

# Research on the Integrated Development Countermeasures of Archaeological Tourism in Shaanxi under the Background of Cultural and Tourism Integration

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## ABSTRACT

Under the broad context of cultural and tourism integration, the development momentum of archaeological tourism continues to grow. Shaanxi Province, one of China's four major ancient capitals, possesses abundant archaeological resources. In recent years, Xi'an, Shaanxi, due to the uniqueness, representativeness, and diversity of its archaeological resources, coupled with the promotion through self-media marketing, has become a nationally recognized "internet-famous tourist city," exemplifying the integrated development of culture and tourism. This paper, through literature review, studies the feasibility, necessity, and pathways for archaeological tourism in Shaanxi, thereby promoting its development.

## KEYWORDS

Archaeology; Tourism; Integrated Development of Archaeological Tourism

## 1. INTRODUCTION

**Archaeological Tourism:** Archaeological tourism is a specialized form of tourism that utilizes archaeological activities and discovered ancient material cultural heritage as attractions. It encompasses functions such as sightseeing, learning and knowledge acquisition, participation and experience, and leisure and entertainment. It can include all products related to public archaeology promotion, such as visiting archaeological sites, museums, interpretation centers, reenactments of historical events, and the rediscovery of indigenous products, festivals, or theater.

**Public Archaeology:** Public archaeology employs various methods to enable the public to understand archaeology, experience archaeology, and learn about the latest archaeological discoveries and research findings. Its aim is to enhance the public's cultural literacy and their enthusiasm and initiative in protecting cultural heritage.

## 2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In 2019, an article published on the website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China stated that the overall approach to cultural and tourism integration is to adhere to the principle of "integrating where appropriate and integrating as much as possible [1]." It emphasized the need to effectively protect, utilize, and pass on cultural heritage. While strengthening the protection, utilization, and intangible cultural heritage transmission, attention should also be paid to promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of China's excellent traditional culture [2]. Therefore, the "archaeology + tourism" development model should be one of the optimal pathways for cultural and tourism integration. This approach not only enhances the excavation and

elucidation of the historical and cultural resources of cultural relics based on their protection and transmission but also injects higher-quality and more attractive cultural content into tourism development. Simultaneously, it leverages the unique advantages of the tourism industry to infuse new momentum into the protection, utilization, transmission, and development of cultural relics [3, 4].

In 2023, the Shaanxi Provincial Government Report indicated that Shaanxi will accelerate the development of the cultural industry, actively promote the construction of a trillion-yuan cultural and tourism industry cluster, implement a three-year action plan for key cultural and tourism industry chains, execute the "Cultural Shaanxi" brand cultivation plan, and expedite the establishment of a modern cultural industry system. It aims to leverage the driving role of major cultural industry projects, advancing the construction of the Northwest Publishing Logistics Base and the Shaanxi Museum of Culture and Arts. Shaanxi is hailed as the "Holy Land of Chinese Archaeology." As one of the important birthplaces of Chinese civilization, Shaanxi boasts a profound cultural heritage. Historically, fourteen dynasties established their capitals here, leaving behind abundant cultural relics and historical sites. While the development momentum of archaeological tourism has increased in recent years, research on its integrated development in Shaanxi remains relatively scarce. Therefore, this study will explore countermeasures for the integrated development of archaeological tourism in Shaanxi.

### **3. NECESSITY OF DEVELOPING ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURISM IN SHAANXI**

#### **3.1. Abundant and Ancient Historical and Cultural Resources**

Shaanxi possesses rich and long-standing historical and cultural resources, forming the material foundation for the in-depth development of archaeological tourism. As a cradle of Chinese civilization and a treasure trove of cultural relics and historical sites, its deep cultural reserves have earned it the title of "Natural History Museum." Shaanxi features a high density, large quantity, and superior grade of cultural heritage sites, encompassing numerous archaeological sites and a dazzling array of museums. Well-known examples include the Zhouyuan Site, the Liangdaicun Site of the Western and Eastern Zhou Dynasties in Hancheng, the Yangling Mausoleum of Emperor Jing of Han, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, the Shaanxi History Museum, and the Forest of Stone Steles Museum.

