and water, Wang spent the rest of his life keeping vigil over his mother's grave by sitting upright before it with his eyes closed. Upon his death the neighbors erected a small temple which they named Xiaozifen, to worship his filial piety. It soon became a favorite place of Changchun for local people to visit and pray for their parents.⁴⁷

When the Capital Construction Program was launched following the establishment of Manchukuo, the XZF was fated to destruction since it stood on the projected Datong Street. The construction of Datong Street started in 1933 by the CCB, and drainage piping work proceeded to the area close by the XZF in May 1934. However, rumors went out amongst local labors that murmuring sounds had been heard from the grave that the construction must not remove the grave and the tree. In face of the labors' refusal to follow the original construction plan, the CCB increased the price of earthwork from 200 Yen to 1200 Yen, yet no one would sign the contract. But the

⁴⁷ SJSB. 1935-8-3. *Contemporary Manchuria*, 1938-5, pp.2-5

Japanese still insisted on “a careful relocation of the local deity to elsewhere” in June, and pronounced that if local Chinese labors would not collaborate, immigrant workers would be hired to do the work.⁴⁸ A month later, a Japanese monk came to the forefront of the debate to make a petition to the Ministry of Culture and Education to move the XZF to a “quite place to avoid the noise of the main street of the new capital”.

The involvement of the Japanese monk who called for demolition of the XZF annoyed local communities and redemptive associations such as World Red Cross and Buddhist Association, and they convened a meeting to oppose to this petition. They insisted the XZF “has been a spot of historical interest for long with high popularity amongst local inhabitants. If it is moved to elsewhere, such cultural meaning will lose, and (we are) afraid that local people will all rise to oppose the decision.”⁴⁹ In the end, the Ministry of Culture and Education, chaired by Zheng Xiaoxu at the time, replied that the Japanese monk did not have much to do with the XZF in the past, and it was not appropriate to move temple in regard of preservation. In the meantime, the people living near the shrine presented another petition to the CCB explaining the history of the temple and surrounding circumstances.⁵⁰ Eventually, Zheng Xiaoxu made an explicit statement that removal of the XZF should be well reconsidered so as not to hurt the feelings of local people.⁵¹

Because local communities, religious associations and the Premier all agreed to preserve the XZF, the GDA conceded to this proposal, claiming that the preservation of the XZF would court local support and educate the people with “being loyal to the monarch and being pious to their elder kinsmen”. The preservation of the XZF added technical difficulty to the construction of the street, and pipe-work was delayed two month. Although the existence of the old grave on the capital's principal thoroughfare renders traffic inconvenient to some extent, it clearly affords a touch of Manchurian local color and at the same time, more than contributes to the promotion of public morals.”⁵² However, As a result, in the official propaganda it was the colonial government that from the onset “decided to leave the temple unimpaired out of deference to the earnest entreaties of local people.

That the XZF stood on the western side of Datong Street, extruding into slow traffic lanes, seemed as if the planners had forgotten to remove it during the construction of the avenue. The sight of incense burning there from morning till night offers a strange contrast to the modern atmosphere of the surroundings. On the top of this mound, a small building was built in grey bricks on a hexagonal plan on the mound, and the grave was buried under a lone elm tree. This place was constantly visited by devout men and women who came to pray for their parents, and XZF was selected one of the

⁴⁸ *Shinkyō hibi shinbun*. 1934-6-2. See also Yu Jing, “Changchun xiaozifen” (the dutiful child tomb in Changchun). Yu Jing, 2001, p.115.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p.116.

⁵⁰ “Manchu Legends”. *Contemporary Manchuria*, 1938-5, p.3

⁵¹ Yu Jing, 2001, p.117.

⁵² “Manchu Legends”. *Contemporary Manchuria*, 1938-5, p.5

most favorable tourist sites of Xinjing, and as late as the summer of 1943 it was still maintained by the colonial government.⁵³ After the renovation, the plan of the mound formed a quadrangle-like complex, occupying an area of about 50 square meters. The base was reinforced and rounded by oval stone wall, and banisters with decorations were added to the stairs and top of the mound. Many high ranking officials such as Premier Zhang Jinghui had contributed steles to honoring the ZXF. The place remained in the same place until 1958 when it was finally demolished by the Communist government “because its intrusion of traffic”.⁵⁴

Rather than eliminating existing layers of the previous age that was usually practiced in Western colonial city planning to give way to the European town, the preservation of the XZF was the most distinguishing example of how Chinese Confucianism was embedded in the state ideology in urban construction. Moreover, the XZF gained more attention as time elapsed and became an emblem of the capital city. In official propaganda (pamphlets and guidebooks), ideologues of Manchukuo intended to build a new capital both thoroughly modern and deeply traditional. It is noteworthy that the ZXF was scheduled to be removed in the original plan, and it was superstition and rumors that delayed demolition, and Zheng Xiaoxu’s involvement was crucial for an alternation for preservation in the end. However, as Zheng was deposed in 1935, his contribution was overlooked in the official narrative, while the XZF itself was continued to be crowned as the manifestation of Kingly Way in urban construction.

David Buck calls the 1932 Changchun Plan “a high modern scheme,” because it was backed by “the absolute power of the colonial state” lacking in both British India and Australia. However, the preservation of the XZF at the heart of the capital marked a significant and interesting compromise with the preexisting environ at Changchun, and demonstrated the Japanese struggle to compete with the Western hegemony of defining “the modern” in the milieu of East Asia. The colonial government found it useful to preserve the site as it was closely associated with a few Confucian virtues such as piety of children and chastity of women, upon which didactics the state was built. In the Japanese scheme, due to cultural similarities, everyday life in Changchun rested more on social and moral norms that stretched from what the local people (and the Japanese themselves) had been familiar with for centuries, than a rigid segregation along racial line, though both aimed at “classifying and keeping everyone and everything in place”. Together with broad avenues and green space in the city, the XZF projected the colonial propaganda of the Kingly Way over urban life.

V. Living the Kingly Way: City Planning, Urban Life, and Japanese Colonialism

Manchukuo emerged calling for the realization of an ideal realm on earth and a

⁵³ SJSB

⁵⁴ Changchun Archives ed. *Changchun shi dashi ji* (Chronicles of Changchun), 1948-1977. Changchun, 1986; also Yu Jing. “Changchun xiaozifen” (the dutiful child tomb in Changchun). in Yu Jing. *Changchun shihua* (Historical stories of Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 2001.

paradise of the Kingly Way (*wangdao letu*) in which humanity would live in peace. The content of the Kingly Way such as following the way of heaven with the king as the surrogate, ethnic harmony, and Confucian virtues of filial piety and loyalty to the throne all found manifestation through the spatial arrangement of Changchun. In practice, however, on one level it relied on exaggerated ideals and wishes, while on another level it was filled with simple embellishments and hyperbolic delusions.

A multi-ethnic state of five races, Manchukuo boasted that it was the first state which was founded on the principle of ethnic harmony. The 1932 Plan reflected social conditions most explicitly in its zoning system. Manchukuo had five official races, with the Japanese taking the “leading role,” but the relationship between these races within the city plan is not strongly delineated. In this aspect, colonial Changchun, quite comfortably incorporated all four parts of previous construction by different authorities into a new capital, differed from other civilizing missions such as the British planning of New Delhi or French planning of Moroccan cities. New Delhi, was a city “with no room for the marginal: the prostitute, the gambler, the homeless, the itinerant, the infirm or even any kind of industry or workshops,”⁵⁵ while French planning insisted on a definite separation, a *cordon sanitaire* between new and old cities. However, there was no explicit general commitment to racial segregation, as there was in some colonial planning. Nor was there any *cordon sanitaire* or zone of *non edificandi* separating new colonial Changchun from the old city.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, both planners and inhabitants of Changchun conceived of the new capital so distinct from the old city, which they saw as old, corrupt, and backwards. Japanese planners clearly proposed a division of labor in which prostitution, industry, and other activities dirty but inevitable, should be assigned to the Chinese sectors. According to David Tucker’s research, by 1937, the Capital Construction Bureau claimed to have spent 350,000 yen to construct 32 brothels with 984 rooms in Chinese entertainment district in the old city and to have compelled brothels in other areas to move to it.⁵⁷ Some Taiwanese who worked in the New Capital during the 1930s and 40s found that although food and entertainment in the Chinese district was cheaper, they felt unsafe there because the Chinese would not talk to them and hostility was ambient against who spoke Japanese.⁵⁸ For example, Ms. Lin Gengwei, who worked in the Ministry of Finance, remembered that:

“The Manchurians did not dare to say anything bad about the Japanese... As their living conditions were relatively low, they did not good feeling toward Taiwanese as well. Besides, the differential treatment of Manchurians and Chinese stipulated by the Japanese aroused their antagonism.

⁵⁵ Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating architecture and urbanism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 184.

⁵⁶ Gwendolyn Wright. 1991. pp. 145-147

⁵⁷ David Vance Tucker. 1999. p. 387

⁵⁸ Chen Yongxiang. Chen Yongxiang xiansheng fangwen lu (an interview with Mr. Chen Yongxiang). Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica (ed.). *Taiwanese in Manchuria under the Japanese rule*. Taipei: Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica, 2002, p.493.

*For example, coal had a ration quota at that time. But the Japanese and Taiwanese did not need to stay in long lines in the air to get coal, while the Chinese were forced so, and oftentimes they ended up with nothing after long hours of waiting. ... Sometimes I sold white rice and coal to them, so they also treated me well.”*⁵⁹

In colonial Changchun, it was true that no stringent restriction of racial segregation was legalized during the Manchukuo period, compared to French and British colonialism, and people were allowed to move relatively freely between different sections of the city.⁶⁰ However, residential quarters were classified into four kinds according to population density and equipped amenities. The density for the first class was 4,000 people per square kilometer, while the number jumped to 12,000 for the fourth class. It was stipulated that only governmental employees may live in the first two classes of residential areas.⁶¹ Considering the Japanese-Manchurian ratio in the government, it was a practical tool of banning the Chinese out from residential quarters of better living conditions.

In the government of Manchukuo, the Japanese-Manchurian ratio of seven-to-three was taken as something of a standard, though in some critical departments such as the Capital Construction Bureau this changed to Japanese always occupying at least 80% of the positions.⁶² The aim of this allotment of positions to Manchurians and Japanese was to take a form wherein Chinese would basically be given the top administrative posts and Japanese the subsidiary ones, while the government's organization would operate on the basis of the autonomous initiative of the Chinese. In this way, the Japanese wanted to avoid international criticism that Manchukuo was a puppet state, and the same form was adopted in the chartered corporations and public companies within Manchukuo. The Manchurians so appointed, though, were all men who had studied in Japan, and none of them had any real power – they were dubbed “ornamental supplements”. In particular, the Japanese effectively held a monopoly by controlling such pivotal functions as personnel desk and planning desk.

Looked at one way, parks in the New Capital were spaces for the possibility of a public sphere and individual relaxation and play. The parks, however, were not merely for play; they were part of defense system – anti-aircraft sites, fire defense, population dispersal areas. Parks also had important health and moral purposes, as Japanese authorities had repeated the common opinion that parks were necessary for moral health: “We know beyond a shadow of a doubt that overcrowding causes immorality.”

⁵⁹ Lin Gengwei. Lin Gengwei nushi fangwen lu (an interview with Ms. Lin Gengwei). Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica (ed.). *Taiwanese in Manchuria under the Japanese rule*. Taipei: Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica, 2002, p.387.

⁶⁰ Joshua Fogel, “Integrating into Chinese Society: A Comparison of the Japanese Communities of Shanghai and Harbin” in *Japan's Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy 1900-1930*. Sheron Minichiello, eds. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i press, 1998)

⁶¹ Qu Xiaofan. *Jindai dongbei chengshi de lishi bianqian* (Historical evolution of cities in the Northeast). Changchun: Jilin Normal University Press, 2001, p. 289.

⁶² Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, p.112.

Moreover, the park provided space for a monumental and ceremonial aesthetics. Statues and temples in Changchun's parks bore explicitly Japanese iconography and marked a change in the trend of ritual *Japanization* of space. For example, the designers composed the National Founding Shrine, the most sacred monument of Manchukuo which corresponded to the Japanese imperial shrine at Ise, with architectural elements of Japanese shrine arrangement. I will turn to this subject of monuments and state rituals later in the following chapters; suffice it to say here is that the hierarchy of ethnicities was distinct under Japan's leadership of the Kingly Way, despite the banner of ethnic harmony.

One of the most explicit attempts to materialize ethnic harmony through urban construction came in the form of Manchukuo's national university: Nation Founding University (Kenkoku daigaku, or Kendai). Kendai was opened in May 1938 in the midst of the China War. Aiming at producing "pioneering leaders in the establishment of a moral world,"⁶³ Kendai in theoretical terms aimed at a pan-Asianist institution to breed leaders of future generations to lead the revival of East Asian. Puyi attended the opening ceremony in 1938⁶⁴ and declared the Kendai to be the highest educational institution of Manchukuo that was bound to embody nation-founding ideals of ethnic harmony.⁶⁵

Sitting a couple of blocks away from the Monument to National Foundation around the southern terminus of Datong Street, Kendai occupied a land of 2,140,000 square meters and had buildings of classrooms, dormitories, playground, gym, and library.⁶⁶ Kendai had a unique management system of dorm (*shu*) that every 25 students consisting of different races lived in the same dorm and a staff of the university was assigned to live with and supervise them in everyday life. (Fig 1-12) All members got up at 5 in the morning, performed a series of rituals, for example, praying for victory and saluting toward Puyi's palace, and other routine included study, military exercise, and going to bed at 10 in the evening.

Euphonized as the first moral state of the world that was built upon the ideal of ethnic harmony, the concept had another side. As it took shape in confrontation with Chinese nationalism and the Three Principles of the People, the design of the slogan of ethnic harmony aimed to quietly eradicate a distinct national or ethnic consciousness which had become the root of anti-Japanese feeling. As a result, the reality upholding the "harmony" of races in Manchukuo emerged in the form of expelling heterogenous elements to enforce obedience to the colonial authorities. In March 1942, 17 Chinese students of the first class were took away and then dropped out from the university, accused with "Antagonizing Manchukuo and Japan" by reading forbidden texts such as

⁶³ ZFGB, 1939, *Jianguo daxue ling*

⁶⁴ SJSB, 1938-5-3

⁶⁵ Yan Tingchao. "weiman jianguo daxue shimo zhaji" (Notes of Kendai in Manchukuo). WSZL, p.23. Eri Hotta, on the other hand, notes that the first class numbered 141 students, of which 70 were Japanese, 46 Manchurians, 3 Taiwanese, 10 Koreans, 7 Mongolians, and 5 Russian Caucasians.

⁶⁶ Liu Xiaoyan. "weiman jianguo daxue ji qi xuesheng" (Kendai and the students in Manchukuo). *Lantai Neiwei*. 2004(2): 54-55.

Three People's Principles and alike. As a result, the president of Kendai was forced to resign in June 1942 because "the dream of Kendai was shattered".⁶⁷

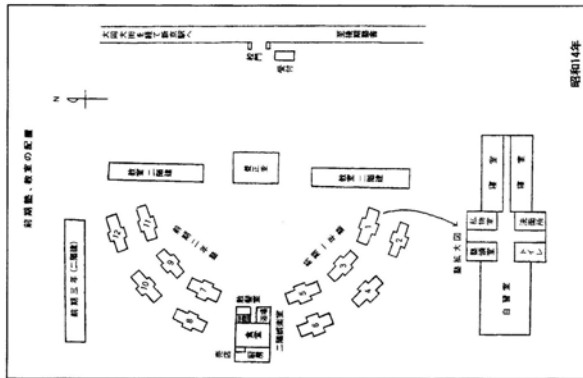


Fig 1-12 The plan of Kendai, 1939
Source: Yukio Yamane. *Kenkoku Daigaku no kenkyu : Nihon Teikoku shugi no ichi danmen*. Toky: kyuku shoin, 2003.

However, students began to question the Japanese leadership role of Asia. More Chinese students joined in secret forbidden-book reading association, and they concluded that "Manchukuo was regrettably a puppet state of Japanese imperialism in actual substance." Another Chinese student confessed that "each time they were made to take part in the ritual morning worship of the Japanese Emperor, he and other Chinese students prayed silently that imperialist Japan would be defeated."⁶⁸

Although in order to boast the dream of racial harmony, Kendai and its equal, Datong Academy, employed mixed elements of various sources, the Kendai failed to match its role in instituting egalitarianism and other ideals. This eventually resulted in the disillusionment amongst the best educated and highly expected people toward the nation-founding ideals, and some turned themselves against the Japanese.

Aside from promoting ethnic harmony in urban life, the Japanese planners were also earnest to show Asia could be modern without relying on the West through various modernizing projects. The planning institution, Secret Service of the Guandong Army, stated in the beginning of *Briefs of Draft Scheme for Xinjing Urban Planning* that

"...(Changchun) was made the capital of the whole country at a sudden accident, ... construction must be made as a crucial measure to cultivate popularity within the country and to represent grandiosity and modernity as a manifesto to the world."

Modern city planning and architecture, under Western dresses but with something essentially different from their Western models, came to be identified with the powerful presence of the Japanese colonizers. To draw Louise Young's seminal thesis of a "total empire" to explain the comprehensive manner of Japanese mobilization for

⁶⁷ Yu Jiaqi. "weiman jianguo daxue jiqi poxi" (A History and Analysis of Kendai in Manchukuo). WSZL, 1997(1), pp. 5-6.

⁶⁸ Eri Hotta. *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007. See many similar recollections also Yan Tingchao. "weiman jianguo daxue shimo zhaji" (Notes of Kendai in Manchukuo). WSZL, 1997(1).

Manchukuo,⁶⁹ I regard modernity manifested in colonial Changchun as the prelude to the larger Japanese militarist conquest of East Asia, hence a bastion of further incursion into China and necessary preparations for “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.”

The 1932 Plan turned a soybean town into a booming colonial capital. The construction of roads, parks, housing, governmental buildings, banks, theatres, and all other infrastructures was made possible only under an authoritarian colonial power in colonial Changchun which was based on a zealous futurism to catch up with western civilization. As Tucker has written, “An ideal design, the interests of the construction industry, or of land speculators were not enough to create this city. It required force.”⁷⁰ At Changchun the Japanese dominated planning, although the city always had a majority of Han Chinese population. Japanese constructed Changchun to make the city the citadel for a further military and economic intrusion in China.

Capital Changchun was a much more military city than is evident in its plan and modern aspects demonstrated in the 1932 Plan were closely associated with the Japanese militarism. Changchun’s inhabitants all knew that antiaircraft artilleries could be deployed on the 60-meter-wide Datong Street in the event Russian army as the imaginary enemy invaded.⁷¹ As the Communists took the initiative of civil war in Manchuria since 1947, Changchun became an isolated stronghold under the control of the KMT, and was finally besieged in March 1948. The previous colonial capital city was intended to be built as a large fortress and had an advantageous position of defense due to sufficient infrastructure networks. Regarding the colonial buildings left by the Japanese, the KMT General Zheng Dongguo, commanding general of Changchun at the time, wrote in his memoir that:

"During the occupation [of Changchun] by the Japanese army, a large number of permanent and semi-permanent military structures were built, such as pillboxes, moats, tunnels, watchtowers, and all other kinds of equipments. The Headquarters of Guangdong Army [and other three buildings] stood at the four corners in the center of the city, connected with one another by underneath concrete tunnel crossing wide streets. The buildings above the ground were covered by concrete roofs and guarded by thick walls, narrow and heavy windows. Even the bombs of medium aircrafts cannot make substantial damage to them. the previous Manchuria Bank is an extremely solid building. Its external walls were all made by granite, with the thickness of over one meter. The large interior space was available to store up a huge amount of ammunition, food, and water, and a generator was also equipped for electric power in the building. The headquarter

⁶⁹ Louise Young, 1998. *Japan's Total Empire : Manchuria and the culture of wartime imperialism*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press.

⁷⁰ David Vance Tucker, 1999. *Building "Our Manchukuo": Japanese City Planning, Architecture, and Nation-Building in Occupied China, 1931-1945*. PhD thesis in the University of Iowa. pp.353-354

⁷¹ Hong Zaiming. Hong Zaiming xiansheng fangwen lu (an interview with Mr. Hong Zaiming). Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica (ed.). *Taiwanese in Manchuria under the Japanese rule*. Taipei: Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica, 2002, p.325.

*of my corps was set in this building. Based on the military structures left by the Japanese, the whole city formed a modern defense system. With all these efforts, I was confident that Changchun became an impregnable fortress, and could afford any attack from the People's Liberation Army."*⁷²

Inhabitants in the city were organized into neighborhood units (*ling zu*), and were required to practice air defense and other sorts of military drills, in addition to tree planting, voluntary labor, etc. A Taiwanese couple remembered that:

*"Generally six families composed a neighbor unit, and communicate with each other with a bulletin board. Normally a neighbor unit consisted of six to eight people. ... Members must attend neighbor unit meetings, and participated in training programs, such as fire safety skill and air defense drill which demanded people to run to bomb shelters as soon as possible."*⁷³

In this way, all inhabitants of Changchun were socially mobilized to serve the goal of "total war". All kinds of activities organized by neighborhood units were covered in contemporary newspapers, such as voluntary labor in national holidays and weekends, military drills of air-, gas-, and fire-defense, and various contributions to warfare ranging from monthly wage to metal pieces, etc. For example, the traditional Chinese agricultural holiday of Grain Rain Day (*guyu*) was stipulated as national tree-planting holiday. On April 3, 1941, an article appeared in *Datong News* stating that during the tree-planting week, inhabitants were to be organized according to their neighborhood units, to plant trees to "nurture the attachment to the motherland of Manchukuo".⁷⁴

Despite the modern surface of Changchun, the military nature of the city planning of Changchun, and omnipresent fear and multi-faceted ambiguities embodied in living the Kingly Way in the city demonstrated the discrepancy between propaganda and political realities which made Manchukuo's nation-founding ideals become "little more than opportunistic idiom of Japanese aggression."⁷⁵

VI. Conclusions

The capital city of Changchun was the site of new modernities embraced by the ideologues of Manchukuo to build an ideal state on basis of Asiatic virtues as manifest in planning schemes architectural programs. Carried out under the propagandistic banner of pan-Asianism, the city embraced the materialization of principles of the Kingly Way through planning, such as ethnic harmony, following the heaven and revering the king, and Confucian virtues such as filial piety and loyalty. Japanese colonialism thus differed from Western counterparts in that the attempts to embody the Kingly Way in the built environment represented idiosyncrasies of Japanese colonial policies, and the

⁷² Zheng Dongguo. *Wo de rongma shengya* (My military years). Beijing: Tuanjie Press, 2008, pp.306-307

⁷³ Chen Jiashu. Chen Jiashu fufu fangwen lu (an interview with Mr. and Mrs. Chen Jiashu). Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica (ed.). *Taiwanese in Manchuria under the Japanese rule*. Taipei: Institute of Modern Chinese History at Academia Sinica, 2002, p.523.

⁷⁴ *Dating Bao*. 1943-4-3(2).

⁷⁵ Roger Brown. "Visions of a virtuous manifest: Yasuoka Masahiro and Japan's Kingly Way". In Sven Saaler and Victor Koschmann ed. *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

planning model of Changchun cannot be reduced to a high modernist scheme. In the meantime, the spatial arrangement turned out to enhance the image of the “East Asian modern,”⁷⁶ and publicized it to the outside world.

However, despite the official propaganda of “East Asian modern,” Manchukuo’s modernity was, as many scholars have noted, coercing regime built on economic exploitation and cruelty that cost a magnitude of lives, as showed in the case of everyday life of Kendai. Not unlike the Western colonialism in operating colonies, the Japanese were also eager to place everyone and everything in its proper place to order the colonial state, using ethnic harmony as smoking decoration of real polices. In a document sent by the GDA to Japanese officials, favor should be given to Korean people when they took issue on the Chinese and both sides held reasons.⁷⁷ In this point Japan was no so different from the European colonialism which Japan itself was criticizing.

⁷⁶ Prasenjit Duara. 2003. *Sovereignty and authenticity : Manchukuo and the East Asian modern*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

⁷⁷ *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, p. 178.

Chapter 2 Ambivalent Anxieties: Showcasing Colonial Architecture of Changchun

The built environment of Manchukuo's capital was used to showcase new modern of the accomplishments of the colonial rule that embodied the ideology of kingly way. However, the modern facades of the colonial city of Changchun was not at all monolithic and massive urban projects were completed in a very short period of time as seen in the previous chapter. The diversity of architectural styles characterized the urban landscape of the city, which was best defined by its ambivalences, contradictions, and ambiguities.

Because the ideology of "Kingly Way" was never explicitly elucidated in governmental texts of Manchukuo era, the manifestation of it allowed various possible solutions in physical construction. A new style, so-called "Developing Asia" (*Shin A*) was generated for institutional buildings in Changchun, resonating with the nationalistic movement in Japan and China at the time. But in practice, the new style did not deviate much from Western historicism and modernism that had strong presence in the city too. However, architectural plurality beyond one singular aesthetic style was evident in Changchun, which found its root back to the Mantetsu era. The colonial regime's accepted and supported a wide array of aesthetics to represent Japanese pan-Asian ideology as a part of its cultural policies.

In fact, the Japanese cultural authority was Janus-faced ambivalent: a pan-Asian aura must be produced while the substance of the legitimacy of leadership was Western knowledge.¹ The ambivalence was also felt by architects. The Japanese justified their colonial project in Manchuria as bringing in modern scientific and technological knowledge to this region, and some of modernism's most ardent opponents routinely made effective use of the most advanced building methods and repeatedly wrote of the need to develop architecture appropriate to local contemporary conditions. Though some Japanese modernists had extensive training abroad and a longstanding commitment to modernist architecture, they sometimes conceded in the face of nationalistic pressure and turned to pre-modern form, not only in Japan but also in Manchukuo.

Brian McLaren has used the concept of ambivalent modernism to analyze Italian colonial rule in Libya, and gives a number of reasons why Homi Bhabha's discussion of the ambivalence of the colonial relationship is pertinent to the description of plurality of modern architecture in the Italian colonies.² The ambivalence of colonial discourse as theorized by Bhabha is a useful way to view the production of colonial space in Libya as a form of cultural hegemony that is neither uniform nor unchanging. The same can be said to the discourse of power in Manchukuo.

This chapter illustrates the ambivalence of the colonial regime and its agencies in building Changchun as a modern capital city, distinctively characterized by aesthetic

¹ Homi Bhabha, "Introduction". In Homi Bhabha ed. *Nation and Narration*. London; New York: Routledge, 1990.

² Brian McLaren. *Architecture and tourism in Italian colonial Libya : an ambivalent modernism*. Seattle : University of Washington Press, 2006, "Introduction". "The marking of Libyan cultural identity as Western and non-Western is closely tied to a temporal dimension that alternately accepted and denied it a coequality with metropolitan culture."

plurality; and the next chapter continues to examine the operation of Manchukuo's hegemonic pluralism as manifest in state and cultural pageantries, arguing for unmistakable hegemony of Japanese coerced rule. This chapter begins with a brief review of the rise of the Imperial Crown buildings in Japan and the equivalent in China, which had great influence on the Developing Asia style, and analyzes the aesthetic plurality of the colonial capital at Changchun in relation to a competing ideology to overcome the West to achieve "the modern". The approach to competition of modern visions culminated in Manchukuo's Tenth Anniversary ceremonies including the 1942 Greater East Asian Exposition in the capital, which aimed at mass mobilization in the war against the West. Discrepancies and ambiguity in urban construction were, as I will show in this chapter, at the core of Japanese colonial project, not unlike that between the reality of political inequality and the demands of ethnic harmony as shown in the case of the Kandai.

I. Architectural Profession in Japan and China till the 1930s

It was not until the 1870s when the Japanese architectural profession was established as a part of a broad program of modernization based on Western models. Their designs housed the public and private institutions that drove the process forward, and they invented symbols of power and status that affirmed the newly emerging social order. However, westernization of Japanese architectural profession did not go unquestioned. These concerns stimulated research into Japanese architectural history and led to the passage in 1897 of Japan's first law on the preservation of historically significant buildings. It was during the same time when the Japanese were more confident in their ability to preserve political autonomy in the face of Western colonial expansion. More importantly, the Western powers refused to recognize Japan as an equal and passed anti-Asian immigration laws in the US disillusioned many Japanese who had been aggressively pro-Western in the aftermath of the first Sino-Japanese War (1904-1905), the period when Japanese intellectuals advocated for incorporation of Japanese culture as a strategy for "Japanicizing" Western knowledge.

In architecture, the Japan Revival style began in the 1890s and grew thereafter, especially during periods of patriotic fervor, which was bound to have an effect on Western-style architecture.³ Ito Chuta (1867-1954), the graduate of the Imperial University of Tokyo (Todai), was representative of this new development who argued for a hybrid architectural style of both pre-modern Japanese and modern Western elements.⁴ It was during this period that the so-called *teikan yoshiki* (Imperial Crown style) became

³ The earliest example of Japan Revival was probably the Nara Kencho of 1895 by Nagano Uheiji. In the heterogeneous context of late Meiji Western architecture, however, it was just one more style. For more detail on the rise of Japanese nationalism and related architectural movement, see Dallas Finn. *Meiji revisited : the sight of Victorian Japan*. New York : Weatherhill, 1995.

⁴ Ito's numerous contributions to the history of Japan's pre-modern architecture began with a groundbreaking work published in 1893 on the seventh-century Buddhist temple complex in Horyuji. He helped restore many historic buildings and collaborated with his former teacher Kigo Kiyoyoshi in constructing the Heian Shrine, a replica of a portion of the late-eighth-century Imperial Palace produced in 1895 to commemorate the city of Kyoto's 1100th anniversary. In his role as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, Ito was also instrumental in expanding other architects' awareness of Japanese architectural history.

the recognized emblem of Japanese nationalism and imperialism.⁵ Two examples representing the *teikan yoshiki* merited attention: the Kanagawa Prefectural Office (1926) and the Nagoya Municipal Office (1930), both of which resulted from competitions. (Fig. 2-1) In terms of monumentality, a massive tower topped by a pagodalike roof⁶ was added to the main part of the building in a ternary form with a Western-style porte-cochere protruding modestly at the center, suggesting the distinct application of Japanese taste in architecture. The architectural treatment of Imperial Crown style later had cast tremendous influence in Japan's colonial urban construction in Manchuria.



Fig 2-1 the Kanagawa Prefectural Office
Source: Jonathan Reynolds, p.91

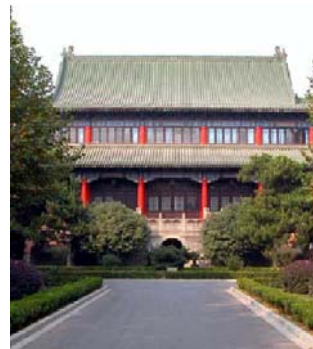


Fig 2-2 the KMT's Central Procuratorate, by
Yang Tingbao, 1935

In the increasingly anti-Western atmosphere of the late 1920s, however, Western technological and scientific knowledge held sway in architectural profession. Despite rising nationalist sentiment for the first two decades of the twentieth century an aggressively engineering-oriented group of architects exerted tremendous influence within the profession. Their primary concern was to explore new construction technology, including the steel frame and steel-reinforced concrete. One of the leading exponents of this approach was Sano Riki (1880-1956), who had supervised the construction in major railway cities under the aegis of Goto Shimpei, the first director of Mantetsu, and served consultant for the 1932 Plan of capital Changchun.⁷

Modernism was introduced to Japan as an international movement, and in their early manifestos the modernists claimed that their efforts were a part of a project of

⁵ The term was dubbed due to a competition of 1917-18 for the Imperial Diet Building, "employed by opponents in the pre-WWI period to mock the seeming superficiality of putting traditional roofs on modern structures, but was used in the interwar era to describe this type of design for governmental buildings." David Steward. *The making of a modern Japanese architecture : 1868 to the present*. Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International, 1987, p.51.

⁶ *ibid*, p.110. In David B. Steward's words: "A massive square tower topped by a pagodalike roof as then added, yielding an appearance very similar to the bizarre, tile-roofed University Library (1931-34) built by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott at Cambridge."

⁷ After graduating from Tokyo Imperial University in 1903, Sano remained at the university to conduct research and lecture, becoming a full professor in 1918. Sano became a specialist in earthquake-resistant design and successfully explore new construction technology. He also introduced toilet and sanitary regulations to Changchun. See Jonathan Reynolds. *Maekawa Kunio and the emergence of Japanese modernist architecture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, pp. 18-19, 32.

international significance, as exemplified in the construction of the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo by Frank L. Wright finished in 1922. It was also the period when the Japan Secession Group (*Bunriha Kenchikukai*) was created as a small intellectual organization promoting modernist movement in Japan, with close ties with Viennese Secessionism and German Expressionism. Young Japanese architects such as Maekawa Kunio and Sakakura Junzo went abroad after their graduation from Todai to work in Le Corbusier's office in Paris, exposing themselves to modernist radical ideas and projects. Maekawa and Sakakura, as well as Tenge Kenzo who had worked in both of their offices, left their impact in the urban construction of colonial Changchun in the thirties and forties.

On the other hand, modern architectural profession in China was established several decades later in the 1920s. After the Boxers' Uprising, American missionary architects, such as Harry Hussey (1880-?) and Henry Murphy (1877-1954), led the path of exploring possibilities to include traditional Chinese architectural elements in many missionary universities. As architect Liang Sicheng (1901-1972), a graduate of University of Pennsylvania in 1927 and also the founder of the discipline of Chinese architectural history, criticized the first Chinese-style buildings designed by American architects "lack research in details",⁸ Chinese architects, many of whom returned to China after being educated abroad, took the leadership from the Americans to build modern Chinese architecture since the 1920s onwards. But the practical experiences by the American forerunners took direct effects on new Chinese architects. For example, Lu Yanzhi (1894-1929), a graduate from Cornell University in 1918, once worked in H. Murphy's office and participated in the planning of Yenching University in 1916 and Nanking University for Women. Shortly after that, he won the international tender for the Mausoleum of Dr. Sun Yat-sen in 1925. This so-called Chinese Renaissance style was a milestone in modern Chinese architectural history.

After military success of the Northern Expedition, Kuomintang (KMT) had the national capital moved to Nanking from Peking in 1928, and carried out the *Capital City Plan* (Chinese: *shoudu jihua*) immediately. The plan regulated that important official buildings should employ national style, with big roofs as the most distinguishing signs. In the Capital City Plan, the overall architectural style was regulated to consist of "a modification of the classic Chinese style". In this way, big roofs and exquisite traditional decorations were put on the functional plans for a lot of buildings in the 1930s, for example, the Building of Railway Ministry in 1929 by H. Murphy, and the KMT's Central Procuratorate in Nanjing by Yang Tingbao, graduate from University of Pennsylvania in 1925, etc. Later, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was completed in 1933 by Zhao Shen and Tong Jun, graduates from the University of Pennsylvania in 1923 and 1928 respectively.⁹ (Fig. 2-2) By the late twenties, a number of professional

⁸ Liang Sicheng. *Corpus of Liang Sicheng (II)*. Beijing: Architectural Industry Press of China, 1984, p.221.

⁹ See Yishi Liu. "Nationalism: an Approach to Understanding Modern Architecture in National Chinese Style". *Huazhong Architecture*. 2006(1); also Charles Musgrove. "Building a Dream: Constructing a National Capital in Nanking". In Joseph Esherick (Ed.). *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900 to 1950*. University of Hawaii Press, 2002.

associations had been founded and professional journals circulated, hence the establishment of modern Chinese architectural profession.

In this larger historical background of nationalist movement (sometimes in the form of anti-Westernism and anti-imperialism) which called for a sovereign nation-state independent from the West, Japanese and Chinese architects consciously looked back into pre-modern history for decorative motifs to be applied in modern buildings to represent cultural pride and national identity. It was the architectural current of the late twenties and early thirties in both countries that predicated the emergence of a specific style in Manchukuo.

II. Architectural Plurality of Changchun before 1931

The Russian-led construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) around the turn of the twentieth century brought profound change to Changchun and many other cities along the route. The first modern architecture in Changchun appeared in the Russian settlement and the most elaborate buildings were of course those relating to the railway. The railway station was a modest single-story building, signifying Changchun was an ordinary freight post along the railway.

Following the victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan gained control over the southern half of the railway and Changchun became the dividing point of the two halves of the line in 1905. The Japanese and built their own railway settlement, or annexed land railway (Ch: *fushudi*; Jp: *fuzokuchi*). Under the supervision of Goto Shimpei, the first director of Japanese Southern Manchurian Railway Company (Mantetsu) which played out the national role of modernizing Japanese settlements in Manchuria, Japanese planners produced a plan based on western technologies boasting efficiency and rationality, both emblems of progress. The influence of both City Beautiful and American railway town planning was obvious in constructing the Japanese railway settlement in Changchun,¹⁰ which later also undergirded planning Manchukuo's capital.

The newly built railway station in the Japanese SMR town was a grand concrete building of two stories, a dominating landmark of both the plaza in front of the station and the whole settlement at large. It was much larger and modern than the Russian railway station to its north, a flat brick building built less than 10 years ago. The modern material of concrete was widely used in many multi-storied governmental and public buildings in the settlement, especially for those surrounding the central plaza in front of the station and those flanking the main street, Changchun Boulevard, starting from the station southwards, such as Mantetsu office, library, post office, police station, etc. In a time when most buildings in Changchun were flammable wooden structures of one story by height, grand, tall and well decorated architecture built in concrete undoubtedly conveyed the message of a modern age.

Western aesthetics pervading in the settlement enhanced this message too. As

¹⁰ Buck David D. Buck. "Railway City and National Capital". Joseph W. Esherick (ed.). *Remaking The Chinese City: Modernity and Nationality Identity, 1900-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999.

in the Japanese home islands, a variety of Western styles appeared since the construction for the railway settlement started, ranging from Renaissance, Baroque, Neo-classical, Gothic Revival, to Secessionist, Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau. These developments in the Japanese home islands were introduced to Manchuria after the Japanese influence grew in that region. The Japanese built a chain of Yamato Hotels in Manchuria, and the one built in Changchun in 1909 (Fig. 2-3). Changchun's Yamato Hotel was not the largest of its kind but it adopted the newest artistic style of Art Nouveau, the same style widely used in institutional buildings in Russian's railway settlements along the CER. The most distinguishing example is the headquarter office building and the railway station in Harbin. Art Nouveau was regarded as an aesthetic turn pioneering a larger modernist movement against neo-classicism, however, the Japanese use of the same style in Changchun's Yamato Hotel was a clear manifesto that Japan was capable of managing this railway settlement since Japanese society was culturally and technically sophisticated as that of any other Western power. It is also noteworthy that except for Shinto shrines and statues, Japanese and local elements were largely absent in the Japanese settlement.



Fig 2-3 Yamato Hotel in Mantetsu settlement, 1915

Source: Mantetsu shomubu chosaka. *Manshu kogyo rodo jijo*. Dalian: Mantetsu, 1925.



