



ANALYSIS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE IN PINGYAO
ANCIENT CITY



Graduate School Srinakharinwirot University

2024

การวิเคราะห์ตีความสถาปัตยกรรมทางวัฒนธรรมของเมืองโบราณผิงเหยา



ปริญญานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตร
ศิลปศาสตรดุษฎีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาศิลปวัฒนธรรมวิจัย
คณะศิลปกรรมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ

ปีการศึกษา 2567

ลิขสิทธิ์ของมหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ

ANALYSIS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE IN PINGYAO
ANCIENT CITY



A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of DOCTOR OF ARTS
(D.A. (Arts and Culture Research))

Faculty of Fine Arts, Srinakharinwirot University

2024

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THE DISSERTATION TITLED
ANALYSIS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE IN PINGYAO
ANCIENT CITY

BY
MING LIU

HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTOR OF ARTS
IN D.A. (ARTS AND CULTURE RESEARCH) AT SRINAKHARINWIROT UNIVERSITY

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chatchai Ekpanyaskul, MD.)
Dean of Graduate School

ORAL DEFENSE COMMITTEE

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 Committee
	(Asst. Prof. Dr.Chakapong Phatlakfa)

Title	ANALYSIS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE IN PINGYAO ANCIENT CITY
Author	MING LIU
Degree	DOCTOR OF ARTS
Academic Year	2024
Thesis Advisor	Associate Professor Dr. Sathit Thimwatbunthong
Co Advisor	Assistant Professor Dr. Piyanard Ungkawanichakul

The study uses semiotics, heritage protection, and display theory to study the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City. A research approach is conducted through field investigations, detailed interviews, and text analysis. Conduct cultural analysis on the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City from the material, social, and spiritual dimensions of architectural culture, and propose a cultural interpretation model for architectural heritage. The goal is to offer a new way of studying architectural heritage culture and to improve the public's perception and aesthetic appreciation of architectural culture. At the same time, proposals for the protection and innovation of architectural heritage culture are made in order to address cultural shortcomings and modernization of architectural heritage during urban development. The material dimension of architecture supports the spiritual dimension, which, in its architectural culture, creates a wide range of architectural entities. The spiritual dimension of architectural culture grows and evolves through the social dimension of architecture, which is the core of architectural heritage culture. Its interaction promotes the steady inheritance, preservation, and development of architectural culture and forms an architectural cultural connotation with timeliness, regionalism, and distinctiveness.

Keyword : Pingyao Ancient City; Architectural culture; Cultural Interpretation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to have such a period of study experience in Thailand at such an age, and I am grateful to Srinakharinwirot University for giving me such an opportunity. Here I met lovely people, classmates who encouraged each other, Thai people who were eager to help me, and professors who were rigorous in their studies. Life in Thailand is colorful, and study life is fulfilling and free. It gives me more time to think and feel all the good things about Thailand. My life is wonderful because I love Thailand.

Thanks to my Major-advisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sathit Thimwatbunthong for giving me the optimistic confidence, "everything is ok!" "everything is finish!" "no problem!". It is the voice that often echoes in my head, which adds infinite motivation to my learning, and always reminds me to show my best results to my professor and live up to his trust in me. In the meantime, thanks to my Co-advisor Asst. Prof. Dr. Piyanard Ungkawanichakul gave me help and support in the writing of my dissertation, she always read my dissertation carefully, marked the suggestions for revision, and kept improving the details of the dissertation so that I could better complete the dissertation. Thank you again to every professor I met at Srinakharinwirot University, thank you for your companionship, support and encouragement, and make me feel like home in Thailand.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my mother, Ms. Li Cuiping, for her strong support in my studies and affirmation of my life plan. My mother is my solid pillar, giving me the confidence to face everything in life. She will continue to support me in exploring each day filled with unknowns.

Every day loving Thailand, every day filled with hope.

MING LIU

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A city is a collection of material and spiritual wealth created by a nation. With its own unique organizational structure and operating rules, buildings in cities not only meet people's basic survival needs, but also constantly create and regulate people's behavioral and ideological activities. It is very interesting to start from the buildings in the city and explore the cultural connotations behind the buildings. The development of cities will also create the culture of this era in the hands of today's people.

This study takes traditional Chinese ancient buildings as the research object, starting from the perspective of contemporary culture and combining ancient Chinese cultural thoughts to understand Chinese traditional architectural culture. Learn more about the cultural concepts that contemporary people give to traditional architecture and the historical mission of traditional architecture in contemporary society. Seeking new development paths for the protection and display of traditional architectural culture.

1.1 Background

The ancient city of Pingyao is located on Kang Ning Road, Pingyao County, Jinzhong City, Shanxi Province, China. Located in the middle of Shanxi Province, the ancient city was founded in the period of King Xuan of the Western Zhou Dynasty (827 BC - 782 BC), rebuilt, and expanded in the third year of Hongwu in the Ming Dynasty (1370) and is the most completely preserved ancient county town in China.

Pingyao Ancient City is composed of walls, shops, streets, temples, scenic spots, and residential buildings. The buildings in the ancient city of Pingyao were symmetrical in axis, with Jinjing City Building as the axis and South Street as the axis, forming the traditional feudal ritual pattern of left town god, right government office, left temple of literature, and right temple of martial arts. It includes 7 national cultural relics protection units in the ancient city (Pingyao Ancient City Wall (1368-1644 in the Ming Dynasty), Pingyao Confucian Temple (1115-1234 in the Jin Dynasty), Qing Xu Temple (1271-1368 in the Yuan Dynasty), the former site of Ri Sheng Chang (1636-1912 in the

Qing Dynasty), Pingyao Cheng Huang Temple (1636-1912 in the Qing Dynasty), Lei Lu Tai's former residence (1636-1912 in the Qing Dynasty), and Pingyao City Tower (1636-1912 in the Qing Dynasty).

The ancient city of Pingyao is an outstanding representative of the Han nationality in urban construction in northern China. The ancient city of Pingyao retains the architectural form and style of the Ming and Qing dynasties, reflecting the traditional cultural concepts of early urban construction and architectural construction. The streets, architectural layout, and residents' daily life of Pingyao Ancient City all reproduce the original historical appearance. The design layout reflects the urban hierarchical planning, construction concept, and shape distribution under feudal rule in the Ming and Qing dynasties and shows the evolution of traditional Chinese architectural style and urban planning in the past five centuries, becoming a living sample for the study of ancient Chinese cities. It has rich and unique value in architecture, religion, commerce, folklore, folk art, and traditional handicrafts.

The ancient city of Pingyao is a collection of human aesthetic symbols, a product of the perfect combination of material and spiritual aspects. The core of the city lies in shaping people's ethics, social order, and understanding of their own beauty. Lead people towards a meaningful state of life. The culture of Pingyao Ancient City is the creation and accumulation of history, preserved in the city and architecture, showcasing the cultural characteristics of the entire city. In the context of globalization and modernization, both developing and developed countries are undergoing changes in urban development, and architectural heritage and modern architecture have built new urban cultures. At the same time, as a common product of urban material, social relations, and ideology, architectural heritage carries a profound historical and cultural heritage, while also influencing people's understanding and creation of modern culture. Therefore, attempting to integrate the connotation of architectural culture in Pingyao Ancient City with contemporary values and seeking new cultural development directions in Pingyao Ancient City has become the focus of this article.

1.1.1 The Impact of Urban Development on Architectural Culture (Material)

Cities are interdependent organisms of matter and spirit, and are a symbol of human development towards maturity and civilization. Simultaneously, the development of cities provides necessary material and spiritual guarantees for human development. The production of matter is used to meet people's functional needs, and the speed is faster than the output of spirit, which is built on matter. This also makes material and spirit often disconnected from each other at the beginning of production, without forming a relatively stable relationship. And while the spirit is attached to material production, it is also extracted by humans to form symbolic concepts, retained by human memory, and used for the creation of new materials. At the same time, it also indicates that the material foundation of cities occurs much faster than the creation of urban spiritual culture in the process of rapid development. This makes it necessary for people to consider the status and role of spiritual culture in material creation in the process of building cities, in order to avoid the social development phenomenon of biomass production being disconnected from culture and people deviating from culture. Lack of cultural connotations in urban construction.

The architecture in Pingyao Ancient City serves as a crucial foundation for the development of the ancient city culture. It is a concentrated display of the city's cultural content, establishing a relatively stable urban form. The architectural heritage not only shapes the culture of the ancient city but also reflects the people's values, standardizes the social ethical order, and influences their value creation. Secondly, the spatial and temporal distribution of architectural heritage in the ancient city shows the changes in human spatial activities during its development, as well as the division and historical evolution of urban functional areas. It embodies the creative demands of human beings as the main body of the development of the ancient city for the living environment, which is not only the pursuit of architectural functions but also the concentrated expression of cultural spirit under the existing technological conditions. Sharing values and beliefs helped the ancient city grow in a standard way, and it also created a "Jin Shang" cultural trait that is unique to the Pingyao ancient city.



Figure 1 It's so far to see Pingyao Ancient City

Source: <https://www.vcg.com/creative/1182576620>

The rapid development of ancient cities cannot be separated from human development. People's demand for architectural space, as well as the functional distribution and transformation of buildings in the city, will change over time. The transformation of functions changes people's behavior habits and also has a certain impact on culture. This forces architectural heritage to consider its own value. Reconstruct the value of architectural heritage in urban development.

1.1.2 The Impact of Modern Culture on Architectural Culture (Spirit)

Anthropologist Leslie A. White proposed in 1959 that "culture arises from the use of symbols, including objects, behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes". Therefore, the emergence of culture depends on human subjective activities and the stable use of symbol systems, further forming cultures of different ethnicities, regions, and periods. The differences between different cultures further promote cultural convergence,

placing culture in a dynamic process of self-development. Simultaneously, the use of symbol systems tends to be standardized and unified, constantly creating new cultures. It is precisely these characteristics of culture itself that enable the emergence and creation of culture to form diverse cultures in rapidly developing societies. The interaction between cultures is bound to have an impact on traditional culture. The understanding of the architectural heritage culture of the ancient city of Pingyao will inevitably lead to the deviation in understanding under the influence of multiple cultures, or the disinfection and sterilization of the architectural heritage culture. Therefore, It is more important to inherit and protect the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.

Secondly, multiculturalism is a social phenomenon of balanced cultural development, where multiple cultures coexist under the guidance of mainstream culture, forming their specific cultural characteristics and integrating and coexisting at the level of abstract culture. Placing the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City in a multicultural system for research, shifting from the value of architecture itself to its cultural value, constructing the connection between people and architectural heritage culture, and paying attention to the value role of architectural heritage culture in future urban development. It will also become a historical mission entrusted to this cultural era.

Architectural heritage is a precious treasure of a country and nation. As an important carrier of national culture, architectural heritage has natural cultural attributes. In different periods of social development, the concept of heritage, cultural expression, and cultural value orientation will change. Therefore, cultural research on architectural heritage should shift from architecture itself to its functional value, from the history of architecture to contemporary cultural expression, and from spatial activities to aesthetic activities. More attention is paid to people's understanding of architectural heritage culture, emphasizing the subjectivity and creativity of cultural subjects, and providing new research perspectives for cultural inheritance and innovation.

In the process of rapid social development, cultural heritage also faces enormous challenges. The fragmentation of traditional culture, the impact of multiculturalism in society, and the constant emergence of cultural innovation, led by

young people, are leading a fierce debate between traditional culture and contemporary culture. Therefore, the protection of architectural heritage should not only focus on material maintenance, but also on building national cultural beliefs at the spiritual level. As literary critic Andreas Huyssen pointed out, "The greatest danger to historical preservation does not come from natural factors, but from a wide range of cultural forces such as urbanization, disenchantment, and deviance." (Huyssen, A, 2003). Philosopher Ernst Cassirer pointed out in 1944 that "humans are cultural animals, and their essence lies not in their material and political existence, but in their cultural existence" (Feng, 2017). Therefore, it is particularly important to explore the cultural value and importance of architectural heritage culture in contemporary society, starting from the subject of cultural occurrence and taking "people" as the core.

1.1.3 The Impact of Tourism Culture on Architectural Culture (Economic)

Compared with Western countries, the protection of cultural heritage in China lags behind to a certain extent, and the protection idea of cultural heritage is also lacking in traditional culture. The protection idea is that the value of cultural heritage is discovered only with the development of tourism. The understanding of the economic value of cultural heritage should be related to the cultural value first, followed by the social value and cultural value of cultural heritage, which results in the creative destruction of cultural heritage in the process of tourism industry development.

The architectural heritage and folk customs of the ancient city are the focus of tourism activities in Pingyao Ancient City. These activities have a big impact on the economy of Pingyao, make life better for locals, help the culture of the ancient city grow and develop, and protect and restore the architectural heritage of the ancient city. Simultaneously, to meet the needs of consumers, the managers ignore the value of cultural heritage and develop it blindly, turning culture into a kind of consumer commodity and distorting traditional culture under the influence of the economy.

Secondly, the formation of tourism culture has brought interference to the interpretation of architectural heritage culture in the ancient city of Pingyao. Tourists

often only take simple photos, marveling at the craftsmanship and decoration of architectural heritage. However, limited by time and space, they often overlook the cultural connotations inside the buildings, and their understanding of architectural heritage culture only stays on the surface, unable to participate in the historical creation process of architectural heritage culture. It has also formed that tourists are participants in tourism culture, but not creators of tourism culture, making the cultural inheritance and innovative vegetation of architectural heritage accessible to a few people. Thirdly, tourism activities have brought many inconveniences to the production activities of residents in the areas where architectural heritage is located. Make the architectural heritage that originally had functional value a form of cultural display, no longer serving the living needs of the residents of Pingyao Ancient City. It also further affects the architectural culture in the ancient city of Pingyao.

Economic development is bound to put forward higher requirements for the development of traditional culture. However, there are still many problems in the relationship between the protection of cultural heritage and economic development in China at this stage. The society is relatively lacking in the awareness of cultural heritage protection, which shows that cultural heritage protection has given way to tourism development. The social value gives way to the economic value, and the traditional excellent culture gives way to the wrong concept of consumer culture, resulting in the wrong understanding of the connotation and value of cultural heritage. The protection of architectural heritage is essentially a cultural issue, and the protection of architectural heritage culture comes from the development needs of culture. Therefore, in the face of the influence of tourism culture, architectural heritage culture should maintain its own cultural attributes, broaden the cultural value of architectural heritage in contemporary times, integrate diverse cultural characteristics, and create new symbols of architectural culture in the era. To enable architectural heritage culture to fully realize its cultural value in different historical and social environments, and further form a sustainable cultural system.

1.1.4 The Impact of Digital Technology on Architectural Culture (Technology)

The progress of technology has driven economic development and social transformation, thereby changing the appearance of culture. Transforming data collection from physical buildings into virtual images for storage and research, and using them for the dissemination of culture and knowledge, reflecting their social value. Digital technology not only protects the architectural and cultural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, but also has a negative impact on culture to a certain extent.

Firstly, it disrupts the unity of spirit and material in architectural heritage culture, establishing culture in virtual visual senses and breaking away from the material creation foundation of culture. Over time, people's understanding of culture only stays at the visual expression of culture, hindering the continuation and innovation of culture. Secondly, digital technology has separated architectural heritage from time and space, severing the historicity of architectural heritage in time and space, as well as the traces of time that architecture bears in the process of historical change. Cutting off the value and role of architectural heritage culture in real society, let alone the diversified development and cultural inheritance of architectural heritage culture. Thirdly, digital technology separates people from the architectural heritage space, separating cultural creation activities from buildings, making the architectural heritage space no longer functional and becoming a virtual space without physical activity space, weakening people's perception of space, cutting off the connection between people and space, further stripping away the cultural attributes of architectural heritage and people's creative activities in architectural heritage space, Separating culture from matter, solidifying architectural heritage in technological means, and only being admired by future generations.

Technology drives social change and economic development, but behind digitization is also a cultural transformation. Digitization is a form of reproduction and supplementation of culture, a material reproduction, not a spiritual expression, let alone a substitute for culture. Therefore, research on the interpretation of architectural heritage culture should highlight the inevitability of history and society, making it a

systematic, multi-dimensional, and characteristic cultural interpretation system that embodies the development of the times and society. Provide research paths and methodological value for the development of architectural heritage culture and human culture.

Given the aforementioned issues, this study utilizes "Ren" as a focal point to elucidate the people's desire for cultural interaction. Through understanding the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City, traditional architectural culture is mixed with modern culture. This keeps traditional architectural culture alive and helps urban history and culture grow. Architectural heritage culture is also mixed with the growth of modern urban culture to meet the needs of the times. Use the cultural value of architectural heritage to its fullest, create a way for architectural heritage culture and urban culture to grow in a way that is sustainable, and start doing research and building a foundation for the growth of architectural culture in Pingyao.

1.2 Hypothesis of the Study

1. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City reflects the material attributes of architectural heritage culture in terms of material dimensions. (H1)
2. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City reflects the functional attributes of architectural heritage culture in the social dimension. (H2)
3. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City reflects the purpose attribute of architectural heritage culture in the spiritual dimension. (H3)

1.3 Definition of Terms

Architectural heritage culture:

The "culture" identified in this article is the material form displayed by buildings during the historical development of the city, which contains architectural creation ideas, images and cultural connotations adapted to local conditions. Secondly, the behavioral activities carried out around the architectural space, the social functions they carry, the social relationships reflected, and the aesthetic consciousness of the cultural activity subjects in interpreting the cultural value of the building.

Interpretation:

"Interpretation" in the Charter on the Interpretation and Display of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008), which was approved by the 16th General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in Quebec, Canada, means all the different things that can be done to make people more aware of and better understand cultural heritage sites. Such activities may include print and electronic publications, public lectures, on-site and off-site facilities, educational programs, community events, and ongoing research, training, and evaluation of the interpretive process itself." Freeman Tilden, in his book *Interpreting Our Heritage*, proposed that "interpretation" is an educational activity that reveals the significance and interrelationship of heritage through the use of cultural communication objects, direct experience, and illustrative media, rather than a simple information transmission of mere facts. The interpretation system in this study refers to the development of three dimensions of culture in the interpretation of architectural heritage culture, namely the material dimension (material expression of architectural heritage culture), the social dimension (functional expression of architectural heritage culture), and the spiritual dimension (purpose expression of architectural heritage culture), to form a relationship structure and jointly affect the expression of architectural heritage culture.

The material dimension of architectural culture:

It is a concrete manifestation of culture, with independent architectural structures, decorations, colors, and unique functional activity spaces. The technical means of architecture preserve the architectural entity in history, forming cultural characteristics of the times. The material dimension of architectural culture is derived from the description of the material characteristics of the buildings in the ancient city of Pingyao, in order to obtain the cultural characteristics at the material level of the buildings.

The social dimension of architectural culture:

The social dimension of architectural culture emphasizes the functional value of architecture in society. For example, the distribution of functions between

architecture and cities, the organization and regulation of social ethical order in architecture, the impact of architecture on social development such as politics and economy, and the lifestyle formed by people around architecture. The interpretation of the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City emphasizes not only the historical and cultural value, but also the modern social value of architectural heritage.

The spiritual dimension of architectural culture:

The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City, created through various production activities during the development process of the ancient city, has a collective memory of commemorative significance, identity and cultural identity, spiritual inheritance, and forms a long-term stable architectural aesthetic and emotional connection.

1.4 Scope of the Study Conceptual / Study Framework

This study focuses on the architecture within the ancient city of Pingyao. Seven national-level cultural heritage sites within Pingyao Ancient City were selected for investigation, including the Pingyao City Wall (Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644), Pingyao Confucius Temple (Jin Dynasty, 1115-1234), Qing Xu Taoist Temple (Yuan Dynasty, 1271-1368), Former Residence of Ri Sheng Chang (Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912), Pingyao City God Temple (Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912), Former Residence of Lei LU Tai (Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912), and Pingyao City Tower (Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912), as well as the largest architectural complex, Pingyao County Office (Yuan Dynasty, 1346-1912), totaling eight sites for field investigation. The study examines the fundamental material aspects of architectural heritage, such as architectural structure, form, and decoration. It summarizes architectural design concepts, characteristics, and styles. Functional classifications of architectural spaces are conducted, along with an analysis of the historical causes of architectural heritage and a summary of the significant role of architectural heritage culture in the historical development of the city.

The research on the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City involves the influence of traditional Chinese thought and culture on ancient architecture, as well as the protection and display of traditional Chinese architectural culture. This study

takes Confucianism and Daoism as the content of research into traditional Chinese culture and discovers their influence on traditional Chinese architecture. In terms of research on the conservation and presentation of traditional Chinese architectural culture, international cultural heritage conservation and presentation regulations from 1933 to 2015 are selected, analyzing the historical evolution of cultural heritage conservation ideas, as well as related conservation measures and presentation principles. A framework for interpreting architectural heritage culture is constructed. (Athens Charter, 1933; Venice Charter, 1964; Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972; Nairobi Recommendation, 1976; Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 1977; Charter of Barbados, 1979; Washington Charter, 1987; Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994; Beijing Charter, 1999; Xi'an Declaration, 2005; Valletta Principles, 2011; Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, 2011; New Urban Agenda, 2016) and China's cultural heritage regulations (Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics, 1982; Principles for the Protection of Ancient Chinese Architecture and Sites, 1997; Revised Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics, 2002; Revised Principles for the Protection of Ancient Chinese Architecture and Sites, 2015).

Local tourism managers, residents, merchants, and tourists were selected for in-depth interviews representing different groups. Through analyzing the spatial functionality of architectural heritage and understanding human behavioral activities, further exploration of the cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City and the cultural value endowed by architectural heritage was conducted. This aimed to further demonstrate the completeness and accuracy of the architectural heritage interpretation model.

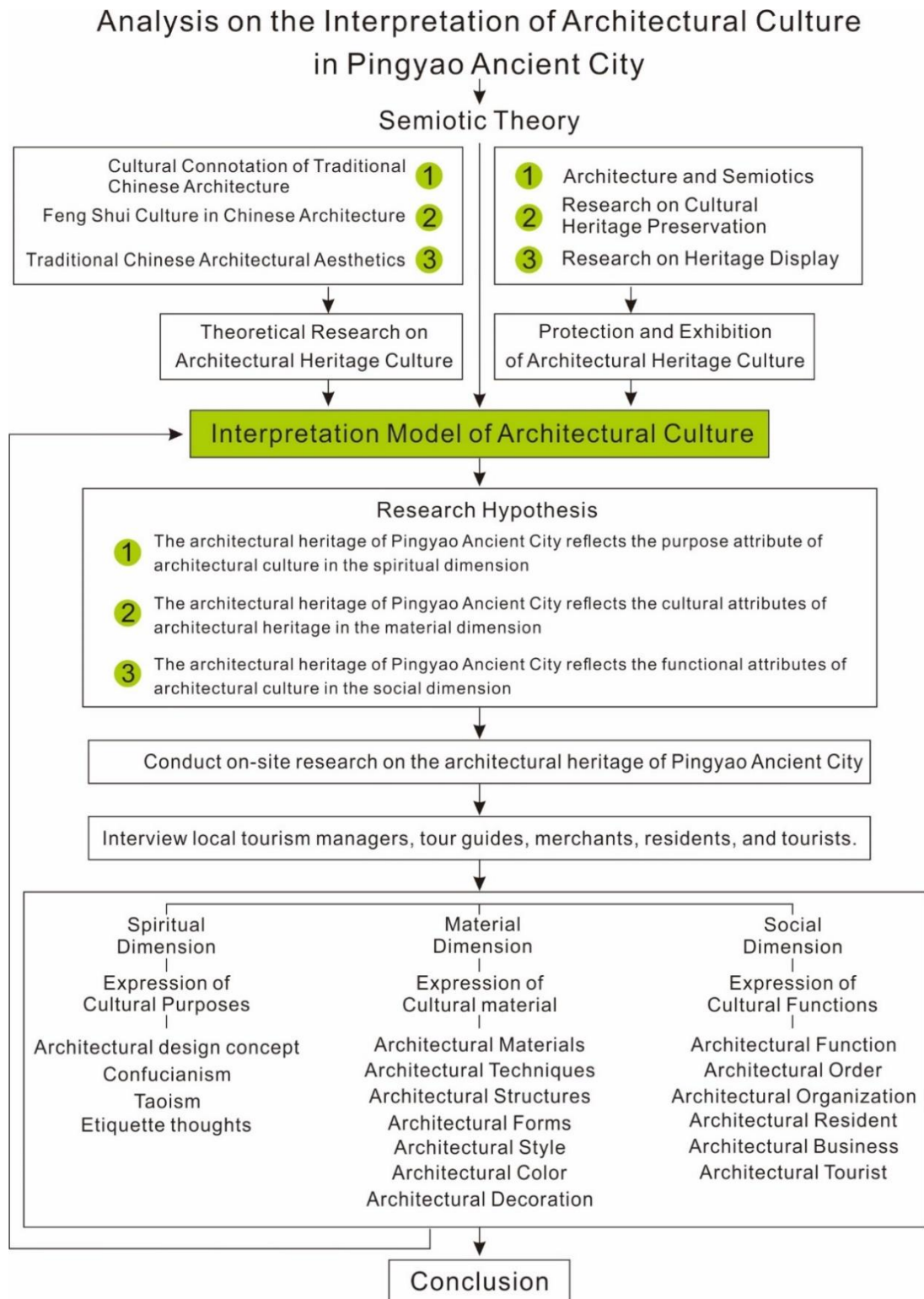


Figure 2 Research Framework Diagram

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1. To provide a research path for the expression and development of architectural heritage culture, a model of architectural cultural interpretation system is proposed. (Architectural)
2. To enhance people's perception and aesthetic ability of the architectural heritage culture in Pingyao Ancient City. (People)
3. To address the lack of architectural heritage culture in urban development and the modernization of architectural heritage culture. (Culture)

1.6 Significance of the Study

1. As a material carrier of culture, architectural heritage reflects the architectural concepts and material technology of the time, reflects social order, human social relations and ideology, seals specific time, space and events, and evokes people's memories and associations. Simultaneously, it condenses human art, technology, and aesthetics into eternal classics, with typical cultural symbolic value and inheritance significance, becoming a product of specific cultural eras. As a symbol of traditional culture, architectural heritage is bound to become an organic organization in modern urban development. We attempt to integrate the connotation of traditional culture with contemporary value orientation, seek new ways to interpret architectural heritage culture, and find new cultural footholds.

2. The study of the cultural interpretation system of architectural heritage is an open and dynamic research process, which not only interprets architectural culture from the perspective of architectural space, but also interprets cultural connotations from the perspective of time and society, and puts it in the contemporary social context, interpreting and constructing the cultural value of architectural heritage in the new era from a human perspective, Emphasizing the influence of human historical values on architectural heritage culture, allowing the interpretation of architectural culture to return to humans, reflecting the relationship between human values and social development, the relationship between human activities and architectural space, and the relationship between human concepts and traditional culture. This makes the interpretation of

architectural heritage culture characteristic of the times, while also possessing diversity and subjectivity in cultural interpretation and development. Let contemporary culture participate in the inheritance of historical culture, achieving cultural innovation and inheritance.

3. The uniqueness and differences of architectural heritage in cities construct unique cultural characteristics of cities, and the research on the interpretation system of architectural heritage culture is based on the protection of architectural heritage, which is a comprehensive study of architectural heritage as an organic organization for the development of urban culture. The innovative principles of architectural heritage culture in cities are proposed, namely the protective principle of architectural heritage culture and the differential principle of architectural heritage culture, The diversity principle of architectural heritage culture, the universality principle of architectural heritage culture, and the sustainability principle of architectural heritage culture. Through the recreation of architectural heritage culture, urban culture has centripetal force, enhances the sense of urban cultural identity, and makes its urban culture have a long history.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The city is composed of buildings that form a physical space, becoming the main place for people's production activities, as well as a container for people to store memories, engraved with people's impressions of the culture of that time. Meanwhile, architecture, as the material foundation of urban development, connects people with time and space. It can be said that architecture creates culture, characterizes culture, and disseminates culture. Therefore, architectural heritage plays a dual role: remembering the historical and cultural aspects of the city; Building its own contemporary value in the current context, architectural heritage is the original purpose of life, the continuation of history and current culture, and the inheritor of culture (Wu,L.Y, 2009).

This chapter mostly uses semiotics as its main theory to build the signifier and signified of architecture. It also lays out the theoretical framework for how traditional culture is expressed through architectural heritage. The relevant heritage protection and display laws and regulations are used to summarize the protection and display of architectural heritage in different dimensions. These laws are then combined with the cultural ideas of traditional Chinese architecture to create an expression of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural culture in different dimensions, and it lays a theoretical foundation for the interpretation model of architectural heritage culture.

2.1 Architecture and Semiotics

Hegel pointed out in "Aesthetics" that architecture is "a symbolic symbol made of building materials, a symbol (symbol) that implies an important idea with universal significance, an independent and self-sufficient symbol (Zhu,G.Q, 2009)".It can be seen that the symbolic meaning of architecture is obvious, and its cultural connotation is rich.

Philosopher Ernst Cassirer constructed a cultural philosophy system. In his book "Philosophy of Symbolic Form," he regarded various phenomena of human culture

as a kind of symbol. He held the belief that symbolic form can express all cultural phenomena or spiritual activities, thereby forming the structure of human cultural philosophy.

The symbolic language system understands and uses language as its signifier. The signifier defines the signified as the meaning it explains. Therefore, the form of architecture is regarded as a medium for information exchange. People use architecture to explain certain ideas, concepts, or problems. Because of this, the shape of the building has to take on a symbolic meaning, which means that the shape of the building has to be a symbol.

Umberto Eco advocates the inclusion of function in the study of meaning. He holds the belief that buildings do not inherently convey meaning, nor are they intentionally designed for communication. In the aesthetic system, traditional Chinese architecture is a special kind of symbol that can take on different meanings at different times. Politics, economy, region, culture, and ethnicity can all constitute the meaning of architecture. Architectural styles have changed over time to reflect the times and people's different tastes in art. These changes have led to the creation of regional styles within architectural styles. However, copying architectural styles has also led to a fake presentation of regional culture, which has hurt the passing down and growth of both architectural culture and local culture. "Ignoring the influence of regional culture on architecture, just consistently imitating the style, being out of touch with regional culture, and deviating from the cultural connotation of architecture" is a criticism made by Pteerc Collins. Architecture has regional culture, which is created naturally by people in the process of production practice and is not constrained."(Li,Y.Z, 1996). Obviously, the interpretation of architectural culture must, on the one hand, return to the building itself and, on the other hand, understand the cultural connotations that the region has given to the building.

Architectural language and architectural symbols reflect the logic, rationality, rules, and structure of history. They are authentic, social, and historic. In traditional architecture, these architectural languages and architectural symbols obey

the rules under a specific economic and social system and show the diversity of architectural language under existing technical conditions. A symbol that has both the meaning and the meaninglessness of traditional architectural language and the meaning and the meaninglessness of modern architectural language shows up when traditional architectural language is mixed with modern architectural language. Secondly, structuralism believes that architecture is a space that reflects the characteristics of the human environment from the relationship between people and architectural space. In the process of building construction, people gain the value of existence in time and space, so architecture is considered to be a material existence with human value in the process of people engaging in production practice; at the same time, architecture is built into various spatial forms according to people's needs. Therefore, we should understand architecture as a symbolic form that carries meaning and characteristics.

Ivco G. discussed in *The New Science* that the origin and development of human social culture, which includes human customs, language, law, religion, and other aspects, are fundamentally consistent and form a complete national spiritual entity. The national spiritual entity serves as the structural framework of culture. For instance, when primitive people see natural events that they don't understand, they apply what they know to those events. Vico also thought that the way primitive people responded to the world was instinctive and unique. He called this instinctive response "poetic wisdom" (*Sapienz poteica*) and thought that it taught primitive people how to respond to their surroundings by using metaphors, symbols, and myths. Therefore, while humans create the world they perceive, they also create themselves. People's knowledge is also being updated all the time, and this process is becoming the engine that keeps humanity growing.

Structuralist semiotics holds that the whole is made up of parts, and the structure is the sum of their relationships. The parts do not have independent attributes, but are determined by the structural relationship of the whole. Therefore, the parts are only regarded as supporting components in the overall structure, playing the role of transmitting "structural force." Relationships, not things, compose the world, and things

serve as the supporting points of these relationships (Li,Y.Z, 1996). Therefore, the culture of different periods and regions is the constituent element of the society in which it is located. The formation of culture is determined by the environment in which it is located, and architecture is also the support point of cultural expression. Explore the cultural connotation of architecture from the perspective of time and environment.

Anthropologist Leslie A. White proposed the "cultural science" theory, which analyzes the relationship between culture, society, and individuals. The human cultural system is holistic, including the technical system, social system, and ideological system. The three systems influence and promote each other. Technology changes society's structure, and the social structure requires a certain level of consciousness and support (Yang,X.L, 2002). In the process of social and historical development, architectural heritage has completely preserved the material basis, processing technology, and technology of the building, embodied the order and value of society, and reflected people's spiritual pursuit and aesthetic ideology. The interpretation of architectural heritage culture represents a practical application of semiotic theory. It further emphasizes the architectural culture reflected by the material, social, and spiritual levels of architectural heritage. As a result, it gives ways and paths for architectural heritage culture to be expressed, which makes that expression whole.

In 1934, American sociologist Ruth Benedict proposed in "Cultural Patterns" that the value system, as the "soul" of the cultural "living organism," determines the cultural structure and external appearance. The historical process of cultural change is a cultural ideological transformation. This change leads to changes in the framework of the cultural system, further leading to changes in cultural technology, materials, and social relations— and ultimately achieving a qualitative leap (Ruth, B, 2009). It stresses that "people" are the ones who create and spread culture, that people are unique in how history and culture change, and that people are in charge of leading changes in social values and structures. Also, it stresses that how each person understands architectural heritage culture depends on their own experiences and the times they live in.

People are symbolic animals, and architecture and its space are examples of unique cultural symbols that people have made. Rob Shields (2017) combined cultural studies with topological concepts in "Spatial Problems: Cultural Topology and Social Spatialization," analyzed multi-spatialization, explored the cultural divisions between tangible space, intangible space, and social fields, and proposed cultural topology (Rob, S, 2017). Space is no longer static and geometric but a social space where various functions and cultures interact, interpreting culture from a topological perspective, further expanding the spatial and functional attributes of architectural heritage culture.

Lewis Mumford conducted research and analysis on cities from the aspects of urban environment, technology, economy, population, social organization, etc. He proposed that cities are the material means for humans to solve common living problems and a symbolic symbol for describing lifestyles (Lewis, M, 2009). R.E. Parker representative figure of urban sociology in Chicago, United States. E. Parker pointed out in his paper "Cities: Several Opinions on Conducting Research on Human Behavior in Urban Environments" that cities are not just a collection of many individual individuals, nor is they simply an aggregation of various social and social facilities. Cities are also not just a simple collection of various service departments and management institutions. "City, it is a psychological state, a whole composed of various customs and traditions. In other words, city is not a simple material phenomenon, nor is it a simple artificial structure. City is closely linked to the various important activities of its residents, and it is a product of nature, especially human attributes (Hawley & Mumford, 1961)." Expressing the relationship between people and cities, cities record people's activities and store their cultural significance, while the core of cities is the creation of culture by people. The famous historian Oswald Spengler believes that "all great cultures of humanity were created by cities. The second generation of excellent humans were animals skilled in building cities, which is the actual standard of world history. This standard is different from the standard of human history, and world history is the history of human urban eras (Oswald, S, 1963)." Lewis Mumford, R.E. Parker, and Oswald Spengler agree that

"no matter what urban form, it has unique cultural characteristics and will inevitably be expressed through cities."

Aldo Rossi pointed out in his 1966 book "Urban Architecture" that "a city is a place and carrier that accommodates time, space, matter, and events in the collective memory of humanity. The texture of urban space and monuments reflect the unique spiritual and cultural identity of each city"(Zhang,X, 2016).In 2014, Zhu Yuanyuan pointed out that urban culture is a complex whole formed by the integration of people's lifestyle and environment, cultivated daily habits, values, etc. in the process of urban cultural development, and is reflected in the material space and social activities of the city(Zhu,Y.Y, 2017).Jiang Jinghua pointed out in 2014 that urban culture is not only a phenomenon, but also a witness. It not only reflects human living conditions, but also reflects human thinking about life, cities, and civilization on a relatively stable level. It is a condensation and symbol of human wisdom. Align the hierarchy of urban culture and human cultural systems, dividing them into three levels: material, institutional, and spiritual(Jiang,J.H, 2015).The culture of a city (including material culture, institutional culture, and spiritual culture) is the unity of diversity and identity (Zhang,S, 2011).

Culture is the process by which individuals express their self-worth and realize it in time and space through a symbolic system. It can also be said that culture is the process of human socialization. The change and development of culture is a change in the human value system, which is a social transformation presented with the development of society. Urban culture is an important manifestation of cultural change and development. As the foundation of urban culture, architectural heritage has shifted from protection and utilization to cultural value interpretation. It is a formal reflection of one's own historical development, based on contemporary social values, and a reflection on one's own socialization.

The signifier and signified based on the semiotic theory, as well as the cultural expression of architecture under the semiotic theory, provide a basic theoretical framework for the research hypothesis proposed in this study. This refers to the multifaceted cultural significance of architectural heritage.

2.2 Research on Cultural Heritage Protection Documents

As an important carrier of human history and culture, cultural heritage has been organized and promulgated by international organizations and regulations, charters, and international declarations on the protection of cultural heritage. According to the characteristics of national cultural heritage and regional environmental factors, each country carries out targeted protection and protects cultural heritage through legislative means. Through the study of relevant laws and regulations, the feasibility and rationality of the expression of architectural heritage culture are established.

2.2.1 Review of Western Cultural Heritage Protection Regulations

Western countries have carried out research in the field of cultural heritage protection earlier than China, which is divided into three stages.

The first stage: From the 1850s–1940s, the Athens Charter on the Restoration of Historic Monuments (Athens Charter), issued in 1931 by the First International Conference of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, was a representative document that mainly emphasized the protection of historic monuments. It has become an important guiding document for the protection of historical and cultural heritage since the 20th century and provides a basis for the formulation of subsequent relevant laws and regulations.

The second stage: from the 1940s to the 1970s, with the International Charter on the Protection and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter) as the representative document, it emphasized the use of all science and technology to protect and repair cultural relics, the protection object expanded from the building to the surrounding environment, and the research content expanded from the material to the intangible cultural research. The Venetian Charter states that "in the context of historical and cultural heritage, heritage does not only include individual buildings, but also includes a unique civilization, a meaningful development, a witness to historical events, and the urban or rural environment in which the heritage is located."

The third stage: Since the 1970s, as the third stage, the international community has produced dozens of conventions, recommendations, charters, declarations, resolutions, and principles related to the protection of cultural heritage.

These international documents have witnessed the development process of world cultural heritage protection, and the protected objects and contents are also more targeted, such as those established by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) The Resolution of the Symposium on Introducing Contemporary Architecture into Ancient Architecture, issued in Budapest in 1972, is a specialized document aimed at new buildings in urban historical environments. The document affirms the positive significance of introducing new buildings in urban historical environments and points out that new buildings are an important way for urban historical environments to adapt to the constantly changing social environment. This statement has a forward-looking perspective. On the one hand, it affirms the profound historical and cultural heritage of the urban historical environment, while emphasizing the need to view the urban historical environment from a development perspective and a macro urban development perspective.

With regard to the protection of cultural heritage, the Recommendations on the Conservation of Historic Areas and their Contemporary Role (Nairobi Recommendations), adopted by UNESCO in Nairobi in 1976, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (the Washington Charter), adopted in 1987, and the Valletta Principles for the Conservation and Management of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (the Waratah Principles), adopted in 2011, and the Nairobi Charter explicitly define the concept of "historic areas." In the Washington Charter, this concept is further extended to "historic cities and regions," and the Valletta Principles extend the conceptual definition of "historic towns and urban areas" in the Washington Charter, dividing the components of the urban historical environment into physical and non-physical levels and defining the specific content of both. The material level mainly includes three aspects: first, the natural environment, including the terrain, landform, and various natural resources in the historical environment of the city; second, culture, politics, and economy in different periods; and third, the material formed by urban development, such as the public space scene. The non-material level mainly includes cultural customs, traditional activities, and

traditional skills with historical value. It provides a reference value for the coordination between the development of the traditional ancient city and the construction of the modern city.

The cultural heritage protection documents issued after the 1970s have become more specific and regionalized in terms of research content and research objects. For example, the Bara Charter adopted by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has been revised multiple times since its promulgation in 1979 (the most recent version in 1999). The Bara Charter inherits the basic concepts and protection principles of other cultural heritage protection documents. Based on the basic national conditions and specific protection practices of Australia, a flexible and operational model has been summarized to achieve the combination of protection principles and practical practices, providing specific and feasible regional model reference experiences for other countries with underdeveloped historical and cultural heritage protection theories. The Nara Authenticity Document, jointly adopted by UNESCO, ICCROM, and ICOMOS in Nara in 1994, was aimed at addressing the challenges faced in the field of international heritage protection, namely, establishing different understandings of the authenticity of historical and cultural heritage based on the principle of cultural equality in different cultural backgrounds. Further expanding the connotation and extension of "authenticity", the concept of "authenticity" is further diversified, no longer based solely on Western stone architecture systems, emphasizing the recognition of the characteristics of Eastern traditional culture and architectural systems. It is pointed out that each cultural system can define the connotation of "authenticity" based on its own cultural characteristics. The Nara Authenticity Document breaks through the inherent standard system of "authenticity", Fully consider cultural diversity and establish the research object on the basis of regional culture. In 2008, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) adopted the "Quebec Declaration on the Protection of the Spirit of Heritage Sites" (Quebec Declaration), which formally introduced the concept of "place spirit" into the field of cultural heritage protection and elaborated the meaning and characteristics of "place spirit" in the form of

a declaration. It provides a new level for the protection of cultural heritage and makes the spiritual connotation contained in architecture the object of protection.

2.2.2 Review of Relevant Cultural Heritage Protection Regulations in China

Traditional Chinese architecture is often regarded as a work of craftsmanship, but also because of the use of brick and wood building materials, difficult to preserve, failed to be included in the scope of heritage protection. It was not until the 32nd year of Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty in 1906 that the Qing government established the Ministry of Civil Affairs and promulgated the Measures for the Promotion of the Preservation of Antiquities, which became the earliest cultural relics protection regulations. In 1928, the government of the Republic of China established the "Central Committee for the Preservation of Antiquities," which became the first institution set up by the state to protect and manage cultural relics, and promulgated the "Regulations on the Preservation of Historical Sites and Antiquities" in 1928. In 1930, the People's Government promulgated the Antiquities Preservation Law, which was the first national law on the protection of cultural relics in Chinese history. In 1931, the Regulations for the Preservation of Antiquities Law included ancient buildings in the scope of cultural relics protection. In 1935, the "Tentative Outline of the Scope and Types of Antiquities" divided architectural relics into cities, gateways, palaces, government offices, academies, mansions, gardens, temples, tombs, bridges, and ruins. In the same year, the "Old Capital Cultural Relics Renovation Committee" was established to study and repair ancient buildings. In 1929, Mr. Zhu Qiling and others established the Society of Chinese Architecture to conduct surveys, mapping, and research on ancient Chinese architecture, which initiated the discipline of research on the protection of ancient Chinese architecture and also included ancient Chinese architecture in China's cultural heritage for protection. Mr. Liang Sicheng presided over the compilation of the National Important Architectural Relics Architecture, which included more than 450 ancient buildings, laying a foundation for the development of China's cultural relics protection.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the protection of cultural relics began to be an important part of the country's cultural undertakings and was managed by the government as a whole. Its history can be broken down into two stages. From the 1950s to the 1980s, it was the main object of protection for immovable cultural relics protection units. In 1953, the Chinese government issued the instructions on the protection of historical and revolutionary cultural relics in capital construction projects. 1956 The State Council put out the Notice on the Protection of Cultural Relics in Agricultural Production and Construction. They also did the first nationwide survey of cultural relics and were the first to talk about the idea of "protection units." It was officially named and defined as "cultural relics protection units" in the Provisional Regulations on the Protection and Management of Cultural Relics that came out in 1961. The regulations said that cultural relics protection units are split into three levels of protection based on their value: national, provincial, and municipal. In 1975, the State Council promulgated the "Notice on Strengthening the Protection of Cultural Relics" so that precious cultural relics can be protected and later announced that cultural relics protection units have become an important basic work of cultural relics protection.

In the second phase from the 1980s to now, marked by the law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics promulgated in 1982, the protection system of famous historical and cultural cities was established in the form of laws. In 1982, 1986, and 1994, three batches of lists of famous historical and cultural cities were approved and published. So far, there are 136 historic and culturally representative cities in China. Since the 1990s, large-scale "old city reconstruction has caused serious damage to the historical and cultural city, and the cultural character and integrity of the historical and cultural city have had a huge impact." In 2002, the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics was amended to include the protection of historical and cultural blocks. The "Measures for the Administration of the Urban Purple Line," promulgated in 2004, put forward the concept of the urban Purple Line and clarified that the core protection scope and style coordination area should be demarcated for cultural relic buildings and historical and

cultural blocks. The Regulations of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns, and Villages, promulgated in 2005 and 2008, have established a multi-level cultural heritage protection system in China, from individual cultural buildings—historical and cultural blocks—historical and cultural cities, and from individuals—groups—cities. The "Planning Standards for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Cities," promulgated in 2019, detailed the protection content and protection methods of historic and cultural cities and historic and cultural blocks and is the most comprehensive legal document for the protection of cultural heritage in China.

After nearly a century of theoretical and practical exploration, the protection of cultural heritage in the world has gradually matured, from the protection of cultural relics to the protection of cultural heritage, from single-subject decision-making to multiple participation in joint decision-making, from the focus on the material level to the non-material level, and from passive static protection to active dynamic protection. In the protection of cultural heritage, on the basis of learning from relevant international laws and regulations and combining them with China's cultural heritage protection practice, China has formed its own laws and regulations on heritage protection, which has further laid a strong foundation for the protection of Chinese cultural heritage.

Based on the study of documents related to the protection of cultural heritage, it is extended from the protection and restoration of the heritage itself to the environment related to the heritage. It reflects the indispensability of architectural heritage in the material dimension of cultural expression. It is hypothesized that the architectural heritage of the ancient city of Pingyao in (H1) shows the material attributes of the architectural heritage culture in the material latitude.

2.3 Research on Heritage Display

The display of heritage is the process of spreading heritage and its culture. By showing heritage in a better way, we can make people more culturally aware, raise awareness of the need to protect heritage, and encourage the long-term growth of heritage culture.

2.3.1 International Regulatory Analysis of Heritage Interpretation

Several international groups have been studying how to interpret and show cultural heritage since the beginning of their work. Their main areas of interest have been the following six things:

1. Reflect the main content, principles, methods, and goals of heritage interpretation and display in the specific measures of cultural heritage protection;

2. The display of cultural heritage should be included in the public education of heritage protection to enhance the public's awareness of cultural heritage protection. Therefore, the display of cultural heritage is an important way and means in the process of heritage protection.

3. Represented by the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, it is clearly stated that heritage display (Presentation) and heritage identification (Identification), protection (Protection), preservation (Conservation), and transmission (Transmission to Future Generations) are the responsibilities of the States Parties to the Convention, requiring the establishment of corresponding institutions, appropriate scientific, legal, technical, administrative, and financial measures, the promotion of the establishment of training centers, and the encouragement of scientific research for the identification, protection, preservation, and display of cultural heritage. It can also provide international assistance in research, training technology, and resources for the protection, preservation, display, and restoration of cultural heritage to countries in need.(Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972)

4. Represented by the Bara Charter, propose the definition of cultural heritage interpretation, clearly stating that heritage interpretation and display are part of the cultural heritage protection process, and propose the requirements, importance, and goals of heritage interpretation and display for various environments in heritage protection.(The Burra Charter, 2011)

5. The International Charter on Cultural Tourism (Principles and Guidelines for the Management of Tourism of Important Cultural Monuments and Sites)

points out that the protection, interpretation, and presentation of cultural heritage play an important role in the process and are a very important challenge. From the perspective of heritage tourism, the principles, requirements, and objectives of cultural heritage display, cultural heritage protection, and sustainable development are discussed. (International Cultural Tourism Charter - Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance, 1999)

6. The International Council on Monuments and Sites has adopted a special document on the Charter for the Interpretation and Exhibition of Cultural Heritage, which has its own definition, objectives, principles, and related rules for the interpretation and exhibition of cultural heritage. (ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, 2008)

In October 2008, the International Council on Monuments and Sites Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites was finally adopted at the 16th ICOMOS General Assembly.

1. The Charter defines the concepts of heritage interpretation and presentation, heritage site interpreters, cultural heritage sites, etc.

Interpretation: All potential activities aimed at raising public awareness of culture and enhancing understanding of cultural heritage, including print and electronic publications, public speaking, and directly and indirectly related display installations, the conduct of planned education, community activities, and research activities, referring to the display effects of heritage culture.

Presentation: It refers to the presentation of objects by arranging relevant explanatory information, personal experience, and illustrative infrastructure services in cultural heritage sites, etc. The presentation content can be conveyed through various technical means and methods.

Cultural Heritage Site: a place of historical, social, or cultural value protected by law. These include places, locality, natural landscape, settlement area, architectural complex, archaeological site, or a standing structure.

2. The Charter sets out basic principles for the interpretation and display of heritage and explains them in detail article by article.

(i) Approach and understanding: The interpretation and exhibition plan should be easy for people to understand;

(ii) Source of information: Collect the information needed for the display of the heritage in an effective and scientific manner;

(iii) Attention to environment and context: The interpretation and presentation of heritage should be related to history, geography, society, economy, politics, culture;

(iv) Authenticity protection: the interpretation and presentation must comply with the most basic authenticity principles of the Nara Authenticity Document;

(v) Sustainability planning: the interpretation plan must examine the natural and cultural environment of the heritage site and take social, economic and environmental sustainability goals as the goal;

(vi) A focus on inclusion: Interpretation and presentation must be the result of effective collaboration between conservation managers, heritage care professionals, local residents, relevant community organisations and other stakeholders.

