

The Axis of Ancient BeiJing that Declaraed the World Cultural Heritage and the Tourism of BeiJing

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Abstract

This essay is mainly about six aspects on the Axis of Ancient BeiJing which Declaraed the WCH and it's relationship between the Tourism of BeiJing:

First, how to find out the Outstanding Universal Value of the Axis?

Second, how to estimate the OUV? Which Criterias shall we choose for the assessment?

Third, Authenticity vs Integrality: Rebuilt or Restoration (Rehabilitation)? Some discussions about the rebuilt of QianMen (the front gate which is also the south gate of the inner city) District and the DiAnMen (the north gate of the inner city).

Forth, what are the main tourism problems along the Axis of Ancient BeiJing and what we are going to do with it after the Axis' Declaration?

Keywords: The Axis of Ancient BeiJing, WCH (World Cultural Heritage), OUV (Outstanding Universal Value), Criteria for the Assessment of OUV, Tourism

(three lines)

Introduction

(two lines)

The ancient capital of Beijing's central axis which is the landmark of the city center, is also the world's longest existing city axis. There are many existing heritage buildings along the 7.8 km of the axis including the Yongding Gate (rehabilitation), Yan Tun, Temple of Heaven, Xian Nong Temple, Zhengyang Gate, the Imperial Ancestral Temple, Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Jingshan, Beihai, Pudu Temple, Wanning Bridge, fire temples, the Drum Tower, Bell Tower and so on(Figure 1: Heritage Area and it's buffer zone). After the founding of PRC (People's Republic of China), Beijing has gradually expanded Tiananmen Square, the construction of the People's Heroes Monument, the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall. Axis of the new era has more and more urban functions. At present, more than one relatively mature and multi-functional area has been formed around the axis, such as Shichahai, Nanluoguxiang, Qianmen area, Dashila, other traditional commercial street, the area of cultural heritage tourism: the Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven, Tiananmen Square, and the relative concentration of government services: Zhongnanhai, Dongjiaominxiang. During the past 10 years, the government has invested 1billion RMB to protect the heritage sites along the axis, it also has conducted more than 10 cultural relics protection units. In the future, Beijing will continue to increase the protection of the axis. Conservation projects will be carried out in advance, including the renovation of the Qianyuan House, the the Ten Thousand Buddhas Temple in the North Sea, and other renovations of ancient buildings, such as the repair work of Di'anmen.

