

什刹海历史文化丛书

什刹海

与北京城的中轴线

北京市西城区什刹海研究会
北京市西城区什刹海街道办事处 编
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前言

北京，我们伟大祖国的首都，一座历史悠久、文化辉煌的城市，令人无限向往。

自金朝贞元元年（1153）始，她成为历代封建王朝的首都。其后历元、明、清三朝，中华民国前期，以至如今的中华人民共和国，北京作为我国的首都，已有 850 余年。其间，积淀的历史文化极其丰厚、精彩和珍贵。

在北京的历史文化中，最显形和引人注目的是北京城的中轴线。这条中轴线，北起钟楼，南到永定门，长达 7.8 公里，纵贯北京旧城南北。永定门、前门、天安门、紫禁城、景山、地安门（已拆除）、万宁桥、鼓楼、钟楼等重要建筑，都坐落在这条中轴线上。在它的东西两侧，天坛与山川坛（先农坛）、社稷坛与太庙、日坛与月坛，以及曾矗立在街头的东单牌楼与西单牌楼、东四牌楼与西四牌楼等“街衢”式建筑，都严格对称地布列。北京内外城、皇城、官城的诸多城门，其位置和名称也都以中轴线为准，东西对称，左右呼应。可以说，南北中轴线如同北京城的脊梁，在其支撑下，构成既匀称又和谐的北京城市形体。面南而王、统治中华，是北京城南北中轴线所蕴含的传统理念和所表达的政治意



旨。这也就是北京城南北中轴线的历史文化价值。

北京城的中轴线是怎样确定的？享誉海内外的著名历史地理学家、北京大学侯仁之教授首先指出，北京城南北中轴线的确定与什刹海有直接关系。什刹海是确定北京城南北中轴线的依傍和根基。

元世祖至元初期，刘秉忠等人在规划设计元大都城时，首先在积水潭（今什刹海）东北岸畔确定了全城的几何中心，建立中心之台。然后，由中心之台向南，通过积水潭东岸向东弯突的顶点（即地安门外万宁桥处）引一条切线，这条切线就是元大都城的中轴线。元大都城的宫殿、坛庙、城墙与城门等主要建筑及其东西、南北向的主要街道，就是依据紧傍积水潭东岸的南北中轴线而布局和构建的。

明初建都金陵（即南京），而将元大都改名北平，并废弃其北部，于元大都北城墙南五里另筑北平城北城墙，即德胜门、安定门一线城墙。明洪武帝死后，传位于长孙朱允炆，是为建文皇帝。为巩固皇位，建文帝在辅佐大臣的支持下实行“削藩”政策，想逐步削除被封在各地为王的他的诸多叔叔的权势，结果引发一场内战，镇守北平的燕王朱棣发动“靖难”之役，率军打进金陵，夺取皇位，改元永乐。永乐元年（1403）改北平为北京，以金陵为南京。四年（1407），始大规模地营建北京宫殿城池，并将北京城向南拓展二里，这就是北京内城。十八年（1420）底迁都北京。至嘉靖中后期，增筑南面的外城，遂形成北京的“凸”字形城郭。



应当指出，明永乐年间营建北京宫殿城池是在元大都城中南部（即北平城）旧基上兴工的，因此，全城的中轴线与元大都的中轴线是一致的。但是，明北京城的中轴线较元大都时却得到进一步的强化和发展，使之更为完善和突出。

