Introduction

On January 8, 1976, Premier Zhou Enlai of the People's Republic of China (PRC) died in the Beijing Hospital near historic East Chang'an Avenue.[1] On the morning of January 11, Zhou's body, in a white hearse followed by a hundred-car motorcade, was driven from the hospital to Babaoshan Crematorium near the terminus of West Chang'an Avenue. A million people lined Chang'an Avenue proper as Zhou's hearse passed by, paying final farewell to the premier.[2] That evening, Zhou's ashes were escorted back along the same route and placed in the Cultural Palace of the Working People, the former Imperial Ancestral Temple of the Ming and Qing dynasties on the north side of historic East Chang'an Avenue. Silent and respectful crowds, stretching more than twenty kilometers on either side of the avenue between Babaoshan and the Cultural Palace of the Working People, observed the return of Zhou's ashes. Thousands of people stood in chilly fog for hours along the section of the avenue near Tiananmen Square. For the next three days, Zhou's ashes were displayed in the main hall of the temple, where hundreds of thousands of people paid their last respects. Toward the evening of January 14, escorted again by a procession of one hundred vehicles, Zhou's ashes were borne along and then across the avenue to the Great Hall of the People, the largest and most important of the Ten Great Buildings constructed for the tenth anniversary of the People's Republic of China in 1959. There, public homage continued. An official memorial service was held on January 16, and after that, the ashes were moved once more along Chang'an Avenue to the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery.[3]

Three months later, on the eve of the Qingming Festival, a traditional Chinese memorial day for paying homage to deceased ancestors, thousands of people gathered spontaneously around the Monument to the People's Heroes in Tiananmen Square to the south of Chang'an Avenue to pay homage once again to the deceased premier. They brought wreaths and banners and turned the monument into an unauthorized memorial for Zhou and a beachhead for criticism of those currently in power. The next morning, after discovering that their tributes had been removed by the police, people began protesting in the square and along the avenue. The confron-

tation between hundreds of thousands of citizens and the police lasted for hours, and those who refused to leave the square after an official warning were arrested by security forces.[4] This event was repeated more traumatically and on a larger scale thirteen years later, in the spring of 1989, following the death of the deposed Chinese Communist Party (CCP) general secretary Hu Yaobang.

Chang'an Avenue once again became a site for national political events in the autumn of 1976 when Mao Zedong's death was quickly followed by the fall of the radical cultural revolutionary leadership faction known as the Gang of Four. On October 24 the avenue became a river of red flags. In a carefully orchestrated event, a million people gathered in Tiananmen Square and paraded along the avenue, celebrating the downfall of the Gang of Four and the victory of Hua Guofeng, who became at the same time chairman of the CCP Central Committee, premier of the State Council, and chairman of the Central Military Commission.[5] On the rostrum of Tiananmen Tower, Hua and other leaders of the nation and the Communist Party gazed down, waving and smiling. As the leaders on the rostrum and the masses in the square stood and watched, an endless succession of marchers and performers paraded past, in an effort to demonstrate the diversity and unity of the country, as well as its glorious past and bright future. Yet again, the dynamic stage for the celebration was Chang'an Avenue.

What happened along Chang'an Avenue in 1976 was just one link in a long chain of celebrations, confrontations, and mourning activities along this twentieth-century thoroughfare in Beijing. Carefully orchestrated state rituals punctuated by spontaneous, emotional popular eruptions have characterized the cultural and political history of the avenue. The urban and architectural spaces along Chang'an Avenue not only offered stages for these important cultural and political events but also became one of the defining factors of modern Chinese history.

A Symbol of the Chinese Modernization Process

Chang'an Avenue is an urban thoroughfare sandwiched between an imperial Forbidden City and a Communist Tiananmen Square. Its development from the late Qing dynasty (1644–1911) to the end of the twentieth century contributed to the most dramatic urban change in modern Beijing. As the most significant urban space in twentieth-century China, and the new east-west axis of the Chinese capital, Chang'an Avenue is ideal for exploring the process of the modernization of Chinese architecture through the analysis of changes in architectural styles, shifts in art ideology, organizational approaches to artistic creation, the mechanism of political interference, and the impact of globalization. As with the avenue, Chinese architectural modernization was framed in a way that could never be fully achieved. In the discourse of

modern Chinese architecture, the very definition of "modernity" changed constantly, following the latest trends in contemporary world architecture. Similarly, each period claimed to "basically complete" the avenue according to its own ideal of modernization, yet each such "completion" left new "gaps," physical as well as symbolic, for future "completions" to fill. Chang'an Avenue thus became a symbol of this unachievable modernization.

Scholars such as Joseph Esherick and Clifford Geertz have pointed out that, for Asian and African nations, the imperial powers of the West have been both the definer of "modernity"—the mark of progress—and the target to struggle against for their place in the world.[6] This, however, does not mean that the traffic of modernity was one-way. What the Chinese perceived of as "modern" was highly selective, and modernity in the West was far from uniform. The Chinese version of architectural modernity is a way to form a historical continuity, in spite of seemingly abrupt changes in architectural technology, forms, and ideology. Unlike discourses on Western architecture, in which "modern" could be used in the past tense, in the discourse of twentieth-century Chinese architecture, "modern" was almost always used in a future tense. The Chinese almost exclusively use "modernization" (*xiandaihua*) instead of "modern" (*xiandai*) when discussing the present issue of how to deal with "tradition."

Two fundamental facts make Chang'an Avenue a perfect symbol for the Chinese modernization process. First, a unified Chang'an Avenue was born right after the fall of the millennia-long imperial order. Second, its growth and expansion into the east-west axis of the Chinese capital was driven by functional desire. The symbol of political power in twentieth-century China is Tiananmen Square, which Chang'an Avenue serves, both symbolically and literally. To allow more people into Tiananmen Square for public celebrations, the avenue was widened; to create a better link between the heart and the outskirts of the city, the avenue was extended; and to facilitate the organization of mass parades that would be visible to the political leaders on the Tiananmen rostrum, the intersections along the avenue were carefully planned. In this sense, Tiananmen Square is the master, the highlight, the positive, the yang; Chang'an Avenue is the servant, the background, the negative, the yin.

In daily life and during public celebrations, however, Chang'an Avenue is a space for movement, while Tiananmen Square is static. Armies and mass contingents march in formation along Chang'an Avenue on National Day, while crowds standing in Tiananmen Square form background patterns with colorful banners. In this sense, the avenue is the main stage, the active, the positive, the yang; the square becomes the backdrop, the static, the negative, the yin. In later developments, Chang'an Avenue overshadowed not only the square but also the imperial north-south axis on which the square is located. For more than half a millennium, the north-south axis along the

Forbidden City dominated the city and separated the avenue into two disconnected halves; after the revolution, Chang'an Avenue cut through the imperial north-south axis at its heart. To the north was the historic Imperial City and Forbidden City; to the south, the Communist Tiananmen Square was constructed.

Modernism, especially in its avant-garde form that is hostile to tradition,[7] cultivated a sense of historical awareness and legitimized its historicity on the basis of chronic uniqueness. On one hand, the present should be different from the past; on the other, the future should be different from the present. The present was singled out by the cult of the "new."[8] Modernity is the center, extending in both directions, into past and future. At the intersection of modernity and tradition, and extending into infinity in both directions, Chang'an Avenue was a perfect metaphor for this linear characterization of the chronology of modernity. While modernity sliced through the ideological boundary between past and present, Chang'an Avenue did this physically.

There are other definitions of modernity in architecture, both formal and value based.[9] What makes modernity a specific historical phenomenon, however, is the awareness of one's historicity. Modernity creates a boundary between past and present. Being modern is not a natural chronological extension of the past, but a self-conscious breaking away from it. The past is comprehensively defined as "tradition." Both the modern and the traditional are products of modernity. In the discourse of twentieth-century Chinese architecture, "modern" was also discussed as a contrast to "national." A satisfying architectural product should be a balance of both "national" and "modern." While "national" (*minzude*) was a positive term and belonged to the present, "traditional" (*chuantongde*) was a neutral term and belonged to the past. As Mao once stated, essence and dross existed in both Chinese and foreign traditions.[10] The difference between "national" and "traditional," however, was never really defined. By confronting both, Chinese modernity imperceptibly blurred the boundary it had previously created between past and present.

An Independent Unit for Academic Inquiry

Arguably the most famous boulevard in China, known as the "Number One Avenue in the Divine Land,"[11] Chang'an Avenue deserves an academic inquiry in its own right. It has expanded both in length and width since the collapse of the Qing Empire, and became the new east-west axis of the socialist capital by the end of the twentieth century. The avenue, together with Tiananmen Square, its most renowned portion, is the largest public space for political ceremonies in China and the place where many of the most important historical events of postimperial China (1912–present) were

staged. During the Republican era (1912–49), Chang'an Avenue was the main theater for political protests against those in power.[12] During the PRC era (1949–present), however, it mainly became the stage on which the Communist authorities displayed power and propagated new national mythologies, especially during PRC anniversary celebrations on October 1.[13]

Chang'an Avenue, lined with a continuously expanding series of government buildings and projects of major political significance, was also the primary national showcase of socialist achievements after 1949. Since most national ceremonies during the PRC era were staged along this thoroughfare, the façades of the avenue became the architectural images most closely associated with the way China was perceived abroad and the way the "motherland" was thought of by different ethnic groups in China. As a result, Chang'an Avenue became a prototype for urban planning and a catalyst for the transformation of major Chinese cities. The development of the avenue into a new east-west axis for the Chinese capital provided a model, a revolutionary gesture in urban planning, a breaking away from the identity of the imperial periods. Other Chinese cities followed Beijing, developing main avenues for public ceremonies that cut through historic urban centers and lined up central squares and major monuments.

As the nation's most important public space, both practically and symbolically, Chang'an Avenue was endowed with political significance, received paramount attention from the Chinese architectural profession, and became a prototype that influenced architecture and urban planning in cities throughout China. In the economic sphere, locations closer to the avenue are more privileged than other spots on the same longitude. Many real estate companies include a map of their properties in their advertisements, using Chang'an Avenue as a reference point. Being in the vicinity of the avenue is a major advantage in the current real estate market.

As a unit for academic inquiry, Chang'an Avenue offers a link between urban study and architectural history. While the discipline of urban history studies entire cities, architectural history studies individual buildings. The former largely focuses on the evolution of the macroscopic structure of a city, and, as a result, elicits only a blurred picture of the particular details of how urban fabrics change. In contrast, the latter, with its focus mainly on separate structures, achieves only a fragmentary understanding of how these contribute to overall change in urban space.

In an effort to overcome this dilemma, scholarly attention was recently given to the street as a link between the macroscopic history of a city and the microscopic history of individual buildings. Some of the issues raised in these studies are directly relevant to Chang'an Avenue in twentieth-century China, for instance, Spiro Kostof's analysis of the Haussmannian or Mussolinic "aesthetics of demolition" and the asso-

ciation of "urban conservation" with nationalism,[14] Greg Castillo's discussion of socialist realist aesthetics as reflected in the reconstruction of Moscow's Gorki Street in the 1930s,[15] and Zeynep Celik's treatment of the street as a space for ritual and ideological engagement.[16] Limited in their length and detail, these articles on urban streets are confined to the change of large-scale urban fabric and lack specific discussions of individual structures.

This book, on the other hand, is solely dedicated to Chang'an Avenue, the only thoroughfare in Beijing that runs through the entire city, and whose development has contributed most to the urban transformation of the Chinese capital in the twentieth century. The avenue also offers the largest and most concentrated collection of significant architectural projects in the People's Republic of China. Examining changes in the urban fabric more closely and selecting some monuments as highlights for in-depth discussion will reveal how the construction of individual buildings contributes to the bigger picture. The approach here lies between the traditional disciplines of urban history and architectural history. By focusing on Chang'an Avenue, a thoroughfare of monuments connecting different parts of a city, this study aims to construct a "tectonic joint" for these two disciplines and to promote better understanding in both fields.

The Chang'an Avenue case also provides an opportunity to create a link between cultural history and architectural history. The study of Beijing has been focused on two approaches. One emphasizes the cultural and political significance of urban space and the evolution of architectural symbolism; the other emphasizes specific professional strategies or methods in the urban development of the capital city. The former treats architecture and urbanism as part of cultural and political history; the latter treats the city and its built environment mainly as a design problem and as the history of various solutions that have been offered. The debates surrounding every significant national monument on Chang'an Avenue make it a perfect candidate for a cultural study of architecture. Historical contextualization in the study of specific objects will be a useful tool in the excavation of different layers of meaning of the avenue's architecture.

While cultural studies of imperial Beijing offer a sociopolitical framework,[17] new research on Republican Beijing lays the foundation for understanding the city's urban environment before the dramatic transformation during the socialist period. Delineating the city's responses to various sociopolitical changes in the first half of the twentieth century, these studies reveal that Republican Beijing was a mixture of old and new,[18] and that "old Beijing" prior to "liberation" was not as old and traditional[19] as discussions during the PRC era assumed. Some publications in Chinese provide indispensable historical details on changes in city life and urban spaces before 1949.[20]

Scholarship on PRC era urban culture focuses on Tiananmen Square as a symbol of political transformation.[21] Wu Hung's study of the political history of Tiananmen Square monuments explores how architecture and urban space acquired meanings and how the meanings changed due to the changing cultural political contexts.[22] Studies on the post-Mao era (1976–present) explore the impact of increased commercialization on urban life and spatial organization.[23]

Rich in historical details about changes in Beijing's urban life and material culture, these studies mainly treat architecture and urban development as footnotes for cultural and political history. The built environment of Beijing serves mostly as a neutral backdrop for historical dramas, both grand events and ordinary lives, rather than as an active participant in them. Although it advances our understanding of the symbolic meaning of urban space in modern Chinese political life, scholarship on PRC Beijing frequently equates the creation of a political space to the representation of Mao's will. However, regardless of the original intentions of the authors, scholarship on the pre-Communist city helps to romanticize "old Beijing."[24] Most of this scholarship has ignored the voices of architects and city planners. The Communist urban strategy was often quickly condemned as a failure of CCP leaders' personal tastes or as their blind enthusiasm for the Soviet model,[25] and the urban plans produced during the PRC era have seldom been seriously studied.

