

# The Aesthetic Perspective and Evolution of Ancient Seals from the Perspective of Communication Studies

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## ABSTRACT

Since the Song and Yuan Dynasties, the activities of appreciating and collecting ancient seals have spurred a wave of compiling collections of ancient seals in the middle and late Ming dynasties to a large extent. Seal cutting masters developed a strong interest in learning ancient seals, and proposed the idea of "esteeming the seal of Qin and Han Dynasties". From the aesthetic perspective of ancient seals, the "three-dimensional lines" capped on the sealing mud of ancient seals were taken as the aesthetic basis from the pre-Qin to the Wei and Jin Dynasties; In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the two-dimensional "plane lines" presented on the paper were compiled into a collection of ancient seal manuscripts for appreciation; Contemporary ancient seal exhibitions or publications are displayed in an all-round way through a variety of perspectives such as three-dimensional seal buttons, seal surfaces, seal inscriptions and sealing mud. From the perspective of communication, there are some differences in the aesthetic of ancient seal between ancient and contemporary. Through sorting out aesthetic perspectives and concept evolution of ancient seal in previous dynasties, this paper discusses the aesthetic differences and relations of ancient seal in different periods.

**Keywords:** *Communication study, Ancient seal aesthetics, Supression and mud, Inscription and printing.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the Qin and Han Dynasties, the ancients' aesthetic basis for the seal was based on the effect after the seal was pressed, that is, the visual effect of raised three-dimensional "red inscription" formed with the sealing mud. The process presented by the "lines" of red inscription was directly related to the aesthetics of the craftsman when making the seal, and also related to the user's aesthetic way of the seal itself. Since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, seal masters have been keen on the collection of ancient seals and the compilation of ancient seal manuscripts. There have been certain changes in the aesthetic perspective of ancient seals, which are mainly reflected in three aspects. First, since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the red "sealing inscription" of ancient seals was presented on paper with vermilion sealing mud and then

compiled into seal manuscripts, which was a two-dimensional aesthetic ("Figure 1"); Second, the red "seal inscription" was printed on the jujube pear wood and then printed with chromatic technology, which is also a two-dimensional aesthetic ("Figure 2"); Third, since the reform and opening up, with the archaeological excavation, a large number of ancient seals have been unearthed, and the advanced photography and printing technology have been continuously innovated. Museum exhibitions and publications show the seal buttons, seal surfaces, seal inscriptions, sealing mud of the newly unearthed ancient seals together to form a comprehensive three-dimensional aesthetics ("Figure 3" and "Figure 4"). From the above three aesthetic perspectives, both the aesthetic perspective of the ancients when making seals in the Qin and Han Dynasties and the aesthetic way since the Ming and Qing Dynasties exist with the development of time and space, and affect people's aesthetics and cognition, including misreading

\*Project: 2021 General Project of Humanities and Social Science Research of the Ministry of Education (21YJA760024)

formed in some cognitive aspects. In the researcher's opinions, it is mainly divided into several aspects for specific analysis and discussion on the changes of aesthetic perspective and concepts of ancient seals.

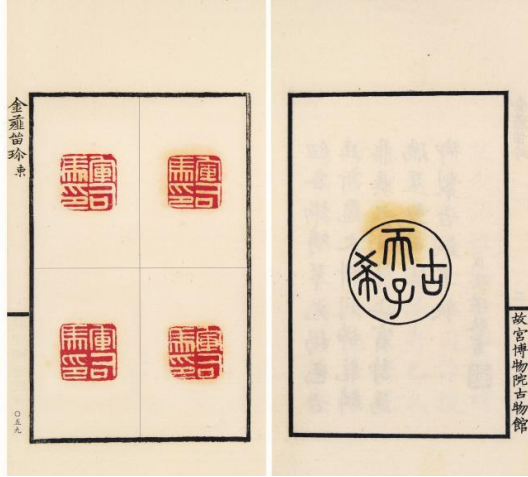


Figure 1 Jin Xie Liu Zhen, Xiling Seal Engraver's Society Publishing House.