3. Following the principles of heritage interpretation and presentation, the Charter sets out its objectives.

(i) Improve people's understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage, arouse people's awareness of cultural heritage protection, and improve public awareness of cultural heritage protection;

(ii) To communicate the social and human value of cultural heritage to the public through scientific, rigorous and effective methods;

(iii) Protect cultural heritage from intrusive interpretations, pressure from tourists, erroneous or inappropriate interpretations by conveying its historical structure and cultural value;

(iv) Ensure the long-term operation of interpretative infrastructure by raising public awareness of the protection of cultural heritage, as well as the regular inspection of interpretative content;

(v) Participate in the development, formulation and implementation of interpretative projects through stakeholders, communities and groups;

(vi) Develop technical standards and professional guidelines for the interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage. These guidelines must be adapted to their overall social and environmental sustainability needs.(ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, 2008)

2.3.2 Theoretical Analysis of Heritage Interpretation

Amit Cohen pointed out that in terms of the interpretation of heritage, namely the connotation and value of heritage, for controversial landscapes and local spirits, their value should be interpreted by analyzing their formation and individual structure.(Irit.A.C, 2008) Cahn analyzed the influencing factors that reflect the spiritual characteristics of cultural routes in different regions, and pointed out that when evaluating their reliability and integrity, the full value of heritage and its value in landscape beautification and biodiversity should be considered. (Alicia, L.C, 2008) Oliver pointed out that the value reflected by the importance of historical sites gives them commemorative significance, which is the basis for protecting, interpreting, and managing the site. The expression of this commemorative significance can allow tourists to appreciate the local spirit contained in the site.(Mery,O, 2008)

In terms of heritage interpretation and display methods, foreign scholars have conducted in-depth discussions on online communication, tourist surveys, memorial halls, and various museums. Burke emphasized that the internet, with its strong expressive power, has become a new opportunity and challenge for communication and dissemination of heritage values. He analyzed the role and impact of communication globalization on conveying the spirit of heritage sites in the era of online information. (Sheridan,B, 2008) Pierce McManamon conducted a survey of young foreign tourists visiting the Berlin Wall, analyzing the role of on-site education and

interpretation materials in satisfying the desire of tourists to understand, appreciate, and participate, as well as the ways to spread the spirit of heritage and the ways tourists love it. He pointed out that surveys of tourist evaluations can become a new method for heritage value assessment and improving the development of heritage sites from the perspective of tourist interests. (Kate, P.M, 2008) Potter pointed out that in Montreal, due to the existence of historical neighborhoods within the city, the city and museums are inseparable, and even archaeological methods can be used to transform this historic public place into an "urban museum". (Louise, P & Sophie, L, 2008) Zanetti pointed out that the inherent complexity of restoring controversial heritage in modern urban structures can be achieved through the use of memorial halls. This approach not only allocates the risk of intervention in heritage to parts outside the heritage, but also provides viewers with a brand new display of heritage. (Thomas, Z, 2008) Zawadzka denies the establishment of a museum on rock art sites to stimulate tourism and completely envelop the rock art sites. He points out that transforming the site into a museum disrupts the relationship between heritage and the surrounding environment, and cannot spread the spirit of heritage. He also suggests using wooden boardwalks and observation platforms to showcase the site while maintaining the relationship between heritage and the surrounding environment. (Dagmara, Z, 2008)

Ilayan pointed out that the interpretation of desert castles includes the construction motivation, symbolic significance, function, structure, and relationships between castles. Establishing a new system of "borderless museums" can protect the value and importance of these castles and fully and clearly showcase the civilization of their location to the audience. (Jamal, L, 2003) In terms of the importance and effectiveness of heritage interpretation and display in protecting, preserving, and understanding heritage, Morate points out that the dissemination of cultural heritage information is of great significance in protecting, understanding, and preserving cultural heritage. Displaying the entire process of heritage restoration projects can allow audiences to understand the problems and restoration techniques in heritage protection work, and encourage future generations to participate in heritage restoration and

protection. (Gabriel, M et al., 2008) Nethery points out that heritage interpretation is crucial for inheriting the spirit of heritage, and editing and publishing heritage interpretation in the form of illustrations through various methods can expand public understanding and access to heritage. (William, N.H, 2008) Sterry pointed out that more efficient interpretation of heritage includes the use of new technologies that can better convey the spirit of heritage, protect heritage and give meaning to heritage sites, and enable audiences to fully immerse themselves in the appreciation and experience of heritage. He emphasized that this new approach is a challenge, as it allows tourists to experience the value and importance of heritage while enhancing their initiative to participate in heritage activities. (Patricia, S, 2008)

In terms of public participation in protecting the value of heritage, Davis pointed out that public participation in local heritage exchange and negotiation is crucial for protecting natural resources, cultural environment, and intangible cultural heritage. Gradually increasing awareness of heritage value will enable the public to form a sense of cultural identity, maintain stable local development, and benefit local cultural heritage management departments. (Davis, P, et al., 2008)

In terms of protecting and showcasing intangible cultural factors, Friedman comprehensively analyzed the formation of the spirit of historical relics and culture, and explored how intangible factors shape tangible heritage, historical and collective memory change heritage sites materially, and have an impact on the excavation, protection, and display of heritage sites. (Leslie, A.F, 2008) Mbangela pointed out that oral history is the most fundamental connection between language and the interpretation of cultural relics and historical sites. The inheritance of oral history requires sufficient opportunities for others to learn through observation and imitation. (Ethel, N.M, 2003)

In terms of heritage tourism, economic development, and heritage authenticity, Ketz pointed out that cultural development projects have profound impacts on geography and potential social, economic, and cultural aspects. However, in order to investigate, preserve, protect, and interpret cultural heritage, cultural development

projects should seek a balance between developing commercial interests and maintaining the original appearance of the site. This can be achieved by involving traditional inheritors in these projects, To protect and promote the uniqueness of national culture. (Anne,K & David,K, 2008) Stokin argues that He pointed out that tourism industrialization of heritage has caused rapid and profound changes in heritage, as well as the disappearance of the spirit of material and intangible heritage. He points out that because there is no material cultural heritage without intangible cultural factors, it is necessary to pay attention to intangible cultural heritage at all times to prevent it from being destroyed and abandoned. (Marko,S, 2008) Munyima pointed out that for the sake of the tourism industry, managing and packaging heritage only considers the tangible value of the heritage, while ignoring that these tangible values are transformed from intangible values, which come from the moral responsibility of the residents of the heritage site to the traditional generations. Therefore, the biggest challenge in protecting heritage sites is to manage and package heritage in the tourism industry, To ensure the originality of the relationship between local communities and heritage resources is not affected. (Munukayumbwa,M, 2003)

On the social and economic value of cultural heritage tourism, Aworth pointed out that It is pointed out that the local residents are an important part of the heritage culture, and their presence helps to increase the vitality of heritage sites and maintain their attractiveness to tourists. (Aworth, G.J, 1990) Mathieson proposed that tourism can promote the protection of historical relics and improve the living standards of local residents. (Mathieson,A, 1982) Dogan proposed that heritage tourism can promote changes in community land ownership relationships, old and new competition relationships, and new and old lifestyle relationships. (Dogan, H.Z, 1989)

In terms of stakeholder research on heritage tourism, Wager pointed out that the government is the planner, manager, and marketer of heritage. (Jonathan, W, 1995) Charlton pointed out that While promoting the development of local tourism culture, the government should build necessary infrastructure, provide public management, carry out scientific heritage planning and protection, effectively publicize

the heritage, and promote the development of tourism economy. However, the government's unclear decision-making on heritage tourism is mainly due to the lack of reliable data. And more from an economic and employment perspective.(Clive, C & Stephen, E, 1996) Teo pointed out that companies are often developers or investors of heritage tourism, but the attractions built by companies on heritage sites are difficult to be recognized by local residents and tourists as part of the heritage, and corporate behavior is also difficult to change the local residents' recognition of existing heritage. (Peggy, T & Yeoh, B.S.A, 1997) Corner pointed out that heritage is a part of social organizations, and private enterprises that provide heritage tourism experiences to tourists may be criticized when they conflict with heritage protection, which is closely related to the perceived authenticity of reconstructed heritage or cultural products. (Corner,J & Harvey,S, 1991)

In terms of the relationship between heritage display and heritage protection, Voyagekin points out that the direct purpose of all heritage protection is to continue the complexity of heritage and showcase the complete historicity of historical sites; History can be interpreted through investigation, protection, and archiving, among which archiving and 3D reconstruction are the only protection methods that can be adopted when historical sites are at risk of land renovation. Therefore, when heritage is damaged, only virtual methods such as photos, records, sketches, and graphic reconstruction can preserve the relics.(Dmitriy, V & Karl, B, 2005)

The display and expression of heritage have provided a new definition of cultural connotation from the perspective of heritage function, enriching the cultural connotation of heritage from multiple angles such as politics, society, and economy. And propose research hypothesis (H2) that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City exhibits functional attributes of architectural heritage culture in the social dimension.

2.4 The Connotation and Form of Traditional Chinese Architectural Culture

The Confucian idea of respecting and ranking orders and differences became the dominant ideology of feudal rule. The Taoist idea of tranquility and inaction also became the way of life of feudal officials. Tradition is a culture that not only affects

people's behavior but also the construction of traditional Chinese architecture. With the rise of Feng Shui came the idea that people and nature, buildings and nature, and people and buildings should all be in harmony with each other. It also set the basic rules and forms for traditional Chinese architecture. Therefore, "studying architecture is studying an art and a culture, and examining architectural culture requires tracing its cultural origins, primitive religions, humanistic thoughts, etc." (Han, 2006)

2.4.1 Cultural Connotation of Traditional Chinese Architecture

Traditional Chinese architecture is part of the symbol of Chinese culture. From the entire city layout and palaces to doors, windows, roofs, and door knockers, they all have a strong sense of Chinese traditional culture. They are closely related to China's Confucianism, Taoism, and Feng Shui culture and reflect China's traditional creation ideas and aesthetic values.

Confucianism

Chinese traditional culture is deeply influenced by Confucianism, which permeates every aspect of life and invisibly influences the attitude of Chinese people towards life. In other words, Chinese culture embodies traditional culture with Confucianism as its core, therefore, traditional Chinese architecture is also known as the embodiment of Confucianism. In the more than two thousand years since Emperor Wu of Han deposed the Hundred Schools of Thought for the sole reverence of Confucianism, although Taoism flourished and Buddhism was introduced, Confucianism was the spiritual core of ancient China for thousands of years. Zhu Xi's Neo Confucianism inherited and developed Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, transforming Confucianism into a speculative form and establishing a vast ideological system. Neo Confucianism is the exploration of the operation of the Heavenly Way, with a focus on the establishment of social order and the correct understanding of the operation of the Heavenly Way, as well as the compatibility between humans and the Way. Zhang Dainian believed in "Culture and Philosophy" that ancient Chinese philosophy can become the "study of heaven and man" (Zhang,D.N, 2006).The relationship between humans and nature.

Confucius believed, "How can a country be established when there is no order of status?" (Fu, 1984) Make hierarchical order the foundation of a country. "Li is order and harmony, and its core is the patriarchal system and hierarchical system. There are strict hierarchical relationships between people and groups (Xiang, 2009).""The use of propriety, harmony is precious, and the way of kings, Si is beauty (He, 1997)"The function of propriety is to do things appropriately and obediently, which is precious. The most valuable aspect of a wise monarch governing a country lies here. They all follow this principle when doing things. If they encounter something that is not feasible, they still blindly pursue harmony without using propriety to control it, which is also not feasible. The full play of the role of "propriety" has been realized.

"Li" is an unequal ideology that served the ruling class better during feudal rule, but also extended to the relationships between people, becoming an ethical system. When there is a period of chaotic social order and unrest, known as the collapse of music and etiquette, the fundamental reason lies in the rampant material desires and chaotic social hierarchy, which is due to the lack of "etiquette" as a standard to constrain human behavior in society. Therefore, Confucianism emphasizes strict adherence to hierarchical relationships, requiring each social class to understand their position and not engage in behavior that goes beyond the rules, in order to stabilize society. "Li" is a complete social system that coordinates various levels and perspectives, delicately defining the status, responsibilities, and obligations of each member of society, recognizing the basic right to survival of each individual. It is believed that each member of society, while obtaining a living material, also bears a certain social responsibility, thus laying a stable "cell" for the harmonious operation of the entire society.(He,X.M, 2007) Simultaneously, Confucianism interprets ritual with benevolence, developing the cultural connotation of "ritual" and applying it to individuals themselves, emphasizing their social responsibility and obligations. The combination of "ritual" and "benevolence" interprets the ideal model of Confucian thought on ritual.

"Li" is the external manifestation of Confucianism, and "ren" is its core idea. "A person who is not benevolent is like a gift."(Li,Z.F, 2009) Regarding the

explanation of "benevolence", Confucius believed that benevolence means "loving others"; Mencius believed: "Kissing is benevolence.". The essence emphasized by the two is consistent. "Ren" is a manifestation of a person's beautiful character and the highest summary of morality. The original intention of Confucianism's advocacy of "benevolence" is very clear, which is to transform the external social hierarchy mechanism and historical tradition into the conscious requirements of internal moral ethics. Starting from rectifying family relationships in interpersonal relationships, it emphasizes "FuYi,MuCi,XiongYou,DiGong,ZiXiao", and extends it to the same structure of the country and family, emphasizing the relationship between father and son, the relationship between monarch and subjects, the distinction between husband and wife, the order of age, and the trust of friends. (Wan & Lan, 2010) It constitutes the connotation of Chinese culture.

Ancient Chinese architecture is the form of "Li" in the presentation, so that the building has a grade, the formation of the hierarchy of architecture. Through the architectural form, the scale of the building, the use of building materials, colors, and the selection of decoration, the grade of the building is reflected so as to maintain the unequal social order.(Qin,H.L, 2006) In essence, it is a grade-marking function imposed by the etiquette system, absorbed by the architectural construction system, and transformed into a complete set of architectural symbols with a grade-marking function.(Peng,J.Y, 2003)

There are two types of architecture based on "Li" in ancient times: one regards the entire architectural form itself as one of the contents of "Li Zhi," and the other regards the building as Li Zhi architecture.(Li,Y.H, 2006b) The former consists of palaces and residential houses; the latter has ancestral temples and ancestral halls. "Li" exists objectively in any social and historical period. "Li" has an external restraint effect, and its internal purpose is to pursue the stability of the country and society. As a hierarchical symbolic medium produced by the ruling class in the process of social development and operation, architecture protects social stability to a certain extent and forms a relatively unified and harmonious social development environment.

The following four aspects summarize Confucianism's influence on traditional Chinese architecture:

1. Confucianism promotes etiquette, which serves as the cornerstone of state governance and the guiding principle of personal behavior, manifesting in a variety of architectural forms, including palaces, temples, and tombs. Etiquette reflects a strict hierarchy, that is, the order of respect and inferiority, and the difference between upper and lower. In architecture, it is manifested in the space, color, decoration, etc., of the building, which has strict regulations and cannot be transgressed.

2. Confucianism promotes the primacy of monarchy, signifying the dominant role of men in society. The supremacy of the imperial power within the ruling class is reflected in the size and majesty of the structures built in palaces.

3. According to Confucianism, "benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom, trust, forgiveness, loyalty, filial piety, and ladder" are all parts of people's thoughts and social lives. They form a unique architectural form, like archways, to praise good manners.

4. Confucianism emphasizes "gentleness and refinement," which is the unity of appearance and content, and is the "Li" in architectural form and the "power" in connotation. In architectural expression, it is reflected in the unity of the form and function of the building itself, such as the Temple of Heaven, the Temple of Earth, the Imperial Ancestral Temple, etc.

Taoist Thought

The Taoist culture, represented by Laozi and Zhuangzi, is an important component of traditional Chinese culture. It explains nature, society, and human beings through the concept of "Dao", and pursues a balance among the three. The Taoist philosophy advocates for nature, pursues nature, inspires people to achieve the highest goodness, and achieves the harmonious unity between humans and nature through the pursuit of "Dao". The adaptation of Chinese architecture to local conditions and the use of local materials demonstrate the harmonious coexistence between humans and

nature. If Confucianism emphasizes the service of art to political rule, while Taoism emphasizes the harmonious aesthetic relationship between humans and nature, which is the inner spiritual beauty of humans. Confucianism entered the world with "propriety" and was vigorous and promising, while Taoism emerged with "Dao" and retreated with "inaction". Confucianism emphasized the "refined and refined" form and quality, while Taoism emphasized the "governing by inaction" of human beings.

Taoism regards human life as an integral part of the universe, believing in the corresponding relationship between humans and the cosmos. In the preface of Du Guangting's "Records of Sacred Places, Blessed Lands, and Famous Mountains," it is recorded: "The mountains of the three realms are all transformed by true energy, with official buildings above and places visited by great saints, corresponding to the thirteen governmental offices in the human body." Because mountains are all structurally similar to the human body, and because humans and mountains mutually depend on and influence each other, people can draw essence from natural mountains and rivers to cultivate and elevate themselves. However, due to differences in purity and turbidity of qi, as well as variations in spiritual energy flow in different mountainous areas, it is necessary to find favorable Feng Shui locations to absorb the essence of mountainous vitality in order to achieve longevity. Taoism believes that good Feng Shui locations not only have the effects of "nourishing life" and "increasing lifespan" but also possess the power of "resurrecting the dead." Additionally, Taoism holds that places abundant with vitality can rejuvenate dried bones. In order to select favorable Feng Shui locations and absorb purer celestial energy, the language used also contains mystical elements inherent to Taoism.

Influenced by traditional Chinese Taoist thought, traditional Chinese architecture has been created to understand the rational utilization and protection of natural resources, and to cleverly interpret the symbiotic relationship between humans and nature. The Taoist philosophy of "Dao" is a philosophical view between humans and nature, which is a law of cosmic operation, the fundamental of the universe, and the "Dao" of nature. Humans are an organic component of nature and socialized individuals,

while "Dao" is the law and criterion of life. The way of human beings and the way of nature, "combining nature with nature" means conforming to nature, and "inaction" means returning to nature. Therefore, Taoism regards returning to simplicity and returning to reality as the highest realm of life, achieving "unity between heaven and man.". This idea permeates into traditional Chinese architecture, emphasizing the combination of nature and artificiality, and the unity between humans and nature.

The cosmology of the Tao De Ching and the Book of Yi Jing reflects the philosophical ideas of "yin", "yang", and "You" and "Wu", emphasizing that the spatial and functional attributes of architecture can be transformed into each other, not only limited to the entity that surrounds the space, but also the space itself. Profound explanation of the essence of architectural space has become the theoretical foundation of traditional Chinese architectural spatiotemporal concepts. Another characteristic of Taoism is the worship of immortals, which directly affects the form of traditional architecture. "Gong and Guan" is a place of Taoist worship. Taoism believes that immortals live in tall buildings, so early Taoist temples are built in high mountains.

If the cultural and spiritual realm advocated by the family is regarded as a relatively pure artistic realm due to its general transcendence and ethical utilitarianism, then Confucianism emphasizes ethics and morality, making its aesthetic ideas an "ethical aesthetics". Taoism emphasizes nature, while Confucianism emphasizes humanity.

Chinese traditional culture is integrated and interconnected, and all research categories have not developed completely independently. Instead, they all want to aggregate the same philosophical concept, that is, the philosophy system of human and nature coexisting. They both compete and complement each other, forming the multifaceted nature of Chinese culture.

Chinese traditional architecture has a simple and unique concept of natural harmony, and a profound cultural sentiment towards land. Although Chinese traditional architecture has become a symbol of feudal system to some extent, it still emphasizes the functionality and practicality of architecture. Their design philosophy is

centered around people, and human thought and behavior depend on the architecture and its space. On the other hand, it also elaborates that architecture serves as a medium to link the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, forming a unique concept of harmony in traditional Chinese culture.

"Harmony", as a traditional concept that has been pursued subjectively from ancient times to the present, has profound connotations and philosophical roots in both its connotation and extension. From the harmony of yin and yang in the Book of Yi Jing to Dong Zhongshu's "unity of heaven and man", from the ancient "Five Elements Theory" to the induction of Laozi and Zhuangzi, the concept of "harmony" has always held an extremely important position in the ideology of the Chinese people, and in Chinese culture, "harmony" Concepts have become the focus of exploration and research in various schools of thought.

The harmony in traditional Chinese culture has different emphasis in different religious schools. Taoism emphasizes being born, living in seclusion in the mountains and forests, staying away from the secular world, taking the spiritual energy of mountains and rivers, cultivating oneself, and seeking tranquility and inaction in the interaction between humans and nature, emphasizing the harmony of the relationship between humans and nature. Confucianism advocates active participation in the world, emphasizes self-cultivation, family harmony, governance, and world peace. To achieve this ideal, Confucianism has established a complete set of ethical, moral, ritual, music, and regulations. As traditional culture, the two have different forms of expression and ideological aspirations, but their basic concept of harmony is the same. Taoist culture emphasizes the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, and integrates its own ideas and ideals, while Confucianism highlights its own ideas from the relationship between humans.

The "harmony" in the Book of Yi Jing is manifested in four levels: at the macro level of the universe, the operation of the universe is harmonious and orderly, forming natural laws; On the level of human and nature, humans are natural beings and coexist harmoniously with nature; At the human level, "harmony leads to unity, one leads

to multiple forces, multiple forces leads to territory, and territory leads to victory over things" .(Wang,Q.J, 1997) Harmony can be concentrated, concentration can have power, concentration of multiple forces can be strong, and strength can surpass everything. Emphasize harmony between people and form an orderly group organization. On the level of the relationship between individuals and themselves, "A gentleman should rest on his body and then move, change his mind and then speak, establish his relationship and then seek ".(Yan,W, 2010)(People should first stabilize themselves in terms of emotions, thoughts, and other aspects before considering taking action. They should also learn to change their perspective, express opinions, understand friends, and stabilize relationships before seeking help.)

The harmony expounded by Confucianism and Taoism from different levels and perspectives, namely the harmony between humans and nature, between humans, and between humans and themselves, is an excellent cultural heritage of the Chinese nation.

2.4.2 External Manifestations of Traditional Chinese Architectural Culture

Feng Shui

Chinese ancient architecture coordinates and balances its layout based on the principle of complementary yin and yang, concealing wind and gathering qi. It simulates images of things in the universe or social life to decorate and express beautiful meanings. The architecture corresponds to the stars in the sky to adapt to changes in the universe, achieving a harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, and between architecture and nature. It is precisely this concept that has achieved the basic form of ancient Chinese architecture, forming unique decorative works in architectural decoration. Therefore, the morphological characteristics of ancient Chinese architecture are practical products that combine the spatial and temporal consciousness of the universe with external forms.

Feng Shui is a knowledge chosen by ancient Chinese people for their environment, also known as mountains and rivers, landscapes, relative residences, forms and techniques, and blue and black. "Feng Shui integrates astronomy,

geography, environmental science, architecture, planning, landscaping, ethics, prediction, human anatomy, and aesthetics." (Lou,Q.X, 2003) Feng Shui encompasses both the geographical concepts of the earth, mountains, and rivers, as well as the content of the four seasons and seasons. Simultaneously, it also includes the concept of the four elements of the 28 stars constellations in the sky. Feng Shui always emphasizes the integrity of the environment. The main idea of feng shui is the idea of choosing the environment, which is a conscious choice made by humans to seek benefits and avoid harm to nature.

As early as the pre Qin period, it had already sprouted. In the Spring and Autumn period, due to the expansion of divination functions to various fields of society, coupled with the deepening of the concepts of yin, yang, and five elements, construction activities developed in two aspects: pragmatism and symbolism. The Han Dynasty initially formed two theoretical forms of feng shui: "Kan Yu" and "Xing Fa". During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, metaphysics emerged, originating from the rapid development of "qi" in the Spring and Autumn period. Feng Shui has turned to the theory of vitality, laying the foundation for aesthetics and art. Subsequently, the ritual system revived, and during the Sui and Tang dynasties, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism coexisted and borrowed from each other, forming a river of three religions. Feng Shui also integrates various ideologies and astronomy and geography. Extending to the Song Dynasty, the Song Dynasty advocated the study of the Book of Yi Jing, promoting the rapid development of the Eight Trigrams and the revival of the Li Qi School. Its academic and artistic qualities were greatly strengthened and enhanced. The development of feng shui in the Ming and Qing dynasties reached its peak, and officials and civilians jointly compiled a series of feng shui books, which led to the continuous standardization of feng shui classics. Feng Shui works are included in both the Yongle Encyclopedia and the Complete Library of Four Branches, establishing the status of classic Feng Shui theories such as the Burial Classic and the House Classic. A large number of professional folk feng shui practitioners emerged. After the Wuxu Reform, Western learning gradually became popular, and feng shui began to decline. During the

Beiyang government period, traditional cultural techniques such as feng shui and traditional Chinese medicine, which originated from the Yin Yang, Five Elements, and Eight Trigrams, were classified as superstitions. The whole society banned them, and thousands of years of feng shui fell into decline.

Chinese feng shui explores the site selection, orientation, layout, and coordination between humans, nature, and destiny in architecture. It opposes the notion of human interference with nature and adapts to local conditions, creating a unique architectural style and urban layout in traditional Chinese architecture. Feng Shui is composed of knowledge such as the Yin Yang and Five Elements, the Chinese zodiac signs, the Four Seasons and Five Directions, the River Map and Luo Shu, the Eight Trigrams and Nine Palaces, the Twenty Four Solar Terms and Seventy Two Seasons Calendar, and the Separation of Stars and Astrology. The core content of Chinese Feng Shui is the unity of heaven, earth, and man.

In Guo Pu's "Burial Sutra", Feng Shui is defined as follows: "When Qi is carried by the wind, it disperses, and when the boundary water stops. The ancients gathered and used it without dispersing, and when they acted, they had it, so it was called Feng Shui. The method of Feng Shui is to use water as the top priority, followed by the hidden wind." (Guo,P, 2010) "Qi" is the core of Feng Shui, and wind and water are the two natural factors that control "Qi", one is to blow it away, and the other is to gather it. This also indicates the important position of water in feng shui and geomancy. It can be seen that "hiding wind, gathering qi, and obtaining water" is the key to the concept of feng shui, and it is also the main reference for building site selection. In order to achieve ideal environmental conditions, a relatively closed environment, known as Tai Chi, is required. In the book "Geographical Knowledge", it is said that "there is both heaven and earth, with one Tai Chi in heaven and one Tai Chi in earth, and all things are born, and each has its own Tai Chi. Therefore, the founder of geography, the end of a dragon, the territory it occupies, and the mountains and waters it receives, form a circle, which is also Tai Chi. The end of a dragon, the city wall it opens, forms a circle, which is also Tai Chi. The end of a dragon, the hall it opens, forms a circle, which is also Tai Chi.". The

dragon and tiger created by parents and the main star form a circle, which is also Tai Chi (According to the size of the terrain, the Tai Chi level is divided into four levels, from Taizu to parents. Taizu is at level one, Shaozu is at level two, ancestors are at level three, and parents and main stars are at level four.) Plan the capital, town, township, and residential areas according to the size of the Tai Chi. From the primitive residence of Chinese people to the later city-state, palace construction was influenced by feng shui. Its basic idea was to seek benefits and avoid harm, balance yin and yang, and leverage the advantages of natural ecological environment to create living space, fully reflecting the harmonious relationship between "heaven", "earth", and "human".

The ancient Chinese people used animals to represent the position of the 28 constellations based on celestial phenomena, and called them the Four Symbols, namely the Blue Dragon, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Xuanwu. The seven eastern constellations connected to form a dragon shape, known as the Oriental Blue Dragon; The seven western constellations connect to form the shape of a tiger, becoming the Western Blue Dragon; The seven constellations in the north connect to form the shape of a turtle, becoming the Northern Xuanwu; The seven constellations in the south are connected to form the shape of a large bird, becoming the Southern Vermilion Bird; The four celestial phenomena correspond to the four seasons of the year, with the Qinglong representing spring, the Vermilion Bird representing summer, the White Tiger representing autumn, and the Xuanwu representing winter. In the typical Chinese residential courtyard, the courtyard is seen as the fifth orientation "middle", corresponding to the five elements of China: wood in the east, fire in the south, gold in the west, water in the north, and soil in the middle. Reflects the layout of traditional Chinese architecture. With the development of society, the integration of Feng Shui with Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and other ideologies has gradually formed a relatively complete Feng Shui theoretical system.

The significant impact of geography and its environmental factors on human beings is self-evident, and the reason why geomancy has persisted for thousands of years is also based on certain scientific principles. "Respond with one

voice, seek with one breath. When water is wet, fire becomes dry. Clouds follow dragons, and wind follows tigers. The sages work and all things see." (Zhu,X, 2004)."Feng Shui, based on the principle of similarity between things, attempts to seek the best geographical location by examining the terrain of mountains and rivers. The vitality contained in the selected geographical location affects the people living on it and their descendants. It is believed that if a person lives in a good feng shui environment, the auspicious energy will keep their body healthy and their mentality calm, and their way of life will always be smooth and auspicious, The saying goes, "A group of birds of a feather gathers together, and things of a feather flock together. Good or bad luck arises." (Zhu,X, 2004) It is precisely because Qi has yin and yang auspicious and inauspicious elements, and ghosts and gods have a distinction between good and evil. Taoism believes that Taoist practitioners who cultivate the Dao can use the pure yang energy in their bodies to eliminate negative energy in the environment, such as the ominous energy in houses and tombs, and thus change the feng shui of houses or cemeteries. This has led to the development of a series of rituals for worshipping houses and tombs, which have also been absorbed by the theory of feng shui in later generations.

Feng shui was integrated into the architectural form and unified with the idea of "Li." Astronomy, Yin-Yang, and the Five Elements were integrated into the architecture, combining architecture with heaven, earth, and the universe, forming the construction concepts of "Xiang Tian She Du" and "Qu Fa Tian Xiang." The capital city buildings of this period began to have regular square shapes." The use of these things in architectural design is not only to achieve the "cosmic pattern" combined with nature in art, but the most fundamental purpose is to formulate the form of the building according to the "Qi Yun" theory of the Five Elements.(Li,Y.H, 2006) The designers of its architecture have evolved from an initial unconscious state to designing and constructing according to a certain concept, and the ideology of the rulers has also sublimated from ruling the people in the city to the harmonious relationship between the entire city and nature, as well as heaven and earth.

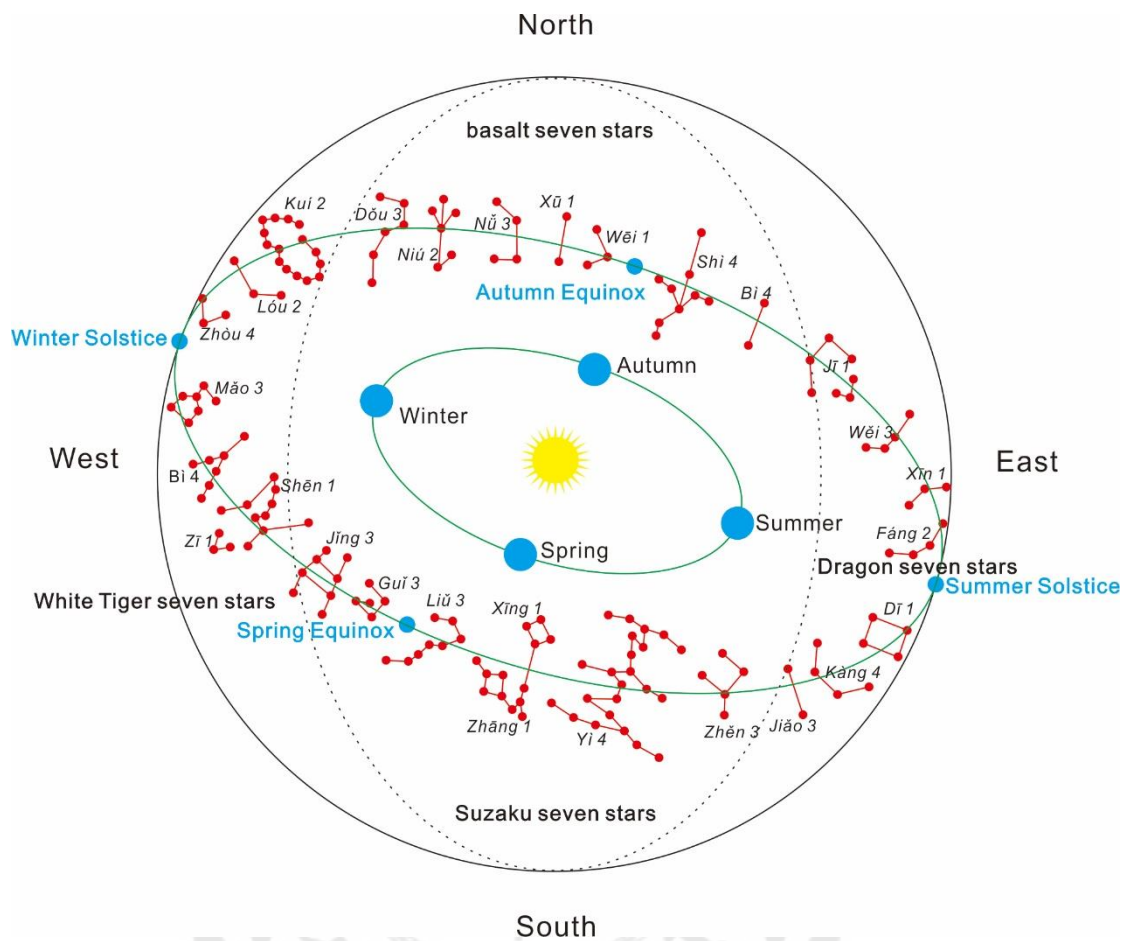


Figure 3 Diagram of the 28 Mansions

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024

Number

In the Book of Yi Jing, it is mentioned that "rivers produce diagrams, Luo produces books, and sages follow them" (Fuxi drew hexagrams, turning points into lines, from numbers to shapes). The River Map and Luo's book first used stars to express ideas. Secondly, the cycle of night and day is accompanied by the alternating appearance of stars in the sky, with the sun appearing dry during the day, forming one. Located in the south, the opposite night is yin, and the moon often appears during the alternation of day and night, so the moon is yang and yin, which is two. The North Star remains constant in the night sky and is directly opposite to the sun's position.

Therefore, the North Star is yin, yang, and three. It is also in response to the saying "one generates two, two generates three, and three generates all things", where yin and yang are separated from chaos and the source of all things is born from yin and yang. So the North Star is where the "Heavenly Emperor" resides, located in the central sky, and controls the stars in all directions. The Bei Dou's circumnavigation reflects the will of the "Heavenly Emperor". As mentioned earlier, the rotation of the Bei Dou reveals the laws of the heavens, with Xuan Ji as the four stars and Yuheng as the handle. Always revolve around the North Star, known as the "arched pole". So the Big Dipper itself has a different meaning for its seven stars. The Big Dipper is located in the north of the sky, with the Big Dipper as the sky, the Big Dipper as the earth, the Big Dipper as the human, the Big Dipper as the hour, the Big Dipper as the sound, the Big Dipper as the law, and the Big Dipper as the star. This expresses the ancient people's understanding and explanation of the Big Dipper, linking them with heaven, earth, humans, time, music, starlight, etc., and endowing them with different attributes. The Big Dipper was an important tool for ancient people to observe celestial phenomena, and played an important role in ancient astronomy, calendar, geography, divination, and so on. All of the above are ten, so ten is a combination, but ten cannot be observed at the same time. That is to say, although they both exist, they cannot appear at the same time. "Profit is loss, and fullness is overflow," so the Yin Yang cycle switches to each other.

sheng ren ze Luo Shu lie gua tu

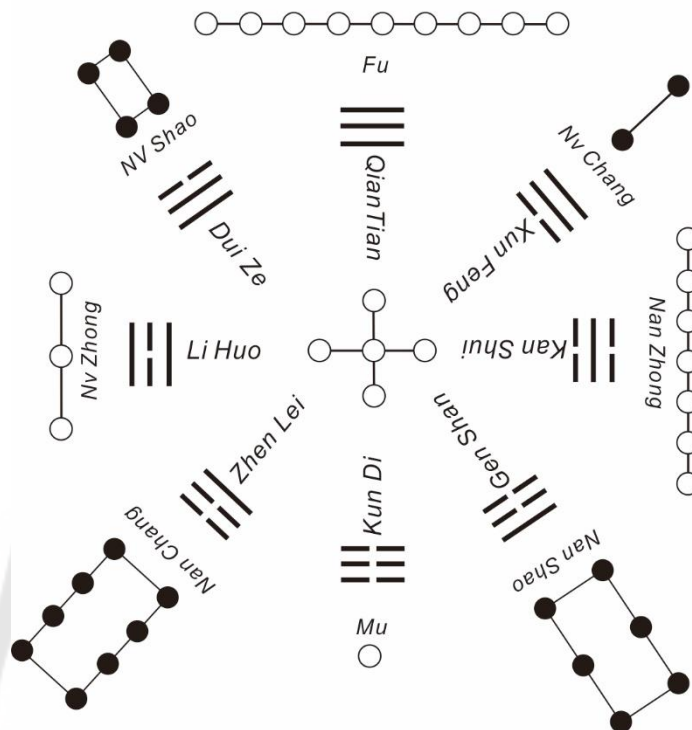


Figure 4 Sheng Ren Ze Luo Shu Lie Gua Tu

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024

Luo Shu is actually consistent with the river map. The river map reflects the laws of the entire universe and the relationship between heaven and earth in chaos. And the Book of Luo reflects the laws of life generation based on this foundation of heaven and earth. There are already two forces of yin and yang in the universe, and life is the result of the exchange of these two forces, and the combination of yin and yang produces life. Therefore, later generations used the River Map as the innate hexagram, and in "Feng Shui", its mathematical relationship was used to examine the natural environment. Because it is natural, the variables are fixed. And Luo Shu is a postnatal hexagram, which is used in "Feng Shui" to guide artificial construction through its mathematical and physical relationships, as well as to combine the innate hexagram to verify the future development trend of humans.

shen ren ze he tu hua gua tu

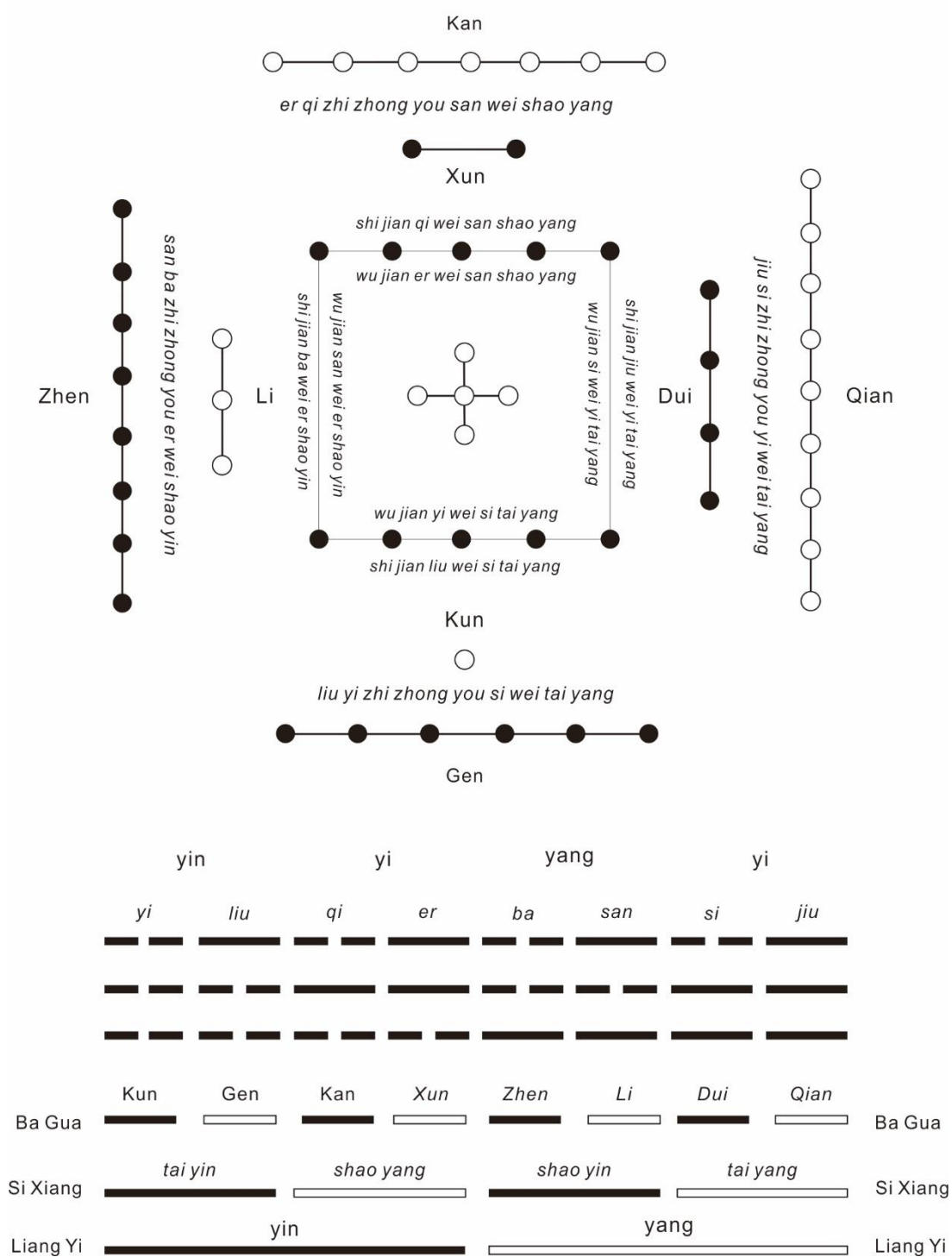


Figure 5 Sheng Ren Ze He Tu Hua Gua Tu

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024

The Hetu and Luo Shu were originally integrated, all based on celestial phenomena. And Kantian Geography was originally an integration of understanding the laws of the universe and providing guidance for personnel. The tools used are also based on moments, and the core reflected is the mathematical laws. So "Feng Shui" should be the superficial description of the academic field, while "Kan Yu" reflects the original intention, mathematical laws are the rules in construction, and Feng Shui refers to the classification of all forms.

He Luo indeed reflects the laws of numbers in the evolution of things, and "numbers" reflect the minimalist nature of things. The construction system of feng shui in China is also described using numbers, which also reflects the aesthetic ideas of numbers.

In Feng Shui, "numbers" have a specific connotation value system, also known as "numerology" (Shushu, also known as Shushu. Shù, referring to methods, techniques; Shù, related to quantity, extended to principles, logic, etc. As the ancients said, "There are techniques in numbers, and there are numbers in techniques." Numerology is a theoretical system in ancient China where individuals generalized the highly macroscopic rules of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements governing the transformations and interactions of all things in the world. They then extensively applied these rules to deduce relationships and changes between phenomena, predict the future, and seek good fortune while avoiding calamity). In traditional Chinese culture, numbers coexist with heaven and earth and possess specific natural laws. In the language of architecture, numbers are used to express desires, concepts, and symbolic meanings. Simultaneously, they create a special architectural decoration that balances the relationship between humans, buildings, and nature, integrating numbers with astronomy, geography, and humanities. The aesthetic of numbers reflects the harmonious relationship between ancient Chinese architects and nature.

According to the "Yi Jing," according to Yin and Yang, the odd number corresponds to the sky, which is Yang and symbolizes auspiciousness; the even number corresponds to the earth, which is Yin and has an ominous meaning. For

example, the Forbidden City in Beijing is divided into the front court and the inner court. The front court is the place for men's activities, and the inner court is where women live. According to the Yin-Yang theory, men are the sky (Qian), which is Yang, and women are the earth (Kun), which is Yin. This is exactly the concept of the combination of Yin and Yang, Qian and Kun. There are three main buildings in the front court (Taihe Hall, Zhonghe Hall, and Baohe Hall). The three halls stand on three layers of white marble steps. The Taihe Hall has 9 bays, 5 bays deep, and 72 giant pillars, all of which are 9 or multiples of 9. The inner court is bounded by Qianqing Gate, and the east and west sides are the East Six Palaces and the West Six Palaces, using the even number "six." The architecture of the Forbidden City presents the concept of Yin and Yang from the perspective of numbers.

The use of numbers also has a strict hierarchical concept. "9" is the largest odd number and is used in the imperial family. For example, the Tiananmen Gate Tower is 9 rooms wide, implying the supreme power. Even numbers are used in the middle and lower classes of feudal society, among which "Lu" and "Ba" are quite popular. On the one hand, it is because the four directions are the numbers of "Liu He," which is perfect and auspicious. "Liu" and "Lu" are homophonic, implying official luck and seeking good luck; "Ba" and "Fa" are homophonic, meaning to get rich. These two numbers reflect the official-oriented thinking of feudal society and also reflect the desire of ordinary people to get promoted and get rich. As a representative of residential houses, the Qiao Family Courtyard in Shanxi consists of 6 courtyards, implying that everything will go smoothly. Its corridor is 80 meters long, with a profound connotation of being stable and having wealth from all directions.

As a large-scale sacrificial site in the Qing Dynasty, the use of numbers in the architecture of the Temple of Heaven in Beijing implies profound natural and cultural connotations. For example, the four seasons in a year, the number of sun, moon, and stars, the use of numbers in architecture to achieve harmony with nature, and praying to heaven and earth to ensure that they are free from natural disasters. For example, the four dragon well pillars in the center of the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests

correspond to the four seasons of the year; the 12 golden pillars in the inner circle correspond to the 12 months of the year; the 12 eaves pillars in the outer circle correspond to the 12 hours in ancient times, and the 24 pillars inside and outside coincide with the traditional Chinese "24 Jie Qi." In addition, the upper railings of the Circular Mound have 72 pieces, the middle layer has 108 pieces, and the lower layer has 180 pieces, a total of 360 pieces, corresponding to the traditional Chinese legislative year, that is, a year contains 360 days. The entire structure contains most of the astronomical numbers known to people.

The application of these numbers in architecture reflects the importance of using "Shu" in ancient Chinese architectural culture, using numbers to symbolize nature in order to achieve a social value aesthetic of beautiful expectations.

Color

Mr. Liang Sicheng said, "From the perspective of architecture of various ethnic groups around the world, ancient Chinese craftsmen may have been the most daring and skilled in using colors." (Liang, S.C, 1981) To some extent, traditional Chinese architecture is a building decorated with colors, making colors a symbolic symbol and expressing their rich cultural imagery, becoming an important carrier of traditional Chinese culture. In traditional Chinese culture, all things in heaven and earth can be summarized by the Five Elements, corresponding to their respective directions and seasons. Simultaneously, the Book of Rites, Kaogongji, records that "the Five Colors, the East is blue, the South is red, the West is white, the North is black, the sky is blue black, and the ground is yellow." Similarly, the Eastern green dragon symbolizes spring and corresponds to water; The Southern Vermilion Bird symbolizes summer and corresponds to fire; The Western white tiger symbolizes autumn, corresponding to the earth; The northern basalt symbolizes winter, corresponding to wood; And the middle heaven and earth are yellow, corresponding to gold. Color, orientation, and season are unified through feng shui, and the harmonious relationship between humans and nature is expressed through architecture.

Chinese ancient architecture dares to use colors, "this characteristic is undoubtedly inseparable from the structural system mainly constructed with wood." (Liang,S.C, 1981) Chinese ancient architecture is mainly composed of wooden structures, and due to the perishable nature of the wood, it needs to be painted for protection. With the development of the times, different colors are used in architecture and painted to form relatively stable architectural decorations. The use of color in architecture also relies on coordination with the natural environment. Due to the cold winters in northern China, where trees wither, warm tones are generally preferred in traditional northern architecture, complemented by blue and green as embellishments to create color contrast. In southern China, the four seasons are like spring, with lush vegetation. Generally, white is used as the wall and gray is used as the tile, highlighting the simplicity and elegance, and complementing the environment.

In the feudal culture of China, color also has a strong political color; for example, "Zhong Wei" in the five elements corresponds to "Di," namely yellow. Yellow became the central orthodox color, so it became the main color of the expression of imperial power, and "yellow" and "emperor" were homonyms, which deepened the political status of yellow. Yin and Yang and the five elements have a deep influence on the application of color in architecture. Colors in different dynasties correspond to different levels. According to the ritual system of the pre-Qin Dynasty, the pillars of the imperial palace are red, the princes are black, and the doctors are blue. The Sui Dynasty mainly used red and white colors, and the Tang Dynasty became the emperor's exclusive color, yellow; in the Song Dynasty, turquoise, red, and gold were used as decorations, with red walls and yellow tiles as the main decorations. The Yuan Dynasty followed the Song Dynasty with rich colors, and the Ming and Qing dynasties paid attention to the gorgeous color and pursued the luxurious effect, while white was regarded as the color of evil, and only the houses of the common people were decorated with white walls.

The application of color in ancient Chinese architecture has also changed with the changing times, and early color applications were a form of aesthetic

decoration. With the development of the Yin Yang and Five Elements, the use of color in architecture is not limited to decoration, but more importantly reflects faith and hierarchy. The colors of different dynasties correspond to different levels. The pre Qin ritual system stipulated that the pillars of the imperial palace were red, the vassals were black, and the officials were blue,; During the Sui Dynasty, red and white were the main colors, while during the Tang Dynasty, yellow became the exclusive color for emperors; In the Song Dynasty, decorations were made in turquoise, red, and gold, with red walls and yellow tiles as the main decoration. The Yuan Dynasty inherited the rich colors of the Song Dynasty, while the Ming and Qing dynasties focused on the splendor of colors and pursued luxurious effects. White was seen as a ferocious color, and only the houses of the common people were decorated with white walls.

The application of color in traditional Chinese architecture not only integrates nature in space but also forms a relatively stable color symbol and aesthetic perception in time. Such as red symbolizes festive, warm; yellow symbolizes brightness and imperial power; green symbolizes life; blue symbolizes calm and deep; purple symbolizes mystery; gray symbolizes simplicity; white symbolizes purity. The use and symbol of color have a specific national connotation. The use of color in architecture provides a rich display for the cultural expression of architecture and sets a cultural connotation for the traditional Chinese aesthetic.

To sum up, the application of color in traditional Chinese architecture has a certain stability. The application of color extends from its own decorative aesthetic to the grade symbol. Simultaneously, the integration of color with Yin and Yang and the five elements makes color have philosophical concepts and enriches the connotation of color. Finally, the use of color in different geographical environments reflects the harmonious unity of people, architecture, and nature.

Based on the influence of Confucianism and Taoism in traditional Chinese culture on the form and function of traditional architecture, as well as the formal expression of traditional Chinese culture in architecture, a research hypothesis (H3) is proposed that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City exhibits the cultural

purpose of architectural heritage in the spiritual dimension. Reflecting the unique architectural spirit and aesthetic tendencies of traditional Chinese architecture.

2.5 Chinese Traditional Architectural Aesthetics (Tian Ren He Yi)

In the long feudal society of China, Chinese traditional culture developed in the constant collision of ideas and finally occupied the dominant position with the coexistence of the three sources of Confucianism, Taoism, and interpretation. Among them, Confucian culture profoundly influenced the spiritual outlook and historical development of Chinese traditional architectural culture, and its core concept and outstanding performance were Confucian etiquette. Harmony with "Li" as the keynote "does not lead people's emotional psychology to external worship objects or mystical realms, but dissolves and satisfies it in the world relationship between people with a parent-child relationship as the core, so that the ideas, emotions, and rituals that constitute the three elements of religion are all surrounded and immersed in this comprehensive unity of secular ethics and daily psychology." Without having to build another edifice of theological faith.(LI,Z.H, 1999) There exists a strict hierarchical relationship between people, as well as a harmonious relationship of "benevolence", which is the ideal social concept of "harmony for all".

This concept is reflected in architecture as "palaces, official offices, temples, and even residential buildings formed by the combination of multiple buildings are usually arranged in an absolutely neat and symmetrical manner, with buildings surrounding the courtyard. The number of courtyards is uncertain. The most important thing is the establishment of the main central line. All organizations are developed according to the central line, and their layout order is left and right, suitable for solemn occasions of etiquette."; "The public is like a grand court ceremony, while the private is like a family of weddings, funerals, and celebrations." (Liang,S.C, 1986) In addition to the basic structural layout concept of balancing the left and right sides of the central axis, prioritizing supremacy, and orderly hierarchy, its main features include a ground level layout, multiple courtyards intertwined, and various buildings arranged in a regular manner to form a closed group spatial pattern, reflecting the introverted and "collective

beauty" characteristics of social structure, "It is not an independent and free thing, but exists as a part of the entire group. Just like any individual line in Chinese painting, if it leaves the entire painting, it is meaningless. Once a single building leaves the group, its existence loses its basis. The Hall of Supreme Harmony is only valuable in the solemn atmosphere of the Forbidden City, and the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvest only has life in the environment of the Heavenly Temple, which is rich in pine and cypress." (Xiao,M, 2003) It is evident that Chinese architecture embodies the holistic and collective nature of "harmony for all".

The ancient Chinese aesthetics were based on the philosophical foundation of "the unity of heaven and man", and its prominent feature is that "the unity of heaven and man" and "heaven" are all encompassing nature and objects; "Man" is the subject between heaven and earth. The unity of heaven and man means that the subject integrates into the object to achieve the fundamental unity of the two, thereby achieving a harmonious state between humans and nature. The ultimate goal pursued is to understand the interrelationships between things and achieve their unity. Taoism seeks the life and aesthetic realm of "unity of heaven and man" through the "non action" of "man follows the earth, earth follows the heavens, heaven follows the Tao, and Tao follows nature" in Laozi. It also emphasizes the concept of "non action and non non action", believing that as long as one embraces nature with a "non action" attitude, they can achieve "unity of heaven and man". This is also the "Heavenly Harmony" realm of Zhuangzi's "All things and I are one". "The unity of heaven and humanity" can be summarized as: both humans and heaven are material, although in different forms, they are essentially the same; People need to conform to nature and transform it, but they cannot destroy nature to achieve harmony and unity between humans and nature.

Under the influence of the Taoist philosophy of "harmony between heaven and man", architecture has become a part of nature. Architecture and nature are appropriately integrated, with emphasis on "integrating into nature" and "integrating nature" through site selection, courtyard style layout, round sky and place shape, numbers under the natural environment, and natural integrated civil materials. The

dialectical materialist view that humans are heaven and heaven is also human emphasizes the unity and harmony between humans and nature. Architecture, as a carrier of traditional Chinese culture, integrates into nature, and naturally echoes the existence of architecture, thus achieving the famous Chinese style courtyard culture of "although created by humans, it opens from heaven". The beauty of nature and art have reached a high degree of unity and integration.