Fig 2-4 Chinese verandah office for the chief official at Changchun commercial district, built in 1909

Source: Zhang Fuhe, p.501

In the face of Japanese encroachment, the Chinese government began to build a commercial district (*shangbudi*) in Changchun as well, a means that had been practiced in many cities before.¹¹ Despite commercial interest, the primary concern for developing a Chinese district was to antagonize Japanese economic and territorial expansion in Changchun. Xu Shichang, Governor of Three Eastern Provinces (1907-1909), reported to Beijing:

Chinese sovereignty must not be infringed by other peoples... and local officials should take suiting measures to different conditions and alter the

¹¹ The first examples of developing a Chinese new town or commercial district within a traditional political center in the first decade of the 20th century are Xiangfang district in Beijing, new districts in Tianjin and Jinan respectively under Yuan Shikai.

situation. *The right of land ownership must be operated and managed by our government, hence commerce can prosper.*¹²

Xu appointed Yan Shiqing, a nationalist local official (*jichang daoyin*), to supervise Changchun's Chinese commercial district. Yan built his administrative office, and a police station and a commerce office, on the south edge of the Japanese settlement, to prevent further expansion of the Japanese settlement. The main hall of the administrative complex was built in 1909, in the so-called verandah style. Fitting the hot and humid climate in South China, veranda-style buildings were widely seen in treaty ports as a combination of dwelling and office for Europeans. Though the veranda does not fit harsh winter in Manchuria, the main hall was surrounded by masonry veranda on all sides measuring 2.4 meters in depth.¹³ In this case, considering the proximity of this office to the neighboring Japanese railway settlement, the display of modernity and a gesture to demonstrate resolution to resist Japanese incursion prevailed over practical concerns. (Fig.2-4)

Other modern buildings in the newly developed district included a Russian Consulate that survives to today, a Japanese Consulate, and several light industrial plants. Jin Yufu (1887-1962), a renowned historian on Manchuria and historiography, chiefed a small pulp factory in this area in the 1920s.¹⁴ Although the Japanese settlement was the most dynamic part of Changchun, the population of the old city and new Chinese-run district far surpassed that of the Japanese.¹⁵

As Changchun was fragmented spatially, ethnically and administratively in four sectors nearly separate from one another before 1931, the architectural plurality put a visual commentary to the complexities of power relations in the city. But be it the Japanese, the Chinese or the Russians, the approach to the modern was an unmistakably westernizing program: while various styles and materials of architecture that embodied Western modernity abounded in the city and competed with each other, no hint of Chinese (or Oriental) element was referred to in the boasted images of Changchun's modernization at the time. In this way, the plurality of Changchun before 1931 differed from what it was to be as a colonial capital.

¹² Yu Jing. *Changchun xianzhi* (Changchun County Gazetteer). Changchun: Changchun Press, p.158

¹³ Chen Suli. 2003. 'A Survey of the Office for Intendant of Jinlin and Changchun'. In Zhang, Fuhe (ed.) *Study and Preservation of Modern Chinese Architecture VIII*. Beijing: Tsinghua University, p.501. The complex included offices and houses that composed a series of courtyard like traditional Chinese *yamen*. It was later used by Puyi for the inaugural ceremony as Chief Executive in 1932, and sequentially used as Puyi's temporary palace, State Council of Manchukuo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc.

¹⁴ Huiwang Changchun committee ed. *Huiwang Changchun* (Reviewing Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 1998. For buildings in different sectors during the Mantetsu era, Chinese literature can be consulted as Yu Weilian ed. *Changchun jindai jianzhu* (modern architecture in Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 2001. For English literature, see Bill Sewell. 2000. *Japanese Imperialism and Civic Construction in Manchuria: Changchun, 1905-45*. dissertation, The University of British Columbia.

¹⁵ According to a statistics in 1928, the number of residents in the Japanese was 31,000, while the number in old walled city and commercial district amounted to 66,000 and 44,000 respectively. see Koshizawa Akira. *manshukoku no shuto keikaku: tokyo no genzai to mirai o tou* (The planning of Manchukuo's capital: an inquiry into the present and future of Tokyo). Tokyo: nihon keizai hyoronsha, 1988, p.86.

III. Architectural Plurality in Capital Changchun

The puppet state of Manchukuo was established in 1932 in the wake of Manchuria Incident (9/18), and Changchun was renamed Xinjing (New Capital) as its capital city. Fragmented pieces of Changchun were incorporated into a much larger and more ambitious plan that I elaborated in the previous chapter. In January 1933, the Five-Year Plan (1933-1937) of capital construction proposed by Capital Construction Bureau (CCB) was approved, and a group of buildings for the central government immediately started construction. However, despite a strong central state that unified administration and carried out construction schemes quickly, there were various architectural manifestations or styles in the city, and the urban landscape was constantly characterized by a plurality of architectural styles. The modified Imperial Crown style appeared in the capital as “Developing Asia style,” which was widely used in Manchukuo’s institutional buildings, while Japanese Revival, Frank Wright’s prairie style, neo-classicism, expressionism, and modernism all had strong presence in Changchun.

The diversity was comparable to that of the previous decade, but it was the ambiguous and self-contradictory nature of Japanese colonial ideology in Manchukuo, rather than fragmented administration, that prescribed architectural plurality in Changchun. Through the appropriation of cultural and ethnical identities, building Changchun as the new capital was a means to boast a positive and benign image of the colonizer that brought civilization and modernity to all ethnic communities, as well as a means of rebuffing and taming Chinese nationalism in Manchukuo.

Developing Asia Style

The distinctive style for governmental architecture in colonial Changchun is generally referred to as “Developing Asia” (Ch: *xingya*; Jp: *shin a*), which displayed striking characteristics such as sloping roofs and exquisite decorations. Though not too much deviated from the concurrent Imperial Crown style in the Japanese home islands, the Developing Asia style embodied more continental elements than Japanese. Except for some subtle difference, the basic features of the appropriation of cultural identities in colonial buildings of Changchun were very close to those built in Nanjing and other major cities under Kuomintang (KMT), and to those later under the PRC since 1949, notwithstanding the three regimes fought each other relentlessly.

A tentative experiment of the Developing Asia style appeared in the capital’s first two major structures, the First and Second Government Buildings, which began in 1932 on Datong Plaza and were completed next summer. Featured by a central tower elevated from a symmetrical, functionalist base of two stories, the First Government Building was used for both the Capital Construction Bureau (CCB), the new institution in charge of the imminent construction of the capital city and the Ministry of Culture and Education (Fig 2-5). The latter was used as Municipal Police Station with more exquisite decorations of tiled roofs and mythical animals, but the composition followed similar principles deriving from the Kanagawa Prefectural Office Building (1926) and the

Nagoya Municipal Office Building (1930). (Fig 2-6) Looking toward Datong Plaza on its south, the two buildings reflected the first attempts of combining Western and Eastern architectural heritage in the colonial capital. Although they were not parallels to the edifices of the capital built in a later time, the most striking characteristics of the Developing Asia style were present: symmetrical composition both in plan and elevation, a central tower of pagoda-like roofs covered with glazed tiles, a carefully designed porte-cochere at the entrance, and massive and horizontally-expanded structure as the base for the surmounting tower to meet functional requirements, etc.



Fig 2-5 the CCB building at Datong Plaza
Source: Li Zhong, p.144



Fig 2-6 the Policy Office at Datong Plaza
Source: Li Zhong, p.56

With the exceptions of the two buildings at Datong Plaza, most Developing Asian buildings were placed on both sides of Shuntian Street to house various ministerial offices. The principle of the Developing Asia style were crystallized in the Hall of State Council, the prominent institutional building in the capital city. (Fig 3-7) It is a five-story building based on an expansive 卅-shaped plan. Erected in 1935, it occupied a whole block of 50,600 square meters with a total floor area of 20,500 square meters with reinforced concrete frame as the main structure¹⁶, seldom seen before in terms of its size and construction methods.

The ornamentation concentrated in the central part of the building, and central tower was covered with double-eaved pointed roof, one of the most magnificent roof styles applied in imperial palatial buildings in China. The most imposing impression of this building was the excessive combination of both Western and East Asian elements on the porte-cochere and the central tower. Western orders and Chinese roofs were both distorted from their genuine forms in this combination, but the Developing Asia style was exactly characterized by this kind of (re)invention of traditions.

The building was covered with brown glazed tiles, a color never seen in Chinese architectural history but was widely applied in facing bricks in Changchun since the Mantetsu era, showing innovative explorations of representing old forms. Though fenestration was bound to be grouped vertically, as in skyscraper design, the impression of modernity in Western notion was dissipated in omnipresent application of false corbels and brown tiled gables.

¹⁶ Yu Weilian ed. *Changchun jindai jianzhu* (modern architecture in Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 2001.

Like the Imperial Crown style buildings in Japan, the Developing Asia buildings also used a porte-cochere, a standard and dynamic component for Developing Asian buildings, for the central entrance which neutralized the Japanese elements of the tower. But as informed in Wright's Imperial Hotel and other Imperial Crown buildings, the porte-cochere was oftentimes endowed with a sloping roof to mark the entrance, and this method was found in the Ministry of Justice, several blocks to the south of the Hall of State Council, and Supreme Courthouse sitting at the southern end of Shuntian Street. The Ministry of Justice was built in 1936, another typical example of the Developing Asia style. (Fig 3-8) A central tower of complicate combination of roof styles surmounting on the three-storied hall looked like a corner tower of the Forbidden City, with the gables facing the entrance. The roofs became even more pervasive for the central part of the building, covered with green glazed tiles, a color reserved for royal uses in imperial China, but the impression was dissipated by large arched windows. The courthouse, on the other hand, was completed in 1938. It was built on a sprawling plan that imitated the character of "本" with two long wings on both sides rounded up at corners. The most focal element of the building was once again the central tower of pointed roofs that rose above the main entrance with rounded corners.



Fig 3-7 the building of colonial State Department,
built in 1933

Photo by the author in 2006



Fig 3-8 the building of colonial Ministry of
Justice, built in 1934

Photo by the author in 2006

Developing Asia buildings congregated in Manchukuo's administrative quarter, flanking both sides of Shuntian Street. Apparently, the colonial regime expected to use this hybrid style to promote the positive image of the newly established state. The most grandiose building of this sort was Puyi's palace, scheduled to be built on the northern plaza of this political quarter, but the breakout of the Pacific War in 1941 suspended its construction. The Developing Asia building provided a comparison to the modified Chinese architectural style called for in the Capital City Plan in Republic Nanjing, which also employed exquisite traditional decorations and simplistic lines on the facades, boldly doing away with the traditional Chinese style large sloping roofs. However, the

Japanese architects adopted a more economic manner of central tiled-roofed towers in colonial Changchun, than the palace-style buildings with large sloping hipped roof in Republic Nanjing in which the upper floors were not easy to practical use and in the meantime more costly in construction.

Modified Historicism

The Developing Asia style was a hybrid aesthetic program that combined Asian and Western elements in a single building, especially for the central part, while a historicist style also abounded in both public and private sectors in the capital city at Changchun. In contrast to the nearby administrative quarter of Manchukuo where Developing Asia style dominated the landscape, the making of Datong Street called for a mix of various styles to boast the true governance of the city and the state under the Japanese rule.

On the northwestern side of Datong Plaza, the headquarters for the Bank of Manchukuo was built in neo-classic style fronted by a Doric colonnade, in line with the design principles of bank buildings in Western countries. (Fig 3-9) As Manchukuo's central bank, it has two stories above the ground, and 4 levels beneath the ground with a large vault, well known as a unbreakable fortress. The building completed in 1938 was the first stage of construction, but it was never supplemented with the other wing until the 1980s. It seemed the directors of the Bank had a peculiar predilection to the Western aesthetics, and had its club and employee houses built in modernist style too.

As the real ruler of the colonial state, the headquarters for the Guandong Army (GDA) was the most prominent example of historicism along Datong Street, completed in 1935. It has a "卅"-shaped plan like that of the Hall of State Council, but unlike the Developing Asian buildings, it boldly boasted the image of traditional Japanese castles. A double-eaved gable and hip roof was used at the central tower, along with two minor tower on both ends of the building. (Fig 3-10) A similar structure meriting Japanese element was the Jimmu den (Jimmu Hall), receded in a park on the east side of Datong Street, with a complicate combination of hip and gable roofs. It was built to commemorate the 2600th anniversary of Emperor Jimmu in 1940, used for Japanese martial training in better preparation for the war.¹⁷ Both the GDA headquarters and the Jimmu Hall were emblems of Japanese presence in the capital city, hence the Japan Revival style.

Chinese palace-like buildings appeared in special events as well. In order to prepare for the commemorate ceremony for the completion of Five-Year Capital Construction in 1937, Datong Park was made the site for the ceremony that the emperor would attend to confer honors and awards to people who contributed to urban construction. Temporary buildings in the park, such as a pavilion for the emperor to inspect over, a ceremonial gate, tents to seat officials that attended the event, etc., were under construction shortly. The similar form of palace with sloping gable roofs

¹⁷ Shinkyo tokubetsushi chokanbo shomuka. *Kokuto Shinkyo*. Shinkyo: Shinkyo tokubetsushi kosho, 1942, p.202

reappeared in the Tenth Anniversary ceremonies in 1942. In official report, the large sloping roof covered with yellow tiles was supported by red columns, and the seat of the emperor was set at the center of the palace, flanked by his advisors and guards. Large sloping roof, as the most distinct element of East Asian architecture, was used once again in a ceremonial building and showed the Japanese role as the preserver of the old and precious tradition of the region.¹⁸



Fig 3-9 Central Bank of Manchuria
Source: Yu Weilan, p.117



Fig 3-10 the headquarters of the GDA
Source: Li Zhong

Religious complexes of the colonial times were traditionally built in a historicist style. The most imposing Japanese Shinto shrine built in the early years of Manchukuo in its capital city at Changchun was the temple of Higashi Honganji, completed in 1937. Although emulating the image of the main building in Meiji Shrine, the large sloping roof and decorative ridge were made in bronze. Besides, the largest Buddhist temple of several courtyards in Manchukuo, located on the north side of Datong Plaza, and a Gothic-style catholic church were both constructed by 1937.¹⁹ The diversity of different styles visually elucidated the state ideology of “kingly way” that different religions were tolerated on condition that they served the ideal of “bringing peace to the peoples,” i.e., maintaining colonial order and pacifying dissidents.²⁰

Another kind of building involved a historicist style which ordinary citizens would frequent was public monument. After the Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, “the way of the king” was gradually replaced by “the way of the God,” and Shinto shrines construction and rituals were stipulated in national laws.²¹ Japanese Shinto shrines were clearly attempts to Japanize Manchuria to replace Confucian temples, a subject I will discuss in the next chapter. In February 1940, Japanese architect Fuiishima Tetsusaburo designed a one story, tile roofed, wooden building in Puyi’s palace as the National

¹⁸ Da dong ya bo lan hui jie mu (the opening ceremony for the Great East Asia Construction Exposition). *Shengijing Shibao*. 1942-8-12(1)

¹⁹ Yu Weilian ed. *Changchun jindai jianzhu* (modern architecture in Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 2001, p.203.

²⁰ Renxin. “Weiman fojiao zonghui huizhang ruguang.” *WSZL*, 1984-5, pp.1-16. for Bo’re Temple under colonial rule specifically, see *WSZL*, 1990-3.

²¹ For more detail on Manchukuo’s state rituals, see Chapter 3.

Founding Shrine.²² Construction began at the end of March, and was complete two months later, and it was used by Puyi to salute and pray for the Japanese empire. The Monument to National Foundation, on the other hand, was built at the far south of Datong Street on September 18 1940, the anniversary of the beginning of the occupation as a surrogate of the National Founding Shrine. As I will elaborate, the historicist Japanese style in the building of shrines since China Incident (1937) suggested the consolidated status of Japanese leadership without the need to compromise with local people.

Modernism

The capital city of Manchukuo was an experimental terrain for Japanese architects, some of whom extended the grandeur of the Imperial Crown style in the Japanese colonial undertaking in Manchuria, while some practicing modernism found the experience in Manchuria crucial and inspiring in post-war Japan.

Facing Datong Plaza, the southwest of the bank was the headquarters of the Manchuria Telegraph and Telephone Corporation completed in 1935 (Fig 3-11).. It was stripped of complicate decorations in boasting its scientific character, while the extrusion of a central tower showed similarities of architectural composition with the Developing Asia style. Similarly, the headquarters of Guandong Bureau, sitting across Datong Street from the headquarters of Guandong Army, also employed functional and efficient style, and appeared more radical with a flat roof that revoked central tower.



Fig 3-11 Mandei Building at Datong Plaza
Source: Li Zhong, p.77



Fig 3-12 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Source: Li Zhong, p.79

Somewhat detached from the colonial ideology, commercial buildings at Xinjing were built in much more restrained and clearly civilian style. The Fengle Theater built in 1935 is a representative of this style, which echoes the Art Deco architecture found both in private houses and office buildings in the Japanese settlements in other cities in Manchuria and Shanghai.

The most exceptional modern building based on a free, asymmetrical layout was Manchukuo's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the long debate between Mantetsu and

²² Wang Shaozhong. *Wei jianguo shenniao* (the temple of nation-founding god of Manchukuo). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 2001.

the Guandong Army over borrowing overseas to develop Manchukuo, its structure in colonial Changchun was built with direct foreign loan from France. Designed by the French firm of Brossard-Mopin, a Tianjin-based architectural firm active in North China, the Foreign Ministry building was completed in 1936. It was a rare Manchukuo governmental building that was not adorned with Asian roof and tiles. (Fig. 3-12)

Two Western leading modernist architects had some influence in the construction of colonial Changchun, through their ideas and their students. Frank Lloyd Wright had rebuilt the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, and his influence was prolonging amongst his Japanese disciples. In the 1930s, one of his Japanese assistants, Endo Arata, moved his office to colonial Changchun and settled down in the city, where he designed the Manchurian Central Bank Club, a large compound with residences and a spacious clubhouse built in Wright's Prairie style that gained immediate recognition.²³

The other Western figure whose influence can be seen in building colonial Changchun is Le Corbusier. Two young modernist architects, Maekawa Kunio and Sakakura Junzo came to Manchuria in the 1930s after returning from Le Corbusier's office in Paris. Though frustrated in competitions in Japan, Maekawa won two tenders in Manchuria, Workshops of Showa Steel Corporation (1937) and Civic Hall of Dalian (1938). As David Steward observes, in the entry of Civic Hall of Dalian, Maekawa did not insert a physical central tower but cunningly "borrowing" (as the Japanese landscape gardening tradition has it) the Monument to the Loyal Dead which stands on a hill behind the building.²⁴ Though not part of the architecture, it manages to afford the crowning element of the design.

Maekawa opened his branch office in Shanghai in 1939, and in 1942 he worked on a series of designs for the Manchurian Aircraft Company. The firm designed factory buildings and housing in Mukden (Shenyang). The projects in Manchuria and in Shanghai were essential to the Maekawa firm's survival, because the main Tokyo office had very little work. From 1942 until the end of the war, the firm had approximately twenty-one projects, of which only sixteen were built: seven of these were for the Manchurian Aircraft Company.²⁵

As Maekawa confessed, the years of Manchukuo was a period of growing ambivalence toward the principles of modern design and their significance for Japanese architecture.²⁶ However, he confirmed that modernism was not a threat to tradition and could be mobilized for nationalistic ends that allowed him to establish his vocation and reputation in the Japanese colonial undertaking in the mainland. Indeed, shortly before, in 1943, Maekawa for the first time had prepared a competition entry in the ancient Japanese palace style for the Japanese Cultural Center at Bangkok.

²³ Yishi Liu and Zhang Fuhe. "1930 niandai changchun de xiandai jianzhu yundong" (Modernism in Changchun during the 1930s). *New Architecture*, 2006(5).

²⁴ David Steward. *The making of a modern Japanese architecture : 1868 to the present*. Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International, 1987, p.154.

²⁵ Jonathan Reynolds. *Maekawa Kunio and the emergence of Japanese modernist architecture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, p.119

²⁶ Ibid.

Sakakura Junzo (1904-1968) went to Le Corbusier's office in 1931 and worked there for 5 years. In 1937, he went to France for the design of Japanese Pavilion in Paris Exposition, and this project established Sakakura's fame as a world-recognized modernist architect. In particular note, Sakakura's planning for the South Lake Complex in 1939 inherited the main idea of the planning for Alger and resident blocks in Antwerp by Le Corbusier in the early 1930. (Fig. 3-13) Meanwhile, it also reflected the opinions of "Brilliance City" proposed in 1935, when Sakakura worked right there in Le Corbusier's office. However, except for the Japanese Pavilion in the Paris international Expo in 1937, and the residential housing proposal in the colonial capital, Sakakura had no equivalent works during a long period of 15 years.²⁷

Incidentally, when Maekawa worked on the Darien Competition in 1938, a younger architect, Kenzo Tange, entered the Maekawa office fresh out of university. Tange stayed with Maekawa until returning to graduate school in 1942. For a period of time, however, Tange Kenzo also participated in the production of South Lake Housing Complex under the supervision of Sakakura. Architectural historian Yatuska Hajime suggests in his research on Tange's Tokyo Bay Project in 1960 that his working experience with Sakakura two decades ago had been an inspired source for his later works of waterfront planning.²⁸ (Fig. 3-14) The three modernist architects, Maekawa, Sakakura and Tange, became prominent architects in postwar modernism, but the strong connection of their previous practice in the 1930s and 40s in colonial Manchuria, as well as the connections amongst their experiences, can not be overlooked.



Fig 2-13 the plan for South Lake Complex, produced in 1939
Source: Akira Koshizawa, 1978

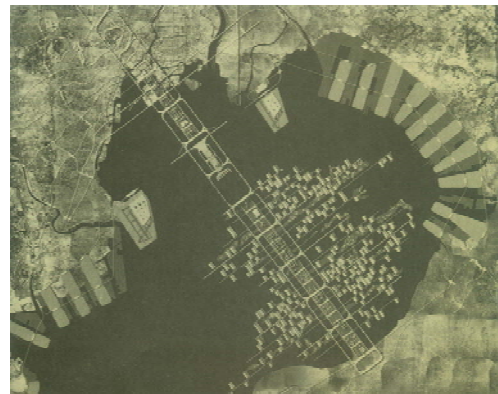


Fig 2-14 Tokyo Bay Plan, by Tange Kenzo in 1961
Source: Kenzo's Selections

It was true, though, that modernist architects like Maekawa did not have much chance to fulfill their architectural ideas. As anti-Western sentiment intensified in Japan

²⁷ It was not until the economic resurgence in 1951 that he got the chance to put the design of Kamakura Gallery into reality.

²⁸ Yatuska Hajime. "The 1960 Tokyo Bay Project of Kenzo Tange". Arie Graafland (ed). *Cities in Transition*. Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001.

in the immediate prewar years of the early Showa era since 1925 onwards, even mild forms of Westernization risked censure. However, it never approached the venom of Nazi critiques of modernism.²⁹ The Japanese members of modernist movement were also ready to make compromise with the imperial government. For instance, Maekawa incorporated in his designs selected pre-modern elements, as exemplified in the competition of the Japanese Cultural Center at Bangkok, Thailand, in a pro-Japanese manner during the wartime. Rather than challenging the nationalistic values that lay behind the imperial roof style, "modernists made a Ruskinian plea for honesty in artistic expression".³⁰ In many part of the world, the period on the eve of World War II in the 1930s saw an increasing interest in monumental styles best demonstrated in modified neoclassical forms, and Japanese members of modernist movement argued that architects should concentrate on their architecture and not become too wrapped up in politics, hence were considered less threatening politically than that in Western Europe. Prominent modernists like Maekawa were not at all stubborn and were ready to employ traditionalist elements such as hipped roof to evade attack from the nationalists.³¹

This tremendous diversity often blurred the stylistic boundaries between modernists and non-modernists. The growing ambivalence toward the principles of modern design and their significance for Japanese architecture was shared by architects of all stripes. But despite their differences, these architects shared a keen sense of group identity – they were all engaged in a struggle to forge new architectural solutions appropriate to East Asian modern, hence the plurality of architectural styles in Changchun as a showcase of Japanese colonial rule.

IV. Architecture and Politics: the Rationale of Aesthetic Pluralism

In Europe many found the concept of internationalism threatening as a radical and dangerous ideology, and it produced a significant rift within the architectural community. In Japan, too, the concept of internationalism became suspect as the political climate in the late 1920s grew more and more nationalistic. Although Japanese modernists encountered significant resistance on both architectural and political grounds, they had far more success in continuing to work and to participate in the public discourse than did their colleagues in Nazi Germany, and Manchukuo and other oversea colonies became the experiment yard for them to realize modernist projects.

The diversity was more explicit in the capital city of Manchukuo. In the nascent state, experiments of statecraft were omnipresent to construct "the first nation in the world based upon the lofty ideal of ethnic harmony." The rank of the experiment included architecture too, as new architecture in colonial Changchun was monumental

²⁹ David Steward. *The making of a modern Japanese architecture : 1868 to the present*. Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International, 1987, p.64.

³⁰ Jonathan Reynolds. *Maekawa Kunio and the emergence of Japanese modernist architecture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, pp.37, 97.

³¹ The difference can be also explained, in part, by modernists' personal links with the political elite and with the leadership of the Japanese architectural profession. For example, Sano Riki had been a close friend and consultant to Goto Shimpei, while Maekawa Kunio had wide family connections in the government. See Reynolds, p.137.

and mixed. In contrast to other authoritarian regimes at the time, architecture in Manchukuo was far more hybrid and plural by nature, as the rule of Manchukuo was built upon Western technologies and institutions in subtle balance with Confucian values.

Combining Western, Chinese and Japanese elements in architecture, the Developing Asia style and the management of ornamentation was one manifestation of the “spirit of ethnic harmony” that underpinned the colonizing project. For example, in the entry hall of the State Council, a large painting of five merry young girls from the five ethnicities was hung on the wall at the lobby of the Hall of the State Council, and it was reprinted as stamps that had an extensive circulation as ethnic harmonious coexistence.

Borrowing the Imperial Crown, the Developing Asia style played out the role of new modernity in colonial Changchun most effectively. Designed to impress viewers with a sense of grandeur and power, it demonstrated both technical innovation and ideological message of “returning to Asia”. The technological and cultural icons of the non-western modernity can be better understood in comparison to practices in Western colonies. For example, in the making of New Delhi, Edward Baker’s Secretariat buildings displayed prominent classical features, “meant to reinforce this sense of empire; for from these porches ministers could look out over the far ruinous sites of the historic cities of the Hindu and Mahomedan dynasties to the new Capital beneath them that united for the first time through the centuries all races and religions of India.”³² The architectural manipulation of institutional buildings to express state power and associative rule in the Secretariat of New Delhi to appease local people was evident in the Hall of State Council, too. However, Developing Asia buildings supported by a pan-Asian ideology also substantially differed from their Western counterparts. In this case, Baker and Lutyens’s use of Indic features is widely regarded as a reflection of the loss of imperial self-confidence. Their appropriation of Buddhist forms acknowledged that Britain, if not yet ready to abandon altogether its authority over the subcontinent, had nevertheless abdicated its claim to a superior knowledge of India’s peoples and its past. The hybrid form was part of a compromise to stabilize British colonial rule in Indian. By contrast, the Japanese painstakingly pursued a policy of non-western modernization in urban construction for colonial Changchun, as they regarded themselves the leader of “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.” The construction of colonial Changchun was used to display their newly assumed leadership role in Asia unified by cultural similarities to “protect the interests of all Asian nations to resist the invasion from the West.” In this sense, the Developing Asia style was widely used in governmental buildings as a means to compete and overcome Western civilization.

Striking as the Developing Asia style was, only a few structures were ever in keeping with it outside the administrative quarter along Shuntian Street. Instead, a plurality of architectural styles characterized urban landscape. The diversity of style was comparable to that before 1931, but it was the GDA officer and different administrative organs of the colonial government and their agencies, rather than the

³² Thomas Metcalf., 1989. *An imperial vision: Indian architecture and Britain's Raj* . Oxford University Press, p. 227

managers of different part of Changchun, who were responsible for its development. Moreover, the creation of modernity in the 1930s did not simply imitate the Western models, but involved various modified indigenous elements and aimed at surpassing the West by a unseen manner of modernization, as exemplified in the 1932 Plan.

Despite the powerful totalitarian government in place, however, architectural pluralism was evident in the capital. I offer two reasons for explanation. First, neither pan-Asianism nor the Kingly Way had at its disposal a complete philosophical system. I have mentioned the content of the Kingly Way was never articulated in official account. It is because Manchukuo's pan-Asian ideology was ambivalent and implicit by nature that various explanations unified by "aesthetic glue" were encouraged, including plural architectural practices in the city. This is one reason why Japanese colonial regime of Manchukuo, like Fascist Italy, despite its authoritarianism, tended toward an "eclecticism of the spirit" in its cultural policies, encouraging a proliferation of competing formulations of the modern, among which the authorities felt free to choose as a function of circumstances.

Second, the preference for aesthetic style of different governmental units and the intension amongst them were omnipresent in Manchukuo as in Japan and elsewhere. In Japan, the Ministry of the Imperial Household may have wanted its Tokyo museum designed in accordance with "Japanese taste," while throughout the late 1930s the Ministry of Communications continued to construct projects in high modernist style. Although efforts were made to employ architecture as propaganda, no public projects on the scale of the Berlin Olympic stadium or Speer's Zeppelinfeld were completed in Japan during these years.³³ Even in Nazi Germany, Hitler endorsed vernacular houses and clubs as well as monumental public buildings, while Hermann Goering chose modernist functional style for his Air Force ministry and institute.³⁴ Likewise, in Manchukuo the responsibility for government-sponsored construction remained divided among various ministries and ruling organs, which aggressively protected their autonomy. For example, although Japanese castle crowns were used for the Guandong Army Headquarters, the Bureau of Guandong Territory was a modernist building. That the Manchukuo government did not carry out a unified national building program explains the plurality of architectural styles in colonial Changchun. Besides, the selection of either Developing Asia or modernist buildings was an outcome of political concern and aesthetic preference that resulted in different decorative motifs, but the footprint and construction technology were consistent, a further indication that Manchukuo was being "civilized" and becoming a modern state.³⁵

Under the Japanese colonial rule, the capital city at Changchun was an ensemble

³³ Jonathan Reynolds. *Maekawa Kunio and the emergence of Japanese modernist architecture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, pp.119-121.

³⁴ Barbara M. Lane. *Architecture and politics in Germany, 1918-1945*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968. pp.190-215.

³⁵ Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, p.180.

of diverse styles, an outcome not only from the rivalry against the West and Republic China, but also from a vague ideology and different aesthetic ideals within. After Pacific War broke out, this pan-Asian approach to competing with the foes of Japanese empire became more evident, as explicitly exemplified in the series of ceremonies in 1942.

V. Decennial Ceremonies and the Greater East Asian Exposition in 1942

As Changchun matured into the capital of a far-flung colony in the 1940s, the colonial authority increased their activities and festival patronage to better showcase their city. The year of 1942 was the tenth anniversary of the establishment of Manchukuo. The colonial government staged a grand commemoration in August and September, 1942, followed by a series of ten celebrating events throughout the whole year, of which the Greater East Asian Exposition was the most spectacular one in the dense calendar of festivals.

Although there is an enormous literature on the world's fairs and exhibitions which are Western spectacles by origin invented to promote European and American colonialism, there are no comparable discussions of the Japanese colonial exhibitions staged between 1895 and 1945 in Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan.³⁶ How were the equivalent of the world's fairs used in the non-western colonial world? And what were the ideological drives of these spectacles during wartime? The 1942 Exposition, which began on August 12, 1942 at the peak of Japan's military success, offers a remarkable case study. Like the plural representations of institutional buildings discussed in the previous pages, this exposition also played out the role as the purveyors of political and colonial concept of the new modern.

Exhibitions were an integral part of Japanese colonial policies to mobilize resources and enhance morale, and the city became the most magnificent exhibit to

³⁶ For the exposition theory, see Burton Benedict. "World's Fairs and Anthropology", in: *World's Fair 1.4* (Fall 1981); Bennett, Tony. *The Exhibitionary Complex*, in: *New Formations* 4 (Spring 1988), 73-102, and his *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. London: Routledge, 1995; Robert W. Rydell and Nancy Gwinn (eds.). *Fair Representations: World's Fairs and the Modern World*. Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994. For the history of world's fairs in the West, the body of literature is even larger, see for example Rosalind Williams. *Dream worlds, mass consumption in late nineteenth-century France*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982; Reid Badger. *The great American Fair: the World's Columbia Exposition & American culture*. University of Alabama Press, 1985; Paul Greenhalgh. *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939*. Manchester 1988: Manchester University Press. For exhibitions staged in the colonies under European colonialism, see Timothy Mitchell. *Colonising Egypt*. Berkeley 1991: University of California Press; Zeynep Çelik. *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs*. Berkeley 1992: University of California Press; and Patricia Morton. *Hybrid modernities: architecture and representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000. Exhibitions, ceremonies, festivals, and perhaps modern Chinese urban history under the Japanese colonial rule in general, are largely absent from contemporary scholarship. However, in recent years scholars have started publishing their research on the subject of expositions in colonial Taiwan and Korea. For the exposition to celebrate the 40th anniversary of colonial rule in Taiwan, see Chiahuey Cheng. *1935 Taiwan bo lan hui zhi yan jiu* (A Study of the 1935 Taiwan Exposition). National Central University, master thesis, 2001; Shih-peng Chang. *Ri zhi shi qi shi zheng si shi nian Taiwan bo lan hui zhi yan jiu* (A Study of Taiwan Exhibition of the Fortieth Anniversary of Governance during the Japanese Colonial Rule). National Chen-kung University, master thesis, 2005; and the tripartite research on this subject by Pin-chang Lin and Wen-ching Su published in *Journal of Design*. For the expositions in colonial Seoul, see Hong Kal. Modeling the West, Returning to Asia: Shifting Politics of Representation in Japanese Colonial Expositions in Korea. *Comparative Study of Society and History*, (2005):507-531.

demonstrate Japanese colonial achievements and promise a better future. How were historical and political issues expressed through architectural styles and spaces of the 1942 Exposition and how well did they produce obedient colonial subjects? To address these questions, this section considers three aspects of the exhibition: the funding sources and organization of the exhibition, the Japanese political designs and the exhibits and pavilions on the site, etc. By explain, rationalizing and promoting, A good opportunity to explain and promote the new colonial order in Manchuria as part of the Japanese pan-Asian program, the process of 1942 Exposition was as much recreational and cultural as ideological and political.

My focus is on the spatial and visual grammar encoded in the exhibition buildings and the strategies of representation used here rather than politics or economics. The Japanese colonial regime staged a number of events through which they attempted to realize a distinctively East Asian Modernity. Based upon archival and published materials from the 1930s and 1940s, I restore the dense calendar of exhibitions and ceremonies. In comparison to world's fairs and regional exhibitions elsewhere, this paper aims to explicate some characters of the expositions staged in Changchun and how they related to and differed from the Western models, and look deeper into the Japanese colonial rule in Manchuria. I conclude by considering some of the Chinese responses to the exposition and suggest that this modern cultural spectacle ironically contributed to overthrowing the hope of mobilizing support for building a Greater East Asia sphere.

Organization and Funding

The Greater East Asian Exposition in 1942 was part of a larger commemorative enterprise for the Tenth Anniversary. The budget of all sorts of ceremonies for the purpose of the Tenth Anniversary reached turned out to be an unprecedented amount of 3,501,344 Yen. The 1942 Exposition cost a conspicuous amount of 407,727 Yen from the governmental sector, itself surpassing all other events in budgetary terms,³⁷ and the private sector contributed another 500,000 Yen, making the total expense of the exposition only second to the commemoration whose budget was 1,005,080 Yen.³⁸ The Manchukuo government afforded half of the total expense, and the other half came from state-owned cultural and industrial enterprises. The sale of lottery tickets was introduced and encouraged by the state to turn the revenue to “serve the majority of the people,”³⁹ and there were several places to sell lottery tickets in the park.

Though the exposition proved to be a success, as can be seen in the size of population it attracted which almost tripled the number of Changchun's inhabitants, it was not included in the original commemorating scheme. At the very start, the Committee of Commemoration for the Tenth Anniversary (CCTA) had conceived totally

³⁷ As a comparison, the Exhibition and Congress of Developing Agriculture cost 120,000 Yen, the sports meeting 100,000, the mass mobilization congress 100,000, the Exhibition of National Situation 56,000, all other's budget did not exceed 50,000. 建國十周年慶祝典並慶祝事業志, p.24

³⁸ *ibid*, pp.25-26

³⁹ The sale of lottery first appeared as a means to fund the exhibitions in the 1889 Paris exposition.

ten major events were decided to illuminate the event, highlighting the number of ten. These events included a series of congresses for mass mobilization for the ongoing Pacific War and for reinforcing education and propaganda, a sports meeting, and several other exhibitions. As the utopian image of Manchukuo rested upon agricultural autarky and natural resources, colonial officials came to the point that an exhibition that aimed to display the potentials of the subordinate nation and the achievements of developing agriculture and related fields comprised a crucial part of the commemoration. Another goal of the agricultural exhibition was to demonstrate the history and accomplishments of Japanese peasant immigrants in Manchuria.⁴⁰

In preparing for the Agricultural Exhibition, however, the organizers recognized that the scope of the exhibits should go far beyond agriculture, mining and forestry of Manchukuo, as the goal of the exhibition, and the commemoration as a whole, was to make manifest “the Kingly Way, ethnic harmony and unity, morality in society, and a co-prosperous Greater East Asia,” well beyond the reach of an agricultural exhibition. Put in other words, political, economic and cultural life of other Asian nations under Japanese leadership should be also comprehensively exhibited in a grand exposition. As a result, the CCTA decided to stage a Greater East Asian Development Exposition (*da dong ya jian she bo lan hui*) in the capital city at Changchun and set up the agenda for it. To keep a dense calendar of celebrations in the capital,⁴¹ the grandiose exposition start from August 12th, 1942, till the end of September for a total duration of 50 days.

A special committee was set up in charge of the preparation and operation for the Exposition on February 18th. As the exposition was an enlarged version of the Agricultural Exhibition which also partially financed it, the exposition had much in common such as personnel. In realities, the committee of the Agricultural Exhibition and governmental departments of mining and industry played an active role in the Committee of Exposition, as “the success of the Exposition was premises on their close collaboration” to facilitate the collection of exhibits and guarantee a coherent exhibition policy.⁴² As wartime budget was tight, three semi-official newspapers were invited to finance the project and to collect exhibits and publicize the event.⁴³

On April 28th, 1942, the exposition committee announced the guidelines of the Exposition. In the section of “Goals,” it stated that the exposition aimed to

“commemorate the tenth anniversary of the establishment of Manchukuo, display the history of founding process of the state and introduce the situations of the states within the Greater East Asia’s Co-prosperous Sphere. By doing so, the exposition will contribute to establishing Manchukuo of highly military defense,

⁴⁰ It later combined another exhibition of a much more modest scale, the Exhibition of National Situation, which was planned to be itinerary around major Manchurian cities, mainly consisted of photographs and paintings about the accomplishments in industry and domestic security in Manchukuo.

