

## *Original Paper*

# Research on the Commercialization of Shu Brocade

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### **Abstract**

*Shu brocade is an important part of Chinese traditional culture, and it is also the first of the “Four Famous Brocades” in my country. Shu brocade has long been not only a handicraft, but also a symbol of cultural commodities, which has been integrated into literary works throughout the ages, into our daily consumption, and even into the 5,000-year-old Chinese traditional culture. Many handicrafts were eventually abandoned by history because of the complexity of inheritance techniques or because they could not keep up with the trend of the times. However, Shu brocade has been passed down from generation to generation for more than two thousand years, from ancient times to modern times. This is in line with the huge cultural characteristics and Commodity value is inseparable.*

### **Keywords**

*shu Brocade, commoditization, cultural characteristics, value*

## **1. Introduction**

Shu brocade, a specialty of Chengdu, Sichuan Province, is a product of China’s National Geographical Indication. From the Han Dynasty to the Three Kingdoms period, the general name of the special brocade produced in Shu County (now Chengdu, Sichuan).

The artistic features of Shu brocade, Shu brocade is mostly woven with dyed cooked silk threads, with warp threads for flowering, color strips for coloring or color strips for adding flowers, geometric patterns and patterns for matching.

The patterns of Shu brocade draw a wide range of materials, such as myths and legends, historical stories, Zhanxiang inscriptions, landscape figures, flowers, birds and animals, etc., which have been continuously developed and refined for thousands of years, and have a high level of generalization and artistic level. Traditional patterns such as dragon and phoenix patterns, group patterns, flower and bird patterns, curly grass patterns, geometric patterns, pairs of birds and animals, squares, halo pleats, and

brocade groups are still popular among the people.

Shu brocade weaving technology. Shu brocade uses mulberry silk raw material as warp and weft threads. According to the production process and specifications of Shu brocade, through the combination of several processes, the structure of mulberry silk is changed, so that twisted raw silk becomes exquisite, delicate and colorful Shu brocade, this process is generally known as the traditional weaving process of Shu brocade. The main process of Shu brocade consists of four parts: the preparation process of silk weaving, the weaving process of silk weaving, the dyeing process of skeined silk and the patterning process.



**Figure 1. Shu Brocade Replica (Collection of Suzhou Museum)**

The development of Shu brocade has gone through many dynasties. It rose in Qin and Han Dynasties, flourished in Tang and Song Dynasties, and declined in the late Ming Dynasty.

It was restored in the middle and late Qing Dynasty, but it fell into crisis again in modern times. While in Chinese after the founding of the Republic of China, due to the guidance and related policies given by the state, Shu brocade has also been once brilliant.

However, with the development of my country's industrialization process, handlooms have been gradually replaced by modern loom replacement, in today's rapid development of global information technology, people's consumption concept has changed, Various cultural products are becoming more and more abundant, and consumers have more and more choices. Shu brocade has lost the original strong competitiveness has had an impact on the Shu brocade consumer market, which has led to an important factor for the decline and development difficulties of Shu brocade.

## 2. The Cultural Characteristics and Value of Shu Brocade

The patterns and patterns of Shu brocade are an important part of the history and culture of ancient Shu. Shu is the birthplace of Taoism and has been deeply influenced by Taoist culture. "Auspicious meaning" is the traditional thinking of the people of Shu. The implicit meaning reflects the pattern of Shu brocade that "the picture must be intentional, and the meaning must be auspicious". The common themes of its patterns include lions, tigers, deer, elephants, peacocks, bats, mandarin ducks, butterflies, fish, bees, longevity turtles, cloud geese, cranes, peony, lotus, hibiscus, comprehensively deformed treasure-like flowers and symbols of smoothness. The characters of longevity and blessing.

