

Thresholds and Stages: Beijing's Central Political Space

Bradley Gordon Allen

B.F.A., Savannah College of Art and Design, 2011

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of the Department of Architectural History
of the School of Architecture
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Architectural History

Professor Shiqiao Li, Chair

Professor Louis Nelson, Second Reader

Professor Richard Guy Wilson, Committee member

May 2014

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations.....	1
Preface.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Chapter I <i>An Imperial Publicness: The Procession and the Threshold</i>	12
Chapter II <i>The Square As the Open Stage</i>	22
Chapter III <i>The Square For Disruptive Subversion</i>	38
Conclusion.....	43
Bibliography.....	46

List of Illustrations

Image

- 0.1 Map of Palaces and Offices of the Imperial Palace 1679

- 1.1 Depiction of the Forbidden City from the Ming Dynasty
- 1.2 'Historic centre of Beijing.'
- 1.3 Tongzi River with modern map of water circulation.
- 1.4 Gate of the Outer City
- 1.5 Altar of Land and Grain
- 1.6 Tai Miao or the Imperial Ancestral Temple
- 1.7 The Meridian Gate
- 1.8 Gate of Supreme Harmony
- 1.9 Elevation of the Hall of Supreme Harmony Hall of Middle Harmony
- 1.10 Hall of Middle Harmony
- 1.11 Hall of Preserved Harmony
- 1.12 Plan of Official Palaces of the Forbidden City

- 2.1 The Liang-Chen Plan Proposal
- 2.2 The Soviet Plan Proposal
- 2.3 Walled City Park- Liang Chen Plan Proposal
- 2.4 Liang Sicheng
- 2.5 "T Shaped Tiananmen Square" British drawn map 1927
- 2.6 The Great Hall of the People
- 2.7 Memorial To the People's Heroes
- 2.8 Crossing the Yangzi River
- 2.9 *Burning Opium*
- 2.10 *Jiantian Uprising*
- 2.11 *Wuchang Uprising*
- 2.12 *May Fourth Movement*
- 2.13 *May Thirtieth Movement*
- 2.14 *Nanchang Uprising*
- 2.15 *Guerilla Warfare against the Japanese invasion*
- 2.16 Museum of Chinese History
- 2.17 Photo of "the Red Guard"

Preface

"A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained, and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another."

-Mao Tse-tung

My fascination with current events sparked the investigation of my project at its earliest stages. In 2011 my academic career changed forever, as I stayed glued to international media coverage of events that would become known as the *Arab Spring*. These events, which are—even four years later—continually playing out, have left everlasting impact on my worldviews. It was the first time I was able to witness revolution firsthand on my television screen which forced me to understand the gravitas of a condition that before I had only read about in history texts. The radical actions of those who ardently believed in change left me in awe and inspired me to apply my passion for the built environment to the idea of radical political change.

I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude to my committee; to Shiqiao Li, Louis Nelson, and Richard Guy Wilson for all of their guidance. My overall project has made its way from a focus on the French Revolution, to Tiananmen Square, to the streets of Cairo, and back to Beijing. It has been a long road, but one that has served to tame my abstract curious mind into the parameters of a concrete academic objective. The fruits of this project are far greater than what can be found in this thesis and will continue to shape my future as an architectural historian and individual.

I would like to dedicate this to all those who opted to rise up to better their lives and the lives of future generations than be content with the status quo.

Introduction

They made one final push North, up the dirt road axis and into the Forbidden City. Less than half of the original 20,000 surviving peasants pulled and hoisted, guiding the last boulders into their final resting place. Some of the stones towered over them weighing over 120 tons. Making the capitol a city of stone rather than a city of dirt and wood as it had been for over a hundred and fifty years. Peasants rarely saw first hand the city of heavenly mandate, the most sacred site in all of China, where the declared Son of Heaven ruled over all. Having survived the grueling tasks assigned in the twenty-eight day process, finally, they had arrived.

Many had succumbed to frost bite as construction could only take place in the days following the winter solstice, notorious for being the coldest in the year. The laborers closely followed the instructions of Mr. Shengui, the emperor's engineer, who surmised that water and freezing temperatures were vital. Ice was the key that allowed these peasants equipped with 1800 mules, and 100 four wheeled wagons to move the colossal boulders. Those not assigned to clear a path through the thick forests, were assigned to dig, as the journey from Dashiwo Quarry in Fangshan to the heart of the Forbidden City was supplied with freezing water from wells newly constructed every half-mile. The pristine white marble stones, some carved with breathtaking reliefs, served as a death sentence for many. The task of guiding the boulders down the icy path 43 and a half miles away to the heart

of Beijing was terrifyingly unpredictable. This newest infrastructure would serve to make the emperor safer from the enemies in the North. It would also resonate throughout time and solidify the Forbidden City as the capitol and seat of Chinese power clear through the twenty-first century.

While this complete redesign to the Forbidden City would solve the issue of ephemerality, it would fail to bring permanence to the dynasty that constructed it. The coffers of the Ming Dynasty would slowly run out, bringing about its downfall just sixty years later. The reoccurring attacks by the Mongols to the North made the dynasty susceptible to attacks from the Jurchen tribes. Unified under the Manchu, the tribes would sack the city in 1644, the new order under the Qing Dynasty took the impressive Forbidden City as its capitol.

Like in this narrative, the task of solidifying the state of political rule with the built environment would continue over time. The Forbidden City is a place of significant events where things happen, a place of dynamic traditions and movements; it is a place of ceremony, and a place of memory that marks change for all of China. The built fabric unlocks the several layers that have been in constant shift since the city began in prehistory(image 0.1.)

The many lenses that one may view the city and its main parts serve to contribute only small bits to understanding the site as whole. Understanding this, the center of the Chinese world, creates a political portrait of China's, past, present, and even future.

Tiananmen Square presents a particularly fertile case study for the analysis of an architectural site that has been at the epicenter of the nation's most significant

shifts in power and political demonstrations over time. The most recent events of socio-political activism have directly shaped the personification of Tiananmen Square in the end of the twentieth century. While considering the use and function of the space politically we must begin by understanding the Square's long evolution into a space that has inherent political associations.

Tiananmen Square—the spatial construct—has been altered extensively throughout its existence. China's long history had seen several capitals that had been in constant flux until Yongle Emperor (1402-1425) declared the city as the new imperial capital and changed its name to Beijing.¹ The Ming Dynasty would completely rebuild the existing fabric to a scale and quality that was unprecedented in Chinese history, “the most majestic palace compound, the grandest buildings and courtyards, the finest temples, bridges, and gardens in China's history.”² This new imperial city was built to expand upon the location of the former Yuan capital, although was much larger and used brick and stone instead of compact dirt to construct the walks and city fabric. The grandeur of this new design would permanently solidify the city of Beijing as the most obvious seat of governance indefinitely. In 1553, during the Jiajing emperor (1522-67), an elongated space was added to the design which extended south from the city. This space would serve as the beginning of the inner city's design. The urban plan was dissected to maintain the processional way to the entrance of the inner city and continued to form a significant spatial construct that has been understood differently throughout time.

¹ Directly translates to *Northern Capital*.

² Madeleine Yue Dong, *The City and its Histories*. (Ewing, New Jersey: University of California Press, 2003), 25.

This would be the beginnings of the spatial construct we know today as Tiananmen Square. The purposely-planned buildings south of the city echoed the strong axial relationship that ran through the inner city and was designed to preserve the unending visual rhythm that culminated at the throne of the emperor himself. This axis, originally understood as a path to the center would, until the People's Republic, remain permanent while its surrounds were altered over time.

With the long chronology my project seeks to address, given its restrictions, it is vital my focus will be to sources that understand Tiananmen Square as it relates to political change, and physical spatial change. This encompasses source material on several different academic disciplines. I found it also necessary to use writers of theories from fields like art history, and spatial theory in some specific areas in order to further my understanding of the Square.

Limiting my investigation to material in the English language and that which has been translated, in the west, Chinese History has often been mapped according to the ruling dynastic group, but this is particularly complicated in the twentieth century when considering the drastic shifts in governmental rule. The changing political landscape of the twentieth century has also lent a great deal to the investigation and academic exploration of government rule in Asia overall and its relationship to the western world. China's vital expanding relationship to the Global world has taken center stage in the academic world both economically and in the topic of urbanism on a broader scale.

Chinese architectural scholarship has been, until recently, limited to two lines of inquiry: a focus on form and craft of architecture with a focus of form and material in regards to the craftsmanship of the individual building, and sinology and religious studies, that focuses on building and urban planning dealing with ideological constructs such as Confucianism and Feng shui.³

Theorists in the field of spatial theory like Jianfei Zhu, who focuses on the Chinese capital in the days of imperial china, bring an understanding of traditional urban planning and how they affected the everyday life of citizens that lived there. Zhu avoids political discussions, but uses his research to break traditional precepts of architecture as only form and religious doctrine. His writings perhaps compliment and conflict with the collaborative efforts of Cody, Steinhardt and Atkin, whose series of essays published jointly by Hong Kong and Hawaii Universities shift the focus of China from a place of tradition to a place that references the western world with the influx of Beaux-Arts classicism during the revolution of the People's Republic. The work focuses on the fifty young Chinese students who receive scholarships to be trained at universities in the United States, and bring back the teachings of the École to China. These sources bring to the forefront the role of urban planning which forces politics into the discussion.

Other theorists typically understood as being inherently western bring vital insight to the topic of space dealing with politics. Michel Foucault, author of a series of essays on space and power, poses for the first time questions regarding the role of power in relation to physical construct of space. What was initially geared toward

³ Jianfei Zhu, *Chinese Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing 1420-1911* (Routledge Curzon:New York, 2004) *Introduction*.

geographers in the way they view the construct of space/geography. This is dealing with space, power, government, war even. His essays are in dialogue with scholars like Margo Huxley who are discussing the role of power plays on space, often with regards to the formal body that governs it. I will also bring in Henri Lefebvre's masterpiece, *The Production of Space*, which gets to the heart of the proverbial spatial-theory chestnut, 'Which comes first: Space as a means of production or product as means of creating the spatial understanding.' This dichotomy will be referenced several times throughout several different chronological periods. Dealing with this discussion is meant to further our understanding of the forces at play on the square, and is not meant to declare either the guiding force.

My look at the urban planning changes that are a vital part to connecting the space to changes in political rule will be analyzed in both the theoretical notions of public space, as well as, discussions on what spatial construct looks like in the several different government types that play out in Chinese history. These are sources like a collection of essays by several authors edited Daniel Stokols and Irwin Altman titled *Public Space*. This serves as a basic western look at the theory of public space from a design perspective but also discusses ruling powers such as different forms of government and religion. There are also several more contemporary writings from Sola-Morales, head of the Center of Contemporary Culture in Barcelona who adds great insight to the theory of 'publicness.'

One crucial half to understanding the ways in which the spaces were altered is the underlying theories and ideas of those that altered them. Scholars are given a spectacular public look at the process of redesign that takes place during the middle

of the twentieth century as a public competition is held to redesign the square. This gives us not only a theoretical understanding of those who entered as each wrote extensively on their plans, but also allows us to understand the vast differences between the most considered plans. The dynamics of both give us the greatest understanding of what the government was envisioning for what the space would become. One such plan is by Liang Sicheng, who was formally trained in the United States and goes on to be known for his extensive written works in architectural history and preservation. Understanding the career and works of the architects gives us greater insight to the critical debates taking place during its redesign. Each time period comes with its own set of government writings as well as theoretical ideas. Some of these most notably include the writings of Karl Marx, Zhou Enlai, and Mao Tsetung. There are also written first hand accounts and historical accounts of the events that changed places such as revolutions, government shifts, as well as major military events that have taken place in the square.

