

Planning Modern Cities in China

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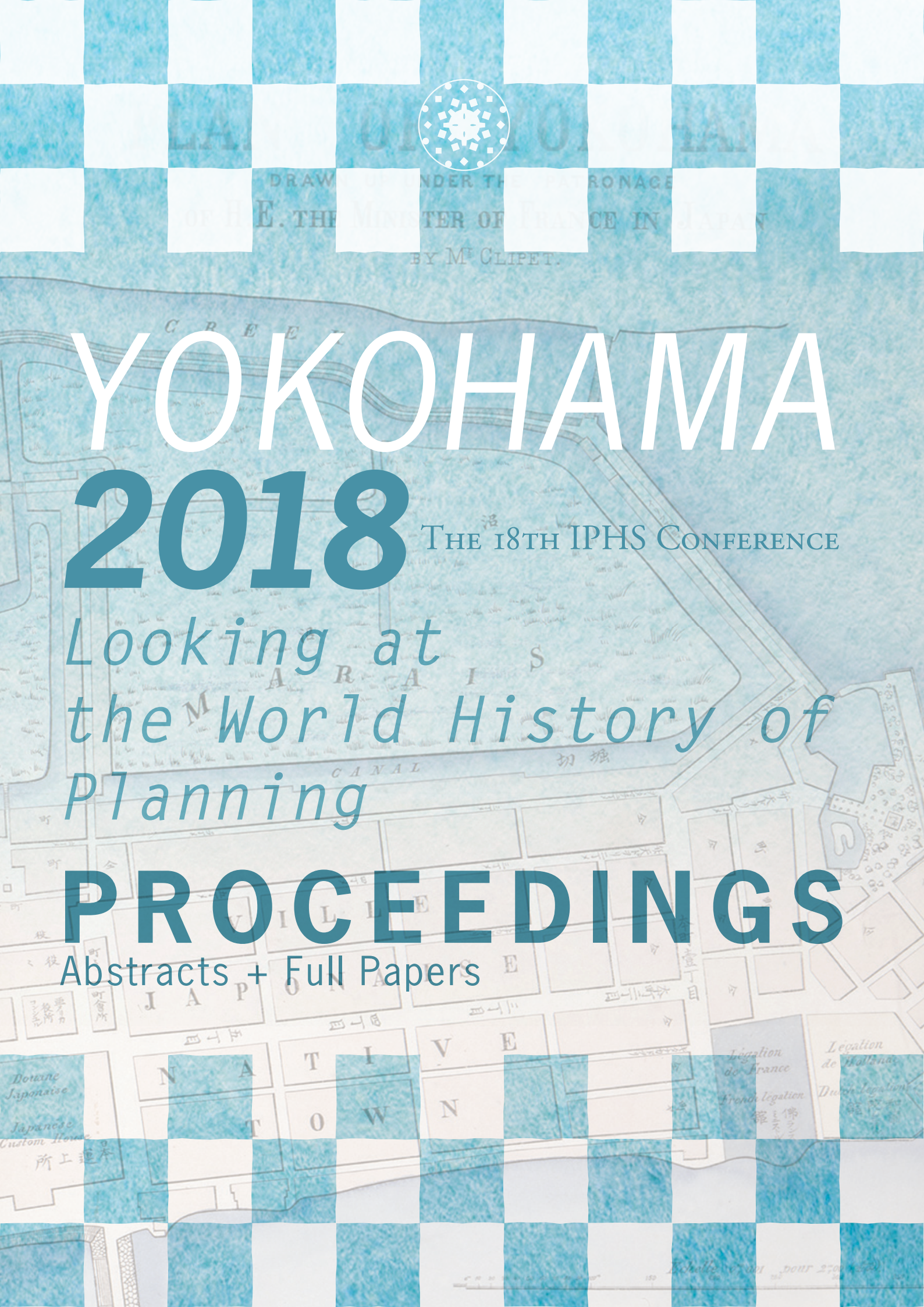
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Planning Modern Cities in China: Urban Construction Regulations of Concessions in Tianjin (1860-1945)

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Tianjin, one of the so-called Treaty Ports that opened to foreign trade under the unequal treaties was home to nine foreign concessions. In each concession, the foreign powers created urban forms and functions that mirrored practices in their respective home countries. This article explores the consecutive establishment and implementation of regulations in eight out of nine foreign concessions in Tianjin between 1860 and 1945. It firstly provides an overview of regulation types and legislative systems of the concessions. Secondly, it compares these regulations and bylaws with the ones in their home countries. Thirdly, it compares the specific cases of Tianjin concessions with each other. Finally, it places the Tianjin case in the context of other Chinese port city concessions. In conclusion, it argues that the regulations of concessions in Tianjin not only showed a strong influence from their home countries in a top-down setting, but also interacted with each other in a peer-to-peer setting. The circulation of these regulations, within Tianjin and among treaty ports in China, was promoted by governments' central control, municipal councils' intervention and individuals' movements from one place to another.