The color of Shu Brocade is influenced by the Taoist "Five Elements" theory, with red, yellow, blue, white and black as the five square colors of Shu Brocade, orange, yellow and purple as secondary colors, red-gray, blue-gray and yellow-gray as complex colors, and the rest are complementary colors. . Ancient Shu people worshiped. The red color of the sun, so people in Shu liked beautiful and bright colors. Through color reconciliation, stains, etc., weaving Shu with folk themes Characteristics and value of brocade In the development process of Shu Brocade, popular culture will have an impact on Shu Brocade. The development of brocade has a huge impact, moreover, Shu Brocade also takes inspiration from traditional colors by absorbing Color skills and textile skills innovate the new style of Shu Brocade. For example: "Pair Tang Dynasty Lianzhu" Chicken pattern brocade" The pattern of this brocade is for chickens, and the color is mainly rice. In warm colors like white, the whole brocade is well done in terms of layering and other aspects. Gives an elegant and generous, harmonious and simple visual effect. Pattern of "Lantern Brocade" The pattern is mainly made of lanterns of different shapes, and orange is the main color of "Lantern Brocade" There will be other tones locally, and these colors can be combined flexibly to create a harmonious whole. The meaning of the image shows people's beautiful vision of national security and prosperity, and a good harvest. Shown in the book. "Yuehua Brocade" is the most representative Shu Brocade of the late Qing Dynasty. "Yuehua Brocade" shows the smudge effect vividly, through the color transition, it gives the weaving surface a strong sense of rhythm and layering, "Crescent Moon" and "Rain Silk" The warp silk color selection subtly shows a very vivid sense of the image, giving people a clear Enjoy able visual experience.

### 2.1 The Origin of the Commercialization of Shu Brocade

Sichuan was called "the State of Shu" in ancient times, and it is also the "country of silkworms". It is the earliest origin of the mulberry silk industry and one of the birthplaces of Chinese silk culture. Among all regions in China, brocade first appeared in Sichuan, which is actually inseparable from its hot and humid climate. Sichuan has a low latitude and is located in a basin, with more precipitation and a hot and humid climate. It belongs to the subtropical monsoon climate zone and has a pleasant climate. It is rich in water resources and the environmental conditions are suitable for the growth of silkworms. The humid climate, fertile soil and sufficient sunshine are very conducive to the growth of silkworm leaves, the food supply of silkworms is sufficient, and the excellent geographical environment makes Chengdu's silk production high. Because, at the same time, dye plants such as safflower and madder

are produced here for the dyeing of silk fabrics, and Sichuan has a splendid culture and rich historical connotation, and its handicrafts and agriculture are more prominent, providing a variety of silk fabrics. Sufficient conditions, so the earliest silk fabrics were bred here. Benefiting from the favorable geographical environment, Chengdu's silk production is relatively high, and the supply resources of Shu brocade are sufficient and high-quality.

The beauty of Shu brocade lies not only in the pattern, but also in the brocade itself.

Professor Appadurai from the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development at New York University professor Appadurai pointed out that "commodification" refers to a process in which the value of things and activities is measured by their exchange value in a trade environment. (Appadurai-1986-P3-63) During the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, or even earlier, with Chengdu as the center, the Shu brocade industry has already begun to flourish. It is also sold overseas through the Silk Road. Chengdu is the starting point of the "Southern Silk Road". Silk fabrics start from Chengdu and pass through Yunnan to Southeast Asia and South Asia. The road". On this road, merchants sold Shu brocade, linen, Qiong bamboo sticks and other goods to Burma, India, and Central Asia, North Africa and Europe. With the opening of the "Northwest Silk Road" since the Qin and Han Dynasties, Shu Brocade was transported to Chang'an, the starting point of the "Silk Road" in the northwest through Shu Road, or directly connected to the "Northwest Silk Road" through Wenguan Road, Diepan Road, etc. Then transfer to the Western Regions, North Africa and European countries. The commercialization path of Shu Brocade for export has been constructed. Shu brocade was not only a commodity in foreign trade at that time, but also a source of military expenditures for troops. The value of Shu brocade established its attribute of becoming a commodity.

