

Refinement of the Tang Dynasty: A Theoretical Study of the Historical Origins and Contemporary Expression of Visual Arts in Xi'an Along the Silk Road

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Abstract: This research delves into the historical origins and contemporary manifestations of Xi'an's cultural and tourism visual arts, with the objective of gaining a nuanced comprehension of the city's distinctive role in the cultural legacy of the Silk Road and the evolution of the tourism sector. Through an examination of the historical and cultural context of the Silk Road and Xi'an's pivotal role therein, this study elucidates the profound influence exerted by the Silk Road's rich history on Xi'an. The cultural flourishing of Xi'an during the Tang Dynasty and its substantial contributions to the cultural milieu of the Silk Road endow us with invaluable historical and cultural reservoirs. Employing case studies and scholarly literature, we ascertain that visual arts within Xi'an's cultural tourism domain not only afford tourists aesthetic gratification but also play a pivotal role in disseminating the city's history, culture, and values. Through mediums such as museums, exhibitions, and festivals, visual artworks effectively convey Xi'an's distinctive status as the starting point of the Silk Road, thereby kindling tourists' curiosity and enhancing their comprehension of the city.

Keywords: Silk Road, Xi'an Culture, Cultural Tourism Industry, Visual Art Symbols

1. INTRODUCTION

The ancient Silk Road, an intricate network of land and sea routes connecting East and West, encapsulates millennia of history and cultural exchange (Rezakhani, 2010; Wood, 2002). Functioning as a conduit for the exchange of commodities such as silk, tea, ceramics, spices, precious stones, and works of art, this historical trade route facilitated some of the most significant trade and cultural interactions in human history (Finlay, 2010). Beyond a mere conduit for goods, the Silk Road embodied the amalgamation and fusion of civilizations, profoundly influencing the interaction between Eastern and Western societies and facilitating the

dissemination of knowledge, technology, religion, and art. Xi'an, identified as Chang'an in ancient times, emerges as a pivotal city along this ancient route (Hoerder, 2020). The Silk Road, characterized not by a singular path but by a complex network of land and sea routes, intricately linked ancient China with its neighboring countries (Winter, 2016). Xi'an, positioned as the capital of Shaanxi Province and a significant ancient capital in Chinese history (Qingzhu, 2007), holds a distinctive status as the eastern starting point of the Silk Road. It served as the capital for various dynasties, notably the illustrious Tang Dynasty, earning the moniker "Capital of Tang" (Xinjiang, 2006). Attaining its zenith during the Tang Dynasty, Chang'an, as it was known then, burgeoned into one of the world's largest cities, attesting to its remarkable prosperity (Lockard C., 2000). Beyond its role as a trade hub, Chang'an stood as a nexus for cultural, religious, and technological exchanges, epitomizing the convergence of Eastern and Western civilizations (Christian, 2000; Millward, 2013). The Tang Dynasty era witnessed Chang'an as a dynamic crossroads where diverse cultural elements intermingled and exchanged, crafting a vibrant cultural panorama (Yang et al., 2022). The Silk Road transcended its function as a conduit for commodities, evolving into a medium for the diffusion of diverse cultural elements (Andrea, 2014). Along this historic route, individuals from varied countries and regions convened, fostering innovations and exchanges in realms like religion, philosophy, science, and art (Cook, 2007). The Tang Dynasty, recognized as a pinnacle in Chinese history and Xi'an's cultural zenith, propelled Chang'an into one of the world's largest cities, characterized by not only economic prosperity but also an abundance of cultural luminaries (Chen et al., 2022). Under the influence of the Silk Road, the Tang Dynasty witnessed the zenith of literature, painting, music, and other art forms. The renowned Tang three-colored terracotta figurines, murals, and poetic works endure as treasures of Chinese culture, resilient through time, and furnishing invaluable historical and cultural reservoirs for future generations. The culture of Xi'an has not only had far-reaching influence in China but also positively influenced the development of the Silk Road. Xi'an's achievements in mural art, the spread of Buddhism, and ancient scientific research attracted the spread and exchange of many foreign cultures (Wang, 2019). These cultural elements continued to spread along the Silk Road, enriching the exchanges between Eastern and Western civilizations and contributing to the prosperity and diversification of the ancient Silk Road (Qian, 2016). Nowadays, with the rapid development of China's tourism industry, Xi'an has become one of the highly sought-after tourist destinations (Jiang & Zou, 2021). Xi'an's famous historical