A cultural historical approach to architectural history does not treat architecture simply as architectural sociology. Arnold Hauser is to some extent correct when he says that art has its own specific problems to solve beyond its social commitments.[26] Heinrich Woelfflin's tradition of stylistic analysis, Friedrich Hegel's *Zeitgeist*, and Alois Riegl's concept of *Kunstwollen* are useful tools as long as they are not treated in a teleological sense to claim the universality of aesthetic values. Although there is no gender-neutral or universal art-historical knowledge, there are standards for art and architecture in a given time and society that are the targets of artists, both as ideals to reach and as conventions to break. It is precisely the relative independence of art and architecture from politics and ideology that makes it possible to look to their relationships for a better understanding of a culture.

Scholarship dealing directly with twentieth-century Chinese architecture has provided some basic information on specific development strategies and on changes in the built environment in Beijing. Some offer basic facts about and brief introductions to the significant architectural projects of the first fifty years of the PRC era, as well as outlines of the political backgrounds and architectural policies during different periods.[27] Others record key moments in the history of Beijing city planning and contain the major drawings of each successive design.[28] A leading figure in both design practice and academic study in Chinese urban planning, Wu Liangyong focuses on

specific development strategies, especially in dealing with the historical city of Beijing, a theory he calls "organic renewal."[29] These studies, written mostly by practicing architects and urban planners, are important for the rich professional detail and broad reference coverage they provide. However, focusing on physical structure and operating within a framework for which the built environment remains mostly a design problem leave little space for critical historical exploration and cultural political analysis.

This book offers a cultural and political history of Chang'an Avenue through detailed analysis of individual buildings and of specific design problems in planning. Chang'an Avenue is the creation of architects as well as politicians, of city planners as well as profit seekers. Politics clearly played a central role in the development of the avenue and in the urban transformation of Beijing. However, political instructions and government-generated cultural guidelines have to go through architects and engineers to be implemented. For a balanced picture of socialist Beijing, it is important to integrate the Chinese Communist Party's political agenda as part of the architectural discourse and not treat architects' debates as merely a footnote to Mao's casual comments.

Modernism, Modernity, and Modernization

The issue of modernity is the theoretical core of this book. Modernity is used here to refer to the defining character of a modern culture in a broad cultural-political sense. Being modern means having a constant awareness of tradition as opposed to "modern" and a belief in the progressive nature of future development. Chinese modernity in the twentieth century is an ever-updating project, a self-conscious replacement of "modern" with "modernization" to create an unself-conscious historical continuity, as evinced in the endless attempts to complete Chang'an Avenue.

Modernism as a mainstream architectural style has recently been criticized. Some argue that architectural modernism is an artificial construction of a group of architects, historians, and critics that eliminates all other practices from their self-promoting historical narration.[30] Others propose replacing the concept of "modernism as a paradigm of style" with "discourse of modernism" as a methodological model to resolve the analytical problems and incoherencies in current discussion of twentieth-century architecture.[31] Such a replacement shifts modernism from a style to an ethically grounded material practice. If the concepts of modernism versus traditionalism or modernism versus regionalism are false polarizations in the West, the transplantation of these concepts to China is more problematic. Thus "modernism" as used in

this book is also only of discursive value. It offers a common ground for Chinese architectural modernity to take shape and a rhetorical base for ever-updating modernization to take place.

New scholarship on Beijing and modern Chinese architecture focuses on the issue of modernity. An analysis of imperial Beijing within a cross-cultural theoretical framework of power and subjectivity sheds new lights on the north-south axis of the ancient capital.[32] The application of tradition versus modernization, or essence versus form, makes it possible to create a master narrative on modern Chinese architecture, simultaneously entailing more critical evaluation.[33] Case studies with different analytical approaches contextualize modern Chinese architectural practice within a global theoretical and practical framework and explore an alternative modernity to the Western model.[34] Studies on the contemporary built environment in China highlight the uniqueness of the Chinese architectural modernity, such as the work unit as an urban form.[35]

Modernity in Chinese architecture has other unique features in comparison with its Western counterparts. For instance, significant architectural works have been created collectively since 1949 and often bear no individual creators' names. As Henri Lefebvre has pointed out, the boundaries between social product and artistic work are not always clear, and an artistic work does not have to be associated with the uniqueness of individual creation.[36] While the Chinese socialist stance is quite akin to some of the avant-garde movements in early twentieth-century Europe, the latter were criticized at the time as bourgeois. This is not the only contradiction and inconsistency in the discourse on Chinese architectural modernity, which will be revealed through a deconstructionist[37] reading of materials—buildings, drawings, and archival documents—generated by the historical entity known as "modern China."

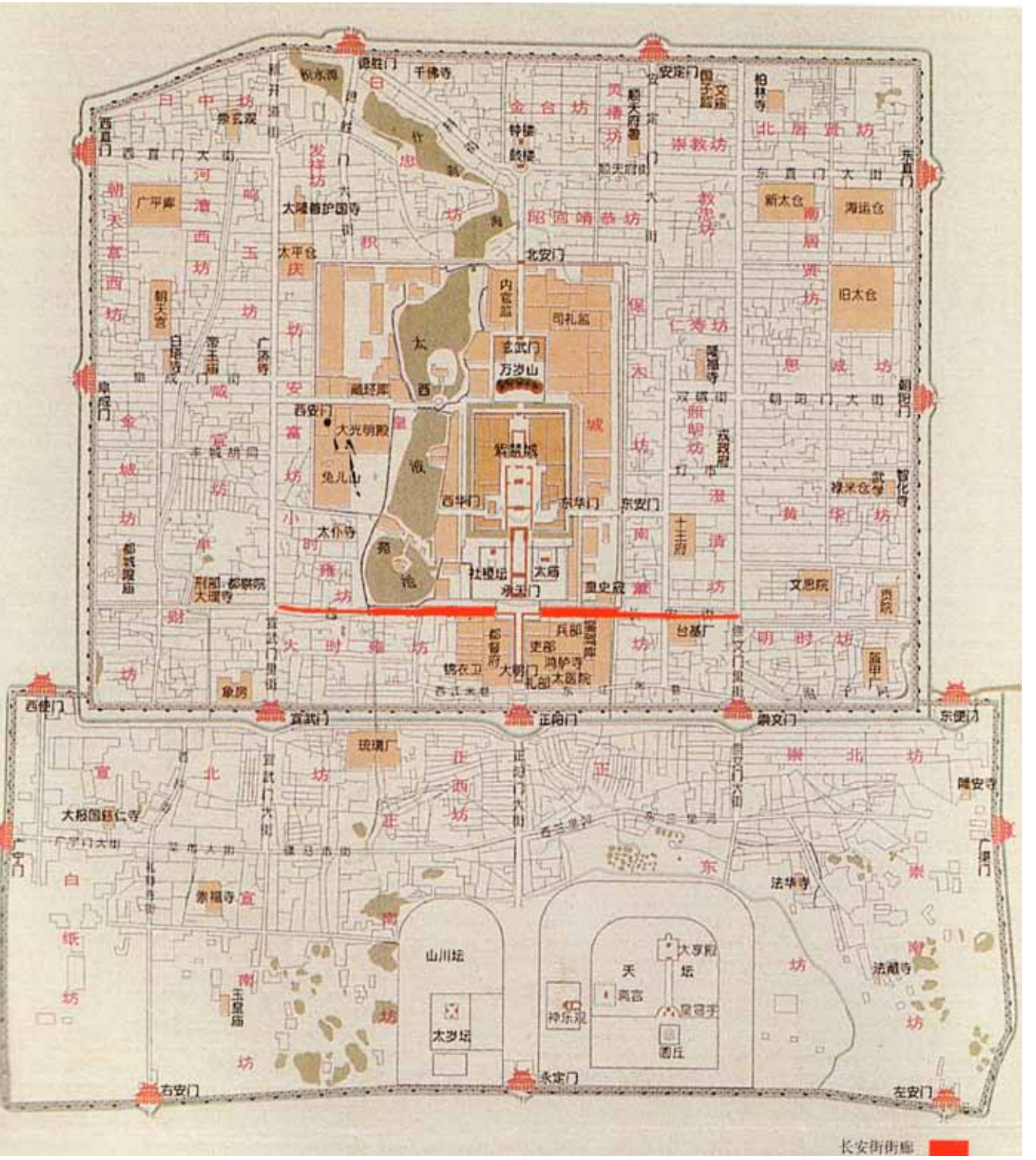
The modern China is ever changing. So are the spaces and activities along Chang'an Avenue. While the revival of the north-south axis accompanying the fanfare of the 2008 Beijing Olympics distracted some attention from Chang'an Avenue, the recent installation and removal of the Confucius statue[38] in front of the National Museum to the south of the avenue signaled the continuing struggle over the control of public space. The history of Chang'an Avenue and the modernization project in Chinese architecture that it represents provide a physical and conceptual framework for understanding of these events.

The History of Chang'an Avenue in an Urban Context

"Chang'an" means "eternal peace," or "long peace" in a more literal translation, but the word will immediately remind the Chinese of two of their most powerful dynasties: the Han (202 BCE–220 CE), from which the Chinese ethnic majority acquired its name (Hanren), and the Tang (618–907 CE), from which the overseas Chinese communities derived their collective identity (Tangrenjie).[1] Both the Western Han Empire (202 BCE–9 CE) and the Tang Empire had the city of Chang'an (modern day Xi'an) as their capital, and both dynasties represent past golden ages of Chinese political power. Thus the roots of the name Chang'an Avenue stretch far into China's imperial past.

Chang'an Avenue during the Imperial Era

"Chang'an" was first used as the name for the major avenue in front of the Imperial City in the early Ming dynasty (1368–1644), during the first fifty-three years of which Nanjing was the national capital. Located on the north bank of the Yangtze River some 1,000 kilometers south of Beijing, Nanjing had served as the imperial capital for many southern regimes before the Ming: Wu (229–80), Eastern Jin (317–420), Song (420–79), Qi (479–502), Liang (502–57), Chen (557–89), and Southern Tang (937–75). None of these regimes unified China. Compared to the powerful and prosperous Han and Tang, with Chang'an as their capital, these dynasties were politically weaker, territorially smaller, and short-lived. When the first Ming emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang (the Hongwu emperor, r. 1368–98), finally chose Nanjing as the main capital of his unified Chinese empire, he was concerned about inauspicious associations with these previous ephemeral dynasties. Therefore the new walled quarters for palaces and central government—also known as the Palace City (Gongcheng) and the Imperial City (Huangcheng), respectively, as later in Beijing—were constructed at the southeast corner of Nanjing to avoid overlapping with the palace sites of former regimes.[2] This might also be why the major street in front of the Imperial City was then named Chang'an Avenue, in hopes of a "long peace" and to create auspicious associations with the long-lasting and glorious Han and Tang dynasties.


长安街街廓

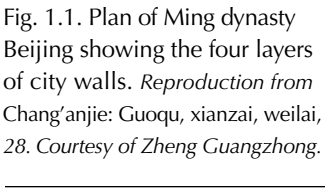


Fig. 1.1. Plan of Ming dynasty Beijing showing the four layers of city walls. *Reproduction from* Chang'anjie: Guoqu, xianzai, weilai, *28. Courtesy of Zheng Guangzhong.*

In 1416 the third Ming emperor, Zhu Di (the Yongle emperor), decided to move the capital to Beijing, the site of the previous Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) capital Dadu (Great Capital). Construction of the new capital started in 1417 and was completed in 1420. Although the new Ming capital partially overlapped with the Yuan Dadu and followed its north-south axis, the layout of Ming Beijing replicated the dynasty's capital Nanjing, including use of the name Chang'an Avenue for the streets in front of the Imperial City. The Beijing of 1420 had three layers of city walls: the Inner City (Neicheng) with nine gates,[3] the Imperial City inside the Inner City with four gates,[4] and the Palace or Forbidden City inside the Imperial City with four gates.[5] In 1553 walls were constructed to the south of the Inner City to define an Outer City (Waicheng),[6] adding a fourth layer of walls with seven gates[7] to Ming Beijing. The entire city was dominated by a 7,500-meter-long north-south axis. Running from Yongding Gate (Gate of Permanent Stability) at the south end of the city to the bell tower in the far north, it lined up not only the main gates of the Outer City, Inner City, Imperial City, and Palace City but also other major imperial monuments.[8] This layout persisted for centuries (fig. 1.1). The Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty, which followed the Ming in 1644, made no major physical changes to the general plan of Ming Beijing or to Chang'an Avenue.

Apart from its central location, Chang'an Avenue during the Ming and Qing dynasties was no different from the other major thoroughfares in Beijing. At that time, however, two separate avenues existed, divided by the Imperial Tiananmen Square.[9] On the western side of the square, from West Three-Arch Gate (Xisanzuomen) to Xidan (named after Xidanpailou, West Single Memorial Archway) lay the historic West Chang'an Avenue. On the eastern side of the square, historic East Chang'an Avenue ran from East Three-Arch Gate (Dongsanzuomen) to Dongdan (named after Dongdanpailou, East Single Memorial Archway).[10]

Imperial Tiananmen Square itself consisted of three squares (fig. 1.2). In the center was the T-shaped space directly in front of Tiananmen Tower, bounded by Tiananmen (Heavenly Peace Gate) in the north, Great Qing Gate (Daqingmen)[11] in the south, Left Chang'an Gate (Chang'anzuomen) in the east, and Right Chang'an Gate (Chang'anyoumen) in the west. Two smaller wing squares separated central Tiananmen Square from the two avenues: the east wing square, between Left Chang'an Gate and East Three-Arch Gate, and the west wing square, bounded by Right Chang'an Gate and West Three-Arch Gate. Walls enclosed all three squares. Imperial Tiananmen Square, together with the Imperial City behind it, blocked more than two-thirds of the east-west communications in the Inner City of Beijing.