Scholars providing a more formal analysis of the built environment in architecture and urban planning in Beijing include an impressive chronological look by Dray-Novey, Li, and Kong that traces the city throughout the twenty and twenty-first centuries. These sources explode around the middle of the twenty-century when the major redesign competition is held by the state. These are government documents, and from several other scholars on the reconstruction of the square.

By far the greatest amount of scholarship comes from the time period after the 1989 student protests. These sources pose a unique situation in my historiography as the Chinese government documents the declaration of martial law

against criminals and dissidents but often rejects the notion that these were student pro-democracy protestors. The vast majority of the sources on the time period come from first hand accounts, government reports, reports from several different branches of the United Nations, as well as media accounts of the situation from local sources and abroad.

My thesis will argue that Beijing's central political space has undergone a profound shift from its imperial origins to its twentieth-century form; Beijing's central political space changed from a set of enclosed spaces orchestrating ritual processions and thresholds into one of a central square based on spatial models from elsewhere. This shift was one of the most fundamental transformations in the history of Chinese cities, one that both maintains some degree of the nature of political power in China, and repositions it radically. The process of this change gives us a fascinating case study of the intertwined materiality of architecture and politics. My thesis will document and analyze the momentous history of spatial change in the center of Beijing by uncovering the circumstances and the authors of new spatial strategies, articulating the political roles of architecture in the formulation of specific political ideals at each stage of its development. Chapter One will examine Beijing's political center as one of processions and thresholds, formulated over many centuries through the demands of Confucian rituals and imperial administration. Chapter Two analyzes the much transformed political center of Beijing – now the Tiananmen Square of immense dimension flanked by two contemporary buildings designed in the style of Soviet Beaux-Arts architecture – in creating a stage for public spectacles that played important roles in post 1949

political upheavals in China. Finally, Chapter Three brings acts of subversion in Tiananmen Square, where the centrality of the political space gives rise to the intensity of its political agency. The emergence of acts of subversion, perhaps best captured by the events of June 4 in 1989, ushered in a new era of Beijing's political center, where a space of political control has turned onto itself as a space of reflection.

My thesis will prove that Tiananmen Square is deeply tied to politics, both the social ritual of place, and the physical construct of space. It is a space that can be etymologized, if any, as a 'political space' a typology that isn't new to the field, but some would argue, like Foucault, is a generalization of all space, but I believe that in the case of Tiananmen Square is best situated as typology than a generalization. Tiananmen Square is the epicenter of national politics, and becomes the focus of redesign after every political reorganization or revolution.

My thesis aims to address Tiananmen Square as a socio-political determinant in its four chapters I will look at four distinct periods of Chinese history and underpin these periods with theoretical writings that can help us greater understand Tiananmen as: a space of power, of spectacle, a stage, and catalyst for change. I will also address specific questions: What role has Tiananmen Square played in Chinese politics? From Emperor to Chairman, how has the square been reshaped and redesigned in order to reinforce and legitimize Ideological constructs in the twentieth century? Through narrative I will recreate and emphasize the

squares redesign process that has gradually taken place with each change in national political thought and rule.

CHAPTER I: AN IMPERIAL PUBLICNESS; THE PROCESSION AND THE TRESHOLD

The Forbidden City exemplified imperial control. It was a place understood as representative of heaven itself, a place mystified and unknown. Few ever got to witness what the inside of the city looked like first hand. Nothing helps a modern viewer understand this idea better than the ‘The Beijing Palace-City Scroll’, painted in the mid-Ming Dynasty around the beginning of the 15th century (*image 1.1.*) The artist, yet unknown, is believed to have been a foreign visitor. This could explain the artist’s seemingly odd point of view. The scroll gives the viewer a detailed exterior look at the city along with very finite details as to the central passage such as the bridge crossings , but overall the painting lacks detail about what is inside of the Forbidden City. The painter has rendered the city in a mystical heavenly abyss while still detailing the complete compound and series of massive halls and fortresses that make up the Inner and Forbidden cities. Depicted at the foreground or bottom of the scroll are the chief imperial architects and engineers along with their head craftsmen. The emperor is portrayed much higher on the scroll, situated inside the city walls. We can also gain a great deal of understanding about Chinese society when we consider the detailed figures being depicted.

The location of the Emperor, situated far above the others and inside the walls of the city and wearing lavish red robes, a color traditionally understood to be

used to represent posterity, happiness, courage, and wisdom.⁴ We can also learn a great deal as well from those individuals privy to the emperor's company. The scroll situates these men at the mouth of the city's gates, and on the imperial axis bowing toward the axis, which is understood as the path to the emperor. The journey to see the emperor was a long one. Those wishing to seek an audience with the emperor would have worn their very best robes or clothing. The limited view was at times monotonous and hard to conceptualize spatially what awaited them. The procession was no doubt planned to do just that.

What had begun as a long slit in the dirty chaotic urban environment had evolved over time in the most drastic way possible. The intricately jointed wood, brick, stone, mud-earth and ceramic tiles came together in breath-taking harmony to create an irresistible vortex that reminded each and every one of them exactly what they were about to experience. Some had been inline for days. Each would digest the environment slowly. Waiting for the next marker, the next threshold, in order to inch closer to the ultimate goal. Time was measured by walls, gates, bridges, changes in the texture of the path, which only became more and more elaborate the deeper they got into the Forbidden City. It was a vista shrouded in mystery. The view was limited to the individual. No one could fathom how vast the Forbidden City actually was as they were only permitted to see what awaited them until the next visual barrier. With the progression of barriers each heightened the individual's anticipation to what display of heavenly power and supremacy could possibly await them in the next leg of the path ahead.

⁴ 'Cultural China', *Cultural website by Shanghai News and Press Bureau*. Accessed April 15, 2014 [<http://traditions.cultural-china.com/en/16T9161T13273.html>]

Cheng, the Chinese word for 'wall', which also means 'city', creates in its duality a literal and theoretical city within several other cities. The built construct of layers and layers of heavy fortification creates a literal and figurative separation from all that dwell on the outside. It was through this method a smaller group of citizens is elevated to the ranks of elite, and where understood to be of a higher class. The seat of the emperor, which serves as the axis mundi, the center of the Chinese world, is used as a measurement to all that live in the China. Where you live in relation to the emperor is a black and white declaration of status in this imperial society. Location declares status.

The space that today is known as Tiananmen Square was only a pathway for those seeking to play audience to the emperor. This physically taxing ritual served as a reminder of the class divides, power, and control this individual had over the general population. The axis was a dissector that began in the middle of the Outer City between the Altar of Agriculture to the West and the Altar of Heaven to the East (*image 1.2.*) The first threshold for a foreigner or outer lying peasant hoping to be in the presence of the emperor would have been to get into the Outer City. The Outer City was a place for common citizens of the city. While parts were clearly more desirable than others, as understood by the amount of defined planning that created the city there. This was a place that ran the spectrum from traditional Chinese courtyard housing which would house families of higher status, to a seemingly field like slum that would play host to slums or even temporary shanty housing. The furthest points to the South of the city would have even been lacking in defined city

streets or roads.⁵ The city's classical scheme that displays centrality and symmetry becomes more and more defined the closer to the emperor.

Continuing North up the central axis the next major threshold, which is also one of the most substantial constructs of military defense, is the gate of the Outer City. This would have been a place of the elite. The planning within this Cheng was well defined and highly manicured. All of the streets were complete and these were the streets that cradled some of the most privileged families in all of china. The development within these walls would have made the haphazard city outside look like a slum. This vital spot at the entrance of the Capital City was also the site of the Gate of Great Qing, which was the first vital threshold on route to the city's center. This 'T' shaped wall served as a funnel that interrupted the urban fabric of the Capital City. It also served to separate those only hoping to play audience to the emperor from those that actually lived in the city. This simple separation both maintained the privacy of the Capital and kept the everyday traffic from the city away from the procession that would have been passing through.⁶ It was here the procession was completely enclosed by walls, the view of surrounding buildings was blocked completely. The next threshold was a pristine moat. The moat, known as the *Tongzi He* (the pipe river), was 3,300 meters long, 52 meters wide, and 4.1 meters deep.(*image 1.3*) This high quality river ran from the Jade Spring in the Western Hills clear to the Yangtze River. What had once played a vital role in the construction of the city functioning as the canal that transported hand selected timbers from the

⁵ Jianfei Zhu, *Chinese Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing 1420-1911* (Routledge Curzon:New York, 2004) 29.

⁶ Lui, Dunzhen, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhushi*, (Beijing: Zhongguo Jianzhu Gongye Chubanshe, 1980) 153.

forests in the West Hills. Deforestation and a transition to more substantial building materials lead to the use of the waterway as strictly defensive. This was also the sole source of water strictly reserved for the Capital and Forbidden Cities.⁷

As the procession crossed four small bridges of the glistening moat below they would be stopped at the first colossal gate, the Gate of Heavenly Peace. This was the gateway that gave way to the Imperial City (image1.4.). This gate was where the imperial court was housed. Those closest to the emperor himself would live here. While the axial route had a clear secure feeling of controlled views and strict symmetry, what would have been hidden from view of commoners hoping to see the emperor was the grandeur of massive housing and bucolic man made lakes. It was truly a playground for society's elite. Aside from being outside of the city, this gate boasted the most spacious urban fabric, which separated it from the city surrounding it.⁸

Passing the Gate of Heavenly Peace, the procession would begin to see the first Imperial sites of ritual. Two structures symmetrically flank the courtyard, The Alter of Land and Grain (image 1.5) to the West and the larger, The Temple of Ancestors (image 1.6.) These would have been significant sites sacred to the Confucius beliefs of the residents and would have been off limits to any none residents of the Imperial City. This courtyard is a very large space and the view only allows anyone in the procession a brief glimpse of the architectural wonders that stood beyond the walls of the axis.

⁷ Fang Li, *The Lost Rivers of the Forbidden City*. (China Heritage Quarterly Australian National University July 2011)

⁸ Jianfei Zhu, *Chinese Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing 1420-1911* (Routledge Curzon:New York, 2004) 45.

Finally, the procession makes its way to the Meridian Gate (*image1.7.*) The Meridian Gate is a structure that is meant to make any man feel small. It is as much a wall as it is a complete building. The disproportionate thickness of the Meridian Gate not only makes a statement about the defense of the space beyond the threshold, but it also makes a very clear statement about the power of the space the visitor would be transcending into. Its outstretched parallel arms extend from the central gate, drawing in the axis itself. The central Gate is situated on the Cheng or wall of the Forbidden City. The anticipation for a first time visitor to this space would have been immeasurable. This is the gate the signaled a visitor's final arrival.

After transcending through one of the side tri-part passage ways the opening into Forbidden City only continues to signal the proximity of emperor himself. The vast courtyard space is now flanked on both sides by gates and towers. Visitors now have the feeling that they are inside a space elaborately constructed. With detailed ceramic tiles and decorative stone and brickwork. The manicured stone floor signals a change to the normal compact dirt floor. This is the most modern and elaborately constructed space in all of China. This is a place for an emperor.

The environment here is noticeably different. What was once seen as a breathtakingly ostentatious experience begins to teeter toward surreal. The following obstacle to meet the procession is the stream of Golden Water. Here five bridges cross the glistening waterway. The arched bridges are constructed to constantly remind those that pass over their place in the hierarchy of society. Passage by commoners may take place on the far sides, center reserved for the emperor himself.

Aside from the brief pitch in the arched bridges the next threshold was the first to alter the elevation of the procession. The Massive decorative gate of Supreme Harmony (image 1.8) was the center and largest of the tripartite gate system of the next North facing wall. The central Gate is drastically elevated on a marble pedestal, which also prevented a direct view up the axis. This gate lead to the courtyard of Supreme Harmony. This was the center of the largest buildings in the city. After ascending from the Gate of Supreme Harmony, visitors would witness a courtyard surrounded by notable pavilions like the Pavilion of Glorifying Righteousness and Heavenly Benevolence. What stood towering in front was perhaps the thing that commanded the attention of all that set foot there. This gave a distinct appearance of being the largest and tallest building in all of China, mainly due to laws forbidding construction to dwarf it.⁹ 37.44 tall building rested on a three-tiered pedestal. The 63.9 X 37.2 meter building boasted a façade of 72 pillars. These are divided into six rows.