attractions, such as the Mausoleum of Qin Shi Huang, the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, and the Huaqing Pond, attract millions of tourists every year. At the same time, the development of the modern culture and tourism industry has made Xi'an a diverse destination that attracts all types of tourists, including history buffs, cultural explorers, food seekers, and art and creative culture enthusiasts (Jiang, 2018; Li, 2013). This diverse group of tourists provides rich market opportunities for the development of Xi'an's cultural tourism industry. As a city with a long history, Xi'an has a rich diversity of cultural and tourism resources. These resources include not only ancient historical sites but also traditional culture, folk crafts, contemporary art, and many other aspects. The process of constructing visual symbols for cultural and tourism resources is an important and complex task. How to transform Xi'an's rich historical and cultural elements into visual artworks to attract tourists and convey cultural information is a topic that needs in-depth research.

2. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE SILK ROAD

The Silk Road, serving as a vital international trade route bridging Asia and Europe, carries profound symbolic value and holds immense historical significance (Zhang et al., 2021). Originating from Chang'an, now situated in the eastern part of Xi'an, the ancient Silk Road extended westward to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, covering an extensive total length of nearly 7,000 kilometers (Xie et al., 2020). Spanning across China's provinces, including Shaanxi, Qingdao, Ningxia, Gan, Xinjiang, the Chinese segment of the Silk Road measures approximately 4,000 km in length. Functioning as the epicenter of trade and commerce along the ancient Silk Road, this international trade route forged unprecedented connections with countries along its trajectory, fostering cultural interchanges among Ancient Rome, Ancient Greek civilization, Arab civilization, Ancient Persian civilization, Ancient Indian civilization, and Ancient Chinese civilization. Consequently, the Silk Road facilitated regional development and comprehensive cultural exchanges, enriching the means of production and livelihoods for each ethnic group and country along its course. Importantly, it played a pivotal role in positively influencing the evolution of social structures and cultural progress within each country and ethnic group. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the Silk Road map.

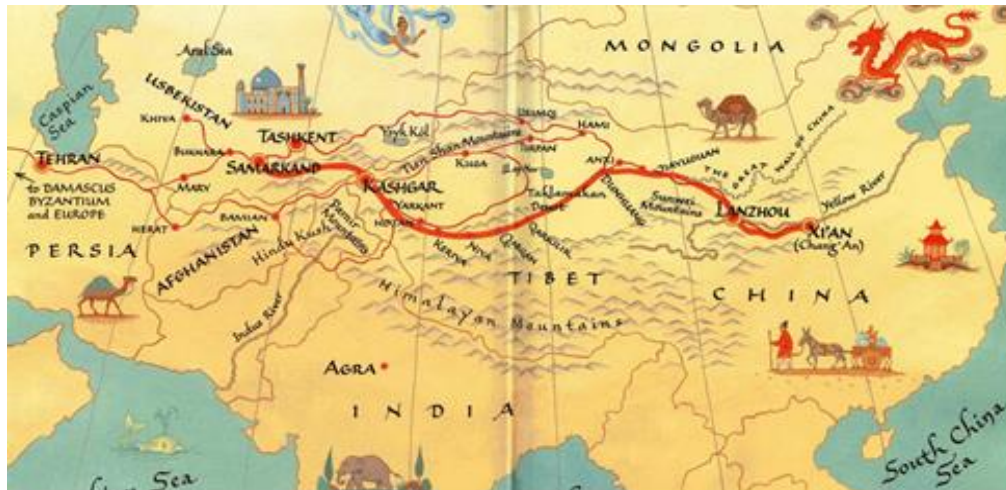


Figure 1: Silk Road map

(<https://www.ghoghnos.net/blog/city-guide/silk-road-the-ancient-communication-route-in-the-world/>)