### *2.2 The Prosperous Period of Commercialization of Shu Brocade*

In the Tang Dynasty, the country was unified, the economy was prosperous, the form was more open, and the costumes became more and more gorgeous. Datang culture absorbs and accommodates many exotic styles and foreign cultures with an open attitude, absorbs, melts and reconciles, and tends to be integrated.

Artists at that time also liked to express foreign themes, including foreign gods and saints; and absorbed those creative styles and techniques that were different from their own. The pattern art of the Tang Dynasty has reached an unprecedented glorious period, because of its high level, it has the same historical status as the contemporary Tang poetry, calligraphy and painting. Tang poetry, calligraphy and painting. The Tang Dynasty was the most brilliant period of Shu brocade art. This is because the brocade craftsmanship at that time continued to develop on the basis of exchanges between China and the West, and new varieties such as twill warp brocade, plain weave brocade, twill weft brocade and double-sided plain weave brocade were created.

### *2.3 The Decline Period of Shu Brocade Commercialization*

When the two dynasties, the Southern Song Dynasty and the Northern Song Dynasty, alternated, Zhao Gou, the then King of Kang, fled to the south of the Yangtze River in order to avoid the pursuit of the

Jin Dynasty army in the north at that time. Then Hangzhou in the south quickly became the political, cultural and economic center. The weaving industry developed rapidly. The Mongol Empire launched a war to destroy the Southern Song Dynasty. During the 45 years from the demise of the Southern Song Dynasty in 1279, the Mongols launched an unprecedented and fierce aggression in Sichuan. This mighty empire, famous for its massacres and frightening Europe, has captured Chengdu three times. Frequent wars have led to the decline of Shu Brocade, and the silk weaving industry in the Jiangnan region has gradually surpassed the silk weaving industry in Sichuan. Until the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Sichuan area was stricken by war again, and the silk weaving industry was completely destroyed. The silk weaving industry in Sichuan area gradually declined.



**Figure 2. Shu Brocade with Lianzhu Pattern Restored (Now in Horyu Temple, Japan)**

The Arab Empire also experienced regional divisions, scuffles and annexations between the 9th and 13th centuries. In the turbulent situation in Eurasia, the Silk Road was mostly blocked by the Huns, which made the security of the North and South Silk Roads unable to be guaranteed. Instead, the Maritime Silk Road was used. After the Southern Song Dynasty, shipbuilding skills improved at this time, the Maritime Silk Road emerged and gradually replaced the Land Silk Road, the cultural integration hotspots moved from the inland to the coastal areas, the Maritime Silk Road became more and more prosperous, and the Jiangnan area and the southeast coast became China's economically developed areas, foreign trade has grown rapidly. During this period, although the structure of China's overseas trade export commodities changed from silk to porcelain, the demand for silk fabrics continued to increase. With more income, the local silk industry flourished. In addition to its geographical, social and economic advantages, the silk weaving industry in the Jiangnan region has also achieved significant growth at the technical level, replacing the traditional warp weaving technology represented by Shu brocade, which has a thousand-year-old tradition, and the status of Shu brocade in the country has gone into decline.

#### *2.4 Opportunities and Challenges for the Development of Modern Shu Brocade*

With the reform and opening up, the combination of state investment and self-raised funds, and technological transformation, the silk weaving industry has developed rapidly. People's demand for brocade is no longer based on clothing and fabrics that are warm, but can reflect the

historical and cultural heritage of silk art, collections, etc., Shu Brocade is deeply loved by people and has developed rapidly. In 2006, Shu brocade weaving skills were approved by the State Council to be included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage lists. Due to the variety of entertainment and consumption patterns made possible by emerging technologies in modern society, Shu Brocade has little appeal among young people. In souvenir selling points in various scenic spots, fake Shu brocade products are rampant, full of mixed products of Shu brocade and fake Shu brocade products. The Shu brocade products they sell are usually cheaper than authentic Shu brocade products, and they can attract the attention and choice of ordinary tourists. Therefore, the sales of high-cost authentic fabrics of Shu brocade products are impacted, and consumers lack purchases.

