



13 XIDAN STREET, BEIJING: READING AND WRITING URBAN CHANGE

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“Thus we understand why spatial images play so important a role in the collective memory. The place a group occupies is not like a blackboard, where one may write and erase figures at will. No image of a blackboard can recall what was once written there. The board could not care less what has been written on it before, and new figures may be freely added. But place and group have each received the imprint of the other. Therefore every phase of the group can be translated into spatial terms, and its residence is but the juncture of all these terms. Each aspect, each detail, of this place has a meaning intelligent only to members of the group, for each portion of its space corresponds to various and different aspects of the structure and life of their society, at least of what is most stable in it.”

Maurice Halbwachs (1980),
The Collective Memory, p. 130.

A city is also is not like a blackboard, we can argue, following Maurice Halbwachs (1980). Yet, many observers see the built environment of cities as a collection of writings that accumulates in time and space. Each building, each sign, each coat of paint represents an intent, an expression of commerce, an assertion of identity, a message in social communication. However, unlike a blackboard, which is meant to be erased and written repeatedly, the writings that constitute the physical city are much less impermanent. At the same time, we also recognize that change is inevitable, some decay is unavoidable, and renewal and rebuilding are inexorable. Thus, the question is always how much should change, at what rate, and what specifically should be preserved and maintained. Because it is through our collective memory of the city and our associations with our past, that our sense of continuity with the stable elements of the structure of society is preserved. It is against this memory that the inevitability of change is judged, and sometimes challenged. Indeed it is this memory that shapes our collective sense of risk and uncertainty.

All too often, however, we transform our cities willy-nilly, and treat them like blackboards. We erase entire blocks or districts of the city in the name of urban renewal, or modernization, or imperatives of development. Harvey Cox (1966) recalls the discussion about the disappearance of historic, albeit run-down, Scollay Square in the late sixties in the wake of the construction of Government Center in downtown Boston. “...certain planners contend,” wrote Cox, “that Scollay Square simply does not exist anymore.” He added, in irony: “Like the lost continent of Atlantis or that prehistoric dinosaur called the pterodactyl, it is simply gone.” Like Halbwachs, Cox too argues about the visual continuity of spatial relationships in the city that represented organization of social relationship in space. He spoke eloquently of social

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and psychological significance of the loss of place in our everyday life. He further argued that the secularization of the western material culture had systematically divested space of sacral or symbolic values and had contributed to declining respect for place.

Thirty years later, Harvey Cox's reflections on the loss and change of the visual environment, which were triggered by urban renewal of American cities, are still relevant in the context of the urban development of third world cities of rapidly expanding economies. The scale and scope of the transformation of major Chinese cities, for example, is truly unprecedented. The imperatives of development in a global economy are far more irreverent than what Cox saw in the urban renewal of American cities thirty years ago. Global capital is much too impatient today, and it is reflected in the high discount rate and expectations of large returns on investment.

Development of course always involves change. To quote Hirschman (1988), development implies a "chain of disequilibria." In the urban context, it means discontinuity, disjunction, and dissolution. It is to be expected in transitional urbanism (Banerjee, 1992). In this paper we will examine the nature of disjunction in the proposed development of a historic shopping street in Beijing, a street located within the historic Ming and Qing dynasty walled city, immediately west of the Forbidden City. Today it is slated for major widening, from its present width of about 30 meters to a final width of 70 meters, and expected to accommodate some six million square feet of additional retail space. Our aim here is to interpret the timing, pace and scale of such massive and unprecedented urban change, and to situate it in the context of recent writings on comparative urbanism. We argue that such change might be analyzed in the metaphorical construct of the Faustian imperative of development as discussed by Marshall Berman (1982). Drawing from the familiar notion of the city as text, we argue that it is not just the reading but the writing of the text that is also critically important for urban designers and planners. What role do designers and planners play in writing the script of urban change?