明北京城的宫城即紫禁城，其城门与宫殿更多更壮观，布局更严密更匀称。前朝三大殿，即奉天殿（后改皇极殿）、华盖殿（后改中极殿）、谨身殿（后改建极殿），后廷三大宫，即乾清宫、交泰殿、坤宁宫，都从南向北依次坐落在中轴线上。毫无疑问，整个紫禁城就是北京中轴线上的一座最为宏伟壮丽的标志性建筑群。按照“左祖右社”的传统规制，明代将太庙与社稷坛这两座最重要的皇家礼制建筑，移建于紫禁城前，使北京城的中轴线更加突显。在紫禁城北，利用挖凿筒子河与南海的废土，堆起了一座五峰并峙的土山，名万岁山，俗称景山或煤山，既是紫禁城的身后屏障，又是北京全城的制高点。万岁山的中峰正当北京城南北中轴线上。因此，新堆筑的万岁山使北京城的中轴线起伏跌宕，富于变化。在元大都中轴线的北端即中心之台的位置，明代改建为鼓楼、钟楼。作为全城报时中心的钟鼓楼雄踞什刹海东北岸边，高高耸立，傲视全城。此外，明永乐间将祭祀天地之神、祈求五谷丰登的天坛和山川坛（先农坛），分别建在正阳门外五六里地的东西两侧。嘉靖间增筑外城时将其圈入城内，分列外城永定门内的东西两侧。这不仅使北京城的中轴线向南延伸至永定门，而

且天坛、山川坛两组宏伟建筑群，也使北京城中轴线的南端格外醒目，并富含历史文化。

清代，除将北京城中轴线上的几座城门和宫殿更改名称之外，最重要的变化就是乾隆年间在景山五峰上添建亭阁，由东向西分别是周赏亭、观妙亭、万春亭、辑芳亭、富览亭。其中万春亭雄踞中峰，正当北京城中轴线上。景山正北，又新建寿皇殿。这些都显示了清代北京城中轴线的变化。

中华人民共和国成立后，随着首都城市规划和建设的发展，北京城的南北中轴线又展新容。特别是天安门广场改造后，升国旗的旗杆高高挺立，人民英雄纪念碑庄严高耸，毛主席纪念堂肃穆矗立，这三大建筑都坐落在北京城中轴线上，为其增添了新的文化内涵和魅力。又随着北京亚运会、奥运会场馆的建设，北京城的中轴线继续向北延伸，显现出无限的生命力。

总之，北京城的南北中轴线，始现于元，完备于明清，现在继续发展。她是北京城的脊梁，是北京城的中枢神经。她集中体现了中华民族的高度智慧和凝聚力。她的完美形象及其博大精深的文化内涵，不仅令中华民族引以为荣耀，而且也越来越广泛地吸引着全世界的目光。现在，我国有关部门已着手将北京中轴线申报世界文化遗产。这是中华民族的共同心声。

为配合北京中轴线申报世界文化遗产，西城区什刹海文化研究会专门组织专家学者编撰了《什刹海与北京中轴线》一书，加强对北京中轴线的宣传，以扩大其



影响。同时，借以深入挖掘并传承什刹海的历史文化。《什刹海与北京中轴线》一书主要介绍什刹海与元大都城兴建时的中轴线的确定及什刹海与元大都中轴线的关系，和国内外专家学者对北京中轴线的评价——“世界奇观，文明顶峰”。继而介绍了明、清及现在北京中轴线的发展演变，重墨书写了什刹海历史文化保护区在北京中轴线上或迤近的一些名胜景观，包括钟鼓楼、万宁桥及澄清闸、火神庙与广福观、地安门等重要建筑，地安门外大街与鼓楼西大街等繁华商业街区，烟袋斜街、白米斜街等著名街巷胡同等。本书还对北京中轴线“申遗”和什刹海历史文化保护区的保护与发展进行展望，提出了建议。总之，这是难得的一部将什刹海与北京中轴线联系起来的专著，值得一读。

我们相信，什刹海的历史文化必将随着北京中轴线的“申遗”而扬名中外，并得到更好的传承和发展。

什刹海研究会

2012年11月6日



Preface

Beijing, the capital of our great motherland, a long history, culture and city was infinite longing.

Ever since she was named capital of Jin Dynasty in the first year of Zhenyuan(1153), Beijing, as the capital of Yuan, Ming, Qing, early Republic of China, as well as the People's Republic of China, has over eight hundred and fifty years history as the capital. In the meantime, she accumulates profound and precious cultural heritage.

