



# Study on Tourism Economic Ecology of Provincial Capital Cities along the Silk Road

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**Abstract:** The Silk Road tourism area master plan (2008-2020) launched by the National Tourism Administration in 2007 takes the China section of the desert oasis silk road as the planning object, involving Henan Province, Shaanxi Province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Gansu Province, Qinghai Province, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and Xinjiang production and Construction Corps. Xi'an, Lanzhou, Xining, Yinchuan and Urumqi are all excellent tourist cities accepted by the National Tourism Administration, and they are also hot tourist cities in their provinces. Therefore, this paper selects the five provincial capital cities as the research object, and investigates the coordination degree of the tourism economic system and the ecological environment system of these cities, which is helpful to clarify the problems existing in the current tourism development and ecological environment protection of these cities. These studies can also provide reference for the relevant departments to formulate tourism development and ecological environment protection policies, and also have a certain reference for other cities along the silk road.

Key words: "The Silk Road"; Tourism economy; Ecology

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## 1. Introduction

In September 2013, general secretary Xi Jinping proposed a strategic vision for building the "Silk Road Economic Belt" at Kazakh, Steiner, Zal and bayev University. At the international level, the Silk Road Economic Belt has promoted energy and financial cooperation, economic trade and connectivity between China and the Asia Pacific Economic Circle and the European economic circle, and activated new economic growth points. For the development of our country, the construction of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" can help the central and western provinces to seek more and better development opportunities. The construction of "Silk Road Economic Belt" can promote the tourism cooperation and development of key cities in central and Western China, especially the cities along the silk road. It is in order to promote the construction of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and better exchanges and cooperation between countries and regions along the silk road that 2015 is designated as the "beautiful China Silk Road Tourism Year". This is an important opportunity for domestic cities along the Silk Road to develop tourism.

## 2. Data sources and methods

The data are mainly obtained from the statistical yearbooks of each city, China City Statistical Yearbook 2016, 2015 Statistical Bulletin of National Economic and Social Development, and official websites of tourism bureaus of each city, and some data are obtained from the Internet. Find out the relevant tourism economy and ecological environment status quo, index system and other aspects of the data information.

Based on the combination of theory and demonstration, this paper combs the theories of sustainable development

and synergetics, analyzes the coupling effect of tourism economy and ecological environment in provincial capitals along the Silk Road, summarizes the current situation of tourism development and ecological environment in each city, and puts forward reasonable suggestions.

### **3. Tourism economy and ecological environment development of provincial capitals along “The Silk Road”**

#### **3.1. Development of tourism and ecological environment in Xi'an**

##### **3.1.1. Tourism development in Xi'an**

With a long history, Xi'an is one of the important birthplaces of Chinese civilization and the starting point of the Silk Road in the ancient Western Han Dynasty. Xi'an is one of the first batch of excellent tourist cities in China, with a large number of cultural landscapes and rich connotations. There are 155 basic types of China's tourism resources census, and Xi'an city accounts for 89 of them.

In 2019, the total number of tourists in Xi'an was 101.3 million, with a year-on-year increase of 27 percentage points. The total tourism revenue was 81.144 billion yuan, with a year-on-year increase of 24 percentage points. Among them, the number of inbound tourists was 1.211 million, and the number of domestic tourists was 10.089 million and the domestic tourism income is 74.728 billion yuan. There are 116 star rated hotels and 360 travel agencies in Xi'an, with a revenue of 5.793 billion yuan. 61 A-level scenic spots; The average stay time of international tourists is 2.9 days. These data fully show that the development quality of tourism industry in Xi'an is high, and the efficiency of tourism industry is at a high level.

##### **3.1.2. Development of ecological environment in Xi'an**

From 2019 to 2020, the built-up area of Xi'an will expand rapidly to the surrounding areas and grow rapidly. In recent years, the quality of ecological environment has declined, which is due to the increasing pressure of urbanization on the ecological environment. The per capita green area of Xi'an city has a great growth from 2019 to 2020, while the proportion of days with good air quality in the whole year has almost halved in 2019, which shows that the air quality of Xi'an city is not optimistic. It can be seen from the data that the proportion of environmental pollution investment in Xi'an will also increase to a large extent in 2019. Relevant departments in Xi'an should pay attention to the environmental problems caused by urban construction and development.

