Analysis on the General Conception and Planning of the Road Trip Campsite along the Land Silk Road in China

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Abstract

In order to build a general planning system for road trip campsite in five northwest provinces along the Silk Road, this paper summarizes the current situation and constraints of campsites in each province through data collection, data analysis and field investigation. On this basis, we put forward the overall construction and planning ideas of the camp. The purpose is to scientifically, reasonably and orderly plan the construction scheme of road trip routes, camping sites and campsites along the Silk Road, so as to promote the healthy development of tourism and cultural experience in the areas along the Silk Road, provide convenient and safe travel routes and recreation environment for tourists. At the same time, it also improves the regional economy and people's living standards along the line.

Keywords

The Silk Road; Road Trip; Campsite; Conception; Planning

Introduction

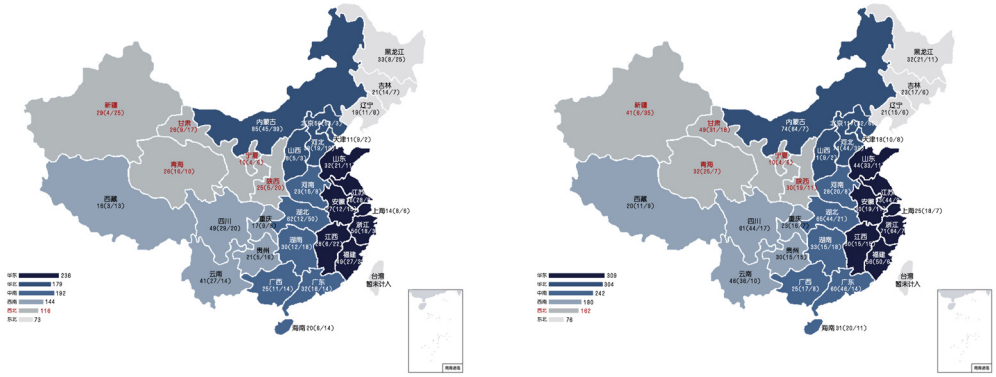
With the reform and opening up, the economy and living standards of the Chinese people continue to improve, resulting in an increase in the number of private cars. Therefore, a new form of tourism—"road trip" has become one of the choices for public travel. With its own global influence and profound history, the Silk Road has become a popular tourist destination for tourists all over the world due to its multi-ethnic, multi-religious culture, spectacular natural landscape, especially those road trip tourists who want to closely experience nature and have a challenging spirit. Therefore,

the tourism routes and campsites matching road trip appeared passively, and gradually developed into a new type of tourism experience (Zhai & Lv, 2017).

According to statistics, at present, in the more economically developed areas of China, road trip campsites are in full swing, especially in the coastal and central and eastern regions (Lin & Lin, 2018). In contrast, the road trip campsites in Northwest China has not been put on the planning and construction agenda. Although there is an individual case, it is not on a large scale. Therefore, in order to support the large-scale development of the western region, do a good job in economic construction and enhance the happiness index of the people, the government issued a relevant guidance document in August 2015: "Speed up the construction of road trip campsites in ethnic minority areas, along the Silk Road and key tourist areas in the Yangtze River Economic Belt."

Development Status of Road Trip Campsites in China along the Silk Road

At present, the planning and construction of camps in Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai and Xinjiang along the Silk Road are still relatively scattered, with a late start, slow development and a large gap compared with the coastal and central and eastern regions (Figure 1). Since June 2014, the areas along the Silk Road have been ranked first in the "China Road Trip Route" (Ma, 2015). After that, the relevant policies of "Belt and Road Initiative" have been introduced, which have made tourism in Northwest China have a good momentum of development. At the same time, many provinces and regions also realize the value and significance of road trip tourism to drive the local economy and have gradually been paid more and more attention to.



2016 2017

Figure 1 Statistics on the number of road trip campsites in China f rom 2016 to 2017 (Source: painted by the author)

Due to the tourism resources along the Silk Road, the change of mass tourism concept, and the convenience of transportation, the number of campsites in the five provinces and autonomous

regions at the end of 2017 increased significantly compared with that in 2016 (Figure 2). However, based on the analysis of the existing campsites in the provinces along the line, we can clearly see that there is a lack of macro overall planning. The lack of a unified management model, unscientific distribution of campsites, fragmentation of a system, and excessive concentration all have many negative impacts on scenic spots. For example, most of the campsites in Qinghai are built around the Qinghai Lake Scenic Area; developers rarely formal, mostly for the private construction, but also lack of overall, unified, safe construction standards. In addition, there are also large-scale campsites in the provinces along the line, and all of them are equipped with wooden house villa area, RV camp, tent camp, comprehensive service body and supporting landscape facilities. However, their architectural forms in public areas are generally the same, lacking regional and cultural characteristics.

