

Problems and Strategies: Building a Future for Cultural Heritage Protection in Shaanxi, China

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Abstract: In China's ancient history, 14 dynasties set their capitals in Shaanxi. The most glorious periods included the Zhou, the Qin, the Han and the Tang Dynasties. Owing to Shaanxi's particular historical position, a large quantity of cultural heritage had been left underground and overground. Protecting well these cultural heritage is of great significance. By literature review, it is indicated that different types of research have been conducted from the perspectives of protection work (investigation report, annual report, material assembly), academic exploration (Shaanxi cultural heritage protection in earlier period, macro-research), monographic study (great site protection, revolutionary cultural heritage protection, field cultural heritage protection, cultural heritage protection and social economy, archaeological site and cultural heritage protection, legal system, cultural heritage crime, fight against cultural heritage crime, cultural heritage digitization) and case studies. However, these studies are inadequate in quantity, quality, depth, analysis and creativity. In particular, besides the natural deterioration, the cultural heritage is suffering from human damages during the economic activities, such as urbanization, commercialism, consumerism, tourism and cultural heritage crime. The existing protection management and utilization approach are no longer effective and influential enough, deserving improvements. This paper aims to investigate the problems in cultural heritage protection in Shaanxi, and then analyze their causes and finally put forward targeted strategies and suggestions. Field investigation, literature review and comparative data analysis methods have been adopted. It is found that the cultural protection problems in Shaanxi lie in natural damage, human destruction, constructive damage, protective damage and commercial damage, which are caused by incomplete and inadequate execution of protective policies and conservative measures, incompetence to carry out an overall and sustainable protection thoroughly, insufficient investment in cultural heritage protection, insufficient professional protection staff, underdeveloped infrastructural facilities, inadequate public supports, severe challenges in capacity building, imperfect legal system and conservative concepts. Correspondingly, the multi-approaches strategies concerning improvements in investment, archaeological excavation, security supervision, fight against tomb robbing and smuggling and public interest litigation system are put forward. And suggestions on enhancing value recognition, digitization, big data platform, talents and team building, revolutionary cultural heritage protection and collaboration are also discussed. It concludes that the new protective conception of "both object and humanity spirit take equal priority" should be implemented.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, Protection, Shaanxi

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Shaanxi, one of the most important birthplaces of Chinese civilization along the middle reaches of the Yellow River, is richly covered by prehistoric remains and sites. Fourteen

dynasties had ever set their capital cities in Shaanxi, lasting from 12th century B.C. to 10th century A.D.. The most glorious periods could be dated to Zhou (1146B.C.-770B.C.), Qin (221B.C.-207B.C.), Han (202B.C.-220A.D.) and Tang (618-907A.D.), when the famous Silk Road was fermented and opened, linking the east with the west and exerting great influence on the process of world history. After the great

Tang dynasty, this place was governed as a military garrison during the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, creating a multi-cultural paradigm of nomadic and agrarian conglomeration. Therefore, the cultural heritage, either underground or overground, is fairly rich in varieties, distinct in quantities, complete in sequence and prominent in qualities, representing almost the first half formation of Chinese history. Some cultural heritage have been regraded as the rare material evidence for the study of cultural exchanges between ancient China and other regions of the world. In view of the particularity of Shaanxi in ancient Chinese history and the uniqueness of its cultural heritage, the culture heritage protection in Shaanxi is of great significance.

However, over the past years, the cultural heritage protection in Shaanxi undergone a “top to bottom” model, the Shaanxi Cultural Heritage Administration took the major responsibility of protecting cultural heritage. This model can not meet the needs of cultural heritage protection in Shaanxi since new damages are emerging due to economic activities such as urbanization, commercialism, consumerism and tourism. Therefore, new model, concept and approach deserve exploration and discussion.

Sorting out different categories of cultural heritage in Shaanxi, this article will investigate the problems in cultural heritage protection in Shaanxi by identifying different types of damages specifically. Then it will analyze the causes of the problems and put forward targeted approaches.

1.2. Literature Review

Concerning the cultural heritage protection, foreign scholars have conducted various researches, among which Myrilyn Truscott proposes to enhance the indigenous cultural heritage protection by community organization, heritage tourism, land policy, process management and quality management and so on [1]. Lah Ljubo puts forward the concept and strategy of transforming from architectural protection, renovation and rebuilding to integrated cultural heritage protection [2]. P.-J. Ezech explores the opportunities and challenges of cultural heritage protection strategies in the multi-cultural society [3]. Although the above research do not focus on cultural protection in Shaanxi, their view and concept are of relevance.