Among these heritages, the central axis is the most outstanding and striking. Beijing's central axis runs directly through the heart of the ancient capital from the Bell Tower in the north to the Yongding Gate in the South, extending 7.8 kilometers. The axis links a string of historic sites including Yongding Gate, Qianmen Gate, Tian'anmen, the Forbidden City, Jingshan hill, Di'anmen(demolished), Wanningqiao, and the Drum Tower. on the east and west of the axis symmetrically lie the Temple of Heaven and Temple of Agriculture(Xian nong Tan),the Temple of Land and Grain and the Imperial Ancestral Temple, the Temple of Sun and the Temple of the Moon along with the 'street emblem'archetectures including Dongdan Archway and Xidan Archway , Dongsi Archway and Xisi Archway that once stood at the end of streets. All the names and locations of gates to the inner and outer wall, imperial city and palace are based on the central axis; they are symmetrically located and work in concert. All these make central axis seem just like the backbone of the city; under its support, the city forms its well-balanced and harmonious pattern. 'Ruler faces south to govern' is the conception



and political implication of the North-south central axis, which is also the historic and cultural value of the north-south central axis.

How was the central axis determined? Professor Hou Renzhi, who is renowned at home and abroad, a well-known historical geologist in Peking University attributes the location of the central axis to Shichahai Lake. He claims Shichahai Lake serves as the basis and reference for the axis.

In Kublai Khan years, the early days of Zhiyuan, in the design of Dadu(Beijing in Yuan dynasty), designers mainly Liu Bingzhong etc. positioned the geometric center of the city and built the central balcony at the north east bank of Jishuitan(Present Shichahai). Then a southward tangent line from the central balcony, extending through the apex on the curvy east bank of Jishuitan(Wanningqiao at Di'anmen) were made, which was the central axis of Dadu in Yuan dynasty. All main buildings of Dadu including palaces, temples, walls and the gates were designed and laid out by the central axis as well as the main latitudinal and longitudinal streets.

The beginning of Ming chose Jinling(i.e Nanjing) as their capital, renamed Yuan Dadu peiping and abandoned its north. They rebuilt the north wall of Peiping 5 li south of the north wall of Dadu, including Desheng Gate and Anding Gate. Emperor Hongwu passed the throne to his grandson, Zhu Yunwen, i.e emperor Jianwen. To reinforce his power, emperor Jianwen, under the support of the ministers, implemented the policy of 'eliminating kingdoms' to weaken the power of his uncles, appointed kings all over the country and caused a civil war in which the king of Yan stationed in Peiping waged the 'Jingnan' battle, broke into the jinling, then he seized the throne and changed the reign into Yongle. In the first year of Yongle (1403) , Peiping was renamed as Peking, Jinling was named as Nanjing. In the fourth year, large scale construction of the city began, in which the city were extended 2 li south and formed the inner city of Peking. In the 18th year of Yongle (1420) ,the capital



was moved to Beijing. In the late years of Jiajing, the outer city on the south of inner city was built which finally formed the “凸” shape pattern. It should be pointed out that the city construction in Yongle is based on the foundation of central and south Dadu. Therefore, the central axis of the whole city is the same as the central axis of Dadu in Yuan dynasty. However, compared with the axis of Dadu, it was strengthened and developed, gradually became complete and outstanding.