#### **3.2. Development of tourism and ecological environment in Lanzhou**

##### **3.2.1. Tourism development in Lanzhou**

Lanzhou is located between the north and South Mountains. The city is built along the Yellow River, which passes through it in an east-west direction. Therefore, Lanzhou is a long and narrow city extending to the east-west direction. Lanzhou has been an important town on the "Silk Road" since ancient times“ "Famous city of melons and fruits" is a famous label of Lanzhou. Tasting melons and fruits and enjoying summer are the tourism characteristics of Lanzhou in summer and autumn.

From 2018 to 2020, the number of domestic tourists in Lanzhou has increased significantly every year, but the number of inbound tourists has not increased steadily, so that the foreign exchange income of international tourism fluctuates from time to time. The proportion of total tourism income in the output value of the tertiary industry shows a trend of steady improvement. Lanzhou received 26.06 million tourists in 2013, up 28 percent year on year. Total tourism revenue was 20.65 billion yuan, including 19.68 billion yuan from domestic tourism. Foreign exchange income from international tourism is 5.61 million US dollars, and there are 50 star hotels. In recent years, there are many bright spots in the development of tourism industry in Lanzhou. The brand effect and market influence of "China's Northwest Travel, starting in Lanzhou" are expanding. Festival activities play an important role in attracting investment and increasing city publicity. However, there are also some problems in the development of tourism in Lanzhou, such as unbalanced

development of the whole year, lack of supporting resources development, and lack of obvious transportation advantages.

#### 3.2.2. Development of ecological environment in Lanzhou City

The ecological environment of Lanzhou city has inherent disadvantages, and the economic development is insufficient, which makes the progress of urban construction and environmental protection in Lanzhou City slow. According to the relevant data, the air quality of Lanzhou is not optimistic, especially in 2020, the number of days with air quality reaching or better than grade II accounts for only barely more than half of the whole year, the green coverage rate of the built-up area is only 33.92% of that in 2020, and the domestic sewage treatment rate is generally low.

### 3.3. Development of tourism and ecological environment in Xining City

#### 3.3.1. Tourism development in Xining City

Xining is the necessary place of the south section of the ancient "Silk Road", with a long history and culture and colorful folk customs. Xining is famous for its beautiful natural landscape, rich cultural landscape and delicious food at home and abroad. It has been rated as "top 200 charming cities with Chinese characteristics" and "national advanced city of landscaping".

From 2018 to 2020, the number of domestic tourists in Xining has increased to a certain extent, but the number of inbound tourists is basically decreasing year by year, and the tourism foreign exchange income fluctuates greatly. On the whole, the proportion of tourism economic income in Xining's GDP is rising steadily, and the tourism industry is developing steadily. In 2013, Xining received 13.0683 million tourists, with a total tourism income of 10.076 billion yuan. Among them, the number of inbound tourists is 33200, and the income of inbound tourism is 16.83 million US dollars. The number of domestic tourists was 13.035 million, and the domestic tourism revenue was 9.973 billion yuan. There are 54-star hotels in Xining City, and the tourism service facilities can carry the current development of tourism industry.

#### 3.3.2. Tourism development in Xining City

From 2018 to 2020, the per capita public green area and built-up area green coverage rate of Xining city have reached a relatively high level, but the emission of air pollutants is large, the level of sewage treatment and domestic waste treatment is not very high, and the investment in environmental pollution is relatively small. In 2013, the number of days with air quality reaching or better than grade II accounted for 59.02% of the whole year, the park green area was 1317 hectares, the domestic sewage treatment rate was 71.2%, industrial waste water discharge and industrial solid waste output reached 27.98 million tons and 53.814 million tons, respectively.