In the collective subconscious of the Chinese people, there is a pursuit of "unity between heaven and man", which is related to China's thousands of years of agricultural civilization. The production state of agricultural civilization relies on nature to make a living, making nature not the object that humans want to conquer in the eyes of the Chinese people, but an existence that shares weal and woe with humans and is connected by blood, and to some extent, even determines the existence of humanity. In the philosophical concept of Chinese people, humans and all things coexist. All things are better adapted to the external environment than humans. Humans need to learn from the natural way of "survival of the fittest and survival of the fittest" from all things in heaven and earth. This way of survival is known as "following the sky" and "unity of heaven and man". The efforts and attempts made by ancient feng shui scholars to study how to achieve "unity of heaven and man".

As the two mainstream ideologies in China, Confucianism and Taoism have different understandings of the unity of heaven and humanity. Confucianism emphasizes the concept of "harmony between man and nature", emphasizing the "interaction between heaven and man". It believes that "heaven also has the energy of joy and anger, the heart of sorrow and joy, and is in line with human beings. By combining with humans, heaven and man are unified". (Zeng,Z.Y, 2009)Its theory draws on the "Yin Yang Five Elements" theory of the Yin Yang family and transforms it into the "Yin Yang Five Elements System Theory". The theory of the Yin Yang and Five Elements system and the tradition of comparing virtues in pre Qin Confucianism have deeply influenced the development and evolution of feng shui theory. Taoism regards "the way of heaven and nature" as the core of understanding the relationship between heaven and man, and

emphasizes the harmony between heaven and nature. Laozi said, "Man follows the earth, the earth follows the heavens, the heavens follow the Tao, and the Tao follows nature." In Taoism, Zhuangzi was the one who clearly proposed the idea of "unity between heaven and man." He said, "There is no gain or loss from heaven, no gain or loss from man. There is no beginning, not death, and man is one with heaven." (Chen, G.Y., 2009) In Zhuangzi's view, the human body can be seen as a material existence similar to all natural things, and natural objects can also be seen as the human body. Use the nature of "me" to align with the nature of "things", so that human nature aligns with the nature of things. The unity of heaven and man in Taoism is a state in which practitioners merge with the people, objects, mountains, rivers, sun, moon, stars, and other large universes around them. At this moment, the Qi of the universe's fullness is drawn into the elixir field to refine the golden pill. At this moment, there is no other, no self, and no breath, entering the final state of fetal rest.

The focus of traditional Chinese aesthetics lies in the reflection of the essence of things, rather than their appearance. Therefore, the highest goal of aesthetics is the purification and sublimation of the spirit, rather than staying at visual or auditory pleasure. In the aesthetic of architecture, people's perception of beauty is often not grand buildings, rich colors, or beautiful scenery, but rather the wisdom of ancient Chinese people carried in their form, the harmonious unity with nature, the harmonious unity with society, and the cultural exploration of human development value.

Therefore, based on the idea of the unity of heaven and man, the interpretation of architectural heritage culture is a multidimensional cultural display, that is, the unity of material dimension, social dimension, and spiritual dimension. Further validate the research hypothesis through the study of three dimensions of Pingyao Ancient City architecture. The component model for the exposition of architectural heritage culture includes the exposition method and the cultural perception path.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative study aimed at providing a multidimensional interpretation of the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City. Cultural interpretation is conducted from the material dimension, social dimension, and spiritual dimension of architecture. Further analyze and summarize the social and spiritual functions of the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City. Complete the interpretation and research on the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City.

This study will use the following research methods to explore the interpretation of architectural culture in Pingyao Ancient City.

3.1 Text Analysis Method

Text analysis is a commonly used fundamental research method. Text analysis is a method of analyzing text content and mining text information. It extracts key information, emotional attitudes, and thematic ideas from the text through analysis of language, structure, semantics, and other aspects, in order to achieve understanding and interpretation of the text and further use it for research problems. The text analysis object of this study is the international charters, declarations, and regulations formed and promulgated between 1933 and 2016, including the Athens Charter of 1933, the Venice Charter of 1964, the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, the Nairobi Recommendations of 1976, the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1977, the Bara Charter of 1979, the Washington Charter of 1987, and the Nara Authenticity Document 1994, Beijing Charter 1999, Xi'an Declaration 2005, Valetta Principles 2011, Recommendations on Historic Urban Landscape 2011, New Urban Agenda 2016, and China's Cultural Relics Protection Regulations from 1982 to 2015 (Cultural Relics Protection Law 1982, Chinese Cultural Relics and Monuments Protection Guidelines 1997, revised Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China 2002, and revised Chinese Cultural Relics and Monuments Protection Guidelines

2015). Sort out the historical evolution and innovation of architectural heritage protection ideas in international cultural heritage related charters, declarations, and regulations, as well as relevant protection measures and methods, further compare the differences in architectural cultural heritage protection ideas between China and the West, summarize the functions and roles of architectural cultural heritage, and provide detailed and reliable historical basis for research content.

3.2 Literature Research Method

Literature research method mainly refers to the method of collecting, identifying, and sorting out related research contents and forming a scientific and rigorous understanding of the research object through the research of the literature. The literature research in this study mainly focuses on the following four aspects:

Firstly, based on the theory of semiotics, this study divides the signifier and signified of semiotics in architecture; Distinguish between the signifier and signified of architectural culture. To lay a theoretical research foundation for the interpretation and research of architectural culture in Pingyao Ancient City.

Secondly, a literature review is conducted on the influence of traditional Chinese culture (Confucianism and Taoism) on architectural creation, summarizing the cultural connotations of traditional Chinese architecture in architectural creation, and further analyzing the cultural connotations of Pingyao ancient city architecture. Based on traditional Chinese feng shui theory and the cultural symbolism of traditional architectural decorative components, combined with on-site research on Pingyao Ancient City architecture, this study summarizes the aesthetic views of traditional Chinese architecture, injecting cultural connotations into the interpretation and research of Pingyao Ancient City architectural culture.

Thirdly, based on the review of relevant literature on the interpretation of architectural heritage culture, a framework for the interpretation of architectural heritage culture is constructed, which includes the material attributes of the material dimension of architectural heritage culture, the functional attributes of the social dimension, and the

purpose attributes of the spiritual dimension. Provide a new research perspective for the interpretation of architectural culture in Pingyao Ancient City.

Fourthly, a review and analysis of literature and materials on Pingyao Ancient City, architecture, and culture in the past five years will be conducted to understand its research content, methods, and ideas, providing research references for the interpretation of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural culture.

3.3 Field Survey Investigation

Field survey method, also known as field investigation or on-site research, is a scientific research method that involves direct observation and data collection. By collecting data through field investigations, new research systems and theoretical foundations can be constructed. The researchers were able to obtain unprocessed raw data, ensuring the authenticity and accuracy of the study. This research project will carry out fieldwork on 8 national level cultural relics protection sites in Pingyao Ancient City (Pingyao Ancient City Wall (Ming 1368-1644), Pingyao Confucian Temple (Jin 1115-1234), Qing Xu Temple (Yuan 1271-1368), the former site of Ri Sheng Chang (Qing 1636-1912), Pingyao Cheng Huang Temple (Qing 1636-1912), Lei Lu Tai's former residence (Qing 1636-1912), Pingyao City Building (Qing 1636-1912), Pingyao County Yamen (Yuan 1346-1912), observe the architectural structure, architectural color, architectural decoration of architectural heritage, understand the social and spiritual functions of architecture, and further Excavate the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City.

China's cultural relics protection mechanism is divided into: municipal-level cultural relics protection units, provincial-level cultural relics protection units and state-level cultural relics protection units. Eight of the buildings in this study are all national cultural relics protection units.

Secondly, these 8 buildings are mainly located inside the Pingyao Ancient City and are mentioned in historical books in the Pingyao County Annals. These 8 buildings were built in different periods and run through the entire development history of Pingyao Ancient City, showing the characteristics of the times and cultural changes of

the buildings. The social functions of the 8 buildings are different, covering justice, education, religion, commerce, residential areas, etc. Analyze the architectural features and cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City from multiple aspects. These 8 buildings are the main tourist attractions of Pingyao Ancient City and also the main places for people to participate in cultural activities, with high artistic value, cultural value, and research value.

3.4 In Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews, also known as unstructured interviews or free interviews, are mainly used for field research. By conducting in-depth and detailed interviews, rich and vivid qualitative data can be obtained, and conclusions can be drawn and summarized through the researcher's subjective insightful analysis. The interview revolves around the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City, with the interviewer and interviewee engaging in relatively free conversations around the theme.

This study will be conducted within the ancient city of Pingyao, with in-depth interviews planned for five different groups: local cultural relic protection unit staff, local tourism practitioners, local merchants and residents, and tourists. The focus of the interview varies depending on the interview group.

The selection of the above five interview groups is based on the consideration of the close relationship between the participation of Pingyao Ancient City architectural heritage culture. The staff of cultural relics protection units are the protectors and inheritors of architectural heritage culture. Local tourism practitioners are disseminators of culture. Local merchants and residents are the builders of cultural activities. Tourists are cultural experiencers. These five groups have jointly promoted the inheritance and innovation of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage culture.

The interviewees will be randomly selected from the above five groups to ensure the objectivity of data acquisition. The entire interview process will be recorded, and the interview content will be organized later to form the original interview data.

For the staff of local cultural relics protection units, the interview topic revolves around the protection of architectural culture in Pingyao Ancient City, to

understand the protection and social impact of architectural culture. Specific aspects: Understand the government's policies, plans, and measures in protecting and promoting the culture of Pingyao Ancient City; The value and role of architectural culture in Pingyao Ancient City; How to balance the protection of architectural cultural heritage with economic development and modernization needs.

For local tourism practitioners, they are very familiar with the culture of Pingyao Ancient City, and the interview topic revolves around the dissemination of Pingyao Ancient City architectural culture. Specifically, understanding the similarities and differences between the culture of Pingyao Ancient City and the architectural culture in the ancient city, as well as the relationship between the two; What are the problems in promoting and showcasing the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City, and what are the new measures and methods that can better explain the architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City.

For local residents, they live in the ancient city, and the historical changes of the ancient city have an impact on their daily lives. The interview topic revolves around the identification of architectural culture in the ancient city of Pingyao. Specifically, understanding the impact of Pingyao ancient city architecture on the daily lives of residents; How to achieve cultural identity of Pingyao Ancient City through its architecture.

For tourists, they are the main consumer group in the tourism market of Pingyao Ancient City and the main target of cultural dissemination. The interview topic mainly revolves around the perception of ancient city architectural culture. Specifically, understanding how tourists perceive the culture of Pingyao Ancient City; How does the architecture of Pingyao Ancient City reflect the ancient city culture and traditional culture; Through what aspects of architecture, you can experience architectural culture.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Pingyao has been known as the ancient land of the Tang Dynasty since ancient times. According to the "Shanxi Gazetteer," during the Ming Chenghua period, "Pingyao County is an ancient pottery land. Emperor Yao first enfeoffed it in pottery, which is here." During the Qin and Han dynasties, the county was established, and because Emperor Yao initially enfeoffed it in ancient pottery, it was called the Tao Tang family. Therefore, it was located in Ping Tao and was under the jurisdiction of Taiyuan Commandery. In the Northern Wei Dynasty (424 AD), due to the homophone between the "Tao" of Emperor Tai Wu of Wei Tuo Ba Tao and the "Tao" of Ping Tao County, Ping Tao County was renamed Pingyao County to avoid taboo. Since the Tang Dynasty, it has gone through five dynasties, including Liao, Song, Jin, Yuan, Ming, and Qing. Despite numerous administrative division changes, Pingyao County remains in use today. The Ming Dynasty expanded the Pingyao Ancient City on the basis of the old city. Although it underwent 26 repairs during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the shape of the city walls and the layout of the streets remained largely unchanged. The ancient city is lined with shops and residential buildings, most of which were built during the Qing Dynasty and a small number during the Republic of China period. The entire ancient city is composed of city walls, temples, government offices, shops, and residential buildings, forming a huge ancient architectural complex that fully showcases the historical style of the county towns in the Central Plains during the Ming and Qing dynasties in China.

4.1 Analysis of the Material Dimension of Architectural Culture

The material dimension analysis of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage culture is based on the basic form, streets, architectural layout, and eight representative buildings (covering different types and functions of buildings, government, economy, commerce, education, religion, beliefs, etc., covering the main buildings of daily residents' production activities), as well as the decorative components on the buildings, analyzing the architectural forms with cultural characteristics, and

proving that Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage exhibits the material attributes of architectural heritage culture in the material dimension (H1).

4.1.1 The Form, Architectural Layout, and Streets of Pingyao Ancient City.

Form

In the "Pingyao County Chronicles" and "Pingyao Ancient City Chronicles" newly revised recently, the folk legends in the ancient local chronicles are followed, and the Pingyao Ancient City is called the "Turtle City." Looking down at the Pingyao Ancient City, the shape of the ancient city is square, but the southern wall is tortuous, like a turtle crawling southward. Additionally, the city's streets crisscross, resembling the pattern on a turtle's back. The terrain on the north, east, and west sides of the Pingyao Ancient City is gentle, so the city walls are built straight. The southern city wall of the ancient city was built close to the Zhongdu River, and it formed a curved direction with the undulating terrain and the winding river. Pingyao Ancient City has a city gate on the south and north walls and two city gates on the east and west walls. The six city gates are like the head, tail, and four feet of a turtle. There are also two wells outside the south gate, like the eyes of a turtle.

The worship of turtle culture originated from prehistoric clans and was considered a divine object. During the Warring States Period, the turtle's combat and defensive capabilities, attributed to its tortoise shell, were seen as a guarantee of victory in war. The Xia Dynasty introduced the turtle as a symbol of patriarchy and reproductive worship. In the "Four Symbols" of Chinese Feng Shui, Xuanwu also appears in the shape of a turtle. The Chinese exhibit a profound emotional connection to turtles. The way of thinking formed in ancient China has the characteristics of intuitive understanding. Intuition is used to generate a rich imagination that describes the inner characteristics of things and imbues them with strong emotional connotations. The turtle culture permeates and affects people's ideology and social customs and further explains that the local residents have given good wishes to the form of Pingyao Ancient City and also pinned their expectations on their living environment.

When building cities, the ancient Chinese have always followed the celestial phenomena, emphasizing the roundness of the sky and the squareness of the earth and the harmony between heaven, earth, and man. Therefore, the planning and layout of ancient cities are mostly square, facing north and south, and basically follow the standards and ancient systems of the Zhou Dynasty's royal city in "Zhou Li·Kao Gong Ji." "Zhou Li" has clear requirements for the orientation of building cities. In the eyes of the rulers, the orientation of the city is a major issue in governing the country and maintaining peace. Only by finding the right orientation can the order of front, back, left, and right be determined so as to achieve "governing the country with etiquette" and peace in the world. The determination of orientation is dominated by etiquette norms and incorporates the ancient people's idea of "harmony between man and nature," summarizing heaven and earth into "five directions" of east, west, south, north, and center. In the "five directions" of heaven and earth, the king can only stabilize the world by choosing the center to set up a palace. Facing south, the yang energy is the strongest and the most noble. Pingyao Ancient City is respected by facing south, which has formed the orientation pattern of "Azure Dragon on the left, White Tiger on the right, Vermillion Bird in front, and Black Tortoise behind."

Before the Qin Dynasty and the Eastern Han Dynasty, the central axis of the ancient city was east-west, even though the city was built facing south, reflecting the era's concept of facing south and being respected. In the early Western Han Dynasty, to strengthen the central position of the palace in the center and facing south when building the ancient city, it was changed to a north-south central axis to lay out the royal palace and government offices. This orientation is why most ancient Chinese cities chose to face south. Simultaneously, the building setting facing north and south adapts to the Chinese climate environment and meets the needs of lighting time in the building space. It reflects the ancient Chinese people's accurate grasp of the objective laws of nature and their subjective creation of the living environment and embodies the "ritual system" culture.

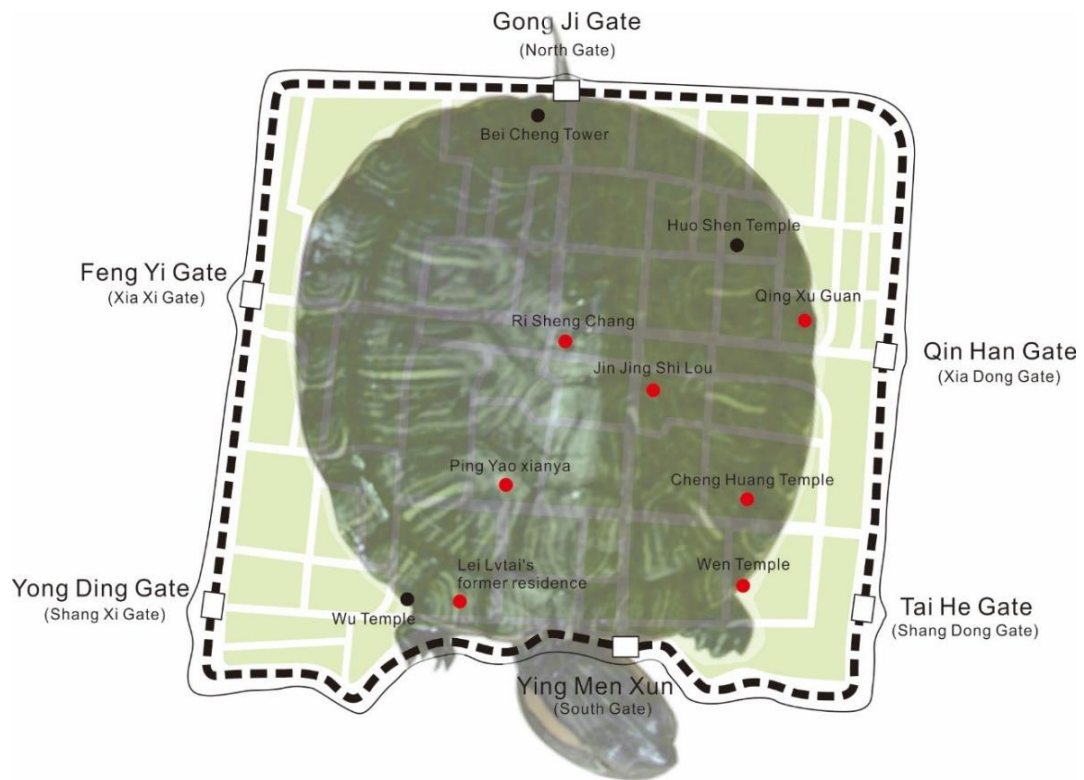


Figure 6 Pingyao Ancient City Resembles a Turtle (Origin of the Turtle City)

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

The construction of Pingyao Ancient City followed the ritual norms. The city is square, facing north and south, slightly east by 15 degrees. Over the past 2,800 years since its establishment, although it has been repaired and expanded by successive dynasties, the appearance and orientation of the ancient city have never changed. Secondly, the political hierarchy and the ritual construction system dictated the size of the ancient city. The measurement of the city and buildings was an odd number, with nine being the largest. Only the emperor was entitled to use this number to show his supremacy. The capital was the seat of the princes, with a scale of 7 li. The city governed by the nobles was 5 li, and so on. Pingyao Ancient City is the county seat. The size of the city is 3 li according to the etiquette. The length of each side of the ancient city wall preserved today is exactly in line with the etiquette. After actual measurement,

the length of the east, west, and north walls is almost 1.5 kilometers, of which the east wall is 1478.48 meters, the west wall is 1494.35 meters, the north wall is 1476.05 meters, and the south wall is built according to the terrain with a total length of 1713.8 meters. According to historical records, Pingyao Ancient City underwent a major expansion in the third year of Hongwu in the Ming Dynasty (1370 AD), and only then did it have the current size of 2.25 square kilometers. It can be seen that when planning and constructing Pingyao Ancient City in the Ming Dynasty, it also strictly adhered to the size of the county town of Three Li Square.

Architectural layout

The spatial layout of ancient Chinese cities is symmetrical and rigorous; otherwise, the majesty of the imperial power cannot be reflected. Therefore, the east and west walls of the city must determine the location of a street running from north to south. The ancient city uses this street as its central axis. All buildings within the city must be based on the central axis and arranged in a "sequence" along both sides of the central axis. The "sequence" here is the "ritual sequence" advocated by Confucianism. It also reinforces the idea that heaven has "mandated" the imperial power.

The existing Pingyao Ancient City was a county town during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. During this period, the planning concept and form of ancient Chinese cities were already quite systematic and reached an unprecedented level. The expansion and improvement of the spatial layout of Pingyao Ancient City were enough to reflect the historical urban characteristics of the Han Chinese at that time. Simultaneously, all kinds of buildings in the city have distinct political attributes. In the overall layout of the urban space, it reflects the ritual thought of the imperial power unifying the world, adheres to the strict hierarchy order, and also integrates the sacrificial culture, including religion.

Pingyao Ancient City regards the market building as the center of the ancient city. The city arranges various buildings according to their functions and cultural attributes, with South Street serving as its central axis. The court etiquette in the early

Han Dynasty stipulated that civil officials were on the left and military officials were on the right. In the etiquette of the subsequent dynasties, the emperor sat facing south, and the arrangement of civil and military officials followed the order of civil officials on the left and military officials on the right, that is, civil officials on the east and military officials on the west. Looking down at Pingyao Ancient City, the city layout follows the imperial power etiquette. With the central axis as the benchmark, the Confucian Temple, County School, Academy, Wenchang Pavilion, Kui Xing Tower, and other buildings are arranged on the left (east) side of South Street, while the Martial Temple and the Teaching Field are arranged on the right (west) side of South Street.

Simultaneously, the ancient city of Pingyao also dealt with the positional relationship between the Cheng Huang Temple and the county government in a ritual way. Since ancient times, the City God has been regarded as the god of protecting the city in people's hearts. He can also protect the country, safeguard the state, and govern the souls of the deceased, which concerns everyone's life and well-being. During the Hongwu year of the Ming Dynasty, Cheng Huang Temple was awarded to the city god on a grand scale, and the scale of the city god temple should be modeled on that of the government offices at all levels. This resulted in the Cheng Huang Temple, located in the county seat, being elevated above the county government office. According to the ritual order standard of "left for top, right for bottom," the ancient city of Pingyao built the Cheng Huang Temple on the east side of South Street and the county government on the west side of South Street, forming a pattern of two institutions and the co-governance of humans and gods, which concentrated on the imperial ideology of feudal rule.

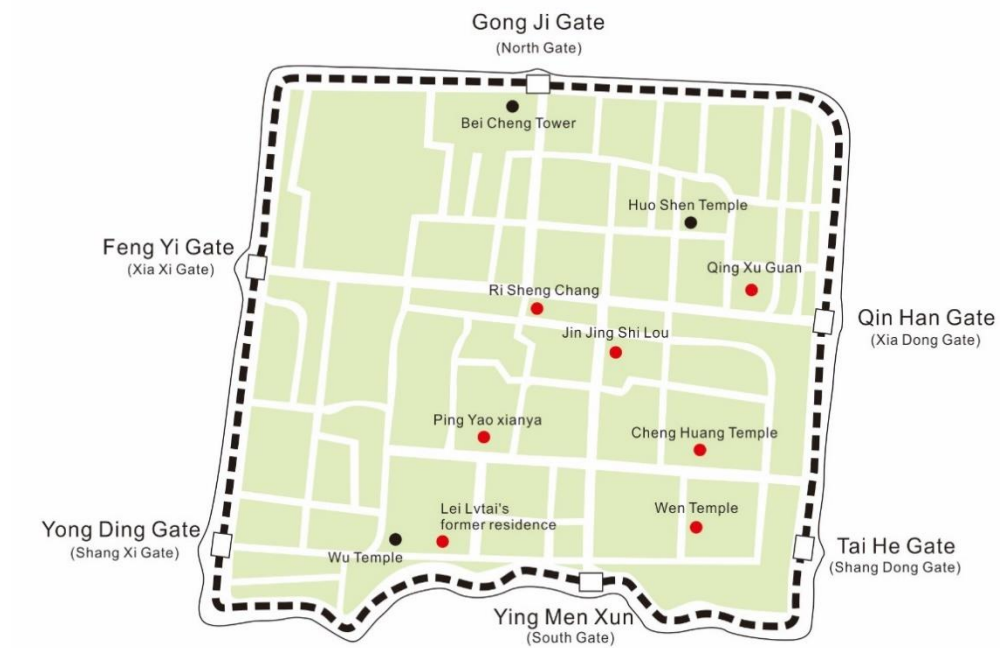


Figure 7 Distribution of Main Buildings Inside Pingyao Ancient City

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

Pingyao Ancient City has appropriately arranged Taoist and Buddhist architecture. Taoism is a local religion in China that believes in "the Tao gives birth to all things" and "cultivating the Tao to become immortal." Buddhism originated from the Western Regions and spread to China, believing in "karma" and "reincarnation of life and death." The emergence of the two major religions has its own geopolitical and cultural background. The concepts of "speaking from the East," "Buddha comes from the West," and "the Western Pure Land" have all influenced the philosophy of life of ancient Chinese people. Pingyao Ancient City adopts a symmetrical layout of the "left road and right Buddha" axis, arranging Taoist buildings such as Qing Xu Temple, Zhen Wu Tower, Zhen Wu Temple, Huo Shen Temple, and Lei Shen Temple to the east of the ancient city. The Buddhist buildings, such as Ji Fu Temple, Jixiang Temple, and Bai Yi Temple, are arranged on the west side of the ancient city, which meets the requirements of ritual order and integrates the cultural connotations of Taoism and Buddhism. Through site

selection and positioning, the origin and characteristics of Taoism and Buddhism are interpreted.

Due to the ancient reverence for facing south, maps were drawn in the order of "up to south, south to north, left east, right west" instead of the current "up to north, south to south, left west, right east." Therefore, in the street and alley layout of Pingyao Ancient City, Cheng Huang Street, Yamen Street, South Street, and East West Street were connected into one "土" character, all of which were used as commercial streets. This arrangement was based on the theory of yin and yang and the five elements in Chinese feng shui. According to the sequential law of "water generates wood, wood generates fire, fire generates earth, earth generates gold, and gold generates water," the meaning of "earth in the center" and "earth can generate gold" was taken, adding a fantastic color to the subsequent development of Jin merchants.

Streets

The street and alley layout of Pingyao Ancient City reflects the characteristics of ancient Chinese urban road planning. Four major streets, eight small streets, and seventy-two small alleys make up the chessboard-style street system in the square ancient city. There are not only main roads for vehicles, horses, and passengers to pass through, but also secondary roads for home life needs, convenient horseback riding and sedan chair travel, as well as small alleys for hiking only. The latitude and longitude intertwine, the main and secondary streets are clearly defined, and the layout is rigorous.

The chessboard-style layout of streets and alleys has always been a big part of ancient Chinese city roads, and it's still used today. The formation of this street layout comes from the well field system of the Western Zhou Dynasty. According to the nine palace pattern, the land is evenly distributed into nine parts, with public land being distributed around private land. Roads separate the fields. And establish an organizational structure based on the Jin Tian system. This system became a fundamental principle in the construction of cities during the Western Zhou Dynasty.

Until today, the chessboard-style road grid is still widely used in the planning and construction of various cities in China, becoming a traditional method and basic model of urban planning in China.

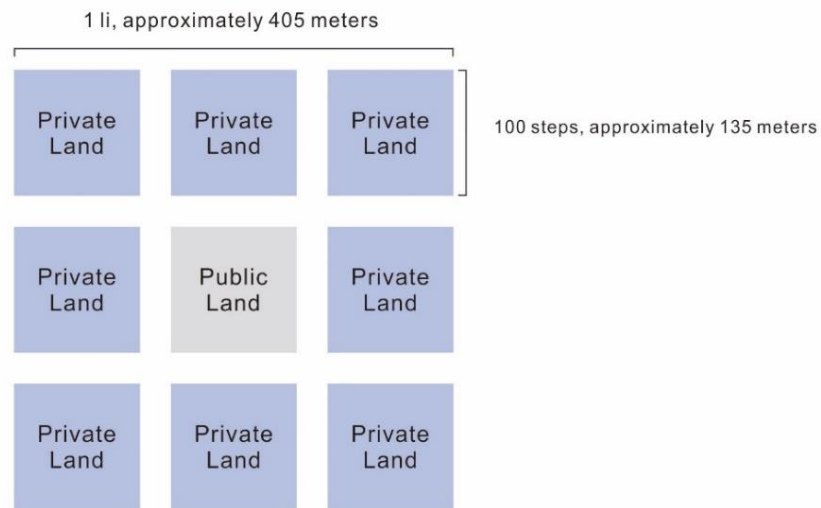


Figure 8 Illustration of the Jingtian System

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

While inheriting the planning concept and method of the well-field system, Pingyao Ancient City has made some innovations in combination with the actual geographical environment of the Pingyao Ancient City. Generally, the city is planned with a cross street, which connects the four city gates. The crossroads is also the center of the entire ancient city. Although there are four streets in Pingyao City, the ancient city adopted a layout where "city gates are not opposite and roads are not directly connected" from north to south. South Street intersects with East and West Streets in a T-shape, while North Street only intersects with West Street in a T-shape. This design idea not only meets the needs of military defense, but it also makes South Street stronger as the main street of the whole ancient city. From the city's expansion in the Ming Dynasty to the present, this street pattern has endured for over 600 years.

The 72 narrow alleys in Pingyao Ancient City are crisscrossed, maintaining the home life of ordinary people and ensuring the living needs of residents

in the ancient city. The chessboard-like street pattern of Pingyao Ancient City connects residential life with road traffic, revealing a people-oriented and harmonious concept.

South Street is the central axis of Pingyao Ancient City and the location of Pingyao Ancient City Commercial Street, with a total length of 738 meters. There are hundreds of shops on this street. The street is filled with a variety of businesses, ranging from financial bills, money houses, warehouses, escort agencies, and antique shops, to small grain and oil shops that cater to residents' daily needs, such as butcher shops, shoe shops, stationery shops, and barber shops. There is a wide variety of businesses present. Looking down at the layout of Pingyao Ancient City Commercial Street, it looks like the Chinese character "土." The construction of Pingyao Ancient City obeys the law of the deduction of Fuxi Bagua in the "Book of Yi Jing." The positioning of the fields adopts the method of "upper south and lower north." Combining the characteristics of "土 in the center" in the five elements of "wood, fire, earth, gold, and water" and the law of the five elements' sequential generation, the implication of "土 can produce gold" is taken, hoping that Pingyao Ancient City will have a lot of money so that several interconnected commercial streets form the shape of the word "土." The horizontal line above is Cheng Huang Temple Street and Yamen Street, the vertical line is South Street, and East-West Street is the horizontal line below the character "土." It can be seen that the character "土" contains the profound historical culture contained in the planning and layout of the ancient city's commercial streets.



Figure 9 The '土' Shaped Commercial Layout of Pingyao Ancient City

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

In ancient China, almost all buildings and plans were not only based on functional needs, but their content and form were always constrained by the feudal "ritual system," and at the same time, they were endowed with beautiful meanings and were marked with traditional cultural values and aesthetic values. For ordinary people, the cultural value of a city, a street, or a building is often more important than its functional use. We can feel this feature of Chinese traditional culture through the architectural cultural phenomena reflected in the Ming and Qing commercial streets of Pingyao Ancient City.

4.1.2 Analysis of Architectural Form and Functional Characteristics

Pingyao Ancient City Wall (1368-1644)

Ancient Chinese cities were surrounded by walls and moats to meet the needs of military defense. During the Shang and Zhou dynasties, King Wu defeated King Zhou and made the world peaceful. He then divided the country among the

princes, who saw building cities as the basis of their country. Building cities can effectively manage the homeland and maintain the rule. According to the "Li Ji • Wang Zhi," the world was split into nine states at that time. Each state had thirty large princely states, sixty medium-sized princely states that were seventy miles square, and one hundred twenty small states that were fifty miles square. This combination made a total of two hundred and ten princely states. These circumstances propelled the construction of cities into a phase of rapid development. Pingyao Ancient City was officially born during this historical period of enfeoffment and the founding of a country.

The Ming Dynasty was established, but there were constant border troubles in the north. So, as part of Ming Taizu Zhu Yuanzhang's "high walls and wide grain reserves" defense policy, many prefectures and counties started to build brick walls and make their city walls bigger. The ancient city of Pingyao is located on the Loess Plateau, and its walls were naturally built on loess. The outer layer of the rammed earth walls received an additional layer of bricks, larger than ordinary blue bricks. Although this method of brick wrapping for city walls had a precedent as early as the Han Dynasty, the city walls we see now are almost the Ming Dynasty walls that were repaired during the Qing Dynasty. The Ming Dynasty's political and military needs drove the construction of the city wall entirely. In 1370 AD, Pingyao Ancient City began a large-scale expansion of its city walls. Over the next 500 years, after undergoing 26 renovations, the existing city walls and scale of Pingyao Ancient City were formed.

The ancient city wall of Pingyao is 10 meters high, the base is 8–12 meters wide, and the top is 3-6 meters wide, forming a narrow top and wide bottom. On the outside edges of the city walls, there are crenellated walls that serve as shelters, and on the inside edges, there are parapets that are half a person high. A horse-blocking wall is another name for the crenelle wall. This is because it can stop flying stones during wartime and keep soldiers and horses safe. However, the battlements surrounding Pingyao Ancient City are thicker than 0.5 meters, rise to a height of 2 meters, and number up to 3000. In order to ensure rapid deployment of troops and mobilization of the people during wartime, in addition to laying thick bricks on the city

walls to facilitate the movement of troops, horses, and artillery, a ring road was also built around the city walls in the ancient city, forming two closed loops above and below the city walls, facilitating rapid troop mobilization and timely replenishment of food, forage, and ammunition, further enhancing the military defense function of Pingyao Ancient City.





Figure 10 Pingyao Ancient City Wall (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 11 Pingyao Ancient City Wall (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 12 Pingyao Ancient City Wall (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 13 Pingyao Ancient City Wall (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 14 Pingyao Ancient City Wall (5)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 15 Pingyao Ancient City Wall (6)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

On the outer side of the city walls around Pingyao Ancient City, there is a square city platform protruding from the wall every 60 or 100 meters. Ancient people metaphorically referred to the city platform as horse face because it protrudes from the plane of the city wall, with neat edges and slender shapes. During the Han Dynasty, many cities were built with this type of horse face, but the number of horse faces on the city walls was not huge. It was not until the Song and Yuan dynasties that the number of horse faces increased. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, horse masks attached to city walls were generally built in smaller county towns, while larger capital cities were no longer common. As a unique architectural construction for city defense in the era of cold weapons, only the Pingyao Ancient City Wall still preserves the complete form of the horse face with the disappearance of history, showcasing to the world this shield called the "city" in the era of cold weapons. Simultaneously, the 72 enemy buildings on the city wall are set up facing the 72 alleys inside the city, overlooking them from a high vantage point and clearly observing the movements of the streets and alleys. The residents living in the ancient city suggest that the 3000 battlements on the city walls represent 3000 disciples of Confucius, while the 72 enemy towers symbolize Confucius' 72 wise men. It can be seen that the residents of the ancient city have a deeper understanding and emotional attachment to the cultural and martial arts of Pingyao Ancient City.

The Pingyao Ancient City Wall gives the military defense of Pingyao Ancient City a strong Confucian ideological meaning. This fully shows how smart and wise the Pingyao people are. On the other hand, those stationed in the city are not only the defending soldiers but also the three thousand disciples and seventy-two wise men of Confucius, who embody the spirit and morality of "benevolent governance" and oppose force. It is thought that the ancient people were very smart because they built well-equipped military bases and put up psychological barriers along with each other. The building of the Pingyao Ancient City Wall and Confucian culture are both somewhat random in how they look, but the cultural meanings attached to them are enough to show what people think of the Pingyao Ancient City Wall.



Figure 16 The "Horse-Faced" Structure within the City Walls (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 17 The "Horse-Faced" Structure within the City Walls (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Weng Cheng, also known as Yue Cheng, is a small town built outside the main city gate to strengthen the military defense capability of the city and cannot be inhabited. It's. Pingyao Ancient City has six city gates and six Weng Cheng gates. The Kangxi County Annals of the Qing Dynasty say that in the early Ming Dynasty, six city gates were built to make the walls of Pingyao Ancient City bigger. These gates were facing east and west, and north and south. Now we see the well-preserved city gate and Weng Cheng, both of which underwent major repairs after the 30th year of the Qing Dynasty's Dao Guang reign (1850 AD). The city's front faces east, south, west, and north, but Wengcheng's gate is only open to the east and south. This is because facing south is seen as respectful and honoring imperial power in traditional Chinese culture.

The shape of Weng Cheng is similar to a type of pottery called Weng. This type of pottery has a large internal space but a small diameter, making it difficult to overturn and pour out the contents. The existence of Weng Cheng has set up numerous obstacles for the invading enemy. Even if the enemy breaks through Weng Cheng's gate and rushes into him, they can only be trapped in a passive situation of being attacked from all sides. The sharp 90-degree turn between Weng Cheng and the city gate made it hard for the enemies coming into Weng Cheng to control their horses and vehicles, which led to chaos in the battle inside Weng Cheng. Currently, the defenders surrounding the city walls of Weng Cheng stood high and dealt a fatal blow to the enemy, achieving victory in the war. This incident is also the origin of the Chinese idiom "Weng Zhong Zuo Bie." In the history of ancient Chinese cities, Weng Cheng is unique because it is a way to organize the walls of cities.



Figure 18 The "Weng Cheng" Structure within the City Walls (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 19 The "Weng Cheng" Structure within the City Walls (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 20 The "Weng Cheng" Structure within the City Walls (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



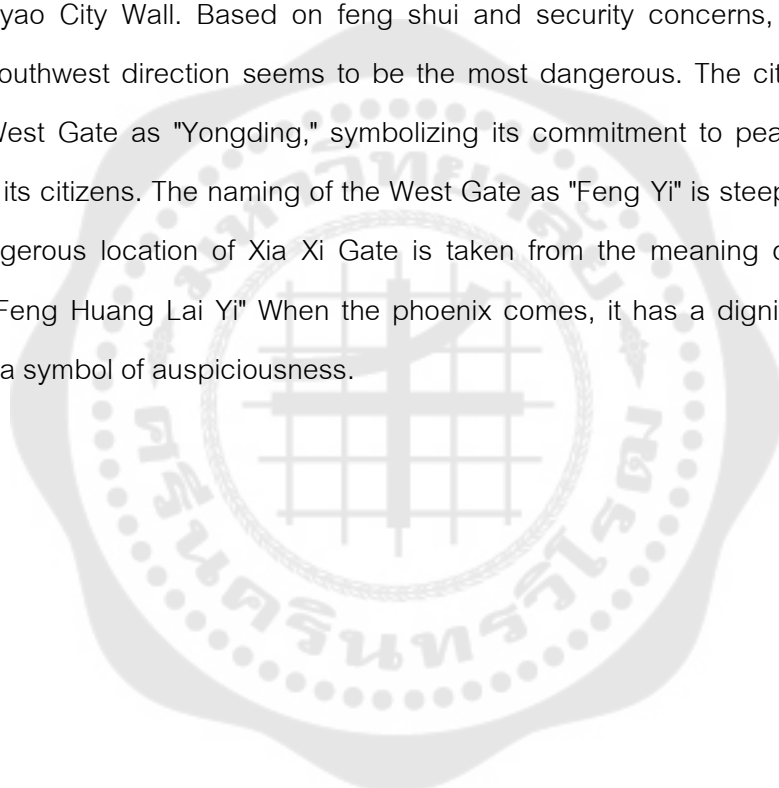
Figure 21 The "Weng Cheng" Structure within the City Walls (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

The gate plaque of Pingyao Ancient City is full of the philosophical ideas, humanistic traditions, and moral standards of ancient Chinese people. This gives the ancient city a personified meaning and shows how the people who lived there felt and what they hoped for. From the county annals of the Ming and Qing dynasties, it can be seen that the six city gates of Pingyao Ancient City had their own names as early as the early Ming Dynasty and have undergone many changes since then. During the reign of Emperor Dao Guang in the Qing Dynasty, the brick-carved door lintel on the city gate was greatly different from that of the Kangxi period, with titles such as Ying Xun, Gong Ji, Taihe, Qin Han, Yongding, and Feng Yi. Across various eras, the camp city managers viewed the construction of city gates as a cultural creation worthy of appreciation. They always used the inscriptions on the gates to express their aesthetic views and understanding of the unity of heaven and man, and the naming of the city gates conveyed the idea of "governing for officials," indicating to the people and passersby the pursuit of stability and harmony.

The ancients believed in feng shui, and they could not build cities and houses without it. They also paid excellent attention to the selection of building environments. The ancient Chinese believed that all directions, including the east, southeast, south, and north, were auspicious, while the other four directions were inauspicious. For that reason, Pingyao Ancient City thought that the city wall should run roughly parallel to the east-west flowing Liu Gen River (formerly Zhongdu River), and the main direction of the city wall should face southeast to get the most sunlight and wind. Therefore, a north-facing and 15 degrees east-facing direction was formed so that the south gate faces the warm spring breeze in the southeast. Therefore, it is named "Ying Xun," expressing the expectation of welcoming joy and warmth at the beginning. The north gate of Pingyao Ancient City is called the "Gong Ji Gate." Archers, guards, and poles refer to the North Star. The campers named the north gate of Pingyao Ancient City Gong Ji Gate, which naturally symbolizes the return of all directions and the mutual respect of all people. And Shang Dong Gate is located in the southeast; according to feng shui, it belongs to the direction of vitality and auspiciousness. Therefore, the city

gate is taken from the meaning of "maintaining harmony and great harmony" the Book of Yi Jing, and the forehead of the gate is inscribed with "Taihe," hoping for the harmonious coexistence of yin and yang qi, complementing each other. Connected to the main thoroughfare leading to Taiyuan Prefecture, the Xia Dong Gate serves as a strategic stronghold against enemy attacks. The word "Qin Han" is carved into the gate, which means that there are armed warriors protecting the ancient city with great righteousness. This shows that the Xia Dong Gate is the main military defense point of the Pingyao City Wall. Based on feng shui and security concerns, the Upper West Gate's southwest direction seems to be the most dangerous. The city designates the Upper West Gate as "Yongding," symbolizing its commitment to peace and the well-being of its citizens. The naming of the West Gate as "Feng Yi" is steeped in mythology. The dangerous location of Xia Xi Gate is taken from the meaning of "Xiao Shao Jiu Cheng, Feng Huang Lai Yi" When the phoenix comes, it has a dignified appearance, which is a symbol of auspiciousness.





Feng Yi Gate
(Xia Xi Gate)



Tai He Gate
(Shang Dong Gate)



Yong Ding Gate
(Shang Xi Gate)



Qin Han Gate
(Xia Dong Gate)



Ying Xun Gate
(South Gate)



Gong Ji Gate
(North Gate)

Figure 22 Pingyao Ancient City Gate Plaques

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

The city gate tower is a well-known landmark of the city gate. Its two main jobs are to watch and control how people enter and leave the city gate and to keep an eye on enemy activity. The construction of the city tower is often exquisite in shape and eye-catching in color. The carved beams and painted rafters towering on the city wall create a strong visual contrast, adding aesthetic significance to the ancient city wall.

The Ming Dynasty built city towers in Pingyao Ancient City, which underwent renovations during the Kangxi reign of the Qing Dynasty. The two city towers at the south and north gates are three-eaved, two-story, seven-purlin corridor-style buildings with a height of 16 meters, built on brick platforms within the walls of the walled city. Although the four city towers on the east and west sides are also two-story, seven-purlin corridor-style buildings with the same layout and roof form as the south and north city towers, they have double eaves and a slightly lower height. The six city towers have different purposes, which draws attention to the position and function of the central axis running north to south. This form of city tower continued until the late 1940s, when it was completely demolished by the Nationalist army due to war and replaced with bunkers. We saw the North Gate Tower, the South Gate Tower, and the Lower West Gate Tower being rebuilt using the old method both before and after the city of Pingyao was better protected and its status as a World Cultural Heritage site was applied for. Even though the city tower of Pingyao Ancient City is not considered a historical building, its iconic structure contributes to the overall clarity and distinctness of the city's style.



Figure 23 Pingyao Ancient City Towers (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 24 Pingyao Ancient City Towers (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

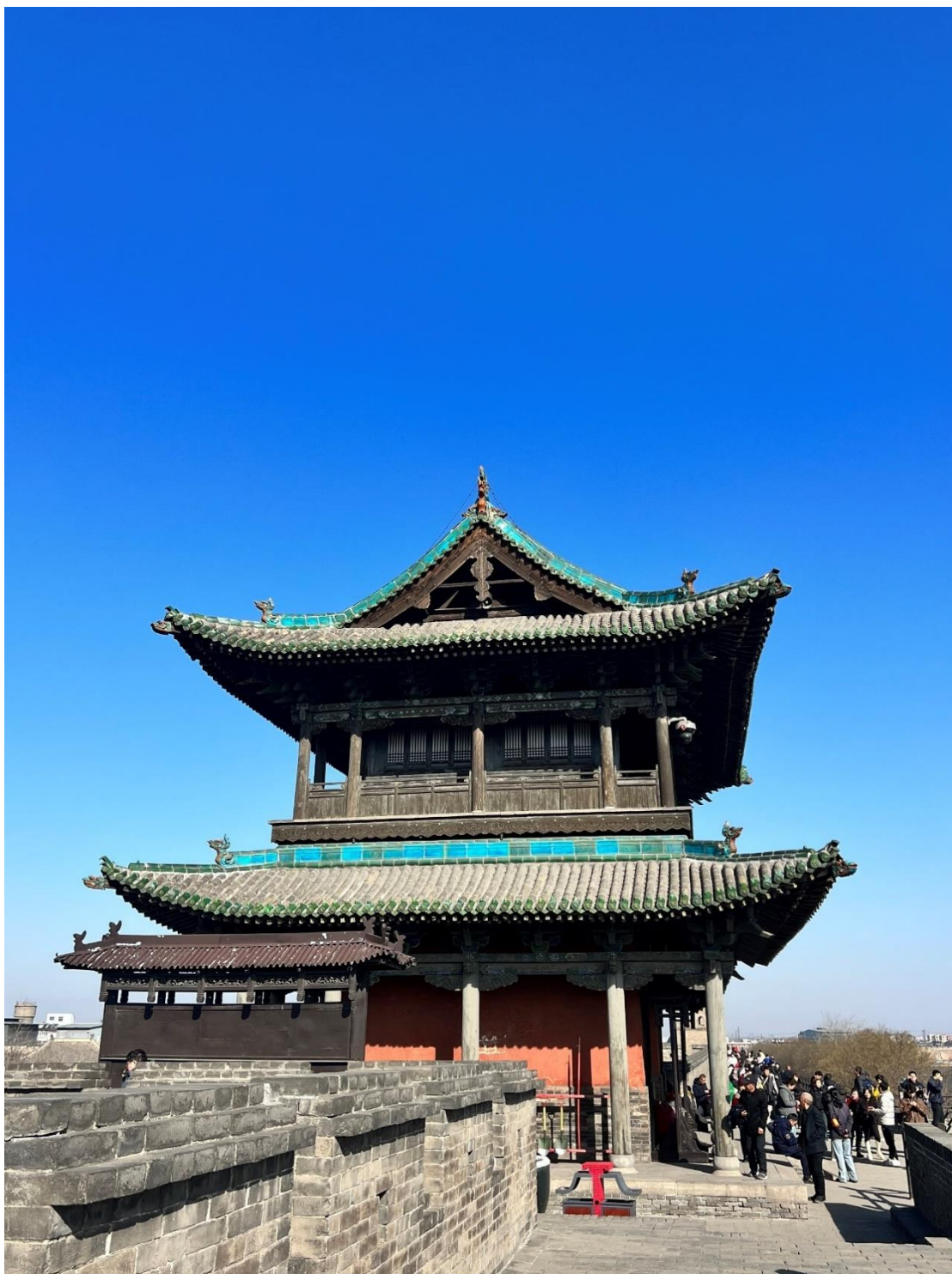


Figure 25 Pingyao Ancient City Towers (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 26 Pingyao Ancient City Towers (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Jinjing Market Tower (1636-1912)

Jinjing Market Tower is the combination of "Jinjing" and "Shilou." During the Kang Xi and Guang Xu periods of the Qing Dynasty, the Pingyao County Chronicles were written. Jinjing Market Tower was also known as Jinjing Tower and Shilou Jinjing.

According to Feng Shui, a cave is a place that stores the energy of mountains and rivers. The cave can store wind and gather energy, which is called "the intersection of mountains and rivers, the fusion of yin and yang," and is a Feng Shui treasure land. The site selection and construction of Pingyao Ancient City are inseparable from the positioning of Feng Shui, and the positioning is called "pointing acupoints" in Feng Shui. Pointing acupoints is to dig a well in the center of the selected area to explore geological conditions; this well is called "Xue Zhong" by Feng Shui. The cave is related to the lifeblood and fortune of the city and plays an important role in the rise and fall of the ancient city. Therefore, the exploration well has become the Golden Well in people's minds and is regarded as the supreme god. The Golden Well in Pingyao Ancient City is located at the geometric center where the east-west and north-south axes intersect and is in the center of the ancient city. The officially revised "Pingyao County Chronicles" explicitly state that "The Golden Well in the City Tower" is located within the county. The water in the well is as golden as gold, and the tower is one hundred feet tall. The Golden Well is a symbol of the traditional culture and ideas that were unique to ancient Chinese city camps.

The construction of Pingyao Ancient City began with the excavation of the Golden Well, followed by the construction of the Market Tower. This arrangement also corresponds to the explanation in "Shi Ji Zhu" that "there were no wells in ancient times. If people gathered at the wells to draw water in the morning, they would buy and sell goods by the wells, which was called a market well." Therefore, a market well refers to the trading of commodities around a well. It is recorded in "Guan Zi": "The market must be square, like the system of building a well, so it is called a market well." Setting up the market in the streets and alleys that extend in all directions aligns more closely with the market's origins. The builders of Pingyao Ancient City deliberately built the Market Tower

next to the Golden Well so that the Market Tower and the Golden Well complement each other. The Golden Well adds a mysterious color to the ever-prosperous commercial street market in the ancient city; the Golden Well has an ancient charm because of the Market Tower, which has brought a lot of wealth to the merchants in the ancient city. Simultaneously, a couplet is hung on the south side of the Market Tower: the upper couplet: Zhao Chen Wu Xi Jie San Shi; the lower couplet: He Feng Qiao Tai Jing Shang Lou; the door lintel: Jin Jing Gu Ji. This couplet reflects the prosperous economy of Pingyao Ancient City during the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

The earliest images of the market tower appeared in the Han Dynasty portrait bricks, portrait stones, and murals. In ancient Chinese cities, local managers had to build market towers and send officials to manage the place, responsible for maintaining market order and collecting taxes. Whenever the market opened, flags would be hung on the tower as a sign of opening. The market tower is usually built in the center of the street market. Officials can look down from a high place and have a clear view of the street market. Since the market tower is a pavilion-style building with a tall and straight shape, it is eye-catching under the color of the ancient city's blue bricks and black tiles. Therefore, in addition to the function of managing the market, the market tower also has the aesthetic effect of appreciating the cultural landscape.

During Emperor Kangxi's reign in the Qing Dynasty, the Pingyao County Annals recorded: "The construction date of the Jinjing Tower remains unknown." It is located on the middle street of the county. The water in the well is as golden as gold, which is why it is named Jinjing Tower. The existing Jinjing City Tower was rebuilt in the 27th year of Emperor Kangxi (1688 AD), which took 6 months, cost more than 400 taels of silver, and employed more than 2,000 workers. Emperors Qianlong, Jia Qing, Tongzhi, Guangxu, and Xuan Tong later renovated it. The Qing Dynasty's artistic style of wooden structures is evident in the complete standardization and stylization of the color, beam structure, material size, and architectural decoration. As of the eighth year of Emperor Guangxu (1882 AD), the Pingyao County Annals were revised. They said that

the Jinjing Market Tower was praised as one of eight beautiful places in Pingyao City. This record further highlights the cultural appreciation value of the city tower.

The Jinjing Market Tower in Pingyao Ancient City is a pavilion-style building from the Qing Dynasty. It is 18.5 meters high, three rooms wide, and three rooms deep. It is a two-story, three-eave hip roof building. There are pillars supporting the attic at the four corners of the bottom floor of the city tower. The North-South Street passes under the city tower. Due to the width of the street, the internal space of the attic is relatively small. The city tower inherits the construction method of traditional multi-story wooden attic buildings, adopting a column structure with two layers inside and outside; the two layers of the structure are connected by brackets. The Jinjing Market Tower's top is decorated with a ceiling caisson to make the structure stable. The brackets under the upper eaves are set up in seven layers, and the eaves are turned up to show how buildings were built in the Qing Dynasty.

