

The Aesthetic Transformation and Value Transmission of Red Genes: A Study on the Construction of an Aesthetic Education Application System for Red Cultural Resources in Liaoning

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Abstract

Liaoning is rich in unique red cultural resources, carrying the profound spiritual genes of China's revolutionary, construction, and reform processes. However, the inheritance of red culture currently faces challenges such as historical gaps, monotonous expression, and dispersed resources, which hinder the effective transmission of its contemporary value. This study proposes using aesthetic transformation as a key pathway, decoding red spirit into aesthetic objects that are perceptible, experiential, and participatory, and establishing a four-dimensional aesthetic education application system of "resources-transformation-practice-evaluation." Through thematic resource integration, four-fold aesthetic transformation strategies, a multidimensional collaborative practice network, and a "four-degree" evaluation mechanism, it aims to shift red culture from historical narration to emotional resonance, and from passive reception to active creation, thereby realizing the internalization of red genes and externalization of behaviors among contemporary populations, especially youth. This system provides a systematic approach for the innovative development and creative transformation of Liaoning's red culture and has a positive significance for enhancing regional cultural soft power and strengthening national cultural confidence.

Keywords

Liaoning Red Culture, Aesthetic Transformation, Value Transmission, Aesthetic Education System, Applied Research

1. Introduction

Liaoning, this land deeply engraved with the red genes of the Republic, bears the indelible spiritual imprints of China's revolutionary and developmental history. From the blood-soaked battles of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army amid the mountains and rivers of the region, to the smoke and fire of the Liaoshen Campaign that decided China's destiny; from the "eldest son of the Republic's industry" rising with a steel backbone from the ruins, to the Lei Feng spirit being nurtured, grown, and carried forward on this fertile land-Liaoning's red cultural lineage, with its richness, representativeness, and continuity, forms a uniquely distinctive Northeast chapter in the spiritual anthology of Chinese Communists.

However, when we try to transform this weighty historical heritage into a source of spiritual nourishment for contemporary people, especially young people, we inevitably face a series of practical difficulties. Currently, red culture education often displays an imbalance in practice, known as the "three many, three few": first, there is a lot of knowledge imparted but little emotional resonance; the educational process often remains at the level of simply recounting historical events and figures, failing to effectively touch the audience's emotions and values. Second, there are many historical narratives but few contemporary interpretations; the connection between the red spirit and the context of the new era, as well as individual life experiences, is weak, leading to insufficient explanation of its contemporary value. Third, there are many single forms but little innovative integration; educational methods are often limited to traditional modes such as lectures, visits, and text-and-image displays, lacking innovative expressions that align with modern aesthetic habits and communication rules. This situation makes it difficult for red cultural resources to truly "come alive" and be "passed down," with the spiritual power they contain facing the risk of being diluted over successive generations.

To break this dilemma, it is urgently necessary to find a new methodological breakthrough. Aesthetic education, with its characteristic of subtly permeating emotions, vivid and expressive forms, and its pursuit of value beyond utilitarian purposes, offers us a unique perspective for problem-solving. Aesthetic education is not merely the teaching of artistic skills, but a process through which emotional cultivation, value guidance, and creativity stimulation are achieved through aesthetic experiences. Incorporating red cultural resources into the scope of aesthetic education means that we no longer view them merely as "history" to be told, but as "aesthetic objects" that can be perceived, experienced, and participated in. Therefore, the core argument of this study is that a systematic aesthetic transformation is a key pivot for activating the vitality of Liaoning's red cultural resources and realizing their value in creative transmission and innovative development. This transformation involves decoding the abstract red spirit into perceptible imagery, participatory scenarios, and resonant narratives through the means of art, emotion, and symbolism, thereby transcending temporal and spatial boundaries and establishing an emotional and value-based connection between historical

spirit and contemporary consciousness.