Archaeological discoveries have fully proved that as early as the fourth century B.C., material and cultural exchanges between China and the West already existed, and the earliest Silk Road was not just a single channel for the transportation of silk, but a series of required materials circulated on a small scale on this road (Duarte, 2019). With the progress of economic development and transportation conditions and further integration of ethnic groups, the original localized exchanges and transactions further expanded. Driven by the Western Han Emperor Wu Di to unite other ethnic groups and fight against the Xiongnu, he dispatched Zhang Qian on a mission to the Western Regions, marking the official establishment of an officially organized exchange channel. The Shaanxi section of the Silk Road, as the starting section, went through a complete process of inception, development, prosperity, and decline, as shown in Tables 1-3.

2.1 The Pioneering Stage of Development

Table 1(a): History of the Shaanxi Section of the Silk Road (Two Han Period)

	Period	Background to the Development of the Silk Road	The Main Content and Performance of the Silk Road
The Pioneering Stage of Development	2nd century BC-early AD	In 126 BC and 119 BC, Zhang Qian was twice sent to the Western Regions for military union, opening up the world-renowned Silk Road and unveiling the development and rise and fall of the Silk Road, which lasted for more than a thousand years.	The emissaries and merchants from the Western Regions and the Han Dynasty interacted frequently, and all kinds of commodities represented by silk circulated in large quantities via the Silk Road.

Table 1(b): History of the Shaanxi Section of the Silk Road (Two Han Period)

	Period	Background to the Development of the Silk Road	The Main Content and Performance of the Silk Road
The Pioneering Stage of Development	Early A.D.-2nd century A.D.	During the Eastern Han Dynasty, Ban Chao's father and son operated in the Western Regions, and the Silk Road continued to develop after experiencing the "three isolations and three passages".	By the beginning of the A.D., the Mediterranean Rim, controlled by the ancient Roman Empire, was the concentration of trade and the end market of the Silk Road connecting Europe.
	2nd century A.D.-6th century A.D.	After the fall of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the Silk Road was affected to some extent by the subsequent three hundred years of division and wars, and was relatively slow, but the exchange of commodities and the spread of culture along the route remained uninterrupted.	Buddhism was introduced into the country and spread rapidly, which in turn gave rise to localized and Chinese manifestations.

2.2 Flourishing and Prosperous Stage

Table 2: Historical evolution of the Shaanxi section of the Silk Road (Sui and Tang dynasties)

	Period	Background to the Development of the Silk Road	The Main Content and Performance of the Silk Road
Flourishing and Prosperous Stage	6th century A.D. - 10th century A.D.	During the Sui and Tang dynasties, as the pinnacle of China's ancient civilization, the state power was highly unified, and relying on strong state power, the administration of the Western Regions was further strengthened, advancing the smooth flow of the Silk Road and the continued interaction between China and the West in terms of trade and culture.	The Chinese civilization centered on the capital city of Chang'an became the dominant national culture, with strong exemplary and radiating power, exerting an important influence on the surrounding areas along the Silk Road and promoting the development of towns and cities along the route. Commodity exchanges along the route were extremely developed, and cultural exchanges were also extremely rich.

2.3 Tapering Phase

Table 3: History of the Shaanxi section of the Silk Road (after the Song Dynasty)

	Period	Background to the Development of the Silk Road	The Main Content and Performance of the Silk Road
Tapering Phase	10th century A.D. - 16th century A.D.	After the Tang Dynasty, China once again entered a period of instability with frequent regime changes, the city of Chang'an ceased to be the capital, and the status of the Shaanxi section of the Silk Road declined.	With the development of the Maritime Silk Road, the earliest land-based Silk Road was no longer the only route of foreign exchange, and its importance gradually diminished. Although the Silk Road route was not cut off, it showed a declining phenomenon.