⁴¹ Festival calendar – in this case, the exhibition of National Situation was staged from May 1st to early August, and the Greater East Asian Development Exposition was planned right after that.

⁴² SJSB

⁴³ It should be noted that even the urban of construction of Xinjing in the first five-year plan were exclusively financed by Japan and Manchukuo, except for a very small portion from French loan in building the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

*and the relation between Japan and Manchukuo will be bound together more closely. As the exposition highlights the important status of Manchukuo in the Greater East Asia's Co-prosperous Sphere, the pride and morale of general citizens will be aroused".*⁴⁴

It effectively highlighted what the colonial government wanted to accomplish through the exposition, that was, to represent the nature of Japanese rule as they conceived it: military prowess, cultural and moral superiority, and ethnic unity, contributing to the whole system of colonial control. All organized and backed by CCTA, the ten major activities alike were held in the capital in 1942 within several months after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

But this also testified to the fact that at the exposition commercial profit was never prioritized by Manchukuo. The investment the colonials government put into the exposition was expected to pay back through stimulation of military confidence and cultural unity; as such, the exhibits consisted of not simply displays of produce, but also an array of physical manifestation of Japanese colonial accomplishments.

Political and Cultural Design of the Exposition

A close examination of the major concerns of the 1942 Exposition can explicate its characteristics and difference from its various predecessors. The idea of world's exposition was well established in the Western context. So widespread was the attempt to imitate London's success that it would not be an exaggeration to say that the expositions (or world' fairs in America), between 1851 and 1939 became a significant institution of Western culture. Expositions increased trade by increasing foreign demand for home products, stimulated industrial and artistic development, and raised the host country in the world's estimation. Closely associated with western colonialism, expositions were both a massive celebration of progress and at the same time an object lesson in educating people to better understand that progress.⁴⁵ Though in a time of expanding capitalism when all colonial powers stressed on economic advantages to be gained from their colonies, there were significant national differences in the ways of imperial powers displayed their colonies.⁴⁶

Universal and colonial expositions not only took place in the West, but were also held in the colonies. These exhibitions began as a local cultural event that aimed to promote indigenous arts and craftsmanship, such as the 1883 Jaipur Exhibition, and in a later time matured into international exhibitions, such as the 1884 Calcutta Exhibition and the 1902 Colonial Exhibition in Hanoi.⁴⁷ These exhibitions staged in European colonies aimed "to developing and promoting the commercial prosperity of India," and "to communicate the potential wealth offered to France by the colonization of Indochina".⁴⁸

⁴⁴ "The Purview of the Greater East Asian Exposition" 建國十周年建設博覽會

⁴⁵ Reid Badger. *The Great American Fair*, ; Tony Bennet. *Exhibitionary Complex*. 1988

⁴⁶ For more detail, see Burton Benedict. *Rituals of presentation*, p.31;

⁴⁷ Official Report of Calcutta International Exhibition, 1883-8. p. 2.

⁴⁸ Michael Vann. "All the World's a Stage", Especially in the Colonies: L'Exposition de Hanoi, 1902-3. Martin Evans

To commemorate its colonial rule, Japan organized the 1915 Korean Products Competitive Exposition, the 1929 Korean Exposition, and the 1935 Taiwan Exposition. These expositions were special because they were staged by a non-western colonizer in a colony. Japanese colonial policy changed over time, and as Hong Kal has written at length, the 1929 Seoul Exposition signaled the shift in colonial cultural policy from the one based on coercion to the one based on pacification, built upon the Cultural Policy of “co-prosperity” between Japan and Korea and the cultural orientation towards East Asian values away from the West.⁴⁹ The new politics of Japanese colonialism continued to guide the expositions in Taipei in 1935 and those in the capital city at Changchun since 1932 as epitomized in the 1942 Exposition.

At a time of the Pacific War, the 1942 Exposition became a good opportunity of bringing a wide selection of people to the same place for the purpose of edification and mobilization for war. As such, the exposition was no mere trade fair or festive celebration, instead it intended to indoctrinate and unify a population, embracing outward manifestations of a nation attempting to flex national, military, cultural and economic muscles for the ongoing warfare. The interesting aspect of “Greater East Asia” was the high-profile acclamation that through the exhibition of this kind the Japanese could confirm its global supremacy and enhance their influence in regional cultural and economic affairs.

Not surprisingly, unlike almost all the exhibitions in Manchukuo at the time, the concern for peace was totally absent in the 1942 Exposition, several months after the attack of Pearl Harbor. No matter how vain and disguised, peaceful concerns were at the top of the list for many international exhibitions, as exemplified in the 1937 Exposition in Paris on the eve of outbreak of the World War II. In Changchun, however, the Pavilion of the Pacific War as the main hall of the Exposition occupied a conspicuous location that boasted Japanese military prowess and recent success over Britain and the United States.

Millions of visitors strolled through the sites were taught and indoctrinated by the display of achievements as a result of Japanese policies in Manchuria and elsewhere, with the aim to arouse “the pride and morale of the people”. Imperial education was the fetish of the exposition, and vulgar propaganda of government was to be seen everywhere. The exhibits were used as an educational tool to visually and vividly explicate colonial policies to fairgoers, with the youth the focus of educational displays as they were important labor resources for the purpose of war. Even the amusement park of the Exposition (the Third Site, discussed below) was filled with military training facilities. The organizers also opened the site for a series of conferences, but the objective was to indoctrinate the public with the major themes of Japanese colonial policies in Manchuria and pan-Asian ideologies, such as agricultural autarky, ethnic harmony, etc.⁵⁰

(ed.). *Empire and Culture: The French Experience, 1830-1940*. NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004.

⁴⁹ Hong Kal. *Modeling the West, Returning to Asia: Shifting Politics of Representation in Japanese Colonial Expositions in Korea*. *Comparative Study of Society and History*, (2005):507-531.

⁵⁰ 建国十周年建设博览会 kenkoku jūnen kensetsu hakulankai

But above all, the most distinct difference of the 1942 Exposition from its Western counterparts was an absence of commerce. Trade had created Western power, and Western exhibitions were no more than an expression of that power. However, the state makers of Manchukuo impugned the despotic and predatory nature of Western modernity, insisting the superiority of Confucian values and Asiatic morality to supersede capitalism and Marxism, both Western doctrines.⁵¹ In opposition to consumerism and individualism, thrift, frugality, diligence, family value, and self-restraint were highly-esteemed merits that the client government called on. Unlike Western colonialism, the Japanese were eager to develop industry in Manchuria and fervently denounced consumerism, meriting frugality and self-discipline as promoted in East Asia for millennia.⁵² Moreover, ration and quota system had existed in Manchukuo long before the war broke out, and only the agents of the colonial government had the power to collect and distribute agricultural produce. In the Agricultural Exhibition, peasants were allowed to sell exhibiting goods, but the amount and the impact was neglectable compared to any exhibitions held in the capitalist world.

Larger and larger areas of sites were given over to entertainment through the 20th century in expositions, reaching a grand climax in the 1930s, as can be seen in the expositions in New York and San Francisco in 1939. However, the 1942 Exposition had no section for entertainment tantamount to the Midway in the US. By the same token, Datong Park, the major site of the exposition, did not see much landscaping plans to redesign the park with fantasy architecture to delight and amaze visitors, while in the West by 1890 it had been accepted that the use of site itself was the greatest factor to entertain fairgoers as a major generator of profits. Magnificence to promote political goals and much restrained consumerism were still of paramount concerns for these exhibitions and expositions. All in all, solemn attitude and serious education of the ongoing war were the rationale behind the whole event.

Progress was another major theme of the 1942 Exposition of Development. As common in all exhibitions, technology was the most frequently suggested vehicle to achieve progress. In addition to technological achievements, the client government advocated Asiatic moral, culture and social progress. They proposed a new world order on the basis of *wangdao* (the kingly way) and *daoyi* (morality and justice). Ironically, common Chinese inhabitants in the capital city at Changchun had long recognized the oppressive nature of the puppet state in ethnic discrimination and cruel suppression of dissent.⁵³

The exposition was financed by three newspaper presses headquartered in

⁵¹ Prasenjit Duara. 2003. *Sovereignty and authenticity : Manchukuo and the East Asian modern*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

⁵² Prasenjit Duara. The Imperialism of Free Nations: Japan, Manchukuo, and the History of the Present. Ann Laura Stoler (ed.). *Imperial formations*. Oxford: James Currey, 2007.

⁵³ I discuss the distrust of Xinjing inhabitants, from the puppet Emperor to commoners, against the colonial government in a following section in the longer chapter. The general civilians, especially ethnic Han Chinese, knew too well that the actual rule was firmly at Japanese hand, and the mood of distrust and indifference grew in between "collaboration" and "resistance".

Changchun. In publicizing the event, Manchukuo's journalists circulated information about the exposition, awakening interest across East Asia, and encouraging the participation of governments and individuals. But the Japanese also made an important invention to facilitate the circulation of the image of the exposition. Long before the use of registered trademarks emerged, other sources of imagery, including exhibition buildings and architectural monuments, symbolized the themes of world's fairs, such as Crystal Palace (London, 1851), Eiffel Tower (Paris, 1889), and Fine Arts Palace (Chicago, 1893). The images of these landmark buildings have been manipulated to define and control the meaning of the visitor's experience through commemorative activities or merchandise. No such grand buildings were left in Manchukuo's capital city after the Exposition which ended in 50 days after its inauguration. The 1942 Exposition, though without such an ostentatious building, bore an official logo or mascot. The pattern of the official logo, so called *rui yun shi zi zhang* (cross-like badge with propitious cloud), is a cross of Chinese ideograph *shi* (ten), suggesting the Tenth Anniversary. The official mark served as an abstract yet powerful icon, adorning virtually everything not only in the Exposition but also in all other events that were staged to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary. The Japanese invention of the logo became the precursor of highly sophisticated corporations that rely on official logos and mascots to capture the attention of tourist-consumers in post-war world's exhibitions and sports meetings.⁵⁴

Pavilions, Exhibits, and Related Activities

The primary site for the Exposition was Datong Park because of its central place in the geographical and political landscape of Changchun.⁵⁵ However, as it was not large enough to accommodate all exhibits, two further sites were selected as well.⁵⁶ The second site was located in the tract of land reserved for a hotel, opposite to Datong Park across Datong Street; and the third had been reserved for the construction of the headquarter of the Manchuria Heavy Industrial Company (MHI). Datong Park was the nominal property of Capital Municipality, while the second site belonged to the Southern Manchuria Railway Company (Mantetsu), and MHI owned the third. In an official report of 1943 that reviewed the ceremonies, the generosity of the three institutions of lending the sites for the purpose of the Exposition was acknowledged. Without a powerful and authoritarian colonial state, the coordination of different interest parties is unimaginable.⁵⁷ Behind the variety of ostentatious exhibits, congresses, mass assemblies and propaganda were the organizers and sponsors – the colonial authority.

⁵⁴ For souvenirs and official signs about how shaped personal experience of fairgoers, see Jon Zachman. "The legacy and meanings of world's fair souvenirs". in *Fair Representations: World's Fairs and the Modern World*. Robert Rydell and Nancy Gwinn. eds. Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994, pp. 215-217

⁵⁵ In the last chapter I discussed the Ceremony of the Completion of Capital Construction in 1937, and the built environment of Xinjing was used as a grand exhibit to spectators. In that event, Datong Park was the primary site for royal ceremony too.

⁵⁶ The influence of the most recent 1935 Taipei Exposition was also notable, as four sites were chosen instead of a single one at a time.

⁵⁷ 建國十周年建設博覽會 kenkoku jūnen kensetsu hakulankai

Datong Park was unanimously termed the “most pivotal site of the Exposition (among the three), and pavilions in the park mainly display Manchukuo’s recent history, culture, mining, industry, and natural resources,” supplemented by pavilions of Japan, Mongol, and Nanjing regime – the latter two were Japanese vassal states in occupied China. The layout of the pavilions was carefully arranged surrounding a small lake in the park. (Fig. 2-15) The path leading to the pavilions from the newly-built entrance was flanked by weapons, such as airplanes, armored vehicles, anti-aircraft guns, etc., a reminder that the state of Manchukuo was engaged in war. Crossing the bridge, the tourist engaged the Pavilion of the Greater East Asian War which sat at the top of a sloping hill overlooking the cluster of Manchurian pavilions and the central square filled with captured weapons.⁵⁸ (Fig. 2-16) These exhibition buildings were arranged along two common corridors and a square, framing an east-west axis that was commonly seen in Japanese traditional spatial arrangements.⁵⁹

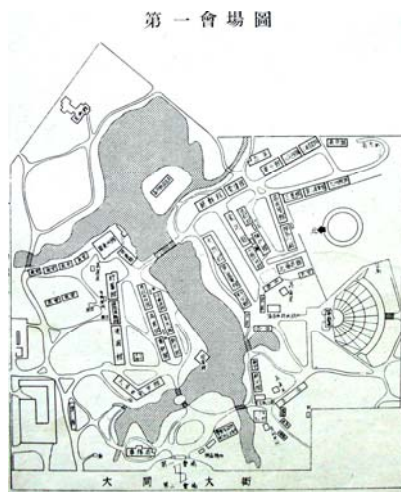


Fig 2-15 The first-site layout, Datong Park, September 1942.

Source: kenkoku jujunnen kensetsu hakulankai



Fig 2-16 Pavilion of International Situations. Unlike all preceding international exhibitions, mobilization for war became the major theme of the event.

Source: kenkoku jujunnen kensetsu hakulankai

In the Manchurian sector, major Manchurian cities such as Pavilions of Xinjing (Capital Changchun), Mukden, and Harbin and propagandistic sections (Pavilions of Nation’s Founding History, Savings, and International Situations) all had their own pavilions. The pavilions of Jiandao and the Territory of Dalian and Lushun, both Japanese colonies before the establishment of Manchukuo, were placed alone at the northeast corner. Though corporations also sponsored their own pavilions in western expositions, as in New York in 1939, two huge state-backed corporations, the SMR and

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Kal Hong. Modeling the West, Returning to Asia: Shifting Politics of Representation in Japanese Colonial Expositions in Korea. *Comparative Study of Society and History*, (2005):507-531.

MHI, were regarded the agent of civilizing Manchuria, and the location of the pavilions (facing the pavilions of Manchurian cities) suggested their accomplishment and importance in state-building and developing Manchuria. This reminds us of what Prasenjit Duara calls “new imperialism,” a self-contradictory ideology of domination and exploitation in parallel with development and modernization.⁶⁰

A special pavilion (*te she guan*) displaying four other state-owned corporations in charge of the most crucial registers of everyday life such as electricity, ratio of necessities, and trade was also grouped in the Manchurian exhibiting area. However, as Manchukuo’s crucial economic institutions carried out Japanese colonial policies, their appearance was not a surprise. As a matter of fact, the legacy of the Mantetsu railway settlement, including broad, diagonal streets radiating from large, circular plazas, continued to shape Changchun’s urban structure in the 1930s.

Across the lake, the southern section consisted of Pavilions of Taiwan, Korea, and Mongol, North China and Nanjing on the east side, and on the west the pavilions of Japanese cities and counties, and corporations such as Mitsubishi and Mitsui. The Pavilion of Jehol was located in the far west, close to the entrance as the end of the tour. These pavilions were built to introduce the visitors to the culture, economy, and resources of East Asian states under the leadership of Japan, and Japanese industrial innovation. Here Japanese pavilions were spatially intermingled with those of Japan’s colonies, and they altogether announced a spirit of coexistence and co-prosperity, the ideology of the exposition.

The construction work of pavilions in Datong Park began on June 1st, only two months away from the opening day. As war exigencies drained resources and labor away to the front, the Committee found themselves not only short of time but also resources. Later in news report of the Exposition, the Committee admitted the difficulties and acknowledged the help with providing materials from different governmental organs, such as logistics, forestry, and economy.⁶¹ Given wartime circumstances, it was easy to understand why eventually all pavilions looked the same in simplistic and functionalistic form based on a quadrangular plan. By appearance, one could hardly tell Xinjing Pavilion from that of Tokyo and the pavilions of military exhibits resembled recreational ones like the café and dinning houses.

However, the general plan prescribed an unmistakable route through the park. In addition, huge symbolic signs and tablets that visually introduced the content or property of a pavilion hung above the entrance, which served an economic but easy marker for orientation, perhaps a lesson learned from the Taiwan Exposition in 1935. Distinctive cultural elements, such as an exquisite wooden gate and a tower of Tibetan Buddhism were used in the pavilions of Nanjing and Jehol respectively.⁶²

⁶⁰ Prasenjit Duara. “The Imperialism of ‘Free Nation’: Japan, Manchukuo, and the History of the Present”. In Aron Stoler, Carole McGranahan and Peter Perdue ed. *Imperial Formation*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007.

⁶¹ 建國十周年慶祝典並慶祝事業志 (kenkukuo jushunen keishyuku jukyokushen), p.538

⁶² Nanjing at the time was the capital of the Chinese government under the leadership of Wang Jingwei (1890-1944)

As in the amusement section, exoticism was not a concern of the 1942 Xinjing Exposition either. Unlike the world's fairs in the West and its colonies, no single entry was found about "exoticized displays of people" in official documents and the exposition did not contain a reconstructed "native villages". As Timothy Mitchell argues, the Oriental artifacts and peoples were used as exhibits for display at Europe's exhibitions, as "the West's great external reality".⁶³ Japan, on the other hand, emphasizing ethnic closeness and the humiliation incurred by the West, advocated an ideology of "co-prosperity" between nations based on shared East Asian cultures. The repetitive and ubiquitous propaganda made it clear the revival of East Asia could only be obtained under Japanese leadership, especially those of Manchukuo, should feel obliged to Japan. This pattern of "knowing the outside world" with appreciation for Japan intended to make the hierarchy of colonial power visible and orderly.⁶⁴ Inside the pavilions, exhibits ranged from photographs, drawings, maps, and illustrations to products, models and even captured weapons in the war. Most exhibits boasted military prowess or industrial accomplishment to enhance morale, but some were also used to arouse a sense of cultural superiority.

A few service facilities were built in the park in modest size. Two months before the opening day, the government publicly called biddings for selling snacks and renting boats in Datong Park, and café and dining facilities were built to house people who sought a rest. Frugality was deemed a virtue and the state encouraged civic saving after the war broke out, and a Pavilion of Savings was built along with the cluster of Manchurian pavilions, symbolizing its importance as an institution in the state. This contrasted sharply with consumptive states of capitalist ideology.

The second exposition site on the other side of Datong Street was designed to introduce Manchuria's agricultural sources and the accomplishments in developing the region, and "meanwhile make preparations for the Agricultural Exhibition."⁶⁵ (Fig. 2-17) The newly built entrance faced a large fountain used also as a fishpond of scare fishes, surrounded by five pavilions of agriculture, aquatic products, livestock products, forestry, and development of the land. A vender facility was erected nearby the entrance to sell domestic agricultural products on the site. A popular attraction was the model agricultural garden on the northeast corner, which served "an introduction of agricultural work and rural life to urban inhabitants" so that visitors could experience plowing and planting themselves. The latter half of the site was reserved for the subsequent Agricultural Exhibition, also targeting at exhibiting agricultural products and mechanics.

collaborated with the Japanese, and Jehol was a province within Manchukuo, famous for its Tibetan temples and summer resort for Manchu emperors.

⁶³ As Mitchell argues, as an epitome in the exhibition, the Western experience of order and truth depended upon creating the very effect of an "external reality" beyond all representation. See Timothy Mitchell. *The world as exhibition*.

⁶⁴ Patricia Morton. *Hybrid modernities : architecture and representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 2000.

⁶⁵ 建國十周年建設博覽會(The Exposition of the Development for Tenth Anniversary of Founding Nation), The Second Site

The third site of the Exposition somewhat provided a retreat from the graveness of the exposition, mostly attracting children's interest and serving a machine of amusement for the public. An aviation tower was set up facing the entrance, (Fig 2-18) behind it a field for children's trial drive of small automatic vehicles. A model of submarine (in the shape of a warship) was used for the youth to experience navy life and engaged them in warfare. Though joyous to younger generation, these facilities were all military related, and aimed to familiarize children with the Japanese war machines. In the small site a pavilion that displayed the history of Manchukuo's recent history was built up to "inculcate the youth with state ideologies and aroused their appreciation for Japan."

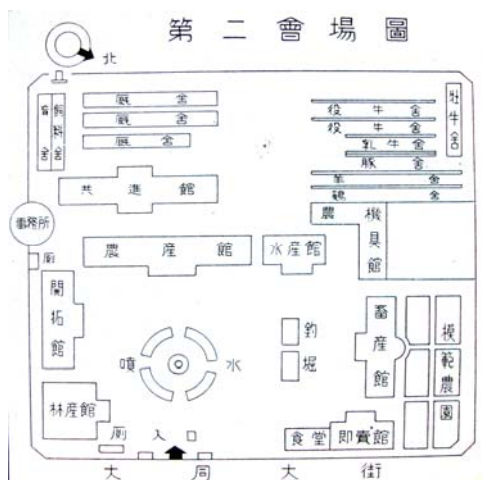


Fig 2-17 The 2nd-site layout. The latter half of the site was reserved for the Agricultural Exhibition.

Source: kenkoku jujunnen kensetsu hakulankai



Fig 2-18 Entertainment, trade, and consumerism were largely absent in the Exposition as well. Even amusement section was filled up with military training facilities.

Judged on all sides and by all standards, the entertainment facilities were no equivalence to the carnival atmosphere of the jubilation and consumerism so pervasive in Western fairgrounds. The Midway at the 1893 exposition in Chicago became one of the most successful and famous amusement areas of any of the great world's fairs, and it provided "a much needed escape from the harsh realities of daily living", as well as a place to educate the people of progress and aesthetic unity.⁶⁶ In contrast, either lottery or facilities on the third site aimed to remind people, especially youth, of the ongoing war. Under colonial rule, nothing attempted to teach Manchurian people to be joyously merry.

The exposition opened at eight in the morning and closed seven in the evening everyday for 50 days. A huge number of people from all walks of life, including government officials and employees, military people, business men, farmers, and children

⁶⁶ See Greenhalgh and Badger.

came to visit the sties. A good many special groups from outside the capital and foreign tourists from Japan, Korea and Taiwan also came to Changchun to see the Exposition. The emperor and his Prime Minister paid a visit to Datong Park in September, too. The total number of visitors to Datong Park reached 608,139, and combined those visiting the other two sites the number exceeded 2,000,000, at a time when the population of Changchun was 645,166.⁶⁷ The ticket price was fifty Manchukuo cents for adults and 25 cents for children and military people. Considering that the average income for a Chinese governmental employee was 36.65 Yen and for Japanese employees generally double or triple the amount,⁶⁸ it was a luxury to common Changchun inhabitants to visit the exposition but enthusiasm was overwhelming. The official final report wrote “since its opening day the splendid exposition was very popular among citizens, especially Chinese inhabitants”.⁶⁹

As one of the first of its kind in Manchuria with much appeal to residents in the city, the 1942 Exposition had brought together “all classes of the population.” In “Regulations for the Greater East Asia Exposition,” fairgoers were required to dress properly, observe rules, maintain the order self-consciously, and not to damage exhibits.⁷⁰ In line with Tony Bennet’s interpretation of the disciplinary functions of exhibition, this event was instrumental to educating the mass in what was expected of them, and could be internalized into a new citizenry, an obedient and proud colonial subject. In 1942, it became manifest that the making of the new citizenry had the ability to promote social cohesion utilizing symbols and ritual acts that held diverse even contradictory, cultural meanings. When the exposition was going on, a couple of cultural events were being held as well, such as the rituals at Japanese Shinto shrines, Confucian rituals, and ceremonies to honor *xiao zi* (dutiful children) and *jie fu* (chaste widows).⁷¹ Back in early March, the mass were mobilized to plant trees and renovate fields surrounding monuments and shrines. In each event, Japanese, Han Chinese, and other ethnic groups each experienced the festivals in a unique fashion, and therein lay the power of such rituals of legitimacy because they could promote social cohesion utilizing symbols that held diverse even contradictory cultural meanings. The common action of witnessing or participating in the festivals and acceptance of the general parameters of the Japanese ruling system fostered cultural and military pride as well as societal unity. This form of social civility thus occur not only as a form of control in Foucaultian sense, but also in the creation of positive values which promoted and enhanced institutions of civil society as class phenomena.

At the exposition, two arresting phenomena rare at the time were the appearance of corporative pavilions, and the apathy of amusing machines and displaying exoticism. These corporations functioned as the agent of Japanese colonial rule in Manchukuo’s

⁶⁷ Shinkyo tokubetsushi chokan somuka. *Kokuto Shinkyo*. Shinkyo: Manshu jijo annaisho, 1942, p.52.

⁶⁸ WSZL, 1997(1), p.65.

⁶⁹ 建國十周年慶祝典並慶祝事業志, p.541

⁷⁰ *ibid*, p.531

⁷¹ *Ibid*; SJSB

economic life, and deserved a place in the exhibition that accentuated the Japanese role in developing Manchuria. As wartime fair, Japan use the event as a reminder of devotion and dedication to war, instead of a retreat from the real world. Furthermore, Japan had dislodged its symbolic identification with the West and associated itself with “Asian civilization” since the late 1920s onwards, hence the juxtaposition of Japanese pavilions and those of its colonies.

All temporary buildings at the three sites were moved out immediately after the close of the Exposition on September 30th, 1942. As temporary installations, they could not compete with the permanent institutional buildings. Thus, in the Exposition’s posters, the central image was always the State Council, the Imperial Palace or the like. With a tight budget due to war exigencies, the exhibiting policy adroitly connected the exposition and exhibitions to the city at large, and the most strategic and alluring spaces of Changchun were transformed. Ephemeral as the exhibition itself may have been, the cultural changes in the state as epitomized in the capital so evident in the exposition were more profound and long-lasting, and the most impressive exhibits became the city itself. Significantly, the “declared” masterpiece of the exposition was not found within the temporary installations at all; it was once again the city itself.

VI. Conclusions

Invented ideas are not always novel as they seem to be and the newness is oftentimes diluted by the past experiences. The new style in capital Changchun, so-called Developing Asia, was an outcome of a synthesis that rooted in nationalist movements and architectural practices in Japan and China. It marked a profound change of Japanese colonial policy and cultural attitude towards the modern. It is clear that the ideological message of the regime was deliberately forged in the form of streets and buildings and was emphasized in the subtexts of their architectural details that aimed to communicate the ability of a regime to provide and control.

The plurality continued into Manchukuo era though under different circumstances and with different attitude towards the modern. In the capital city of Manchukuo, there was no single and dominant mode with which modernity and indigenous culture interacted. This negotiation was part of a shifting cultural ground that transformed along with the politics of Japanese colonialism – which were by no means uniform or unanimous through this period, and the production of space in Manchukuo was thus neither unchanging nor uniform. As Homi Bahbah notes, the image of cultural authority can be ambivalent because of ambiguities of the political structure.⁸² The plurality of aesthetics in Changchun of the 1930s reflected the inherent rapture and discrepancies of Japanese pan-Asian ideology. Moreover, the pluralism demonstrated in the built environment was deliberately set in a hegemonic political structure. For example, the military used the Japan Revival buildings such as the GDA headquarters, Jinmu Hall, and various Shinto shrines to enhance their presence in the city, while most Manchukuo institutions were housed in Developing Asia roofs.

In the capital city of Manchukuo, there was no single and dominant mode with which modernity and indigenous culture interacted. This negotiation was part of a shifting cultural ground that transformed along with the politics of Japanese colonialism – which were by no means uniform through this period, and the production of space in Manchukuo was neither uniform nor unchanging. The plurality of aesthetics in Changchun of the 1930s also mirrored the inherent rapture and discrepancies of Japanese pan-Asian ideology.

The anti-capitalist and anti-Western approach to the modern through showcasing exhibitionary edifice of the capital city was epitomized in the exhibitions held in 1942, at the height of the war, which comprises an overlooked chapter in the history of regional fairs.⁸³ Japan and her Asian allies and client states, such as Manchukuo, Mongolia, Nanking regime, Thailand, etc., built their pavilions in the 1942 Exposition, and Germany, Italy and Bulgaria sent convoys to attend the event. Using the event to mobilize the public for war was the ultimate concern of the exhibition, while peace, trade and amusement were absent from the scene. This cultural event was taken full advantage for consolidating and publicizing the colonial rule in Manchuria, it was also ambitious in bringing Asian countries under the Japanese leadership in the warfare against the West, and the ideology of competing with and surpassing over the West to achieve the modern culminated in the 1942 Exposition.

**Chapter 3 The Politics of Worshipping under Japanese Colonial Rule:
the King, Confucius, and Amaterasu**

As discussed in the previous chapter, fourteen years of Japanese colonial rule left behind a body of artistic production that permits neither simple formulas nor easy judgments. No one style or monument can readily summarize the state rhetoric and ideology of pan-Asianism. The need to appease dissent, both at home and abroad, led to the tactics of aesthetic pluralism in the early and mid 1930s and encouraged the promotion of hegemonic pluralism – a Gramscian-informed notion of pluralism under the authoritarian colonial rule.¹

This chapter further explores the hegemonic political structure as exemplified in spectacles and public pageantries in colonial Changchun. Three types of such events will be discussed in detail: the coronation of Puyi in 1934, state worshipping rituals of Confucius and, after 1937, Amaterasu. The coronation and other important political events such as the anniversaries of the establishment of Manchukuo I discussed in previous chapters were celebrated as jubilees. The colonial government used these ceremonies and exhibitions to promote a positive image of Manchukuo and to exhibit its capital's modernity.

Under the ideology of the Kingly Way, traditional venerable ceremonials were revived and re-invented by newly created institutions. Confucian and Taoist rituals were regularly practiced in the first years of the colonial regime, while Japanese religious rituals were also well established. The year 1937 had special significance in this narrative which marked two distinctive phases of colonial cultural policies. The first Five-Year plan of Capital Construction was completed in 1937, while Sino-Japanese broke out in the same year. As resources were drained to war after 1937, a series of changes took place both in the organization of the government as well as in cultural policies. As a result, Chinese rituals gave way to Japanese rituals of worshipping Amaterasu in national political life. The Japanization of cultural life in the second phase (1937-1945) of Manchukuo's state building carried within it the seeds of the collapse of the client state.

In building Manchukuo, state ideologues advocated an Asian ideology drawn from a variety of regionally circulated ideas and symbols as promoted in Wangdaoism ("kingly way"), in opposition to the alleged Western ideology of "hegemonic way". I have elucidated how political realities departed from this ideal as exemplified in the built environment. The ruptures and discrepancies can partly be explained by the metaphor of the chimera, a classical Greek beast of the head of a lion, body of a sheep, and tail of a dragon, to imagine the forces at work in this government sponsored by the Japanese military, as Yamamuro Shin'ichi likens Manchukuo as the chimera.² Through ritual

¹ Marla Susan Stone. *The Patron State: Culture and politics in Fascist Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. pp. 67-69.

² Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, "Introduction," p.6.

practices as an important part of urban life in capital Changchun, I will further demonstrate in this chapter that the Guandong Army (DGA), the lion of the chimera, was the real master of the colonial state of Manchukuo, and more contradictions inherent in the pan-Asian ideology of the Kingly Way.

I conclude that the ambivalence mirrored the structural ambiguity. Japan's ideological stance towards Manchukuo was crystallized through the public pageantries that encouraged widespread participation. Through these cultural pageantries, the city as a whole was manipulated to display the novel colonial ideologies and rhetoric, though the hegemonic structure of colonial politics in Manchukuo eventually resulted in mistrust between the colonized and the colonizer, and carried within it the seeds of the collapse of the client state.

I. The Coronation Ceremony in 1934

Puyi left Tianjin after the Manchurian Incident and arrived in Dalian, welcomed by the GDA. On February 25, 1932, it was decided to make him the head of Manchukuo, "according to the eager wish of the thirty million inhabitants".³ A modest ceremony was held on March 9, 1932, eight days after the inauguration of the new state, in which event Puyi was formally made the Chief Executive (*zhizheng*) of Manchukuo. Puyi expressed his disappointment for this title, and felt "being cheated by the Japanese and betrayed by his subordinates," as the Japanese had promised to enthrone him upon the establishment of Manchukuo.⁴ In order to appease Puyi and his loyal followers, a Government Organization Law was instituted to confirm that "the government by the Chief Executive is a transitory administrative form until the promulgation of the Constitution, and in order to strengthen the national foundation, the promulgation of the Constitution is to be hurried as much as possible", and a committee for studying the Constitutional system was appointed to investigate the subject.⁵

Two years later, after long negotiations between Chinese monarchists and the GDA, the Japanese agreed to let Puyi ascend throne on March 1, 1934, on the third anniversary of the establishment of Manchukuo. In the meantime, the former Government Organization Law was abolished, and the new National Organization Law which was regarded as the provisional Constitution until the promulgation of the Constitution was published announced Manchukuo to be a constitutional monarchy. In order to commemorate this political event, to advocate the Kingly Way of an independent country, and to publicize that Puyi "is supported by the entire people, and bears the responsibility for the entire people," the preparations for a grand coronation ceremony were underway immediately.⁶

³ Toa-keizai chosakyoku(East Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau). *Manchoukuo Yearbook*. Tokyo: Uchiyamashita-cho, kojimachi-ku, 1934, p.769

⁴ Puyi. *From emperor to citizen : the autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989.

⁵ *Manchukuo Year book*, 1934. p.781

⁶ Fumimaro Konoye. "Manchukuo, precursor of Asiatic renaissance and the government by Wangtao". South Manchuria Co. *Contemporary Manchuria*, Dalian: SMR, 1937-2, p.1-18.

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As Puyi recollected in the 1950s, he wanted to have on formal Manchu attires (*longpao*) in the enthronement ceremony in his palace, but this proposal was declined by the GDA. The Japanese had made it very clear from the onset that the new state of Manchukuo was not a continuation of late Manchu Qing, and the government “should make every effort to keep this idea out from public opinions”. As such, Manchukuo’s emperor should dress “generalissimo attire” in the ceremony. But in order to court Puyi, the GDA agreed that Puyi could wear Manchu attires in the ritual of offering a sacrifice to Heaven (*jitian*) before the enthronement ceremony.

The ritual of worshipping Heaven was a long tradition in Chinese culture, as the Confucian idiom of “respecting Heaven and observing ancestry” (敬天法祖); it was also one of the most important royal rituals in countryside (*jiaosi*, 郊祀) in imperial times. Special altars and temples for this purpose were built on the order of the vassal or emperor, and the Altar of Heaven had been a major element in city planning in China since the end of the Spring and Autumn Period, as recorded in *The Records of Examination of Craftsman* (考工记). The layout of the Altar of Heaven accords to Chinese cosmic concept that the Heaven is round in shape while the earth is square (天圆地方). (Fig 3-1) The ritual of offering a sacrifice to Heaven was to be regularly held every year on summer solstice of Chinese lunar calendar, and only the emperor or his special envoy could host this solemn ritual. But in special events, such as coronation or pray for rain, more grandiose rituals would be held too. The ritual of worshipping Heaven had been regarded the symbol of legitimacy of imperial rule.

According to Confucian cosmological conceptualization of human and nature, a large round altar was built to symbolize the Heaven, with no building on its top except for a temporarily-set table to put sacrifices on. After sufficient preparation work the ritual should take place before the sun rose on that day, and hundreds of sacrificial vessels and sacrificing articles all around. The emperors actively participated in the ritual of worshipping the Heaven as a means of legitimizing his rule over the vast country as the son of the Heaven. This ritual had been practiced in Beijing’s Altar of Heaven for about five hundred years, a tradition that was reinvigorated by Yuan Shikai in 1914 as part of the preparations for ascending to the throne.⁷

In order to prepare for the ritual of worshipping the Heaven, Puyi ordered to build a new altar in Xinhuaacun which was reserved for the emperor’s eventual palace. At that time, Xinhuaacun was still countryside but new construction of Xinjing had already expanded to nearby area, so the roads could be easily laid out to connect Puyi’s temporary palace. The altar in Xinjing was built in November 1933 with frozen soil clumps, and appeared a trilaminated stair-stepping platform based on the model in Beijing. (Fig 3-2) The diameter of the top platform was 27 *chi*, 7 *chi* from the ground, while the altar occupied a much larger area.⁸ Wooden posts and palings were place

⁷ Yuan Shikai (1859-1916), a pivotal politician in the last years of the Qing, was made the first President of the Republic of China in 1912, but failed in a short-lived attempt to revive the Chinese monarchy as the “Great Emperor of China” in 1916. Yuan died soon after he was forced to reinstitute the Republic.

⁸ Yang Zhaoyuan. “Kuilei huangdi dengji chouju” (The farce of the puppet emperor’s enthronement). *Wei huanggong*

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surrounding the round altar, covered by yellow cloth (yellow is the symbol of the royal house), eventually forming a large square. The layout of the altar responded to Chinese cosmic conception of round Heaven and square earth, though of much smaller scale compared to that in Beijing.



Fig 3-1 Temple of the Heaven in Beijing

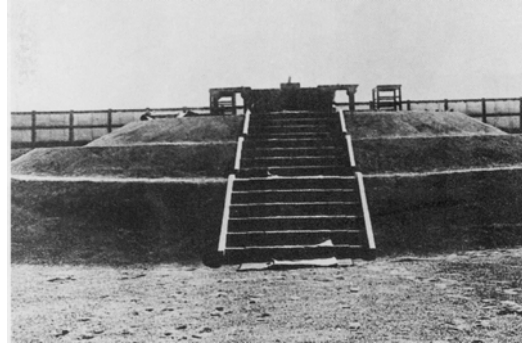


Fig 3-2 Temple of the Heaven in Changchun

Source: Liu Fenglou, p.45

At 7:50 on the morning of March 1, 1934, Puyi got on his limousine and departed from his temporary palace after being greeted by his officials. Before he arrived at the altar, his Premier Zheng Xiaoxu, GDA officers and Japanese and Chinese officials had been waiting there for long. Puyi carried out the enunciation to heaven (*gaotian*) ceremony by reporting to heaven that he had received its mandate and acceded to the throne. He was wearing the *longpao* or imperial gown with gold dragons embroidered on each shoulder front and back, which was brought to Puyi from Tianjin for this purpose.⁹ On his head he wore a circular cap with a leather trim to which red and pearl decorations had been affixed. (Fig 3-3) The ritual Puyi headed in Xinhuaacun closely followed what had been in imperial times, and the whole process was filmed by an American company, Fox Film Corporation.¹⁰



Fig 3-3 Puyi at the *Jitian* ritual in traditional attire (*longpao*)

Source: Xinhuashe jiefangjun fenshe (ed). *Wuqiang* 9/18. Beijing: Central Archival Press, 2001.

chenlieyuan nianjian (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 1984. p.105. Chi is traditional Chinese measure unit of length. One chi approximately equals to 0.3 meter.