In regard to the cultural protection in Shaanxi, studies by domestic scholars fall into four categories. Firstly, basic research was done in the form of work investigation, then the investigation report and annual report were published. Shaanxi Cultural Heritage Administration has conducted work investigation many times and published annual report on Chinese Cultural Relics Newspaper, for example, the latest one by Li Rui entitled *Persisting the Original Obligation, the Road of Cultural Heritage Protection in Shaanxi* [4]. Secondly, academic researches on cultural heritage in Shaanxi can be subdivided into two types. The first type focused on the cultural heritage protection in Shaanxi during earlier times, which were discussed in papers of Luo Hongcai [5], Wei Qipeng [6], Tan Qianxue [7], Luo

Dongqin [8]. The second type focused on the macro-research, reflected in papers of Zhang Tinghao [9], Zhao Rong [10], Liu Weihong [11], Zhang Jingwei [12], Pang Zitao [13], Fang Keyou [14], Qi Zhang'an [15]. Thirdly, monographic studies are conducted in great site protection [16], revolutionary cultural heritage protection [17], field cultural heritage protection [18], cultural heritage protection and social economy [19], archaeological site and cultural heritage protection [20], legal system [21], cultural heritage crime [22], fight against cultural heritage crime [23], cultural heritage digitization [24]. Fourthly, individual case studies were conducted by scholar Hou Weidong [25], Li Bing [26], Guo Qinghua [27].

Analyzing the above literature, these studies are inadequate in quantity, quality, scope, depth, analysis and creativity, therefore, this paper intends to address these gaps through field investigation, literature review and comparative data analysis methods.

2. Terms

In this article, cultural relics and cultural heritage are used interchangeably since the former was firstly used in the English version of *the Law of the Peoples Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics* and then in other regulations or local documents and the latter has been applied later by National Cultural Heritage Administration and its subordinates.

3. Cultural Heritage in Shaanxi

According to the latest statistics released by Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration, the cultural heritage in Shaanxi totals 7,797,808 million by the end of December of 2019 [28].

3.1. Immovable Cultural Heritage

The total number of immovable cultural heritage in Shaanxi is 49058, including 23453 historic sites, 14367 ancient tombs, 6702 ancient architectural buildings, 1068 caves and grottoes, 3213 significant modern historic remains and representative houses (1224 of them are immovable revolutionary cultural heritage) and 255 other sites. There are 270 National Key Cultural Relics Protection Sites, 1131 sites are under provincial protection, and 3590 sites are protected at the municipal and county levels.

3.2. Moveable Cultural Heritage

More than 522 state-owned cultural relics collecting and storing institutes house 3,009,455 million sets or 7,748,750 million items of movable cultural relics. The gross amount is only next to Beijing, the largest owner of cultural relics. 11166 sets/items of them belong to the first grade, 23848 sets/items are recognized as the second grade, 112568 sets/items are appraised as third grade, and the other 1,04 million sets/items are authenticated as non-graded

collections.

3.3. Museums

The accredited museums numbered 329, among them, 165 are under the management of Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration, 60 are affiliated to state-run industries, and 104 are from non-governmental sector. 9 of them were listed as the first grade museums (including 1 non-governmental museum), 16 of them were appraised as the second grade museums and 22 of them were evaluated as the third grade museums. 222 museums open to public free of charge, 45 community museums have been recognized, and 25 museums enjoy the titles of the Excellent Cultural Heritage Base and Patriotic Education Base.

3.4. World Cultural Heritage

In Shaanxi, 3 places consisting of 9 sites have been listed as World Cultural Heritage, including the Great Wall remains (scattered in 5 cities and 17 counties), the First Emperor Qin Shihuang Mausoleum and the Terra-cotta warriors and horses, the Silk Road: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor (7 sites, the Weiyang Palace Site of the Western Han dynasty, Daming Palace Site, the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, and Small Wild Goose Pagoda, Xingjiao Temple Stupa, Big Buddha Temple of the Tang dynasty in Binxian County, as well as the first Chinese to the west, Zhang Qian's tomb in Chenggu county).

3.5. Chinese Cultural Heritage Preliminary List for World Cultural Heritage

There are 6 places and 33 sites, including Dangjiacun Old Residential Building Complex (Qing dynasty), Xi'an City Wall (Ming and Qing Dynasties), Tongwan City Wall (capital of Daxia period, 407-431), Shimao Neolithic Walled Structure, 11 imperial mausoleums of the Western Han dynasty, 18 imperial mausoleums of the Tang dynasty.

3.6. National Archaeological Sites Park

Four sites has been titled as the National Archaeological Sites Park, and eight sites were listed as the candidates. The Administrative Committee for the Special Protection Zone of the National Great Site of Han Chang'an City was the first of its kind in China. The Great Site--Xi'an Area was one of the Six Great Key Sites strongly supported by the central government.

