

Value Evaluation of Chinese Traditional Seal Culture

Taking Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop as an Example

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Abstract—It is of great significance to construct a scientific value evaluation system of traditional seal culture for accurately understanding the development status of seal cultural products and promoting the core value of the cultural products. Through the examples in the field of cultural products in China and abroad for reference, combined with the value attributes of Chinese traditional seal cultural, this paper takes the Seal Culture Salon of Youning Hall as a case, and constructs an evaluation model for empirical research based on the analytic hierarchy process (AHP), providing reference for the creative development of service products of traditional Chinese seal culture.

Keyword: seal culture, cultural values, Youning Hall, analytic hierarchy process

I. INTRODUCTION

In the report to the 19th national congress of the communist party of China (CPC), it was pointed out that efforts should be made to dig deeper into the ideology, humanistic spirit and moral norms contained in the fine traditional Chinese culture, carry on and make innovations in line with the requirements of the times, and make Chinese culture display its permanent charm and the style of the times. Chinese traditional seal culture, with its deep origin, contains rich cultural genes of philology, archaeology, mythology and sociology. At the same time, as an important branch of Chinese traditional calligraphy and cultural development, Chinese traditional seal culture has participated in the construction of Chinese people's aesthetic taste, rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people, and has high value for cultural creative product development. [1] In this study, a series of cultural products such as "2019 seal culture salon" in Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop in Chengdu are taken as examples, and their cultural values are evaluated by using analytic hierarchy process (AHP), and suggestions are put forward for the improvement of the products, so as to provide ideas and inspiration for the development of creative products of Chinese traditional seal cultural.

II. RELATED RESEARCH PROGRESS

From the perspective of the vertical process of the development of Chinese traditional seal culture, from the Pre-Qin royal seal with engraved inscriptions, to the Han seal with insects and birds, to the Tang seal with characters of

curling strikes folding, to the literati seal cutting popular in the Ming and Qing Dynasty, and to the freehand style of contemporary appeal to visual aesthetics, seals in different times all show ever-changing artistic images, which not only reflect the cultural appeal and aesthetic ideology at that time, but also reflect the external perception of the living environment at that time. [2] Today, although the function of the traditional seal is replaced by more advanced scientific and technological means, it still exists as a symbol of identity and symbol. This situation not only occurs in China, but also in neighboring countries such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore, which still maintain the practice of using seals. The combination of science and technology and culture makes the industrialization trend of seal culture increasingly obvious. [3]

The evaluation of cultural products is an important way to realize the value of cultural industry. The establishment of scientific and reasonable evaluation index system can play an important positive incentive role in the design, production, sales and service of cultural products. [4] The main methods to evaluate the value of cultural products are subjective qualitative analysis represented by expert evaluation [5], and quantitative tools to solve qualitative problems of quasi-quantitative analysis methods, in which the analytic hierarchy process is the most typical [6]. Specifically, the research objects are mainly time-honored cultural brands [7], regional tourism cultural values [8] and film and television works [9]. The evaluation focusing on the value of seal cultural products is rare. In practice, the focus of tangible product development of Chinese traditional seal culture is relatively small. Besides the seal cultural creative products developed by the representative of Xiling Seal Engraver's Society, the most influential institution in China, excellent products for the public are not common. [10] Relevant cultural enterprises still need to improve their awareness of intangible product development of Chinese traditional seal culture.

Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop is a creative agency established in Chengdu with the theme of Chinese traditional seal culture. It not only carries out the product design and development related to Chinese traditional seal culture and seal cutting art, but also actively explores the service and product form of Chinese traditional intangible cultural heritage. In recent years, the workshop

has developed a series of service products such as "2019 Seal Culture Salon" with the theme of Chinese traditional seal culture. Taking this service product as a case, this paper uses analytic hierarchy process to evaluate its cultural value, and puts forward development suggestions for the improvement direction of the product.

III. VALUE SYSTEM CONSTRUCTION OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL SEAL CULTURE

Chinese traditional seal culture is rooted in Chinese history, which is a comprehensive expression of art, history, scholarship, culture, commerce and other factors closely related to seals, seal cutting and seal study. Seal culture is a macro concept. It covers the aspects of seal study, seal cutting art, and the study of seals, and radiates from them to other social and cultural factors, cultural functions and cultural phenomena related to seals, seal cutting and seal study, such as cultural exchanges, cross-cultural studies, and the management and development of cultural industries. [11] Based on relevant studies and combined with the cultural and creative practice of Younging Hall, this study proposes six dimensions of the cultural value of Chinese traditional seals.