Figure 2 (Ming Dynasty) Collection of Ancient Seals (woodcut edition), Xiling Seal Engraver's Society Publishing House.



Figure 3 "Mutual affinity: Exhibition of Chinese Seal Culture", Han Tianheng Art Museum, Shanghai.

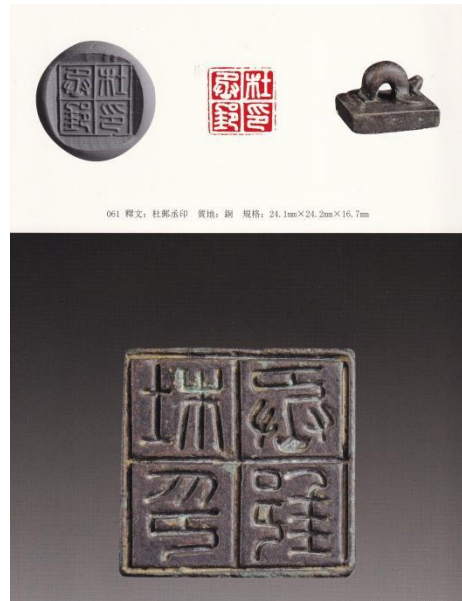


Figure 4 Selection of Newly-acquired Ancient Seals, Henan Fine Arts Publishing House.

## 2. THE AESTHETIC AND PERFORMANCE OF ANCIENT SEALS IN THE PERIOD FROM PRE-QIN DYNASTY TO SUI AND TANG DYNASTY

Before the Qin unified the six states, the seal inscriptions of the Warring States period were generally divided into characters cut in relief and characters cut in intaglio. So far, people can see only a few sealing muds of the Warring States period, but more seal inscriptions of the newly unearthed pottery in different regions of the Warring States period, which is called "pottery inscription" in the academic circle. There are raised characters and concave characters on the pottery, which are three-dimensional seal inscriptions formed after the ancient seals pressed on the pottery or brick. The seal in this period is a kind of practical utensil, and its final aesthetics needs to be sealed for reading. For example, the branded horse stamp, the seal inscription on the cover of bricks, tiles and pottery are all the aesthetic effects of the seal. If the branded horse stamp belongs to characters cut in intaglio, it may not be able to brand the text on the horse very clearly. However, the characters cut in relief will make the branded text clear at a glance, and it is true for the seal inscription on the pottery. Therefore, from a practical point of view, some prints need to be displayed with characters cut in relief, while others need to be displayed with characters cut in intaglio, and the purpose is to enable the viewer to identify the text clearly, which is a practical aesthetic.

After the Qin unified the six states, the seals were standardized and unified by adding boundaries such as the shapes of "田" and "日", and most of these seals were presented with characters cut in intaglio. The raised characters on the sealing mud were especially convenient for the viewer to identify the seal content, which was also used as the specification and standard for official seals. In recent years, a large number of sealing mud of Qin Dynasty unearthed in Liucunbao, Xiangjiaxiang and other places in Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province basically used characters cut in relief, and the text content was sealed by the official seal. Therefore, during this period, the basic functions of the seal were manifested in three aspects. First, in terms of the official seal, the seal was a symbol of power. It was uniformly made, distributed, recovered and destroyed by the official. Its main purpose was to seal and inspect official documents and letters. For example, "Cang Lv" in "Shuihudi Qin Bamboo