Keywords: Treaty Port, Concessions, Modern Tianjin, Regulations.

Introduction

From the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century, Western powers and Japan had owned numerous concessions in the treaty ports of China. Located close to the capital, Beijing, Tianjin was particularly attractive to foreign nations, more politically than economically.¹ Mr. Reed, the American Ambassador, claimed in 1858 that if Tianjin opened, "it would be a nest of intrigue, besides affording European powers a position from which they could overawe the capital".² Tianjin was opened as a treaty port in 1860. From 1860 to 1902, nine foreign concessions (British, French, American, German, Japanese, Russian, Italian, Austro-Hungarian, and Belgian) settled in Tianjin (Figure 1, Table 1), the highest number in all of China. Ambitious countries such as Britain, France, Japan, Germany, and Russia also owned self-contained concessions in other treaty ports of China.

Table 1. Foreign concessions in Tianjin and their respective establishment and recovery year.

Concession	Year of establishment	Year of actual recovery ³
British Concession	The Concession	1945
	The Extension	
	The Southern Extension	
	The Extra Mural Extension	
French Concession	The Concession	1945
	The Extension	
American Concession	After 1862	Included in the Southern Extension of the British Concession in 1902
German Concession	The Concession	1917
	The Extension	
Japanese Concession	The Concession	1945
	The Extension	
Russian Concession	1901	1924
Belgium Concession	1902	1931
Italian Concession	1902	1945
Austro-Hungarian Concession	1902	1919

Source: Compiled by authors based on Shang and Liu. *Research on the Society of Tianjin Concessions* (Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1996), 5-35.



Figure 1. The old Tianjin town and nine foreign concessions on map of Tianjin. The concessions were all located outside the old Tianjin city, along Hai-Ho river (海河).

The nine foreign concessions in Tianjin were all located near the Hai-Ho river, convenient for trade and transport. Almost all of the concession areas were undeveloped at the beginning of their establishment. In the words of the editor of the *Chinese Times*, Alexander Michie, the beginning of the first two concessions, the British and the French, were “foul and noxious swamps, around them, on the dryer grounds, were the numerous graves of many generations of people”.⁴

Enjoying administrative, judicial, policing and taxation rights in the concessions, foreign powers brought new planning ideas, building forms and urban forms. According to their home countries’ experience, each of the nations planned its concession, made regulations, gradually built roads, houses, warehouses, stores, churches, hospitals, cemeteries, parks, and set up modern municipal facilities such as street lights, tramways and sewers. As it was stated in the pamphlet *Tientsin, North China* published by the Tianjin Rotary Club in 1934: “the foreign areas look for all the world like modern Western cities, with great modern Temples of Finance, massive business premises, and well-built residences”.⁵ Born in Tianjin in 1914, the American writer and journalist, John Hersey, represented the multi-layered identity of the city: “For three or four Chinese coppers, I could ride in a rickshaw from my home, in England, to Italy, Germany, Japan, or Belgium. I walked to France for violin lessons; I had to cross the river to get to Russia, and often did, because the Russians had a beautiful wooded park with a lake in it.”⁶

With each concession having its own national characters, Tianjin was thus an important hub for the import and exchange of planning ideas, and a singular case to study transnational urbanism in a single city. Despite abundant historical research on foreign concessions of Tianjin, the urban construction regulations of these concessions, which played an essential role in the transmission of Western modern planning ideas, has not been fully explored. Focusing on the regulations of foreign concessions in Tianjin, this paper provides a new perspective to interpret the transmission mechanisms of these new planning ideas among treaty ports and within Tianjin.

First, the paper illustrates different types of concession regulations, and actors involved in the legislative process. It shows how the respective ministers, consuls, municipal councillors and professionals participated in different layers of regulation formulation. Second, it shows how the foreign powers introduced their home countries planning ideas into the concession regulations, including provisions not only on land management, municipal infrastructures and urban planning, but also on private construction from design aesthetics to building technology.



Third, it explores the circulation mechanism of regulations among concessions, positioning it in a larger framework of transnational urbanism. It suggests that this peer-to-peer interaction existed among different concessions in Tianjin and between concessions belonging to a same country in different treaty ports. This circulation had various driving forces, from governmental level to professional individuals.