The City As Text

The idea that city can be read as text grew out of early writings on urban semiotics and has recently become popular in a number of disciplines, such as sociology, art history, literature, and geography¹. Surprisingly, in the field of planning we have been minimally aware of this possibility, although Lynch (1960) had emphasized "legibility" of the visual form of cities almost forty years ago². Text, however, is but one of many metaphors (like tree, machine, organism, market, bazaar, and theater) that could help us understand the city³. It might help us to see the city in a different way, "a way that could not be imagined before the metaphor was used"⁴. It allows us to explore the deep meanings imbedded in the urban landscape, and to discover a variety of clues and messages about the social, political, economic, and cultural contexts within which

the city is written and re-written. More importantly, the text metaphor acknowledges the complex, dynamic and interactive relationship between the authors and the audience⁵. Thus the city is constantly endowed with new meanings as people read this text in many different ways through their daily activities and experiences. This interpretation of the city helps planners and architects to be aware of the fact that the lines that they draw on a piece of paper become the defining text for people's daily lives. This calls for an increased sensitivity to the design of urban space.

In a way the city is a very unusual text form. Unlike conventional texts it is not portable. The observer must navigate through the space of the text, to be able to read it. Even that is not quite guaranteed, since the text may not have an obvious beginning or an end, and often one might find some critical lines and pages missing. In the earlier times when the city was a discrete, geographical, economic, political, and social unit, boundaries were well-defined, and the its text had a clear sequence. Today, there are more boundaries within the city than between the city and the rural space. In that sense, the city as physical text is not necessarily universally accessible. It may be risky or impossible to move through the text of the city, since access to many places within the city is restricted. There are barriers and controls. One may need a key, or have to pay a gate fee, or to be of right class or color (like gated communities or ghettos). In some instances, the access to the whole city may be restricted (like the ones in socialist economies, or Mecca to non-Muslims)⁶.

Despite all these difficulties in reading the city as text, is it still possible to decide what the basic syntax of the city is? Of course there have been many attempts to decompose the city into basic building blocks that fill its space. Thus the built environment of the city has been disaggregated into dwellings, "buildings and monuments"⁷, "streets, public spaces, districts, and city edges"⁸. Others have tried to deconstruct the city into its social elements—its citizens, ethnic groups, and communities.. Furthermore, one should also remember that the city not only can be read from its visual form, but also sensed through its palpable ambiance, even if invisible, as suggested by writings of Calvino (1972), Lynch (1960) and Raban (1977).

Reading the City

Like any other text, the city as text also has an audience, a real or imaginary group of persons who are acquainted, could be acquainted, or are meant to be acquainted with the city. The city is read daily by countless people at different times through sight, hearing, touch, taste or smell⁹. We read the city by simply living in it, interpreting it in infinitely varied ways. In that sense, there is no such a thing as "the city," but there are "cities" as Jonathan Raban would argue:

"For better or worse, it (the city) invites you to remake it, to consolidate it into a shape you can live in. You, too, decide who you are, and the city will again assume a fixed

form around you. Decide what it is, and your own identity will be revealed, like a position on a map fixed by triangulation. Cities, unlike villages and small towns, are plastic by nature. We mold them in our images: they, in turn, shape us by the resistance they offer when we try to impose our own personal form on them. In this sense, it seems to me that living in cities is an art, and we need the vocabulary of art, of style, to describe the peculiar relationship between man and material that exists in the continual creative play of urban living. The city as we imagine it, the soft city of illusion, myth, aspiration, nightmare, is as real, maybe more real, than the hard city one can locate on maps, in statistics, in monographs on urban sociology and demography and architecture."¹⁰

Our reading of the city is affected by a number of factors¹¹; (1) the quality of the itinerary: i.e. the routine (journeys between place of work and of residence) versus the exceptional (shopping, walking around at random without having any preconditioned idea of where we want to go); (2) the variations which refer to our affective state: i.e. happy vs. unhappy; (3) those which refer to our material situation: i.e. man vs. female, child vs. adult, low income people vs. high income, pedestrians vs. motorists, and the like.