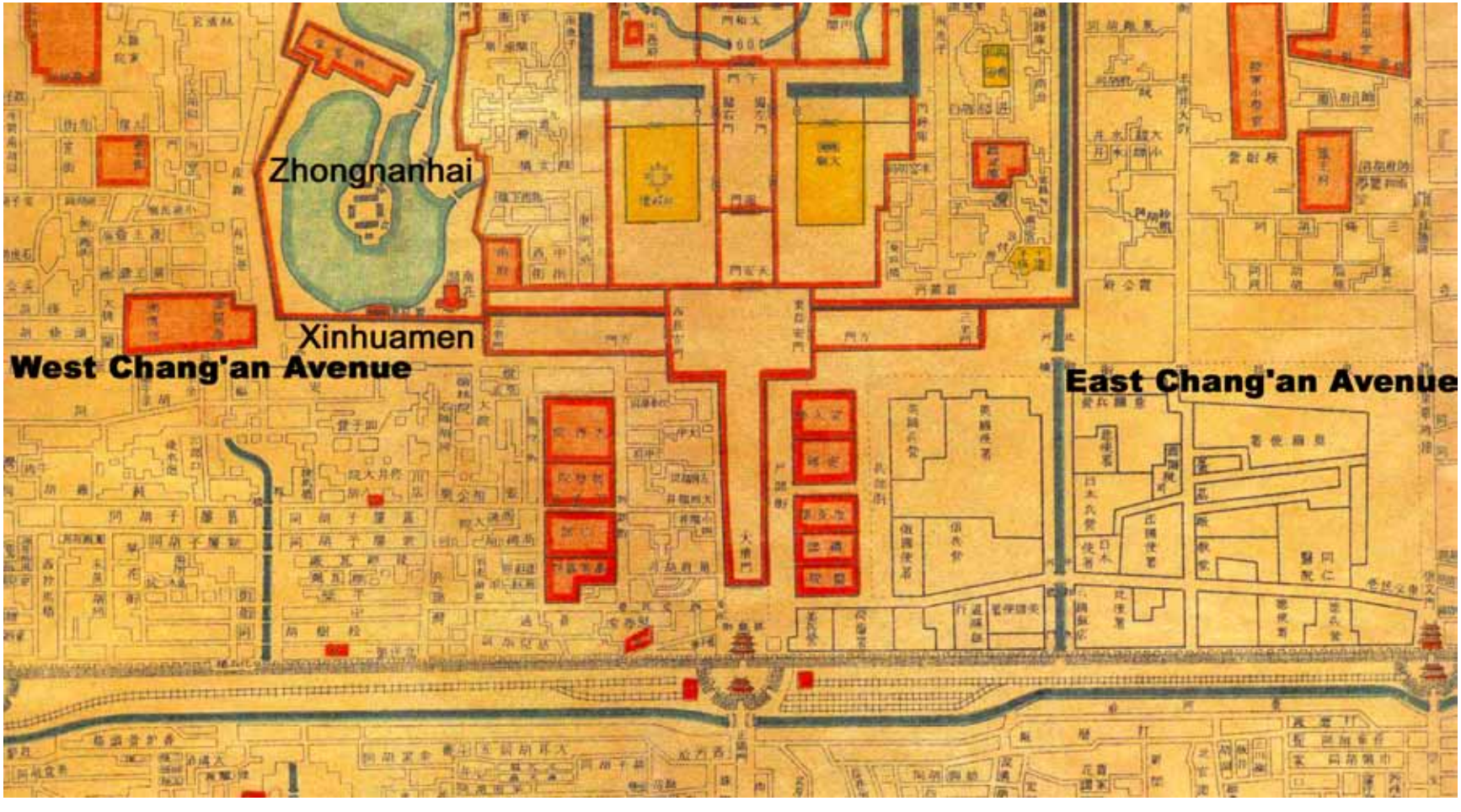

Zhongnanhai
Xinhuamen
West Chang'an Avenue
East Chang'an Avenue

Fig. 1.2

Fig. 1.2. Tiananmen Square, East Chang'an Avenue, and West Chang'an Avenue during the late Qing dynasty, detail of *Xiangxi Dijing Yutu* [Detailed map of the imperial capital], a map of Beijing published in 1908. *Map in the public domain.*

Historic East and West Chang'an Avenues had different functions and symbolic meanings in imperial China. According to the Daoist "five elements" (*wuxing*) theory, east belongs to the element of wood and is associated with spring, growth, and life, while west belongs to the element of metal and is associated with autumn, decay, and death. While historic West Chang'an Avenue was mainly associated with punishment, military power, and authority, its eastern counterpart was more associated with business, civil power, and celebration. On the west side of the Thousand-Pace Corridor (Qianbulang)—the southern part of T-shaped Imperial Tiananmen Square—next to historic West Chang'an Avenue, the Ming dynasty built the headquarters of the Five Armies and the Jinyiwei (secret police force), and the Qing dynasty built the Ministry of Punishment (Xingbu), Imperial Procuratorate (Duchayuan), and the Imperial Prison (Qintianjian). On the east side, next to historic East Chang'an Avenue, both the Ming and Qing dynasties built the Ministry of Rites (Libu), the Ministry of Revenue (Hubu), the Ministry of Civil Office (Libu), the Ministry of Public Works (Gongbu), and the Imperial Hanlin Academy (Hanlinyuan).[12]

Every three years, an imperial announcement written on yellow silk with the names of those who had passed the imperial examination was carried out through Left Chang'an Gate and posted in today's East Chang'an Avenue; and every autumn, convicts awaiting execution were led through Right Chang'an Gate and knelt along the west side of Imperial Tiananmen Square for their final trial and sentence. From these events, popular names for the gates evolved. Left Chang'an Gate was known as the Dragon Gate (Longmen), or Gate of Success, while Right Chang'an Gate was called Tiger Gate (Humen), or Gate of Peril.[13]

The civil-military dichotomy that divided East Chang'an Avenue from its western counterpart was further strengthened by Beijing citizens' different opinions about the areas east and west of the north-south axis in general. The saying in Beijing that "the east is rich and the west is aristocratic; the south is humble and the north is poor" suggests that most of the merchants lived in the east city, while most of the princes, dukes, and other Manchu aristocrats lived in the west city, and that many inhabitants of the south city were from the lower classes, while those in the north were poor Manchus.[14]

After the Second Opium War in 1860, part of the area south of historic East Chang'an Avenue became foreign concessions of Western powers. After the Boxer Rebellion in 1901, the entire area between today's East Chang'an Avenue proper and the southern wall of the Inner City became foreign concessions.[15] Thus East Chang'an

Avenue also became associated with diplomacy, Western influence, the larger world, and, later, with Western imperialism and China's past humiliations.

Chang'an Avenue during the Republican Era (1912–1949)

After the Qing Empire collapsed in 1911, the two Chang'an Avenues were gradually unified. The unification and spatial reconfiguration of the avenue during the Republican era, however, were less about change in the physical environment than about the way urban space was used. In other words, the changes were more symbolic than physical, more about "software" than "hardware." Throughout the Republican era, new facilities, such as electric street lamps and tramlines, were added to the avenue, but its length and width remained unchanged from imperial times.

In 1912 Beihai, the northern part of the former imperial garden west of the Forbidden City, opened to the public, while the central and southern parts, located north of Chang'an Avenue and known as Zhongnanhai, became the presidential palace. A new south entrance to Zhongnanhai, called Xinhua Gate, Gate of New China, was opened onto the avenue. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, this structure had been a freestanding two-story pavilion just inside the imperial garden's south wall. At that time, it was known as Baoyuelou, the Tower of the Precious Moon. The Republican regime changed this freestanding structure into a gate by opening the ground floor and modifying the garden walls (fig. 1.3), which are now connected to the sides of the structure instead of screening the front of it.[16]

On January 1, 1913, the first anniversary of the Republic of China, the government under Yuan Shikai removed the doors in the East and West Three-Arch Gates and the Right and Left Chang'an Gates and demolished the walls connecting these gates.[17] This created a passageway that connected the two avenues for the first time, and common Beijing citizens were now able to walk from one directly to the other.[18] However, two separate streets still existed, along with the four gate towers marking the borders between Imperial Tiananmen Square and the historic Chang'an Avenues.

In October 1914, the former Altar of Soil and Grain (Shejitan) opened to the public as the "Central Park" of Beijing. During imperial times, the altar was a sacred place, where the emperors performed annual duties of sacrifice to the gods of soil (*she*) and grains (*ji*). The tradition of constructing an Altar of Soil and Grain in the imperial capital as a national symbol and legitimizing device for the mandate of the emperor as the "Son of Heaven" can be traced as far back as the Zhou dynasty (1046–256 BCE).[19] During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Altar of Soil and Grain, together with the Imperial Ancestral Temple (Taimiao) on the other side of the north-south

Fig. 1.3. Gate of New China (Xinhuamen), built in 1758 as Baoyuelou, opened as a gate in 1912. *Photograph by author.*

axis, was closed to common Beijing citizens. The Imperial Ancestral Temple remained a private preserve of the former Qing imperial family well into the 1920s. After the founding of the Republic of China in 1912, however, both sites were gradually opened to the public.

Before the Republican capital was moved to Nanjing in 1927, the main person in charge of these urban changes in Beijing was Zhu Qiqian. Born to a family that had close connections with many powerful Qing officials, Zhu first became minister of communications, then minister of interior in 1912 during Yuan Shikai's presidency.[20] In addition to unifying Chang'an Avenue and converting the Altar of Soil and Grain into a public park, Zhu also supervised the Zhengyang Gate renovation project and many road and railway construction projects in Beijing.[21]

The transformation of Chang'an Avenue in the early years of the Republican era was characterized by the adaptation of former imperial urban spaces for civic use and the protection of the Old City's original urban texture. Imperial structures inside the former Altar of Soil and Grain were carefully preserved and rebuilt for public enjoyment. Preservation efforts extended even to the old cypress trees planted at the begin-

ning of the Ming dynasty, when the altar was first built. Ten years after the Central Park project, Zhu lamented,

> The nice trees in the former forbidden areas are lush, green, and undamaged after all of these revolutionary changes, and we can still rest under them after hundreds of years. Seeing these trees again, the vicissitudes of an old nation and the rise and fall of regimes become vivid, which makes me sad and full of emotions. Today, the task of reconstruction and preservation does not belong only to the government, but also to the people. Indeed, the garden of old trees has much in common with the spirit of self-discipline. I sincerely hope that our countrymen will love and protect them and will not let our descendants sigh and reproach us [because we didn't care for these cultural relics].[22]

The former imperial monuments, with their forbidden spaces, suddenly became the cultural heritage of the people and the embodiment of national spirit. Physical changes were minimal. All that was needed was a change of name and function. In 1925, when Sun Yat-sen died in Beijing, his body was temporarily placed in the main sacrifice hall of the former Altar of Soil and Grain. In 1928 Chiang Kai-shek defeated the Beiyang warlords and relocated the Nationalist capital to Nanjing. Beijing was renamed Beiping (because the *jing* in Beijing means "capital"), and Central Park was renamed Zhongshan Park in honor of Sun.[23]

After the revolution in 1911, the last Qing emperor, Puyi, was allowed to continue to live in imperial style in the Forbidden City. As the place where the remnant Qing court continued to make ritual sacrifices to its ancestors, the Imperial Ancestral Temple remained part of the palace holdings. In 1924, after general Feng Yuxiang evicted Puyi from the palace, the Forbidden City became the Palace Museum, and the former Imperial Ancestral Temple was opened as the Peace Park.[24] In 1928 the park was closed and the halls of the former temple became part of the Palace Museum.[25]

While major structures on Chang'an Avenue did not experience much physical change after the fall of the Qing Empire, monuments symbolizing China's former humiliation by Western powers did. In 1900, Western countries with concessions on East Chang'an Avenue moved troops into Beijing to protect their citizens during the Boxer Rebellion. This, in turn, placed considerable military pressure on the Qing court. On June 20, 1900, German ambassador Clemens von Ketteler was killed by a Manchu military officer at Dongdan, near the eastern end of historic Chang'an Avenue. This incident was followed by the invasion of China by an international force composed mainly of troops from Japan, Russia, Britain, the United States, and France. After the suppression of the Boxers, as part of the indemnities imposed on China by

the Western powers, a three-bay marble memorial archway called the Ketteler-Denkmal was erected at the location where the ambassador died. An apology from Emperor Guangxu was inscribed in a horizontal board over the central bay of the gate in English, French, Latin, and Chinese, a source of a galling shame and humiliation to many Chinese. After the defeat of Germany in World War I, the Ketteler-Denkmal was dismantled and in 1919 was reconstructed in Central Park on the other side of Chang'an Avenue and renamed Memorial Archway for the Victory of Justice (Gongli Zhansheng Fang).[26] Germany's defeat in World War I had given China an ephemeral hope of national revival and the end of foreign humiliation.

Another major change was the incorporation of modern technology. In 1924 tram rails were laid along the avenue. During the period from 1924 to 1948, three parallel tramlines, Lines One, Three, and Five, ran between Tiananmen Tower and Tiananmen Square.[27] This modern technology cut across the 7,500-meter-long imperial north-south axis at its very center.[28]

In the 1941 Beiping[29] urban plan, prepared during the period of Japanese occupation (1937–45), new residential areas in the western and industrial districts of the eastern suburbs were envisioned on either side of the Old City, and Chang'an Avenue was planned as the major connection between them.[30] Although the avenue was not yet physically extended, between 1937 and 1939 openings were made in the city walls where the future extension of the avenue would meet the borders of the Inner City. The western opening was called Chang'an Gate (today Fuxing Gate, or Gate of Revitalization), and the eastern opening was called Qingming Gate (today Jianguo Gate, or Gate of National Construction).[31] After the Japanese surrendered, the Nationalist government hired Japanese technical personnel to prepare a new general plan for Beijing in 1946. The resulting plan was not very different from the 1941 Japanese plan, and no major physical change was made to the avenue (see fig. 6.10).[32]

Chang'an Avenue remained short, divided, fragmented, and not perfectly straight throughout the Republican era. The avenue turned several times between Xidan and Dongdan. Although no longer impassable at Imperial Tiananmen Square, the eastern and western parts of the avenue were still spatially separated by the four intervening gate towers. In fact, four sections of the street, with different names, were referred to in general as Chang'an Avenue. The section in front of Zhongnanhai was called Fuqian Street, and the section between Tiananmen Square and Nanheyan was called East Three-Arch Gate Street. Historic West Chang'an Avenue referred only to the approximately 800-meter-long section between Xidan and Fuyou Street, and historic East Chang'an Avenue was only about a kilometer in length between Nanheyan and Dongdan. The two historic Chang'an Avenues were more than two kilometers apart.[33]

Physical Expansion after 1949

The physical unification and expansion of Chang'an Avenue did not occur until after the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). On October 1, 1949, when Mao Zedong stood on the rostrum of Tiananmen and proclaimed the founding of a New China, the space he looked out over was not very different from imperial times, except that it was now filled with people and flags. The parade of military formations along the avenue still had to pass through arches in the gate towers and temporarily disappear from his sight. Flags had to be tilted in order to fit under the arches. As Tiananmen Square became the main political public space of New China, and as national and revolutionary ceremonies proceeded with increasing frequency along the avenue, reconstruction of the thoroughfare became inevitable.