The hall of Supreme Harmony (image 1.9), the largest of the three audience halls that were set above on the central and highest pedestal was the largest and allowed for the most formal form of Imperial Audience. The individuals rank and circumstances of visit would determine how close and how intimate you got to be to the Emperor himself. A commoner for example would only make it to the Hall of Supreme Harmony, where seated in the distance would be Emperor or one of his close advisors to pay attention to the visitor. If it was determined that your reason for visit was special enough you would then be taken on to one of the next two

⁹ Emily Cole, *The Grammar of Architecture*. (New York: The Ivy Press. 2002) 55.

audience halls. The Hall of Middle Harmony (image1.10) and the Hall of Preserved Harmony (image 1.11) respectively, thus allowing for a more close and intimate audience with the Emperor.¹⁰ Something that must have weighted heavily on all of those waiting in the sometimes multiple week procession, was the fact that there was no guarantee that your sentiment, be it well or ill, would even be heard or received by the proper channels of Imperial authority.

The spatial divisions of the axis, during the time of Imperial Rule were more than a planned way of exhibiting power. Anyone seeking to engage an audience with the Emperor, the socially declared ‘center of the universe’, would have to first take part in a rite of passage. This ritual of procession would have greatly shaped all who experience it. The gradual transition that would have taken the individual slowly through an extreme scale of hierarchical dwelling, from the very chaotic outer lying regions of Peking to the Imperial core; a space where no expense was spared to make the space the most manicured and opulent possible. The space allows for drastic transition that would have demanded a psychologically altering response of awe and humbling to authority.

Michele Foucault elaborate work on the role of power and space are highly relevant to this as a space for the dissemination of power. Foucault’s original ideas on the issue were outlined in an interview with a French magazine *Herodote*. His initial statement that the idea of space as a tool for displaying power doesn’t consciously begin until the eighteenth century does not seem to hold true

¹⁰ Jianfei Zhu, *Chinese Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing 1420-1911* (Routledge Curzon:New York, 2004) 101.

considering a case study like the imperial city with a ritual of axial procession.¹¹ In a later interview he addresses the issue with declaring space having relation to power. He clarifies that,

“What I wished to point out was that from the eighteenth century on, every discussion of politics as the art of the government of men necessarily includes a chapter or a series of chapters on urbanism, on collective facilities, on hygiene, and on private architecture. Such discussions are not found in the discussions of the art of government in the sixteenth century. This is not a change of architects, but rather one of the thoughts of political men.”¹²

Foucault goes on to state that the modern city brought to the forefront this new way of understanding and thinking about cities in the design process, “...cities, with the problems they raised, and in particular forms that they took, served as the models for the governmental rationality that was to apply to the whole of the territory.”¹³ While architects have always worked on government projects intended for the collective condition of those which they served, Foucault argues that the modern era brought about new conditions of understanding the politics of building from the perspective of politicians as, “being for collective facilities, on hygiene, and on private architecture.”¹⁴

This raises the question surrounding the design of the Imperial City. Without question the city emulates a clear organization that situates the Emperor as the center of the universe, but it also illustrates clear underlying classical Chinese traditions and Confucian traditions as well, which was the basis for the city’s

¹¹ *Hérodote*. ‘Questions from Michele Foucault’ Issue 1, 1976.

¹² Rizzoli Communications, Inc.: Michele Foucault interview, “Space, Knowledge, and Power,” from *Skyline* (March 1982), published by Rizzoli Communications, Inc. 1

¹³ *Ibid*. 2

¹⁴ *Hérodote*. ‘Questions from Michele Foucault’ Issue 1, 1976.

original plan.¹⁵ If we understand this plan as a religiously inspired space, an example of the most extravagant architecture created in the country, then we must wonder if this was done so for political reasons or reasons that were meant to confirm doctrine. The architects and engineers of Imperial China may not have considered the nature of their role as a political one. If they instead viewed the palace as a place to glorify the Emperor, the perceived son of Heaven on Earth, the center of the world, it wasn't focused on situating the space as a political center. The question of whether the designers understood the space as a political one cuts to the core of Lefebvre's question -are social outcomes a result of the space or does the social constructs create the space?¹⁶

If we consider the Imperial palace, a place created by the Emperors over time, which followed and developed a ritualistic decorum of what was expected of common citizens in china over a period of hundreds of years, we can understand that these forces are complementary to one another. The space shaped the rituals that took place there, and the space—constantly evolving—was formed over time to compliment the rituals. Thus, a dual force is created and further illustrates the issues discussed by Lefebvre.

¹⁵ Jianfei Zhu, *Chinese Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing 1420-1911* (Routledge Curzon:New York, 2004) 29.

¹⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Basil Blackwell: Cambridge, 1991) 85.

CHAPTER II: THE SQUARE AS THE OPEN STAGE

The machines roared as they busted through the long row of houses. What was once seen as housing for those enjoying imperial privileges, were now viewed as reminisce of the nation's political problems—a product of social inequality. These houses that formed the urban fabric parallel to the central axis and had a grand view of the parade route were symbolic of a class structure that the revolution hoped to wipe away from the countries historical narrative.

The new Tiananmen Square was meant to serve as a stage for the people to display their new unity. Its size enables the masses to assemble, giving the people the feeling of harmony with the greater body. At the same time the new square achieves a crushing de-individualization, one that is meant to remind each individual that steps part there that they are only one in a sea of many. The new political landscape demanded a new physical landscape to reflect it. The new square was to represent the one thing that was the new center of the political ideology—the people.

Who was once a lowly janitor at Peking University was now the leader of a movement that had solidified by force in numbers a new way of thinking. This new movement made up of peasant laborers would again reshape Tiananmen Square. Hoping to destroy all signs of class structure, this unlikely political leader sought to recreate the nation as a utopian place where all people were equal. The new square

would be a vast space, where the people would feel as if they were apart of something larger. It would also be a place where the people as individuals were much smaller, less significant than the whole. Lost in the scale, a vast sea, a square that was endless, this design modeled after the precedent of close ally in Moscow, this space would dwarf the Kremlin. This would be a stage, for the individuals to come together in harmony and choreographed unity as a whole. This new open space would serve as a stage where the government that had freed its people from the oppression of a class system, would take seat overhead, looking down on the population as a whole. In the mind of the Chairman, this was to be the square of all squares.

The most drastic change, which brings the space to the large clearing in the urban fabric we are familiar with today, was the remodel of the space began in 1952 and completed in 1959. This is often a topic of inquiry in the field of Preservation in regards to the government ordered demolition of a massive segment through the heart of Beijing's oldest urban fabric. What had been a "T" shaped space since the sixteenth century was vastly expanded into the new largely rectangular expanse.

The People's Republic

Mao Tse-Tung, the father of modern revolution in China, can be remembered largely as a profound leader that brought a new form of revolution to the country. By fusing classical and guerilla warfare, Mao mobilizing the peasant masses.¹⁷ The Socialists, who had become fed up with the corruption and greed of the new

¹⁷ J. Bowyer Bell, *On Revolt: Strategies of National Liberation*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1976), 11.

Republic began with a disastrous campaign in 1927 with the Autumn Harvest Uprising. The campaigns of Mao were mainly concentrated on the outside of metropolitan centers where the proletariat masses—the peasants—could be rallied on a local grass roots basis to support new socialist ideals. Mao, self-educated in the ideas of Karl Marx, quickly became an impassioned leader of the movement. When the revolutionaries took control of the country after a long revolution that lasted twenty-two years. Mao renamed it the country, “The People’s Republic of China”, and began to posture its governance very different from other Communist governments. Mao’s opening address at the First Session of the First National People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China¹⁸ declared, “at the core leading our cause forward is the Chinese Communist Party, whose theoretical basis of thought was guided by Marxist-Leninism.”¹⁹ The new People’s Republic would be based on a plan for “balanced national economic development”, which placed emphasis on coordination and divided leadership responsibilities on local, provincial, and national levels.²⁰ The new government also placed an extreme priority of organized political leadership with the Communist Party or (during the Cultural Revolution) People’s Liberation Army. This differs greatly from the Communism model used by the U.S.S.R. As one author writes, “[The Stalinist Communist Party] tended to degenerate into an elite club for leaders whose power

¹⁸ September 15, 1954

¹⁹ Mao Tsetung, *Quotations from Chairman Mao*. (Peking: Foreign Languages Press. 1972), 1.

²⁰ Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1979), 272.

was based on their functional positions as managers, state bureaucrats, and professional specialists.”²¹

Few changes had been made to the city of Beijing since the eighteenth century, the ever expanding urban fabric’s most major re-structuring was the advent of the railroad, undertaken in 1865 by a British merchant.²² The original railroad scheme was in some cases was less dramatic as in Western cultures as much of the rails were incorporated into existing axial streets. The restructuring of the city’s rail in 1930 was less sparingly as several significant sites were demolished to make way for new lines.²³

With Mao’s announcement to bring a new designed city center to represent new government control, several architects both Socialist and those understood as ‘conservatives’ came forward to submit proposals for the new design of the city center. Before architects and planners had begun to contemplate possible ideas for the city, the government had already begun to proceed with plans to redesign the city. Parts of the Outer Wall were torn down in 1950, in preparation for construction prior requests to architects for new design proposals.²⁴ These included architects Liang Sicheng, trained in the United States at the University of Pennsylvania, Chen Zhanxiang, trained in Great Britain, and Hua Lanhong, trained in France, and Chen Gan, trained in China and leader of a group of strongly left-wing architects.

²¹ T.H.Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*(Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), 160.

²² Madeleine Yue Dong, *The City and its Histories*. (Ewing, New Jersey: University of California Press, 2003), 36.

²³ The most significant Sites including in the 1930 demolition the Xuanwu gates and several portions of the city’s original protective walls.

²⁴ Lillian M. Li, Alison J. Dray-Novey, Haili Kong. *Beijing: From Imperial Capital to Olympic City* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2007), 176.

The two most popular proposals submitted were the Liang-Chen plan (image 2.1) and the Chan Gen Plan (image 2.2.) Both were basic arrangements of memorials and new government buildings that demonstrated the vitality the new People's government had to offer. The Plan also turned historic walled structures into public parks. (Image 2.3.) Both plans reflected strong axial relationships and connections of memorials in monumentality that complimented the existing urban fabric in Beijing.

Both plans drew heavily on design principles that were widely taught in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris throughout the nineteenth century. One could pinpoint the writings of theorists like Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, a pupil of Jacques-François Blondel and Étienne-Louis Boullée. Durand's theories envision architecture as being something that is timeless and that should represent general principles such that are understandable in all times and places—a universal communication of spatial form. He also believed that architecture should possess 'disposition', a characteristic he described as being one which removed all ideas of space and proportion from being a prime consideration. The idea of a spatial disregard to scale as a concern, thus something that could border on surreal in its openness for the public use.²⁵ The favoring of designs that drew upon Beaux-Arts schemes was not to mimic those used in the West, rather the ideas that these designs could be a universal communicator of power and design for public use was what appealed to the architects. It is also no coincidence that they are thinking about theories that would enable them to divorce the space from concerns of proportion in a way that

²⁵ Hanno-Walter Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press 1994) 274.

enabled them to achieve the most drastic form of openness possible. This is an idea that would suit the government for the people—the masses—well.

