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ID 1606 | THE MORE COMMERCIAL, THE LESS SAFE? –IMPACT OF COMMERCIALIZATION ON STREET SAFETY IN REVITALIZED DOWNTOWN AREA

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1 INTRODUCTION

Urban safety is one of the most important issues among sustainable development challenges. Over the past decade, the world has witnessed growing threats to the safety and security of cities and towns. These threatens, in terms of traffic accidents, traffic jam, environmental pollution, crime incidents, etc, have all brought severe challenges to place-making and management on urban space. Streets, the public space where people commute, walk, go shopping, stay, and live, has played a key role in making our cities safe and secure for generation to come. Topics of street security cover a series of urban safety issues, such as transportation safety, defense and security, psychological security, and so on, which are worthy of attention by city planners and urban designers.

Streets are important elements in downtown revitalization. Among the globe, infilled development of commercial and retail functions in old downtown cities has being contested as an effective revitalization approach to promote the vitality of neighborhood with various functions, but also as a growing threaten to local safety as well as an overburden to streets according to increasing tourist and traffic flows. There are abundant researches on gentrification trends as well as discussions on urban revitalization approaches. As the basic demand of local residents and immigrants, the security issues, however, are in lack of discussion. Although there is common sense that the entering of immigrants, commerce, and tourists have increased unsafety risks to local neighborhoods, very few scholars have investigated this topic and make scientific verification.

Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District, a typical historical conservation residential area in inner city of Beijing, is an exemplification of downtown revitalization in recent decades with its typical fabric of streets and public space. Nowadays this area is mixed with local residents and a large amount of boutiques, bars, retails, and restaurants. Taking Jin-Si-Tao area (JST as abbreviation in following paragraphs) as example, this

paper analyzes and maps the impact of commercialization on streets safety in local community through exploring the following questions:

1. Within the dense footprint of residential blocks in downtown area, what are the major spatial characteristics of streets that affect safety and security issues?
2. How do streets change after commercialization and revitalization in terms of public space, public activities, and management? What are the subsequently impact on street security?
3. What are the implications on urban planning and street design?

This article is organized as follows. After this introduction, the second section makes an analytical framework of street security based on literature review, and introduces the research methodology of this article. The third section introduces the evolution of JST area in Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District, as well as research findings on changes of streets before and after commercialization. The penultimate section explores transformation of users' psychological impression on street security issues and street attribute. This article concludes with the future direction that street design in revitalized downtown may take.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF STREET SECURITY

Streets are the backbone of urban experiences for users. The changes in different modes of transport have shaped urban form in history, as the impact of the motor car on the modern urban form shows. The modernist agenda of reshaping cities to accommodate the motor car, however, has come under pressure for a generation. Urban design is part of the campaign for pedestrian friendly urban environments, taming the cars, and support for the development of public transport. The order that the streets impose on the urban society, and the manner of experiencing it from inside a car, have been challenged by the meandering and free movement of pedestrians, who will have an entirely different experience of the city. Rather than a track for the fast movement of vehicles, the street is acknowledged as a social space, in which functional performance and social connections are reconciled.

Modern urban planning has proposed road hierarchy system, which raised transportation into an important topic in research of street security issues. The modernist ideas of movement, technology and functionality came together in the Charter of Athens. As the Charter writers argued, 'The street systems found in most cities and their suburbs today are a heritage of past eras... designed for the use of pedestrians and horse-drawn vehicles', and could 'no longer fulfil the requirements of modern types of vehicles' (Sert,1944). Alongside the phenomenal growth in the number and use of motor cars, these ideas were turned into manuals and policy documents to change the shape of cities. The conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, between parking space and cycling routs, and the inadequacy of small blocks when facing rapid traffic activities, have all emerged with mobility. As a result, during that period, street security was nothing but vehicle and traffic accidents.