Slips" of the Qin Dynasty contained: "The county official and the township supervisor sealed it together, and gave the warehouse assistant one door respectively to distribute food. They can seal it alone, and then leave the warehouse. When there is no surplus in the warehouse, they can open another warehouse door for them." [1] According to this sentence, it can be seen that the sealing and inspection system and supervision mechanism of the Qin Dynasty are relatively perfect; second, in terms of private seals, although they did not have the strict management and use system as that of official seals, they could still be used as personal goods to identity certificate. The number of private seals of the Qin Dynasty people can see today accounts for a large part of the unearthed seals in Qin Dynasty, and the private seals also show superb carving technology of people in Qin Dynasty; third, in terms of proverbs and auspicious language, these seals can generally be worn together with private seals in life. Because the seal contents basically include the language of praying for blessings and self-cultivation, seals with proverbs and auspicious language can also be buried as sacrificial objects. Therefore, whether it is official seal, private seal, proverb or auspicious seal, it must take the sealing effect as the medium. In this paper, the author emphasizes the function and aesthetic way of seal. Many modern and contemporary history books describe the unification of the six states, characters and weights and measures in the Qin Dynasty. In fact, seal was also one of the main contents of unification, and seal was an indispensable part of the promulgation of rights and decrees. Therefore, the emergence of such a unified paradigm in the Qin Dynasty was typical and representative, and affected the use and continuation of seals and inscriptions in the Han, Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties.

Wang Guowei once said in postscript to "the elucidation of red ink paste used for seals": "the ancient seal pressed on the sealing mud, and there was no such thing as inkpad today. The use of sealing mud is similar to that of bamboo slips. When bamboo slips are discarded, the sealing mud is also discarded. However, the waste of sealing mud is the beginning of this mud, which is different. By the time of Zhou and Qin Dynasties, silk had been used as well as that of bamboo slips. If it is printed on silk, it cannot be used without today's inkpad "[2]. Wang Guowei talked about the relationship between seal and sealing mud from the practical aspect, and clearly explained the relationship between sealing mud and bamboo

slips. If bamboo slips are not used, the sealing mud will be abolished. This could arouse another question, that is, how does the aesthetic way change and continue after the abolition of sealing mud? Just as Wang Guowei said, it is the beginning of the use of "today's inkpad", and then the seal has gradually changed from white to red.

After the Han Dynasty, the use of paper gradually became popular. If the white seal is dipped into the sealing mud on silk and paper, it is inevitable that there will be an uneven seal surface or the covered object without the seal, resulting in the fuzzy state of the words on the seal surface, which is far less obvious and clear than the effect of seal with red inscription. According to Huang Binhong in the book "Seal inscription: the era of miscellaneous seals in the Tang and Song Dynasties and the Six Dynasties", "since the Northern and Southern Dynasties, red inscriptions and miscellaneous seal characters have been used, which are as thin as hair. Although they advocate refinement, roundness, strength and charm, they are specific to the times, the ancient methods are gradually abolished." [3] Therefore, some seals after Wei and Jin Dynasties gradually changed from white seal to red seal for this reason, which was also the transformation and continuation of aesthetic style of red inscriptions. The most representative is a gold seal of "Empress Dowager's seal of Tianyuan in the Northern Zhou Dynasty", which is collected in the cultural relics protection center of Weicheng District, Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province (see "Figure 5"). Gao Jihou of the Qing Dynasty said in "Seal" that "the seal inscriptions in Han Dynasty are characters cut in intaglio, the seal inscriptions in Tang Dynasty are characters cut in relief, and the seal inscriptions follow that of Han Dynasty." [4] Han Tianheng also believes that "after the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the paper replaced bamboo and bamboo slips, and the use methods and means of public and private seals have undergone revolutionary changes." [5] Therefore, in a sense, it is a historical necessity to present seals with red inscriptions after Wei and Jin Dynasties. Until to the Tang Dynasty, almost all official seals were presented with curl and red inscriptions, and they needed to be dipped in inkpad and sealed on paper, which should be the main factor for the transformation of aesthetic vision. From the pre-Qin Dynasty to the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the seals were basically portable due to their small volume and weight, while the size and weight of the seals in the Tang Dynasty increased significantly, and many seals were basically official

seals, that is, except for the military seals, the seals generally did not need to be portable, but were placed in the official residence, which also affected the use of seals after the Tang Dynasty. Judging from some vermilion seals of Tang Dynasty currently collected in major Chinese museums, the production method is basically welding technology, and it is extremely fine, especially the printing background is very deep (as shown in "Figure 6"). This technology affected the official seals after the Yuan Dynasty to a certain extent.



Figure 5 Empress dowager's seal of Tianyuan of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, collected by cultural relics protection center in Weicheng district, Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province.



