

Exploration of the “Greater Shanghai Plan”

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Abstract: *The "Greater Shanghai Plan" was a package of urban planning for Shanghai put forward by the Shanghai special municipal government in 1929. Its introduction was not only based on the actual needs of its urban development, but also depended on the political conditions at that time. The "Greater Shanghai Plan" aimed at the overall urbanization of Chinese communities in Shanghai, put forward many clear urban development plans, and absorbed and integrated the western urban concept in the struggle and compromise, reflecting the particularity and complexity of the road of urban development in modern China.*

Keywords: *The "Greater Shanghai Plan", Modernization, Urban Planning, Urban Theory*

1. Introduction

Shanghai is located on the west bank of the Huangpu River and Wusongkou in the north, its strategic position is very important. After the revolution of 1911, there was a strong demand for the "Greater Shanghai Plan" to build a new downtown in Shanghai. In 1919, Sun Yat Sen proposed to "set up a world port in Shanghai" in his article "China's International Development". [1] Since then, due to the turbulent situation of the time, the plan for Shanghai urban planning had had twists and turns. It was not until 1929 that the "new plan for the construction of greater Shanghai" was officially launched. As the "Greater Shanghai Plan" was closely related to the background of Shanghai, it was the historical epitome of the tortuous development of modern Chinese cities. This paper intends to explore it from the perspective of scheme analysis.

2. Background of the "Greater Shanghai Plan"

2.1. Competition with foreigners' Greater Shanghai Plan

After the war between Jiangsu and Zhejiang in 1924, in view of the ravages of the civil war and the damage to industry and commerce, people in Shanghai asked the government to designate Shanghai as a special urban area and never allow troops to be stationed. Powell, a British engineer, also put forward his "Greater Shanghai Plan" and published it in the Shanghai Times. Powell had great prestige in the Far East engineering circles, and his "Greater Shanghai Plan" was also very detailed, its core thrust was to make Shanghai and its surrounding areas an independent new country: "The territory of the new country covers more than 12000 square miles, including Suzhou and Hangzhou. The suzerainty of the new country belongs to the Republic of China and devotes 5% annual income to the Chinese government. Because the people of the new country have several nationalities, it is appropriate to accept the direct judgment of the League of Nations in case of disputes with other countries. There is an official president in the country, who is appointed by the Chinese. The executive president is a foreign who has the greatest economic interests in China. In addition, a Senate is composed of six Chinese and six foreign people, and House of Representatives is formed by several people elected by the people with electoral qualifications in each district. The number of members is half of that in China and foreign countries..." [2] At that time, Powell tried to take advantage of the Chinese people's aversion to civil war to create a "detached public opinion" and tried to use "suzerainty", "presidential system" and "bicameral system", the seemingly democratic and republican model confused the Chinese people and gradually achieved his goal of occupying the whole Yangtze River Delta. Fortunately, the Chinese press circles immediately gained insight into his ambition and unanimously expressed their opposition, so his goal was not achieved. In the following years, the foreigners' "Greater Shanghai Plan" had been looming in newspapers sponsored by foreigners and had secretly resisted China's movement to recover state power. Of course, Chinese people can't let it succeed. [3] At the beginning of the establishment of the Shanghai Construction Discussion Committee in 1929, a member proposed: "To build a municipal administration

and realize the whole 'Greater Shanghai Plan', first, we must recover the concession." [4] This fully reflected that the Chinese people proposed their own "Greater Shanghai Plan" had the meaning of competing with the foreign.

2.2. The rose of Shanghai's administrative status

After the National Government found Nanjing as its capital in 1927, Shanghai was established as a Special City on July 7. In the same year, the Shanghai municipal government issued the case of order compliance. The contents were as follows: "According to the fact that the municipal government is special administrative organ and directly under the central government system. In consideration of the complexity of affairs, so it is urgent to stipulate the procedures for the exchange of official documents between various organizations and organs. All organizations and organs within the scope of this Special City, which is under the command and supervision of the government and bureaus, shall be issued with orders, and all communications shall be submitted to the relevant delegations immediately. All organizations shall comply with this order as a whole." [5] This showed that after the rose of administrative status, Shanghai required all departments to use a unified official document format, so as to lay a foundation for mutual coordination.

On March 16, 1928, Cai Yuanpei presided over a joint meeting of provinces and cities in Nanjing. According to the regional map of Shanghai Special City, he decided to transfer the administrative power of Shanghai county, Baoshan county and some surrounding villages and towns into Shanghai Special City, and confirmed that Shanghai Special City was a special administrative region directly under the central government, and the status of the municipal government was the same as that of the provincial government. In addition, all inland taxes in the urban area were collected by the special municipal government. [6] Soon thereafter, the Shanghai municipal government and representatives of Jiangsu provincial government and the five counties of Shanghai, Baoshan, Songjiang, Nanhui and Qingpu agreed to determine the jurisdiction of the Special City: "Wusong in the north, Minhang in the south, the boundaries of Chuansha and Nanhui in the east, Baoshan, Jiading and Songjiang in the west." The rose of Shanghai's administrative status not only increased its financial strength, but also provided necessary spatial conditions for its own urban development.