Glazed tiles decorate the roofs of the Jinjing Market Tower. One of the main ridges and eight vertical ridges are all covered with blue glazed tiles, and the outer eaves are bordered with yellow glazed tiles. The two ends of the ridge are decorated with gargoyles and treasure bottles, and the vertical ridges are decorated with mythical beasts and immortals riding phoenixes. The south-facing eaves are painted with yellow as the base, and the word "喜喜" is spelled out in blue. The north-facing eaves are painted with blue as the base, and the word "寿" is spelled out in yellow. Ancient China strictly regulated the use of colored glaze, a precious building material. The Qing Dynasty widely employed colored glaze ornaments in public buildings. The special feature of the City Tower is that the patterns on the roof are made of colored glaze, which is rare in ancient Chinese buildings and shows its unique culture and art.



Figure 27 Jinjing Market Tower in Pingyao Ancient City (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 28 Jinjing Market Tower in Pingyao Ancient City (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

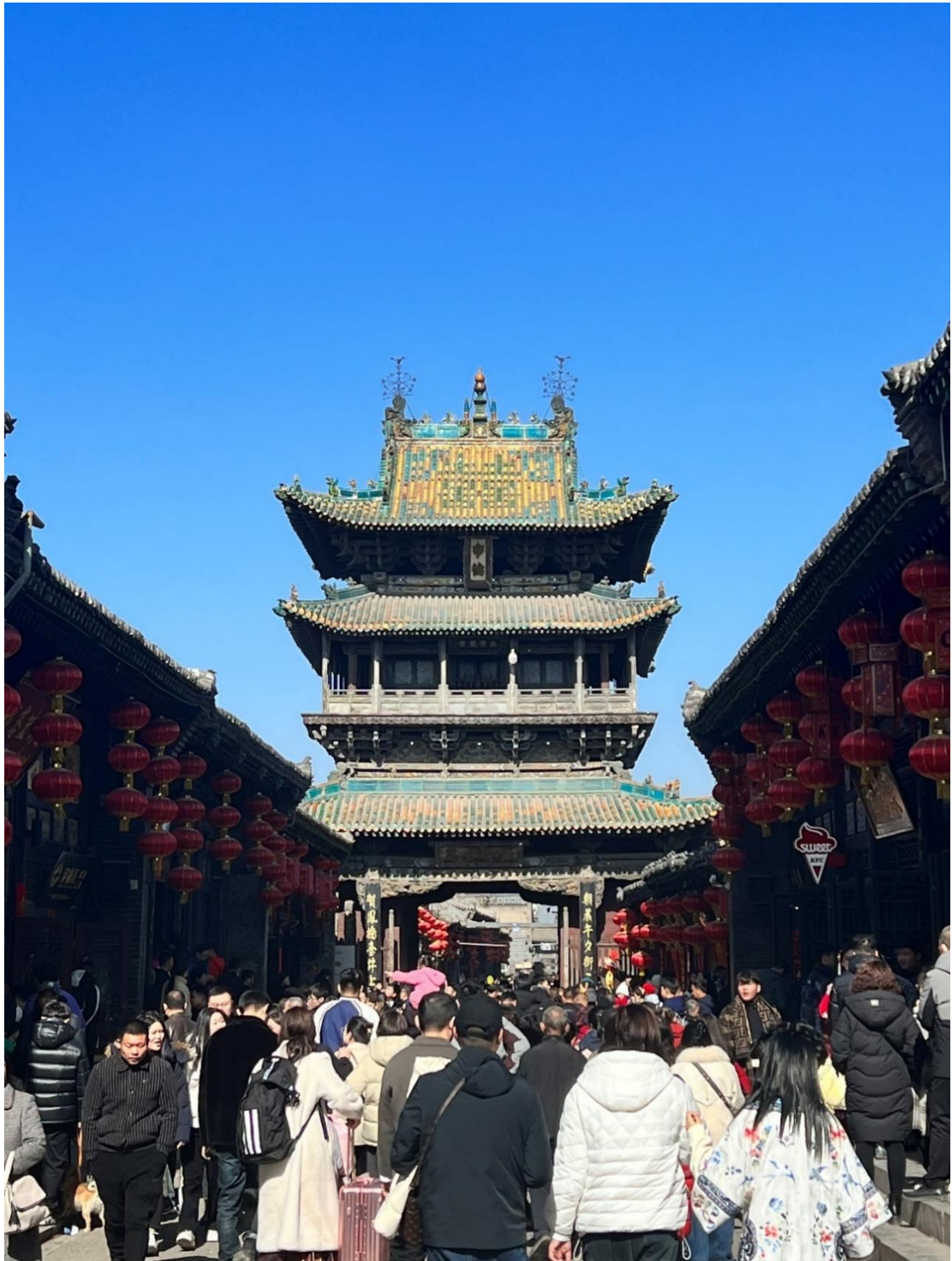


Figure 29 Jinjing Market Tower in Pingyao Ancient City (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

During the lunar festivals, Pingyao Ancient City has many festive activities, such as gongs and drums, yang ge, stilts, opera, and other folk activities on South Street. Because of how times and society have changed, Jinjing Market Tower is no longer used to run markets. Instead, it is now a landmark building with landscape features. However, Jinjing Market Tower is still a lucky spot in Pingyao. The tower is a historical record of the wealthy Shanxi merchants and is an important part of the architectural and cultural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.



Figure 30 Folk Festival Activities (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 31 Folk Festival Activities (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Pingyao County Ya Men (1346-1912)

The "Qing Shi Zong Shi Lu" believe that the governance and rebellion of the world began in local states and counties; so emperors throughout history have attached great importance to county governance. The county government and county magistrate are direct representatives of imperial power over the people and play a big role in their daily lives. The feudal hierarchical system strictly limits the work of the county magistrate and the area where people live. This system not only clearly separates the official and civilian classes, but it also has a consistent and harmonious traditional idea and shape for space. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the opposition between the county government and the people who lived there had already

grown strong, creating a full set of building rules and procedures. As an example, multiple combination methods were used to move the courtyard forward layer by layer along multiple vertical axes based on a closed courtyard. This created a strict and organized architectural group. The building's functions are varied and complete, its layout is well-thought-out, and it's easy to see how the different levels of the building are connected. It contains profound moral and ethical concepts and folk cultural content and further reflects the core position of the county government in county governance—that is, the supreme rule of imperial power.

In 1368 AD, Zhu Yuanzhang established the Ming Dynasty to strengthen centralization and promote county governance, which required the establishment of necessary institutions, such as administrative halls and corresponding official residences, staff quarters, and prisons in the location of county-level political power. He also established clear limitations on the specifications of county government offices. In this way, the Pingyao County Government Office was rebuilt and grew four times during the Ming Wanli period. It also got two more renovations and grows around the 12th year of the Qing Shunzhi reign (1655 AD) and the 5th year of the Guangxu reign (1879 AD). The Pingyao County Government Office is located on the west side of the central axis of the ancient city, north of Yamen Street, facing south. It is 131 meters wide from east to west and 203 meters long from north to south, covering an area of 26600 square meters. It is the largest architectural complex in the ancient city. The Pingyao County Annals from the eighth year of the Guangxu reign of the Qing Dynasty (1882 AD) say that the yamen building complex had more than 30 buildings at that time. These buildings were all built in the order of the Ming and Qing dynasties.

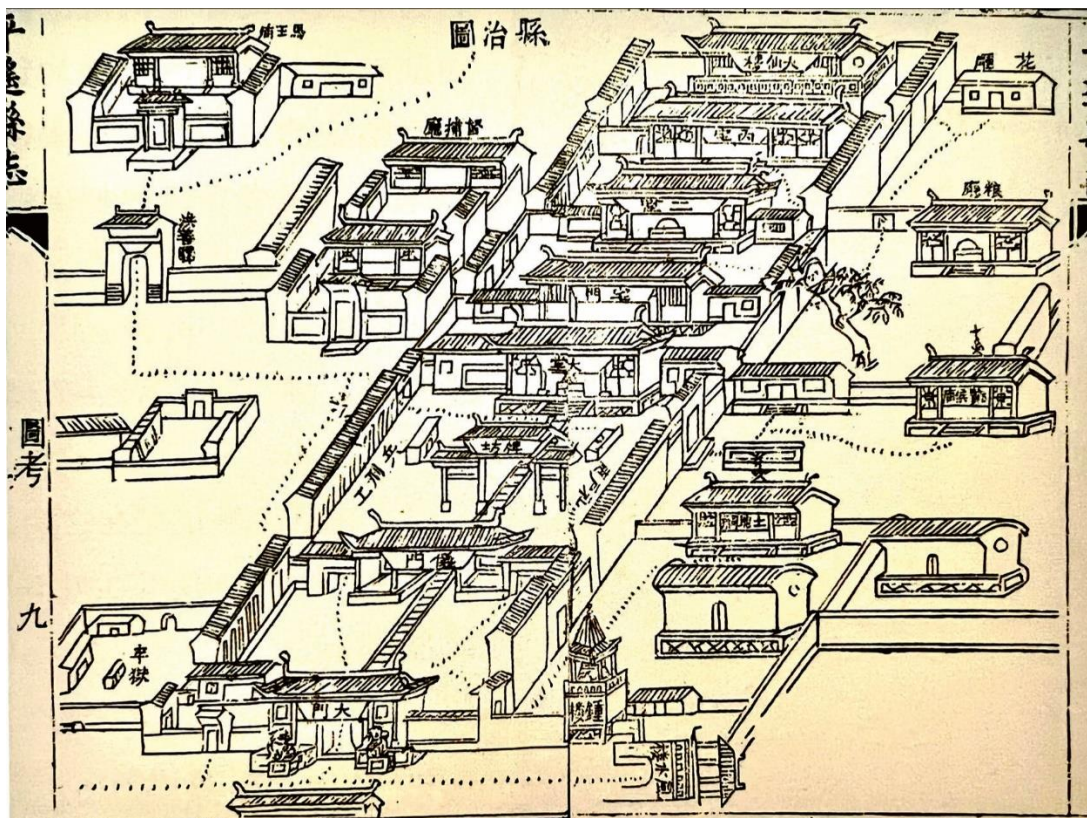


Figure 32 Layout of Pingyao County Ya Men in the Qing Dynasty

Source: Guangxu Edition. (1882). Pingyao County Annals.

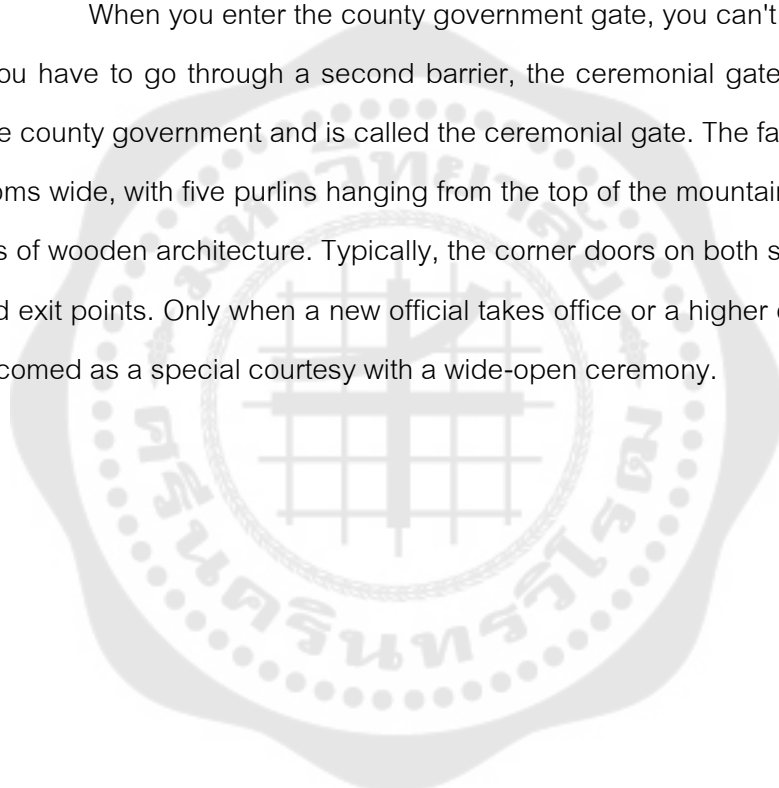
The county hall, located in the center of the county government office, is considered the most important main building. The county government hall has a width of five rooms and a single eave roof. However, four hanging ridges overhang the mountain wall, creating a suspended mountaintop. Five layers of arches of wooden architecture are set under the front eaves to increase the height of the outer eaves and the depth of the eaves. A structural unit consisting of Dou, Gong, Ang, and Fang is set on the beam between the capitals to transfer the gravity of the eaves. The exterior wall adopts fence doors and straight mullion windows, located on a brick platform over 1 meter high, to highlight the status of the county government hall building. Secondly, in ancient China, the halls of prefectures and counties were also known as public halls. The halls of

county offices did not have walls, and they directly faced the open courtyard in front of them. On the central screen in the lobby, there is a landscape sunrise painting symbolizing "integrity and honesty," and a plaque reading "Bright Mirror Hanging High" is placed at the top. The lobby's backyard features two halls, each measuring five rooms wide, and the interior furnishings are significantly less elaborate than those in the lobby. This is the main office of the county officials' supervisor. Here, we handle civil disputes such as marriage, land, housing, and debts and handle daily official duties. The second hall is located inside the courtyard door behind the lobby in the middle courtyard, and it is guarded by people outside, forming a relatively independent inner courtyard. The courtyard's enclosure demonstrates the privacy of civil case trials. The Pingyao County Government makes full use of space and environment to help it do its job, and it uses architectural language to perfectly capture the ceremonies and high status of power that the county government used to display during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

The county government arranges its main buildings along the central axis from south to north, creating four courtyards. The lengths of the east and west sides are parallel to the central axis, and there are courtyards on the east and west sides, respectively. The east courtyard is home to bell towers, land shrines, Yin Hotel, Fu Hou Temple, grain hall, and official residence flower hall, while the west courtyard accommodates heavy prisons, women's prisons, light prisons, Hongshan Post Station, police station, and horse carriage hall. As the supreme governing body of the county government, the main buildings all adopt the high standard of an overhanging mountain roof, an arch of wooden architecture, and colored paintings. On the platform at the southernmost end of the central axis, the county government gate is built. It has three rooms across, one eave that hangs off the top of the mountain, a wooden arch on the outer eave, and a big drum for yelling complaints under the front eave on the east side. On both sides of the gate, brick octagonal shadow walls are used to enhance the grandeur of the yamen. Simultaneously, there are stone lions on both sides in front of the county government gate, and a screen wall is set up across the street on the opposite side. On the one hand, it does not allow outsiders to directly see the scene inside the

county government, and on the other hand, from the perspective of feng shui, it is to store wind and gather qi, ensuring that the county government is not disturbed by evil spirits. A wind observation tower stands on the east side of the gate, next to the bell tower. A group of buildings, with the county government gate as the main body, forms the square in front of the gate. The layout is strict and staggered, and the language of architecture has a strong expressive effect. It symbolizes the invincibility of imperial power, evoking an awe-inspiring and intimidating visual and psychological sensation.

When you enter the county government gate, you can't go straight to the lobby. You have to go through a second barrier, the ceremonial gate, which was built inside the county government and is called the ceremonial gate. The facade of Yi Men is three rooms wide, with five purlins hanging from the top of the mountain and three floors of arches of wooden architecture. Typically, the corner doors on both sides serve as the entry and exit points. Only when a new official takes office or a higher official arrives will it be welcomed as a special courtesy with a wide-open ceremony.



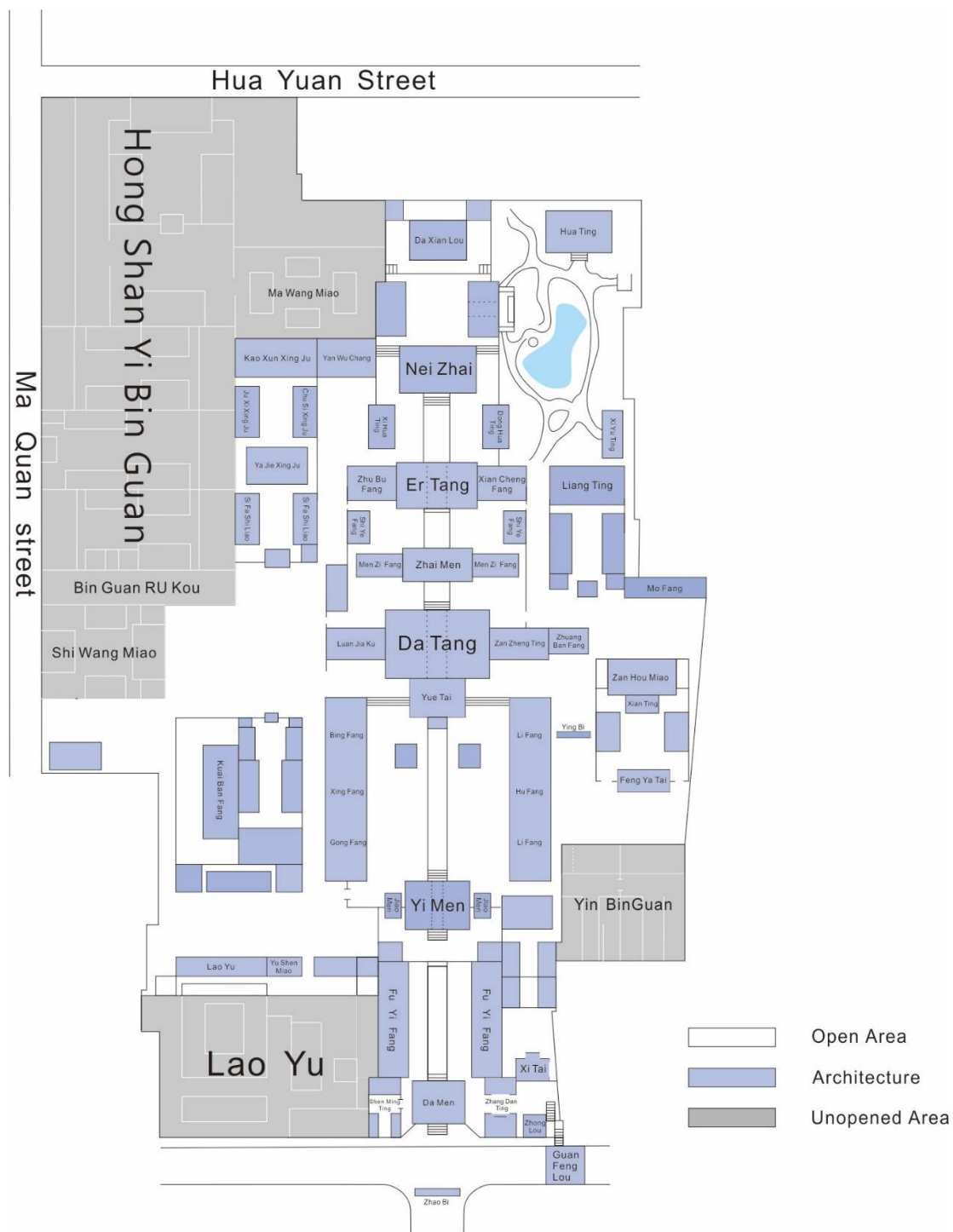


Figure 33 Layout Plan of the Pingyao County Ya Men

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

Officials built the living space, known as the official residence, behind the second hall of the county government. It is also a complete quadrangle courtyard in shape. In front of it, there is an inner house, five rooms wide, and a flush gable roof lower than the suspended peak. The central room in the inner house is called the Ming room; the two sides are called the secondary rooms, and the east and west are called the Warm Pavilion, serving as the bedroom and study. The inner house has a Da Xian building behind it, as the Qing government often revered the fox fairy as the seal guardian. The Da Xian Building incorporates the distinctive local architecture of the lower kiln and the upper floor. The bottom floor is cave-type, and the second floor is a wooden pavilion dedicated to the big fairy guarding the seal of the Supervisor of the County.



Figure 34 Pingyao County Ya Men (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 35 Pingyao County Ya Men (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 36 Pingyao County Ya Men (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 37 Pingyao County Ya Men (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

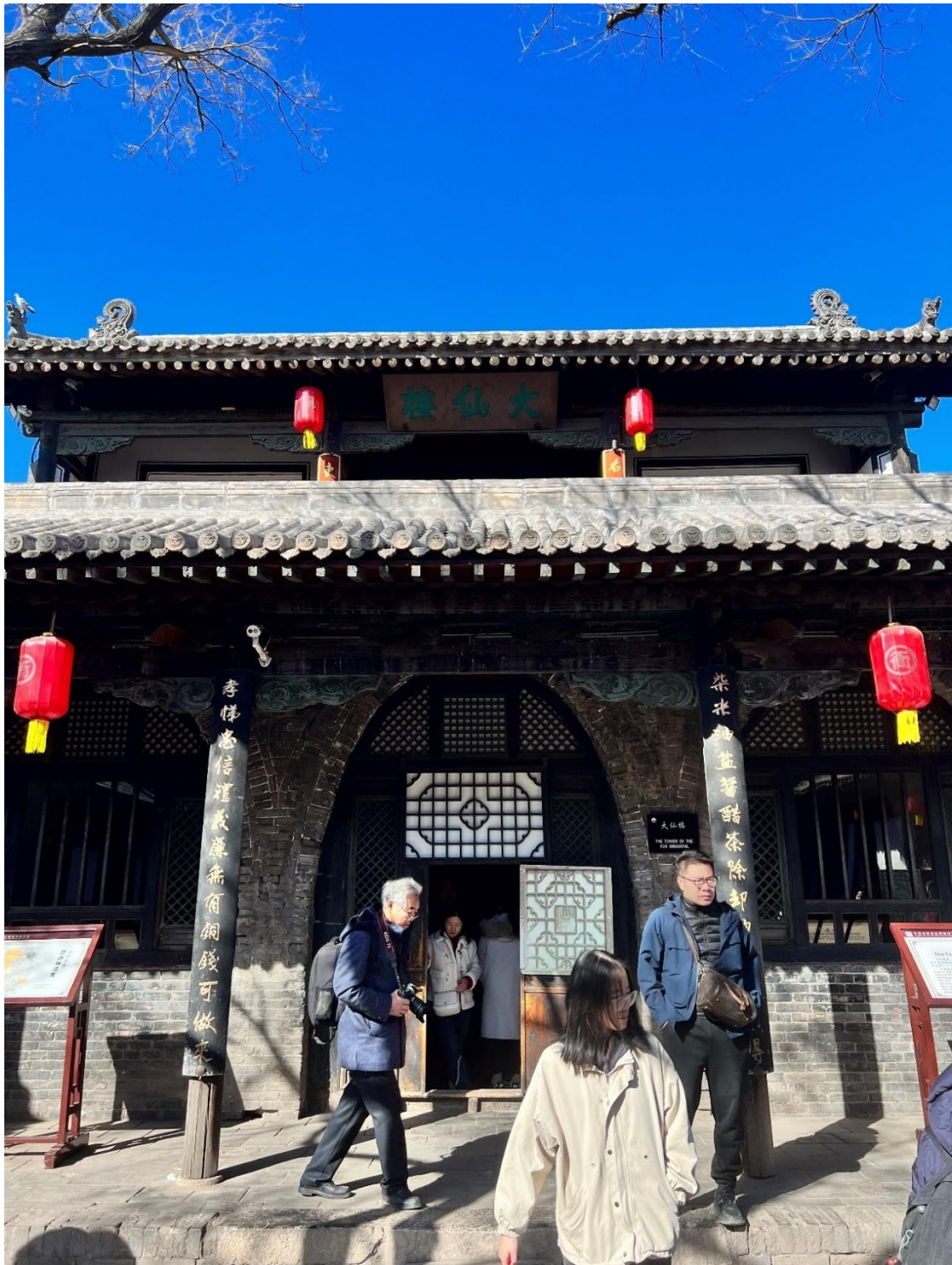


Figure 38 Da Xian Tower in the Pingyao County Ya Men

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

The Pingyao County Ya Men shows how Chinese architecture looked in its original size and shape during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It is a piece of history written in architecture. In addition to showing how the Confucian ritual system affected architecture, the Pingyao County Ya Men also shows how the ancient Chinese thought about balancing the ruling class of emperors and nature. Show that the ritual system and the form of architecture work well together, and connect the form of architecture with its cultural meaning.

The Temple of Confucius in Pingyao (1115-1234)

In ancient China, temple architecture was originally a place for specialized ancestral temple worship. Due to the need to respect Confucianism, this type of ritual architecture with special functions extended from worshipping ancestors to worshipping the Confucian sage Confucius; hence the name Confucian Temple. And the main hall of the Confucian Temple, which worships the "Great Sage Ancestor," naturally has the name of the Great Hall.

In ancient China, respecting Confucianism and worshipping Confucius was an indispensable event in social life. From the imperial city at the feet of the emperor to every prefecture, state, and county, Confucian temples are almost ubiquitous. The temple where Confucius was first worshipped was called Confucius Temple, abbreviated as Confucius Temple. The Confucius Temple can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period when Duke Ai of Lu built it in Qufu Que. The temple's function was to collect Confucius' relics, not for worship. Confucius temples gradually became popular during the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern Dynasties as successive emperors enfeoffed Confucius. During the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Zhen guan, Emperor Tai Zong Li Shiming ordered that Confucius temples be built in many states and then changed their names to Confucian temples. During the Yuan Dynasty, the worship of Confucian temples throughout the country was one of the contents of the national sacrificial ceremony. The construction of Confucian temples was most prosperous during this period, and many of them were rebuilt or newly built during the Yuan

Dynasty. By the Ming Dynasty, the number of Confucian temples had exceeded 1500. There are currently over 20 Confucian temples in China that are in good condition.

The Da Cheng Hall of the Confucian Temple in Pingyao Ancient City was renovated in the third year of the Jin Dynasty's Da Ding era (1163 AD) and is an early architectural work of the existing Confucian temples in China. The Confucian Temple is located in the southeast corner of the ancient city, following the layout of "left writing and right martial arts." The temple faces north and south, covering an area of 8649.6 square meters, with 3472.3 square meters of existing buildings. Composed of three groups of buildings standing side by side, the architectural space varies in density, retaining the characteristics of Confucian temple worship architecture since the Yuan and Ming dynasties.

The Confucian Temple is centered around the Da Cheng Hall and has five courtyards in front and back. On the central axis of the Confucian Temple, there are main buildings arranged in sequence, including Ling Xing Gate, Panchi, Panchi Bridge, Da Cheng Gate, Da Cheng Hall, Ming Lun Hall, Jingyi Pavilion, and Zun Jing Pavilion. A screen wall is built in front of Ling Xing Gate, and street crossing memorial archways are respectively erected on the east and west sides of the street, and the square in front of the temple is formed by Ling Xing Gate, the screen wall, and the memorial archway. On both the east and west sides of the square, there are horse riding stones with inscriptions that read 'civil and military officials and civilians wait here to dismount from their carriages.' The symmetrical layout feature of the Pingyao Ancient City Confucian Temple is prominent, including all buildings, which are designed and constructed strictly in accordance with the norms of ritual.

Upon entering the courtyard behind the Ling Xing Gate, there is a semi-circular pool known as the "Pan Pool," according to Confucian interpretation. The Pan Pool features an arch bridge that leads to the Da Cheng Gate, ensuring the orderly passage of viewers. The east and west sides of the courtyard correspond to the wing rooms. The Da Cheng facade is five rooms wide, and the courtyard inside the door has a large north-south depth, which is the Confucius Memorial Square. Across from it is the

Da Cheng Hall, with nine houses on each side. The Da Cheng Hall has three side doors, each connecting to the third courtyard. The main building of the third courtyard is Ming Lun Hall, which has a width of five bays. To the east of the hall, there are three Xian Hou Temples, and to the west, there are three Loyalty and Filial Piety Temples. In the 20th year of the Jiajing reign of the Ming Dynasty (1541 AD), the Jingyi Pavilion was built behind the Ming Lun Hall of the Confucian Temple. Soon after, the Zun Jing Pavilion was built behind the Jingyi Pavilion in the 4th to 6th years of the Long Qing reign (1570–1572 AD). Thus, the Pingyao Confucian Temple has been fully built according to the layout and structure of the Yuan and Ming dynasties.

The Da Cheng Hall is located on a 1-meter-high pedestal. The platform consists of two sections: a bluestone platform and a panel railing-surrounded platform. There are bluestone steps on the east, west, and south sides of the platform. The steps on the south side are called front steps, with a stone-carved imperial stone in the middle and hand stomping on the east and west sides. The main hall is five rooms wide and five rooms deep, with a single eave resting on the mountain roof. The arch of wooden architecture is huge, and the eaves are very far-reaching. The roof style belongs to the "Nine Ridge Hall," second only to the top of the pavilion in terms of rank. Bricks and tiles cover the roof, while glass decorates the ridge. The pillars of the main hall are supported by raised side legs. The diameter of the eaves pillar is 0.47 meters, and the height is 5.11 meters. The beam frame adopts a structure of ten rafters. The beams and beams' cross-section is mostly 3:2, which comes from the way the Song and Jin dynasties built with wood. A small arch of rich and deep wooden architecture forms the caisson decoration in the center of the ceiling. The roof truss is 7 meters high, and the distance between the front and back eaves and rafters is 1:3.7, which is a little less than what the Song Dynasty's "Ying Zao Fa Shi" says should be done. The arch of wooden architecture has two structures: column head paving and corner paving. Large inclined beams replace the paving structure between columns, known as the complementary space. The total height of the paving is 2.275 meters, and the total depth of the overhanging is 1.695 meters.

In order to meet the needs of gathering a large number of people for worship activities, the hall adopted the technique of reducing pillars, removing the two pillars in the open room, thus increasing the grandeur and spaciousness of the interior space of the Da Cheng Hall. Both the main and secondary rooms at the front of the Da Cheng Hall are equipped with wooden partition doors, featuring straight mullion windows in the middle. An eaves wall over 1 meter thick is built on the front, east, west, and north sides of the main hall. Taking a comprehensive view of the plane layout, column method, arch of wooden architecture beam frame structure, and Xie Shan emerging form of Da Cheng Hall, they all have the characteristics of early Chinese wood structure architecture. Specifically, the Confucian Temple in Pingyao Ancient City exemplifies the technique of replacing patchwork with large slanted beams under the eaves.

As an important center of Confucian culture and thought, the Confucian Temple in Pingyao Ancient City shows how Confucian culture and thought are becoming more popular among people. Ancient Chinese culture was based on honoring Confucianism and Taoism. This is reflected in the idea, structure, techniques, and art of Confucian temple architecture. All of these things teach historical facts and moral lessons.

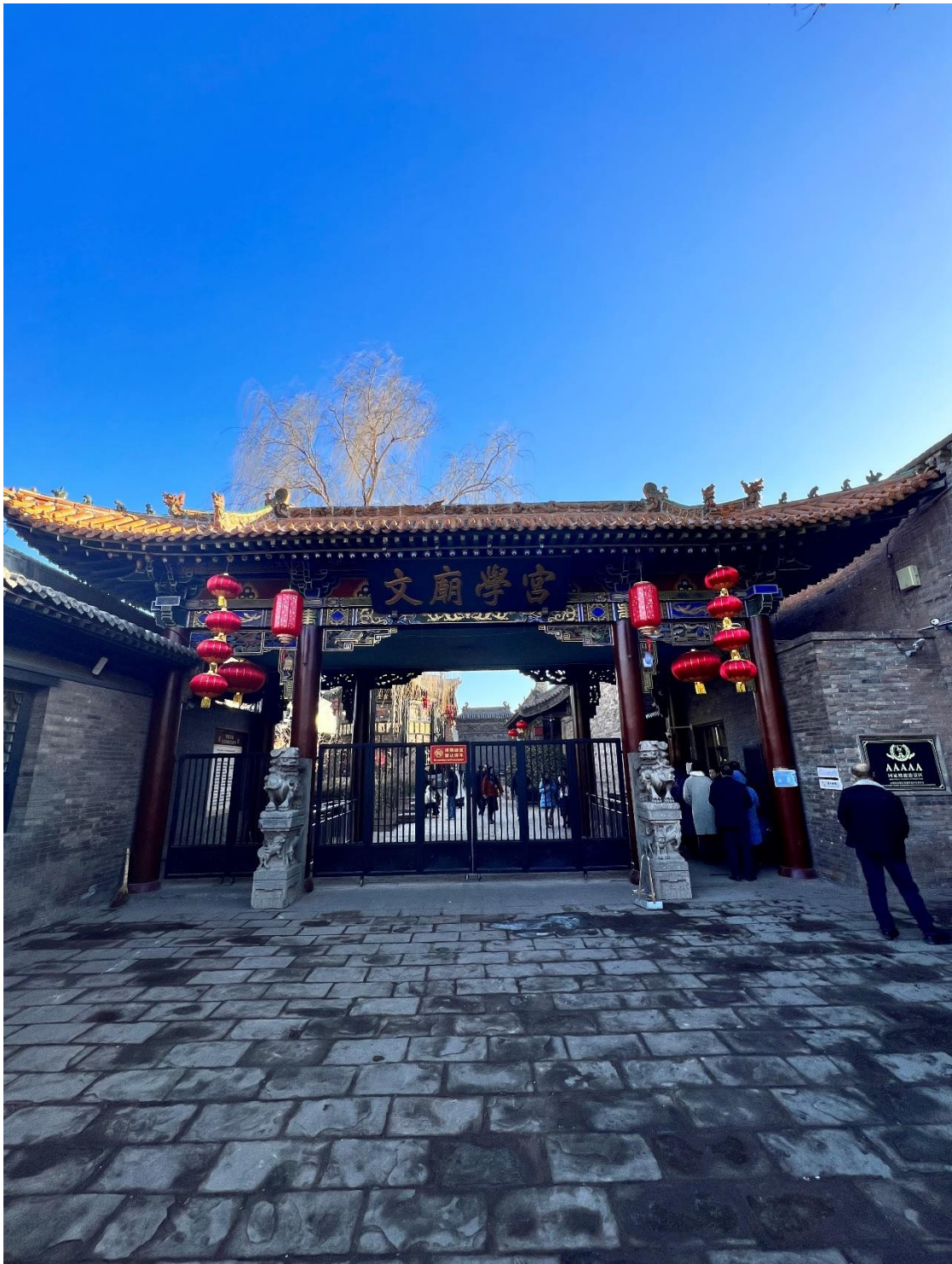


Figure 39 Confucian Temple (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

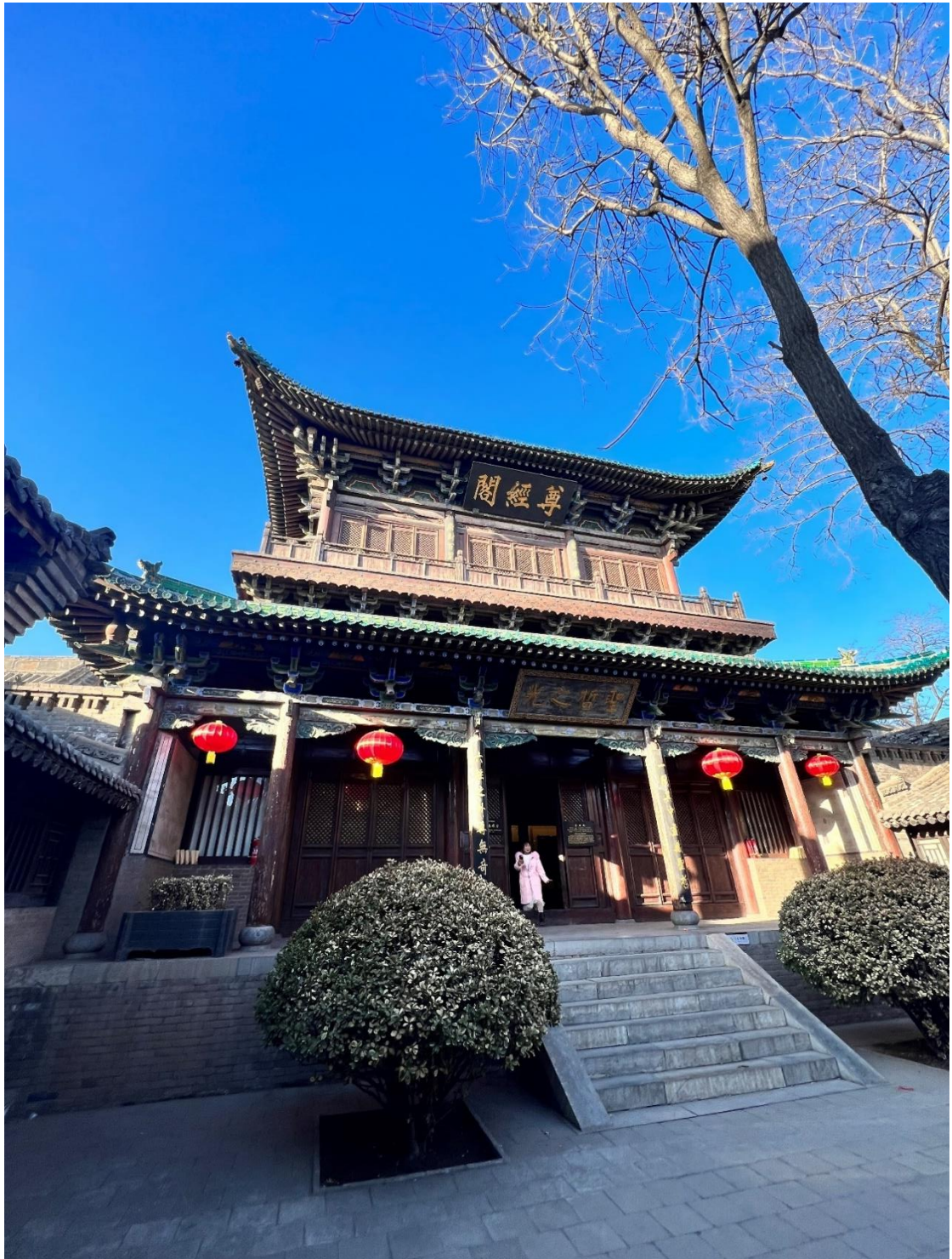


Figure 40 Confucian Temple (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 41 Confucian Temple (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 42 Confucian Temple (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 43 Confucian Temple (5)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Qing Xu Temple (1271-1368)

Taoism emerged during the Eastern Han Dynasty and is a native religion in China. Taoism has formed a unique personality of various god worship because it is rooted in the dispersed small-scale agricultural economy society, inherits the ancient primitive ancestor's concept of "all things have spirits," and is constantly influenced and infiltrated by diverse ideological cultures. From the "Three Pure" Heavenly Lords in the heavenly realm to the City God, Land God, Mountain God, and Dragon King in the earthly realm, as well as the various household gods such as the Door God, Kitchen God, and various ghosts and gods in the underworld, it can be said that they are respected and worshipped everywhere. But its main teaching is that worshipping gods and immortals is the key to success in cultivation. It follows the idea that there are many gods, which is why there are many Taoist temples and shrines.

Qing Xu Temple is built on the north side of East Street in the ancient city, fully adhering to the ritual norms of "left road, right interpretation" in the layout of the ancient city, corresponding to the Ji Fu Temple built on West Street. The Qing Xu Temple architectural complex faces north and south, covering an area of 5890.9 square meters. The Tang Dynasty was the peak period of the development of Taoism in China. The Li Tang Dynasty originated from multi-ethnic bloodlines. To strengthen its political rule, it utilized the Taoist Laozi, also known as Li Er, who shares the same surname as the Tang royal family, and honored Laozi as the "ancestor." With the help of the state, it promoted the spread of Taoism and mythologized the rule of the Li Tang Dynasty. During the reign of Emperor Gaozong of Tang, he ordered the construction of Taoist temples in various states and counties across the country. So Pingyao Qing Xu Temple was founded in the second year of Tang Xian Qing (657 AD) and has a history of more than 1350 years. The Qing Xu Temple is named Taiping Temple. In the first year of the Song Dynasty's Zhi Ping reign (1064 AD), an imperial decree was issued to change the Taiping Temple to the Qing Xu Temple. It was rebuilt in the seventh year of Yuan You (1092 AD) thereafter. Jin Mingchang (1195 AD) repaired it again in the sixth year. In the Yuan Dynasty, Qing Xu Temple was renamed Taiping Xing Guo Temple, and in the

second year of Emperor Xianzong's reign (1252 AD), it was renamed Taiping Chong Sheng Palace. The Qing Dynasty restored the name of Qing Xu Temple. Literature records show that the Qing Xu Temple was renovated on a large scale during the Chenghua and Wanli periods of the Ming Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty after the Yuan Dynasty. Most of the ancient buildings inside are relics from the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties.

Taoism originated in the folk. Taoist activities do not take place at a fixed construction site. Later, relying on the emperor's advocacy and preaching, he began to use palaces and observation platforms to invite gods and welcome immortals, ultimately turning palace and observation buildings into places exclusively for spirits to reside and hold Taoist rituals. So, in ancient Chinese architecture, the Taoist "Guan" and the Buddhist "Si" were the same thing. This created a nickname for ancient architecture that shows two different religious cultures. Since the Tang and Song dynasties, Confucianism's idea of hierarchy and Buddhism's worship sequence have slowly made their way into Taoism. This is called the process of influence, infiltration, and integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Taoism shows obvious official characteristics in the arrangement and layout of architectural groups and in the construction of architectural specifications for respecting and worshipping the main deity. Emperors highly valued the Quan Zhen sect and accorded it a high political status, particularly during the Yuan and Ming dynasties. The Quan Zhen School thinks that "cultivating oneself, benefiting others, and striving for unity" are all important parts of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Because of this, they strongly support the mixing of the three religions, which has a big effect on Taoist architecture. Most palace buildings are also modeled after Buddhist temples. This is where the architectural art of Qing Xu Temple came from. It shows clearly the ideas and culture of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing Quan Zhen schools, as well as the Taoist style of architecture.

The San Qing Hall is the theme building of the Qing Xu Temple. The main buildings that belong to the San Qing Hall are the Dragon and Tiger Hall, the Xian Hall, and the Jade Emperor Pavilion. The Mountain Gate, Dragon and Tiger Hall, Xian

Hall, San Qing Hall, and Jade Emperor Pavilion are lined up in order along the central axis. From south to north, they make up the Three Entrance Courtyard. The layout is neat and symmetrical about the central axis, and the building grade and priority are obvious. According to the classification of ancient Chinese architecture, most of the buildings on the main axis of Qing Xu Temple adopt high-spec gable roofs, demonstrating the outstanding architectural style of this Taoist temple.



Figure 44 Qing Xu Temple

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Cheng Huang Temple (1636-1912)

In the construction of ancient Chinese cities, rammed earth walls were usually called "Cheng," and the water-filled city walls surrounding the walls were called "Chi," and the waterless city walls were called "Huang," hence the distinction between "Cheng Chi" and "Cheng Huang." However, the commonality between the city and the

city god lies in maintaining the safety of "Cheng," and the city god has been given a special meaning by the people, that is, a universal deity who guards the city, blesses the place, reconciles wind and rain, and governs the dead. The common people revere it widely as the protector of the city because of its close relationship to the people of the world.

The Cheng Huang Temple in Pingyao Ancient City was built during the Qing Dynasty, covering an area of 4552 square meters with a total construction area of 3672 square meters. The Cheng Huang Temple is completely modeled after the shape of the county government office in terms of planning and layout, with symmetrical axes and strict rules adhering to the Confucian norms of respect and hierarchy. The location, size, shape, and style of the roofs of all buildings almost exactly match those of the county government, except for the stage at Cheng Huang Temple, which is set up in a unique way. Glazed roofs decorate most of the main buildings in the temple area, reflecting the special status of the City God. Cheng Huang Temple is a three-courtyard structure centered around the City God Hall. It combines four different types of buildings—the Six Cao Fu, the Land Hall, the Zao Jun Temple, and the Caishen Temple—into a courtyard within a courtyard layout. The layout of the Cheng Huang Temple is similar to that of the Pingyao County Yamen. In front of the Cheng Huang Temple, there is also a screen wall. On the east and west sides, there are wooden memorial archways across the street. On both sides of the gate, there are eight-character brick screen walls, each with stone lions and horse-tying columns, enclosing the square in front of the temple. Along the central axis of Cheng Huang Temple, the main buildings are arranged from south to north, including the mountain gate, stage (also serving as a ceremonial gate), east and west bell and drum second floors, offering hall, main hall, and sleeping quarters. The mountain gate, stage, and two side corridors are in the front courtyard. The stage, bell and drum tower, offering hall, main hall, and east and west corridors are in the middle courtyard. The bedroom behind the main hall has become an independent backyard, reflecting the official style of "front court and back bedroom." There are two courtyards on the east and west sides of the backyard,

namely Zao Jun Temple and Caishen Temple. Everything about Cheng Huang Temple gives off an air of strict government office hierarchy, from the way it is laid out to its architecture.

To the east of the main hall, there are nine corridors that replicate the six rooms occupied by soldiers, criminals, workers, rites, households, and officials in the County Government Hall. The City God establishes the Six Cao Fu as the administrative agency to manage the affairs of the underworld. At the southern end of the Six Cao Fu, adjacent to the bell tower, there is a single room, Zhong Kui Hall, while to the west of the main hall, there is a Land Hall. At the southern end of the Land Hall, next to the Drum Tower, there is also a small, single-room hall known as the Reincarnation Hall. Install a sacrificial hall in front of the main hall of Cheng Huang Temple as a place to display offerings and perform worship. We built the entire hall on a one-person-high pedestal to highlight the lofty and noble status of the City God. The Xian Hall is adjacent to the main hall. The Xian Hall boasts a width of five rooms, a flush gable roof, a round ridge roof, and a seven-story wooden architectural arch. This perfectly designed hall is exceptionally solemn and majestic.

The stage at Cheng Huang Temple is built on the temple's central axis. It faces south and north in a backwards layout, with the Xian Hall and the main hall on either side. The design of this layout clearly caters to the requirements of the performing arts function. On the one hand, it respects the north and performs a grand play facing the City God, pleasing him and expressing his piety and respect for the City God. However, during their daytime performances, performers will not receive direct sunlight from the south. Given that the stage is situated on a pedestrian walkway along the central axis and functions as a ceremonial gate for the county government, there are stringent requirements for the design and construction of the stage building. Therefore, the stage of Cheng Huang Temple in Pingyao adopts a corridor-style double-eaved gable roof tower structure, with a width of three rooms and an open entrance on one side. The building is towering and upright, and with a glazed roof decoration, it is particularly magnificent and spectacular.

The stage is located on the central walkway, where performances can be performed without blocking traffic, so a passage is built in the center of the stage base. The entrance of the passage on the back wall of the stage is built into an arched doorway, which is elevated from the ground to the outer eaves to form a suspended mountain-style pedestrian gate tower. Two towering ancient locust trees and hexagonal flower windows open on both sides of the passage. People no longer feel uncomfortable facing the back wall of the building upon entering the mountain gate, and the two small doors beneath the bell tower and drum tower resonate on both sides of the gate tower, enhancing the visual aesthetic impact.

Simultaneously, the sound effect of the performance was fully considered during the construction of the stage. The designer buried five large pottery jars on both sides of the stage passage, with the jars facing upwards. They were first covered with stone slabs, and then a three-inch-thick soil layer was added. A layer of square bricks was laid flat on top of the soil layer to form a resonance zone for the multi-cavity sound system. The stage, the adjacent Xian Hall, and the main hall, combined with their echo effects, produced a rich, round, and melodious sound. The Cheng Huang Temple in Pingyao's design concept shows how ancient wisdom was used to build buildings, how human and divine governance worked together, and how official and civilian governance were brought together in architecture.



Figure 45 Stage in the Cheng Huang Temple (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 46 Stage in the Cheng Huang Temple (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 47 Stage in the Cheng Huang Temple (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 48 Cheng Huang Temple (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 49 Cheng Huang Temple (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 50 Cheng Huang Temple (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Overview of Residential Buildings in Pingyao Ancient City

China is a vast, multi-ethnic country. Different times in history have had different political, economic, cultural, and regional environments that have shaped daily life and created rich cultures that are still alive. The courtyard-style architecture is a common residential form of the Han ethnic group north of the Yangtze River and a great creation of traditional dwellings. A quadrangle courtyard is a courtyard-style building enclosed by houses perpendicular to each other on the vertical and horizontal axes. The courtyard-style building is surrounded by solid walls, with the aim of opening a courtyard door on the southwest corner wall to create a relatively independent and concealed living space. Most courtyard-style buildings face north and south, providing good lighting for the main building. Courtyard-style buildings usually have the midpoint of the main roof ridge as the longitudinal axis and are arranged with buildings of different functions. These buildings tend to be symmetrical in terms of location, volume, shape, and decoration. The courtyard's shape shows the strict organization, clear hierarchy, and moral order of a family living together through blood ties. It has become a style of architecture that represents the traditional way of life of the Han ethnic group in China. The traditional residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City are great examples of Han ethnic residential architecture in the Central Plains region, with their own unique cultural traits.

The prosperity of Pingyao Ancient City benefited from the rise of Shanxi merchants in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. With the rise of the financial industry, Pingyao merchants completed their early capital accumulation. Because of the traditional belief that people should honor their ancestors, merchants bought land and built big buildings, which changed the way Pingyao built buildings. Simultaneously, Shanxi merchants admired Confucian culture and called themselves Confucian merchants, which also had an important impact on their residential buildings. China's traditional homes are mostly made of wood. Building house frames out of wood is called "Da Mu Zuo," and making decorations and furniture out of wood is called "Xiao Mu Zuo." Wooden structure buildings have two major characteristics: one is that wooden frame

structures are used as the load-bearing system of the building, and the indoor and outdoor spaces are divided by wall enclosures, thus forming the characteristic that the wall will not collapse; the second is that no matter how grand and complex the building complex is, the plane of the single building is composed of "Jian," and the form is relatively simple.

On the basis of inheriting traditional forms, Pingyao Ancient City's traditional dwellings have also made many innovations and developments in combination with the natural geographical environment of Jinzhong, Shanxi. The residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City are mostly in the form of narrow rectangular plots of land from north to south, with a length generally exceeding twice the width. The layout of the courtyards is very compact. Due to land limitations, some residential buildings have a two-story main building, with the rear walls of the east and west wing rooms directly facing the streets and alleys. The eaves are high, making the courtyards particularly narrow and deep. Or the rear walls of the east-west wing rooms are closely adjacent to the rear eaves of the neighboring courtyard wing rooms, connecting the courtyards together. In winter, northwest winds prevail in Pingyao. The courtyard is long from north to south and narrow from east to west. This shape lets southeast winds flow through and lets enough light in. It also keeps cold northwest winds from blowing into the courtyard in the winter, showing that the builders were smart enough to design something that works with the environment.

Shanxi has been a battlefield for military strategists since ancient times. There are often wars there, and bandits take advantage of the situation to cause trouble, which can make home life very unstable. Secondly, Pingyao Ancient City is located in a transportation hub, and the merchants in the city started with bank accounts, most of which were converted from residential buildings. For the safety of the entrance, Pingyao residential buildings have changed the traditional courtyard building's herringbone two-slope roof to a single-slope roof facing the courtyard for drainage. In addition, the rear wall of the house is not opened, and the wall's height is raised to the ridge, greatly increasing the difficulty for thieves and bandits to climb the eaves and improving the

prevention ability of the courtyard. Simultaneously, the Loess Plateau experiences dryness and rain, and Pingyao merchants perceive water as a source of wealth. A single sloping roof on all sides easily forms a small courtyard, contributing to the process of "gathering wealth." When it rains, the courtyard can effectively prevent the outflow of fertilizer and water. The large tanks in the courtyard can also be used to contain rainwater, which plays a role in fire prevention and disaster control. The rear wall facing the street does not have windows or exposed eaves, which reduces the spread of fire in adjacent courtyard houses in case of a fire. "External grandeur and internal elegance" was a short way that Liang Sicheng once described Pingyao's residential buildings. It shows that Pingyao's residential buildings are extraordinary.

In the ancient city of Pingyao, most of the three-courtyard and four-courtyard houses are the homes of ordinary people. However, this is not the case for merchants and wealthy families. They often own mansions, not only for the needs of home life but also as a symbol of wealth and status. These mansions usually occupy the most prosperous and lively areas of the ancient city, surrounded by high walls and built facing the street. The most common way for wealthy families to build courtyards is to connect them in series vertically, in parallel horizontally, or in a mix of vertical and horizontal. Many wealthy families build at least two or three courtyards, often including side courtyards on both sides of the main courtyard. The layout of the side courtyard is basically the same as that of the main courtyard. Therefore, the layout of these courtyards presents various spatial combination forms such as the characters "日" "目" and "田". According to the traditional courtyard design, the courtyard space is divided into layers along the north-south central axis with inner courtyard gates, low walls, and halls. On the one hand, it meets the requirements of the home arrangement with respect for seniority and distinction between inside and outside. On the other hand, it also allows the mansions located in prosperous areas to enjoy the tranquil environment of deep courtyards even though they are located in the bustling city.

