

HOW CITIES ARE SHAPED

Railway colonization of Harbin and Changchun in Manchuria from 1895 to 1945

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Introduction

The three northeastern provinces today of China, Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning were also known as Manchuria and were colonized by the Russian Empire and Japan successively in the first half of the 20th century. They are located east of Mongolia, south of Siberia, and north of the Korean peninsula (Figure 0.1). Colonialism has played a forceful role in many cities in Manchuria, in which process the will of colonizers prevails over factors such as economics, politics, and industrialization, and is expressed through the built environment. With the lack of cultural authenticity, the peculiarities of the locals are overlooked in favor of a symbolized landscape designed to serve mainly political interests. Analyzing the urban interventions performed by different colonial regimes within the same regions provides a chance to see how deviations in intention can make big differences in physical environments, and how surroundings, in turn, affect psychological cognition.

The urban construction of Harbin and Changchun stems from their colonial background. Harbin was the base of the CER railway company controlled by the Russian Empire and the USSR (1898-1931). Changchun was the “new capital” of Manchukuo (1932 -1945) founded by Japan. Although geographically adjacent in Manchuria, Harbin and Changchun developed diverse urban forms due to their colonizers' completely different planning laws and colonial strategies. **Therefore, it is reasonable to question how colonial urban planning can affect urban morphology in different ways? And how do colonial tactics and physical environment affect each other alternately?**



Figure 0.1. The geographical location of Manchuria¹

Analyzing cities is a daunting task, especially when there are two cities. Three questions are raised in this paper to find a clear cut in the complex thread. By asking "What was before colonization?", the first chapter begins with Manchuria's historical background and geographical significance. It then dives into the origin of railway colonization by studying the land treaties signed by the Qing government and other countries. By querying "How cities were constructed?", the second chapter first examines how the plans of Harbin and Changchun evolved during the colonization process. Then, by examining the plan, it is possible to further compare the specific planning techniques applied to them, including site selection, zoning, street planning, and architectural styles. The last question "who built the city" is a subtle point of view. In addition to the planners' will, the laborers who build the cities brick by brick and the residents who live in the community will explain the huge difference in urban morphology by telling their stories.

¹ Chinese Civil War. (n.d.). Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/event/Chinese-Civil-War>

Methodology

Colonial construction in Harbin and Changchun has been studied separately, but rarely compared. And the research perspective is mostly from planners rather than civilians. Some articles provide a comprehensive analysis concluding with solid historical context and specific urban profiles. Guo Qinghua (2004) examined Changchun's symbolic identity and urban features from 1932 to 1945 based on historical background and colonial design method, among which the debate on palaces between Puyi and the Kwantung Army deserves attention. Olga Bakich (1986) explored the decisive influences of the Chinese Eastern Railway on the urban structure of Harbin before 1917 when Japan defeated the Russian Empire. Furthermore, other papers are worth noting from a special angle. Koshizawa Akira (2002) described the technical issues from the view of Japanese planners, including a dispute over road width, considerations of greening rate, and population density. Blaine R. Chiasson (2011) provides the author with a new perspective on how Harbin was built and maintained through land treaties and municipal management.

The dissertation adopts a comparative research method. By comparing urban planning between Harbin and Changchun, the methodological origins of how colonial systems and tactics influence urban morphology will be shown. The thesis will look at the planning maps and archives of Harbin and Changchun, with a focus on their connections with land treaties and bureaucratic structures. Finally, it is possible to understand how different colonizers shaped the cities with the same cultural background in a way they ended up with totally different forms.

Chapter I

What was before the colonization?

First, it is critical to understand the historical ethnic origins of Northeast China, especially the Manchu-Han relations before the invasion of colonizers with divergent cultural backgrounds. This pre-existing ethnopolitical configuration was an a priori condition for the railroad colonization of the region and ultimately affected the urban morphology and citizen identity. Furthermore, realizing the role of wars and railway companies is also vital. They initiated the urbanization of Harbin and Changchun, turning them from obscure towns into the metropolises of the time. By studying the connections between railway and land treaties, we can glimpse the eve of urban formation.

The names of Manchuria

The history of Manchuria, especially Harbin and Changchun, is closely related to the conflicts and cooperation between races, Jurchen (Manchu), Chinese Han, Korean, Russian, Japanese, and other ethnic groups. The power of various races in northeast China changed and grew, which was reflected in the different names.

Northeast China was an area inhabited by many ethnic minority clans that were subordinate to the central Han regime for a long time. Sixteen major dynasties have been established successively in the central plains of China by the Han nationality since 2205B.C. And they referred to northeast China by the names of the most powerful clans that may affect sovereign stability or those most closely related to the central plain dynasty, such as Suchen, Donghu, and Mohe. Until 1115, the Jurchen leader Aguda united all Jurchen tribes and established the Jin dynasty (1115-1234). The capital was founded in Huining Mansion (now Acheng District, Harbin City, Heilongjiang Province). In 1636, Jurchen raised troops and entered the central plains to establish the Qing Dynasty (1636-1912), the first Jurchen-led dynasty of China.

"Manchu" was a new clan name chosen for the Jurchen after 1635 by Emperor Huang Taiji. The official view of the Qing Dynasty believed that the word originated from Manjusri Bodhisattva (Mañjuśrī). Around 1800, the Japanese geographer Takahashi Kageyasu derived the word "Manshū" from the Manchu as a place name to refer to the geographical area from Shanhai Pass to Heilongjiang, as it was obviously different from the other geographical units in China in terms of climate, humanities, and nature. When the Japanese map was brought back to Europe by the Dutch Philipp von Siebold, the Japanese "Manshū" was transformed into "Manchuria". Western geographers refined the previously commonly used "Chinese Tartary"² and other broad and general names with "Manchuria". Because this name could clearly express the nationality and history of the above-mentioned areas at that time, that was, Manchuria was the ancestral place of the Manchus and the birthplace of the Qing Dynasty. Manchuria is a reference from a foreign perspective, which has never been used for Manchus to refer to their homeland. But as a foreign derivation, the name has never been used for Manchus to refer to their homeland.

For the Chinese people, the area was also named *Dongbei* or *Guandong* since 221BC. *Dongbei* is a locative word, literally meaning northeast, and also refers to the jurisdiction appearing in the official title, such as Northeast Jurchen Horse and Solider Department. *Guandong* means east of the Pass. *Guan* is not only a geographical but also a racial divide. *Guan* is the pass at the eastern end of the Great Wall (770 BC-). Its location varies with the construction situation in different eras. Since the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), it refers to Shanhai Pass. Due to the role of the Great Wall in resisting the invasion of the nomadic tribal alliance, the main living place of the Han people was in the west of the pass before the Qing army entered the Shanhai Pass. In the Qing dynasty, a policy implemented by the Manchu-led government prohibited Han Chinese from entering the area east of Shanhai Pass, the former Manchu residence. Only certain Manchu and Mongols lived there. However, by the 18th century, Han farmers who suffered from famine, floods, and drought along the Liao River were allowed in for cultivation. A large number of Han immigrants

² Tatar originally implied the nomadic region from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Japan. Europeans indiscriminately referred to all the nomadic people and other barbarians in the region as the Tatars. In the early 18th century, influenced by the writings of missionaries to China, "Tatar" was used to refer to the Manchu. The area outside the Great Wall was called "Chinese Tatar", and the scope of "China" was narrowly defined as the Han land within the Great Wall. When "China" was extended to the entire Qing Empire in the 20th century, the Han land within the Great Wall was also called "China Proper".

entered Guandong from the provinces of Shanxi, Shandong, Hebei, Henan, and Jiangsu, which is known as “Chuang Guandong” in history, that is, “Crashing into the east of the Shanhai Pass”. This immigration wave was the source of the base population in Dongbei, and towns were gradually formed as they settled down. It brought 8.7 million migrants from mainly Shandong and Hebei provinces from 1891 to 1942³. The ban was abolished when Russia and Japan invaded China in 1860.

It should be noted that, given the colonial period and context discussed in this article, the author uses “Manchuria” to refer to the region, rather than “Dongbei” or “Guandong” commonly used in China.

The start of Harbin and Changchun

Refugees heading north made up the majority of the population in Harbin and Changchun. Ethnic assimilation gradually united the Mongols, Manchus, Han, and other ethnic groups. The reasons for their earliest formation, and the opportunities that followed, together contributed to the development of these two cities.

At first, Harbin was the joint name of several villages. The villagers were mainly Han peasants who went north to Manchuria to engage in agriculture for a living. The settlements were on both sides of the Songhua River, a vast area rich in fertile land and natural resources. There were wineries, ferry ports, and even pawnshops. Among them, Tianjia Shaoguo (Winery) was the most famous one. In 1805, three generations of the Tian clan in Huangxian County, Shandong Province, came to Harbin to open up wasteland. In 1814, the Tian clan and the Wang clan jointly established the Shaoguo (winery)⁴. A small village with around 200 households formed and centered on the Shaoguo⁵. The defensive and self-governing settlement developed into a free trade town with its own bazaar inside (Figure 1.2). But soon the inevitable war and the accompanying railroad put the town on the road to industrial modernization. The Tianjia winery was acquired by the Russians (Figure 1.3).



The front door



The front street and market

Figure 1.2 Tianjia Shaoguo⁶

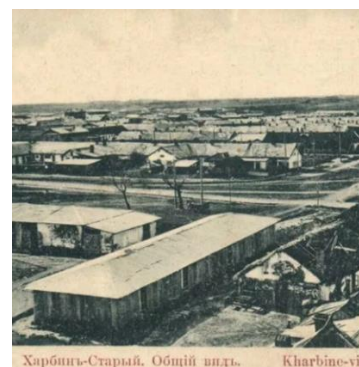


Figure 1.3 colonization by Russians⁷

³ Chuang Guandong. (2021). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Chuang_Guandong&oldid=1056291483

⁴ The Manchu Department of the First Historical Archives of China & Heilongjiang Provincial Archives (2017). 黑龙江将军衙门档案. Heilongjiang Yamen Archives, Alchuka Vice Dutong Yamen. Heilongjiang People's Publishing House.