1.1. Definition of Core Concepts

In addition, to clarify the boundaries of the research and avoid conceptual overlap, this study provides operational definitions for the following key terms. First, red cultural resources. These refer to the preserved red historical heritage in the Liaoning region that can be used for education, exhibition, and research, including both tangible forms such as sites, venues, and artifacts, and intangible forms such as oral histories, images, and documents. They serve as a “materials repository” for aesthetic education practices. Second, red spirit. This refers to the core values embodied in red cultural resources, such as loyalty, responsibility, dedication, and struggle, which are abstract concepts and the spiritual expression of red genes. Third, red genes. These refer to the spiritual codes and behavioral norms that run through a century of red history in Liaoning, characterized by continuity, stability, and transmissibility; they constitute the “structural core” of the red spirit, such as “loyalty and responsibility,” “innovation and practical work,” and “dedication and struggle.” Fourth, aesthetic transformation. This refers to the process of decoding abstract red genes and re-encoding them into perceivable, participatory, and resonant aesthetic objects through artistic creation, emotional narrative, spatial design, digital media, and other means. Essentially, it is a process of creative translation and reproduction of meaning, aiming to achieve a transition from “historical cognition” to “aesthetic experience” and from “spiritual transmission” to “internalization of values.”

1.2. Research Methods

This study adopts a method that combines conceptual framework construction with regional application design, belonging to applied theoretical research. The research process revolves around the core issue of “the aesthetic application of red cultural resources in Liaoning” and follows four steps: “resource sorting-conceptual construction-strategy derivation-feasibility support,” ensuring that the study possesses both theoretical depth and practical orientation.

1.2.1. Aesthetic Selection Based on Red Cultural Resources in Liaoning

This study takes the national and provincial red education bases and cultural relic protection units within Liaoning Province as the basic directory, combined with official documents such as the “Liaoning Province Revolutionary Cultural Relics Directory” and the “Liaoning Province Patriotic Education Bases Directory,” supplemented by field surveys in Benxi, Fushun, Jinzhou, Dandong, Shenyang, Anshan, and other locations. Red cultural resources with typicality, representativeness, and potential for aesthetic transformation were selected. The main types and locations of research investigation are: First, war sites: Jinzhou Liaoshen Campaign Memorial Hall, Benxi Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army Secret Camp Site Group; Second, industrial heritage: Shenyang China Industrial Museum, Ansteel Mengtai Memorial Hall, Fuxin Haizhou Open-Pit Mine; Third, memorial

venues: Fushun Lei Feng Memorial Hall, Dandong Memorial Hall of the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea; Fourth, former residences of historical figures: the military station where Lei Feng served, and the secret camp of Anti-Japanese United Army general Yang Jingyu in Benxi.

1.2.2. Constructing an Aesthetic Transformation Framework from a Multidisciplinary Perspective

Based on a systematic review of literature on red culture research, art education theory, cultural heritage transformation, narratology, and spatial aesthetics, the four pathways of “aesthetic transformation” are distilled: narrative transformation, symbolic transformation, spatial transformation, and subject transformation. This core concept is used to build a four-dimensional interactive system of “resources-transformation-practice-evaluation.” This system emphasizes a closed-loop logic from resource activation to value transmission, highlighting the role of art education as an emotional intermediary and a mechanism for cultural inheritance.

1.2.3. Summarizing Transformation Pathways Based on Liaoning’s Resource Characteristics and Domestic and International Experiences

By classifying the aesthetic characteristics of Liaoning’s red resources, such as heroic epics, ordinary perseverance, the beauty of creation, and regional integration, and combining them with typical examples of red culture transformation at home and abroad—such as the immersive narration at the Normandy Landing Museum in France, the spatial symbolic design of the Jewish Museum in Berlin, and the digital narrative practice at the Yan’an Red Culture Experience Base in China—the four major transformation strategies suitable for Liaoning are summarized. First, narrative transformation, suitable for the Liaoshen Campaign Memorial Museum, develops an immersive reading play titled “A Letter from Home.” Second, symbolic transformation, suitable for the Lei Feng Memorial Museum, extracts the visual symbol of the “screw” to develop a public welfare visual identification system. Third, spatial transformation, suitable for the Benxi Anti-Japanese United Army Secret Camp, creates an immersive hiking experience route called “Retracing the Route of the Anti-Japanese Army.” Fourth, subject transformation, suitable for the Ansteel Mengtai Memorial Museum, organizes intergenerational co-creation workshops titled “Industrial Memories: Family Photo Albums.”

1.2.4. Drawing on Existing Practices to Clarify Subsequent Verification Pathways

Referencing existing digitization projects of red culture, such as the “Red Memory” digital archive, immersive exhibition cases like the “Yan’an Spirit” VR experience, and school-based curriculum development practices, such as Liaoning University of Science and Technology’s “Red Aesthetic Education” general course, these serve as preliminary evidence for the feasibility of the strategy. Subsequent research will rely on pilot schools and red culture venues within Liaoning Province to carry out a “one strategy, one pilot” implementation verification: first, Fushun

Lei Feng Primary School will conduct a “symbol transformation” pilot by developing a school-based course, the “Lei Feng Spirit Visual Identity System”; next, Benxi Anti-Japanese United Forces Historical Exhibition Hall will conduct a “space transformation” pilot by designing an immersive study activity titled “Night in the Secret Camp”; finally, in the Gongren Village community of Tiexi District, Shenyang, a “subject transformation” pilot will be carried out, organizing a digital co-creation project called “Industrial Memory Oral History.”