Since the Western Han Dynasty, the Silk Road formally began the development of ancient human society for thousands of years, it was magnificent, across the East and West, and the capital city of Chang'an in the Western Han Dynasty naturally became the starting point of the Silk Road in the pioneering period (Wang & Zhao, 2012; Yimin & Lingwei, 2017). Even in the Tang Dynasty, when the development of the Silk Road was at its height, Xi'an was also the political, economic, cultural, and military center of ancient Chinese society, and the Tang capital Chang'an once again became the central city that determined and controlled the development of the route. The imperial capitals, represented by the Han Chang'an City and the Tang Chang'an City during the route's inaugural and flourishing periods, encompass a wealth of material remains closely related to the Shaanxi section of the Silk Road, which centrally reflects the core value of the Shaanxi section of the Silk Road as the starting point of the entire cultural route, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Distribution of Ancient Capital Sites in Shaanxi Province

This article focuses on the Xi'an area during the Tang Dynasty. The site of Tang Chang'an City is located in the city of Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, which was built in the Sui Dynasty, and the construction of Daxing City was started in 582 A.D. Emperor Wen of the Sui Dynasty appointed Yu Wenkai, a famous architect, to be in charge of planning, designing and supervising the construction of the capital city, which was completed 10 months later (Zhang, 2015). Li Yuan after the rise of the Tang Dynasty, in Sui Daxing City the basis of continued to extend for the capital, the city name was changed to "Chang'an". After the capital was moved to Luoyang at the end of the Tang Dynasty, the city was demolished and reduced to ruins', after which the ruins of Tang Chang'an City were buried underground, and most of the ruins were superimposed by modern buildings to this day. Tang Chang'an City was the most magnificent and spectacular capital city during the heyday of China's feudal society and the largest city in the world at that time. Tang Chang'an City is rectangular in plan, covering an area of 83.1 square kilometers, the overall symmetrical layout according to the central axis, the Palace City, the Imperial City, and the outer City three parts. The Imperial City was built in the south of the Palace City, which was the seat of the central government offices and temples. Outer Kuo Cheng, also known as Luo Cheng, distributed in the southeast and southwest of the Palace City and the Imperial City, is a residential and commercial area. To the south of the Imperial City, Zhujiao Street as the central axis, the city is divided into east and west symmetry of the two major patterns, to take the checkerboard division of the Li Fang system, the city totaled 108 Fang, see Figure 3.