A. Aesthetic value

From the perspective of aesthetics, from the textual research of the ancient seal, on the one hand, the free skewing of the ancient seal writing with natural and simple aesthetic experience are not arbitrary and disorderly, which have embodied the writing style of that era and presented its inherent aesthetic law. Compactness and brightness, precipitousness and stability, contrast and echo, scattering and density and other categories, the printed texts in each of them reflect the mature application, thus forming various abstract images that can generate synesthetic images with people's accumulated aesthetic experience in life. The aesthetic value has always been the outstanding manifestation of Chinese traditional seal culture. [12] On the other hand, the decorative nature of seals for practical use reflects the awareness that the practical efficiency of imperial seals has been promoted to the aesthetic object. For example, the various knobs of the ancient seals of the Warring States Period has been integrated with certain meanings; the artistic consciousness of the imperial seal in the Han Dynasty was not only applied to the calligraphy, rules and techniques, but also to the beautification of the seal body; after the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the development of literati seal cutting and the use of stone seal promoted the decoration of seal knob to turn from the original function into pure art, which further promoted the aesthetic elements of Chinese seals.

B. Spiritual value

As the intensification of seal ideographic function and lyric function in seal cutting, the content of seal cutting works in the late Ming Dynasty changed the semantic pattern of imperial seal, which constructs the independence of the cultural function of seal cutting and makes the seal have spiritual value. Literary, ideological and emotional words have become the subject of seal cutting, and the expression

of humanistic spirit is freer. In the late Ming dynasty when the conflicts between the monarch loyalty and the anxiety over the time, and between being positive in politics and leading a secular life, occurred in the mind of the literati, the seal has become another language space for literati to seek for relief in addition to calligraphy, painting and poetry, and the language content itself on the seal surface became a part of the artistic aesthetics. The ideographic and lyrical functions of the seal have been strengthened, which can be said to be the manifestation of more humanistic content and spiritual value of seal cutting and seal culture.

C. Social value

Social value shows the mutual relationship between people, reflects the social nature of the era of art, and contributes to forming the consciousness of identity and status. The Chinese seal is first and foremost an "implement of system". People tend to regard the Chinese seal as an artistic phenomenon, though; it is first and foremost an institutional instrument that deeply participates in China's social, political and economic activities. The knob modelling and theme have been all part of the hierarchy of official seal since Qin and Han dynasties. In the process of evolution, the modelling choice of the imperial seal style show the infusions of beliefs, symbols, authorities and other concepts, rather than the general form of beautification. The changes of various forms and systems are subject to the changes of social functions of seals and the ways of using them, and there hasn't been a stage of formalism where the imperial seal only serves as decorations.

D. Historical value

Since the imperial seal bears rich political, economic and cultural elements of Chinese society, its social identity as a solemn keepsake needs to be strengthened in a stable form. Therefore, in the confluence and accumulation of many elements, the art of seal-cutting between square inches bears the life condition of the creation era and the connection with history and future. Only from the basic form of seal, during the development of seal over two thousand years, seal characters have always been the basic form of seal, during which the social application of Chinese characters has evolved from seal characters to clerical script, to cursive script, and to regular script.

E. Symbolic value

From the point of view of the official seal system, the official seal symbolizes not only the official position, but also the public power of government office. From the point of view of the private seal system, it symbolizes the recognition and credit of the identity of the official as a natural person. In the long process of development, the original attributes and functions of seals have been constantly evolving into two directions. However, some non-credit categories have always been closely related to the seal mainly based on credit, which indicates that the "seal mode" has sufficient symbolic value in daily life.

F. Real value

The real value of seal cutting refers to the unique and original characteristics of the style and artistic level of seal cutting. In particular, after the aesthetic concept of "I create my own rule" in modern seal cutting has been continuously developed, which is quite different from the creative orientation of seals and the background of the Ming and Qing dynasties, and the real value of seal cutting is more prominent. The theme of inheriting the classics and displaying the individuality is more consciously reflected in the creation of the seal engravers. The expansion and mobility of the seal engraver community led to the convergence and collision of styles. All these have contributed to the situation that modern and contemporary seal cutting art presents rich connotation, diversified personality and purport and interest of lyrical freehand brushwork while showing classical consciousness of industrial rigor.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Case description

The "2019 Seal Culture Salon" of Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop is a cultural and creative service product innovatively designed and developed by digging deeply into the cultural value of Chinese traditional seal with the core of Chinese traditional seal culture. The orientation of the product is for the urban literary youth, which breaks the mentality of orientation only to seal cutting enthusiast of most enterprises in the industry, so as to let Chinese traditional Indian culture blend with the time and life. Each salon session is divided into three sections, namely seal cutting experience, rubbing experience and creative experience. *Mystery in One character, the Beauty of Han Seals, A World of Totem, A Breath of Fresh Air Yielding Radiant Splendor* and other series of core experience

products allow participants to have a preliminary understanding of the art of seal cutting and learn basic skills of seal cutting and facsimile. In these processes, relevant cultural elements have been fully integrated, such as the Yi-ology, Han costume, and Chinese zodiac... reflecting the diversified cultural value of seal cutting art. Since it was put into the market in February 2019, it has carried out 36 salon sessions with more than 400 participants and achieved good results and responses.