Making Regulations: creating new orders in concessions

Before the opening of the city and the establishment of foreign concessions, there was no modern planning nor municipal management system in Tianjin. Like many other traditional Chinese cities, the old Tianjin city was rectangular in shape surrounded by lofty walls. Public works such as road cleaning, bridge construction, fire protection was assumed by local charities and society organizations, and the local government was in charge of tax collection and security management. When the foreign powers came to Tianjin and started to construct their own areas, they also brought modern regulations.

In the book *The History of Chinese Concession* (中国租界史), Chengkang Fei highlights three types of regulations: decrees on the setting up of the concessions, basic regulations of the concessions, and municipal regulations.⁷ This classification can be mainly applied to the foreign concessions in Tianjin. Some of the concessions in Tianjin were created through agreements signed between China and respective foreign country. Others were set up according to diplomatic notes or official notices issued by both or one of the two sides.⁸ These agreements, notes and notices provided basic principles for early development of the concessions, generally clarifying boundaries of the concessions, and modes of acquiring lands and paying rents. Some of them classified land and regulated road and house construction. After the establishment of the concessions, a series of regulations emerged to meet the needs of their development (Table 2). In some concessions which were established earlier and had a relatively higher degree of construction and complete legal systems, such as the British, the French, the German and the Japanese, basic regulations and municipal regulations were promulgated separately. Regulations of the other concessions in Tianjin usually combined basic regulations and municipal regulations in one regulation document. Whatever the regulation system, in terms of urban construction, these regulations generally related to land system, land use, infrastructures (electricity, water, drainage, etc.), private construction procedure, construction details and building style.

Table 2. Partial List of Regulations of Concessions in Tianjin

Concession	Publishing Year	Regulations
British Concession	1863	Local Regulations for Tientsin
	1864	Supplementary Regulations
	1866	Tientsin Local Land Regulations and General Regulations
	1878	Provisional Rules for Voting at Land Renters' Meetings at Tientsin
	1878	Approved Bye-laws
	1898	Land Regulations of the British Municipal Extension, Tientsin
	1901	Tientsin Local Land Regulations and General Regulations Amendment
	1902	Draft Scheme for Amalgamation of the Four British Municipal Areas
	1907	Amendment to the Tientsin British Concession Local Land Regulations
	1911	Amendment and Extension of "The Land Regulations of the British Municipal Extension, Tientsin, 1898"
	1913	Hand Book of Byelaws and Municipal Information
	1918	The Tientsin Municipal Regulations
	1919	British Municipal Area Municipal Byelaws
	1922	British Municipal Council Tientsin, Handbook of Municipal Information
	1925	British Municipal Council Building & Sanitary By-laws
	1930	The Tientsin Municipal Regulations 1918 with Amendments to December 31, 1930
	1930	Zoning Regulation of the Extra Mural Area
1936	British Municipal Council Building & Sanitary By-laws	
French Concession	1877	Règlement de Police et de voirie de la Concession Française de Tientsin
	1881	Règlement sur la Construction des Maisons Chinoises à Élever Ultérieurement sur la Concession
	1893	Règlement Provisoire d'Organisation Municipale
	1894	Règlements Municipaux Concession Française de Tienn-tsinn
	1908	Règlement Municipal de la Concession Française de Tientsin
	1912	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Règlement Administratif
	1912	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Recueil des Règlements Municipaux
	1916	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Recueil des Règlements Municipaux
	1921	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Règlement Administratif



	1921	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Règlement Général de la Concession Française
	1926	Règlement Municipal Organique de la Concession Française de Tientsin
	1928	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Règlement Administratif
	1930	Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Tientsin, Règlement Général de la Concession Française
	1931	Règlement Municipal Organique de la Concession Française de Tientsin
Japanese Concession	1901	工事請負規則
	1902	天津帝國專管居留地內永借權登錄規程
	1902	天津帝國專管居留地土地建物屆出規則
	1902	天津日本專管居留地假規則
	1905	居留民團法
	1906	居留民團法施行規則
	1907	天津居留民團法施行細則
	1919	下水道條例
	1922	電氣供給規程
	1923	建築取締規則
German Concession	1899	Outlines of Regulations for the German Concession
	1899	Baupolizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1899	Polizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1902	Baupolizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1905	Gemeindeordnung für Die deutsche Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1908	Polizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1911	Polizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1912	Polizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
	1915	Polizeiordnung für das Gebiet der Deutschen Niederlassung in Tientsin
Russian Concession	1903	Regulations of the Russian Concession at Tientsin
	1912	Russian Municipal Council Municipal Regulations and Byelaws
	1915	Byelaws for the Russian Concession
	1920	Russian Municipal Council Municipal Regulations and Byelaws
Austro-Hungarian Concession	1908	Reglement Enthaltend die Hauptsächlichsten Grundsätze und Bestimmungen für die Verwaltung der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Niederlassung in Tientsin
Italian Concession	1908	Royal Italian Concession in Tientsin, Local Land Regulations and General Rules
	1913	Regulations and Byelaws of the Italian Concession
	1923	Statuto Municipale e Regolamento per la sua applicazione
	1924	Municipio Della Concessione Italiana Tientsin Regolamenti
Belgian Concession	1923	Conseil Provisoire de la Concession Belge de Tientsin Recueil des Règlements Municipaux