The pendulum, however, swung back, and the paradigm shift of streets-to-roads was reversed. Once again the urban street became the paradigm, where the speed of traffic could be managed and limited and where pedestrians were conized as a legitimate basis for design of the streets. The official advice from the Department for Transport now favored pedestrians and cyclists. As the preface to an influential document *Manual for Streets*, outlines, 'For too long the focus has been on the movement function of residential streets. The result has often been places that are dominated by motor vehicles to the extent that they fail to make a positive contribution to the quality of life' (Department for Transport,2007). The new emphasis now was on showing 'the benefits that flow from good design and a higher priority for pedestrians and cyclists' (ibid). Many cities around the world have now embraced this second paradigm shift, producing master plans for pedestrians and cyclists and creating pedestrian and bicycle priority areas. Rather than the segregation of cars from pedestrians, the idea of sharing space between them, which has been practiced in countries such as the Netherlands, has been widely adopted.

In the street networks of the city, some streets have become the central axes, finding a special local character, or becoming the concentration of the prominent activities of the city. Especially in downtown, streets are the center of activities in local communities and even cities. The social aspects of streets have played important roles in impacting urban safety issues with regard to monitoring, crime prevention, and

evacuating places. Jacobs used the phrase of “Eyes on the Streets” in her book “The Death and Life of Great American Cities” to coin about the crucial importance of a vibrant street life to neighborhood safety and community (Jacobs, 1961). She argues that if there are residents and retails locating along both sides of streets, they would play the role of monitors for activities on streets, which in hence largely improve the degree of safety. The criminologist, Ray Jeffery, has coined and formulated an approach of CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design), in which altering the physical design of the communities in which humans reside and congregate can help to deter criminal activity. A more limited approach, termed defensible space, was developed concurrently by architect Oscar Newman (1972). Newman’s book, “Defensible Space: - Crime Prevention through Urban Design” came out in 1972. His principles were widely adopted but with mixed success. Later, Jan Gehl expanded the concept of “defensible space” into environmental field and practiced it in his urban design projects. Japanese scholar, Ito explored relationships between crime and urban environment and coined a series of specific strategies to promote urban safety (1988).

Since streets serve multiple functions involving transportation, location for social interaction, and public space for urban activities, this paper conducts an analytical framework of street security consisting of traffic safety, crime prevention, and psychological security. The conduction is based on the following assumptions: On one hand, users form their impression of street safety through physical environmental performance and spatial characteristics of streets. This impressions, such as whether they regard there is risk in crime, or whether they feel safe under monitoring, can lead to human-being activities. On the other hand, the physical road elements, such as cross-ways, pedestrian route design, and open space of corners, all affect traffic behaviors, which then lead to judgement of traffic security.

2.2 DATA AND RESEARCH METHOD

Our research case is located in Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District in Beijing. This district is a typical residential neighborhood in old downtown. Meanwhile, it is also a famous tourist attraction as well as concentration of commercial pubs and bars. One reason of why selecting it as the case study is that this district has well-preserved hutong-and- court-yard-fabric, and well-retained lifestyles for original residents. During the past decades, this district faces the same spatial challenges as well as other places in Beijing old city. Moreover, the gradually commercialization and infilled development process since thirty years ago have largely changed the phenomenon of streets. The case can serve as a great example in discussing impact of commercialization on old downtown.

In terms of impacts of revitalization on street security, this article develops a series of indexes on the changes of physical performance on streets before and after infilled development respectively. They include: spatial changes (such as number of retails, number of public space, etc), changes of lighting (elevation change, illumination, etc), changes of activities (local residents, tourists, shop owners, etc), and changes of management (on and off streets). The research data comes from following resources: ground survey on physical environment, questionnaire survey of residents and tourists, time-phased photographing, and traffic data.

3 CASE STUDY AND FINDINGS

3.1 SPATIAL EVOLUTION OF STREETS IN JINSITAO AREA, SHICHAHAI DISTRIC

The case, JST area, is located in Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District, which has the longest history during evolution of Beijing City. There is a saying that “Shi-Cha-Hai Lake comes first, Beijing City comes later”. In the historical planning of Jin and Yuan Dynasty, which is approximately 800 years ago, the water system in Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District is an important element in city layout. In Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the area of water reduced, while courtyards, temples, and local dwellings are built around the lake. The commercial activities sprouted up at that time. As of Qing Dynasty (1644-1912), the local authority renovated and dredged the rivers. The JST area was formed as a peninsula surrounded by lake on three sides. More and more imperial palace were constructed during Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District. On the other hand, the emergence of Lotus Market, Yanday Xiejie Street in this area illustrated this area as a civic center in Beijing. During the period of republication of China, the lack of management has led to environmental

pollution of water resources, causing business decline till late 1980s, when Beijing Municipality set the entire area into Historical Cultural Preservation District. Since then, Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District became an important place of interest in old downtown of Beijing.