In the planning discipline, Kevin Lynch (1960) made one of the first, and certainly most influential investigations of reading the city through his studies of cognitive maps¹². His aim, indeed, was to discover the image of the city its readers form through their interactions with the city. He was interested in increasing the legibility of the city. Lynch's analysis has stimulated subsequent research by behavioral geographers and environmental psychologists and has led to a better and more informed urban design. In recent years, however, his approach has been criticized for being limited to an understanding of the city at a "perceptual knowledge of physical form"¹³. Ledrut (1973), for example, sees his way of analysis as being no different from analyzing the behavior of animals in a maze: both are adopting to their environment¹⁴. It is now generally accepted that the city is not only perceived as Lynch argued, but it is also conceived by its residents on the basis of what they do there. In that sense, the city in which we actually live is socially produced and, therefore, is ideological in its content.

Writing the City

Some literary critics argue that the meaning of a text has more to do with its audience than with its author. Some go so far as to say that the meaning of a text has nothing to do with the author but is solely derived through its audience. Although any text can be read differently by different readers it cannot exist without original intentions and ascribed by its creators (its authors).

Unlike conventional texts that are written by identifiable authors at a particular time and place, however, the city is simultaneously written by anonymous and partial authors: by planners, architects, developers, politicians, economists,

engineers, landscape architects, community groups, not to mention people who live in the city, its inhabitants. The authors of this anthology may never know each other and may live centuries apart. They do not usually cooperate in writing the collective text of the city. Yet, there is a partnership among these authors of the city. Every generation maintains some parts of the city text and erases some part of its inheritance. The final creation is a city text with many layers forming a "palimpsest,"¹⁵ a composite landscape made up of different built forms superimposed upon each other with the passing of time¹⁶.

On each layer of the city palimpsest inscribed are the natural, political, socio-cultural, and economic life (context) of the city at the time the layer was produced (which are always unfixed, contested, and multiple)¹⁷. As Italo Calvino put it nicely about Zaira (city of high bastions);

"The city... does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls."¹⁸

It is the writing of the text of this contemporary city that we turn to in the following text. We recognize that much has been written in recent years about the city as text and how to read such text. As noted previously, some of this literature has been triggered by semiotics of space, and the notion of city as sign. Others are written as post-modern and post-colonial interpretation of city building of the past. But relatively little of this literature has been devoted to the writing of the city text in contemporary times, in the context of economic development and modernization. It is our intent here to examine the role of city planning and design in the context of capital accumulation, investment and stock formation in a new global economic order. What follows is a discussion of the planned transformation of a historic street in Beijing against the background of unprecedented transformation of the historic city induced by imperatives of modernization and economic development.

Xidan Street: A Historical Major Shopping Area in Beijing

Xidan has been a commercial street in Beijing since the seventeenth century. During the Ming (13th-17th Century) and Qing Dynasties (17th-20th Century), it was a major grid road connecting two of the historic city gates: Xuanwumen in the south (which was torn down during the socialist period) and Deshengmen in the north¹⁹ (Figure 1). Today Xidan Street is one of the three major commercial areas in Beijing located to the west of the Forbidden City. The other two include Qianmen and Wangfujing. These three are not complementary to each other as far as the sorts of commodity and customer composition are concerned. Qianmen has been a commercial center off and on since the beginning of the fifteenth century²⁰.

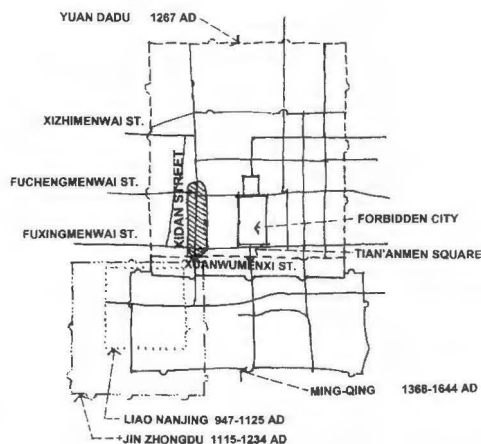


Figure 1 Location of Xidan Street Development in the context of historic-walled cities of Beijing