⁵ Shaoguo is a major occupation in Manchuria and its owner must be rich. It is called Shaoguo because people and animals are hired to make sorghum into wine. The wine is not only popular in the north, but also famous in the south of the Yangtze River. Since the owner is engaged in a great business, he builds Shaoguo into a city or even a fortress to prevent outside aggression. There is also a market in the city. The residents are led by the owner and have an autonomous atmosphere. The surrounding wall is 20 to 30 miles long, which is similar to that of a small county in Jiangsu and Zhejiang province, or even larger. This is Xiangfang, the first Harbin. (Shan Shili. 1904. Guimao Travel Notes. Zhaohua Publishing House. 2017)

⁶ 哈尔滨旧影—田家烧锅 — 大话哈尔滨. (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.imharbin.com/post/45234>

⁷ 哈尔滨旧影—田家烧锅 — 大话哈尔滨. (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.imharbin.com/post/45234>

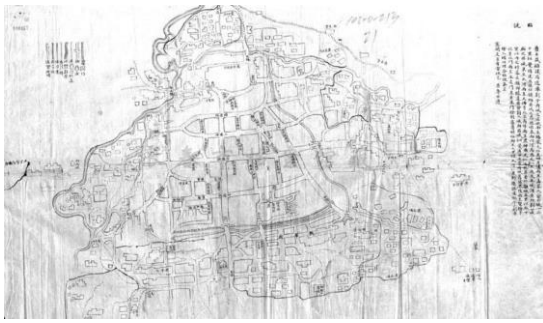


Figure 1.4 The map of Changchun⁸



Figure 1.5 Changchun Hall⁹

Changchun, formerly known as Kuanchengzi, was a walled city developed under formal official supervision and equipped with various infrastructures (Figure 1.4). According to the records of the Changchun Municipal People's Government, as early as 1797, an agricultural product market appeared. There were also religious places Guandi Temple and Chenghuang Temple in the city. Incense burnt continuously every day. The local administrative agency - "Changchun Hall" was set up as instructions of Emperor Jiaqing in 1800 (Figure 1.5). It was responsible for the management of people's affairs, the repression, and the management of lawsuits. The officials of Changchun Hall were both Manchu, Han, and Mongolian. Li Jinyong, a Han officer at Changchun Hall, built Yangzheng Academy and an elderly care institution, and the first public cemetery. The Cowpox Bureau, the agency he promoted immunization, introduced free cowpox to young children to prevent smallpox.

Both Harbin and Changchun originated from Han refugees, one was a collection of many natural trading villages, and the other was a walled city under the supervision of the Qing government. After land reclamation and ethnic integration, they took shape into gathering places. However, due to the geopolitics of Manchuria: the multi-race historical background, the three-sided foreign borders, and the Qing government's blockade policy, the relationship between Manchuria and the Chinese main territory was not close. From this point of view, Harbin and Changchun were ideal colonial cities for the Russian Empire and Japan that intended to expand their territory.

⁸ Changchun Hall - The Birth and Memory of a City. (n.d.).

⁹ Changchun Hall - The Birth and Memory of a City. (n.d.).

The Treaties and Railway

The colony began with wars and treaties. The territorial rights transferred in the treaty became an opportunity for the Russian Empire and Japan to colonize Manchuria by railway.

After Qing China signed the *1896 Secret Sino-Russian Treaty* and the *1898 Lease Convention*, Imperial Russia gained a construction concession to connect Russia's Far East to the Pacific Ocean in the shortest distance. A railway spur line went across Manchuria, creating a shortcut between Chita and Vladivostok, two stations of the Trans-Siberian Railway. The shortcut reduced the distance between the two stations by about 800 miles and shortened the time by 1 day. In the middle of this branch line, Harbin was chosen to be the CER base. Then the line was extended southward from Harbin to the Liaodong Peninsula, forming another important branch line connecting Manchuria and the Pacific Ocean. The T-shape railway has served as a continuous transport link and imported abundant natural resources and investment from Manchuria to Russia. And Harbin is the intersection of the branch lines (Figure 1.6).¹⁰



Figure 1.6. Map of Chinese Eastern Railway (Trans-Manchurian)

For the Qing government, signing the treaty did not mean the transfer of sovereignty. It stemmed from the joint Russian boycott of Japan. In 1895, Japan won the Sino-Japanese War. The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed, ceding the ownership of Taiwan, Penghu, and the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan. Due to the participation of the Russian Empire in negotiations on the return of the Liaodong Peninsula, Tsar Nicholas II (1868-1918) had the chance to implement the Far East expansion policy to unify Asia. Sergei Witte, head of the Imperial Russian Finance Ministry, persuaded Li Hongzhang, China's senior official, to let the Russian Empire develop in Manchuria to resist Japan. In the view of the Qing government, the two treaties were to use Russia to defend against Japan. This opinion was also stated in Article 4 of the *Secret Sino-Russian Treaty*, which stipulated that the Chinese territory still remained inviolable, and the railway company must have Chinese investment.¹¹

¹⁰ Chinese Eastern railway-en.svg. (2022, March 19). Wikimedia Commons.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chinese_Eastern_Railway-en.svg

¹¹ The junction of this railway with the Russian railway shall not serve as a pretext for any encroachment on Chinese territory nor for any infringement of the rights of the sovereignty of his Majesty the Emperor of China. The construction and exploitation of this railway shall be accorded to the Russo-Chinese Bank, and the clauses of the Contract which shall be concluded for this purpose shall be duly discussed between the Chinese minister in St. Petersburg and the Russo-Chinese Bank. (The Secret Sino-Russian Treaty, Article 4, June 3, 1896)

During the Russian colonial period, however, land ownership was always ambiguous. The disputes were reflected in Article 6, indicating that the sovereignty of the railway line and its periphery was transferred from Qing China to the railway company with no land taxes.

The lands necessary for the construction, operation, and protection of the line, as also the lands in the vicinity of the line necessary for procuring sand, stone, lime, etc. will be turned over to the Company freely, if these lands are the property of the State: if they belong to individuals, they will be turned over to the Company either upon a single payment or upon an annual rental to the proprietors, at current prices. The lands belonging to the Company will be exempt from all land taxes. The company will have the absolute and exclusive right of administration of its lands. (La Société aura la droit absolu et exclusif de l'administration de ses terrains.) (The Secret Sino-Russian Treaty, Article 6, June 3, 1896)

The main source of the debate is the difference in translation between Chinese, Russian and French of the underlined sentence quoted above. "In the Chinese translation, the word employed for administration is jingli. Jingli is understood as the administration of a business, unlike the Chinese word guanli, which means political administration"¹². But in French translation, the word "l'administration" was explained as full territorial sovereignty. The Qing government did not know that only the French version has legally binding benefits in dispute.

Changchun was far more than a simple colonial city: it was a new capital carrying Japanese ideological dreams. *The Treaty of Portsmouth* (September 5, 1905) marked not only the end of the Russo-Japanese War but also the beginning of Japan's ownership of a CER branch line, from Changchun to Port Arthur (Lushun), as stated in Article VI¹³. That part of CER formed South Manchuria Railway (SMR). An untouched fertile plain was an ideal space to build the Japanese ideological capital. On 10 March 1932, the Manchukuo puppet state was established by Kwantung Army. Puyi, the last emperor of the Great Qing, was invited by the Kwantung Army to be the emperor again. As the capital of Manchukuo, Changchun then was renamed "Hsinking", meaning "New Capital" in Japanese. The Kwantung Army became the main responsible organ of the SMR to remain in the city. Article X¹⁴ in the treaty protected the rights of Russian residents who remained in Manchuria from being violated, which also made Harbin not a good option for the new Japanese capital.

The CER company was both a commercial organization and colonial administration. It was solely responsible for urban construction, with limited Chinese participation in the process. The administrative scope of the Civil Department under CER was broad and important: (1) *Police*, (2) *Medical*, (3) *Veterinary*, (4) *Passport*, (5) *Land*, (6) *Education*, (7) *Religion*, (8) *Construction*, (9) *Meteorology*, (10) *Building Maintenance*, (11) *Department for Relations with Chinese Officials*, and (12) *Prisons*"¹⁵. Whoever

¹² Chiasson, Blaine R. (2010). *Administering the Colonizer: Manchuria's Russians under Chinese Rule*, 1918-29. pg.22.

¹³ The Imperial Russian Government engages to transfer and assign to the Imperial Government of Japan, without compensation and with the consent of the Chinese Government, the railway between Chang-chunfu and Kuanchangtsu and Port Arthur, and all the branches, together with all the rights, privileges, and properties appertaining thereto in that region, as well as all the coal mines in the said region belonging to or worked for the benefit of the railway. The two high contracting parties mutually engage to obtain the consent of the Government of China mentioned in the foregoing stipulation. (The Treaty of Portsmouth, Article VI, September 5, 1905).

¹⁴ It is reserved to Russian subjects, inhabitants of the territory ceded to Japan, to sell their real property and retire to their country, but if they prefer to remain in the ceded territory, they will be maintained protected in the full exercise of their industries and rights of property on condition of submitting to the Japanese laws and jurisdiction. Japan shall have full liberty to withdraw the right of residence in or to deport from such territory of any inhabitants who labor under political or administrative disability. She engages, however, that the proprietary rights of such inhabitants shall be fully respected. (The Treaty of Portsmouth, Article X, September 5, 1905)

¹⁵ Chiasson, Blaine R. (2010). *Administering the Colonizer: Manchuria's Russians under Chinese Rule*, 1918-29. pg.24.

controlled the department had the right to urban construction. However, the Chinese president of the department was executed in 1899 and the appointment of a Chinese successor was blocked by the Russians until after the 1917 October Revolution.¹⁶ The vice-president S.I. Kerbedz who truly controlled the company was chosen from the Russian-dominated board, and only reported directly to the CER's chief engineer, Aleksandr Iosifovich Iugovich. Similarly, the establishment of the SMR was obsessed with both the political and economic mission of mastering Manchuria for Japan. Although Puyi was nominally the new emperor of Hsinking, he had no power in construction and management.

Colonization was initially limited to the railway affiliated land defined by the treaties. In Harbin, the railway was the city center, as well as a solid boundary between four communities of different races and classes. The materials and people transported by railway were the driving force for urban development. The establishment of the CER was committed to both the political and economic mission of mastering Manchuria for the Russian Empire. In contrast, the SMR was merely a guise for the legalization of Japanese rule. Keeping a proper connection with the railroad was the positioning of the new capital. The construction of Changchun soon exceeded the limitation of treaties.

