

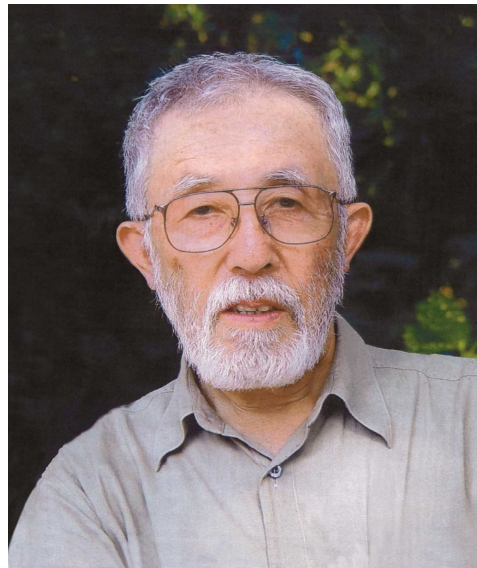
The Planning Theory of Professor Yorifusa Ishida (1932-2015)

A Critical Analysis of "Displanning"

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Professor Yorifusa Ishida ⁽¹⁾ (1932–2015) was a leading scholar in postwar Japan in the fields of land-use controls and planning, city and rural planning, and planning history. He left behind many high-quality writings which have become the subject of further study by researchers today. ⁽²⁾

Professor Ishida was actively researching for over 40 years, starting in the 1960s. His research life can be viewed as consisting of two distinct periods, with the 1980s marking a turning point in his work. In 1982 he reacted against the Nakasone administration's deregulation policy, the impact of which extended to land-use controls which were the core technical tool of city planning. Ishida saw this deregulation policy as "breaking the cage of 'the detailed and strict land-use control system' which the 1968 Act had started and the 1980 District Planning system had reinforced, and letting loose a tiger of land price in the field." (1988: 81) He denounced the policy as being one of 'displanning' ('Hankeikaku' in Japanese). ⁽³⁾



Professor Yorifusa Ishida (c.2000)

The purpose of this paper is to critically examine Ishida's planning theory with a focus on the concept of 'displanning.' Although the idea of 'displanning' is not established in the planning community, Ishida instituted the term as a crucial keyword for the period from the early 1980s to approximately 1995. He also argued that the 2001 'Urban Renaissance' policy of the Koizumi administration was similar in nature to that of the Nakasone administration. It is clear that Ishida used the concept of 'displanning' to criticize trends that emerged in planning during the 1980s and on. As such, an understanding of the concept of 'displanning' is essential for comprehending the core of Professor Ishida's planning theory and philosophy and will lead us to new interesting points for further discussions.

Keywords: Yorifusa Ishida, Planning Theory, "Displanning," Hankeikaku

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1. Introduction

Two years from now in 2019, the Japanese planning community will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the City Planning Act of 1919. This act, drastically amended in 1968, has long acted as the foundation of Japan's modern planning system. In addition, it was also brought to Taiwan and Korea in pre-war colonial days. In recent years in Japan, there has begun an effort to theoretically verify the overall planning history of the past 100 years. ⁽⁴⁾

Given this context, I choose to focus on the planning theory of Professor Yorifusa Ishida (1932-2015) as it is extremely relevant to the past 100 years of planning in Japan and raises some controversial, potentially uncomfortable points about how we look at the entire history of modern planning. Ishida was one of the top academic scholars in Japanese city planning and has left many excellent writings in the fields of land-use controls and planning, city and rural planning, and planning history.

In fact, Ishida is the only Japanese scholar who has written a general history of modern Japanese planning. The book (1987a), composed in Japanese, was entitled: *One-Hundred Years of Japanese Modern City Planning* (hereafter, *One-Hundred Years*). The revised edition (2004): *The Historical Development of Japanese Modern and Contemporary City Planning, 1868-2003* (hereafter, *The Revised Edition*) is still widely read as a standard textbook. Interestingly, the most defining characteristic of Ishida's historical interpretation is the concept of 'displanning.' He interprets almost the entire period of Japanese planning history since the 1980s as a period of 'displanning.'

The purpose of this paper is to analyze Ishida's planning theory with special attention paid to the concept of 'displanning.' Although this term, which he coined, is not an established technical term in the planning community, it nevertheless reflects the center of Ishida's planning philosophy, which is undoubtedly very critical of Japanese planning since the 1980s.