A perfect Pingyao two-entry courtyard has a main gate, a back house, a Chui Hua gate, a hall, a main house, the front and back yards, and the east and west

wing rooms. These are all very good for following traditional Chinese etiquette rules about respecting elders, men and women, young and old, and inside and outside. The houses built on the left and right sides of the main house along the central axis of the courtyard are the east wing and the west wing, which are used for the living of the younger generations. According to the ancient etiquette order of "left is upper and right is lower," the eldest son is usually arranged to live in the east wing on the left side of the main house, and the concubine's son lives in the west wing on the right. The house at the south end of the central axis of the courtyard is called the "back house" or "south house" because it faces south, and its doors and windows are opposite those of the main house and open to the courtyard. Generally, family members of lower generations use it as a study, living room, and dining room.

Feng Shui has always had the saying of "Kan House and Xun Gate," which believes that "the fortune of a house lies in the gate." The house facing north and south is regarded as "Kan House," which is auspicious. The location of the house's gate should also be auspicious in order to ward off evil. So, the southeast corner, which is called the Xun position in architectural Feng Shui theory, is the best place to put it. People often build toilets and pig pens in the southwest corner of the courtyard. Only with this layout can family life be prosperous and auspicious.

The gate of the house is the face of the family and the clan. The size of the gate, the height of the gatehouse, and the magnificence or solemnity of the gate image represent the status of a family or clan. Usually, a glance at the house's gate reveals the status and wealth of the courtyard owner. The gates of residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City generally use gatehouse-style column doors and arched doors. The gatehouse-style pillar gate is directly opened on the wall of the back building, and a wooden gatehouse or a brick gatehouse is built above the gate. A main ridge, a vertical ridge, a gargoyle, and a vertical flower column decorate the gatehouse. Often, the arch gate features a courtyard entrance, allowing carriages and horses to enter and depart. The arch is built with bricks and stones above the door opening into an arc, and two door panels made of a whole piece of wood are installed in the door opening.

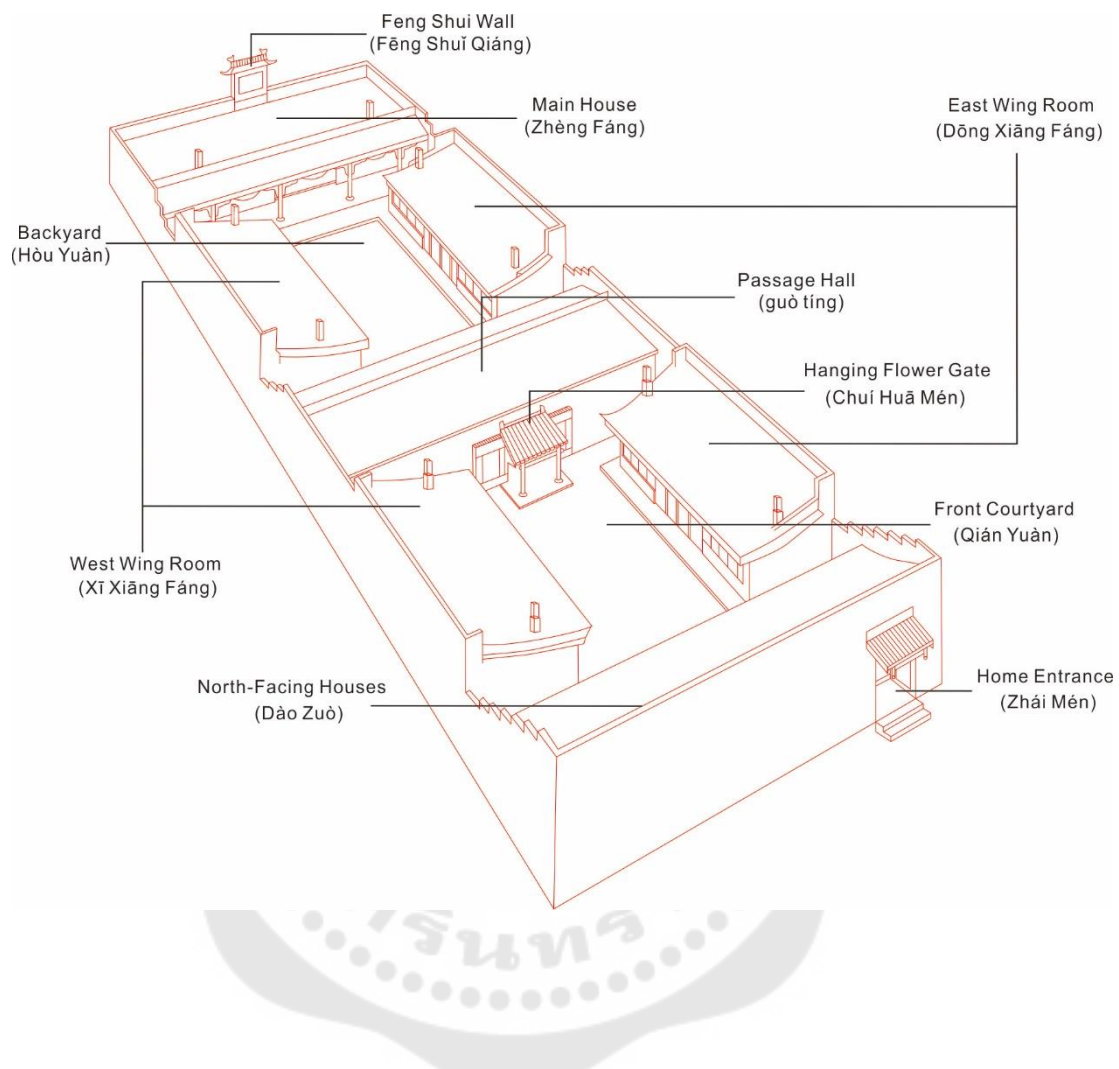


Figure 51 The courtyard-style building has two courtyards

Source: Designed by the author in 2024



Figure 52 Residential Compounds Composed of Various Architectural Structures

Source: Designed by the author in 2024



Figure 53 Varied Gates of Traditional Pingyao Residences (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 54 Varied Gates of Traditional Pingyao Residences (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 55 Varied Gates of Traditional Pingyao Residences (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 56 Varied Gates of Traditional Pingyao Residences (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Some courtyards have horse hitching posts and horse-mounting stones at the gates, showing the wealth and nobility of the Jin merchants' courtyards. Among the few existing horse hitching posts in Pingyao Ancient City, all the stone carvings on top of these posts are shaped like monkeys. It is said that the idea is based on the story in Journey to the West that the Jade Emperor appointed Sun Wukong as "Bima Wen" and used the monkey's spiritual power to control the imperial horses in heaven. The Jin merchants' courtyards adopted such a folk art form, which not only implies avoiding horse plague but also expresses the ideal expectation of "being granted a title of nobility immediately" and "being granted a title of nobility for generations" advocated by Chinese Confucian culture.





Figure 57 Hitching Posts in Pingyao Ancient City (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 58 Hitching Posts in Pingyao Ancient City (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 59 Hitching Posts in Pingyao Ancient City (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

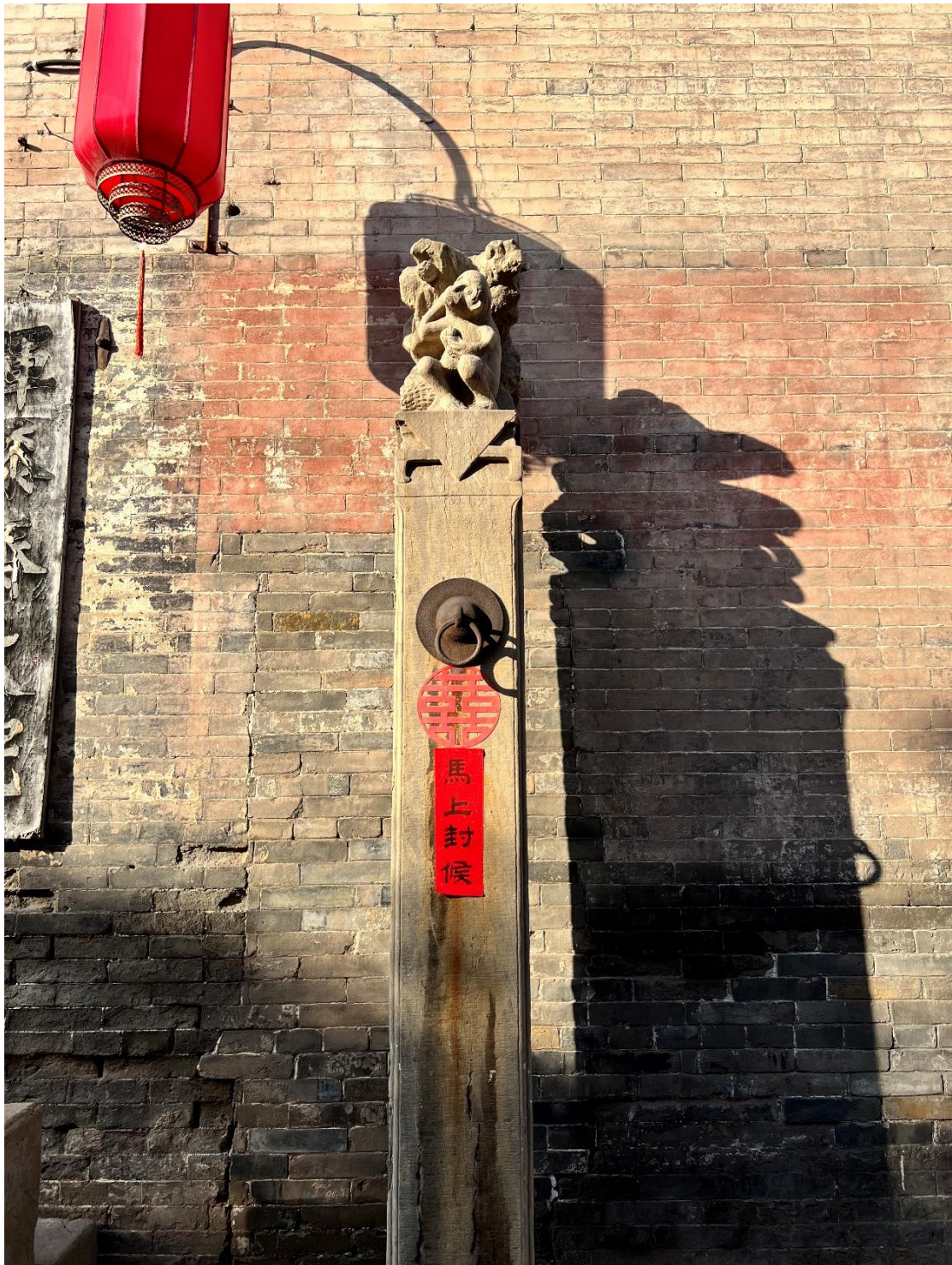


Figure 60 Hitching Posts in Pingyao Ancient City (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

The Chui Hua gate was a popular inner courtyard gate in the Ming and Qing dynasties. It was built on the central axis of the courtyard, occupying a back room, so that the entrance to the courtyard faces the gable at the south end of the wing room, preventing visitors from looking directly into the courtyard. After entering the gate, turn left to reach the front yard. It plays the role of dividing and connecting the outer courtyard and the inner house.



Figure 61 Pingyao Ancient City Residence Chui Hua Gate

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

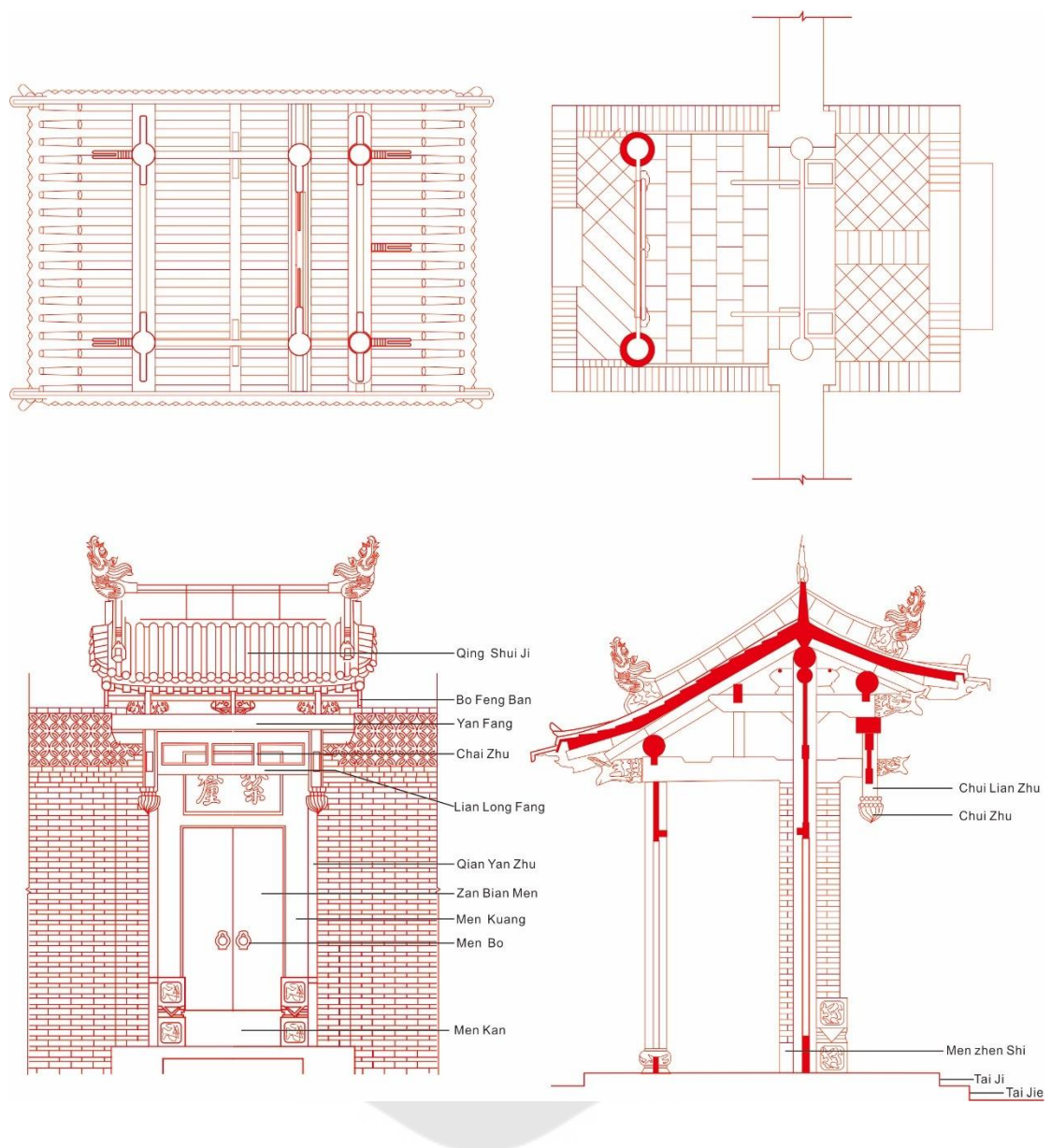


Figure 62 Diagram of Chui Hua Gate Structure

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024

In feudal society, adult men and women could not touch each other casually, and there were strict etiquette restrictions. Mencius said, "Men and women should not touch each other, which is etiquette." Men take care of external affairs, while women take charge of domestic affairs. After the Song Dynasty, this etiquette norm became more strict. Sima Guang said in "Shu Shui Jia Yi": "When building a palace, you

must distinguish between inside and outside. The deep palace has a solid gate, and the inside and outside do not share wells, bathrooms, or toilets. Men manage external affairs, and women manage internal affairs. Men are not permitted to remain in private rooms during the day without justification, and women are not permitted to peek through the middle door without justification. Men walk at night with candles, and women must cover their faces when they go out of the middle door for a reason. Male servants refrain from entering the middle door unless they are performing repairs or have a serious reason to do so. Women must avoid the middle door. If they cannot avoid it, they must cover their faces with their sleeves. Female servants do not go out of the middle door without reason, and if they go out of the middle door for a reason, they must cover their faces." The traditional courtyard house's Chui Hua gate serves as an unbreakable red barrier, clearly marking the boundary between inside and outside. People often say that ladies in the boudoir "never go out of the main door or the second door." The second door here refers to the Chui Hua Gate in the courtyard.

So-called "Chui Hua" refers to the fact that the front eaves column on the gatehouse doesn't touch the ground directly. Instead, a short hanging lotus column is placed under the cantilevered beam head to make the shape of a flower that hangs from the gate. In the courtyard-style dwellings in Pingyao Ancient City, the double-column single-roll Chui Hua Gate is the most common, and wealthy families often build four-column or six-column single-roll Chui Hua gate. This kind of Chui Hua Gate has a hip roof with a large ridge facing the front yard. The front eaves columns support two chessboard doors with lattice frame panels, while square door pillows or drum stones rest below. The middle of the back column houses two or four screen doors. The platform features movable steps on three sides, commonly referred to as Ruyi stepping. Typically, we close the four screen doors and use only the two sides for entry and exit. Only the female family members, during weddings and funerals, or when welcoming guests, will open the screen doors.

Enter the backyard through the Chui Hua gate. The hall divides the backyard into the second and third courtyards. The hall is composed of two houses, one

in the south and one in the north, built back to back and located on a brick platform. A gable-shaped double-slope hardy roof forms a shared back wall between the two houses. The passage between the second and third courtyards connects the front and back rooms. The south-facing building, which faces the Chui Hua gate, serves as either a living room or study. It adopts a wooden beam frame structure, and a screen is set near the back eaves of the room to block the view.

The third courtyard is the most closed and private space in the quadrangle. Passing through the hall, the main house in front is the most important building in the quadrangle. Other buildings in the courtyard are not as big as the main house. Its span, depth, eaves height, ridge height, and platform are all bigger. Plaques often hang on the door lintel, creating a functional outer eaves corridor in front of the entrance. The outer eaves columns host maple couplets. Even the style and carved patterns on the column base are exquisite. Since the ancient city of Pingyao was built on the alluvial fan of the two rivers, the terrain is relatively low and is often disturbed by floods. Therefore, when building the three-entry courtyard, starting from the gate of the house, the ground of the courtyard and the building was raised and compacted with soil layers so that the height of the inner and outer courtyards increased successively, which was called "step by step" and "three consecutive promotions" in the hope of family prosperity. For more than 2,000 years, China's patriarchal system and morals based on "ritual" have been kept alive by the courtyard-style architecture of Pingyao folk houses. It has gone from being an open space to a home with shared space and private space by making space and decorating it with art. It has many levels and clear priorities, making a peaceful, organized, comfortable, and stylish living space that follows the design idea of "harmony between man and nature."

The Old Site of Ri Sheng Chang (1636-1912)

The earliest bank in China, Ri Sheng Chang Piaohao, was born in Pingyao Ancient City. Ri Sheng Chang Piaohao was the prototype of Bank of China. During the Dao Guang and Xian Feng years of the Qing Dynasty, almost half of the

Piaohao headquarters in China were in Pingyao Ancient City. There were also branches all over the country and in other countries. Pingyao Piaohao controlled the Chinese financial world, exerted an influence on it for more than 100 years, and made great contributions to the creation and development of China's financial industry.



Figure 63 The Old Site of Ri Sheng Chang (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

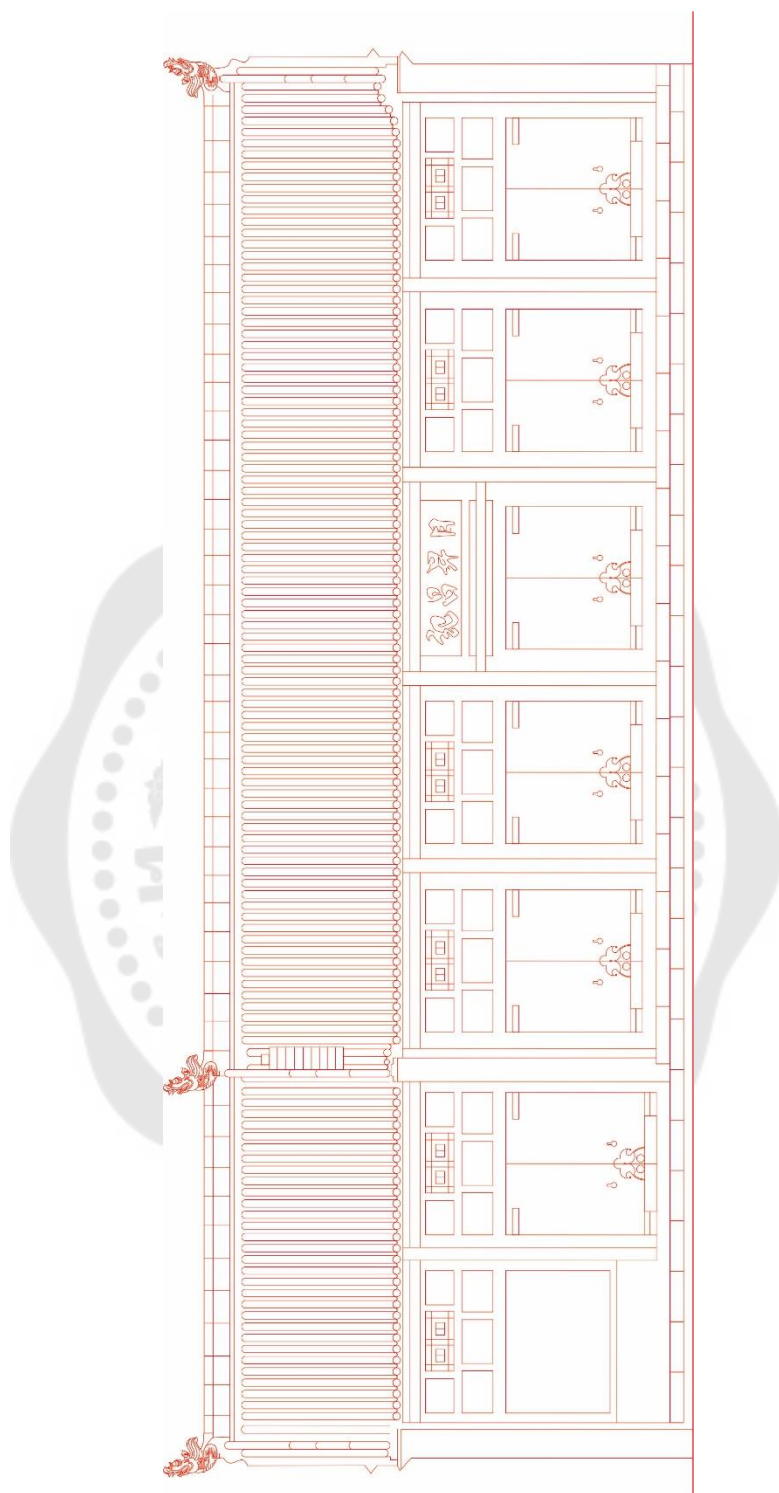


Figure 64 The Old Site of Ri Sheng Chang (2)

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024



Figure 65 The Old Site of Ri Sheng Chang (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

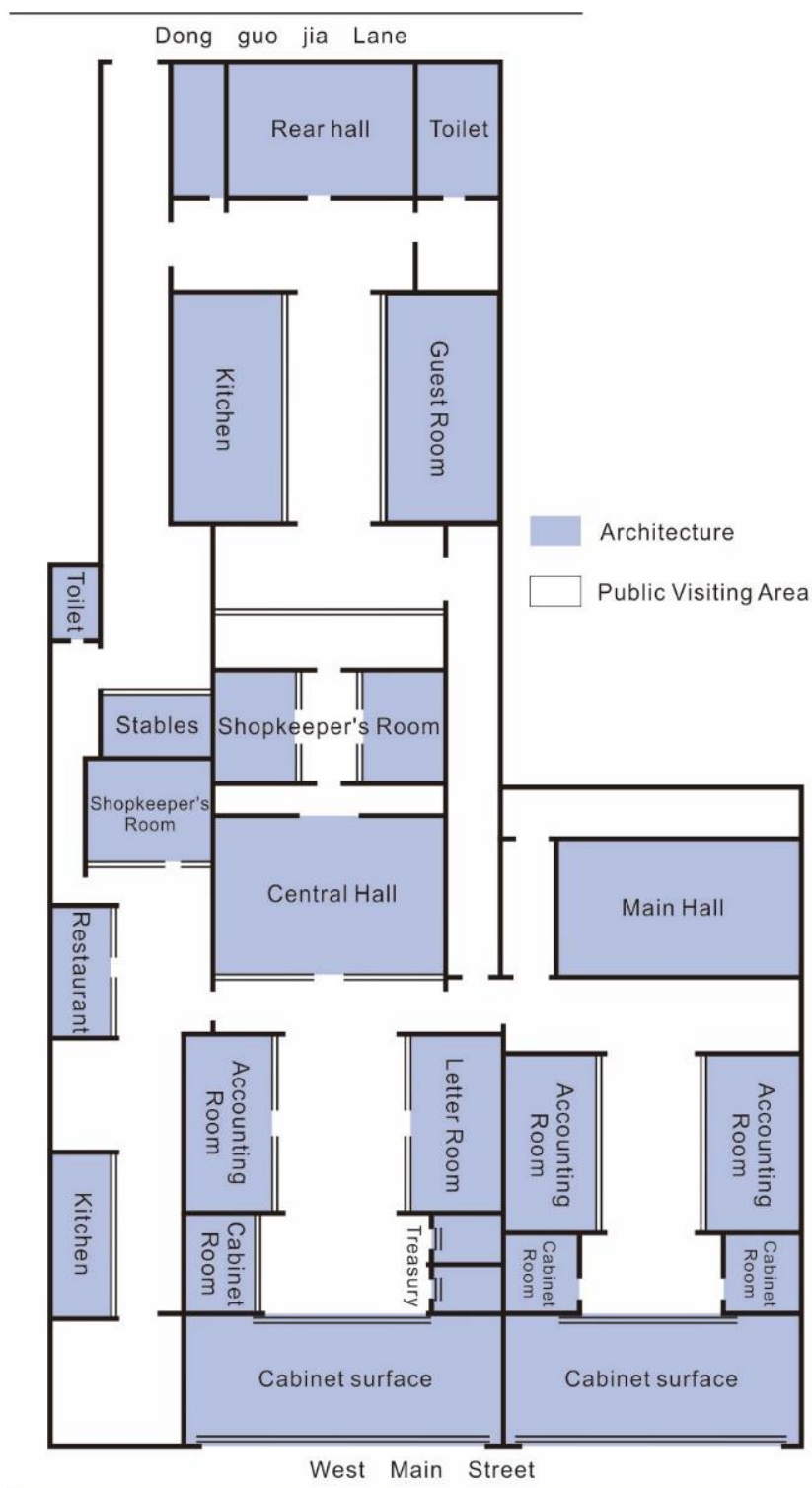


Figure 66 Layout Plan of the Pingyao Ri Sheng Chang

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

If you look at how China's financial industry has grown over time, you can see that commercial credit started to appear in the Western Han Dynasty, and money transfers started in the Tang Dynasty. Emperor Xianzong of the Tang Dynasty produced "flying money" in the capital, which served as the prototype for the remittance business. The Song Dynasty not only continued the "flying money" form of the Tang Dynasty, but also, in the third year of Kai Bao in the Song Dynasty (970 AD), the government also established a state-run remittance agency, "Bian Qian Wu," in the capital Bian Liang, using the "Bian Huan" method to handle inter-regional remittances for customers and merchants. In the late Ming Dynasty, with the development of the commodity economy, the amount of currency in circulation increased day by day, and the speed of circulation became more and more frequent. Large-scale cash transfers were no longer able to keep up with the fast growth of trade. This is why bills of exchange started to appear, which replaced cash settlement with bill settlement, making it easier for bulk trade to happen over long distances. The circulation and use of this type of bill of exchange continued until the early Qing Dynasty. According to the "Coins" in Volume 52 of the Qing Dynasty's "Collection of Imperial Essays on State Affairs," in the early Qing Dynasty, many merchants transported large quantities of materials to the capital. Because the journey was long and the transportation was inconvenient, they "entrusted money to wealthy merchants in their hometowns and took bills to the capital to receive payment" for safety and convenience. The term "bill of exchange" refers to this process. The bills of exchange during the Ming and Qing Dynasties exhibited the characteristics of commercial credit exchange. The establishment of Pingyao Piaohao marked a significant qualitative leap in the credit exchange business, leading to a new era of financial exchange in Chinese finance history.

With the emergence of Pingyao Piaohao, the original traditional merchant shops, driven by functional needs, have undergone major changes in the layout, structure, and details of the building. As a result, a group of Pingyao's earliest Piaohao buildings appeared. Despite retaining the main characteristics of Jinzhong Si He Yuan residential buildings, these Piaohao buildings have already transitioned to a

more commercial use. Like local residential buildings, Piaohao buildings are composed of two courtyards, three courtyards, and cross courtyards, with the main house and wing rooms symmetrically arranged along the central axis. The courtyards are separated by Chui Hua gate, halls, and side doors. The appearance of the building is no different from that of Pingyao residential buildings. The only difference is that these Piaohao houses are deep houses with high walls, single-slope hard mountain roofs, towering ridges, no open windows on the exterior walls, and adjacent gables protected by wire mesh to prevent thieves from climbing over the wall and fire spreading. Simultaneously, the thickness and height of the walls surpass those of residential buildings, extending beyond the reach of ordinary shop walls. Most of the courtyards have two entrances, front and back. The entrance facing the commercial street is located in the middle of the storefront, and several bluestone steps are built to facilitate merchants' contacts with the store for exchange business. The other entrance is located in the cross-courtyard or side courtyard, with a round arch gate facing the secondary street and a gently sloping alley paved with stone slabs, which is mainly for the internal personnel of the ticket number to enter and exit and is also convenient for carriages to transport property and silver. The side door leading to the main courtyard from the cross-courtyard and side courtyard is extremely narrow, and only one person can enter and exit. Each Pingyao ticket number has more than a dozen or twenty buildings, but the functional divisions are clear, and the layout is orderly. In the first courtyard, there are counters, letter rooms, account rooms, and other business function rooms. The second courtyard or hall building is the office and reception place for the ticket number manager—that is, the manager's office, which is used for management and is also the residence of the ticket number manager. The backyard building has guest rooms, kitchens, and restaurants, which are used to receive partners from various branches returning to the Pingyao headquarters to handle business. The entire courtyard is divided functionally, which effectively coordinates the business procedures and management functions of the ticket exchange, ensuring that its development is differentiated between the inside and the outside and does not interfere with each other.

As a financial institution, the building's success hinges on the smooth development of its exchange business and the safety of its silver storage. Pingyao Piaohao is generally built in a prosperous downtown area, with customers coming in and out every day, and a considerable amount of gold and silver currency is pulled in and out. Vaults, secret passages, and secret rooms are naturally indispensable for ticket houses. Unexpectedly, some ticket houses conceal secret passages, secret rooms, and underground vaults in the courtyard where customers frequently enter and exit, or even in the counter room where customers often ignore them. Such a clever idea also responds to the saying, "The most dangerous place is also the safest place." For example, the underground vault used by Ri Sheng Chang Piaohao to collect and deposit silver at any time is located in the counter room where people come and go, and the entrance of the vault is also hidden under the foot pedal in front of the earthen kang. Xie Tong Qing Piaohao took advantage of the natural drop of the outdoor terrain and adopted a staggered grounding method to build a two-story building on the ditch slope downward and set the vault on the underground ground floor, connected to the second-floor counter room through a brick staircase secret passage. The entrance room of the secret passage is like an ordinary living room, with no special protection, creating the illusion of an ordinary living room to confuse others.

Pingyao Piaohao buildings are the product of the economy, society, ideology, and culture of a specific historical period, and they play an important role in the design and formation of modern financial buildings. The creativity and history of Pingyao Piaohao buildings have left too much inspiration and reflection for future generations.

Lei Lutai's Former Residence (1636-1912)

The former residence of Lei Lutai was built during the reign of Emperor Dao Guang of the Qing Dynasty, facing north and south. The composition of the middle courtyard, east courtyard, east side courtyard, and west side courtyard totals 3888 square meters. The middle courtyard is the main building courtyard of the former

residence. Due to land limitations, there are only two courtyards in the front and back, so the typical Pingyao structure layout of three ridges and two courtyards is adopted. The east and west wing rooms of the inner and outer courtyards correspond to three courtyards. And according to local customs, a sedan-style courtyard was built, with narrow lanes left outside the rear walls of the east and west wings of the central courtyard, symbolizing two parallel sedan poles that lift the sedan. This creates a visual association of the central courtyard sitting on a flower sedan chair, indicating the prosperity of the family. Due to the presence of lanes on both sides of the central courtyard, the eastern and western courtyards have become independent and formed their pattern. The east courtyard is divided into three courtyards by two inner gates, and the east side courtyard, which is separated from the east courtyard by a wall, is equipped with a carport, stables, and storage facilities for miscellaneous items. Although the courtyard on the west side is slightly narrow, it is the ancestral hall of the Lei family, symbolizing the Western Paradise and reflecting the traditional Chinese concept of life and death. The layout of Lei Lutai's former residence is reasonable, the facilities are complete, the building materials are large and solid, and the architectural decoration is exquisite and refined, showcasing the simplicity and humility of Jin merchants' residences. The layout of architectural functions is both pragmatic and sincere.

For Jin merchants in Pingyao, the houses they built were more grand and luxurious than those of other wealthy families. However, they have always respected Confucian culture, claimed to be Confucian merchants, understood the rules and regulations of the imperial family, and were well versed in the affairs of the officialdom. Naturally, they understood that throughout the dynasties, emperors and officials regarded their homes as symbols of power and status, establishing a strict hierarchy for building specifications. They also formulated specific systems for the size, shape, decoration, and other aspects of residential buildings. The punishment for violators would be severe. According to the regulations of ancient Chinese architecture, "Jian" refers to the space enclosed by four columns in a single building and is the unit of

measurement with the lowest building width. People always use "space" and "frame" as rulers to measure the three-dimensional spaces of buildings. "Ming Shi · Yi Yu Fu Zhi" record: "The common people's houses were customized in the 26th year of Hongwu (A.D. 1393), but there were only three rooms and five frames. The Ming and Qing dynasties strictly prohibited the use of arches in wooden architecture and instead decorated them with colors. The architectural breadth of Pingyao folk houses was also limited to three rooms, strictly abiding by the housing system and rules of the Ming and Qing dynasties. So Shanxi merchants who are skilled in management never dare to arbitrarily raise the specifications of residential buildings or expand the opening, depth, and building volume. Instead, they secretly imitate the approach of the Royal Palace and cleverly use diverse grouping methods to form multiple sets of courtyards by vertically connecting and horizontally connecting courtyard houses and quadrangle houses, thus highlighting the outstanding status of the courtyard owners. Vertical connection helps to extend the courtyard along the central axis, layer by layer. The opening and closing mechanisms, along with variations in size, width, scale, and architectural form of the courtyard space distinguish between primary and secondary areas as well as internal and external grades of both the courtyard space and residential buildings, reflecting their functional use; And horizontally parallel on the left and right sides, expanding into partial or cross courtyard buildings, combined into multiple, multi-axis building groups, which can be used as the owner's study, dining room, garden, relatives' rooms, and property storage, as well as for the living and living of household servants, parking cars and horses, and raising livestock. This type of mixed vertical and horizontal residential courtyard greatly increases the space of the building in terms of form and scale compared to traditional courtyard-style buildings, providing multiple possibilities for the functional organization and division of space and also highlighting the prominent status of wealthy households. It is a classic work of traditional residential architecture in Jinzhong, Shanxi.

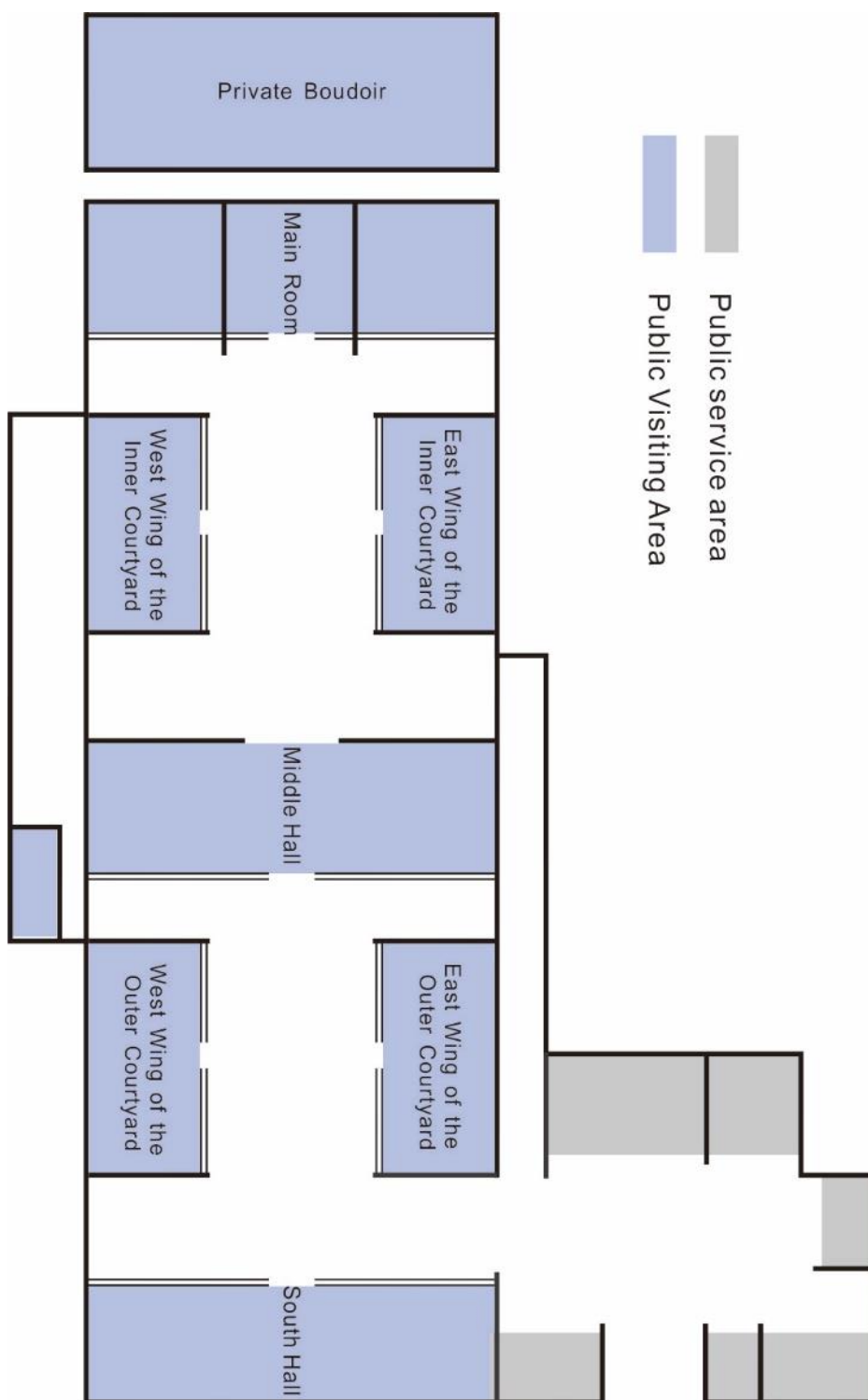


Figure 67 Layout Plan of the Lei Lutai's Former Residence

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

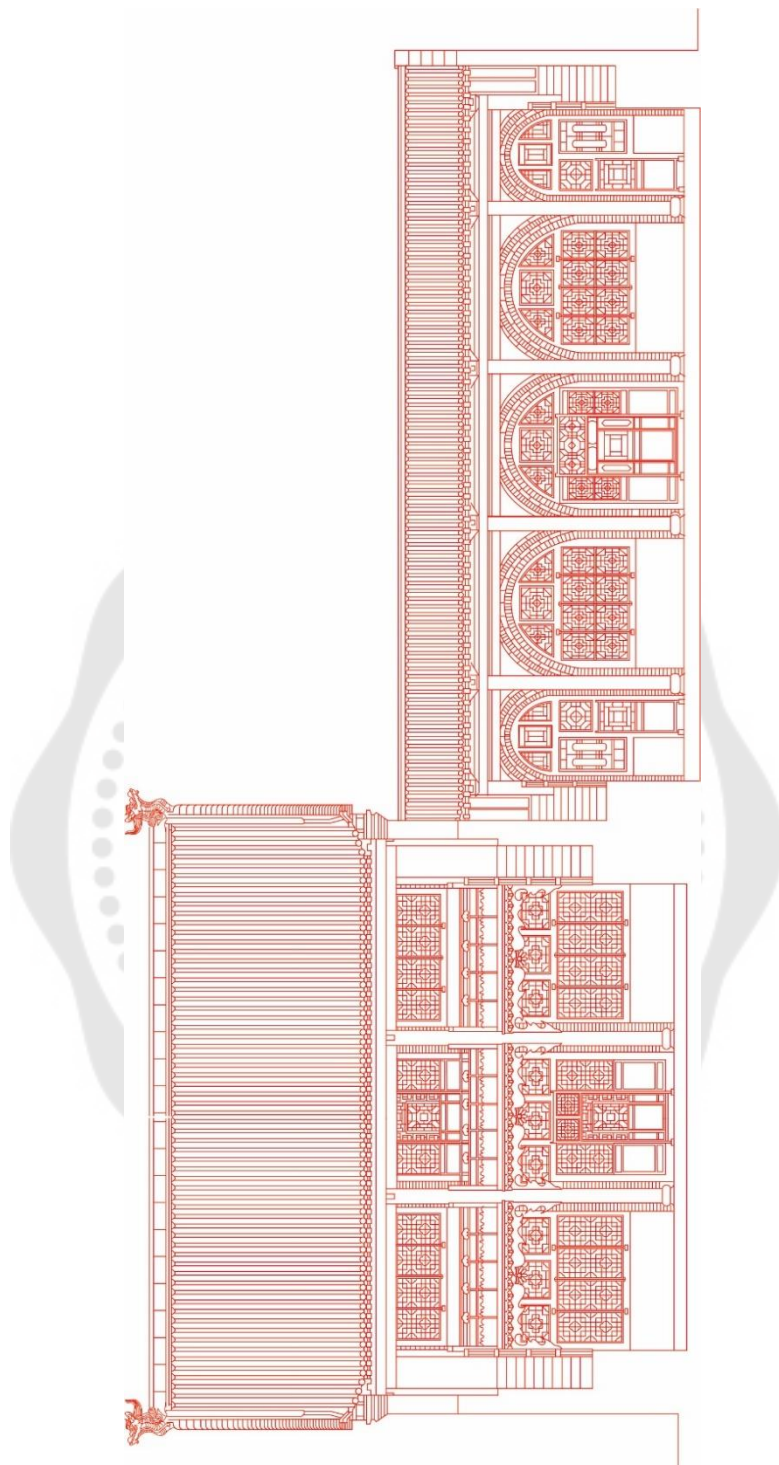


Figure 68 Horizontal Section of Lei Lutai's Former Residence

Source: Designed by the author in 2024



Figure 69 Lei Lutai's Former Residence (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 70 Lei Lutai's Former Residence (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

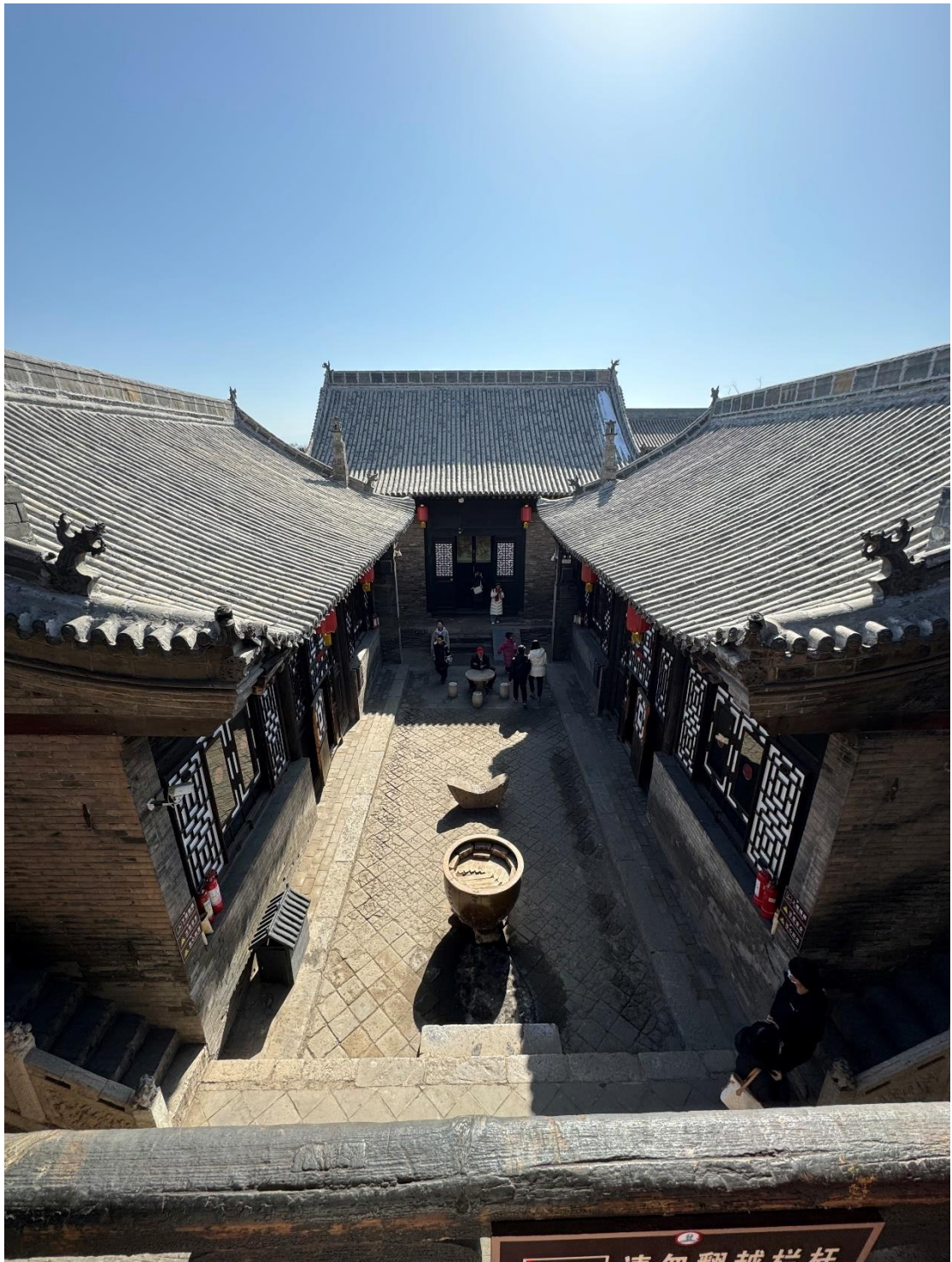


Figure 71 Lei Lutai's Former Residence (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 72 Lei Lutai's Former Residence (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 73 Lei Lutai's Former Residence (5)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 74 Lei Lutai's Former Residence (6)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Simultaneously, the architectural craftsmen in Pingyao combined local conditions to create three types of buildings with local characteristics: one is the wooden structure lifting beam brick and tile house; one is the independent arch brick kiln cave; and one type is the down kiln and upstairs style residential building. The former residence of Lei Lutai, located in the middle of Lei Lutai, is also a major feature of Pingyao's residential architecture. A wooden corridor's outer eave is usually added in front of the arched brick cave in the lower kiln and upper building styles. The intersection of the outer eaves and columns features exquisite sparrows, while various wooden carvings of different themes accompany the beams. Wealthy families still build a wooden beam-style building on top of the cave dwellings, corresponding to the upper and lower parts of the cave dwellings, and add external eaves and corridors to form a lower brick cave and an upper wooden house. The stairs of the lower kiln and upper house-style residential buildings are made of outdoor bricks and are located on both sides of the main house. Each side can have one staircase for two purposes, allowing one to climb to the second floor of the main house or enter the second floor of the wing house.

The Pingyao residential courtyards are connected one by one, neatly arranged in the alleys of Pingyao Ancient City, outlining the traditional texture of the historical district particularly clearly, and also expressing the introverted and enclosed characteristics of traditional Chinese courtyard-style architecture. The influence of Confucian ritual culture on the daily lives of ordinary people is evident everywhere.

4.1.3 Analysis of Urban Architectural Components and Decorations

Chinese traditional architecture not only focuses on the rational planning and use of functions and architectural space but also pays significant attention to architectural decoration. Various wood carvings, brick carvings, stone carvings, painted art methods, and auspicious patterns are used to add the finishing touch, and the most expressive roofs, ridge decorations, eaves corridors, QueTi, Xuan Yu, doors, windows, and partitions on the building are decorated exquisitely and gorgeously, making the

building full of strong cultural connotations and embodying the good wishes of seeking good fortune, family prosperity, and longevity.

The architectural style of Pingyao Ancient City is strong on the outside and soft on the inside. It is majestic on the outside and elegant on the inside, with implicit but unobtrusive decoration. In addition to employing intricate woodworking techniques for creating vibrant exterior and interior decorations in wooden structures, it primarily depends on three architectural decorative arts: wood carving, brick carving, and stone carving. It is widely used in various components, such as beams, columns, Xuan Yu, ridge decorations, tiles, QueTi, doors, windows, plaques, bases, steps, column bases, Bao Gu Shi, and screen walls, gradually forming a major feature of Pingyao Ancient City architecture. Simultaneously, the architecture of Pingyao Ancient City has inherited the traditional forms of ancient Chinese architecture and has also combined the natural geographical environment of Jinzhong, Shanxi Province, with many innovations and developments.

Dou Gong

Dou Gong is a load-bearing component unique to Chinese architecture. It consists of square Dou, Sheng, Gong, Qiao, and Ang. Dou Gong comes in various complex shapes and types. We can divide it into three types: inner eaves Dou Gong, outer eaves Dou Gong, and flat seat Dou Gong, based on the location of use. Dou Gong is composed of "Gong," used to support the beam horizontally or vertically, and "Dou," which is located between "Gong". It is a square component, "Dou," that supports and connects the "arches" of each layer. The name "Dou Gong " also derives from this. The Dou Gong is placed on the column under the eaves, and the short wood called "Gong" or "Ang" is extended outward to support the eaves or beam heads. The Dou or Sheng refers to the small wooden blocks that sit between each layer of short wood, while the Dou Gong is the entire structure. The Dou Gong serves to support the eaves that extend out of the roof, thereby reducing the erosion of rainwater on the house body, walls, doors, windows, and columns. On the other hand, it can decompose the roof pressure borne by the columns and beams through layer-by-layer cantilevering so as to support

The Spring and Autumn Period recorded the shape of Dou Gong. Cave carvings from the Northern Dynasties primarily depicted the image of Dou Gong during the Northern and Southern Dynasties. At this time, the production of Dou Gong was regulated in both shape and size and tended to be standardized. Simultaneously, the outer contour of Dou Gong had paid full attention to the decorative effect of art, and it was no longer stiff and rough like the Dou Gong of the Han Dynasty. The surface decoration of Dou Gong was not only carved but also painted. Most of them were painted with honeysuckle patterns, scroll patterns, and algae patterns on a red background, and the edges were decorated with blue and green. The Tang Dynasty continued to use this form. During the Tang and Song Dynasties, Dou Gong had fully developed and matured. The building's level and scale, as well as the number of Dou Gong layers, were subject to strict regulations. The standardization of the use of materials and the size of the decorative materials were more standardized, which reflected the rationality of the architectural structure of this period and cleverly combined functionality and decoration. It was a mature stage in the development of Dou Gong. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Dou Gong almost became a decorative component. The use of oblique gongs in intervening or capital paving was a manifestation of Dou Gong's tendency to be decorative. The structural role of Dou Gong gradually decreased, the scale decreased, and the number increased. In the evolution process, although the development of Dou Gong did not change much in terms of structural form, it gradually reduced its volume and weight, and its workmanship became more refined, thus saving materials, reducing construction costs, and increasing beauty. Simultaneously, it increased the height of the column, reduced the height of the decorative part, increased the stability of the overall structure, and increased its seismic resistance. (Ma, B.J., 2005)

Dou Gong in traditional Chinese architecture is very different from Western column-style architecture. Western column-style architecture is not connected to any building components, so it freely develops capitals with different decorative features, becoming an important part of architectural decoration. Conversely, Chinese

Dou Gong integrates with other architectural components, forming an integral part of the architectural whole. Over time, craftsmen designed and improved Dou Gong, transforming it into a self-contained building component. It evolved from single-layer to multi-layer and from one-way to multi-way structures. The design became increasingly complex and ingenious, establishing itself as a unique form of Chinese architecture. Whether from the perspective of art or technology, Dou Gong is enough to symbolize and represent the spirit and culture of classical Chinese architecture.