¹⁶ Carter, J. (2019). *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932*. Cornell University Press. pg.14.

Chapter II

How the cities were constructed?

The ambition of the unification of East Asia held by the Russian Empire and Japanese was also reflected in urban plans. The narrative in this chapter begins with an exposition of the planning process for Harbin and Changchun respectively, supplemented by archive photos. And it ends with an analysis of the differences in their urban planning methods, including site selection, zoning, street planning, and architectural style. It should be emphasized that the research object of this section is the original master plan instead of the later updated version or maps of the actual scene reproduction. The master plan, as the two-dimensional representation of planning ideology, interprets how colonial planners at that time chose among the many factors they considered the most important. The conjectures drawn from the map can be justified by photographs.

Harbin, A railway city

As railway construction preceded city formation, Harbin was not a typical pre-planning monolithic city. With the river and railway, boundaries of physical space and social class, four communities with different functions and bilingual names formed individually along the borders. Stations at the edges and intersections of borders connected each community with the exterior (Figure 2.1).

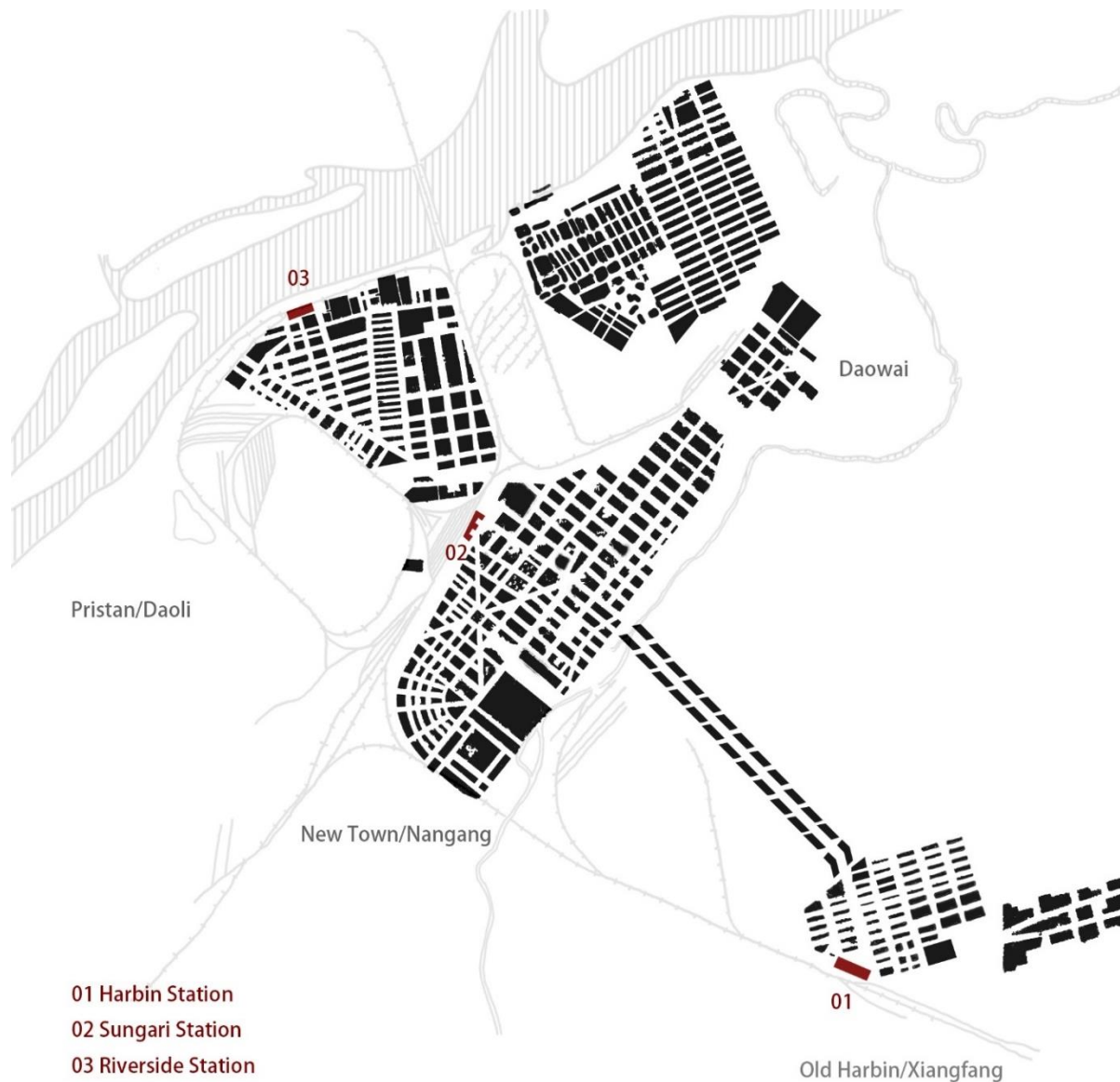


Figure 2.1 Redrawing Harbin plan by author

Based on Figure 2.2. the Chinese copy of the Russian development plan of Harbin 1899.

The first Russian settlement was named Staryi Kharbin by Russians. It developed on the basis of old Harbin before the colonization, known by the Chinese as Xiangfang. In April 1898, A.I.Shidlovskii, an engineer from the Engineering Bureau of the Middle East Railway of the Russian Empire, acquired the Tianjia Shaoguo and transformed it into the headquarters of the CER Construction Management (Figure 2.3).¹⁷ In October, the first railway station named “Harbin Station” was also built. The photo showed that it was just a humble bungalow, and the Chinese station staff was saluting (Figure 2.4). Soon, a Russian community five miles from the river was formed, including the first Orthodox church, a brewery, a bank, a paramilitary school for CER employees’ children, barbershops, restaurants, and social clubs (Figure 2.5). Since they found it very restrictive to be stationed at a distance from the Songhua River, in 1899 they began to establish a permanent settlement near the river and drew a new master plan¹⁸. Four districts separated by tracks could be seen in the plan. After 1904, most Russians moved away and Xiangfang became a town for oil mills and a military camp.



Figure 2.2 The Chinese copy of the Russian plan of Harbin 1899



Figure 2.3. The headquarters of the CER Construction Management¹⁹



Figure 2.4 Harbin Station in Xiangfang²⁰



The first Orthodox church, Aug 1898



The first Russo-Chinese Bank, July 1898



The first brewery, 1900

Figure 2.5 The first Russian community in Staryi Kharbin ²¹

¹⁷ The old Harbin, the local name Xiangfang, used to be the Tianjia Shaoguo (a winery). Five years ago, the Russian people of the railway company claimed it as the central location and expelled the original owner.....In 1900 he heard that during the Gengzi Rebellion, the officers and soldiers destroyed the winery, and then he died. (Shan Shili (1904). *Guimao Travel Notes*. Zhaohua Publishing House, 2017)

¹⁸ the Chinese copy of the Russian development plan of Harbin 1899.

¹⁹ https://www.sohu.com/a/www.sohu.com/a/461944535_350855

²⁰ https://www.sohu.com/a/www.sohu.com/a/461944535_350855

²¹ <https://www.uulucky.com/show-3157218.html>



Figure 2.6

The Flooded Central Street²²



Figure 2.7

The Cargo terminal²³



Figure 2.8

The Sugari Station

The annual flooding made the banks of the river uninhabitable initially, but soon an area called Pristan (Daoli in Chinese) was formed west of the railroad along the river. The floods did not prevent it from prospering (Figure 2.6). Tons of cargo, including construction materials, fresh food, and trading products were shipped to the Riverside Station north of Pristan (Figure 2.7). Some were also unloaded at the central station "Sungari Station" (Figure 2.8). The excellent cargo location made this area planned as the commercial center for international and local trade in Harbin. Pristan was featured with art nouveau and classical revival buildings. Banks, stock exchanges, and shops were built along a commercial street named China Street (now Central Street) which connected the river bank and Harbin station. Anyone who went to that street thought they were in Europe. Therefore, Harbin was also called "Manchuria Paris".²⁴

The main planning area called "New town" was built on high terrain. Chinese people called it Nangang, meaning "a small hill to the south". The New Town was also a Russian community. It was estimated that only 17.3 percent of the population living in the New Town were Chinese in 1913.²⁵ New Town was the most closely related to the CER company among the four districts with different functions. Administrative and religious buildings were built on both sides of the boulevard, Dazhi Avenue²⁶, such as the CER Administration (1906), the Consulate General of the Russian Empire (1904), and St. Nicholas Church (Sviato Nikolaevskaia, 1899). At the end of the boulevard was a public cemetery divided by religion (Orthodox, Judaism, Christianity, etc.). There was also auxiliary infrastructure, including the Chinese Eastern Railway club (1911), Moscow Bazaar (1904), Sino-Chinese Polytechnical Institute (1920), Chinese Eastern Railway Hotel (1903) and etc. The residences were mainly private villas and collective housing for CER employees. It was the only area in Harbin's plan that featured diagonal avenues to link important nodes.

²² Ablamskiĭ, V. P. (1920) *Obshchiiĭ vid na tsentral'noiĭ ulitsu Kharbina sverkhu*. Heilongjiang China Harbin, 1920. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018687655/>.

²³ Shots Across the Amur 黑龍江對岸的槍聲. (n.d.). Retrieved March 20, 2022, from <https://acrosstheamur.wordpress.com/>

²⁴ Sergei Runich. "V. Man'chzhurii." *Istoricheskii vestnik*, Vol. 95 (1904), p.976.

²⁵ Carter, J. (2019). *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932*. Cornell University Press.

²⁶ Carter, J. (2019). *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932*. Cornell University Press.

To the west of Pristan was Fujiadian or Daowai. This Chinese community had no Russian names. Daowai, meaning “beyond the track” in Chinese, revealed its geographic location and social status: a labor gathering settlement outside the main city, separated by tracks. It was a densely populated Chinese-only community. Sumon Karlinsky wrote that Daowai “occupied approximately one-sixth of the city’s area. But it was much more densely populated than any of the Russian sections.”²⁷ Most of the refugees from “Chuang Guandong” finally stayed here (Figure 2.9).