The street of bar in Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District is another leisure and recreational tourist area after Sanliton area in Beijing. The first bar emerged in 1997. After the year of 2003, the pubs and bars get a booming development. Many local residents changed their own houses into shops with frontage for rent or sale. Since then, the “street of bar” has become a well-known place. It is also one of the most welcomed tourist places in Beijing, as there are many important cultural heritages in this area, such as Prince Gong Mansion, Drum Tower, and Former Residence of Soong Ching-ling. Mixed people and traffic flows, rental cycling routes and pedicab have brought high traffic pressure on this area (Figure 1).



Figure 1 – Location of JST Aera in Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District

Jin-Si-Tao area, located in the middle of Shi-Cha-Hai Lake District, is a peninsula between Qianhai Lake and Houhai Lake. It occupied a 20-hectare area. There are 18 hutongs and 469 courtyards in this area, among which, Big Jin-Si Hutong, with its zigzag shape, has the most distinct character in terms of physical layout. The design of such distinct form is to guarantee each courtyard can have just north-south orientation. Along the periphery of JST area, three of four borders are streets of bars, with local dwellings located inside this area. Prince Gong Mansion is located to the west of this site, with only 200 meter distant, attracting a lot of tourists visiting this area.

3.2 CHANGES OF STREETS BEFORE AND AFTER COMMERCIALIZATION

For the sake of safety and comfort, traditional dwellings in China have relatively closed facades, such as folk houses in Huizhou, classic earth building in Fujian, and courtyard in Beijing. Usually, its facade facing the streets only has doors without windows or only small windows. The main living space in the courtyard inside. The lighting and ventilation needs of surrounding buildings are mainly solved through internal courtyards. The vertical and horizontal arrangement of the fish-bone-style of hutongs connect courtyards in series. The traditional hutongs have more trafficability characteristics than social interactions. The street safety relies mainly on relatively closed courtyards and walls for passive defense.

The transformation of lifestyles in modern society has increased both number and complexity of people in old city. Especially in JST area, the crowd and the influx of leisure tourists have brought large impact to original lives in this area. The original relatively independent space of the streets and alleys has also undergone great changes.

3.2.1 SPATIAL CHANGES OF STREETS

There are two types of commercial store transformation happening in JST area. First, some residents opened up the walls of their dwellings along the street and change some rooms into small retails. Most of the retails are owned and managed by local residents themselves. Second, the house owners rent their courtyards out to tenants, who are in charge of decoration and transformation. These courtyards are changed to restaurant, cultural and creative shops. The latter ones are always located close to the street or bars on the periphery of JST area (Table 1).

Subject	Security Factors	Changes after Commercialization
Some light	Light from lamps and houses	Increase lighting
Good view of street	Width, transparency of facades	More open facades
A lot of residents	Brightness	--
Buildings adjacent to streets	Emergency refuge	Retails as refuge area
Black area	Danger area	Reduce of black area
Width of streets	Awareness to dangers	--
Footstep of pedestrians	Pavement of streets	Increase of pedestrians
Unconnected alleys	Risky factors	--
Blind corners	Risky factors	Reduce of blind corners
Few open spaces	Potential risks	More open space for activities
View from home	Attention, monitoring	More windows for monitoring

Table 1 – Spatial Changes on Streets after Commercialization

According to the boom of bar streets, the hutongs adjacent to the streets also changed a lot. The traditional alleys used to be other hutongs deep inside the JST area, with quiet and tranquil atmosphere. The development of bar streets bring more commerce into this area, turning the adjacent hutongs into lively pedestrian streets. Correspondingly with the transformation of functions on street, the facade has become more open: most of the shop façade along the street are decorated with glasses and open shop doors. Compared to the traditional closed walls along the alley, open facade of street can promote the safety of the street.