The main differences between the two were the basic location they had selected as well as the size of the projects overall. The Liang-Chen plan, seen as a more conservative plan by Marxist critics, sought to preserve the city's most historic fabric to the west of the Imperial city. This was something the Chan Gen plan didn't see as a necessity, and understood the concerns of Mao, who had stated on multiple occasions that he cared nothing for the conservation of old Beijing, often times publically ridiculing Liang Sicheng's views of sentiment for the past.²⁶ Instead of preserving the past fabric of a Beijing that Mao believed was unjust, he hoped to completely change it. The conservatives were also attacked by those who believed their design was an attempt to, "negate Tiananmen, the country's political centre cherished by the revolutionary people."²⁷ The Liang-Chen plan was also much smaller and aimed to preserve a human scale in relation to the juxtaposed buildings.

The fact that Liang Sicheng's (image 2.4) plan boldly defended the preservation of the wall is a significant one. Liang's earlier works were not always in favor of preserving what was already on site. One such—example which arose during Liang's documentation and rediscovery of Song Dynasty architecture—situated him on the side of tearing down other works of architecture in order to rebuild and recreate monuments like in his proposal for the rebuilding of the

²⁶Jun Wang, *Revolutionary Record of Beijing City(Cheng Ji)*. (Hong Kong:SDX Joint Publishing, 2006), 101.

²⁷ Ibid. 117.

Temple of Confucius.²⁸ His goal of preserving the Wall, which he saw as “the great national necklace”²⁹, is noteworthy.

Aside from the widely discussed political beliefs of the designers, the Chan Gen plan received added support as it’s conceptual basis³⁰ outlined a theory derived directly from the writings of Friedrich Engels, German theorist and sometimes referred to as the father of Marxism. His plan also drew a great deal conceptually from the environmental plan of Red Square in Moscow, a site that exemplified the aims of the new Communist party. He proposed that the new government center assert itself at the heart of the old city. The new constructions would be placed on the Imperial route on axis aligning directly in relations to the inner city, which was also to be utilized. As one almost prophetic architectural critic wrote during the late imperial period, “There is no open and collective spatial field where a society can congregate in a central area. An open space, with its fluidity and continuity and its tendency to gather and to form a centrality, this is missing in imperial Beijing.”³¹ This would not be overlooked, but rather would be a top priority for Chairman Mao. New Beijing as representative of the next chapter in the country’s narrative believed it had to demolish the ancient fabric symbolic of the old and replace it with a new center that would stand as an open political space meant to visually represent the radical new ideas of the people. This gesture of demolition was by no means a

²⁸ Shiqiao Li, *Writing a Modern Chinese Architectural History: Liang Sicheng and Liang Qichao*. (Journal of Architectural Education, 2002), 35-45.

²⁹ Jun Wang, *Chengji [Record of a city]* (Beijing: Sanlian, 2003)37-39.

³⁰ Chapter IV

³¹ Jianfei Zhu. *Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing, 1420-1911* (New York, Routledge Press, 2003)46. [First Chinese publication 1966.]

mistake—a clear indication that the new governing vision was finally becoming a reality—razing the old place with its old political ideals.

Mao envisioned the new Tiananmen Square as being the new dominant space of politics, representative of the nation, and a site for the visual representation of the people. The nation's new leadership hoped the newly selected architect, Chen Gan would realize these goals. Construction, beginning with demolition, began in 1952. The most changed was the heart of the inner city or the structures that surrounded the "T shaped" square(image 2.5) that had been there since the fifteenth century. Timber houses made up of 110 bays known as "The Thousand Step Porches", both parallel rows were to be demolished. The Tiananmen Gate(Gate of Heavenly Peace) would be untouched by the changes, and instead serve as a new focal point of the planned Square. The Gate which was once the entrance to the Forbidden City, allowed ideal view of the planned vista as well was set back from the Square itself just off of the East West axis that is Chang'an Avenue.

As the Communist Party established a firm control over leadership, the new order immediately began reshaping metropolitan centers and small towns alike. The emerging communist party began to utilize public squares as a tool to maintain government control. Not only in the capitol of Beijing, but in cities and towns across the country. Several public squares were constructed, large and small throughout Chinese cities, towns, and villages. The new squares were places where political rallies constantly took place under watchful eye of the Communist Party. Almost every administrative center was marked with the construction of a public square, which was fitted with a platform built for leaders of the municipality to review mass

assemblies.³² These squares became a place of business, a place of politics, and a place to legitimize sentiments on a national level. A stage of politics literally existed in every town, which served to reinforce the national stage of politics that was closely controlled by the new People's Republic. While these squares could be understood as public space, they were heavily controlled and planned by the government. Everything that took place on the square was meant to promote the government's voice among the people. This form of public space belonged solely to the government, a space situated in the public, but for the singular purpose of politics—a political space. These were places where the public was welcome to perform rallies of political activism, which was to be closely monitored by the officials of the Communist Party. While the free speech of the people officially existed in policy, it was obvious that only appropriate voice was that in support of the new People's Republic. As one party work stated, "It is only through the unity of the Communist Party that the unity of the whole class and the whole nation can be achieved...and the national and Democratic revolution accomplished."³³ The notion had influential definition to what was permitted to take place on the municipal square, and would be defined by those in charge of the party. What political speech could be distinguished as right from wrong is found on the basis of "the Constitution and overwhelming majority of our people and the common political position"³⁴ was

³² Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of A Political Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 23.

³³ Speech of Mao, "Win the Masses in Their Millions for the Anti-Japanese National United Front" (May 7, 1937) *Selected Works*, Vol. I p. 292

³⁴ Mao Tsetung, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" (February 27, 1957) in *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1972) 48.

outlined in the first pocket edition of *Quotations of Chairman Mao Tsetung* (1957) in a section called, “*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*”, it states:

“(1) Words and actions should help to unite, and not divide, the people of our various nationalities.

(2) They should be beneficial and not harmful, to socialist transformation and socialist construction.

(3) They should help to consolidate and not undermine or weaken, the people’s democratic dictatorship.

(4) They should help to consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, the democratic centralism.

(5) They should help to strengthen, and not discard or weaken, the leadership of the Communist Party.

(6) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to international socialist unity and the unity of the peace-loving people of the world.

Of these six criteria, the most important are the socialist path and the leadership of the Party.”³⁵

If we consider these squares uniformly as a single typological example of twentieth century Chinese architecture, none represent the power and uniformity of the country as a whole greater than Tiananmen. Its vast area was meant to hold an army, and its platform constructed for political leaders hosted the heads of the communist party as well as Mao himself. Rather than a platform, the political leadership would appear from the auspices of the Tiananmen Gate, or the Gate of Heavenly Peace, that has sheltered the ruling classes of people since its construction in the fifteenth century. If we understand the installation of a new People’s Republic as the first change Mao made in office, then the second thing he did was reshape the political realm, confined to the new political spaces that were closely supervised by officials of the Communist Party.

³⁵ Ibid.48

Tiananmen Square—aside from serving as a monumental space that could be used to stage the nation’s political rallies—would also be built with a complex architectural program. The initial plan to create tripartite monumental structures from West to East creating a linear axis that would parallel Chang’an Avenue. The three structures were to be built over a two decade span. The plan included the Great Hall of the People (image 2.6) , a space that would fulfill the function of legislative government in the new government as well as be a place that ceremonies for the government could be held. The Great Hall—clad in granite—made up of a series of halls and auditoriums was one of the priorities in the project, which was one of the ten Great Buildings the government hoped to complete before the tenth anniversary of the People’s Republic. The second structure was central Memorial to the People’s Heroes (image 2.7.) This memorial was to be central in the overall scheme, and also planned for completion to make the tenth anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic.³⁶ The decision of what the Memorial to the People’s Heroes should look like went through a series of several committee meetings, some of which were chaired by Mao himself. Out of the thirteen schemes considered, the final consensus that the monument should be “a monumental medium for the writings of Chairman Mao.”³⁷ Other monuments considered consisted of ancient Chinese architectural forms, the traditional form of Stalinist memorials, which usually consisted of figural representations, and even more abstract depictions of industrial smoke stacks. The final selection was a monolith

³⁶ October 1, 1959.

³⁷ Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of A Political Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 28.

intended to have the inscriptions of the Chairman with a base, covered with reliefs depicting the victories of the People's Heroes. The inscription, written by Zhou Enlai reads,

*"Eternal glory to the people's heroes who laid down their lives in the people's War of Liberation and the people's revolution in the past three years.
Eternal glory to the people's heroes who laid down their lives in the people's War of Liberation and the people's revolution in the past thirty years.
Eternal glory to the people's heroes who from 1840 laid down their lives
In the many struggles against internal and external enemies for national
Independence and the freedom and well-being of the people."*³⁸

The reliefs of the monument depict: *Crossing the Yangzi River-campaign during the Chinese Civil War 1949 (image 2.8), Burning Opium 1839 (image 2.9), Jiantian Uprising 1851 (image 2.10), Wuchang Uprising catalyst for the 1911 uprising (image 2.11), May Fourth Movement 1919 (image 2.12), May Thirtieth Movement 1925 (image 2.13), Nanchang Uprising 1927 (image 2.14), and Guerilla Warfare against the Japanese invasion 1931-1945 (image 2.15.)* Each depiction shows idealized characters portrayed in action and rather than illustrating historical figures, the characters are homogenized into idealized representations of those involved.

This memorial holds particular significance in its location in the center of the North-South axis known as the Imperial Passage. It was the first planned structure to obstruct the axis since the construction of the Gates in the space of Tiananmen Square. The interpretive plaque on the monument reads:

"The proposal to build the monument was approved at the First Plenary session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference on September 30, 1949. The construction began on August 1, 1952, and was completed in April, 1958. The monument, built with more than 17,000 pieces of granite and white marble 37.94 meters high , 50.44 meters wide from east to west and 61.54 meters long from north

³⁸ Zhou Enlai. Inscription on Monument of the People's Heroes.

to south, is composed of double platforms, double sumeru bases, the main body and the top part. It is the largest such monument in Chinese history.”

The third and final construction was also on schedule to be completed for the government’s founding anniversary was The Museum of Chinese History (image 2.16.) This was a space planned to hold all of the antiquities of China from the beginning of time. The museum flanked the square on the East side. It was constructed parallel to the Great Hall. The juxtaposition of the Museum with the Great Hall of the People was no mistake, and instead created a very obvious relationship between that which was of the past and that, which was the present. The museum was also built in the East, where the sun rises and Great Hall in the West, where the sun sets, this is a very common symbolic relationship that the Communist Party used repeatedly.

Along with the interesting relationship of the East and West directions, another notable decision was made in the direction of the Monument to the People’s Heroes. Not only does it obstruct the Imperial axis, something that had never been done, but it also faces north. The entrance to the traditional Imperial City’s gate faces to the south, which was done in keeping with ancient tradition that understood the North of being both where the Mongolian Enemy and cold weather originated.³⁹ This structure not only defies the tradition of honoring the Imperial axis, but also faces North as if to assert itself in the path of the traditional city, and by doing so, assert its presence into the narrative of Chinese history. Just as was

³⁹ Lillian M. Li, Alison J. Dray-Novey, Haili Kong. *Beijing: From Imperial Capital to Olympic City* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2007), 14.

seen with Mao's intentional clearing of much of the Inner City's historic architectural fabric, we can understand the construction of the monument as an assertion of a new historic trajectory. With the creation of a new axis mundi, a new social order to govern the people.

With the completion of these three main sites in Tiananmen, a space was born that would represent the nation politically. The massive scale of the space communicates the overwhelming power of the government and shifts attention from the individual to the collective whole. Allowing one to realize the frivolity of self, which pales in comparison to the enormity and overwhelming strength of the population as a whole. The space is most well utilized during a parade or show of ceremony, which as seen in events like the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the of the People's Republic. The three-day festivities consisted of a party celebrative meeting, an official banquet, and finally a parade through Tiananmen. The Chinese media reported that over 700,000 people were present to witness the parade of machinery, military regalia, and artillery parade either down the square itself or past Chang'an Avenue. Such parades would continue to the present day.