Harbin was constructed as a group of railway-affiliated communities, located on both sides of the railway line and centered on a station. Four communities played different roles in the urban plan. Xiangfang, the earliest Russian settlement later became an industrial and manufacturing area. Pristan was the commercial core and the New Town was the cultural and administrative core. Daowai provided enough space for laborers and became a Chinese settlement.

Year	Population in Daowai
1904	30,000
1913	45,000
1920	115,000

Figure 2.9 The population density in Daowai²⁸

²⁷ Большой Проспект (1989). *Memoirs of Harbin*. *Slavic Review*, 48(2), 284–290. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2499121>

²⁸ Carter, J. (2019). *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932*. Cornell University Press.

Changchun, the ideal capital ²⁹

In 1931, Japan officially launched a full-scale war of aggression against China, and Changchun officially became the capital of the Japanese regime in Manchuria. Puyi, the last emperor of the Qing Dynasty, who was expelled by the Republic of China (1912-1949), was invited by the Japanese army to serve as the head of the newly established Manchukuo. Changchun then was renamed “Hsinking”, meaning “New Capital” in Japanese. The last time the Japanese planned a capital was in 794 when Emperor Kammu decided to move the capital from Nagaokakyo to Kyoto.³⁰ The Japanese expectations and ambitions for the future were shown in the comprehensive planning of Hsinking (Figure 2.10). In terms of scale and quality, Hsinking was outstanding in the world at the moment.

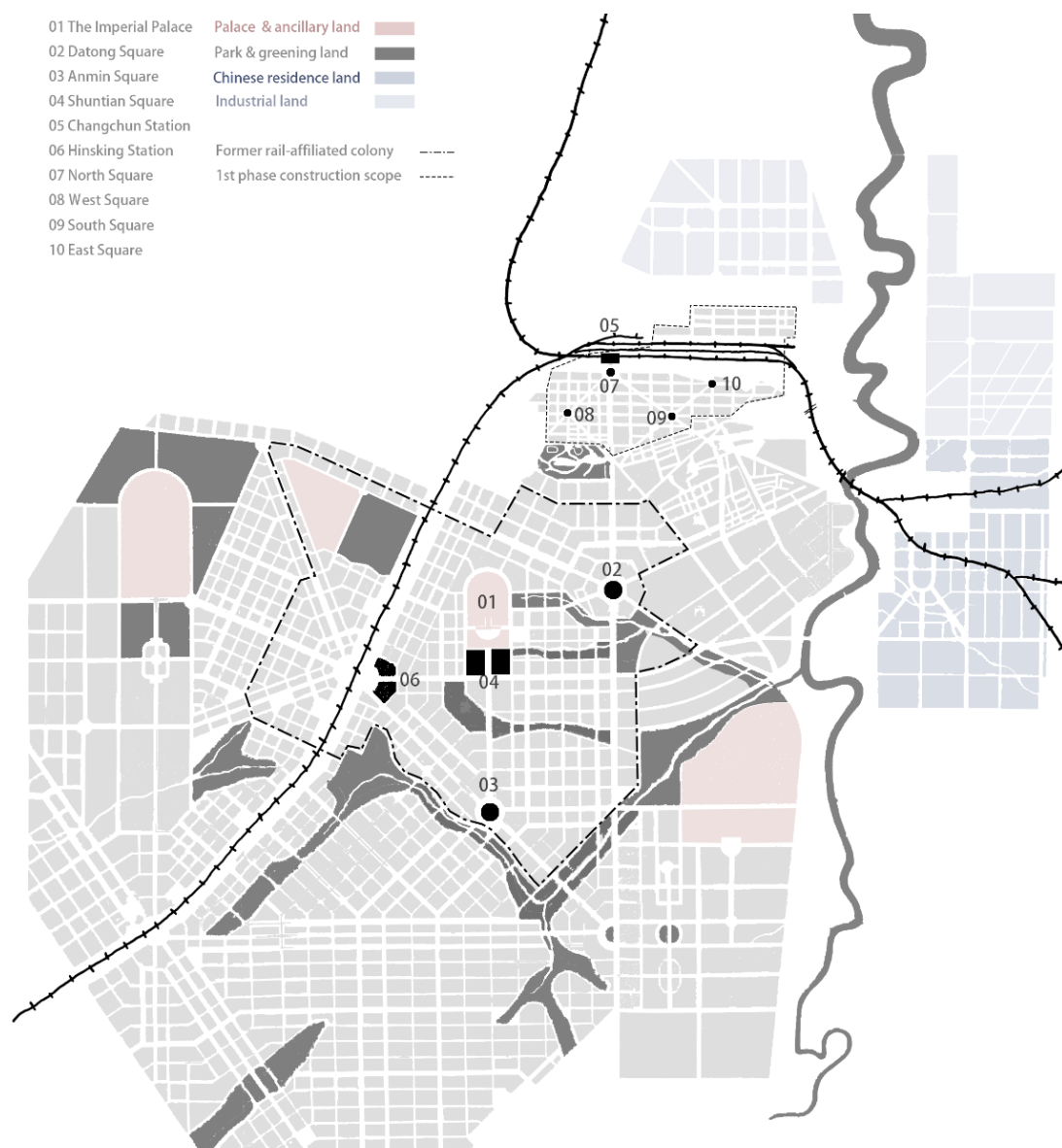


Figure 2.10 Redrawing Hsinking plan by the author
Based on the Hsinking Master Plan Map (1934)

²⁹ In order to distinguish between Japan's planning of the Changchun Railway Station annex and the Hsinking plan, this section refers to the area before 1931 as Changchun, and the area from 1932 to 1949 as Hsinking.

³⁰ Kyoto_Early city planning, <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/ealac/V3613/kyoto/intro/cityplan.html>

Before 1931, the Japanese colony was limited to railway-affiliated land in the northwest of Changchun city. Gotō Shinpei, the president of the South Manchurian Railway, considered that street planning was the most important. Urban areas were divided according to functional proportion into five use zoning: residence, commerce, grain stack, public space and etc. Matrix and radial roads were also graded (Figure 2.11). This methodology was closely integrated with the actual situation. The main income of the Manchuria Railway at that time came from the transportation of agricultural products represented by soybeans. As a result, the commercial and freight industries of the city took precedence over the residential function, and their area accounted for the highest proportion (Figure 2.12). In addition, due to road classification, it was possible to efficiently allocate different spaces of use to different functions. The high-grade road paved with high-cost granite was dedicated to heavy freight carriages, which not only benefited city beautification and road maintenance but also reduced costs.³¹ With these early attempts, the SMR proved its capability for large-scale urban planning and construction.

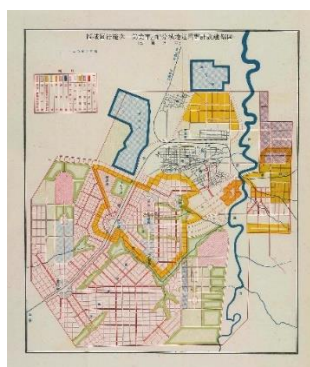


Figure 2.10

Hsinking Master Plan Map (1934) ³²

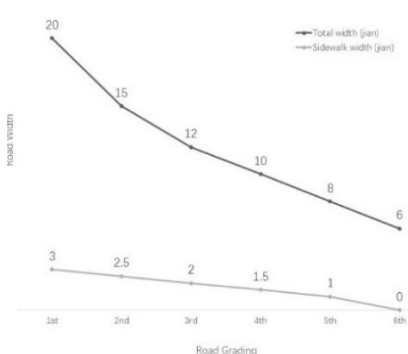


Figure 2.11

Road grading (1jian≈1.8 meters) ³³

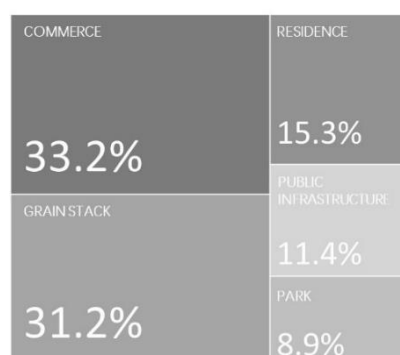


Figure 2.12

Land classification (1ping≈3.3 square meters) ³⁴

The ambition to make Hsinking a world-class capital was evident from the planning size, which was unprecedented. In 1931, Changchun was a prefecture-level city with a 21 square kilometers built-up area and a total population of about 130,000.³⁵ In November 1931, the Capital Construction Bureau (CCB) once again formulated the scope of urban construction planning and determined that the construction planning area of Hsinking is 200 square kilometers. In addition to the 100 square kilometers in the suburban countryside, the construction area is 100 square kilometers and the planned population is 500,000. ³⁶ The plan was reported to the Kwantung Army Headquarters, and was finalized by the Kwantung Army Chief of Staff, Kuniaki Koiso, and Vice Chief-of-Staff, Yasuji Okamura, and became the "the Metropolitan Plan of Great Hsinking " (simplified Chinese: 大新京都市計画). In terms of the planned area, Hsinking was more than twice that of Harbin and nearly ten times that of Kyoto³⁷. Tokyo was not included in the comparison because it was developed under the guidance of a market economy rather than a master plan.

³¹ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>.

³² Shinkyō. (1932). English: City planning map of Changchun, Capital of Manchuria. Page 4. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Changchun_1932_-_Plan_4.jpg.

³³ Based on the data from *Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo*. Page.47. Social Science Literature Press, 2011.

³⁴ Based on the data from *Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo*. Page.44. Social Science Literature Press, 2011.

³⁵ Guo, Qinghua. *Changchun: Unfinished Capital Planning of Manzhouguo, 1932-42*. Urban History 31, no. 1 (2004): 100-117.

³⁶ Guo, Qinghua. *Changchun: Unfinished Capital Planning of Manzhouguo, 1932-42*. Urban History 31, no. 1 (2004): 100-117.

³⁷ The ratio was estimated by the author based on historical data provided by Wikipedia.