As mentioned earlier, the four sections of historic Chang'an Avenue—historic West Chang'an Avenue, Fuqian Street, East Three-Arch Gate Street, and historic East Chang'an Avenue—did not form a straight line. Not even two of them lined up perfectly. While the other three sections had only slight turns, historic East Chang'an Avenue was about 100 meters south of the other sections. In 1950, in an effort to straighten the avenue in preparation for a mass parade celebrating the first anniversary of the People's Republic of China, a fifteen-meter-wide parallel street was added to the north of historic East Chang'an Avenue, in line with East Three-Arch Gate Street. At the same time, a street of the same width was created to the south of East Three-Arch Gate Street, in line with historic East Chang'an Avenue. Thus, on the east side of Tiananmen Square, historic Chang'an Avenue had two parallel lanes, separated by tramlines and large areas of greenbelts, giving rise to the nickname "Green Boulevard." During the reconstruction of the avenue in 1950, the East and West Three-Arch Gates were demolished, along with the two memorial archways.[34]

In August 1952 the Left (east) and Right (west) Chang'an Gates were also torn down to further open the avenue for public communication and as a parade ground for the third anniversary of the People's Republic of China on October 1.[35] In 1954 the last two imperial monuments marking the separation of Chang'an Avenue, the Western and Eastern Chang'an Archways, were removed for reconstruction in Taoranting Park.[36] For the first time, East Chang'an Avenue and West Chang'an Avenue were fully connected.[37]

Changes were then made in the avenue's width and surface, some in preparation for another National Day celebration. In 1955 West Chang'an Avenue was expanded to a width of between thirty-two and fifty meters. Before that, the widest section of the avenue, a stretch of 2.4 kilometers between Dongdan and Zhongnanhai, measured only fifteen meters. The asphalt and crushed stone road pavements were

replaced with asphalt concrete. A decision was also made that, before the tenth anniversary of the People's Republic of China in 1959, the two lanes of East Chang'an Avenue would be merged to form a road with a width of between forty-four and fifty meters.[38]

West Chang'an Avenue was extended to Fuxing Gate in July 1956, and East Chang'an Avenue was extended to Jianguo Gate in July 1958. Before that, between Xidan and Fuxing Gate were two alleys, each five meters wide, and between Dongdan and Jianguo Gate were many small alleys of similar width. To make straight extensions thirty-five meters wide, matching the width of the original sections,[39] about 2,500 bays[40] of courtyard houses were demolished in 1956 and a further 3,000 bays more disappeared in 1958, a total of roughly 2,000 buildings.[41]

Elaborate changes occurred in 1958, in preparation for the People's Republic of China's tenth anniversary celebration in 1959. Tram rails in the middle of East Chang'an Avenue were removed and the greenbelts were paved. The two lanes were merged to form a wide, open passageway. The width of the central section of the avenue between Nanchizi and Nanchang Street (about one kilometer in length) was expanded to eighty meters and was called Grand Parade Road.[42] The original plan had called for an even more ambitious expansion, to a width of 120 to 140 meters.[43] The 391.9-meter-long section in front of Tiananmen Tower was paved with granite blocks. Two rows of elaborate columned streetlights were added to the sides of the road, along with white poplars, elms, pines, and willows. At nightfall, "the lamps formed two long dragons of endless golden lights" along the avenue.[44]

The thoroughfare also expanded rapidly in length after the mid-1950s. When compared to an early twentieth-century map, a 1950 map of Beijing shows the two historic Chang'an Avenues virtually unchanged. In a 1957 map, however, the western extension already reaches the Shijingshan District, the contemporary west end of Beijing's east-west axis. The eastern section, however, remains almost the same length as before 1949, creating a very unbalanced image of the avenue on the two sides of the north-south axis. A symmetrical image would soon be restored. A 1972 map shows the eastern extension reaching far enough to match its western counterpart, transforming the avenue into a true thoroughfare for the entire city. As early as 1966, the avenue reached its current length of 40,000 meters, from Tongxian country in the east to the Shijingshan District in the west.[45]

With Chang'an Avenue cutting through the entire urban area of Beijing and expanding in both length and width, cross traffic became a problem for the maintenance of its image as a wide, open, and straight road, a visible metaphor for China's bright socialist future. Before the late 1970s, traffic crossed the avenue on the same level as the street itself. Since 1980, crossings have been carefully planned and con-

trolled. Bridges and tunnels, including subway station tunnels, were built to make the avenue an unimpeded thoroughfare.[46] However, no bridge was built over Chang'an Avenue proper, in order to avoid blocking the grand vista of the parade route. No ground-level crossing is permitted along the Grand Parade Road between Nanchizi and Nanchang Street. Pedestrians must walk through tunnels, and vehicles must detour to cross the central section of the thoroughfare. Along the avenue proper, both stopping and left turns are banned for vehicles. Crossing on foot is difficult given the width of the street and the few existing pedestrian crosswalks.[47]

Between 1998 and 1999 Chang'an Avenue underwent further, comprehensive renovation in preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of the People's Republic of China. The section between Dongdan and Jianguo Gate was widened from thirty-five to fifty meters, thirty meters for motor vehicles and seven meters on each side for nonmotorized vehicles, with three-meter interval belts. Along Chang'an Avenue proper, pedestrian lanes on both sides were widened to six meters, and along the Chang'an Avenue extensions, all of the pedestrian lanes were widened to five meters. Along historic Chang'an Avenue and Tiananmen Square, sidewalks were paved with granite, and in the sections from Xidan to Gongzhufen and from Dongdan to Dabeiyao, they were paved with colorful concrete tiles. Tiananmen Square itself was paved with granite tiles, and two green areas of grass and trees, each 30 meters wide and 160 meters long, were added to decorate its east and west sides. Pipes and wires were buried underground. Along the entire avenue, traffic signs, billboards, shops, and dustbins were reorganized, repaired, and renovated; green areas were increased; and benches were added. Upon completion of this renovation project for the fiftieth anniversary in 1999, the avenue was claimed to be "unprecedentedly more beautiful and neat."[48]

Planning

Although the two original Chang'an Avenues were united almost immediately after the fall of the Qing Empire, plans to reshape Chang'an Avenue and Tiananmen Square were carried out only after the founding of the People's Republic of China. In four major stages, each with different functional emphases, the 1950s, the 1960s and 1970s, the 1980s and 1990s, and the early twenty-first century, the political elements of the plan became weaker and weaker, while increasing attention was paid to the cultural dimension. "Function" was always the claimed focus, but its meaning differed from phase to phase—political, cultural, humanitarian, or environmentalist. One constant remained: economy was never mentioned, although commercial development has been crucial since the 1980s.

The issue of a comprehensive plan for Chang'an Avenue was first raised in late

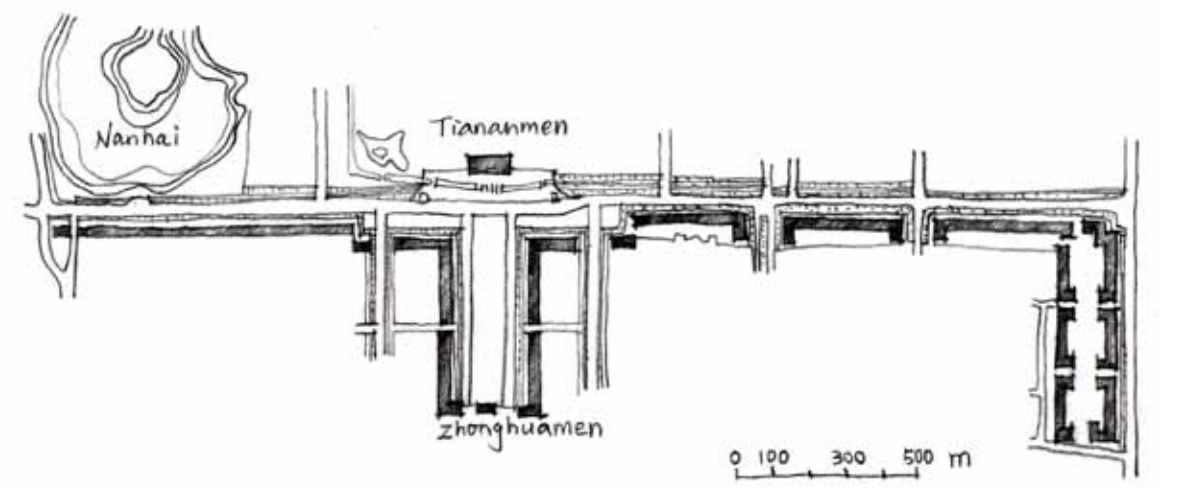
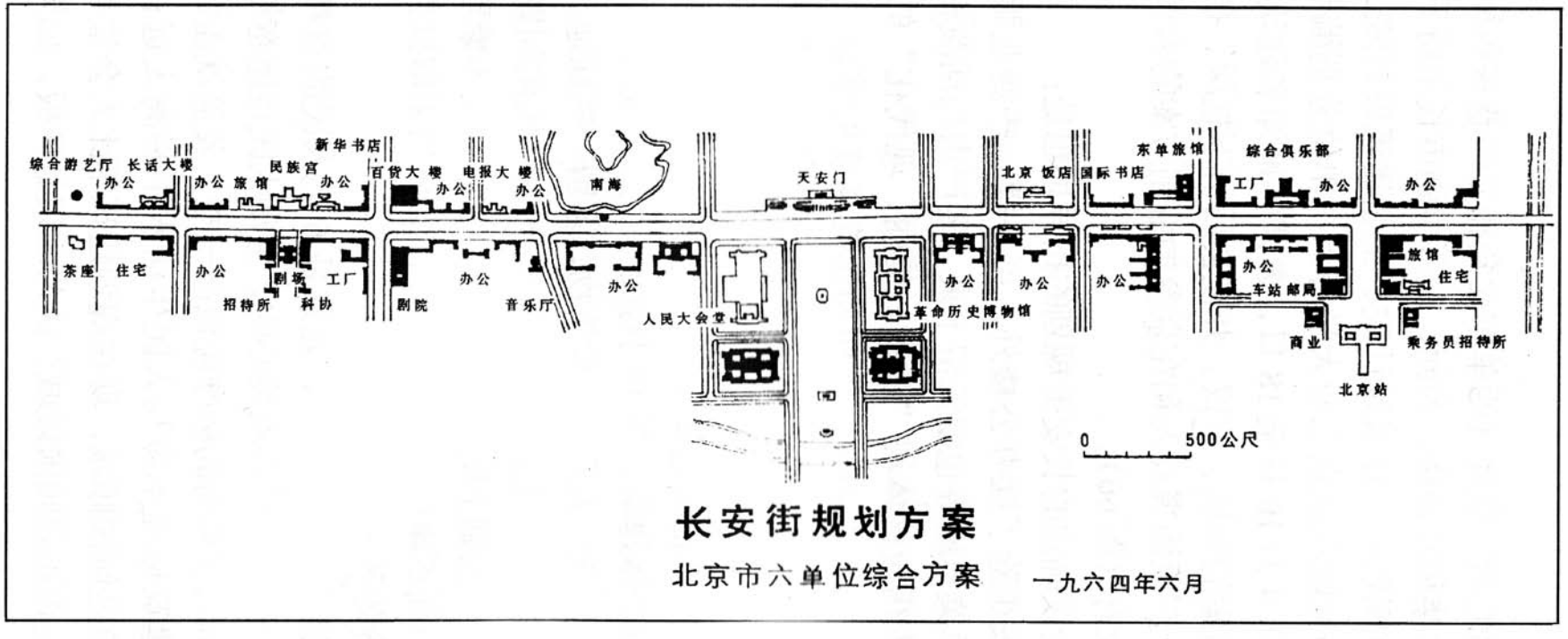


Fig. 1.4. Soviet advisors' proposal for the reconstruction of Chang'an Avenue, 1949–50. *Drawing by author, modified from Dong Guangqi,* Beijing guihua zhanlue sikao, *374.*

1949 and early 1950 by Soviet advisors[49] who came to assist the new Communist regime's reconstruction of China, a country torn by more than a century of constant warfare and social unrest. These advisors argued that a new government center should be developed along the avenue, with Tiananmen Square as its focal point (fig. 1.4). Many Chinese architects and scholars opposed such a plan, including Liang Sicheng, the most renowned Chinese architectural historian of the twentieth century, and Chen Zhanxiang, a British-trained urban planner invited to Beijing by Liang.[50] These two were the authors of a famous alternative vision for the reconstruction of the capital, the Liang-Chen Scheme.[51]

While the specific strategies for the urban renovation of Beijing remained unsettled, the headquarters of branches of the new government were constructed along the avenue, including new buildings for the Ministries of Public Security, Textile Industry, Fuel Industry, and Foreign Trade in 1951. One of the major arguments in favor of concentrating these government buildings along the avenue was that the former training ground for foreign troops in the concession area on historic East Chang'an Avenue was the only unoccupied space in the Old City.[52] This explanation, however, did not answer the question of why the new government center had to be located in the heart of the Old City at all, an issue that Liang and Chen had raised.