#### **3.2. Building a Strong Information Matrix & Ensuring Stable Tourist Flow**

Tourism provides the market foundation for archaeology. Shaanxi Province is constructing an information matrix in 2023 to strengthen tourism promotion, accelerate the comprehensive recovery of tourism, and expedite the creation of a trillion-yuan cultural and tourism industry cluster. China's five-thousand-year cultural heritage, traditions, and local customs are crucial components of this cultural-tourism matrix. Traditional sightseeing "check-in" style tourism increasingly fails to meet people's spiritual needs. There is a growing demand for experiences that cultivate the spiritual world during travel, prioritizing excellent humanistic resources complemented by natural scenery, achieved through the "culture + tourism" model. As a nationally renowned "internet-famous city" with strong tourist appeal and rich historical and cultural resources, Shaanxi is well-positioned to implement the "archaeology + tourism" model, driving the deep integration of its tourism and archaeological sectors [5].

### **3.3. Addressing the Misalignment between Public Archaeology and Tourism Development**

Public archaeology and tourism development are intersecting industries but currently suffer from misalignment, providing a practical basis for this research. Shaanxi's archaeological resources are immensely rich, distributed not only in the provincial capital Xi'an but also in cities like Xianyang, Baoji, Tongchuan, Weinan, Hanzhong, and Yulin, each with unique historical and cultural resources. However, museums, tombs, and sites in some regions lack innovative development and creative transformation, resulting in low levels of interactivity and experiential engagement, which diminishes tourist appeal. Coupled with underdeveloped tourism and low tourist numbers, many archaeological resources remain "hidden away and unknown." Research into the integrated development of tourism and public archaeology is therefore essential [6].

## **4. FEASIBILITY OF DEVELOPING ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURISM IN SHAANXI**

Shaanxi's abundant historical and cultural resources provide a feasible foundation for integrating archaeology and tourism.

### **4.1. Shaanxi's Archaeological Resources**

Shaanxi's archaeological work represents not just an accumulation of data but the restoration of history. Over a century of archaeology, significant site discoveries have acted like cultural puzzle pieces, greatly illuminating Chinese civilization. Examples include: The Lantian Man Site and Jiegidong Cave (near the Han River south of the Qinling Mountains), which help answer fundamental questions like "Who are we? Where do we come from?" Artifacts like the petal-patterned painted pottery jar housed at the Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology, expressing a culturally unified China. Exquisite craftsmanship evident in artifacts like the pottery eagle and fine bone needles. The enduring legacy of symmetrical Chinese traditional architecture. Regarding tomb resources, Shaanxi's other title, "Holy Land of Chinese Archaeology," is apt. Its favorable geographical layout has made the Guanzhong Plain an ideal location for imperial burials since the 11th century BC. Thirteen dynasties and states, including the Western Zhou, Qin, Western Han, Xin, Eastern Han, Western Jin, Former Zhao, Former Qin, Later Qin, Western Wei, Northern Zhou, Sui, and Tang, established their capitals in Xi'an for over 1200 years. Most emperors were buried on the loess plateaus flanking the Wei River, forming spectacular imperial tomb clusters. Particularly notable are the grand Qin, Han, and Tang tombs, with 39 emperors' tombs basically confirmed (e.g., the famous Western Han Nine Mausoleums, Tang Eighteen Mausoleums, Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum), and 79 imperial tombs in total identified through various investigations as likely located in Shaanxi. This rich resource base can inject new upgrades and inspiration into tourism development.

### **4.2. Shaanxi's Tourism Resources**

Shaanxi is one of China's most resource-rich provinces for tourism, featuring high-quality resources, diverse types, and profound cultural deposits. Its wealth of above-ground and underground cultural relics has earned it the title "Natural History Museum." The province boasts 35,800 registered heritage sites, 151 museums, and 900,000 sets/groups of cultural relics in collections, leading the nation in density, quantity, and grade of heritage sites. Exploring this "museum," one encounters ancient city walls, palace ruins, temples, tombs, and buildings. Museums across the province display priceless treasures: Western Zhou bronzes, Qin bronze chariots and horses, Han stone carvings, Tang gold and silverware, Song porcelain, and historical steles, reflecting the splendor of past dynasties. Beyond cultural relics, Shaanxi offers stunning natural landscapes: the precipitous Mount Hua (Huashan), the majestic Hukou Waterfall of the Yellow River, the ancient Loess Plateau, the vast Guanzhong Plain