Figure 6 Seal of Jinshan County, Tang Dynasty, collected by Zhejiang Provincial Museum.

It is worth noting that since the Ming Dynasty, many seals of the literati are not made of metal, a large number of seals with red inscriptions are carved with the same surface effect as that of the Tang Dynasty. The seal background is flat and



deep. The most representative is the "depth of 72 peaks" ("Figure 7") carved by Wen Peng, "playing the lyre, leaning on the pine and playing with the crane" ("Figure 8"), the "seal of Qinggang" used by Zhu Bao ("Figure 9"). In addition, the "Ding Chou Jin Shi" ("Figure 10") engraved by Zhou Jing is a seal with white inscription, and the groove of the words is similar to that of the ancient cast seal. Although the materials of these four seals are ivory and Qingtian stone respectively, each seal background is deeply engraved, the lines are vertical and the bottom is very flat. It has to be reminiscent that these seals are obviously influenced by the bottom of official seals since the Tang Dynasty.

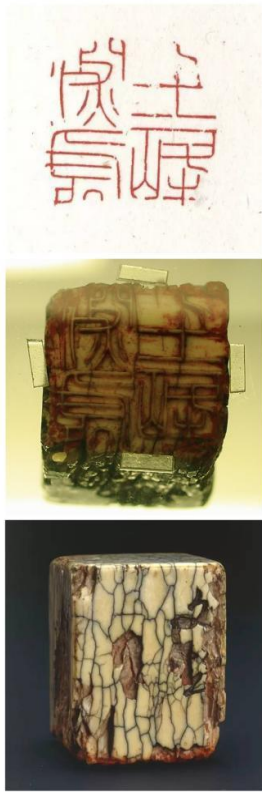


Figure 7 Wen Peng, "the depths of 72 peaks", collected by Shanghai Museum.



Figure 8 Wen Peng, "playing the lyre, leaning on the pine and playing with the crane", collected by Xiling Seal Engraver's Society Publishing House.



Figure 9 Zhu Bao, "the seal of Qinggang", collected by Shanghai Museum.

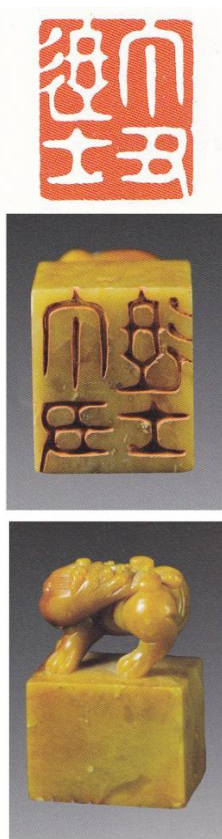


Figure 10 Zhou Jing, "Ding Chou Jin Shi", collected by Shanghai Museum.

### 3. THE AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVE OF APPRAISING AND COLLECTING ANCIENT SEALS AND COMPILING OF SEAL INSCRIPTIONS IN MING AND QING DYNASTIES

From the publication of Gu Congde's Gu collection of ancient seals in the Ming Dynasty to the continuous reproduction and reprinting of "Yin Sou" three years later, it can be explained that the collection of ancient seals in the middle and late dynasties experienced an unprecedented development climax in terms of types and the number of compiled seals, which became a special period of preparation and gradual maturity of seals. Since the Qing Dynasty, the collection of ancient seals has continued the way of compilation. In the process of dissemination, it is no longer a simple collection and exchange. To a greater extent, it is favored as a seal material for seal masters to learn. It is precisely because of the dissemination of these seals that the seal cutting of the Ming and Qing Dynasties has become the second peak in the

history of Chinese seal. Under the influence of epigraphy, collectors and seal masters have always respected the concept of preserving epigraphy and studying philology, and "collect old seals and copy them into genealogy". [6]. The seal genealogy has been greatly developed to a certain extent. Most scholars also draw lessons from the theories and methods of painting and calligraphy, so as to bring the theory of "printing" into people's vision. Therefore, many scholars have participated in the compilation of the seal inscriptions, and wrote a large number of preface and postscript in the seal inscriptions. Moreover, in the process of the generation and dissemination of the seal inscriptions, there have been some works of seal theory, gradually forming a relatively complete seal system info. As for the aesthetic perspective and mode of ancient seal since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, it is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