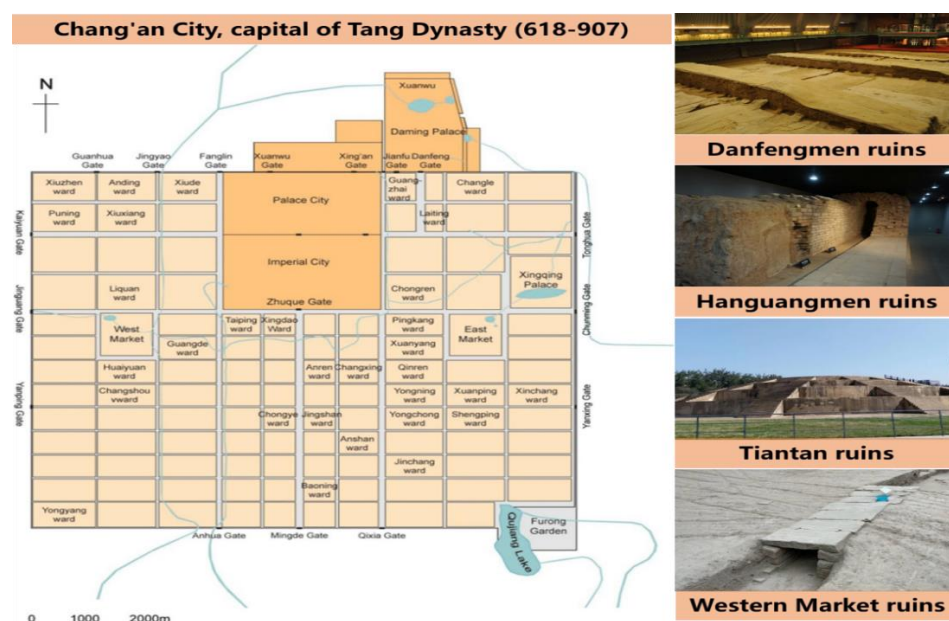


Figure 3: The overall pattern of the Tang Dynasty Chang'an City and the distribution of the remains of the Daming Palace site

Within the city site's scope, diverse architectural remains characterize the Tang Great Wall site, offering a representative mosaic of Tang Dynasty Chinese culture (Zhang, 2015). These include palaces, gate sites, pagodas, marketplaces, ceremonial buildings, and other structures. Notable examples encompass the Daming Palace Site and Xingqing Palace Site, representing the Palace City and Palace Site; Big and Small Wild Goose Pagodas for the Religious Building Site; the West Market Site for the Market and the Trade Site; Yanping Gate Site, Mingde Gate Site, and Hengguang Gate Site for the City Gate Site; and the Temple of Heaven Site for the Ceremonial Building Site. These architectural remnants encapsulate specific details of the Tang Dynasty culture, reflecting philosophical thinking, artistic concepts, religious beliefs, national consciousness, construction technology, and other pivotal facets of the Tang society. The Silk Road played a pivotal role in disseminating Chinese culture to regions beyond the Western frontiers. During the Tang and Song dynasties, Buddhism traversed the Silk Road, extending its influence south of the Tianshan Mountains and along the Hexi Corridor. This period witnessed a flourishing of preaching and scripture translation, with the construction of temples and caves becoming a prominent trend. Guzi, Gaochang, Dunhuang, and Liangzhou emerged as renowned Buddhist shrines and propagation centers. Subsequently, Nestorianism, Zoroastrianism, and Manichaeism also traversed the Silk Road through the Western Region in the Central Plains and Xinjiang. Religious influences were rich and varied, particularly the transformative impact of Buddhism on Central Plains culture.

The arrival of Buddhism from the East brought substantial changes to ancient Chinese thought and culture. This cultural assimilation prompted a significant evolution in Chinese art, with the introduction of Western painting techniques marking a new era. Concurrently, Chinese art styles traversed the Onion Ridge, influencing Central Asia. Notable murals from the 7th-8th centuries A.D. discovered in the Cornucopia region bear a striking resemblance to contemporaneous Chinese mural paintings, as depicted in Figure 4. This interplay of cultural exchange along the Silk Road showcases the dynamic transformation and enrichment of artistic and philosophical expressions across diverse civilizations. In the material culture, the foreign cultures of the Western regions made an important contribution to the richness of Chinese culture. In the Tang Dynasty and nomadic wars, the horse was for the warrior riding and carrying the

important tool of supplies, the 'Tang Dynasty relied on its rulers in the Asian peoples of high status and its authority by the world, to a large extent, depends on the number of horses they can get the war, so the Tang Dynasty rulers, the horse has a very great significance.

The New Book of the Tang Dynasty clearly states that "the horse is the military equipment of the country, and if the sky is removed from its equipment, the country will be in danger of collapse." Early in the seventh century, just as the Tang Dynasty was established, the Tang rulers found that they had only 5,000 horses at their disposal for sheep grazing on the Longyu grasslands.