The motivations for developing Chang'an Avenue instead of constructing a new center outside the Old City were revolutionary ideology and national pride, as well as practical concerns. Ideologically, Chinese revolution in the twentieth century defied the preservation of the old; practically, the new regime needed not only an area for


综合游艺厅
长话大楼
办公
办公
旅馆
民族宫
办公
新华书店
百货大楼
办公
电报大楼
办公
南海
天安门
北京饭店
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500公尺
长安街规划方案
北京市六单位综合方案
一九六四年六月

Fig. 1.5

Fig. 1.5. Comprehensive scheme, Chang'an Avenue planning, 1964. *Reproduction from Dong Guangqi,* Beijing guihua zhanlue sikao, *376. Courtesy of CABP.*

buildings but also a space with an architectural frame for the display of power. The avenue fulfilled all of these purposes handsomely. As the parade ground for the annual National Day celebrations, it became the route along which the majority of the Anniversary Projects of 1958–59, also known as the Ten Great Buildings, were concentrated. While drawings from the 1950 Soviet plan show that all of the proposed new buildings were on the south side of the avenue, near Tiananmen Square, most of the new construction for the tenth anniversary was on the north side, which would allow the avenue to be developed into a major showcase with monumental buildings on both sides. Widening had another practical purpose. It would allow airplanes to take off or land on the avenue during an emergency. Preparation for war was still a major concern for architects and urban planners in China in the 1950s.

If the first attempt at avenue planning in the 1950s was still part of a general project to renovate the capital, the second stage in 1964 was a well-organized project aimed only at the avenue itself. For the first time, Chang'an Avenue proper, from Fuxing Gate on the west to Jianguo Gate on the east, was planned comprehensively as one urban unit, to be lined with monumental structures on both sides, most of which were official and cultural complexes, with some commercial and service buildings located predominantly on the east side (fig. 1.5).

The original motivation for this round of planning, however, was to fill the vacant spaces left by the unrealized Anniversary Projects of 1959. The 1958 plans called for most monuments for the tenth anniversary to be constructed on Chang'an Avenue and its extensions.[53] Two of the originally planned buildings were not completed. The old buildings on these sites, one on the east side of Fangjin Alley at the eastern end of East Chang'an Avenue proper, the other at the northeast corner of Xidan on historic West Chang'an Avenue, however, were cleared away. In order to fill the empty space on the avenue, six major architectural and urban planning units in Beijing—the Beijing Municipal Planning Bureau, the Beijing Institute of Architectural Design and Research, the Institute of Industrial Building Design, Tsinghua University, the Research Institute of Architectural Science, and Beijing Industrial University—were invited by the municipal government to prepare planning proposals, in a process chaired by vice mayor Wan Li. Experts from all over the country were called on to review the drawings and models provided by different institutes. Finally, a comprehensive design by all of the participants, including the six Beijing units mentioned above and five leading architects from the provinces, was submitted to the municipal government.[54]

During this 1964 planning process, the issue of architectural consistency along the

avenue was raised for the first time. Not only was the entire thoroughfare now considered as one single unit for urban development—the redline for the planning area covered both sides of the avenue, from Fuxing Gate to Jianguo Gate—but also the guiding principles emphasized the necessity for a unified urban space along the thoroughfare. It was a prerequisite that the overall arrangement of buildings along the avenue should be "continuous, rhythmic, and complete," and that the skyline of the avenue's elevation should be "simple and clear." The heights of all of the buildings were to be between thirty and forty meters. Abrupt height changes were to be avoided, with the exception of four points: Dongdan, Xidan, Jianguo Gate, and Fuxing Gate, the major intersections on and the eastern and western ends of Chang'an Avenue proper. Another guiding principle specified that the avenue as a whole should exemplify "grandeur, beauty, and modernization." "Nationalization must be based on modernization, absorbing valuable experiences from a variety of cultures—foreign or Chinese, ancient or modern—as a way to make buildings simple, decent, and bright."[55] The relationship between the avenue and the main north-south axis was also specified: the number of north-south axes intersecting with Chang'an Avenue was to be limited in order to maintain the prominent status of the main axis through Tiananmen Square.

Like the first stage of planning in the 1950s, the third stage in the 1980s and 1990s was also part of the general planning for the whole city. In 1982 a new Master Plan for the Municipal Construction of Beijing was drafted, and this was approved by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee and the State Council in July 1983. The following spring, the Capital Planning and Construction Committee convoked leading units[56] in the field to compile a new master plan to further flesh out and update the 1982 plan. Experts and professors in various fields, from city planning to architectural design, from historical preservation to sculpture, were invited to revise and combine the proposals. The comprehensive plan was released in December 1985. In August 1985 the Height Limitation Plan for Buildings in Beijing was enacted by the Capital Planning and Construction Committee and the Beijing Municipal Planning Bureau.

The future of Chang'an Avenue envisaged in these proposals was not very different from that of the 1964 plan (fig. 1.6). However, some general ideas in the previous plan were made more specific. For instance, three secondary north-south axes were added to intersect the avenue and parallel the main axis. These were located at Xinhua Gate and the Minority Culture Palace on West Chang'an Avenue, and at the Beijing Railway Station on East Chang'an Avenue. These plans also offered more details on height restrictions: buildings between Xidan and Dongdan were not to exceed thirty meters, and buildings west of Xidan and east of Dongdan were not to be higher than forty-five meters. Squares to facilitate traffic were planned for the four major intersec-

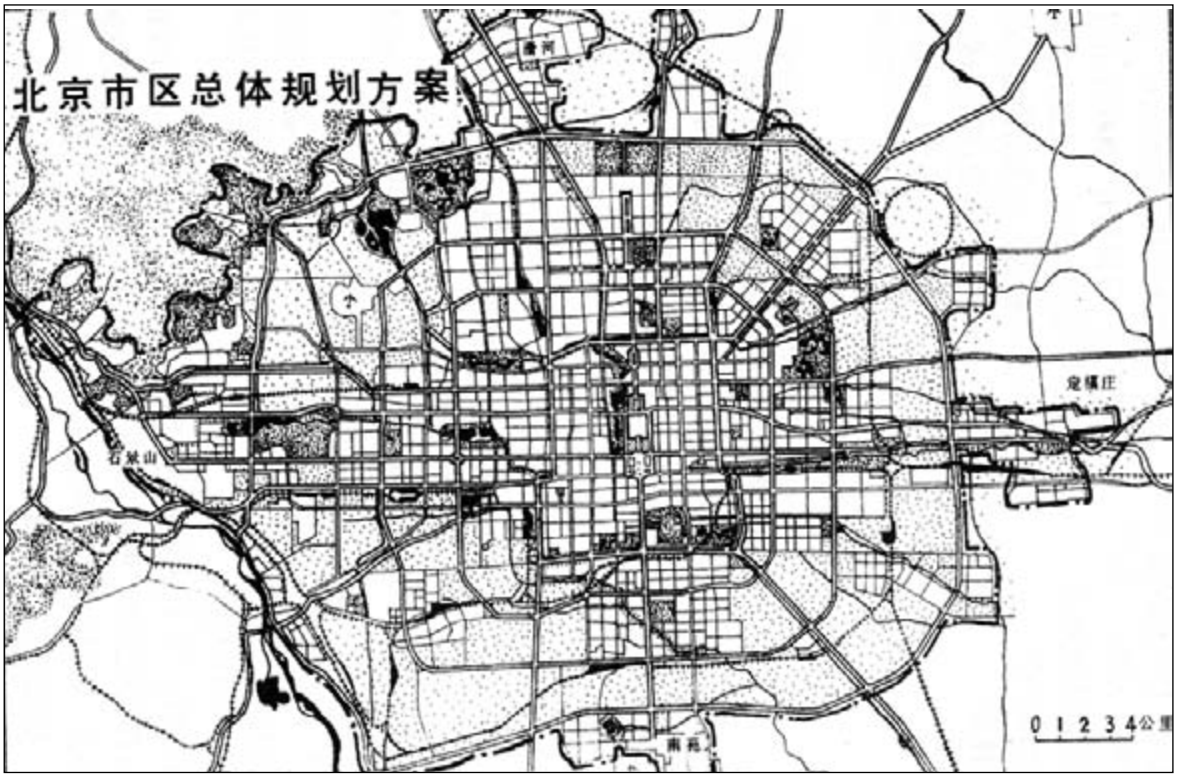


Fig. 1.6. Beijing master plan, 1982. *Reproduction from Dong Guangqi,* Beijing guihua zhanlue sikao, *389. Courtesy of CABP.*

tions at Dongdan, Xidan, Jianguo Gate, and Fuxing Gate, and the subway from Jianguo Gate to Fuxing Gate was to be completed as soon as possible.[57]

Also in August 1985, a report on the planning scheme for Tiananmen Square and Chang'an Avenue was submitted to the CCP Central Committee and the State Council. A major change in the 1980s proposals was their new emphasis on the civic and commercial (rather than the political) roles that the square and the avenue should play. Large green fields were planned to cover some key spots,[58] and green space was to appear between every two buildings. In general, green areas were to be located evenly along the avenue. These proposals customarily required the future square and avenue to be grand and solemn. Yet everyday requirements for living, sightseeing, and recreation were also addressed. Commercial and service facilities were envisaged at the intersections of the Front Gate, Wangfujing, and Xidan. The ground floors of the buildings along the avenue were all to be open to the public. The underground area to the north of Tiananmen Square was to be used for parking lots, small shops, and service facilities. More service facilities were to be provided along the sidewalks.[59]

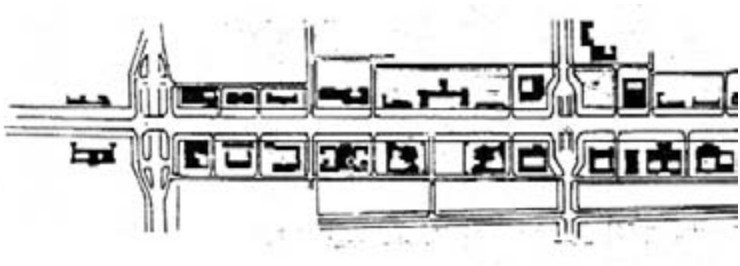
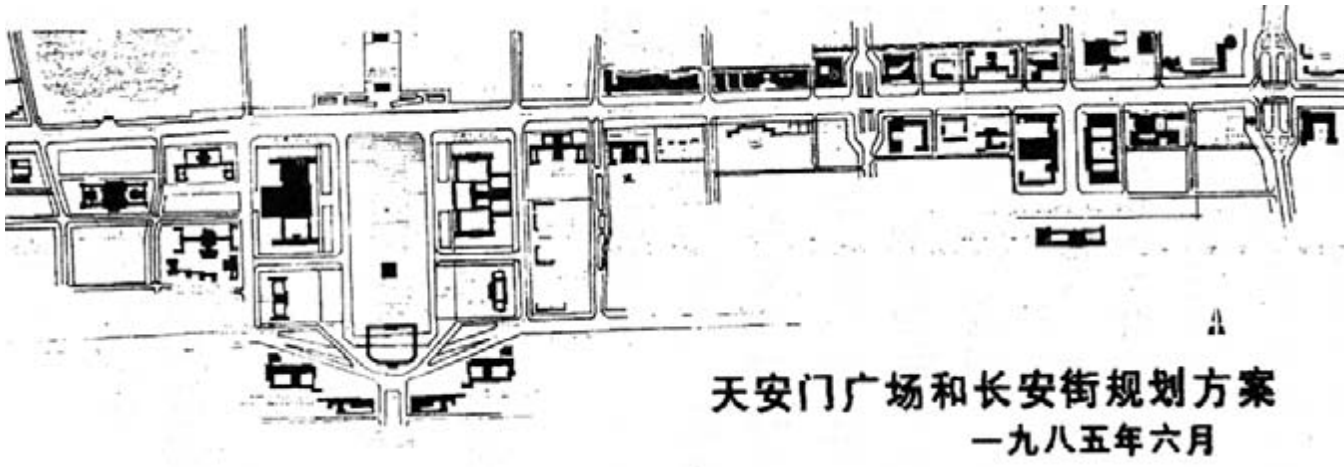


Fig. 1.7. Chang'an Avenue plan, 1985. *Reproduction from Dong Guangqi,* Beijing guihua zhanlue sikao*, 402. Courtesy of CABP.*

Another departure in the planning schemes of the 1980s was the emphasis on the preservation of the "style of the old capital" (*gudu fengmao*). Traditional buildings and imperial structures were formerly treated as obstacles to modernization and were demolished to make way for the expansion of the avenue and the square. In its response to the 1982 scheme, however, the CCP Central Committee and the State Council pointed out, for the first time since the founding of the People's Republic of China, "Beijing is the capital of our country and a renowned cultural historical city. Urban construction in Beijing should reflect the historical cultures of the Chinese peoples, revolutionary tradition, and the unique style of a socialist capital. Historical cultures should be preserved and developed, and new creations should be encouraged."[60]

Stylistically, the 1985 Chang'an Avenue planning scheme was dramatically different from both the Soviet plan of 1949–50 and the 1964 comprehensive plan. While Chang'an Avenue in the two previous plans was framed mainly by long straight blocks, in the 1985 plan, these were mostly replaced by complexes with courtyards (fig. 1.7). This had been advocated strongly by Liang Sicheng and the Tsinghua University teams in every round of planning but had never won out before. This stylistic change signals recognition of Liang's approach to the reconstruction of Beijing. It was also a result of the increase of historical preservation in the 1980s, which Liang, had he lived, would have supported enthusiastically.

