

PROTECTING SUZHOU: STUDY OF THE CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL  
HERITAGE IN THE CITIES ALONG CHINA'S GRAND CANAL

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## **I.Introduction**

### ***1. Research Problems***

This thesis researches the current status of heritage protection in certain canal zones of Suzhou, China, in light of the successful promotion of the Grand Canal's World Heritage designation in 2014. Based on this research, the thesis will develop recommendations that will help other cities and towns along the Grand Canal in China develop better preservation and development plans.

### ***2. Sub Problems***

#### ***2.1 The first subproblem***

The first subproblem is to analyze the typical effects (like commercialization and increase in tourism) of the World Heritage Listing (both worldwide and in China).

#### ***2.2 The second subproblem***

The second subproblem is to understand what impacts and problems the cities and cultural heritage sites along the Grand Canal may face or have faced (e.g., commercialization and tourism development will affect the authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage).

#### ***2.3 The third subproblem***

The third subproblem is to analyze the successes and failures experience of Suzhou in protecting cultural heritage before the Grand Canal was successfully listed as a World

Heritage site.

#### *2.4 The fourth subproblem*

The fourth subproblem is to summarize what new planning schemes and policies Suzhou has made in the service of cultural heritage protection after the Grand Canal was successfully listed as a World Heritage.

#### *2.5 The fifth subproblem*

The fifth subproblem is to summarize the protection planning concepts reflected in Suzhou's experience and attempts, which can be exported to other towns along the Grand Canal.

### **3. Definitions/Abbreviations**

#### **1) World Heritage Site:**

World Heritage is the designation for places on Earth that are of outstanding universal value to humanity and, as such, have been inscribed on the World Heritage List to be protected for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

#### **2) Authenticity<sup>1</sup>:**

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<sup>1</sup> Chinese Definition of the Authenticity: 是指文物古迹本身的材料、工艺、设计及其环境和它所反映的历史、文化、社会等相关信息的真实性。对文物古迹的保护就是保护这些信息及其来源的真实性。与文物古迹相关的文化传统的延续同样也是对真实性的保护。——《中国文物古迹保护准则（2015 版）》(Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China)

The authenticity of cultural heritage sites is the central concern of preservation. Practices of preservation and development should not violate the geographic or historical authenticity of cultural sites; this is achieved by protecting landmarks and other historical locations, respecting traditional construction methods and materials, and protecting the material artifacts of cultural heritage.

### 3) Integrity<sup>2</sup>:

The preservation of cultural relics and historical sites is the complete preservation of its value, value carrier and environment, which embodies the value of cultural relics and historic sites. Cultural relics and historic sites formed in historical evolution, including the characteristics of each era, valuable material remains should be respected.

## ***4. Methodology***

### 1) Case Study

Through the research, analysis and evaluation of Pingjiang Road Historic District Preservation Program and Shantang Street Historic District Preservation Program, the thesis summarizes the experience and lessons of Suzhou section of the Grand Canal cultural heritage preservation before 2014.

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<sup>2</sup> Chinese Definition of the Integrity: 文物古迹的保护是对其价值、价值载体及其环境等体现文物古迹价值的各个要素的完整保护。文物古迹在历史演化过程中形成的包括各个时代特征、具有价值的物质遗存都应得到尊重。——《中国文物古迹保护准则（2015 版）》(Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China)

## 2) Documentary Research

Through research and analysis of the *Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)*, this research summarizes the new attempts of cultural heritage conservation in the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal after 2014, and makes a prospect of its possible impact.

Through data collection and analysis, this thesis evaluates the impact of COVID—19 on tourism and its further impact on cultural heritage preservation.

## 3) Interview and Survey

In this thesis, the author interviewed some tourists who visited Suzhou and collected data from tourism rating websites to evaluate the achievements of Suzhous cultural heritage preservation based on their impressions of Suzhous cultural heritage sites.

## 4) Summarize

Based on the successful promotion of the Grand Canal's World Heritage designation, the post—pandemic era, and the policy of the Chinese government to strengthen historic preservation, this thesis provides recommendations for the preservation of the cultural heritage of cities along the Grand Canal.



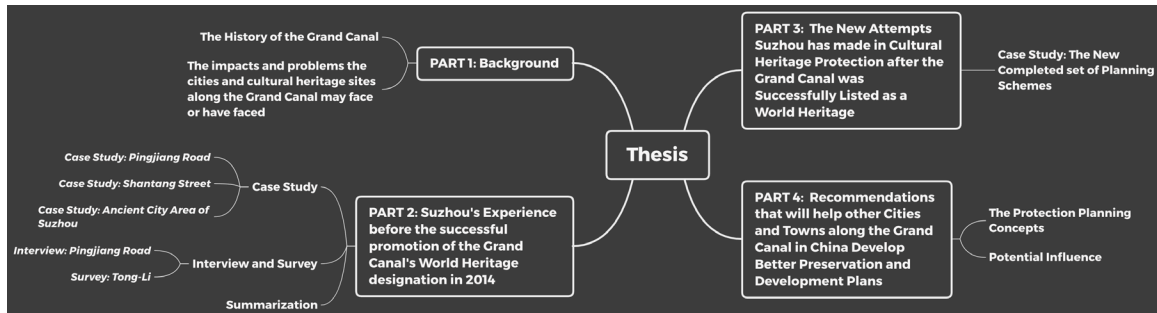


Figure 1: Research Framework

## 5. Literature Review

In recent years, cultural heritage conservation along the Grand Canal has been a popular research area in China.

Before successfully promoting the Grand Canal's World Heritage designation, scholars paid more attention to the preservation of linear cultural heritage.

In *A Preliminary Study on Large—Scale Lineal or Serial Cultural Heritages: Break Through and Pressure*,<sup>3</sup> SHAN Jixiang, then director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China, firstly proposed the concept of Lineal or Serial Cultural Heritages developed from Cultural Routes. Then, in his article, he analyzed China's large — scale linear cultural heritages and their characteristics, and took the Grand Canal as an example to analyze the status quo of China's large—scale linear cultural heritage preservation. At the end of the paper, suggestions are given for preserving large—scale

<sup>3</sup> SHAN Jixiang. "A Preliminary Study on Large-Scale Lineal or Serial Cultural Heritages: Break Through and Pressure." *Relics from South*, 2006(03):2-5.

linear cultural heritage in China.

Professor SUN Hua further analyzed the types of lineal or serial cultural heritages in *A Discussion on Different Types of Sequential Heritages*<sup>4</sup>. The classification of its protection methods is also discussed.

On the basis of the studies of SHAN Jixiang, SUN Hua, and other experts on lineal or serial cultural heritages, China completed the declaration of the Grand Canal as a World Cultural Heritage.

After successfully promoting the Grand Canal's World Heritage designation, the unavoidable problem is the impact of tourism development and commercialization on World Cultural Heritage. This issue has also been widely studied and discussed internationally.

In *Commercial Tourism and the Protection of World Cultural Heritage*<sup>5</sup>, Ye Fang took World Cultural Heritage in China and other countries as examples, analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of market operation on the preservation of World Cultural Heritage, and put forward measures to strengthen the preservation of World Cultural Heritage.

In *The Study of the Construction of the World Cultural Heritage Tourism Impact*

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<sup>4</sup> SUN Hua. "A Discussion on Different Types of Sequential Heritages[J]." *Research on Heritages and Preservation*, 2016,1(01):48-54.

<sup>5</sup> YE Fang. "Commercial Tourism and the Protection of World Cultural Heritage." *Journal of Wuyi University*. 2017, v.36; No.157(11): 33-37.DOI: 10.14155/j.cnki.35-1293/g4.2017.11.007.

*Assessment Index System in China*<sup>6</sup>, ZHANG Guochao, TANG Pei and ZHANG Enrong have tried to build a data evaluation method and system for the impact of tourism on World Cultural Heritage.

After analyzing and studying the influence of commercialization and tourism on the World Cultural Heritage sites, how to better protect the cultural heritage along the Grand Canal has become a new topic for historic preservationists.

Taking the Beijing—Tianjin—Hebei section of the Grand Canal as an example<sup>7</sup>, LIU Yang and WANG Wei discussed the cultural heritage preservation along the Grand Canal in *Implementation Countermeasures of Linear Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management in the Post—World Heritage Site Application Era*. JIANG Wencheng, ZHAO Ye, LIU Sen, YUE Wenna, ZHU Ying took the Shandong Section<sup>8</sup> of Grand Canal as an example in *Research on Linear Cultural Heritage Protection in the post—donation Era of the Grand*, to analyze the cultural heritage preservation along the Grand Canal. However, these discussions failed to put forward a demonstration and referential preservation plan for the cultural heritage protection along the Grand Canal. Therefore, it is still crucial to

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<sup>6</sup> ZHANG Guochao, TANG Pei, ZHANG Enrong. “The Study of the Construction of the World Cultural Heritage Tourism Impact Assessment Index System in China [J].” *Studies on Cultural Soft Power*, 2019, v.4; No.20(04): 73-83. DOI: 10.19468/j.cnki.2096-1987.2019.04.009.

<sup>7</sup> LIU Yang, WANG Wei. “Implementation Countermeasures of Linear Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management in the Post-World Heritage Site Application Era [C]” *The Remarkable Advantages of the Socialist System with Chinese Characteristics and the National Governance System (II)*, 2020: 182-191. DOI: 10.26914/c.cnkihy.2020.063215.

<sup>8</sup> JIANG Wencheng, ZHAO Ye, LIU Sen, YUE Wenna, ZHU Ying. “Research on Linear Cultural Heritage Protection in the Post-Donation Era of the Grand Canal: Taking Shandong Section of Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal as an Example[J].” *Architecture & Culture*, 2021, No.211(10):86-87. DOI: 10.19875/j.cnki.jzywh.2021.10.030.

find a more appropriate case to analyze and provides recommendations that will help other cities and towns along the Grand Canal in China develop preservation and development plans better to balance the relationship between historic preservation and social development and promote the joint development of regional culture and economy.

## **6. *Delimitations***

The World Heritage Listing is likely to have both positive and negative effects. This study will not negate the positive effects of the World Heritage cultural site declaration and will not criticize commercialization and tourism development in cultural heritage sites, but an analysis of the positive and negative effects which commercialization and tourism development bring to cultural heritage sites. This research will attempt to study the balance of positive and negative effects, so that the proposal can take full advantage of the World Heritage Listing in order to help the city or region with further development.

This study will not address specific cultural heritage sites condition assessment and protection techniques.

This study investigates Suzhou's experience as a World Heritage Site and provides a theoretical model for development, not a procedural or practical model for development.

This study will focus on Suzhou, not other cities.

This study will take the role of local policies or other national policies into consideration

properly but will derive lessons from specific cases rather than analyze policies in the abstract.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, fewer people were interviewed. In addition, the interviewees selected by the researchers are all professionals in historic preservation and related fields (such as architecture and city planning). Their answers and opinions are primarily from professional perspectives, so they cannot represent the feelings of all tourists.

### ***7. Importance of the Study***

The Grand Canal in China was listed as a World Heritage site in 2014. Under the successful promotion of the Grand Canal's World Heritage designation, the Grand Canal itself, including its waterway structures, adjacent landscapes, has been well protected. However, due to the success of the World Heritage listing, the heritage sites along the Grand Canal are also experiencing commercialization, industrialization, and urbanization that threaten their significance and integrity. Some cities and towns copied the model of other towns and developed cultural heritage programs along the Grand Canal without rational analysis and design. Some cities simply tore down their historic districts and rebuilt them. The reconstructed districts did not reflect the local architectural style, shape and scale of traditional streets and alleys in the design process. Some cities did not completely demolish historic districts, but arbitrarily changed the buildings' appearance, facade and function, or

arbitrarily widened roads without adequate research. Some cities transformed and utilized cultural heritage or historic buildings at will, without continuing their original style and function. The ways mentioned above of using and transforming cultural heritage have resulted in the problem of a “one size fits all” heritage management strategy in different cities; and violated the principle of authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage protection and utilization. Given the influence of the successful promotion of the Grand Canal’s World Heritage designation, we can expect potentially damaging effects of commercialization and uncontrolled tourism in the cities and towns along the Grand Canal in China. This thesis investigates the current situation as it exists in Suzhou and draws recommendations from Suzhou’s experiences to help other cities and towns along the Grand Canal in China develop better preservation and development plans.

Suzhou is a city with a long history, giving birth to the splendid Wu culture. Suzhou has an essential historical position in China and is one of the first National Historical and Cultural Cities<sup>9</sup> announced by The State Council of China. Suzhou boasts a rich historical and cultural heritage, with 492 cultural relics under conservation.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, Suzhou is the only ancient city with a constant site during more than 5,000 years of history in China, and the only ancient city that required comprehensive preservation by The State Council

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<sup>9</sup> The List of Chinas Historical and Cultural Cities

<sup>10</sup> YANG Shiyue. “Research on Safeguarding and Renewal in Historic Districts Adjacent River[D].” *Hefei University of Technology*, 2007.

of China. The ancient city of Suzhou basically retains the “two—checkerboard” urban pattern of land and river, which is a classic work of ancient Chinese urban planning.<sup>11</sup> Before the successful promotion of the Grand Canal’s World Heritage designation, the Suzhou government was committed to protecting cultural heritage. Suzhou Traditional Gardens, Suzhou Ancient City, Pingjiang Road Historic District, Shantang Street Historic District, etc., are the achievements of Suzhou cultural heritage conservation work. After successfully promoting the Grand Canal’s World Heritage designation, many cultural heritages in Suzhou became important parts of the Grand Canal World Cultural Heritage. Under this background, Suzhou has made new attempts to protect its cultural heritage. Thus, Suzhou is an excellent place to focus this research.

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<sup>11</sup> XI Fanzhen. “Conservation Planning of Historical and Cultural Blocks South of the Yangtze River — Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Historical and Cultural Block as an Example.” *Housing Science*, 2021(07):163-164.

## II. Background Information

### 1. *The Grand Canal in China*

The Grand Canal, which is called the Jing—Hang Grand Canal (京杭大运河) in Chinese, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the longest canal or artificial river in the world.

The total length of the Grand Canal is 1,776 km (1,104 miles).<sup>12</sup> It is located in the central and eastern part of China, spanning eight provincial—level administrative regions including Beijing(北京), Tianjin(天津), Hebei(河北), Shandong(山东), Jiangsu(江苏), Zhejiang(浙江), Henan(河南) and Anhui(安徽) (Figure 1), and connecting the five major water systems of the Hai River(海河), the Yellow River(黄河), the Huai River(淮河), the Yangtze River(长江) and the Qiantang River(钱塘江). Throughout its 2500 years of development, the Grand Canal has played a critical role in transportation, water conservancy and political development of the region. It was initiated in the 5th century BC, but it was not until the 7th century AD that it was fully completed. A major repair initiative occurred in the 13th century AD, which formed the Grand Canal (Figure 2) as it is today.

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<sup>12</sup> Pacey, A.J. *China - Science and Civilisation in China*. Volume 4, Part 3: Civil Engineering and Nautics. By Joseph Needham with Wang Ling and Lu Gwei-Djen. London: Cambridge University Press, 1971. p.76





Figure 2: Courses of the Grand Canal (From: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Grand-Canal.png&oldid=339746879>, accessed September 9, 2020)

According to the historical segmenting and naming conventions, the Grand Canal in China consists of ten sections. These sections have been divided into 31 heritage areas based on

their geographical location along the Grand Canal. Within these sections, 58 important cultural resource sites have been designated, including typical river sections, sites of canal hydraulic work, subsidiary sites, and related locations.<sup>13</sup>

China's Grand Canal is the only colossal engineering system in the world that was invested and managed by the government to ensure the security of grain transportation, the stability of political power, and maintain the empire's unification.<sup>14</sup> The Grand Canal was instrumental in addressing the uneven distribution of social and natural resources between the north and the south of China.<sup>15</sup> The Grand Canal, together with the Silk Road, was an important route of communication and exchange between China, Central Asia, and Western Countries. The Grand Canal of China has been labeled the "cradle of civilization" in this region due to its vast space and long history, outstanding achievements, and far-reaching influence on the history of China.

## **2. Suzhou**

Suzhou is an important city along the Grand Canal in China and is famous for its rich cultural heritage, such as the Classical Gardens of Suzhou (World Cultural Heritage), Ancient City Wall, ancient towers, and ancient temples. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, Suzhou has implemented many policies designed to protect its cultural

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<sup>13</sup> The Nomination File of the Grand Canal. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1443/documents/>

<sup>14</sup> Ebrey, P.B., Walthall, A (2014). *East Asia: A cultural, social, and political history (third)*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning. p. 76.

<sup>15</sup> Ebrey, *Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, 116

heritage.<sup>16</sup> The preservation and development of the Pingjiang Road Historic District, Shantang Street Historic District, Zhouzhuang (one of the most famous water townships in China), and Luzhi not only helped Suzhou to develop its tourism but also protected the inherent features of the water town in the south of the Yangtze River. Suzhou's laws and regulations have effectively protected the historical features of Suzhou's ancient urban areas. In the face of the impacts of commercialization, Suzhou has effectively protected its cultural heritage and maintained its cultural traditions while also growing and developing quite dramatically. Suzhou has imposed restrictions on urban construction, such as limiting the height of new buildings, and carefully regulating the renovation and demolition of old buildings, in order to preserve the overall style of the ancient Suzhou city. At the same time, some well—preserved historic districts should be further developed and utilized according to local conditions. Tourism should also be vigorously developed so as to effectively spread and promote Suzhou's cultural traditions and historical features.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> YU Wufeng. "Study on the Preservation of Suzhou Historical and Cultural City[J]." *Industrial & Science Tribune*, 2021, 20(17):200-203.