3.7. Revolutionary Cultural Heritage

Immovable revolutionary cultural heritage spread over 10 cities and 65 counties or districts, mostly in the bordering regions among Shaanxi, Sichuan and Gansu. There are 753 immovable revolutionary sites in the First Publication of Shaanxi Provincial Revolutionary Cultural Relics List, 23 of these sites are under the national protection, 246 sites are protected by the provincial government. The movable revolutionary cultural heritage totals 40703 items or sets.

3.8. Old Cities and Towns

Six old cities with historical and cultural values enjoy the national titles, seven towns and three villages also got the nomination. 113 traditional villages are protected by the national funds and 323 traditional villages are maintained by the provincial authority.

3.9. National Industrial Heritage

Baoji Shenxin Cotton Factory (western Shaanxi), Wangshi'ao Coal Mine (middle Shaanxi), and Yanchang Oil Plant (northern Shaanxi) got the nomination of National Industrial Heritage titles.

3.10. World Heritage Irrigation Structures

Zhengguo canal in Jingyang county (246B.C.), three dams in Han Zhong City, Longshou canal irrigation areas from Luo river of Henan.

4. Research Methods

Field investigation, literature review and comparative data analysis have been adopted.

Field investigation was conducted in Weinan City, Xianyang City, Yan'an City, Hanzhong City, Tongchuang City, Baoji City, Hancheng City in Shaanxi Province in order to get the first-hand material and comprehensive knowledge of cultural protection in Shaanxi.

Literature on cultural protection and cultural protection in Shaanxi Province have been reviewed in order to build a comprehensive contextual landscape.

Data comparative analysis method has been applied to investigate the problems and their causes in the existing cultural protection work, in order to verify the research hypothesis of constructing a integrated provincial cultural heritage protection matrix.

5. Problems Concerning the Cultural Heritage Protection in Shaanxi

Sticking to the general principle of "inheritance, protection and usage" for cultural heritage protection, the provincial government at various administrative levels, experts, management staff, volunteers worked together and shouldered the protective responsibilities of such a huge repository of ancient treasures in this province, and made great contributions to this undertakings. As Zhang Kun (2020, 2) summarized,

"Since 2014, Shaanxi government allocated more than 1 billion RMB to the precautionary protection of movable cultural heritage under the great support of National Cultural Heritage Administration, such as the collection conservation of Shaanxi History Museum, Xi'an Beilin Museum, Emperor Hanjingdi Yangling Mausoleum Site Museum, Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, Baoji Bronze Museum, as well as the installation of anti-earthquake facilities. Environment monitoring and alarming system,

individual boxes and independent shelves were introduced, the potential hazards were eliminated, a clean and stable safer setting was recreated.” [29]

However, after careful field investigation and reading, some obvious problems could be observed in the current cultural heritage protection, either conceptually, methodologically or technically, ethically.

5.1. Natural Damage

Due to the material, age and storing condition, the cultural heritage in this area is generally undergoing the irreversible natural deterioration or structural damage, leading to their ultimate physical vanishing. Apart from these non-human factors, some destructive damages were resulted from the irresistible emergent accidents, such as fire, floods and pandemics.

5.2. Human Destruction

Human destruction was mainly caused by the massive constructional activities, commercial exploitation and unsophisticated conservation works.

5.3. Constructive Damage

During the ever growing modernization period, the original landscape of cultural heritage was ruined with the rapid expansion of urban areas and rebuilding of old districts. Some street settings, historic houses and remains, archaeological sites embedded with high cultural value were razed to the ground. Zhang Tinghao (1998) showed great concern that the new wave of tourism would brought severe threat to the fragile heritage, not to mention this province is proud of its gorgeous tourism destinations, particularly one of the Eighth Miracles of Qin terra-cotta warriors and horses, the world famous Buddhism monuments, magnificent imperial mausoleums of the Han and Tang dynasties and beautiful architectures of later dynasties. [30]

5.4. Protective Damage

In China, cultural heritage protection is guided by the national principle “to restore the old as the old, to maintain the original appearance, to minimize the interference”, not only for the suitable protection of the objects, but also for their environment. However, in recent years, there were some typical examples of improper handling and operation or misuse during the implementation of conservation and utilization projects. Zhao Rong (2014) also found other damages from the related work of maintenance, repair and restoration, e.g., rebuilding, alteration or archaeological excavation. Some were dismantled, restructured; some collapsed or disappeared; some became new and lost their core values. Sometimes, museum collections are facing the potential threats during transportation, exhibition and other activities. [31]