But there are also great cases, such as Camp 151 in Erlang Sword Scenic Area, Qinghai. Each room in the camp is named after a representative scenic spot in Qinghai Province, which is also an alternative way of publicizing "Greater Qinghai". In addition, the Yongjing Public Aviation Brigade and the Yellow River Three Gorges Self-driving Tour Base in Gansu Province is also an excellent representative. It was rated as the "China's Most Potential Camping Site" from 2017 to 2018. The camp takes green, healthy and leisure as its business philosophy, and sets up viewing pavilion, veranda, flower trellis, greenbelt and ecological surrounding water system. It has become a self-driving camp integrating accommodation, catering, ecological tourism, cultural experience, leisure and entertainment. However, there are few such typical cases along the silk road.

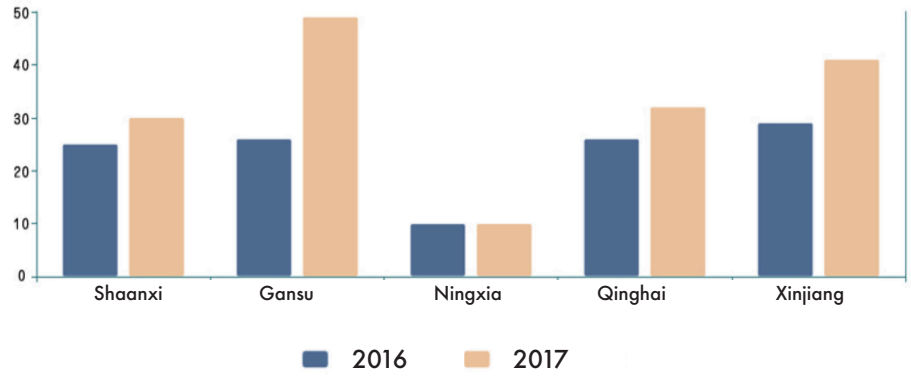


Figure 2 Statistics of number of road trip campsites in five northwest provinces along the Silk Road from 2016 to 2017 (Source: painted by the author)

Influencing Factors of Road Trip Campsites in China along the Silk Road

Favorable Factors

(1) National Policy Support

The National Tourism Administration issued the "Car Road Trip Campsites Development Plan" in May 2017, creating a classic road trip route of "three circles and two lines": around the coast, the central and eastern regions, through the eastern and western parts and covering the "Belt and Road Initiative" land Silk Road (Figure 3). At the same time, the five provinces along the Silk Road have also issued relevant policies to support them. For example, Shaanxi issued "Several Opinions on Further Promoting Tourism Investment and Consumption" in February 2016, proposing a unified plan for the construction of campsites for road trip tours. In June 2016, Gansu proposed the goal of making Gansu Province a "international RV camping destination" in the "Silk Road Gansu Transportation RV Camping Site Development Plan" (Zhu & Xue, 2019). In October 2016, Qinghai built a campsite system in the province based on the "Qinghai Province Road Trip Tourism Product Development Plan" and built a high-standard road trip campsite and landscape corridor system. In March 2017, Ningxia issued the "the 13th Five-Year Global Tourism Development Plan for Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region" and guided the construction of road trip camps, and actively created tourism products with the ancient charm. In June 2017, Xinjiang clearly pointed out in the "Work Plan for Promoting the Construction and Management of road trip RV Camps in Xinjiang Uyghur Region" that different types of campsites should be built on the basis of environmental protection, combined with the actual situation of the development of road trip tourism.

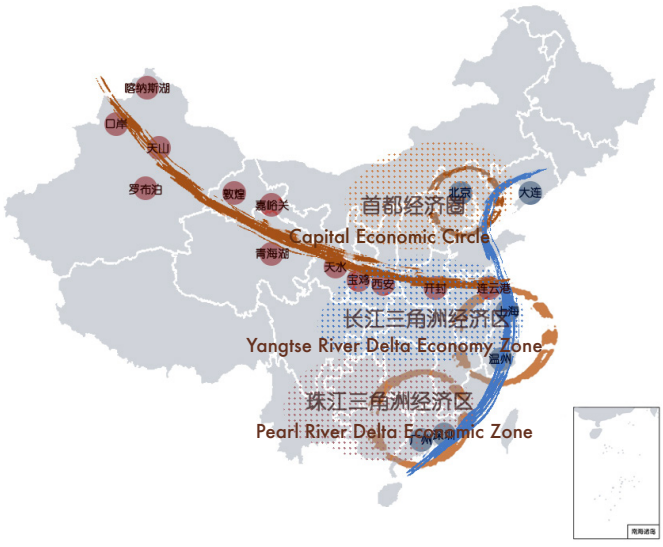


Figure 3 Schematic diagram of "three circles and two lines" road trip route planning (Source: painted by the author)