<sup>17</sup> HUANG Yi. "A Study on the Cultural Embedding of Characteristic Commercial Blocks -- A Case Study of Guanqian Street, Pingjiang Road and Shantang Street in Suzhou[J]." *ECONOMIC RESEARCH GUIDE*, 2019(26):72-73

### 3. Cultural Heritage Sites along China's Grand Canal in Suzhou

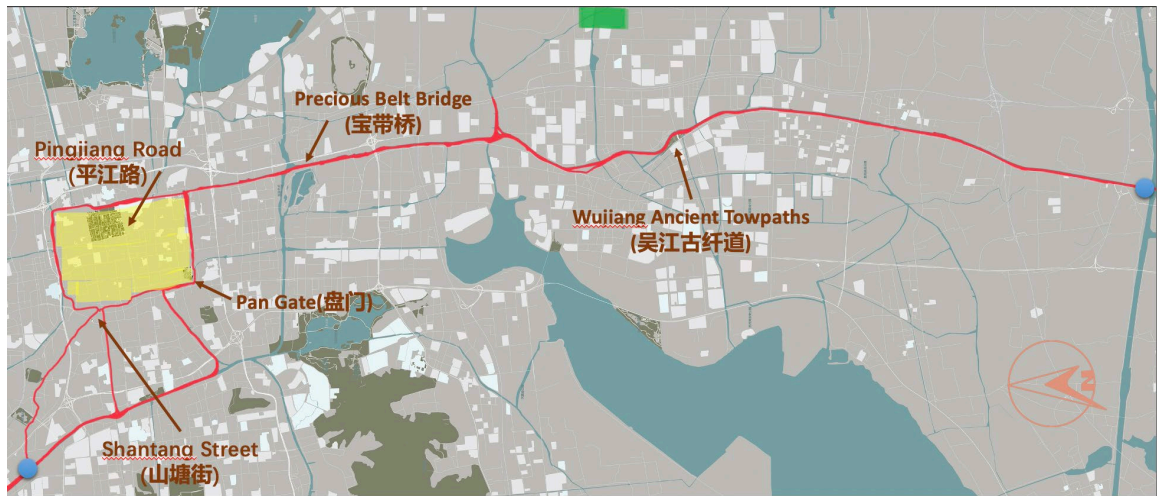


Figure 3: Cultural Heritage Sites along China's Grand Canal in Suzhou (Drawn by Dairong Qiu)

The map (Figure 3) above shows how the Grand Canal relates to the urban fabric of Suzhou. The Yellow part is the Ancient Suzhou City. The red lines show the Suzhou part of the Grand Canal, in which the left blue point is the start point, and the right blue point is the endpoint. Those five areas indicate the Cultural Heritage Sites, which are parts of the Grand Canal designation. Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District are Suzhou's famous well-preserved historic districts. Pan Gate was one of the eight gates of the capital city of Wu during the Spring and Autumn Period.<sup>18</sup> Precious Belt Bridge (Figure 4), the Fifth Batch of National Cultural Relic, is the turning point of the Grand Canal to the south.<sup>19</sup> Wujiang Ancient Towpaths is the only preserved ancient towpath on

<sup>18</sup> WANG Qinan. "Urban Design of Historical and Cultural Cities and Historic Areas -- A case Study of Pan Gate District, Suzhou City. [J]." *City & House*. 2020,27(07):127-128.

<sup>19</sup> FU Xinshi. "Discussion on the History and Culture of Precious Belt Bridge and Preservation Countermeasures[J]." *Cultural Monthly*, 2021(03):49-51.

the Grand Canal. The Green part is Tongli water town. Besides, Suzhou also has the Classical Gardens of Suzhou in the ancient city area, which are a group of gardens in Suzhou, that have been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. And those gardens attract millions of people to visit every year.



Figure 4: Precious Belt Bridge (FU Xinshi. Discussion on the History and Xulture of Precious Belt Bridge and Preservation Countermeasures[J]. Cultural Monthly,2021(03):49—51.)

#### ***4. Corona—virus Pandemic***

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID—19), also known as the coronavirus or COVID—19, is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS—CoV—2). The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December

2019.<sup>20</sup> The disease has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic.<sup>21</sup> The COVID—19 pandemic has affected tourism development, spawned new forms of travel, and further affected the approach to historic preservation.

### **III.Suzhou's Experience in Cultural Heritage Preservation before 2014**

#### ***1. Case Study***

Suzhou is a famous cultural city in China. It is one of the first 24 historical and cultural cities in China announced by the China State Council. Suzhou was the capital of Wu during the Spring and Autumn Period. It has a history of more than 2500 years.<sup>22</sup> With its long history and splendid Wu culture, Suzhou attracts a large number of tourists to visit.

During the 254 years, from the Northern Song Dynasty (1113 AD) to the end of the Yuan Dynasty (1376 AD), Suzhou was once called Pingjiang city. The old city of Suzhou has not changed for thousands of years. The ancient city area circled by the city moat has a large number of traditional streets. However, after the founding of the People's Republic of China, especially under the background of the rapid development of the economy, many of the traditional streets and alleys were almost destroyed by the government's projects of

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<sup>20</sup> Page J, Hinshaw D, McKay B (26 February 2021). "In Hunt for Covid-19 Origin, Patient Zero Points to Second Wuhan Market – The man with the first confirmed infection of the new coronavirus told the WHO team that his parents had shopped there". *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved 27 February 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Zimmer C (26 February 2021). "The Secret Life of a Coronavirus – An oily, 100-nanometer-wide bubble of genes has killed more than two million people and reshaped the world. Scientists don't quite know what to make of it". Retrieved 28 February 2021.

<sup>22</sup> CHEN Laisheng. "Study on the Construction of Characteristic Blocks in Suzhou Ancient City in the Process of Modernization[J]." *Journal of Changshu Institute of Technology*, 2015, (9):22-27.

large—scale demolition and reconstruction. Fortunately, the local government of Suzhou stopped most losses in time, studied and formulated a series of protection and development plans, and well—protected the surviving historical districts.<sup>23</sup> Suzhou Planning Bureau commissioned the Planning and Design Institute to create the most suitable preservation planning for these historic districts to better preserve them, through detailed on—site investigation and analysis, research and discussion by many experts. After the government establishes the preservation planning project, design and construction companies are selected to complete the project through public bidding. Meanwhile, the government will supervise the project to ensure its smooth progress. Since then, relevant departments have carried out protection projects in strict accordance with the protection plan, and done a good job of inspection and monitoring after the implementation of the project. As a result, these historic districts have well preserved and inherited the local historical context, and the tourism developed on this basis has also driven the regional economic development.

Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District had been fully protected before the Grand Canal was successfully applied for World Heritage. Before protecting these two historic districts, the Suzhou government commissioned planners to formulate a comprehensive protection plan. The implementation process of the

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<sup>23</sup> ZHANG Jia. “Analysis on the Featured Urban Space —— Case Study of Pingjiang Road, Shantang Street and Ligong Causeway.” *China Academy of Urban Planning & Design*. 2014

conservation project also follows the requirements of the conservation plan. Due to the early start of the project, the preservation of Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District has passed the test of time, with remarkable achievements, but also exposed some problems. Therefore, compared with other cultural heritage sites along the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal, the preservation of Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District is more representative. Thus, this research chooses Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District as case studies from the cultural heritages along the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal. At the same time, these two cultural heritage sites are also the most popular tourist destinations and the most impacted by commercialization and tourism. Therefore, their conservation experience and lessons are more valuable for other cities along the Grand Canal to learn from.

### *1.1 Pingjiang Road*

#### **1.1.1 Overview of Pingjiang Road Historic District**

Pingjiang Road Historic District is located in the northeast of the ancient city. Its east is Suzhou's old city moat; west is the city's commercial center; south is the main road of Suzhou; north is the Zhuozheng Garden, one of the most famous four gardens in China. Pingjiang Road Historic District is Suzhou's most typical and complete historical and cultural protection area, with profound historical and cultural deposits. It still retains an 800-year-old urban pattern of parallel roads and rivers, as well as a large number of



traditional Jiangnan style and volume buildings, road width. On both sides of the block are previously quiet residential areas, including one world cultural heritage site —Ouyuan, nine cultural relics protection sites at all levels, and 43 buildings under control and protection. At the same time, the block also has parts of ancient city wall ruins and several historical residential houses of celebrities, including the Qing Dynastys famous ministers Pan Shien and Wu Tingchen, modern Chinese scholar Gu Jiegang. UNESCO awarded the Pingjiang Historic District in the ancient city of Suzhou the 2005 Asia—Pacific Cultural Heritage Protection Honor award for its outstanding conservation work. *"The revitalization of Pingjiang Historic District is a commendable example of integrated urban rehabilitation which has restored the physical, social and commercial fabric of one of China's most well-known historic waterway towns...."* the UNESCO jury said of the conservation plan. *"The project has demonstrated the feasibility of upgrading traditional housing stock to keep it in continuous use by the original residents, which maintains the authentic historic spirit of the place...."* On June 22nd, 2014, the Pingjiang Road Historic District was listed as part of the Grand Canal, a world cultural heritage.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.1.2 Functional Position of Pingjiang Road Historic District**

Pingjiang Road Historic District was a historical street lane and later was developed as a

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<sup>24</sup> UNESCO News. Profiles of 2005 Heritage Awards Winners

commercial block.<sup>25</sup> From the perspective of business format, its architecture, landscape, environment, shops, and historical traces and cultural deposits embody distinct cultural characteristics.<sup>26</sup>

From the perspective of Planning, the Pingjiang Road Historic District emphasizes the urban characteristics of Suzhou because of fully protecting and rationally utilizing the existing resources. Pingjiang Road Historic District is positioned as “a dynamic urban zone with a unique cultural landscape and a high—quality tertiary industry with cultural connotation and reasonable utilization of the historical and cultural resources of the block”<sup>27</sup>. The function of Pingjiang Road Historic District is to display the cultural connotation of Suzhou.

### **1.1.3    *Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District (2004.07)***<sup>28</sup>

The Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District is designed by the Research Center of the National Historical and Cultural City of Tongji University. The National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University (hereinafter referred to as "the Center") first determined the planning

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<sup>25</sup> Huang Yi. “A Study on the Cultural Embedding of Characteristic Commercial Blocks -- A Case Study of Guanqian Street, Pingjiang Road and Shantang Street in Suzhou[J].” *ECONOMIC RESEARCH GUIDE*, 2019(26):72-73

<sup>26</sup> Chen Laisheng. “Study on the Construction of Characteristic Blocks in Suzhou Ancient City in the Process of Modernization[J].” *Journal of Changshu Institute of Technology*, 2015, (9):22-27.

<sup>27</sup> *Architectural Evaluation of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic and Cultural District*, China Travel & Tourism Press, 2008

<sup>28</sup> *Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District*, China Travel & Tourism Press, 2008

target and the preservation program of "protecting the street style, improving the historic environment, continuing the historical context and reappearing the value of the district."

After that, they did a lot of detailed research work, and carried out hierarchical planning to preserve Pingjiang Road Historic District.

#### 1.1.3.1 Classifying Protection Scope, Defining Preservation Requirements

In the formulation of preservation scope and preservation requirements, the center divided six preservation categories and made preservation plans for each category.

First, the center divided the Core Preservation Area composed of cultural relics and historic sites, historic buildings, structures, and landscape environment, as well as the Construction Control Area to ensure the integrity of the core preservation areas landscape and characteristics. The Core Preservation Area should strictly preserve the spatial pattern and traditional style formed by history, and protect all elements of historical style (including buildings, gardens, courtyards, streets and lanes, rivers, ancient wells, trees, etc.) as well as a cultural landscape and folk customs with local characteristics. The Construction Control Area requires that all kinds of construction in the area should be strictly controlled, and the buildings that need to be built, modified, or expanded must be coordinated with the traditional architectural style in terms of building height, volume, decorative materials, architectural color, scale, and proportion, so as to achieve a reasonable spatial transition

with the protected area. (Figure 5)

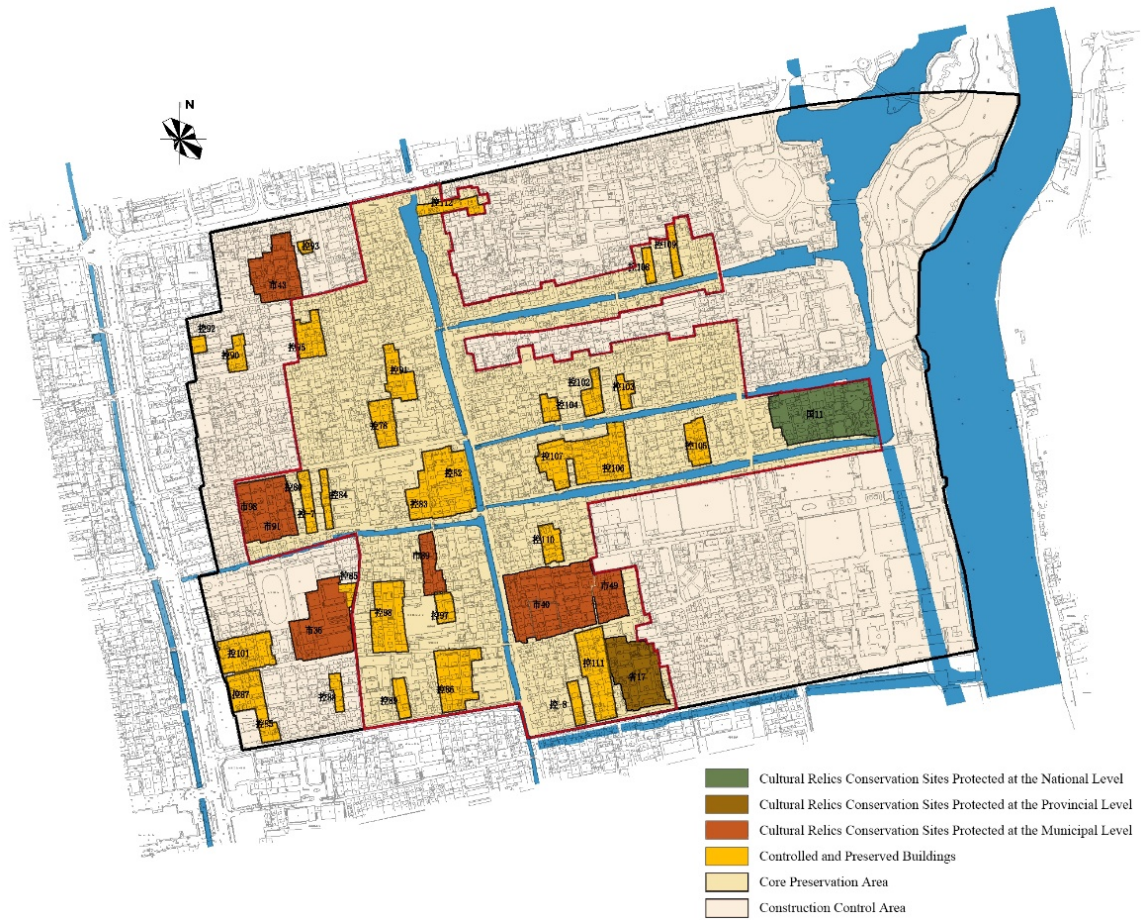


Figure 5: Suzhou Historical and Cultural City Preservation Plan 2002:

Pingjiang Historic District Preservation Map (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

Second, the center has defined the scope of preservation and requirements of Cultural Relics Conservation Sites (Figure 6); and made strict regulations on the demolition, construction, or reconstruction of cultural relics.



Figure 6: The Index of Cultural Relics in the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

Third, the center also stipulated the evaluation standard, preservation scope, and protection requirements of Controlled and Preserved Buildings in Pingjiang Road Historic District (Figure 7). This is a prescient move to protect many cultural heritage sites that have not yet been designated as Cultural Relics Conservation Sites, but have incredibly high historical, scientific and artistic value.



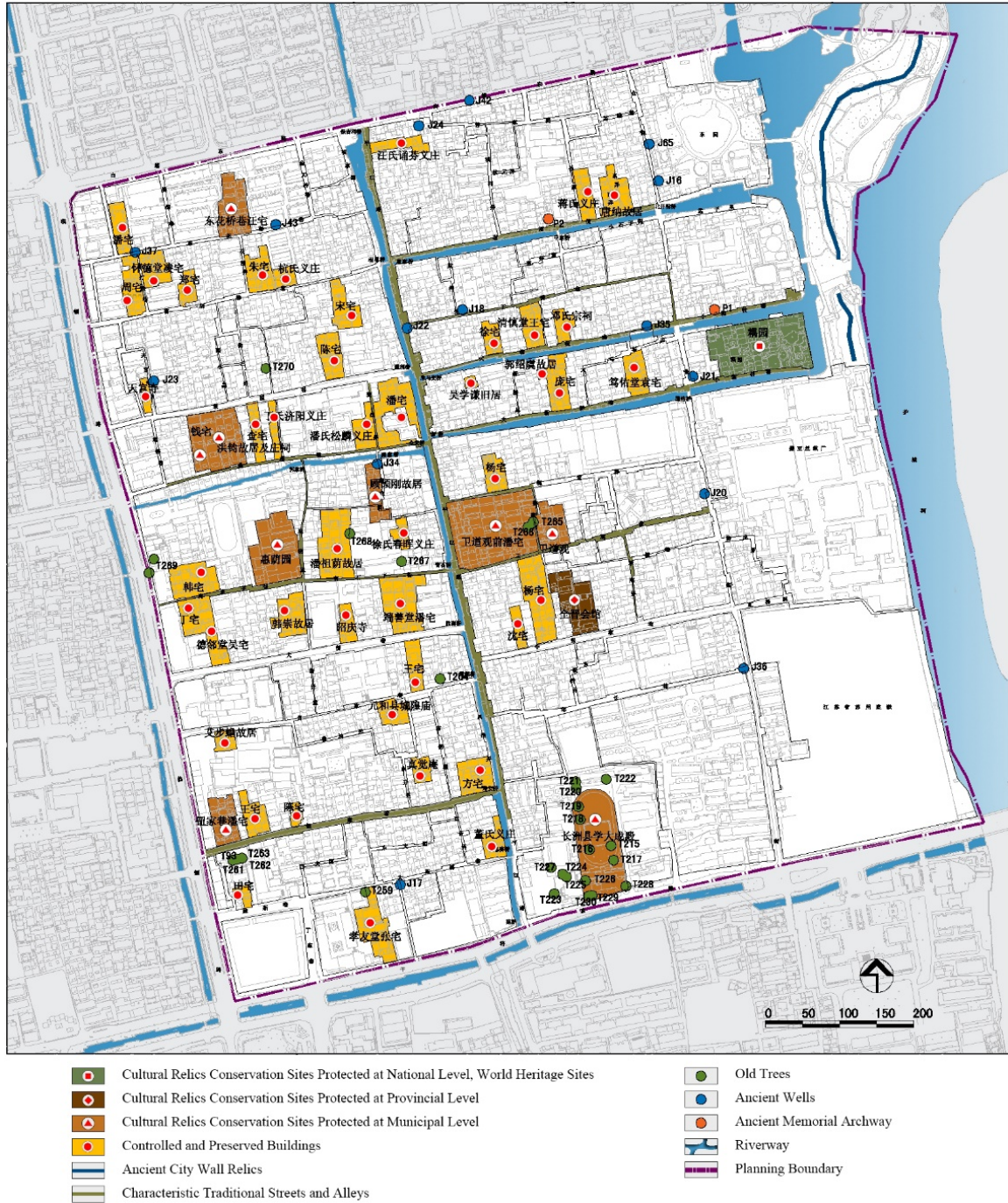


Figure 7: Historical and Cultural Heritages in the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

Fourth, the center defined the Historic Buildings in the Pingjiang Road Historic District — buildings with historical, scientific and artistic value that reflect the historical features and

local characteristics of a city outside the scope of Cultural Relics and Historic Sites; and their preservation requirements — no large—scale demolition, no demolition of historic buildings to restore them as they were.