5.5. Commercial Damage

Tombs, underground palaces of Buddhism stupa,

Buddhism grottoes sculptures and murals were robbed, smuggled, transported and sold. Historic houses were refurbished or redecorated and used as shops, restaurants and other business facilities. Li Hongyan (2007) gave a severe warning about the hazards from the massive destruction during the rapid social and economical changing circumstances. [32]

6. Analysis of Main Causes

6.1. The Governments at All Levels Were Incompletely Guided by the State Protective Policies and the Conservative Measures Within Their Jurisdictions

In order to reach an instant performance achievement and get a quick rewards, some officials occasionally choose a GDP-oriented policy and governance practice. Whenever there is confrontation between the protection of cultural heritage and rapid economic indicators, the later was always given a preferential arrangement. Although the *General Secretary* of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, *Xi Jinping emphasized repeatedly* “cultural relics embodied the splendid civilization, handed down history and culture, and sustain national spirits”, “protection of cultural relics is also a political achievement.” Nevertheless, on a practical level, his instruction was not completely executed. Firstly, the governing conception of cultural heritage protection was not strong enough to be a guiding and deciding principle for local economic development. Secondly, the provincial government’s policy of *The Decision on Fully Implementation of Five Incorporation to Protect the Cultural Heritage* (No. 59 Shaanxi provincial notice)--cultural heritage protection was not fully channeled into the strategic planning of local economic and societal development, urban and rural areas building, local governmental financial budget, organizational reformation and official job responsibility system. Thirdly, some local departments failed to provide forceful support and escort to the protection of cultural heritage. Fourthly, the cultural heritage protection departments were not empowered to allocate the resources from other governmental institutes, to perform the coordination functions, particularly with the police, the judiciary, procuratorial organ, as well as other law enforcement. The supervision was weak, leading to certain uncontrollable violations of law by the legal representatives of related units. Such cases were exposed by some national media, and caused public criticism. Last year, the National Cultural Heritage Administration launched a campaign against the illegal cases concerning destruction of cultural heritage which were committed by the legal representatives. Some typical cases were related to some officials of Shaanxi, the State Administration put forth the arguments that “the cultural heritage security duty was not incorporated into the annual performance evaluation system of local government” “the principal responsibility for protection the cultural heritage should be inserted into government’s operation.” Shaanxi Provincial General Office of the Discipline

Inspection Commission issued a notice, *Further Fortification of Supervision, Enforcement of Discipline and Accountability Mechanism*, 4 typical cases were registered suing the dysfunctional behavior of cultural heritage damage, dereliction of protective duty and neglect of protective jobs. Chen Guofen (2005) observed that severe punishments were imposed on those who purposely destroyed the Qin Dynasty Capital city site in Xianyang, Dayun temple in Shangluo city, the Ming dynasty great wall in Yulin city. [33]

6.2. The Incompetence to Carry out an Overall and Sustainable Protection Thoroughly

Although the provincial administration issued a series of policies, regulations and measures, trying to provide an overall protection to these precious cultural heritage, there are usually some hesitations or slight preferences towards the reality of development when facing the conflicts between historical protection and modernization of city landscape style. The precautionary protective conception is less persuasive than rescue actions. Risk awareness and management were not fully emphasized, while new trends were not sensitively captured. The rapid expansion of city space, the merging of real estate and industrial construction all encroached, squeezed and threatened the cultural heritage underground and overground. New developing zones were built on the historical sites, villages overlapped the remains. Lu Wu (2009) found out, a huge rural population migrated into cities, leaving a hollow and deserted countryside as well as their collective memories. Traditional architectures and agrarian heritage gradually deteriorated. [34] As Tang Qian (2018) suggested, a lot of revolutionary heritages are left unprotected, some of them rapidly disappeared. [35]

6.3. Insufficient Investment in Cultural Heritage Protection

For this developing province, welfare of all people is the first consideration. Compared to other sector, the cultural heritage protection funds are mainly from provincial budget and self-financing by cultural relics administration. Although public engagement in protection fund-raising is encouraged, but there is no policy to promote diversified ways, for examples, adoption of cultural heritage site or certain number of museum collection, donation or endorsements by social organizations, companies or individuals. According to Luo Juanli's theory (2020), the poor equipment or facilities in the small protective units and institutes could not compete with the high-tech tools of the tomb robbers or thefts. People feel sorry for not able to prevent the destruction and stealing of valuable cultural heritage of their ancestors. [36]

6.4. Insufficient Professional Protection Staff

The tight budget, low salary always put the cultural heritage profession in a disadvantaged and awkward situation. Both administrative staff and conservative employees are less enthusiastic, mostly because of lack of stimulative measures and sound salaries. Jiang Xin (2020) believed that the challenges came from vast areas of cultural heritage

protection, poor working condition, inadequate staff and heavy work or over-long work time. Less opportunities for promotion and professional training created new problems such as no permanent research team, no high standard publications.[37]The cultural heritage administrative institutes are able to have a police or judiciary alliance to work together in fighting against the illegal activities. For local museums, the conservation and restoration of collection have to rely on big museums or institutions.