In 1991 the approach of the new century and the opening of the second fifty-year planning period of the capital led to a new revision of the 1983 master plan. As a replacement for the previous planned economy, Deng Xiaoping's "socialist market economy" policy took root in the 1990s and was also reflected in city planning. Foreign investments and financial organizations were allowed to appear on the avenue. In addition to the 1980s definition of Beijing as the "political and cultural center," the future of the city was now officially characterized in terms of a "globally famous historical capital and modern international metropolis."[61]



The fourth stage of avenue planning in 2002 constituted the most comprehensive study of the avenue to date, covering its historical development, its present condition, and the preparation of planning concepts for its future. Like the third planning stage in the 1980s and 1990s, this round was initiated by the Capital Planning and Construction Committee and was divided among several leading institutes, which were almost exactly the same as those in the 1980s planning.[62]

Like the 1950s and 1960s planning, the motivation for the planning in the twenty-first century was to fill in the gaps on the avenue. According to the Beijing Urban Planning Committee, the municipal leaders of Beijing had raised the question of how to create a strategic vision for the completion of the ten unoccupied sites along the avenue. "This is to say," the committee revealed, "the leaders requested us to complete Chang'an Avenue with buildings on both sides before 2009." The "gaps" along the avenue needed to be filled, even without an understanding of what to fill them in with. In fact, the task for the planners was exactly to study "strategies on how to fill the ten unoccupied sites along Chang'an Avenue."[63] The avenue simply needed to be "completed" to facilitate great spectacles during major cultural and political events, this time, the twenty-ninth Olympic Games in 2008 and the sixtieth anniversary of the People's Republic of China in 2009.

The report for the 2002 project named Chang'an Avenue the "Number One Street of China" and "the east-west axis of Beijing city," which "plays an important and special role in the nation's political and cultural activities and which represents the image of the Chinese capital and the whole country."[64] Although the avenue had become the de facto east-west axis since the 1950s, and its status as such was mentioned in materials from previous documents, the 2002 appraisement was the clearest statement yet of the symbolic power this avenue possessed for Beijing and China.

Most of the report was dedicated to such practical issues as how to offer a more artistic and functional urban space with more efficient traffic circulation and better service along the avenue (fig. 1.8). The symbolic significance of the avenue, however, was hinted at in the assessment of its present condition and suggestions for its ideal future. In the section titled "Analysis of Architectural Functions," the authors complained that the avenue was losing its character as a political and cultural center. There were too many commercial and banking buildings along the avenue, and too few dedicated to culture and services. The report also suggested reducing commercial advertisements on the thoroughfare and replacing them with billboards promoting public welfare and publicizing cultural affairs.[65]

Fig. 1.8. Computer-generated images for future Chang'an Avenue, Research and Planning Project for Chang'an Avenue and Tiananmen Square, 2002. *Reproduction from* Chang'anjie: Guoqu, xianzai, weilai, *265. Courtesy of Zheng Guangzhong and Zhao Tian.*

Compared to previous Chang'an Avenue plans, the guidelines for future development in the 2002 project added two principles that reflected a new orientation in twenty-first-century Chinese architecture: environmentalism and humanism.[66] On a theoretical level, the environmental principle aimed to improve the natural environment through sustainable design and ecological balance in urban development; the principle of humanism required more consideration of the lives of common people instead of focusing solely on state ideology. On an operational level, for the environmental principle, the 2002 plan proposed expanding green fields and adding more water surface along the avenue; for the principle of humanism, it suggested opening the lobbies and ground floors of all buildings along the avenue to the public so that everyone could use service facilities, such as washrooms. The 2002 plan also suggested adding more public toilets, seats, benches, and souvenir pavilions along the sidewalks to provide more public services and comforts.

The 2002 guidelines also reiterated four other principles that had been fully or partly emphasized in previous plans: (1) basing development upon existing conditions, (2) preservation, (3) function, and (4) art. The principle of basing development upon existing conditions admitted that both great achievements and great problems had resulted from the preceding fifty years of construction, and held that future development should take this as its starting point. The principle of function emphasized the significance of Chang'an Avenue, together with Tiananmen Square, as a political and cultural center, and called for improvements in services for both the people and the central government. The principle of preservation reiterated the obligation to protect and reutilize historical buildings and neighborhoods. Finally, the principle of art demanded that the "Number One Street of China" be on a par with

the great avenues of other world capitals. This required that the avenue have functionally sound construction, convenient communication, modern facilities, a beautiful and splendid image, a pleasant space and a human scale, rich cultural content, deep traditional flavor, and unique Chinese character.[67]

The most detailed design in the 2002 planning was the central office district (*zhongyang bangongqu*) on the south side of West Chang'an Avenue proper. The form of the plan, as well as the choice of this area for in-depth design, was a legacy of the controversy over the status of the avenue in the 1990s, when there were two different views on the east-west axis of the Chinese capital. One view, advocated by city planner Chen Gan, maintained that the avenue already had been and should continue to be developed as the east-west axis.[68] The opposing view was upheld by architect Zhao Dongri, who characterized the avenue as *xuzhou*, a "void" or "false" axis, an empty passageway with monuments only along its sides. Zhao called for the construction of a "real" or "solid" axis (*shizhou*) to the south of the avenue, an axis with monuments directly on it, comparable to the ancient north-south axis with its monuments Tiananmen Tower and the Forbidden City. The area Zhao proposed for the construction of this east-west axis was between the avenue and today's Qiansanmen Street, with Tiananmen Square at the intersection of the east-west and north-south axes. The east-west axis of monuments in Zhao's proposal extended westward from the Great Hall of the People on the west side of Tiananmen Square, and eastward from the Museum of Chinese Revolution and History on the east side of the square.[69] In the 2002 plan, the central office district has it own axis, with monuments and water surfaces directly on it. The axis also started from the Great Hall of the People, with the nearly completed National Grand Theatre as the second monument on it. This axis, however, covered only the west section of Zhao's original proposal. It was also much shorter than both the avenue and the north-south axis, and thus represented a compromise between Chen's and Zhao's views.

In spite of changes in ideology and the guiding principle, the motivation for the development of Chang'an Avenue has remained the same throughout the PRC era: to fill in the "gaps." The 1949 Soviet plan proposed to fill the gaps around the former concession area; the 1964 plan tried to fill the two gaps left by the Anniversary Projects in 1959; and the 2002 project aimed to fill the "last" ten gaps. This chronology suggests that new gaps were produced as soon as old gaps were filled. In fact, such "gaps" were more conceptual than physical. They were the products of changes in ideology and guiding principles, discrepancies in the ideal "completions" of different periods. The gaps were also about public façades—a concept imported from the West when the Chinese first began to grapple with the issue of architectural modernity.

The Changes of Chang'an Avenue's Façades

The concept of a façade as the main public image for a building was foreign to traditional Chinese architecture, which stressed an open courtyard, a void, rather than solid built structure. The Chinese courtyard was enclosed by walls on all sides, and from the street the only clue as to the status of a building complex or its inhabitants was the main gate, usually located in the south wall. The individual buildings that defined the courtyards each had a "face"[70] and a "back." The "face" had large windows and doors and was often elaborately decorated, while the "back" was usually just a plain solid wall, sometimes with small high windows in the upper part. The "face" almost always looked inward to the courtyard, leaving the "back" to the public urban space. Usually a single story structure, the "face" remained concealed from the street (see fig. 6.12).

In traditional Chinese architectural illustrations, buildings were often represented either by sections or by axonometric drawings, but rarely by elevations.[71] The earliest extant drawings of architectural façades in China were those for the Western buildings in the Yuanmingyuan, one of the major summer palaces of the Qing emperors. The concept of using façade in a public space to indicate architectural significance was a result of China's encountering the West.

Chang'an Avenue Façades before 1949

Before 1949, historic Chang'an Avenue was an architecturally traditional street framed mainly by walls and gates. Before 1860, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the central section was framed by the walls of the Imperial City to the north and the walls of the various government ministries to the south. Historic East and West Chang'an Avenues were bordered on both sides by walled residential compounds, punctuated by shop fronts and temples. The avenue façades were low and predominantly single-story.

In 1860, after the Second Opium War in 1860, foreign embassies were constructed around the area of East Jiaomin Alley to the south of historic East Chang'an Avenue. They were mostly one- or two-story masonry buildings within walled quarters, each for a different country. Although designed and built mainly by Westerners, their main façades all faced inward and away from public urban spaces, following the Chinese convention. After the Boxer Rebellion of 1901, foreign concessions expanded to occupy the entire area between historic East Chang'an Avenue and the south walls of the Inner City, as well as part of what is now Tiananmen Square. The entire 120–hectare legation district was walled and guarded like a medieval castle,[72] physically

Fig. 1.9. The model of the Old City of Beijing made in 1949, showing the legation quarter with its military drill grounds. *Reproduction from* Chang'anjie: Guoqu, xianzai, weilai, *46. Courtesy of Zheng Guangzhong.*

and administratively "a city within a city," as the Chinese called it. Inside the legation district were embassies, residences, clubs, post offices, and military camps. The peripheries of the legation district were cleared as military drill grounds for foreign troops and as polo fields for Westerners. Now surrounded by large areas of open space, historic East Chang'an Avenue completely lost its façades (fig. 1.9).[73]

During the Republican era, some multistory buildings appeared on historic Chang'an Avenue, such as the Capital Municipal Administration Office across from Zhongnanhai and the Beijing Hotel of 1917 on the north side of historic East Chang'an Avenue. On the whole, however, historic Chang'an Avenue was still dominated by walls and one-story buildings. The few tall colonial-style façades rose above the continuous horizontal red walls and gray roofs like "cranes standing among chickens," as some contemporaries put it. After Zhongnanhai was converted from an imperial garden into the presidential seat in 1912, the Tower of the Precious Moon, formerly a pavilion inside the garden, became an entrance façade. At the same time, a long unbroken wall with brick patterns of Western baroque motifs was constructed along the south side of the avenue to hide the shabby courtyard dwellings from the view of the Republican leaders. Much of the façade of historic West Chang'an Avenue was reduced to an endless screen of gray brick (fig. 1.10).

Another significant post-1911 change in the avenue's façades was a direct result of

the opening of previously restricted imperial areas. After the walls surrounding Imperial Tiananmen Square were demolished, Tiananmen Tower, the former south gate to the Imperial City and just one of many gates on the north-south axis of Beijing, was singled out as a façade. This new façade was immediately accorded political prominence. Huge portraits of both Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek had hung above the central arch before the Communist takeover, conflating a political face with an architectural façade. As a whole, however, the avenue façades remained low and fragmented throughout the Republican era (fig. 1.11A).

Fig. 1.10. Walls facing Zhongnanhai across historic West Chang'an Avenue, 1910s. *Photograph by author.*

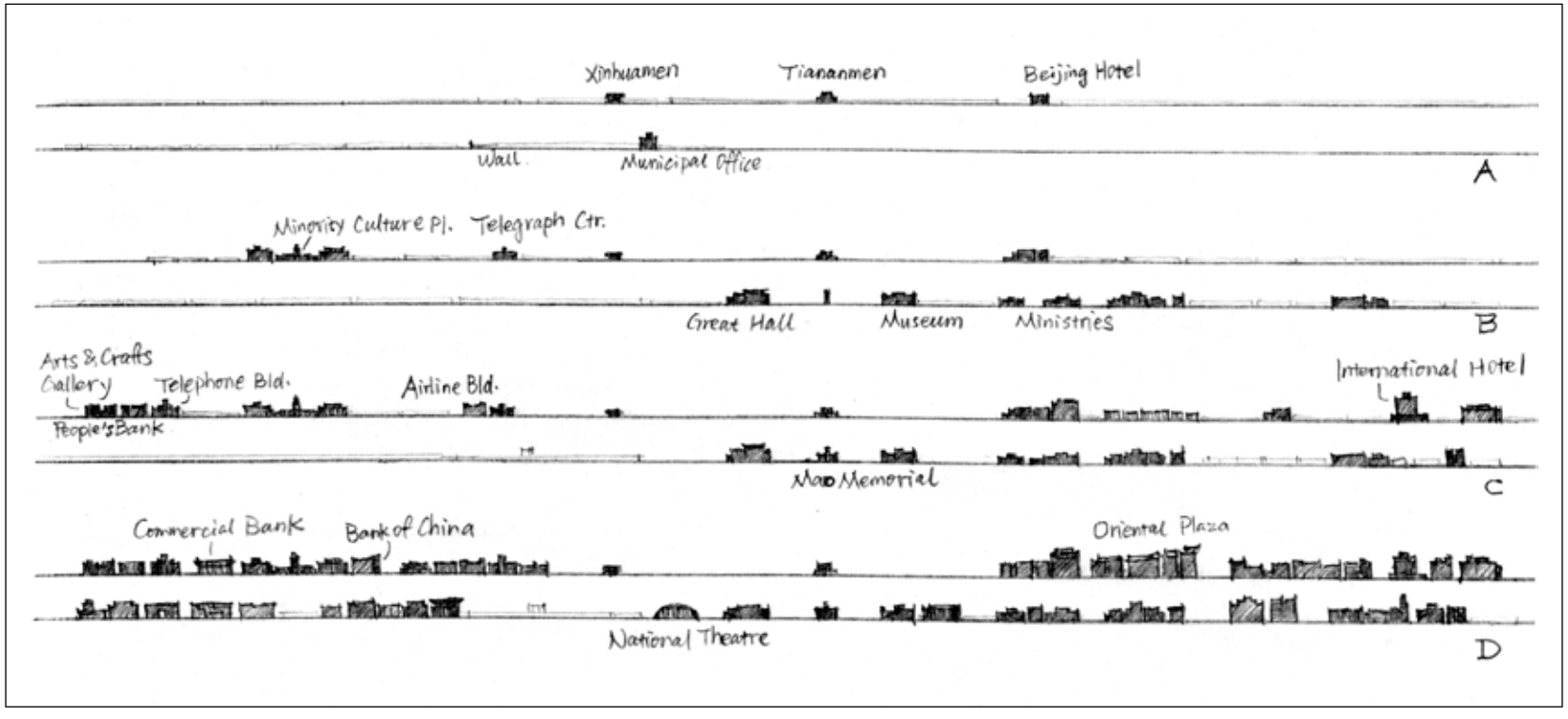

Xinhuamen
Tiananmen
Beijing Hotel
Wall
Municipal Office
A
Minority Culture Pl.
Telegraph Ctr.
Great Hall
Museum
Ministries
B
Arts & Crafts
Gallery
Telephone Bld.
Airline Bld.
International Hotel
People's Bank
Mao Memorial
C
Commercial Bank
Bank of China
Oriental Plaza
National Theatre
D

Fig. 1.11

Fig. 1.11. The changing façades of Chang'an Avenue proper (top: northern façade; bottom: southern façade): A. 1910s–40s; B. 1950s–60s; C. 1970s–80s; D. 1990s–2010. *Drawing by author.*

Chang'an Avenue Façades after 1949 and the National Identity of China

During the PRC era, Chang'an Avenue emerged as an urban thoroughfare filled with monumental façades. Almost every new decade's impending national anniversary was preceded by a major round of planning and construction, always with the same aim: to "relatively complete Chang'an Avenue." During this time, to complete meant to fill the gaps among previously finished monumental façades and to replace the low walls of traditional courtyards with modern edifices. Within about half a century, the avenue was transformed from a fragmented street lined mostly with single-story courtyard residences into an endless straight thoroughfare framed by massive symmetrical façades.