Thoughts on the Commercialization of Shu Brocade Traditional Hand Weaving Techniques Shu Brocade handicrafts have profound connotations and meanings. To develop Shu Brocade fabrics, they must first be commercialized. Brand building plays an important role in the inheritance of handicrafts. In the process of inheritance and development of Shu brocade, mining its cultural connotation, enhancing its brand value, and establishing a perfect brand awareness are important measures to effectively expand the market and promote the economic benefits of Shu brocade. The traditional hand-woven products of Shu Brocade cannot be limited to decoration, but need to be used in more practical products.

### **3. Method**

The research method is qualitative and the writing method is descriptive analysis. During this research process, researchers gather information through field trips and literature reviews. First, in the fieldwork, the researchers interviewed some Shu brocade artists, Shu brocade practitioners, and government officials. The content of the interview mainly includes the development of Shu brocade from ancient times to modern times, the impact of social development on Shu brocade, the public's recognition of Shu brocade, on the other hand, based on the collected literature, a comprehensive summary and analysis of the commercial development of Shu brocade is carried out.

#### *3.1 Research Population*

##### *3.1.1 The Non-Genetic Inheritor of Shu Brocade*

Hu Guangjun, the provincial representative inheritor of Shu brocade weaving skills in Sichuan Province, the director of the Shu Brocade Special Committee of the Chengdu Arts and Crafts Industry Association, and the vice chairman of the Chengdu Ancient Shu Brocade Research Institute. Hu Guangjun, 71 years old this year, has been engaged in Shu brocade weaving and pattern weaving for 50 years.

Those engaged in Shu brocade art work

Ye Xiaoqian, from Chengdu Shu Brocade Weaving and Embroidery Co., Ltd. (Shujiang Brocade Institute), as a Shu Brocade worker, is mainly engaged in the weaving work of Shu Brocade.

### 3.1.2 Social Groups Who Appreciate Shu Brocade

Shu brocade paper, journal publisher (Yuanyuan from Sichuan Normal University, Zhuo Yueru from Chengdu University, Jin Ren from Chengdu University, Li Kunyang from Guizhou Normal University, etc.)

### 3.1.3 Shu Brocade Trading Business Group

Huang Ping, the general manager of Sichuan Jindi Clothing Co., Ltd., the founder of the original Shu brocade weaving, is mainly engaged in the production of Shu brocade ready-to-wear clothing and Shu brocade accessories. Committed to the pursuit of the beauty of Shu Brocade, let Shu Brocade go to the whole country and the world.

## 3.2 Instrumentation/Too

### 3.2.1 Record Book for Fieldwork, Drawing, Measurement, etc...

### 3.2.2 Interview Questionnaire

The interview question form is one of the important information gathering tools. According to the research questions formulated in advance, they will be submitted to the interviewees in advance in written form. Respondents will have a clearer understanding of the survey content. If there is something that they don't understand, the surveyor is obliged to provide a targeted explanation so that the respondent can understand the survey question clearly and correctly. Researchers can also ask new questions about the respondent's answers, or consider more in-depth interviews. At the same time, the question-and-answer format allows the participants in the question-and-answer session to maintain communication and flexibility, giving the interviewee enough time to consider the problem. After the interview, you can consider whether you need to organize a more in-depth interview based on the interview process and results. The interview can be conducted with different people or with the same person multiple times. Interviews can be obtained mainly through informal channels (including key person interviews, random interviews with Shu brocade practitioners) and literature search.

Tools for recording audio and video, namely cameras and camcorders.