First is the seal inscription directly sealed by the ancient seal. These seal inscriptions basically refer to inscriptions sealed by ancient seal with sealing mud. Due to the small number of seal inscriptions, collectors generally do not choose block printing and distribution. The ancient seal inscriptions are represented by "Gu's collection of ancient seal inscriptions", "Yang's collection of ancient seal inscriptions", "Fan's collection of ancient seal inscriptions", "Baoyinzhai's collection of seals" and "Songtange's collection of seal history". The arrangement of this kind of seal inscriptions is divided into two styles. One is to design the format such as the square in advance, and then print the seal inscription with the grid. For this kind of seal inscription, it is required to dip the ancient seal into the sealing mud, press the seal inscription into the grid, and then bind it into a volume. For example, the Gu's collection of ancient seal inscriptions of the Ming Dynasty is consist of the seal inscriptions, and there are only 20 copies, so the seal inscription is particularly precious. In "Gu's Yin Sou citation", he said: "I have collected thousands of ancient seals and printed them on paper with ink" [7]. However, due to the high demand of the public, many printed copies such as Yin Sou" printed on wood have appeared one after another in the same period to supplement the number of copies issued, resulting in a disaster of counterfeits to a certain extent. The other is directly sealed on the blank paper and bound into a volume. For example, Chen Jieqi's shizhongshan seal" is completely sealed on the blank paper with ancient seals. This seal inscription

is basically made by the collectors themselves, and generally would not circulate in the world.

Secondly, there are all kinds of ancient seal manuscripts printed on jujube wood since the Ming Dynasty. These seal manuscripts were very popular during the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty. Moreover, the seals on these jujube wood versions will be copied from each other. Therefore, it is difficult to make the distinction. The arrangement of many seals in the seal manuscripts has affected that in the Qing Dynasty. Shen Ye's "Seals" of the Ming Dynasty said: "All the seals sold on the market are made of wood. Although the rules of composition and characters exist, there is no artistry of wielding the knife." [8] From the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty to the Xianfeng Period of the Qing Dynasty, there were hundreds of types of seal inscriptions in the world, but most of them had one thing in common, that is, the collection of many seals overlapped, and the patterns of engraved seals were different, and some were even continuously engraved with printed versions of jujube pear wood. In fact, this kind of engraving is much more distorted than the original plate engraved on the basis of the ancient seal on the jujube board. The ancient seal originally lost its due style. Later, it was engraved again on the basis of the jujube board, forming a serious effect of erroneous information. Therefore, the seals engraved by some people in the Ming Dynasty people can see today have dull seal writing and slightly mechanical engraving effect. They should be affected by reproducing the engraved version. Guo Zu'nian published an article "Fenggu Yuyin" in "Haiyue Xuekan" in 1944, "there are many seal inscriptions, and it is difficult to know all of them. Those who collected the seals of the Zhou, Qin and Han Dynasties can't make the distinction, that is, they had the similarity. Genuine goods are precious, and fake ones can't be made by people today. The appraisers can make the distinction and collectors would invest in them. They would search for broken gold tablets, copper and iron seals with only one or two words. These tablets are integrated. And then, it is required to clean up with a knife, apply paste and bury it. After time goes by, this seal is known as a "newly unearthed object" [9]. Therefore, in the process of dissemination, the advantages and disadvantages of the seal inscription directly affect the seal craftsman's cognition and learning of the ancient seal.