Mural of the Vimalakirti Sutra



Mogao Caves frescoes

Figure 4: Comparison of frescoes in the Sut region with frescoes in China of the same period

Three thousands of these horses were inherited from the fallen Sui dynasty, and the rest were trophies from the Turks. Of course, the introduction of horses from abroad during this period was also seen as a tool of foreign policy and military strategy: in the 16th year of the Zhenguan Dynasty, the Tang Dynasty initially refused a request for 3,000 horses from the Tiele, but the following year, the Tang government acceded to Xue Yantuo's request for marriage, who in turn wanted the Tang Dynasty to contribute 50,000 clear, white, and black horses, as well as a large number of oxen, camels, and sheep.

The poet Li Bai of the Tang Dynasty also mentioned the "tiger pattern" in his poems, which indicates the return of the horse to its ancestor, and the patterns on the tiger pattern can be seen in the wild asses of Asia. Horses produced in Kang were introduced to the Tang Dynasty as breeding stock for Tang warhorses.

3. THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF VISUAL ARTS IN XI'AN CULTURE AND TOURISM

Chang'an, the ancient name of Xi'an, as early as the Han and Tang dynasties, she, along with Athens, Rome, and Cairo, is known as "the world's four great ancient capitals of civilization". In this land of great wealth and talent, there have been 13 dynasties such as Zhou, Qin, Han, Sui, Tang, etc., which have set up their capitals here for more than 1,100 years, and it is the ancient capital of civilization with the largest number of dynasties and the longest period in China's feudal era and a large number of ancient cultural resources have been preserved. Among them, the Tang Dynasty was the strongest compared with other dynasties, and the time from today is relatively close, so the distribution of Tang cultural resources is also the most concentrated and rich. After absorbing the religious culture of foreign lands, China's religion, ideology, and culture became more colorful and enriched the people's daily lives. At the same time, the customs of foreign cultures in the western region also penetrated all aspects of the Tang dynasty society. According to the Old Book of Tang - Public Opinion and Clothing Zhi records: "Since the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty, the Taishang music Shang Hu music, the nobleman royal writers all for Hu food, the scholarly women are competing to wear Hu clothes." "Hu" refers to the ethnic minorities in the northwest region of ancient China. In the following text, the concept of "Hu people" and "Hu food" are also understood in this way. In Chang'an and Luoyang, narrow-sleeved, small-waisted Hu clothes were extremely popular, and Mrs. Hua Rui's "Palace Lyrics" said, "The magpie clothes are fitted with a magpie horse, which is known as a small-waisted body." As for Hu food, since the Wei and Jin dynasties, has spread throughout the Central Plains. In the Tang Dynasty, the style of eating Hu food was more prevalent. Hu food has Hu cake (oven cake), birch gong, etc. Hu cake including meat pie and no filling cake two, generally baked in the oven. Hu food was not only in the court but in the folk popular. The Silk Road was not opened for economic reasons, but after the opening of the Silk Road in the western region, the economic exchanges between the Chinese dynasties and the nomadic tribes in the western region began. The nomadic tribes were producing livestock and animal products for the nomadic economy, while the Central Plains Dynasty was producing grain and spinning cotton and silk, nesting silk for the farming economy, the two complemented each other economically, not only producing the official tribute trade but also contributed to the Silk Road shuttle caravans and profitable merchants. Since then, for thousands