Fifth, historical environmental elements, such as ancient bridges, ancient ferries, ancient wells, ancient archways and ancient city walls relics, are also included in the plan, and their preservation requirements are stipulated (Figure 8).





Figure 8: Riverways and Bridges in the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

Sixth, the planners have also taken into account the importance of intangible cultural heritage, providing them with spaces for cultural exhibitions, scientific research, and



tourism experiences. At the same time, they will also preserve and restore the historical names of cultural relics, streets, bridges, and so on, so as to better restore and display the historical context of the Pingjiang Road Historic District.

#### 1.1.3.2 Preservation and Repair Work According to Different Levels and Standards

Based on the principle of preserving the architectural style and spatial pattern of the historic district, and taking the current situation and operability into full consideration, the *Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District* puts forward six preservation and repair modes (Figure 9, Table 1) for the single buildings in the street area.

- 1) Repair — for Cultural Relics Conservation Sites, Controlled and Preserved Buildings and other ancient buildings with particular historical and cultural value. Keep it as it is, to reflect its historical heritage. To carry out the regular repair, adhere to the "Repair the old buildings, in order to preserve the authenticity" repair principle.
- 2) Improvement — for general historical buildings, the original structure of the building will not be moved, partial repairs will be made, and the interior of the building will be adjusted and renovated, and basic facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms will be provided to improve residents quality of life.
- 3) Preservation — for general buildings without conflict with traditional styles, the

construction quality is better, so it will be retained.

- 4) Rehabilitation — for the general building with a certain conflict with the traditional style. The quality of the building is good, but it is difficult to dismantle it immediately in the near future. Including floor down, flat slope, replacement of exterior finishes, roof, etc.
- 5) New construction — for general buildings that conflict significantly with traditional styles and buildings with poor construction quality. After the demolition, it was rebuilt according to the requirements of the protection plan, in harmony with the traditional style.
- 6) Demolition — for general buildings that conflict with traditional styles greatly, buildings with poor construction quality, temporary or illegal buildings, and buildings that need to be demolished by road combing. After demolition, it is planned for open space, restored courtyard space or road land.

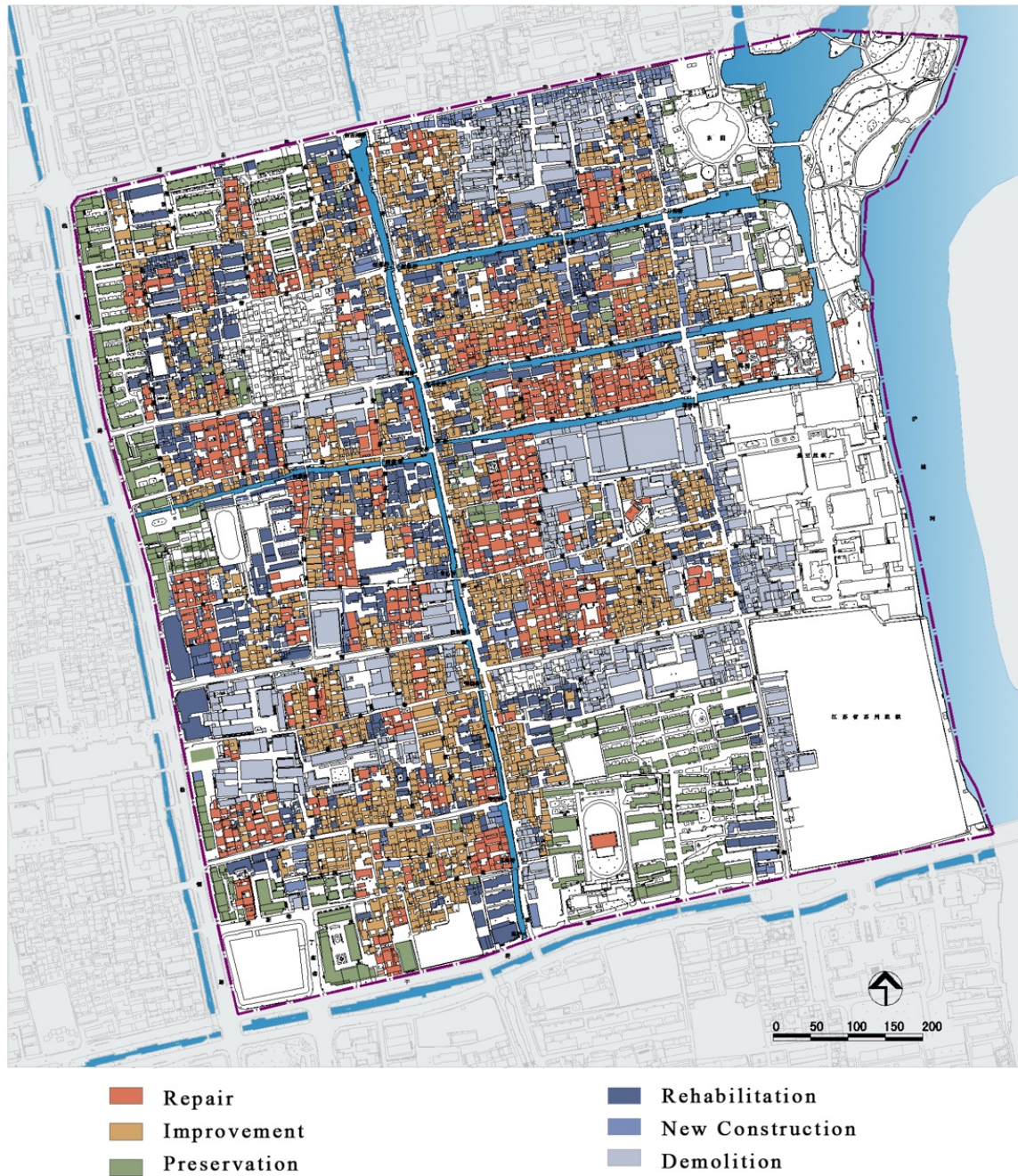


Figure 9: Patterns of Preservation and Repair Work of the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

Patterns of Preservation and Repair Work	Core Preservation Area (47.4 ha.)		Historic Cultural District (116.5 ha.)	
	Building Area (㎡)	Ratio (%)	Building Area (㎡)	Ratio (%)
Repair	65300	26	82300	18
Improvement	102500	40	128000	27
Preservation	4900	2	60000	13
Rehabilitation	37600	15	68800	15
New Construction	20400	8	33200	7
Demolition	2200	9	91900	20
Total	25.29	100	46.41	100

Table 1: Patterns of Preservation and Repair Work of the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

At the same time, the protection planning also pays attention to the control of building height, which makes different building height control requirements for different areas.

#### 1.1.3.3 Context Preservation

In addition to the preservation of buildings, bridges and other tangible cultural heritage, the preservation planning also protects the context of Pingjiang Road Historic District according to local conditions.

The River—Street Space is an important feature of Pingjiang Road Historic District. According to the different combination relations of river, street and house in the district, the preservation planning divides the spatial form of river—street into four types: riverside outer street, two streets with a river, riverside inner street, and river without street (Figure 10). On this basis, these River—Street Spaces are divided into Strictly Controlled River Street Sections that do not allow any change; and river street sections need to be re—designed.



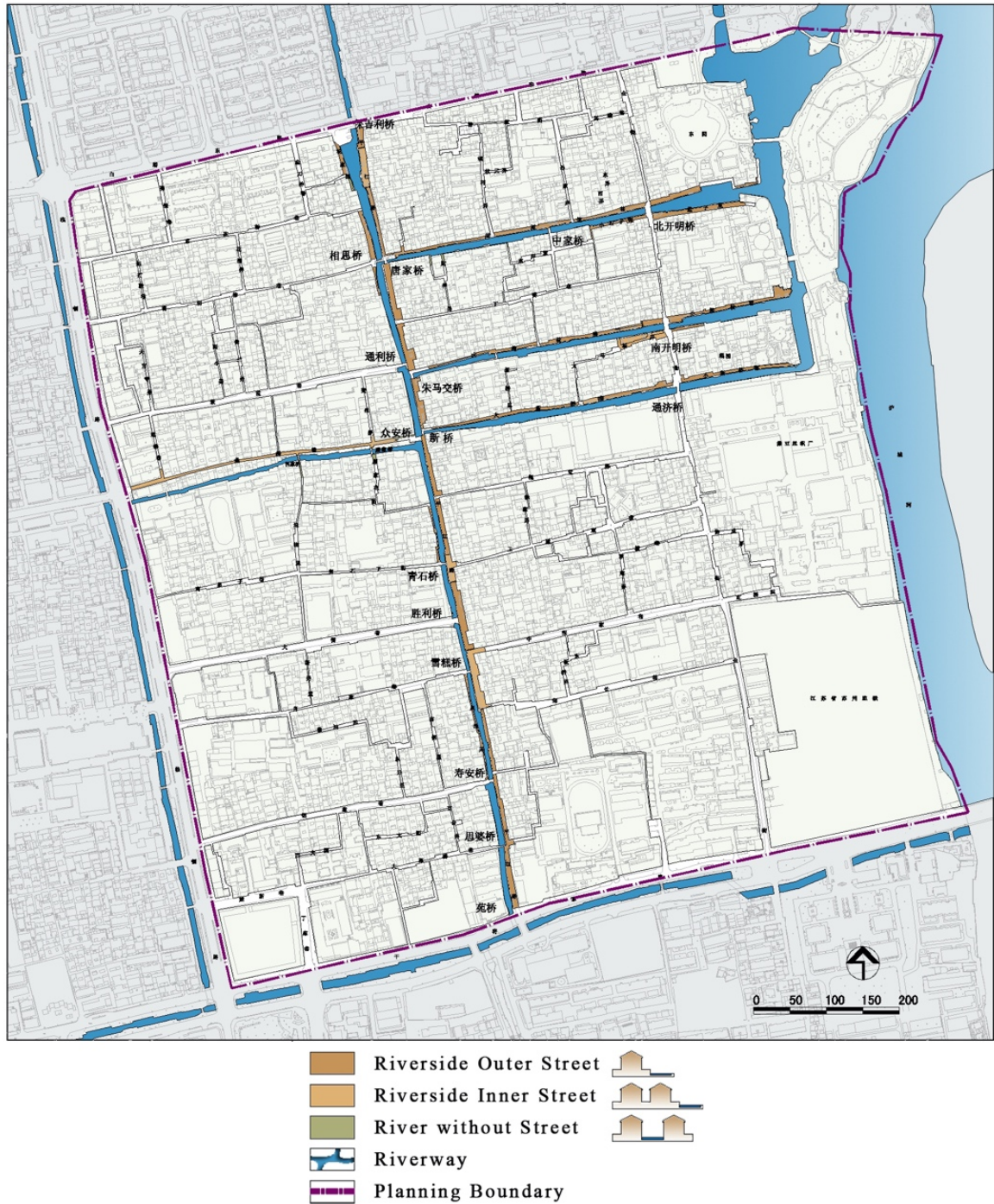


Figure 10: Riverway in the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

The rivers in Pingjiang Road Historic District are all parts of the Grand Canal system.

Although the declaration of the Grand Canal as a World Heritage Site had not yet begun when the preservation plan was formulated, the designers insisted on the principles of “overall protection, partial restoration, environmental improvement and effective utilization” of the river system in Pingjiang Road Historic District. On the basis of conservation, through research and field visits, the designers also restored some historic and tractable watercourses. These restored watercourses are also used in conjunction with existing rivers to restore and organize water traffic (Figure 11) in navigable sections. The conservation of these rivers also laid a solid foundation for the future declaration of the Grand Canal for World Heritage Site.





Figure 11: Planning of Water Traffic of the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

The historical streets and alleys with relatively complete historical features and spatial

patterns in the Pingjiang Road Historic District have been strictly controlled and preserved according to the protection planning.

Unlike other historic districts, which move out the entire population, Pingjiang Road Historic District eventually moved out only 35% of the population after the census, field research, and preservation planning design. Local people can continue to live in the historic district, which also protects the historic districts context from the aspects of culture and living habits. At the same time, maintaining the proportion of original residents in the historic district can effectively cope with the impact of commercialization and tourism development on the preservation of the historic district.

#### 1.1.3.4 Improvement of Living Environment

In terms of road traffic (Figure 12), Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District has re—divided the motor vehicle lane, non—motor vehicle lane and pedestrian lane within the district, making the series relationship between them more reasonable. The main motorway in the district and the peripheral city road forms a loop in the Controlled Construction Area. The original scale of all pedestrian streets and alleys has been preserved, and the varied sections and interfaces of the roads remain unchanged. Parking lots has also increased in the districts. Parking lots have also been added outside the historic district without affecting the historic fabric.



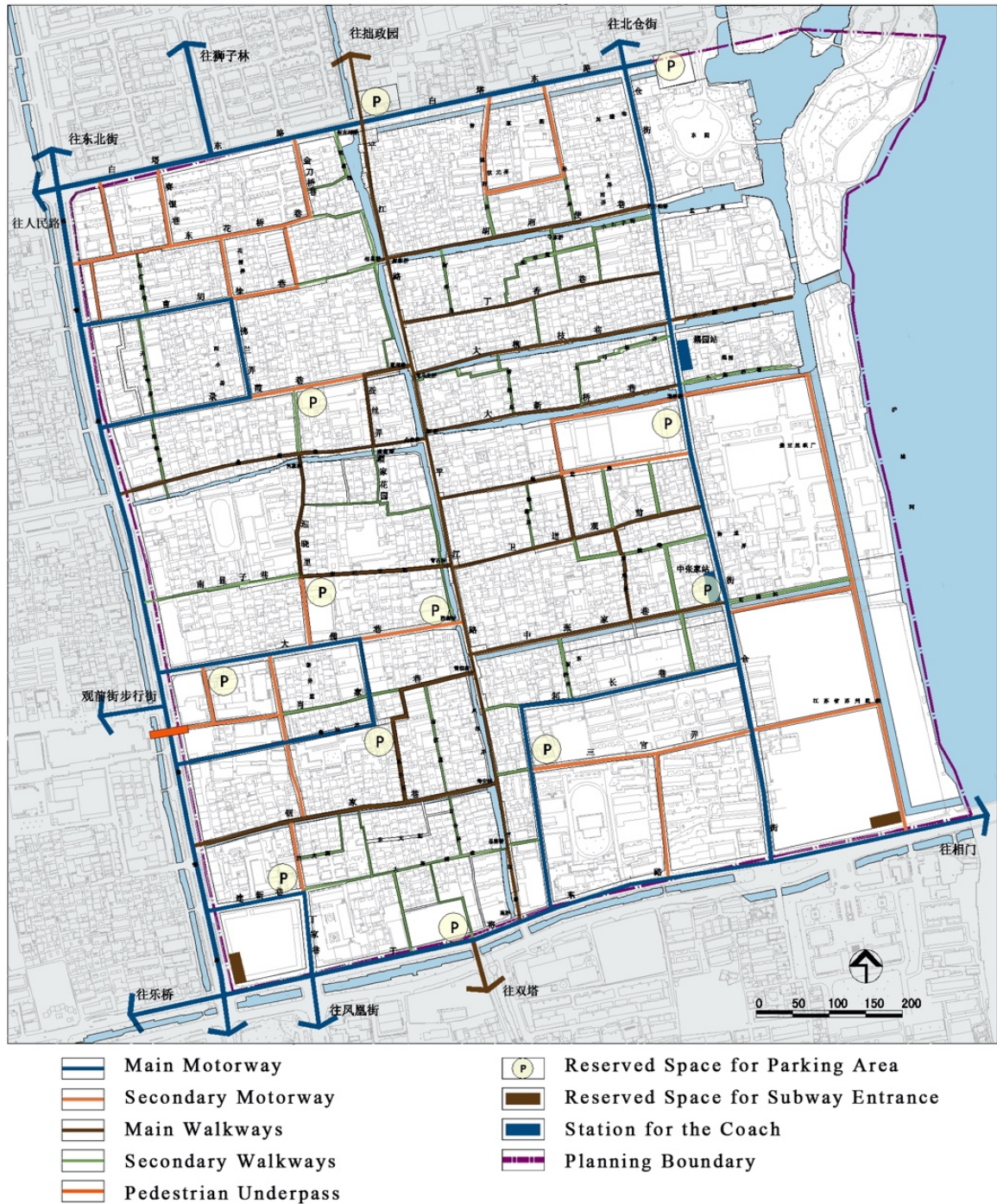


Figure 12: Planning of Traffic of the Pingjiang Road Historic District (Designed and Drawn by the National Research Center for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities of Tongji University; Translated by Dairong Qiu)

There are two main water transportation routes planned within the historic district. A road

through the main characteristics of the block river street, cultural relics. The other is the core landscape of Pingjiang River and Pingjiang Road along the way. For the external water transportation, consideration is given to the connection with the water loop of the outer city river, the transfer of pleasure boats, and the spatial treatment of the water entrance of Zhangjiaxiang in the district.

In terms of municipal engineering, the demand for water supply and drainage, power supply, communication system, sanitation facilities and fire fighting in the historic district has also been re—evaluated and calculated. On this basis, the installation and laying of all municipal pipelines have also been re—planned and arranged.