Third, since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, many seals have been reproduced several times, losing the original denudation effect of ancient

seals. In addition, with the dull style of wood engraving, the gold and stone lost its original style. As a result, the seal craftsmen in the Ming Dynasty learned the rigid style of the seals after learning the reproduced version. This influence lasted until the early Qing Dynasty. By the middle of the Qing Dynasty, few seal craftsmen in the Qing Dynasty had learned some seal manuscripts that were reproduced and printed. They also abandoned learning from the seal cutting works of the seal craftsmen since the Ming Dynasty and chose to directly learn from the real ancient seal. Therefore, they put forward the idea of "real ancient seals in the Qin and Han Dynasties", and there were a variety of schools of seal craftsmen and seals under the influence of this concept. Many seal craftsmen put forward the new ideas of "seal from books" and "seeking seals". Under the influence of this idea, it promoted the continuous pursuit and exploration of seal craftsmen, making seal cutting in the Ming and Qing Dynasties become the second peak in the development history of Chinese seals. And this concept of continuous exploration has affected the development of contemporary seal cutting concept since the late Qing Dynasty. The school seal appeared in the middle of the Qing Dynasty was based on a reflection on the seal style since the Ming Dynasty. It was precisely because of the rigidity of the seal in the Ming Dynasty that the school seal craftsmen in the Qing Dynasty directly learned the ancient seal and integrated many elements other than the seal into the seal cutting art. Such development was closely related to the concept of "seeking seal outside the seals" advocated by them. If craftsmen continue to take the ancient seal inscriptions since the Ming dynasty or the seal cutting works of the people in the Ming Dynasty as the model, it is impossible to extend such rich and colorful school seals. Objectively speaking, the collection of ancient seals in woodblock copying has played a certain positive effect in the dissemination. With the popularization of the knowledge of seals, people can understand ancient seals. However, from the aesthetic perspective, it has played a certain misleading role in the development of seal cutting art in the Ming Dynasty. Therefore, the choice of "seeking seals outside seals" by the school seal craftsmen in the Qing Dynasty is a historical necessity.

#### 4. THE DIFFERENCE AND PERFORMANCE OF AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES IN ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES

Sealing mud is a way to recognize ancient seals, and seal inscription is another way to recognize ancient seals. The former is from the aesthetic perspective of the ancients, and the latter is from the aesthetic perspective of the seal craftsmen in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. If human beings want to understand the differences and manifestations of ancient and modern aesthetic perspectives, it is necessary to be in the background of the times. In this way, people can understand how the ancients in different periods view the different aesthetic and mutual relationship between sealing mud and seal inscriptions. Huang Binhong mentioned in his article "difference in shapes of different dynasties" in "introduction to ancient seals": "there are three generations of characters in the low-lying area of Xiao-shaped seal. It is very rare and difficult to copy." [10] Huang Binhong said that the low-lying part of Xiao-shaped seal is the groove of the sealing surface, and the words or patterns presented in the groove refer to another aesthetic perspective. Viewing many Xiao-shaped seals, the concave part of the seal surface itself has characters or decorative patterns. For example, in "Figure 11", there are many small line patterns on the characters in the seal groove. If people want to see the full picture of the patterns and lines of the seal, it is necessary to press the seal on the sealing mud, and then, the overall pattern can be seen more clearly. However, from the sealing inscription on the paper with the sealing mud, many patterns can hardly be seen, only large gaps can be seen, and the pattern to be reflected by the Xiao-shaped seal can not be reflected at all.

In addition to Xiao-shaped seals, many ancient seals in the Qin and Han dynasties had same situation in the aesthetics of characters, that is, the lines of characters stamped on the sealing mud by the ancients were in line with their aesthetics at that time. There are patterns or strokes at the grooves among some seal characters. If it pressed on the sealing mud, the patterns and strokes in the groove can be displayed. If it is dipped in the seal paste and pressed on the paper, it is a small blank, which can not reflect another aesthetic effect of the seal ("Figure 12") ("Figure 13") ("Figure 14"). The author compares and sorts out some ancient seals unearthed in recent years and finds that there are decorative patterns or strokes in the grooves of the

sealing surface of some ancient seals. From the sealing mud covered by the seal, these strokes are particularly rich. This aesthetic style enriches the overall artistic effect of the seal ("Figure 15"). There are strokes or ornaments in the grooves of the sealing surface. For example, the "山" under the word "丞" is obviously decorated with twills, and the "巳" of the other three words also has strokes and ornaments. However, the red seal inscription on the paper dipped in the sealing mud seal often shows a two-dimensional plane style, appearing a large blank and leaving blank in aesthetics. Nowadays, many books often show all the buttons, surfaces, sealing mud and inepad, so that people have a new three-dimensional artistic aesthetics of seals.