Hierarchy and order were reflected in the plan (Figure 2.10). The main skeleton of the city was derived from the experiences of the railway-affiliated colony, including road grading, land zoning, and public spaces. They were carried over and upgraded in the new scheme. In terms of zoning, the physical boundaries of railways and rivers separated core from non-core urban functions. The north side of the railway was the light industry area, and the east side of the Yitong River was the heavy industry area and a redistributed Chinese settlement. The hierarchy of urban space was further refined by grading. Roads were divided into three levels: “main lines (60-20 meters wide), branch lines (18-10 meters wide), and auxiliary lines (5-4 meters wide)”.³⁸ Main roads were all boulevards, connecting important public nodes such as squares, parks, and palaces. Other matrix roads subdivided urban bases into different levels of functional land. Infrastructure pipelines like communication, water supply, drainage, gas, and electricity were buried under branch roads instead of main roads, which was convenient for maintenance and facilitated the construction of boulevards. Varying in diameter from 244 to 300 meters, the round squares anchored spatial order and urban identity. Two sequences of squares and public buildings acted as central parks for public activities and landmarks for urban monumentality. One was Datong Avenue, which connected Changchun Railway Station, North Square, and Datong Square (Figure 2.13). It linked the original station colony with the new city. The second was Shuntian Avenue, which connected the Imperial Palace, Shuntian Square, and Anmin Square from north to south (Figure 2.14). The street was the administrative core of Hsinking, on both sides of which were the Eight Grand Ministries³⁹ of the Manchukuo government.

The plan of Hsinking reflected the systematic and modern transformation of the environment by the Japanese colonists. The colonial construction represented by Hsinking is often carried out simultaneously with the urban transformation of Japan, or even slightly ahead of the latter.⁴⁰ Thus Hsinking as a modern new city has experimental significance for Japan.



Figure 2.13

Datong Avenue in Hsinking

Japanese book "Showa History: History of Japanese colony" published by Mainichi Newspapers Company.



Figure 2.14

Shuntian Avenue in Hsinking

www.blog.sina.com.cn/duqiao

³⁸ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011.
<https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>.

³⁹ Ministry of Public Safety, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Culture and Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Civil Affairs.

⁴⁰ 盛家恺: 伪满时期的长春与帝国的“现代性.” (n.d.). 豆瓣. Retrieved April 7, 2022, from <https://book.douban.com/review/13800318/>

Plan and origin ⁴¹

Both the Russian Empire and Japan had strong colonial ambitions for Manchuria, but they operated in different ways. The territory of the Russian Empire was about 60 times that of Japan⁴². The Russians extended the influence of St. Petersburg to Manchuria through the railway network. However, the Japanese intended to control the periphery through the influence of a new capital far from home, the legitimacy of which could be assured by rail. Therefore, the two cities were different at the urban administrative level. Harbin was one of the important station cities, while Hsinking was metropolitan.

The differences in administrative positioning were directly reflected in the main urban infrastructure, built volumes, grid networks, and distribution of massing and functions. Although the actual construction area was roughly the same, the planned volume of Hsinking was more than twice that of Harbin⁴³. This led to three varied methods of constructing spatial order.



Figure 2.15

Songhua River, Harbin, 1930s⁴⁴



Figure 2.16

Manchuria Kodama park river⁴⁵

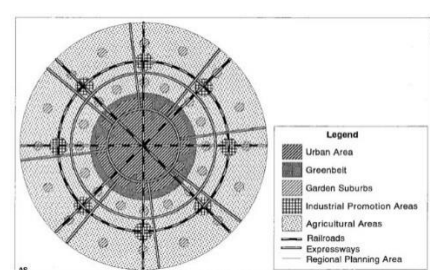


Figure 2.17 Kanto region Metropolitan structure plan, 1940. Source: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 1989.

First of all, the different considerations of site conditions by Russian and Japanese planners can be seen in the urban relocation process. After gaining enough experience from the first colonial settlement by the station, the colonists in Harbin and Changchun planned larger major urban areas nearby. Although both cities experienced a center shift, their directions were diametrically opposed. The development of Harbin was inseparable from the materials and manpower delivered by trains and piers. Therefore, the center of Harbin moved closer to the main railway station and the Songhua River. Hsinking's planned area was so large that it was divided into a three-phase construction process. The Japanese chose a flat piece of land away from the limiting factors. As a result, Hsinking was farther away from the station's ancillary land and the Yitong River.

Their different responses to the water environment directly affected the urban fabric. The main streets of Pristan and Daowai in Harbin were perpendicular to the Songhua River. A lively marina area and waterfront recreation area were formed along the river (Figure 2.15). In Hsinking, small tributaries that flow through the city were transferred into waterfront recreational areas for citizens (Figure 2.16). The green belt that conformed to the terrain broke the boredom of homogeneous grid blocks and organically

⁴¹ In order to distinguish between Japan's planning of the Changchun Railway Station annex and the Hsinking plan, this section refers to the area before 1931 as Changchun, and the area from 1932 to 1949 as Hsinking.

⁴² The ratio was estimated by the author based on historical data provided by Wikipedia.

⁴³ The ratio was estimated by the author based on historical data provided by Wikipedia.

⁴⁴ Russian beauties promenading at Songhua River, Harbin, c1930s. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kernbeisser/4129665481>

⁴⁵ Vintage: China, Hsinking Kodama park river. (n.d.). eBay. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.ebay.com/itm/143597128946>

shaped Hsinking's urban form. In addition, these natural tributaries were also used as summer reservoirs to regulate water volume and local climate. Separate sewage and drainage pipes effectively prevent contamination of the reservoir. This was the first case of planning that incorporated both natural tributaries and artificial infrastructure as elements of an all-park green space system.⁴⁶ Akira Koshizawa (2011, p.4) believes that green belts prevent cities from expanding indefinitely to the outside, and Japan began to implement green areas that prohibit urbanization in its own territory after the practice in Hsinking. The idea of configuring radiation and annular green belts can also be seen in the *Kanto region Metropolitan structure plan* issued by the Japanese Home Ministry in 1940 (Figure 2.17). The idea of configuring radiating and circular green belts may have originated from the Garden City movement and has been localized and improved.

Secondly, the spatial organization of the two cities is divergent, which can be interpreted through structural models. Harbin presents a multi-group distribution centered on the Sungari Station, and Hsinking shows a radiation distribution with a political core dominated by a palace and ministry offices.

The Sungari Station was the geometric center of the four districts in Harbin in terms of spatial organization. Similarly, CER company was the social core of them as Olga Bakich (1986, p.146) argues that Harbin was a company town before the October Revolution. Each district represented a group with its own class structure and social life (Figure 2.18). The first circle around the railway company is CER officers and employees. As described in Chapter 1, the Civil Department under CER built and maintained most infrastructure and social services - the shopping malls, hotels, schools, churches, clubs, and libraries. The second circle is the merchants who rely on rail and wharf transportation in Pristan. The last circle is the workers with low incomes living in Saryi Kharbin and Daowai. Only New Town was planned with a boulevard (Dazhi Avenue) and diagonal avenues linking important public spaces like parks and churches (Figure 2.19). Inhomogeneous grids in Pristan were denser and more conducive to the movement of goods and pedestrians.

Thus, fishbone-shaped streets dominated the spatial structure and divided the land into strips (Figure 2.20). The main avenue in Pristan connected the marina and train stations and was flanked by banks, stock exchanges, commercial clubs, and shops. It was planned as a middle-class community with a nice theater, restaurants, stock exchanges, commercial clubs, and a municipal council. The plan did not change the shanty towns in Daowai that had formed spontaneously before but added Pristine-like blocks next to them. Later it spontaneously formed a fishbone-like road network. The main street, Jingyu Road, ran parallel to the river and transported labor from Daowai to Pristan.

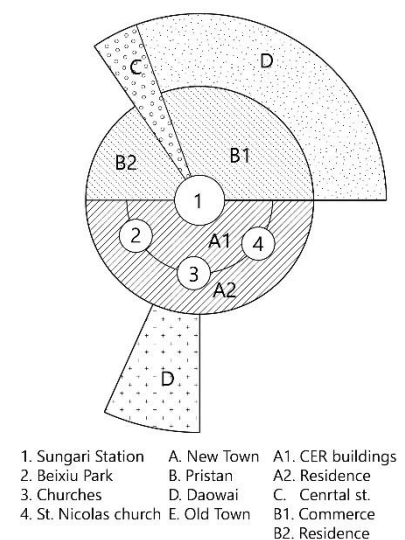


Figure 2.18. Harbin Spatial Model
drawn by the author based on Fig 2.1

⁴⁶ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011.
<https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>. Pp.127

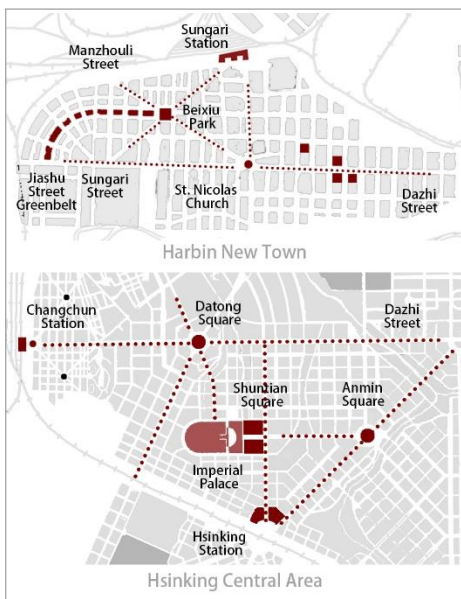


Figure 2.19. The section of main roads in Changchun, drawn by the author



Figure 2.20. Street net of Pristan and Daowai in Harbin, drawn by the author

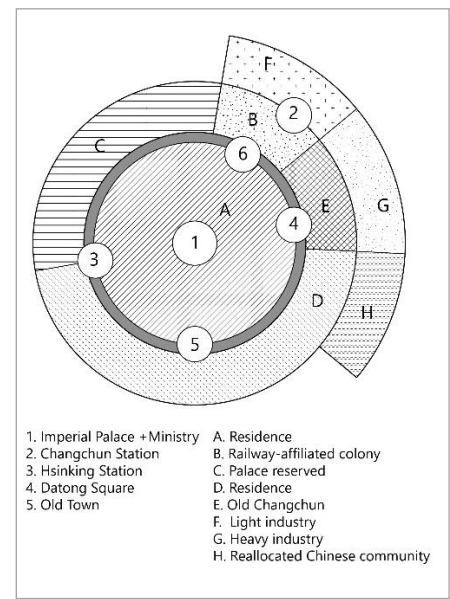


Figure 2.21. Changchun Spatial Model, drawn by the author based on Fig 2.10

The administrative core with a palace and ministry buildings dominated the Hsinking plan (Figure 2.21). The first circle radiating outwards is the first-class residence and government land, with green belts defining their boundaries. The second circle radiates out from the public space such as parks, squares, and train stations. It contains the secondary residential land, the reserved land for palace construction, the railway-affiliated colony, and the old Changchun City. Each core is a cognitive anchor, they are connected by boulevards, radiating roads, and green belts, thus forming an effective mental spatial orientation. The third circle was beyond the physical boundary, the railway and Yitong River. It is comprised of light and heavy industrial land, a cargo area, and a “Chinese labor settlement”⁴⁷. All circles have a geometric urban texture that effectively distributes traffic flux like human blood vessels. The main roads are very wide and detailed. According to the map, the width of the boulevard (Dazhi Avenue) in Harbin is estimated at about 10m. In contrast, Datong Avenue was 60m wide and subdivided into roadways, sidewalks, and promenades. The same went for the secondary streets with widths of 45m and 26m (Figure 2.22). The frequent intersections of grading streets improve pedestrian movement by effectively subdividing and directing huge flux into each block, which finally achieved an idealized urban and social order.