3.2.2 CHANGES OF LIGHTING ON STREETS

Due to the business properties of bar street, the safety of the neighborhood night is more worth discussing. In the study of the Japanese streets, the consideration of defense safety is mainly evaluated by night lighting, sound, sight, and blind corners, among which the brightness and range of lighting has the greatest impact on nighttime safety.

Traditional alley lighting mainly rely on street lamps. Because the alley is narrow, the lamps are usually ranged in a single row. If there once is a breakdown of lamp, the street would in trouble of lacking light. Meanwhile, the shape of alley is complex, some part of the alley is very dark at night and lack effective lighting through public infrastructure.

The introduction of commercial shops has effectively improved the dilemma. The waterfront bar street, including many of the shops and restaurants, makes waterfront area brightly lit in the evening and thus largely improves the security in the neighborhood along the alley. Inside the blocks, the infilled small retails improve the alley night brightness through various lighting approaches and improve its safety accordingly. On the one hand, due to the placement of the store, its facade becomes open, the internal light can be revealed, which can enhance the brightness of the street. At the same time, shops always installed many kind of light boxes at the door for their own publicity effect, which serve as another source of night lighting (Figure 2).

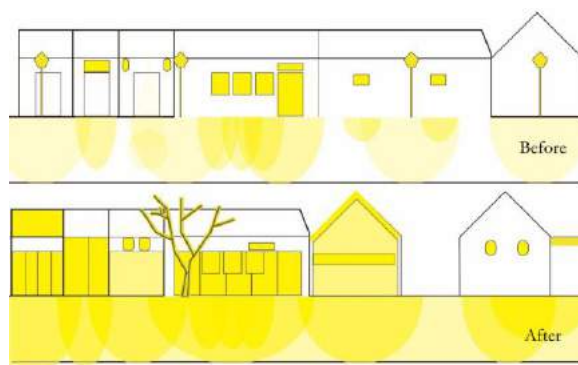


Figure 2 – Change of Lighting Before and After Commercialization

Based on the investigation of current site, lots of shops are generally located at the corner of alleys. Fortunately, many hutongs in JST area have such zigzag shape. Thus there are several retails and shops at each corner. According to the research of Japan Lighting Association, the layout of light source has an impact on crime prevention and the improvement of the security of the neighborhood. The road intersection is the most important location for light source layout. Thus the light source density should be appropriately increased in the twisted streets, which can make the highest efficiently use of lighting. The lighting along zigzag hutong in JST area just meet this requirement, it can enhance the security of the neighborhood in terms of lighting.

3.2.3 CHANGES OF ACTIVITIES ON STREETS

The location nearby several famous historical heritage made hutongs in JST area also changed from the traditional residential community into a tourist attraction. In the daytime activities, there has been increased a lot of human tricycle for hutong and courtyard tourism. This caused a large security risk to pedestrians, as the tricycle driving may easily run into pedestrians in narrow alleys. Moreover, the investigation shows that the visit to private courtyard was welcome by local residents in the early days, but gradually turn to be refused by more and more house owners because of its disturbance to their daily lives and potential unsafe risks.

Research shows that the bar streets have transformed from semi-public alley space into a commercial and leisure space with completely public nature (Figure 3). Its citizenship increased, and nature of local community gradually weakened. Many local residents usually choose waterfront areas as a daily walking place. The study found that residents of different ages all like rambling along the waterfront alleys, together with the crowd here to form a very lively night scene.



Figure 3 – Cognition of Public Nature of Streets

As the bar street business hours are usually at night, the local residents living habits have also changed. The field research in the region founds that the active time in the block produced a significant extension due to the impact of the night bar. The increasing crowd and accordingly large sound and noise disturbed nearby courtyards and local residents. The shops in the hutongs adjacent to bar streets all postponed their business hours to meet local demands. In this situation, the active hours of the neighborhoods are different from those in other regions. With the postponement of the business hours of business shops, the complexity of the activities of the people in the night area has been significantly improved, forming the result of the common improvement of potential dangers as well as monitoring control in the alley.