To date, there have been very few studies on Ishida's research activities and achievements. As his junior and his friend, I have written about his life and works following his death in 2015 (Watanabe 2016a; 2016b; 2017). I believe that studying Ishida's writings will guide us to uncover rich and challenging treasures within the field of Japanese planning history research.

In the following pages, I will first present an overview of Ishida's entire research career and specify its turning point, which occurred during the 1980s. Then, I analyze his concept of 'displanning' through his writings (the majority of which were written in the 1980s and 1990s), which I then follow with some concluding remarks.

2. Ishida's Research Career

Yorifusa Ishida was born in Tokyo's western exurbia of Kokubunji on February 7, 1932. He graduated from the Architecture Department of the University of Tokyo in 1950 and then pursued graduate studies in city planning in the same institution. His research explored practical investigation methodology with a strong Marxist influence.

In 1960, Ishida started work as a Research Fellow in the Architecture Department of Tokyo Metropolitan University and, the next year, obtained a doctorate degree from the University of Tokyo. His dissertation was entitled "Study on the Land Use Control System for Urban Sprawl Areas in the Metropolitan Peripheries" (1961).

The question of how to control disorderly urban development, or 'urban sprawl,' which was caused by rapid economic growth, was a significant social problem at the time. Ishida

investigated the actual reality of development in Tokyo's metropolitan peripheries from both urban and rural viewpoints. After examining the then-existing land-use control techniques against sprawl, Ishida proposed a new land-use system, which was later accepted and, at least partly, integrated into the City Planning Act of 1968. The Act institutionalized the Area system in which developments are controlled differently according to the planned Areas. The Act served as a controlling tool of urban sprawl to a reasonable extent.

Ishida's proposal, however, had been more sophisticated than what was actually enacted, which led him to be not entirely satisfied with the new system. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the legislative impact of his research marked a happy start to his career as a researcher in land-use controls and planning.

In 1967, Ishida was promoted to tenured Associate Professor and, in 1984, moved to the University's Center for Urban Studies as a Professor, and served as Director from 1991 onwards.

At this stage, Ishida had become an established scholar who expanded his research interests to include historical and international dimensions of his original research area of land-use controls and planning.

His historical research is characterized by both its expanse and depth. His interests were so wide as to cover the entire period of Japan's modern city planning, starting from before the first legislation of the 1888 Tokyo Urban Improvement Ordinance to the then-current planning practices of the early 2000s. His analyses were also impressive in terms of their complexity and level of detail. Ishida dug into and explored historical data in great depth, and also presented elaborate arguments regarding them. It should also be noted that he believed historical study could serve to produce practical guides for current and future planning systems and practice. In this sense, Ishida was a pragmatist.

In 1995, Ishida retired from the Tokyo Metropolitan University. After his retirement, he enjoyed a number of activities including researching, teaching, writing and bird-watching until he suddenly fell ill in 2009, which was followed by his death at the age of 83 in 2015.

3. The Turning Point

Ishida's research activities stretched over a period of 40 years, from the 1960s to the early 2000s. If we follow his development, we can divide his research roughly into two periods with a turning point occurring in the 1980s.

As mentioned previously, Ishida had a promising start to his professional career as his research was directed towards the needs of the time, and played a role in the law-making processes to establish the 1968 Act. He believed that a good planning system was a "detailed and strict land-use controls and planning system," (1988: 85) and certainly society at the time seemed to hold the same opinion.

The Area system of the 1968 Act and the District Planning system of 1980 followed this line of reasoning, though not to a fully satisfactory degree in terms of Ishida's theoretical framework.

From the late 1960s to the mid-1970s, many local governments in cities where city planning was actually being carried out were administered by progressive heads, often based upon the collaboration of Socialist and Communist parties. Ishida, sympathetic toward the Marxist camp, considered this situation a favorable development towards a democratic city planning administration.

In the early 1980s, however, the political atmosphere changed to a more conservative one. In 1982, the Nakasone administration started a deregulation policy extending to land-use controls which were the core tool of city planning. It was a favorable situation for urban landowners and developers, who wanted to use urban space more intensively to generate additional profit.