The zoning and road planning in Harbin is application-oriented and based on geometric planning, adapting to the conditions of different ethnic and class levels. Unlike the separation in Harbin, the Japanese pursue a collective order and establish a unified hierarchy to regulate different clusters. However, the planning of the two cities is more western characterized. The monolithic style and detachment from the locals exacerbate divisions at the bottom of colonial urban society. Top-down colonial planning is exclusive, leading to labor regionalization and marginalization, which hinders long-term urban development.

⁴⁷ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>. P.110

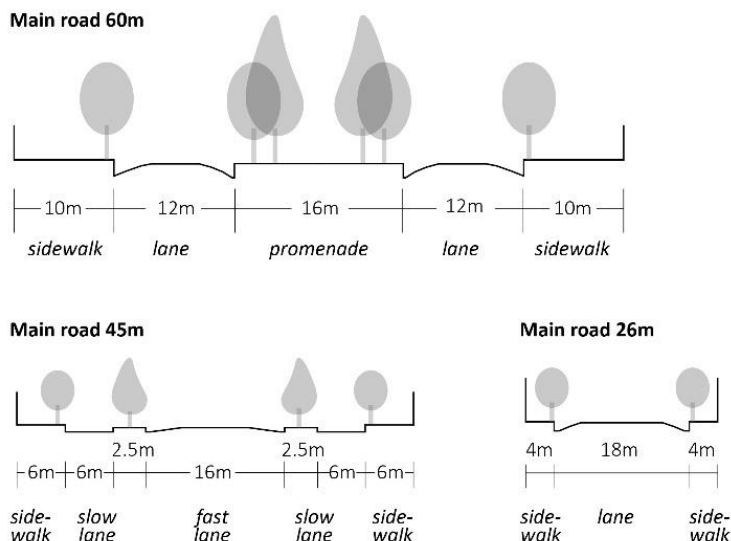


Figure 2.22 The section of main roads in Changchun⁴⁹



Figure 2.23. National Diet Building, Tokyo, 1936; Manchukuo General Affairs State Council building, Changchun, 1936⁴⁸

Finally, there are functional differences in the architectural style. Churches, stations, clubs, and parks in Harbin serve as community links. Intensified by culture shock and colonial superiority, they emerged as a carrier of an advanced lifestyle. Submission to mainstream culture prompted the earliest Russian-style railway buildings to be prototypes for other buildings to imitate later. Cultural and social identity spontaneously merged to form a colonial identity in a bottom-up manner. This can be speculated from the spontaneous adoption of Russian-style facades by commercial buildings on Jingyu Road in Daowai, a community purely constructed by Chinese craftsmen. The symmetrical three-section façade not only had Western-style decorative columns and curved natural patterns, but also Chinese ornaments that imply auspiciousness such as bats, pomegranates, golden toads, and peony.

The colonial identity of Changchun is difficult to develop from cultural identity submission as Japan has deep historical and cultural ties with China. Therefore, the squares, grand architecture, and parks in Hsinking are planned for supremacy, as stated by Guo Qinghua "A utopian vision of economic opportunity led Japan into not only an era of military expansionism but also the realm of ceremonial fantasy." The outcome is the monumental streetscapes in both Chinese and Western styles. The early style was completely westernized. For example, Yamato Hotel (1909) was featured in European neoclassical style, with extensive use of structural symmetry, red bricks, and other elements. Later, a new style "Xingya" was applied to administrative buildings. The Manchukuo Government Office (1934) has a colonnade with Tuscan columns and a three-section façade. A group of four Tuscan columns is continuously repeated and strengthened on the façade. Traditional Chinese styles such as cornices, tented roofs with double eaves, and glazed green tile. Built in the same year, the National Diet Building in Tokyo shared similar characteristics (Figure 2.23). By merging Eastern and Western cultures, the architectural style of the institutions of power in Hsinking aims to establish a sense of national identity within the regime.

⁴⁸ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>. P.114

⁴⁹ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>. P.114

Although it seems that the mixed styles are emphasizing that everyone is welcome in Hsinking. In fact, the attitude of the Japanese colonists to cultivating a sense of national identity in Manchukuo has always been subtle, especially in the state architecture. The palace at the center of the Hsinking plan was the residence of Emperor Puyi, but it was not completed until the end of World War II. The eight Ministries headed by the State Council actually controlled the city. Their office buildings were located on the south side of the palace, all featuring Xingya-style facades. As Manchukuo was a puppet regime from beginning to end, this identification was essentially empty and meaningless. The Xingya style existed only in several Japanese colonies in China and the national buildings in Tokyo and was not widely and automatically adopted.

In conclusion, the urbanization methods of Harbin and Changchun are different due to various reasons, which leads to the morphological differentiation between the two cities extensively. Their colonial practice in Manchuria was closely related to the country's institutional reform and industrialization. They carried out colonial plundering and seize the funds, raw materials, and markets that were necessary for industrial development. Premised on colonial strategies, planning methods that served the identity of the new regime dominated the urban form. Cities were formed in or near railway-affiliated lands. Induced by industrialization and commercialization, Harbin spontaneously completed the colonial formation and cultural integration. In Changchun, monumental elements such as boulevards, hyper-scale squares, and grandeur exotic buildings worked together and shaped the colonial landscape.

Chapter III

Who shaped the cities?

When we ask who shaped the two cities, Harbin and Changchun, we are not only asking who designed the city, but also who lived in them and who built the actual houses. The designer's educational background can explain the character of the city in many ways. For example, it can explain why Japanese builders transformed Changchun, a Chinese city, into a metropolis with obvious westernized characteristics. And the citizens and laborers saw life in the colony from a bottom-up perspective. Communities are gradually formed in an imperceptible way. Regardless, since the fate of the two cities is inextricably linked to the railway, the narrative of this chapter begins with the people who worked for the rail company, the designers.

Designers

The huge construction volume in Manchuria brought thousands of professional engineers and experienced officials from the Russian Empire and Japan. Russian Engineers working for CER built most religious orthodox buildings and auxiliary infrastructure (stations, official buildings, employee houses, etc.) as they were “associated with the nation-state program for the construction of the railway”.⁵⁰ Most of them received an education at the St. Petersburg Institute of Railway Engineers and adapted the typical executive drawings developed at school to local conditions⁵¹. Although the names of the Russian architects of these buildings are difficult to identify due to limited sources, it can be inferred from the photographs that they are similar in style (Figure 3.1). There are features of Art Nouveau and neoclassicism: symmetrical façades with different proportions of window openings, the application of Greek columns, and the decoration of curving and flowing lines.

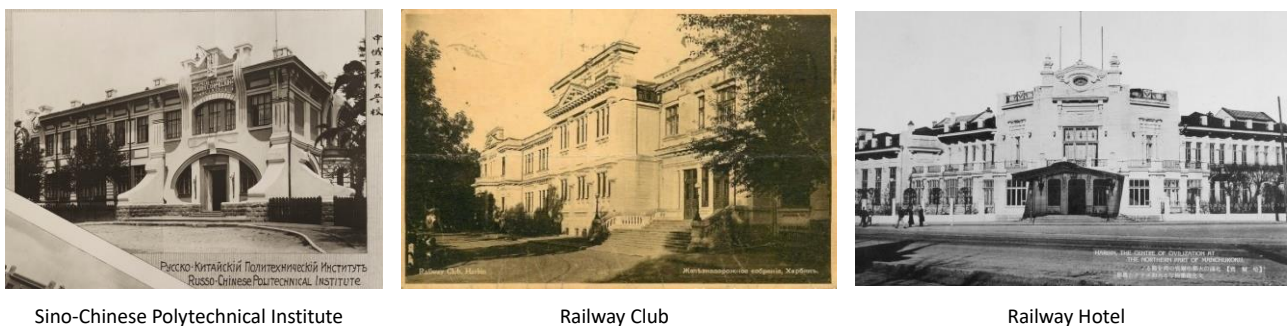


Figure 3.1. The CER company buildings ⁵²

The Japanese who built Changchun were all top domestic designers and engineers at that time. The president of SMR Goto Shinpei once served as the chief civil affairs officer of Taiwan. Manchukuo civil engineering director Naoki Kotaro once served as the civil engineering section chief of Tokyo City. Manchukuo civil chief director Yonoyoshi Kato graduated from the Civil Engineering Department of Imperial Universities in 1894 and was the Civil engineering section chief of Niigata. Some people also have the experience of studying abroad. Makino Masami, the architect who designed the Manchukuo General Affairs State Council building (Figure 3.2), graduated from Tokyo University in 1927 and went to France for further studies. Planning Section Chief, Satsuki Mizoguchi graduated from Hokkaido University in 1916. Then he studied at Wisconsin State University and the University of Chicago. Perhaps his experiences in the United States made him insist on promenades in the Changchun planning⁵³. Similar designs can also be seen in Boston and Kansas City at the same time.

The main architecture style in Hsinking was “Xingya” which mixes the features of Neoclassical and Chinese Imperial palaces. Generally, the main entrance portico is on the central axis of the façade and is emphasized by its prominent volume and the tower. Portico is used as the motif to strengthen the united monumentality. The façade is three-staged. The ground floor is elevated with light-colored

⁵⁰ Xu Jinghui (2016). *Wind and Rain Middle East Road. 风雨中东路*. Beijing Book Co. Inc.