Its entry is marked by the imposing, fifteenth century, double-arched Qianmen Gate just south of Tiananmen Square. Qianmen continues to function as a traditional commercial center, serving a large proportion of customers from Beijing's agricultural hinterland²¹. It is characterized by hundreds of shops, restaurants, refreshment rooms, theaters and inns that are arranged in a row along crowded narrow streets, typical of Chinese style commercial areas. Located east of the Forbidden city, Wangfujing on the other hand, is considered a modern, western style shopping area with several large department stores and many smaller retail shops lining the street. It houses some international brand names like Cerruti and Giorgio Armani. It is close to the eastern part of the city, not too far from the diplomatic enclave in the Chaoyang district inhabited by expatriate population with a higher purchasing power. Its customers are mainly upper end shoppers consisting of Hong Kong and other overseas Chinese tourists. Compared to Qianmen and Xidan, the commercial functions of Wangfujing developed much later, only at the beginning of the twentieth century.



Figure 2 Xidan Market, a major department store

Today, Xidan is a shopping area with large department stores and many smaller strip commercial and restaurants²². Goods in different quality and grade are provided in the area. Big-box retail intermingles with local street markets linked by hutongs to centuries-old courtyard housing situated just east and west of the main spine. The three major shopping centers along this north-south corridor are the Xidan Market (Figure 2), Xidan Shopping Center and Xidan International Mansion. It draws its customers (mainly local people rather than tourists) from the suburbs in the west and north west of Beijing, and the West City proper where a large number of government agencies, research institutions and colleges, and many residential quarters (the residents of which enjoy high incomes) are located²³. A new financial district is also located to the west of Xidan.

As a commercial area Xidan Street ranks after Wangfujing in respect to size (total operating space), total turnover and profit per operating space²⁴. Qianmen follows these two. However, among the three major shopping areas of Beijing, the accessibility of Xidan is the highest because it holds the shortest distance to subway stops. On average, it is one of the major nodes in the urban road network of Beijing, and a number of bus and trolley lines meet at this crossroads. According to Wu-yang (1990) who carried out a central place theory analysis on Beijing's commercial network, this makes Xidan and its vicinity a candidate to become the CBD of Beijing in the near future while Wangfujing and Qianmen would be commercial centers of high rank (metropolitan centers).

In addition to three major commercial areas that serve as downtown centers for the entire city and attract large pools of non-resident customers, new commercial centers are being developed in Beijing²⁵. These include specialized computer and electronics retail stores in northwestern Haidian district and the joint venture Lufthansa Center/ Landmark Towers area development in northeastern Chaoyang District. Haidian District has a high concentration of research and commercial enterprises associated with high technology. Chaoyang District, however, is the center of foreign embassies and diplomatic residences, foreign residential, social and retail establishments. Therefore, it is designated as the "Foreign - Influenced Area." The majority of its retail demand is foreign tourists, expatriates and embassy personnel. Besides these newly emerging commercial centers Beijing is dotted with hundreds of local commercial centers of varying scope and size.

Transformation of Beijing: Plans Versus Markets

Although the transformation of Beijing, and indeed that of China, is attributed to the nation's embrace of market economy in the mid-eighties, the seeds of the change were planted immediately after the end of Cultural Revolution in the late seventies. In the fourteen years since 1978 a total investment of 2.7 billion yuan (or \$400 million) was directed to the

improvement of urban infrastructure, amounting to 21.2% of the city's total investment in fixed assets. Thus a total of over two billion was spent in the transformation of the urban form of Beijing between 1978 and 1992. By 1985 Beijing already had a total office space of 6.73 million square meters or about 70 million square feet. In another seven years, by 1992, it has increased to 9.5 million square meters or over 100 million square feet. By mid-nineties, the retail space in Beijing has grown to over 5 million square meters or about 55 million square feet. By 1992 the Beijing Land Administration Bureau has negotiated investment projects on 1369 hectares of land, involving about \$371 million, more than half of which came in the form of foreign capital. As China's economy is growing at an astounding rate of 8-9% per year (12.4% since 1992, compared with the US average of 2.8%), both domestic capital formation and foreign investment are growing at a concomitant pace. For the economy as a whole, foreign investment accounts for more than 5% of gross domestic product.