The development and evolution of Dou Gong to a considerable extent reflect the characteristics of traditional Chinese architectural techniques and art in different eras. The overall development of Dou Gong is from majestic to slender in shape, from simple to complex in structure, from few to many levels, from large to small in form, from high to low in height, gradually reducing in length, and from functional structure to decorative components. Due to the need for architectural decoration, the number of Dou Gongs is increasing, but their size is shrinking due to space limitations. The actual material size of Dou Gong and the proportion of the arch of wooden architecture in the overall framework have gradually decreased over the ages. Although the load-bearing function of Dou Gong has basically been lost by the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the shape is more complicated than before, which is completely due to the need for decoration and is also a sign to distinguish building grades. From this, it can be seen that during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the quantity and decoration of Dou Gong also became a symbol of hierarchy and were regulated.

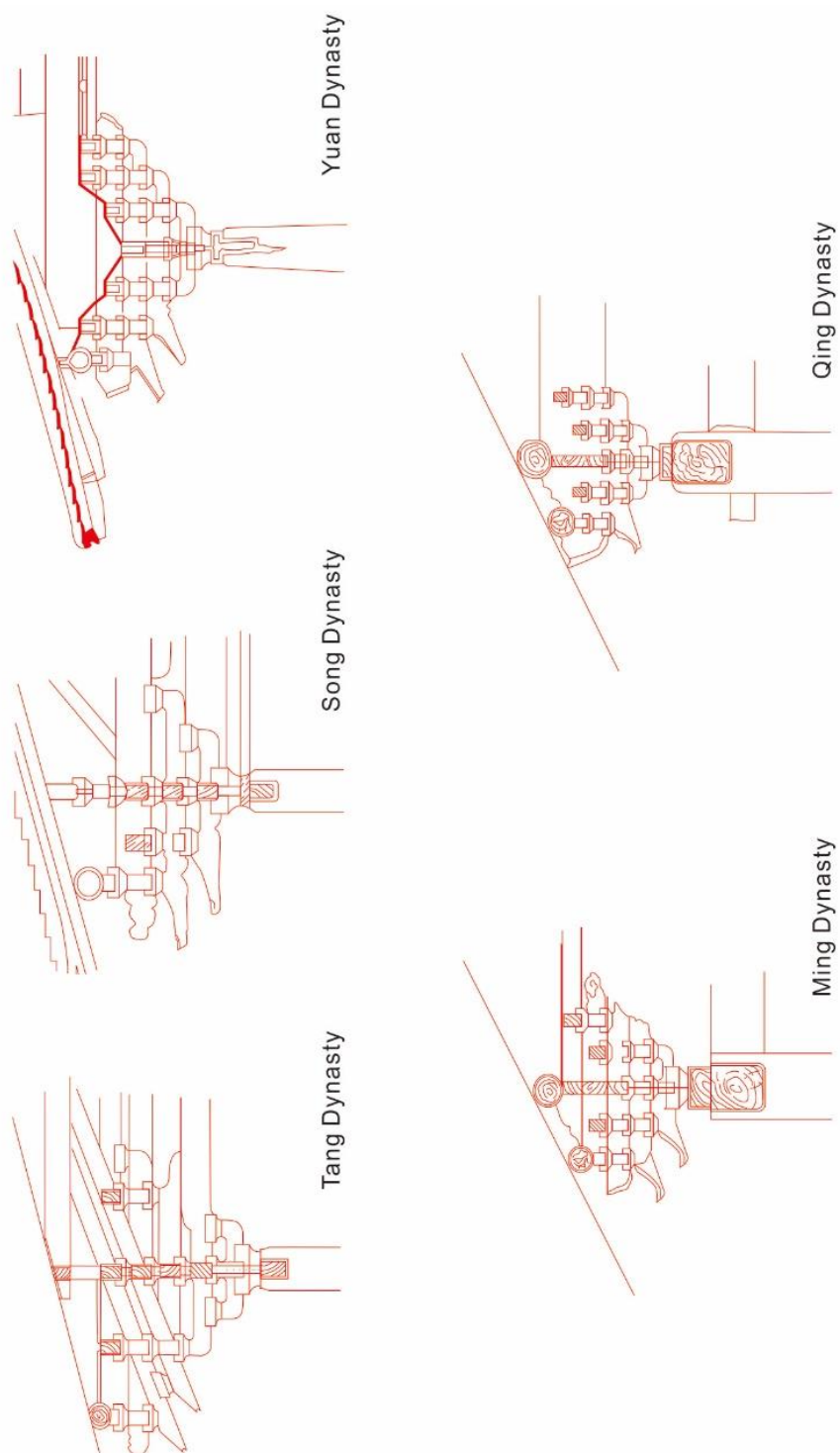


Figure 76 Changes in Dou Gong Forms Across Different Dynasties

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024

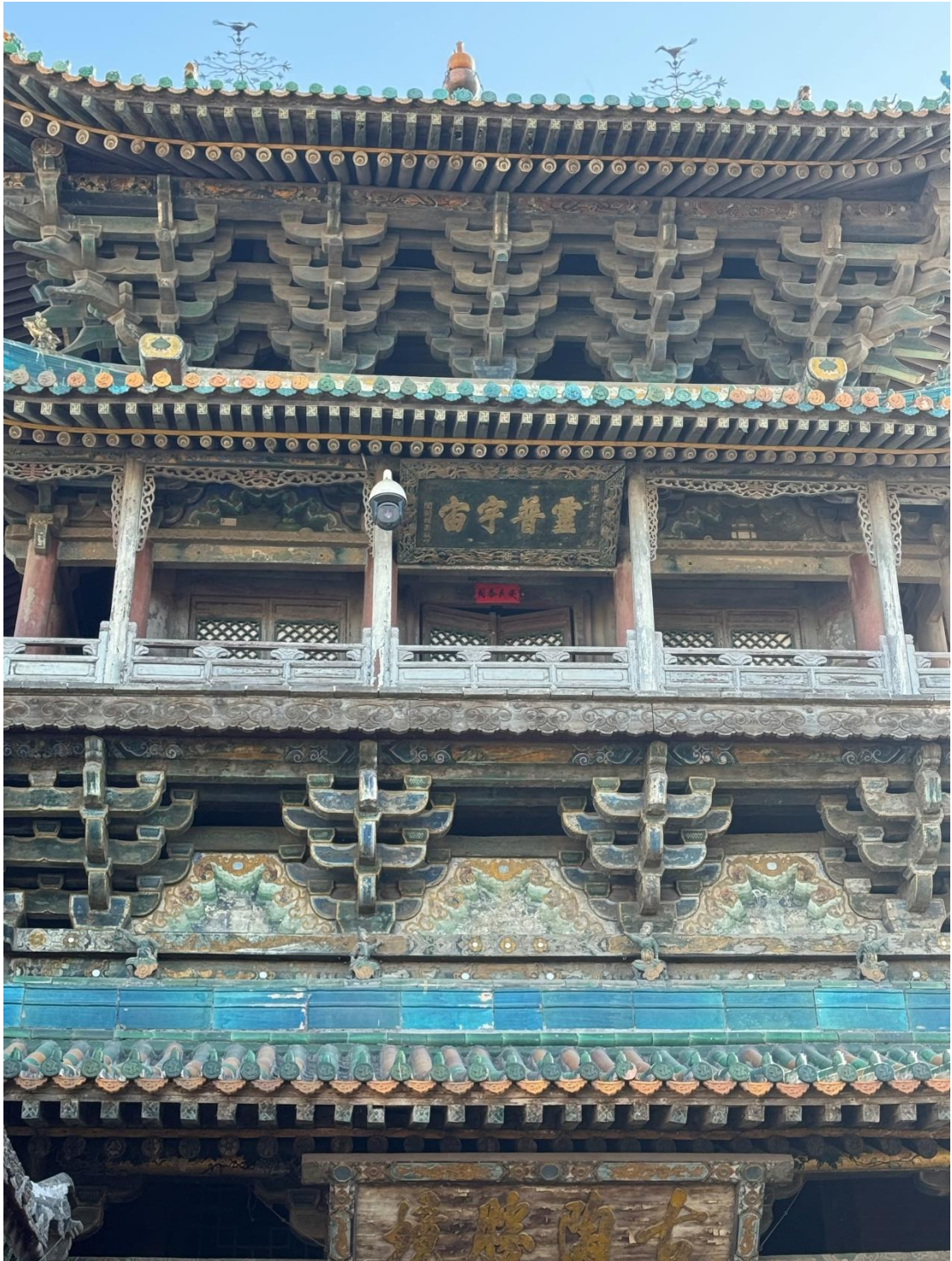


Figure 77 Dou Gong (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 78 Dou Gong (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 79 Dou Gong (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 80 Dou Gong (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Column base

A column base is an ancient Chinese building component, usually called a disc or a column foundation stone. It was first seen in the classic book "Huai Nan Zi · Shuo Lin Xun" It is a foundation stone that supports the weight of the column and is an indispensable building component for all wooden frame houses. In the early days, people buried the columns deep in the ground to stabilize the building's foundation. To prevent the columns from sinking, people set up a hard rammed earth layer under the columns to increase the pressure area and reduce the problem of uneven settlement of the columns. Later, to prevent the roots of the columns buried in the soil from rotting, the ancients began to use pebbles as column bases and add column pedestals (transition structures between column bases and columns). With the evolution of the times, the functionality and decorativeness of the column base gradually emerged, so it appeared as an independent building component.

The covered basin-style column base was regularly produced from the end of the Western Han Dynasty to the Southern and Northern Dynasties. The Song, Liao, and Jin dynasties continued to use the covered basin-style column base, but its carving and decoration were complex and intricate. The Song Dynasty's "Ying Zao Fa Shi" contains records of eleven types and forms of column base decoration: "There are eleven types of patterns and systems created: one is sea stone cotton; the other is Baoxiang flower; the third is peony flower; the fourth is Huicao; the fifth is Fangwen; the sixth is water waves; the seventh is Baoshan; the eighth is Baojie; the ninth is lotus flowers on the ground; the tenth is lotus flowers on the top; and the eleventh is lotus flowers on the top. Alternatively, you can place dragons, phoenixes, lions, beasts, and other creatures between the patterns, distributing and using them according to their suitability." (Liang,S.C, 2015). It is evident that the forms and shapes of column bases were rich at that time. By the Ming and Qing dynasties, the decorative craftsmanship of column bases had reached a higher level. Craftsmen integrated carving techniques such as high relief, shallow relief, translucent carving, and round carving to create highly decorative column base shapes. However, column bases during this period were also

considered to be more complicated and formulaic, lacking the earlier grandeur and spirit, and weakening the functional role of column bases in architecture, emphasizing their decorative nature.

Through the review of the development history of the column base, it can be seen that it also appeared as a building mechanics component in its early days and had moisture-proof and anti-corrosion functions. But in the later development process, the decorative function of the column base was increasingly highlighted, and it became an important category in Chinese stone carving art. With the increasing refinement of craftsmanship, the decorative function of column bases has exceeded actual functional requirements, to the extent that even stone pillars that do not require solving moisture-proof problems are now adorned with exquisite column bases as decorative embellishments.

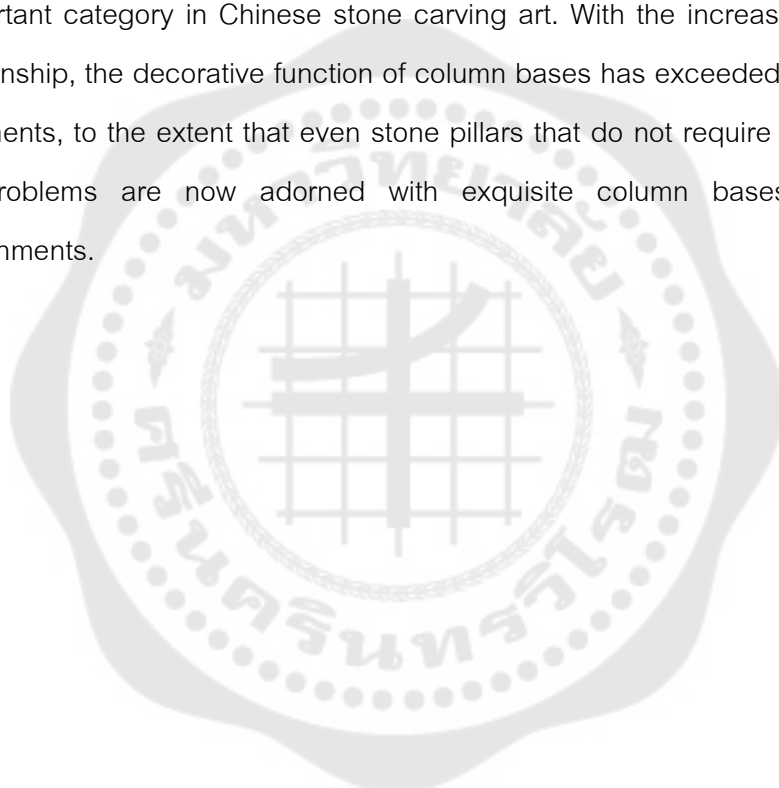




Figure 81 Column Base (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 82 Column Base (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 83 Column Base (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Ridgepole

The roofs of classical Chinese architecture have diverse forms and distinct levels and have become the most eye-catching part in architectural history due to their profound eaves and curved shapes. They are also an important component and unique architectural decoration in traditional Chinese architecture. The roof presents a gracefully curved outline, with a towering upper part and eaves extending outward like wings, becoming the beautiful crown of the entire building and a unique decorative component of traditional Chinese architecture. People also recognize the roof as a unique phenomenon that spans the entire world. (Yi,D.Z.T, 2014). Although Chinese architecture includes various roof forms such as pitched, hipped, suspended, and hip-and-gable roofs, regardless of the type, the junction between adjacent roof planes requires special architectural elements known as ridgepoles.

The ridge is a brick and tile masonry structure located at the junction of different slope surfaces on the roof or at the junction of the roof with the wall or beam frame. The ridge, being the weakest point in the overall roof's waterproofing, necessitates special attention. The use of brick and tile pieces stacked and assembled to form a raised shape with moldings and decorations, while meeting waterproof requirements, has also become a highly decorative part of ancient Chinese building roofs. Regardless of the form of roof, the main ridge is generally taller and more prominent than the vertical ridge, and the design and construction of the main ridge are relatively more complex. Tiles adorn the two ends, forming a beast-shaped decoration that ascends from the group's height. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, dragon-shaped decorations with mouths facing inside and bodies with tails up and inside were mostly made, which were called regular kisses or big kisses. There were also animal-shaped decorations with heads outward, like a tiger, which were called regular roof figures. Local architecture has diverse shapes, but most still feature dragon shapes.

Placing a beast-shaped ornament at the front section of the hip rafter is called "hip beast," also known as "hip rafter beast" in the Song Dynasty. The hip rafter is thus divided into two sections: the front and the rear. In the front section, a row of barrel

tiles with beast ornaments is evenly arranged, referred to as "walking beasts" or "crouching beasts." At the foremost corner, a deity riding a mythical creature is placed, known as the practice of glazed roof ridges. For hip ridges with green tiles, deities are not used; instead, lion heads lead the procession, known as "embracing lions" or "leading lions." Subsequently, horses are uniformly used, with intervals of lions and horses, applied in suspended, hip-and-gable, and hipped roofs alike. The mythical creatures ridden by deities are winged beasts. The number of walking beasts behind the deities depends on the architectural grade and size, typically placed every two feet in height per column, with an odd total count. Pavilion roofs and hip-and-gable roofs typically use a minimum of five and a maximum of nine, except for the highest-ranked Taihe Hall in the Qing Dynasty, which has ten. The sequence of walking beasts under the eaves is as follows: long², feng⁴, shi¹, tian¹ ma³, hai³ ma³, suan¹ ni² (pi¹ tou²), ya¹ yu², xie⁴ zhi⁴, dou³ niu², xing² shen² (si⁴ hou²).

The application of tiles contributes to the roof ridge's decorative nature. The emergence and widespread application of tiles have played an important role in promoting the development of traditional Chinese architectural construction techniques. From a practical perspective, the use of tiles can better drain rainwater and protect buildings compared to mud, ash, and thatch. Simultaneously, they also have better sealing and insulation properties. Starting with aesthetic needs, the form and decoration of architecture are more precise and easier to grasp. In the development process of later architecture, tiles also have a strong historical and cultural color, with a hierarchical nature, and different methods, materials, and colors belong to specific social classes.

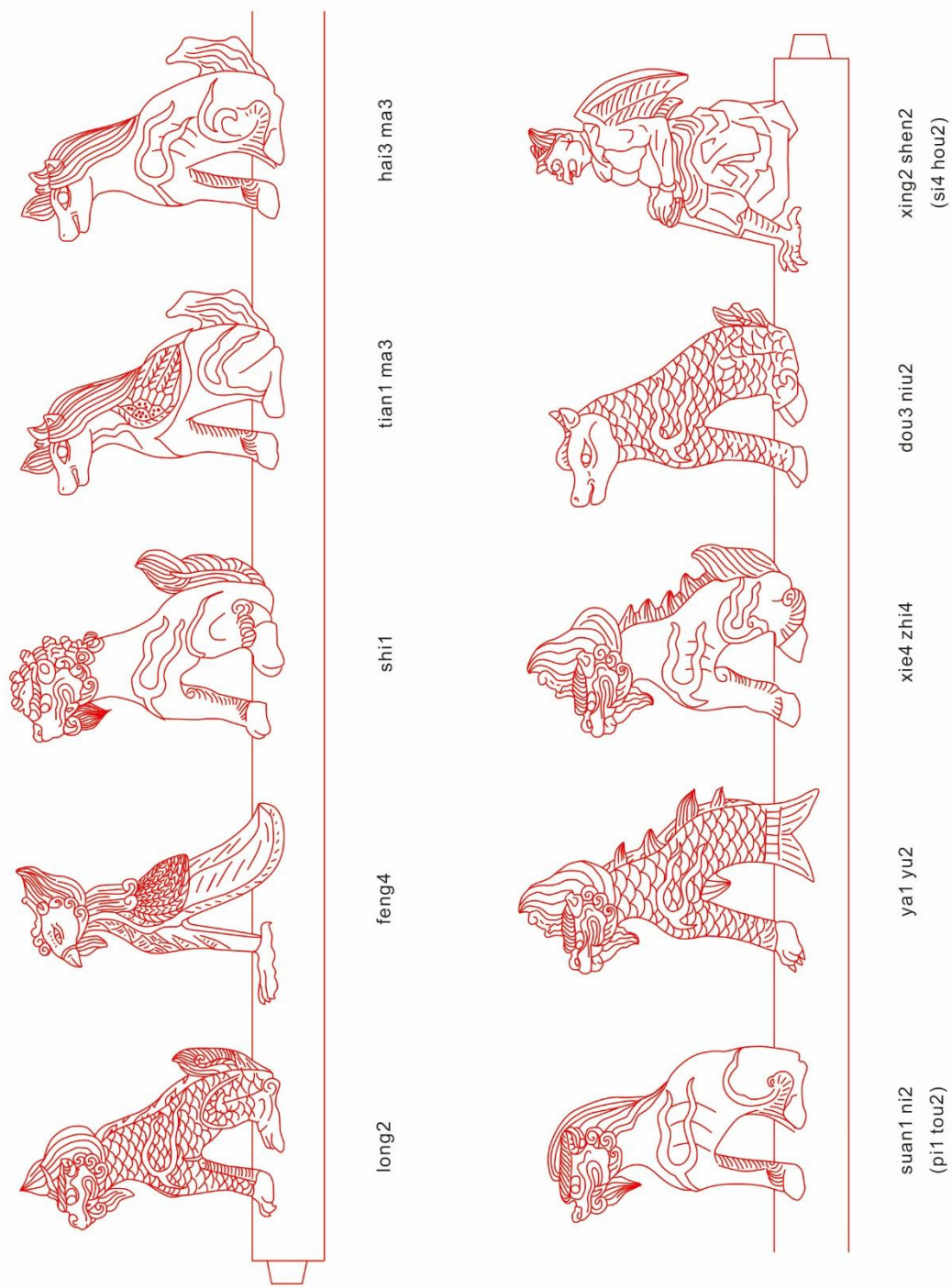


Figure 84 Ridgepole

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

Tile

Tile first appeared in the early Western Zhou Dynasty, replacing mud and ash, and thatch became the main material for covering roofs. During that period, pottery primarily produced slab tiles, tube tiles, roof tiles, and ridge tiles. Board tiles are laid upside down on the roof, while tube tiles cover between two rows of board tiles. The tile should be the head of the tube slab in front of the eaves. Residential buildings typically use blue-gray tiles, with a small percentage of cylindrical tiles, but they cannot use glazed tiles. Board tiles and tube tiles are not only building materials used to cover roofs but also important decorative materials in residential buildings.

During the Spring and Autumn period, it was not common for residential roofs to be covered with tiles. However, during the Warring States period, residential roofs were mostly covered with tiles. During the Qin and Han dynasties, there was the saying, 'Qin bricks and Han tiles.' During the Tang and Song dynasties, tiles of varying scales and forms covered most residential buildings in cities. Since the Song Dynasty, colored glazed tiles have been widely used. Glazed tiles, fired based on gray tiles, offer good waterproof and architectural decorative effects. By the Ming and Qing dynasties, various types of blue brick and tile houses had become popular. And the specifications and varieties of tiles and tile decorations in the Ming Dynasty began to standardize. The tiles primarily feature animals on both the main spine and the vertical spine. These tiles are only used in palaces, temples, and other buildings, and they alone show the buildings' reputation.

With the development of the social economy, tile has gone through a process of rough to exquisite production and simple to complex craftsmanship. Among them, the artistic value of tiles lies in the rich and diverse themes of tile patterns, each reflecting the unique characteristics of its historical period. We can divide decorative patterns into three categories: textual tile patterns, patterned tile patterns, and pictorial tile patterns. Qin mainly used patterned tiles, with a wide range of decorative materials, including mountains, birds, etc. Animal shapes are free and unrestrained, cleverly conceived, concise, and vivid with profound meanings. In the Han Dynasty, the main

focus was on writing tiles, with those with characters being considered precious and those without characters not being valued by people. According to the content of the text, it can be divided into several categories such as palace gardens, official offices, ancestral tombs, residential buildings, auspicious language, and chronicles. The word count ranges from 1 to 12 characters, with four being the most common. Later on, with the introduction of Buddhist culture, the lotus-patterned pottery commonly seen in later generations appeared during the Southern and Northern Dynasties period. Afterwards, the patterns of the Wa Dang were basically fixed as lotus patterns, tree crown patterns, animal patterns, dragon patterns, and other patterns, which continued from the Tang and Song dynasties to the Ming and Qing dynasties.

The development process of tiles clearly shows a gradual increase in their decorative value. People's recognition of the decorative components of buildings is a gradual process. Improving the building itself enhances its decorative value and gives both the building and its decorations beautiful meanings.

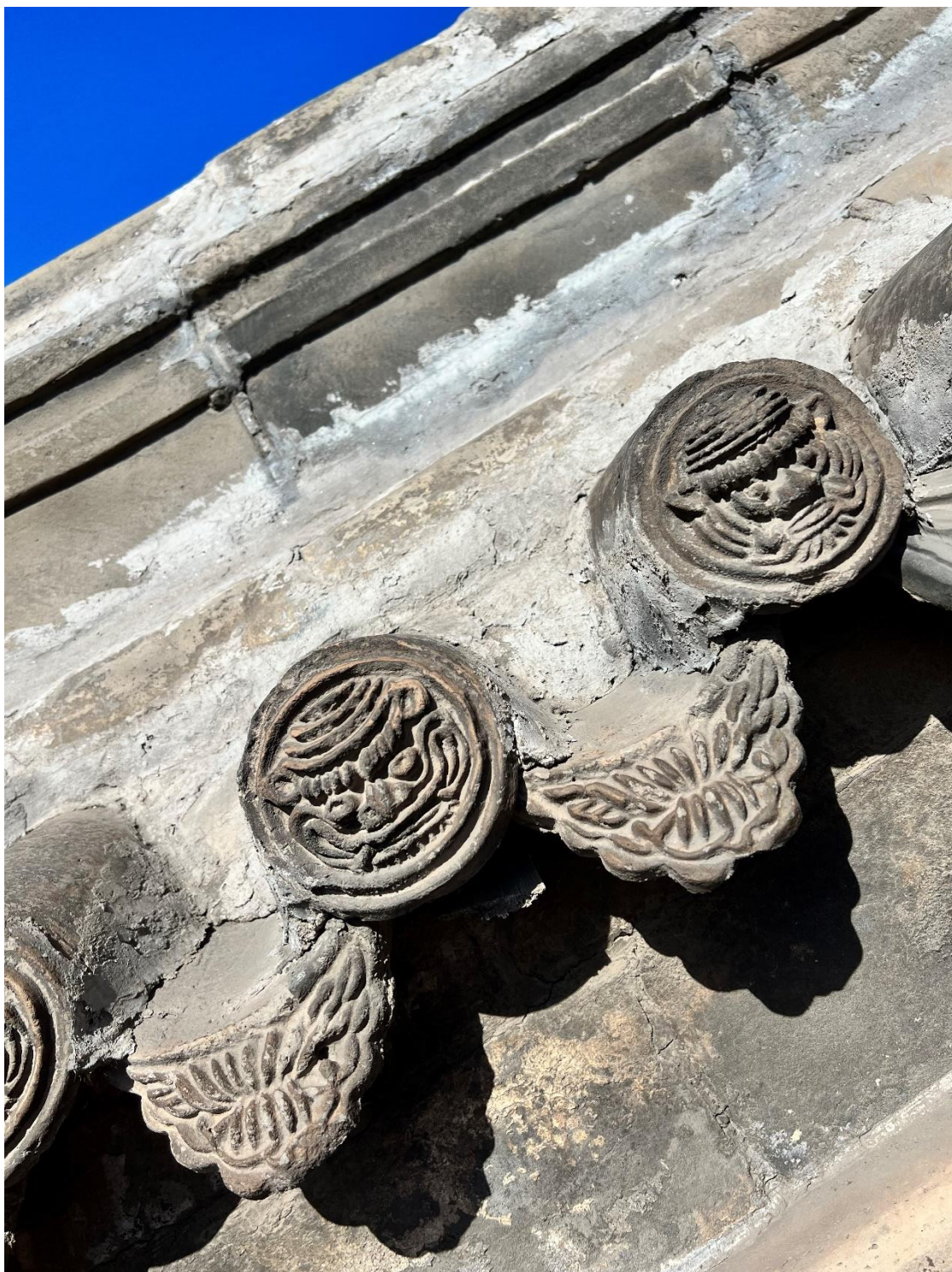


Figure 85 Tile (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 86 Tile (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 87 Tile (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Que Ti

The installation of Que Ti, a component that supports beams and beams, occurs at the junction of beams and columns. Que Ti extends from the column to support the beam's two ends, reducing the beam's span and the force at the beam-column junction and preventing the column and crossbeam vertical intersection from tilting and deforming. In early architecture, the shape of Que Ti was a substitute for wood, spanning the groove of the column head and supporting the left and right beams from both ends. As Que Ti was located at the intersection of beams and columns, it was called "corner substitute" in the Song Dynasty and "Que Ti" in the Qing Dynasty, also known as "inserting corners" or "supporting wood."

The standard of Que Ti matured relatively late. The Northern Wei Dynasty gave rise to its embryonic form, but the Ming Dynasty saw its widespread use. In both the "Ying Zao Fa Shi" and the "Engineering Practice," there are provisions for the Que Ti method, but the architectural functions undertaken by Que Ti in the Song and Qing dynasties were not the same. During the Song Dynasty, Que Ti was used as an important structural component to support beams and beams, similar to the early role of "replacing wood." In the Qing Dynasty, the original long strips were replaced with two "short" ones, which were connected to the columns with mortise and tenon joints. The change represented the loss of the original structural function of reducing beam span, but the decorative value was enhanced. Due to the shape of Que Ti, which resembles wings attached to both sides of the column head, its contour curves and carved shapes are highly decorative and have been continuously developed in composition. The decorative effect of Que Ti carving has become increasingly prominent, with carving methods including round carving, relief carving, and openwork carving. During the Qing Dynasty, Que Ti had become a uniquely styled architectural component.

Similar to the arch of wooden architecture and the plinth, the Que Ti also gradually evolved from the original mechanical component to a combination of mechanics and decoration and finally became a purely decorative component in the Qing Dynasty. Its vivid form changes with the columns and grids, with the contours

transforming from straight lines to soft curves and from squares to more diverse and free shapes of flowers, birds, animals, and plants. Que Ti's location has also solved the problem of column head decoration. Future generations of architecture prefer to use Que Ti as column head decorations to highlight the magnificence of the building.





Figure 88 Que Ti (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 89 Que Ti (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 90 Que Ti (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 91 Que Ti (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 92 Que Ti (5)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 93 Que Ti (6)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Drumstone

The drumstone is a stone component shaped like a drum, located at the gate, archway, or railing. Among them, the drumstone of the house gate is a kind of door pillow. In terms of mechanics, the drumstone needs to bear and balance the weight of the door to strengthen the door frame and prevent the door panel from shaking due to external forces. (Wu, W, 2006) The round stone drum of the door pillow stands upright on the pillow and is supported by a layer of flowers and leaves underneath, so it is also called a "drum-holding stone."

According to legend, the Yao and Shun periods in ancient China marked the emergence of democracy in Chinese politics, with the saying "Yao set up a drum for admonition, and Shun set up a wooden signboard." The drum set up at the gate of the imperial court was called a drum for admonition, and the people could beat it here to seek advice. Therefore, setting up a drum in front of the gate had the symbolic meaning of welcoming visitors. Later generations set up round drums outside the gate as decorations and also gave them the connotation of hospitality. Stone drums can be large or small, thick or thin, depending on the size of the gate and the financial resources of the owner of the building.

The drumstone comes in two shapes: "round" and "square." The square one is called "dun," and the ancient Chinese called the round one "drum." The round drumstone is designed for the gate of the military officer's house, while the square box-shaped pier is for the gate of the civil official's house. In the past, people had to carry books and the four treasures of the study to Beijing for the imperial examination. These things had to be placed in layers in the book box. To ensure that the things in the book box were not bumped and convenient to carry when traveling, the book box was made relatively high. After passing the exam, the meritorious book box was placed outside the door as a permanent decoration to glorify the door lintel. This is how the box pier came into being. This statement cannot be verified, but it is enough to reflect people's consideration of the details of architectural decoration, and it can always give a beautiful interpretation to the details of architectural design.

Like the Que Ti, the decorative function of the drumstone is to "cover" the linear nodes of two intersecting components, and it is given decorative properties. The decorative patterns of the drumstone are rich and varied. From the perspective of subject matter, they can be divided into auspicious beasts and clouds, flowers, birds, insects, fish, and utensils. We can divide the carved parts into two categories: the drum seat and the drum surface. There are many reliefs on the drum seat, with patterns such as Ruyi patterns, scroll patterns, and auspicious cloud patterns, expressing the meaning of happiness, longevity, and auspiciousness. The patterns decorated on the drum surface include both shallow relief patterns and high relief images of dragons and lions, which are symbols of the majesty of the wealthy clans in the old days.





Figure 94 Drumstone (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 95 Drumstone (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 96 Drumstone (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Chi Wei (Chi Wen)

Chi Wei is a decorative component found at both ends of the main ridge in traditional Chinese classical architecture. Its origin and evolution remain a matter of debate. (Feng,S.Y, 2011) Archaeological findings from the Han Dynasty and stone carvings depict that during this period, the ridge of the roof was straight, with slight elevations at the ends. (Pan,G.X, 2009) The Han Dynasty often adorned the main ridges of the most important buildings with phoenixes. After the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the "Chi Wei" ridge decoration gradually became mainstream, and the decoration of phoenixes eventually disappeared. Li Daoyuan recorded in "Shui Jing Zhu: Hot Springs" that "new houses were built and all were equipped with Chi Wei." The word 'Chi Wei' originally referred to a species of hawk eagle, but in this context, it likely symbolizes or represents elements of early phoenix worship imagery.

In the early days, the form and decoration of Chi Wei were relatively simple, with the image of Chi Wei consisting only of a fin-shaped decoration on the outer side with a tail tip extending inward. After the mid-Tang Dynasty, the form of Chi Wei evolved into a beast head shape, with its mouth able to "bite" the end of the ridge and its tail curved upwards; hence, it is also known as a "poison kiss." The Song Dynasty's "Ying Zao Fa Shi" contains different forms of Chi Wei, dragon tail, beast head, etc. During the Yuan Dynasty, Chi Wei gradually curled outward. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the tail of Chi Wei was almost completely turned outward, and the end was changed from forked to curled, complicating the carving. Small dragons, with a proportion close to square, often adorned the animal's body, while a sword handle appeared on its back. In the Ming Dynasty, people believed that Chi Qian was the son of a dragon, who was born in water and flew in the sky. Placing it on the roof of a house was both a decoration and a metaphor for rain and fire prevention.

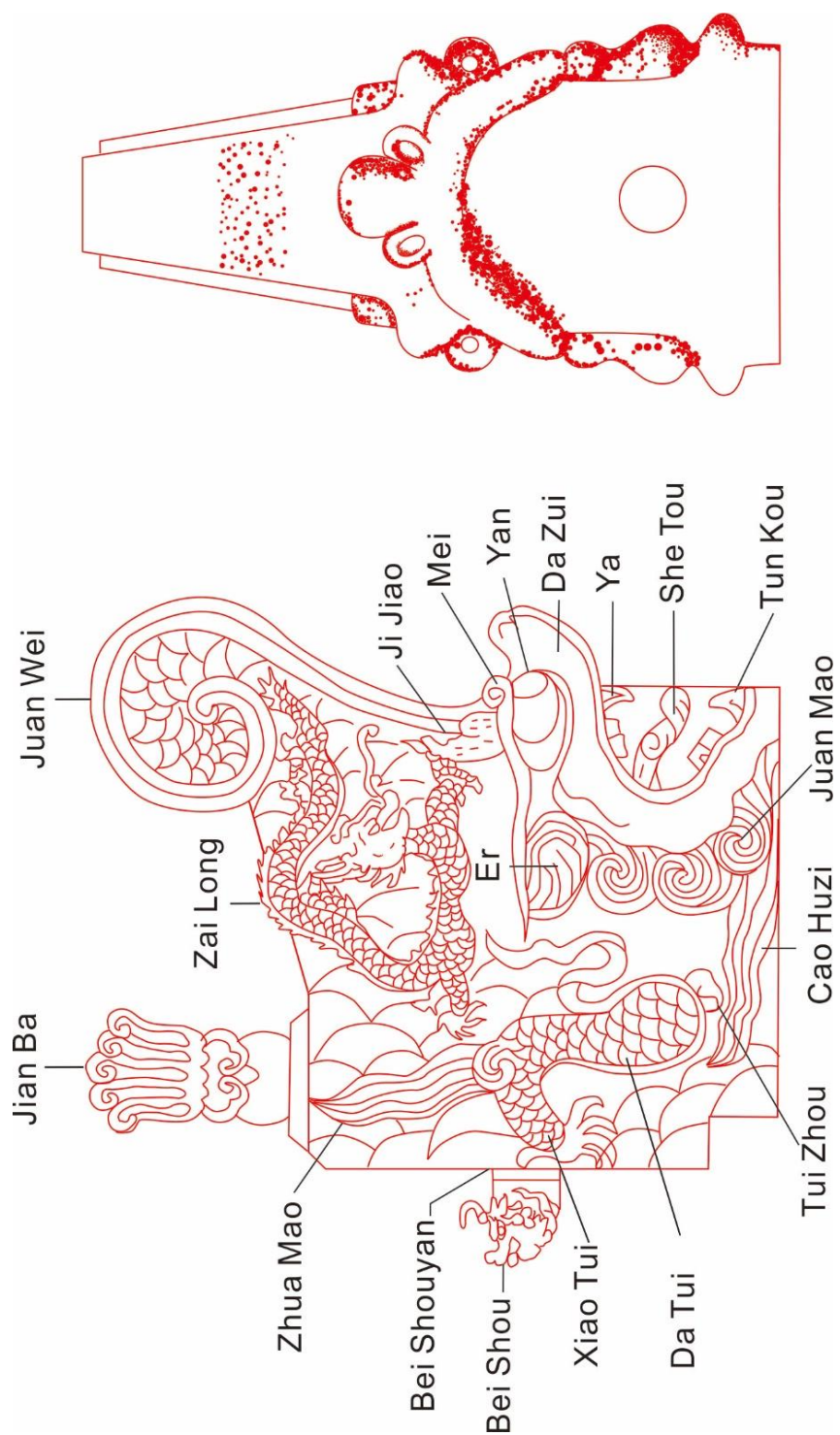


Figure 97 Diagram of Chi Wei Structure

Source: Depicted by the author in 2024

During the Song Dynasty, people increased the slope of roofs due to their need for changes in roof form. In roof forms such as eaves and gable tops, iron nails were used on the ridge angle beams to achieve the necessary inclination angle of the ridge. There is a continuous iron chain inside both the main spine and the hanging spine, with both ends fixed to large iron nails inside the Chi Wei or hanging beast. The presence of iron chains effectively strengthens the ridge shape. The reason why the "beasts" are arranged tightly is that there is no iron chain inside this section, so heavy ridge tiles need to be nailed to corner beams or large rafters with iron nails. (Hou, Y.B, 2009) The chi Wei and walking beasts play a role in protecting the iron nails from corrosion by wind and rain.

The ancients have always attached immense importance to the image and use of the official kiss. The Qing Dynasty's "Regulations on the Imperial Household" recorded the ceremony of welcoming kisses: "One official is sent to offer kisses at the Liu Li Cave, and four officials are sent to offer sacrifices at the Zheng Yang Gate, Daqing Gate, Wu Men Gate, and Taihe Gate. Officials of the fourth rank or above, military officials of the third rank or above, and the Science and Road Palace are arranged to welcome kisses. Various temples and other workers welcome kisses." Therefore, the official kiss is of great significance not only in terms of appearance but also in expressing the spirit of architecture. Secondly, in Volume 13 of the Song Dynasty's "Ying Zao Fa Shi" the "Chi Wei System" includes "Using the Chi Wei system, the palace building has eight rafters and nine or more rooms, with those with auxiliary steps below being nine feet to one zhang high (those without auxiliary steps are eight feet high), five to seven rooms (excluding the number of rafters), seven feet to seven feet five inches high, and three rooms being five feet to five feet five inches high. (Liang, S.C, 2015) The building grade, rather than practicality, determines its size. The height of Chi Wei in Qing Dynasty architecture was determined by $\frac{1}{4}$ of the column height, which also indicates the emphasis placed by Qing Dynasty craftsmen on its decorative value.



Figure 98 Chiwei (Chiwen) (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 99 Chiwei (Chiwen) (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

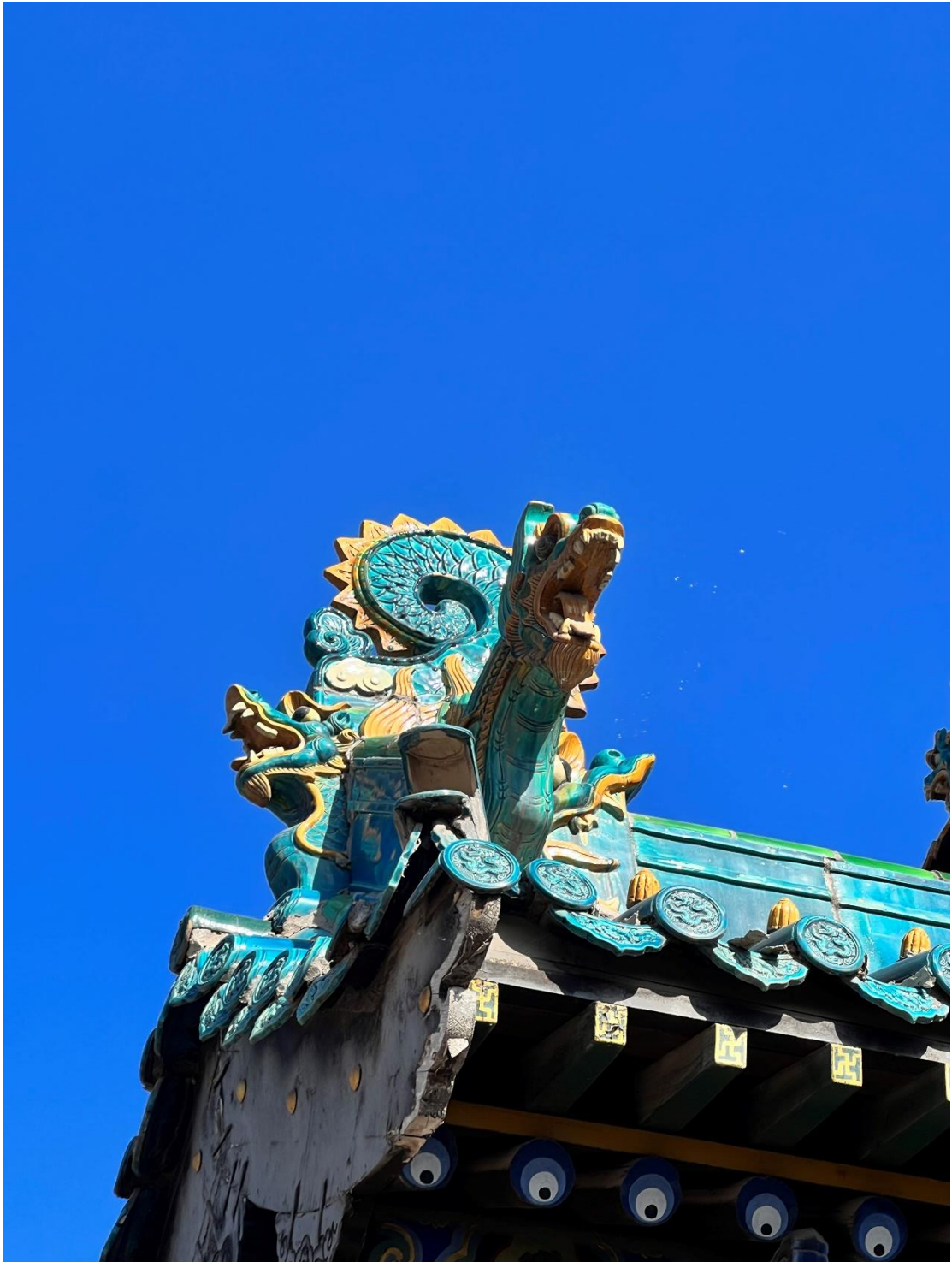


Figure 100 Chiwei (Chiwen) (3)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 101 Chiwei (Chiwen) (4)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Xuan Yu

Xuan Yu is also called Chui Yu and Re Cao. There is a special description in the book "Ying Zao Fa Shi": "Chui Yu is installed under the top of the wind board of the house; Re Cao is installed under the wind board, outside the water." This describes the placement of Xuan Yu within the building. From a structural perspective, Xuan Yu is a component at the central intersection of the wind board of traditional Chinese architecture. It is nailed to the central joint of the wind boards on both sides to cover the gap and strengthen the overall strength of the wind board. Re Cao is also a decoration nailed to the joint of the wind board. It is slightly smaller than Xuan Yu because the joints of the wind board are all selected where there are rafters, while Re Cao falls on the rafters. Simultaneously, it creates a decorative effect by evenly arranging Re Cao on the wind board.

Xuan Yu is applied to the central intersection of the wind panels on both sides of the building with a gable roof or a hip roof. It is perpendicular to the main ridge and is a decorative component that handles the intersection point "node." Often, it features several pairs of Re Cao on both sides, creating a distinct "Xuan Yu and Re Cao" style. The popularity of gable roofs and hip roofs correlates with the emergence of Xuan Yu. Mr. Xiao Mo believes that gable roofs have appeared on the roofs seen in Han Dynasty funerary objects, stone reliefs, and brick reliefs; the appearance of hip roofs may have begun in the Western Wei Dynasty and become widely popular in China in the late Northern Dynasties.(Xiao,M, 2019), so Xuan Yu should have been widely used in Chinese classical architecture during the Sui and Tang Dynasties.(Wang,H.X & Tian,X.D, 2013) There are significant regional differences in traditional Chinese architecture, with distinct local characteristics. Local characteristics affect building materials, and even the same material has different methods. Therefore, Xuan Yu's development has already gone beyond the image of a hanging fish and created many new styles. Xuan Yu has many patterns and shapes in different regions and eras, some of which are small fish, some are double fish, ancient coins, cloud grass, patterns, etc. As Mr. Ito Tadatai said,

"The Xuan Yu of China is almost amorphous, with almost every building having its own style, and its types are unknown in the thousands.(Yi,D.Z.T, 2014)."

Xuan Yu's development has gone through a process from functional components to decorative symbols. During the Tang and Song dynasties, Xuan Yu had the function of fixing wind deflectors, as well as protecting purlins and blocking dwarf columns; during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the architecture was simplified compared to the past, with two mountain faces pushed outward and an increased area. Grass frame columns were added to stabilize it, and mountain flower boards were added to achieve aesthetic effects. At this time, there was no longer a place to place Xuan Yu, nor was there a need to install him. However, the characteristics of this component were still preserved, and it was displayed as a decorative symbol on the mountain flower board.(Zhang,Z.Y & Wang,J.B, 1981)

The Xuan Yu in Pingyao Ancient City have various forms and materials, which have long lost the functional attributes of architectural components and are more of an expression and application of architectural decoration.



Figure 102 Xuan Yu (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

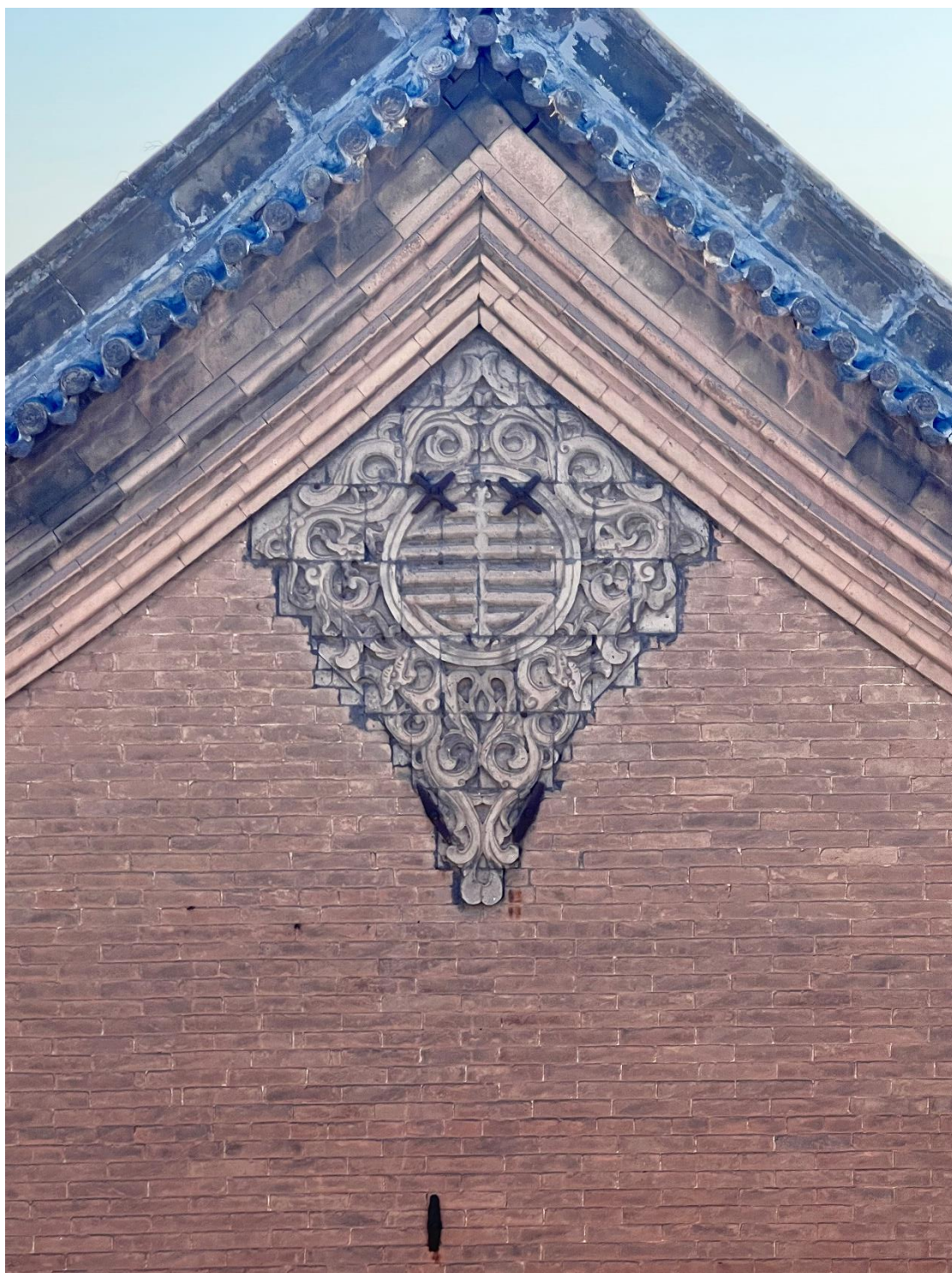


Figure 103 Xuan Yu (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

Feng Shui Tower (Fengshui Wall)

In the central part of the main roof of the cave dwellings in Pingyao Ancient City, there is a small temple-style attic, and there are also square lattice walls built on the daughter wall of the back wall, which are more than one person high, with one independent or three separate ones. There is also a small house-like Buddhist niche installed in the center of the roof ridge of a wooden brick and tile house with raised beams. These are unique feng shui walls and buildings found in residential structures in the Jinzhong area. Both feng shui buildings and feng shui walls play a role in raising the height of buildings, compensating for the lack of feng shui caused by the influence of terrain, orientation, location, and neighbors during the construction of residential buildings. In two adjacent families, if the one living in the east builds a feng shui building, the one living in the west can only build a smaller feng shui building or wall. The residents of Pingyao Ancient City use this specific architectural language to pray for the prosperity, peace, and happiness of their family, conveying their spiritual aspirations and local customs.

Pingyao's traditional architectural decoration incorporates various carving techniques, including flat carving, openwork carving, round carving, semi-round carving, high relief, and shallow relief. The architecture reflects the cultural heritage of Shanxi merchants, their respect for Confucianism and commerce, and their emphasis on business, self-improvement, dedication, and integrity.