#### 1.1.3.5 Tourism Planning and Management

In order to respect the authenticity and integrity of Pingjiang Road Historic District and make better use of the historic and cultural district to develop tourism, the Tourism Development Research Center of Soochow University compiled the Tourism Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historic District. The historic district is divided into three areas: commercial, residential, and landscape. The original intention of the planning is to make the traditional district not only retain the historical style, promote the regional culture, but also well integrate modern commercial tourism and other formats. Furthermore, it is planned to control the daily tourism environmental capacity of the district to be 5600

people per day.

Combined with the preservation and renovation of cultural relics and historic sites in the district and space environment, twelve river views are planned for visitors to visit.

Replanned rivers and water traffic were also used on the aquatic tourist line. As a unique resource, the aquatic tourist line brings economic benefits to the district under the operation of the market. The boat shape of the aquatic tourist line has also been carefully designed, with simple and natural materials and quietly elegant and fresh colors.

#### 1.1.3.6 Result and Conclusion

Beginning in 2002, relevant departments in Suzhou jointly launched the features of the historic district preservation and environmental renovation project. Under the principles of repair, the local government vigorously implemented the river dredging, port trimming, road rebuilding, pipeline into the ground after the construction of infrastructure, and on this basis, continue to improve the street environment, improve the modern living facilities, repair—related compound, maintain and optimize the context of “original residents” life and ecological environment (Figure 13-1, Figure 13-2). Before this, the architects of Tongji university carried out a lot of investigation and planning work in Pingjiang Road Historic District. In the architects view, the preservation of the style of Pingjiang Road Historic District is not only the preservation of the historical information, but also the preservation of a kind of life form (Figure 14-1, Figure 14-2), which is a respect for the historical

context.<sup>29</sup>



Figure 13-1: The Context of “Original Residents” Life and Ecological Environment has been Well—Preserved after the Project (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. Suzhou University. 2020)

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<sup>29</sup> Li Xiaoming. “The protection and renovation of historical and cultural commercial block[J].” *Shanxi Architecture*, 2015, 41(35): 20-21.





Figure 13-2: The Context of “Original Residents” Life and Ecological Environment has been Well—Preserved after the Project (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. Suzhou University. 2020)



Figure 14-1: Original Life Form of Original Residents after the Project (HE Qing. Space Perception of Pingjiang Road in Suzhou from the Perspective of Scale, Space and Behavior. *Architecture & Culture*, 2021(11):113-114.)



Figure 14-2: Original Life Form of Original Residents after the Project (HE Qing. Space Perception of Pingjiang Road in Suzhou from the Perspective of Scale, Space and Behavior. *Architecture & Culture*, 2021(11):113-114.)

The protection and renewal restored traditional economic activities such as restaurants, teahouses, snacks, food, old bookstores, and silk weaving(Figure 15-1, Figure 15-2) with Suzhou characteristics and renovated cultural and artistic venues such as the Kunqu opera museum, Pingtan club, Suzhou library.<sup>30</sup> These restorations let people have the opportunity to hear and see the lost culture, regain the memory of the past, and encourage the owners to innovate in order to connect with the current fashion. The Management Department of Pingjiang Road Historic District strictly selected the business projects that can be settled in the district. At the beginning of the renovation, there were still some empty houses. It is not because of the lack of businesses, but because the Management strictly complied with the requirements of the conservation plan, protected the authenticity of Pingjiang Road Historic District, and did not take economic development as the primary purpose. At present, Pingjiang Road Historic District has introduced many new business forms, such as holiday inn, art studio, fashion bookstore, art shop, art gallery, coffee shop (Figure 16-1, Figure 16-2), bar, fashion shop, etc. After the reconstruction, Pingjiang Road Historic District has regained its vitality. Every night or weekend, residents and tourists from China and abroad come here to enjoy the slow and elegant local customs and customs of the old Jiangnan region, remember the taste of their predecessors lives, and taste the

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<sup>30</sup> HAN Le. "The Protection and Renewal of the Traditional Life form in the Historic District: Taking Pingjiang Road Historic District in Suzhou City as an Example [J]." *Architecture & Culture*,2021(07):163-164.



local specialties.

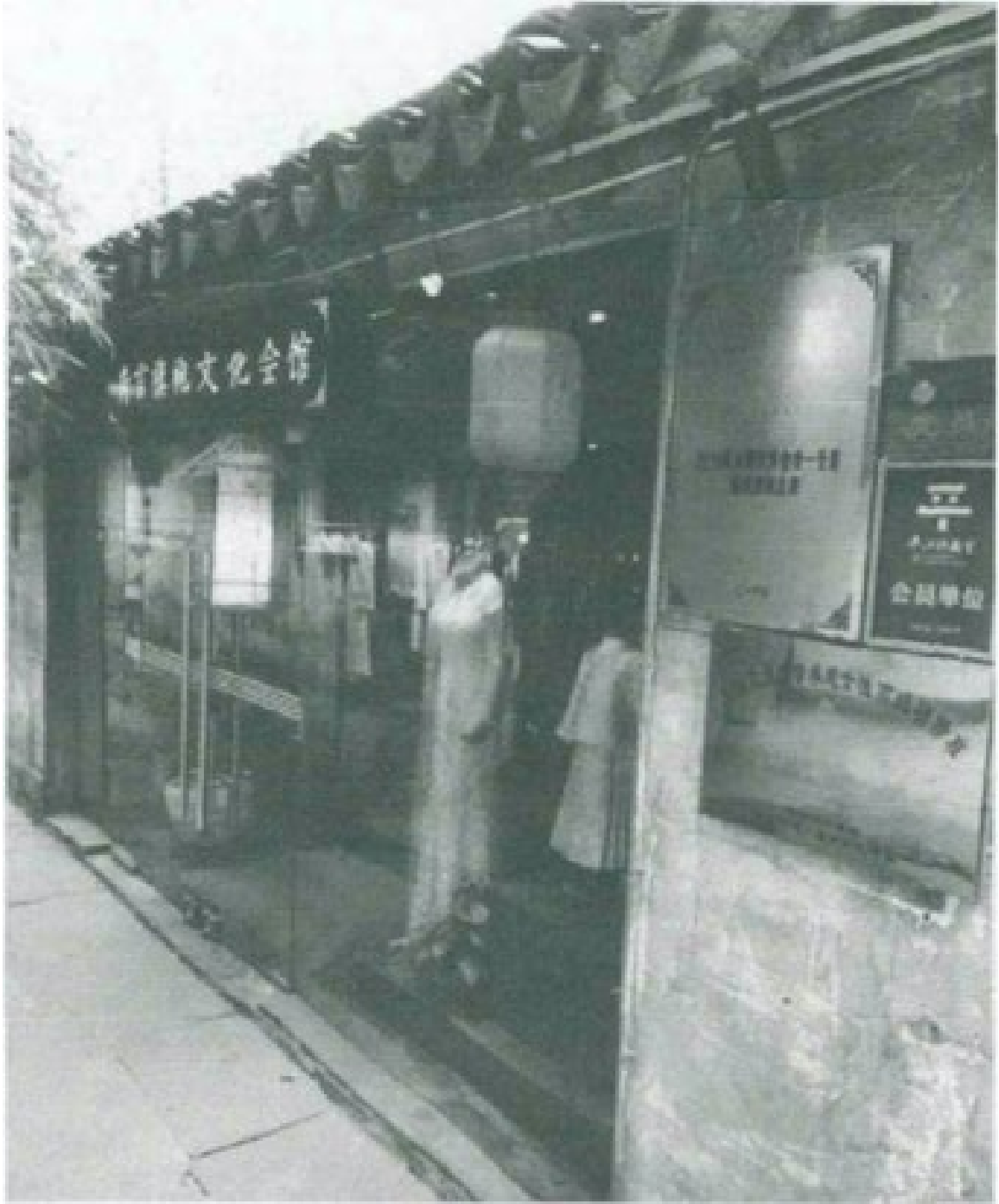


Figure 15-1: Silk Weaving on the Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 15-2: Silk Weaving on the Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 16-1: Tea House on the Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 16-2: Tea House on the Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)

Besides, the protection and renewal of the Pingjiang Road Historic District retained the original architectural features of Jiangnan residential houses (Figure 17-1~ Figure 17-6) and integrated them into the atmosphere of the new era.<sup>31</sup> Suzhou residential houses are the model of Jiangnan residential houses full of the charm of the ancient culture of the water town in the south of the Yangtze River. The old street has preserved its original style and landscape, renovated the old houses and gardens of celebrities, and preserved a large number of residential houses, giving new life to these old houses that have lasted for more

<sup>31</sup> YUAN Zhongjin, WANG Ziqiang. "Preservation and Design of Spatial Form of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District[J]." *China Ancient City*, 2015(04):61-64.

than a century. A part of the residents kept staying in Pingjiang Road Historic District to ensure the authenticity of the residents of the water town. The government has renovated the municipal facilities, connecting the living conditions to modern life patterns. These old houses and relics are the living carrier of the city's memory, making people feel that the pulse of yesterday is still pulsing in the ancient streets. Many old houses quietly hidden behind wooden doors are galleries, bars, or fashion shops (Figure 18), with a low-key appearance. At first glance, they look no different from ordinary residential houses. The manager has strict requirements on each store's decoration design and internal environment and allows the store owner to make appropriate adjustments according to different business forms. Through the extraordinary renovation of the store entrance, as well as the interior design, the layout style of each store is different, which looks very comfortable, not only fashionable but also consistent with the broad architectural style and context.



Figure 17-1: Original Architectural Features of Jiangnan Residential Houses on Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)





Figure 17-2: Original Architectural Features of Jiangnan Residential Houses on Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 17-3: Original Architectural Features of Jiangnan Residential Houses on Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)





Figure 17-4: Original Architectural Features of Jiangnan Residential Houses on Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 17-5: Original Architectural Features of Jiangnan Residential Houses on Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 17-6: Original Architectural Features of Jiangnan Residential Houses on Pingjiang Road (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)



Figure 18: Starbucks Hid behind Wooden Doors (TANG Jiajia. Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example. *Suzhou University*. 2020)

The so—called history is the shared memory of a group of people. Protecting a group of people's memories does not mean a kind of solidification frame protection for the so—

called historical feeling. The *Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District* focuses on the lifestyle and needs of local people in the preservation of historic district, so that local people can live a happier life, local entrepreneurs and owners are more willing to invest and create development opportunities. Tourists can feel the traditional but vibrant cultural atmosphere.<sup>32</sup>

In 2005, the restoration and renovation project of the core area of Pingjiang Road Historic District (along Pingjiang Road) was completed. It was awarded the honorary award of the Asia—Pacific Cultural Heritage Protection in 2005 by UNESCO for its outstanding preservation work. In 2009, Pingjiang Road Historic District was selected as one of the first ten "Famous Streets of Chinese History and Culture" jointly led by the Ministry of Culture and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

#### **1.1.4 The Macro Impact of Commercialization**

At the early stage of the restoration of the Pingjiang Road Historic District, the functional planning of houses in the block was assumed to maintain about 80% of the residential function and maintain the unique living scene in the famous water town of Jiangnan (the area south of the Yangtze River), when other 20% were designed with the function of business and service. Therefore, at first, Pingjiang Road Historic District only had a few

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<sup>32</sup> HAN Le. "The Protection and Renewal of the Traditional Life form in the Historic District: Taking Pingjiang Road Historic District in Suzhou City as an Example [J]." *Architecture & Culture*, 2021(07):163-164.

clubs, inns, crafts shops, and other business shops. As a result, the atmosphere there is relatively quiet and leisure. At that stage, the commercialization of Pingjiang Road Historic District was positive: it not only provided certain economic support for the protection and restoration of Pingjiang Road Historic District but also provided an excellent commercial service for the tourists, forming a relatively positive virtuous circle and interaction. With the rise of Pingjiang Road Historic Districts fame and the influx of tourists, the number of travelers increased rapidly from less than 1 million in 2008 to nearly 6 million in 2014. Pingjiang Road Historic District also gradually changed from a nameless old street to almost becoming the representative of the ancient city of Suzhou.

However, in this short period of several years, Pingjiang Road Historic District, the total length of about 1.2 kilometers of the main street, opened more than 140 diversified shops, such as costumes, opera and Pingtan (a kind of traditional opera in Suzhou), art exhibitions, cultural bookstores, inns and hotels, especially a large number of restaurants and snacks for most shops, almost one after another. Milk tea, stewed chicken feet, dried bean curd, and even seafood barbecue have become popular mainstream shops on Pingjiang Road Historic District. As a result, Pingjiang Road Historic District, as one of the "Top 10 Famous Streets of Chinese History and Culture", has become a "snack street" in the opinion of many visitors. However, even these so-called "snacks" are still represented by the barbecue and milk tea, not Suzhou local food, which embodies the homogenization of

business.

### **1.1.5 The Micro Impact of Commercialization**

For those shops who conformed to the position of its original forms of Pingjiang Road Historic District, due to its relative "high—end," they cannot compete with snack shops and souvenirs shops which are higher profit, leading to various restaurants, tourist souvenir shops present a sense of "Bad currency drives out good currency."

For example, the "Zhuyuan Guild Hall" located at no. 31, Pingjiang Road, was originally a boutique homestay and affiliated book bar after architectural renovation and renewal by Shanghai Zhongfang Architectural Design Institute in 2007 based on "Zhangs Old Residence," a residential house in Qing Dynasty after the whole block was restored (Figure 19-1, Figure 19-2). Its designers have kept the original style and wooden structure to the maximum extent in the architectural renovation. They have also made modifications and attempts to meet the needs of people's new indoor activity requirements and technical equipment. After completing the project, it won the Second Architectural Creation Excellence Award, awarded by the Shanghai Architectural Society. However, due to the increasing commercialization of Pingjiang Road Historic District, the "Zhuyuan Guild Hall," with only four rooms and a book bar as profit points, was gradually defeated by the nature of capital seeking profit. In early 2014, "Zhuyuan Club" was quietly transformed into a shop specializing in tourist souvenirs (Figure 20). Surprisingly, the souvenirs it sold

were not the local characteristics of Suzhou, but the style of the Southwest Minority areas, and filled with the stereotypical sense of "high price and low quality" typical in domestic scenic spots. What is more regrettable and painful is that the original designers painstaking efforts for the careful repair, layout, and renovation of the old house were thus in vain.



Figure 19-1: Zhang's Old Residence after Renovation and Renewal Project (ZHUO Yuqi. Social Space Effect of the Protection and Renewal in Historical and Cultural Blocks——Taking the Protection of Historical and Cultural Blocks in Pingjiang Road, Suzhou as an Example [J]. *City and House*, 2019,26(03):62-65.)





Figure 19-2: Zhang's Old Residence after Renovation and Renewal Project (ZHUO Yuqi. Social Space Effect of the Protection and Renewal in Historical and Cultural Blocks——Taking the Protection of Historical and Cultural Blocks in Pingjiang Road, Suzhou as an Example [J]. *City and House*, 2019,26(03):62-65.)



Figure 20: "Zhuyuan Club" Became a Tourist Souvenir Shop (ZHUO Yuqi. Social Space Effect of the Protection and Renewal in Historical and Cultural Blocks——Taking the Protection of Historical and Cultural Blocks in Pingjiang Road, Suzhou as an Example [J]. *City and House*, 2019,26(03):62-65.)

In today's Pingjiang Road Historic District, such an event is not an isolated case. In order to survive in the fierce commercial competition, some traditional crafts and folk cultures had to accept the impact of the new era of business; many Pingjiang Road old brands are "changed" to cater to the taste of the public consumers, resulting in many stores with different names selling similar or identical goods. Many traditional crafts gradually withdraw from the modern consumer market and people's vision, the problem of commercial homogeneity urgently needs to be solved. Although the architectural style along the street and road scale has not been destroyed, intangible characteristics such as

commercial forms in the historic district have undergone great changes under commercialization. And this is undoubtedly part of the loss of authenticity of the historic district.<sup>33</sup> From the perspective of long—term development, the damage to the traditional architecture and culture of the historic district caused by excessive commercialization is obviously not conducive to the inheritance of its culture and the sustainable improvement of its economic benefits.

### **1.1.6 The Influence of Tourism Gentrification**

#### **1.1.6.1 Tourism Gentrification**

According to Gotham, Tourism Gentrification refers to the transformation of a middle—class neighborhood into a relatively affluent and exclusive enclave marked by a proliferation of corporate entertainment and tourism venues.<sup>34</sup> The Tourism Gentrification is an unavoidable social and economic phenomenon for tourism development projects of old city reconstruction.

#### **1.1.6.2 Research and Analysis<sup>35</sup>**

The protective development of Pingjiang Road Historic District has optimized the structure of material space, improved the structure of social groups, completed the transformation of

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<sup>33</sup> HE Qing. “Space Perception of Pingjiang Road in Suzhou from the Perspective of Scale, Space and Behavior.” *Architecture & Culture*, 2021(11):113-114.

<sup>34</sup> Gotham, Kevin. (2005). “Tourism Gentrification: The Case of New Orleans Vieux Carre (French Quarter).” *Urban Studies*. 42. 10.1080/00420980500120881.

<sup>35</sup> Zhuo Yuqi. “Social Space Effect of the Protection and Renewal in Historical and Cultural Blocks——Taking the Protection of Historical and Cultural Blocks in Pingjiang Road, Suzhou as an Example [J].” *City and House*, 2019,26(03):62-65.

urban functions from residence to tourism and business services, and revived the old city blocks. It has also had a far-reaching impact on diverse social groups and brought opportunities and challenges to all kinds of people. Although the *Preservation and Renovation Planning of Suzhou Pingjiang Historic District* has played a role in promoting the preservation of Pingjiang Road Historic District and the development of tourism, tourism gentrification, as the “Zhuyuan Guide Hall” example mentioned above, undoubtedly poses challenges to the long-term preservation and sustainable development of Pingjiang Road Historic District. How to avoid the adverse effects of tourism gentrification becomes the next problem to study on and be solved. It is also a “wake-up call” for cultural heritage preservation and planning design in other Chinese cities.