Tiananmen Square played a significant role in the Cultural Revolution (image 2.17) that took place from 1966 to 1976, which was meant as, "a great revolution that touches people to their very souls and constitutes a new stage in the development of the socialist revolution in our country, a deeper and more extensive stage."⁴⁰ The revolution consisted of public trials and humiliation for suspected capitalists or anyone who was perceived as having views that differed from the

⁴⁰ *Decision Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, adopted on August 8, 1966 by the Chinese Communist Party.

Communist Party, which often ended in a death sentence. Several rallies were held in order to reinforce the People's vision of an ideal communist society. Several such rallies were held in Tiananmen Square throughout this ten-year period.

Tiananmen Square became, for the Mao era, a stage of national significance. It functioned for the People's Republic as a literal stage that commanded the attention of the international community. Military and public displays that took place there were meant to send a message abroad. It was also a stage where government orchestrated celebrations and public displays of adoration to the new one party system. A inward self-gratification that would serve to recommit all citizens to the breath-taking show of awe, giving them a feeling of pride in the national cause. These orchestrations of the masses would come to be the national calling card as the population in China would continue to swell beyond any other nation in the world. The completion of the ten-year anniversary celebrations and redesign of the square, Mao had finally rebranded the square as a place that declared the new People's Republic legitimate. Now all rallies, regardless of the purpose would take place in front of an architectural backdrop of buildings and monuments that memorialized a new narrative of national history. One that had been reshaped to tell a heroic tale of the People's Republic and its coming to power.

Unlike revolutions prior that attempted to relocate the nation's Capitol, to no avail; Mao chose to redesign and even expand the existing axis that had been the epicenter of national rule since the Ming Dynasty. Rebranding the historic narrative of the space, while expanding upon the existing history in the direction of a

continuing or evolving spatial future. The axis now serves as a time line that would continue into the future and reflects the nation's history. A basic midcentury interpretation of this is two fold. (a) While a new system of governance has come to power the Imperial structures remain to paint an obvious contrast; What has been remains, and the present is now the newer more radically better present. (b) We(the new system) is one that is moving forward through time. The new system is one of human evolution in the theories and thinking of how to govern a people. Both of these communicate the ideas that the new system is cause for celebration and the past remains as a reminder of what has been.

The use of a universal communicator, like the Beaux-Arts allowed the new government a way of communicating a universality to the space while creating a space that was open, free of the bonds of architectural proportion, and could also hold as many people as possible while commanding a stage of orchestrated control. The fact that the space also linked the new government to the USSR also made the use of Beaux-Arts very fitting. The new design is a perfect stage for the future while drawing on a design scheme that touts universality, much like the government stands to universally represent the masses of citizens in one unified voice.

CHAPTER III: THE SQUARE FOR DISRUPTIVE SUBVERSION

The use of Tiananmen Square to oppose the government is a rather interesting notion. A place constructed to reflect the establishment and to reinforce the ideas that the government wants to instill would be the last likely to become a place for the successful reversal of the establishment's goals. The ironic idea that this, officially public space, could be used to rally against the very party that created it makes evident the value and delicate nature of a space that has been raised to the level of national and international focus.

Tiananmen Square, which was only a formal axial boulevard during the last revolution in 1912, one that began in outer lying regions and saw its final resolve in the Forbidden City. The government's shift from the Imperial palace to the open square, a place where government led assemblies took place and officially meant for a controlled public use, would be the epicenter of where this demonstration began. The nationally reinforced notion that the square was for public demonstrations was a controlled idea. 'Public', for display of support and rallies for the People's Republic—the collective entity that all had to support. In Mao's own words, "contradictions... should be dealt with in a democratic and non-antagonistic fashion."⁴¹

The student led movement, would quickly turn into a political movement of the people. What began with 35 students would end with the participation of 2.8

⁴¹ Mao Tsetung, *Quotations from Chairman Mao*. (Peking: Foreign Languages Press. 1972), 1.

million from over 600 universities and colleges.⁴²The pro-democracy protests began peaceful as boycotts of classes, hunger strikes, and marches throughout Beijing were held.

It is perhaps vital to note also that the student protests did not begin on or around the axis, but to the northwest of the site of the Forbidden City. The movement gained momentum as it wound up and down the streets of the city and ascended upon the square from the north. The eventual flooding of the square was marked with banners, loud chanting, and a mass of supports who opposed the current system.

By the May 4, 1989 the mass of people had taken stronghold in Tiananmen Square. Chants and rallying cries could be heard for miles from the masses assembled. Students also quickly began to create a plaster statue, which they called, "The Goddess of Democracy." The statue was positioned on the Imperial axis aligned with the monument to the people's heroes and could be moved throughout the square. The original idea for the statue came from a replica of a statue of liberty that had been erected in the Shanghai, but instead the students believed that the figure should be representative of the Chinese struggle for democracy. As one author writes, "a Chinese image—a strong, young woman—was preferred instead."⁴³ This put a face on the opposition. These simple constructs created an image to confirm that in fact there was a different way, and that it was a viable option for the nation.

⁴² Chu-yuan Cheng. *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre: Social, Political and Economic Ferment in China*. (Boulder Co., Westview Press: 1990), 129.

⁴³ Hsingyuan Tsao, "The Birth of the Goddess of Democracy" in *Cries for Democracy* ed. Han Mnzhu (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press:1990) 141.

Aside from the construction of the statue the students also set up a makeshift headquarters on the platform that surrounded the monument to the people's heroes. It was here that those involved in the hunger strike were being kept, and it was here that those students and people leading the revolution would discuss what the next step of their time in Tiananmen would be.

The idea that the revolutionaries quickly began to alter their surroundings evokes memory of the strategies Mao himself took as the new leader of China. Like the physical alterations and redesign Mao created in the square, the students also began to alter their surrounds in order to support their cause. The National Stage, one meant to play host to national eyes had now played stage to a new production. Likewise, a new voice could be heard on the platform intended for international attention. Again the method to rebrand the space was taking place, though through ephemeral means with plaster and makeshift tents. This was a method of establishment that would for an instant create the idea that this was a legitimate group with legitimate ideals. The new temporary outcry evoked the idea that change could be made a reality.

With the ouster of Zhao Ziyang, General Secretary of the Communist Party, and last sympathizer to the student cause, plans were made to dismantle the crowds that had made Tiananmen Square their permanent place. The first crackdown was with martial law, enacted on May 20. Armed troops ascended to the square on five major streets. This initial showing of force led several in the crowd to disperse. Four outside regiments had been brought in from other cities to enforce the residents of Beijing, and had taken over the enforcement of protestors by May 25th. This in made

it impossible for the protestors to know any of the military officials being told to enforce the law. In the morning of June 4 at around 2a.m. the crackdown began as 10,000 armed soldiers and 1,280 mounted assault vehicles began to clear the square. Soldiers created four fronts lined in front of the Museum, Great Hall, Tiananmen Gate, and from the south as barriers were held to restrict access or exit from the square on Chang'an Avenue. By 2:15 am the troops and vehicles fired into the crowd indiscriminately and by 5:00 am Tiananmen Square was cleared of all surviving protestors.⁴⁴

Media crews from around the world were also present in the square at the time. The events launched investigations by humanitarian groups like Amnesty International. In the months to follow the Chinese government arrested and estimated 10,000 people for to their involvement in the protests.⁴⁵ The government also denied ever firing upon any of the protestors, and that all casualties happened as a result of the protestors. The plaster cast statue that once stood in the square was destroyed and shattered into pieces.

Regardless of the actual events of the student led movement, the events illustrated the resolve of the CPC to maintain control of the status quo and the square itself. The assemblies, though very controversial, planned to take place in a space as controlled as Tiananmen Square, in order to have the greatest national impact. The students tested the notion that the square maintained its official state of 'publicness' when they rallied there for purposes, which sub-verged from the official

⁴⁴ Chu-yuan Cheng. *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre: Social, Political and Economic Ferment in China*. (Boulder Co., Westview Press: 1990), 137.

⁴⁵ *New York Times*, September 17, 1989. E3.

or even pro-establishment ideals. By disrupting the flow of traffic for weeks, and shifting the public attention to a cause not sanctioned by the government the students, illustrated the level of importance a space such as Tiananmen Square plays as the stage of national significance.

CONCLUSION

The axis has been perhaps the only constant throughout centuries of alterations that have taken place in Beijing. It has been understood by some scholars to represent time itself. The face of the axis has changed drastically, but has remained intact and even expanded. What was the most important ceremonial way through the Forbidden City, today is most dynamic outside of the Forbidden City's walls. The axis has continued to represent the future of the nation.

In 2008 China captivated the world as host of the Summer Olympic games. It was the dubbed in slogan as, "the Green Olympics", "the Humanist Olympics", and "the Technological Olympics." The Olympic village and main athletic complexes were without coincidence built on the Imperial axis to both the North and South of the city. It represents the future of China. In the years after the Tiananmen Square crisis the country has seen a population boom, a rise in consumerism, and is a prime example of the result of urban globalization. Since the 1980's both the inner city and outer cities have seen the rise of several high-rise complexes that hope to dent the housing shortage issues the city is having overall. The ground floor of the new high rises are commonly designated for commercial retail space. These changes in cityscape are drastically different from the traditional huntong courtyard houses which were once prevalent there.

Tiananmen Square was once only another threshold to the pathway to Forbidden City, but the middle of the twentieth century the space transformed it into a stage of public interest making it a place of national politics. The square quickly became the forefront of the national and international spotlight when it

came to political expression. A place deeply tied to the politics of the country both the physical construct and the stuff that takes place there. It's a space that has been directly changed by every shift in political rule and a stage that commands international attention which continues to be a space of spectacle.

Political Space, like that of Tiananmen Square should be understood as a stage or a site with mega-phonic implications. Rather than a sterile frame, the space of politics is a place of dynamic fluidity. It can be understood as a space that gains the attention of the establishment be it a country, organized religion, institution, or foreign nation. The space is one that aims to make public an outcry against the status quo in order to inspire the masses to bring change. It can also be a space that makes public an outcry of celebration; this can be one of pride, reverence, or achievement meant for internal and external eyes.

A political space can be born in proud extolment to a governing idea or be the derivative of passionate animosity. It can be planned by an establishment or become elevated as such by the masses. In its duplicity it can function as a tool for those who govern or a tool for those—who refuse to yield—in opposition. Different forms of authority and governance further accentuate the obvious variances that exist among cultures in all parts of the globe. The concept of public verses private that dominates the American spatial dialogue only implies the space's possible usage. The understood perception of political association in examples such as Tiananmen Square in Beijing implicate these spaces not for their possible usage, but rather for their unequivocal role in the society's past. Thus labeling a space as "political" creates the perception that it is directly in dialogue with the country, the

people: rulers and ruled, and time itself. By defining it as a 'political space' we are acknowledging that this space has been elevated to a hierarchy that reflects its relationship to the state of things, and the future of things to come.

Political space functions as space that connects the ideas of future possibilities with the ideas of the past and allows man to transcend from the three dimensional realm of the built environment to a conceptual realm which governs the social order of humanity.

Bibliography

- Aristotle, *Politics*. Kitchener: Batoche Books translated 1999.
- Bowyer, Bell, J. *On Revolt: Strategies of National Liberation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1976.
- Carr, Stephen. Francis, Mark. Rivlin, Leanne G. Stone, Andrew M. ed. Stokols, Daniel and Altman, Irwin. *Public Space* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1992.
- Central Intelligence Agency. *World Fact Book*. (Accessed online Feb. 17, 2013), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>
- Cheng, Chu-yuan. *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre: Social, Political and Economic Ferment in China*. Boulder Co., Westview Press: 1990.
- Cole, Emily. *The Grammar of Architecture*. New York: The Ivy Press: 2002
- Dong, Madeleine Yue. *The City and its Histories*. Ewing, New Jersey: University of California Press, 2003
- Dray-Novey, Alison J. Li, Lillian M. Haili Kong. *Beijing: From Imperial Capital to Olympic City*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2007.
- Dunzhen, Lui, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhushi*, Beijing: Zhongguo Jianzhu Gongye Chubanshe, 1980
- Enlai, Zhou. Inscription on Monument of the People's Heroes.
- Engels, Friedrich. Marx, Karl. "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in *The Portable Karl Marx*. New York: Penguin Books 1983.
- Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*
- Hérodote. 'Questions from Michele Foucault' Issue 1, 1976.
- Henkin, David M. *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.
- Hung, Wu. *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of A Political Space* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Jackson, J.B. "Forum Follows Function" in *The public Face of Architecture*, Ed. Nathan Glazer and Mark Lilla. New York: CollierMacmillan, 1987.