B. Research methods and processes

In this study, analytic hierarchy process (AHP) and fuzzy matrix analysis were used to evaluate the cultural value of the 2019 Cultural Salon in Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop, and yaahp software was used for data processing. Yaahp is an analytic hierarchy process (AHP) auxiliary software, providing model construction, calculation and analysis assistance for the decision-making process using AHP. Yaahp software also provides a fuzzy comprehensive evaluation method (FCE) support, and is highly integrated with existing analytic hierarchy process (AHP) function. With yaahp software, the analytic hierarchy process (AHP), fuzzy comprehensive evaluation method and multi-criteria decision analysis task combining AHP and fuzzy comprehensive evaluation method can be easily completed. Yaahp has been widely used in the assessment and appraisal of many industries.

As for the selection of indicators, based on the above exploratory analysis of the value system of traditional Chinese seal culture, and combined with the research results of He Qi and Gao Changchun (2013) [13], this study constructed the evaluation index system of cultural value, including the target layer, the evaluation criterion layer and the evaluation system containing 14 factor index layers. ("Table I")

TABLE I. PRODUCT CULTURAL VALUE EVALUATION SYSTEM OF YOUNING HALL CULTURAL AND CREATIVE WORKSHOP

Target layer A	Criterion layer B	Index layer C
<i>A Value of cultural products</i>	B1 Original value	C1 Originality of theme creation
		C2 Originality of technique
		C3 Originality of form
	B2 Aesthetic value	C4 Aesthetic image
		C5 Audiovisual effect
		C6 Expressive force
	B3 Artistic value	C7 Artistic vision
		C8 Craftsmanship
		C9 Deep expression
	B4 Influence of cultural brand	C10 Popularity and influence of the creators
		C11 Popularity and influence of product brand
	B5 Cultural awareness	C12 Cultural source
		C13 Chang and deduction
		C14 Cultural transmission power

The hierarchical structure model can be constructed after inputting the text of the indicator system to yaahp (see "Fig. 1").

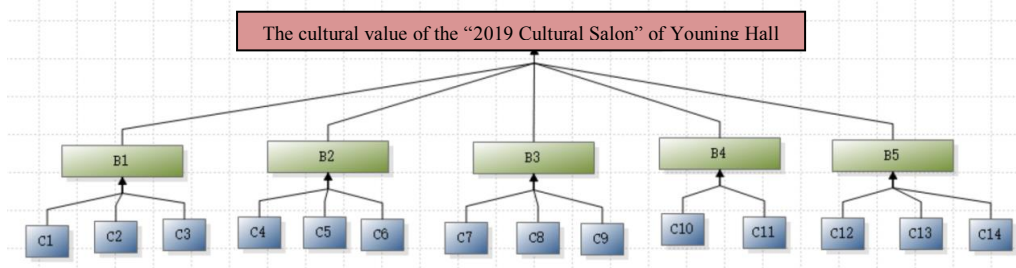


Fig. 1. Hierarchical structure model of cultural value evaluation of the products of Youning Hall.

After the model test is passed, the AHP questionnaire is generated. Then, 12 experts were selected to fill in the questionnaire. These experts are in creative and cultural institutions, seal cutting arts, government departments and academic institutions of universities, having rich working experience and knowledge in related fields. By summarizing the experts' scores for each indicator, relevant data were sorted out. Based on the software test results, the scores of each expert passed the consistency test. Finally, the judgment matrix and group decision judgment matrix of five experts are constructed respectively, and the parameters of the importance of each factor in criterion layer B and indicator layer C are obtained (see "Table II").

TABLE II. GROUP DECISION MATRIX

A	B1	B4	B5	Wi
B1	1.0000	7.0000	6.0000	0.5771
B2	0.1250	0.5000	0.2500	0.0619
B3	0.1111	0.3333	0.1667	0.0395
B4	0.1429	1.0000	0.2000	0.0926
B5	0.1667	5.0000	1.0000	0.2289

In the evaluation criteria layer, the weight distribution of the four parts is artistic value (0.2353) > cultural brand influence (0.2265) > original value (0.222) > cultural awareness (0.1651) > aesthetic value (0.1508). The weights of evaluation results of the criterion layer and the indicator layer are shown in "Table III".

