

Abstract

**Aero-Technology Transfer from Germany to Japan during the 1930s:  
Connection between Heinkel and the Japanese Navy**

**By TAKASHI NISHIO**

Postgraduate Student, Graduate School of Arts and Letters, Meiji University, Tokyo

The purpose of this article is to explore the aero-technology transfer from Germany to Japan that took place during the 1930s through the connection between Heinkel Co., one of the leading aircraft manufacturers in Germany, and the Japanese navy. This article especially focuses on the transfer of Heinkel aircraft and its consistent contribution to the sudden acceleration in Japanese naval aviation technology, particularly in dive bombers. The Japanese Naval Aviation Department firmly intended to attain indigenization of its aircraft design and manufacture as part of the three-year program (1932-34). As the only exception to the plan, the prototype of the navy's first dive bomber, He50, was developed by Heinkel. Just after Germany's rearmament in 1935, the Japanese navy provided the German navy with development aid in the form of construction and operation of aircraft carriers as military technical trade, while the Germans exported Heinkel's latest transport aircraft, He70, and dive bomber, He118, to Japan. The Japanese navy utilized these new aircrafts for its indigenous carrier-based dive bombers. As the United States embargo on arms to Japan was stricter after 1937, the Japanese aircraft industry was forced to depend heavily on Germany as its only major supplier of aircraft technology.