6.5. Underdeveloped Infrastructural Facilities

For the reason of budget insufficiency, the protective measures could not get plentiful chances to update timely, and there are no guarantees for supporting the high-level academic activities. Standardization, specialization, technicalization and digitization were not completely realized in small institutes, especially the remains and sites, mausoleums in the isolated areas or remote villages. There are not enough specialized facilities and equipment especially designed for cultural heritage protection, unfortunately, the small need in this profession worsened the situation.

6.6. Inadequate Public Supports

Cultural heritage protection has two major dimensional definitions, one is in the broad sense or in general way, and another is in the narrow sense. There are many relevant scopes to form a surrounding circular closure. One of the most important elements is public engagement. Under the watch of the whole society, some historical remains which had been deliberately neglected could find a chance to be noticed and to be put into the provincial protection system. The newly-recognized immovable sites could be properly protected and be brought into the legal domain.

Cultural heritage protection is considered as a small profession, an old way of life, or just a kind of memory, or the negative assets, it is difficult to attract huge attention from the public in the internet age. Young people are busy with high-tech events, and are living in the super-connected virtual world, they are too busy to care about the past, they would rather enjoy the present moment or wonder for the future. Public engagement conception and practice calls for a good mechanism.

6.7. Capacity Building for Inheriting and Utilizing the Cultural Heritage Face Severe Challenges

The theoretical foundation is not solid enough to uphold the chitinous inheritance, expansion and progress of the traditional conservative skills. Some basic research and technical breakthroughs could not be realized because of the limits of precautionary protective theory and scientific approaches. The existing vertical administrative mode created some separate spheres, vacancies and boundaries to obstruct the co-operational needs to satisfy the cultural heritage protection. Furthermore, all people in this region are titled to share the preserving burden of historical assets. Each of them has to be trained so as to be qualified for taking care

of the heritage as much as he or she could, a set of skills education would be welcome and his or her need for a good protector to be met.

6.8. Imperfect Legal System

During the past years, although some laws and regulations concerning the cultural heritage protection were adopted by the provincial legislative departments sequentially, such as *Shaanxi Provincial Regulation for Protection of Qin Shihuang's Mausoleum* (first issued at 30th, July, 2005 by the 20th Standing Committee Meeting of the 14th Shaanxi Provincial People's Congress),

Implementation Suggestions for Further Strengthening the Cultural Relics Work (No. 54), issued by Shaanxi People's Government on 23 December 2016.

The Yellow Emperor's Mausoleum Protection and Management Methods (approved by 28th Standing Committee Meeting of Shaanxi Government).

Shaanxi Provincial Regulation for Cultural Relics Protection (first issued at 3 June, 1988; then it was amended orderly at 21 April, 1995; 3 August 2004; 4 August 2006; 12 July 2012; 27 July 2017 by Shaanxi People's Congress).

Xi'an Historical and Cultural Famous Cities Protection Regulation (first issued at 3 July, 2002 by Xi'an Municipal Government).

Xi'an City Wall Protection Regulation (Approved by the 10th Standing Committee of the 11th Shaanxi People's Congress on 24 September 2009).

Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Settings of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas (adopted in Xi'an, China, 21 October 2005).

However, the changing economic and population environment and the demands of cultural heritage protection were contradicting each other. Due to the lack of solid theoretical and practical foundation, some law experts who were not quite familiar with the cultural heritage protection could not find a scientific methodology to construct a legal framework to foster, develop and create a new legal context. Chen Guofen, Yuan Anqing (2017) made an argument that the governance structure for cultural heritage protection is far from mature, and the capability building is still on the way. [38] The modernization and digitization of cultural heritage preservation await more inputs and attentions.

6.9. The Conservative Concepts Are Under Transforming Threshold

For those professional conservators, protection of materialized body of cultural heritage is the top priority, and too much attention were given to preserve the "physical property" "authenticity" "wholeness", the value of protection was not fully emphasized and cherished. This fact could be seen from the fund flow, work reports and publications.