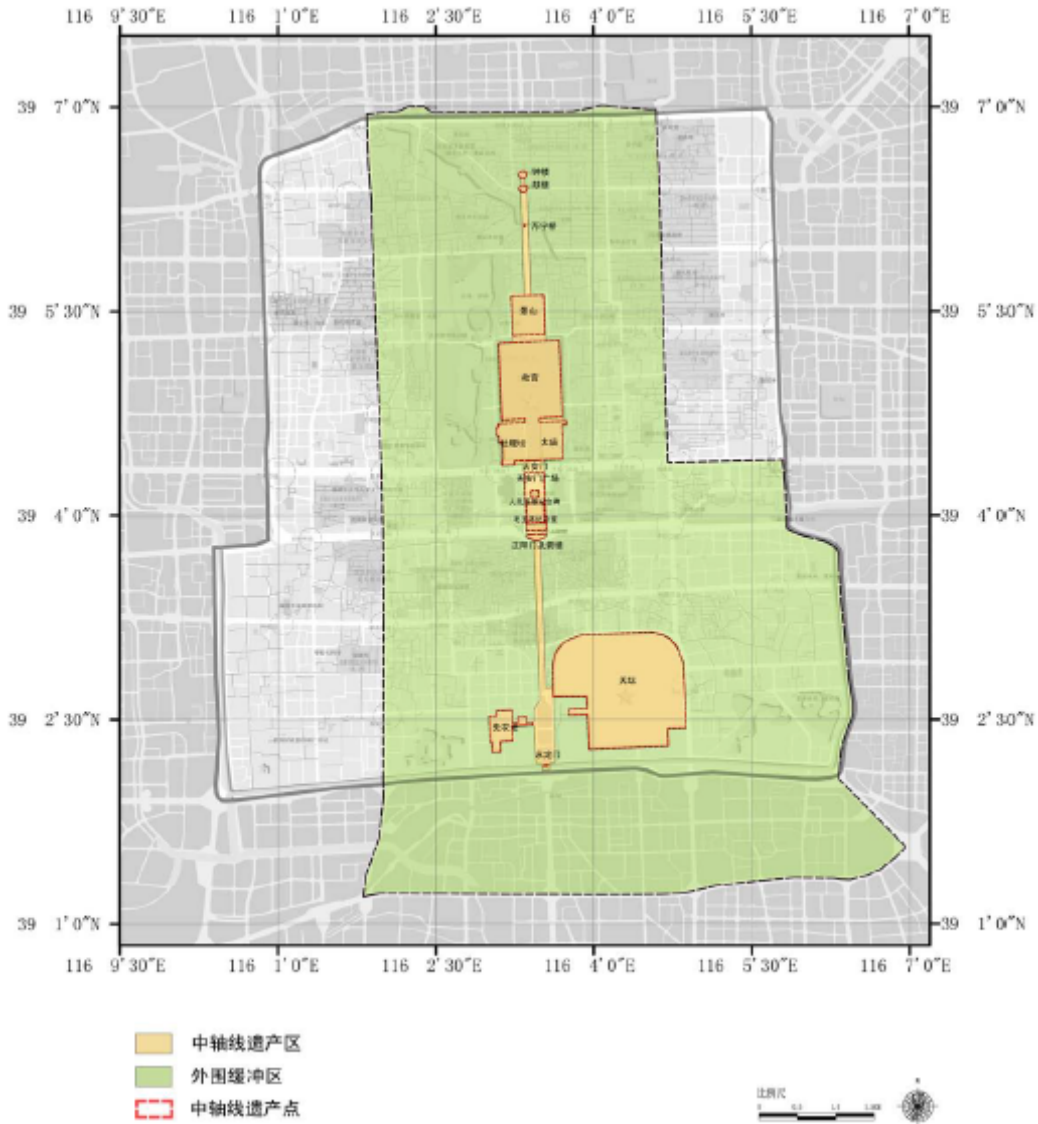


Figure 1: Heritage Area and its buffer zone

Legend:

Heritage Area of the Axis

The buffer zone

The Heritage Sites along the Axis

Source: Beijing axis declared World Heritage List

1 Statement about the Axis of Ancient Beijing that Declared the World Cultural Heritage

1.1 A statement of outstanding universal value

As the center of Beijing's old city, the axis contains the unique aspects of ingenuity on urban planning during the Yuan, Ming and Qing Chinese feudal capital and also the new capital of PRC.

Both its siting and design represent the faith of Chinese culture "respecting the middle" and "harmony between the heaven and human" without losing the traditional Chinese philosophy of understanding the respect for nature and the harmonious relationship between man and nature. Strictly according with the "Kao Gong Ji", this kind of city planning and construction of capital is the material carrier of the ancient Chinese ritual, and it strengthens the well-organized social order at the same time. This axis has been constantly modified and developed after the major changes in Chinese society in nearly eight hundred years, and always adapts to the needs of different times of social life.

It reflects the Chinese culture, ethics and values' influence on the design of the capital, which is the traditional Chinese methods of social control and the creative method of practice on urban planning. This unique exploration makes a close integration of urban planning and the social order, it also has an universal reference value for present and future generations.

1.2 Integrity

The central axis of Beijing includes all the elements of outstanding universal value. Its physical structure and important look are both at the good condition.

Both "the central axis of Beijing" itself and the other cultural heritages along the axis reflect the ideas of the common ritual in Chinese culture that expressed in the field of urban planning. It is a complete display of the the great achievements on the ancient Chinese idea of urban planning and construction.

The axis of Beijing has the integrity of spatial dimension. It passes north to south through the whole old city, rhythmic, stretches continuously, that has enough scale to show the strict pattern and the symmetric space of the old city. This area also expresses the magnificent spatial order. We can get the complete expression of the cultural value of the axis itself in this region.

The axis of Beijing has a the integrity on the dimension of time. The planning and evolution pass through the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasty and the People's Republic of China, in nearly eight hundred years. It is regarded as the most important part of Beijing urban planning and urban pattern at different times, and it has take enough long time to show the process of change.

Beijing axis is located in the heart of old Beijing, both the overall conservation planning and the delineation of the surrounding buffer zone have been completed to ensure that Beijing's central axis is going to get enough respect as a whole.

1.3 Authenticity

The central axis of Beijing was originally formed in the thirty-second year of Jiaping Period in Ming Dynasty (1553), which was on the basis of experience in Yuan Dynasty. It is currently the highest achievement and the most typical example in the axis design of the Chinese traditional capital city.

