

The Traditional Chinese Culture and Lifestyle in Modern China

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This paper will probe the traditional Chinese cultural values and their impacts on modern Chinese life by reviewing related literature and the residents' contemporary living stories. The Chinese developmental inner drive is the great national spirit of unremitting self-improvement. This crucial spiritual fountainhead is Fu Xi, an admired Chinese national immemorial humanistic ancestor. In Chinese Tianshui City, the Fu Xi festival is a state-level affair, opening every year grandly. Chinese and foreign tourists all bent on their backs over those very charming series of cultural tourist scenes. They reveled in the features, including visiting the Fu Xi Temple, enjoying ancient music and dance, shopping at the temple fair, tasting local cuisine, and touring the dwellings and houses of the feudal dynastic style. Local modern service economies, such as the catering industry, also benefited from the fiesta. Ordinary residents Zhou Xiaolan and Zhou Xiaohui sisters were obligated to explain Fu Xi's story to tourists and children and inherited the excellent traditional national culture. Contemporary Chinese people strive for self-improvement, are inclusive and open, and work together to build a beautiful and harmonious country acceleratingly.

Keywords: Fu Xi's culture, temple fair economy, delicious food, traditional courtyard, compulsory narrate

INTRODUCTION

The Chinese people have taken shape and formed a distinctive national spirit through long historical quenching. By tracing to the root, the creational spirit of the Chinese humanistic ancestor named Fu Xi (Chinese phonetic symbol: fú xī) has been celebrated generation after generation, and the relevant cultural relics excavated by modern archaeologists have also proved this creational authenticity. Thus, the correlative polychrome ceremonies to commemorate Fu Xi become a drive for society to move forward continuously. According to some widespread historical stories, Tianshui City, Gansu Province in China, is the hometown of Fu Xi. Various related Fu Xi's inherited activities, such as the annual national memorial ceremony, social onward modal temple fair, and allegorical traditional food, all have significant economic and cultural benefits. For example, to express their inward deep gratitude to their remote ancestor, civilians regularly offer delicious food to them when participating in some worshipful activities. Over time, combining meaningful activities and local fine food gradually becomes a rich folk custom.

No one can fail to praise the special delicacies with rich traditional flavors that waft the fragrance of contemporary Tianshui City. Delicious food, on the one hand, attracts diners from all places; on the other hand, it promotes the revitalization of montane areas. The more powerful social demands for food and other commodities increase, the more prosperous commercial trading market attached to the Fu Xi temple fair appears. Bustling shopping from crowded buyers is like the monetary tide, indicating higher economic efficiency. At present, the expansion of consumption in the domestic market is inseparable from the

economic support of the folk temple fair. In Tianshui, the group of civil structural residential quadrangle courtyards of the Ming and Qing dynasties is another scenic spot, showing elegance, quiet, and longevity, and it mightily attract tourists. Contemporary Chinese must first undertake a solemn responsibility to use scientific methods to carefully protect those traditional and diversified quadrangle courtyards, which show “concretionary music” and reveal picturesque characteristics. Then, we will also moderately and commercially operate the historical dwellings of precious national cultural heritage to promote social and economic development. How beautiful is the motherland, attracting her sons and daughters to work hard and constantly innovate?

Inheritance and Sustainability for the Long-Standing National Spirit

The Chinese developmental inner drive is the great national spirit of unremitting self-improvement. This crucial spiritual fountainhead is Fu Xi, an admired Chinese national immemorial humanistic ancestor. This is a symbol that reveals the initial progressive state of Chinese civilization. Today, Fuxi’s spirit is still essential in realizing the national great rejuvenation of hundreds of millions of people.

Promote the Spirit of Fu Xi

The Chinese antique book titled *Classic of Changes-Hexagram Bi* (accomplished in early times of the Western Zhou Dynasty, c. 11th century-771 BC), regarding the human ancient classic, elaborated as follows: Observing the laws of heaven and earth recognize seasonal acceptable changes, and paying attention to humanity and culture civilize the whole public (Ji, c. 11th BC). Countless facts have proved that the Chinese national culture, steeled by history, is a central potent source in overcoming various risks and challenges on the road ahead. The Chinese culture is also a vital propelling power that satisfies the growing demands of modern people for a better life.

Since 1978, China’s reform and opening-up policy has led to sustained social and economic development. The vast motherland is rich in resources, and by them, hundreds of millions of people create material wealth to decorate the rivers and mountains with even more beauty. Some novel and appropriate national policies have been issued and implemented recently, and the resulting economic dividends have spread across the population. Hence, a very prominent social situation has emerged. Going on a trip has become common for civilians in China’s well-off society to live better. According to statistics released by the State Council of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), the total national population was more than 1.443 billion people by the end of 2020. Associating with this, the verified nationwide statistics describing what happened during the *China Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development (2016-2020)* manifested: “There is average annual personal travel more than four times. Through tourism, people can enjoy the beautiful scenery of the motherland’s mountains and rivers and feel its splendid cultural charm, significantly enhancing their sense of gain, happiness and security (State Council of PRC, 2021).”

Humans inherently long for a free, cheerful, and nature-friendly life, making the tourist industry flourish in the contemporary world, which includes serving personal leisure needs, such as visiting scenic spots and experiencing historical events. The world-famous ancient “Silk Road” has historical sites and scenic spots, attracting countless tourists. The historical starting place of the Silk Road is, at present, Xi’an City in Shaanxi Province, China. Six hundred fifty kilometers west of the starting place, there is the Fu Xi Temple, standing on the north bank of the Xihe River as a tributary of the Yellow River flowing through Tianshui City. It is the largest palatial architectural group commemorating the Chinese national immemorial humanistic ancestor named Fu Xi or the other honorific, Tai Hao, in northwest China. Since ancient times, civilians have constantly held the Fu Xi Fiesta in the Tianshui area, gradually evolving into a traditional folk activity. This fiesta is one of the Chinese historical witnesses and important cultural carriers. In 2006, the “Taihao Fu Xi Fiesta,” held at Tianshui City, was officially enrolled in *The First Batch of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List* by the State Council of PRC, arranging serial number 485, No. x-37(Zhou, 2006). This fiesta “contains the Chinese national unique spiritual value, thinking method, imagination and cultural awareness, and reflects the Chinese national vitality and creativity (State Council of PRC, 2006).” Many relics are related to the Fu Xi Fiesta in the mountains and riverine places, attracting tourists yearly.

They collectively converge to be an important source of nourishing the Chinese traditional excellent culture - the spirit of Fu Xi, reflecting exuberant and original “national vitality and creativity.” Fascinated visitors all are bowed down by the “splendid cultural charm” of the relics. Due to personally experiencing the obvious “sense of gain, happiness,” etc., from the historical sites, the tourists use different forms to express the same sentiments: Only cannot forget the own originals a nation will open up the future, and only can better inherit excellent traditional spirits the nation will innovate much more. In 2024, Chinese and foreign tourists’ diversified visitorial activities in Tianshui, such as enjoying Taihao Fu Xi Fiesta and experiencing distinctive local folklore, were more lively and large-scale than in previous years. A series of celebrational activities concretely and vividly demonstrated the “creative transformation and innovative development of excellent traditional Chinese culture (Yu, 2024).”

The Fu Xi Temple is a grand scale with complex, majestic palace-style architecture in Tianshui City. In front of the temple, a towering “Paifang” (Chinese phonetic symbol: pái fāng) or arch stands covering exquisite carvings and bright paintings. Chinese arch is a monumental, symbolic and decorative structure. It “highlights a strong traditional cultural heritage and atmosphere” and also exhibits “strong cultural confidence (Cai, 2022).” The monastic buildings mainly contain four catenate courtyards, interlinking one after another. In those courtyards, there are many cypresses with broad and deep serenity. An ancient Chinese scholar tree planted during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) by the specialists’ identification stands in the first courtyard. It’s tree-age of a thousand years more. Although the trunk is hollow, green leaves are still whirling on the branches. “The Heaven Palace” is the most magnificent main building in the temple. A unique giant color sculpture of Fu Xi is placed on a high platform in the palace. The sacrificial musical composition played in the Fu Xi Temple often echoes over some adjacent ancient stylistic residential courtyards, which belonged to a period of the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644) and Qing Dynasty (1636—1912). Those residents’ living behaviors were immersed in the traditional culture, like a long historical river, and everyone liked to use different forms to deduce and preach the spirit of Fu Xi.