TABLE III. THE EVALUATION RESULT WEIGHTS OF CRITERION LAYER AND INDICATOR LAYER

Criterion layer	Weight	Sort	Index factor	Weight	Sort
B1	0.2222	3	C1	0.122	3
			C2	0.0497	9
			C3	0.0505	8
B2	0.1508	5	C4	0.0417	11
			C5	0.0264	14
			C6	0.0827	4
B3	0.2353	1	C7	0.037	12
			C8	0.1372	2
			C9	0.0612	7
B4	0.2265	2	C10	0.1807	1
			C11	0.0458	10
B5	0.1651	4	C12	0.0327	13
			C13	0.0637	6
			C14	0.0687	5

On the first layer are the popularity and influence of the creators (0.1807), craftsmanship (0.1372) and originality of theme creation (0.122); on the second layer are the expressive force (0.0827), cultural transmission power (0.0687), change and deduction (0.0637), and deep expression (0.0612), etc.; on the third layer are originality of form (0.0505), originality of technique (0.0497), popularity and influence of product brand (0.0458) and aesthetic image (0.0417), etc.; and the fourth layer are the artistic vision (0.037), culture source (0.0327) and audiovisual effect (0.0264), etc.

In order to intuitively analyze consumers' evaluation of product cultural value, this study constructed a Fuzzy Comprehensive Evaluation (FCE) evaluation table, with the evaluation rating of each indicator divided into 1-10 levels. Furthermore, 160 consumers who had participated in the "2019 Seal Culture Salon" of the Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop were interviewed and they scored on the evaluation indicators. The research team sorted out the questionnaire data and calculated the cultural and creative products' scores in the cultural value evaluation system through the software (see "Table IV").

TABLE IV. CONSUMER EVALUATION FORM OF THE CULTURAL VALUE OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SEAL PRODUCTS PRODUCED BY YOUNING HALL

Target layer	Score	Criterion layer	Score	Index level	Score
A	7.57	B1	9.1	C1	9.6
				C2	8.6
				C3	8.4
		B2	8.1	C4	8
				C5	9.4
				C6	7.8
		B3	7.2	C7	7.8
				C8	7
				C9	7.2
		B4	5.4	C10	5.2
				C11	6.2
		B5	8.5	C12	8.2
				C13	8.4
				C14	8.8

Seal Culture Salon of Youning Hall: After the evaluation of experts and consumers, the cultural value evaluation of the Seal Culture Salon of Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop is 7.57. In the criterion layer, experts and consumers believe that the cultural value evaluation of the Seal Culture Salon of Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop has high original value (9.1) and high cultural awareness (8.5). As the cultural and creative studio of Youning Hall Cultural and Creative Workshop is a newly established brand, its cultural brand influence is relatively weak, which affects the overall cultural evaluation of the service products. From the analysis of the score of the index layer, the originality of theme creativity (9.6), aesthetic image (9.4) and audio-visual effect (8.8) ranked the top three, respectively. The last three are artistic skills (7), popularity and influence of product brand (6.2), and popularity and influence of the creators (5.2).

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Chinese traditional seal culture has rich cultural and creative value. From the perspective of the overall product, the symbolic value, historical value and aesthetic value of the product can be deeply explored, that is, in addition to the development of material products, more attention should be paid to the form of non-material products. As mentioned above, the credit displaying function is the most essential feature of the seal culture function. The creative product development based on the credit displaying function of the seal is separated from its function of displaying credit. Therefore, it will be a selection of future business practices to dig deeply to the facing slip, marking, admiration, seeking for good fortune and other derived levels of products, and refining the product development direction combining of the meaning of displaying credit and the role as living objects with the help of modern science and technology measures. In addition, the above research also shows that in the development of Chinese traditional seal cultural creative products, it is necessary to attach great importance to the artistry of cultural resources. The artistry of Chinese

traditional seals is reflected in its variety of aesthetics, so both physical products and service products should be based on its three-dimensional variety aesthetic system of seal culture. This also verifies the early view of "variety culture of seal" in the academic circle from another aspect. [2]

Based on the above analysis, this study holds that for cultural and creative products, whether physical products or intangible products, originality is always the focus that consumers pay most attention to. Without innovation, convergent products will lose competitiveness in terms of product creativity. In addition, enterprises should not only focus on the design and planning, but also pay close attention to selection and use of cultural marketing strategy and improve product popularity from the perspective of integrated marketing brand communication. Cultural entrepreneurs can also improve their influence through various channels, which is of positive significance to the overall cultural value evaluation of products.

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