3.2.4 CHANGES OF MANAGEMENT ON STREETS

With the transformation of street nature, people's awareness of safety depends to a large extent on the situation of regional management. During field investigation, we found that there were many people in the street who carried out security work in the area to patrol the duty. They also provide tourists enquiry and information. Their presence has a relatively large protection on both local security and the psychological awareness of residents.

Local authorities take charge of street security management in terms of the following two aspects: one is the requirement that all bars should close before 12am, which to some extent guaranteed daily work and rest time for local residents, and also ease the contradiction between the residents and the merchants. Another approach is to add a number of security personnel to the streets. Through the survey, both local residents and tourists generally feel that security personnel in the region have had a great effect on regional security. Therefore, the existence of these groups has a positive effect on psychological safety for the regional residents.

4 DISCUSSION

In the process of gradually infilled development of JST area, the introduction of new commercial formats has increased the number and proportion of tourist groups in the alley, as well as led to the removal of many local residents, making a significant change of the local population structure. Its safety considerations are no longer only for the residents but also for tourists and consumers. Accordingly, real estate developers bring street traffic and security management into the scope of business management. The street property becomes an open public space instead of traditional community space.

Changes in the properties of the streets have also changed the psychological awareness of the residents. The waterfront area of JST area is no longer considered as a typical local neighborhood-belonged alley, but completely become a pedestrian street with commercial services. People's awareness of the open area of the bar streets is no longer confused with the internal alley system as well. The clustering of the typed commercial formats has a positive meaning for the zoning within this area and is more convenient for the uniform management and business practices.

The public space in the streets has become an important part of urban life and has an important role in ensuring the security of the neighborhood. Shops on the streets do not only bring convenience to local residents, but also serve as "eyes on streets" through providing places for different activities. Some retails owned by local residents can not only provide necessary life services for local residents and tourists, but also serve as "information center" for foreign visitors, which hence is a great advertisement for local community. The owners and merchants also admit that travelling behaviors have brought more crowd into this area, thus they always monitor the street security through the windows and doors. Strangers will be inquired by shop owners. This undoubtedly has a positive effect on the safety of the entire neighborhood.

5 CONCLUSION

To sum up, the research finds that while the infilled development adds traffic pressure to inner city and increases complexity of users in this area, the retails and shops serve as monitors and guidance on streets for local communities by applying lighting, re-defining public space, well-organized management, and

remodeling users' cognition of this place. Besides the complexity of immigrant and its following crime risk, the commercialization of the JST area has had a positive impact on the safety of the neighborhood. The impact on the street security can be analyzed from two aspects in term of spatial transformation and psychological impression. From the perspective of spatial performance, commercial placement to some extent breaks down the closeness of original area and has increased a number of "eyes on streets". It also enhances the brightness of the street night and decrease crime risk in this area. From the perspective of crowd psychology, the introduction of commercial functions has changed the residents' cognition on local blocks. The most effective way to enhance people's psychological security is to strengthen the management of business behavior and to increase public security services.

Approaches of revitalization in inner cities has brought a series of changes to local communities with regard to activities along streets, daily lives in public spaces, social atmosphere in neighborhood, and transportation flows. The paper argues that these changes have transformed streets in local neighborhood from an original enclosed, reserved place toward an open, inclusive public place for both residents and tourists. A mix-use community environment that is both vital and livable is possible if planners and urban designers incorporate elaborated urban safety issues into street design guidelines and if local society can adopt new management approaches on commercial and public space.

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ID 1620 | VISIBILITY OF TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN AMSTERDAM

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1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout history immigrants have always played a significant role in shaping the streetscape of Western European cities through their amenities, which are characteristic for the immigrant neighbourhoods. Some of the oldest examples of these are the Jewish and Chinese neighbourhoods located in many of the major cities like London, Paris, and Amsterdam. However, it was after the 1960s that the immigrants influenced