⁵¹ Bazilevich, M. E., & Tceluiko, D. S. (2020). The Influence of Professional Activities of Railway Engineers on the Development of Architecture in the Far East at the Turn of the 19th-20th Centuries. *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, 753(2), 022070. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/753/2/022070> pp4

⁵² This collection of photos are from the website <https://brightspace.tudelft.nl/d2l/le/content/398595/viewContent/2573761/View>

⁵³ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. *Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo*. Social Science Literature Press, 2011. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>. Pp.156

stone veneer, dark bricks are used in the middle, and green glazed tiles are used for the top eaves. The wide and outstretched roof adopts the high-standard eaves of Chinese official buildings, such as the double eaves Xieshan, or the imperial crown style that emerged in Japan after 1930. This style was widely used in the buildings along Shuntian Avenue. The role of this style, as Takeo Sato put it, "reflects political gestures"⁵⁴. Makino Masami supported the united style "The buildings along Shuntian Avenue have been well designed, at least they are pursuing something". There were also dissenting voices at the time. When designing the Central Bank of Manchu (Figure 3.3), Yoshitoki Nishimura argued that "If such a large building were designed to be nondescript, it would be a laughing stock in the future". The bank facade was characterized by huge Romanesque stoa. This European Renaissance-style architecture was popular in Japan at the time. This indicates the subtle attitude of the Japanese colonists in terms of architectural style and cultural identity.



Figure 3.2 Manchukuo State Council⁵⁵



Figure 3.3 The Central Bank of Manchu⁵⁶

Also, the mixing of architectural styles from various ethnic groups was a propaganda tool. In cultivating a sense of national identity in Manchukuo, the authorities adopted "Five Races Under One Union" (Chinese Han, Chinese Manchu, Mongolian, Korean, and Japanese) and the modernized capital were the main themes of union identity in Hsinking. The Guandong Army Headquarter acted as a cultural symbol in media in particular films and posters made by Manchukuo Film Association during the colonization period (Figure 3.4). There is no doubt that the Japanese colonial activities in Changchun and Manchuria were always centered on the pursuit of modernity. And this modernity is inextricably linked with the strengthening of state power in the context of imperialism.



Guandong Army Headquarter, Founding Spring,
black and white film, 1938



Five Races Under One Union



Guandong Army
Headquarter in a
poster⁵⁷, 1938

Figure 3.4. Architecture image and political context

⁵⁴ Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo, Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo. Social Science Literature Press, 2011. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07247465>. Pp.183

⁵⁵ Japanese book "Showa History: History of Japanese colony" published by Mainichi Newspapers Company. 1939.

⁵⁶ Japanese book "Showa History: History of Japanese colony" published by Mainichi Newspapers Company. 1939.

⁵⁷ "With the assistance of Japan and China, the world is peaceful",

Communities

Harbin and Changchun were similar villages before colonization. The population was mainly composed of Chinese Han people from the central plain of China. Similar lifestyles and eating habits contributed to the formation of an intimate community of acquaintances, providing a natural environment for Sinicization. Colonization brought villages into a rapid modernization and industrialization phase. Lacking effective social, cultural, and ethnic integration, economic disparities exacerbated and generated various degrees of settlement differentiation.

The citizen immigration from Russia and Japan to Manchuria was different. After the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, a large number of Belarusians expelled by the Soviet regime took refuge in Harbin. In 1920, the number of Russian diasporas was as high as 155,000 (not including the large Russian garrison in Heilongjiang province), and the number of Jewish diasporas reached more than 20,000, ranking second in the total number⁵⁸. In contrast with the immigration wave in Harbin, few Japanese showed great enthusiasm to emigrate to Manchuria. One reason was that due to the war, Japan's domestic expansion of industrial production required more and more labor, resulting in a decrease in export labor. The wages of workers in Japan were much higher than those in Manchuria. Even Koreans, when faced with the immigration Manchuria policy enacted by the Japanese authorities, preferred to go to Japan for the same reason.⁵⁹

As the Russians' influence in Harbin declined after the October Revolution, the Chinese population in New Town grew to 47.3 percent in 1929. The differences between Daowai and the rest of Harbin gradually diminished. All bustling commercial districts were Russian-Baroque architecture that featured decorative columns and twisting elements on facades. Different national groups, Jewish, Polish, Tatar, Armenian, and Han built their communities including schools, churches (Figure 3.4), and clubs in Harbin. There were associations from different races: a Jewish National Association (1903), a Polish Association (1901), a Georgian Association (1905), and a Ukrainian Association (1905).⁶⁰ Their life can be depicted in casual life photos, with religious and sports activities (Figure 3.5). People of different faiths and races were buried in the United Cemetery of Seven Countries (Figure 3.6). Harbin is a memory and history of many Russian families.



Figure 3.6. the United Cemetery of Seven Countries
Chinese (Ch), Orthodox (O), Catholic (C), Jewish (J), Lutheran (L), Moslem (M), Karaite(K), Japanese (Ja), and Molokan (Mn).

Sources from: Glodek, A. (2020, July 2). Roman Catholic cemetery in Harbin (1903-1958). Boym Institute. <https://instytutboyma.org/en/roman-catholic-cemetery-in-harbin-1903-1958/>

⁵⁸. Harbin Diaspora 哈爾濱僑民. (2021). In Wikipedia.

<https://zh.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%E5%93%88%E7%88%BE%E6%BF%B1%E5%83%91%E6%B0%91&oldid=63763611>

⁵⁹. Grajdanzev, A. J. (2008). 47. Manchuria: An Industrial Survey. Chinese Economic History up to 1949 (2 Vols), 640–653.

⁶⁰. A Russian City in China: Harbin before 1917 on JSTOR. (n.d.). Retrieved December 8, 2021, from https://www.jstor.org/stable/40868580?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents pp143



Figure 3.4. Various Religious Architecture in Harbin

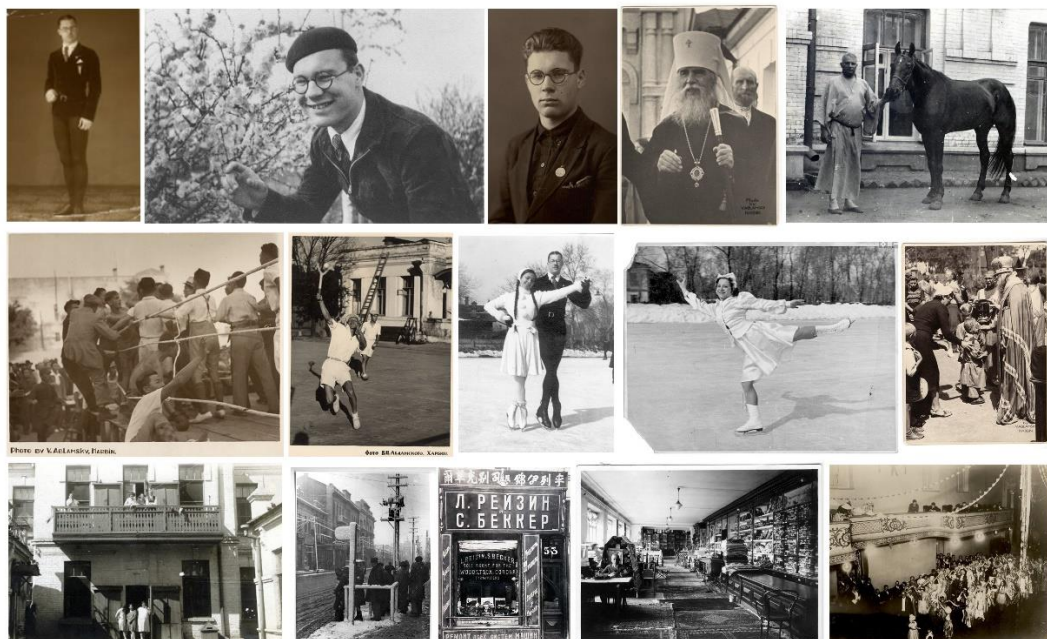


Figure 3.5. Casual life photos that were taken by Vladimir Pavlovich Ablamskii⁶⁷ (1911-1994) in 1933⁶⁸

61. St. Nicholas Cathedral in Harbin. (n.d.). Whitworth University. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from https://digitalcommons.whitworth.edu/cmh_orthodox/70/

62. "Harbin. Pristan. Synagogue." Lowcountry Digital Library, College of Charleston Libraries, .

63. Русский Харбин / Российская фашистская партия. (n.d.). ОРИЕНТАЛИСТ — LiveJournal. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from <https://orientalist-v.livejournal.com/1961845.html>

64. Tatars in China. (n.d.). Manchouko Hailar Harbin Sin Zin Shanghai. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from <http://theperemechlounge.blogspot.com/2008/08/tatars-in-china-manchouko-hailar-harbin.html>

65. <http://humus.livejournal.com/2089116.html>

66. <https://sobory.ru/photo/245263>. Source: Александр Качалин

67. Vladimir Pavlovich Ablamskii, a figure-skating champion from northern China, was also a famous Harbin photographer and photojournalist. This collection contains Ablamskii's photographs depicting the life of the Russian immigrant community in Harbin.

68. Ablamskii, V. P. (1930) *Kostiumirovannyi Bal V Teatre*. Heilongjiang China Harbin, 1930. [Harbin, China: publisher not identified, to 1939] [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018687712/>.

Similarly, Japanese shrines were established in important public spaces in Changchun. Rooted in Japanese culture, the shrine is a place for Japanese citizens to express their daily gratitude to divinity or casual visits for weddings and graduation. The construction of the first one, Changchun Shrine (Figure 3.7), began in 1911 and had been expanded several times. It was located around Changchun Station. When the streetcar passes through it, the driver would inform the passengers to take off hats regardless of their nationality and race⁶⁹. Higashi Honganji Temple of Hsinking was located south of Datong Square. It consists of the main hall with green-tile eaves and a side hall with black-tile eaves and curved overhangs, both in traditional Japanese style (Figure 3.8). More importantly, the shrine is the spiritual core and national consciousness of the Japanese administration. Zhongling Temple was built in 1935 to worship Japanese soldiers who died in battle by holding 20 fixed sacrificial activities every year (Figure 3.9). It covered an area of 456,000 square meters, with a total investment of 1.6 million yuan and a total of 170,000 workers.