Source: Compiled by authors.

An investigation into legislative system of the concessions will help us understand how different actors got involved in the formulation of the concessions. The legislative systems of the concessions in Tianjin can be basically divided into three types. Represented by the British Concession, the first type refers to concessions that enjoyed higher degree of autonomy, in which the land-renters' meeting held certain legislative power. In the early years of the British Concession, Land Regulations were made by the British Minister to China or consul in Tianjin. From the late 19th century, the annual general meeting of land-renters had authority to appoint a committee to report on the amendment of and/or addition to Land Regulations, which had to be approved in a general meeting, and sanctioned by the British Minister to China before implementation.⁹ The municipal council, elected by annual general meeting of land-renters, had power and authority to make various bye-laws to enable them to carry out the objects of Land Regulations.¹⁰ The Russian, the German and the Austro-Hungarian Concessions had similar legislative systems. The second type refers to concessions in which the respective consul held absolute legislative powers, such as the French Concession and the Italian Concession. In these concessions, the municipal council was under the effective direction of the consul, and the land-renters meeting had no legislative power. The third type refers to the Japanese Concession, which experienced from consular managing to semi-autonomous. From 1898 to 1907, the Japanese Concession was managed by the Japanese consul in Tianjin, and the regulations were usually issued by the consul under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1907, the Residents' Association (居留民会) —not unlike the land-renters' meeting in other foreign concessions—was established in Tianjin under the Residents' Corporation Law (居留民團法) and its implementing rules issued by Japanese government.¹¹ It acted as a legislative body, but its legislative actions were under the consular orders.¹²

Professional planners have played important roles in the realms of transnational and cross-cultural urbanism and migration including in the concessions.¹³ In the case of Tianjin, professionals were also involved in the formulation



and revision of concession regulations. In 1915, the Russian Municipal Council set up a special committee to revise the existing regulations of the Russian Concession.¹⁴ Its members included representatives from the municipal council, companies in the concessions, and professionals. They are Th. de Krzywoszewski (Councillor), W. Sutton (Councillor), J. Holmberg (constructing and civil engineer, associated member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, Denmark), R. H. Maclay (merchant, previous U.S. assessor of the mixed court in Shanghai), and C. F. Kleye (clerk of the Russo-Chinese Bank).¹⁵ It is even more obvious in the formulation of building bye-laws in the British Concession. In 1917, A. Loup, architect from Loup & Young, Architects, Engineers, Land, House and Real Estate Agents, and H. McClure Anderson, architect from Cook & Anderson, Architects, Surveyors and Valuators, took on the revision work of building bye-laws.¹⁶ Similarly, five years later, the Works Committee of the British Municipal Council appointed two members of the Architects' Association, H. McClure Anderson and E. C. Young to assist the council in drafting new building regulations and generally in the improvement of street architecture.¹⁷ Trained in Western countries and opening their own business in Tianjin, these foreign professionals had experience in applying their Western planning and building knowledge into local projects. Their engagement in formulation and revision of the regulations had undoubtedly promoted the exporting of Western planning ideas in Tianjin.

Exportation of Planning Ideas from Home Countries

Foreign powers in Tianjin brought modern planning and municipal systems which had already been developed in their home countries. To develop living quarters that they were familiar with and to show the power of their countries, they used their respective home country's experience in making regulations of the concessions. This investigation excludes the Japanese Concession, because urban planning in Japan was also affected by Western ideas during the same period, the planning and construction of its concession in Tianjin was a reflection of Japan's learning from the West.