Zhou Xiaolan, an affable housewife, lived in a residential courtyard of postal numbered “Daxiangdao” No. 9, one of the Ming and Qing dynasty’s stylistic residential houses closest to the Fu Xi Temple. She and her sister Zhou Xiaohui, a public official, and their family members volunteer to promote serialized Fu Xi culture in various ways, including explaining ancestral stories to young tourists and inheriting distinctive customs. The elders were eager to pass on their expectations of inheriting creational spirit and willingness to develop grand prospects for descendants through this ritual. The younger generation could more deeply understand the spirit of Fu Xi through this festival.

During the days of the Taihao Fu Xi Fiesta, Lady Zhou Xiaolan, Zhou Xiaohui sisters, and other elders led the younger people to go into the Fu Xi Temple collectively. Many solemn elders first reverently worshiped to bow with folding hands in the front of their chests in the most significant temple titled the Heaven Palace, orally calling honorific “Ren Zong Ye” (Chinese phonetic symbol: rén zōng yé) instead of Fu Xi. This folk appellation meant a noble human great-grandfather. At that moment, the ritual in the temple courtyard came into full swing. The ancient musical melody was echoing, and the psychedelic dance was being performed. The children carefully watched and attentively listened to everything about this grand ceremony. The dancers were pious and excited. They sometimes twirled and shouted, dancing majestically and spectacularly; sometimes, they moved steps lightly and smoothly, their soft bodies playing some living scenes to express profound meaning. Songs and dances were one after another with a warmer atmosphere. Many audiences could not help but jiggle their bodies. The inside and outside, everyone interacted with each other, and grandeur and grace followed the wind to diffuse. The fiesta made the public seek the historical experiences of inheriting Fu Xi’s spirit to carry it forward more permanently.

Ancient Chinese had worshipped great ancestors generationally in temples since prehistoric times. For example, since the end of the 19th century, in the northwest suburbs of Anyang City, Henan Province, archaeological professionals have excavated a massive relic titled the “Yin Ruins,” one of the capitals of the ancient Chinese Shang Dynasty (c.1600 -c.1046 BC). In the relic, more than 100,000 crucial paleontological bone fragments carved with ancient writings, mainly tortoise shells, backshells, and buffalo shoulder blade pieces, were successively unearthed. Those were called the “oracle bones,” primarily recording the historical events of the Shang Dynasty, such as the royal sacrifice of ancestors, divinations of

national affairs, and appearers or nothing of natural disasters etc. The scholars confirmed that the oracle bone was the earliest precious historical material to record historical events in China. The oracle bone of the Yin Ruins recorded the scene of the sacrificial dance. For example, an interpreted oracle bone revealed “Divination.” The “King” mainly played the “feather dance” for it. “Auspiciousness (Luo,1912; Luo and Luo,1912).” Contemporary archaeological scholars explained that the Shang Dynasty King prayed for divination. The King personally played the special “feather dance” by holding five-colored feathers to worship for a specific event and finally gained anticipant auspicious results.

The fiesta, befittingly collocated with music and dance, was a respectful system in the Shang Dynasty. During that long time, using the external means of sweet music and colorful dance to warm their inward emotions, the Shang people liked to adopt those means to pray for a harmonious and peaceful life. Dai Sheng, a liturgist of the ancient Chinese Western Han Dynasty (202 BC-8 AD), in his compilatory Confucian classic titled *The Book of Rites* (accomplished in the reign title of the Jian Chu 7th Year or 82 AD), expressed that: “Music, it expresses harmony between the heaven and earth.” “Because of harmony, all things can reproduce and grow (Dai, 82).” In the modern grand fiesta of the Fu Xi Temple, the mighty dance shakes the earth, and the honest and solemn music floats in the air, making the contemporary people realize the creational process of the ancient ancestors who pursued the unification of the world and the promising land.

The ancient official fiesta involved social stability and popular welfare, reflecting a mental state in the ruler’s introspected administration and self-regulation to continue governing the country. *The Classic of History-Sacrifice Gaozong*, an influential ancient Chinese classic, expounded: “For the great fiesta, it’s right to don’t give kinsfolks many material benefits (Confucius, 489 BC).” By offering sacrifices to ancestors in the temple, the ancient populace obeyed this meaningful ceremony, with generations one by one. Some ancient scholars believed the Chinese character “temple” is about the homophony of personal “looks” following the Chinese phonate. For example, an ancient Chinese classic titled *Baihu General Sense-Ancestral Temple*, compiled by a famous historian and writer named Ban Gu (32-92) during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), stated: “Temple, it means personal looks (Ban, 72).” Another ancient Chinese classic titled *Explain Names-Interprete Palaces*, composed by a historical linguist, Liu Xi, at the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, further interpreted: “Temple, it is a personal apparent image, imperially visualizing ancestral exterior (Liu,210).” The ancients called such a building a temple because they could subjectively see imaginary or virtual ancestors in that place. It is clear that the Chinese temple originally was a stately place where ancient nationality worshiped their imperial ancestor. Zuo Qiuming, a historian during a period medium-term of the ancient Chinese Warring States (476 -221 BC), wrote a historical classic titled *The Commentary of Zuo-Monarch Cheng- The Thirteen Years of Monarch Cheng*, and in it, formulated: “The country’s great events are sacrifice and military (Zuo, Warring States).” The significance of the sacrifice is that the later generation expresses their admiration for the ancestors’ innovation and is determined to inherit the spirit of advancement and self-reliance forever.

Many steles stand in a corridor of stone tablets in the Fu Xi Temple, Tianshui City, praising Fu Xi’s spirit of the anthropic-cultural ancestor from the inscriptions. Following the elders to worship the great ancestor, the children stood before the stone monuments for a long time while listening to the predecessors talk about the inscriptions. A stone tablet titled *Records of Rebuilding The Fu Xi Temple* was made in the reign of Jiajing Three (1524) during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and was a precious relic in children’s memory. That precious relic is 312 cm high from the forehead and body, 108 cm wide and 26.8-28 cm thick, decorated with beautifully carved cirrus patterns of clouds along the edge of the stone tablet. The entire inscriptions contain 828 characters. It praisingly expressed Fu Xi to “begin to draw the Innate Eight Trigrams” and gradually to be improved into “the Sixty-four Trigrams” by the later generations long after. These Chinese systematic hexagrams possessed the function of “solving many of the world’s problems (Jia, 2015).” The inscriptions stated the social innovations that happened during that particular era marked by Fu Xi, including the creation of original simple characters, the formulation of the marital system, the making of the banjo and the twenty-five-stringed plucked instrument, and the establish the multifarious official duties (Zhou, 2016). Especially those historically revered theories of the Eight Trigrams and the extended Sixty-four Trigrams are both extensive and profound cultural types in ancient China, expressing the unique

value of human civilization. In Shaodian Village, Wuying Township, Qin' a County in Tianshui City, the prehistoric human cultural relic - "Dadi Bay Site" (7800-4800 years ago), corroboration that it could indicate the authenticity of the ancient human activities represented by Fu Xi in a sense. Ancient ancestors established the primitive farming economy in that region, an emerging primitive culture. Thus, Chinese civilization took the most preliminary shape (Gansu Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, 2006).

The ancient story of Fu Xi, celebrated through the ages, appears again through various artistic forms in some sacrificial ceremonies in many places. Elders nod with full smiles to each other to praise the ancestors' creational spirit for injecting inexhaustible power into real life again. Children are happy to dance, burning passion in their hearts, imagining valorously doing the same beneficial human things as their ancestors in the future. The excellent traditional culture integrates into the populace's real lives and becomes the social drive to move forward continuously.