2.3. Urban development and change in Shanghai

Shanghai was an important economic city in China and the center of Oriental commerce. With the development of commerce and trade, the population was bound to increase rapidly. According to Customs Statistics in 1926, there were 830,000 people in the public concession, 300,000 people in the French Concession. [7] According to official statistics, the population of Shanghai had exceeded 2.92 million by 1930, with a population growth of nearly 1.35 million in the past ten years. Although Shanghai had a large population, it was surrounded by farmland, and no significant progress had been made in the process of urbanization. Shanghai township representatives also said: "It is difficult to abolish the county governance at present." [8] There were 17 urban areas directly under the jurisdiction of the Shanghai municipal government, most of which had not been separated from the state of rural society except the two districts of Zhabei and Southern Shanghai." Although the facilities in these two districts have taken shape, they are really stunned compared with adjacent concessions. It is urgent to transform the old city." [9] In addition, due to the soaring population, the rent had soared. In order to solve this contradiction between man and land, it was necessary to establish a new residential area. At the same time, the existing traffic situation felt improper, and in order to improve the street system, they could only open up new areas. [10]

Besides, people also summarized the shortcomings of Shanghai's municipal administration at that time. The most important ones are three: first, the concession laid across the center of the city, so that the transportation between Southern Shanghai and Zhabei was separated, and the facilities could not be unified; second, Shanghai waterways and railways could not be connected with each other, and the transportation of goods was neither convenient nor economical; third, the tonnage of ships had surged in recent years, the existing wharf status and equipment were no longer applicable. As a result, most ships had to berth at the mouth of Huangpu River. If we do not quickly build a large scale new port to accommodate large ships, it will be difficult for Shanghai to maintain its position as a commercial port in the world. [11] In conclusion, building a new "Greater Shanghai" is also the realistic need for the continuous development of the city.

3. Content and analysis of the “Greater Shanghai Plan”

3.1. The official process of the “Greater Shanghai Plan”

When Huang Fu became the first mayor of Shanghai Special City in July 1927, he planned a more detailed "Greater Shanghai Plan". However, with his departure, this plan could not be realized. In September of the same year, Zhang Dingfan was mayor and paved the way for the implementation of the "Greater Shanghai Plan" during his term of office (September 1927 to March 1929). In October 1927, the Shanghai special municipal government held the 27th municipal meeting and decided that the bureaus under the municipal government should formulate the "Greater Shanghai Plan" respectively. [12] This had laid a "first draft" for the "Greater Shanghai Plan". However, the "Greater Shanghai Plan" was officially introduced during the period of Zhang Qun's reign. In April 1929, Zhang Qun took office as mayor of Shanghai Special City, established the Construction Discussion Committee on July 1, and organized the Shanghai Central District Construction Committee on August 12 to prepare the construction plan of Shanghai. [13] For this purpose, the government bonds were also issued, with 500,000 yuan as the construction cost of the Municipal Center. In May 1930, the "Greater Shanghai Plan" was officially confirmed by the Central District Construction Committee. On July 7, 1931, the foundation laying ceremony of the New House was held, and the construction was officially started immediately. [14] Generally speaking, the "Greater Shanghai Plan" wants to completely change the urban pattern of Shanghai and build a "Chinese City" with Jiangwan as the core.

The "Greater Shanghai Plan" implemented a clear zoning plan, which was planned to be divided into five regions: first, administrative districts. In the future, Jiangwan will be the center of the city, including administrative organs, banks, museums and other public buildings. Second, industrial areas. Wusong River, Yunzaobang area and Gaochangmiao Town were lined with factories, which should be preserved as an industrial zone. Third, wharf areas. Along the railway on both sides of the Huangpu River, can be classified as the wharf area. Fourth, business districts. Except that the concession aspect had become a commercial district, north along the Huangpu River areas, west to the north and south road, south to Yinxiang, north to Baoshan, are divided as commercial districts. Fifth, residential areas. The central urban area can be divided into mixed residential areas, most of which is decentralized and a small part is combined. [15] Those zoning planning shows the clear design ideas and reasonable design conception of the time, reflecting the orderly modern urban planning concept.