#### **1.1.7 Conclusion**

From the example of Pingjiang Road Historic District, we can see that the primary core of the historical and cultural blocks is the historical architectural complex with a core of complete "authenticity" and the traditional culture attached to it, which can also be said to be the soul of the historical and cultural blocks. Only by effectively protecting this core, can it avoid becoming a "fake antique" in the style of archaistic architecture, or an "empty shell specimen model" lacking in personality and soul. Besides, historic block protection and development of architectural culture, also need the economic development brought about by commercial development as the support: a moderate amount of commercialization

for the restoration of historic blocks and development provide a solid material foundation and the guarantee of funds, but also, through the cultural interaction with the outside world, realize the historical block of the live update.

However, commercial business capital with its profit brought by the nature and the role of the inherent laws of the market, in the absence of a scientific and practical planning and management environment, often quickly and easily to the other extreme, formed "the whole street (area) to the commercialization." The unbalance and the situation of excessive commercialization led to the severe erosion of local traditional culture: indigenous people moving out, many foreigners moving into the historic block, and doing business has nothing to do with the local characteristics or "traditional industry." Then it severely damaged the non—renewable local traditional cultural resources. It is a way of draining the pond to catch fish. Therefore, in the future protection and renovation of historic blocks, how to maintain the appropriate degree of commercialization, provide sufficient protection funds and popularity experience for the organic renewal of historic blocks, to realize the sustainable development of historic blocks, will be a topic worthy of continuous exploration and research by relevant practitioners.

## *1.2 Shantang Street Historic District*

### **1.2.1 Overview of Shantang Street Historic District**

Shantang Street is located at the northwest of the ancient city of Suzhou, Jiangsu Province,

reaching the chang gate, which is called the "first—class rich and romantic ground" in the east, and the "first scenic spot in Wuzhong" in the west, with a total length of about 3,600 meters.

In the Tang Dynasty, BAI Juyi was appointed governor of Suzhou. He dredged the northwest river outside Suzhou and dug it into the Shantang River. The ancient street built alongside the river was called Shantang Street, and there were ancient buildings along the street. Most of the ancient buildings left were built in the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China. They are a building group composed of several longitudinal buildings and horizontal buildings. Along Shantang Street, there are seven ancient stone bridges across the Shantang River. In addition, an ancient opera stage and the Chamber of Commerce Museum are located here.

On June 18, 2002, the protective restoration of Shantang Street was started. In 2010, Shantang Street was awarded the "Model Unit of Chinas Cultural Heritage Protection" and the "Famous Chinese Historical and Cultural Street." In 2015, Shantang Street was selected as one of the first batches of "Chinese Historical and Cultural Districts" by the Ministry of Housing and Urban—Rural Development and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> PING Longgen. "'Dream Pursuit' of Thousand-Year-Old Ancient Street -- A Personal Experience of Protective Restoration of Shantang Street, A Famous Historical and Cultural Street in China." *Zhong Shan Feng Yu*, 2021(01):25-26.

## **1.2.2 Preservation of Shantang Street Historic District**

### **1.2.2.1 Restore by Stages — Inherit the Water Town Historic District Characteristic**

In June 2002, the preservation and restoration project of Shantang Street was officially launched. The preservation project of Shantang Street Historic District always adheres to the steps of " planning before testing, testing before practice", from east to west, restoring by stages and gradually advancing.

The preservation planning of Shantang Street Historic District is mainly generated from three aspects: block pattern, architectural style and spatial node.<sup>37</sup>

#### **1) Block Pattern**

The spatial pattern of Shantang Street Historic District retains the traditional water street pattern, and generally maintains the courtyard residence and the texture of "street, river and lane"(Figure 21). The current Shantang Street is behind the street and in front of the river, with small bridges, running parallel to the river. With the folk houses with white walls and black tiles, the traditional block pattern has been preserved on a large scale.

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<sup>37</sup> WU Rongliang. "Analysis of the Problems in the Transformation of Suzhou Shantang Street Historic District [J]." *Beauty and Times*, 2019(05):37-38.

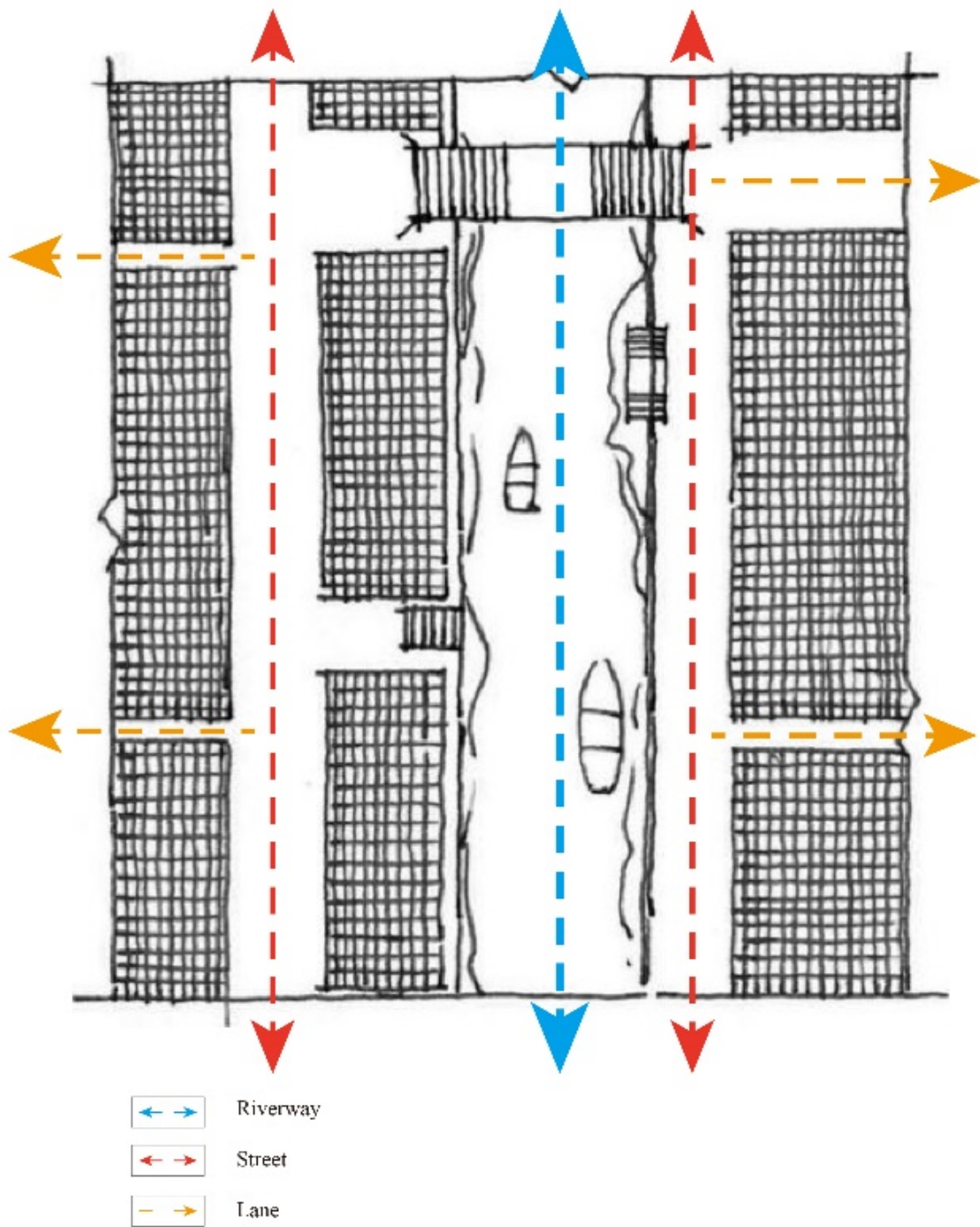


Figure 21: Traditional Street Pattern of the Shantang Street (Plan Drawing Created by WU Rongliang, Edited by Dairong Qiu)



## 2) Architectural Style

The transformation of the architectural style is concentrated on the facades of the buildings along the street (Figure 22-1, Figure 22-2). This part of the building is greatly changed, because this part of the building is mainly commercial space with a high frequency of use. Combined with the replacement of storefront functions, this part of the building is mainly renovated and newly built. The traditional street and lane forms are extracted and integrated into the new building, so as to achieve as much unity on the facade as possible. At the same time, the building volume, color, and material are coordinated with the whole historic district. Except for the glass façade in some buildings, the buildings in the district are mainly made of wood, which is generally coordinated and unified. There are Shantang Academy, Jiangnan Silk Shop, Suzhou Impression, and other commercial spaces, which represent Suzhou traditional culture and further enhance the cultural value of the strict.

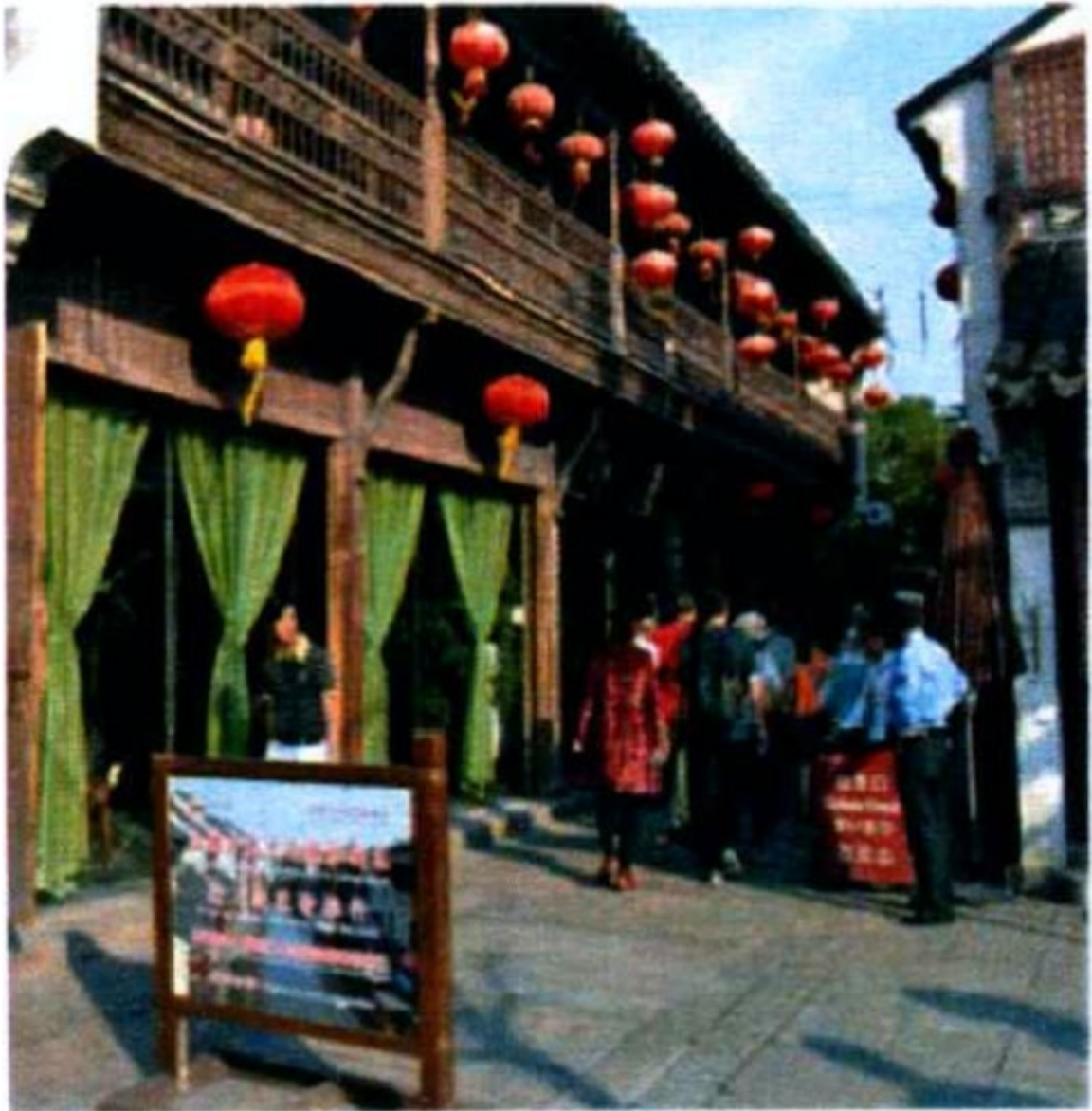


Figure 22-1: Buildings along the Shantang Street (ZHANG Jia. Analysis on the Featured Urban Space —— Case Study of Pingjiang Road, Shantang Street and Ligong Causeway. *China Academy of Urban Planning & Design*. 2014)



Figure 22-2: Buildings along the Shantang Street (ZHANG Jia. Analysis on the Featured Urban Space —— Case Study of Pingjiang Road, Shantang Street and Ligong Causeway. *China Academy of Urban Planning & Design*. 2014)

### 3) Space Nodes (Functional Area)

Nodes are the essential elements of the space, reinforcing peoples identity with the street, like landmarks of a place. The nodes of Shantang Street Historic District can be divided into two categories, one is historical and cultural connotation construction, such as ancient buildings with exquisite carving, Ming dynasty historic house Yuhan Tang, etc.; another kind is the site for communication with public recreational function (Figure 23-1, Figure



23-2). Along the riverbanks, there are some small leisure platforms interspersed between the two buildings. In these small spaces, neighbors meet with each other, and visitors sit there to enjoy the view. Small spaces carry a variety of functions.



Figure 23-1: Public Recreational Function Space (Photo by QIAN Fangfang<sup>38</sup>)

<sup>38</sup> QIAN Fangfang. "Shantang Street, Suzhou -- Positioning in Cultural and Creative Tourism Industry[J]." *Tourism Today*, 2019(10):88.



Figure 23-2: Public Recreational Function Space (Photo by QIAN Fangfang<sup>39</sup>)

Shantang Street Historic District is always preserved and restored based on important historical sites based on cultural connotation research, style renovation, and infrastructure transformation. As a result, the restoration of five important cultural sites, such as the ancestral hall of the Bei family and the relic site of Tongqiao, has been completed, and some historical and cultural relics have been protected. In 2012, the fourth phase of the Shantang Street protection and restoration project began. The planning scope of the restoration project in this period is from Bantang to the Huqiu section. With the guiding ideology of "Continuing the thousand—year ancient street and water village culture, reviving the living picture of Suzhou city," the restoration project improved the scene along

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<sup>39</sup> QIAN Fangfang. "Shantang Street, Suzhou -- Positioning in Cultural and Creative Tourism Industry[J]." *Tourism Today*, 2019(10):88.

the river, promoted the development of key sites, and formed a Wu cultural characteristic district featuring scenic sites, cultural experience and other forms of business.

#### 1.2.2.2 Adjusting business forms

Shantang Street gradually standardized and adjusted the forms of business, the stores in the street are divided into cultural enterprises stores, Gusu handicrafts stores, fashion characteristic brand stores. After the adjustment, the business forms in Shantang Street, such as "food, accommodation, transportation, travel, shopping and entertainment," and other elements of the tourism industry are relatively complete, meeting the needs of consumers of all ages.

In the future, Shantang Street Historic District will keep adjusting business forms in Shantang District — rejecting poor quality forms, and introducing high—quality travel experience business, supporting a number of forms that have distinctive cultural features and unique taste, fundamentally promote the Shantang Street tourism quality upgrade."<sup>40</sup>

#### 1.2.2.3 Adhere to authenticity and promote sustainable development

In recent years, the Suzhou municipal government has invested about 100 million yuan in repairing the historic buildings of Shantang Street and improving its infrastructure. The preservation and restoration always adhere to the principles of "preserving style, repairing

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<sup>40</sup> ZHU Xihong. Interview to Gusu Historical Block scenic area administration

the old as the old, sustainable renewal" and "preservation in levels." In the future, Shantang Street will also make further efforts in the integrity and authenticity of tourism resources, planning of cultural activities, and cultivation of tourism products, so as to continuously improve the reputation of Shantang Street and promote the sustainable development of the old street.

### **1.2.3 The Influence of Shantang Street Historic District Preservation Project**

In 2004, the Shantang Street Historic District from Xinmin Bridge to Shantang Bridge was officially opened to the public, and the water tour route from Shantang to Huqiu was officially opened. After years of exploration, the tourism industry of Shantang Street is developing rapidly, and the scenic sites are increasing. According to statistics, in 2012, Shantang Scenic Sites received nearly 2.5 million tourists, with a year—on—year increase of 21%. Tourism operation income and housing rental income both exceeded 10 million yuan for the first time, realizing a harvest of economic benefits.

Although Shantang Street Historic District has a good preserved on the architectural style and block pattern well, and promotes the regional tourism and economic development effectively, some problems are still exposed in the process of conservation and development.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the investigation<sup>42</sup> of local residents local identity in

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<sup>41</sup> WU Rongliang. "Analysis of the Problems in the Transformation of Suzhou Shantang Street Historic District [J]." *Beauty and Times*, 2019(05):37-38.

<sup>42</sup> ZHANG Fang. "The Protective Renewal Strategy of Historic District based on the Construction of Local Identity: A Case Study of Shantang Street Historic District in Suzhou[J]." *China Ancient City*, 2019(06):80-87.

Suzhou Shantang Historic District (Table 2) intensifies these problems.