A Grand Alliance of Clans and Tribes

More and more archaeological research results on the remains of the Dadi Bay Site attest that it is the earliest Neolithic site found in China. The unearthed painted potteries also indicate that this site is one of the earliest ancient cultural relics in the world. Therefore, the culture of this relic possesses the original cultural source of many sites in the New Stone Period of China (Wu, Wu and Wang, 1984). Particular attention was paid to these cultural relics, which, in a sense, indicated several characteristics of primitive tribal activities represented by Fu Xi.

According to historical books and records, in immemorial times, many ancient clans and tribes in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River in China interacted with each other but attacked each other constantly. Fu Xi led the tribes to migrate eastward from the western region of the upper reaches of the Yellow River, then gradually united many clans and tribes activated in the middle reaches of the Yellow River. They formed a larger tribal alliance with the character of state power (Huang et al., 241). Thus, a unique grand scene of different tribes first appeared in Chinese history. Fu Xi is praised as the humanistic ancestor and revered as the Chinese national common ancestor, deserving the name undoubtedly. Therefore, since ancient times, the fiesta of Fu Xi has been a modality of Chinese national governance with a more extensive scope and higher specification.

The Confucian classic *The Book of Rites*, compiled by liturgist Dai Sheng during the ancient Chinese Western Han Dynasty (202 BC-8 AD), expounded the following idea: Of all the measures to govern the people, nothing is more critical than rites. There are five categories in the rites, none of which is more important than that of sacrificial rites. External factors do not force the so-called sacrifice but an action coming from a person's heart. Their hearts are so touched that they express these deep emotions through institutional rites. Hence, only demonstrating the sage who is sincere in heart can reveal the meaning of fiesta most fully (Dai, 82). In ancient Chinese history, the Qin Dynasty was the first feudal dynasty to establish a centralized authority (221 - 207 BC). In 672 BC, Qin Xuangong (? - 664 BC), once governing a small vassal kingdom called Qin and was the seventh king, held a grand sacrificial ceremony in the Wei River Valley, a tributary of the upper Yellow River. According to a famous book titled *The Records of the Historian· Offer Sacrifices to Heaven* (completed in 91 BC) by Sima Qian(145 - 86 BC?), a famous historian and writer in the ancient Chinese Western Han Dynasty, Qin Degong, the sixth King, had reigned for two years and died in 662 BC. The famous book recorded: "Four years later (672 BC), King Qin Xuangong built a unique ancestral hall on the south bank of the Wei River and worshiped Great Fu Xi (Sima, 91BC)." The kingdom embarked on the first precedent of publicly worshipping the humanistic ancestor in the territory. That sacrifice was conducive to gathering the various tribal populations engaged in the different economic production of nomadism and farming in the Qin kingdom and consolidating the dynastic rule. Thus, the significance of tribal unity and the consolidation of the political system expressed by the sacrifice was obvious.

Until now, the national-level sacrifice to Fu Xi has continued for more than 2700 years. Each dynastic government used sacrifice to unite different ethnic groups or tribes and stabilize the state system. The national-level worship of Fu Xi around present-day Tianshui City began during the imperial court of the

Jin Dynasty (1115-1234). The last emperor of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) was the Shun Emperor named Toghon Temür (1320–1370). In the imperial year titled Zhizheng Dinghai of Yuan Shun Emperor (1347), several imperial local officials specially carved a stony tablet titled *The Chancel Recorded Tablet on Fu Xi's Drawing Trigrams* (Yang and Zhang, 1990). Although the original tablet was lost, some historical books recorded tablet inscriptions. It detailed offering sacrifices to Fu Xi on Guatai Mountain in present-day Weinan Town, Meiji District, in Tianshui City (Zhang, 2020). According to the tablet inscription, the Yuan Dynasty emperor issued an imperial edict and ordered the officials to worship: “The officials must sacrifice on time. When the temple is damaged, the government will repair it (Shao, 2016).” The sacrificial purpose of ancient dynasties was to build and improve an efficient state political management system to govern by honoring the Chinese national ancestors. By the middle of the Ming Dynasty(1368-1644), the Fu Xi worship activities in the Tianshui area began to be gradually institutionalized and normalized, “Tianshui’s Fu Xi Temple once became a national center of Fu Xi worship (Xi, 2022).”

To aspire to pursue historic prosperity, predecessors in every nation carefully refine their experiences and theories from memory and pass them on to future generations. Later generations inherit, apply and develop the progenitor’s experience and wisdom through many methods of learning and remembering. Saint Aurelius Augustinus (354-430), a famous philosopher and pioneer of thoughts in Ancient Rome (c. 753 BC-1453 AD), wrote the book *The Confessions*. He believed that people stored the observational images of the world as memory and then condensed them into scientific theory to guide future action. But, the vast memorial sky contained more than those images. The philosopher elaborated: “There is also unforgotten scholarly knowledge, which seems to lurk in the deeper vault.” He said human memory “stores, not the images, but the knowledge itself.” Augustinus generalized: “Memory holds it all in its vast storehouse, hidden somewhere deep and crooked, to prepare to use in the time needed (Augustinus, 420).” The immemorial ancestral entrepreneurial history and the Chinese nation’s pushing spirit are the nation’s precious memories to march on.

In Tianshui City, the public presently holds the grand memorial ceremony of Fu Xi on the 13th of the fifth Month Chinese Lunar every year. For example, on June 21, 2024, the Taihao Fu Xi Fiesta was celebrated in Tianshui. Booming drums, sonorous bells, aflutter flags, and melodious music, how solemn and grand were the great fiesta! The public worshipped and bowed. Gansu Province Nomarch Ren Zhenhe respectfully read an enthused and motivating tribute: “Great sage Fu Xi, glory feat establishing. Originate the Eight Trigrams, enable civilizational dawn.” The Fu Xi ceremony was celebrated simultaneously in New Taipei City, Taiwan Province in China, on the same day. Offering sacrifices to Fu Xi on both sides of the Taiwan Strait strongly manifested “the same root and ancestor, thus the Chinese worship together (Zhang, 2024).” Fu Xi’s characteristic represents the incipient Chinese civilization, inheriting and brightening forever.

Prosperous Mountain Villages From Special Natural Delicacy

According to the classical records, the public most praised sage Fu Xi primarily drew the innate Eight Trigrams when offering sacrifices to this great ancestor. The immemorial clan tribes walked out of the most primitive, chaotic world with the theoretical help of the trigrams. The social economy gradually shifted from hunter-gatherers to farming and raising livestock. People diligently and actively work to obtain the most crucial food in life.

Special Cakes Contain Profound Meaning

In the basic philosophical system of the Chinese nation, there is an ancient theoretical system, Eight Trigrams, which is unique in the world and still full of vigor today. The ancient Chinese classic *Classic of Changes · The Great Appendix II* also elaborated as follows (Ancestors. c. 11th BC):

Anciently, when Fu Xi had come to the rule of all under heaven, looking up, he contemplating the brilliant forms exhibited in the sky and looking down, he surveyed the patterns shown on the earth. He observed the ornamental appearances of birds and beasts and the multiform agrarian suitabilities. Near at hand, including himself, he found things

for consideration, and the same at a distance, he also pondered various things. After that, Fu Xi devised the eight trigrams for the first time to show the attributes of the spirit-like and intelligent entirely by devoutly operating and following the laws of innumerable things.
- *Classic of Changes-The Great Appendix c. 11th BC*

The book detailed the “Eight Trigrams Theory” or the “Tai Ji Diagram” and was also called the “Yin-Yang Theory” etc. Chinese “Yin” means feminine, and “Yang” means masculine.

In the first period of cultural relics unearthed in the Dadiwan Site, on the inner wall of more than 20 pot-typed utensils and some ceramic pieces, there are more than ten kinds of different patternable painted symbols such as “↑,” “-,” “×,” “|” and “+” etc. After researching them, scholars believed they were not continuous but might assume they contained some functions to record things (Cultural Relics Work Team of Gansu Provincial Museum,1982). Contemporary scholars believe our ancestors may have used those nicks to indicate something thousands of years ago. They may possess one of the functions titled “Specify Thing,” which was first named by ancient scholars when they created Chinese block-type characters.