Ishida saw the policy as "breaking the cage of 'the detailed and strict land-use control system' which the 1968 Act had started and the 1980 District Planning system had reinforced, and letting loose a tiger of land price in the field." (1988: 81) Thus, the deregulation policy paved the way for land price inflation and then the 'bubble economy' that started around 1986 and ended in 1991.

At this point, the gap between Ishida's research paradigm and society's paradigm became obvious. To him, the Nakasone deregulations fit his definition of 'displanning.' Although it was not an established term in the planning community, he instituted 'displanning' as a keyword in his planning history to describe the 1980s and the decades that followed. The Nakasone deregulations were, in a sense, a fundamental challenge to the research accomplishments that Ishida had built up over his career up until that point.

4. Development of 'Displanning' Theory

4-1. The Term 'Displanning'

Ishida's concept of 'displanning' was not something he simply came up with in the spur of a moment. In addition to coining the term, Ishida spent over 20 years, from the 1982 Nakasone deregulation policy until the 2004 publication of *The Revised Version*, developing and refining the concept itself, and 'displanning' came to be a central idea in Ishida's planning theory.

Ishida was very particular about word usage in general, and added ruby characters of "disupuranningu (displanning)" to the Japanese word 'Hankeikaku' he coined (1987a: 326). According to Ishida, the 'dis' in 'displanning' is not intended to signify 'not carrying out planning' but rather 'the opposite of planning (regardless of the kind of 'planning' under discussion),' or 'that which should not be called planning.' In other words, 'displanning' is equivalent to 'wrong planning.'

In order for 'wrong planning' to exist, there must also exist something that constitutes 'right planning.' As such, the logical next step to discussing 'wrong planning' is to ask what is 'right planning,' and Ishida spent many years developing a logical definition of this concept. The following paragraphs will provide a brief overview of the development and history of 'displanning.'

4-2. Writings on "Displanning"

The following seven titles, presented in chronological order, consist of the most significant of Ishida's works pertaining to his 'displanning' theory, or planning theory in relation to 'displanning' (all works written in Japanese). ⁽⁵⁾

(1987a) *The Hundred Years of Japanese Modern City Planning*

(1987b) "The Concept of Planning and Its Function"

(1988) "The Philosophy of Land Use and the Ideal of Planning"

(1993) "The Concept of Planning and Theoretical and Methodological Studies on Urban and Rural Planning"

- (1998) "The Concept and Function of Planning, and Their Historical Development: In Connection with Future Local Government Administration"
- (2000) "Perspective of City and Rural Planning in the 21st Century: Based upon the Historical Development of the Japanese Contemporary City Planning"
- (2004) *Historical Development of the Japanese Modern and Contemporary City Planning: 1868-2003*

It is interesting to note that the majority of these works were released by publishers associated with the Japanese Communist Party. The two exceptions to this are his paper (1993) which was published by Tokyo Metropolitan University, and other paper (1998) published by the Japan Association of City Mayors.

The most fascinating thing about these two exceptions is that while they both discuss ideas related to 'displanning,' Ishida does not actually use the term 'displanning' in them. The first of the two was published by the university at which he worked, the second by a nonpartisan group. It may be fair to say that when addressing the Japanese Communist Party, Ishida almost tried to drastically present the problem, using a somewhat 'emotional' approach. In contrast, when speaking to the planning academic community, his approach was to appeal to their sense of logic and reason.

4-3. *The Hundred Years* (1987a)

The first instance of 'displanning' appearing in a published work was in *The Hundred Years* in January 1987. In this book, Ishida divides the history of Japanese urban development and planning into eight periods, covering over 100 years of history from the Meiji Era onwards. He identifies the first period to be that of a "Transformation to Westernized Urban Development," as the chapter title is spelled out, followed by the pre- and post-WWII periods. The seventh period is that of the "New Basic Planning System (1968-1985)," and finally the eight period is the "Displanning Period (1982-?)" (:10).

The eighth period, Ishida notes, is that of a weakening of planning regulations in order to increase urban development activities in the private sector, and is one which goes against the achievements of the previous seventh period. Based on this evaluation, he calls this kind of planning 'displanning' (:15).

Within this work, we find the assessment that 'displanning' "moves against the progress made during the entire history of modern Japanese city planning" (: 326), but we are not yet provided with an understanding what 'right planning' is.