of years, horses from the western region have made indelible contributions to the improvement of war horses in the central plains, and their use as important equipment to enhance combat effectiveness. In these trades, although horses were exchanged for material goods, the methods of breeding horses and the improvement of soldiers' riding skills were also exchanged along with the material goods, which had the connotation of cultural trade. Cultural trade also tended to feed into a form of economic exchange in the form of peacemaking, such as the political marriages of the Han dynasty in which the princesses of peacemaking married far away from each other and also tended to receive a lot of rewards. "The Wusuns hired them with a thousand horses." In the third year of the Han Dynasty, Emperor Wu "sent the daughter of the king of Jiangdu, Jian, as a princess to marry him." He attached great importance to this marriage with the Wusuns, "He gave them a large number of moped and clothes, as well as hundreds of eunuchs and eunuchs." He gave her a large number of carriages and horses, clothing, and household utensils, and provided her with hundreds of officials and eunuchs. When Emperor Wu heard that the Princess made a song called "Yellow Bull's-eye" to express her longing for home, he was very sympathetic to her and sent his envoys to give her curtains and embroideries to comfort her. These chariots and horses, costumes, household utensils, including the far-married princesses and their attendants also became the emissaries of the Han culture among the nomads in the Western Regions. Since the Western Han Dynasty, Chang'an has been a hub of East-West transportation. The South China Sea Road led out of Guangzhou to the countries of South Asia and even to Tianzhu, and the East China Sea Road led to Silla and Japan. Chang'an west to Lanzhou until out of the Yumen Pass that is, there are three land routes to the Western Regions, which can also be said to be the three Silk Road. These superior conditions made the Tang Dynasty Chang'an become the center of the world, the center of cultural exchanges between the East and the West. Thus, China's silk, porcelain, tea, Chinese medicine, and production, use a steady flow to Western countries. Persia, Silla, Japan, etc., and the painting, dance, technology, music, etc., were also attracted to Tang. The continuous economic prosperity and cultural exchanges made the cultural trade in Chang'an more and more prosperous.

4. CONTEMPORARY XI'AN CULTURAL AND TOURISM VISUAL ART EXPRESSIONS

As the ancient capital of China's history, Xi'an has a rich historical and

cultural heritage that attracts a large number of tourists to explore. With the rapid development of domestic tourism, Xi'an has become a highly sought-after tourist destination. This development has been facilitated by improvements in high-speed rail and air networks, making it easier for tourists to reach Xi'an (Zhou et al., 2021). Famous tourist attractions in Xi'an, such as the Mausoleum of Qin Shi Huang, the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, and the Huaqing Pond (Mingers & Willcocks, 2014; Pacey & Bray, 2021), as shown in Figure 5, attract millions of domestic and foreign tourists every year. In addition, the historical and cultural elements of the Silk Road attract many tourists who are eager to experience the charm of this ancient trade route for themselves.



Figure 5: Famous tourist attractions in Xi'an

Art exhibitions and cultural programs have also become part of Xi'an's cultural tourism industry. These exhibitions and programs offer visitors the opportunity to interact with traditional culture while promoting the creative inspiration of contemporary artists. In conclusion, the current state of development of Xi'an's cultural and tourism industry shows a vibrant city that fully utilizes its historical and cultural resources to attract tourists, and also continues to innovate in the field of cultural industry and visual arts to provide tourists with more rich cultural experiences. This development trend provides a solid foundation for further exploring the historical origins and contemporary expressions of Xi'an's cultural and tourism visual arts. In semiotics theory, a complete sign system consists of three parts: energy, reference, and meaning. Energetic reference is the form of the sign, which emphasizes materiality; referent is the meaning and connotation of the thing; and meaning is a process (Yang, 2022). The visual symbol is the symbol that combines with the reference of the symbol, and the energy reference is obtained through the cognition of visual senses (Wang et al., 2020). Constructing visual symbols of Xi'an tourism resources is to convert the raw materials of Xi'an tourism resources information into symbols that can be disseminated, and present the physical and spiritual

resources visually, to improve the public's perception of tourism resources and awaken the public's "cultural self-consciousness". The establishment of Xi'an tourism resources visual symbols gene pool should also be Xi'an tourism resources to sort out, divided into categories of the system, clarify the pattern of the advantages of the resources, focused, hierarchical, phased integration, and utilization of visual cultural resources. Taking the visual symbols of Xi'an Silk Road tourism resources as an example, we can find closely related resources in the overall construction, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Visual Representation of Xi'an Culture on the Silk Road