The “Specify Thing” as one of the methods used to create Chinese characters was proposed by Xu Shen (c. 58- c. 147), a scholar of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220) in ancient China. So, he was addressed respectfully as a “Saint of Chinese Character” when researching the source of Chinese characters. Xu Shen wrote the famous classic book titled *Theory and Practice of Chinese Characters* (completed in 121) and stated: “Specify Thing means to know its significance by looking at and to consider its content by observing, meanwhile, thinking the character’s background (Xu, 121).” Specifically, it is to use symbolic symbols to express the meaning of a thing or to add a symbol to a pictographic word to represent a new meaning. The Banpo Site (6000-6700 years ago), located in Baqiao District, Xi’an City in Shaanxi Province, is the ancient human cultural remains of the New Period of China. This site existed about 1100 years later than the Dadi Bay Site. Some symbols on the cultural relics on this site are similar to the homogeneous symbols on the other relics on the Dadi Bay Site.

A famous Chinese scholar named Guo Moruo (1892-1978) studied the symbols carved or painted on the cultural relics of the Banpo Site and expressed: “It can certainly be said that it is the origin of Chinese character, or the relict of Chinese original character (Guo, 1972).” It can be considered that the painted symbols on the cultural relics in the Dadi Bay Site may be the earliest prototype of Chinese characters. They are of great significance to study the ancient Chinese wordy development. In brief, the culture of Fu Xi with the Eight Diagrams Theory as the essential content is the reality of China’s prehistoric history. The Eight Diagrams is a systematic integrational theory of natural and social science, expounding the developmental law of the objective world. This system profoundly influenced the Chinese descendants, giving birth to some critical schools of philosophical thought such as Confucianism, Taoism, military and peasant philosophy, etc. Moreover, this set of theories with ancient Chinese characteristics has spread throughout the present East Asian countries throughout history.

Although the *Classic of Changes* has been out for thousands of years, some important sections and chapters, such as the Eight Trigrams or the Yin-Yang Theory, are still vividly alive. For example, the *Classic of Changes-Qian Trigrams and Kun Trigrams* states as follows: As heaven maintains vigor through movement, a gentleman should constantly strive for self-perfection; as the earth keeps thick and amiable, a gentleman should hold the outer world with a broad mind and outstanding moral character (Ancestors, c. 11th BC). This is a high generalization of the Chinese national cultural elemental spirit. Gu Donghui, professor and doctoral supervisor of the College of Social Development and Public Policy at Fudan University, Shanghai City in China, considered: “The Yin-Yang is a special term to reflect Chinese culture, covering everything and changing dynamically (Gu,2017).” Scholar Kevin Dewayne Hughes recommends that more folk learn the Tai Ji Diagram and the Eight Trigrams or the Yin-Yang Theory. He systematically elaborated: “This ancient theory is compatible with modern scientific understanding(Hughes,2022).” It can be said that the Yin-Yang Theory represented by the image of the Taiji Diagram is the ancient Chinese wisdom flicker, appearing highly condensed Chinese cultural quintessence.

The Eight Diagrams Theory expresses the harmonious idea of man and nature, exhibiting a lofty realm. This theory starts with the extensive, profound and magnificent Chinese culture. Thus, Fu Xi’s culture is

the original culture of the excellent traditional culture in China. The Eight Diagrams profoundly influenced the Chinese national thinking method while promoting the continuous progress of human civilization. For example, nearly a fifth of the world uses block-type Chinese characters. In the current information age, the information of Chinese characters is like the vast sea. Chinese civilization has become the only civilization in the world whose vigorous life has lasted for 5,000 years without interruption, an essential secret of which lies in the long history of Fu Xi's culture. It is an incumbent mission for the contemporary Chinese people to learn the culture of Fu Xi and carry forward the Chinese national spirit.

On the Taihao Fu Xi Fiesta days, the folks often make several unique dishes to express their sincere desire to worship and inherit the avital spirit in Tianshui. During the legendary period of Fu Xi, our distant parental ancestors began to reclaim land, sow and finally harvest grains for life. Like the neighbors, Lady Zhou Xiaolan and Zhou Xiaohui sisters also cooked several kinds of food on those special days, sincerely thanking the national ancestors for their outstanding achievements. Among them, a multilayer wheat flour pastry was particularly tempting. It is as follows:

Preparing a pot of wheat flour, you mix it into dough to ferment. Carefully select a dish of walnuts, sesame seeds, peanuts, melon seeds, etc., stir fry and cut up, and add sugar and sesame oil to make the delicious filling. Evenly dividing the fermented flour into more than ten small cakes, you roll them into a round, thin floury cake one by one and add the filling to spread on it regularly. It's with the second cake, added with the filling and spread out. One round wheat flour cake is covered on top of the other, overlapping up to ten layers. Mark spice star anise shapes several beautiful patterns on the top cake's surface. Your final step is to place the multilayer cakes in a bamboo steamer over an iron pan. Burn the stove fire, boil the water, and steam the cakes for 30 minutes, fluttering fragrant finally. This pastry is delicious significantly. The multilayer wheatflour pastry means that the human cultural ancestor Fu Xi led the tribals to create a good life that is better year by year.

When making a memorable delicacy, Lady Zhou Xiaolan always told a story. She held a chopstick and gestured: "Ren Zong Ye waves his hand to draw a painting along a transverse line named 'one' (Chinese, the first ordinal number is a long transverse line). "She drew again and cut the long transverse line from the middle, becoming the two short horizontal lines. "The two symbols of a long transverse line and two short horizontal lines represent the concepts 'Yang' and 'Yin' respectively." She continuously expressed that Fu Xi arranged a long transverse line and two short horizontal lines per the set order, with different levels up and down, gaining many combinations of long and short transverse lines. Lady Zhou Xiaohui followed : "Fu Xi first made the most primitive horizontal line combinations of the Eight Trigrams, or called 'the Innate Eight Trigrams.'" She excitedly said again: "More sixty-four combinations are called 'the Sixty-four Trigrams.'" The elder's indoctrination enlightened the younger generation. The Sixty-four Trigrams Theory was again arranged by the set orders, forming more than 2000 basic arranged combinations. Each of these combinations was called a "Divinatory Symbol." Modern in-depth research reveals that this kind of Divinatory Symbol can express or predict some shifty law of the objective world. People use these symbols to resolve questions and make decisions faster. The combinational form of horizontal one long and two short lines and the Yin-Yang Theory may seem simple, but they are the cornerstone of Chinese culture.

Professor Marcus Hernig, a previous president of the Goethe Institute in Kyoto, Japan (2011-2014), published a 400-page German monograph to expound on Chinese popular cultural and dietary connotations in 2012. He stated, "One needs to understand Chinese food to understand Chinese culture (Hernig, 2012)." Another scholar, Philipp Demgenski, also deeply evaluated Chinese food, "its cultural importance, international fame, and as a source of national pride." The significance of Chinese idiomatical food is excellent and goes beyond the single nature of itself. Thus, he also proposed better proposals to promote Chinese food to the international market (Demgenski, 2020). Chinese national food reflects thousands of historical years, moving forward continuously. Local delicacy in Tianshui blossoms in radiant splendor, on the one hand, to show the national culture and development, on the other hand, to fill the surrounding air with a tempting fragrance.

Natural “Wulongtou” Dishes Bring Wealth

The first human need in the world is food. Sima Qian(145-87 BC), a great historian, writer and thinker in the ancient Chinese Western Han Dynasty(202 BC-8 AD), refinedly expressed in his famous classic titled *The Historical Records-Li Sheng Lu Jia Biography* (completed in 91BC): “The king takes the people as heaven, and the people take the food as heaven (Sima, 91BC).” Characteristic food in Tianshui, on the one hand, supplies the demotic daily needs; on the other hand, it implies the national enterprising history and sequentially boosts modern social and economic development. A home-cooked dish Tianshui residents used to eat has become an export commodity for mountain farmers to make their lives richer and villages prosperous.