Constrained by the above restricting factors, the protection of cultural heritage in this province is undergoing a transitional period from "traditional mode" to "modern paradigm", from "procedural practice" to "meaningful

ideology", from "diversification" to "inclusion", from "repair the old as before" or "repair the old as new" to a more flexible and comprehensive matrix of "authenticity" "aesthetics" "humanistic value" theory and praxis (Sun Manli, 2013). [39] These emerging changes are functioning well. We see a transforming force with the background of policy changing, funds fueling and attitudes correcting.

7. Multi-approaches to Improve the Standard and Efficiency of Cultural Heritage Protection at All Levels

Liu Yuzhu (2021, 61), the Director of National Cultural Heritage Administration, made a national plan for cultural heritage protection,

"To strengthen the capacity building of cultural heritage protection management, to fasten the revision of Cultural Heritage Protection Law, to build the national cultural heritage data base, to implement the key national research projects of 'cultural heritage protection and civilization inheritance', to increase the protective staff number." [40]

This is a general guiding line for Shaanxi provincial administration, we believe there are some detailed solutions for the further development of cultural heritage protection.

7.1. Increasing the Investments

There is a Special fund for cultural relics protection from the national treasure and provincial budget annually. The provincial fund was allocated by the financial department after the approval by the provincial government, which was exclusively used for protection of immovable and movable heritage within the territory of this province. The national fund was directly given to the provincial cultural relics administration, then it was separated according to the different programs from the protective institutes and museums at provincial or municipal or county levels.

Table 1. Cultural heritage protection funds.

Year	Operation Funds (million Yuan)	Year	Operation Funds (million Yuan)
2006	264,67	2014	796,94
2007	348,86	2015	941,32
2008	394,68	2016	1214,00
2009	423,63	2017	1241,00
2010	511,70	2018	1415,00
2011	735,06	2019	1524,00
2012	1100,38	2020	1348,25
2013	1132,89		

Table 1 shows a rapid increase of this fund from 2006-2020, the growth rate was nearly five times annually. Table 2 indicates the details of the expenditure, including the operation fund from the National Cultural Heritage Administration, provincial funds and self-financing funds by the protection administration, e.g. Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration. By the end of 2020, more than 524 billion Yuan (RMB) was used to initiate the maintenance projects

totaling 355 sites. 254 revolutionary sites were repaired and the comprehensive ecological settings were improved. 0.24 million moveable objects were restored, and the first national movable cultural relics survey was carried out. The Long

March remains, anti-Japanese war sites and Buddhism grottoes, Qinling mountain heritage and historical remains along the Yellow River were investigated and documented.

Table 2. Various Resources of Funds.

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	total
Operation funds	12.14	12.41	14.15	15.24	54
Cultural heritage protection project funds (national special funds) from National Cultural Heritage Administration	3.52	2.026	2.3	3	11
Provincial special financial funds	0.74	0.75	0.77	0.75	3
Provincial self-financing funds	1.54	1.03	1.07	1.3	5

7.2. Enhancing the Archaeological Excavations and Protect Ancient Tombs

According to national Cultural Relics Law, archaeological exploration and excavation should be conducted before the construction work. More historical sites and tombs were protected by archaeological excavations during constructions. President Xi Jinping made an important instruction recently, “to strive for a archaeology discipline with distinct Chinese characteristics and style”, to interpret the origin of Chinese civilization, to demonstrate the evolution of unified and

multi-nationalities China by carrying out the major programs such as “archaeological China” aiming to set up the cultural genes pedigree and to educate the public with patriotism.

Table 3 indicates a rapid growth of archaeological projects and investment, symbolizing that the great importance had been attached to the protection by excavation. Shao Anding (2017) was proud of the archaeological achievements by his institute, and was very supportive for the public archaeology which would generate a new resource for participatory cultural heritage protection. [41]

Table 3. Archaeological Projects.

year category	2016	2017	2018	2019
Various archaeological projects	321	98	141	131
Archaeological investigation areas	26.67 square kilometre	438.68 square kilometre	194.5 square kilometre	290.39 square kilometre
Archaeological exploration areas	2317.55 million square kilometre	792.07 million square kilometre	1657.7 million square kilometre	684.15 million square kilometre
Ancient tomb excavations	1812	1450	2427	1655
Ancient site excavations	17771 square metre	261445 square metre	49320 square metre	62500 square metre
National Top Ten Archaeological Excavation Awards	1 (Qin and Han sacrificial site)	2 (Neolithic and Qin sites)	2 (Neolithic and Eastern Zhou sites)	2 (Palaeolithic and Neolithic sites)
China Six New Archaeological Findings	1 (Neolithic site)		2 (Neolithic and Eastern Zhou sites)	1 (Neolithic site)
Cultural heritage protection projects		41	28	26
Cultural heritage maintenance projects		41	42	33
Emergency reinforcement projects		18	15	10
Acceptance appraisal projects		35		
Cultural heritage protection planning development	9	4	2	13

7.3. Strengthening the Security Supervision

The protective effects of cultural heritage lies in the supervisions from all levels. The provincial administration made great endeavour to secure the process and performance of protection work.