Figure 3.7. A wedding and graduation ceremony in Changchun Shrine⁷⁰



Figure 3.8. Higashi Honganji Temple⁷¹



Figure 3.9. Ceremonies in the Puppet Manchurian Zhongling Temple⁷²

69. Wikipedia. <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%96%B0%E4%BA%AC%E7%A5%9E%E7%A4%BE>

70. Wikipedia. <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%96%B0%E4%BA%AC%E7%A5%9E%E7%A4%BE>

71. <http://www.fangzhiguan.com/tag/%E9%95%BF%E6%98%A5%E8%80%81%E7%85%A7%E7%89%87/page/5/>

72. <http://www.fangzhiguan.com/archives/528/>

Labor

A large number of laborers was also required to promote the development of industry, commerce, and transportation. Both the railway company and the Kwantung Army had recruited a large workforce to Manchuria from two provinces of Shandong and Hebei in China since 1897. This led to the second immigration wave of “Chuang Guandong”. By the autumn of 1898, more than 400,000 laborers had been recruited within a year. The Chinese Eastern Railway used 170,000 laborers, and more than 230,000 laborers went to the Far East to build the Trans-Siberian Railway.⁷³ There were two immigration routes, one is by land, exiting from the Great Wall gates such as Shanhai Pass, Xifengkou, and Gubeikou, and entering Liaoning province; the other is by sea, by boat from the Shandong Peninsula to the Liaodong Peninsula. But transportation was too expensive for them, according to the description in a Japanese travelogue: “many walked there”⁷⁴. People were divided not only by race but also by class. Photos recorded Chinese and Russian aristocrats eating hotpot (Figure 3.10), as well as the scenes of Chinese laborers working and eating (Figure 3.11). The CER workers faced harsh conditions and meager wages, but the forced laborers by the Japanese military faced even worse. According to a runaway labor document (Figure 3.12), the youngest was 12 years old and the oldest was aged 54. Usually, the result of escape was death (Figure 3.13).

During the 40-year ownership change of the railway line, the resources and geographical significance of the vast land in Manchuria passed from the Russian Empire to Japan. The railway company was firmly controlled by the colonial government and the army, while the Qing government and later the Republic of China were only bystanders to the upheaval. Even though the Chinese side had always emphasized the involvement of Chinese capital and the integrity of sovereignty, the land rights of railway companies granted by unequal treaties directly led to the presence of troops, accompanied by an administration shift with economic penetration for military aim.



Figure 3.10. A Meal for Upper Class⁷⁵



Figure 3.11. A Meal of Railway Laborers⁷⁶



Figure 3.12. Labor escape list, Jilin Provincial Archives.⁷⁷ The ages of the deceased from left to right are 44, 54, 40, 23, 12, 15, 30, and 19.



Figure 3.13. A dead body of forced Chinese laborer who was electrocuted by Japanese troops⁷⁸

⁷³ Xu Jinghui (2016). *Wind and Rain Middle East Road. 风雨中东路*. Beijing Book Co. Inc.

⁷⁴ “Yesterday, in May of the 31st year of Meiji (Western Calendar 1898, there was a Shandong plank truck on the dirt road from Fengtian to Xingjing. Women were crowded on top of it, their children were crying, tossing, and turning [...] It was indescribable. There were young women calling their husbands, old women calling for their children. The screams shook the wild. Some people walked to Tonghua, some to Huairan, some to Hailong, and some to Chaoyang Town. They stumbled, facing each other shoulder to shoulder”. (The description is translated by the author). Koshimuraya Heitaka (1902). *Traveling in Manchuria*, Volume 2, Guangzhi Bookstore, 28th year of Guangxu, Qing Dynasty

⁷⁵ <https://orientalist-v.livejournal.com/1961845.html>

⁷⁶ Avrutin, E.M. (2022). *Boundaries of Exclusion*. In *Racism in Modern Russia: FROM THE ROMANOV TO PUTIN* (pp. 23–45). London: Bloomsbury Academic. Retrieved April 16, 2022, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350097308.0008>

⁷⁷ Documents reveal Japan's warfare crimes- China.org.cn. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2022, from http://www.china.org.cn/photos/2014-01/13/content_31166662_6.htm

⁷⁸ Archives on forced laborers by the Japanese military—China—Chinadaily.com.cn. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2022, from

Conclusion

By comparing the construction process of Harbin and Changchun during the colonial period from 1895 to 1945, we can learn that colonial urbanization eliminated the original backgrounds, and established new orders through multi-faceted planning methods, which directly led to the differentiation of urban morphologies. The railway was the key factor in gaining legal status to build colonial strongholds. Whether voluntarily or involuntarily, Harbin and Changchun have completed the process from village to metropolis, in which the population and cultural composition have undergone a sharp shift.

The way in which colonial identities were acquired led to a huge difference in urban morphology. The relationship between Manchuria and the Central Plains of China has always been geographically and ethnically dissociated, which was one of the innate conditions for the train colonization of the Russian Empire and Japan. However, the Great Wall and the isolation policies of the Manchu Qing government did not prevent a large number of Han refugees from fleeing north, who constituted the basic population on the eve of urbanization. This later became a local factor that Russia and Japan could not ignore in order to gain dominance. In Harbin, despite the different social statuses, the multi-ethnic cultural background has led to the formation of a diverse urban texture. However, Pan-Asianism under a homogeneous western façade dominates the urban form in Changchun. Early construction in Changchun, such as land classification, grid street systems, and public squares and facilities indicated Japan's intention to build a leading modern city by Western standards. After 1932 when Changchun's political status as the new capital was established, the Great Hsinking plan was an exploration of new modernity based on an ideal political order and pan-Asian culture. The tone of the city was ultimately set to gain the support of state power and colonial rule.

Whoever managed the railway company could really control the cities. Unlike cities that were built spontaneously, colonial cities had a strong top-down construction drive that stemmed from land ownership. In the Harbin and Changchun cases, land ownership was granted by land treaties to railway companies controlled by Russian or Japanese authorities. Therefore, the colonization of Harbin and early Changchun was carried out around the railway in the spatial layout. After Japan established the Manchukuo regime in Manchuria in 1931, the demand for this weakened, so the planning of Hsinking was not so closely related to the railway. Free from the shackles of railways, Hsinking's plan had a larger scale and finesse than Harbin's plan. There are few Russian versions of the Harbin plan. However, based on the markings on the map, it can be speculated that the Hsinking plan has undergone at least four rounds of improvement, and every detail has been discussed, including how to obtain the stones and bricks for urban development.

The attitudes of the Russian and Japanese colonists towards railway colonization construction were opposite, resulting in different positioning of the two cities. The primary goal of Russian engineers was to build railways. The station town acted as an auxiliary facility and replicated the experiences of St. Petersburg. However, the new capital was jointly planned by the best Japanese officials and scholars at that time, who not only had a rich practical experience but also learned from Europe and the United States. The construction of Hsinking had early exploration and practical significance as it was synchronized with Japan's practice, even ahead. In the long run, Hsinking is a replicable template,

and Harbin is an isolated case.

Cities are also shaped by different individuals. Due to the cultural and economic colonization advocated by Finance Minister Sergei Yulyevich Witte and his successors, Harbin presented a relatively free and tolerant spirit in politics, religion, and race. At first Russian engineers recreated a city of their own and reproduced what they learned in St. Petersburg in the colony. With the influx of Belarusian refugees, Harbin developed into an international commercial city. The city formed in a bottom-up way as different ethnic groups shaped their communities and social relationships. The decorative façade that combines Chinese auspicious cloud patterns and twisted double columns is good proof. Instead of trying to replicate their own country, Japanese colonists explored how to deal with the relationship between modernity and Asian elements. A series of practices have proved that their approach is forward-looking. But there was a huge disconnect between the synchronized way of life it strived to shape (Five Races Under One Union) and the fact that Chinese and Japanese inhabitants actually lived in two parallel worlds. As a result, the construction of the city is more like a huge monumental landscape completed by top-down forces. Urban space under colonial rule was given an ideological role, and various public and even private spaces became tools of management and assimilation.

In terms of results, Harbin's prosperity is more like the result of the times. The continuous flow of talents and materials brought by the intersection of traffic routes is the core element to drive Harbin forward. Changchun is a well-planned and systematic modern city. Comparing the colonial urban construction cases of Harbin and Changchun is instructive. It demonstrates how planning methods driven by cultural, political, and economic factors affect urban form in specific ways and provides an excellent model for studying how city identity plays a role in this process.

Annotated Bibliography

Books

Chiasson, B. R. (2010). *Administering the colonizer: Manchuria's Russians under Chinese rule, 1918-29*. UBC Press.

The ideology and culture of the local inhabitants are rarely discussed in many articles about the colony. I am not sure whether this is because aborigines did lack discourse in history or they were neglected on purpose by the researchers afterward. Different from other opinions about the construction of Harbin, Chiasson assumes that "Harbin is the only white city in the world run by yellows", which is also the reason I chose Harbin as the comparison with Changchun. In my opinion, if Changchun embodies a unilateral construction process with strong metaphors, Harbin's construction tends to show self-expression in cooperation. But so far, I only have partial access to this book.

GUO, Q. (2004). *Changchun: Unfinished capital planning of Manzhouguo, 1932-42*. *Urban History*, 31(1), 100-117.

The study contains a comprehensive analysis concluding the historical context of Changchun construction, Beaux-Arts features in both urban planning and architectural design, and the conflicts of palaces between Puyi and Guandong Army. This reflects the "ideological underpinnings of city planning and the methodological sources of architectural design to understand how the city was shaped and why." However, the article is lack of comparison between Changchun and any other colonial city in the Far East.

Akira Koshizawa, Ou Shuo. *Planning of the capital of pseudo-Manchukuo*. Social Science Literature Press, 2011.

This volume has a wider range of studies on Asian cities that were constructed by western imperial powers, including Harbin and Changchun as the first two examples. This provides me with a good vision of how to analyze the commonalities and differences between the two cases in a complete and continuous framework. But I have no access to this book except buying the paper book.

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