3.2. The traffic design of the “Greater Shanghai Plan”

The traffic design of the "Greater Shanghai Plan" was roughly divided into three parts. The first was land and water transportation. The Huangpu River was the main line of water transportation. However, at that time, the important wharves were in and near the concession. If commercial development in the future, the number of ships will increase day by day, if there is no large-scale good port, it will certainly not be able to meet its needs. "So the future wharf will be located in the area of Wusong and Yinxiang. The location along the Pudong coast can be used as a place for the expansion of commercial ports. If a canal can be dug near Huangdu to connect with Wusong River, the transportation will be more convenient." Two railway trunk lines had been built on land, one was Shanghai Nanjing line, which ended at Zhabei north station, the other was Shanghai Hangzhou Ningbo line, which ended at Nanshi south station. Foreigners built railways across the concession from east to west, blocked the direct connection between the Shanghai Nanjing line and the railways at both ends of the Shanghai Hangzhou Ningbo line. Therefore, the railway layout in the urban area was very unfavorable to the development of the city at that time. Because the railway ran across Zhabei, the city was still withered and there was no room for revitalization. So, the existing railway line in Shanghai must be diverted. The specific scheme was as follows: "Taking Jiangwan as the terminus of Shanghai in the future, passengers and light goods can be directly import into the center. The two routes of Shanghai Nanjing line, Shanghai Hangzhou Ningbo line will be connected from Longhua to Zhenru. All the existing sections of the Shanghai Nanjing line between Zhenru north station and the branch line from north station to Wusong will be demolished. The status of the Shanghai Hangzhou line can still be preserved." [16]

The second was the road (highway) system. Jiangwan was the center of the city, so it should be the intersection of north and south, east and west traffic: "It is proposed to build a trunk road from the inside of Baoshan County, cross Yunzaobang, pass through the east of Jiangwan Town, connect North Sichuan Road, pass through the old county of Shanghai and arrive at the south station. We can take advantage of one section of Shangnan automobile road to Zhagang Town, which is a north-south trunk road. The planning of other trunk roads should be base on the standard of connecting villages, towns, stations or

districts. In case of an established road, its status is more important and not connected intermittently, then fix it through." According to statistics, at that time, the trunk roads in the city were about 500 kilometers long, and the completed roads were about two fifths of the total length. The Zhongshan Road, which ran through the north and south cities, was still under construction. In addition, in order to "facilitate the business and traffic in and around the city center, and divide sections to facilitate construction, a large number of dense ordinary roads shall be built to facilitate business and residence." [17]

The third was the combination of water and land railways. The railway line and the wharf were far away from each other, which was not conducive to development. In order to realize the plan of greater Shanghai, "the Shanghai Special City should coordinate and change the transportation policy of the whole city by the ministry of railways, the business community and the municipal government. The most important thing is to rebuild the main station, move it to one end of the railway track, go direct to Wusong through Jiangwan, and open a commercial port in Wusong. All commercial ships coming to Shanghai do not have to enter Pukou, but can unload at Wusong. Mainland cargo ships can also go direct to Wusong and export. " [18] The traffic in Shanghai will be very convenient.

To sum up, the traffic design of the "Greater Shanghai plan" will take Jiangwan as the center and comprehensively consider various factors, trying to provide many convenient conditions for the modern development of the city.

3.3. Urban theory in the "Greater Shanghai Plan"

The driving force behind the overall planning of the "Greater Shanghai Plan" was chief architect Du Dayou. He had a western educational background and was very familiar with the western urban planning theory. Therefore, there was a close relationship between the "Greater Shanghai Plan" and western modern urban design. Its urban planning theory was spread by foreign architects and learned from and digested by the first batch of architects in modern China.

In terms of architectural style, although the authorities had clearly expressed their desire to revive the traditional style, on the whole, they still draw lessons from western urban planning theory to a great extent. Take the Civic Center as an example: the plan began in October 1929, which was very formal and a more detailed part of the "Greater Shanghai Plan". It reminded people of the early 20th century western urban planning theory of -- the "Urban Beauty Movement": the general plane reflected a strictly symmetrical layout along the north-south axis, expressed a strong desire to abandon the existing urban structure and create a brand new Shanghai civic center. Obviously, western urban theory had a deep impact on the "Greater Shanghai Plan", but this impact was not one-way. A large number of references to western modern urban precedents were sometimes the guide of China's urban development, but in many cases, they only served as theoretical support for the actual plans put forward by decision makers. Moreover, the research and analysis of concession urban areas were always unconsciously linked with politics. Chinese architects always maintained the competitive mentality between the "Chinese community" and concession urban areas. [19]

4. Conclusion

In 1929, the "Greater Shanghai Plan" formulated by the Shanghai special municipal government, it was committed to turning Shanghai into a New Independent Urban Administrative Region and was included in the central decision-making agenda. However, due to the "January 28 Incident", which was provoked by Japan in 1932, many parts of Chinese communities in Shanghai were destroyed by the war, and the plan basically failed. Throughout history, the plan did not change the dominant position of concession, but it was undeniable that it had laid the foundation for the future urban planning of Shanghai. Later, as one of the sub centers of Shanghai, Jiangwan was first established in the "Greater Shanghai Plan".

All in all, the coexistence of urbanization and modernization factors in the "Greater Shanghai Plan" was not only the product of urbanization under the realistic needs of the times, but also the exploration of the road of modern Chinese cities to compete with and learn from the West. The in-depth study of the "Greater Shanghai Plan" can not only understand the development process of China's modern urbanization, but also deeply experience the complex feelings of people's attachment to or separation from the western urban model, which will trigger the reflection of future generations.

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