Suzhou Shantang Historic District Local Identity Questionnaire			
Assessment Level	Questions	Average Grade	Variance
Overall Features	1. Street height to width ratio, walking comfort.	4.17	0.803
	2. The buildings along the street are well arranged.	4.04	1.149
	3. Unity of architectural style and harmony with the environment.	4.17	0.925
	4. Store design and cultural adaptability.	3.76	1.37
	5. The restored building has a high degree of historical restoration.	3.99	1.033
Building Features along the Street	6. Ground pavement, windowsill, balcony, doors and windows, mailboxes and other details antique, adapt to the environment context.	4.04	0.959
	7. The materials, colors and feel of the buildings conform to expectations of Suzhou's traditional architecture.	3.99	0.966
	8. The corridor pavilions along the street, the second floor platform of shops and other areas provide a large number of places for stopping and viewing	3.89	1.235
	9. Modern living facilities such as antennas and air conditioners were properly arranged without affecting the overall appearance	3.78	1.191
Environmental Context	10. The water and land environment has the characteristics of Suzhou ancient city.	4.42	0.736
	11. The river is clean, the barges and docks are well maintained, and the scenery along the river is beautiful.	4.02	1.072
	12. You can easily find public seats and rest nodes.	3.56	1.14
	13. The number and location of public toilets and garbage cans are suitable.	3.72	1.12
Commercial Atmosphere	14. Shops on the street offer products with local characteristics, reflecting Suzhou's traditional culture.	3.74	1.479
	15. Traditional goods are close to the people and can evoke memories of local people's childhood.	3.94	1.137
	16. The goods sold in Shantang Street have very significant traditional characteristics of Suzhou.	3.92	1.294
	17. The business is mainly cultural industry.	3.79	1.248
	18. Suzhou specialty street shops because of the architecture and interior environment of the taste of Suzhou is stronger.	3.95	1.199
	19. The featured goods for sale are cost-effective.	3.44	1.354
	20. Starbucks, ice cream shops, convenience stores and other exotic elements do not affect the overall look.	3.72	1.545
Cultural Function	21. The historical allusion from Shantang Street is well known.	3.72	1.626
	22. Cultural attractions on Shantang Street are deeply rooted in people's hearts.	3.79	1.542
	23. Traditional activities on Shantang Street are attractive.	3.62	1.802
	24. The traditional project of Shantang Street presents the traditional culture of Suzhou.	4.24	0.845
Local Identity	25. Local people have a strong sense of attachment and identity to Shantang Street.	3.92	1.145
	26. Shantang Street is suitable for Suzhou traditional culture education base.	4.12	1.098
	27. Shantang Street is highly recommended.	4.33	0.961
	28. For the inheritance of Wu culture, Shantang Street has a very high irreplaceable.	3.93	1.363
	29. The traditional cultural atmosphere of Shantang Street makes locals proud.	4.28	0.942

Table 2: Suzhou Shantang Historic District Local Identity (ZHANG Fang. “The Protective Renewal Strategy of Historic District based on the Construction of Local Identity: A Case Study of Shantang Street Historic District in Suzhou[J].” *China Ancient City*, 2019(06):80-87.; Translated by Dairong Qiu)



### 1) Industrial Products, Mix the False with the Genuine

As a historic district with water as its core, Shantang Street historic District is built along the river, and the plants along the river are significant decoration elements. However, there are a lot of false vines and flowers in the vegetation along the banks, which cannot integrate with the surrounding plants. Similarly, there are stone steps along the river. Traditional stone steps in Jiangnan are characterized by mottled, smooth, and transparent polished by footprints, because they are the witness of time. However, the steps along the river are square—cut, and the material is not the traditional one— blue slate, resulting in the loss of historical charm.

### 2) Façade Damage, Visual Interference

The walls of Traditional Jiangnan buildings should have "white walls." The beauty of the facade of dwellings in the south of the Yangtze River lies in the blank, blank to plain, which can be called "colorless beauty" or "natural beauty". However, the building façade of Shantang Street after restoration was destroyed by various abrupt heterogeneous elements. The first is that the wire does not cover—up. The second is all kinds of signs are also different sizes, different heights, appear on the white wall. In addition, even the streetlamp has been hung on lots of signs.

### 3) Abrupt Texture, Rhythm Destruction

In the treatment of the roof, the simple but elegant beauty should originally be powdery wall black tile. However, in order to increase the aesthetic feeling of lamplight at night, the wall lamp with different sizes appears in great quantities on the housetop. In addition, huge solar water heaters appear on the roof. They disrupt the rhythm of the roof. On the walls, the air conditioners are placed randomly. Some of them are processed and wrapped with wood grids. Some of them are undecorated and destroy the simple and elegant beauty of the wall. In addition, some storefronts along the street directly abandoned the original wooden windows and replaced them with glass doors and windows, which also damaged the walls texture (Figure 24-1, Figure 24-2) and affected the atmosphere of the whole block.



Figure 24-1: Wires, air conditioners, and glass windows on the wall (WU Rongliang, "Analysis of the Problems in the Transformation of Suzhou Shantang Street Historic District [J]." *Beauty and Times*, 2019(05):37-38.)



Figure 24-2: Wires, air conditioners, and glass windows on the wall (WU Rongliang. "Analysis of the Problems in the Transformation of Suzhou Shantang Street Historic District [J]." *Beauty and Times*, 2019(05):37-38.)

#### 4) Commercial Homogeneity

Although the Shantang Streets retain the appearance, architectural styles, and block pattern, traditional culture is in decline: temples, ancestral halls, and other historic sites are neglected; public participation in historical and cultural attractions is low; let alone the lack of classic projects to attract tourists to appreciate Wu culture deeply; lack of traditional

commercial forms. The traditional commercial format and market—style have not been effectively protected. After the restoration of Shantang Street, the linear distribution of the commercial form (Figure 25), cannot show the regular division of Suzhou's ancient city commercial characteristics.



Figure 25: Starbucks on Shantang Street (TANG Jiajia, Research on the Performance of Authenticity of Historical Blocks—Taking Suzhou Pingjiang Road Historical Cultural Block as an Example, *Suzhou University*, 2020)

#### 1.2.4 Conclusion

Shantang Street has always maintained the parallel pattern of streets and alleys along River

Street, and has carried out practical exploration in preservation, display, and utilization. Based on historic preservation, the Shantang Street Historic District protection project has promoted the development of tourism and the local economy. The growth of financial revenue brought by economic development also feeds the protection of the Shantang Street Historic District.

Unlike the Pingjiang Road Historic District preservation status quo, the preservation planning of Shantang Street Historic District is deficient in details. In the process of project implementation, management is also lacking. As a result, the overall style of the Shantang Street Historic District is not coordinated and needs to be improved. At the same time, like Pingjiang Road Historic District, Shantang Street Historic District is also facing the problem of commercial homogeneity.<sup>43</sup> This once again shows the importance of studying and analyzing the function of the business of historic districts, issuing planning documents for guidance, and implementing the management of the function of the business.

In future preservation, in terms of protection and utilization, Shantang Street Historic District should pay more attention to adhering to the authenticity of the cultural heritage site, including the authenticity of the heritage itself and the authenticity of local traditional culture display.

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<sup>43</sup> HUANG Yi. "A Study on the Cultural Embedding of Characteristic Commercial Blocks -- A Case Study of Guanqian Street, Pingjiang Road and Shantang Street in Suzhou[J]." *Economic Research Guide*, 2019(26):72-73

## ***2. Interview***

### *2.1 About the interview*

The researcher invited 12 interviewees with Architecture, City Planning, Urban Design, Historic Preservation backgrounds to ask questions about their experience in visiting Pingjiang Road Historic District, Shantang Street Historic District, Suzhou, and other cities along the Grand Canal. The questionnaire is attached in the appendix. The interview took the form of a face—to—face chat. During the interview, the author recorded with the interviewees consent. After completing all the interviews, the author summarized the interviewees thoughts and drew the following summary.

### *2.2 Summary of the Interview*

The majority of interviewees thought that these historic sites and cities matched their expectations and perceptions of these places before they went. As far as Suzhou is concerned, Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District have retained their historical features and traditional business forms and are very characteristic of Suzhou, which will not give them the impression that it is similar to other cities. However, it is worth noting that the interviewees who have visited Suzhou several times mentioned that the shops located in the historic districts of Pingjiang Road and Shantang Street had been affected by commercialization — more and more popular shops have begun to replace them the traditional shops.



According to the above analysis, the preservation planning of the two historic districts has carried out meticulous design in terms of preserving the historical buildings, historical features, and context in the districts, and has also guided the shaping and conservation of the spirit of the place. Nevertheless, the Ping Jiang Road Conservation Plan provides detailed implementation rules and specific guidance in terms of commercial development, while Shantang Street Conservation Plan does not. Therefore, the development tendency of commercial homogeneity in Shantang Street Historic Districts conforms to market rules and does not violate laws, regulations, and planning provisions. However, as mentioned above, the commercial activities in the historic district are also an essential part of the context of the historic district. Thus, in the later planning, design, and implementation of conservation projects, the historic conservators need to analyze the commercial forms in the historic districts and standardize them so as to better protect the authenticity of the historic blocks.

### ***3. Conclusion***

Suzhou's experience in cultural heritage preservation before 2014 is to carry out special research and analysis, design and planning, implementation plan and constantly make targeted adjustments for each cultural heritage. These conservation attempts focus on the authenticity and integrity of materials such as historical buildings, as well as the authenticity and integrity of traditional culture. Based on protecting the authenticity of

cultural heritage itself, the function of cultural heritage has been transformed into tourism, so as to drive economic development.

In addition to the worth of learning scientific, systematic planning and responsible project implementation attitude and adhere to years of management, Suzhou also has some problems in cultural heritage preservation that other cities need to pay attention to when carrying out historic preservation and adaptive reuse. Driven by economic and commercial development, some businesses or projects will chase short—term economic benefits and ignore the protection of local culture and the cultivation of cultural characteristics, resulting in homogenization problems. At the same time, some traditional commercial projects in cultural heritage sites lack innovation, and some time—honored brands are of low quality and grade, making it difficult to attract more customers. Those shops that are eliminated from the market can only move away or close down, with the corresponding extinction of history and culture.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, in practice, planners need to provide standards and implementation rules for commercial development to better protect traditional commercial forms and cultural projects in cultural heritage sites. At the same time, regulatory authorities should strengthen supervision and regular inspection so that the context of cultural heritage sites can be continued, and their authenticity can be better protected.

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<sup>44</sup> HUANG Yi. “A Study on the Cultural Embedding of Characteristic Commercial Blocks -- A Case Study of Guanqian Street, Pingjiang Road and Shantang Street in Suzhou[J].” *Economic Research Guide*, 2019(26):72-73

#### **IV.Suzhou's New Attempts in Cultural Heritage Preservation after 2014**

Compared with Suzhou's experience in cultural heritage preservation before 2014, which focused on each historical and cultural heritage site, after 2014, Suzhou's cultural heritage preservation attempts put more effort into the coordination among various cultural heritages, including the Classical Gardens of Suzhou, Ancient Administrative Buildings, historic districts and so on.

The Grand Canal itself is a linear heritage as a cultural route.<sup>45</sup> Being a part of the Grand Canal cultural heritage brings new challenges and opportunities to preserve and utilize Suzhou's cultural heritage.<sup>46</sup> Protecting each cultural heritage, connecting them together, and eventually forming a historical and cultural city, cultural area, has become a new research topic.

##### ***1. Before the successful promotion of the Grand Canals World Heritage designation***

In the Grand Canal World Cultural Heritage application stage, in order to cooperate with the application work, Suzhou selected ten cultural heritage sites, including Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District, as the candidate sites of the Grand Canal World Cultural Heritage application in Suzhou section. At the same time, Suzhou Municipal Bureau of Planning and Natural Resources formulated *the Heritage Protection*

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<sup>45</sup> SUN Hua. "A Discussion on Different Types of Sequential Heritages[J]." *Research on Heritages and Preservation*, 2016,1(01):48-54.

<sup>46</sup> SHAN Jixiang. "A Preliminary Study on Large-Scale Lineal or Serial Cultural Heritages: Break Through and Pressure." *Relics from South*,2006(03):2-5.

*Plan of the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal to properly handle the relationship between the canal heritages and other cultural heritages* relationship between new water conservancy projects and historic sites.

### *1.1 The features of the Cultural Heritage Sites of Suzhou Section of the Grand Canal*

There are various types of cultural heritage in the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal, including rich tangible heritage and intangible heritage. In terms of form, the heritage of the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal is also complex: the canal heritage is not only linear cultural heritage but also has the characteristics of the cultural landscape. Most of these cultural heritages are well preserved. At the same time, along the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal, there are a large number of cultural relics with high density and generally high value. The Suzhou section of the Grand Canal is covered with cultural heritages, including 5 old canal routes, 7 heritage sites, 9 classical gardens listed in the World Cultural Heritage list, and 6 intangible cultural heritages of mankind.<sup>47</sup> In addition, the Grand Canal itself still retains its original function, and to this day it still plays an important role in the national economy as an important transportation corridor.

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<sup>47</sup> ZHU Yibing. "A River and a City -- Exploring the Cultural Heritage of Suzhou Section of Grand Canal [J].", *Jin Gu Wen Chuang*. 2021(44):124-126.

### *1.2 The Difficulties in protecting the Cultural Heritage Sites of Suzhou Section of the Grand Canal*

Grand Canal Heritages are numerous and are classified in different preservation levels according to their importance. Therefore, it has led to difficulties in dividing responsibility for preservation. At the same time, because the protection of cultural heritage needs the cooperation of various departments, how to coordinate the work of various departments has become a difficult point for the protection of the Grand Canal heritage in the Suzhou section.

In addition, the heritage in the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal covers a wide geographical range, so how to link all the heritage together to develop tourism and promote regional development jointly has also become a complex problem.

### *1.3 Protection Measures of the Cultural Heritage Sites of Suzhou Section of the Grand Canal*

In view of the features and difficulties in the protection of the heritage in the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal, Suzhou has formulated corresponding protection strategies. The protection of the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal will be included in the unified organization and guidance of the government, and the responsibilities of various departments will be clarified. Implement the protection plan in accordance with the developed protection plan. Let the heritage department play a more active role, clarify the

classification of various heritage sites, and provide professional protection advice.

## ***2. After the successful promotion of the Grand Canals World Heritage designation***

### ***2.1 Formulate New Special Preservation Plans<sup>48</sup>***

On October 16, 2020, the *Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)* was released, aiming to strengthen Suzhou's core position of "Jiangnan Culture" and build Suzhou into a model city of world heritage. The plan will end in 2035, with a near-term target year of 2025. Suzhou will comprehensively promote the rejuvenation of the ancient city and build an "international core functional area" with the Jinji Lake—Dushu Lake area and the Shishan area.

According to the planning, Suzhou will build a regional and integrated historical and cultural city protection system; To strengthen the core position of "Jiangnan Culture" of Suzhou and build a model city of world heritage; It highlights the historical and cultural settlement sites, integrates natural and historic cultural resources in the context of water conservancy and waterway system and historical waterway, constructs the historical and cultural protection spatial structure of "Great Suzhou Famous City" in the city, forms the historical and cultural protection pattern of a network, and promotes the overall protection

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<sup>48</sup> Suzhou Planning Bureau. *Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)*

of the historical and cultural in the city.

#### 2.1.1 Overview of Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)

This plan aims at the comprehensive and systematic protection of Suzhou, a famous historical and cultural city. The conservation goal is to strengthen Suzhou's core status of "Jiangnan culture," build a world heritage model city and build a regional and integrated preservation system of Suzhou's historical and cultural city.

The process of planning and design follows the principles of "preserving the authenticity and historical context," "comprehensive and professional conservation," "rational utilization and sustainable utilization," and "people-oriented and high-quality development."

After the implementation of this plan, Suzhou will construct three levels of historical and cultural space preservation: city area, urban area and historic city area. At the same time, Suzhou will form covers the physical and nonphysical two aspects, including natural ecological environment and landscape, cultural, ecological belt, cultural landscape areas, world heritage and history of Jiangnan culture settlement system, historical and cultural blocks and historical area, cultural relics protection units and historical buildings, intangible cultural heritage and fine traditional culture of 8 types of content system of

Suzhou city protection.

### 2.1.2 Specific contents of Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)

In the aspect of city—style protection, it is proposed to protect the traditional style of "small Bridges, running water, white walls, and black tiles," pay attention to the coordination of the overall style and improve the overall quality. In terms of the protection of traditional dwellings, the courtyard should be taken as a unit, and the small—scale, progressive, micro—circulation, and consultative renewal mode should be adopted. The protection and utilization of traditional dwellings should be combined with the improvement of residents living conditions, the adjustment of the population structure of the ancient city, the continuation of the Suzhou style life, and the sorting of property rights. In terms of practical orientation and industrial transformation, Suzhou will take "culture" as the mainline to develop the new cultural economy, promote the revitalization of cultural industry (Figure 26), and then help develop the new economy.



# Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)

Planning of the Preservation of Historic City Area

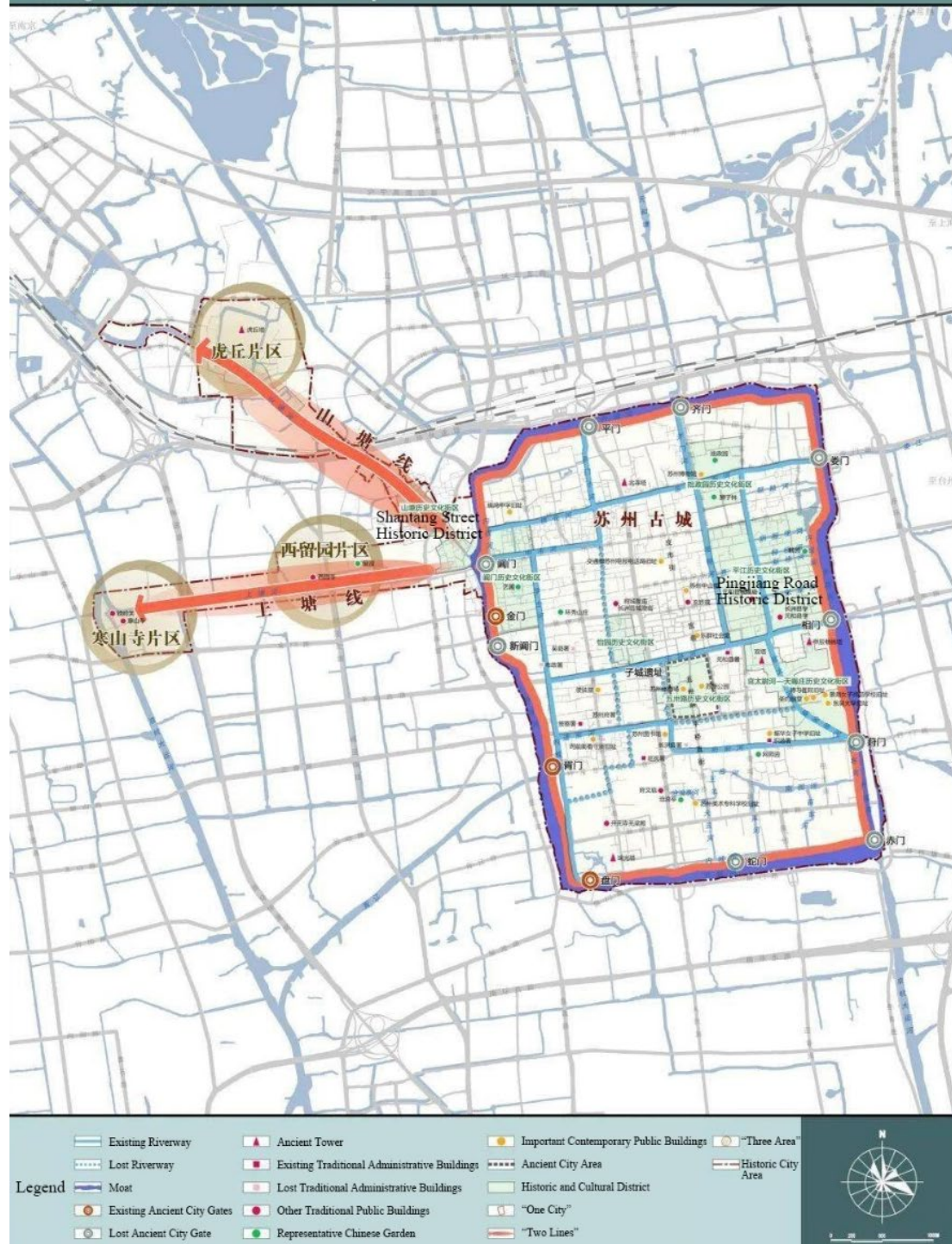


Figure 26: Planning of the Preservation of Historic City Area (Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035)

According to the preservation plan, Suzhou will use the Grand Canal to connect the cultural heritage of the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal with other cultural heritage sites, while developing convenient rail transit (subway) and other public transportation to make all cultural heritage sites easily accessible. As shown in the picture below (Figure 27), cultural heritages along the Grand Canal, including the Pingjiang Road Historic District and Shantang Street Historic District mentioned above, will be connected.