Thus the text for transformation of Beijing is written by a combination of both state intervention and domestic and foreign capital. The emerging landscape is seemingly one of unbridled market economy that has helped raise living standards and create a new consumer culture. The question is: what role, if any, does city planning have in writing this text?

Municipality planners of Beijing of course would argue that they are trying their best to manage this transformation as reasonably as they can. The master plan of Beijing has several goals that attempt to protect the original text of the historic urban pattern. These include: protecting and developing the central axis of the city; retaining the line of the old city wall; protecting the net of rivers and lakes closely related to the evolution of the city; preserving the original "chessboard" pattern of the roads; assimilating the traditional grey dwellings of the city; maintaining height controls in the vicinity of the Forbidden City; protecting city vistas; protecting historic streetscapes; increasing number of city squares; protecting old trees, increasing green spaces, and so on. One might look at these goals as a way to write the organization of the text, and to establish the basic syntax of the language. And one could argue that some of these policies indeed have helped to maintain the historic urban pattern, only if visible from a satellite camera. But very little remains at the street level that makes the pattern apparent or visible with the exception of occasional gates or walls or temples or gardens. Some of the social memory, however, continues in the naming of the streets that maintains reference to outside or inside of the various gates of the old city wall, none of which exist today.

Rewriting Xidan

Like any other text, Xidan commercial area as text comes into existence by its authors, readers and contexts in which it is written and read. In this section, as a reader of Xidan's landscape, we look at the relationship between some of the

authors of this urban text and the larger historical context of economic, political, and cultural change. What we decipher from this text is that although it was the Chinese history and traditions that produced the text of Xidan until very recently, today Xidan is being written to a great extent by the private investors and developers as well as by Chinese government officials. The intent of these new authors is to respond to the urgent needs of the emerging market economy in China in general and in Beijing in particular. Therefore, they are in search of an order, rationality, and efficiency, and they do seem to care more about the money and less about the environment.

Xidan Commercial Area constitutes only a small example to the recent obsession with growth in China in the form of increased real estate construction. According to the Beijing Municipal Planning Commission, for example, approximately 6 million square feet of retail development is planned and approved for Xidan, an amount far exceeding the total retail space in downtown Los Angeles. This number is quite high considering the fact that Xidan is only one of the three centers in Beijing where the commercial development will be speed up according to the Beijing Master Plan. Such amount of proposed construction makes one wonder if there is indeed a demand of such magnitude. Yet true to the spirit of market liberalism, the local planners are not about to question the validity of such assumptions, as long as investors are willing to bring the money. Signs of overbuilding and slow demand are becoming apparent today in many parts of Beijing, including the Xidan corridor. The construction of a massive mixed use complex at the prime corner of Wangfujing and Changan Street is on hold indefinitely, because of sudden drying up of foreign capital. Similarly another major office and retail complex that was constructed by clearing out the traditional shopping area along Xidan, now sits empty, waiting for capital and customers. The massive Junefield Plaza at the southern end of Xidan Street, has yet to find adequate financing—preferably foreign—to begin construction of the hotel tower, although the main office and retail complexes are near completion (Figure 3).



Figure 3 Junefield Plaza, a hotel-office complex under construction on Xidan Street, south of Fuxingmenwai Street

Impatient Capital and Tragedy of Development

Harvey (1985) argues that “the very existence of money as a mediator of community exchange radically transforms and fixes the meanings of space and time in social life and defines the limits and imposes necessities upon the shape and form of urbanization”²⁶. Although this was not true for China for centuries, money has finally started to talk in Chinese urban landscapes. In better terms, it has started to write the Chinese city and push for changes in the style of buildings, in the use of urban land, and the form of urban areas. The skyline of today’s Chinese city is highly in contrast with the Chinese imperial city as well as with the uniform gray horizons of the socialist city of the 1960s and 1970s.