(2) Improvement of Highway Traffic Network

In the past ten years, with the support of the national development policy, the construction of highway traffic network in Northwest China has developed rapidly. The improvement of the construction quality of national highways, provincial highways and county highways has greatly increased the frequency of people's travel, and made travel more convenient, safe and comfortable. As a result, a group of self-driving travel groups with companies, families, and friends as the unit emerged. While enjoying self-driving travel, people broaden their horizons, increase their knowledge, and narrow the distance between people.

(3) Steady Progress in the Great Western Development and Economic Construction

The implementation of the "Belt and Road Initiative" policy affects the development of tourism economy in the five northwestern provinces to a great extent. According to statistics from 2013 to 2017, the gross domestic product of the western region increased by 4.4 trillion yuan, with an average annual growth rate of 8.8%, and its proportion in China increased from 19.8% to 20.0%, which laid a solid economic foundation for the construction of the camp.

(4) Innovation and Charm of Road Trip Campsites

As a self-challenge, road trips not only provide tourists with opportunities to stay close to nature, enjoy exotic scenery and religious culture, but also spread the spirit of the Silk Road and promote the economic and cultural development of the five provinces. In addition, camping is a form of outdoor leisure life that integrates sightseeing, entertainment and accommodation. It can provide travelers with a place to relax themselves and socialize. According to relevant statistics, although self-driving campsites are in the primary stage in China, their development potential and room for growth are huge (Figure 4).

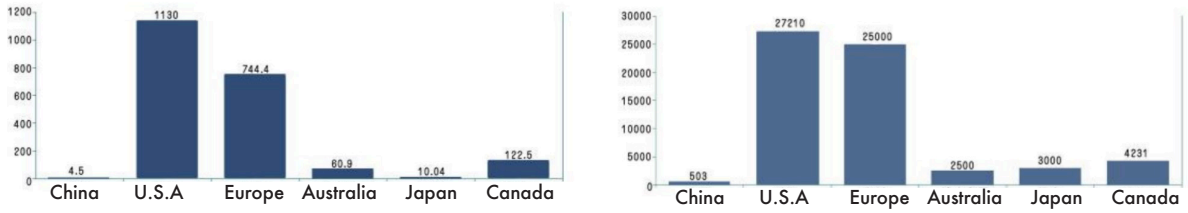


Figure 4 Schematic diagram of the number of RVs and campsites in the world from 2016 to 2017 (Source: painted by the author)

(5) Rich Tourism Resources and Diverse Cultural Activities

The Silk Road, as an important transportation route lasting for thousands of years, has played a great role in the development of social civilization and formed a unique tourism resource (Lin & Wang, 2006). This is also the motivation and source for tourists to choose road trip. Such as the desert, grassland, snow river, swamp, caster landform, salt lake and other natural landscapes and rare flora and fauna near the silk road. As well as the ancient city of Loulan, Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes, Kumbum Monastery, Aywangs dwellings, yurts and other cultural landscapes. In addition, there are more than 40 ethnic minorities, including Kazakh, Uyghur, Hui, Tibetan, Manchu ethnic groups and splendid folk activities.

Restricting Factors

The main constraints on the development of the "Silk Road" road trip are as follows: First, the five provinces lack coordinated policies and mechanisms. Second, the relevant laws and regulations are not perfect and the service guarantee is not in place. Third, due to the vast area, the campsites are scattered and the infrastructure is not perfect. Fourth, the difference between slack season and peak season is obvious. Fifth, The destination is blocked and the traffic is inconvenient. Sixth, the number of enterprises participating in the development is small and the management team and professionals are insufficient (Ge & Li, 2018).

(1) Lack of unified policies and mechanisms. Although the provinces along the Silk Road have introduced relevant policies, most of them are planned within the province due to geographical restrictions. This has led to differences in the management of the campsites in the five provinces. In addition, there are common problems of improper ecological environment protection, shortage of construction land, and inadequate facility construction and maintenance management.

(2) Laws and regulations are not perfect and services are not in place. At present, the planning design and laws and regulations for the domestic camp of the "Silk Road" have not yet been formed. The construction of scattered camps is not standardized, and security issues cannot be completely resolved, and industry management is basically in an unorganized state. Especially in the uninhabited areas of Qinghai and Xinjiang, the inconvenient transportation and harsh natural environment make safety problems extremely prominent.