In the early years of the concessions in Tianjin, the first and most important problem that the foreign powers faced was land. We can always find in the early concession regulations that the concession authorities referenced their respective home country's regulations when dealing with land issues. For instance, feu,¹⁸ a form of land tenure originally from Scotland, was adopted by the British Municipal Council during the 1870s and 1880s, and admitted in *Land Regulations of the British Municipal Extension, Tientsin 1898*.¹⁹ Moreover, in *Règlements Municipals de la Concession Française de Tientsin 1908*, it was written that all acts of sale or any acts relating to the ownership of land situated within the French concession in Tianjin must be written in the form prescribed by French law.²⁰ Similarly, it was stipulated in *Regulations and Byelaws of the Italian Concession 1913* that all disputes arising between adjoining proprietors should be judged in accordance to Italian Law.²¹

With the development of the concessions, foreign authorities also introduced modern municipal infrastructures to the concessions in Tianjin, the planning and construction of which were confirmed in regulations and byelaws. Taking the British Concession as an example, in *Land Regulations of the British Municipal Extension, Tientsin 1898*, the British Municipal Council was empowered "to install gas, water, and electric supply; tramways, or other means of facilitating transit of wayfarers or goods, or to grant concessions to others to do so".²² In the *Draft Scheme for Amalgamation of the Four British Municipal Areas 1902*, there was a separate article, Article XXX-Drains, specifying the power of the British municipal council in constructing, improving, and demolishing sewers and drains in the concession.²³ Related provisions were continuously refined and detailed in later revised regulations and byelaws, based on which municipal infrastructures were constructed and improved in the British Concession (Figure 2). Similar provisions can also be found in regulations of other concessions. The French Concession formulated regulations on sewage system and tramways in 1912, and on electronic installations in 1930.²⁴ The German Municipal Council issued regulations on electricity supply in 1916, covering application for electricity supply, type of power supply, design and maintenance of the installation, and electricity price.²⁵ In the Russian Concession, regulations on drainage system and water supply were published in 1920.²⁶ Moreover, the Italian Concession published byelaws on sanitary installations and sewer connections in 1924.

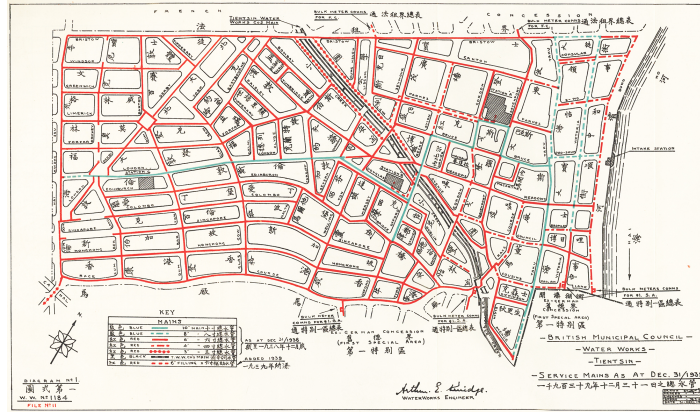


Figure 2. Drainage system of the British Concession in Tianjin, 1939.

Apart from modern municipal infrastructures, buildings with foreign styles were constructed in the concessions. Today, the former concession area of Tianjin is honoured as “International Architecture Exhibition”, which reflect its diversity in building styles, from first Romanesque to gothic, from eclectic to postmodernism. In fact, the control of architectural style was an important part in regulations of concessions, and the European style from their motherlands was always admired and imposed in the main areas of the concessions. The British municipal council was empowered in its regulations to require the outward design of new buildings to conform the council’s standard of attractiveness.²⁷ The French Concession, the German Concession, and the Italian Concession all had stipulated in their regulations certain areas where only European style houses could be erected.²⁸ Similarly, in the byelaws of Russian Concession issued in 1915, a “Park Residential Area” was reserved as a strictly residential area for foreigners and better class Chinese. Only detached and semidetached houses of modern design shall be admitted for construction within the area.²⁹

Detailed building rules were enacted to guarantee the construction of European style or modern design buildings, which were related to building materials, height, distance, highlighting ventilation, fire protection, stability, and attractiveness. Some of these provisions could be traced back to their motherlands’ regulations. For instance, in *Règlement du Service des Travaux 1912* published in French Concession, it was specified that when dealing with protrusions such as bollards, steps and balconies which encroached the public roads, tolerance would be admitted under the conditions and bases generally adopted by Paris.³⁰ It is also worth noted that the German Concession and the British Concession both had provisions on reinforce concrete and structural steel, which were new building materials and technology to Tianjin (Figure 3).