The power of money on the Chinese urban landscape has become visible since 1979. This was the year when the government officially opened up China to world markets and foreign investments, and promoted economic and technical cooperation with other countries. In the 1980s, the dominance of central state planning was reduced, and a more market-led economy was permitted. In this new economy the majority of the production units are owned by the state officially, but managed according to free market principles.

In a time of high economic growth, combined with a number of reforms on land use rights, local government officials (one of the major authors of the urban text in China) have now started to realize the relative economic value of inner city sites, and make money for the local government through agreements, open bidding or auctions²⁷. This has led to an enormous increase in the development of new office and commercial projects, upscale residential developments as well as infrastructure improvement projects in most Chinese cities.

Of course one would ask, “What is wrong with development?”. Marshall Berman (1982) offers an answer by giving a fascinating allegory. According to Berman, Goethe’s Faust is the first and still the best case of the tragedy of development. Faust in Goethe’s writing first emerges as The Dreamer, then, through Mephisto’s mediation transforms himself into The Lover, and finally, long after the trudge of love is over, he reaches his life’s climax as The Developer²⁸. Goethe’s Faust, unlike its predecessors [i.e. Johann Spiess’s *Faustbuch* (1587), and Christopher Marlowe’s *Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (1588)] wants for himself “a dynamic process that will include every mode of human experience, joy and misery alike, and that will assimilate them all into his self’s unending growth; even the self’s destruction will be an integral part of its development”²⁹. Berman calls Faust “The Primal Growthman” and argues that he “would tear the whole world apart for the sale of insatiable expansion, without asking or caring what unlimited growth would do to nature or to man.”³⁰ One interesting thing about Faust’s trudge of development is that it is a trudge that “nobody wants to confront—neither advanced nor backward countries, neither capitalist nor socialist ideologies—but that everybody continues to re-enact.”³¹

Thus the global capital is not the only villain in this game. Capital’s instinct is in making profit, not in development in the Faustian sense. The persona of Faust—the “primal growthman,” as Berman suggests—is interestingly manifested in the form of the Chinese state. Even though the leadership and the ideology have changed, the primal urge for development and modernization have not. We should recall the circumstances of the disappearance of the old city wall. The gates and parts of the wall began to come down during the last years of the Qing dynasty, and during the Japanese control, the remaining segments of the wall and gates came down during the socialist era, as the “orders came down from the very top.” Whether it was the Qing monarch, or the Japanese colonialist, or Mao Zhe Dong, or Deng Xio Ping, the text of the city has been written by the primal Faustian urge of development. Today most of the Third World States are preoccupied with the Faustian drive, aided and abetted by the World Bank and the global capital. Indeed, this is how this tragedy of development is played out not just on Xidan Street in Beijing, but throughout the developing world.

Notes

- ¹ See, for example, Keith and Cross (1993), Savage (1995), Duncan (1990), Short (1996), Soja (1986) (1995), Dear (1998).
- ² Not until very recently have there been some attempts to include literary theory in the planning discipline. Milroy (1980), Mandelbaum (1990), (1993), Tett and Wolfe (1991), Healey in Mandelbaum, Mazza and Burchell (eds.) (1996), Fischler (1995), for example, applied the conceptions of literary theory in order to understand the ways written texts of planning (planning documents) are produced and read.
- ³ In planning there has been an increasing interest in metaphors. See, for example, Verma (1993) and Sandercock (1995).
- ⁴ Rorty (1989): 16.
- ⁵ Etymologically, the term audience refers to a group of listeners, the meaning of which goes back to a time when the primary form of acquaintance with the work of an author was through spoken world. But here we refer to an audience as a group of readers.
- ⁶ In Chinese cities, for example, until very recently, migration was forbidden unless the interested party was specifically recruited, for a job or university study. To police this system, each household was listed a registration booklet (*hukou bu*) which listed the members of the household and their gender, age, marital status, class background, work unit, educational level, hometown, etc. The police had to be informed of any changes in the household. This system helped control the flow of migrants and stabilize the residential population in China for decades.