⁹ Ibid. p.104.

¹⁰ Yu Jing. *Changchun shi hua* (historical stories of Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, p.211-212

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Having completed the entire urban ceremony, including the enunciation to heaven, attired in long skin boots, the ceremonial garb of the Qing court, Puyi returned to the temporary palace, where he held the formal coronation at 11 o'clock in the morning in front of the same group of people waiting at the Xinhua Altar, but with different attires. They celebrated the coronation ceremony at the palace, when Puyi this time was in the full dress uniform as Generalissimo of the Manchukuo's army, navy, and air force. (Fig 3-4)



Fig 3-4 Puyi in Generalissimo of the Manchukuo's army, navy, and air force

Source: Foreign Affair Ministry of Manchoukuo. *Manchoukuo illustrated*. Hsinking: Manchoukuo Bureau of Information and Publicity, 1935

In this ceremony, Puyi promulgated the imperial edict of enthronement. This edict reiterated that the State of Manchukuo was established due to "the noble aid from the friendly country of Japan," hence the monarchical state would be more able to practice Wangtaoism "with consultancy and collaboration with the Empire of Japan".¹¹ After Puyi received greeting letters and ovation from his subordinates, the ceremony was followed by an imperial banquet in the palace around noon. In the afternoon, Puyi accepted the sign of submission - the three kneelings and nine knockings (*sanbai jiukou*) from the descendants of the Aisin Gioro clan who had come from Beijing. The enthronement ceremony then drew to an end.

The use of the two sets of attires, one of Chinese tradition and the other modern state, is the best illustration of "hegemonic pluralism" of Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo, wherein numerous traditions and cultural practices were allowed (and sometimes were encouraged) to co-exist, but the Japanese colonial concerns overwhelmed the others. Puyi in generalissimo attire on the coronation later became his standard portrait and a symbol of the client state. However, the combination of the traditional imperial attire indicates that the Japanese had to concede to the pressure from resourceful Chinese monarchist, in order to gain wider support at a time when the consent of local elites was crucial to the initial state building. The result of bargaining and compromise between the two sides was to have two ceremonies: the ceremony held in the suburb of the city in his *longpao*, and the accession ceremony held in his military uniform. The classification of different attires for the formal enthronement ceremony and the

¹¹ Yu Qiyuan, *Wangshi cunzhen*. (A record of the past). Changchun: Changchun political consultancy press, 2007. p.36-40.

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private heaven worshipping suggest the nature of the hegemonic structure of colonial politics.

The puppet state of Manchukuo and the constitutional monarchy placed Puyi as an emperor. But because the emperor was secluded from active politics, it would be safe enough to enhance the position of the head of state ceremonially with no threat to the veneration of the colonial authority.¹² The Japanese did not want to misinterpret this ceremony to the international audience that Puyi reassumed the throne in Manchuria. Instead the new State of Manchukuo must be “a modern and new state totally different from the past times,” therefore Puyi had no choice but wore “modern” attires in the coronation. Even the ritual of worshipping the Heaven changed in detail from the imperial times. Puyi took a private limo to the altar instead of a traditional royal carriage, and he did not stay over night at the altar before the ritual. The elements of discontinuity and modern aspects of Manchukuo were distinct, but the traditional Manchu attires were endowed with a romantic and mysterious splendor as an allure of the monarchy’s capacity in building a modern state on the basis of the old culture and customs.

After the coronation, the GDA demanded that people in all governmental units including schools salute and bow to Puyi’s photos and the enthronement edict on schedule. Modern media to report the ceremonies and the anachronism of various venerable rituals were paralleling to each other. Newspapers and governmental covered the coronation as well as celebrating parades in Changchun and elsewhere in Manchukuo, and Puyi’s head portrait on the coronation was printed on post stamps. However, once again as we have seen in the aforementioned public pageantries, the well managed ritual was restricted from commercial exploitation. The government ordered a limited number of commemorative medals to be produced, to be worn on the left breast. This medal can only be worn by the recipient, while his descendents were required to carefully keep it as a souvenir.¹³ As no transaction of the medal was allowed, this part of the ceremony was quite different from the British coronations which were regarded as paradise for medal-makers. The separation from commerce reflected respect for the ruler as a long Chinese tradition, as well as the colonial state’s antipathy to free market and capitalism.

To some extent, an anachronism characterized the cultural life of Manchukuo. Nostalgia and ceremonial rituals were regarded as appropriate to revive Asiatic moralities and achieve the Kingly Way in the end. This great emphasis on ritual was not limited to the royal house. In many other spheres of activity, too, ceremonials were put in place to reinvent and revere the past as spectacular events, among which the most distinct example was the rituals of worshipping Confucius.

¹² David Cannadine, “The British Monarchy and the ‘Invented Tradition’”. In Eric Hobsbawm (ed.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

¹³ Wang Bin. “Guancang weiman jinianzhang yanjiu” (A study of the collected medals of Manchukuo). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 1993. p.63-64

II. Worshipping Confucius and Guan-Yue

The traditional ritual of worshipping Confucius consisting of activities like offering sacrifices and ritual performance in the temple of Confucius had lasted for thousand years, starting from the first emperor of Han dynasty. Confucius's central concepts of humanity, loyalty, piety, family state, etc. were the cornerstones of imperial dynasties, and the state cult of Confucius had become one of the means to legitimize the emperor's rein as a unifying symbol. As such, the worshipping of Confucius had been venerated in imperial China. In imperial times, the regular national worshipping was held twice in early February and August of Chinese lunar calendar, with an additional festival on August 27 of lunar calendar, which was Confucius's birthday. Worshipping Confucius had the same significance with worshipping the Heaven in dynastic times, both of which were regarded emblem of legitimacy of the imperial rule.

However, in a time when the Qing was overthrown and a republic state was cried out for, pre-eminent statesmen and educators, such as Cai Yuanpei, called for abolishment of worshipping Confucius as "being loyal to the emperor is against the spirit of republic, as much as honoring Confucianism against the spirit of liberty".¹⁴ During the turbulent years of early Republic, the public reception of Confucius and the ritual became more entangled with the changing political circumstances. In 1913, Yuan Shikai issued orders to reinstate the respectable status of Confucius and hosted a state ritual of worshipping Confucius on September 28, 1914, the first time of the kind in the Republic. However, Yuan Shikai presided over the ritual of worshipping Confucius as part of his endeavor for the short-lived monarchy, opposed by the whole nation, the Confucian ritual had ever since lost its political legitimacy and disappeared in many parts of the Republic of China for decades.¹⁵

On March 1, 1932, the Manchukuo government published "Announcement of the Establishment of Manchukuo," claiming that "one of the tenets of the new state is conforming to the Heaven and securing the people..... it is very important for all nationals that education should be promulgated, and ceremonies and rites should be respected. Wangdao should be widely practiced..... to build Manchukuo as the model of world politics."¹⁶ The government further explained that the Kingly Way was the way of ancient meritorious kings who followed Confucian teachings, which had been "the source of rule by virtue deeply embedded in people's mind in the past two thousand years."¹⁷ As a result, the colonial government, with Confucian scholar-official Zheng

¹⁴ Cai Yuanpei. "duiyu xin jiaoyu zhi yijian" (Opinions on new education). *Jiaoyu zazhi* (Magazine of education). 1912-2-8.

¹⁵ For example, in Shangxi Province, the ritual of worshipping Confucius disappeared since 1923 until the region was occupied by the Japanese in 1937. In Shandong Province, the formal worshipping of Confucius took place in 1934, as sponsored by four Kuomintang's pivotal figures: Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, Ye Chucang, and Dai Jitao. See Xu Zaibin. "qianxi 1934 nian Shandong jikong huodong" (A study of the Confucian ritual in Shandong in 1934). *Heilongjiang shizhi* (History and Gazetteer of Heilongjiang), 2010(5).

¹⁶ *Manchukuo Yearbook*, 1934

¹⁷ "Chinese Culture and Manchukuo", in *Contemporary Manchuria*, 1940-1, p.77-79. See also Jilin Manchukuo's history compilation group. *Manzhouguo shi fenlun* (History of Manchukuo, Volume II). Changchun: Jilin Province Press (internal circulation materials), 1992, p.728.

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Xiaoxu as its Prime Minister decided to revive the rituals of worshipping Confucius immediately, and announced the worshipping of Confucius of February and August as national holidays.

In the first few months of Manchukuo, it was the Bureau of Culture and Education under the Ministry of Civil Affairs that took charge of the ritual of worshipping Confucius. A few months later, the Bureau of Culture and Education was escalated to the Ministry of Culture and Education in July 1932, and Prime Minister Zheng Xiaoxu held a concurrent post of its first minister, indicating the importance of worshipping rituals in national political affairs. The new ministry included three bureaus of general affairs, rituals and education, in charge of ideology, religion, worshipping, and education. Seeing the damage made to Confucian temples and abandonment of traditional rituals in Manchuria under the Zhang regime, Zheng declared that “the spirit of Wangdao rule and idea of Datong (great unity) will be based on the worshipping of Confucius as the foundation of the new state,” and published his books to promote and publicize Confucian doctrines.¹⁸

The governmental organization installed Confucian teachings the foundation for Manchukuo’s national education, in sheer contrast to previous regimes in Manchuria. The May Fourth movement spread to Manchuria in the late 1910s, and the warlord government commenced to adopt a modern educational system of their own in imitation of the American school system. After 1928, when the Zhang Xueliang administration subjugated to the Kuomintang, the so-called Educational Party Policy was introduced to Manchuria, and nationalistic education based on the spirit of the “Three Peoples Principle” of Sun Yat-sen came to govern the educational field in Manchuria, which replaced private schools based on the teachings of Confucius and on traditional family system which was the basis of the social structure in China for thousands of years. As a result, “[t]he cry for recovering lost national rights was gradually instilled into the younger generation, and even the text-books for elementary schools were injected with much anti-foreign sentiment”.¹⁹

After the establishment of Manchukuo, however, the educational policy aimed to “respect the Wangtao, and humanity and justice; to observe the Declaration issued by the Chief Executive upon the State foundation; to govern individual life, families, and the country by the Wangtao; to establish the national spirit; and to harmonize the sentiments of the peoples of the world. That is to say, the educational policy is based on moral education, and thus it is fundamentally different from the educational policy under the former Three Peoples Principle which was founded upon anti-foreign sentiment.”²⁰

¹⁸ Ministry of Culture and Education. *Manzhou guo wenjiao nianjian* (Annals of national culture and education). Changchun, 1934, p.1099. See also Zheng Xiaoxu. *Wangdao cong kan* (collections of essays on Wangtaoism). Xinjing, 1934.

¹⁹ Rana Mitter. 2000. *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

²⁰ *Manchukuo Yearbooks*, 1934, p.623-634

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As stated in official propaganda, the new educational institutions and enterprises for propagating and materializing the new educational policy were expected to be based upon the principles of the Kingly Way. Zheng Xiaoxu, Minister of Culture and Education, order that “the use and teaching of the Four Books and Classic of Filial Piety in school curriculum and the honoring of Confucian morality”.²¹

The fundamental idea of Manchukuo, that was, the principles of the Kingly Way, originated in Confucianism.²² As in the past, those who belonged to the educated class established the temples of Confucius in various places, and enshrined Confucius and other sages of the school of Confucius in them. On the two seasonal festival-days,²³ grand and almost purely religious ceremonies were held. Despite of abandonment for decades, after the establishment of Manchukuo, the ritual of worshipping Confucius was effectively revived. The Department of Education ordered surveys to be carried out to comprehend the present state of the temples, so as to repair them throughout the country.²⁴ Henceforth, as the Kingly Way was closely related to Confucianism, the two Confucian rituals became national festivals as cornerstone of the state. (Fig 3-5)



Fig 3-5 worshipping ritual of Confucius, led by Zheng Xiaoxu

Source: Bureau of Information. *Manchoukuo: A Pictorial Sketch*.



Fig 3-6 performances in worshipping ritual of Confucius

Source: Xinhuashe jiefangjun fenshe, p.15

On September 3, 1932, Zheng Xiaoxu headed officials and conducted the first ritual of Confucian festival in Changchun's Temple of Confucius. In the meantime, the ministry also sponsored the Confucius festival throughout the country, and issued decrees that the festival should be observed in spring and autumn every year throughout Manchukuo. Though experimental and modest, the first Confucian ritual set up the model for the following rituals to surpass. Moreover, as it would be difficult to extend

²¹ ZFGB

²² Confucianism may be said to be a sort of religion which was founded by Confucius and expounded by Zi'en (子恩), Mengtzu (孟子) and others based on Chinese ancient ideas, combined with high philosophical ideals. In Confucianism the questions of life and death are never touched; to cultivate oneself and to govern others are its objects, seeing benevolence as the highest virtue of the human world.

²³ April in spring and August in summer in Chinese lunar calendar.

²⁴ *Manchukuo Yearbooks*, p.707-708

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such cultural development to the area outside the capital because affairs concerning ceremonial procedures and ceremonial music were not perfected, Zheng Xiaoxu helped open a special school (燕乐传习所) at the Confucian Temple in the capital. At the school, thirty students are trained for three months to enable them to handle the affairs of national festivals and ceremonies.²⁵

Based on these preparations, Zheng issued a decree in early February the next year, prescribing in detail that “public lectures should be held on the day of the Confucian ritual, on the subject of Wangdao and nation-founding,” and “all teachers should learn from the ritual of the virtues and salient words of Confucius and other sages.” In the meantime, “all Confucius temples should be repaired, and a good many ceremonial articles, musical instruments, and dancing equipments should be well prepared.” On March 2, 1933, Zheng Xiaoxu led the worshipping group again in the Temple of Confucius in the capital city, and the GDA officers also attended the grand event.²⁶ In the meantime, all heads of Manchukuo’s provinces were required to lead the ritual on the same day, and it was reported that it seemed the whole country was celebrating a festival with great jubilation.²⁷

The grandest Confucian ritual in Changchun took place on September 28, 1933, led by Puyi himself and attended by a corps of GDA officers. Chinese high ranking officials played their part in the ritual, followed by performances of chorus, music, and dance. (Fig 3-6) All participants except for GDA officers dressed in traditional attires as in the imperial times, and at the end of the ritual people knocked head to the ground three times and bowed to Confucius’s portrait nine times. The whole ritual lasted about two hours in the early morning. However, this was the only time for Puyi to attend Confucian rituals. Since 1934 onwards, Confucius worshipping rituals were led by the premier, first by Zheng Xiaoxu and then by Zhang Jinghui who replaced Zheng in 1935. As promulgated by Zheng Xiaoxu, Confucianism became the exclusive national religion in the early years of Manchukuo.²⁸

In the “Announcement of the Establishment of Manchukuo,” the Japanese colonial authority attempted to incorporate indigenous culture and traditions as part of state policies to establish colonial rule in a time of turmoil and international condemnation in the wake of Manchuria Incident. Confucius had been the unifying symbol of the nation for thousand years, and Confucian teachings were closely related to the Wangtao ideology of Manchukuo, many principles of which had been advocated for years by monarchists such as Zheng Xiaoxu. When Zheng died in 1938, the colonial government sponsored burial commemorations in Changchun and Mukden where Zheng was buried. In commemorating Zheng, his contribution of promoting Wangtaoism and

²⁵ *Manchukuo Yearbook*, 1934, p. 684-685

²⁶ Wenjiao bu xunling di qi hao (No. 7 decree of the Ministry of Culture and Education), 1933-2-11. Changchun: ilin Province Archive. See also Zhi Lijiang. “Weimanzhou guo de guojia jisi jiqi riben hua” (Rituals in Manchukuo and their Japanization). *Lish ijiaoxue* (history teaching), 2010/9.

²⁷ SJSB 1934-3-4.

²⁸ *Manchukuo Yearbook*, 1934, p. 684-685

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institutionalizing Confucian rituals was mentioned.

The Japanese astutely recognized the very meaning of reviving the rituals and publicized it as a national festival. In the early stage of Manchukuo, GDA officers supported and attended the ritual of worshipping Confucius in the state building to elevate the ritual to a conspicuous place in political and cultural life of Manchukuo. The ritual of worshipping Confucius would help achieve the political objectives that “the ritual promoted Asiatic morality and virtues and helped form national spirit and self-cultivation” by the colonial authority until 1937.²⁹

As Confucian ideals and rituals were revived and practiced in the first years of Manchukuo, worshipping Guan-Yue (Guan Yu and Yue Fei) also gained popularity. In terms of significance in official discourses, worshipping Guan-Yue was only second to the national ritual of worshipping Confucius.

Guan Yu, the Chinese God of War, was born in Shanxi province at the end of Han dynasty. Intelligent and daring, he displayed an exuberance of strength and activity, which caused him to be feared by all. But it was his loyalty to his elder brother emperor that finally made him a legendary figure of the “Three Kingdoms” (A.D. 221-265), as Guan Yu was renowned in many stories for his loyalty and many civic moralities and virtues.³⁰ It should be noted that Guan Yu was not only revered by Confucian literati, but worshipped in many Taoist and even Buddhist temples. Guan Yu was also called God of Richness, God of Brotherhoods, and God of Martial Power, etc.³¹ But it is Guan Yu’s virtues that gained him so much popularity among all social classes, and made him another unifying symbol of the nation to be well manipulated in Manchukuo.

Yue Fei (A.D. 1103-1142), on the other hand, was a well-known Han Chinese patriot and military general who fought for the Southern Song Dynasty against the Jurchen armies of the Jin Dynasty, widely regarded the ancestors of Manchu people. Worshipping Yue Fei in the same temple of Guan Yu began after the collapse of the Qing, as a result of anti-Manchu movement. However, the Manchukuo government claimed that “it would not be appropriate to abolish this (new tradition), and to worship both of the deities can be regarded as the government’s generosity and tolerance.”³² It is obvious a cultural pluralism was at work in the early phase of state building of Manchukuo, and creators of Manchukuo seemed not afraid of the sentiment of resistance against invasion by “the barbarian peoples”, maybe because they felt secured both culturally and militarily.

The Manchukuo government decided to make the worshipping of Guan-Yue as

²⁹ Manzhou hongbao xiehui. *Manzhouguo xianshi (kangde si nian)* (current situations of Manchukuo). Changchun, 1937, p. 132.

³⁰ The five constant relations among mankind, that of sovereign and subject, father and son, elder brother and younger, husband and wife, friend and friend.

³¹ See Justus Dollittle (ed.). *The Chinese recorder*, Volume 3. Foochow: Rozario, Marcal & Co, 1871, p.43-45. also Henry Dore. *Researches into Chinese Superstition*, Shanghai: T’usewei Printing Press, 1920, pp.78-80. See also Prasenjit Duara. “Superscribing Symbols: The Myth of Guandi, Chinese God of War”. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (Nov., 1988), pp. 778-795.

³² Lao Zude (ed.) *zheng xiaoxu riji* (Zheng Xiaoxu Diaries). Beijing: zhonghua shuju, 1993, p.2576

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national holidays too, twice a year in lunar February and August, after Confucian festivals. The rituals took place both in Changchun led by the Minister of Military Affairs and in all provinces led by the chief of local garrison troops. In doing so, “the government aims to foster respect of martyrs and faithful and courageous soldiers, and the morale of the army and police will be inspired”.³³ Both led by high ranking bureaucrats in the capital, the rituals of worshipping Confucius and Guan-Yue were incorporated in the official propaganda that Wangdao, as exemplified in the revival of Asiatic rituals of virtuous old times, was being well practiced in the new state of Manchukuo. It also conveyed the message that Asiatic virtues such as benevolence, loyalty, courage, and brotherhood were highly esteemed by the government “as a model for the world politics”.

The Guan-Yue Temple in the capital city at Changchun was built in 1799 in Qing dynasty, which was widely regarded as the starting point of Changchun’s history as a town on Manchuria,³⁴ and the temple was rebuilt and extended with shrines for other deities in 1850.³⁵ The entrance was an exquisitely decorated gate with three bays. A square-plan bell tower close to the entrance and the flag posts on either side of the gate indicating its function as a temple. (Fig 3-7, Fig 3-8) The main hall was a modest single-story building also with three bays. The statues of Guan Yu and attendants of the God of War were enshrined in the middle of the main hall.³⁶ Beyond the main hall, a small building was devoted to the Emperor of Heaven. In the rear of the temple, there were a few paralleling halls that housed Yue Fei, Niang Niang (more elaborations in next section), and other deities of Taoist myths. The large courtyard were crowded with people during the ritual of worshipping Guan-Yue, and when the ritual ended, indigenous operas and plays would took place, much like a traditional temple festival.

Curiously, after 1937 when the second Sino-Japanese War broke out, the worshipping ritual of Guan Yu did not ascend to a more prominent place in national life. In the contrary, the ritual, though twice a year as national festivals, was only sporadically covered by governmental newspapers and gradually disappeared from the sight of the public, while Japanese shrines to honor military valiance occupied a prominent place as discussed in the next section. Moreover, the colonial authority adopted the policy of reducing Chinese cultural influence in Manchukuo. What took the place of Guan Yu as the protective God of Manchukuo were Japanese deities.

³³ Jilin Manchukuo’s history compilation group. *Manzhouguo shi fenlun* (History of Manchukuo, Volume II). Changchun: Jilin Province Press (internal circulation materials), 1992, p.729

³⁴ Yu Weilian ed. *Changchun jindai jianzhu* (modern architecture in Changchun). Changchun: Changchun Press, 2001.

³⁵ 村田治郎. 关帝庙建筑史の研究. 昭和五年. P. 89.

³⁶ Henry Does. Researches into Chinese Superstition, pp.85-88.

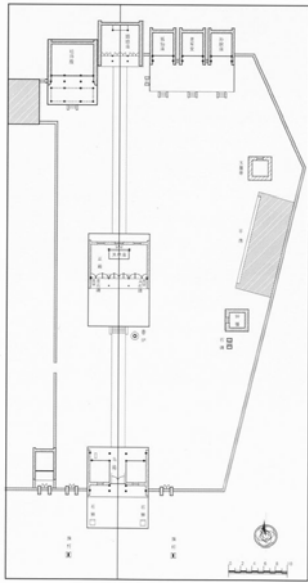


Fig 3-7 the plan of the Temple of Guan-yue in Changchun

Source: Yu Weilian, p.67

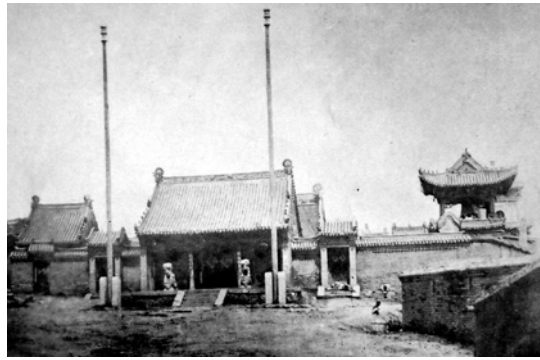


Fig 3-7 the entrance of the Temple of Guan-yue in Changchun

Source: Yu Weilian, p.67.

To make it worse, the Ministry of Culture and Education, which was in charge of worshipping Confucius, was reduced to a bureau and merged into the Ministry of Civil Affairs in 1937. In 1939, the Ministry of Civil Affairs issued a decree that participants in the Confucian rituals should wear the specific attires of the Concordia Association (Ch. *xiehehui*, J. *kyowakai*), while the rites of knocking head to Confucius should be replaced by bowing to the portraits and tablets of Confucius.³⁷ A fraction of the GDA officers even proposed to abolish worshipping Confucius, but given the effectiveness of the ritual to appease local people, it was finally decided that Confucian rituals shall be preserved with diminished importance.³⁸ After 1940 when Shinto shrines were built in large quantity and rituals of worshipping Amaterasu were established, Confucian rituals were reduced to a very marginal place compared to Shinto rituals, while Guan-Yue was formally eradicated from the list of national holidays.

III. Worshipping Amaterasu

In the wake of China Incident in July 1937, as Manchukuo was increasingly involved in Sino-Japanese War and since 1941 the Pacific War, it became urgent to align Manchukuo to the Empire of Japan in culture and religion to mobilize morale and

³⁷ See minsheng bu (ministry of civil Affairs). *Di san ci minsheng nianjian* (the third consensus of the ministry of civil affaris). Changchun: East Asia Press, 1940, p.5. About the intervention of the Concordia Association, see Zhao Lingshi. "weiman zhiming tongzhi sixiang gaishu" (A general review of Japanese colonial ideologies). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 1991. p.157-161.

³⁸ Sun Bang (ed.). *weiman wenhua* (Manchukuo's culture). Changchun: Jilin People's Pres, 1993, p.374

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resources for war. For this purpose, the GDA, the Manchukuo government, and the Concordia Association held a series meetings and came to a consensus that “a nation-founding god has been protecting Manchukuo since its birth,” as a result, a grand temple should be built to enshrine and worship this “nation-founding god”.³⁹

However, there had been heated debate over which deity should be enshrined in the temple. Ishiwara Kanji, who was responsible for Manchuria Incident and had stationed in China for a long time, suggested Chinese gods instead of Japanese ones be worshipped, while other GDA officers argued for a combination of gods from both sides, including Confucius, Taoist gods, Emperor Meiji, and even the first emperors of Qing dynasty.⁴⁰ Yoshioka Yasunao (吉岡安直), the GDA representative in Puyi’s palace,

insisted that the Japanese goddess of Amaterasu should be worshipped in the temple, as the GDA contributed single most to the state building of Manchukuo under the order of the Japanese emperor, and the emperors of Japan were decedents Amaterasu.⁴¹ This suggestion was finally accepted.

According to Japanese myth, the first Emperor *Jinmu* founded Japan in B.C. 660. Therefore the year 1940 was the 2600th anniversary of foundation of Japanese Empire. In August 1938, right before he left the position of Vice Chief of Staff of the GDA, Ishiwara Kanji, the ardent advocate of pan-Asianism, formally proposed to the Manchukuo government that “it is required a nation-funding be set up... in order to unify various ideologies and different beliefs of different ethnic peoples in Manchuria, which will be the true heart of the eternal life of Manchukuo”.⁴² But the plan of building the national shrine was protracted by two military incidents with the Soviet along the northern border.⁴³ In June 1940, the GDA arranged Puyi’s second visit to Japan to celebrate the ceremonies. When Puyi returned to Changchun, he brought back with him three sacred talismans of Amaterasu. The next day after Puyi’s return, the State Council of Manchukuo convened a meeting, discussed and approved that the Manchukuo Emperor should worship Amaterasu, and a National Foundation Shrine and a public agency temple should be built for this purpose. In the meantime, the law of governmental organization should be amended to accommodate the change in national ritual.⁴⁴ A few days later, Puyi issued the third imperial rescript of his rein, declaring that

“When we reflect the great achievement of and look to its source, we saw that it was all thanks to the divine blessing of the Heaven Shining Bright

³⁹ Wang Shaozhong. *Wei jianguo shenmiao* (the temple of nation-founding god of Manchukuo). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 2001. p.221

⁴⁰ Wang Shaozhong, p221. Also see Zhi Lijiang. “Weimanzhou guo de guojia jisi jiqi riben hua” (Rituals in Manchukuo and their Japanization). *Lish ijiaoxue* (history teaching), 2010/9.

⁴¹ Zhi Lijiang.

⁴² Wang Wenfeng. “weiman huanggong yizhi yanjiu” (A Study of the remainders of the puppet palace). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 2001. p.215-218

⁴³ Battles of Zhanggufeng (July 1938) and Nomenhan (May 1939).

⁴⁴ Wang Shaozhong , p222

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Deity [Amaterasu] and the protection of His Majesty The Emperor of Japan (the development of the state) is the outcome of the blessing of Amaterasu and Japanese Emperor... Thus may the basis of the Nation be consolidated by venerating the Way of the Gods [Japanese Shinto religion], and the principles of the Nation be founded in the teaching of Loyalty and Filial Piety.”⁴⁵

Consequently, the amended Law of Governmental Organization ordained that the emperor should lead the ritual of worshipping Amaterasu, and the Shinto ritual was established and institutionalized in 1940.⁴⁶

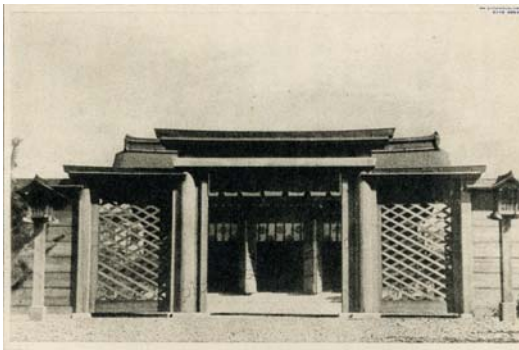


Fig 3-9 the National Foundation Shrine at the palace

Source: Weiman Huanggong bowuyuan



Fig 3-10 Puyi's presence at the ritual of worshipping Amaterasu

Source: Xinhuashe jiefangjun fenshe

Before Puyi left for Japan, the National Foundation Shrine had been built up in May 1940, located at the southeast corner of Puyi's temporary palace. (Fig 9) On July 15, 1940, a solemn ceremony was held to honor Amaterasu in the temple, with the presence of Puyi and some 120 respectable dignitaries selected by the GDA, the Concordia Association and the Manchukuo government. The calendar of worshipping Amaterasu in the national shrine was publicized in April 1941, and it required the emperor lead two grand worshipping rituals: one on March 1, the National Day, and the other on July 15. He attended four medium worshipping rituals a year: the New Year Day, Puyi's birthday (February 6), Grain Rain Day (Ch: *guyu*, also Manchukuo's Tree-Planting Day), and Awarding New Festival (*shangxin jie*).⁴⁷ As such, the

⁴⁵ Guoben dianding zhaoshu (The Imperial Edict of Nation Founding) See Puyi. *From emperor to citizen : the autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989, p.301 (capitalized words by the author)

⁴⁶ The sun goddess Amaterasu ("great shining heaven") is the chief divinity of Shinto, the indigenous pre-Buddhist religion in Japan. Worshipped in simple tree-flanked shrines as Shinto is a nature-honoring religion, Amaterasu is also seen in the simple circle on the Japanese flag, which represents the mirror that is central to her myth. As her myth makes clear, the primary symbol of Amaterasu is the bronze mirror, which has been kept at the Great Shrine at Ise. Aside from the mirror, Amaterasu's other two major symbols are a curved piece of jade necklace and a sword. The jade connects the sun goddess with the womanly craft of spinning, while the sword reveals her martial aspect. It was the three ritual articles of Amaterasu's symbolism that Puyi brought back to Changchun. See Patricia Monaghan. *The goddess path: myths, invocations and rituals*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 1999, p.71-73

⁴⁷ Wang Shaozhong. *Wei jianguo shenmiao* (the temple of nation-founding god of Manchukuo). *Wei huanggong*

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emperor was kept in a busy schedule in worshipping the exported deity, in sheer contrast to his only presence in Confucian rituals and absence from all Guan-Yue rituals.

The shrine was situated in a fairly large complex in the southeast within Puyi's temporary palace. The inner shrine area of 13077 square meters was surrounded by concrete walls, with a larger outer shrine area of 46237 square meters. The inner and outer area was connected by magnificent Japanese gates. The shrine sat in the north facing the south, 13.1 meters in width and 20.7 meters in depth, occupying a floor area of 109.79 square meters. The whole building was supported by 41 stone columns extruding from the ground, a modern construction techniques in imitation of traditional Japanese Shinto shrines. Inside the National Foundation Shrine, the space was divided into three parts, and Amaterasu's three talismans were enshrined in the inner most space. During the worshipping ritual, traditional Japanese music and dance were performed, while the emperor sat in the shrine in his formal generalissimo attire, not a dragon cloth or Manchu attire.⁴⁸ (Fig 10) In order to commemorate the enshrining of Amaterasu at the National Foundation Shrine, a special medal was issued to Puyi's ranking officials in 1940.⁴⁹

As the ritual in the national shrine was only attended by the emperor and high ranking officials, a large temple of Amaterasu was scheduled to be built in the southern outskirts of Changchun, near by the Jingyue Reservoir, but it was never realized. Instead, an agency temple (*she miao*), the Temple of the Martyrs of National Foundation was built up on September 18, 1940, to commemorate the eighth anniversary of Manchuria Incident. (Fig 11) This temple was regarded as the Manchukuo version of Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, dedicated to those who died in campaigns since Manchuria Incident. There were more than twenty rituals every year as such in this temple, some of which were attended by the emperor himself.⁵⁰

The spring and autumn worshipping rituals at the Temple of National Foundation substituted former Confucian rituals. In addition, Japanese shrines and monuments to deceased soldiers scattered in Changchun, such as the Kodoma Statue in Kodoma Park (today's West Park), the Monument to National Foundation, the Kuanchengzi Battlefield Memorial, etc. attracted a larger number of pilgrims, while Chinese rituals were let to decay.

chenlieyuan nianjian (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 2001. p.224

⁴⁸ Ibid. p222-223

⁴⁹ Wang Bin. Guancang weiman jinianzhang yanjiu (A study of the collected medals of Manchukuo). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 1993. p.66

⁵⁰ 建國廟造營概要. Changchun, Unknown date, Changchun Municipal Library. See also Shen Yan. Weiman Jianguo zhongling miao (Manchukuo's Temple of the Martyrs of National Foundation). *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 1991. p.172-177

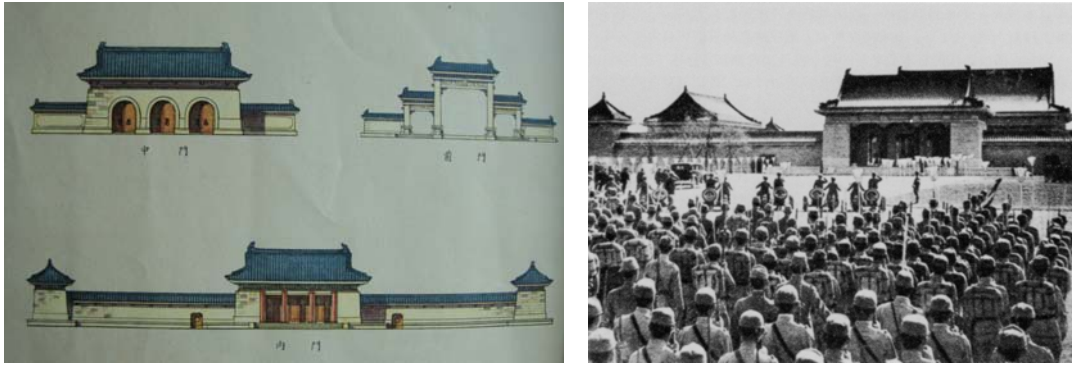


Fig 3-11 the Temple of the Martyrs of National Foundation and worshipping rituals
Source: *jianguo miao zaoying gaiyao*

The location of the national shrine at the temporary palace used to be the temple of imperial ancestors in planning traditional Chinese capitals and imperial palaces, as exemplified in the making of Beijing since Mogul Yuan dynasty. And the temple of imperial ancestors was replaced by a Japanese shrine - the enforced change of his ancestry made Puyi, the puppet emperor felt deeply disgraceful, while he had no choice but obeyed the GDA. Puyi recollected that he obeyed the requirements of worshipping Amaterasu, but he “knocked to the ancestors of Qing emperors before leaving for the Amaterasu ritual”. When he bowed to Amaterasu, the emperor read silently that he was bowing to the Kunming Hall of the Forbidden City in Beijing.⁵¹

The emperor expressed abomination as such, and common civilians of Manchukuo also felt depressed toward the exported god and enforced rituals. In order to educate the public of Manchukuo with Shintoism, the colonial government stipulated that all employees and students in the government and schools should bow to the direction of Japan when the emperor worshipped Amaterasu.⁵² Besides, all people should bow to Japanese shrines and war monuments when passing by the neighborhoods. In fact, many Chinese inhabitants chose to detour to avoid the mandatory bowing.⁵³ Indeed, Puyi recalled in the 1950s the decision of making Amaterasu the national god of Manchukuo resulted in tremendous mistrust amongst Manchukuo’s bureaucrats and populace,

"I later heard that there had been disagreements over this within the Kwantung Army as some of the officers who knew China better thought that it would arouse fierce opposition among the people of the Northeast and increase Japan's isolation. Later it was decided that with the passage of

⁵¹ Puyi. *From emperor to citizen : the autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989, p.365, 363.

⁵² ZFGB

⁵³ WSZL. See also Zhao Lingshi. “youbang mengbang, qinbang qianxi” (A preliminary study of friendly countries, allying countries, and kinsman countries.) *Wei huanggong chenlieyuan nianjian* (Annals of the puppet palace museum). Changchun: Puppet Manchukuo palace museum Press, 1986, pp.160-165.

time the Shinto religion would take root among the young while the older generation would get used to it. The decision to go ahead with this policy was unpopular with most of the Chinese collaborators, to say nothing of ordinary people, and I found it even more difficult to stomach than the robbery, of the Eastern Mausoleum."⁵⁴

In the last month of the Second World War, Changchun was bombarded by the allies. To make the situation worse, the Soviet army invaded from the north on August 8, 1945, and the GDA defense was quickly shattered. Puyi was required to leave Changchun on the evening of August 12, and when his car left the palace, he saw the national temple was on fire. The building was burnt to ground, leaving only the 41 stone pillar podiums on its foundation that survive to today.

IV. Cultural idioms

As the majority of Manchukuo's people were Han Chinese, a few Chinese indigenous customs and shrines were carefully selected for preservation and promotion. Traditional Chinese (and acculturated Manchu) festivals, such as New Year, Lantern festivals, Middle Autumn, etc. were written to tourist pamphlets to attract tourists and international audience,⁵⁵ and the most exotic and indigenous Manchurian festival is Niang Niang. Other ethnicities, such as Korean, Mongol, Tibetan, and Russian all had their customs and religions manifested in urban or rural settings. Survival of these customs and historical sites rendered them venerable in an age of rapid change, which was regarded useful to gain wider support among commoners. But all these festivals were allowed to exist only under conditions of a marginal place in official propaganda which were subsidiary to Japanese rituals.⁵⁶ Although the colonial government accepted and supported a range of cultural practices, like architectural aesthetic pluralism, Japanese culture had the advantages over all others. Hence the hegemonic pluralism was failure and doomed as it sought to be simultaneously multiple and unitary.

Commendatory meetings and art exhibitions

While the *Xiaozifen* (XZF) was the most distinct representation of the Kingly Way in the built environment as I elaborated in Chapter One, the idea of filial piety and respect to the elderly were also demonstrated in other cultural events under the tutelage of the colonial government. In the early phase of Manchukuo, in parallel to grand state ceremonies, the Ministry of Culture and Education convened elder inhabitants in Changchun to discuss state affairs, a tradition that had been practiced for long in imperial

⁵⁴ Puyi. "Imperial rescripts". Puyi. *From emperor to citizen : the autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989, p.299

⁵⁵ Chinese festivals were recorded by Japanese photographers on many issues of a famous Japanese-English magazine. See, for example, *Manshu gulahu* (Manchu Graph), 1936-1, pp.3-5, and 1936-1, pp.13-15.