The palace of Beijing in Ming dynasty i.e the forbidden city has more splendid gates and courts together with a more rigorous and more symmetrical layout. The front court has three great halls including Hall of Fengtian(later changed to hall of Huangji), Hall of Huagai(later changed to Hall of Zhongji) and Hall of Jinshen(later changed to Hall of Jianji) while the back court has three palaces i.e Palace of Heavenly Purity, the Hall of Union and Peace, the Palace of Earthly Tranquility, which all situated on the central axis from south to north. Without a doubt, the forbidden city is the most grand and magnificent symbolic architecture complex on the central axis. According to the tradition of “ancestral temple on the left, god of land and grain temple on the right” , the two most significant sacrificial architectures in Ming Dynasty were moved to the front of the forbidden city which made the central axis more noticeable. To the north of the forbidden city, an earth five-peak hill was piled up with the earth from the excavation of Tongzhihe river and Nanhai Lake, named as Wansuishan, known as Jingshan or Meishan which serves both as the back screen of the forbidden city and the commanding height of Beijing. The central peak of Wansuishan situates precisely on the central axis. The newly built Wansuishan makes the central axis up and down and enriched its scenery. The central balcony built at the north end in Yuan dynasty was changed to the Bell and Drum Towers in Ming dynasty. As the time service center, the Bell and Drum tower stands on the northeast bank of Shichahai lake, overseeing the whole

city. In addition, the Temple of Heaven and Temple of Agriculture for the sacrifice rites to the gods of heaven and earth for harvest were built respectively on the east and west 5-6 li south of the Zhengyangmen Gate. They were enclosed in the outer wall built in Jiajing years on east and west sides of Yongdingmen Gate, which extended the central axis southward to Yongdinggate. Besides, the architectural complexes of Temple of Heaven and Temple of Agriculture made the south end of the central axis even more striking and enriched its history and culture.

In Qing Dynasty, in addition to the name changes of some gates and palaces, the most important change was the building of pavilions on the five peaks of Jingshan, i.e. Zhoushang Pavilion, Guanmiao Pavilion, Wanchun Pavilion, Jifang Pavilion, and Fulan Pavilion from east to west. Among these pavilions, the Wanchun Pavilion stands on the central peak, right on the central axis. Shouhuang Hall was built to the north of Jingshan. comprises the changes of central axis in Qing dynasty.

Since the founding of People's Republic of China, with the development and construction of the capital, the central axis turns on a new appearance. Especially after the Tian'anmen square was reformed, the national flag post, Monument to People's Heroes and the Mausoleum of Chairman Mao all locate on the central axis and add to its cultural connotation and attraction. Her further northward extension with the building of Asia Games and Olympic Games stadiums will endow the central axis with infinite vitality.

In short, the central axis of Beijing derives from Yuan, forms in Ming, Qing and continues to develop at present. As the backbone of the city and central nerve of Beijing, she demonstrates the wisdom and cohesion of the Chinese people. The perfect image and profound cultural connotation not only take the Chinese pride but also attract people all over the world. Now, relevant department are working to apply for world cultural heritage for the Central axis which is the wish



of all Chinese people.

To cooperate with the central axis's bid for World Cultural heritage, the Shichahai Research Society organized scholars and compiled the book "Shichahai and the Central Axis of Beijing" in order to promote the publicity of the Central Axis and expand her influence. At the same time, take the opportunity to further explore and pass on the history and culture of Shichahai. The book mainly introduces the role of Shichahai in the determination of the Central Axis in the building of Dadu in Yuan dynasty and the relation between Shichahai and the Central Axis as well as comments of experts and scholars at home and abroad on the Central Axis of Peking—"miracle in world, peak of civilization", then changes of the Central Axis from Ming, Qing to present are elaborated with focus on sceneries on or near the Central Axis in the Shichahai Historical culture Conservation Districts of historic sites including the Bell and Drum Tower, Wanningqiao Bridge, Chengqingzha dam, Temple of Fire Lord, Guangfuguan Abbey, Di'anmen, business streets like Di'anmenwai street and Gulouxi street as well as famous Hutongs (alley)such as Yandaixiejie, Baimixiejie etc. The book also provides suggestions on the Central Axis' application for the World Cultural Heritage and the development and protection of the Shichahai Historical Culture Conservation District. In a word, it is a precious major that links Shichahai to the Central Axis, worth reading.

We believe, with the application for Culture Heritage of the central axis, the historical Culture of Shichahai will win renown all over the world and be inherited and developed in a better way.

Shichahai Research Society

November 6th 2012



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