- ⁷ Rossi (1994): p.5.
- ⁸ Kostof (1992).
- ⁹ Although according to some we live in a world of things seen, a world that is visual, seeing is not more important than the other senses in an empirical understanding of the city. As phenomenology emphasizes, the full ontological potential of human experience is important as far as the city is concerned. Accordingly, the city can be visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory, depending on how we perceive it.
- ¹⁰ Raban (1974): 9-10.
- ¹¹ Fauque (1973) in Gottdeiner and Lagopoudolos (1986).
- ¹² Cadwallader (1996) and Gottdiener and Lagopoulos (1986) emphasize that there have been some early studies on reading the urban environment by Trowbridge (1913), Frey (1945), Tolman (1948), Wright (1947), Wahl and Strauss (1958).
- ¹³ Gottdeiner and Lagopoudos (1986): 7.
- ¹⁴ Faquoe (1973) in Gottdiener and Lagopoulos (1986).
- ¹⁵ Harvey (1988).
- ¹⁶ This, however, does not mean that we can unpack the layers in the city and explain one by one and interpret the past.
- ¹⁷ Following Pierce, Barthes, and Eco, urban socio-semiotic approach has provided a useful tool for deciphering the layers of meaning hidden in the urban environment. According to this approach, semiotic systems are not produced by themselves but are rooted in non-semiotic processes of social, political, and economic practices/context of society (material conditions of everyday life).
- ¹⁸ Calvino (1972): 11.
- ¹⁹ Xuanwumen was torn down during the socialist period while Deshengmen was kept since it was closer to the main north-south axis of Beijing.
- ²⁰ Traditionally, trade and commerce within the Chinese city were strictly regulated and restricted by officials within the markets which occupied discrete and very limited space within the city. Before the Ming dynasty, for example, the market in Beijing was only allowed in the northern part of the Forbidden city (in the area of the drum and bell towers). To the south were the administrative quarter, the ancestral temple to the east, and altar of grains and soils to the west. Although this tradition was followed during the Ming Dynasty, commercial activities were no longer confined to the northern part of the city alone. The location of the market had started to shift to the west of the imperial city. See Sit (1995): 246-247. Also, during the socialist period in China (in the 1950s and 1960s and during the years so called cultural Revolution), the development of Beijing's trade and service was quite slow.
- ²¹ Gaubatz in Davis, Kraus, Naughton and Perry (eds.) (1995).
- ²² Office and residential use is quite limited in Xidan.
- ²³ Only 30% of its customers are from other sites and regions. See Wu-yang (1990): 53.
- ²⁴ Wu-yang (1990).
- ²⁵ Retail market in Beijing has developed gradually over the past ten years, but it was only in the last three years has there been a profusion of western goods in the market. As living standards in China improve, so do the quality and variety of consumer products. Today many western products can be found at local corner shops. Some of the major retailers coming to Beijing include Lafayette, Theme, the GAP, the newest. Brand names already in Beijing are Christian Dior, Hugo Boss, Nautica, and a string of cosmetic lines such as Elizabeth Arden and Shisheido. See JLW (1997).
- ²⁶ Harvey (1985): 1.
- ²⁷ Before China's transition to market economy, land in cities belonging to the people (namely the state) could only be transferred by the state by taking the needs and norms into consideration. The land could not be sold or leased to individuals, foreign ventures, or domestic companies. Since 1988, however, all institutions and individuals have had a right to land use though they do not have a right to ownership of land.
- ²⁸ Berman (1982): 40-41.
- ²⁹ Berman (1982): 40.
- ³⁰ Berman (1982): 83.
- ³¹ Berman (1982): 86.

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