The transformation of the avenue's façades can be seen as the unrolling of a collaged scroll depicting China's ongoing search for national identity during the twentieth century, first as a member of the socialist bloc during the 1950s and 1960s, then as a Third World developing country in the 1970s and 1980s, and, finally, since the early 1990s, as a regional power guided primarily by nationalist ideology. Each period left its own section in the scroll. When the multistory buildings filled the gaps among the single-story residential courtyards, the single-story courtyards became gaps. As the height of buildings along the avenue kept rising, each period filled old gaps and produced new ones for the next generation, until laws were finally passed to impose height control. In the end, the two façades formed a pair of long screens, illustrating China's changing national identity in a variety of architectural styles (fig. 1.11B, C, D).

The 1950s and 1960s. The first large gap along Chang'an Avenue to be filled after 1949 was the former foreign drill grounds and polo field around the concession area. In 1951 office buildings of three to four stories for the Ministries of Public Security, Textile Industry, Fuel Industry, Light Industry, and Foreign Trade filled the open grounds along the south side of East Chang'an Avenue proper. In 1953–54, the eight-story West Building was added to the old 1917 Beijing Hotel (now known as the Middle Building) on the north side of East Chang'an Avenue proper. In 1958–59, Beijing Railway Station was built to the south of East Chang'an Avenue proper. Located in a back street, however, it was not exposed to the avenue until the 1990s, when the small

alleys and courtyards blocking its north façade were cleared. Building also occurred on the north side of West Chang'an Avenue proper: the Telegraph Service Center was constructed in 1955–57, and the Minority Culture Palace and the Minority Hotel were erected in 1958–59. Around the Tiananmen Square area, the Monument to the People's Heroes was built in the center of the square between 1949 and 1958, and in 1958–59, the Great Hall of the People rose on the west side and the museum complex on the east. On the West Chang'an Avenue extension, the Central Broadcast Building was built in 1957 on the south side, next to Fuxing Gate, and the Military Museum was built in 1958–59 on the north side, some three kilometers west of the Ming-Qing city wall. No large-scale building was constructed on the avenue during the 1960s.

During this period, façade building concentrated on the south side of East Chang'an Avenue proper and on the north side of West Chang'an Avenue proper. The overall façade of the avenue, however, was only sporadically punctuated by multistory buildings. Most areas on either side of the thoroughfare were still occupied by traditional single-story courtyards (fig. 1.11B).

Chinese architecture in the 1950s generally followed the Soviet policy of "socialist content, national form." This was unambiguous when applied to art forms such as painting or opera. In architecture, however, its meaning was never clear, and particularly unclear was the content requirement, which was understood as function by some and as ideology by others.[74] In practice, "socialist content" in the PRC architecture of the 1950s was identified with a style—the neoclassicism promulgated by Joseph Stalin in the 1930s and 1940s. This style combined concrete structure with sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Muscovite architectural elements and revolutionary motifs,[75] characterized by a symmetrical plan with a central body and spreading wings, three

Fig. 1.12. Telegraph Service Center, 1955–57. Lin Leyi, Zhang Zhaoping, and others. *Photograph by author.*

or five horizontally spreading sections in elevation, and a soaring tower in the middle section. Chinese architects later nicknamed it "toad style" (*hamashi*).[76] The "national form" requirement of the Soviet policy was more tangible, but different interpretations resulted in diverse architectural forms, from full-size traditional roofs to decorative motifs noticeable only upon scrutiny. Thus, both "content" and "form" were reduced to style. As Lowell Dittmer has pointed out, the acquisition of identity is an amalgam of "fitting in" and "standing out" that first requires identification with a selected reference group of significant others, then development of characteristics that will impart a sense of distinctiveness and integrity.[77] Architecture in the early years of the People's Republic of China "fit into" the reference group of the socialist bloc by adopting Stalinist neoclassicism,[78] and "stood out" with its distinctive Chinese character through the application of traditional forms and motifs.

Proceeding west from Tiananmen Square, the first façade on the avenue was the Telegraph Service Center, built in 1955–57 (fig. 1.12). Although symmetrical in both plan and façade, with a clock tower in the middle, it looks much lighter than Soviet buildings of the Stalinist era because of the grid patterns of white frames and yellow walls and the rhythmic arrangement of large windows on the elevations. This building was acclaimed as a successful step in the exploration of a "Chinese modern style."[79] Contrasting with the Telegraph Service Center was the Soviet-style Central Broadcast Building (fig. 1.13). Completed in 1957, it was one of the 156 Soviet-aided projects. Although documents from the time stated that Chinese architects were responsible for the design and Soviet engineers were responsible for the technological issues, this building had all the characteristics of the Soviet monumental style, from the pyramidal structure to the European-style lantern on top of the central tower. Acroteria of decorative urns,

Fig. 1.13. Central Broadcast Building (detail), 1957. Yan Xinghua and others. *Photograph by author.*

Fig. 1.14. Military Museum, 1958–59. Ouyang Can, Wu Guozhen, and others. *Photograph by author.*

often seen in seventeenth-century European neoclassical as well as Russian Muscovite architecture, embellished the corners of the roofs. Chinese motifs were completely absent.

If this diversity in architectural style—modernism, Stalinist neoclassicism, and Chinese traditional revivalism[80]—indicated ambiguity of national identity and a shifting of ideology in the earliest transitional years of the People's Republic of China, the Anniversary Projects in the late 1950s set the tone of the architectural style for socialist China. The façades of six of these buildings faced the avenue. Some were predominantly Soviet in appearance and some had more Chinese motifs, but all shared the common feature of combining a Soviet general composition with traditional Chinese details.

The main façade of the Military Museum was predominantly Soviet in style, horizontally divided into five sections, with the central section the tallest (fig. 1.14). Like the Central Broadcast Building, the general outline of the Military Museum was pyramidal, with a central spire raising a gigantic Chinese army emblem. The two sections flanking the central tower were lower, and the two end sections lower still. The central and end sections protruded, and the two sections in between receded, giving the façade some sculptural effect, with shadows playing on the walls. Unlike the Central Broadcast Building façade, that of the Military Museum contained many traditional Chinese motifs. For instance, the protruding eaves atop each section were covered

Fig. 1.15. Minority Culture Palace, 1958–59. Zhang Bo, Sun Peiyao, and others. *Photograph by author.*

with yellow glazed tiles, and the three-doorway entrance was a simplified form of the traditional memorial archway (*pailou*), standing seemingly detached from the main structure.

The façade of the Minority Culture Palace employed more traditional Chinese architectural motifs and materials than did the Military Museum. The central tower was topped by a pavilion with double-eave pointed roofs (*chongyan cuanjian*) covered by blue-green glazed tiles. Four smaller pavilions on a lower level, with roofs in the same style, surrounded the central pavilion at the four corners. The same blue-green tiles covered the sloping roofs of the lower sections flanking the central tower, whose top floor was treated as a traditional veranda (*lang*) with concrete details imitating the columns, beams, and longitudinal brackets (*queti*) in an ancient wooden structure (fig. 1.15). Liang Sicheng had proposed in a 1954 lecture that traditional Chinese architectural "forms" (motifs) and "grammar" (principles) could be employed to fulfill any contemporary needs. He supported his argument with two drawings he had made.[81] To some scholars, this building exemplified Liang's vision of combining a high-rise with national forms.[82] The plan, however, was in the typical Soviet "toad style," and the façade on the avenue had the standard five-section horizontal divisions with a soaring central tower, a composition not very different from that of the Military Museum.

Residing stylistically between the Military Museum and the Minority Culture

Palace, the Great Hall of the People and the Museum of Chinese Revolution and History were neither overtly Soviet nor explicitly Chinese in character (see figs. 2.8, 2.10). Devoid of upturned Chinese roofs and soaring Soviet central towers, they represented a further compromise between "socialist content" and "national form." On one hand, both the Great Hall and the museum complex had overhanging eaves covered with yellow glazed tiles, and national motifs in relief could be observed under the eaves on the exterior walls and in the interior designs. On the other hand, the overall proportion of the façades remained Western. Like the Military Museum, the main façade of both the Great Hall and the museum complex could be horizontally divided into five sections, with the center and corner sections protruding and the two in between receding. The distances between the neighboring gigantic columns of the porch in the main eastern façade of the Great Hall were not identical but decreased from the central bay toward both sides, following the principle of traditional Chinese timber structures. However, the proportion of the façade did not follow traditional Chinese principles. The Song dynasty-building manual *Treatise on Architectural Methods* (Yingzao fashi) specified that the height of a column should not exceed the width of the bay (*zhugao buyu jianguang*), but in the porch of the Great Hall, the column height was two to three times greater than the intercolumniation, a proportion more akin to Western classical architecture. The museum's building had courtyards as spatial organizing elements, but they were not arranged in axial relationships as were traditional courtyards. That this compromise style was used for the two most significant of the Ten Great Buildings was not accidental. The designs were carefully chosen. In 1958 a total of 84 plan and 189 façade proposals were considered for the Great Hall of the People, among which were traditional big roofs, modern glass boxes, and Soviet-style towers.[83] It was this compromise style that best allowed New China both to "fit into" and "stand out" from the socialist bloc in the late 1950s.

The 1970s and 1980s. Three major façades were added to Chang'an Avenue proper during the 1970s: the East Building of the Beijing Hotel in 1973–74, the Long-Distance Telephone Building in 1976, and the Chairman Mao Memorial in 1976–77. In the three years after 1971, "diplomatic projects," including the International Club, the Beijing Friendship Store, and the Diplomatic Apartments, filled a large section of the façade gap on the East Chang'an Avenue extension, and multistory residential blocks were built on both the East and West Chang'an Avenue extensions.

During the 1980s, nine more buildings were added to the façades of Chang'an Avenue proper. Four of them were on West Chang'an Avenue proper: the National Arts and Crafts Gallery of China in 1985, the headquarters of the People's Bank of China in 1987–90, the Ticket Center of Air China in 1985–90 on the north side; and

the Beijing Concert Hall in 1981–85 on the south side. Five were on East Chang'an Avenue proper: the Chinese Academy of Social Science in 1980–83, the Dongdan Telephone Exchange Office in 1983–85, and the International Hotel in 1982–87 on the north side; and the Customs Headquarters in 1987–90 and the New Building for the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation in 1987–92 on the south side. Along the Chang'an Avenue extensions, new construction in the 1980s was concentrated in the east. On the East Chang'an Avenue extension, both the Jianguo Hotel in 1980–82 and the enormous International Trade Center of China in 1989 rose on the north side, while the Changfugong Center was constructed in 1989 on the south side. On the West Chang'an Avenue extension, the China Central Television (CCTV) Center was built in 1988. Projects of smaller scale and lesser significance were also constructed throughout the Chang'an Avenue extensions during the 1980s. By the end of the 1980s, the northern side of West Chang'an Avenue proper already had enough monumental façades to render the former low building areas "gaps," while the southern façade was still dominated by old courtyards (fig. 1.11c).

The concentration of construction on East Chang'an Avenue during the 1970s and 1980s had much to do with the political shift of China's international role from a member of the socialist bloc to a member of the Third World, a term evolved during the Cold War to define countries aligned neither with capitalism nor communism. In the early 1970s, Mao announced his own Three Worlds Theory and redefined "Third World" to include China.[84] Since 1956 Chinese architects had been working in such countries as Mongolia, Vietnam, North Korea, Nepal, Yemen, and Algeria as part of Communist China's foreign aid to "fraternal countries" in "Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[85] During the 1960s, more Chinese-assisted national projects were constructed in many Asian and African countries.[86] Before the 1970s, however, these activities were carried out under the socialist bloc's principle of internationalism, in which China was to export revolution to the rest of the world. During the 1970s, this stance had changed. China began to consider itself a member of the Third World instead of a socialist bloc leader duty-bound to export socialism.[87] The ideological boundary between socialism and capitalism was deliberately blurred.

Because West Chang'an Avenue was mainly associated with punishment, military power, and authority, and East Chang'an Avenue was historically associated with commerce, civil power, and celebration, the development of East Chang'an Avenue was a friendly gesture to show China's desire for more connection with the rest of the world, especially the West. Indeed, the new façades of the 1970s on East Chang'an Avenue were stylistically very different from their counterparts of the 1950s, which were mostly symmetrical, with monumental entrances, resulting in main façades that were grand, serious, and intimidating. The 1970s façades on East Chang'an Avenue, in

contrast, were mostly asymmetrical, with entrances and porches that were human in scale and overall images that were more approachable and relaxed (see fig. 4.6).

All of the major buildings on East Chang'an Avenue in the 1970s were linked to new diplomatic developments. The International Club was a service center, with a theatre, reading rooms, an outdoor swimming pool, sport facilities, social rooms, and restaurants, built for the diplomatic communities around the Jianguo Gate area. The Diplomatic Apartments were constructed originally as living quarters for foreigners to rent. The East Building of the Beijing Hotel was added in 1974 to accommodate the rising number of foreign visitors after China was admitted to the United Nations and began opening to the West.[88]

Stylistically, the façades of these new diplomatic buildings were more akin to modernism as represented by the International Style that had prevailed globally since World War II. The key tenets of this style were "regularity rather than axial symmetry, more volume than mass, and no 'arbitrarily' applied decoration."[89] China's ideology had changed. While the lofty goal of the socialist bloc was global Communism, the ultimate aim of a Third World developing China was to become a modern industrialized developed country. Although socialism and revolution still occupied the foreground of ideological discourse in official Chinese propaganda, this shift in national identity could already be observed in the avenue façades in the early 1970s.