System Categories	Supporting Culture	Visual Representation
History	Ancient sites	Weiyang Palace Ruins of Chang'an City of Han Dynasty, Daming Palace Ruins of Chang'an City of Tang Dynasty
	Ancient Architecture	Big Wild Goose Pagoda, Small Wild Goose Pagoda, Silk Road Group Sculptures
	Political Economy	Shaanxi History Museum, Tang Dynasty Art Museum
Religion	Buddhism	Daci'en Temple, Xingjiao Temple
Art	Crafts	Shadow, paper-cutting, clay sculpture, face, embroidery, silk
Folklore	Cuisine	Meat buns, cold skin, beef and mutton steamed buns, buckwheat noodles with caramelized stuffing, oil splash of spicy noodles, shabu-shabu tripe, pickled vegetables and fried rice
	Festivals	Xi'an Silk Road International Tourism Festival, Xi'an Silk Road Film Festival, Xi'an Silk Road International Art Festival

The establishment of thematic tourism resources holds profound significance, as exemplified by the analysis presented in Table 4, highlighting Xi'an's distinctive focus on historical relics within its Silk Road tourism offerings. This deviation from the emphasis on natural landscapes in other Silk Road cities underscores the importance of accurately positioning and emphasizing tourism resources in communication strategies. It is crucial not to overlook the natural landscape and modern urban culture in the region when constructing symbols. The development points stemming from them, especially in themes like "Xi'an City Recreation and Leisure," should underscore visual symbols encompassing hot springs, skiing, trekking, and culinary experiences. Given Xi'an's wealth of cultural relics and monuments, including the Half-slope Ruins and the Terracotta Warriors and Horses of Qin Shi Huang's Mausoleum, catering

to the diverse needs of tourists is paramount. Communication images should steer clear of stereotypical terms, opting instead for popularized and storytelling communication methods. By showcasing the life scenes of ancient people and drawing analogies with the contemporary, tourists can be deeply moved, creating unforgettable memories and fostering communication fission. Furthermore, the integration of Xi'an tourism resources and visual cultural elements should be leveraged to cultivate cultural brands and craft marketable products. Thoughtfully designed hand-me-downs, such as Xi'an boxes, can serve as tokens for inter-city exchanges. These items should encapsulate the cultural connotations and brand essence of Xi'an, becoming condensed endorsements for promoting Xi'an's tourism culture. Designers are encouraged to explore visual elements from Xi'an's tourism symbols, composing an overarching visual image of cultural heritage symbols infused with Xi'an's craftsmanship and technology, resulting in gifts with aesthetic, artistic, and cultural appeal. In the digital age, harnessing the power of new media and self-media is crucial for presenting Xi'an's tourism resources' visual cultural symbols. Platforms like microblogging and WeChat should be utilized to open hot topics, with a strategic focus on leveraging the influence of "opinion leaders" and the "celebrity effect" in dissemination. This approach ensures that the visual symbols of Xi'an's tourism resources undergo viral publicity, reaching a broader audience and solidifying their presence in the public consciousness.

5. CONCLUSION

By conducting a comprehensive examination of the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of Xi'an's cultural and tourism visual arts, we aim to gain nuanced insights into the city's distinctive role. These visual arts play a pivotal role in advancing the development of Xi'an's cultural and tourism industry, preserving its cultural heritage, and fostering cross-cultural exchanges. Xi'an, serving as a living repository of the Silk Road's history and culture, is undergoing a renaissance, showcasing its allure in novel dimensions. Through this research endeavor, our objective is to shed light on and heighten awareness of the significance of visual arts within Xi'an's cultural tourism landscape. Simultaneously, we aspire to infuse renewed vigor into the historical and cultural traditions of the Silk Road, perpetuating the ongoing process of cross-cultural exchange and mutual understanding. This scholarly pursuit contributes to the scholarly discourse

on the vital role of visual arts in cultural tourism, with Xi'an serving as a noteworthy case study.

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