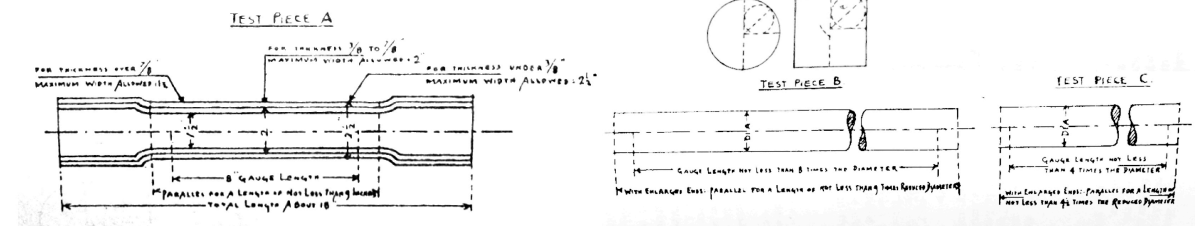


Figure 3. Illustrations on structural steel from *British Municipal Council Building & Sanitary By-laws 1925*.

Interaction among Concessions in Tianjin

The concessions in Tianjin were established at different times from 1860 to 1902, and they had different degrees of development. The earlier established concessions, such as the British Concession, the French Concession, and the German Concession, held the leading positions in development among all the concessions in the city. Comparing the regulations of different concessions in Tianjin, it can be inferred that other foreign powers had learned from their French, British and German neighbours when making their own regulations. People who worked in a couple of different concessions, especially as municipal councillors, also promoted this process.

Using French as the official language, regulations of the Belgian Concession showed a strong influence from ones of the French Concession. A main reason was that some councillors of the Belgian Provisional Council, which was established in 1912, had close relations with the French Concession. One of the councillors was Jean O’Neill, who came to Tianjin in 1900 as a French naval officer. He was a member of the French Municipal Council in Tianjin from 1906 to 1908, and also the manager of the most important real estate company in the French Concession, *Crédit Foncier d’Extrême-Orient*.³¹ Another one was E. Rousseau, who worked in the French Municipal Council during 1908-1911 and 1919-1925.³² The work experience in the French Concession contributed



to their work in the Belgian Provisional Municipal Council. The provisional council published a handbook of municipal regulations in 1923. Most of its regulations were similar to the French ones. For instance, almost all the articles from *Règlement du Service des Travaux* in this handbook were copied from the *Recueil des Règlements Municipaux* of the French Concession published in 1916.³³

Apart from simply copying, there existed more sophisticated influence mechanism in the regulation circulation in Tianjin. Usually, the foreign powers would revise the provisions they had learned from their neighbours according to their own needs. Taking building regulations for example, the German Concession published a detailed building byelaws in 1899, which set up a model for later issued building regulations in Tianjin.³⁴ When the Italians made regulations for the Italian Concession in 1913, they improved the German provisions in their own regulations. The building regulations in the German Concession stipulated that:

The distance between separate buildings on a plot must be at least 3 meters; In the Chinese quarters, if the buildings have courtyards and do not occupy an area greater than one-third of a *mou*, the distance must be at least 1.5 meter.³⁵

In the regulations of the Italian Concession, this provision was revised as:

Adjoining houses, belonging to different owners, shall, if it is not intended to build a boundary wall between them, be erected at a distance of at least 3 meters from the common boundary line. In the Chinese quarters this distance shall not be less than 2 meters.

Houses, belonging to the same owner, shall be kept at a distance of at least 3 meters from each other. In the Chinese quarters, however, whenever buildings do not occupy more than 1/2 of a *mou* (300 m²) of land, including the back yard, this distance may be reduced to a minimum of 1.5 meters.³⁶

The relationship between concessions in Tianjin was complicated. On one hand, the foreign powers from different countries locally worked together as a body when dealing with Chinese authorities;³⁷ On the other hand, they competed in developing their concessions to attract merchants and residents, and benefit their own nationals. The regulation circulation among these concessions can be understood as a result of the sense of both cooperation and competition.

Circulation among Treaty Ports in China

Britain, France, Germany, Russia and Japan had owned more than one individual concessions in different treaty ports in China, and planning ideas in concession regulations also circulated among these concessions belonging to one same country. Leading examples were the British and French Concessions. When these two countries established concessions in Tianjin in 1860, the British Settlement (united with the American Concession to create the Shanghai International Settlement in 1863) and the French Concession in Shanghai had already been developed for more than 10 years, and they were regarded as models for other British and French concessions in China. The interaction between the British and French concessions in Shanghai and Tianjin, which can be told from their regulations, has multiple driving forces.