The ancient Chinese created the “Twenty-four Solar Terms” of the lunar calendar, which were included in the UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* in November 2016, to cultivate crops per the laws of climate and phenology throughout history. “Qingming Festival” (also known as Pure Brightness Festival), one of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in China, ends each time on April 4 or 5 in the Gregorian calendar. Whereafter, Lady Zhou Xiaolan and Zhou Xiaohui sisters would invariably cook a local special dish of inheriting traditional culinary art named “Wulongtou” (Chinese phonetic symbol: wū lóng tóu). The elder Zhou Xiaolan knew some traditional Chinese medicine, and she said: “After an adult ate Wulongtou, his blood could flow fluently. A child ate it, his pain would go away.” Indeed, those ethnic and local characteristic cuisines reflect many energetic factors such as historical, cultural, and economic vitalities. They are especially evident in implementing China’s reform and opening-up policy. The scientific name of Wulongtou is *Aralia chinensis* L., which is classified into *Aralia* *Araliaceae*, deciduous shrubs, or small trees. This deciduous shrub grows edible buds each year in late spring and early summer, shaping conical flowers with purplish red, which means local colloquially known as Wulongtou. It is rich with many demic-required amino acids and mineral elements such as calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, zinc etc. It is both a vegetable and herb plant. As a food, Wulongtou tastes sweet, tender, and mellow, considered “the king of wild vegetables.” It can be cooked as a refreshing cold dish, quick-fried vegetables, or slow-stew one, perfuming out. As traditional Chinese medicine, Wulongtou is often used to treat rheumatic limb joint pain and lumbar muscle acid. It also can unclog blood circulation to treat physical asthenia.

Every March, the younger Zhou Xiaohui used to contact the pedlar to buy Wulongtou and would cook the special dish in the traditional way preparatively. One of them is the following: Wulongtou on the deciduous shrubs slowly reveal purple buds in March. The buds grow up about four centimeters, meaning the best time to pick out. The best buds of Wulongtou are un-blossomed, surrounded by layer upon layer of its leaves. Zhou Xiaohui blanched the picked Wulongtou and then soaked it in cool water to remove its bitter taste, gaining a semi-finished product. In turn, prepare some seasonings, including shredded green peppers, a pinch of minced garlic, a pinch of salt, a few drops of sesame oil, half a teaspoon of vinegar etc. Then, place the salubrious semi-finished product on a plate, sprinkling the seasonings. You cooked a dish of Wulongtou finally. Its natural delicacy is unique, a strange fragrance filling the hall air. People also braise Wulongtou with chicken and beef; its taste is mellow, and its aroma is tangy. It takes a bite and is missing for a long time.

As stated in the article, the village farmers in the hinterland of Xiaolongshan Mountains around Tianshui City cultivated Wulongtou and exported them to overseas markets. Overseas customers will receive this green forest product, which is being marketed excellently. More robust overseas consumptive demand has stimulated the continuous expansion of domestic production. For example, Yaoer Village, administratively attached to Liubao Town, Zhangjiachuan Hui Autonomous County in Tianshui City, is located in the higher altitude range of Xiaolongshan Mountain. The regional climate is late warm in spring and early cool in autumn, with more significant differences in temperature between day and night. The village farmers mainly used to produce grain crops but had more considerable input and lower income. The geographical conditions are not conducive to cultivating grain crops there. In recent years, the farmers in the Yaoer Village have deeply implemented reformatinal measures by local conditions and established some green breeding professional cooperatives. Adopting a new development model of “cooperative + family farm + individual,” the farmers actively have planted local characteristic floristic delicacy

Wulongtou (Xu, 2018). The relevant departments conducted the formal audit following the *Administrative Measures for Geographical Indications of Agricultural Products* implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture of PRC on February 1, 2008. The authoritative professional institute determined that the Wulongtou products cultivated by the Yaoer Village and others possessed “unique qualitative characteristics,” their formation “mainly depends on the unique natural ecological environment and humane and historical factors” and other standard conditions. Thus, the Wulongtou in Yaoer Village was given the “Geographical Indication of Chinese Agricultural Products” certificate (Ministry of Agriculture of PRC, 2007).”

This rural reform has opened up a new frontier for economic development in Yaoer Village. For example, villagers Yang Yilan’s family grew wheat, potatoes, and other crops, earning an annual income of about Ren Min Bi (RMB) 9000 *yuan*/hectare. Those farmers gained meager income following annual accounts, excluding fertilizer, pesticides and labor costs. In recent years, the family has switched to growing Wulongtou. Yang Yilan happily expressed: “We will grow 4,950 Wulongtous on 1 hectare of land, and the minimum yield will be 1500-2250 kg/1 hectare during the peak period. According to the marketable bottom price of ¥30/ kilo, the minimum income will get ¥ 45000-67500 *yuan* per hectare.” This farmer also calculated a long-term investment. “Here, it usually takes one year for us to plant Wulongtou, pick it out within two years, and gain a high yield within triennium. Its market demand is larger, and I will gain better economic results.” In 2022, Wulongtou’s cultivation area reached more than 87 hectares in the village, and the total revenue was more than RMB two million *yuan* by the end of the year(Shao,2022).

On the one hand, the farmers in Yaoer Village vigorously cultivated the Wulongtou; on the other hand, they developed rural tourism and other projects to link up the rural revitalization operation effectively. Nowadays, every village under the jurisdiction of Liupbao Town’s administration generally cultivates Wulongtou. Every year, the fresh Wulongtou produced there is snapped up as soon as it goes on sale. At the same time, “as a rare wild vegetable, Wulongtou is one of the main wild vegetable export varieties (Chen, Che and Zhao, 2014)” in this town and other neighboring mountainous areas. Gansu Province’s customs actively organized the export of Wulongtou. Feedback showed that consumers in overseas markets welcomed this green product warmly. Today, the planting and marketing of Wulongtou have become a particular road toward a more affluent village. The prosperous developmental scene of once-unknown mountainous villages has appeared.

The wisdom and transmission of ancient ancestors and the inheritance and development of contemporary people constitute a drive to realize Chinese national rejuvenation. Wulongtou is more than just a portion of food; it is more critical. This unique delicacy is a prerequisite to attracting ordinary residents to consume. Just-in-time delivery guarantees market supply, such as the farmers in Yaoer Village’s increased planting of the deciduous shrubs of Wulongtou. The social consumptive increase stimulates the productional scalar expansion and promotes continuous industrial upgrading, gradually leading to economic prosperity and demotic well-being. Consumption and production are closely linked, operating in cycles. The country’s governance follows this objective law. In 2023, China’s sustained economic and stable development relied on various political and methodological implementations in expanded consumption. The administrative machinery of provinces and cities actively “improve consumptive conditions, innovate consumptive scenarios, optimize the consumptive surroundings, create a good consumptive atmosphere, and safeguard consumers’ legitimate rights and interests. “All parts of society collectively “promote consumptive increasing recovery and high-quality industrial development (General Office of Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2023).” China’s economic train is moving along this track.

Traditional Temple Fairs With Consumer Market

Chinese historical temple sacrifice is increasingly associated with commercial transactions. Crowds gather around the temple to interact with each other, and the productive trade rises from the tide. So, such a folk gathering is called the “temple fair.” The temple fair has been essential to social, economic, and cultural life for thousands of years. Modern economic development using the reborn traditional method is one of the proper selective routes.

Tidal Crowd Means the Monetary Tide

During the Taihao Fu Xi Fiesta days in Tianshui City, traditional temple fair activities were grandly open in the streets. The temple fair carries vibrant marketable transactions and multitudinous folk cultural activities. The lively fair, without exception, made adults and children very happy. When the Zhou sisters were volunteer interpreters during the Fu Xi sacrifice, children liked to go after the amiable elders to listen to historical stories. Later, the innocent children followed them from the sacrificial place to visit the commercial and famous temple fair outside, where the lively scene made the children bounce around all day without crying tiredness out.