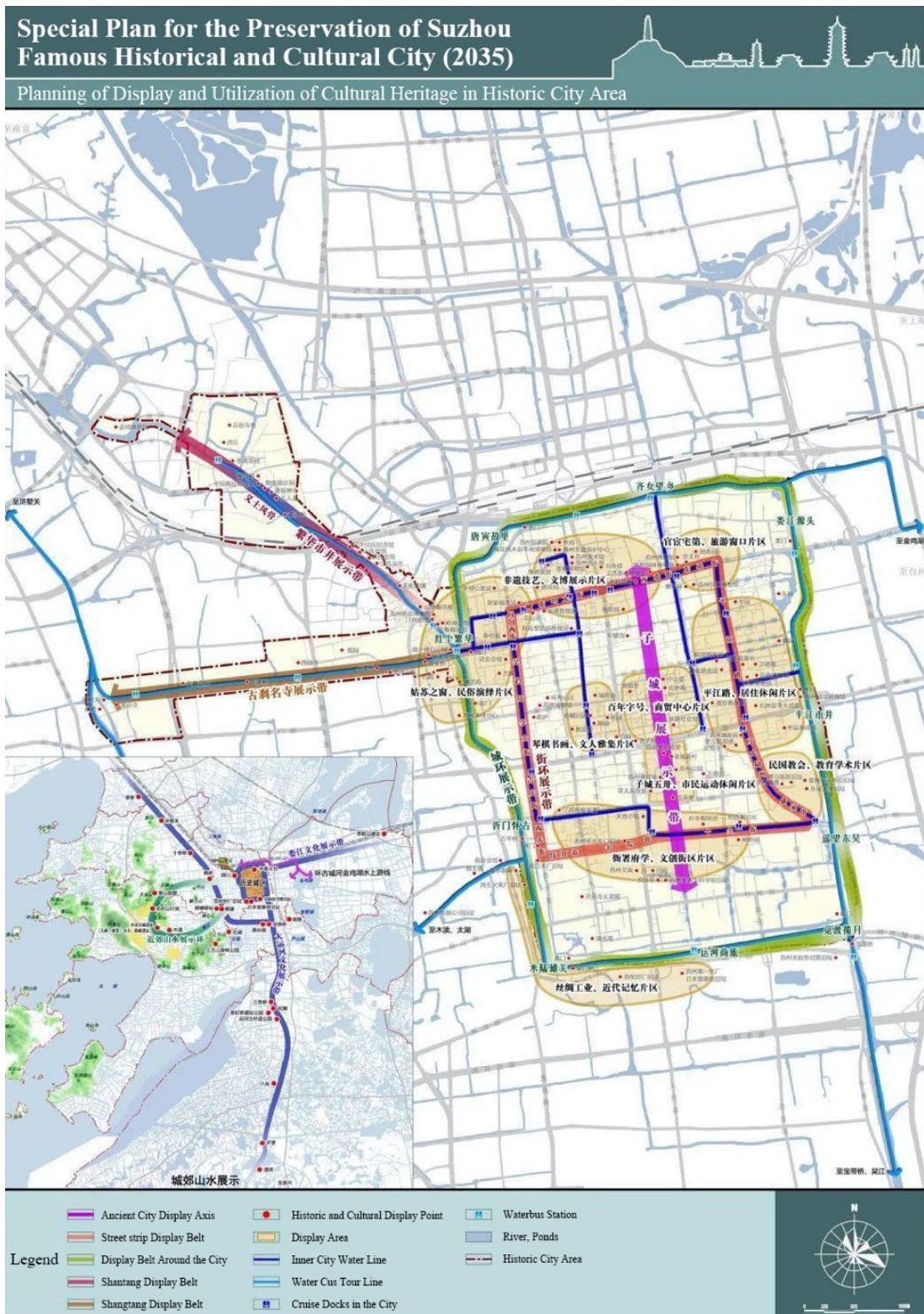


Figure 27: Planning of Display and Utilization of Cultural Heritage in Historic City Area (Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035))

Suzhou will build three cultural belts and four cultural landscape areas encompassing all cultural heritages around the ancient city of Suzhou. In these areas, cultural heritage at all levels will be preserved at different levels. Furthermore, Suzhou will adhere to the policy of "protecting the ancient city's features and actively building new areas" and make full use of the features of the water towns in the south of the Yangtze River to highlight the historical and cultural values and profound cultural deposits of Suzhou.

At the same time, Suzhou will strengthen the protection and use of historical and cultural resources (Figure 28) in the historic district, guide industrial adjustment and optimization, improve the livable environment, improve tourism facilities, and build an international high level of "culture, industry and human habitation" ancient city. Suzhou will build a core heritage of Wu (place) culture, a place for Su style living experience, a place for garden house expo, an international cultural tourist resort, and a gathering place for cultural creativity to become a high—quality integration area for international cultural and business travelers.



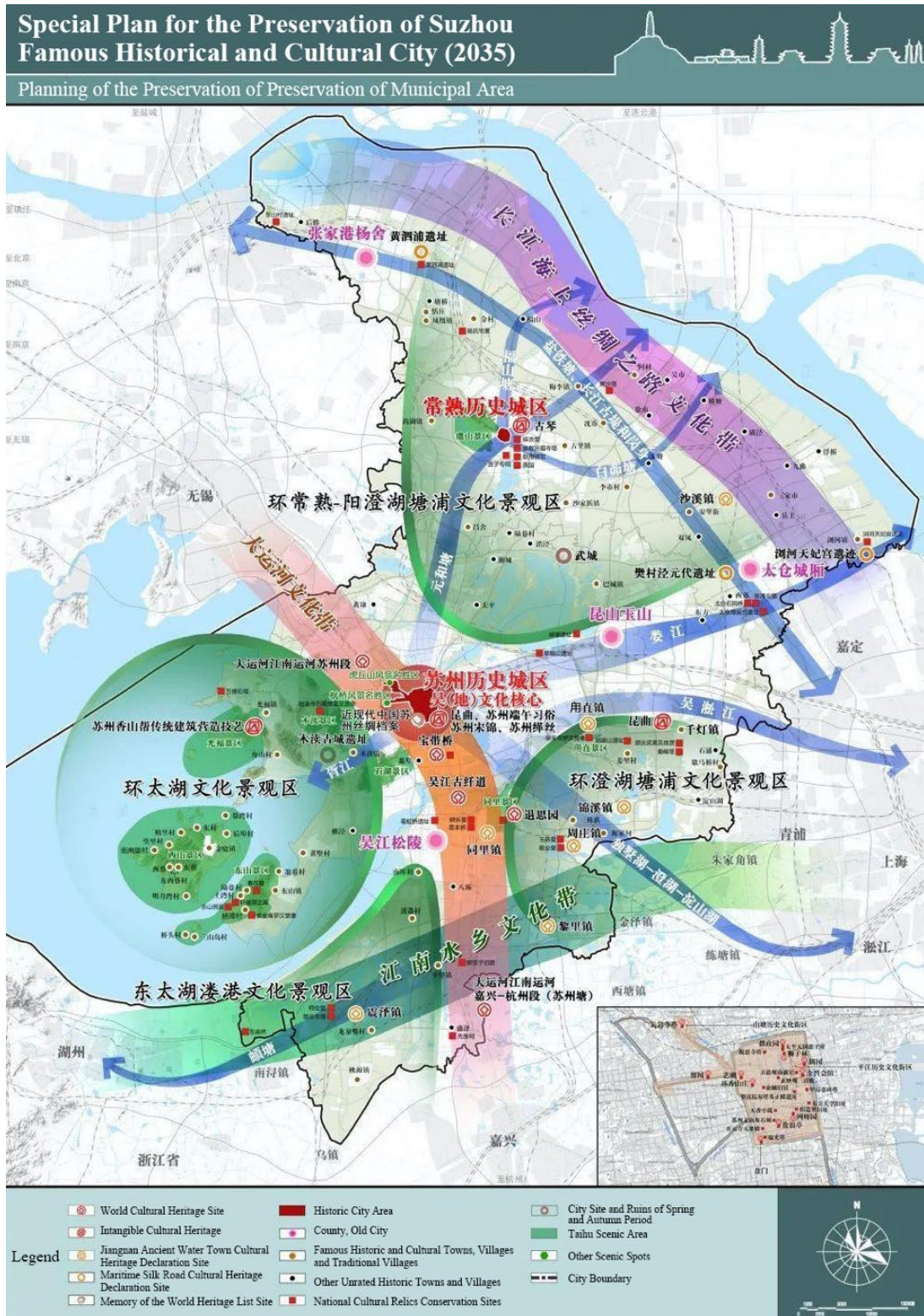


Figure 28: Planning of the Preservation of Municipal Area (Special Plan for the Preservation of Suzhou Famous Historical and Cultural City (2035))

With "culture" as the mainline, Suzhou will develop a new cultural economy, promote the revitalization of the cultural industry, and boost the development of the new economy. Plan special cultural activities to enhance the level of cultural exchanges and cultural activities in historic urban areas.

Suzhou will optimize residential function and enhance public function and service function; optimize the quality of commercial functions, improve the traditional business forms, stimulate the potential of time—honored brands; highlight the "slow" characteristic and "fine" advantage of the ancient city, strengthen the industrial (business form) management control in the historical and cultural street area. Suzhou will develop all-area tourism, deepen the development of cultural tourism, promote the development of high-quality, all-area, brand-oriented and high-value-added tourism industries, and improve the system of tourism accommodations.

The population structure of the ancient city will be optimized, and the permanent population capacity will be controlled at 200,000-240,000. Suzhou will advocate green travel and vigorously develop a green transportation model of "rail + slow traffic". Suzhou will optimize the allocation of public resources, enhance the attraction of the ancient city and enhance residents happiness ; use underground space according to local conditions, strengthen the integration of aboveground and underground construction, and improve the efficiency of intensive and economical use of land; improve technical specifications to

meet the protection and development requirements of ancient cities.

## *2.2 Integrating the Cultural Heritage along the Grand Canal into People's Daily Life*

Suzhou has built footpaths along the Grand Canal for citizens to walk and exercise. Together with the Grand Canal embankment reinforcement project, this project creates the Grand Canal scenic belt in the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal. Much of the cultural heritage along the Grand Canal has been made within walking distance, allowing citizens to explore it on a leisurely stroll. In this way, Suzhou brings the cultural heritage along the Grand Canal closer to peoples daily lives, not just as a tourist destination.

## **3. Conclusion**

After the successful nomination of the Grand Canal as a World Heritage Site, Suzhous cultural heritage preservation has changed from the protection of individual cultural heritages in the past to the unified planning and utilization of numerous cultural heritages; took the point as a unit in the past, into lines, planes and even areas to protect. Such a change in protection mode enables Suzhous cultural heritage to have a matching overall cultural atmosphere and urban environment. This way of protection and utilization can preserve the authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage to the maximum extent, and let the authenticity of historical culture relying on its existence be better inherited.

## V.Cultural Heritage Preservation and Tourism in the Post-Pandemic Era

Since the end of 2019, countries around the world have gradually implemented entry and exit restrictions and domestic travel restrictions to control the further deterioration of the epidemic. As a result, the tourism industry has taken a huge hit, and it has changed as a result.<sup>49</sup>

In terms of the impact of the pandemic, the number of domestic tourists in China in the first half of 2020 was 1.168 billion person-times, decreased 62% year on year, and the domestic tourism income was 0.64 trillion yuan, decreasing 77% year on year.

From the perspective of the way of influence, “transformation, self-help, popular interest, intelligence, live-streaming e-commerce” has become the new keywords in the tourism industry. In addition, under the influence of the pandemic, some enterprises changed their business and actively responded to the pandemic for self-help. For example, Tongcheng Yilong launched the urban "Ark Alliance" activity, using VR and high-definition video technology to provide free tourism promotion services for tourist destinations.<sup>50</sup>

Regional sites of widespread interest became the next popular tourism site. For example, regional and local tourism information platforms such as Jiangsu Tourism, Suzhou Tourism,

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<sup>49</sup> China Tourism Academy, *Chinas domestic tourism development report 2020 | Coronavirus Pandemic and Domestic Travel: Impact and Confidence*, 2020

<sup>50</sup> SONG Rui, FENG Jun, WANG Yena. COVID-19 and Tourism in China in 2020: Impact assessment and suggestions for reflection, *TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA: ANALYSIS AND FORECAST (2019-2020)*



and Mochou Tourism gradually got developed, and the industrial pattern of the domestic tourism market changed. The data show that the pandemic is not only affecting peoples lives, it is also shaping the way people travel, showing a noteworthy new trend -- spending a few days in a resort hotel near the city is now the holiday of choice. Experts believe that "micro vacations" in local areas and surrounding areas are becoming part of peoples lifestyle as their travel consumption needs become increasingly diversified. According to the analysis report on the *Development Characteristics and Causes of "Local Lifestyle" Tourism* released by Meituan Tourism Training Center, Chinas tourism industry shows a trend of "localization" development. Many urban and rural residents prefer "doorstep" tourism projects; more than 50% of the citys residents prefer to take short trips within the city, local leisure travel has become the mainstream choice<sup>51</sup>. The *2021 Report on Chinese Residents Side Trips Trends* released by Tongcheong Travel Company also pointed out that post-COVID-19 summer trips show a general trend of "strong side trips, weak long-term travel." Specifically, the demand for a 2-day-1-night weekend surrounding leisure vacation is strong, and it has been the most popular type of surrounding tourism since the summer of 2021(Figure 29). Surrounding self-driving, theme park, comprehensive resort, zoo, aquarium, etc., are all popular choices.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Meituan Tourism Training Center. *Development Characteristics and Causes of "Local Lifestyle" Tourism*

<sup>52</sup> Meituan Tourism Training Center. *Development Characteristics and Causes of "Local Lifestyle" Tourism*

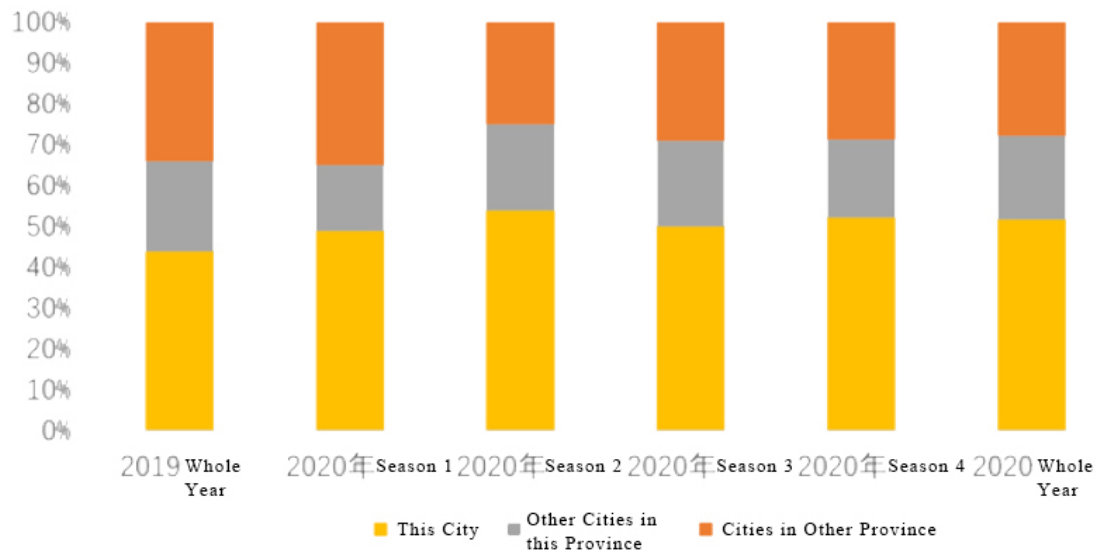


Figure 29: Tourism Form

The pandemic promoted the intellectual development of tourism. “AI service,” “Virtual Reality,” “Intelligent Tour,” and “Data Monitoring” have become the basic requirements of the intelligent tourism construction of major tourism enterprises and scenic sites. With the participation of many travel service providers and more and more local government leaders, the year 2020 has become the “Year of Online Tourism “. "Online Tourism" can be in the form of Vlog, through the idea of video shooting and editing skills, vivid and immersive presentation of interesting stories and life of the tourist destination, or interactive communication through live broadcast, to help people more in-depth experience of the life culture and humanistic spirit of the tourist destination. Compared with traditional offline tourism, the attraction of "online tourism" lies in the ability to deeply understand and experience the cultural charm behind a brick, a stone, a painting or a monument

through in-depth explanation. The form of live broadcasting is also optimizing the details of online travel. For example, online tourism can explain the details of historic sites that have been ignored by people through professional anchors, bringing new feelings to people and discovering more uniqueness.<sup>53</sup> Compared with crowded offline tourism, online tourism allows designers to show visitors more details of history and culture, greatly increasing the amount of information and making it easier for people to absorb the power brought by culture. On the other hand, when the cultural heritage sites no longer need to accommodate too many tourists, its architecture and context will be less affected or damaged. The impact of commercialization on the cultural heritage sites will also be reduced, and traditional architecture styles and business form will be better protected. In addition, online tourism also provides marketing channels for cultural and creative products of cultural heritage, which not only drives the career transformation of some tourism practitioners, but also helps cultural heritage management units still get enough maintenance funds under the impact of the pandemic.<sup>54</sup>

From the perspective of consumption behavior, “contact-free vacation, near outing, reservation tour” is the key word. Normal pandemic prevention and control, real name booking, and other requirements have made booking tours a new habit for tourists.