Figure 104 Feng Shui Tower (Feng Shui Wall) (1)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024



Figure 105 Feng Shui Tower (Feng Shui Wall) (2)

Source: Photographed by the author in the ancient city of Pingyao in 2024

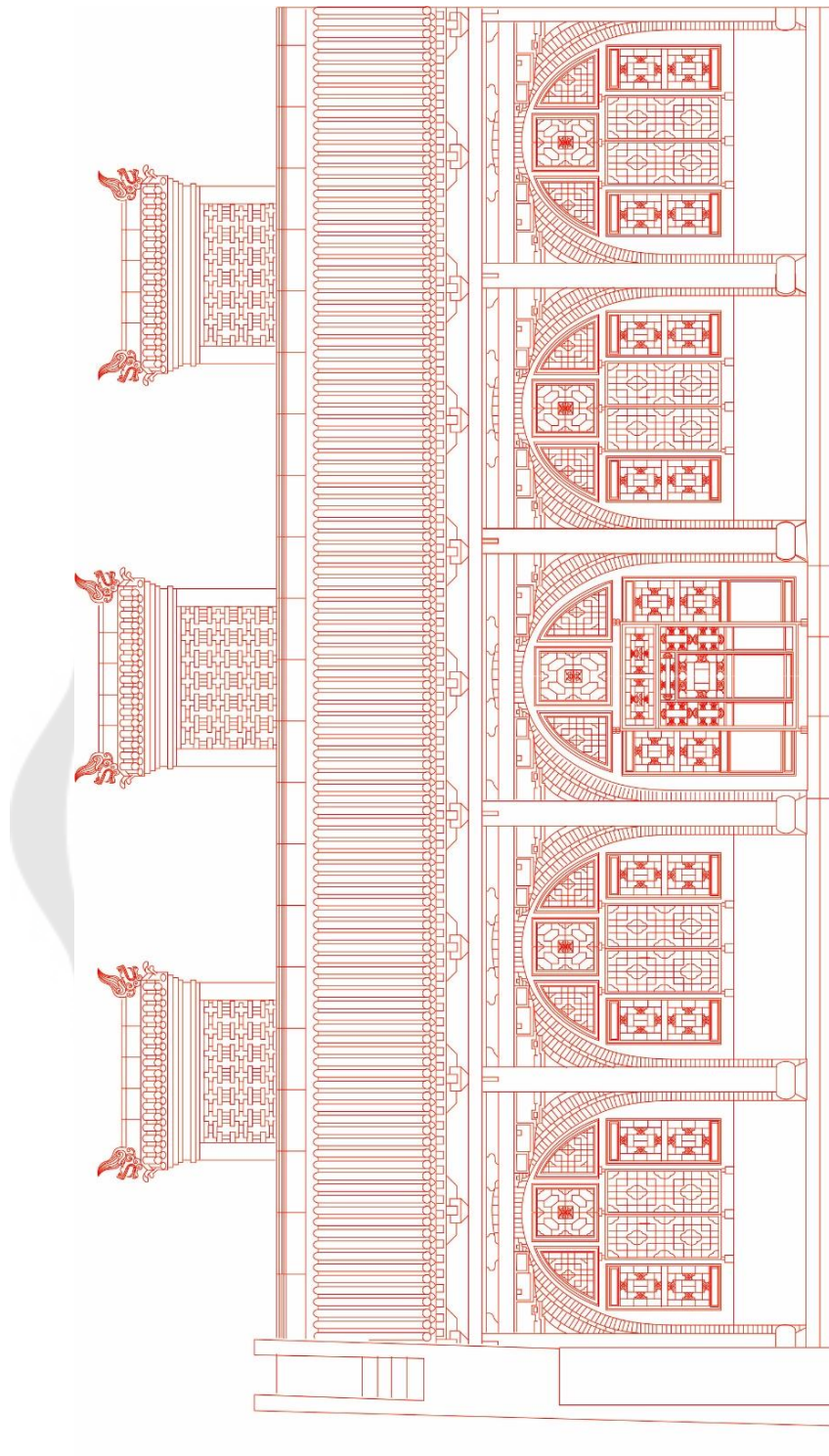


Figure 106 Feng Shui Tower (Feng Shui Wall) (3)

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

In architectural decoration, there is a saying that 'architecture must have pattern decoration, patterns must have meaning, and the meaning must be auspicious.' The selection of architectural decorations revolves around three aspects: first, the traditional Confucian ideas and ethical concepts of loyalty, filial piety, propriety, righteousness, trustworthiness, brotherly love, and integrity; second, the promotion of the moral spirit and integrity of Guan Gong's loyalty, righteousness, courage, and benevolence; and third, the expression of the desire for the five virtues to be complete, clear, high, and elegant, and to pray for good fortune, longevity, and longevity. There are fairy stories based on dramatic characters such as the Peach Garden Oath, the Three Heroes' Battle against Lu Bu, the Thousand Mile Riding Alone, the Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea, the Harmony of the Two Immortals, and the Peach Blossom Festival. There are also stories based on auspicious birds and beasts, fairy flowers, and grasses, such as the San Yang (Sheep) Kai Tai, the Si Ji (Lion) Ru Yi, the Wu Fu (Bat) Lin Men, the Liu He (Deer and Crane) Tong Chun, the Qi Lin Song Zi, Xi Que Deng Zhi, the Plum Pine and Bamboo "Three Friends in Cold Years," the Plum Orchid, Bamboo, and Chrysanthemum "Four Gentlemen," the Lian (Lotus) Sheng Gui Zi (seeds), and the Lion Rolling Embroidered Balls. There are also auspicious symbols mainly composed of vases, the Four Treasures of the Study, music, chess, calligraphy and painting, cloud patterns, turtle back patterns, and ten thousand character patterns. A book culture with themes such as fortune, wealth, longevity, and happiness. These three-dimensional carved decorative images are full and compact, showing the essence of spring and autumn, greatly expanding the meaning of Pingyao ancient city architecture. The architecture has become more artistic, culturally valuable, and aesthetically significant.

These architectural decorative arts reflect the regional culture of Pingyao. Despite their widespread use in architecture, they maintain their integrity. The details of the building's exterior and interior doors and windows primarily embellish them. The composition is simple, the carving is concise, and the style is solemn and simple, reflecting the pragmatic character of Jin merchants.

The eight architectural heritages in Pingyao Ancient City were looked at in terms of their history, culture, function, form, layout, and the social setting in which they are located. Also, architectural decoration elements like the arch of wooden architecture, Owl Kiss, Fengshui Wall, and more were looked at. This completed the material level analysis and research on the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City. Through active display and cultural dissemination, we repair and preserve the material dimension of architectural heritage in accordance with relevant heritage protection regulations. Transmitting the connotation of traditional Chinese architectural culture to future generations reflects the role of traditional Chinese architecture and its impact on people's daily lives. The importance of protecting the architectural heritage and cultural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City was further emphasized. The research hypothesis (H1), which asserts that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City demonstrates material attributes of architectural heritage culture in the material dimension, was verified.

4.2 Analysis of the Social Dimension of Architectural Culture

Architecture is a product of the development of social forms, which should reflect the styles and aesthetics of architecture in different periods. Reflects the economy, culture, politics, and people's living habits of a specific historical period. This study analyzed the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City from a social perspective using in-depth interviews. The interviewees included staff members from the Pingyao Ancient City management and organization department, tour guides in the scenic area, merchants and residents in the ancient city, as well as tourists. Elaborate on the social functions of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural culture from different levels and perspectives. Further verify the hypothesis that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City exhibits functional attributes of architectural heritage culture in the social dimension (H2).

Table 1 Interview questions one

Question 1: Based on your understanding of Pingyao Ancient City, which attractions do you recommend?		
Government Department Staff	1	The City Tower, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Confucius Temple, Pingyao County Government Office, and City God Temple.
	2	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, City Tower, Confucius Temple, Temple of Martial Ancestors, City God Temple.
	3	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Pingyao County Office, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Residence of Lei Lutai, City Tower.
	4	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Residence of Lei Lutai, Confucian Temple, Temple of Military Marquise, Qingxu Taoist Temple.
	5	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Market Tower, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Weitaihou Exchange Shop, China Armed Escort Agency.
Tour Guide	1	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Weitaihou Exchange Shop, Lei Lutai Residence, and Xietongqing Exchange Shop.
	2	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Market Tower, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Weitaihou Exchange Shop, and Xietongqing Exchange Shop.
	3	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Market Tower, Ming and Qing Dynasty Street, Pingyao County Office, City God Temple, Confucian Temple.
Merchants and Residents	1	Pingyao County Office, Market Tower, Confucian Temple, Martial Temple, City God Temple, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Residence of Lei Lutai.
	2	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, Pingyao County Office, City God Temple, Confucian Temple, China Escort Agency, Rishengchang Exchange Shop.
	3	Pingyao County Office, City God Temple, Confucian Temple, China Escort Agency, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Lei Lutai Former Residence.
	4	Pingyao Ancient City Wall, City Tower, City God Temple, Pingyao County Office, Confucian Temple, Martial Temple, Qingxu Temple.
	5	City Tower, Pingyao County Office, Confucian Temple, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Ming and Qing Dynasties Street, and Xieheqing Exchange Shop.
Tourist	1	Pingyao County Office, City God Temple, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, China Escort Agency, and the Former Residence of Lei Lutai.
	2	City God Temple, City Tower, Confucius Temple, Qingxu Taoist Temple, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Former Residence of Lei Lutai, and Joint Celebration Exchange Shop.
	3	The Ancient City Wall of Pingyao, City Tower, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Ming and Qing Dynasties Street, and China Escort Agency.
	4	The Ancient City Wall of Pingyao, City Tower, Pingyao County Office, China Escort Agency, Rishengchang Exchange Shop, Weitaihou Exchange Shop.
	5	The ancient city wall of Pingyao, Pingyao County Office, Rishengchang Exchange Shop,

		Confucian Temple, City God Temple, Ming and Qing Dynasties Street.
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Summary:

Pingyao Ancient City boasts rich tourism resources, with tourist attractions relatively concentrated. The development of tourism projects is mature and targeted, effectively meeting the needs of tourists visiting Pingyao Ancient City, enhancing their understanding of the city, and leaving a lasting impression on them. Moreover, most of the attractions mentioned during the interviews are national-level cultural heritage sites, mostly presented in the form of architectural heritage. It can be seen that the protection and development of architectural heritage are typical in Pingyao Ancient City.

Table 2 Interview questions two

Question 2: What aspects of the architectural heritage in Pingyao Ancient City are most attractive to you (most recommendable)?		
Government Department Staff	1	The bracket structure, eaves, ridge beams, Chui Hua gate, decorative patterns on the screen walls.
	2	Eaves, couplets on door frames, ridge beams, chiwen, sparrow substitutes, courtyard layout planning.
	3	Courtyard layout planning, ridge beams, chiwei, Fengshui towers, drum-shaped stones.
	4	Architectural bracket sets, Fengshui towers, decorative patterns on the screen walls, carved decorative elements, courtyard layout planning.
	5	Bracket sets, courtyard layout planning, drooping Chui Hua gates, Fengshui towers.
Tour Guide	1	Courtyard layout planning, drooping Chui Hua gates, couplets on door frames, drum stone.
	2	Bracket structure, chiwei, ridge, hanging fish, courtyard layout, feng shui tower.
	3	Courtyard layout planning, ridge, sparrow substitute, embracing drumstone, decorative patterns on the shadow wall.
Merchants and Residents	1	Dougong structure, ridge, roof, chiwei, embracing drumstone, sparrow substitute.
	2	Ridge, roof, courtyard layout planning, couplet, sparrow substitute.
	3	Bracket structure, eaves, roof, sparrow substitute, drooping Chui Hua gate.
	4	Fengshui tower, eaves, chiwei, embracing drum stone, embroidered tower.
	5	Courtyard layout planning, bracket structure, ridge, roof, chiwei.
Tourist	1	Bracket structure, building roof, courtyard layout planning, dougong, decorative brackets.
	2	Sparrow substitute, overall layout of the building, decorative patterns in the building, roof ridge, decorative roof ridge tiles.

	3	Corbel arch structure, roof ridge, roof, eaves tile, courtyard layout, decorative patterns in the building.
	4	Corbel arch structure, decorative patterns in the building, feng shui tower, cave dwelling.
	5	Corbel arch structure, eaves, decorative patterns in the building, cave dwelling, embroidered tower.

Summary:

In the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, corbel arch structures, roof ridges, decorative brackets, drum stones, courtyard layout planning, and decorative patterns on the screen walls stand out as the most recommended and visually appealing architectural elements. These architectural components have become symbolic of traditional Chinese architecture. Both the architectural components and decorations showcase the aesthetic design and craftsmanship of the buildings, further reflecting the application of traditional Chinese culture in architecture.

Table 3 Interview questions three

Question 3: What is the relationship between people and architecture like?		
Government Department Staff	1	1.Architecture carries a sense of history, documenting the development of society, as well as construction techniques and craftsmanship. 2.It showcases the characteristics of urban development and architectural functions of the time, elucidating people's ways of life and habits.
	2	1.Architecture provides people with a safe living space, shielding them from harsh external natural environments. 2.It offers a relatively secluded private space for human life. 3.It fosters stronger familial bonds for families linked by blood relationships.
	3	1.Architecture provides a safe space for human production and living. 2.The variety of architectural types meets people's diverse functional needs for space. 3.It embodies the designer's concept of construction and architectural wisdom.
	4	1.Architecture is an indispensable and essential component of urban development and formation. 2.The form of architecture reflects the aesthetic preferences of people in different eras. 3.While meeting people's needs for interior space utilization, architecture also further delineates the functional areas of the city.
	5	1.The development of architecture reflects human intelligence and aesthetic perception, as well as changes in architectural craftsmanship and technology across different eras.

		<p>2. People's diverse spatial requirements also demonstrate the differentiation of functions in various types of architecture.</p> <p>3. It embodies human design concepts and architectural ideas.</p>
Tour Guide	1	<p>1. Architecture provides people with safe spaces for living and working.</p> <p>2. Architecture can sustain family relationships, such as when multiple generations live together in one household.</p> <p>3. Different architectural spaces have specific functional divisions that regulate people's behavior.</p>
	2	<p>1. Architecture reflects the culture created by humans, including architectural styles, decorations, and structures.</p> <p>2. Architecture also reflects people's beliefs, such as the construction of temples.</p> <p>3. Architecture regulates people's activities, indicating appropriate activities for different architectural spaces.</p>
	3	<p>1. Architecture becomes an important component of urban layout.</p> <p>2. Architecture can create spaces necessary for people's lives.</p>
Merchants and Residents	1	<p>1. Architecture provides people with spaces for production.</p> <p>2. Architecture effectively reflects people's needs for different spatial functions, both public and private.</p> <p>3. The different attributes of spaces regulate people's behavior.</p>
	2	<p>1. Architecture has transformed people's living environment, further expanding their activity space.</p> <p>2. Architecture embodies different generations' understanding of architectural aesthetics.</p> <p>3. The spatial layout and functions of architecture exert a strong influence on people's behavior.</p>
	3	<p>1. Architecture reflects the aesthetic preferences of different generations, including various architectural styles and decorations.</p> <p>2. Architecture can serve as an emotional anchor for people, providing a sense of belonging and identity to the buildings in their lives.</p>
	4	<p>1. Architecture provides living space for people.</p> <p>2. The division of architectural space regulates people's behavioral activities.</p> <p>3. Architecture effectively reflects people's design concepts and architectural ideals.</p>
	5	<p>1. Architecture provides essential living space for people.</p> <p>2. It also divides the city into functional areas for people's lives.</p>
Tourist	1	<p>1. Architecture provides both living space and spiritual space for people.</p> <p>2. Architecture reflects the political, economic, and cultural characteristics of different eras, as well as the hierarchy within society.</p> <p>3. The hierarchy within architecture also contributes to social stratification among people.</p>
	2	<p>1. Specific buildings serve specific functions, allowing people to understand their purposes through architecture.</p> <p>2. There is a relatively stable collective consciousness regarding buildings among people,</p>

		such as with religious structures. 3. There exists a harmonious symbiosis between people and architecture.
	3	1. Buildings provide spaces for human activities and record human activities, such as festival events. 2. Architecture reflects human aesthetics and cultural connotations.
	4	1. The hierarchy of individuals determines the use of architectural spaces. The use of architectural space also reflects the hierarchy of individuals. 2. The spatial layout and functions of buildings regulate and guide human behavior.
	5	1. Buildings embody people's concepts and design ideas for construction. 2. They provide essential activity spaces for people and offer material space for the generation of culture. 3. Green architecture, sustainable development concepts, and the harmonious development of people and buildings.

Summary:

The relationship between people and architecture is primarily manifested in the fact that architectural heritage serves as a carrier of historical culture. People can understand historical culture and related architectural knowledge through architecture, thereby enhancing their aesthetic perception. Secondly, architecture provides people with necessary and stable spaces for production and living, including public spaces, private spaces, and spiritual spaces, meeting people's spatial needs. Meanwhile, the spatial layout of buildings also imposes certain constraints on people's words and actions, better regulating human behavior and extending to the differentiation of architectural and human levels. As an essential material foundation in cities, architecture also contributes to the functional division of urban areas. Lastly, in the process of mutual development between people and architecture, it emphasizes the harmonious development between humans and buildings, as well as the concepts of green architecture and sustainable development.

Table 4 Interview question four

Question 4 What is the relationship between people and culture like?		
Government	1	1. Culture is an essential component of society, influencing its values and social structure. Different cultures in various regions shape distinct sets of values that further influence

Department Staff		<p>individuals, shaping their own value systems.</p> <p>2. Individuals within different cultural contexts often exhibit a strong sense of identity and pride in their culture, leading to stable belief systems.</p>
	2	<p>1. Through culture and cultural identification, individuals realize their own value systems and perpetuate these beliefs. People are both creators and inheritors of culture.</p> <p>2. In the process of inheriting and developing culture, the succession and innovation of culture reflect individuals' subjective reflections on objective facts under the influence of material and spiritual factors. Culture is a product of human subjective creation.</p> <p>3. People's behavior and speech are often influenced by culture, determining how they perceive the objective material world.</p>
	3	<p>1. Individuals are the main agents of cultural inheritance and development, actively participating in the process of cultural creation.</p> <p>2. In the process of inheriting and developing culture, individuals engage in a learning process, where culture serves as a source of inspiration and educational significance for people.</p> <p>3. Culture imposes certain constraints on individuals and regulates their behavior and speech to some extent.</p>
	4	<p>1. As people create culture, they also shape themselves, resulting in an interactive and iterative process.</p> <p>2. Culture shapes people's values, thought patterns, and influences their perspectives on the world.</p>
	5	<p>1. Culture strongly shapes individuals, fostering cultural identity in the realm of the spirit and imposing significant constraints on behavior.</p> <p>2. While shaping individuals, culture also inspires people to express themselves culturally through various forms such as drama, architecture, and decoration, enriching the diversity of cultural expressions.</p>
Tour Guide	1	<p>1. Culture holds educational significance for individuals, facilitating the better transmission and development of culture.</p> <p>2. People enrich the diverse manifestations of culture, leading to a wide array of cultural expressions.</p> <p>3. While creating culture, individuals witness the birth of new cultural forms and the potential disappearance of existing ones.</p>
	2	<p>1. Culture serves as both a material and spiritual product that propels historical progress and witnesses the evolution of history. People engage in learning about culture to enhance their survival and development.</p> <p>2. Culture lays the material and spiritual foundations for human development. Inheriting and developing culture must be aligned with the progress of the times, laying the groundwork for future generations' development and seeking sustainable cultural development.</p>
	3	<p>1. Culture dictates people's daily behaviors, serving as an implicit mechanism of constraint.</p> <p>2. While innovating and developing culture, people must not deviate from it; otherwise, the</p>

		emergence of new culture will lose its original significance.
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Summary:

Culture represents the wisdom created by human society in the process of development and is an essential part of society. Different regions have their own regional cultures, which impose certain constraints on the behavior of local people and provide spiritual guidance. This further demonstrates that while creating their own culture, people have a strong sense of identity and pride in their culture. Moreover, the inheritance and development of culture rely on human development, and innovation in culture fundamentally depends on sustainable human development. Therefore, the diversity of cultural expressions and the high level of artistic synthesis contribute to the inheritance and protection of culture, ultimately serving the betterment of human development.

Table 5 Interview question five

Question 5 How do you view the architectural heritage in Pingyao Ancient City, and what cultural connotations does it reflect?

Government Department Staff	1	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City symbolizes the culture of Pingyao, with Jin merchants culture serving as a significant emblem. These architectural remnants bear witness to historical development, reflecting urban planning, architectural design, and even the planning of people's ways of life. For instance, the construction of temples and the emergence of family ancestral halls both profoundly influenced people's lives, behaviors, and ideologies, effectively shaping the trajectory of societal development.</p> <p>2.Among the architectural features of Pingyao Ancient City that best illustrate this regulation is the Jin Merchant Courtyard (Jin Merchant Residence). While adhering to the original architectural norms, the residential buildings have been creatively adapted to reflect the rich cultural heritage of the region. For example, the architectural style of the embroidered towers atop the underground dwellings not only pays homage to traditional culture but also showcases the Jin merchants' innovative spirit in architectural design.</p>
	2	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City constitutes its invaluable material cultural legacy, laying the foundation for the city's current historical and cultural significance. It serves as a concentrated display of architectural cultural artistry throughout various historical periods in Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.The architecture in Pingyao Ancient City encompasses the architectural styles of various</p>

	<p>dynasties in China, showcasing the remarkable architectural structures, craftsmanship, and decorative arts of ancient Chinese craftsmen. This contributes to the distinctive cultural identity of traditional Chinese architecture.</p> <p>3. Within Pingyao Ancient City, temples of varying sizes are scattered, representing diverse religious beliefs. However, these buildings all embody the architectural artistic expressions of traditional Chinese architecture in the realm of religion.</p>
3	<p>1. The architecture of the ancient city reflects traditional Chinese architectural culture, such as feng shui principles and religious beliefs. Simultaneously, it also embodies local cultural characteristics, such as Jin merchant culture, clan relations, and kinship ties, which are integral to social development. These cultural aspects are well manifested in the architectural planning and form of the ancient city.</p> <p>2. Culture is the inheritance of history, so we strive to preserve the most primitive state of the ancient city and maintain the living conditions of its residents. At the same time, culture is also dynamic and evolving, requiring the participation of local residents to create contemporary cultural attributes. Additionally, it can actively guide cultural trends and cultivate a cultural environment in the ancient city that meets the requirements of modern development.</p>
4	<p>1. The architecture in Pingyao Ancient City symbolizes Pingyao culture and serves as its cultural carrier. Firstly, it showcases the ancient people's architectural craftsmanship, and secondly, it reflects their aesthetic values. From today's perspective, it represents the perfect fusion of art and culture.</p> <p>2. The architecture in Pingyao Ancient City can be divided into two aspects: public buildings with spiritual and cultural connotations, and private buildings with clan rituals and systems. Both aspects demonstrate the organization and regulation of people by architecture, embodying a strict hierarchical system.</p> <p>3. Even today, there are still many residents living in Pingyao Ancient City, which distinguishes it from other ancient cities. Culture creation cannot be separated from people, just as the Jin merchants of the Ming and Qing dynasties created the prosperous Jin merchant guilds, laying the foundation for Jin merchant culture. Therefore, the residents of Pingyao Ancient City are witnesses of historical culture and creators of contemporary culture. The contribution of the people of Pingyao to culture is invaluable.</p>
5	<p>1. From the overall architectural layout of Pingyao Ancient City, it can be seen that it regulated the daily lives and lifestyles of the city's residents, determining where to shop, eat, and work. Urban planning, fundamentally, is planning for people.</p> <p>2. The overall planning of Pingyao Ancient City, visually resembling a crawling turtle, is referred to as the "Turtle City," while from the perspective of the enemy towers on the city walls, it is known as the "Confucian City." These are all ideals and expectations bestowed upon Pingyao Ancient City by later generations. However, the most important aspect lies in the layout of the city's construction by ancient people, which demonstrated their adaptation to local conditions and understanding of traditional Feng Shui. It is the most direct embodiment of architectural culture.</p>

		3.The county government office, the Confucian Temple, and the Martial Temple essentially exerted significant influence over the ideological consciousness of the ancient city residents, regulating their behavior and beliefs. To a certain extent, they effectively organized the local residents' production and life.
Tour Guide	1	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is an essential component of its cultural identity. In other words, the buildings of Pingyao City narrate its history, and without these architectural relics, there would be no Pingyao Ancient City culture.</p> <p>2.The most prominent cultural aspect reflected in the architecture of Pingyao Ancient City is the Jin Merchants culture, which is unique to Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>3.The cultural aspects reflected in the architectural heritage are diverse, including religious culture, hierarchical systems, Feng Shui principles, and mythological legends.</p>
	2	<p>1.Jin Merchants culture serves as the hallmark of Pingyao Ancient City. The ruins of Rishengchang Exchange Shop and Xietongqing Exchange Shop preserve the scale and structure of the original exchange shops, reflecting the Jin Merchants' principles in managing exchange businesses through architectural layout and spatial division.</p> <p>2.Within the compounds of Jin Merchants' courtyards, although the residence of Lei Lütai represents the opulence of wealthy merchants, it was constructed in accordance with the feudal regulations governing civilian residences at that time, adhering strictly to prescribed norms.</p> <p>3.The Fox Deity enshrined in the Daxian Hall of Pingyao County Office symbolizes feudal culture, yet it has been preserved to this day, serving as a testament to historical traditions.</p>
	3	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City not only embodies the culture of the city but also reflects historical social forms, societal values, and social structures.</p> <p>2.Within Pingyao Ancient City, various temples signify the diverse beliefs held by its residents. These beliefs serve as spiritual constraints on individuals, with architecture serving as a material expression of spirituality. This reflects people's beliefs while also regulating their behavior.</p>
Merchants and Residents	1	<p>1.The architecture of the ancient city reflects the aesthetic sense of ancient craftsmen in construction. During the construction process, they partitioned the space according to its functions, emphasizing privacy and reflecting cultural ideas about gender differences.</p> <p>2.In the construction of some residential buildings, great attention was paid to orientation, with an emphasis on facing south and north. This includes the orientation of doors and the presence of screen walls within courtyards, indicating the prevalence of Feng Shui beliefs among the populace.</p>
	2	<p>1.The layout of architectural courtyards is distinctly functional, with residences clearly delineated to reflect cultural ideals of hierarchy, emphasizing orderliness among family members based on age.</p> <p>2.Both public and private spaces within the buildings utilize architectural decorations for partitioning. While maintaining their functional roles, these decorations also serve to embellish and beautify traditional culture.</p>

Tourist	3	<p>1.The buildings in the ancient city include historical remnants of architectural heritage as well as later renovated residential houses, all of which maintain the characteristic feature of Pingyao Ancient City: courtyard-style architecture. This reflects the architectural style of Han nationality residences in northern China.</p> <p>2.Within relatively enclosed spaces, architectural units are formed based on blood relations, serving as the bond that embodies a patriarchal culture within clans.</p> <p>3.The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City symbolizes its cultural essence and lays the foundation for Pingyao's cultural identity, also inheriting traditional Chinese culture, including the residents' beliefs.</p>
	4	<p>1.The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City embodies the continuity of culture, primarily manifested in the centrality of various activities within its architectural layout, such as markets, temple fairs, and religious ceremonies.</p> <p>2.The buildings in the ancient city also reflect strong characteristics of Pingyao residences, such as cave dwellings and household shrines.</p>
	5	<p>1.Residents' daily activities revolve around the architecture, such as visiting temples to burn incense and pray on the first and fifteenth days of each month, and the bustling commercial streets around the market tower effectively organize and manage residents' daily lives.</p> <p>2.In residential buildings, there are also many decorative elements, primarily themed around etiquette and filial piety, reflecting traditional Chinese ritual culture. The decorative patterns in the architecture also reflect people's aspirations for a better life.</p>
	1	<p>1.he architecture of Pingyao Ancient City serves as a carrier of historical culture. From these structures, we can witness the rise of the Jin merchants, while also observing the strict family rules and etiquette within Jin merchant families.</p> <p>2. The buildings in Pingyao Ancient City showcase the architectural characteristics and styles of different eras, allowing us to witness the evolution of architectural development over time.</p>
	2	<p>1.Pingyao Ancient City reflects early military defense strategies and the design concepts of ancient city construction.</p> <p>2.The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City embodies Jin merchant culture, showcasing the development history of Jin merchant ticket houses and the cultural values of honesty and trustworthiness upheld by Jin merchants.</p> <p>3.The residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City demonstrate the clan-based ceremonial system and a strict hierarchy.</p>
	3	<p>1.The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City possesses cultural vitality, allowing for various cultural creations centered around its ancient buildings.</p> <p>2.The buildings in Pingyao Ancient City effectively showcase the lifestyle and regional culture of the people in the Pingyao area. This includes various festive activities organized around the architecture, demonstrating the cohesive power of the buildings on the people.</p>
	4	<p>1.The buildings within the ancient city reflect the Pingyao Jin Merchant culture, while the residential houses linked by familial and clan relationships are scattered throughout Pingyao</p>

		<p>Ancient City, forming cultural tribes.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is part of Pingyao's cultural heritage, and the culture created by modern people is also a continuation and important component of the ancient city's culture. For example, the development of tourism resources in Pingyao Ancient City.</p>
	5	<p>1.The economic development of Pingyao Ancient City relies on its architectural heritage, which serves both economic and cultural purposes.</p> <p>2.The construction of buildings in Pingyao Ancient City reflects strong feudal ceremonial thoughts. It also revolves around the worship of deities, showcasing both rational and superstitious aspects, collectively forming the unique cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>3.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City demonstrates various architectural styles and aesthetic preferences from different periods. In terms of content, it reflects strict ceremonial rites and lineage systems, regulating the speech, behavior, and lifestyle of people at that time.</p>

Summary:

The architectural heritage in Pingyao Ancient City is a vital component of its culture, representing both the fundamental principles and thinking patterns of traditional Chinese architectural construction (such as feng shui, gender distinctions, and hierarchical order), which centrally showcase the craftsmanship and aesthetic expression of ancient artisans. Additionally, it embodies Shanxi Jin merchant culture, as evident in the grand courtyards of wealthy merchants, demonstrating the lineage-based kinship and patriarchal system. The spatial layout of these buildings strictly adheres to ritualistic codes, reflecting the essence of ceremonial and legalistic aspects of society.

In Pingyao Ancient City, the organization and management of various communal events primarily manifest the social functions of architecture. For instance, public buildings host significant festivals and ceremonies, such as the temple fairs and markets at the City God Temple and the Confucius Temple's ceremonies honoring Confucius. The Jinci Market Tower, a commemorative structure at the heart of the ancient city, dictates the layout of the commercial street, showcasing the organizational role of architecture. Within the private architectural heritage, the layout of courtyards strictly adheres to hierarchical systems, with clear distinctions between genders and

respect for age order, evident in both the layout and decorative elements, effectively expressing the ordered functionality of architecture. Similarly, in the overall layout of Pingyao Ancient City, with Jinci Market Tower serving as the commercial hub and Pingyao County Office as the political center, flanked by the Confucius Temple on the left and the Martial Temple on the right, all conforming to legislative principles. Therefore, the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City represents the traditional Chinese ritual system. In the process of societal development, architecture plays an effective organizational role in people's lives, production, and daily habits, facilitating orderly management of their lives.

The temple architecture in Pingyao Ancient City reflects the diverse beliefs of its people, not limited to any particular sect. People worship whichever deities they encounter, and the architectural decoration of temples adheres to high standards in terms of design and specifications. This demonstrates the reverence of the people towards the divine beings. To some extent, the architectural formality provides a spiritual unity among the people and also serves as a manifestation of the social function of architectural culture.

Table 6 Interview question six

Question 6: The value and significance of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage in modern society.

Government Department Staff	1	<p>1.To enable more people to understand China's rich architectural history and provide researchers with abundant architectural artifacts to comprehend China's architectural characteristics and culture.</p> <p>2.To drive the development of the local tourism market, enhancing the local tourism economy.</p> <p>3.The development of tourism economy further promotes the development of local culture, ensuring better preservation of local culture.</p> <p>4.Shifting from labor-intensive industries to cultural service industries, diversifying industrial development and expanding industry channels.</p>
	2	<p>1.As a symbol or representation of a locality, architecture embodies the cultural characteristics of the region. The protection of architectural heritage is thus synonymous with the preservation and continuation of local culture.</p>

	<p>2.The buildings in Pingyao Ancient City are imbued with numerous legendary folk tales, the authenticity of which is difficult to ascertain. However, they all reflect rich historical and cultural significance. Serving as the vessel for these stories, architecture allows for their oral transmission and mutual interpretation, complementing each other's significance.</p>
3	<p>1.Shanxi is a province abundant in cultural relics in China. Despite its small size, Pingyao Ancient City has preserved various architectural styles from different periods, providing valuable materials for architectural history.</p> <p>2.The most representative buildings in Pingyao Ancient City should be the residential houses. Unlike other structures, each residence has its own characteristics. The rise of the Jin merchants provided financial support for the construction of these houses. Meanwhile, without violating the ancestral laws and rituals, they drew on various strengths and innovated boldly, endowing Pingyao Ancient City's residential houses with distinctive features. Through the construction of these houses, the Jin merchants demonstrated their understanding of and adaptation to traditional culture.</p> <p>3.The inheritance of culture requires carriers. The protection and restoration of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage are manifestations of the preservation and understanding of traditional culture. Therefore, Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage serves as the best preservation of traditional culture.</p>
4	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City can attract a large number of tourists, promoting the development of the local tourism industry and providing financial support for the restoration and maintenance of the ancient city heritage. It can also be said that the development of tourism plays a positive role in the protection of cultural relics.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides venues for festive activities and folk performances, allowing more people to gather in specific places and engage in cultural activities. It can be said that architecture has a certain cultural centripetal force in contemporary society.</p> <p>3.The activities centered around architecture have strong folk cultural characteristics, such as the Confucian Temple's ceremony honoring Confucius, which further demonstrates the educational role of architecture.</p>
5	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City prominently embodies traditional Chinese ritual culture, with clear distinctions of gender hierarchy and seniority order reflected in its construction. This has significant influence on the layout of modern living environments, such as the division between public and private spaces. For example, the renovation of Rishengchang, originally a residential building, into a ticket office expanded the functional space of the architecture, providing important insights for contemporary spatial planning. Similarly, some public buildings feature segmented functional areas, serving as references for current spatial design.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides emotional artifacts for contemporary people. The presence of public commemorative buildings indicates a certain emotional connection people have with these structures, which can unify the emotions of a certain group. From another perspective, this unified group may share a common belief,</p>

		<p>which, to some extent, signifies their identification with a certain culture. For instance, Rishengchang is considered the hallmark of Pingyao Ancient City, evoking pride in Pingyao's residents and symbolizing Jin merchants' culture.</p> <p>3.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City embodies a certain aspect of Jin merchant culture, contributing to the preservation of Jin merchant culture to this day. Jin merchant culture also incorporates traditional Confucian cultural ideals, providing historical artifacts for the study of Jin merchant culture.</p>
Tour Guide	1	<p>1.It has driven the economic development of Pingyao Ancient City, creating additional employment opportunities and increasing income for local residents.</p> <p>2.Through the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, more people come to understand Jin merchant culture, thereby gaining insight into Shanxi culture and promoting greater awareness of Shanxi culture among the general population.</p>
	2	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides a reference basis for people to understand the historical culture of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City allows us to understand the living environment and lifestyle of people at that time.</p> <p>3.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides material support for the development of ancient city tourism. Meanwhile, the cultural and creative industries centered around architectural heritage are also continuously developing, providing security for cultural output.</p>
	3	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City adds a profound historical and cultural dimension to the city. While attracting tourists and increasing income, it also draws the attention of scholars to the study of traditional Chinese architecture, providing a basis for the preservation and restoration of buildings.</p> <p>2.The inheritance of Pingyao's architectural heritage encompasses not only culture but also architectural craftsmanship, serving as a valuable learning resource for contemporary emulation of ancient architecture.</p>
Merchants and Residents	1	<p>1.The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City serves as a cultural symbol and is the hallmark of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City has brought abundant tourism resources to the city, ensuring the development of local tourism culture and economy.</p> <p>3.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City embodies distinctive local characteristics, conveying culture while adding to the ethnic pride of the region.</p>
	2	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City has driven local economic and cultural development.</p> <p>2.While participating in local cultural construction, the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City also inspires the study of traditional culture.</p> <p>3.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City embodies Jin merchant culture, providing historical references for the study of Jin merchant culture and Shanxi ticket numbers.</p>

Tourist	3	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is the crystallization of the wisdom of our ancestors. Many craftsmanship techniques have been lost, making it worthwhile for us modern people to study and learn from.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City represents the continuity of culture. While vigorously developing the cultural heritage of the ancient city, we should also respect traditional culture, allowing more young people to understand and participate in cultural development. This realization carries educational significance for culture.</p>
	4	<p>1.It has historical significance, allowing more people to understand history.</p> <p>2.It evokes memories and becomes an emotional anchor and bond.</p> <p>3.It enhances the local residents' pride in their local architectural heritage.</p>
	5	<p>1.It provides venues for activities such as temple fairs and festival events.</p> <p>2.It records historical changes and fosters local residents' identification with the culture of Pingyao Ancient City.</p>
	1	<p>1.It provides tangible examples for understanding traditional Chinese architecture.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City enriches its tourism resources, attracting more visitors from outside and further boosting the local tourism economy.</p>
	2	<p>1.By understanding the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, we can further grasp traditional Chinese architecture, which helps enhance national pride.</p> <p>2.Understanding the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City also provides insights into Jin merchant culture, Shanxi piaohao (draft banks), and enhances historical awareness.</p> <p>3.Exploring the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City allows for a deeper understanding of the living conditions and lifestyle of people in ancient times.</p>
	3	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides significant cultural and historical assets for the development of local tourism culture.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City can reflect the culture and history of specific periods and regions, allowing people to experience unique cultural characteristics.</p> <p>3.It enhances people's aesthetic perception of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>4.It strengthens people's sense of identity with the cultural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, facilitating the effective dissemination of traditional culture.</p>
	4	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides rich traditional architectural knowledge and also enriches people's understanding of traditional architecture.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City interprets Chinese traditional culture from different perspectives, enriching people's understanding of Chinese traditional culture.</p>
	5	<p>1.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides different travel experiences for modern tourists, adding freshness to their journeys.</p> <p>2.The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is not only a cultural legacy but also delivers artistic impact to contemporary people, allowing them to sense the creativity of ancient artists and their understanding of architectural beauty.</p> <p>3.The architectural heritage in Pingyao Ancient City has had a significant influence on the</p>

		division of functional spaces in our modern lives, such as the concept of hierarchy and orderliness, which is reflected in the partitioning of rooms in modern homes, including master bedrooms, secondary bedrooms, and guest rooms.
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Summary:

Through interviews with different groups of people about the value and significance of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage in modern society, the following conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is a symbol of Pingyao's cultural heritage and represents a unique expression of Chinese traditional culture in Pingyao. People can perceive the rich historical culture of Pingyao through understanding its architecture, becoming familiar with the local historical and cultural environment, and social customs. This deepens their identification with Chinese traditional culture and enhances their national pride. Secondly, the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City provides abundant cultural tourism resources, promoting the development of tourism resources, the tourism culture industry, and local economic transformation, thereby driving local employment and income growth. Thirdly, the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is not only a carrier of culture but also a link to the emotions of Chinese traditional culture, connecting contemporary people with their perception of traditional culture and enhancing their aesthetic appreciation of Chinese traditional architecture. Simultaneously, it deepens their understanding of Chinese traditional culture.

From the above interview records, it can be seen that the role of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage in cultural tourism still has room for improvement. Tourists have a relatively limited understanding of Chinese traditional architectural culture, mainly staying at a visual level without a deep understanding of the cultural significance of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage. Therefore, it is relatively difficult to achieve emotional resonance between people and Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage. This also reflects the need for Pingyao's tourism culture industry, which is based on Pingyao's architectural culture, to consider new forms and paths of cultural dissemination from a cultural perspective. It is necessary to effectively diversify

the dissemination of culture through architecture as a carrier, thereby enhancing national cultural identity and cultural confidence.

Table 7 Interview question seven

Question 7: What are the remaining issues regarding the cultural display of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City?		
Government Department Staff	1	<p>1.Currently, the heritage exhibitions in China are all developed according to the standards for 5A-level scenic spots set by the state, without a special interpretation system specifically tailored for the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.The lack of cultural depth among interpreters is somewhat related to the management system, as there is no regular cultural training provided for them.</p> <p>3.There is no established and comprehensive evaluation system for interpreters. This results in interpreters having strong subjectivity in their interpretation content, which tends to be relatively loose and lacking in standardization.</p>
	2	<p>1.Tour guides' interpretations of cultural heritage remain superficial, focusing on describing historical and cultural phenomena without delving into deeper historical and cultural research. This results in every tour guide using the same clichéd expressions.</p> <p>2.Interpretation materials are relatively scarce, with no promotional brochures available within specific areas about the cultural heritage site. Additionally, there is a severe lack of relevant foreign language explanatory materials.</p> <p>3.Signage within the ancient city's architectural heritage area is unclear, leading to public confusion and potential repeated detours, which detract from a positive cultural experience. Moreover, the excessive placement of signage has a detrimental effect on the display of the architectural heritage.</p>
	3	<p>1.Tour guides often improvise their commentary, lacking a coherent historical and cultural narrative, thus failing to effectively convey the cultural significance of the heritage site.</p> <p>2.The aesthetic education activities centered around the architecture lack sufficient folk story performances.</p>
	4	<p>1.With the development of the times, the ancient city's architectural heritage has become integrated with the tourism economy. While focusing on tourism development, the shaping of the cultural significance of architectural heritage has been overlooked, replaced instead by a commercial cultural atmosphere.</p> <p>2.The relocation of some residents from Pingyao Ancient City has led to a lack of humanistic and grassroots cultural atmosphere within the architectural heritage, depriving it of its vibrant life.</p>
	5	<p>1.The management of tourist numbers in the Pingyao Ancient City scenic area needs to be strengthened. During peak tourist seasons, the excessive number of visitors results in a heavy burden on the area, leading to a negative experience for tourists.</p>

	<p>2. There is a lack of standardized management for tour guides, leading to the presence of unlicensed guides within the scenic area, which seriously undermines the cultural atmosphere of the area.</p> <p>3. There is a relatively low level of awareness among local residents, communities, and participants in cultural construction and management regarding the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.</p>
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Summary:

Through interviews regarding the cultural display of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, it was found that the display mainly consists of three categories: personnel interpretation (interpreters, tour guides), explanatory promotional materials, and theatrical performances and activities centered around the architectural heritage. The forms of cultural display are relatively homogeneous. The central issues are manifested in three aspects. Firstly, interpreters and tour guides tend to provide monotonous and fixed descriptions of the architectural heritage culture. For example, regarding tangible cultural heritage, they often provide introductory explanations of architectural structures, functions, and historical backgrounds, while for intangible cultural heritage, they typically explain its origins, development, and manifestations. This monotonous content forms a fixed pattern and lacks in-depth exploration of the cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City. Secondly, the interpretive promotional materials within the architectural heritage area are incomplete, lacking foreign language translations. Thirdly, there is a lack of scientific and reasonable control over the number of tourists, leading to a poor cultural experience. Therefore, there is still significant room for improvement in the cultural display of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.

Simultaneously, it is evident that Pingyao Ancient City prioritizes tourism economy far more than the preservation of its architectural heritage. The emphasis on immediate benefits outweighs the consideration for the sustainable development of the heritage site.

Table 8 Interview question eight

Question 8: What are the problems and challenges encountered in the cultural preservation of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City?

Government Department Staff	1	<p>1. With a history of 2800 years, Pingyao Ancient City's traditional architecture primarily constructed with stone and wood faces irreversible damage due to the weathering of stone and the corrosion of wood.</p> <p>2. Insufficient government funding necessitates self-financing through tourism development for the preservation and maintenance of architectural heritage.</p> <p>3. During holidays and peak tourist seasons, Pingyao Ancient City experiences high visitor traffic, and the uncivilized behavior of some tourists contributes to damage to the architectural structures within the scenic area.</p>
	2	<p>1. The development of the ancient city conflicts with traditional architecture, as the surrounding area is dominated by towering modern buildings whose styles clash with those of the ancient city, disrupting the harmony between traditional architecture and its surroundings. This incongruity affects the original design principles and functions of the ancient city's architecture, undermining the expression of traditional architectural culture.</p> <p>2. There is a conflict between the basic living needs of residents within the ancient city and the preservation of its architectural heritage. Within the limited space of the ancient city, there is a need to balance the protection of architectural heritage with the improvement of residents' access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and transportation.</p> <p>3. The commercialization of the ancient city, driven primarily by tourism, erodes traditional architectural culture.</p>
	3	<p>1. Excessive commercial development has introduced significant disruptions to the cultural expression of the ancient city's architectural heritage. For example, the currency exchange service within Rishengchang, initially intended as an interactive cultural experience for visitors, has increasingly become focused on monetary considerations, thereby diminishing the cultural immersion experience.</p> <p>2. Natural disasters and adverse weather conditions cause substantial damage to architectural heritage, such as the collapse of sections of the ancient city wall due to flooding.</p> <p>3. There is a need for greater financial support to further enhance the restoration and protection of architectural heritage.</p>
	4	<p>1. The development of modern technology, such as the use of virtual imaging techniques, while aiding in the replication of the architectural heritage of the ancient city, also risks stripping Pingyao Ancient City's architectural culture of its human touch, thus undermining the preservation of architectural heritage culture.</p> <p>2. Residents within the ancient city exhibit insufficient awareness regarding the protection of architectural heritage. For instance, climbing on the city walls without regard for their</p>

		preservation and dumping household waste at the base of the ancient city walls.
	5	<p>1. Driven by economic value, the preservation and restoration of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage have led to a loss of traditional craftsmanship. Restoration and construction projects are often rushed, with a focus on speed rather than craftsmanship, as seen in the use of chemical industrial paints instead of traditional natural lacquer.</p> <p>2. The protection of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage should prioritize the preservation of historical and cultural significance rather than blindly expanding heritage sites. For example, the overall development of the Confucian Temple in Pingyao Ancient City in 2004 should have been approached with a focus on promoting cultural heritage rather than mere expansion.</p>

Summary:

The cultural preservation of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City faces several key issues and challenges:

Natural disasters and climate change contribute to inevitable weathering and corrosion of the city's architectural heritage.

Insufficient funding hampers the maintenance and restoration of architectural heritage.

The distinct cultural differences between the architectural heritage and its surrounding environment hinder the protection and inheritance of architectural culture. Moreover, the expansion of architectural heritage itself leads to cultural diffusion.

Both residents and tourists in the ancient city lack awareness of the need to protect its heritage, resulting in some degree of damage to its architectural culture.

The dominance of tourism-driven commercial culture within the ancient city erodes traditional architectural culture.

The protection of architectural heritage culture extends beyond the buildings themselves to encompass their surrounding environment, including both material and human aspects. The human environment, in particular, serves as a primary driver for the development of architectural heritage culture.

Table 9 Interview question nine

Question 9: What methods and suggestions are there for the protection of the

 architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City?

Government Department Staff	1	<p>1.Clearly define the detailed regulations for the protection of the architectural heritage of the ancient city and ensure effective enforcement of these regulations.</p> <p>2.Clearly define the channels for raising funds for the protection of the architectural heritage of the ancient city and monitor the allocation of funds to support heritage conservation efforts.</p> <p>3.Establish clear responsibilities within the scenic area management system to ensure accountability for the protection of architectural heritage.</p>
	2	<p>1.Adhere to the principle of sustainable development for the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, and actively explore the cultural significance of both tangible and intangible heritage, efficiently promoting cultural innovation and dissemination.</p> <p>2.Mobilize the participation of the public in the protection of the architectural heritage of the ancient city, achieving universal involvement to advance heritage conservation and cultural exploration. Simultaneously, establish a mechanism for residents of the ancient city to supervise and protect its architectural heritage.</p>
	3	<p>1.Raise funds for the routine maintenance and protection of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.Establish and improve local laws and regulations on the protection of architectural heritage, with clear identification of responsible units.</p> <p>3.Establish a system of expert consultation for architectural heritage protection, seeking advice from professional institutions to scientifically and reasonably carry out conservation work.</p> <p>4.Draw on advanced technology and experiences from abroad to actively protect architectural heritage.</p>
	4	<p>1.Promote the digital modeling of architectural heritage to provide reference for the protection and restoration of architectural heritage.</p> <p>2.Capture and document the form, components, structure, and decorations of architectural heritage to create valuable images for the preservation of architectural heritage records.</p>
	5	<p>1.Consider establishing grassroots organizations to enhance the supervision mechanism for the protection of architectural heritage.</p> <p>2.Strengthen local legislation for the protection of architectural heritage, managing according to regulatory standards to ensure the smooth implementation of architectural heritage protection efforts in a reasonable and effective manner.</p>

Summary:

The protection of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City primarily requires macro-level recommendations and strategies. These include establishing relevant laws and regulations tailored to the local context, specifying responsible units

and individuals for architectural heritage protection. Additionally, effective channels for raising funds should be established to provide financial support for heritage protection. Furthermore, local residents and grassroots organizations should be mobilized to establish a comprehensive supervision mechanism for architectural heritage protection, allowing for timely resolution of issues. Finally, efforts should be made to promote digitalization in architectural heritage protection, implement expert consultation systems, and learn from advanced technologies abroad to provide scientific methods and measures for heritage protection.

The protection of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is fundamentally a macro-level issue. Progress in heritage protection can only be achieved under the constraints of policies and regulations, providing a legal framework and guidelines for specific heritage protection processes. Compared to other methods, this approach is more authoritative, compulsory, stable, and standardized.

Table 10 Interview question ten

Question 10: What are your thoughts and suggestions for the future cultural development of Pingyao Ancient City?