⁵⁶ For example, they oftentimes appeared in pamphlets introducing Manchukuo under the section of "local customs" or "colorful life," while Shinto and Confucian rituals were branded "state ceremonies".

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China, and hosted commendatory meetings to award certificate of merits and medals to dutiful children (*xiaozi*) as well as chaste widows (*jiefu*).

The earliest such commendatory meeting took place in 1933, Zheng Xiaoxu noted in the preface of the records of this event that:

*“The benevolent Wangdao should first be practiced to care for four weak groups: widowers, widows, orphans and childless couple, and nowadays those with the virtue of filial piety and chastity are equal to these four weak groups (hapless people). ... When filial piety and chastity are exalted, the attitude of the people will be adjusted to the politics of Wangdao.”*⁵⁷

And in his admonitory talk in the meeting, Zheng explained the importance of extolling traditional virtues in the state building of Manchukuo: “the relation of husband and wife, and that of father and son, can be extended to the relation of the monarch and his subject. To extol hapless but virtuous people as pious sons and chaste wives will contribute most to cultivating moral sense and establishing social order.” As a result, “the Wangdao will be promulgated quickly and fluently as wind blows down grass.”⁵⁸ In this meeting, 14 dutiful sons, 45 chaste widows and other 3 chaste women⁵⁹ were awarded certificates and medals. The second commendatory meeting was held in July 1934, four months after Puyi was enthroned.

When the Ministry of Culture was merged into the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the latter took charge of these commendatory meetings. In the preface of the Records of Extolling Virtuous Persons of 1939, Minister Sun Qichang stated that

*“[f]ilial piety is the most basic virtue of all human behaviors, while chastity is the most basic virtue for all women. ... if chaste wives and dutiful sons become a social norm, the state will have plenty of loyal officials. Hence the respect for dutiful sons and chaste widows (for over thirty years) is an essential part of the benevolent Wangdaoism.”*⁶⁰

After the Pacific War broke out, the idiom continued to be practiced under the aegis of the state, for example, a grand commendatory meeting was held in parallel with the decennial as part of the commemoration enterprise. There amounted to about 2700 chaste widows and 700 dutiful sons and daughters who were awarded certificates during the Manchukuo regime.⁶¹

Because these commendatory meetings were extolling mundane civilians of Manchukuo with the government sponsorship, they represented what a moral state could achieve in educating people under the Kingly Way. However, the concepts the meetings extolled, such as chastity and loyalty, helped educate the public to respect those who did surrendered and deceased in battles. For this reason, they were allowed to remain as a

⁵⁷ Wenjiao bu. *Wenjiao bu. Jie xiao bao jiang lu* (Exaltation of filial children and chaste widows). Xinjing, 1933. Prefaced by Zheng Xiaoxu.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ One widow died because of resistance of being insulted, the others were unmarried women.

⁶⁰ Minsheng bu. *Jie xiao bao jiang lu*. 1939

⁶¹ Xinhua she jiefangjun fenshe (The PLA news press). *Wuwang jiu yi ba* (never forget the 9/18 incident). Beijing:zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2001, p. 147

cultural event in Manchukuo with more tightening colonial cultural policies after 1937.

Other cultural events in Xinjing such as art exhibitions, music performances and movie festivals were encouraged, on the condition that they were held to promulgate cultural diversity and ethnic harmony with no danger to the colonial cultural policy. In the case of fine arts, traditional Chinese painting was officially banned to be displayed in the exhibition, as they were regarded “backward and had bad aesthetic taste,” while Chinese calligraphy was encouraged.⁶² In the first Manchukuo Art Exhibition, the Minister of Civic affairs, Sun Qichang, declared that

*“Art exhibitions as well as music and movies can be mobilized to cultivate and educate the public, and it is highly important to use them to promulgate the benevolent politics of Manchukuo. ... And the objective of the exhibition embodies the concord between Japan and Manchukuo.”*⁶³

Unlike fascist Italy where the state served as a generous patron to generate and tolerate pluralistic styles,⁶⁴ art exhibitions in Manchukuo were used to embellish grand state ceremonies, such as Puyi’s first visit to Japan and the decennial ceremony, and the regime aimed to promulgate consistent cultural vision through art exhibitions. In order to serve war after 1937, the topics on mundane civilians who dealt with specific work contributing to the state welfare were encouraged. Some of the realist art works also left the present-day audience of what Manchukuo and Xinjing looked like in the thirties and forties.

Niang Niang Festival

The colonial government did not interfere much in indigenous customs, and if a custom did not go counter to the colonial rule, the government had the interest to promulgate it to advocate the cultural and ethnic policy. One of the most popular indigenous customs was worshipping goddess Niang Niang. The spirits embodied are the three goddesses, who had the miraculous power of giving happiness and longevity, bestowing children, and healing eye diseases respectively. The Niang Niang festivals on Mt. Mizhen (also spelt Michen) in the vicinity Dashiqiao, one of the Southern Manchurian mainline railway stations, were held for four full days commencing on April 16 of the lunar calendar. Thousands of devotees thronged to the sacred grounds from far and near by train, horse cart or on foot, and they were “spurred and imbibed by something akin to religious passion” came from remote corners of Manchuria to attend this festival. A Japanese writer observed that

The desire of the Chinese and Manchus to have children, especially boys, is very great because they consider it an unpardonable sin should they have no

⁶² Gao Chengxian, “Wo canjia weiman huazhan de huiyi” (Recollection of my participation in Manchukuo’s art exhibition). *Tieling wen shi zi liao di qi ji* (Historical and literary materials of Tieling No.7). Tieling: political consultancy press, 1993

⁶³ Sun Qichang. Preface. in *Minshengbu. Diyi hui manzhouguo meishu zhanlanhui tuji* (The collection of the first Manchukuo’s art exhibition). Xinjing: 1939.

⁶⁴ Marla Susan Stone. *The Patron State: Culture and politics in Fascist Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

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*offspring to continue their ancient lineage. This is one reason for the general practice of concubine among the Chinese race. The intense desire of Chinese women to have offsprings is manifested in the fervent prayers they offer to the goddess Niang Niang, who is believed to possess the miraculous power of bestowing children.*⁶⁵

Niang Niang was said to be the representative goddess of Taoism and temples dedicated to this deity were found in all parts of Manchuria. In the plan of the Temple of Guan-Yue in Changchun, Niang Niang was enshrined in a hall at the rear of the complex, as in many cases elsewhere in Manchuria. But many upper-class families also had a small household shrine worshipping Niang Niang. Traditionally, during the period of maternity various restrictions were placed upon the expectant mother. For instance, she was not permitted to go out at night. Upon reaching the fifth month of pregnancy it was customary for her to call over a midwife to perform the ceremony of putting on a maternity belt. When she approached maternity, a picture of the goddess Niang Niang should be hung in the room in which she would bear the child. The goddess Niang Niang and the god of heat were worshipped, and candles and incense were burned on this day to beseech protection of the infant, while at the same time the ancestral spirits were worshipped and a report rejoicing at the arrival of a descendant, was made. The ceremony finished, the picture of the goddess Niang Niang and the tributes were burnt. According to tradition, the death of a child was due to the infant being carried off by evil spirits.⁶⁶

Niang Niang festival and household worshipping continued throughout the Manchukuo regime with little official restriction. So was other customs of Han Chinese and other ethnic groups, for example, the Lunar New Year festival, lantern festival, mid-autumn festival, etc. Japanese ethnographers made curious and careful investigation into these festivals and recorded how people celebrated them under the colonial rule.⁶⁷

The display of various festivals and rituals celebrated by Chinese, Mongols, Koreans, Russians and Japanese seemed to have provided ideal representations of cultural diversity and ethnic equality under Japanese colonialism. But as I have elaborated in the first section of this chapter, rituals that had the potential to jeopardize the colonial rule were diminished or eradicated, such as the Confucian and Guan-Yue rituals which had too much impact among the people. Though the Manchukuo government did not forbid people to celebrate their cultural festivals, it was stipulated that all people bow to Japanese shrines whenever they passed by, and on the days of worshipping Amaterasu and numerous “national festivals,” such as the birthday of the Japanese emperor, the anniversaries of Manchuria Incident (9/18) and China Incident (7/7), etc., all people had to follow certain ritual regulations and requirements to show respect; otherwise they

⁶⁵ “A pointilistic description of a niang niang festival”. *Contemporary Manchuria*, 1937-4, pp. 48-54

⁶⁶ “Marriages, birth, and funerals in Manchuria”. *Contemporary Manchuria*, 1938/4, p.102-106

⁶⁷ “Manchu Legends”. *Contemporary Manchuria*. 1938-5, p.1-15; see also *Manshu gulahu* (Manchu Graph) 1934-3, p.69.

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would be castigated. The hierarchy of pluralism is obvious that within a hegemonic political structure, the colonial regime sorted and ordered various rituals based on the propaganda of “five-race harmony” by prioritizing Japanese cultural programs at the cost of Chinese rituals.

V. Conclusions

When Changchun became the capital of Manchukuo, the sensory impact of the public pageantries and spectacles on its inhabitants was profound, but the feeling solicited amongst the populace was distrust and fear rather than gratification as Japanese hoped. In memoirs, Chinese officials and commoners recalled the terror of not being in line with the colonial stipulations. It was through a parable of the horrors and hubris that the colonial authority engineered political stability and social unity under the banner of “Harmony of the Five Races”.

As in architectural styles, a wide arrange of religions and rituals were allowed, and oftentimes different rituals and customs featured many pamphlets to promote cultural plurality and tolerance of the colonial authority. However, the pluralism demonstrated in the built environment and cultural events was deliberately selected and positioned in a hegemonic political structure manipulated by the GDA. This patronage system, based on a plurality of expressions, took potentially oppositional rituals and aesthetic languages and integrated them into a ruling structure.

Although Confucianism was stipulated as a major part of state ideology in the first years of Manchukuo and grand ritual ceremonies were put in place in Confucian temples, its role diminished as the colonial authority established firm control. And despite the limited influence of Shintoism and other Japanese rituals that had been practiced in Manchuria for a long time before Manchukuo, it practically superseded all other forms of rituals after 1937.

The presence of the monarch in these ritual events was significant politically and spiritually. The emperor was invited or forced to play a role in these ceremonies. In each case the emperor’s participation reaffirmed the ideology of the Kingly Way, the twin concerns with modernity and the past which theoretically linked everyone. However, Puyi only attended Confucian ritual once while he was enforced to lead the ritual worshipping a Japanese Goddess. As simplified and crystallized in ritual events, it could not become more obvious that only the GDA and the corps of Japanese bureaucrats in Manchukuo, the actual owner of Manchukuo, was “omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent”. The politics of worshipping in Manchukuo best illustrates the metaphor of the hybrid beast of chimera, that Manchukuo was nominally structured according to the emperor system while the client state was headed by the military, and the emperor was reduced to an inconsequential, but indispensable, part that was added when everything had been set.

Puyi soon realized and was depressed by his true role as a puppet manipulated by the GDA and Japanese counsels in his palace. Frightened that Japanese would poison

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and replace him, he had to follow their instructions, including presenting himself in rituals and ceremonies. Repeatedly but secretly he expressed his anger and depression of being humiliated and employed as a symbolic puppet.⁶⁸ It is notable that the emperor himself was muted. The presence of the monarch in these commemorative and ritual events was significant politically and spiritually. In each case the emperor's participation reaffirmed the ideology of Wangdao ("the Kingly Way"). He himself was made a sign of the grandeur of the colonial rule. The ceremony gave the people the opportunity to "meet" the emperor, and in many respects, the emperor was both an actor in and the subject of this grand theater of power.

Alongside the Japanization of cultural life, the relation of Japan to Manchukuo changed from the "friendly country" (*youbang*) to "the ally" (*mengbang*), and finally the "parental country" (*qinbang*).⁶⁹ Thus, Japan-Manchukuo relation moved from an equal relation to an unequal, hierarchical one characterized by parental bondages. As such, Manchukuo had to unilaterally exhaust its devotion and filiality, which even aroused resentment of the most obedient collaborators like the second Prime Minister Zhang Jinghui. The commemorative ceremonies such as exhibitions and expositions (discussed in previous chapters) and rituals were a success in terms of organization and the large number of participants engaged, while the main purpose of these events as a whole of inculcating unity and gratification largely failed.

⁶⁸ Pu Yi. (Translated by W. J. F. Jenner) *From Emperor to citizen; autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*. Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1964-65

⁶⁹ In Puyi's Admonitory Rescript to the People on the Occasion of the Emperor's Return (May 2, 1935), Japan became the "friendly country" (*youbang*) as in the expression, "united in virtue and heart with that friendly country." In tile Rescript on Commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the Concordia Association (July 25, 1936), it had changed to 'ally' (*mengbang*) as in: "We shall never alter in our reliance upon our ally, the Empire of Japan." In his Re- script on the Tenth Anniversary of the Founding of the State (March 1, 1942), the term used was "parental country" (*qinbang*) as in: "We shall contribute to the great East Asian holy War and Offer our support in the great task of our senior [parental] Country." See Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Joshua Fogel (tran.). *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, pp. 186-187.

Chapter 4 The Process of Decolonization: Changchun under Reconstruction, 1945-1957

Till the time when the PRC was founded, three regimes established the rule in Changchun in the aftermath of Japanese defeat in 1945, i.e., the Soviet military (August 1945 – April 1946), the Nationalist (April 1946 – October 1948), and the Communist (since October 1948). In the process of decolonization, successive political regimes in Changchun, despite their disagreement and conflict, made continuous efforts to wipe out Japanese colonial imprint left in the city. As a result, profound change took place in areas such as ideological superstructures, institutions and political apparatuses to institute new social systems, alongside the new way and content of life. Like in the colonial times, the new society was accompanied by new symbols that had been integrated into daily life: the red flag, the hammer and sickle and other symbols of the unity of workers and peasants, the five-pointed star symbol of communism, etc. Labor's Day (May 1st) and the anniversary of National Day (October 1st) replaced Confucian and Shinto rituals and became great national holidays, representing the traditional festival of the labor movement and the day on which history definitely took a new turn. The anniversaries of these and other important socialist events were celebrated as jubilees, and the collective life of socialism aimed to supersede old regimes.

However, one of the most fundamental changes was the transformation of urban space. As Henri Lefebvre notes, “[a] revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential. ... A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space.”¹ Therefore, a close examination is needed for the emergence of a range of governmental strategies and techniques of spatial intervention that served to consolidate and define the new regime. Accordingly, I will explore in this chapter how the colonial built environment was appropriated by successive regimes, and how newly built spaces under Maoism embodied and bolstered socialist ideology. In the following chapter, I will examine a Chinese work unit of automobile production in the outskirts of Changchun, and chart out how socialist spatial formation has been crucial in the production and reproduction of socialist relationships and collective subjectivity.

This chapter deals with various kinds of urban transformation in downtown Changchun as part of decolonizing movements, including politics of renaming, appropriation of old space, and newly constructed buildings. After the tumultuous Civil War in Manchuria during the years of 1946-1948, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established firm rule in Changchun. When the CCP assumed political power over all of China, the question of how to govern the cities was foremost in the minds of its leadership. In his address to the Central Committee in March 1949, Mao Zedong declared that imminent victory would shift the focus of party work from the countryside

¹ Henri Lefebvre. *The Survival of Capitalism*. London: Allison and Busby, 1974.

to the cities with an emphasis on economic construction.² According to Mao, the major task of this new urban-centered strategy was to bring about a transformation in the nature of the Chinese city. During the three-year economic recovery period (1949-1952), with the implementation of centralized planning, "private ownership of the means of production" was abolished or restricted to a minimum. When the first Five Year Plan (FFYP, 1953-1957) started, not only the urban landscape of Changchun was transformed, but also the general perception of the city was changed. By the end of 1957, the last year of the FFYP, Changchun was officially recognized a "new" city of an industrial base and home to many important socialist institutions, while the urban life in the city had long been attuned to Chinese socialism.³

Nevertheless, the built environment from the old social order lived on. As we shall see, a lot of colonial institutional buildings, as well as streets in Changchun, were renamed and reused according to Communist ideological content. The decision to utilize and modify the old city to the need was crucial because it implied that the new regime would be constructed on the bones of the old. No doubt this resulted in the erasure of much of the past, yet it also ensured that important spatial memories of the past would be imprinted upon the architecture of the new. This chapter thus aims to unfold how the same urban space was appropriated for different political ends.

The reuse of existing spatial forms, however, could only go so far. In form, a new society meant a new art and a new architecture. The Soviet pattern of socialist realism replaced the Developing Asia style as a dominant aesthetical model, and Chinese architects and planners had enthusiastically mobilized themselves to apply the conception of "progressive national form" in practice.⁴ In this vein, ironically, it turned out new buildings under Maoism resembled colonial Developing Asian style in the abundance of traditional decoration, meanwhile Western modernist and functionalist buildings were criticized for their smooth, plain facades. The overarching goal to compete with and to overcome the West in approaching to a new modern society reappeared in the built environment under the new regime. Like its colonial precedent, socialist urban design and architecture were conceived as a positive counter-image to the alleged decadent Western metropolis, and aimed to assert social, moral and political superiority of the socialist state.

Unlike stylistic diversity that featured colonial times, the grand vistas and totalizing landscape of the socialist city and the economy of scarcity effectively reduced aesthetic representation into a monotonic form. When the first Five-Year Plan (FFYP) started in 1953, socialist realism was elevated to the sole tolerated ideal in China. On the one hand, by abandoning functionalism and modernism, the urban construction in

² Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong (IV)*. Beijing: People's Press, 1976, p.365.

³ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1957-12.

⁴ Liang Sicheng, "zhongguo jianzhu de tezhen" (characteristics of Chinese architecture). *Architectural Journal*. 1954(1). See also Wang Ying, "jicheng he fazhan minzu jianzhu de youxiu chuantong" (Inheriting and developing excellent tradition of national architecture). *Architectural Journal*. 1954(1).

Changchun quickly broke away from the multiplicity and plurality of expression that characterized colonial Changchun. Important buildings should be built in line with a political system based on the principle of the leading role of the CCP, a principle so radical that could not be reconciled with any challenge. On the other, national form applied on new buildings unambiguously proclaimed Chinese cultural identity, unlike the hybrid form of the colonial times which entailed a distinct reference made to the West or Japan. It was the allure to Chinese nationalist sentiment that made it easier and more efficient to let the colonial legacies sink from memory by completion rather demolition of old buildings, as exemplified in the reconstruction of Changchun downtown. Specifically, I argue that the newly built socialist city of Changchun, despite its obvious connections with the recent colonial past, embodied and bolstered socialist ideology of egalitarianism and the leading status of working class.

I. Changchun during Transitional Years, 1945-1948

Unlike Tokyo, Changchun did not suffer from formidable air bombard until toward the end of the war. The Soviet Union joined the war in Far East on August 8, 1945, and the capital of Manchukuo was bombarded the next day. On August 15, 1945, the Japanese government accepted the terms of unconditional surrender of the Japanese military. Two days later, Puyi, Manchukuo's emperor who had fled with his family and a coup of officials outside Changchun, announced the Imperial Rescript of Abdication in a small frontier city on the border of Manchukuo and Korea.⁵

The Soviet Red Army entered Changchun in late August 1945, and set up a military government in the city immediately. The first measure taken by the Soviet army was to rename renamed *Xinjing* back to Changchun, and tried very possible means to eradicate Japanese colonial imprints. For example, Datong Street and Datong Plaza were renamed into Stalin Street and Stalin Plaza, respectively. Many major institutional buildings of the colonial times were occupied by the Soviet army, for example, the Headquarters of Guandong Army was used for the headquarters of the Soviet army in Manchuria headed by Marshal R. Y. Malinovsky. Parades of soviet troops were held oftentimes to demonstrate the overwhelming power of the Soviet military, and symbols of socialist revolution, such as Stalin's portrait, red flag, and Party flag, were hung over on important buildings throughout the city.⁶

At a time of tremendous social and political change, monuments were readily used to proclaim the imminent arrival of the socialist utopia and demonstrate the strength and permanence of the new political order. In the meantime, the demolition of reactionary monuments became indispensable part of the campaign to eliminate colonial signs in Changchun, long before the reconstruction projects were in place. As early as

⁵ Ironically, this was third time for Puyi to announce his abdication from the throne. The first time took place in the aftermath of the 1911 Revolution, followed by the second abdication of an unsuccessful restoration of monarchy in 1917.

⁶ Changchun TV Station ed. *Biannian Changchun* (Changchun Bicentennial). Changchun: Jilin Fine Arts Press, 2000, pp.67-68.

the Russians came in Changchun, memorials associated with Japanese colonialism and militaristic heroism were demolished immediately. For example, in memory of Kodama Kentaro (1852-1906), the late chief of general staff who won the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), a statue of Kodama on a horse was erected in Changchun's first park near the entrance in 1938, but the statue was demolished by the Russians immediately after Russian takeover.

The Russian military government also decided to build a new monument in Changchun's center, Stalin Plaza, in order to glorify the Soviet military forces and memorize that deceased in the battles against the Japanese. This site, full of political and cultural significance for political ceremonies as discussed in previous chapters, had been used to be temporary buildings for state ceremonies and celebrations, such as the tower for the Completion of Capital Construction in 1937 and the bonfire tower for the Tenth Anniversary in 1942. (Fig 4-1) The Russians consciously chose this site to set up their monument to supersede the former foe.



Fig 4-1 the tower of *shuntian anmin* erected by the Japanese at Datong Plaza

Source: *weiman jiuying*, p.94



Fig 4-2 the Soviet Martyrs' Monument by the Japanese at Stalin Plaza

Source: photo by the author in 2009

The Soviet Martyrs' Monument, designed by Russian military engineers, was divided into three parts: base, pedestal, and tower body. The low round base is 30 meters in diameter and 0.1 meter in height, above which stands the round 3-layered pedestal that occupies about 314 square meters. The height of the pedestal is approximately 2 meters, and the diameter of its top layer is 8 meters, equal to the diagonal length of the section of the tower body's bottom layer. On the pedestal rose symmetrical low walls and stone posts, and the whole complex demonstrates symmetry and monumentality characterizing Soviet socialist realism. The tower body, five-stepped trapezium in form with square sections, is totally 27.5 meters in height. Each edge of the bottom layer of the tower body is 5.7 meters, and the edge of the top layer is 2 meters.⁷ In addition to its height and symmetrical composition, four posters on the base that surround the main tower also mark the so-called socialist realism, which had been copied in later socialist construction in Changchun.

⁷ Yang Zhaoyuan. *Changchun Jianzhuzhi caogao* (Manuscript of Gazetteer of Architecture in Changchun). p. 216-217

Erecting a monument was a usual practice in the aftermath of Soviet victory in the WWII. In Russia and its allies in East Europe, the Soviet monuments were of three main types: a statue of the Soviet soldiers, in bronze or stone; the pillar or obelisk; and, a statue of the Soviet tank or gun put up on a stone base.⁸ The Changchun monument was a combination of the latter two types. The whole tower was built in granite, while at the top of the tower body was erected a Soviet bomber model made in cast iron, with its head facing the north (the direction to the railway station). The northern side of the tower body is carved with Chinese and Russian inscriptions that glorify Soviet military martyrs, their names and ranks, and a Soviet insignia. The monuments, as the victory army's the first implementation that was erected at the center of the city, conveyed a message on the endured Soviet influence, as practiced in the Eastern bloc.⁹ (Fig 4-2)

Using Japanese war prisoners as labor, the Soviet monument was erected within two months, right before the celebration of the 28th Anniversary of Great October Socialist Revolution in 1945. On November 7, 1945, Marshal Malinovsky headed the celebration ceremony as well as the inauguration of the new monument in Changchun. The Soviet troops paraded through Stalin Street (previous Datong Street), and Japanese girl students were arranged to present flowers to the monument at the inauguration. (Fig 4-3) A few high-ranking deputies from the Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) government in Nanjing attended the ceremony, including Chiang Ching-kuo, son and political heir of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek who had been detained in the Soviet Union for 15 years.¹⁰



Fig 4-3 young Japanese girls presenting flowers to the Soviet monument, shown at the background.

Source: *suiyue dongbei*. p. 189

The KMT government had somewhat reluctantly signed the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance (*zhong su you hao tong meng tiao yue*) with the Soviet government on August 14, 1945, which affirmed the legitimacy of the KMT government and Chinese sovereignty of Manchuria at the price to confer special rights to the Russians, including

⁸ Anders Aman. *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992. p.38

⁹ As Anders Aman observes the examples of Soviet victorious monuments in Bulgaria and Poland, the Soviet victory monuments were the first implementation of the socialist rule in Eastern European countries.

¹⁰ Qin Feng (ed.) *suiyue dongbei, 1904-1948*(*Historical dongbei, 1904-1948*). Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2007, p.185-191

the use of the railway and the lease of Dalian and Lushun. The KMT had sent a corps of some five hundred officials in middle October to Changchun where the Soviet army headquartered, but they were prevented from entering other cities. Political negotiations and debates on the date when the Soviet army retreated from Changchun continued into the next year, when Madam Chiang Kai-shek visited Changchun in January 1946 to “extend regards to Soviet soldiers on the behalf of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek”.¹¹

After the Chinese Civil War (1946-1949) broke out, the KMT occupied Changchun for most of the time before it was finally liberated by the Communists in October 1948. Lack of necessary sources to rebuild the former colonial capital, the KMT government manipulated the names appearing on map as the most efficient and economic way of asserting a new regime in Changchun. The central plaza was renamed from Stalin Plaza to Zhongzheng Plaza (“Zhongzheng” refers to the literal name of Chiang Kai-shek). The northern part of central avenue (from the station to Datong Plaza, now Zhongzheng Plaza) was renamed Zhongshan Dajie, in memory of the late Premier Sun Yat-sen, while the southern part of the street was called Zhongzheng Dajie, named after Chiang Kai-shek himself. In June 1946, Stalin Park (previous West Park or Kodama Park after 1938) was also renamed Zhongshan Park. Other places and buildings were also renamed following the suit of the Three People Principles.



Fig. 4-4 Portraits of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek on a building that faced Zhongzheng Street.

Source: *suiyue dongbei*. p.201



Fig. 4-5 a group wedding ceremony for KMT officers held at the entrance of former Yamato Hotel.

Source:

<http://www.ccrpf.org/bbs/thread.php?fid=49>

Another widely used method of eradicating the Japanese colonial influence was hanging everywhere the portraits of political leaders, Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen, especially on primary institutional buildings along main avenues as previous Datong Street and Shuntian Street. (Fig. 4-4) The KMT also did not differ too much from what the Russians had done to appropriate colonial buildings for their use. During warfare,

¹¹ Zhao Derang (ed.). *Changchun shi wenwu zhi* (Gazetteer of historic buildings of Changchun). Jilin People's Press, 1995, p.148.

very little construction was made in Changchun, while many colonial buildings were easily converted into military fortresses in preparing for a street battle. For example, the Manchuria Bank became the headquarters of KMT army stationed in Changchun, and the previous Guandong Army Headquarters became the headquarters of a KMT army.¹² Also, the previous Yamato Hotel was expropriated by the military as an officers' club. (Fig. 4-5)

As the Communists took the initiative of civil war in Manchuria since 1947, Changchun became an isolated stronghold under the control of the KMT, and was finally besieged in March 1948. The previous colonial capital city was intended to be built as a large fortress and had an advantageous position of defense due to sufficient infrastructure networks.¹³ In addition to solid buildings, other facilities such as cisterns and the lake system in Changchun provided enough water for the KMT army and inhabitants, and frustrated the PLA by an attempt to cut off the water supply from outside the city.¹⁴ Knowing that it was unlikely to conquer Changchun in a short period of time, the PLA officers decided to besiege the city on a long-run basis, and expected that the KMT army would debacle in the end because of hunger and demoralization. As the result of the seven-month siege, the KMT army stationed in Changchun surrendered to the PLA in October 1948.¹⁵

The statistical analysis of the size of Changchun's population reveals the remarkable slowdown of the population growth during the Sino-Japanese War from 1937 until 1945, and then a dramatic decrease until the Communists took over the city in October 1948. When the Communists entered the city, the number of population in Changchun decreased from 700,000 at the end of the Sino-Japanese War to slightly over 170,000 in October 1948, due to the turmoil of Chinese Civil War and a long siege of the city. The city was gradually recovered in the following three years according to the census in 1953 with a rapid increase in population and restoration of urban governance.¹⁶

Due to turbulent warfare in Changchun during the transitional years up to 1949, urban construction came to a halt and the city was deteriorated. Appropriation of colonial buildings and manipulation of names and political signs were major means of urban management. The Soviet monument at the central plaza was perhaps the only achievement in construction of this period was to affect later socialist construction after the PRC was founded in 1949.

¹² For solidity of the building, see memory of General Zheng Dongguo, who was the ranking officer of KMT troops stationed in Changchun, quoted in Chapter 1.

¹³ The KMT General Zheng Dongguo, commander of Changchun troops, wrote in his memoir about the well-built colonial buildings left by the Japanese. See the quote in Chapter 1. Zheng Dongguo. *Wo de rongma shengya* (My military years). Beijing: Tuanjie Press, 2008, pp.306-307

¹⁴ The Committee of Culture and History of Changchun's Political Consultancy ed. "changchun jiefang" (liberation of Changchun), in *Cultural and Historical Material of Changchun*. 1988(1); The Committee of Culture and History of Changchun's Political Consultancy ed. "xin qijun toucheng" (revolt of the 7th army of the KMT), in *Cultural and Historical Material of Changchun*. 1988(2).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ In Manchuria as a whole, the population rose from 36,703 millions in 1950 to 43,753 millions in 1953 by more than seven million people. Alfred Schinz. *Cities in China*. Berlin: Gebrüder Borntraeger, 1989, p.405.

II. Socialist City Planning and Architecture: Soviet and Colonial Imprint

The most characteristic feature of socialist construction in the PRC, as in the Soviet Union, was the degree to which it was coordinated and planned through central government agencies. City planning in socialist countries was based on tenets of Marxism-Leninism as an governmental tool of close control of overall national economic development, aiming to assist in achieving the state's needs and goals.

As Xie and Costa elucidate, "socialist planning is assumed to create a new form and a new pattern for the city. The overall goals of socialist planning included: (1) to correct the ills inherited from the era of capitalism; and (2) to reduce the danger of alienation during urbanization; and (3) to develop a strong community spirit within urban sub-communities. ... The political ideology of eradicating the difference between workers and peasants, city and countryside, and manual and mental labor - became an important part of urban development policies."¹⁷ As such, city planning, especially residential planning and housing projects should promote self-reliance, a tradition the CCP had practiced from the Yan'an period. I will elaborate on this model of socialist planning as exemplified in the construction of the First Automobile Works in the next chapter.

Like many other fields, planning was institutionally established in socialist China with the aid from the Soviet Union. With Soviet influence, city planning became part of the nation's economic programs of five-year plans. However, it is the centralized planning institutions and agencies that remind us of the similarities between socialist and Japanese colonial planning practices. Specifically, the four general elements characteristic of socialist city planning as summarized by Jack Fisher are helpful to identify connections between the two planning regimes: 1) proper size of a town that any increase in the size of the urban complex depends on calculation of the population according to a master plan decided by the government; 2) neighborhood unit concept that was borrowed from the British model became modified and normalized in the socialist context for housing; 3) city's central plaza(s) and the central avenues that function as the place for massive institutional buildings and monuments, with the exception for grand hotels or department stores.¹⁸ The reconstruction of the civic center of Stalin Plaza (previous Datong Plaza) was a good example that remodeled colonial legacy into a characteristic element of socialist city. 4) standardization, or urban uniformity that embodied socialist egalitarianism, and this may be the most distinctive difference from the colonial precedent. With the implementation of centralized planning, important innovations in the standardization of housing and urban design were evident in every Chinese *danwei*. But the way of organizing communal life within a certain compound was not too much different between the socialist and colonial regimes, as exemplified in the National Founding University (Kendai) under the Japanese rule.

¹⁷ Yichun Xie and Frank J. Costa. "Urban planning in socialist China Theory and practice". *Cities*. Volume 10, Issue 2, May 1993.

¹⁸ Jack Fisher. "Planning the City of Socialist Man". *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*. Vol XXVIII, No 4, 1962. p.251-265. The most distinctive examples in the PRC under Maoism should be the reconstruction of Tiananmen Square and Chang'an Avenue in Beijing.

For architecture and planning, there were three more key implications that connect the two regimes. First, the reprimand of capitalism made possible the abolition of bourgeois private land tenure, thus providing an unprecedented opportunity, for the planned redesign of urban space – a possibility that was unimaginable under capitalism. This had been already practice by the Japanese in constructing the capital city of Manchukuo from scratch. Second, the centralized planning process and implementation averred the primacy of politics over technology. In the same vein, with the overthrow of capitalism/colonialism, the same technologies that served the capitalist/colonial order could be redeployed in the service of socialism. Hence, technology could play a positive role in the building of a new society, but only when deployed under the guidance of a socialist government. Third, centralized planning was used to implement sweeping construction dictated by five-year plans, educate the mass, create subject identity, and foster a strong community spirit to meet ideological propaganda, be it the Kingly Way or socialism.

During the first years of the 1950s, in the arena of architectural representation, socialist realism was introduced for socialist public buildings in many Chinese cities. The term “socialist realism” was first used in the Soviet Union in 1934, referring to a literature genre.¹⁹ It was favored by Stalin and took sway in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, and was later exported to Eastern bloc after WWII. The corresponding concept of socialist realism was “socialist content and national form,” and it represented itself in neoclassical and monumental public buildings.

A distinctive departure of socialist realism from the previous radical constructivism was the return to the classical form and a combination of nationalist elements. The special significance of the word “national” can be traced back to the period immediately following the death of Lenin, when Stalin denounced Trotsky and his idea of permanent revolution and affirmed the concept of “socialism in one country”. In literature it was easy to understand what was meant by realism, but national form was less clear. But in architecture, the opposite was true: realism there was a difficult concept and would remain so, while national form, on the other hand, was easy to understand as exemplified in classical architecture.²⁰ Consequently, Chinese architects who reconstructed socialist cities looked into the practices of Chinese Revival under the KMT and Developing-Asian buildings under Japanese colonial rule for inspiration, hence the continuity in urban landscape with the recent past.

Instead of becoming a site for the production of new proletarian culture, as the radical architects had hoped, Chinese cities, like the Soviet counterparts, rapidly became the site of monuments and grandiose governmental and pulic buildings that were designed to represent the might of central power and the dominance of the masses (embodied by the state) over the individual. Maoist architects at the time condemned

¹⁹ Thomas Lahusen. “Introduction”. Thomas Lahusen (ed.). *Socialist Realism without Shores. The South Atlantic Quarterly*. Summer 1995, Vol.94, No.3

²⁰ Anders Aman. *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*. Cambridge: MIT Press, p.6.

modernism and functionalism which embraced universal values and cosmopolitanism were as “remnant of exploiting class,” while extolled the advantage of socialist realism that embraced socialist system and national identity.²¹

When the CCP assumed political power over China, the question of how to govern the cities was foremost in the minds of its leadership. As Mao urged his colleagues in the eve of the establishment of the PRC in 1949, “From the very first day we take over a city, we should direct our attention to restoring and developing its production Only when production in the cities is restored and developed, when consumer-cities are transformed into producer-cities, can the people’s political power be consolidate.”²² Thus, while the urgent short-term goal was to restore production, which had been severely affected by the war, the longer-term objective was to turn the cities into net producers instead of net consumers of wealth. This reflected a common view among CCP leaders that Chinese cities were characterized by a predominantly wasteful and decadent bourgeois lifestyle. The urban policies of serving the people and serving producer-cities had brought about great changes. On March 17, 1949, the *renmin ribao* (People’s Daily) editorial stated that:

*“Old China’s cities were all consumer cities. Although the cities were exploited by imperialism, they acted as exploiters toward the rural areas. Therefore, let us remove the antagonism between the cities and the rural areas, and speedily restore the productivity of the cities.”*²³

Hence, the gravity of the CCP shifted from the countryside to the cities. From 1953 the FFYP marked the shift from recovery to construction. A number of laws and regulations were promulgated in order to facilitate the construction of heavy industry and across the nation large-scale construction of industrial bases.²⁴ During the FFYP, planners were trained, and administrative organizations and professional associations prepared themselves to build Chinese socialism.²⁵

Rapid industrialization became the driving force of socialist economic planning, with particular emphasis on heavy industry such as steel works and truck factories. In practice, cities were divided into four categories according to the degree of industrial construction: (1) new industrial cities; (2) cities to be enlarged in proportion with industrial construction; (3) cities with little industrial construction where public facilities

²¹ Zou Denong, *Zhongguo xiandai jianzhushi* (history of contemporary Chinese architecture). Tianjin: Tianjin science and technology Press, 2000.

²² Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong (IV)*. Beijing: People’s Press, 1976, p.365.

²³ *renmin ribao* (People’s daily). 1949-3-17.

²⁴ For example, Suburban Land Reform Regulation (November 11, 1950), Provisional Regulation for Taxation of Urban Housing, Land and Property (August 8, 1951), Provisional Law for Capital Construction (January 9, 1952), Law for Requisition of Land for National Reconstruction (December 5, 1953)

²⁵ The professional association of architects and educators, Architectural Society of China was founded in 1953, and the first issue of its publication, *Architectural Journal*, appeared in 1954. In August 1954, the First National Urban Construction Conference met. This conference summarized the past several years’ urban construction and decided on the following urban guidelines for the First Five-Year Plan period: “New China’s cities must serve socialist industrialization. Urban construction must be advanced on a priority basis in order to serve the basic tasks of the First Five-Year Plan.” See Sun Jingwen. “shiyong gongye jianshe xuyao jiaqiang chengshi jianshe gongzuo” (Enhancing the work in cities to adapt to industrial construction). *Renmin ribao*. August 12, 1954.

exist; and (4) medium and small cities. It is obvious that such construction principles reflected the view that “the speed of development of socialist cities is inevitably determined by the rate of growth of socialist industry”.²⁶ As this categorization was decided in 1952 when Changchun was still what remained as a typical consumption city due to its colonial trait, Changchun was put under the third type. (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1 An overview of primary cities of priority for construction (1952)²⁷

Type	Proportion of industry in the city	Cities
I	Newly built heavy industrial cities (8)	Beijing, Baotou, Xi'an, Datong, Qiqihaer, Daye, Lanzhou, Chengdu
II	Old cities with much industry (14)	Jilin, Anshan, Fushu, Benxi, Shenyang, Harbin, etc.
III	Old cities with little industry (17)	Changchun , Nanjing, Shanghai, etc.
IV	Other cities	Cities other than the 39 cities listed above

In this plan six of all the eighteen industrial cities to be supported by the Central Government were located in the Northeast, leaving only twelve cities for the rest of China. Changchun and all other important cities of the region were included except Dalian, the harbor city. Between 1952 and 1955 the urban population increased 26 per cent but the average increase for ten industrial cities including Shenyang, Changchun, Luoyang, and Xi'an was 51 per cent.²⁸ The Soviet urban planning was the model, and the idea prevailed in urban planning “must reflect the new era’s greatness and beauty” as dictate by Joseph Stalin.²⁹

III. Changchun during Socialist Economic Recovery, 1948-1952

When the PLA took over Changchun in October 1948, the Communists immediately tried all means to restore the vigor of the city, based on recent experience of the management of large cities. Running water, electricity and several bus lines were reactivated in the same month. A total number of 80,000 people gathered at the previous Datong Plaza (now renamed Stalin Plaza) on November 11, 1948, to celebrate

²⁶ Guanche zhongdian jianshe chengshi de fangzhen (Thoroughly implement the principle of constructing cities according to priority). *Renmin ribao*. August 11, 1954. Also, City planning in socialist China were charged for “1) To serve proletarian politics; 2) To serve socialist production; and 3) To serve the livelihood of the laboring masses.” It is the “foundation” of the national economy. Industrial development has been emphasized as the “leading factor” guiding the nation towards modernization. The objectives of city planning aimed to: (1) Combine industry with agriculture (Gong nong jiehe); (2) Combine city with country (Cheng xiang jiehe); (3) Benefit production (Youli shengchan); and (4) Facilitate people’s livelihood (Fangbian shenghuo). See Laurence Ma. “The Chinese Approach to City Planning: Policy, Administration, and Action”. *Asian Survey*. Vol. 19, No. 9, 1979.