As the most important foundation of city Beijing, the central axis with important cultural values has a sustained and significant impact on the city pattern formation and the urban development of Beijing for hundreds of years.

This process truly reflects the ancient Chinese ideas on urban planning since the "Kao Gong Ji" and the traditional culture of "ritual" on the important impact of urban planning and layout. It is also a true reflection of that the axis of Beijing is the most important part of the development and evolution in a few hundred years. Meanwhile, the Beijing central axis has a high degree of

importance in the hearts of local people. It is the symbol of Beijing. Just as the famous architect Liangsicheng said: "Beijing's unique splendor of order is produced by the establishment of this axis." Thus, the central axis of Beijing also has a spiritual and emotional authenticity.

In a few hundred years of urban development, portions of the original buildings along the Beijing central axis (such as the Yongding Gate and the Dian Gate) were demolished and rebuilt. Part of the local space (such as Tiananmen Square) has been modified. But the axis as a whole, which is fully respected and reflected, has always been the main axis and the most important base to the development of Beijing urban planning.

Linked to the important historical events, the local changes on the central axis reflect the specific way during the development of Chinese society and certain values which also have the real cultural value. The very small number of rehabilitation works which aim to reflect the "axis" overall completely (such as the Yongding Gate) are under the strict accordance with historical documents, the historical photographs, and the records of mapping or chart. The rehabilitation also used the traditional materials and techniques too.

1.4 The Criteria for Selection

(i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

Beijing and its surrounding areas are evolving from the historical axis of careful urban planning and design system during 8 hundred years. They are formed by the historical remains of the royal palaces, imperial gardens and important contemporary public buildings and city square, and contained by a series of Royal Altars, residential neighborhood, the natural landscape, historic streets, water projects, defense projects, and important symbol of architecture and urban landscape. The layout follows a particular principle: combination of the unified space as a whole. As Beijing strict symmetry of spatial pattern of the old city core, the axis of Beijing and its surrounding area is the incomparable masterpiece of contemporary urban planning in the history of ancient China. Its planning and development process reflects the creativity of Chinese people who combined the science, aesthetics and philosophy of ancient times in the design of the city. The methods of establishing social order and regulating social life through urban planning can be distinguished on human development in urban planning .

(iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

The central axis of Beijing and its surrounding areas are contained of the palaces, government offices, Altars, mansion, houses, gates and other important buildings in an orderly distribution. They build a rich, magnificent urban space sequence and have a profound symbolic significance by consisting of six water systems; from the spatial layout, the building shape, to the architectural color, They become an unique witness of Chinese civilization in the ceremony, the Royal Culture, the Feng Shui culture and the folk culture. They are the last witness of the ancient Chinese society which has gone away, the live carrier of the Chinese traditional culture and values.

(iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

The Central Axis of Beijing and its surrounding areas, including the landscapes, the streets in the Square, the defense works and water projects strictly follow the idea of "Kao Gong Ji" which contained the layout of the ancient Chinese city planning, the capital construction of China's feudal society. They are the typical mature paradigm of the thousands of years evolution and represent the highest achievements of ancient Chinese capital during the Ming and Qing

dynasties. They are also the best preserved examples of the typical China's feudal capital construction.

(vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

Beijing central axis is a true record of the Chinese capital of Beijing evolution process and the change of Chinese dynasties and social.

The changes in the axis witness the disintegration of old Chinese dynasty and the establishment of the new country in thousands of years. This historical event has a common reference value for the people who are fighting for independence and freedom and building democratic institutions all around the world.

2 The current situation of tourism of Beijing central axis

2.1 Beijing central axis and the development of tourism

"Development plan of tourism and exhibition industry in Beijing(2006-2010)" puts forward 5 key projects and 35 scenics. Part of these projects are closely related with the central axis of Beijing. From which we can see the great role of the axis in the development of tourism in Beijing. The brief introduction of these projects are as follows:

2.1.1 The most important tourism projects along the central axis (2006-2010)

In the "Development plan of tourism and exhibition industry in Beijing(2006-2010)", the government plans to build five major tourist projects, two of which are closely related with the central axis of Beijing, they are:

(1) The Qianmen and Dashila traditional commercial zone - the overall protection will be based on the excavation of historical and cultural content. The government will improve the level of facilities, form a traditional business, a culture of leisure, a folk culture and tourism combines comprehensive boutique area.

(2) Historical culture and leisure tourist zone of Shichahai - combined with the repair work of historical and cultural heritage sites and traditional residential district building, we are going to develop a strong local cultural heritage tourism products. The annual Shichahai tourism festival will be held continually, the scenic tourist products melting into lakes and mountains, historic sites, folk culture and modern city leisure activities will also be built.