## 3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Document Collection: Collect the Literature and Data of Shu Brocade Library, Refer to Textbooks, Library Books, Electronic Libraries, Personal Research and Papers and Journals on Shu Brocade Library

### 3.3.2 Field Work

Data collection is mainly concentrated in the Museum of Shu Brocade and Shu Embroidery, other museums, archives and other places that collect Shu Brocade. The collection and creation related exhibitions and collection exhibition records are used as the original data for the development of Shu Brocade, and information is collected on-site from the perspective of Shu Brocade-related participants. Intuitively understand the daily behavior of participants, better understand the subjective thoughts of participants, and understand some objective factors related to the social activities of Shu brocade, and have an in-depth understanding of its connotation and operation mode of Shu brocade.

### 3.3.3 Fieldwork Notebook

The work record can be used as one of the personal data of the researcher. The main content is research goals, research plans, time arrangements, etc. You can also set big goals for different time periods. At the same time, it should also include List, address, contact information, matters needing attention, time arrangement, research

Researchers for funding and other content. Researchers need to view work records determine the time of the work phase and the consideration of different work phases. Finally, work records can be stored in research data as auxiliary data.

## 3.4 Data Analysis

### 3.4.1 Chinese Government Support

With the support of the state, on May 20, 2006, Shu brocade weaving skills were approved by the State Council to be included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage lists. Item No. VIII-16. And provide special funds to inherit and develop Shu Brocade art.

### 3.4.2 Commercial Production and Operation of Shu Brocade

Under the condition of the management of modern Shu brocade and the survival and income of craftsmen, Shu brocade is produced and operated by continuously expanding the consumer group.

3.4.3 China has opened its doors to many countries, and the Shu Brocade handicraft market has further expanded, attracting foreign tourists to buy local products with distinctive culture. Constantly innovating, meeting the market demand of the source country, leading consumption, and deeply loved by foreign tourists.

## 4. Result

As a well-known intangible cultural heritage craftsmanship in Sichuan, Shu brocade is developed and researched as a commodity, and its value existence is discussed from the aspects of history, culture and weaving skills of Shu brocade, and the attractiveness and core competitiveness of Shu brocade as a commodity are analyzed. The unique cultural characteristics and preciousness of Shu brocade fully demonstrate the high value of Shu Brocade. With its unique cultural charm, Shu Brocade has strong artistic and cultural value and commodity value in modern society. Under the relatively backward conditions of ancient technology, people rarely have the flexibility to reconcile and integrate such richly colored textiles. With the development of the times, these folk-themed silk fabrics with harmonious colors and interweaving provide materials for our archaeological research on the social, economic and cultural environment of the past dynasties. Shu Brocade is the most representative work of the Chinese nation and the crystallization of the wisdom of the ancient Chinese people. In contemporary times, the cultural value, economic value and archaeological value of Shu Brocade have been perfectly presented. There are still many deficiencies in the research on the commercialization of Shu brocade in this paper. First, the research on the weaving skills of Shu brocade remains at the theoretical stage, lacking practical experience in production practice. Therefore, the techniques



discussed are more inclined to the theoretical level; the second is the theoretical research. Due to the limitations of my own knowledge and thinking, the in-depth and comprehensive aspects of analyzing problems and proposing countermeasures need to be further improved; finally, the writing ideas and expressions of the article are not rigorous enough, and it will be difficult for future academic research. Needs to be further improved.

## 5. Discussion

The subject of this research, "Research on the Commercialization of Shu Brocade, involves the development history of Shu Brocade in the past three thousand years. This research analyzes the commercialization process of Shu Brocade from the perspective of research text and research ideas. First, in the existing research on Shu Brocade, the researchers' research results Most of them focus on the development process of Shu brocade and the changes of Shu brocade art. They focus on the development of Shu brocade as a work of art, but ignore the research on the connection and commercialization of Shu brocade with Chinese people and Chinese society. But in fact, Shu brocade The development of Shu brocade does not exist independently. The development of Shu brocade is related to the change of social background, the progress of economic foundation and the strength of science and technology to varying degrees. The neglect of the relationship between Shu brocade and Chinese people and Chinese society has led to the existence of related research on Shu brocade. Certain academic limitations.

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