Jun,Wang . *Revolutionary Record of Beijing City*(*Cheng Ji*). Hong Kong:SDX Joint Publishing, 2006.

Kruft, Hanno-Walter, *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press 1994.

Li, Fang, "The Lost Rivers of the Forbidden City". *China Heritage Quarterly* Australian National University July 2011

New York Times, September 17,1989.

Rigby, T.H. *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968.

Rizzoli Communications, Inc.: Michele Foucault interview, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," from *Skyline* (March 1982), published by Rizzoli Communications, Inc.

Scruton, Roger. "Public Space and the Classical Vernacular" in *The public Face of Architecture*, Ed. Nathan Glazer and Mark Lilla. New York: Collier Macmillan, 1987.

Skocpol, Theda. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1979.

Sitte, Camillo . "Monuments and Plazas" in *The public Face of Architecture*, Ed. Nathan Glazer and Mark Lilla. New York: Collier Macmillan, 1987.

Solà-Morales, Manuel de. "The Impossible Project of Public Space." *In Favor of Public Space*. Magda Angelès, Barcelona: Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona and ACTAR, 2010.

Tsao, Hsingyuan . "The Birth of the Goddess of Democracy" in *Cries for Democracy* ed. Han Mnzhu Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press:1990.

Tsetung, Mao. "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan", (March 1927) *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p.44-46 in *Quotations From Chairman Mao Tsetung*. Peking: Foreign Languages Press. 1972

Tsetung, Mao. Introductory note to "On Widening the Scope of Women's Work in the Agricultural Co-operative Movement" (1955), *The Socialist Upsurge in China's*

Countryside, Chinese ed., Vol. I in *Quotations From Chairman Mao Tsetung*. (Peking: Foreign Languages Press. 1972), 298.

Zhu, Jianfei. *Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing, 1420-1911* New York, Routledge Press, 2003.[*First Chinese publication 1966.*]

Zhu, Jianfei, *Chinese Spatial Strategies: Imperial Beijing 1420-1911* (Routledge Curzon:New York, 2004

Illustrations

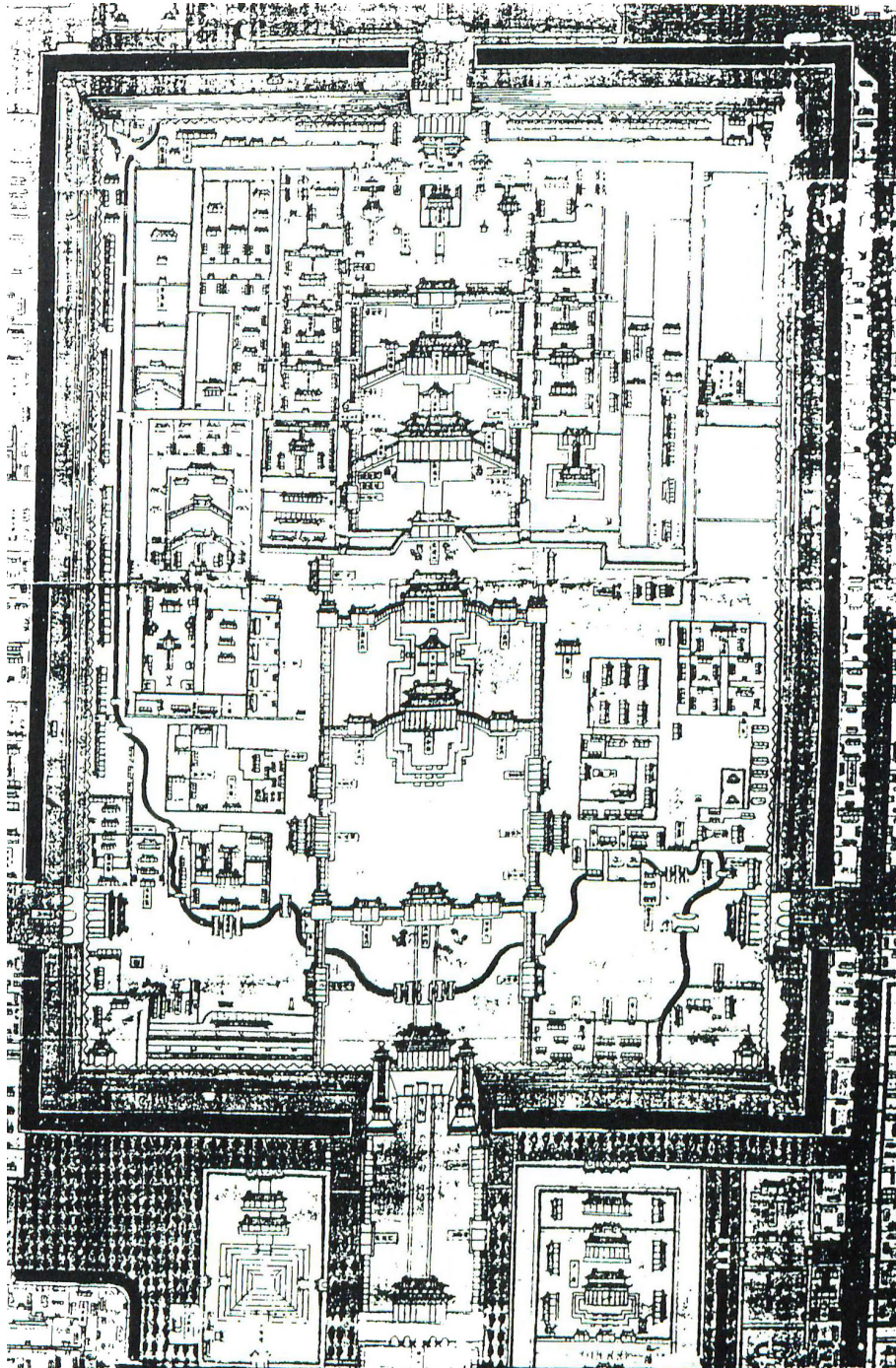


Image 0.1. Map of Palaces and Offices of the Imperial Palace 1679
(Source: Sun Dazhang, Ed., *History of Ancient Chinese Architecture*, Vol. 5, Beijing: Building Industry Press, 2002. 43.)



Image 1.1. Depiction of the Forbidden City from the mid-Ming Dynasty, “The Beijing Palace-City Scroll. c. 15th century.

(Source: http://ookaboo.com/o/pictures/topic/91958/Forbidden_City) Accessed April 12, 2014.

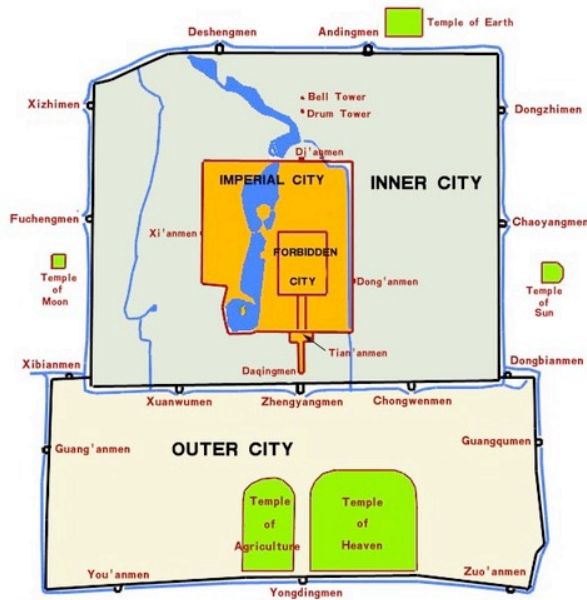


Image 1.2. 'Historic centre of Beijing.' Photo from 2007. Location of the Forbidden City, Temples, and Inner/Outer City Walls.

(Source: <http://ookaboo.com/o/pictures/source/29049/userkallgan>) Accessed April 12, 2014.

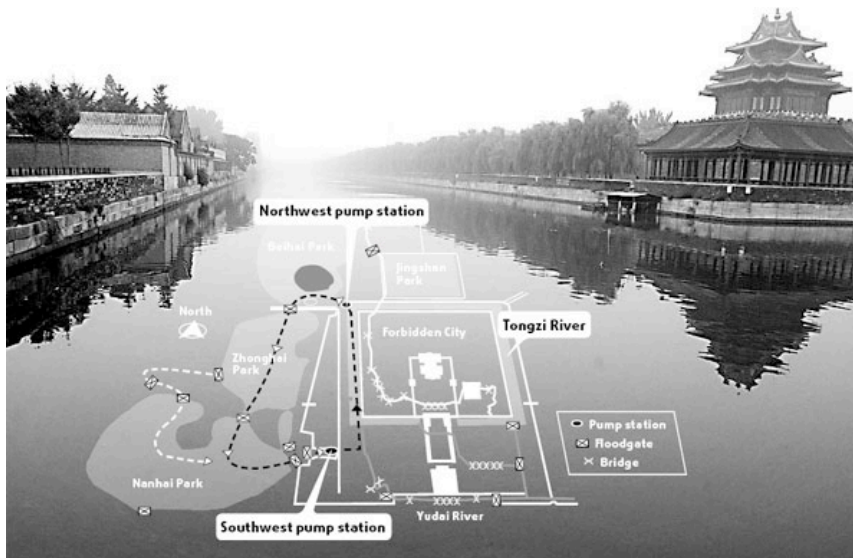


Image 1.3. Tongzi River with modern map of water circulation. Photo from 2008

(source: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bw/2008-03/24/content_6559363.htm) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 1.4. Gate of the Outer City. Photo from 1996.

(Source: <http://djtravel.homestead.com/TheForbiddenCity.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 1.5. Altar of Land and Grain. Photo from 2007. The first site of ritual significance on the axial procession inside the Forbidden City. (Source: <http://arts.cultural-china.com/en/85Arts1409.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 1.6. Tai Miao or the Imperial Ancestral Temple. Photo from 2013 (source: <http://bigontrips.wordpress.com/2013/06/08/beijings-hidden-surprise-tai-miao/>) Accessed April 12, 2014.