Government Department Staff	1	<p>1.It is hoped that local residents and communities actively participate in the protection and management of architectural heritage culture, fostering multi-level cultural interactions.</p> <p>2.Enriching the cultural life of residents in Pingyao Ancient City by integrating the essence of daily life into architectural heritage culture, thus shaping cultural characteristics for the new era.</p> <p>3.Effective cultural dissemination requires a solid cultural foundation. Therefore, efforts should be made to enhance the cultural literacy of scenic area staff and improve their ability to express cultural values.</p>
	2	<p>1.The government could provide more economic support to renovate dilapidated courtyards and houses within the ancient city, integrating the cultural image of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.Collaborate with major international events to enhance the visibility of Pingyao Ancient City (e.g., Pingyao International Film Festival, Pingyao International Photography Exhibition).</p> <p>3.Establish a robust and comprehensive publicity platform to consolidate the cultural image of Pingyao Ancient City for better dissemination. Details such as signage and guidance within the scenic area are essential for shaping its image.</p>
	3	<p>1.Utilize new platforms and new media to promote Pingyao Ancient City and enhance its</p>

		<p>visibility.</p> <p>2.Establish more tourism projects to improve the cultural development of Pingyao Ancient City and attract more tourists.</p>
	4	<p>1.Renovate and refurbish the residential houses in the northeast corner of Pingyao Ancient City. This serves two purposes: addressing housing issues for residents and contributing to the overall planning and image of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.The development of the scenic area should prioritize the well-being of residents within the ancient city. It should aim to foster a balanced relationship between residents' livelihoods and the cultural heritage of the ancient city, thereby promoting sustainable development for both people and the ancient city's culture.</p>
	5	<p>1.Implement tourist number control measures such as online booking while developing the tourism economy. It's essential to consider not only economic development but also the quality of tourism and the construction of a tourism cultural brand. Pingyao Ancient City's culture is unique and cannot be replicated, which determines its distinctiveness. Establishing a strong cultural brand for Pingyao Ancient City is crucial for better economic development.</p> <p>2.Improve tourist center services to truly serve tourists and enhance brand service. Addressing practical issues during the tourism process will help shape a new image for the ancient city.</p>
Tour Guide	1	<p>1.Develop more tourism projects to allow visitors to experience a broader range of the ancient city's culture.</p> <p>2.Implement standardized management for tour guides within the scenic area, while also enhancing their own cultural development. This will enable them to better explain and promote the culture of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>3.Create diverse forms of cultural promotion and interpretation, utilizing imagery and modern VR technology to immerse visitors in the cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City.</p>
	2	<p>1.Strengthening one's own cultural knowledge is essential for better serving tourists and effectively conveying the culture of Pingyao Ancient City to them.</p> <p>2.Enriching the forms of interpretation, including oral narration, scene reenactments, visual recordings, and interactive activities, allows for the presentation of the cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City from multiple perspectives and in various ways.</p>
	3	<p>1.Standardize the management of the scenic area, including the management of tour guides, tourists, and cultural projects, to enhance the overall image of the area. This will better accommodate visitors from various regions and allow them to experience the unique culture of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.Enrich cultural projects by introducing distinctive and public-interest-oriented initiatives to attract more tourists.</p> <p>3.Expand the spatial scope of the scenic area to reasonably disperse visitor flow. This not only improves the quality of tourism services but also allows visitors to deeply appreciate the historical culture of the ancient city.</p>
Merchants	1	<p>1.We hope that the managers of the scenic area can put more effort into tourism culture.</p>

and Residents		<p>While we also talk to tourists about the culture of the ancient city and Jin merchants, our verbal expressions alone cannot fully showcase the culture of Pingyao Ancient City.</p> <p>2.The attractions within the ancient city are relatively concentrated, resulting in less foot traffic in areas without attractions. We hope that the management of the scenic area can guide and divert tourists to these areas. Additionally, in places without attractions, new tourism projects could be developed. These projects could incorporate both ancient and modern aspects of the city's culture to enrich the tourist experience.</p>
	2	<p>1.It is essential to establish a safety assurance mechanism within the scenic area. Emergencies such as sudden fires and casualties require cooperation from emergency management departments. However, currently, there is not even a hospital within the scenic area.</p> <p>2.Strengthen the linkage between residents and the culture of Pingyao Ancient City. While the ancient city preserves culture, residents create and disseminate culture, achieving the sustainable development of Pingyao Ancient City's culture.</p>
	3	<p>1.In my opinion, the most representative aspect of Pingyao Ancient City is its Jin merchant culture. This culture can be observed through the grand courtyards of the Jin merchants, showcasing their business style. It allows visitors to gain a deeper understanding of the history and ethnic spirit of the Jin merchants. However, I believe more effort should be put into this aspect.</p> <p>2.Furthermore, expanding the traditional architectural culture of Pingyao Ancient City will enable visitors to truly experience the profound historical culture of Pingyao Ancient City. They can appreciate the ingenuity and superb craftsmanship of ancient artisans.</p>
	4	<p>1.For permanent residents, it is hoped that normal commuting, living, studying, and medical services can be guaranteed. However, these public facilities have been relocated outside the ancient city, which has affected the daily lives of residents. While we inherit and promote the culture of the ancient city, we should not compromise the livelihood of residents within it. The development of cultural tourism is aimed at improving life, but now we have lost basic living guarantees. It is hoped that the future development of the ancient city can consider the lives of residents more, making the ancient city more vibrant and lively.</p>
	5	<p>1.Consider staggered use of roads in Pingyao Ancient City or implement one-way traffic to avoid traffic congestion caused by increased tourist flow during holidays, which can inconvenience traffic within the ancient city.</p> <p>2.Regulate the use of vehicles within the ancient city to provide a safe cultural environment for residents and tourists.</p>
Tourist	1	<p>1.Introduce more performance shows, such as the large-scale immersive theater production "Rediscovering Pingyao," to enhance visitor experiences.</p> <p>2.Explore additional tourism projects to allow tourists to better appreciate the local culture of Pingyao Ancient City, such as "Pingyao Young Madam's Travel Photography."</p> <p>3.Uncover new local delicacies to enrich the culinary experience for visitors.</p>
	2	<p>1.I hope there will be fewer people, or better planning to divert tourists at attractions,</p>

		<p>enhancing the overall viewing experience.</p> <p>2. More tourism projects could be added to allow visitors to participate and enhance their sensory experience.</p> <p>3. After visiting the different buildings in Pingyao Ancient City, I felt that the interiors were just displays, lacking vitality. I hope the buildings won't appear so cold and lifeless.</p>
	3	<p>1. With numerous attractions within the scenic area, perhaps considering recommended routes would be beneficial.</p> <p>2. Dynamic presentation of the number of tourists within the scenic area would facilitate visitors in choosing attractions.</p> <p>3. It would be beneficial to provide more introductions to Jin merchants' culture, enriching the presentation forms to focus on cultural display rather than using it solely as a marketing tool for products.</p>
	4	<p>1. Combining tangible cultural heritage with intangible cultural heritage can enrich the tourist experience, allowing visitors to learn more.</p> <p>2. Safety issues in the scenic area: what makes me feel the most unsafe in the ancient city is the tourist shuttle bus. Although it is a profitable means, it travels very fast, posing safety hazards to pedestrians. Could we consider having dedicated routes that avoid densely populated tourist areas?</p>
	5	<p>1. We can consider adding some rural tourism projects, allowing visitors to taste the daily food of local residents and experience the local culinary culture.</p> <p>2. During cultural festivals, more cultural activities can be added to allow visitors to experience the cultural characteristics of that era, enriching the cultural development of Pingyao Ancient City.</p>

Summary:

Regarding the future development of Pingyao Ancient City culture, there are several ideas and suggestions to consider, focusing on four main aspects:

Firstly, increasing financial support is crucial. This funding can be allocated to enhancing visitor services, providing deeper cultural education for tour guides and interpreters within the scenic area, and leveraging modern photographic techniques to explore new forms of cultural dissemination. This aims to offer visitors better tourism services while expanding related tourism projects to enrich the cultural development of Pingyao Ancient City.

Secondly, governmental policy support is necessary for the overall planning of the ancient city. This includes renovating and refurbishing old and dilapidated residential buildings, rationalizing the use of roads and vehicles, and standardizing

signage within the scenic area to facilitate the travel of residents and tourists, thereby enhancing the overall image of the ancient city.

Thirdly, establishing a comprehensive safeguard mechanism is essential. This involves providing essential facilities such as hospitals, fire stations, and markets within the scenic area to ensure the daily lives of residents in Pingyao Ancient City. This transformation aims to evolve the ancient city beyond merely being a historical architectural relic within city walls but also a vibrant living space embedded in contemporary society, thus revitalizing traditional Chinese culture.

Lastly, it is crucial to establish a distinctive tourism culture brand for Pingyao Ancient City. This entails exploring tourism cultures with local characteristics and integrating them with international and domestic events (such as the Pingyao International Photography Exhibition and Pingyao International Film Festival) to create a new cultural identity for the ancient city.

The function of architecture is a special cultural form given by people in the process of production. It reflects the relationship between man and man, man and building, man and society in the process of social development. Through the method of in-depth interview, the function of architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is recognized, the relationship between people, architecture and culture is organized, the cultural connotation of architectural heritage is expanded, and the social value of architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City is explored. In addition, an interview study is conducted on the protection, display and future development of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, and the research hypothesis (H2) is further demonstrated that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City shows the functional attributes of the architectural heritage culture in the social dimension. Expand the content of architectural heritage and cultural display.

4.3 Analysis of the Spiritual Dimension of Architectural Culture

The spirit of Chinese traditional architecture holds the essence of Chinese traditional culture. The culture's politics, religion, philosophy, and traditions can be found in every part of the architecture. This culture is always spreading, which changes

the way people interact with each other and with nature, as well as Chinese beliefs and views on the world. By studying traditional Chinese philosophical ideas, more proof of Chinese traditional building methods has been found. This proves that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City shows the purpose aspect of architectural heritage culture in the spiritual dimension (H3).

4.3.1 Yin and Yang and the Five Elements in Architecture

Early ancient Chinese people had already begun to explore nature and life, forming a unique and simple philosophical thought. Ancient Chinese philosophy believed that yin and yang are the fundamental forces that make up the universe, and the essence of life lies in the combination of yin and yang. Unify life with the universe and form a spiritual concept of all things. In the book Laozi, it is recorded that "all things carry yin and embrace yang," which means that all things carry yin and embrace yang, and in structure, yang is on the front and yin is on the back. The combination of yin and yang forms the 'Tai Chi,' which is a whole, and the universe is a 'Tai Chi.' Laozi's worldview contains similar metaphysical beliefs. The Book of Yi Jing also contains a discourse that asserts, 'The Tao is one yin, one yang.' Yin and Yang are the laws of opposition and unity, interdependent and complementary, and always in a state of balance and coordination. The Five Elements in traditional Chinese culture are considered the fundamental elements and attributes that make up all things. Gold, wood, water, fire, and earth interact with each other in a cyclical manner. All things in the universe form a large system according to the laws of yin and yang and the five elements, and form their own small systems that operate according to a unified law. This operation of the law is considered the natural "way." The Yin Yang and Five Elements closely relate to any independent entity, possessing all the characteristics common to the entire universe.

The architecture of Pingyao Ancient City not only contains rich architectural culture but also profound philosophical views. The simple philosophical thought of China had already sprouted in ancient times and developed into the Yin Yang

Five Elements thought based on the "Qi-based theory" during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. The yin-yang and five-element theory, rooted in the "Qi-based theory," profoundly influenced Pingyao Ancient City's architecture. As a typical representative of courtyard-style architecture, the core of its spatial organization—the combination of courtyards and halls—is the idea of yin-yang interaction. Firstly, the establishment of the spatial form of a building relies on the enclosure of building materials, forming the internal and external spaces and primary and secondary relationships of the building, as well as the virtual and dynamic spaces of the building. Secondly, under the strict requirements of the traditional hierarchical system, the gatehouse and main hall are arranged in order under the guidance of the axis, accompanied by east and west wing rooms and inverted seats. This primary secondary relationship is also a concrete manifestation of the yin-yang relationship. The correspondence between the east and west wing rooms is also the opposition and unity of yin and yang on the horizontal axis of the building, which influences the social hierarchy within the household. The courtyard layout controlled by the interweaving of vertical and horizontal directions, with vertical as the main and horizontal as the secondary, also forms a unified relationship between primary and secondary yin and yang. From the perspective of courtyard-style architectural space, running from the outside to the inside through the main entrance of the courtyard—the Chui Hua gate—the main room of the middle courtyard—the back room of the inner courtyard—not only reflects the concept of hierarchical hierarchy, but also each level is combined into a progressive hierarchy, forming a hierarchical yin-yang relationship. Maintain and coordinate the yin-yang harmony between each courtyard and the overall courtyard-style building, unifying the yin-yang symbiosis between people and buildings.

The Five Elements are the fundamental elements that make up all things, namely metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Ancient people already possessed a simple philosophical dialectical thinking, believing that metal generates water, water generates wood, wood generates fire, fire generates earth, and earth generates metal. This kind of thinking influences people's daily lives and architectural practices. Yangzhai

emphasizes the "Kan Zhai Xun Men": "Kan" is the north side, which is the main water in the "Five Elements," and the main house is built on the water level to avoid fires; Xun "refers to the southeast, which is the wind in the "Five Elements" and symbolizes wealth. Opening the door here signifies great fortune and prosperity. Few of the residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City face south from the gate. Because most wealthy merchants in Pingyao are gold merchants, while those in the south are fire merchants. Fire restrains gold, and if it restrains gold, they cannot make a fortune. For ordinary people, the Loess Plateau is located in a dry area, so they naturally have their fears and precautions against fire, and they will not open their doors to the south. Therefore, they typically open their gates facing either the southeast or southwest direction.

4.3.2 Unity between Heaven and Humanity in Architecture

The concept of "unity of heaven and man" is an important basic idea in ancient Chinese philosophy. The term 'heaven' here refers to the objective natural environment, while the concept of 'human' is relatively broad, which can be a group, a social unit, an individual person, or a man-made thing and object created by human-centeredness. The unity of heaven and man refers to the survival and development of humans in the natural environment while maintaining a harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, forming the unity of the two. The concept of "heaven" originated from the ancient humans' reverence for unpredictable nature. After the Xia and Shang dynasties, "heaven" was considered the highest ruler with will and personality. This worship of 'heaven' constructs a human worldview. After the Western Zhou Dynasty, people emphasized the symbiotic relationship between humans and heaven, and the concept of "unity of heaven and man" emerged.

The ancient Chinese people used a simple worldview and cosmology to understand the relationship between humans and nature. In Zhuangzi's "Qi Wu Lun," it is said that "heaven and earth coexist with me, and all things are one with me," clarifying Zhuangzi's basic idea of "the unity of heaven and man. In Laozi's "Tao Te Ching," it is stated that "man follows the earth, the earth follows the sky, the sky follows the Tao, and

the Tao follows nature." This text discusses how the natural Tao influences the universe, affects the changes in heaven and earth, and how the will of heaven and earth influences human life and survival. It elucidates the relationship between humans and nature, emphasizing that humans should pursue the natural way and its harmonious coexistence. It emphasizes the pursuit of a harmonious coexistence between the natural environment and the living environment. The idea of "unity of heaven and man" has always been present in the development process of traditional Chinese architecture, influencing the development and changes of Chinese traditional architecture. Under the concept of harmony between man and nature, the architecture of Pingyao Ancient City is full of ancient philosophical ideas of "harmony between man and nature" in terms of site selection, overall layout, indoor and outdoor environment design and display, as well as material selection and construction techniques.

Traditional architecture generally follows the basic principles and layout of feng shui in site selection and attaches great importance to the surrounding geographical location and natural environment. The best choice is to have a natural environment and relatively enclosed space that is conducive to the formation of a good ecological cycle system: "facing the mountains and facing the water, facing north and south, and embracing the sun in the shade." "Back to the mountains and facing the water" refers to using a screen to block the cold winter winds in the north, while facing the water welcomes the warm winds in the south. "Sitting north and facing south" ensures optimal sunlight for sunrises, while the gentle slope serves as a buffer against floods and a place of refuge. So, when deciding the direction of Pingyao Ancient City, it was thought that the city walls should run roughly parallel to the east-west flowing Liugen River (formerly Zhongdu River). The main orientation of the city walls should also be able to meet the needs of sunlight and southeast wind, making a direction that runs north to south and slightly east. In the process of building construction, local materials were used to excavate the moat and complete the rammed earth construction of Pingyao Ancient City Wall, coordinating with local conditions and nature.

Similarly, the residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City have been elevated in number of floors and ground adjustments, resulting in a low front and high back, as well as left and right wings that embrace each other, thus simulating a natural environment of negative yin embracing yang. The ancient Yellow Emperor's Classic of Residence holds that the living environment is not the hub of yin and yang, nor the model of human ethics... People stand because of their homes, homes are preserved by people, and individuals support each other to feel the connection between heaven and earth... " It emphasizes that housing is the key to linking natural yin and yang, and the relationship between people in housing is not only the relationship with architecture but also the ethical relationship between people. Only with harmonious relationships can people prosper, architecture be preserved, and only through the unity of yin and yang between architecture and nature can people achieve harmony. It further illustrates the harmonious unity between nature, architecture, and human beings. Therefore, Chinese residential buildings have created a basic layout centered around courtyards from south to north, with the buildings being yang solid and the courtyards being yin virtual. This courtyard sequence space, where yin and yang complement each other and the virtual and real alternate, effectively coordinates the relationship between people and space, as well as between people and nature, in a dense living environment.

The courtyard is not only the center of living but also the best place for humans and nature to coexist harmoniously. Therefore, introducing natural scenery such as rockeries, flowing water, pavilions, fish ponds, flowers, and birds into residential courtyards expands the courtyard into a private garden. Even small households have to plant a few green plants, fully demonstrating the integration of humans and nature. Simultaneously, various potted plants, bonsai, vase inserts, and mountain rocks are cleverly used indoors to integrate artificial and natural elements in a moderate architectural space, making them come from nature and higher than nature, extracting the scenery of nature, and incorporating it into the living environment to feel nature. This approach reflects the cultural concept of "unity of heaven and man."

4.3.3 The Ideology of Ritual and Music in Architecture

The Western Zhou Dynasty was just established, and King Wu of Zhou divided the feudal lords and established rituals and music, creating the ritual and music civilization that Confucius admired. 'Li' generally refers to various behavioral rituals in human daily life, as well as the norms governing all human behavior. Regarding "rites," there are adult rites, wedding and funeral rites, and sacrificial rites. 'Joy' can bring joy to people. Music has five notes, and only when the five notes are intertwined can music be pleasant to the ear. Therefore, "rites and music" are regarded by later generations as regulations that can be accepted by people without causing resentment and as a system used to maintain harmonious development between people and society.

Confucius revered ritual and music, especially the Western Zhou ritual system. According to the "Book of Rites," "To cultivate a son of a country with the Tao, the six arts are taught: first, five rituals; second, six music; third, five archery; fourth, five divination; fifth, six writing; and sixth, nine counting." Ritual music ranks first among the "six arts." Confucius said, "If there is a way in the world, the emperor will provide conquest rites and music; if not, the feudal lords will give them. From the feudal lords, those who have lived for ten generations will not be lost; from the officials, those who have served the country for five generations will not be lost; from the officials, those who have served the country for three generations will not be lost. If there is a way in the world, then politics will not be in the officials hands. Commoners won't talk about it if there is a way in the world." Confucian rites are not rigid regulations and procedures, but rather they unite people through their relationships. The Confucian ritual lies in order, that is, a hierarchy. If the order is correct, most conflicts and contradictions will not occur, and everything will proceed smoothly. The core of 'ritual' is 'harmony,' which means harmony. The Book of Music proposes that 'happiness is the sum of heaven and earth" and ritual is the order of heaven and earth,' which means that the entire universe operates in an orderly and harmonious manner.

The concept of ritual and music is about harmony. The coexistence of traditional Chinese architecture with the surrounding natural and cultural environment is

a harmonious place of ritual and music. The order of ritual and music reflects the influence of the patriarchal system on residential architecture. Through the long-term influence of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism in ancient China, the status of "heavenly and earthly ruler, personal teacher" in people's minds has formed a solid concept of patrilineal rule, which constitutes the core of social ethics. There is a sacred place inside any building that cannot be violated, and the result is the need for ritual. The use of architecture is not only for the expansion of functions but also a constraint on human behavior, and this power is invisibly manifested in groups, expressed in a tough form by simple architecture. Therefore, to maintain social order and the behavior of family members, architecture has formed unique etiquette, namely the relationship between people, the relationship between people and architecture, and the relationship between architecture and society; that is, the relationship is "etiquette." The establishment of the entire set of social ethical concepts in ancient China, namely "different rites, different levels of hierarchy and respect, and equal levels of hierarchy, known as rites," became an important foundation for the order of social life. Accompanying the ritual is music. The Book of Music states, "Music is the sum of heaven and earth; ritual is the order of heaven and earth. Harmony leads to the transformation of all things; order leads to the differentiation of groups of things." This reflects the level, space, layout, and function of architecture and further regulates the level of decoration of architecture. Expressing "ritual and music" through architecture is a way for people to form established constraints and norms in the space of architecture, to educate individuals, and to complete the spiritual function of architecture. With the passage of time, it forms a social and spiritual constraint of architecture.

The aesthetic core of traditional ancient Chinese architecture is "ritual and music," which reflects the traditional human ethics order, moral concepts, emphasizes the order of hierarchy, and distinguishes between interior and exterior. For example, in Pingyao Ancient City, although the courtyard-style architecture is limited by terrain and does not excessively pursue complete symmetry in architectural layout, it still emphasizes the establishment of a hierarchical living space order for elders and juniors,

with different levels of living space above and below. The main room houses the ancestors, the wing room houses the juniors, and the south room serves as either a living room or a study room. The order of ritual and music in the settlement spreads and develops from the inside out, forming a unified whole of various environmental elements. At this juncture, the building's center or axis loses its significance, thereby establishing a natural order. The result is the connotation of ritual and music in architecture.

4.3.4 Lineage and Feudalism in Architecture

The patriarchal system in China evolved from the blood relationship of clan society under new historical conditions and emerged in the late Shang Dynasty. The main contents include the systems of eldest son inheritance, enfeoffment and state building, and ancestral temple worship. The patriarchal relationship is a social relationship based on blood relations that has evolved from the patrilineal system of clan society, permeating into various fields of society. The layout and design of the residences in Pingyao Ancient City clearly reflect the resulting patriarchal concept.

In traditional residential buildings, there are some villages where "clans gather together," which are actually typical combinations of blood clans gathering together. The multi-courtyard style courtyard architecture provides a clear explanation of the deep patriarchal ideas present in many aspects of residential architecture. Adopting a strict axis-symmetrical layout, the courtyard space is composed of multiple buildings, connecting several generations of people who are related by blood and dispersed in different courtyards. In the central hall of the courtyard, portraits of clan ancestors are often enshrined, and during important festivals, sacrifices are made to seek health and prosperity. In some courtyard-style buildings, there are often ancestral halls dedicated to the ancestors of the clan. The main hall of the ancestral hall, also known as the Hall of Enjoyment or the Hall of Sacrifice, is the place where sacrificial ceremonies and clan discussions are held. Ancestral tablets and portraits are located in the rear bedroom. According to the patriarchal concept and its system, ancestor worship is sacred, involving the types of worship, sacrificial vessels, offerings, content of the sacrificial

proclamation, responsibilities of relevant personnel, ritual procedures, and post-ritual banquets. Through sacrificial activities, we aim to achieve spiritual communication between younger generations and ancestors, pray for the blessings of our ancestors, and strengthen the cohesion of our clan members under the influence of our ancestors.

Under the behavioral norms advocated by the patriarchal concept of "San Gang Wu Chang" "Respect for the Elderly and Subordinate for the Young," and "Differentiation between Men and Women," the size and shape of residential buildings are generally classified according to individual status, gender, seniority, and age within the family, reflecting a strict order of superiority and inferiority. The spatial layout of buildings reflects this feudal patriarchal relationship, determining the location of each person's housing. We place particular emphasis on distinguishing between men and women in spaces with clear hierarchical boundaries. To ensure the safety of women in the inner chambers, a Chui Hua gate is installed in the main hall and backyard of the three courtyards and two halls to distinguish between the inner and outer chambers. The female relatives and young ladies live deep in the back building. The elders accompany the young ladies when they go out. Only a few important festivals or events, such as the Spring Festival and acting, can the female relatives go out to watch, and the rest of their daily needs are taken in by servants. The servants can only enter through the front and back doors, not the main entrance.

The courtyard-style architecture of Pingyao Ancient City is divided into halls, courtyards, corridors, and wing rooms according to the function of the activity space, and the spaces with different contents are strictly defined and divided. Halls, courtyards, and corridors are public activity spaces for families, while wing rooms and inner rooms are individual activity spaces with strong internal and external order. The family's core area is the front hall, where they worship their ancestors, gather guests, and hold discussions. It has obvious openness and embodies the principle of "public before private"; The back hall is where the elders live, and in fact, the arrangement of major events in the front hall is in the hands of the elderly with higher seniority, reflecting the principle of "front down, back up." Female relatives or unmarried ladies living in the

attic or side hall upstairs not only have concealment but also have a certain degree of privacy, reflecting the principle of "gender differentiation"; The servants live in corridors or side rooms, and the decoration is relatively simple, reflecting the principle of "equality of status."

Even in the architectural decoration of the ancient city, one can still see the deep imprint of clan concepts. The concept of filial piety and brotherly love is the core of ancient ethics and morality, so there are many sculptures with the theme of "filial piety," such as "Guo Ju Buries His Son," "Selling His Body to Bury His Father," "Abandoning Official Position to Seek Mother," etc. In addition, there are sculptures symbolizing the prosperity of the clan's population, wealth, and cultural development, such as "Eighteen Scholars," "Five Scholars," "Three Scholars," "Hundred Scholars Making Yuanxiao (filled round balls made of glutinous rice-flour for Lantern Festival)," "Guo Ziyi Shou," etc. The architectural decoration of Pingyao Ancient City infuses these patriarchal concepts with patriarchal values.

4.3.5 Religious Beliefs in Architecture

There is a saying in Shanxi that goes, "On the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month, when the temple doors open, all kinds of immortals come together." A prominent feature of the society surrounding Pingyao Ancient City is the lack of a unified religion, which has the characteristics of embracing and worshipping multiple gods. This is mainly due to the ancient concept of "all things have spirits." Temples belonging to the nature of shamans are scattered throughout Shanxi, and the general public's worship of gods and Buddhas is not based on any religious beliefs but on their daily needs, hoping to receive help from the gods, with distinct practicality and utilitarianism. As a result, the folk beliefs in Pingyao Ancient City became very complex, with items of faith found in heaven, earth, the human world, and the underworld. Additionally, regardless of whether the belief is domestic, foreign, or locally unique, worshipping gods is often necessary. This practice characterizes Shanxi folk beliefs. The exterior and interior of residential buildings in Pingyao also display religious beliefs.

In the residential buildings of Pingyao Ancient City, families who believe in Buddhism usually offer Buddhist niches in their main rooms. Simultaneously, four auspicious beasts are placed on the sloping surface in the center of the main room roof, and their cultural origin is Buddhism. The four auspicious beasts face in all directions, shaped like roaring male lions. This image fully conforms to the concept of lion sculpture and its significance in Buddhist culture, symbolizing the Buddha's preaching of Buddhism to people from all directions. Simultaneously, it also metaphorically represents the people living here who worship and honor Buddha day and night to live a safe and happy life under the blessing of Buddha.

In families that believe in Taoism, it is not only reflected in the internal design of residential buildings but also in the uniqueness of their location and layout. The talismans and other techniques of Taoism are very similar to feng shui. Taoism often uses strange terrain and landforms to cleverly construct various types of buildings, fully reflecting the unique style of combining architecture with natural landscapes.

A temple is a secular religious venue and an open social activity center. As long as there are gods closely related to people's lives, such as Guan Di, Guanyin, Dragon King, Medicine King, etc., they are often worshipped whenever there is a god, fully reflecting the practicality and utilitarianism of folk beliefs. Moreover, most people believe that "worshiping gods is like worshipping gods, and having many gods is not surprising," and this concept is put into practice through temple fairs, making temples a rare social and gathering place for people. People use temples not only to expand their commercial activities but also to enjoy themselves. Generally, there are stages built in temples, and grand sacrificial activities are often held during festivals and holidays, performing various dramas, and people and gods share the joy of celebration. For any temple, the prosperity of the temple indicates the prosperity of the population, and this concept is deeply rooted. As a result, the religious activities of Pingyao people are exceptionally active and diverse.

Pingyao Ancient City was just a small county town in ancient Chinese society, yet it showcased vivid scenes of diverse sacrificial cultures to the world. Today,

people can still make a list of all kinds of temples built inside and outside the ancient city, such as the Jade Emperor Temple, Zhen Wu Temple, Di Yao Temple, Wu Dao Temple, Erlang Temple, Cheng Huang Temple, Tudi Temple, God of Wealth Temple, Zao Jun Temple, Fire God Temple, Thunder God Temple, White Tiger Temple, Dragon King Temple, Guan Di Temple, Wenchang Temple, Jieshen Temple, San Guan Temple, Luban Temple, Jing Temple, Wenchang Pavilion, Kui Xing Tower, and so on, according to the records in Pingyao County Annals and the existing historical relics. In a word, all the gods worshipped most frequently by the people during the Ming and Qing Dynasties can be found in Pingyao Ancient City. There are even more temples dedicated to Zhen Wu Emperor, Wenchang Emperor, Guan Sheng Emperor, Wu Dao Generals, and Erlang God in the small town. Imagining the flourishing scene of diverse worship activities among the common people of Pingyao County, who were at the bottom of society during the Ming and Qing dynasties, is not difficult.

The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City exhibits traditional Chinese cultural characteristics in multiple aspects. Based on Confucianism and Taoism, it further develops its ideological connotations and concretizes them, regulating the form and function of buildings and constraining human behavior and activities. It offers a robust ideological and cultural foundation for societal development. Simultaneously, the blending of various religious beliefs mirrors the aspirations of Pingyao's residents for an improved quality of life. This blend showcases their spiritual quest and highlights the core spiritual values embedded in residential architectural culture. The purpose of culture is to inherit and develop; to this day, the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City can still be seen by more people, and its cultural connotations are perceived and recognized by modern people. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City exemplifies the spiritual dimension of architectural heritage culture. This further supports the research hypothesis (H3).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Architecture constitutes the basic material carrier of the city and becomes an important space for human activities. Based on this foundation, architecture continuously contributes to the unique cultural value of the city. This cultural value also changes with the passage of time, which invisibly affects human activities and the development of the city. As a product of the urban development process, architecture not only reflects the unified relationship between architecture and the environment, the spatial relationship between architecture and the city, and the relationship between architecture and human activities. It also further explains the historical and cultural sense endowed by the architecture itself. Simultaneously, architecture also reflects the harmonious relationship between man and nature, the organizational relationship between man and society, and the emotional relationship between man and man. It also further reflects the design concept of architecture and the creative ideas of man, as well as the cultural attributes behind them.

The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is the subject of this study. It uses the theory of semiotics, the idea of traditional Chinese architectural culture, and the study of international cultural heritage protection and heritage display to come up with a model for interpreting architectural culture. This study confirms the important position and role of architectural heritage in the cultural development of Pingyao Ancient City and further indicates that architectural heritage has special cultural value in the development of human society. Through the research on the material dimension, social dimension, and spiritual dimension of the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City, the feasibility and validity of the architectural culture interpretation model are verified. Simultaneously, it also provides methods and theoretical values for the sustainable development of architectural culture.

5.1 A Brief Summary of the Study

5.1.1 Interpretation of the Three Dimensions of Architectural Culture

In conjunction with the "Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites" (2008) adopted by the 16th General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in Quebec, Canada, it was proposed that "interpretation refers to all possible activities aimed at raising public awareness and enhancing the public's understanding of cultural heritage sites. It may include print and electronic publications, public lectures, on-site and off-site facilities, educational programs, community campaigns, and ongoing research, training, and evaluation of the interpretation process itself."

This study analyzes and interprets the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City from three different dimensions, analyzes the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City from multiple levels and angles, and constructs a path and model for interpreting the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City, providing new thinking for the study of architectural culture. This approach not only highlights the significance of preserving such historical sites but also encourages a more profound understanding of how architectural elements reflect the social and cultural dynamics of their time. By integrating these dimensions, the study aims to foster a broader appreciation for the architectural narratives that shape our collective heritage.

The study uses text analysis and field research to organize and collect material data on the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City. In the form of interviews, the architectural heritage and culture of Pingyao Ancient City are explored to understand the social value of architectural heritage culture and the relationship between architecture and people and further explain the functionality of architecture and culture. The expression of Chinese traditional culture in architecture is explained by the construction of Pingyao Ancient City architectural heritage.

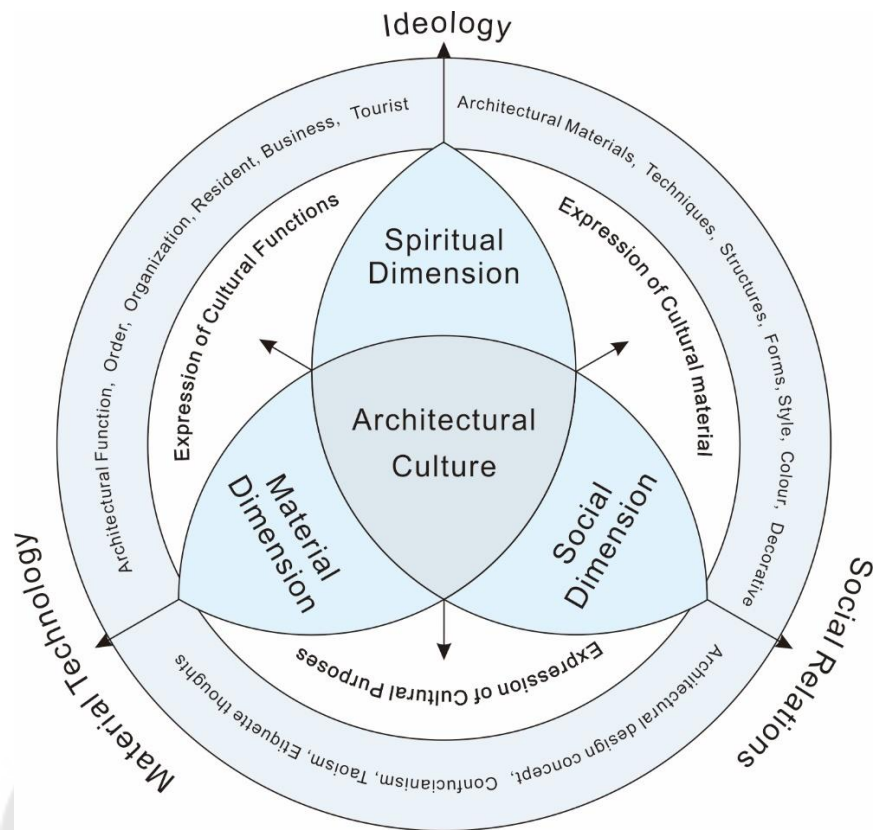


Figure 107 Architectural Heritage Cultural Interpretation Model

Source: Designed by the author in 2024

The study of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural culture revealed the division of culture into material culture and spiritual culture. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City effectively reflects material culture, demonstrating the historicity and depth of culture. Different architectural forms, structures, and decorations reflect cultural characteristics. On the one hand, the expression of spiritual culture affects people's ideas, such as the patriarchal system, which regulates people's words and deeds, and is also reflected in daily living habits and folk activities, such as the order of seniority and gender differences in Confucianism. On the other hand, it is the gods and immortals that are transformed by people's ideas and the temples and ancestral worship built for this purpose, which concretize the things of consciousness and transform the spirit into material again, such as Qing Xu Temple, Cheng Huang Temple, and other

buildings. The material culture and spiritual culture in Pingyao Ancient City have formed unique cultural characteristics through historical accumulation, and these characteristics are based on the characteristics of culture given by the people of Pingyao Ancient City, showing people's outstanding creativity in culture.

Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage culture in the material dimension:

The material dimension of architecture can also be called the material and technical level of architecture. Under the original material and technical conditions, the processing of building materials forms unique architectural space, architectural form, building components, and architectural decoration.

The material foundation determines the superstructure, and the Pingyao Ancient City Heritage has laid out the overall layout of the ancient city from the architectural space, forming a giant group of buildings. Simultaneously, the division of architectural space is also carried out in individual buildings, forming different functional areas of the building and gathering groups for cultural production activities in the space. On this basis, functional architectural decoration has been further formed, which has played a supporting role in building shape and structure. The decoration in ancient Chinese architecture is an artistic expression that can best reflect architectural culture, expressing the artistic aesthetics and architectural style in different times, and also reflects the different understanding of architectural decoration by the ancients. For example, the magnificent arch of wooden architecture in the Tang Dynasty emphasizes functional practicality; the small and exquisite architecture in the Song Dynasty; and the decorative replacement of functionality in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, which also shows that architectural decoration has changed from simple beauty to a symbol of hierarchical culture.

Secondly, architectural decoration has also evolved into a symbol of the function of architectural space. It decorates the activities in the architectural space. For example, there is a big difference in decoration between the main hall and the second

hall of Pingyao County Government. There is also a strict distinction between the main hall and the side hall in the Confucian Temple in terms of functional decoration. Such an arrangement is not only an expansion of the function of architectural space and a functional expression of decoration, but also a display of culture in people's spatial activities.

The spatial environment formed around the architectural heritage, such as the natural environment, historical environment, and cultural environment, places the building in a semi-open space, becoming the material basis for the externalization of the architectural heritage, and further developing and improving the culture of the building through people.

Material elements, such as building materials, techniques, forms, and environments, perfect the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City. Over time, the organizational forms of architectural heritage culture have evolved to create diverse social spaces influenced by human life needs. The highlighting of its value requires people's perception of space, association of memory, and awakening of spirit. Through architecture, the transformation of people's social values is demonstrated once again. This is evident in the historical evolution and inheritance of architectural culture.

Pingyao Ancient City's architectural cultural heritage in the social dimension:

The architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City is the awakening of people's memory, identity recognition, cultural inheritance, and development in the social dimension, and it promotes the development of politics and economy at the social level. The culture of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage belongs to an open and relatively stable state, and its historical and cultural imprints permeate people's consciousness, behavior, customs, and norms. When architectural heritage becomes a cultural symbol, memory will naturally be awakened and commented on, and a more positive comment is a strong recognition of culture, which is put into action to display culture. The process of interpreting the cultural heritage of the

ancient city will inevitably bring a strong sense of belonging and identity to the residents who have lived here for a long time. The inheritance and development of culture will also be continued, driven by behavior.

Social existence and social consciousness are the foundations of society. People regard the ancient city's architectural heritage as an integral part of its social existence. Its social consciousness must revolve around material existence, regulate human behavior, divide the relationship between people, and form an effective organization and management model. The spatial order in the Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage emphasizes ethical relationships; spatial organization emphasizes communication relationships; and spatial use emphasizes lifestyles. It maintains the behavioral paradigm unique to the Pingyao Ancient City culture.

Pingyao Ancient City's architectural cultural heritage in the spiritual dimension:

The spiritual dimension of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural and cultural heritage expands upon the material and social dimensions, thereby presenting the cultural connotation in a new context. For instance, Pingyao Ancient City incorporates Confucianism, Taoism, Feng Shui, rituals, music, and religious beliefs from China.

The spiritual dimension of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural and cultural heritage is a concentrated interpretation of people's ideological sphere. This reflects people's understanding of the architectural heritage and culture of Pingyao Ancient City, as well as their recognition and inheritance of traditional Chinese cultural ideas in Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage, further demonstrated in Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage. These cultural ideas have shaped the politics, economy, and culture of a particular region. These cultural ideas, rooted in spiritual dimensions, will forever shape human production and life, thereby constraining human behavior and activities. The formation of a strong spiritual belief is also referred to as national culture.

The above analysis and research verified the research hypothesis:

The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City shows the material attributes of architectural heritage culture in the material dimension.

The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City shows the functional attributes of architectural heritage culture in the social dimension.

The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City shows the purpose attributes of architectural heritage culture in the spiritual dimension.

Through the study of the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City, we promote the integration of traditional cultural connotation and contemporary cultural value. On the one hand, we explain the cultural connotation of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage, and on the other hand, we construct people's own contemporary value in the current cultural context. People need to find stable, safe, and vital spiritual spaces and places in traditional cultures to fight against cultural consumption. We are nurturing the contemporary cultural spirit that aligns with architectural heritage culture by relying on its power, standardizing behavior patterns and lifestyles, and strengthening traditional cultural construction, which is both an innovation and an inheritance of traditional culture.

From objective material expression to subjective perception of architectural culture, from static expression of architectural culture to dynamic dissemination of architectural culture, from regional cultural representation to achieving cultural self-identity, forming a sense of cultural pride. All of them actively reflect the role of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage in history and further interpret the era characteristics and cultural connotations that Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage continually adapts to social development in the process of contemporary social development.

5.1.2 Perception and Aesthetics of Architectural Heritage Culture

Pingyao Ancient City has a history of 2,800 years. During the Qing Dynasty, it became the financial center of China and the earliest prototype of the Bank of

China. The establishment of Pingyao Piaohao has significantly transformed the credit exchange business. Its business has expanded to Russia and Mongolia. It has close business dealings with HSBC Bank in the UK, Citibank in the US, Bank of Japan, and other institutions in China, forming a miracle of "connecting the world with a bill of exchange." While facilitating the development of business, it also shows the contractual spirit of Pingyao merchants who won the world with integrity. Pingyao merchants are known as "Shanxi merchants" precisely because of this spiritual culture. It has become a part of Shanxi culture. It has also become a common business practice among Chinese merchants. The banking business methods, management, organizational structure, and anti-counterfeiting identification system that have been preserved have played a decisive role in the establishment and development of modern Chinese banks. This unique "Shanxi merchant" cultural connotation of Pingyao can be regarded as a kind of cultural spirit, which also affects the form and pattern of local architecture.

Pingyao rose from the banks, and the architectural form evolved from traditional houses to commercial buildings. These banks were deep houses with high walls, single-slope gable roofs, high ridges, no windows on the exterior walls, and the height and thickness of the walls exceeded those of ordinary residential buildings. This formed a specific functional building, which also reflects that the architectural form of culture is the product of a specific historical stage and has distinct regional characteristics.

The material dimension of architectural culture will disappear with the passage of time, including natural damage and man-made destruction. It is the dominant inheritance of culture and a straightforward expression of cultural characteristics. Simultaneously, people carry out certain social activities around buildings in a specific period, giving buildings various functions. Some functions are temporary, such as markets, folk performances, etc. Some functions are long-term and stable, such as temples, judicial institutions, etc. To a certain extent, the functional attributes of buildings determine their material appearance. Therefore, the material dimension of architectural culture reflects the social nature of architectural culture and

forms specific patterns and architectural space functions in future building construction. For long-term and stable architectural functions, the behavioral norms of people are constrained in the architectural form, and specific activity trajectories are generated, which can be called a ritual. Naturally, the division of functional areas in buildings influences people's behavior in daily life, forming a behavioral habit. Architectural form, the connotation of architectural culture, preserves this long-term and stable behavioral activity. When this long-term and stable behavior is separated from the building, it can also produce established behaviors, or form a concept, and pass it down from generation to generation, thus forming the spiritual connotation of architectural culture, that is, the spiritual dimension of architectural culture.

The spiritual dimension of architectural culture constrains people's thoughts and behaviors, and at the same time, it socially plans the functions of buildings and strictly regulates their materials. Emphasizing the spiritual connotation of architecture ensures its cultural inheritance. There are three parts to architectural cultural heritage. The material part is what makes up the spiritual part of architectural culture. Together, they make up a rich and varied architectural entity. The social dimension of architecture promotes the expansion and dissemination of the spiritual dimension of architectural culture, while the spiritual dimension is the core of architectural heritage culture. This approach will steadily promote the inheritance and development of architectural culture, forming a cultural connotation that is timely, region-specific, and unique.

From this, it can be seen that the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City reflects not only the cultural connotations of traditional Chinese architecture but also the unique spiritual connotations bestowed upon architectural culture by specific periods, regions, and social developments.

The spiritual dimension of architecture, to a certain extent, determines the material dimension of architecture, that is, the presentation of architectural form. When perceiving architectural culture, it is necessary to consider the social function of architecture, that is, the social dimension of architectural culture. Therefore, the cultural

perception of the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is based on the role of architectural heritage in preserving and transmitting culture.

The aesthetic appreciation of culture does not only stop at the appreciation of the material level of architectural heritage, that is, building materials, building technology, building decoration, and building color, but also further cultural perception through the social environment in the historical era in which the building is located. The social environment mainly refers to politics, economy, folk customs, beliefs, etc., which influence the social functions of architecture, helping it to better serve societal needs, enhance people's social activities, and contribute to cultural phenomena and spiritual beliefs. Therefore, the aesthetic appreciation of architecture is not a single-level visual appreciation, but a modern people's cognition of historical society with the help of architectural heritage and a re-understanding of the social activities and beliefs engaged in by the ancients. It can be seen that the aesthetic appreciation of the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City is based on the continuation and expansion of its cultural value in contemporary society.

5.1.3 Protection and Innovation of Architectural Heritage Culture

The protection of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage is an important part of cultural protection and an extension of the concept of heritage protection. The following ideas are put forward to protect and pass on the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City. They are based on research into international heritage protection charters and regulations, as well as China's laws and regulations on protecting cultural relics, and the actual situation of the Pingyao Ancient City survey:

First, strengthen the construction of laws and regulations for the protection of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage, refine the legal provisions, and promote the legalization and standardization of architectural heritage cultural management. Form targeted bills with local social, economic, cultural, and environmental characteristics to improve and supplement China's Cultural Relics Protection Law. The most urgent of these is the reconstruction and repair of damaged

and uninhabited residential buildings in Pingyao Ancient City to make the image of the ancient city more unified and complete. Implement the responsibility system for architectural heritage protection units, clarify the responsible persons of architectural heritage protection units, clarify the work content and scope of architectural heritage protection units, truly implement them to people, clearly define rights and responsibilities, highlight the pertinence and effectiveness of local cultural heritage protection laws and regulations, integrate the relationship between Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage and overall cultural construction, establish a scientific, developmental, holistic, social, and national concept of Pingyao Ancient City architectural heritage protection, and highlight the cultural characteristics of Pingyao Ancient City.

Secondly, the Pingyao Ancient City architectural heritage should form multiple channels for fundraising cultural relic protection funds. The operation of architectural cultural heritage is not profit-oriented but cultural value-oriented, to obtain the maximum economic benefits, and the income is not used as dividends but for reinvestment in the architectural heritage cultural undertakings. Secondly, obtain sponsorship from the government, society, groups, and individuals to provide necessary guarantees for the protection and development of the architectural culture of the Pingyao Ancient City.

Third, it is important to learn more about the cultural background of protecting the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City through comparative research. This will help strengthen both the technical and cultural aspects of heritage protection. Drawing from international theories, regulations, and advanced protection technologies is a crucial foundation for accelerating the protection of architectural heritage in China. It is important to understand how international heritage protection has changed over time and how protection ideas have changed along with it. It is also important to understand how heritage protection differs across different cultures and to use the cultural aspects of Pingyao Ancient City to find relevant theories and technologies that can be used to protect its heritage.

Fourthly, establishing a sound mechanism for public participation in the supervision of architectural heritage protection is vital to enhance the awareness of Pingyao Ancient City residents and tourists regarding the protection of architectural heritage culture. Establishing a platform for heritage protection participation, improving supervision channels, and ensuring transparency in information related to the protection of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage will encourage residents and tourists to participate in heritage protection efforts. These initiatives will elevate the recognition of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage culture and enhance its cultural appeal.

Fifth, explore the cultural characteristics of local architecture, understand regional social culture, and reproduce social activities in a situational manner, allowing culture to be expressed from multiple perspectives. Simultaneously, increase cultural activities to enable audiences to better participate in cultural activities and expand the breadth and depth of culture. Further enrich the construction of modern urban culture, unify architectural heritage culture with modern urban development, and achieve the inheritance and development of traditional culture in contemporary society.

Sixth, in the process of restoring architectural heritage, the restoration process should be displayed on site, presented in a certain way, and the structure, craftsmanship, decoration, and other contents of the building should be educated through science popularization. Enable cultural participants to have a deeper and closer experience of architectural heritage culture. Simultaneously, cultural and creative product design can also be carried out around architectural heritage, creating cultural heritage and allowing more people to experience the spirit and aesthetics of ancient culture.

5.2 Discussion of the Results

This study focuses on the interpretation of the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City, sorting out the historical, cultural, and humanistic aspects of Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage and combining traditional Chinese cultural ideas to provide a new interpretation of the cultural expression of architectural heritage. Propose three dimensions for interpreting architectural heritage culture, namely material

dimension, social dimension, and spiritual dimension. We proposed suggestions to safeguard the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City.

The interpretation and research on the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City mainly adopts qualitative analysis.

The research has focused on history, culture, and humanities from a material perspective. The research objects selected are national cultural relics protection units and representative architectural heritage sites. Other levels of architectural heritage in Pingyao Ancient City have not been the subject of any investigation. The research objects are special.

In terms of the social dimension, the understanding and interpretation of the cultural function of Pingyao Ancient City architectural heritage was conducted through interviews with Pingyao Ancient City managers, tour guides, merchants, residents, and tourists. We redefined the function of Pingyao Ancient City culture in the new era, from macro protection policies to micro daily life. Simultaneously, corresponding research was also conducted on the protection of Pingyao Ancient City architectural heritage culture, providing a path for the inheritance and development of architectural heritage culture. Due to the different cultural backgrounds of the interviewees, the expression of content and opinions is subjective and emotional, so it is inevitable that objectivity will be lost in the later recording and sorting process.

In terms of the spiritual dimension, an analysis of traditional culture's influence on the architectural layout of Pingyao Ancient City was conducted to establish its cultural expression in architecture. This interpretation represents a significant but not exhaustive understanding of traditional Chinese culture within Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage.

The research primarily focuses on the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City, interpreting the manifestations of traditional Chinese culture within architectural heritage. It explores the artistic expression of traditional Chinese culture in architectural heritage. There is relatively little discussion of contemporary culture within Pingyao Ancient City's architectural heritage, with a focus on discussing architectural

aesthetics from a historical perspective. However, there is a lack of discussion about people's aesthetic experiences with architectural heritage.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Study

The development of Pingyao Ancient City has entered the era of cultural creativity, cultural consumption, and network economy. The lifestyle and living environment of the residents in the ancient city are changing, and people's pursuit of cultural life is constantly increasing. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City has specific historical forms and cultural attributes, providing material space for the generation and creation of culture. It is a combination of history and reality, nature and humanity, and material and spirit. The architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City is a concentrated expression of traditional Chinese culture in architectural construction and decorative art and is also a typical representative of the living culture of the Han ethnic group in northern China. It provides a materialized form for modern people to explore culture and achieves spiritual recognition of traditional Chinese culture, becoming a symbol of culture.

This study explores the expression of architectural heritage culture based on the architectural heritage of Pingyao Ancient City and proposes three dimensions of architectural culture to further elaborate on architectural heritage culture. Pingyao Ancient City has its unique historical, cultural, and regional characteristics, so the explanatory model established in this study has universal applicability and needs more case studies to verify. Meanwhile, the research content can be further expanded to include the expression and protection of digital architectural heritage culture, such as exploring digital signal simulations of abstract cultural concepts. Conduct precise analysis of culture. Constructing mathematical model components for buildings to achieve virtual building modeling can enhance the alignment of architectural forms with cultural expressions. Starting from the public's perception of architectural heritage culture, this paper explores the compatibility and participation between the public and culture and practices the cultural protection of architectural heritage and the harmonious

development of urban culture in the process of urbanization development. The aim is to enhance the public's aesthetic appreciation of culture.

Secondly, this study mainly adopts qualitative research, primarily discussing the expression of architectural heritage culture, aesthetic perception of architectural heritage culture, and the protection and development of architectural heritage culture. Data collection mainly relies on text analysis, field investigations, and in-depth interviews, which are subjective to a certain extent. There are some limitations to this approach. Starting from research methods, quantitative research methods are mainly used to deeply measure the public's perception of architectural culture and cultural aesthetics, as well as to compare the understanding of architectural culture among different age groups. By establishing mathematical models and analyzing data, the study of architectural heritage culture becomes more objective.

The historical and cultural attributes of architecture are a cultural expression endowed by history. People cannot change a culture, but they can create one. The protection of architectural heritage is also based on the restoration and repair of historical objects, which maintain the original appearance of the buildings. People's understanding of culture through architectural heritage is not simply a static retelling of a culture, but rather an amplification of its influence through different forms. The interpretation of the architectural heritage culture of Pingyao Ancient City is in line with the development of the times and the contemporary people's reinterpretation of historical culture. While praising traditional Chinese culture, it expresses the contemporary people's understanding of culture. This highlights the importance of architectural heritage in inheriting culture, while also emphasizing the importance of people in the process of interpreting architectural culture, as well as their identification with their culture during the interpretation process, that is, the inheritance and protection of culture by people, and the cultural development and innovation endowed by the times.

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Appendix


Interviewee Information

Classification of interviewees	Government functional department staff	
Name	Chang Jun	
Gender	Male	
Age	52	
Occupation/Position	TV Program Producer	
Interview location	Yingze District, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province	
Interview time	February 14, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Government functional department staff	
Name	Yang Yang	
Gender	Female	
Age	38	
Occupation/Position	Pingyao Ancient City Media Editor	
Interview location	Yingze District, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province	
Interview time	February 17, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Government functional department staff	
Name	Yin Suping	
Gender	Female	
Age	38	
Occupation/Position	Director of the Ancient City Management Office	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 16, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Government functional department staff	
Name	Liu Hongping	
Gender	Female	
Age	36	
Occupation/Position	Staff member of the Ancient City Management Office	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 16, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Government functional department staff	
Name	Zheng Hong	
Gender	Female	
Age	36	
Occupation/Position	Staff member of the Ancient City Management Office	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 16, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Pingyao Ancient City Tour Guide	
Name	Dong Fang	
Gender	Female	
Age	38	
Occupation/Position	Pingyao Ancient City Tour Guide	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Pingyao Ancient City Tour Guide	
Name	Luo Xiaoyin	
Gender	Female	
Age	28	
Occupation/Position	Pingyao Ancient City Tour Guide	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Pingyao Ancient City Tour Guide	
Name	Li Ran	
Gender	Female	
Age	34	
Occupation/Position	Pingyao Ancient City Tour Guide	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Merchants and Residents	
Name	Zhu Yanan	
Gender	Female	
Age	34	
Occupation/Position	Merchant/Vinegar Brewing Workshop Manager	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 12, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Merchants and Residents	
Name	Liu Yuwen	
Gender	Male	
Age	30	
Occupation/Position	Merchant/Crafts Design and Sales	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 12, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Merchants and Residents	
Name	Liang Yixiang	
Gender	Male	
Age	38	
Occupation/Position	Merchant/Photography Shop Owner	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 12, 2024	


Classification of interviewees	Merchants and Residents	
Name	Wu Shigan	
Gender	Male	
Age	80	
Occupation/Position	Residents	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 12, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Merchants and Residents	
Name	Li Qi	
Gender	Female	
Age	34	
Occupation/Position	Residents	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Tourist	
Name	Li Ling	
Gender	Female	
Age	20	
Occupation/Position	University Student	
Interview location	Pingyao Railway Station	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Tourist	
Name	Zhang Jing	
Gender	Female	
Age	21	
Occupation/Position	University Student	
Interview location	Pingyao Railway Station	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Tourist	
Name	Li Chaoqi	
Gender	Male	
Age	19	
Occupation/Position	High School Student	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Tourist	
Name	Liang Ailian	
Gender	Female	
Age	52	
Occupation/Position	Retiree	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

Classification of interviewees	Tourist	
Name	Wang Lianfang	
Gender	Female	
Age	36	
Occupation/Position	Freelancer	
Interview location	Pingyao Ancient City Tourist Attraction	
Interview time	February 15, 2024	

NAME	Ming Liu
DATE OF BIRTH	16 November 1986
PLACE OF BIRTH	Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, China
HOME ADDRESS	Jinwan Community, Gulou Street, Yingze District, Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, China