2.1.2 The constructions of tourist attractions associated with the central axis (2006-2010)

In the "Development plan of tourism and exhibition industry in Beijing(2006-2010)", the government planned to build 35 scenics, four of which are closely related with the central axis of Beijing, they are:

Table 1. The constructions of tourist attractions associated with the central axis (2006-2010)

No.	Area name	Focus
1	Red tourism center of Tiananmen Square	Construction tourism center, tourist information services to enhance and optimize the tourism environment order to build the city tour bus main site, the introduction of red tourism.
2	Imperial Cultural Tourism Zone	Nanchizi transform dilapidated building housing relocation, renovation of historic districts, neighborhood style comprehensive renovation, the introduction of historic district tourism projects.
4	National Culture and Arts	Full Chang'an Avenue intensive national and municipal arts

	Center tourist areas	and cultural facilities and institutions, highlighting Beijing cultural tourism brand, organize cultural events and city sightseeing tour route, at the National Theatre Centre, set up a tour bus stops and tourist site .
7	Temple of Heaven - Royal festival and cultural tourism Xiannongtan	Improve tourism facilities, improving the tourism environment.

Source: <http://www.bjta.gov.cn/lyzl/lygh/207220.htm>

2.2 The status of tour service facilities

After the "Eleventh Five-Year" period of development, the central axis of Beijing tour services has been greatly improved and basically meet the requirements. The sub-profiles are as follows:

(1) Transport: The range of cultural relics protection units within Beijing central axis already have the corresponding parking; the road traffic signs, warning signs are already complete and located in the vicinity of the central axis of Beijing.

(2) Travel directions Facilities: the signs and the cultural heritage tourist signs along the Beijing's central axis are already complete, and located in the central axis of Beijing cultural relics protection units.

(3) Accommodation: there are plenty of hotels along the Beijing axis, visitors can meet the accommodation even in the busy season of tourism.

(4) Restaurants: there is a reasonable distribution of food and beverage facilities along the Beijing central axis which can meet the visitors dining enen in the busy season of tourism.

(5) Medical care facilities: there are some first-aid centers and professional medical staff within the Beijing central axis area.

2.3 The Statistics of the Visitors

Compared to the last year, the number of domestic tourists increased slightly, but the number of inbound tourism is slightly reduced during the first and second quarter of 2011.

In inbound tourism, Hong Kong and Macao compatriots have a greater number of growth compared to last year, but it is the overall proportion of less; compared to last year, the Taiwan compatriots and foreign tourist arrivals declined. I believe that through the declaration of WCH, China's traditional culture in the international reputation and identity will be further improved, Beijing's cultural attractions as a historical and cultural city will be enhanced to promote faster and better development of the capital city.

Table 2. Outreach tour in 2011 (group) received travel case

Categories	First Quarter	Year on year growth%	Second Quarter	Year on year growth%	1-2 quarter	Year on year growth%
The number of domestic tourists	530437	5.9	1043288	3.5	1573725	4.3
The number of inbound tourism	274044	-9.4	506436	3.2	780480	-1.6
Hong Kong compatriots	22032	0.5	35998	37.0	58030	20.4

Macao Compatriots	1817	12.4	4220	228.9	6037	108.2
Taiwan compatriots	6685	-35.4	12128	-15.3	18813	-23.7
Foreigner	243510	-9.3	454090	1.2	697600	-2.7

Source: <http://www.bjta.gov.cn/lyzl/tjzl/index.htm>

Huge number of tourists will visit the place of interest along the Beijing central axis every year. Except a large number of Chinese tourists, there are also a large number of foreign tourists. For example: the number of tourists who visit the Forbidden City is about 8 million annually; the number of tourists who visit the Temple of Heaven is about 400 million annually.

2.4 The analysis of Tourist pressure

The various constituent elements of the central axis are receiving large numbers of tourists, especially on holidays or in the busy season of tourism. For example, in 2002, the number of tourists reached 7.13 million in the Forbidden City, the highest number of visitors in one day reached 109 thousand, 446 thousand and 388 thousand people were received during the holidays of the International Labour Day and the National Day; Zhongshan Park, Temple of Heaven, Xian Nong temple, the Imperial Ancestral Temple and other place of interest bear the frequent daily use of the city residents.