In this instance, Ishida is opposing the Nakasone Administration's deregulation policy from an intuitive, somewhat subjective standpoint, rather than from a logical one. The seventh period mentioned above was the period during which Ishida made significant contributions and produced positive results, and it is possible that Ishida felt that that by denouncing the ideas of that period, the Nakasone Administration were denouncing Ishida himself.

But it does appear that Ishida was aware of the need for a logical discussion of 'wrong' and 'right' planning, and was to achieve this by further researching the concept of planning, as well as and the logic behind its functioning and proof of this functioning too.

4-4. "The Concept of Planning" (1987b)

As a result of his awareness for the need of a more logical approach, he published this paper three months after the above book. In this paper, Ishida first discusses the concept of

planning in general, and then calls attention, in the very context of city planning, to the 'communal' nature of planning and how greatly it differs from 'individual planning.'

In critically examining historical developments that began with the 1888 Urban Improvement Program, Ishida specifies his ideal concept of planning as "having a plan that is the communal will and goal of all the parties in the city, and devising logically methods and means that will implement the plan most effectively" (: 84). However, he concluded that the privatization route was a form of 'displanning' based upon the fact that he could not "find any semblance whatsoever of a concept of planning that includes a communal vision" (: 84).

4-5. "The philosophy of Land Use" (1988)

The following year, Ishida furthered his ideas and published this paper. In contrast to the inductive approach he took in the previous paper for how to define 'right planning' by examining the planning history since the Urban Improvement Program, in this paper Ishida took a deductive approach, starting by proposing a theoretical definition of 'right planning.'

A deductive approach requires some form of premise or hypothesis from which to begin, and Ishida found this in land-use philosophy, which is "the understanding that the possibilities for the use of a piece of land are not inherent in the land itself, but rather endowed upon it by the nature of the use of surrounding land" (: 88).⁽⁶⁾ The "surrounding land" necessitates the "communal cooperation" in regulation and planning.

In addition, Ishida states that realizing the most optimal use for each individual piece of land and collections of land as a whole, is the ideal of land-use planning that is based upon land-use philosophy" (: 89) This statement might be said to contain a bit of leap in logic.

From Ishida's perspective, however, this concept was hindered in Japan by individual's 'freedom to build.' In contrast to this, the western land-use planning system makes possible "the detailed and strict land-use by having the idea of 'no development without a plan' as a basic rule" (: 90). With this, Ishida denounced, at least in part, the idea of 'freedom to build' and proposed a rather sophisticated system for land-use controls which would introduce the concept of 'development rights' while also aiming for 'down-zoning' of the existing Floor Area Ratio.

As such, Ishida's proposal for a definition of the idea of 'right planning' was a 'detailed and strict regulation' system. For Ishida, the core technical tools of city planning was to be found in land-use controls and planning, not in infrastructure construction nor in land-use deregulation. In this paper, he furthered this position, running against the mainstream current of thought in city planning at the time.

4-6. "The Concept of Planning" (1993)

Five years later in 1993, Ishida had an opportunity to discuss 'theoretical planning research' in the Tokyo Metropolitan University's periodical *Comprehensive Urban Studies*. In this paper, in addition to exploring philosophy and concept of planning, Ishida also highlighted the need to propose new planning systems. He devoted a chapter to "The Historical Development of the Concept and Role of Planning," in which he gives a general overview covering the 1888 Urban Improvement Program, the 1919 Act, and the 1968 Act. Then, he states that "planning is composed of both 'planning from a societal perspective' and 'planning based on agreement from the people'" (: 31). Here too Ishida tries to establish the idea of 'right planning' based upon his own historical observations.

4-7. "The Concept and Function of Planning" (1998)

A further five years on in 1998, Ishida published this paper in a journal that mainly targeted local civil servants. This work that is an elaboration of his previous two works (1987b: 803-804; 1993: 28-30) was almost the final list of the historical meaning of Japanese planning. The list includes ten elements as follows:

- (1) "Planning as schemes of individual construction projects," typified by Ginza Brick Street's Construction Project in the early Meiji Era.
- (2) "Planning for the government to coordinate many successive projects" in the Urban Improvement Program.
- (3) "Planning for controlling private projects" which has the potential to disrupt the government's construction projects.
- (4) "Planning for predicting and preparing for the future" for the expansion of urban areas, in accordance with the 1919 Act.
- (5) "Planning that coordinates private interests" to expand government activities.
- (6) "Planning of private 'communal' projects of public nature," such as the Land Readjust Program.
- (7) "Planning that aims for higher standards" in order to improve living environments.
- (8) "Self-regulated planning based on mutual agreement," such as the Building Agreement.
- (9) "Planning to coordinate inconsistencies in demand for urban spaces," such as planning by citizen participation.
- (10) "Planning as the 'communal' goal and rule of residents, such as District Planning and Machizukuri activities.