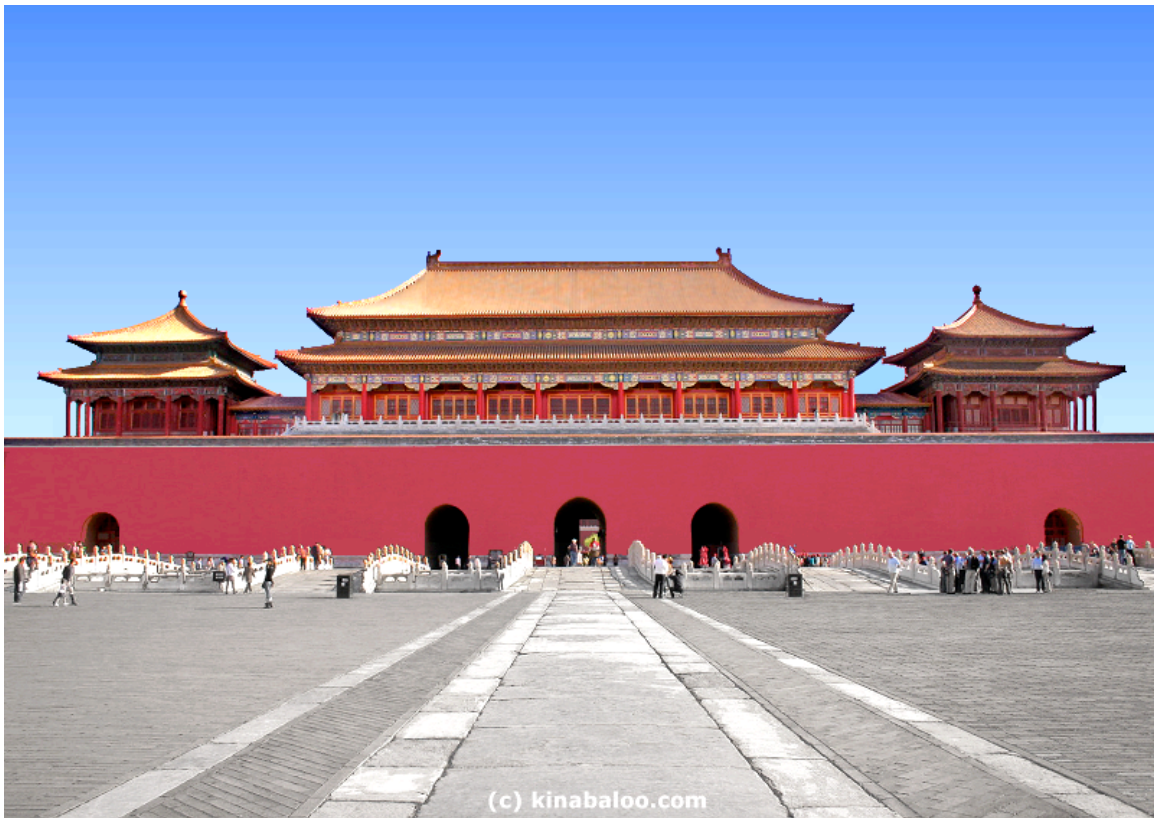


Image 1.7. The Meridian Gate. Photo from 2010

Source: <http://www.kinabaloo.com/fce2.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 1.8. Gate of Supreme Harmony. Photo from 2009.

(Source: <http://romeartlover.tripod.com/Pechino5.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.

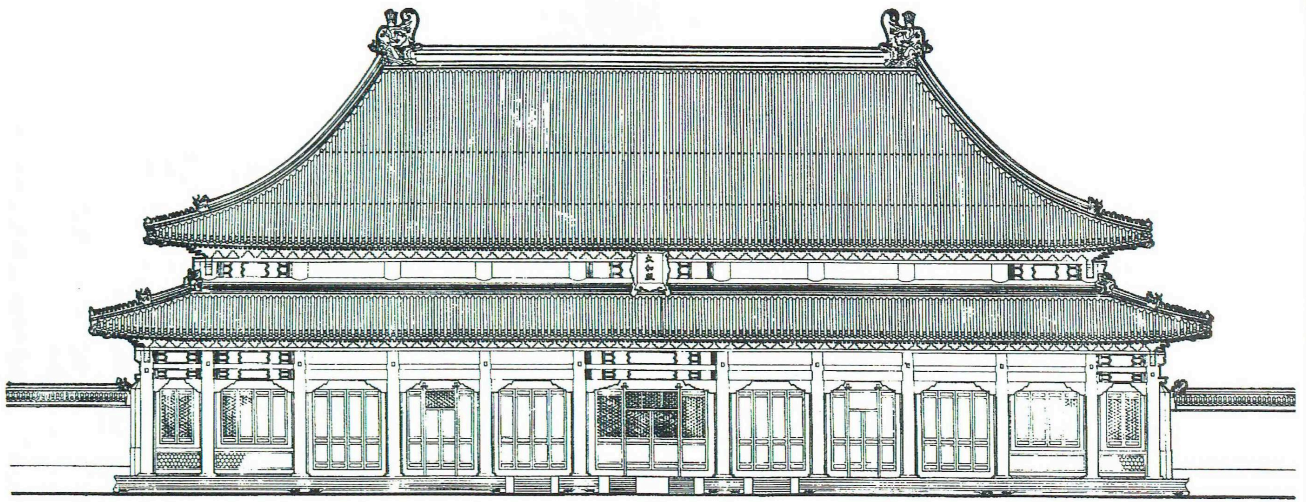


Image 1.9. Elevation of the Hall of Supreme Harmony
 (Source: Sun Dazhang, Ed., *History of Ancient Chinese Architecture, Vol. 5*, Beijing: Building Industry Press, 2002. 63.)



Image 1.10 Hall of Middle Harmony. Photo from 2010.
 (Source: http://www.drben.net/ChinaReport/Beijing/Landmarks-Hotspots/DongCheng/Gugong-Palace_Museum/Wai_Chiao-Outer_Court/Beijing-Forbidden_City_Palace_Museum-Wai_Chou-Outer_Court-Index.html) Accessed April 12, 2014.

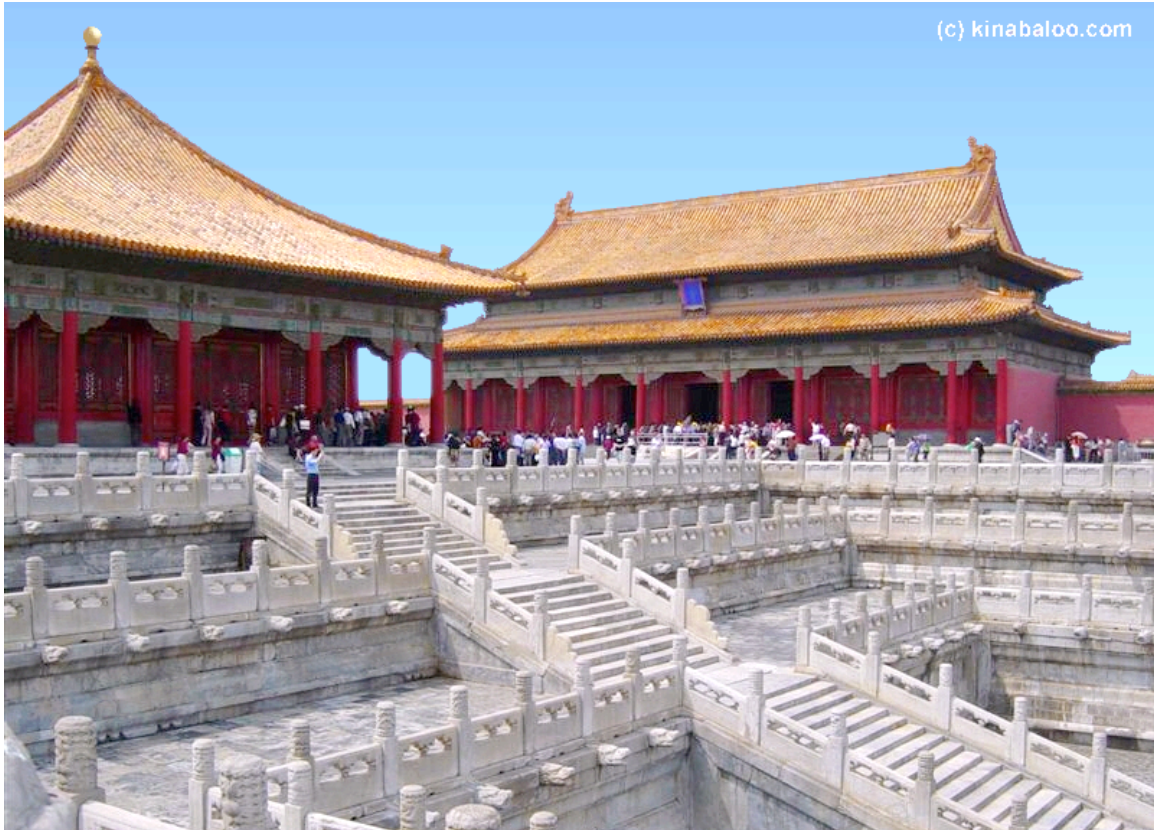


Image 1.11. Hall of Preserved Harmony(right.) Photo from 2010.
(Source: <http://www.kinaballoo.com/fcn.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.

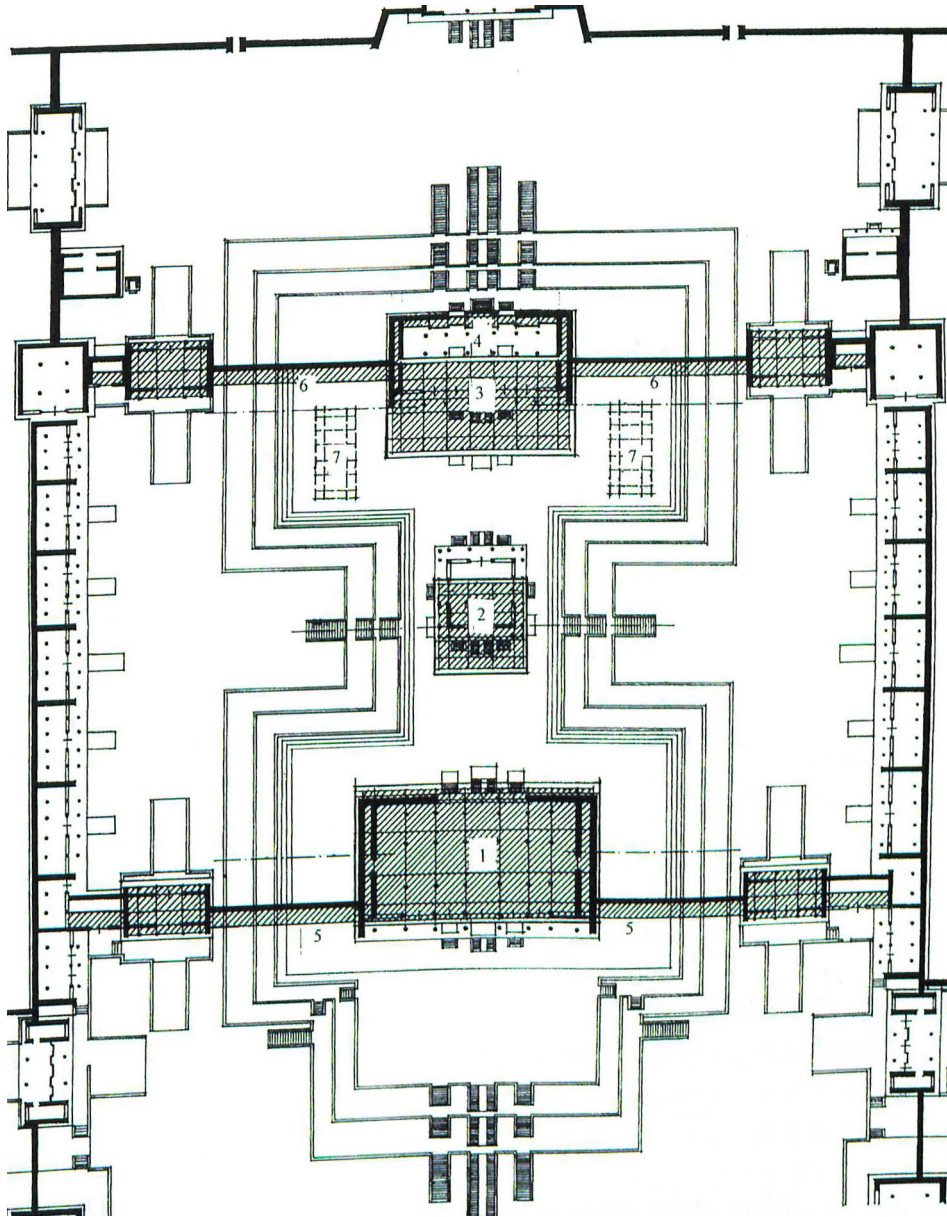


Image 1.12 Plan of Official Palaces of the Forbidden City
(Source: Sun Dazhang, Ed., *History of Ancient Chinese Architecture, Vol. 5*, Beijing: Building Industry Press, 2002. 50.)