Figure 11 Xiao-shaped, "Seals in prosperous times" (Art and Culture Academy).





Figure 12 Du Youcheng of Qin Dynasty, Selection of Newly-acquired Ancient Seals, Henan Fine Arts Publishing House.

Figure 14 Han·Fan Han, "Selected ancient seals in luquanxuan collection".



Figure 13 Du Youcheng of Qin Dynasty, Selection of Newly-acquired Ancient Seals, Henan Fine Arts Publishing House.



Figure 15 Words with patterns in the seal surface selected by the author.

The figures are selected from "Seals in prosperous times", "Selection of Newly-acquired Ancient Seals", and "Selected ancient seals in luquanxuan collection".

From the Qin and Han Dynasties to the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the aesthetic perspectives of ancient seal were seal and sealing mud. Since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the aesthetic perspectives of ancient seal were the methods of pressing on paper with sealing mud. With these two aesthetic perspectives, there are different aesthetic feelings and textures, that is, the difference between three-dimensional and two-dimensional. In addition, since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, many seal craftsmen have seen rusty ancient seals, pressed them on rice paper with sealing mud, so that there are some uneven white spots or white lines in the effect. This effect is that the rust spots on the sealing surface are uneven and the sealing surface does not fully contact the paper, which can reflect the mottled feeling and vicissitudes of years. Many ancient seals people can see in contemporary times are chiseled and cast. There are obvious copper rolled up or raised after chiseling on both sides of the strokes on the chiseled printing surface. If the chiseled seal pressed on the plasticine, there will not be too much rolled copper that will affect the stroke itself. However, if the seal is dipped in the sealing mud and pressed on the paper, it will show that there is an obvious strip blank on both sides of the main stroke. The cracks on both sides of the rolled copper can not be covered with the sealing

mud, which often creates a lot of hollow-out or broken effect on the visual appearance of the viewer. Many contemporary sealing manuscripts display the sealing surface, buttons, sealing mud, seal inscription and other aspects in an all-round way, which provide a good opportunity for human beings to learn ancient seals. Therefore, this is the difference between the aesthetic perspectives of pressing on seal mud in ancient times and pressing on paper since the Ming and Qing Dynasties. If human beings were in the Qin and Han Dynasties, the natural color of all seals should be a relatively new golden brass color. Although the oxidation will make the seal color black and dark-red after continuous use, there is absolutely no appearance of corrosion. Therefore, this appearance is only suitable for a general aesthetic on a specific sealing mud in a specific period at that time. After the Ming and Qing Dynasties, when people pressed the rusty ancient seal on paper, there were many white spots and fragments on the seal, and this effect was also an aesthetic style or "old effect" that people had been pursuing since the Qing Dynasty.

## 5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, for the aesthetics of ancient seal, people must examine and restore its original performance in the historical context. From the pre-Qin Dynasty to the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the aesthetics of ancient seal was established based on seal and sealing mud. The text reading of seal and

the linear aesthetic feeling of seal were "three-dimensional" aesthetic perspective established by the sealing mud. Since the Song and Yuan Dynasties, the aesthetic of ancient seals has basically been on the seal inscriptions on the paper. This effect has lost the aesthetic effect of three-dimensional space and is a plane and intuitive two-dimensional perspective. In recent years, with the development of archaeological excavation and publishing technology, people have seen a variety of ancient seal display effects. While clarifying its aesthetic perspective in different periods, the misunderstandings of people's aesthetic perspective and cognition since the Ming and Qing Dynasties can be seen more clearly, and then the incomplete understanding of ancient seal since the Ming and Qing Dynasties could be effectively corrected. At the same time, the way of recognizing and learning ancient seals have changed greatly, and become more scientific and systematic with the change of time.

## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

This paper is independently completed by Xin Jin.

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