According to Ishida's understanding, the above comprise the concepts and functions of planning that can be taken from the Japanese planning history. That is to say, they are the legacy of the evolution of the art of planning. Together, the ten elements can be interpreted as the definition of 'right planning.'

4-8. "Perspectives of City and Rural Planning" (2000)

Two years on in 2000, Ishida published an essay surveying 21st century urban agricultural planning in which he gives a critical evaluation of city planning systems since 1968, and examines its prospects for the 21st century. He addresses the subject of 'displanning' only briefly, simply noting that since the 1980s "in accordance with weakening of regulations, we have gone through a period centered on the principal of city 'displanning'" (: 79) and "a deregulated style of District Planning system without proper controlling rules is in the direction toward 'displanning'" (: 82).

4-9. *The Revised Version* (2004)

Ishida's 2004 publication was a revised version of *The Hundred Years* (1987a), containing additional information. He slightly altered the name of the eighth period to "the 'Displanning' and 'Bubble' Economy Period (1982-1992)," and added a ninth period entitled: "Towards Citizen Initiative and Decentralization of City Planning (1992-)". He observed "that Prime Minister Koizumi's 'Urban Regeneration' policy that started in 2001 onwards is very similar to the concept of 'displanning' observed in the previous period. (:271-272).

According to Ishida, the idea of 'displanning' did not end with the eighth period, but has

continued (and may continue to this day) to be a force in society which is going in the opposite direction to "the achievements made and agreed upon by the planning community throughout the development of Japanese city planning, particularly the achievements made since the 1960s" (: 271-272).

5. Concluding Remarks

In short, Ishida fought 'displanning' war in two battlefields at different levels. The first was a concrete battlefield of the planning tool level; the second in an abstract battlefield of the planning philosophy level.

The first was the battlefield of "detailed and strict land-use regulation vs. deregulation." What happened with this war afterwards? In the 'post bubble' period from around 1990, this war came to a natural cease fire due to real estate surplus and population decrease. In fact, 'detailed and strict land-use regulation' was a very important function expected of planning when market's development pressure was very high.

Now new functions are expected of planning such as 'revitalization' of the city, which may have become a more important function rather than land-use regulation. Thus, the expected function of city planning changes with the times. Under such circumstances, what kind of planning system would Ishida propose? This question has the potential to evolve into a fundamental question as we go through it. "What is the core of planning technology and what extent of its application is it?"

The second was the battlefield of "planning progress vs. 'displanning'". Ishida's argument may be generalized that the power to resist planning (Ishida's 'displanning') existed not only in the 1980's but also since the Meiji period and including the Koizumi era. This understanding will give us a view that there is a permanent tension relationship between 'planning' and 'displanning.'

Is such a power always 'backflow' to progress? Or could it be another kind of progress? The judgement may depend upon the difference in position. And we may grasp that the change in the competing power relationship is the dynamism of planning history.

In this way, 'displanning' raised by Ishida can be relativized and seated in a theoretically comfortable place so that it will continue to be a valuable concept in the future when we talk about the planning function and planning progress. Thus, Ishida's research attainments have such an intellectual power that still stimulates us in many ways.

Notes:

- (1) 石田頼房
- (2) A project of establishing the on-line Ishida Archives is going on at the Tokyo Metropolitan University.
- (3) 反計画
- (4) The City Planning Institute of Japan has established the Special Committee for the 50th and 100th Anniversary of the City Planning Acts as the next year will be the 50th year of the 1968 City Planning Act and the following year the 100th year of the 1919 City Planning Act.
- (5) It may be possible to also include the (1983) paper in this list.
- (6) Ishida specified the phrase "endowed upon" with small dots for emphasis.

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