As early as the ancient Chinese Shang Dynasty (c. 1600 -1046 BC), people relied on the temple to sacredly worship their holy ancestors (Wang, 1988). Gradually, this fete was associated with daily life and economic production, such as the ordinary person's birthday and marriage, field husbandry etc. (Chen and Huang, 1948). With the social and economic development, the fete appeared to have some comprehensive socially active characteristics, including the folk worshipping icons, exchanging feelings, dealing goods etc. The name "temple fair" comes from this. In modern society, the social and economic functions of the temple fair have increasingly become prominent and gradually evolved into an industrial chain (Kong, 2009). The tractive role of intangible cultural heritage in consumptively stimulating production becomes so apparent that it deserves continued high-quality management to unleash more potential.

The temple fair is always a grand occasion in Tianshui City. During the pyrotechnic days, various shops and stalls in the streets and alleys were open to welcome visitors, selling diversified goods. Many sellers are rural farmers, primarily relying on zero-hour stalls to market their fresh produce. Facing green products, instant buyers buy them one by one like a tidal wave. The children excitedly followed the Zhou sisters at the temple fair through choppy crowds.

On one side, elder Zhou Xiaolan evaluated needful goods and bought; on the other, she repeatedly said: "Continuous mountains, choppy the sea, all are not as prosperous as crowds." The convivial crowd stimulated children with boundless pleasure. They ran to stand in the front of the shop one by one to watch the commodities, begging the elder to buy goods for them.

Younger Zhou Xiaohui accepted some packets of sugar for them in a shop. The merchant's face wreathed with smiles, and the children shouted and jumped with happiness. The elder said joyously, leaving the shop, "The tide of people is the tide of money." Looking at the thriving commercial trading scenes around her, she added: "Everyone can make money and have a good day." This common saying contained profound meaning.

Karl Marx once said: "Consumption is also direct production, just as in nature the consumption of elements and chemicals is the production of plants (Marx,1857)." Urban residents buy farmers' self-produced agricultural products, and this consumption partly converts into farmers' reproductive investment funds. The more purchases in the market, the more investment in reproduction. With money in their pockets, the peasants will begin to be rich and build themselves beautiful villages confidently. "As a result, a mutual stimulative optimum circle of consumption and investment has formed (Liu and Wang, 2024)," undoubtedly seizing the historic opportunity; in other words, it is also the challenge of a new developmental stage. Housewife Zhou Xiaolan's plain language explained the profound principles of economics and enlightened the children on commercial, economic developmental law.

The commercial and managerial departments of Tianshui City implemented special preferential regulations during the days of the temple fair. For instance, the governors allowed farmers to set up zero-hour commercial counters in some busy streets, normally prohibited market-oriented trade at ordinary times, and allowed them to freely sell multifold goods without paying taxes, etc. Such preferential policies attracted many peasants who lived in mountainous areas to carry native products into the city to trade. Municipal staff and social volunteers actively maintained the commercial order of the temple fair. They implemented innovative and inclusive business approaches, quickly resolved transactional difficulties, and warmly served merchants and customers. The atmosphere at the temple fair was warm, the trades were prosperous, and both buyers and sellers were happy. Scholars Sabine Löbbe and Fereidoon Sioshansi et al. have researched marketable management and corporate operation in depth. They believed "a customer-centered, market-driven and welfare-enhancing management approach must be implemented." This could

attract more consumers and optimize costs. To this end, different administrative bodies should determine “the welfare considerations for citizens and society on a local and national level,” and at the same time, also should “consider different community designs and evolve commercial models (Löbbe and Sioshansi et al., 2022).” Sabine Löbbe is a professor of energy economics and business administration at Reutlingen University, Germany. Dr. Fereidoon Sioshansi is the President of Menlo Energy Economics, a consulting firm based in San Francisco, America. Following economic law is the only way for businesses to thrive worldwide.

Booming Catering Industry Stimulates Economic Development

During the days of every temple fair in Tianshui City, street shops and mobile vendors sell various special foods in urban areas. This scene is rooted in the traditional ritual of offering food to ancestors. Confucius, a sage of ancient China, once said that even if foods were coarse rice and vegetable soup, we would take some of them out for sacrifice before eating, and this fete should be as severe and respectful as when fasting (Confucius’ disciples recorded, c.540 -400 BC). Greatly thanking ancestors to grace younger generations, inferiors always inherit the traditional benevolent virtues of loyalty to respect for elders and filial piety. During the long period of history, including the special days of the temple fair, this concept of etiquette, advocated by famous sages to moisten daily life in addition to, often tended to rise with the occasion and expressed itself more strongly.

During the days of the temple fair in Tianshui, many local characteristic delicacies appeared together for the public to taste. Thick, sweet and fragrance floating over the streets and alleyways, tantalizing your stomach. On the roads, the food stalls are either steaming hot, wafting incense, or bright colors, attracting more. The sellers all smile, and the buyers happily pick at random. When bargaining for the goods, the seller often gives in first, and the buyer will be content swiftly. The deal is done, and everyone is happy. The situation of “the temple fair + market” is the national historical and cultural inheritance and the drive of modern social and economic development. The delicious sale vividly illustrates economic laws, traditional etiquette, and local characteristics.

Tianshui City belongs to the northern hemisphere’s semi-humid continental monsoon climate zone. The average annual rainfall is 450 to 600 mm, with 185 frost-free days and abundant sunlight. The region has more than 260 large and small rivers and tributaries, such as the Jialing River, the Weihe River, and the Xihe River, which distribute many small diluvial plains and valleys. The organic matter content in soil is higher there (Local Historical Annal Committee of Gansu Province, 2018). Because the climate and soil are suitable for crops and other plants, there is a wide variety of local food, including cereal such as rice, wheat and corn and fruits such as muskmelon in May, cherry in June, apple in October etc. The timely availability of seasonal ingredients makes local food fresh and attractive.

Mr. Fan Changjiang (1909-1970) was an outstanding journalist in China. “The Fan Changjiang Journalism Award,” named after him in 1991, is among the highest awards in Chinese journalism. Fan Changjiang commented in his book *China’s Northwest Corner-Some Situational Stories in Shaanxi-Gansu Province*: “Civilians in Gansu Province speak about Tianshui just like civilians in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces to tell about Suzhou and Hangzhou cities. They consider it a place with beautiful scenery, rich products and beautiful persons (Fan, 1936).” Thus, “Long Shang Jiang Nan” (Chinese pinyin symbol: lǒng shǎng jiāng nán) is another good urban name for Tianshui City, meaning “nice regions like the south of the Changjiang River.” Based on abundant resources, Tianshui’s people imaginatively use edible materials to cook delicacies. Those fine foods make society stable and prosperous and satisfy folk’s tastes. Food is the public’s livelihood and the country’s foundation. There are many popular cooking methods in Tianshui, including boiling, steaming, frying, roasting, simmering, pickling, drying, etc. They cover almost every method of Chinese cooking. Therefore, the delicious food, favorable climate, etc., attract large numbers of alien populations to settle here. The local society is also known for its prosperity and tranquility in northwest China.

At present, exemplary management at all levels of the catering industry is the crucial factor leading to the continuous balance of quality and quantity in Tianshui’s cuisine. Conforming to the epochal developmental trend is necessary to promote the increasingly close integration of novel digitized science

and technology and traditional cooking methods. For example, practitioners, from high-end restaurants to corner stalls, should sincerely and consciously adopt the concept of “ensuring quality and standardized supply of ingredients from the source” to achieve the culinary service of “original taste and flavor” for customers. To this end, more restaurants must try to establish “the entire industrial chain from food production to consumers (China National Radio et al., 2022)” including a closed loop of raw material production, alimentary material circulation, catering processing, and terminal consumer. Because the laboral refined division progressively appears normal in the market, the new operational restaurants of fresh taste, complete nutrition and fast delivery have become more and more. These enterprises have obtained better profits since they satisfied the consumptive demands of “more and more diversification (China National Radio et al., 2022). “

Adam Smith (1723-1790) was regarded as the “father of economics” of modern society. In 1776, Smith first systematically put forward the theory of laboral division in his academic monograph titled *An Inquiry Into The Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (abbr. *the Wealth of Nations*). This book began with the theme without a preamble (Smith, 1776):

The most significant improvement in the productive powers of labor and the greater part of the skill, talent, and judgment with which it is directed or applied seems to have been the effects of the division of labor.