Table 4. Cultural Heritage Inspections.

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of Cultural Heritage Management Committees	222	222	222	223
Cultural Heritage Protect staff	7000	8017	8000	8600
Security input (Yuan)	16,17 million	20,00 million	28,00 million	31,83 million
Rectification of hidden dangers	87 sites	319 sites	67 sites	178 sites
Technical protection projects	60 sites	70 sites	90 sites	80 sites

Table 4 showed that a slow growth in field protective institutes, probably because of the complicated procedure, but the quick rise of field professional protective staff. The more investment were given, the more threats were eliminated. Volunteers engaged themselves into the field cultural heritage protection. Most importantly, the media exposed more stories about the importance of these heritage,

more and more people were encouraged, especially the young generations were inspired and many had devoted themselves to the great cause of cultural heritage protection. More and more people in this province are recognizing the value of protection, sharing the protective conception and this endeavor, building a protective framework and context for protection.

7.4. Augmenting the Fight Against Tomb Robbing and Smuggling

During recent three years, cultural heritage crimes were remaining higher than the neighboring provinces, just as table 5 indicated. Cheng Xinyu (2017) made a statistic

investigation, he insisted that the cases against cultural heritage criminals rise 40 annually, only a small percent of them were closed. [42] Therefore, the national police and provincial criminal investigation authority mobilized more policemen to crack down some severe cases.

Table 5. Cultural Heritage Criminal Cases.

Year	Case registered	Cases cleared	Number of suspects	Recovered stolen objects	others
2018	157	333 (266 tomb robberies, 34 thefts, 29 smuggling, 1 hidden stolen objects, 3 other crimes.)	468	2643 pieces, including 6 First category, 19 second category, 179 third category, others were non-categorized.	3 listed as provincial supervision, 1 listed as special operation case
2019	100	250 (58 tomb robbing cases were cleared, 14 cases of cultural relics stealing, 104 smuggling cases, 1 hidden case, 73 other related cases.)	297	3077 (7 first grade, 37 second grade, 243 third grade, ungraded 2523, others 258.)	1 under the national supervision, 4 under provincial supervision, 1 under provincial special case supervision.
2020	140	510 (cases including 153 tomb robbing, 25 stealing, 29 smuggling or reselling, 293 others)	394	4099 (21 second grade, 172 third grade, undergraded 3308, 598 others.)	6 under provincial supervision, 432 suing cases. 4 targeted criminals were arrested, 5 were haunted.

7.5. Bringing Cultural Heritage Protection into the Public Interest Litigation System

Shaanxi Provincial People's Procuratorate worked with Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration to issue a joint document, *Suggestion on Forwarding Procuratorial Public Interest Litigation and Promoting Cultural Heritage Protection*. It clearly states that the Great Wall remains, the revolutionary heritage are brought into the special actions of public interest litigation. There are several successful cases in the protection of the Great Wall remains. Pang Bo (2020) made a positive comments, "this is a big move in the course of provincial cultural heritage protection". [43] Besides, stimulus should be applied into protection team building.

8. Suggestions

8.1. Cultural Relics Protection Is of Paramount Importance for a Sustainable and Harmonious Provincial Settings

The provincial government at all levels have to faithfully follow the national general guideline of protection, "archaeological excavation as foundation, scientific conservation at the core, exhibition as instrumentality and public service as the ultimate goal", and should be proud of these gifted treasures. The great potential value of protection should be highly recognized and preserved for the later generations. Liang Peiyi, Yu Jie (2019) offer a positive route map for the a harmonious ecology of heritage and regional prosperity which would give birth to a more healthy, more liveable and a more sustainable future. [44]

8.2. Digitization Is a Most Effective Way to Preserve the Provincial Cultural Heritage

Building a digitally confident cultural heritage protection system is the main task. Four key national scientific research bases, including the protections of four categories of cultural

heritage, archaeological excavation site, the stone monuments and bricks, the pottery wares and tomb wall paintings sequentially, should take the initiatives to make the strategic planning, team building and experimental explorations. For those most vulnerable remains, particularly textiles, color attachments and wooden structures, Lu Fang (2020), Zhang Luying (2016) proposed, digital protection and usage designations and funding always take priorities. [45, 46]

8.3. Big Data Platforms for Provincial Heritage Protection Management and Scientific Research Play a very Important Role

Setting up a more authoritative organization to assemble and allocated effective tools for large-scale and impactful protective research data platform, and to manage the digital resources under the direct administration of the provincial government or led by one of the vice-governors. Data from the universities, research institutions, either public or private, should be assembled, opened and shared provincially, nationally or globally. The massive data collecting, processing and automatic generating capabilities would greatly promote intelligent display and utilization which will stimulate more multidisciplinary conservative matrix, such as remote sensing archaeology, 3D scanning, HD photography and ground penetrating radar.