(3) The campsites are scattered and the infrastructure is not complete. The five provinces and regions along the Silk Road are vast and distant, with few landscapes and long distances between them, which cannot form a good connection. Especially the camps far away from the city center face many technical problems in water, electricity, sewage and garbage disposal. In addition, life infrastructure, vehicle supply, vehicle maintenance and other issues also restrict the travel routes to a large extent.

(4) Significant differences between low and peak seasons. These five provinces are all located in Northwest China. The winters are long and cold, with high temperatures and little rain in summer, and sandstorms and tornadoes often occur. This has led to a very obvious off-peak season for self-driving travel. When tourists travel during peak seasons, it is also easy to cause road congestion, unavailable restaurants, and shortage of camps. In the low season, a large number of service facilities in scenic spots and camps will be idle.

(5) Poor accessibility. Compared with the developed areas in the central and eastern coastal areas, the development of transportation facilities in Northwest China is still relatively poor. The road network between scenic spots and scenic spots, between scenic spots and surrounding cities, and between cities and cities has not been fully formed, and there is a lack of safe and fast traffic arteries. In addition, there are many uninhabited areas in Northwest China, such as deserts, Gobi deserts, basins, natural grasslands, plateaus, and icebergs in Ningxia, Gansu, and Xinjiang that restrict the possibility of vehicles entering.

(6) The companies involved in the development are few and small in scale, lacking management teams and professionals. The more common tourism development companies in China include Beijing Tourism Group, Hong Kong China Travel International Travel Service Co., Ltd., 318 Group and other campground chain brands. However, the development scale of camps along the Silk Road was small and the management level was low. Companies often lack investment funds and are unable to formulate complete construction investment plans. Most of the employees are temporary workers without professional training and the service quality is not high.

Overall Conception and Strategy of Road Trip Campsites in China along the Silk Road

Concept: Promote the Silk Road Culture and Spirit

As a unique business route, the "Silk Road" has made great contributions to global culture, business exchanges and technological development and has attracted worldwide attention. In addition, there are many ethnic gathering areas along the route, so it has its own characteristics in cultural background, religious beliefs, and ethnic customs, attracting scholars and travel enthusiasts from all over the world to favor this area. Therefore, the planning of campsites must take the inheritance and promotion of Silk Road traditional culture as the core, and build each campsite into a unique classic route with distinctive regional characteristics and systematic characteristics.

Goal: On the Basis of Human, Valuing the Nature

The construction of road trip camp should be based on "people-oriented and scientific planning" as the core. We should pay attention to the full service of roads, camps, facilities, rescue services, guidance systems and traffic radio station. At the same time, we should pay attention to the original protection and utilization of campsite development, so as to achieve the interdependence and harmonious coexistence between man and nature. In the site selection, to "Respect for nature and primeval landscapes" as the goal. Without destroying or less destroying the original geological and geomorphological conditions of non-cultivated land, non-intact meadows, saline-alkali land, beach land, lakeside, icebergs, etc., the site selection should be scientific, reasonable, environmentally friendly, convenient and safe.

Strategy: Unified Planning of the Five Provinces to Jointly Seek Development

On the whole, we should adhere to the macro unification, break the regional restrictions, establish the management coordination group and formulate the unified standards. For example, uniformly plan the selection criteria, application area, necessary facilities, shopping stores, emergency areas, lighting equipment, road signs, etc.; formulate a unified roadmap, scenic spots introduction, cultural and historical brochures, websites, traffic radio stations, etc.; establish a unified management system, rescue system, garbage disposal regulations, supervision system, etc. Adhere to the unity, systematicness, science, rationality and safety of planning, and build a complete and distinctive campsite system.

Design: Macroscopic Design, Reasonable Layout

The camp line is divided into "south line" and "north line". The southern route is about 5,181 km and the northern route is about 5,328 km (Figure 4). At the same time, according to the "average vehicle speed of 75M/h, driving about 5-6 hours a day" reference standard, the distance between the two locations is set to be about 150-300 km.