- Adam Smith 1776

Focusing on reform, the modern catering industry in Tianshui, China, increasingly applies digital technology and strengthens specialized labor divisions. Then, the various processes of the culinary industry chain become closely linked and interlocking. Scientific management lays the foundation of productive growth.

The employees of the modern catering industry in Tianshui already have relied on hard work to win the market and obtain high benefits. In 2013, the turnover of the catering industry in Tianshui City was RMB 5.26 billion *yuan* (848.99 million US dollars; The central parity rate of People’s Bank of China in 2013, the RMB *yuan* converted the US *dollar*: ¥1 = \$0.1614), an increase of 18.1% over the previous year(Tianshui,2014). In 2018, the turnover of the catering industry in Tianshui City was ¥ 8.72 billion (\$ 1.31885 billion; The central parity rate of People’s Bank of China in 2018: ¥1 = \$0.15124), up 12.6% year on year(Tianshui,2019). From 2020 to 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic raged worldwide, dragging down the world economy and causing it to shrink. The catering industry in Tianshui City created new achievements in adversity. In 2021, badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, Tianshui City still recorded a 20.2% increase in food and beverage revenue compared with the previous year, according to consumptive patterns (Tianshui,2022). In 2023, food and beverage revenue continuously grew by 20.2% compared to 2022 (Tianshui, 2024). The most well-known is the Tianshui delicacy, inherited and carried forward by the excellent traditional Chinese culture from generation to generation.

Wonderful Music Upon the Courtyard of Ming and Qing Dynasties

Several traditional residential quadrangle courtyards with civil structures are near the Fu Xi Temple in Tianshui City. On the one hand, these courtyards protect residents from wind and rain from living and learning; on the other hand, they highlight architectural art’s historical and national beauty. Living in it gives the body more pleasure.

The Charm of the Quadrangle Courtyard

The ancient Chinese Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) are known for their imperial architecture and cultural achievements. The basic layout of the royal architecture is a magnificent variant community of the quadrangle dwelling style. The “Siheyuan” (Chinese phonetic symbol: sì hé yuàn), meaning quadrangle courtyard, is a typical feature of traditional Chinese architecture with a history of more than 3,000 years, consisting of four buildings surrounding a central courtyard. The Siheyuan near

the Fu Xi Temple in Tianshui, preserved from the Ming and Qing dynasties to the present, is quaint and charming, and it is the precious wealth of ancient Chinese architecture.

In ancient Greek mythology, Orpheus, the god of music, had a lyre. He played melodious tunes to touch birds and animals and to make wood and stones from various buildings in the open space, following his musical rhythm and melody. Inspired by this, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854), a prominent German philosopher, said: "Architecture is concretionary music (Schelling, 1845)." A few decades later, Moritz Hauptmann (1792-1868), a noted German musical theorist and composer, added: "Music is a flowing building (Hauptmann, 1888)."

So far, in some places of Tianshui City, including the vicinity of Fu Xi Temple, "there is the abundant and distinctive retained group of civil structural residential quadrangle courtyards of the Ming and Qing dynasties, "revealing strong ethnic customs and distinct regional characteristics. These remaining "buildings of the Ming and Qing dynasties blend the two characteristics of the rugged and vigorous northern folk house and the beautiful and delicate southern one (Sun, 2017)," containing the Chinese profound humanistic traditional culture. Nowadays, many young and middle-aged people from Tianshui never forget their hometown's warm family, elegant surroundings and rich stories, deriving from their "Ming and Qing dynasties civil structure residential Siheyuan," when they went out to hard work in the fast, intense commercial market in metropolises.

A quadrangle dwelling, where the Zhou sister's family lived and was postcoded "Daxiangdao" No. 9, is of antique beauty. It is "one kind of ethnic and traditional built-up courtyard." This architectural component feature manifested: "There are houses on all sides and a courtyard in the middle." The city's quadrangle dwelling depends on the street and the alley. Thus, "The quadrangle courtyards and alley are integrated into one (Zhu, 2020)." The family's quadrangle dwelling displays a well-preserved style of the Ming Dynasty. The walls of all houses in this courtyard are of cyan bricks, and each roof of the house is the traditional type of "Ying Shan Ding (Chinese phonetic symbol: yìng shān dǐng)," possessing the five roofing ridges and two roofing slopes covered by cambered tiles. The type of Ying Shan Ding means the roof is shaped like a rocky peak. This typological roof "appeared in the middle and late Ming Dynasty." These roofs were first used to set up ancient civil and residential buildings, but "They gradually were adopted by royal architecture (Guo, 2006)."

On both outsides of this courtyard gate, a pair of richly carved and allegorical stony seats stand up called "Bao Gu Shi" (Chinese phonetic symbol: bào gǔ shí) or "Drum-shaped Bearing Stone." In China, these diversified stony carvings in front of the gate play several symbolic roles in the traditional courtyard architecture. "The Drum-shaped Bearing Stone reflects a person's pursuit and yearning for a better life and carries his infinite spiritual sustenance (Lu and Hu, 2014)." A tall cultivated elm stands two meters away from the gate, swooshing jolty leaves in the wind like the playing of a musical lyre. Behind the gate is a "Zhao Bi" (Chinese phonetic symbol: zhào bì) or screen wall. In traditional Chinese architecture, the Zhao Bi is a wall outside the door of a house facing the gate to act as a barrier. This screen wall possesses a smooth surface inlaid by butt joint bricks decorated with carved patterns on some bricks. "A screen wall is a unique form of quadrangle courtyard, but also reflects the custom and social system (Chen, 2021), "giving folks secret, noble and solemn feelings. On the left side of the screen wall, there is a "Yue Men" (Chinese phonetic symbol: yuè mén) or lunar gate, shaped like a full moon. In the Chinese concept, the moon is lit but not dazzling, meaning reunion and happiness. Thus, in traditional Chinese architecture, "If there is no framed view of the "Yue Men," the whole scene will be dark and colorless." However, in one building, "the lunar gate will make folks' eyes light up, indicating better expectation to exist in the front. This is the charm of the lunar gate (Han, 2020). "Passing the lunar gate, you enter into the courtyard. On the north-high steps are five rooms with wide verandas and a small water-well room in the leading house facing south. Under the high steps are four east and west wing rooms with slightly narrower galleries. Like many traditional residential buildings, the doors and windows are carved with varietal flowered patterns, expressing primitive elegance and auspiciousness by some techniques and ideas passed down through history (Wang, 2009). Watching the flower-shaped panes with a strong artistic appeal, you might hear the ethnic songs with the melody of "Hua Er" (Chinese phonetic symbol: huā ér). Folks among the Hui and Sala ethnic minorities in Northwest China like to sing songs with the melody of Hua Er, meaning blossoming flowers.

The national folk songs of Hua Er melody are “quick, free scale level, following person’s mood change.” It can let the singer fully express personal emotions so that “the gap between real life and the ideal pursuit miraculously complements each other (Li, 2021), “making real-life rich and colorful.