²⁷ Huang Li. *Zhongguo xiandai chengshi guihua lishi yanjiu, 1949-1965* (A historical study of modern Chinese cities, 1949-1965). Wuhan: Wuhan University of Science and technology, 2006, p.27

²⁸ Si Gengsheng. “wo guo renkou tongji fangmian siyao taolun yanjiu de jige wenti” (Some problems concerning discussion and research on our country’s population statistics). *Tongji gongzuo tongxun* (Statistical Bulletin). 1955, No.12

²⁹ Lan Tian. “anzhao jing ji, shi yong, mei guan de yuan ze jian she cheng shi” (Reconstruct cities according to the principles of economy, function, and beauty), *Renmin Ribao*, January 7, 1954)

the liberation of the city as well as to memorize those who died in the siege.³⁰ (Fig. 4-6)



Fig 4-6 a public gathering at Stalin Plaza with the Soviet monument at the background.

Source:

http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/articlelist_1309640884_0_1.html

When the People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949, the new regime joined in the Soviet bloc immediately and began to emulate the Soviet model of building state and society. In March 1950 the central government began to carry out energetic measures for unifying the financial structure of the country and stabilizing the currency and prices of consumers' goods. The successes achieved in this area laid the foundations for the restoration and development on a broad national scale of both state and private industry. The three years (1949-1952) were not only years of basic social reform which decisively altered the face of Chinese society and established the democratic dictatorship of the people headed by the working class, but also facilitated the transition to full-blown central planning in the FFYP.

When the Korean War broke out in 1950, Changchun, and the Northeast as a whole, became a base of "helping the front". Hundreds of thousands of patriots expressed a desire to join the ranks of the people's volunteer.³¹ On December 8, 1950, a large number of people gathered at Stalin Plaza to celebrate recovering Pyongyang, the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.³² Also, the campaign for suppressing counter-revolution and the "sanfan" and "wufan" movements were begun at the very height of the great patriotic movement mobilized for the Korean War. The former targeted corruption, waste, and bureaucratism among party cadres, government

³⁰ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977).

³¹ The famous motto "for resistance to American aggression, aid to Korea, defense of the fatherland and home," put forward by the patriots of the Northeast, became the motto of the entire Chinese people.

³² In official propaganda, the movement to resist American aggression and help Korea demonstrated the vitality of the people's order, stimulated the birth of titanic forces and energies of hundreds of millions of people of free China in all the diversity of their heroic deeds, and played a tremendous organizing and mobilizing role in socialist construction. As the result, "all the moral unity of the Chinese people increased still further and its faith in the strength and creative capacity of the people's order strengthened". U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research & Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley), p. 16. For mass conventions, see *Xinhua Ribao*. 1951-10-29, 1951-11-11, 1951-11-15.

officials, and administrative organs.³³ Together these two campaigns were designed to consolidate unified central leadership over the urban sector and had great impact in urban life. For example, the *wufan* congregation of Changchun's construction workers was held in the state-run architectural design firm in February and March 1952, as sign that "the class struggle sharpened".³⁴

In the core urban area of Changchun, three basic methods of (re)construction were applied: 1) manipulation of naming and renaming, 2) erection of statues of Chairman Mao and revolutionary martyrs in front of existing colonial buildings or in the place of old statues of Manchukuo or the KMT, and 3) new buildings of socialist realism that complete urban form so that supplementation rather than demolition played an active role in forgetting the past. When Changchun was liberated in late 1948, and the main street that stretched several kilometers from the railway station to the South was again renamed Stalin Street, when the Soviet was regarded as the most reliable and powerful ally for the industrial base of the Northeast. Another main street, Shuntian Street where Manchukuo administrative offices were congregated, was renamed Xinmin, literally meaning New People (*xin min*), reflecting the objective of socialist revolution to create new subject identity. The names of districts, streets, squares, parks and buildings of Changchun had been already changed for several rounds, while reconstructing colonial buildings was also an economic way to reuse existed buildings to embody socialist ideals.

As the Communist government issued decrees immediately after its liberation that no estate or industry of old regimes should be destructed, most colonial buildings along the central avenue continued to function as they were, but under different names and political guise. For example, the Guandong Army headquarters housed the Communist Party Committee of Jilin Provincial. The former Capital Construction Bureau building was remade to house People's Municipal Government of Changchun. (Fig 4-7) Yamato Hotel was renamed Chunyi (Changchun's Friendship) Hotel, and the previous Fengle building was still used as a theater but with a new name Chuncheng ("the city of Changchun"). Other buildings were re-modified to accommodate new functions. For example, the Concordia Association headquarters beneath Datong Plaza was converted into a military club, and the buildings of former Manchukuo governmental organs and Japanese corporative headquarters were changed into hospitals or universities. The nationalization of land and the way buildings and places were given new uses and meanings, even when the physical configuration of those spaces was little changed, indicating that space was subject to political interests. (Fig 4-8)

³³ The *sanfan* campaign was intended to remove party and government officials, including former GMD functionaries, who had shown themselves unreliable in the implementation of government policy. Unified planning required a loyal and dependable cadre, or as Mao commented in relation to the purpose of these campaigns, "Planned economy is impossible unless we are clear about the situation." If the *sanfan* campaign signaled the CCP cleaning up bureaucratic ranks in preparation for the task of socialist construction, the *wufan* campaign signaled the end of the brief "New Democracy" alliance with the national bourgeoisie. See David Bray. *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, pp.110-111.

³⁴ For the movement in Changchun, see Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1951-3-15, 1952-2-18, 1952-3-30.



Fig 4-7 The former CCB building was reused for people's Municipal Government of Changchun

Source:

<http://www.ccrpf.org/bbs/index.php?m=bbs>



Fig 4-8 The former Capital Police Bureau was remodeled to house police department of socialist Changchun

Source:

<http://www.ccrpf.org/bbs/index.php?m=bbs>

In Changchun, as the reconstruction of war-torn colonial capital demanded tremendous material resources in a city where practically everything was in short supply, the PLA issued decrees immediately after entering the city in 1948 that existing buildings of the previous regimes must not be destructed at random.³⁵ Besides, the estates and enterprises of the former KMT government, war criminals and collaborators were confiscated and nationalized.³⁶ Under the socialist regime, by the end of the recovery period, the old mercenary organs of industrial administration underwent a basic reform and a considerable part of the old technical specialists was unified and re-educated to “voluntarily serve the people”.³⁷

Construction workers as part of the leading class in the new society joined in building socialism enthusiastically. Like in Eastern European countries, the socialist movement was everywhere in evidence, and strikingly often its message was conveyed with the assistance of buildings, bricks, and bricklayers that soon became popular subjects in mass media and newspapers. Chinese construction workers were also organized for reconstruction, and new building methods of the Soviet and its Eastern European variants were rapidly introduced to the Northeast. Several model construction workers and their skill of fast bricklaying were extolled and publicized in media. The Manchurian mason and bricklayer Su Changyou, like his counterparts in the Eastern bloc,

³⁵ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1948-10-12

³⁶ For example, the irrational system of administration of industry was abolished, factories and mines cleansed of counter-revolutionary elements, and the feudal despotic contractors who mercilessly oppressed and exploited the workers were over-thrown. U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research & Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley)

³⁷ During these three years the production of pig iron in the country increased almost 7.7 times, the production off steel 8.5 times, the production of rolled stock 9.2 times, coal production doubled and the production of petroleum increased 3.6 times; the production of machine tools increased sevenfold. The restoration and development of the industry of China were proceeding at accelerated rates. As a result, by the end of 1952 industrial production reached the pre-war level, and in a number of industry branches exceeded the pre-war level. See *Supplement to the magazine "People's China"* No.22, 1954

became a well-known public figure as a model construction worker.³⁸ Su invented a new bricklaying technique in 1951, and all contemporary major Chinese newspapers covered his outstanding deeds and advanced techniques. Su and his brigade achieved a 128% increase in brick laying labor productivity in 1951, and a 215% increase in 1952.³⁹ In 1952, Su improved the fast bricklaying technique, and traveled all over in Manchuria to demonstrate with his fellow workers his new techniques and to inspire socialist competition among his fellow countrymen. On May 20, 1952, the “Su Changyou Brigade” came to Changchun to demonstrate his method. His appearances were a kind of festival and workers in Changchun gathered to welcome his arrival. A few brick layer brigades began to follow Su’s example of the Su Changyou Brigade in building new houses.⁴⁰

At the time of reconstructing Changchun under the socialist regime, monumentality of new buildings proclaimed the imminent arrival of the socialist utopia and demonstrated the strength and permanence of the new political order, while the mania of erecting new statues also displayed China’s own radical and revolutionary tradition that superseded the colonial past. Among the reconstructing projects, the Changchun First Film Studio (CFS) was most famous, whose precedent was a film production company to publicize colonial propaganda, founded by Mantetsu and Manchukuo government in 1937 (*Man’en*). After the Japanese defeat, the Communists took over the buildings and equipments and established the first film studio of the new regime. In 1955, it was renamed Changchun Film Studio, and old buildings were renovated and expanded, and Mao’s statue was erected in front of the main building. (Fig. 4-9) The CFS produced hundreds of revolutionary films that made it the most well-known film producers in Maoist China. The first of its field, the CFS, as well as the FAW, hence became the emblem of socialist Changchun and the most frequently visited places by foreign guests, including the Soviet Presidium.⁴¹



Fig 4-9 Changchun First Film Studio. Mao’s statue is standing in the front of the colonial Man’ei building

Source: photo by the author in 2004

³⁸ Su Changyou (1925-1981) invented the “segmented continuous brick laying method” in 1950 and joined the CCP the same year. Though a famous mason and bricklayer of the early 1950s, little was known about him and his life after the first FYP.

³⁹ *People’s China*, No. 1, January 1955, p. 24

⁴⁰ *Xinhua ribao*, No. 6, June 1952, p. 98

⁴¹ Changchun shi dang’an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977).

Changchun's first park, West Park, formed another example of this sort. West Park was designed by Todai professor Shirasawa Yasumi in 1915 when the public park was a novel institution in Asian cities as part of a broad modernizing project, with its main gate facing the central avenue. In memory of Kodama Kentaro (1852-1906), the late chief of general staff during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), a statue of Kodama on a horse was erected near the entrance in 1938, and the park was renamed Kodama Park. The statue was demolished by the Russians immediately after the WWII. In June 1946 when the nationalists took over the city from the Russians, the park was renamed Zhongshan Park. In March 1949, the Communists changed its name to Victory (*shengli*) Park, and a huge painting was placed at the entrance where the Kodama statue stood. (Fig 4-10) In the heyday of Cultural Revolution, a 6.8-meter-high statue of Chairman Mao was erected to replace the dilapidated painting in 1968,⁴² (Fig 4-11) which was finally replaced by a marble statue of Mao in the 1980s. The change in name and statue was matched by a new demand on sculptors to produce monuments that reflected and popularized the new ideology of socialism.



Fig 4-10 Kodama's statue in West Park
Source: *dai shinkyo mi*.



Fig 4-11 Mao's picture in Victory Park, the same place
Source:
<http://www.ccrpf.org/bbs/index.php?m=bbs>

Another frontline of building Chinese socialism lied in mass propaganda, a common practice of socialist states. During the three-year period of recovery, a large number of socialist paintings and posters that eulogized construction workers and urban construction were produced. (Fig 4-12) In the poster, building was a symbol of learning from the Soviet, and the working class was dealing with reconstruction, the Party, and Chinese socialism. The bricklayer in this poster is the representative of youth and tomorrow, the new man in the making during "the construction of socialism." The construction worker is a typical bricklayer as the direction of current social development, and the socialist future is firmly staked out: the construction project in progress in the background.

The major figure of bricklayer reminds us of one of the best-known paintings in the 1950s in Poland, that is, *Pass Me a Brick*. (Fig 4-13) In this painting, three bricklayers

⁴² Yu Qiyuan. *Wangshi cunzhen*. (A record of the past). Changchun: Changchun political consultancy press, 2007.

are working on a building site, who stood out monumentally against the background sky. “Pass me a brick” meant “Play your part in the reconstruction of Poland. Your country needs you!”⁴³ In both paintings, heroic work of constructing socialism was a far cry from the gray drudgery of everyday work and workers became the focal point, a symbol of profound social change under socialist ideology.



Fig 4-12 socialist poster, the title reads “The Soviet is our model”
Source: <http://chinese posters.net>



Fig 4-13 *Pass Me a Brick!* Oil painting
by Aleksander Kobzdej, 1950
Source: Anders Aman, p.74

As working class was the base of the new regime, the organs of the people’s government showed great care for improving the status of women workers, and the material condition of workers and employees were also improved considerably. In three years their wages and salaries increased on the average by 61.2%, and their purchasing power increased 3.8 times.⁴⁴ During this period 5.3 million square meters of housing floor space were repaired and constructed for workers and employees.⁴⁵ Thus, under the leadership of the CCP, the broad masses of workers entered into the patriotic competition of production with great enthusiasm, introducing numerous efficiency proposals and steadily raising the productivity of labor. Socialist political movements, educational campaign, working competition, etc., all these together strengthened the CCP’s administrative and political control over urban industry, and facilitated the transition to a larger scale socialist construction.

IV. Rebuilding Changchun Downtown under Socialism, 1953-1957

Through the three-year period of recovery, necessary conditions were created for

⁴³ Anders Aman. *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992. pp.181-183.

⁴⁴ *People’s China* No. 1, January 1953, p. 2

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p. 25. The people’s government spends considerable sums on improving conditions of work and on work safety measures. In 1952, 1,283 billion yuan were spent for these purposes. “*People’s China*” No. 10, May 25, 1955, p. 16

broad planned economic and cultural construction, for the industrialization of the country and for assuring steady progress forward to socialism. The municipal government of Changchun convened a large meeting attended by representatives from all walks on January 28, 1953, to mobilize for the economic development of the upcoming FFYP.⁴⁶

According to an official statistics, by the end of April 1953, nineteen work units (*danwei*) in the city had started construction, including research institutes, factories relevant to livelihood of the people such as electric power plants, universities, etc. Fourteen out of the nineteen construction sites amounted to a total area of 147,000 square meters.⁴⁷ Streets and bridges of the colonial times were widened, and a new bridge was built to connect the old city to the newly-built FAW on the southwestern outskirts. Due to Changchun's strategic geographical position on Manchuria, and its capacity of a host of important institutes and factories, the provincial seat moved from Jilin City to Changchun in 1954. As a result, a number of cultural and recreational facilities were built in the new provincial seat. For example, two cinemas were completed in 1954, and in the meantime, old libraries, theaters, hotels and housing left by the Japanese were renovated while new ones were built up.⁴⁸

Reconstructed compounds and new buildings scattered throughout the city. Nevertheless, the most impressive transformation in urban landscape came with a few important projects that gathered up along two major arteries of previous colonial capital: Datong Street (now Stalin Street) and Shuntian Street (now Xinmin Street). New buildings along the two streets not only gave the city with an updated skyline, but also effectively eradicated colonial influence.

Stalin Street (previous Datong Street)

After the FFYP started in 1953, the Communists began to build their own monuments along the central street in Changchun. It was during this period that Stalinism left on Changchun an indelible mark through what became known as socialist realism that dominated the construction of the First Automobile Works in the outskirts of Changchun.⁴⁹ The alignment with socialist thinking encompassed new meanings of architectural and urban design aesthetics, and socialist realism was used as one major means to consolidate political power. As such, the civic center of the city was once again accorded pre-eminence as the locus of state power.

As the Japanese did not fully realize the 1932 Capital Plan before they were defeated in WWII, the central plaza was incomplete in that two blocks were left empty by 1955. After the Communist takeover, the Manchurian Bank fronting Stalin Plaza became the headquarters of China Bank, while the previous CCB building was occupied

⁴⁶ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1953-1-28

⁴⁷ Ibid. 1953-1-28, 1953-4-20

⁴⁸ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1954-9-27, 1954-1-1, 1954-9-25.

⁴⁹ See Chapter 5 for the detail of the construction of the plant and housing compound.

by Changchun Municipal Party Committee. The colonial Municipal Policy Station, Manchuria Communication Building and the CCB all functioned as what it had been designed for, but under a different name of Changchun Policy Department.

After the FFYP started, a Cultural Palace of Workers was proposed and construction began in July 1956.⁵⁰ Completed in late 1957, the Cultural Palace of Workers is an enormous four-storied building. (Fig 4-14) Not unlike its surrounding colonial buildings, the central portion of the Palace rose above the wings. The location of the Palace at the center of the city indicates the important status of workers in the new regime under the proletarian-revolutionary ideology, thereby being enabled to reorient and recast China into a socialist nation. As in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, the “workers’ club” had been a new, widely publicized building type, and it served the factory community as part of socialist content. However, a palace of culture at the center of the city was larger than a club, aiming to serve the whole city. The main facility of the Cultural Palace of Workers of Changchun was characterized by a large assembly hall for performances, film shows, and political meetings.

To the south of the Palace stands the newly built Jilin Provincial Hotel, an even larger building of six stories. (Fig 4-15) Unlike the Palace, the hotel is abounded with traditional motifs, such as roof and window styles, exquisite decorations on cornice, etc. In this way, If socialism can be regarded as a historically “rational” project of modernity in certain circumstances, “we may be ready to acknowledge the fact that socialist realism is, after all, a radical form of modernism and a radical formulation of the mainstream Enlightenment idea of modernity.”⁵¹ Along with the colonial institutional buildings, the cultural palace and hotel which were built under different political guise but with similar outlook eventually completed the urban design of the civic center. Once again, the central plaza became a fundamental site of ideological intervention and manifestation, but this time of socialist advantage over the decadency of the West.



Fig 4-14 Changchun’s Cultural Palace of Workers at Stalin Plaza



Fig 4-15 Jilin Provincial Hotel at Stalin Plaza in Changchun

⁵⁰ Changchun shi dang’an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1956-7-15

⁵¹ Greg Castillo. “Peoples at an Exhibition: Soviet Architecture and the National Question”. Thomas Lahusen (ed.). *Socialist Realism without Shores*. The South Atlantic Quarterly. Summer 1995, Vol.94, No.3, p.917

Both the Cultural Palace and the Hotel are large in scale, and symmetrical in layout with an emphasis on central part where ornamentation concentrate on, the distinct feature of Socialist Realism. National form was displayed through the roof style and window decorations, while socialist content of the ruling class of proletariat was equally unmistakable. Like factory buildings in socialist countries, the aphorism of “national in form, socialist in content” had been translated into built form.

Away from the plaza, new buildings that flanked the central street included a gymnasium that began construction in October 1956, which ingeniously fit the aesthetics of socialist realism in with structural innovation that featured the entrance. A series of science and research buildings were built, amongst which the most famous one was Optical Apparatus Institute built up in 1958. A new office building for stationary army in Changchun was also built in 1958.⁵² Like the Ten Grand Projects in Beijing in 1959, the Changchun Municipal Government sponsored ten construction projects to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the People’s Republic, including five buildings mentioned above - the Hotel and Cultural Palace at the central plaza, the gym, the military office building and the optical research center.

As Stalin Street advanced to a political ensemble of socialist symbols for the creation of a new and better society that helped forge the new socialist men. The central plaza and railway station plaza on the street continued to be the venues of mass assemblies, for political events under different banners. Seen from the widest avenue Changchun, banners and red flags on these buildings proclaimed the new political objectives, reminding people of socialist accomplishments: consolidation of the new regime, abolition of the private ownership of the means of production, friendship with the Soviet Union, transformation of Changchun’s urban landscape in a short period of time, etc. Most of all, with the completion of central plaza, the intensification of official efforts to dominate public space and construct a new socialist monumental landscape accompanied the imposition of the socialist model.

Xinmin Street (previous Shuntian Street)

As discussed in Chapter Two, the palace and buildings lining the previous Shuntian Street formed the administrative quarter of the Manchukuo government. The buildings of State Councils, the Ministry of Military, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Transportation, and The Supreme Court at the southern end altogether represented the best efforts to create the new Developing Asia style. However, construction of capital Changchun drew to a close by 1941 when the Pacific War broke out, by which time only foundation work of the palace was completed, while a few land lots were left vacant in this quarter.

The name of the street (Shuntian) in the colonial times was excerpted from the idiom of Confucian classics, *shuntian anmin*, meaning following the Heaven and bringing

⁵² Changchun shi dang’an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977).

peace to the people, also a major principle of the colonial ideology of the Kingly Way. The circular plaza of the southern terminus of the street was named Anmin Plaza. After Communist takeover, the street was renamed *Xinmin* after the Communist regime was established, meaning New People. The circular plaza at the southern terminus of Xinmin Street was renamed from Anmin Plaza to Liberty Plaza. To the south of the plaza was the largest artificial lake, South Lake Park, and a monument was set up at the entrance in the 1980s to memorize those deceased in the 1948 campaigns to liberate Changchun. The previous colonial Supreme Court at the corner of the plaza had been changed to an air force hospital.

As such, the previous colonial administrative quarter was changed into a new district that took care of public health and people's cultural life, as what the new name of the street *Xinmin* (new people) suggested. It is also interesting to see the cultural attitude of Asian modernizers towards a different modern path, be it Manchukuo's capital city, the KMT's New Life Movement (1935), or the Communist New China and New People. The desire of bringing up something new to overcome the past and the contemporary competitors stipulated the connection between these modernizers.

Colonial buildings along Xinmin Street were put under the military for a while, and all the institutional buildings which were in good status after civil war, were renovated as military hospitals and medical research institutes. In 1954, a medical college was established on the foundation of Henry Norman Bethune Medical School of the 1930s in Yan'an, and changed previous colonial institutional buildings into hospitals and affiliated facilities.⁵³ For example, the previous Hall of State Council, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Transportation, and Ministry of Economy were remodeled teaching and research buildings. A statue of Bethune was erected in front of the main entrance at the former State Council, though the internal space did not entail too much change.

As a part of the larger reform of restructuring of universities and colleges according to party line in 1952 and 1953, Changchun Institute of Geology was established in December 1952. The site of the new college occupied the former palace and imperial garden. The existing foundation on the site, which was designed for a two-storied developing Asian palace, was used for a new main building of four stories for administration and teaching. (Fig 4-16) The project started in 1953, and upon its completion in the following year, it was the first building in "national form" in Changchun, preceding those to be built in the First Automobile Works.⁵⁴

The architect, Wang Fuchen of Changchun Municipal Architectural Design Institute, however, had referred to the original design left by the Japanese but elevated the height of the base. The large sloping roof and decoration on the ridge, entrance, and

⁵³ Henry Norman Bethune (1890-1939, Chinese name: Bai Qiu'en) was a Canadian Communist and physician and medical innovator. Bethune is best known for his service in war time medical units during the Spanish Civil War and with the People's Liberation Army during the Second Sino-Japanese War. After his death, Chairman Mao had a famous piece to memorize his internationalist spirit, and a medical school was established after his name in Yan'an, the capital of the Communist regime during the period 1936-1947.

⁵⁴ Yang Zhaoyuan. *Changchun Jianzhuzhi caogao* (Manuscript of Gazetteer of Architecture in Changchun). p.253

beams all resonated with the colonial Developing Asian style, only the color was more brilliant than before. The college, like all other research institutes and colleges at the time, was a self-sufficient work unit (*danwei*). The main teaching facility built upon the foundation of the previous palace was not only prominent in its own terms but also an organizing element that dominated spatial arrangement within the compound. With a total floor area of over 30,000 square meters, it became the landmark of socialist Changchun and selected as one of the ten major buildings of the city in 1958.⁵⁵

As provincial seat was moved to Changchun in 1954, the party newspaper of Jilin Province was relocated in the previous Manchukuo administrative quarter, on the site next to the Hall of State Council. Opposite the street was the television and broadcast station. To follow up the political elevation of the city's status, a number of cultural facilities were built up during the FFYP. The largest project was Jilin Provincial Library, located in opposite to the previous Ministry of Transportation across Xinmin Street. (Fig 4-17) Completed in 1957, it was a four-storied building with an extruding tower at the center, covering a total area of 12,000 square meters.⁵⁶ Aside from the tiled tower, the most ornamented part was the portico that fronted the main entrance. In terms of decorative motifs, height, mass and color, the library stood in harmony in the historic quarter with existing colonial institutional buildings.



Fig 4-16 The Palace of Geology (*dizhi gong*), built on the base of Puyi's imperial palace (*digong*) in 1953

Source: photo by the author in 2004



Fig 4-17 The Provincial Library built in 1957, four blocks from the Palace of Geology

Source: photo by the author in 2009

A few blocks away from the previous Hall of State Council (now the main building of Bethune Medical College), a university building in true socialist realism was built up in October 1956. It covered a total floor area over 30,000 square meters, which was one of the largest university buildings of Maoist Changchun.⁵⁷ The nine-storied central tower was a monumental manifestation of the achievement of Chinese socialism. Sloping roofs were absent from this building, however, the message conveyed by

⁵⁵ Ibid. It is noteworthy that during the criticism against socialist realism and construction waste, this project became the main target of the movement in 1955, three years before it regained recognition.

⁵⁶ Yang Zhaoyuan. *Changchun Jianzhuzhi caogao* (Manuscript of Gazetteer of Architecture in Changchun). p.256

⁵⁷ Ibid. p.253, 256.

exquisitely decorated portico was unmistakable: the present rested on the foundation of tradition, and the present surpassed tradition as exemplified in its height, structure, and the speed of construction.

The buildings that were newly built along Xinmin Street filled up previous vacant blocks of the 1932 Plan, and had successfully transformed the former administrative quarter of Manchukuo into an educational and cultural district. Through education, workers were trained to become both politically enlightened and technically proficient, or in the parlance of the time, “both red and expert.” Promoting a large number of “red experts” was considered a crucial precondition for achieving a transition to socialism. New and old buildings along Xinmin Street altogether played a vital role in producing proletarian subjects. (Fig 4-18)



Fig 4-18 a group of young medical students at the entrance of the former Ministry of Justice, now teaching building of Bethune Medical Institute.

Source:

<http://www.ccrpf.org/bbs/index.php?m=bbs>

In early 1957, it was all clear that the FFYP was going to be completed ahead of time. As Changchun in particular and the Northeast as a whole had confirmed its role during the FFYP as an industrial base of the whole country, several key projects of the second five-year plan had been prepared in Changchun. The construction of the main building of Automobile Mechanic Repairing Factory began in March 1956, while the Changchun Railway Vehicles Factory started in May 1957.⁵⁸ The latter was to be China's the first factory of its kind that is still producing high-speed railway vehicles today. Two factories that produced meteorological and optical instruments were expanded in August 1957, both of which were the largest in China. By November, the list of socialist achievements were added a new dam in the outskirts of Changchun and a tuberculosis hospital. Power stations, dams, hospitals combined with newly founded factory communities were altogether referred to as “the great construction projects of Communism,” demonstrating as they did the superiority of the new social system over the old, and the great accomplishments of the FFYP in Changchun. On December 20, 1957, the official newspaper, *Changchun Daily*, proclaimed that “by the end of 1957 the FFYP has been successfully completed with the joint efforts of all people, ... and

⁵⁸ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977). 1956-3-26, 1956-5-6.

Changchun has already been a new industrial and cultural center.”⁵⁹

V. Conclusions

Three regimes (the Soviet military, the KMT, and the Communist) took turns to operate the war-torn city of Changchun after 1945. What these regimes shared in common was the goal to eradicate Japanese colonial legacies left in this former capital city. In rebuilding Changchun’s urban core, the decolonizing efforts included three basic methods: manipulation of naming and renaming, erection of statues of Chairman Mao and revolutionary martyrs to replace old ones in front of existing colonial buildings, and completion of urban form with new buildings in socialist realism so that supplementation rather than demolition played a more active role in erasing the past. Both the examples of reconstruction of Stalin Plaza (Fig 4-19) and Xinmin Street (Fig 4-20) showed a similar way of eradicating colonial memory, that through complementation rather than demolition of existing spatial form.

The decision to utilize and modify the old city to the need of the new regime was not simply the result of a reassertion of CCP power at the behest of Mao, nor was it the triumph of socialist modernization over bourgeois classicism. Rather it was a victory of pragmatism over utopian architectural purism. This decision was crucial because it implied that the new regime would be constructed on the bones of the old. No doubt this resulted in the erasure of much of the past, yet it also ensured that important spatial memories of the past would be imprinted upon the architecture of the new. The most distinctive examples of this endeavor were the redesign and redeployment of Datong and Shuntian Streets. Decorated by various impressive landmarks, the two streets were both treasured urban projects that displayed power of the state and achievement of Japanese colonization. Based on socialist ideals, however, they were now renamed into Stalin Street and Xinmin Street, respectively, and became an ensemble of socialist achievements of urban decolonization and construction.

The reuse of existing spatial forms did not go beyond the years of economic recovery and it wasn’t long before economic construction began to transform the urban environment. The massive construction project set out in the FFYP and launched in the mid-1950s called for the development of hundreds of new industrial plants, the majority of which were to be constructed in and around the existing major urban centers. This resulted in the dramatic expansion of cities and the emergence of new forms of urban space. It is out of this process that the newly built public buildings that housed key socialist institutions, such as the Provincial Hotel and Library, came to dominate Changchun’s spatial organization and urban life.

With the Soviet aids, the PRC adopted the socialist program completely, and merited the socialist ideals of equality in resource distribution, restrictions on market and commercialization, and state economic planning as the alternative to capitalism towards modernization. Ironically, the Japanese colonial government had similar anti-capitalist

⁵⁹ Ibid. p.119.

mindset to compete and overcome the West, and the connections were evident in the spatial formation and reformation in Changchun.



Fig 4-19 completed central plaza. Buildings as follows: 1. Workers' Palace of Culture (1957); 2. Jilin Provincial Hotel (1958); 3. CCB (Municipal Government, rebuilt in the 1990s); 4. Manchurian Central Bank (People's Bank of China); 5. Telegraph and Communication Building (Changchun's Telegraph Bureau); 6. Capital Police Bureau (Changchun's Police Department); 7. the Soviet Monument.



Fig 4-20 completed Xinmin Street. Buildings as follows: 1. Imperial Palace (Palace of Geology, 1953); 2. Jilin Provincial Library (1958); 3. Hall of State Council (teaching facility for medical institute); 4. Ministry of Military (hospital for medical institute); 5. Ministry of Justice (teaching building); 6. Ministry of Transportation (hospital); 7. Ministry of Economy (hospital); 8. Manchukuo's Supreme Courthouse (hospital of air force of the PLA)

For example, Changchun's central plaza was designed first by the Japanese to function as the political-cultural-administrative center instead of a high-end shopping and commercial area. This design principle determines radical departure from traditional capitalist concept of the central business district for both the colonial and socialist regimes. As we have seen, the central plaza of Manchukuo's capital, which was renamed Stalin Plaza later on, resonated with socialist planning principles. The driving force to explore something new and different from what had been known in the Western civilization stipulated the connection between these modernizers, in which programs new nations would surpass Western materialism and capitalism through a competing approach to the modern, be it the Kingly Way or socialism.

**Chapter 5 Competing the Modern:
Building the Automobile Town in Changchun, 1953-1957**

During the First Five-Year Plan (FFYP), a few factory communities were built in Changchun as crucial part of Maoist industrialization, of which the First Automobile Works (FAW) was the most prominent example that epitomized socialist Changchun and the achievement of Chinese socialism. It packed in everything: planned economy, heavy industry, mobilization of workers, aid from the Soviet Union, new working methods, socialist competition, and above all, an early but perfect model of Chinese work unit (*danwei*) that combined both production and non-production sectors to be an essential social institution of Maoist China.

Along with the start of the FFYP in the early 1950s, the *danwei* was cemented as the dominant social, economic, and organizational unit of Chinese city, and became the basis for a distinctly socialist strategy of urban management. Such was the success of the new regime in remaking and reorganizing urban China that by the end of FFYP over 90 percent of the urban population became affiliated to socialist *danwei*.¹ Although recent scholarship has revealed how *danwei* emerged and became an essential institution of Chinese socialism, the detailed study of its spatial formation and architectural composition still needs more exploration.

By examining the specific example of the FAW, I aim to trace the design processes and outcomes of its factories and the housing sector. The FAW compound made a telling example of urban development in the spirit of socialist planning with exciting experiment to counter over-standardization in housing design due to prefabrication and mass production. Through spatial intervention, the FAW became a “social condenser” in which production, proletarian culture, and everyday social life were combined within a single collective space.

Collectivism, the crucial part of so-called socialist content, was promulgated through urban planning and housing construction, and the pursuit of a “modern” state was set on a different path from the capitalist model. It should be noted that collective housing was by no means a novel idea in China. Nonetheless, it was the large scale and its social function with serious practical and ideological consequences that made the housing compounds of Chinese socialist work units an active player of urbanization under Maoism. In the pages to follow, we will see how socialist planning and architecture, as a vehicle for public education and instruction, regained the notion to inform, educate and elevate society under strong state control.

I begin this chapter by a brief explanation of the nation’s economic development program of the national five-year plans. The rest of the chapter goes into three parts: the construction of the factories (production sector), residential compounds (non-production sector), and the life in the FAW as observed and remembered by visitors and workers. Specifically, I argue that the construction of the FAW compound was a unique, yet

¹ David Bray. *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, pp.94-95.

overlooked and abolished experiment of socialist modern and provided antithesis to over-standardization that dominated Chinese urban landscape in the next decades.

I. The First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957)

As has been discussed in the last chapter, by facilitating the formation of unified and loyal party-led regimes within Chinese cities, the *sanfan* and *wufan* campaigns greatly strengthened the CCP's administrative and political control over urban industry.² This process was part of the CCP's attempt to consolidate and centralize governmental practices in preparation for the full implementation of the planned economy and further facilitated the transformation of bourgeois-run factories into socialist *danwei* in readiness for the shift to full-blown central planning.

Since the Korean War drew to an end in 1952, the PRC began to initiate nation-wide modernizing projects. The historical task of the PRC was the building of a socialist society. To this end, a powerful weapon in the hands of the Communist state in the performance of this task was the planning of the national economy.³ In 1953, the Chinese Communist Part (CCP) commenced to fulfill the First Five-Year Plan (FFYP) of in accordance with the general party line.⁴

The experience of the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries had shown that socialism was impossible without a unified planned economy. Subsequently, with the beginning of the FFYP, the sphere of state planning began to steadily expand in connection with socialist industrialization and transformations, eventually written in the Constitution of the Chinese People's Republic: "The State, with the aid of the economic plans, directs the development and transformation of the national economy and uninterruptedly raises the productive forces with the aim of the development of the material and cultural level of the people, the strengthening of the independence and security of the country."⁵

The FFYP aimed at a foundation for the socialist industrialization of the country, for the reform of heavy industry, agriculture and handicraft industry by various production cooperatives.⁶ For the fulfillment of the FFYP, there were assigned 76,640

² The *sanfan* (Three-anti Campaign: corruption, waste, and bureaucracy) in 1951 and *wufan* (Five-anti Campaign: bribery, theft of state property, tax evasion, cheating on government contracts, and stealing state economic information) in 1952 were political movements originally issued by Mao Zedong in an effort to rid Chinese cities of corruption and enemies of the state. For detail of the two campaigns and their place in the transitional period, see the last chapter.

³ U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research &. Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley), "National Planning," p. 27

⁴ After several rounds of debates and revision, the FFYP was eventually worked out by the CCP and was ratified in July 1955, in which time a large proportion of construction had already begun.

⁵ Constitution of the PRC, Article 15.

⁶ In the course of five years the plan aimed at increasing the gross output of the industry of the Chinese People's Republic by 98.1% in terms of value. The gross output of contemporary industry was to increase by 104.1%. Steel production in 1957 was planned to be brought to 4.12 million tons against 1.35 million tons in 1952; electric energy to 15.9 billion kilowatt hours (against 7.26 billion kilowatt hours in 1952); coal to 115 million tons (against 61.53 million tons in 1952); electric generators to 227 thousand kilowatt (against 50 thousand kilowatt in 1952); auto truck to 4000 units (there was no production in 1952) etc. U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research &. Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley)

million *yuan*.⁷ As the first and most powerful industrial base of the country, Manchuria was assigned an important role in the fulfillment of the basic goal of the FFYP, and a significant number of industrial plants of the FFYP were built in Northeastern China. During the 1950s, the Northeast remained in the center of attention, due to industrial foundation left by Japanese and geographical proximity to the Soviet Union.⁸

The CCP authorities closely followed Soviet practice in developing strategies for the implementation of central economic planning. In the first year of implementation of the FFYP in 1953, an agreement (Sino-Soviet Friendship Alliance Treaty) was signed between the Soviet and the PRC on assisting the latter in the development of its national economy. According to this agreement the Soviet Union obligated itself to give technical assistance to China in the construction and reconstruction of 141 (later 15 more projects were added) large industrial enterprises and to deliver the equipment for these enterprises, of which the First Automobile Works (FAW) was one of the largest and most important projects.⁹ In addition to these major projects, another twenty-three hundred smaller-scale industrial construction projects were to be completed.¹⁰

As working class became the leading class in the PRC, the FFYP also aimed at raising the welfare of the workers of China. By the end of 1957 it was planned to increase the wage of workers and employees by an average of 33%. In the course of five years it was proposed to spend 5 billion *yuan* on labor insurance, medical help, public services and cultural-educational work. It was planned to build 46 million square meters of living area for workers and employees, most of which were in the Northeast. As an official report claimed, without the development of cultural construction and improvement of workers' livelihood, it would not be possible to even dream about industrialization, cooperative organization and other socialist reforms.¹¹

II. Construction of the First Automobile Works (FAW)

As indicated in Table 5.1, Changchun as of 1952 had little industry. Being a former colonial capital city, it had been designed as a "political center" under colonial rule, while the industrial center in Manchuria was designated to Shenyang, 300 kilometers south of Changchun. In colonial times, there were "850 factories in Changchun, of which 650 were small ones (with a total number of employees ranging

⁷ Of this sum 55.8% was earmarked for capital construction, while of the auto earmarked for capital construction 58.2% was planned to be invested in industry. Ibid.