(Eight Hundred Li Qinchuan), the picturesque mountains of southern Shaanxi, the legendary Mount Li Scenic Area, and the snow-capped peak of Mount Taibai in the Qinling Mountains. These diverse resources spread across Shaanxi's cities, counties, and districts drive economic development. Simultaneously, tourists' diversification and pursuit of novelty and completeness broaden the market base for public archaeology, thereby advancing archaeological endeavors.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURISM IN SHAANXI**

### **5.1. Design Theme-Based Archaeological Tourism Routes to Enhance Satisfaction of Archaeology-Interested Tourists**

Shaanxi Province boasts numerous famous archaeological attractions such as museums and site parks. Designing relevant tourism routes helps out-of-town tourists formulate clear travel plans and enhances their satisfaction. When designing routes, attention should be paid to the following: routes should be designed according to specific themes, with each route having one theme to meet tourists' personalized needs; famous attractions should be placed at appropriate times and locations within the itinerary to ensure the effectiveness of tourists' understanding of archaeological knowledge or historical events; finally, route design should consider tourists' age, physical condition, and travel needs, allowing for appropriate adjustments and innovations while ensuring a balance between activity and rest [7-9].

The design of archaeological tourism routes enables tourists to gain an in-depth understanding of local history and culture along the journey. Visiting ancient sites, museums, and cultural attractions allows tourists to experience the uniqueness of different civilizations and partake in diverse and rich cultural traditions; tourists coming to Shaanxi from various places for archaeological tourism are provided with opportunities for cultural exchange with others. By understanding and respecting the history of different civilizations, tourists can potentially promote cross-cultural understanding and respect, reducing cultural conflicts and misunderstandings; furthermore, through participating in archaeological tourism, tourists may develop a deeper appreciation for the value of cultural heritage and the importance of its protection. This helps elevate the societal level of attention paid to historical and cultural preservation.

It is also crucial to note that to maximize these positive impacts, a balance must be emphasized in the design and promotion of archaeological tourism routes, ensuring that the tourist experience meets their expectations while also protecting the integrity of cultural heritage. For example, a theme route titled "Appreciating the Grandeur of the Tang Dynasty, Experiencing Tang Dynasty Affairs" could be designed: starting at Qujiangchi Relics Park in the morning, visiting Tang Paradise in the afternoon, and enjoying the light nightscape of Tang Dynasty Ever-Bright City in the evening. The second day could begin at the Tang Imperial City Wall Site Museum (Hanguangmen), visit the Zhaoling Mausoleum Museum at midday, proceed to the Qianling Mausoleum Museum in the afternoon, and end at Yuanjia Village in the evening to taste Guanzhong cuisine [10].

### **5.2. Implement the "Internet + Tourism + Archaeology" Model to Meet the Experiential and Interactive Needs of Young Tourists**

With the continuous development of social technology, China is applying technology to various industries. For archaeological tourism, traditional museum exhibition methods typically rely on object display, text explanations, and visual presentations. These methods exhibit problems such as singular information transmission, low interactivity, spatial utilization limitations, fixed viewing routes, difficulty in achieving personalized experiences, and failure to meet the needs of the younger

generation of tourists. Therefore, museums are widely adopting technology in exhibitions to provide richer, more interactive, and educational experiences.