8.4. Key Supports Should Given to Specialized and Professionalized Protection Talents and Team Building

Firstly, a series of lifelong learning or training policies and mechanisms preferences should be guaranteed. Secondly, it is the major responsibilities of the provincial administrations to help those small institutes in county level to perform their protective duties. Thirdly, more professionals should be sent to the field conservative areas, and a partnership operating mode would help a top-bottom tie between the different institutes from provincial level to the county level. Fourthly, high level experts should develop protective standards,

professional ethic code and digitized involvement into the provincial protective law, regulations and other constrained documents should be. Zhao Rong (2009), the former director of Shaanxi Cultural Relics Bureau, suggested that the protection of protective team is crucial for the cultural heritage inheritance and extension. [47]

8.5. Revolutionary Cultural Heritage Protection Should Be Further Strengthened

Aiming to protect the physical completeness and authenticity, as well as the value of the revolutionary cultural heritage, the Standing Committee of Shaanxi Provincial People's Congress (notice No. 31) issued the revised *Shaanxi Provincial Regulation for Protection of Yan'an Revolutionary Heritage* on 1 May, 2020 (first issued on 1 June 2001; amended in 2004). According to the website of Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration, the first group list of Revolutionary Cultural Heritage was released by the Bureau at 31st, December, 2020, publicizing 1214 immovable heritages, 40703 items (sets) movable objects, more than 56.2% from Yan'an and Yulin districts. As one of the six national exploration examples of revolutionary heritage protection, Yan'an, the location of Revolutionary holy place in China, where the Central committee of the Chinese Community Party led Chinese people to build a new China for 13 years (1935.10.19-1948.3), aims to restore the past landscape as a whole based on the 140 revolutionary sites. Repairs, reinforcements and renovations projects have already been planned. 11093 sets (158 first grade, 272 second grade, 969 third grade, 529 ungraded and others) of the moveable revolutionary collections in 11 cities were accredited and categorized for further research, exhibition and education. 1214 immovable revolutionary heritage sites or buildings (36 national protection, 243 provincial protection, 338 municipal or county level protection, and 565 awaiting graded) are under protection. 169 first protective programs, including security facilities, fire controlling devices, technical precautionary installations have been planned. Putting the revolutionary cultural heritage into provincial protection will exert great influence on the whole paramount of strategic planning of local fourteen-five-year's development.

8.6. Close Collaboration and Strong Partnership Between the Heritage Protection Sectors with Legislative, Judiciary and Law Enforcement Departments

Guided by *Shaanxi Provincial Administrative Accountability Provisions on Severe Security Accidents against Cultural Heritage* (governmental order No. 84. first issued on 18 September 2002; amended on 25 Feb. 2011), the provincial heritage protection administration worked with Shaanxi Police Bureau to create the first national joint mechanism to fight against the illicitly stealing relics and digging the ancient tomb under protection, and to launch a eight-year's special action "Hawk" to recover the stolen cultural relics, 16553 most representative objects were registered by museums. As Guo Xianzeng (2014, p3), the former deputy director of Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics

Bureau said that these joint operations include fight against crimes, case investigation, supervision and assessment, evaluation of stolen burial objects and ministerial-level coordinating platform. [48]

9. Conclusion

This paper has presented the cultural heritage in Shaanxi comprehensively. By field investigation, literature review and comparative data analysis, problems such as natural damage, human destruction, constructive damage, protective damage and commercial damage on cultural heritage protection in Shaanxi Province are identified. And the causes lie in incomplete and inadequate execution of protective policies and conservative measures, incompetence to carry out an overall and sustainable protection thoroughly, insufficient investment in cultural heritage protection, insufficient professional protection staff, underdeveloped infrastructural facilities, inadequate public supports, severe challenges in capacity building, imperfect legal system and conservative concepts. To tackle these issues, improvements in investment, archaeological excavation, security supervision, fight against tomb robbing and smuggling and public interest litigation system should be considered. In addition, it is suggested that enhancing value recognition, digitization, big data platform, talents and team building, revolutionary cultural heritage protection and collaboration will be of great help.

To sum up, the new protective conception of "both object and humanity spirit take equal priority" should be implemented.

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