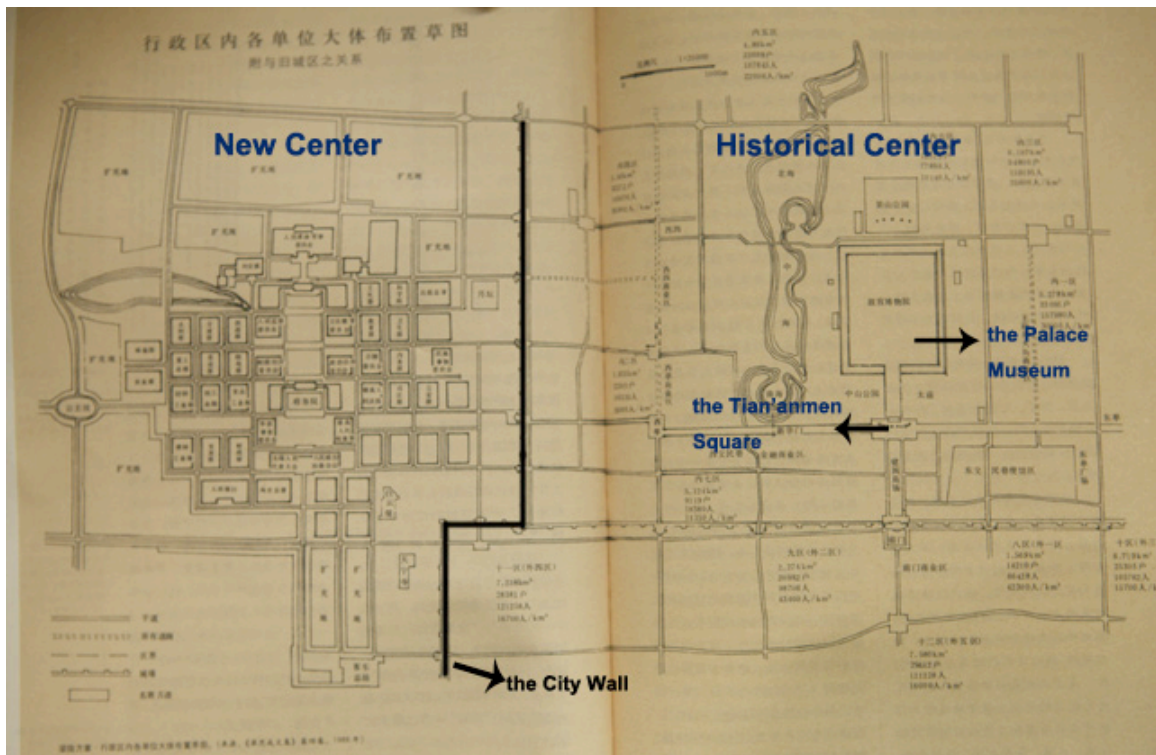


Image 2.1. The Liang-Chen Plan Proposal. 1950. Edited by Celeste Zhou.
 (Source: <http://untappedcities.com/2013/08/09/the-beijing-that-never-was-a-two-center-beijing-under-the-1950-liang-chen-proposal/>) Accessed April 12, 2014.

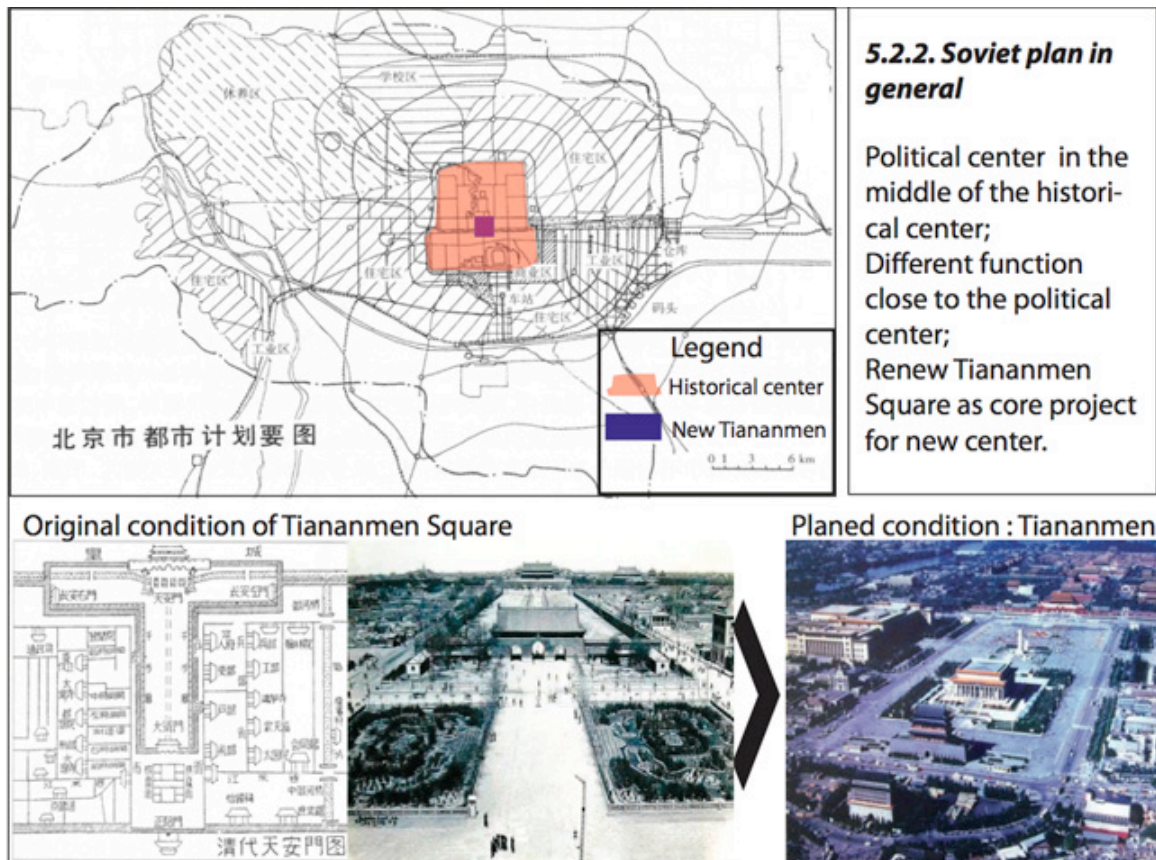


Image 2.2. The Soviet Plan Proposal via Ruofei Duan 2010

(Source: <http://untappedcities.com/2013/08/09/the-beijing-that-never-was-a-two-center-beijing-under-the-1950-liang-chen-proposal/>) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.3. Walled City Park- Liang Chen Plan Proposal. 1950.
(Source: <http://untappedcities.com/2013/08/09/the-beijing-that-never-was-a-two-center-beijing-under-the-1950-liang-chen-proposal/>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.4. Liang Sicheng.
(Source: <http://untappedcities.com/2013/08/09/the-beijing-that-never-was-a-two-center-beijing-under-the-1950-liang-chen-proposal/>)Accessed April 12, 2014.

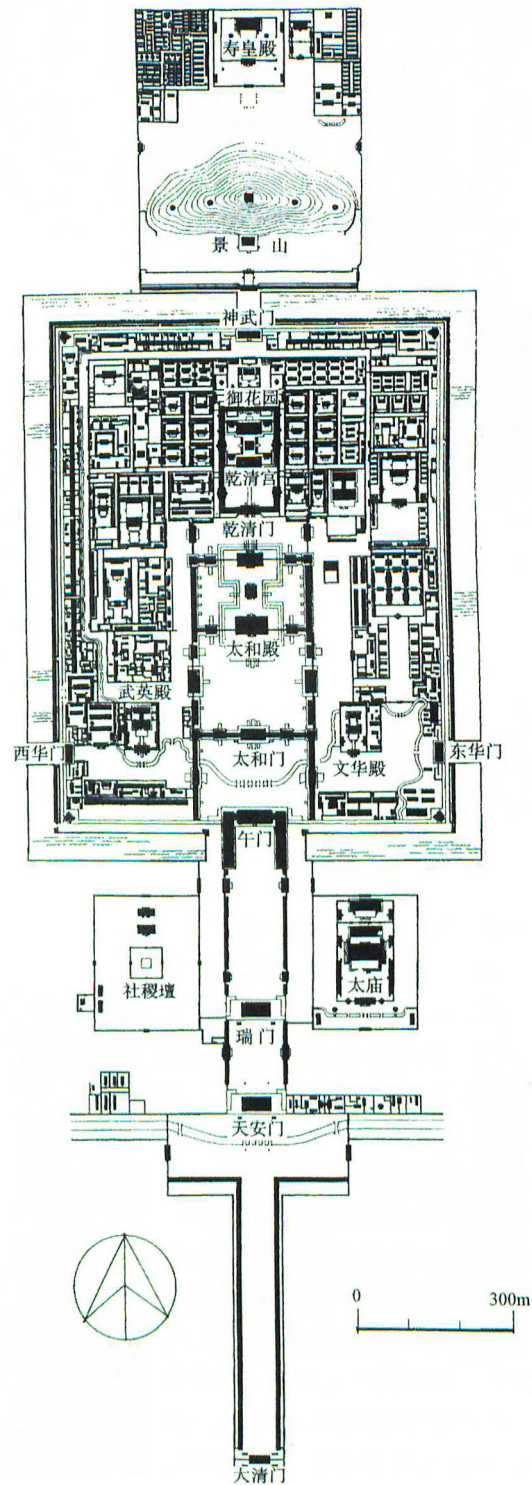


Image 2.5. "T Shaped Tiananmen Square with Forbidden City" (Source: Sun Dazhang, Ed., *History of Ancient Chinese Architecture, Vol. 5*, Beijing: Building Industry Press, 2002. 42.)



Image 2.6. The Great Hall of the People. Photo 2004.

(Source: <http://www.elizabethwanggallery.com/Great%20Hall%20of%20the%20People.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.7. Memorial To the People's Heroes. View from Mao Memorial Hall. Photo 2006 Source: (http://www.rtoddking.com/chinaspr2006_bj_ts.htm) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.8. *Crossing the Yangzi River Campaign during the Chinese Civil War (1949)* bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes. (Source: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-09/17/content_375482.htm) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.9 *Burning Opium (1839)* bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes. (Source: <http://chinauniquetour.com/html/Beijing/2010812/arts-6382.html>) Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.10 *Jiantian Uprising (1851)* bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes.
(source: <http://www.chinatravelchinesefood.com/tag/beijing-2>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.11 *Wuchang Uprising (catalyst for the 1911 revolution)* bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes.
(source: <http://www.chinatravelchinesefood.com/tag/beijing-2>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.12 *May Fourth Movement (1919)* bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes. (source: <http://www.chinatravelchinesefood.com/tag/beijing-2>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.13 *May Thirtieth Movement*(1925) bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes. (source:<http://www.chinatravelchinesefood.com/tag/beijing-2>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.14 *Nanchang Uprising* (1927) bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes. (source:<http://www.chinatravelchinesefood.com/tag/beijing-2>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.15 *Guerilla Warfare against the Japanese invasion* (1931-1945)bas-relief from the Monument of the People's Heroes. (source:<http://www.chinatravelchinesefood.com/tag/beijing-2>)Accessed April 12, 2014.



Image 2.16 Museum of Chinese History (Source: <http://www.beijing-tours.cn/beijing-museums/museum-of-the-chinese-revolution-and-museum-of-chinese-history.html>) Accessed on April 13, 2014.



Image 2.17 Photo of “the Red Guard” during the Cultural Revolution. Photo from 1967. (source: <http://pages.ramapo.edu/~theed/Cold War/d Brezhnev Era/c 1968/ff Wuhan.html>) Accessed on April 13, 2014.