The interaction of regulations between the French concessions had a lot to do with the movement of the consuls between the treaty ports. As we have discussed earlier, the French consul had supreme power in the French concession. In the early days of the French concession in Tianjin, the regulations of the concession showed a strong influence of the ones in Shanghai. The *Règlements de Police et de Voirie 1894* published in the French Concession of Tianjin had similar articles with the *Règlement Municipal de Police et de Voirie Pour la Concession Française 1869* issued in Shanghai on keeping public roads clean and clear.³⁸ This influence continued under P. Claudel, who was the Consul of France in Tianjin from 1906 to 1909. During his career in the French diplomatic corps, P. Claudel was the French consul in Shanghai in 1895, where he became familiar with the regulations of the French Concession in Shanghai. This experience played an important role when P. Claudel led the revising of *Règlement Municipal de la Concession Française de Tientsin* in 1908.³⁹ In 1909, Camille Gaston Kahn, who used to work in the French Concession of Canton (1904-1906), took over as French consul in Tianjin. In this position, he participated in making *Recueil des Règlements Municipaux 1912*, in which *Règlement du Service des Travaux* was influenced by *Règlement Concernant les Voies Publiques et Constructions 1910* issued in the Shanghai French Concession in many aspects, including building application system and management of special construction projects, and based on this regulation in Shanghai, the Tianjin one added more detailed stipulations on protrusions, downpipes, smoke ducts, and measures against fire.⁴⁰ After Camille Gaston Kahn moved to Shanghai and became the new French consul of Shanghai in 1913, similar detailed regulations on eaves, protrusions, smoke ducts and firewalls were issued in the Shanghai French Concession.⁴¹ Camille Gaston Kahn had introduced his working experience in Tianjin to Shanghai, and promoted regulations there.⁴²

Different from the French Concession, the British Concessions had a higher degree of autonomy, and the respective British consul only played a supervisory role in concession affairs. Based on available sources, the circulation of regulations between the British concessions can be understood from two aspects.



First, since the regulations of all the British concessions should be made or approved by the British Minister in China according to the British government requirement,⁴³ the Minister might have a central control in this process.⁴⁴ The consistency of certain articles in *Local Land Regulations of the British Concession at Tientsin 1866* and *Land Regulations and Bye-laws for the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, north of the Yang-king-pang 1869* was the result of central control of Sir Rutherford Alcock, the British Minister to China. The municipal council in Shanghai revised its land regulations during 1865-1866 and submitted the amendments to Sir Rutherford Alcock, who gave a reply on November 15th, 1866 with some suggestions.⁴⁵ Eleven days later, on November 26th, Sir Rutherford Alcock issued *Local Land Regulations of the British Concession at Tientsin*. These two regulations had similar articles on land management and organization of municipal council.⁴⁶

Second, the British Municipal Council of one treaty port would actively reference existing regulations of other British Concessions. With the gradual improvement of the municipal administration system of the British concession in Tianjin, the British Municipal Council took over the legislative work, in which the council always followed the model of Shanghai. In 1898, a committee was appointed by the Municipal Council of Tianjin to make new regulations for British Municipal Extension in Tianjin. As the chairman of the Municipal Council of the British Concession in Tianjin, W. W. Dickinson, reported to the consul in Tianjin, these regulations were “based on those which obtain in Shanghai and in the British Concession, and the committee made modifications and additions as past experience and present exigency seem to justify”.⁴⁷ Similarly, it was pointed out in the report of British Municipal Council in Tianjin in 1917 that the modification of building bye-laws would base on the building code in Shanghai.⁴⁸ Moreover, more than half of the articles in *Municipal Building & Sanitary By-laws 1925* enacted in the British Concession of Tianjin were borrowed from the building regulation of Shanghai International Settlement issued in 1916.⁴⁹ This building regulation in Shanghai had a combined impact of *London Building Act, The Building Code of the City of New York 1901*, and *The Public Health and Buildings Ordinance 1903* issued in Hong Kong.⁵⁰

From the above, a wide range of actors were involved in this transnational urbanism practice. Ministers to China, consuls in the treaty ports, municipal councillors of the concessions, representatives from important companies and professionals all participated in the formulation of regulations to a certain degree. Besides, governments’ central control, municipal councils’ active learning from each other, and political leaders’ and professionals’ movement from one concession/treaty port to another had all promoted the circulation of regulations among Chinese treaty ports and within Tianjin. This circulation furthered modern urban development of Chinese treaty ports.