### 3.4. Development of tourism and ecological environment in Yinchuan City

#### 3.4.1. Development of tourism in Yinchuan City

Yinchuan is a famous historical and cultural city of China and the capital of Xixia Dynasty. Yinchuan City has a beautiful environment, known as the "the Pearl on the wall", "the south of the Yangtze River on the wall", "the land of fish and rice". It has been rated as "China's top ten new Tianfu" and has the honor of "national garden city", "national civilized city" and "China living environment model award".

From 2018 to 2020, the number of domestic tourists in Yinchuan has a great growth, and the number of domestic tourists in 2020 has increased by 48.76% year on year. However, compared with other provincial capital cities, Yinchuan's total tourism revenue accounts for a smaller proportion of GDP and the tertiary industry. The data also revealed the instability of foreign tourists in Yinchuan.

#### 3.4.2. Development of ecological environment in Yinchuan City

The built-up area of Yinchuan city has a high green coverage rate, and the wastewater discharge can be effectively controlled. However, the emission of sulfur dioxide per square kilometer of industry is generally on the rise. From the relevant data, it can be seen that the overall air quality of Yinchuan city has been declining since 2016.

In 2020, there will be 249 days of good urban air quality. Yinchuan city has better water environment protection and treatment. From 2018 to 2020, the domestic sewage treatment rate is relatively high, and the water quality of Yinchuan section of the Yellow River reaches class II. Yinchuan will complete 33 environmental pollution control projects in 2020.

### **3.5.Development of tourism and ecological environment in Urumqi**

#### **3.5.1.Tourism development in Urumqi**

The natural landscapes of Urumqi include alpine snow landscape, grassland landscape and mountain forest landscape of Tianshan Mountains, which can meet the needs of tourists for sightseeing, leisure and exploration. The Silk Road clothing festival and the silk road ice and snow tour, as the unique city cards of Urumqi, are festivals and exhibitions with strong silk road characteristics. The scenic spots with Xinjiang folk customs in Urumqi include the famous Xinjiang International Bazaar, Erdaoqiao ethnic customs Street, etc. The unique natural landscape and cultural landscape with ethnic characteristics make Urumqi an important tourist destination and distribution center in Xinjiang province.

As a western city with highly developed tourism industry, Urumqi's tourism revenue in 2020 has accounted for 12.39% of Urumqi's GDP, the total number of tourists in 2019 is 1.11 times of that in 2018, and the total passenger volume in 2020 has exceeded 54 million. In 2020, the total number of tourists in Urumqi will be about 19.53 million, and the total tourism income will be 27.673 billion yuan.

#### **3.5.2.Development of ecological environment in Urumqi**

As a tourism city, the construction and protection of the ecological environment is also the key to the development of tourism. If the tourism industry can not coordinate with the ecological environment, the development of the city will also enter a bad state. The green coverage rate of the built-up area in Urumqi is low, the per capita public green space area is also small, the domestic sewage treatment rate and the harmless treatment level of domestic waste are low.

## **4.Conclusion**

The Silk Road Economic Belt strategic city and one belt, one road vision and action have brought new opportunities for the tourism development of the provincial capital city of the silk road. These five cities have long been important tourist cities in central and western China because their tourism development started earlier and laid a good foundation. However, most of the provincial capitals along the Silk Road were located in western China, on the Loess Plateau and in desert areas, making their ecological environment relatively fragile.The rapid development of tourism continues to threaten the original ecology of these areas and poses challenges to the realization of sustainable development goals in these areas.As tourism is an indispensable development opportunity, it is particularly important to coordinate the relationship between tourism economic development and ecological environmental protection for long-term prosperity in the future. They can neither sacrifice the ecological environment for the economic benefits of tourism, nor restrict the development of tourism economy for the sake of protecting the ecological environment, resulting in inadequate development and utilization of tourism resources. In the future, the research object should be further extended to other important tourist cities, so as to more comprehensively analyze the coupling and coordination status and development process of tourism economic system and ecological environment system in the Silk Road region to help achieve the balance between the development of tourism economy and ecological protection.

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