⁸ *Dongbei Ribao*, 4 February 1955; *Xinhua Ribao* 1952-1-3, it was reported that the industrial development in the Northeast had great achievement, the industrial products held 53% in the whole national economy. By the end of 1953, the first year of the plan, the size of capital construction exceeded by 32% the size of capital construction in the four preceding years taken together.

⁹ Of great importance also is the agreement on scientific-technical cooperation signed on October 12, 1954. It provides for an exchange of technical documentation and pertinent information and also for the dispatch of specialists for rendering technical assistance and familiarization with the achievements of both countries in the scientific-technical field.

¹⁰ Because of the priority given to these industrial construction projects, virtually all available capital was channeled into this sector at the expense of other sectors, especially agriculture.

¹¹ U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research &. Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley East Asian Library)

from five to thirty).” The largest plant in colonial Changchun was a tobacco factory, while almost all other large factories were flour mills, a traditional light industry in Changchun since the last years in the Qing.¹² All light industry congregated on north of the railway station, and to east of Yitong River. The major concern of such arrangement was Changchun’s predominant wind direction which blew from the southwest to northeast, so as to reduce industrial pollution as much as possible. Prospective heavy industry such as mechanical repairing also appeared in the 1932 Plan, yet was never realized.

After the PRC was founded in October 1949, a Chinese delegation headed by Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai went to Moscow and signed the “Sino-Soviet Friendship Alliance Treaty” with the Soviet Union, which was the prelude to the establishment of China’s industrial infrastructure. During his stay in Moscow, Mao visited Stalin Automobile Works (previous Avtomobilnoe Moskovskoe Obshchestvo) and was impressed by Soviet heavy-duty trucks (it should be noted that China did not produce any automobiles before the establishment of the PRC).¹³ As a result of the Sino-Soviet treaty, the Soviet agreed to aid 156 major industrial projects during the FFYP, including the construction of China’s first modern truck factories.

As early as in 1950, a special committee was organized to study the location of the first automobile factory under Zhou Enlai’s leadership. Several possible cities were proposed, such as Beijing, Xi’an, Wuhan, etc., but finally Changchun was chosen due to practical consideration.¹⁴ In March 1951, Zhou announced that “the First Automobile Works will be built near by Changchun in the Northeast, ... the site will be in Mengjiatun in Changchun’s outskirts.”¹⁵ (Fig 5-1)

¹² *Kuokuto shinkyō*. Xinjing: manshu seiban kaisha, 1942. “Xinjing’s Industries”, p.102-103

¹³ Stalin himself also urged the Chinese to build up a new factory to produce heavy-duty trucks. See quanguo zhengxiewenshi he xuexi weiyuanhui (Political consultancy and research committee of China) (ed.). *yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng* (establishment and development of the First Automobile Works). Beijing: Chinese Culture and History Press, 2009, p.9

¹⁴ According to planned annual output of 30,000 units, the factory needed 24,000-kilowatt electric power plus sufficient supply of more than 200,000 tons of steel every year. Transportation was also a primary concern that the factory alone needed about one million tons of transport. At the time, the steel works in Beijing could not meet the requirement until 1956, while there was not enough volume of transport. Changchun, on the other side, had convenient transportation and well-equipped railway facilities since the colonial times, and Manchurian forests could provide enough fuel for power. See Yang Zhaoyuan. *Changchun shi guihua zhi caogao* (manuscript of gazetteer of the planning history of Changchun). chapter 3 section 6. see also

¹⁵ Wu Shiduo. “wosuo liaojie de yiqi xuanzhi gongzuo” (My knowledge on the siting of the FAW). quanguo zhengxiewenshi he xuexi weiyuanhui (Political consultancy and research committee of China) (ed.). *yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng* (establishment and development of the First Automobile Works). Beijing: Chinese Culture and History Press, 2009, p.41-43.



Fig 5-1 geographical location of the FAW in Changchun.

Source: yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng, p. 3.



Fig 5-2 opening ceremony of the FAW, 1953.

Source: yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng.

Mengjiatun used to be a place where a secret unit of the Japanese army, Unit 100, stationed. Like the famous Unit 731 in Harbin, Unit 100 also conducted bacteriological research in the outskirts of Changchun. After the Japanese were defeated, Mengjiatun was virtually deserted, but the infrastructure such as barracks, water supply, railway transportation, electric power plant was left without much damage. In the summer of 1951, a group of students from Tsinghua University completed the surveying of topography of the area,¹⁶ and a modern socialist automobile factory would soon be built up on colonial remainders.

Mao Zedong took a strong personal interest in the FAW project. Mao signed on the final project plans in June 1952 which called for completion of the factory within 3 years. Later, he autographed the foundation stone of the new factory, urging that new China must possess the capability to produce vehicles as part of modern transportation infrastructure and part of Chinese socialism.

Soviet influence had a strong presence in planning and building the FAW. Over 40% of the equipment of the Changchun automobile plant was delivered by the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic.¹⁷ The Stalin Truck Factory was commissioned to produce the general plan for the whole region of Mengjiatun, including defining the circumscription of the factory and residential areas respectively, alongside with the plan of transportation, water and power supply, etc.¹⁸ in the meantime, during three years of 1953-1956, six teams with a total of 518 young

¹⁶ Zhang Bochun. "20 shiji 50 niandai sulian yuanjian yiqi gaishu" (A brief introduction of the soviet-aided FAW project in the 1950s). *Journal of Harbin Industrial University*: Vol.6, No.14, 2004.

¹⁷ U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research &. Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley), p.53.

¹⁸ Li Gang. "yi yiqi choujian qianqi de zhu mosike gongzuo xiaozu" (A memory of the working group in Moscow for the preparations of the construction of the FAW). *quanguo zhengxiwenshi he xuexi weiyuanhui* (Political consultancy and research committee of China) (ed.). *yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng* (establishment and development of the First Automobile Works). Beijing: Chinese Culture and History Press, 2009, p.18

Chinese technicians from the FAW were sent to the Stalin Truck Factory for instruction in truck production, including the future president Jiang Zemin (rein 1989-2003) who worked in the FAW for over a decade. On the other side, hundreds Russian experts came to Changchun to assist with the construction and operation of the FAW. In order to accommodate Russian experts, a three-storied building was built in 1953 in the residential area. (see Fig 5-14)

The construction of the FAW began on July 15, 1953, on which day a grand ceremony was held to lay the foundation stone with Mao Zedong's autograph for the FAW. (Fig 5-2) The FAW was the largest productive enterprise of the FFYP, completed with a whole series of other enterprises, including transformer, machine building, electric generator and ball bearing factories. The buildings of its 34 workshops and subordinate enterprises cover an area of 150 hectares.

As shown in the last chapter, city planning in the PRC was an integral part of the nation's economic planning, and the whole nation was engaged in this construction project ("aiding the construction of the FAW in Changchun"). The entire country participated in the construction of the FAW. Orders for the manufacture of machinery were filled by enterprises in Tianjin, Qingdao, Harbin, Shenyang, and other cities in the country. Machine builders came from Shanghai and lathe workers and technologists from Nanjing.¹⁹ The Engineer Corps of the People's Liberation Army came to Changchun in 1953 to help building factories, while many experienced workers also came from all over the country for the construction of the first auto factory in China.²⁰

The general plan of the region was rendered by Soviet experts, and became a symbol of the friendship with the Soviet and the Eastern bloc. All important factory buildings were designed in Russia, and the Soviet model of socialist realism was imported through the design and immediately became a dominant style in building socialism, under the political movement of "learning from the Soviet Union in all registers" in the early 1950s. Receiving Soviet aids, it was natural that factory buildings of the FAW bore the postmark of socialist realism still popular in the Soviet Union under Stalin's rein.

As discussed in the previous chapter, socialist realist as an architectural style was favored by Stalin and took sway in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, and was later exported to Eastern bloc after WWII. Stalin's theory of "socialism in one country" rejected modernism and instead promoted socialist realism and national form, in architecture as in other artistic fields. With the Soviet influence, Chinese architects too condemned modernism and functionalism as "embraced universal values and cosmopolitanity as remnant of exploiting class," and extolled the advantage of socialist realism that embraced socialist system and national identity.

Like many contemporary factories in the Soviet Union and East European

¹⁹ The FAW Archive ed. *Di yi qiche gongsi wushinian dashiji* (Chronicles of the FAW in the past 50 years). Changchun, p.12.

²⁰ U.S. Government translation. *Democratic and socialistic Structure in Contemporary China*. Research &. Microfilm publications. (UC Berkeley)

countries, the main entrance of the FAW and its plaza has been conceived as an architectural iconography and a symbol of the ideological content of building socialism. (Fig 5-3) The founding stone of Mao's autography was set as focal point of the plaza. At its back stood a row of neo-classical gate houses, decorated with tall, simplified columns on the exterior wall, demonstrating the two fundamental principles of socialist realism, namely, classical composition and decoration.²¹ The Soviet Union provided the accompanying iconography of dramatic pictures of heavy industry such as steelworks in clouds of steam and coal smoke, imageries closely associated with building socialism.²²



Fig 5-3 the bird view of the main gate of the FAW in 1957

Source: by courtesy of the FAW Archive

Two large factories nearby the main entrance served as two sentinels guarding the gate, one for tool molding and the other mechanical processing. Planned in symmetry and regularity, the most striking element of the two buildings was the twin towers on both sides of the main entrance. The hip-roofed tower was covered with deep green glazed tiles, commonly seen on a traditional pagoda in Chinese gardens. The tower was used as a light well for the large factory space beneath, though the symbolic meaning overweighed its actual function, showing an unmistakable Russian influence. (Fig 5-4) The monumentalization of factory gate and the two towered factories became a staple item in the architectural iconography of Mao's industrial regime, and many photographs of the FAW since the 1950s included the main entrance and the two towered buildings against cooling towers and chimneys in the background. As political symbols, the new factory became almost as important as the red flag.

²¹ The earliest example in Changchun, and in China as a whole, was the Soviet victorious monument built in 1945.

²² Chairman Mao declared that he would like to see clusters of chimneys from the Tiananmen. At a time when pollution was far from a popular concern, chimneys were the symbol of prosperous industry, especially in China which lacked heavy industry in the early 1950s.



Fig 5-4 the tool processing factory near the main gate

Source: photo by the author in 2009



Fig 5-5 National Cultural Palace in Beijing, designed by Zhang Bo in 1958

Source: photo by the author in 2003

In regard to national form, the pagoda-like tower was perhaps the easiest and most widely used motif in modern Chinese architecture that looked back to indigenous tradition. Before the Japanese imposed Developing-Asia in Changchun in the early 1930s, under the auspices of the KMT, returning architects such as Yang Tingbao and Dong Dayou had completed a few governmental buildings in Nanjing and Shanghai that applied roofed-tower as a unifying element in design. In constructing the famous “triple ten” buildings in Beijing in 1958 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the PRC, Chinese style towers appeared on six out of the ten buildings.²³ (Fig 5-5)

There are several reasons for why the ruling governments were so engaged with towers in institutional buildings as a symbol of the regime. Extruding towers could easily catch the audience’s attention, and fit well with architectural composition. Large sloping roofs above the space of modern function meant a huge construction waste, both economically and architecturally. Tower-like roofs, instead, reduced the waste to the minimum, and can be added to buildings of all kinds without too much interference to interior spatial arrangement. Towers thus were architecture’s foremost contribution to monumental propaganda and they carried conspicuous prestige to convey ideological message.

If examined closely, however, the Chinese-style towers reminded the audience of the colonial State Council and Kangde Building (Mitsubishi Kotoku kaikan) built in colonial times, as national traditions had been revitalized earlier in Changchun during the 1930s under the colonial rule for different purposes. Both Developing-Asia style and socialist realism enlisted a single, slender tower crowned with a Chinese sloping roof with an allure to Chinese (and East Asian at large) tradition, not to mention exquisite traditional decorations. However, as analyzed in Chapter Three, the colonial towers

²³ “Triple ten” refers to “ten buildings in ten months to celebrate the ten years of Liberation” in 1958-1959. The municipal government in Changchun emulated the efforts of that of Beijing to build ten large public buildings, some of which have been discussed in the previous chapter, such as the hotel and Cultural Palace at the central plaza.

were a combination of both Chinese and Western elements, i.e. a combination of sloping roof and modified column order. The socialist towers, on the other side, a focal point as well, entailed Chinese decorative motifs alone. Towers in this case were modest as they were part of factory, but the Chinese element in design is more illustrative in the residential area to be discussed in next section.

More importantly, Chinese elements were used in Japanese institutional buildings as the materialization of the Kingly Way in which Asiatic moral virtues were endowed with the power to compete and overcome Western civilization, hence the rationale of new modernities. The towers on socialist factories, on the other hand, represented the expected combination of socialist content and national form, and modernization was equal to rapid industrialization.

The most distinct difference between developing-Asian and socialist realism (and Chinese renaissance under the KMT regime) exists in the use of traditional decoration in relation to Chinese nationalism. Under the colonial rule, as elaborated in previous chapters, cosmopolitan ideal pervaded that resulted in diverse styles, and although Chinese motifs among many other ethnic traditions were used, like popular and regional culture, they were stage-managed. Put in other words, in these cases Chinese culture was not spontaneous or innocuous, and was cautiously alienated from national independence. Despite their difference, ideological pretensions were equally enormous in towered buildings of different regimes (Nationalist, Japanese, and Communist). Towered buildings derived their inspiration from the same historical tradition, but they were part of the ideological content of the city. In the FFYP in the 1950s, the political metaphor charged Changchun with a new ideological face, and city plans and buildings had to make reference to the political context of building socialism and fighting against capitalism alongside with the Soviet. The Japanese pinned the ideals of pan-Asianism and ethnical harmony behind the façade of the Developing Asia buildings, while in the PRC, buildings with central or corner towers embodied “the magnificent, upward force of socialist society, the onward-forging lifestyle of Chinese people and their abundant, many-sided joy of living”.²⁴

Socialist realism also demonstrated itself in other vocabularies. For example, the Kangde Building was smoothly surfaced, while the factories had porticos fronted by simplified classical columns, which elements were widely used in the FAW and differed from colonial buildings remarkably. (Fig 5-6) Many factories had attached tall columns with little decoration as for porticos of factories or simply as punctuation for a long smooth façade. Besides, important factories and public buildings were surmounted with red stars. The most exotic building of the FAW was its cistern with obvious Russian influence. (Fig 5-7) They display a rapid move toward richness of form and monumentality. In this way, a modernist classicism has been adjusted to the basic concepts of socialist realism.

²⁴ Anders Aman. *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992. p.90

The FAW, China's first automobile construction factory, began operations a year ahead of schedule. In July of 1956 right before the third anniversary of its inauguration, the FAW manufactured 4-ton trucks of the make "jiefang" (liberation), and excited workers held a carnival for celebration.²⁵ (Fig 5-8) As the factory newspaper claimed, this was not only an offering to Chairman Mao himself on the eve of the third anniversary of laying the founding stone, but also marked an end to the humiliated history of China's inability of producing vehicles, and it showed the bright future of the FFYP that would achieve its objectives ahead of time.²⁶



Fig 5-6 the assembling factory of the FAW
Source: photo by the author in 2009



Fig 5-7 the FAW cistern
Source: photo by the author in 2009

Building the FAW in Changchun answered Mao's call for changing previous consumption cities into production centers by means of socialist urban planning which aimed at the correction of "the ills inherited from the era of capitalism". The FAW soon became a national symbol of the FFYP and the achievement of Chinese socialism, effectively substituting for Changchun's unpleasant association of with colonial rule while using similar architectural elements. Concurrent with the FAW, a number of universities and factories were established or relocated to Changchun, signaling the new age of urban development of the city.²⁷ But the construction of the FAW, the largest industrial project of the FFYP, was undoubtedly the most conspicuous achievement in Changchun and also the symbol of the increasingly growing working class, and regional and national newspapers had kept reporting every achievement it gained in the following decades. (Fig 5-9)

²⁵ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977).

²⁶ *Automobile Workers*. 1956-7-1.

²⁷ Changchun shi dang'an guan (Changchun Municipal Archive) (ed.). *Changchun shi dashi ji* (chronicle of Changchun, 1948-1977).



Fig 5-8 celebrating the production of Liberation-make trucks

Source: *yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng*.



Fig 5-9 a celebration in the FAW

Source: *yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng*.

As an early industrial plant of the PRC, the FAW was also one of the first Chinese socialist work units, or *danwei*, that assumed multiple functions: industrial production, housing, day-care, transporting, education, entertainment, sports, bath, etc., as an essential means for population regulation and settlement control. Amongst these functions, housing provision within a *danwei* was unique as the new, unique community organizer of Chinese socialism, and housing design as a form of spatial interventions was expected to facilitate the transition to socialism. Next, I will turn to the non-production sector of the FAW to illustrate the way in which people lived in the *danwei* and used the space.

III. The FAW Residential Compound

Before an elaboration of the characteristics of Chinese *danwei* system and its social function, I will first discuss in this section the principles of Chinese socialist housing design, i.e., standardization of design and collective lifestyle made possible by the design, and how different building types in the FAW constituted a self-contained workers' community.

Principles of Housing Design in the FFYP

Stalinist planners had consciously appropriated radical architectural program to enhance communal living, including the policy to site new housing within close proximity of the factories and industrial complexes where the occupants were to work, in order to minimize the length of the journey to work with rich cultural life around the workplace. This outcome was further augmented by the involvement of individual enterprises in the provision of housing as encouraged by the state.²⁸ In 1953 when the

²⁸ David Bray argues that the outcome of communal life was not an intended outcome under Stalinism but was dictated by limited social resources, hence shared facilities in communal housing such as kitchens and toilets. See David Bray.

CCP was ready to launch its own industrializing programs, Soviet experts were on hand to pass on the results of many years' experience in design standardization, and their Chinese counterparts were about to follow closely the path to socialist transition established by the Soviet Union.

Centralization and standardization of the design processes were favored in socialist countries because they allowed for the coordinated and efficient deployment of technical resources. Centralization meant that design expertise could be concentrated and design tasks coordinated so as to achieve finished designs as efficiently as possible, while standardization ensured that identical design standards could be applied throughout the nation rapidly.²⁹ The importance of standardization was most pronounced in the area of urban housing. Although there were many different types of factory and institution, and each required a certain degree of specialization in design, the housing that was to be built alongside the factory or institution could conform to universal national standards. With the FFYP calling for the construction of huge amount of urban housing to accommodate workers in rapid industrialization, the potential benefits from standardizing design and systematizing the construction process were readily apparent. It was also politically important because unity and standardization in architecture was seen as reflecting an overall unity in ideological stance.

As David Bray notes,

Chinese construction authorities learning from the Soviet experience in design and construction adapted and developed two basic forms of housing suited to mass production: the first was a simple dormitory style consisting of individual rooms opening off long corridors with shared toilet, washing, and cooking facilities; the second was apartment style that combined two or more rooms to form an independent residence. (Fig 5-10) Both housing forms were employed in FAW's residential compound.

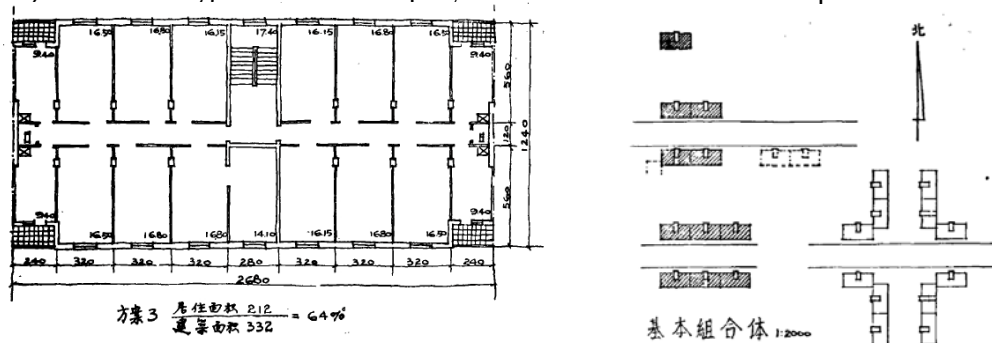


Fig 5-10 a standard design for housing unit – *danyuan*, (left) and possibilities of combination of *danyuan* in a housing compound (right).

Source: Li Chunling. "standardized design of cost-reduced housing design". *Architectural Journal*. 1955(1).

Social Space and Governance in Urban China. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, p.91.

²⁹ For the development of this institution, including change of its name and institutional connections, see David Bray, p. 132. The FFYP called for the construction of thirty-one tractor factories, each to be located at key points throughout the country to serve regional agriculture. All were built according to the same standard design developed by the General Design Office in consultation with the First Ministry of Machinery.

To facilitate this kind of collective-oriented lifestyle, Chinese architects suggested grouping two or three housing blocks that enclosed an internal courtyard together to form small compounds within the larger residential compound. Even though this meant that some buildings would face east instead of south, the architect considered the principle of collectivity to override the issue of sunshine. By establishing a number of smaller compounds (formed by the grouping of buildings) within the *danwei* compound, the plan allowed for certain aspects of social life to be carried out on a smaller, more practical scale of collectivity.

Designed as such, it is apparent that collective life in the livelihood sector of a *danwei* was arranged on various levels. For example, several families shared toilets and kitchens, and several buildings shared public facilities such as playgrounds in the internal courtyard for recreation. Also, smaller compounds that formed distinctive residential areas provided larger public space such as sports ground, canteens, medical clinics, bathhouses, etc. Finally, all residents shared facilities such as the central park, meeting halls, stadiums, kindergartens, and primary schools. Despite different composition and buildings types, the overriding objective of these housing compounds as part of Chinese *danwei* was identical: the production of proletarian subjects with no contamination of capitalist individualism and materialism. Therefore, the unique combination of standardized housing and domestic spatial arrangement played a crucial role in the transition to socialism.

The collective housing idea had already existed in China for decades, as in the recent practice by the KMT and Japanese colonial regime.³⁰ However, using standardized design in housing compounds with expectation to enhance collectivism and class sentiment was institutionally novel in the PRC, and *danwei* housing were built on an unprecedented scale to translate ritual, political and class relationships into spatial terms through arrangement of daily life. Embodying new political ideology and lifestyle, these residential estates was to be the centerpieces of the new socialist society.

Buildings in FAW's Residential Sector

A lesson learned by the CCP from the deficiencies of the Soviet model of industrialization was to avoid overemphasis of opening new factories at the cost of improving workers' livelihood standard. Therefore, the construction of housing, groceries, and other auxiliary facilities of residential compounds started in concurrency with the construction of the factories of the FAW. After the Russian-produced general plan was sent to China in April 1953, the Eastern China Industrial Architectural Design Institute in Shanghai (ECIA) was commissioned by the state to render the plan of FAW's residential and auxiliary buildings.³¹

³⁰ For the modern practice of collective living and housing, on its republican origin see Wen-hsin Yeh. "Republican origins of the *danwei*" p.60 and Wen-hsin Yeh. *Shanghai Splendor*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. The Japanese built quite a lot of corporate housing in Manchuria, for example, the residential district of Fengming St. in Dalian, and housing units of the colonial State Council in Xinjing.

³¹ Zhang Bochun. "20 shiji 50 niandai sulian yuanjian yiqi gaishu" (A brief introduction of the soviet-aided FAW

In the residential area, the ECIA took charge of what was called “specific planning” (*xiangxi guihua*), including the design of apartments and dormitories, gardening, water supply and sewage, transportation. Based on the general plan (*zongti guihua*) produced by Soviet experts, the specific plan worked on the layout of residential and other buildings and was completed in the summer of 1954.³² The housing project started immediately. When FAW’s main factories were built up in succession, workers also moved into the new apartments in 1955.³³ By 1956, a total floor area of 320,000 square meters was completed. According to 6 square meters per capita in the specific plan, the newly built area was able to house approximately 50,000 people.³⁴ The factory and residential compounds consisted of the first modern and grandiose “automobile town” of the PRC.

The ECIA plan followed the principle that residential and industrial areas should be located close enough so that the journey to work takes no more than thirty minutes by bus or bicycle, the chief modes of daily travel.³⁵ The FAW under construction hence was divided into factory area (production sector) and residential area (non-production sector), and the two parts altogether constituted a unique institution of Chinese socialism, that is, work unit (*danwei*). As scholars have revealed, *danwei* was featured by “a lifetime social welfare system from cradle to grave, and a network of relationships encompassing work, home, neighborhood, and social and political membership”.³⁶ Moreover, Chinese *danwei* became actively engaged in forming new urban communities on a large scale, hence promoted urbanization and modernization under Maoism. The FAW factory community was one of the first examples with a complete set of facilities that embraced collective life.

The FAW residential area consists of three parts: central garden and plaza, Chinese style blocks, and Western style blocks. (Fig 5-11) The planning reflected the norms of Soviet socialism in building new towns: axial symmetry, regularity and clarity

project in the 1950s). *Journal of Harbin Industrial University*: Vol.6, No.14, 2004. see also Wang Huabin. “Wo men dui dongbei mouchang juzhuqu guihua sheji gongzuo de jiancha” (self-criticism of the planning and design of a residential area in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2).

³² “Because all units contributed to fulfilling the general plan produced by the Russian experts, the specific plan had thus been proceeding smoothly.” See Wang Huabin. “Wo men dui dongbei mouchang juzhuqu guihua sheji gongzuo de jiancha” (self-criticism of the planning and design of a residential area in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2).

³³ *Automobile Workers*. 1954-12-24

³⁴ The figures come from Yang Zhaoyuan. *Changchun Jianzhuzhi caogao* (Manuscript of Gazetteer of Architecture in Changchun). the standard in the Soviet Union was 9 sq meters, while “accoding to the current situations in China, this standard is not realistic”. The standard for the FAW housing was set at 6 sq meters, which “still proved high”. See Wang Huabin. “Wo men dui dongbei mouchang juzhuqu guihua sheji gongzuo de jiancha” (self-criticism of the planning and design of a residential area in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2); also Wang Huabin. “jiji chuanguozuo, nuli tigao zhuzhai jianzhu sheji shuiping” (actively practice and improve the skill of housing design). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1962(2).

³⁵ Unlike the United States, where the best housing is almost invariably located some distance away from industrial districts, and the quality of housing usually be-comes better with increasing distance from the city center, in Chinese cities the quality of housing does not vary significantly over space and virtually no single family houses are constructed. See Ma.

³⁶ Wen-hsin Yeh. “Republican origins of the *danwei*”. Xiaobo Lu (ed.). *danwei: the changing Chinese workplace in historical and comparative perspective*. London: M.E.Sharpe, 1997, p.60

of the relationship between the principal and the subordinate, uniformity of style and height, etc. Its land uses were primarily residential and recreational (with two shops on the tower's ground-floor), in contrast to the mix of land uses often found in the West since the Industrial Revolution.



Fig 5-11 general plan of the FAW
Source: by courtesy of Changchun
Institute of City Planning



Fig 5-12 western-style residential blocks
Source: photo by the author, 2009

The general demeanor of the site was attractive and inviting. The central park (Gongqingtu Park) and Yingchun Plaza was located at the center of the residential area. Framed by sloping roofed apartment buildings, the park included a small pond, trees, walkways and benches for the pedestrians. The landscaping made the site much greener than typical tenements and provided opportunities for children to play while remaining under the watchful eyes of adult users of the park. The axis of the park strung up a series of small plazas, forming the largest shared public park and a spacious recreation place for all residents. Apartments surrounding the central park are heightened and carefully decorated, especially on the roof, to enrich the silhouettes of the central area.³⁷

Residential blocks (*jiefang*) are the basic elements for the organization of the residential area. In FAW's residential area, Chinese style apartment blocks sandwiched the central park, while the Western style apartment blocks are located diagonally away across the main street. Each block is unique, but all have a distinct axis to regulate the layout. Apartment buildings are laid on the four edges of each block along streets. Service facilities such as power distribution station and daycare center were placed inside the block. Part from buildings, playground, green space, parking space and storage area

³⁷ Wang Huabin. "jiji chuangzuo, nuli tigao zhuzhai jianzhu sheji shuiping" (actively practice and improve the skill of housing design). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal); 1962(2).

are also included inside the block. Geometry and symmetry dominated the plan of each block, showing the strong order of space.

Western style blocks consisted of three-storied apartment buildings with a Western pediment as the most distinctive ornament. In order to receive sunshine, a Chinese living habit, most apartment buildings were aligned to North-South axis, hence a rectangular shape of the blocks. Windows, balconies and flower-stands of the apartments were well decorated, though balconies and flower-stands on the façade accord to aesthetic more than functional need. The clay sculptures of western emblazonry on the pediment and above the doors of housing units further accentuate the foreignness of the buildings. (Fig 5-12) Inside the block, some of the ground units of the apartment buildings were designed as daycares or residential management offices.

The Chinese blocks, on the other hand, are not only larger and higher, but also richer and more varied in housing shape and the silhouettes as a whole. The Western style apartment buildings are relatively small in that each contains three to five housing units while the Chinese style apartment building consists of as many as sixteen units. Unlike the Western style blocks, apartment buildings in the Chinese style blocks form a square in plan, and are laid surrounding the central park. Buildings in the Chinese style blocks have at least four stories, and the exceptions of five stories are given to those flanking the central park. The towered and hip-roofed apartments, instead of standing alone, formed part of a larger composition and created a visual reference point in the skyline. (Fig 5-13)

Several roof styles appeared in different locations in these blocks: hip roofs in general, extruded towers facing the central plaza, and gable and hip roofs used for special buildings such as the hotel for Russian experts. (Fig 5-14) Despite the variety of roof styles, the roofed towers on the top of two buildings that flanked the entrance of the central park were the most distinctive examples. (Fig 5-15) these towers were used for residences, while the ground floor of the two buildings were used for shops. Building bases, much higher than the Western style apartments, are richly decorated in combination of the undulating topography of the area, hence the facade is divided into three parts in the classical manner. Combined with decorative screens on exterior walls, the balcony became a vigorous element enriching the façade, although distribution of the balconies was governed by considerations of architectural effect rather than consideration for the function inside. In order to match the silhouettes of the apartment buildings, the eight electric distribution stations inside these blocks were also crowned with sloping roofs.³⁸ (Fig 5-16)

³⁸ The project was reproached due to costly construction as such, “and the decoration on the electric station cost ten more *yuan* per square meter for the whole project”. See Feng Yunshan (ed). “*yiqi de sanci fanlangfei douzheng*” (The three campaigns of anti-waste in the FAW). *quanguo zhengxiewenshi he xuexi weiyuanhui* (Political consultancy and research committee of China) (ed.). *yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng* (establishment and development of the First Automobile Works). Beijing: Chinese Culture and History Press, 2009, p. 157-158.

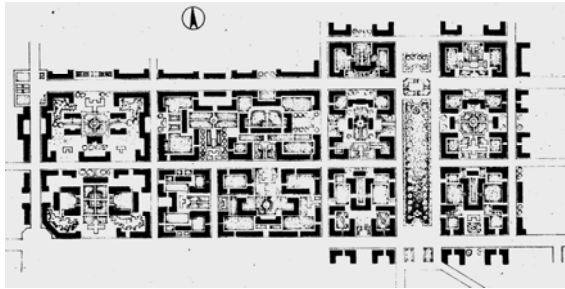


Fig 5-13 Plan of Chinese-style residential blocks

Source: *jianshe sheji shinian*.



Fig 5-14 view of Russian expert hotel (now used as FAW Hotel)

Source: photo by the author in 2009



Fig 5-15 view of the towered residences. Its ground floor is still used for shop.

Source: photo by the author in 2009



Fig 5-16 an electric distribution station within a Chinese-style housing block

Source: photo by the author in 2009

Apartments were composed of several cellular housing units (*danyuan*). Each unit consists of a staircase shared by multiple independent apartments. The transformation of the *danyuan* into collectivized living space showed one aspect of a much larger project, for the *danyuan* housing unit was merely one element within a larger collective entity: the *danwei*. In this spirit, Chinese architects gained confidence to see themselves as political agents to apply spatial design to facilitate the transition to communism.

Each housing unit was designed according to standard architectural components and modules, and apartment buildings were assembled by a few such units, hence richness in length and form. The FAW housing was also called a new model that was “constructed based on the principles of standard design for workers” by the government.³⁹ As illustrated in Fig 5-17, rooms were designed deep and narrow, yet

³⁹ Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jianzhu gongcheng bu (Ministry of Construction of the PRC). *Jianzhu sheji shinian* (Ten years of architectural design, 1949-1959). Beijing: Beijing Xinhua Press, 1959. “Changchun first Automobile Works and housing compounds”

comfortable proportioned to form a *danyuan*, with concern for heat conservation. There are eight apartments in one of the housing units, among which two comprising two bed-rooms and a kitchen and a bathroom, others were single room with no kitchens. Three families shared a three-bedroom apartment, “a temporary measure to alleviate housing shortage.”

Gardens and green spaces inside the blocks play out the role to supplement the symmetrical residential plan. (Fig. 5-18) However, the geometrical layout of the inside gardens sometimes impeded inhabitants from reaching their destination easily, given the large scale the square residential blocks. Public green spaces including the central park, tree-lined avenues, traffic parks, etc., are equally distributed in the residential plan, reflecting the egalitarian ideal of socialism. Like park system of the colonial times, all green spaces are connected with one another in prevention of fire expansion.⁴⁰ An elementary school and a kindergarten are situated on both sides of the central park. (see Fig. 5-22) The easy access to public green spaces guaranteed the safety of children when they walked between their homes and schools, the application of another Soviet planning norm.

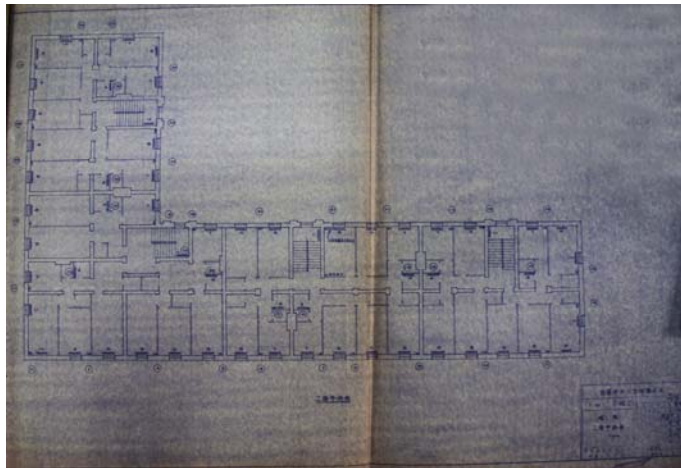


Fig 5-17 combination of FAW housing *danyuan*
Source: by courtesy of FAW Archive

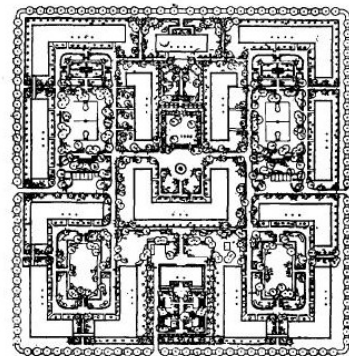


Fig 5-18 landscape plan of the courtyard as enclosed by Chinese-style apartments

Source: Wang Huabin, 1955

According to the Soviet residential planning theories, auxiliary facilities such as dinning halls, public baths, workers’ club, auditorium hall and alike were situated in the center of the residential area. Socialist content also included reading rooms for the perusal of newspapers and magazines, kindergartens and nursery schools to educate the children and enable their mothers to go out to work, sports centers and stadium facilities marking the new role of sport in the life of the community, and rest homes for deserving workers. Nonetheless, there was no centralized commercial area in the residential area,

⁴⁰ Wang Huabin. “jiji chuangzuo, nuli tigao zhuzhai jianzhu sheji shuiping” (actively practice and improve the skill of housing design). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal); 1962(2).

while “groceries should be placed in independent buildings or on the ground floor of apartments along the main streets”.⁴¹ As such, the ground floors of the two towered apartment buildings facing the central plaza were used for shops. (see Fig. 5-15) The integration of commercial space in workers’ estates and in ordinary urban neighborhoods provided convenient service for inhabitants on the one side, as equal distribution of social resources was a keystone of socialist planning. In this vein, the polarization of rich commercial districts and slums could be eliminated. But on the other side, it also implied that commercial activities were no more the excluding priority and Chinese urban communities were much more self-contained than their counterparts in the West.

Aside from daycares, banks, shops that were integrated with apartment buildings, canteens and bathrooms that were shared by all residents of the *danwei*, as well as facilities of higher standard such as the reception center, hotels, the stadium, worker’s clubs, teaching buildings, etc, were built up. These free-standing buildings borrowed architectural language of southern Chinese folk buildings, crowned with gable and hip roofs with exquisite Chinese decorations on eaves and pediments in response to the general style of apartment buildings. (Fig 5-19) However, they differed from apartments in lower height (two or three stories) and smaller volume, which helped inhabitants and visitors orient themselves in the residential area.⁴² These facilities were distributed around residential blocks, further facilitating socialist collectivism, and the configuration of housing became a political determinant of consciousness and behavior that accorded with party line.



Fig 5-19 FAW’s two-storied dining hall,
now used as the FAW Archive
Source: photo by the author in 2009

The various kinds of buildings and their percentage of the floor area constructed can be seen from the two tables below. (Table 5.1, 5.2)

⁴¹ Huadong jianzhu gongcheng shejiyuan. “chengshi zhuzhaiqu de guihua he jianzhu” (the planning and design for urban housing compounds). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1958(1)

⁴² In the factory newspaper, *Automobile Workers*, it was reported that dinning halls and reception center were regarded as landmarks for inhabitants to orient themselves.

Table 5.1 Building categories and land used⁴³

Category of buildings	Land used		
	Hectare	%	Sq. meters per person
Residential blocks	72.7	38.7	15.6
Public buildings	37.94	20	8.1
Public green space	45.5	24.3	9.8
Plaza	4.6	2.5	0.99
Streets	27.2	14.5	5.85
Total	188	100	41.1

Table 5.2 Floor area of residential blocks and average density⁴⁴

Stories	Percentage %	People housed	Density (people per hectare)	Floor area of residential blocks	
				Hectare	Percentage
5	15	6,894	573	12.1	18.1
4	55	25,608	533	48.0	51.9
3	30	13,968	433	32.3	35.0
Total	100	46,560	504	92.4	100

The relatively high standard which incurred harsh criticism in the campaign against waste in the construction industry in late 1954 reflected the avid pursuit of the socialist modern of Chinese architects. More importantly, the enthusiasm of professionals as exemplified in unflinching diversification of housing form and decorations showed that Chinese architects increasingly saw themselves as political activists whose spatial interventions must facilitate the transition to socialism. Although severely austerity in housing design as a physical embodiment of the slogan “production first, livelihood second” dominated Chinese urban landscape for more than two decades since the mid-1950s, the early experiment of the FFYP projects provided antithesis to urban uniformity and standardization recognized as paramount planning principles. Like that in the colonial period, the content and form of the modern was not a constant, and we will see how housing design was affected considerably by political movements in the next section.

