

Front to Rear: Architecture and Planning during World War II

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City and War. Foreign Influences, the Pacific War, and the Japanese City between 1937 and 1945

In 1942, Ishikawa Hideaki published a book entitled "War and the City" (*Sensoo to Toshi*) in which he examined foreign planning concepts and laid out the basics for a master plan for the Imperial Capital Tokyo. In the book, Ishikawa refers to numerous foreign examples, including notably German planners such as Paul Wolf and Walter Christaller. This publication provided a detailed approach on the theme of planning for defense, and built on earlier works by Ishikawa and notably his 1941 textbook on urban and regional planning in which he had already proposed his own regional planning ideas. Ishikawa's proposal for Tokyo divided the city into multiple small units and strongly influenced Ishikawa's postwar reconstruction plan. Ishikawa's career with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government spans the war and postwar period from 1933 to 1955. His work in Tokyo and in the colonies, in conjunction with that of other prominent planners and architects of the time, provides room for a two-pronged analysis of war and the Japanese city.

In a first part, the paper therefore analyzes urban design for colonial areas, where military structures facilitated the application of Japanese planning concepts. For Japanese planners the colonies were an important study ground of foreign planning concepts (German, Russian, etc.) as well as an opportunity to develop and try out their own design concepts. Among the examples to be discussed are Ishikawa's experiences in Shanghai, Tange Kenzo's proposal for the Japanese Cultural Center in Bangkok (1942) and his 1942 entry in the Greater East Asia competition, as well as the urban project for Datong by a group of planners including Uchida Shozo and Takayama Eika for Datong.

In a second part, the paper examines instances in which the war context facilitated planning in Japan. As the government and notably the military prepared the Japanese mainland for a possible future defense, their support allowed planners to realize proposals for decentralization planners had discussed for several years, but that had not found support. The construction of decentralized military towns such as Sagami-hara Military City in 1940, or the decision on the construction of a green belt in 1939 are evidence of the urban transformation that took place during the war years.

In conclusion, the paper argues that Japanese architecture and planning between 1937 and 1945 were characterized by a conscious borrowing of foreign urban planning and design ideas both in order to demonstrate Japanese architectural and urban design skills in the colonies and in order to transform and defend the urban spaces on the Japanese islands. War

and defense preparation led to an acceleration of urban development that is visible both in planning examples in the colonies as well as in Japan.

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Her recent publications include: Carola Hein, Pierre Laconte (eds): *Brussels: Perspectives on a European Capital*. Brussels: Publication of the Foundation for the Urban Environment, 2007; Carola Hein, Philippe Pelletier (eds): *Cities, Autonomy and Decentralization in Japan*. London: Routledge, 2006. Carola Hein (ed): *Bruxelles l'Européenne: Capitale de qui? Ville de qui?/ European Brussels. Whose capital? Whose city?* Brussels: Cahiers de la Chambre-Architecture n 5, Brussels: La Lettre Volée, 2006; *The Capital of Europe. Architecture and Urban Planning for the European Union* (Westport (CT): Greenwood/Praeger, 2004).

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