Another sign of this shift was the construction on the avenue in the early 1980s of a building designed by an American architect, the first time this had happened since the founding of the People's Republic of China. Like the Fragrant Hills Hotel completed in the same year by I. M. Pei, the Jianguo Hotel was also designed by a Chinese American.[90] Located on Outer Jianguo Gate Street of the East Chang'an Avenue extension, the Jianguo Hotel was similar to an American economy hotel such as the Holiday Inn in both architectural form and hotel management.[91] Run by the state, its moderate standard of hospitality, plain design, and practical use of space were appropriate for a guest house in a Third World country. Its obvious connection with the most powerful developed country in the world indicated the goal of the developing country's arduous development.

After the completion of the Jianguo Hotel, more International Style hotels and high-rise office buildings designed by Western architects appeared on the avenue. The scale became increasingly grandiose, and the international cooperation required became more and more complex. Located on Outer Jianguo Gate Street, on the north side of the East Chang'an Avenue extension, the International Trade Center in 1989 occupied a twelve-acre site, with a total floorage of 420,000 square meters. It had two glass towers of offices, reaching a height of 156 meters (thirty-eight stories; fig. 1.16). Other buildings in the complex included a twenty-one-story hotel, two thirty-story

apartments, an 8,000-square-meter exhibition hall, a 13,000-square-meter shopping center, and a parking garage for 1,200 vehicles. The first stage general scheme design was by Robert Sobel/Emery Roth and Sons of the United States. Nikken Sekkei from Japan and Wong and Ouyang from Hong Kong supervised the successive designs of later stages, in cooperation with the local Beijing Steel and Iron Design Institute.[92] Its geometric shapes and enormous curtain walls gave the complex a classic modern character, and its twin glass towers echoed New York's World Trade Center, a timeless symbol of capitalism and modernism.

Buildings along Chang'an Avenue designed by Chinese architects followed this International Style trend reintroduced by Western architects. The International Hotel in the Inner Jianguo Gate Street section on the north side of East Chang'an Avenue proper was a twenty-nine-story (104.5 meter) high-rise with clean white walls creating a neat grid over the dark windows. While the twenty-seven-story (112.7 meter) tower of the CCTV Center on the north side of the West Chang'an Avenue extension on Fuxing Road employed Corbusian ribbon windows,[93] the Changfugong Center on the south side of the East Chang'an Avenue extension on Outer Jianguo Gate Street offered a Miesian-style twenty-five-story (90 meter) block.[94] None of these high-rises was capped with a big roof or decorated by glazed tiles.

Most of the new construction on the avenue during the 1980s was hotels, rental offices, and other commercial buildings. Following the historical convention in the capital, they were built to the east of the north-south axis. Those built on the west side, like the CCTV Center and the Head Office of the People's Bank of China, were mainly government buildings. The latter, built in the late 1980s, though stylistically similar to the New Brutalism in the West, employed traditional and folk motifs in Chinese culture and heralded the rise of nationalism in the coming new decade (fig. 1.17).[95]

A deviation from the modernist style of the 1980s Chang'an Avenue architecture was the National Gallery of Arts and Crafts, built in 1989. As an official national project, it was located on the north side of West Chang'an Avenue. However, its prominent sloping roofs, though considerably simplified, made it stand out among the buildings of the 1980s. Its subsequent history reflected the new directions China would take in the 1990s. Originally designed as a national museum, the National Gallery of Arts and Crafts later became a commercial center with floors dedicated mainly to shopping, entertainment, and rental office space, better known to the people of Beijing as the Baisheng (Parkson) Shopping Center. Almost accidently, a new important commercial center had finally taken root on West Chang'an Avenue. The revived traditional architectural motifs manifested in this building were further explored in the 1990s (fig. 1.18).

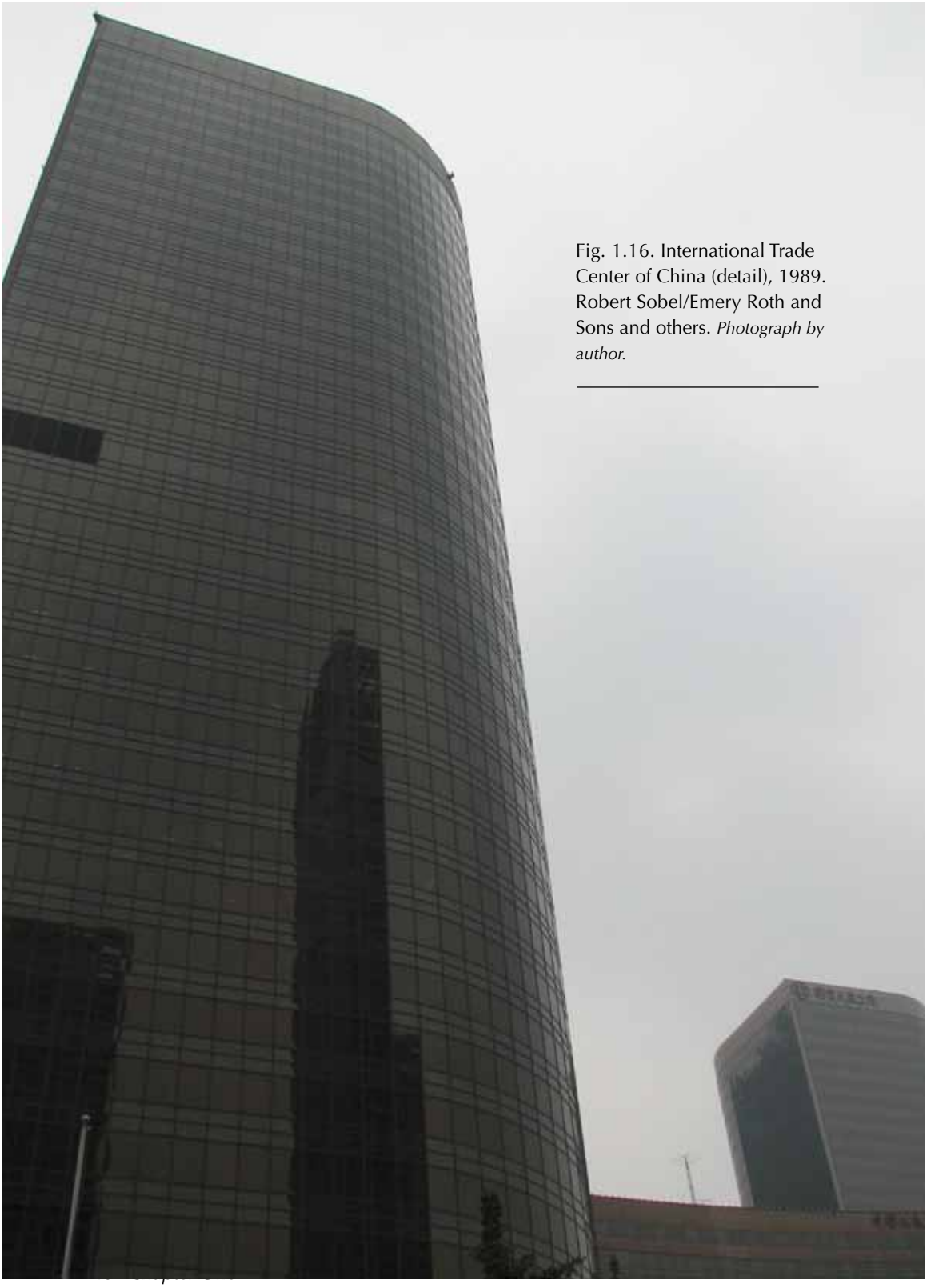


Fig. 1.16. International Trade Center of China (detail), 1989. Robert Sobel/Emery Roth and Sons and others. *Photograph by author.*

Fig. 1.17. Headquarters of People's Bank of China, 1987–90. Zhou Ru and others. *Photograph by author.*

Fig. 1.18. National Arts and Crafts Gallery of China, 1985–89. Guo Yichang and others. *Photograph by author.*

The 1990s and after. The façades of Chang'an Avenue have been completely transformed in the decades before and after 2000. A total of twenty-three buildings were added to Chang'an Avenue proper within fifteen years of 1990, twelve on the west side,[96] and eleven on the east side.[97] Buildings housing the Ministries of Fuel Industry and Textile Industry, built in the early 1950s, were also renovated, their façades rebuilt and new floors added on top.

After the intensive construction in the 1990s and early 2000s, the northern side of Chang'an Avenue proper is now filled with monumental façades, leaving only a few small "gaps." The same is true of the southern façade of East Chang'an Avenue proper. Specific projects were planned to fill these minor "gaps." The southern façade of West Chang'an Avenue proper still has a large "gap" of traditional courtyards hidden behind the baroque-style brick wall built in 1912. This is a special section of façades directly facing Zhongnanhai, the former imperial gardens, now a new PRC version of the Forbidden City. Since Zhongnanhai became the residential compound for top leaders of the Communist regime, the construction of tall buildings on the street opposite it has been forbidden, in an effort to keep Zhongnanhai out of public view. The only multistory building from the Republican era, the Capital Municipal Administration Office, which once afforded a view into Zhongnanhai, was demolished shortly after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The recently completed National Grand Theatre was a first step toward breaking this taboo at the dawn of the new millennium (fig. 1.11D).

Monumental façades were also constructed on both avenue extensions. On the West Chang'an Avenue extension, these included the West Railway Station, the China Millennium Monument, the Capital Museum, and the August First Building (the headquarters of the CCP Military Affairs Commission). While these significant state-sponsored government projects were carried out on the West Chang'an Avenue extension, large tracts of land on both sides of the East Chang'an Avenue extension were designated as Beijing's new Central Business District (CBD).

If the most characteristic building type in the 1970s and 1980s was the hotel, the building type that symbolizes 1990s China is the bank office. Nine out of the thirty buildings nominated as candidates for "Beijing's Ten Prominent Buildings of the 1980s" were hotels, and ten out of the thirty candidates for "Beijing's Ten Prominent Buildings of the 1990s" were banks or commercial offices.[98] In response to Deng Xiaoping's call for "constructing socialism with a distinctive Chinese character," China became more and more integrated into the international market. This process of globalization, however, has led to the revival of more traditional Chinese cultural and artistic motifs in architecture.

It seems paradoxical that China's architectural style was international while China

Fig. 1.19. West Railway Station, 1996. Zhu Jialu and others. *Photograph by author.*

saw itself as a Third World country, and that the architectural style has turned to nationalism just as China's national identity has shifted to that of a competitor in the international market. The use of traditional motifs is a strategy to stand out, while the abstract manipulation of these national symbols fits well into contemporary world architectural practice in the 1990s.

Traditional architectural motifs, especially the time-honored "big roof" (*dawuding*), were widely adopted to represent the national character of China. Some applications were quite literal. One of the best-known examples was the West Railway Station, built in 1996 on Fuxing Road, on the south side of the West Chang'an Avenue extension. Its design included a gigantic *ge*-style three-story pavilion atop a grand fifteen-story modern arched structure, with four smaller *ge* located atop the four corners.[99] A row of repeating traditional archways decorates the lower section of the main façade. According to the official explanation, the grand arch symbolized the gate to the Chinese capital (fig. 1.19). However, after former Beijing mayor Chen Xitong, who sponsored big roofs as a design strategy to "take back the image of the old capital" (*duohui gudu fengmao*), was removed from the CCP Central Committee, no designer was

Fig. 1.20. August First Building (Military Commission Headquarters), 1999. Zhang Qiming and others. *Photograph by author.*

willing to claim responsibility for the West Station. Nevertheless, the use of the traditional roof as a national architectural symbol did not stop. The 1999 August First Building next door to the 1959 Military Museum on West Chang'an Avenue also has traditional big roofs, a style whose straight eave lines originate in the images in Han dynasty stone carvings (fig. 1.20).

Alongside these more or less literal applications of traditional architectural motifs, other buildings simplified, distorted, manipulated, or deconstructed the time-honored big roof.[100] Since the 1990s, architectural style has diversified along the avenue due to vastly increasing contact between China and the outside world in business, culture, and education. Joint design has become commonplace since China entered the international market, and the era of a dominant official style has ended. The 1996 Henderson (Hengji) Center furnished the façade of East Chang'an Avenue proper with postmodern columns, capitals, pointed roofs, and broken architraves from Western classical and baroque architecture (fig. 1.21). The comments of its chief

Fig. 1.21. Henderson (Hengji) Center, 1996. Liu Li and others. *Photograph by author.*

architect, Liu Li, exemplify the attitude of the times: "Style doesn't matter. Whether Chinese or Western, modern or classical, architectural forms are good as long as they are beautiful."[101] The 1999 headquarters of the Beijing Broadcasting and Television Bureau adopted a similar postmodern approach. Another building, a complex of gigantic glass and concrete boxes, the 1996 Oriental Plaza in the prestigious Wangfujing commercial district on East Chang'an Avenue proper has neither Chinese nor Western traditional architectural motifs. While the 1993 CCP Central Committee Propaganda Department headquarters offered a Chinese traditional revivalist structure with big roofs, the International Finance Building of 1996–98 dissolved such traditional rooflines into steel and glass details copied from large international firms such as KPF, HOK, and NBBJ.

The stylistic fragmentation of Chang'an Avenue façades at the threshold of the new millennium was epitomized by two important national projects: the China Mil-

lennium Monument of 2000 and the National Grand Theatre of 1998–2007. Both will be discussed in detail in chapter 5. While the former resembles a giant sundial and recalls the forms of altars from China's distant past,[102] the latter was designed by a French architect and is devoid of any traditional Chinese architectural motif. The appropriateness of constructing such a foreign structure in the most revered area of Beijing, and, maybe more seriously, the justification in allowing a Western architect to take charge of a national project of this stature, were widely debated. Further new development soon rendered such controversies obsolete. Almost all of the significant national projects in Beijing in the first decade of the new millennium have been designed by non-Chinese architects, from the Olympic stadium and the new international airport to the National Museum expansion. The new national identity of China as represented by the changing façade of Chang'an Avenue is still in flux.

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