First, in cultural relic exhibitions, using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies, museums can create immersive experiences allowing visitors to interact with exhibits. For example, using AR technology, visitors can view reconstructions of ancient buildings or see virtual elements overlaid on actual exhibits via smart devices. Second, utilizing touchscreens, gesture recognition, and other interactive technologies, museums can design exhibitions that enable visitors to actively participate. This includes digital exhibit introductions on touchscreens, touch-based maps, and interactive screens. For instance, at the Terracotta Army exhibition, an electronic map of the Qin King's conquest routes could be created, allowing interested visitors to independently choose routes to explore, thereby enhancing visitor appeal and interactivity. Third, using holographic projection technology, museums can present realistic virtual exhibitions. This can include virtual actors, virtual laboratories, etc., providing visitors with more vivid visual experiences. [Note: The original Chinese repeated the holographic projection point; this translation consolidates it into one clear point [11]. For example, at Tang Paradise, holographic projections of famous poets like Li Bai and Du Fu could engage visitors in poetic dialogue, not only improving visitors' poetry knowledge but also creating a cultural atmosphere within the scenic area. Finally, utilizing audio guide systems, museums can provide visitors with detailed explanations, sound effects, and music. Multimedia guides can delve into the stories behind exhibits through videos, audio, and images. For highly popular sites like the Terracotta Army with large visitor volumes, relying solely on tour guides may prevent many visitors from fully receiving information. Therefore, free QR code scanning for self-selected audio tours should be implemented to meet personalized needs. These technological approaches not only make exhibitions more attractive but also help provide deeper, personalized learning experiences, attracting a broader audience. However, while leveraging technology, museums also need to pay attention to balance, ensuring technological elements are organically integrated into the exhibition.

### **5.3. Utilize New Media for Marketing and Promotion to Build Shaanxi into a Major Archaeological Tourism Province**

New media promotion methods for archaeological tourism can leverage tools like the internet and social media to disseminate information more widely and attract more tourists. First, social media promotion. Utilize social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to publish attractive pictures, videos, and stories showcasing the unique features of Shaanxi's archaeological sites. Interact with tourists through social media by answering questions and sharing a sense of participation to increase engagement. For example, posts like "Do you think Qin Shi Huang's expedition route was the most optimal?" or "The Extravagant Life of a Zhou King" can be published to spark online discussion and generate buzz. Second, online videos and livestreaming. Due to the impact of the pandemic in previous years, people stayed home. Online videos allow people to learn about scenic areas without leaving home, sparking interest and generating travel motivation [12]. Third, blogs and articles. Invite renowned experts or scholars to write articles or stories to create topics. Finally, User-Generated Content (UGC). Encourage tourists to share their archaeological tourism experiences by uploading photos, videos, and reviews via social media platforms. Such UGC serves as powerful word-of-mouth marketing. Most tourists exhibit herd mentality and are influenced by surrounding reference groups; thus, UGC can deepen visitors' impressions of attractions and increase travel motivation. For instance, the Zhaoling and Qianling Mausoleums are located in Qian County, Xianyang, relatively far from Xi'an. Many tourists are unwilling to make the tiring journey; UGC campaigns offering incentives like cultural and creative products can be used for promotion. Through these new media promotion methods, Shaanxi's archaeological tourism can showcase its appeal more intuitively and diversely, attracting more tourists to participate while also promoting the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage [13-15].

## 5.4. Conduct Archaeological Education and Training Activities to Enhance Public Archaeological Awareness

Currently, most people's understanding of archaeology remains confined to history classes in school, with only a minority of archaeology professionals possessing a more comprehensive understanding. Therefore, for those with a strong interest in archaeology, archaeological education and training programs can be developed, offering staged training based on their level of archaeological knowledge. These programs can provide systematic knowledge of archaeological theory, methods, and practice. Training methods can include academic courses, field trips, and hands-on operations. Courses are divided into theoretical learning and field investigation. Theoretical learning is primarily conducted through a combination of online and offline methods. Field investigation and internships can be arranged, allowing students to conduct on-site surveys, personally participate in archaeological excavation projects, understand actual archaeological workflows, and learn practical skills such as excavation, surveying, and artifact cleaning. Archaeological summer camps can also be offered, providing participants with intensive, short-term training that combines field trips and practical activities to deepen their understanding of archaeology [16]. Finally, upon course completion, professional certificate programs will be awarded. Provide archaeology-related professional certificate courses emphasizing specific skills and knowledge areas, suitable for students and practitioners needing to acquire professional skills quickly.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This paper, leveraging the rich archaeological and tourism resources of Shaanxi Province, analyzed its archaeological and tourism resources separately. It proposed adopting an "archaeology + tourism" approach to drive the bidirectional development of Shaanxi's tourism and archaeology sectors, thereby promoting the flourishing of the province's economic and cultural undertakings.

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