Architects and Experiment of Non-Standardization

The whole FAW residential project, as an integral part of the FAW of in the FFYP, was undertaken under the auspices of the state. The chief architect of this project was Wang Huabin, the chief architect of the ECIA at the time. Wang was born in 1907 in Fuzhou, Fujian province, and like many preeminent contemporary architects he graduated from Tsinghua University and studied at the University of Pennsylvania during

⁴³ Huadong gongye jianzhu sheji yuan (ECIA). “dongbei mouchang juzhuqu xiangxi gui Hua sheji de neirong jieshao” (A Brief of the content of a residential area of a Northeastern factory). *Architectural Journal*: 1955(2)

⁴⁴ Ibid.

1928-1931. After his return to China, he had worked in Shanghai for most of his career before Communist takeover, serving as a practicing architect and a dean professor of architecture school in two universities.⁴⁵ In his own words, Wang admitted that his “major interest exists in reforming Chinese architecture,” and his specialty was house design and housing planning.⁴⁶ He worked in the Housing Bureau of Central Trust in the KMT government for three years (1946-1949), and was promoted to the chief of the bureau in 1949, hence knowledgeable of housing issues and design.

The Eastern China Industrial Architectural Design Institute (ECIA) that took charge of this project was established in 1952 in Shanghai, and was one of the first design institutions of the PRC. A number of well-known Shanghai-based architects who had gained their fame during the Nanjing regime worked in the ECIA, including Zhuang Jun, Chen Zhi, Zhao Shen and Wang Huabin.⁴⁷ As architectural activity such as housing provision formed an indispensable part of central planning, once it had been subsumed by the five-year plans and had come to be dominated entirely by big state-sponsored commissions, there was no longer any room for private architectural practices.

However, the initiatives and enthusiasm of architects cannot be overlooked, especially in the FAW project. Under Wang’s leadership, the FAW residential project embodied the way in which diversified architectural forms contributed to building socialism and embodied advantage of socialism. Wang admitted that “in the façade of the housing blocks (of the FAW residential area), our attention had been primarily laid on the treatment of roofs, in an attempt to achieve varied form of the roof.”⁴⁸ Roof styles, as discussed in previous pages, were regarded as the most distinguishing element of national form with many expressions, such as towers and various hipped roofs. (Fig 5-20) In addition to roof styles, important positions on the façade such as balconies, windows, doors, decorative screen walls, etc. that appeared on the main façade or on end walls with more consideration to formal need had numerous forms of ornamentation with scarce repetition. (Fig 5-21) It is obvious how much enthusiasm and hard work architects had put into this project to produce blueprints for these irregular architectural components.

The enthusiasm of the ECIA architects was omnipresent during the first years of Maoism, and architects were also earnest to fulfill their part in industrialization and modernization that would eventually turn China into “a strong and wealthy state,” which was the pursuit of many generations of Chinese intellectuals. Wang’s view of formal diversity was enthusiastically shared by his fellow architects. Aware of that the FAW was the most important plant of the FFYP and was crucial to building Chinese socialism,

⁴⁵ Hujiang University (1933-1939) and Hangchow University (1939-1949). After the Sino-Japanese War broke out, the school of architecture at Hujiang University was incorporated into Hangchow University, where Wang served as a dean professor till 1949.

⁴⁶ For Wang’s life experiences, see Lai Delin. *jindai zhejiang lu* (Introduction of modern Chinese architects). Beijing: Hydraulic and electric Press, 2008, “Wang Huabin”. A brief introduction by Wang’s grandson is available online at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_54da4dbd01000da4.html.

⁴⁷ A brief 50-year history of ECIA is available online at <http://www.abbs.com.cn/ecadi/2.htm>.

⁴⁸ Wang Huabin. “Wo men dui dongbei mouchang juzhuqu guihua sheji gongzuo de jiancha” (self-criticism of the planning and design of a residential area in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2): 22.

architects of the ECIA devoted themselves to this exciting project. As Israel Epstein, a Polish writer who had lived and worked in the PRC since the 1930s, had written,

*“we all felt impelled by the same spirit [of building Chinese socialism during the 1950s]. That is collective struggle toward the accomplished goals, with no care for fame or private interest. People who had not participated in this collective work can hardly know such feeling.”*⁴⁹



Fig 5-20 details of the sloping roofed apartments

Source: by courtesy of the FAW Archival (Left), and photo by the author in 2009 (Right)



Fig 5-21 different combination of decorative screen walls on the facades of Chinese-style housing apartments

Source: photo by the author in 2009

In the meantime, diversification exceeded single buildings and was also demonstrated in the general plan of FAW's livelihood area. The most distinct example is that, at an intersect of three main streets, the buildings at the four corners were

⁴⁹ Author of *Unfinished Revolution of China*, Israel Epstein was a naturalized Chinese journalist and author and also a member of the Communist Party of China. Quoted from Gu Baozi. “yiqujihua chutai qianhou” (The preparations and consequences of the first FYP). *Xiangchao*. 2009/2.

decorated with similar motifs such as extruded towers, high bases with capped edges, etc. However, the plans of the four buildings were different from one another. (Fig 5-22)

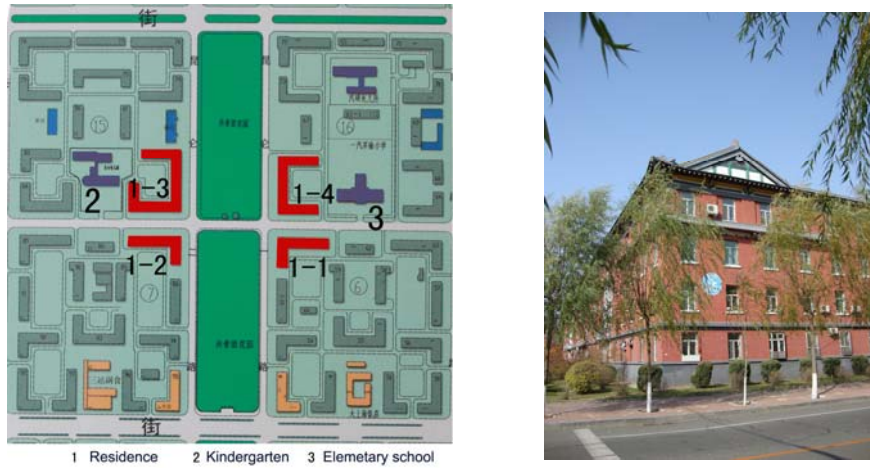


Fig 5-22 the different forms in plan of the four residential apartment buildings, while their appearance was similar featured by the same architectural elements (roof style, base, etc.)
Source: by courtesy of the FAW Archival (Left), and photo by the author in 2009 (Right)

Wang Huabin was a supporter of architectural modeling, and earnestly publicized the 3M modular system in China in the fifties and sixties.⁵⁰ He argued that modular system contributed to pre-fabrication and fast construction, which “corresponds to what the central government called for building socialism with greater, faster, better and more economical results”.⁵¹ Nevertheless, what Wang opposed was an over-standardization that dictated a rigid prescription of housing design and left out architects’ motivation to provide variations of composition and decoration.

It was not entirely fortuitous that the push for standardization coincided with the economic austerity drive and the political call for an increase in the speed of collectivization. Standardization in design, particularly in the area of urban housing, played a major role in rapid industrialization to increase collectivization. However, the overwhelming concern for economy and speed of construction resulted in monochromatic urban spaces throughout Chinese cities. On the contrary, Wang was aware of the deficiencies of overemphasizing standardization at the very beginning of the FFYP and became an ardent proponent of diversifying layout and architectural forms based on standard units. He argued for the necessity of architectural diversity in an essay,

“As the form of housing architecture is simple in itself, the aesthetics of housing compounds depends on how space is compartmented, organized, and beautified. ... The combination of wholeness and diversity of housing

⁵⁰ The basic module is 10 centimeters, marked as “M”. 3M refers to the use of 30 centimeters as the modulus to promote prefabricated construction. See Wang Huabin, “Jianzhu moshu shulie de tantao” (Discussion of architectural modular sequence). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1961(10): 5-10.

⁵¹ Ibid. p.10

*compounds is a good solution to enhance the artistic standard of housing design. ... A certain extent of diversity of architectural forms can supplement the integrity of the whole plan, which will grant vivid and novel impression to the people.*⁵²

The FAW's residential compound best materialized Wang Huabin's view of diversification of housing form in organic combination with standardized design. The richness of composition, housing form and decoration demonstrated the enthusiasm and confidence of contemporary architects to play an instrumental role in the transition to socialism through spatial intervention.

By 1955, a good portion of housing buildings had been built up. However, the project was behind schedule because of too many irregular components, and construction cost exceeded the original budget by one million *yuan*.⁵³ Worst of all, as Khrushchev came to power and cultural policy changed in the aftermath of Stalin's death in 1953, de-Stalinization was to mean rejecting extravagant monumentalism that was the hallmark of Stalinist nationalist style. Instead of flaunting the might of the state, Soviet architecture began to concentrate on more practical and immediate concerns, such as addressing the urban housing crisis that had become increasingly critical in the latter years of Stalin's rule.

The same reproach swept China beginning in late 1954 that targeted at costly "national form" in construction,⁵⁴ and the FAW residential project stood for the main target of criticism. On March 7, 1955, an editorial appeared on the CCP's official newspaper *People's Daily* criticized the high construction cost of the FAW's residential project: "(the architects) ignored the prepared standardized design drawing, but tried all means to design (these parts) by themselves".⁵⁵ Earlier on, the Ministry of Construction and Engineering convened a national conference in Beijing to launch the anti-waste campaign in construction. The attempts to develop a Chinese national style to represent the new regime were now accused of practicing "bourgeois formalism" and attempted to launch a "classical revival" in the guise of national style. The conference concluded that, given the state of the national economy, aesthetics could only be considered secondary to the principles of economics and utility.

⁵² Wang Huabin. "jiji chuanguozuo, nuli tigao zhuzhai jianzhu sheji shuiping" (actively practice and improve the skill of housing design). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1962(2).

⁵³ *Renmin Ribao*, 1955-3-7.

⁵⁴ The first major political intervention into the arena of urban planning and construction began in late 1954, when Premier Zhou Enlai publicly criticized the construction industry for "wasting the limited resources of the state." Through 1955 this campaign gained momentum as it targeted a number of key figures accused of adhering to extravagant standards in architecture, building, and urban planning. In 1955, Li Fuchun (vice-premier and chairman of the State Planning Commission) reported: "For several years, we have neglected the difference between two kinds of standards, productive and nonproductive construction. Standards for nonproductive construction were set far too high for the level of our country's economic development In construction of new industrial cities, too, there were many cases in which standards were set too high, modernization was sought too quickly, or the appearances of cities was over-emphasized." Quoted in Koshizawa Akira. "China's Urban Planning". *The Developing Economies*: Volume 16, Issue 1, March 1978. See also David Bray. *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.130.

⁵⁵ A criticism of the costly construction. See "zhongdian gongcheng de teshuhua (Specialization of projects with priority)". *People's Daily*. 1955-3-7

Wang Huabin, chief architect of the project, published his essay on *Architectural Journal* about his reflections on the mistakes, in which he self-criticized his “idealist design conceptions that only took Chinese roofs as national form,” hence the budget excess.⁵⁶ While much of the debate centered on questions of architectural style, there was also criticism of norms and standards set by the Soviet advisers in the areas of housing and urban planning. In this essay, Wang confessed that while these standards may have been suited to the Soviet Union, they were too high for China given its inferior economic circumstances: “although the ratio of 6 sq meters per person instead of 9 sq meters that is the minimum to meet Soviet sanitary requirement was adopted, planning density can be increased without breaching sanitation and fire protection requirements.”⁵⁷

In June 1955 the CCP Central Committee issued a range of directives concerning measures to be adopted in order to reduce construction costs. The People’s Daily later reported that costs for construction of nonproduction-related buildings would be reduced even further.⁵⁸ Significant economies were achieved through the abandonment of all internal and external ornamentation.⁵⁹ Roofs that had previously been designed with traditional eaves and gables were flattened, balconies were dispensed with, and arches were eliminated. Despite this overtly political focus, the anti-waste campaign also led to reappraisals of more mundane issues such as the standards adopted in design and construction. The resultant buildings were severely austere in appearance and provided visual proof of the relentless shift of resources from consumption to production that marked this period, and a mediocre outlook of collective housing had dominated Chinese urban landscape for the next few decades.

However, the experiment of planning the FAW residential area displayed the attempt of an alternative path to the socialist modern embodied in architectural representation and the new way of life. Large sloping roofs and traditional decorative motifs featured apartment compounds as a whole, but that did not mean architecture was entirely subordinated to tradition. Housing unit that met daily needs and modular system that realized mass construction were undergirded in housing design, not to mention the goal to facilitate collective working and living. Still less that it was to look old-fashioned. The architecture of a national form would certainly not be called modernist, but it would be new, and above all, was based on tradition and allied with “socialist content,” a content inserted in the form.

As has been seen, spatial formation of the FAW’s housing compound stipulated the new way of life which created proletarian subjects. In regard to architect’s place in

⁵⁶ Wang Huabin. “Wo men dui dongbei mouchang juzhuqu guihoa sheji gongzuo de jiancha” (self-criticism of the planning and design of a residential area in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2)

⁵⁷ Wang Huabin. “Wo men dui dongbei mouchang juzhuqu guihoa sheji gongzuo de jiancha” (self-criticism of the planning and design of a residential area in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2).

⁵⁸ People’s Daily. 1955-6-19. see also ECIA. “Fu dongbei mouchang juzhuqu xiangxi guihoa sheji de neirong jieshao” (Attached introduction of the residential compound planning of a factory in the Northeast). *Jianzhu xuebao* (Architectural Journal): 1955(2).

⁵⁹ The cost per square meter for construction of offices and university classrooms was to be reduced from 100 yuan to 45-70 yuan, while that for housing was to be reduced from 90 yuan to 20-60 yuan. See David Bray, pp.94-95.

social transformation, unlike, Chinese architects and urban planners saw themselves as technicians in the service of a primarily political project rather than revolutionary vanguards in the West, and were willing to align with the CCP-led government as long as the government was able to get rid of humiliation imposed by the foreigners. As they saw it, their task was to design spaces, buildings, and cities that would reproduce and reinforce the political, social, and productive relationships demanded by socialism. As exemplified in the enthusiasm of building the FAW housing compounds, Chinese architects entrusted themselves as political activists whose work made for the transition to socialism.

The FAW was just one of the many examples of community building for industrializing projects in the FFYP, but perhaps was the most conspicuous one. By the mid-1950s, more and more Western architects and theorists reflected on and reproached the absoluteness and monochrome of modernism. It was under totally different circumstances that Chinese professionals rejected modernism and proposed an alternative that looked back to their own tradition. Despite different cultural and socio-economic circumstances, methodologies of anti-standardizing everything and diversifying architectural form had been attempted in parallel on both sides of the Cold War in the mid-1950s.

IV. Living the Chinese *Danwei*: Socialist Life in the FAW

Transforming urban landscape and urban life fundamentally, the FAW was nothing more than a typical large state-managed *danwei* built under Maoism. As has been revealed, the *danwei* as a key social institution of Chinese socialism was delegated responsibility in a number of vital areas of social, economic, and political organization, including areas such as the provision of welfare, material support and housing, management of trade unions, employment and worker education, etc.⁶⁰ Given the role played by the *danwei* within the overall strategies of urban governance as the foundation of urban management, it is less surprising that it would also become the locus of urban infrastructure.

The profound social change brought about by Chinese *danwei* can be read in the writing of Edgar Snow, a friend of many high ranking CCP officials and the author of *Red Star over China* published in 1937 who was invited by Chairman Mao to visit China in 1970. He wrote about people's life and work in cities that he saw in the Northeast:

"All the factories I saw operated nurseries, clinics, hospitals, rest homes and part-time schools; all had clubs, theaters, drama teams and bands. Housing varied from miles of newly built cheap brick apartments with modem plumbing (some with shower baths and private toilets) to ramshackle tenement structures. "Clubs" and theaters might be in buildings

⁶⁰ For its definition and place in the state building of the PRC, see Xiaobo Lu (ed.), *danwei: the changing Chinese workplace in historical and comparative perspective*. London: M.E.Sharpe, 1997; David Bray, *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005; Duanfang Lu, *Building the Chinese Work Unit: Modernity, Scarcity, and Space, 1949-2006*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

... specially constructed for the purpose or in old converted houses or shops. Where the service was not covered by the welfare fund (as in state factories) the cost of nursery care (including noon meal) varied from six to ten yuan a month. Nurseries and kindergartens were sometimes well housed in former homes of the rich.

... In large factories I saw what might be called “milking stations” to which working mothers came at regular intervals to breastfeed their babies - whom they carried home at the end of the day. A nurse or two or baby-sitters cared for the infants while the mothers, nearby, operated machines.

... The workers were paid a 'norm-wage' in accordance with their “grade” and also received variable bonuses for over-norm piecework production. There was an eight-hour day and a six-day week in most state factories I saw. Plants worked two or three shifts. Housewives working in municipally owned shops as a rule spent only four to six hours on bench work and two to three hours in spare-time schools learning characters and Marxism.”⁶¹

It is obvious that many faces of daily life such as food preparation, child care, laundries, and other social activities were organized communally within *danwei*. Through the communal style of organization, workers ate in collective canteens, socialized in public recreation areas, and attended lectures and discussion groups in communal meeting halls. For example, on the domestic level, shared toilet, washing, and cooking facilities in apartments facilitated communal life, while children were divided into a number of different age groups and played in the internal courtyard of residential blocks. (Fig 5-23)



Fig 5-23 playground of a internal courtyard within a Chinese-style block

Source: *jianzhu sheji shinian*

With the advent of the new urban management of *danwei*, the functions of the factory, workers' club, and communal house were unified in one spatial form. These new socio-spatial arrangements were designed not simply with the aim of increasing labor productivity, but also set out the foundation in forging new men in the socialist

⁶¹ Edgar Snow. *Red China Today*. New York: Vintage Books, 1971, “Manchuria: Industrial Heartland,” pp.215-217. Snow mentioned about monthly wage of the workers, “Welfare benefits for union members included accident insurance and retirement on half pay, at sixty for men, fifty-five for women. Rents and utilities averaged three to six yuan a room and food costs were a bit less than in the south, or eight to twelve yuan per adult.” See p. 215.

working and living environment. Through this conjunction of a collectivized spatial form with a regularized schedule of collective activity, it was hoped that the new way of life under Chinese socialism would improve labor productivity and create model proletarian subjects.

In addition to promotion of collectivism, Chinese *danwei* also afforded the issues of the distribution of material supply and mass mobilization. The provision of material safety net was another important factor in establishing legitimacy for the new regime in the cities, and an urban household registry system was adopted to enmesh workers within the socioeconomic structures of the new regime.⁶² In the FAW, like in many other *danwei*, workers were grouped to study political situations for several hours in the afternoon of a working day, and huge banners were hung on the wall of apartments that no one would miss. (Fig 5-24) The regime of planning adopted by the CCP-led government ensured that the urban *danwei*, which had already become a basic unit of political organization, was rapidly transformed into the basic unit of economic planning as well as the primary site for political education and mobilization.



Fig 5-24 an old picture of the towered shop-residence. A banner in front of it read “If the American Imperialists Do Not Surrender, It Will Be Strangled.”

Source: *jianzhu sheji shinian*

For the spatial layout of the FAW compound and collective life organized within it, proletarian education was another principal goal to secure working-class commitment to political and productive goals in the urban factories. (Fig 5-25) The most common method adopted to pursue this task was the establishment of after-hours classes for factory workers at their places of work. As a worker recalls the enthusiasm of young workers for study at the FAW,

"When the FAW was established, there were about 18,000 employees, nearly all of whom were young people. ... The newly built FAW was the world of young people who were vigorous and earnest to devote to socialist construction. ... The factory provided various kinds of after-hour classes for workers, and organized a group of qualified teachers for this purpose.

⁶² David Bray, p.103

*Young people put most of their time after work for study. After off duty at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, young singles hurried to the dinning hall for a meal and ran to the Educational Building to attend evening school there. People of the night shift took class at 6 o'clock in the morning."*⁶³



Fig 5-25 a sketch of workers' club of the FAW
Source: *Automobile Workers*. 1954-3-16

The FAW became well-known immediately after it was completed and the “Liberation”-make trucks aroused pride as well as curiosity amongst Chinese people. In February of 1958, Chairman Mao came to the FAW on a factory inspection tour. In the following few years, many high-ranking Communist officials, including Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen etc., and social celebrities visited the FAW.⁶⁴

Amongst many visitors to the FAW, one was special. Puyi, the abdicated emperor of Manchukuo who had been imprisoned in a hinterland city in the Northeast until 1959, recorded his visit to the FAW in 1957 in an organized tourist-study group:

"Every time when I heard “Liberation” make automobiles, I could not help feeling proud and excited. ... Upon our arrival at the Auto City, I first saw endless rows of modern factories, department stores, hospitals, clubs, dinning halls, and workers' housing – indeed magnificent! Besides, wide roads paved with asphalt and all kinds of vehicles indicate that this is a new, modern city. ... I think it is very appropriate to call it an “Auto City”.

*... We were also showed to various welfare facilities for the workers of the FAW. The first place we visited was an educational building, which contained in it all levels of after-hours classes from de-illiteracy to college level courses. A total of 12,000 workers are working and studying in this building. Next we visited a hospital that serves the FAW, ... Then we were showed to a kindergarten."*⁶⁵

⁶³ Chen Jixin. “huoyue zai qichecheng de nianqing ren” (Vigorous young people in the automobile city). Culture and History Commission of the National Political Consultancy ed. *Yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng* (the establishment and development of the FAW). Beijing: China's Culture and History Press, 2007. p. 203-205.

⁶⁴ For articles that record these visits by Mao and others, see essays collected in The Committee of Culture and History of Changchun's Political Consultancy ed. “qiche gongye zhixing” (Preeminent figures in the FAW), in *Cultural and Historical Material of Changchun*. 1991(1); see also Culture and History Commission of the National Political Consultancy ed. *Yiqi chuangjian fazhan licheng* (the establishment and development of the FAW). Beijing: China's Culture and History Press, 2007.

⁶⁵ Puyi. *Aixin jueguo puyi riji* (Aisin Gioro Puyi's Dairy). Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1996, pp.83-86. (1957-6-11)

In the end of the dairy of the trip to his former imperial capital, Puyi concluded that the colonial remainders were totally eliminated by sweeping socialist construction, especially for the newly built automobile city that marked the profound change of Changchun as a socialist industrial center.

As mentioned before, the extravagant decoration and various form of FAW's housing compound incurred harsh criticism in the anti-waste campaign in the field of architecture in 1954-1955. Paradoxically, it was the careful design and well-equipped housing compound that helped FAW workers identify with the new factory community. Modern equipments such as kitchen, bath, and all-day hot water supply inside apartment improved livelihood standards of the workers who felt proud of working in the FAW, while daycare, elementary schools and dinning halls enhanced collective living and social solidarity leveled at socialism.⁶⁶

The negative utopias of collective life in the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc has been described by dissents as a hellish communal existence or "a deep individual alienation growing out of meaningless construction work and barrack existence."⁶⁷ The example of the FAW residential compounds provided a counter argument to such generalization. In 2001, a popular Chinese situation comedy "A Family in the Northeast" (*dongbei yijiaren*) was screened on TV, and the whole story was based on a portion of the FAW residential area. Through the family's daily life in the late 1990s and the way in which family members' recalled of the early years of the FAW, the housing compounds were the arena of vivid community life that provided security and helped form collective identity amongst the inhabitants.

V. Conclusions

In this chapter I elucidated the construction of a Chinese *danwei*, i.e., the FAW and its housing compound. The FAW was one of the largest projects in the FFYP, also one of the earliest socialist *danwei* in the PRC, an emblem of Chinese socialism under Mao's rein. I have illustrated that the socialist modern was conditioned by political circumstances developments and how housing design was affected by political movements as remarkable uniformity in spatial form. The standardization of spatial forms reflecting both the demands of economic austerity and the growing political move toward collectivization became a norm of the spatial formation of *danwei* and dominated urban Chinese landscape for decades. But the FAW compound demonstrated several qualities falling short of standardization. First, the production and livelihood sectors of the FAW were designed by Soviet and Chinese professionals, respectively. Second, Chinese architects such as Wang Huabin played an active role in diversifying housing

⁶⁶ Hot water supply was the most modern facet of all benefits, even judged from today's standard in Changchun. As there is a thermal electric power plant in the FAW, vaporized water was carried out through piping system from the factories and was circulated in residential apartments, which made hot water supply possible in the early 1950s. see *sushequ reshui de gongying wenti* (hot water supply in housing compounds). *Qiche gongren* (Automobile workers). 1956-6-21(4).

⁶⁷ Kenneth Straus. "The soviet factory as community organizer". Xiaobo Lu (ed.). *danwei: the changing Chinese workplace in historical and comparative perspective*. London: M.E.Sharpe, 1997, p.159

forms and decorations.

As the CCP regarded the Soviet model of planning and socialist realism the correct direction of building Chinese socialism, the Soviet influence was obvious. The factories of the FAW were designed by Soviet architects with Stalinist socialist realism. Two recent concepts that defined socialist realism were adopted in shaping the built environment of the FAW: the ensemble and the silhouette.⁶⁸ Here the concepts of classical architecture and classical town planning still held sway, from the ornament, the architectural detail, and the facade via the street, the square, and the block, to the factory community as an artistic entity.

The richness of housing appearance, on the other hand, showed architects' enthusiasm in building Chinese socialism. I have argued that Chinese architects were confident to see themselves as political activists to facilitate social change through spatial intervention. Indeed, collectivization was realized on several levels: from the domestic living unit that shared many livelihood facilities, to residential blocks, and eventually the arena for this radical new social formation was to be the *danwei* compound.

In the study of the FAW, a specific and representative *danwei*, I have shown that FAW was both a product of and an enabler of centrally determined policies to restore production and create proletarian subjects. The spatial arrangement of the FAW aimed to facilitate collectivization, organize and mobilize the population, enmesh the workers in the social structure. Through the account of socialist life that many inhabitants and visitors have written about, profound social change was taking place in Changchun in the 1950s, and the former colonial capital city was superseded by a socialist industrial city. The FAW was an emblem of the "great victory of Maoism," the victory not only over former colonial cruelty, but also over the capitalist world and capitalist manner of production. Despite its ephemeral experiment, it showed the path of achieving the socialist modern that surpassed its competitors.

⁶⁸ Anders Aman, *Architecture and Ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin Era*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

What I have aimed to demonstrate in the previous pages is that the built environment of Changchun offers visual interpretation to the idiosyncracities of Japanese colonial practices in Manchukuo and Communist modernizing projects, and uncovers connections between the two. Architecture and city planning not only shaped and reshaped Chinese cities to meet the ends of different political regimes, they are also instrumental to understanding the larger political and cultural context.

Though each of the previous chapters has had its own theme and focus, the study as a whole has had three main objectives. The first, and most important, has been to demonstrate the urban region of present-day Changchun came into formation during these culminating years of political turbulence, and reveal connections between the colonial past and socialist “present”. I have focused on competitions in architectural representation that projected a construction of the time and space of the nation. At the same time, the shaping of the built environment is also a writing of the history of the nation. I aim to write a political history of architecture and urban design of Changchun which recognizes its colonial precedents.

The second objective has been to demonstrate how the ideals of the Kingly Way (such as cultural independence, ethnic harmony, respect for the king, “following the way of heaven and bringing peace to the people,” etc.) and socialism (socialist equality, centralization and standardization of the design) found distinct demonstration in naming and building the capital colonial city, hence demonstrating qualities differing from the Western notion of modernity.

Finally, my aim has been to reveal how social identity was formed through everyday life in urban space. The material environment, as Lefebvre has pointed out, is both the product of, and the condition of, the possibility of social relations by which identities are formed and transformed. Under socialism, identity was articulated in terms of class rather than through native place or lineage ties; thus it was the act of labor itself that determined subject identity. I have used a unique example of the First Automobile Works compounds to show urban management under Chinese socialism.

The themes of these chapters – Manchukuo’s pan-Asian ideology and its manifestation in city planning and architecture, the change of worshipping deities that reflected Japanese changing colonial policies, the reconstruction of the city in the lines of Chinese socialism, and the making of the first *danwei*, i.e. the First Automobile Works – are all conditions best conveyed through the experiments of redefining and competing the modern. In this sense, some connections between the two regimes are inevitable.

But in the present scholarship on Manchukuo, serious studies of relationships between Japanese colonial past and socialist present are largely missing for combined reasons. The purposes of the dissertation have been anchored by an overall objective to fill up this vacancy from the perspective of urban construction and urban life. A considerable portion of this dissertation has examined the oppressive nature of Japanese

colonialism and the discrepancies between Manchukuo's pan-Asian ideology and Japan's paternal practices in the city. I examined in Chapter Three the nature of Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo from the perspective of rituals and public pageantries, by using Yamamuro's analogy of the client state to a hybrid beast of chimera. I hope this dissertation may be part of a larger project to objectively reevaluate the colonial past and guide contemporary preservation of the colonial legacies to boost rising tourism.

In the following pages, I first readdress the issues of new imperialism, nationalism, Chinese socialism, and the topic of architecture and spatial politics and the formation of collective subjectivity. In the final section, I return to my personal story in Changchun and the current situation of architectural preservation.

Competing the Modern: Anti-Capitalism and Anti-Imperialism

This dissertation has unfolded a proliferation of competing formulations of the modern in Changchun's urban development, some inspired by Western creations but more competing with Western concerns. In the competition for the dominance of the world, Japanese colonialism in Manchukuo and Chinese socialism both represented massive anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist qualities.

The fear of an imminent war and anxiety of legitimacy crisis in Manchukuo had normalized Japanese competition with the West, the Russians, the Nationalists, and the Communists. On a global level, ambitiously building Changchun as a modern city to justify the colonial rule, the Japanese constantly consulted indigenous sources to compete with, and overcome, the Western vision of the modern in city planning and architecture. The idea of competing the modern culminated in Manchukuo's Tenth Anniversary ceremonies including the 1942 Greater East Asian Exposition in Changchun, which aimed at mass mobilization in the war against the West. On a continental level, as I mentioned in Chapter One, the three major principles of the Kingly Way, i.e. following the way of heaven and bringing peace to the people, the principle of people as the basis of the state, and ethnic harmony were exactly the antithesis of one the Three Principles of the People, the state ideology of the Nationalist regime. On the domestic level, these factors surely contributed to the nature of the founding ideals and institutions of the state of Manchukuo: they competed with, rather than complemented, one another.

The overarching goal to compete with and to overcome the West in approaching to a new modern society reappeared in the built environment under Chinese socialist regime. Like its colonial precedent, socialist urban design and architecture were conceived as a positive counter-image to the alleged decadent Western metropolis, and aimed to assert social, moral and political superiority of the socialist state.

Duara Prasenjit had identified two pillars upon which the ideals of anti-imperialist movement were built: the discourse of alternative civilizations and socialism, which explicitly explains the two major driving forces in shaping Changchun's urban form under different political regimes. The view that emerged from the first discourse was fully developed by the Japanese into pan-Asianism as elaborated in the

first three chapters. Socialism as a second pillar of the anti-imperialist movement prescribed socialist equality and party command over society. Under the leadership of the CCP, China adopted the socialist program that reflected the socialist ideals of equality, market restrictions and state re-distribution programs as the alternative to the imperialist capitalism under which it had suffered. Following the Soviet model and with the Soviet aids, the CCP developed an integrated plan for nation's economic construction in 1953. The CCP developed economic planning along the Soviet model of five-year plans as a radical discrepancy from Western lines, and became part of the competition of the camp socialist countries against the capitalist West. But it should be noted the Japanese also adopted five-year plans in the 1930s in the capital's urban construction with astounding success.

I have argued that the ideals of Japanese pan-Asianism and Chinese socialism all found distinct demonstrations in Changchun's urban construction. Both ideologies were designed to resist the conceptions and paths towards the modern in the West, hence elevation of elements of alternative experiments to capitalism. I also argued that this anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist rhetoric of competition determined the continuities in the built environment from the colonial buildup to the socialist reconstruction in the built environment, despite totally different ideological banners.

The difference between the two regimes, as exemplified in the physical environment, is of course distinct. For example, as I mentioned in previous chapters, new buildings under Maoism resembled colonial Developing Asian style in the abundance of traditional decoration, such as surmounting pavilions at corners as a focal point, large sloping roofs and modern space beneath them, exquisite ornaments such as simplified brackets, etc. However, the colonial towers were a combination of both Chinese and Western elements, i.e. a combination of sloping roof and modified column order. The socialist towers, on the other side, a focal point as well, entailed Chinese decorative motifs alone. Under the colonial rule, elements such as sloping roofs and tiles were always referred to a larger concept of pan-Asianism, cautiously alienated from the connotations of Chinese culture or national independence. Despite official propaganda of ethnic harmony in Manchukuo, racial discrimination was manifest in examples that I have examined such as the disillusionment of the puppet emperor, Kendai students and common inhabitants of Changchun. Therefore, the most distinct difference between the Developing Asia style and socialist realism exists in the use of traditional decoration in relation to Chinese nationalism.

Socialist decolonization in Changchun not only reclaimed legal sovereignty of Han Chinese people, but also legitimized it rein by the anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism movement. Based on Leninist rhetoric of liberation and egalitarianism, Chinese socialism refers to "an emancipating ideology" aiming to liberate the nation from imperialist and capitalist coercion. Although often in tension with the celebration of Asian traditionalism, Chinese socialism contained national elements in the built environment and embraced traditional value in urban governance.

For example, *danwei* was a distinct invention of Chinese socialism and was the foundation of urban governance under Maoism. While the Communist trade unions certainly rejected the rigid hierarchical differentiations embodied by the traditional family, they were often portrayed as being like a family for the workers. David Bray charts out how *danwei* space (in its archetypal form) was arranged according to a highly symbolic order based on the layout of a Confucian courtyard house. It is noteworthy that one of the most important means through which the Manchukuo state sought to restrict westernization was by the disciplining of the family and gender roles within the family.

The subtle connections between the colonial past and socialist present and the processes through which the new system came to underpin a new revolutionary “science” of population and economy certainly need more exploration. Past colonial relations of power and techniques of urban governance, as post-colonial studies have shown, linger in the post-colonial period, “which has already had a certain duration (and still continue) in any nation that was involved in imperialism either as the colonizer or the colonized.”¹ The next section, which is a recent story about the Changchun preservation project, shows what confusing outcomes could be when such a study is missing at a time when the colonial past can no longer be simply let to sink from memory and sight as before.

Mapping the Past

In September 2005, after the planning project for Changchun had been initiated for one year, Changchun’s Planning Bureau convened a forum discussion on preservation strategies and cultural orientation of the city’s Japanese colonial legacies. The forum was made possible for several reasons, but the most practical one was to reduce conflict between professors from Tsinghua and local planning officials, and hoped to achieve some compromise on the ongoing preservation project as a guideline for the future.

For the Tsinghua team that had been working on this project for a year, Japanese colonial buildings were visible evidence of Japanese exploitative and oppressive colonial practices. In preceding cases, a few of these buildings had been preserved and changed into so-called educational base of patriotism, such as the former 731 Unit complex in the outskirts of Harbin. For Changchun, as the former colonial capital, a scheme of two corridors of national humiliation along Renmin Street (previous Datong Street, and then Stalin Street until 1996) and Xinmin Street (previous Shuntian Street) where most colonial buildings congregated, was proposed. In the first proposal, it was suggested that some eleven colonial buildings of minor importance “can be replaced by new buildings in different styles that differ from their colonial precedents,” as colonial building style was not desired any more. In fact, some professors from the Tsinghua team were very much annoyed by the coarse imitation of colonial Developing Asia in new buildings across the city as Changchun was undergoing rapid urban renewal.

In a time when large-scale demolition was thought necessary for new urban

¹ Mariko Asano Tamanoi. *Memory Maps: State and Manchuria in Postwar Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008, p.3

construction, local planning officials, aware of the fate of Viceroy House in Seoul a decade ago, were also worried if the proposal were passed then many colonial buildings were doomed. But the local officials and professional were most resistant to the idea of “national humiliation corridors”. They argued all colonial buildings had already undergone socialist transformation and could serve the people and the city better. In order to persuade outsiders, the chief of Planning Bureau convened the forum that invited local people from many other walks: historical scholars, artists, journalists, novelists, archivists, and officials, besides the Tsinghua group and local planners.

There was heated debate during the one-day forum, and local professionals unanimously agreed on stricter regulations to preserve colonial buildings. They did admit, though, new buildings should no longer imitate colonial aesthetics. Both sides, however, agreed on the achievements of the First Five-Year-Plan, especially the First Automobile Works.

As a result of the forum, the Tsinghua team increased the number of buildings to be preserved, of which all Japanese colonial buildings remained while quite a few buildings of pre-colonial and socialist times were added. Specific regulations of the preservation of colonial buildings were also spelt out – it was because a debated example of the preservation of former Minister of Foreign Affairs that led the Tsinghua team to the conclusion that total demolition could be better than inappropriate preservation.

Looking back upon the debate on the forum, I came to realize reasons behind local enthusiasm to preserve colonial buildings. Changchun, unlike other major cities in the Northeast such as Harbin, Shenyang and Dalian, had almost nothing left before the twentieth century, and the present urban structure was inherited from Japanese colonial period. In Harbin and Dalian, as the terminus of Eastern Ching Railway, the Russian imprint was ostensible, while Shenyang has been honored as a political center of national significance at least from the Qing. In this vein, the preservation of Japanese colonial buildings, many of which were important institutional buildings of high standard, were crucial to distinguish Changchun from other cities, and earned a unique urban image that helped boost tourism. All these factors converged at a time when rapid urban construction and renewal were underway and urban managers were more and more conscious of cultural value and uniqueness of their cities to attract investment and tourists. This was also the same time when literary works and historical research on Japanese colonialism in Manchuria were brought to surface.

In the final report, however, the difference between Japanese colonialism and Chinese socialism was more articulated in terms of ideological and political concerns than architectural and social effects. In retrospect, I think an absence of serious study of the connection as well as difference between the two regimes can best explain the conflicting opinions. Colonial buildings were built with modern materials in plural aesthetic styles, many of which still function well today and deserve preservation. They should be preserved not only as the witness to a special historical layer of the city, but also as sources from which socialist architectural legacies of the Maoist years developed.

They both are part of a fuller history of modern Chinese architecture, which cannot be easily erased from memory as before. As shown in the previous chapters, a study on the evolution of the idea of modernity and its translation in urban construction from an architectural historian perspective can contribute to better understanding Changchun's urban development under different political regimes, corroborated by an examination of how people lived in the city and how they used and perceived the physical form.

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