Several flower beds and small cross-shaped stony paths are laid in the courtyard. The adults and children often chat outside in this courtyard on summer evenings. Beautiful flowers bloom in the parterres, and a basket of vegetables sits at one end of a clean hallway. The sunset glow has dyed half the sky red. Relatives smell the potpourri and talk about life stories brimming with happiness and auspiciousness. In modern Chinese society, the residential quadrangle dwelling of the Ming and Qing dynasties commendably manifests a perfect integrational interpretation of man and nature. Outside the yard, the crooked public paths paved by small smooth gravel run forward in each direction like a maze, deep and quiet. Walking the curving paths, you sometimes hear broadcast euphemistic music overflowing from another quadrangle courtyard. The soft radio music swirls in the air, lingering longly. The smooth sound is the Chinese folk musical tune named “Jiang Nan Si Zhu” (Chinese phonetic symbol: jiāng nán sī zhú) or the silk and bamboo music from the south region of the Changjiang River, playing with string (silk) and wind (bamboo) instruments. The Chinese southern silk and bamboo music is “lyrical melody, graceful tune, elegant style.” This musical performance” shows, on the one hand, the industrious, simple and implicit characters of the people living in the south of China; reflects, on the other hand, the beautiful scenery with green mountains and charming posture there (Zeng Zhu, 2015). “

Not far from the courtyard is an exit of the “Daxiangdao” laneway. Next to the exit, a beautifully carved “Pailou” (Chinese phonetic symbol: pái lóu) or an archway stands tall, refinedly showing a highly condensed national long history. The decorated archway is a unique landmark building in China. “It embodies the essence of ancient Chinese architectural art.” A Pailou is “majestic from a distance and exquisite from a close look” in many Chinese cities and towns. An archway is a nourishing homeland for the soul. In overseas countries, residents “know that this is a ‘Chinatown’ inhabited by Chinese people (Han, 2003) “as soon as they see a decorated archway. Living in such a quadrangle dwelling, seeing the solid-state posture of the building and hearing the sound of leaves whirling, you can experience the vivid, colorful and fragrant scene transformed by parting ancient history. Steeping into this historical drama, you mostly feel your heart rise and fall like waves. In brief, the residential courtyard and streets of the Ming and Qing dynasties are “concretionary music” emerging with excellent traditional Chinese cultural charm.

The Zhou sisters and their descendants believed the “traditional civil structural residential quadrangle courtyard” was a valuable national cultural heritage in various parts of China. They vividly reproduce “the most perfect and most characteristic traditional historic district (Zhang, Zhang and Wang, 2022),” where predecessors lived and worked, which is worthy of protection, inheritance and reasonable application.

Reference and Exchange

People worldwide treasure the buildings left by their predecessors, such as the old houses. An American woman author named Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867-1957) wrote nine books titled “*Little House*,” such as *Little House in the Big Woods* etc. This book is the autobiography of the first half of the author’s life, showing the scenes of natural, plain life and labor. During the peak period of the American Western Reclamation in the second half of the 19th century, the author’s parents and elders, as pioneers, built wooden houses in the great forests of Wisconsin State. In the book, the author recalled that the elders had migrated through rough roads in caravans and had built tiny wooden houses on the edge of a large forest. During the day, the adults cultivated the wilderness outside the hut and hunted, and the children saw sika deer running through the forest. At night, the relatives who had worked hard all day came out of the cold forest and returned to the cabin. “By this time, the fire was shining on the hearth, the cold and the dark and the wild beasts were all shut out (Wilder, 1932).” The family relaxed and chatted happily. Worked very hard, gained a lot.

Dr. Virginia L. Wolf, teaching at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, America, analyzed the book and pointed out the heroine Laura and her family, who had a “positive, optimistic and romantic” attitude to face the challenging life during the pioneering initial stage. She evaluated that the living details depicted in the work were authentic. She further commented on the heroine’s growth: “It speaks of the restraint, constancy,

respect, selflessness, and self-control which Laura learns.” Wolf outlined the theme of the work: “It embodies an ideal of harmony within the individual, the family, the community, and nature (Wolf, 1982).” The historic log cabin symbolizes the ancestors who used their hands to create a beautiful home. As a result, it has been translated into many languages and published, attracting countless readers in various countries. Holly Blackford, a professor at Camden, Rutgers in State University of New Jersey, USA, emotively expressed: “When I was a child, I read and reread a series of ‘*Little House*’. “This female professor admitted: “I absorbed and came to embody little Laura’s convicted sentiments” because “her appearance and behavior conformed to cultural expectation (Blackford, 2008).” The “cultural expectation” of witnessing the wind and rain expressed by the *Little House* symbolizes the national spirit and the brave pioneering gumption of the predecessors, which is passed on to future generations. The social developmental momentum will be stronger.

The reserved time of retentive civil structural residential quadrangle courtyards of the Ming and Qing dynasties in Tianshui City is much longer than that of the above cabins. These quadrangle dwellings, such as the postcode “Daxiangdao” No. 9 and its surrounding communities, are the incompact group, shaping row upon row of houses and picturesque, well-proportioned like concretionary music. The cadenced melody plays the music of the historical lyre without interruption for hundreds of years. Whether viewed from a domestic or foreign perspective, the complete protection and effective use of these buildings that largely contained “cultural expectation” are the must-do projects for modern society.

Scholars Jana Gregorová and František Kalesný et al. collectively expounded on the importance of preserving ancient architecture. They participated in the salvaged preservative ruins project of the medieval Spiš Castle in Slovenská Republika. These ruins of the Romanesque palace are human cultural sites, as verified by UNESCO. The ruins’ reality was, “The selected Romanesque palaces in the Spiš Castle had gone through many structural periods. The internal structures were nonexistent.” Together, they agreed: “Only conservational protective approaches are preferred” in the practical application of the sites. They used advanced technology to research and consult historical data. The results were encouraging. “Romanesque, gothic and Renaissance periods are identifiable.” The scholars confirmed that they had the opportunity to complete the task of restoring buildings from a specific historical period. “It would be possible to reconstruct some buildings of these periods partially and hypothetically based on saved archive materials.” The principle they set for preserving and restoring valuable monuments is “from the indication of the medieval form, renaissance form.” Another is that “covering authentic ruins requests professional architectural modeling of alternatives based on exact historical facts (Gregorová and Kalesný et al., 2017).” Their engineering methods for specific protection are numerous. Practice shows that the first stage of protection, restoration and use is very successful. They all once further studied at the Faculty of Architecture at the Slovak University of Technology, the capital of Bratislava in Slovakia. This complementary item of UNESCO is worth learning from.

In short, our contemporary Chinese must first undertake a solemn responsibility to employ scientific methods to carefully protect those traditionally diversified quadrangle courtyards, which show “concretionary music” and reveal picturesque characteristics. Then, we also will moderately and commercially operate the houses of national precious cultural heritage to promote social and economic development.

CONCLUSION

Tianshui City is located in the corner of northwest China and has distinct local economic and cultural characteristics. To continue to activate and enhance those local potential economic and cultural energetic elements, personally practicing as the Zhou two sisters to carry on the traditional excellent national culture, a better social development will inevitably emerge.

Accelerate to Complete National Rejuvenation

The historical legend of Fu Xi’s creational activities circuitously and gleamingly conveys various information about the civilizational condition of Chinese ancestors. At present, we must inherit and carry

forward these up-and-coming spirits to realize the dream of a better life expressed by ancient ancestors through myths. Constantly striving to become stronger, broadly tolerating and roundly opening to the outside world, a new generation will accelerate to work on the historic mission of national rejuvenation.

Strengthen Digital Construction in Catering Industry

The folk of Tianshui create local food. It is a better method for the beneficial economic internal circulation to stimulate the catering industry to develop fast. Therefore, to make local dishes unique to the public, we need to continue to popularize digital technological applications in the catering industry and carefully maintain the operation of all industrial chain links. By presenting the public with unique local dishes, we will finally satisfy customers and make the restaurants profitable.

Expand Economic Scale by Temple Fairs

Duly organizing the large-scale famous temple fair economy is a better method to bring benefits to both customers and merchants. The needs of customers are the permanent commercial goal. Meanwhile, the cultivated purchasing wave propels the economy forward. We should improve market management to attract more clients to consume.

Carefully Manage Tour in Traditional Residential Courtyard

The civilian structural residential quadrangle courtyards of the Ming and Qing dynasties in Tianshui City perfectly interpret the blend of nature and man. We must preserve those houses of antique beauty and archaic national rhyme and restore the elegant green gardens in the courtyards. Visitors will savor the primitive architectural lingering charm and pleasantly smell refreshing potpourri. To beautify the land, civilians enjoy the happiness of life.

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