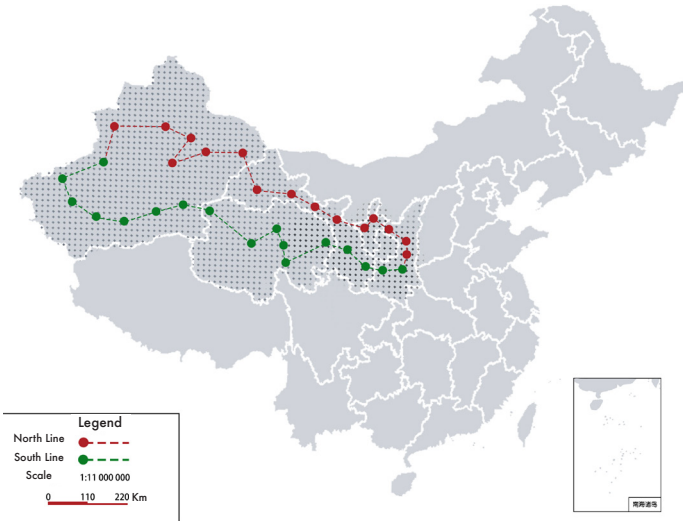


Figure 4 Schematic diagram of the overall planning of the Silk Road road trip tour routes and camping sites in China (Source: painted by the author)

Idea: Plan the Route with Province as the Unit and Run Through the Whole Route

Integrate the planned routes of the five provinces with the Silk Road as a link. In order to enable visitors to better feel the natural landscape and cultural features of the northwest region, this plan takes the ancient Silk Road as the main line, on the basis of which a side line is extended to form two routes of the south and the north (Table 1). The two lines take Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province (ancient Guchang'an) as the starting point, each province as an independent unit, and Aksu City in Xinjiang as the end point to form a "circular" line.

Positioning: Highlight Natural, Humanistic and National Characteristics

The five northwestern provinces have their own distinctive natural landscape, cultural landscape, regional culture and different ethnic languages, religions, folklore, living habits, clothing and so on. So, in the site selection of the campsite, we should choose a representative geomorphological environment far away from the city as far as possible. In the landscape construction, take the local unique material materials and vegetation as the core elements of greening, and show as much as possible the different ethnic groups, different religions, different folk customs, different buildings and different living habits in this area.

Table 1 Route and distance planning of road trip tour in provinces of China–within the province (Source: painted by the author)

Provinces and autonomous regions / Line		Shaanxi	Gansu	Ningxia	Qinghai	Xinjiang
South line	Starting point	Xi'an–Baoji	Tianshui–Linxia–Lanzhou	–	Xining–Madoi–Touraine–Delingha–Golmud–Mangya	Ruoqiang–Qiemo–Minfeng–Hotan–Yecheng–Kashgar–Aksu
	Distance (km)	210	481	0	1819	1922.2
North line	Starting point	Xi'an–Huangling–Yan'an–Dingbian	Wuwei–Zhangye–Jiayuguan–Dunhuang	Yinchuan–Zhongwei–Guyuan	–	Hami–Turpan–Korla–Urumqi–Kuitun–Yining–Aksu
	Distance (km)	545.5	838.3	204.7	0	2855.4

Of course, campsites between provinces are either adjacent or non-adjacent (Table 2).

Table 2 Route and distance planning of road trip tour in provinces of China–between provinces (Source: painted by the author)

Provinces and autonomous regions / Line		Shaanxi–Ningxia	Ningxia–Gansu	Gansu–Qinghai	Gansu–Xinjiang
South line	Starting point	–	–	Lanzhou–Xining	Mangya–Ruoqiang
	Distance (km)	0	0	224	351
North line	Starting point	Dingbian–Yinchuan	Zhongwei–Wuwei	–	Dunhuang–Hami
	Distance (km)	170	293	0	421

Establish a Professional Team to Systemize the Management System and Supporting Services

In the camp planning, it is necessary to establish a unified management and service team, introduce professional talents, and carry out professional training for personnel at different levels. At one time, the provincial and regional governments should further improve the management mechanism of campsite construction, and urge the campsite investors to carry out scientific and reasonable development and construction on the basis of following the law, so as to establish the "Silk Road Tourism" brand.

Conclusion

Due to the urgent demand of the public for road trip campsites and the strong desire of travelers for natural and cultural landscape in Northwest China, this paper takes the planning of the land "Silk Road" in China as the research object. After status analysis, data summary and market demand analysis, we put forward corresponding planning suggestions and overall ideas: "Persist in the promotion and display of the Silk Road culture and carry forward the Silk Road spirit; On the basis of human, valuing the nature; Unified planning, seek common development; Macroscopic design, reasonable layout; Highlight natural, humanistic and national characteristics". Only in this way can it be built into a fully functional international road trip campsite classic route, and it can also lay a good foundation for promoting the economic development of the western region, and provide comprehensive services for tourists who love the "Silk Road Culture" at home and abroad.

Funding

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