Conclusion

In the late 19th century and early 20th century, foreign powers export Western planning ideas to concessions in Tianjin mainly through a series of urban construction regulations, which had strong influence from their respective home country. Stephen V. Ward has proposed a typology of international diffusion of planning ideas, which depends on a “power relationship” between importing and exporting countries.⁵¹ According to this typology, the exportation of planning ideas in foreign concessions of Tianjin can be understood as an example of the “authoritarian imposition”, characteristic of which is externally imposed planning proposals and methods of enforcement with few indigenous interests. Although, in the late periods of the concessions, it had some characteristics of the “contested imposition”, as Chinese were allowed to join the municipal councils and local circumstance got more attention by foreign authorities. Besides, Planning ideas in these regulations circulated among concessions belonging to one same country in different treaty ports in China and among different concessions within Tianjin. The “power” of the two sides in this relationship was relatively equal, and the transmission of regulations from one concession to another was selective and always accompanied by modifications according to local needs. Thus, this circulation is similar to “selective borrowing” in Ward’s typology. Thus, in the case of Tianjin, there existed both “imposition” and “borrowing” relationships in the diffusion of planning ideas.

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¹ Shuwei Luo, *Jindai Tianjin Chengshi Shi* (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1993), 12.

² Otto Durham Rasmussen, *Tientsin: an illustrated outline history* (Tianjin: the Tientsin Press, 1925), 17.

³ Year of actual recovery here refers to the year that the Chinese government actually take the power of the concessions, other than the signing of recovery agreements.

⁴ Otto Durham Rasmussen, *Tientsin: an illustrated outline history* (Tianjin: the Tientsin Press, 1925), 37.

⁵ Pennell, *Tientsin, North China*, 24. Tianjin was formerly known as Tientsin in older Chinese postal romanization system.

⁶ J.R. Hersey, "A reporter at large: homecoming. I: the house on New China Road", *New Yorker*, 10 May 1982, 54, cited in Maurizio Marinelli, "Making Concessions in Tianjin: Heterotopia and Italian Colonialism in Mainland China." *Urban History* 36, no. 3 (2009): 404.

⁷ Chengkang Fei, *中国租界史 [The History of Chinese Concession]* (Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, 1991), 115.

⁸ The concessions established through diplomatic notes or official notices were the original British Concession, the British Extension, the British Southern Extension, the British Extra Mural Extension, the American Concession, the French Extension, the Russian Concession.

⁹ *Land Regulations of the British Municipal Extension, Tientsin*. (Tientsin: The Tientsin Press, 1898), 23. National Archives, FO 228/1286.

¹⁰ *The Tientsin Municipal Regulation, 1918*. (Tientsin: The Tientsin Press, 1918), 8. Nantes Diplomatic Archives Centre, 961PO/1-45.

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¹⁴ Russian Municipal Council, *Report of the Council for the Year Ending December 31st, 1915 and Budget for the Year Ending December 31st, 1916*. (Tientsin: The North China Printing & Publishing Co., Ltd., 1916), 2.

¹⁵ J. Holmberg was a native of Denmark, who, after qualifying as a constructing and civil engineer, received a first-class certificate in 1902. He came to Tientsin in 1903. During his stay in Tianjin, he used to be Consul for Denmark, and Engineer in Chief and Secretary, Tientsin City Water Works Co., Ltd. Lunt, C.P. *The China Who's Who 1922, A Bibliographical Dictionary*. (Shanghai: Kelley & Walsh, limited, 1922), 136; Wright, A., and H.A. Cartwright. *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hongkong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China: Their History, People, Commerce, Industries, and Resources*. (London: Lloyds Greater Britain Publishing Company, Ltd., 1908), 740; *The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, & C. With Which Are Incorporated "the China Directory" and "the Hong Kong List for the Far East"*. (Hongkong: Hongkong daily Press office, 1910), 773.

¹⁶ British Municipal Council Tientsin. "Report of the Council for year ended 31st December, 1917 and Budget for the year ending 31st December, 1918." Tianjin Municipal Archives ed. *Concessions in Tientsin: The Archives of British Concession*. (Tianjin: Nankai University Press, 2015), 1388.

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¹⁸ Feu was previously a form of land tenure in Scotland. In feu holding there is a substantial annual payment in money or in kind in return for the enjoyment of the land. The crown is the first overlord or superior, and land is held of it by crown vassals, but they in their turn may feu their land, as it is called, to others who become their vassals, whilst they themselves are mediate overlords or superiors. In the 1870s and 1880s, the British Municipal Council bought land from locals outside the British Concession and feued the land to foreign individuals.

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Figure 1: Drawn by authors.

Figure 2: British Municipal Council Tientsin. *Report of the Council for the Year Ended 31st December, 1939 and Budget for the Year Ending 31st December, 1940*. Tientsin: Tientsin Press, Limited, 1940.

Figure 3: British Municipal Council. *Building & Sanitary By-laws 1925*. Tientsin: The Tientsin Press, Ltd, 1925: 145-146.