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<sup>53</sup> LV Yahui, ZHANG Runqing. “The Characteristics and Development Trend of Cloud Tourism[N].” *China Tourism News*, 2020-07-13(003).

<sup>54</sup> LI Yongjian. “ ‘Cloud tourism’ ” : The Beauty of the Cloud is at your Fingertips.” *Guangming Daily*. 2020.07.27-16

According to the survey data, 77.4 percent of tourists made reservations to visit scenic sites during the Labor Day holiday in 2020. Reservations also effectively control the number of tourists, avoiding the situation of overcrowding every holiday in the past. On the one hand, it reduces the carrying capacity burden of tourist destinations and reduces the damage to cultural heritage. On the other hand, it also helps to improve the quality of tourism and reduce the bad tourism experience caused by crowds.

Therefore, in view of the current pandemic and the coming post-pandemic era, we should also give suggestions to cultural heritage sites to help them make better use of the sites to develop tourism and revitalize the economy on the basis of preservation. On the one hand, cultural heritage sites need more systematic and professional protection planning and adaptive reuse design. On the other hand, historical preservationists and designers should also develop project models of "cloud tourism" or "online tourism" as soon as possible to help people who manage the sites of cultural heritage better discover the historical and cultural core of cultural heritage and the tourists' interests, so as to better display it online.

## **VI.Chinas New Policies on Historical Preservation in 2021**

### ***1. Opinions on Strengthening the Protection and Inheritance of History and Culture in Urban and Rural Development*<sup>55</sup>**

The document calls for "overall planning and systematic promotion", "value-oriented and guaranteed," "rational utilization, inheritance and development", and "multi-party participation and joint effort." At the same time, we need to accelerate the establishment of a system for preserving and inheriting urban and rural history and culture, strengthen conservation, utilization and inheritance, establish and improve working mechanisms and guarantee measures. The latest national policy has set new standards and targets for historical and cultural preservation in China.

Under the requirements of the new national policy, Suzhou and even the whole of Chinas cultural heritage preservation will enter a new stage. Cities across the country will pay more attention to historic preservation. At the same time, the historical protection mode will change from single cultural heritage preservation to joint preservation and emphasis the continuity of cultural context.

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<sup>55</sup> General Office of the CPC Central Committee General Office of the State Council. *Opinions on Strengthening the Protection and Inheritance of History and Culture in Urban and Rural Development*

## ***2. Construction and Preservation Planning of Grand Canal National Cultural Park***

China will integrate cultural relics and cultural resources from the eight provinces and cities along the Grand Canal to optimize the overall functional layout according to the idea of "river as a line, city as a bead, string the beads, and the get the area," so as to further explain the cultural value of the Grand Canal. At the same time, relevant departments will strengthen control and preservation, strengthen the design of theme display functions, promote cultural and tourism integration to drive economic development. Through these methods, China will enhance the utilization of traditional Chinese culture, promote the implementation of key projects, and strive to build the Grand Canal National Cultural Park into a brand card to promote Chinas image, display Chinese civilization, and demonstrate cultural confidence in the new era.<sup>56</sup>

The Grand Canal National Cultural Park project helps promote the mutual learning and common development of the cities along the Grand Canal in historic preservation. At the same time, regional cooperation also helps the cultural heritage along the Grand Canal to be better systematically protected and is no longer restricted by administrative divisions.

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<sup>56</sup> National Cultural Park construction leading group. *Construction and Preservation Planning of Grand Canal National Cultural Park*

## **VII. Conclusion & Recommendation**

### ***1. Conclusions***

Lessons from Suzhou's experience in preserving cultural heritage can be divided into two parts.

First of all, Suzhou carries out targeted protection for specific cultural heritages. They first investigate and analyze the characteristics, history, and context of particular cultural heritage and find the core of their preservation. Then the protection plan is made according to the protection core of the cultural heritage. In the process of implementing conservation plans, they will constantly make adjustments, continue good conservation strategies, and correct new problems in practice. Later, on the basis of respecting the authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage, cultural heritage should be used to develop tourism and business and drive the development of the regional economy. Finally, the benefits generated by economic development are utilized to feedback the protection of cultural heritage, through the above steps to achieve a virtuous circle of cultural heritage protection. However, it is worth noting that Suzhou's historic preservation in this stage also shows some problems. One is the problem of business homogeneity. Impacted by the development of commerce and tourism, people tend to ignore the protection and continuation of traditional business forms in the pursuit of short-term interests. Second, in the process of project implementation, there will still be some engineering details failed to respect the authenticity.

These are the cultural heritage protection in other cities that need to pay attention to.

In general, Suzhou has been leading the way in cultural heritage protection in China. Perhaps influenced by Suzhou's long history and context, the successive governments of Suzhou have attached great importance to historic preservation. Suzhou has never been eager for quick success and instant benefits in historic preservation work: from the establishment of historic preservation projects to field research, planning scheme generation, project implementation, and supervision in the later use process, Suzhou government and relevant practitioners are careful and prudent to complete their work. At the same time, the Suzhou governments attitude towards historic preservation has also attracted a large number of historic preservation experts to join the work. Therefore, Suzhou has made more outstanding achievements in cultural heritage protection and historical protection compared with other Chinese cities.

After the Grand Canal was successfully designated as the World Heritage List, Suzhou took advantage of the Grand Canal as a linear heritage to connect various cultural heritages within the region, forming a cultural landscape area and cultural protection belt. With these cultural landscape areas and cultural protection belts, Suzhou has restored and protected the historical features and context of the whole city. At the same time, relying on these regional distributions of cultural areas, Suzhou has developed better tourism industry and pulled the rapid development of the economy. What benefits will be gained and what



problems will be exposed in the future of the current conservation planning and implementation need to be paid continuous attention to by the historical conservators.

## ***2. Recommendations***

Based on Suzhou's experience in cultural heritage preservation, the author proposes the following suggestions for other cities along the Grand Canal to help them better protect their cultural heritage.

- 1) Before developing and utilizing cultural heritage can begin, relevant authorities need first to formulate relevant policies to limit development practices and then implement them carefully.
- 2) The development of cultural heritage needs complete planning before it can be implemented. Cultural heritage preservation plans shall be designed for specific cultural heritages. It is necessary to thoroughly study and analyze the cultural heritages history, value, and context to determine the core of its protection. Then the supporting protection planning scheme is formulated around the protection core. The content of the plan should consider the local socio-economic conditions, cultural atmosphere, and historical evolution and should be completed progressively.
- 3) Relevant departments should protect the intangible cultural heritages, traditional commerce, and handicraft industries in the places where cultural heritages are located;

help and guide their sustainable and stable existence and development there.

- 4) Tourism and commercial development at sites of cultural heritage should be encouraged but be limited simultaneously. For areas with low passenger flow, publicity and promotion should be done well, and transportation facilities should be improved to attract merchants and tourists. For the area with a more significant visitor flow, especially when the visitor flow is concentrated during holidays, the flow of visitors should be controlled, and the reservation system can be considered in the travel peak. Simultaneously, the relevant departments should avoid popular shops using the market choice to squeeze traditional shops living space.
- 5) For the cities along the Grand Canal, the advantages of the Grand Canal as a linear heritage should be fully utilized in the protection of cultural heritage. The Grand Canal can be used as a medium to communicate and link various cultural heritages and make them form cultural areas. Such cultural areas can effectively sustain the cultural atmosphere and urban environment in which cultural heritages depend on each other, thus providing a more reasonable basis for the protection of cultural heritage.
- 6) In the post-pandemic era, it is worthy of developing visual tour platforms and considering setting up online stores for traditional shops to maintain the development of cultural heritage sites.

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## IX.Appendix

### Questionnaire for the Interview:

As a Tourist

您是否到访过苏州？ Have you ever visited Suzhou?	
<p>1、如果到访过，您去过苏州几次？苏州给您留下了怎样的印象？符合您对于苏州的认知吗？</p> <p>If so, how many times have you been to Suzhou? What is your impression of Suzhou? Does it meet your perception of Suzhou?</p> <p>2、您去过苏州哪些名胜古迹、文化遗产？</p> <p>What places of interest and cultural heritage have you been to in Suzhou?</p> <p>3、您对于这些名胜古迹、文化遗产有哪些印象？符合您对苏州当地文化特色的认知吗？</p> <p>Whats your impression of these places of interest and cultural heritage? Is it in line with your understanding of the local cultural characteristics of Suzhou?</p> <p>4、您对大运河及其申报世界文化遗产有所了解吗？</p> <p>Do you know anything about the Grand Canal and its application for World Cultural Heritage?</p> <p>5、您是否在大运河申遗成功的 2014 年前后分别去过苏州？</p> <p>Have you been to Suzhou before and after 2014, when the Grand Canal successfully applied for World Heritage Site?</p> <p>6、大运河申遗成功前后，在您眼中，这些文化遗产与名胜古迹有什么变化吗？如果有，是好的变化还是不好的变化？</p>	<p>1、如果没有到访过，您对于苏州有什么样的印象？</p> <p>If you havent visited Suzhou before, whats your impression of Suzhou?</p> <p>2、您对于苏州的名胜古迹、文化遗产有所了解吗？在您眼中，苏州的特色应该是怎样的呢？</p> <p>Do you know anything about the places of interest and cultural heritage in Suzhou? In your opinion, what is the characteristic of Suzhou?</p> <p>3、您对大运河及其申报世界文化遗产有所了解吗？</p> <p>Do you know anything about the Grand Canal and its application for World Cultural Heritage?</p> <p>4、您是否到访过其他大运河沿岸的城市或文化遗产、名胜古迹？</p> <p>Have you visited any other cities or cultural heritage sites along the Grand Canal?</p> <p>5、如果有，它们又给您留下了怎样的印象呢？</p> <p>If so, what impression did they make on you?</p> <p>6、大运河申遗成功前后，在您眼中，这些文化遗产与名胜古迹有什么变化吗？如果有，是好的变化还是不好的变化？</p> <p>In your eyes, what changes have taken place in these cultural heritages and scenic spots before and after the Grand Canal was successfully applied for the</p>

<p>In your opinion, what changes have taken place in these cultural heritages and scenic spots before and after the Grand Canal was successfully applied for the World Heritage List? If so, is it a good change or a bad change?</p> <p>7、作为游客，您觉得苏州的文化遗产与名胜古迹符合您对于苏州的预期以及您所了解的苏州的历史沿革、文化特征吗？</p> <p>As a tourist, do you think the cultural heritages and scenic spots in Suzhou meet your expectations of Suzhou and what you know about its history and cultural characteristics?</p> <p>8、如果是，请举例说明；如果不是，请指出您觉得哪些特征是不属于苏州的？</p> <p>If yes, please give an example. If not, please point out which features do you think do not belong to Suzhou?</p> <p>9、您是否到访过其他大运河沿岸的城市或文化遗产、名胜古迹？</p> <p>Have you visited any other cities or cultural heritage sites along the Grand Canal?</p> <p>10、如果有，它们又给您留下了怎样的印象呢？</p> <p>If so, what impression did they make on you?</p> <p>11、作为游客，您更希望看到怎样的文化遗产/名胜古迹呢？</p> <p>As a tourist, what kind of cultural heritage/places of interest would you prefer to see?</p>	<p>World Heritage List? If so, is it a good change or a bad change?</p> <p>7、作为游客，您觉得您去到的这些文化遗产与名胜古迹符合您对于当地的预期以及您所了解的当地的历史沿革、文化特征吗？</p> <p>As a tourist, do you think the cultural heritages and places of interest you have visited meet your expectations of the local area and what you know about the local historical evolution and cultural characteristics?</p> <p>8、如果是，请举例说明；如果不是，请指出您觉得哪些特征是不属于当地的？</p> <p>If yes, please give an example. If not, please indicate which features you feel are not local?</p> <p>9、作为游客，您更希望看到怎样的文化遗产/名胜古迹呢？</p> <p>As a tourist, what kind of cultural heritage/places of interest would you prefer to see?</p>
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As a Scholar

<p>您是否对大运河及其申报世界文化遗产有所了解？</p> <p>Do you know anything about the Grand Canal and its declaration of world cultural heritage?</p>
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<p>如果有,请浅谈一下您对于大运河申报世界文化遗产对沿岸城市保护当地文化遗产产生的影响。包括好处和坏处两方面。</p> <p>If so, please talk briefly about your declaration of the Grand Canal World Cultural Heritage to the coastal cities to protect the local cultural heritage will have an impact. There are both advantages and disadvantages.</p>	<p>如果没有,就您的研究了解,申报世界文化遗产会对文化遗产本身以及当地产生怎样的影响呢?包括好处和坏处两方面。</p> <p>If not, according to your research, what impact will the declaration of World Cultural Heritage have on the cultural heritage itself and the local area? There are both advantages and disadvantages.</p>
<p>如果您对大运河及其申报世界文化遗产有所了解,您是否去到过苏州呢?</p> <p>If you know something about the Grand Canal and its declaration of world cultural heritage, have you ever been to Suzhou?</p>	
<p>1、如果到访过,您去过苏州几次?苏州给您留下了怎样的印象?符合您对于苏州的认知吗?</p> <p>If so, how many times have you been to Suzhou? What is your impression of Suzhou? Does it meet your perception of Suzhou?</p> <p>2、您去过苏州哪些名胜古迹、文化遗产?</p> <p>If so, how many times have you been to Suzhou? What is your impression of Suzhou? Does it meet your perception of Suzhou?</p> <p>3、您对于这些名胜古迹、文化遗产有哪些印象?符合您对苏州当地文化特色的认知吗?</p> <p>If so, how many times have you been to Suzhou? What is your impression of Suzhou? Does it meet your perception of Suzhou?</p> <p>4、您是否在大运河申遗成功的 2014 年前后分别去过苏州?</p> <p>If so, how many times have you been to Suzhou? What is your impression of Suzhou? Does it meet your perception of</p>	<p>1、如果没有到访过,您对于苏州有什么样的印象?</p> <p>If you havent visited Suzhou before, whats your impression of Suzhou?</p> <p>2、您对于苏州的名胜古迹、文化遗产有所了解吗?在您眼中,苏州的特色应该是怎样的呢?</p> <p>Do you know anything about the places of interest and cultural heritage in Suzhou? In your opinion, what is the characteristic of Suzhou?</p> <p>3、您是否到访过其他大运河沿岸的城市或文化遗产、名胜古迹?</p> <p>Have you visited any other cities or cultural heritage sites along the Grand Canal?</p> <p>4、如果有,它们又给您留下了怎样的印象呢?</p> <p>If so, what impression did they make on you?</p> <p>5、大运河申遗成功前后,在您眼中,这些文化遗产与名胜古迹有什么变化吗?如果有,是好的变化还是不好的变化?</p> <p>In your eyes, what changes have taken</p>

<p>Suzhou?</p> <p>5、大运河申遗成功前后,在您眼中,这些文化遗产与名胜古迹有什么变化吗?如果有,是好的变化还是不好的变化?</p> <p>In your opinion, what changes have taken place in these cultural heritages and scenic spots before and after the Grand Canal was successfully accepted as a World Heritage Site? If so, is it a good change or a bad change?</p> <p>6、您觉得苏州的文化遗产与名胜古迹现阶段的使用和保护是否遵循了苏州的历史沿革、文化特征?</p> <p>Do you think the use and protection of Suzhous cultural heritage and scenic spots at the present stage follow the historical evolution and cultural characteristics of Suzhou?</p> <p>7、如果是,请举例说明;如果不是,请指出您觉得哪些特征是不属于苏州的?</p> <p>If yes, please give an example. If not, please point out which features do you think do not belong to Suzhou?</p> <p>8、您是否到访过其他大运河沿岸的城市或文化遗产、名胜古迹?</p> <p>Have you visited any other cities or cultural heritage sites along the Grand Canal?</p> <p>9、如果有,它们又给您留下了怎样的印象呢?</p> <p>If so, what impression did they make on you?</p> <p>10、关于如何更好地分析大运河申遗对于文化遗产保护的影响,您有哪些建议呢?</p> <p>11、作为专业人士,您觉得大运河沿</p>	<p>place in these cultural heritages and scenic spots before and after the Grand Canal was successfully accepted as a World Heritage Site? If so, is it a good change or a bad change?</p> <p>6、您觉得您去到的这些文化遗产与名胜古迹符合您对于当地的预期以及您所了解的当地的历史沿革、文化特征吗?</p> <p>Do you think the cultural heritages and places of interest you have visited meet your expectations of the local area and the local historical evolution and cultural characteristics that you know?</p> <p>7、如果是,请举例说明;如果不是,请指出您觉得哪些特征是不属于当地的?</p> <p>If yes, please give an example. If not, please indicate which features you feel are not local?</p> <p>8、关于如何更好地分析大运河申遗对于文化遗产保护的影响,您有哪些建议呢?</p> <p>What are your suggestions on how to better analyze the impact of the Grand Canal World Heritage application on the protection of cultural heritage?</p> <p>9、作为专业人士,您觉得大运河沿岸城市应当如何更好地利用大运河申遗来保护当地的文化遗产呢?</p> <p>As a professional, how do you think the cities along the Grand Canal should make better use of the Grand Canal World Heritage application to protect their local cultural heritage?</p>
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<p>岸城市应当如何更好地利用大运河申遗来保护当地的文化遗产呢？</p> <p>Do you have any suggestions on how to better analyze the impact of the Grand Canal World Heritage application on the protection of cultural heritage?</p>	
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