Tourism will not only bring the city a lot of ticket sales, but also bring benefit to the conservation of the axis by improving infrastructure, improving the value of cultural and traditional knowledge.

But tourism also brings the challenge on the legacy of physical, environmental and social integrity. For example, the peak tourist traffic causes a great pressure on the transportation of the old city, so that the urban space of the central axis is overload, several major traffic arteries such as Di'anmen Street are facing such problem, which is accelerated the aging of the road and reduces the urban environment of comfort; The demands to tourism infrastructure, such as restaurants and hotels, also contributed to that the historic district and community structure of the original business was replaced by the purpose of commercial alternatives, which will threaten the existing land use, the community composition and the historic features. For example, the historical district of bell tower, the drum tower and Houhai have been suffered by the uncontrolled development of the bars and tourist shops;

The deficiencies of tourism management will also lead to a lot of tourist junk, improper use of heritage and harm the value of heritage. In addition, although the Zhengyang Gate and the Yongding Gate show the relationship between the heritages and the central axis, but the overall package in the axis, such as directions, explanations and sanitations are inadequate, the display and interpretation of the constituent element are confined to their own, the overall display and interpretation of the central axis should be improved.

3 Effective countermeasures

To ease the pressures of tourism, I would like to demonstrate several adequate countermeasures under the conditions of the existing heritage charm and in full awareness of historical and cultural value of the axis. Five effective countermeasures are raised as follows:

3.1 Enhance the traditional tourism

For the traditional tourist attractions, we should prepare to optimize the environment, improve the facilities and service quality under the declaration of WCH.

Combined the protection and restoration with the ancient capital of Beijing, the government should open up the historical and cultural district, the former residences of celebrities and other new historical and cultural tourist attractions. It will also Strengthen the development of the historical and cultural significance, innovate new approaches of showing and performance practices, standardize and improve the interpretation system, Strengthen the capacity of area monitoring and counseling, comprehensively improve the surrounding environment.

Strengthen the quality of the Beijing World Heritage Series such as the planning and the organization of travel routes. Promote the Protection and Development of other World Heritage Projects actively, proposed classification of all heritage sites in order to protect and control the capacity of tourism, etc. We should create a sustainable use of world cultural heritage in new methods.

3.2 Long-term monitoring

We need a Long-term monitoring for the current increase of tourists, especially during the peak period of surge tourist pressure, adverse effects on the environment and the transport and tourism organization problems.

Main monitoring contents include: the annual number of visitors per month, the number of visitors in all major legacy, tourists' travel time, the main activities in the Beijing central axis area, the evaluation of the central axis.

3.3 Publicity

The publicity of Beijing axis Heritage will be mainly through books, publications, online media, film and television, conferences and forums, thematic exhibitions, private events, outdoor advertising, home communication, making souvenirs and other forms. The historical, scientific and artistic value of central axis will be showed to the the public so that people will have a deep understanding of the axis.

3.4 Accelerate the construction of tourist informatization

Vigorously promote the GIS (Geographic Information System) based on the number of tourist information to support the construction; encourage tourism services, the positive application of information technology, including electronic visual technologies and guide systems, electronic ticketing management systems; accelerate the use of e-tourism process.

Destination marketing system (DMS) refers to the city tourist destination complete information technology solutions, which is through a series of information technology products and support services appropriate to achieve. To perfect the Beijing tourism information network, we should build the network of travel informations and tourism call center applications, providing information for tourists inquiries, travel navigation, circuit design, online booking and online payment services. We should also combine the overall tourism DMS platform with the existing tourism consultation, the service Center public site and e-map touch screen inquiry system ("Digital Beijing") to the organic integration.

3.5 Strengthen the supporting construction of the tourism industry system

3.5.1 Speed up the construction of the visitor center and tourist identification system

Speed up the construction of tourism center, the tourist information centers, the tourist areas (spots) and the visitor service system.

Tourism hub should strengthen public transport (bus vehicles, rail, etc.) between the hub and tourist attractions interface.

Strengthen the construction of the tourist areas (spots) public information symbols and the standardization of tourism logo signs, improve the tourism traffic signs, provide bilingual text in both English and Chinese.

3.5.2 Develop the cultural tourism

Enhance the coordination and cooperation of the tourism and cultural sectors.

We should design or stage performances and organize cultural activities regularly in order to create a good urban tourism and cultural atmosphere by using of Beijing's cultural and recreational facilities and city commercial downtown area, attractions around the city square and other urban public space. Through administrative means and market-based instruments, we can enhance the quality of the cultural function and the reception services.

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