2. The Aesthetic Characteristics and Practical Challenges of Liaoning’s Red Cultural Resources

The red cultural resources of Liaoning are valuable spiritual assets nurtured and formed within specific historical contexts and geographical environments. These resources not only carry profound historical memories but also contain rich and unique aesthetic qualities, constituting a treasure trove for aesthetic education applications. However, examining their current state of inheritance reveals practical challenges that cannot be ignored. This chapter aims to systematically outline their aesthetic characteristics and directly address the challenges of their contemporary transmission.

2.1. An Overview of Resources on the Four Major Aesthetic Dimensions

In the red cultural lineage of Liaoning, at least four distinct yet intertwined aesthetic dimensions can be identified, which constitute the core source of content for the transformation of aesthetic education.

2.1.1. Heroic Epics and the Spirit of Sacrifice

This beauty is reflected in grand struggles and fearless sacrifices made for national liberation and revolutionary ideals. Its aesthetic core lies in the tragic grandeur and the eternal value that transcends individual life. It is mainly concentrated in Jinzhou and Benxi in Liaoning. One example is the Liaoshen Campaign Memorial Hall and nearby battlefield sites such as the Peishui Reservoir Battle Site and the Heishan Blocking Battle Site, which display the majestic momentum of large-scale troop operations and the strategic wisdom of “closing the gates to strike the enemy.” The spirit carried by the Tashan Blocking Battle Memorial—“consider the overall situation, strictly observe discipline, be willing to sacrifice, and dare to fight and win”—represents the pinnacle of the aesthetic of collectivist nobility. Another example is the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army Historical Exhibition Hall and the many hidden camp sites scattered across the mountains of Liaodong, which recreate the extraordinary hardships faced by soldiers like Yang Jingyu and Zhao Shangzhi in extreme environments, “warming their chests with fire in the cold and feeling the wind chill their backs.” The Dandong Memorial Hall of the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea elevates the lofty spirit of defending the homeland and conducting international combat operations. This kind of beauty, through grand war narratives, harsh living conditions, and the

heroic and tragic outcomes, inspires awe and a sense of mission in the audience.

2.1.2. Extraordinary Dedication in Ordinary Positions

This form of beauty sheds the halo of grand narratives and focuses on the extraordinary value that ordinary workers created in everyday positions during the period of socialist construction. Its aesthetic core lies in persistent simplicity, selflessness, and loyalty. It is mainly concentrated in Fushun and Anshan in Liaoning Province. Firstly, the Fushun Lei Feng Memorial Hall and the military unit where he served while alive are the most classic symbols of the “beauty of dedication.” The metaphor in Lei Feng’s spirit of “a screw that will never rust” perfectly combines personal value with the needs of the nation, embodying greatness in the ordinary. Secondly, the Angang Meng Tai Memorial Hall showcases the spirit of the old hero Meng Tai, who, in the early years of the founding of the country, “picked up” a blast furnace from a heap of scrap metal, representing the “Meng Tai spirit.” The making of steel at Angang is not only an industrial process but also a forging of will and character, symbolizing the dedication of the builders of the republic’s industry who “love their factory like home and work hard through hardships.” This form of beauty is close to everyday life and, through the real stories and simple styles of specific individuals, conveys a lasting and warm spiritual strength.

2.1.3. The Beauty of Creation: Labor Wisdom and the Spirit of Construction

This beauty is reflected in the industrialization process of the Republic, in the practices and achievements of the working class as they conquered nature and created miracles. Its aesthetic core lies in the great power of humanizing nature, the wisdom of collective collaboration, and the bold spirit of “daring to make the sun and moon change the sky.” The main focus is on Shenyang and Fuxin in Liaoning. Firstly, the China Industrial Museum in Shenyang condenses the history of the cradle of “great national machinery,” including the Shenyang Foundry and Machine Tool Factory. Its immense industrial equipment, precise products, and vast factory spaces themselves directly present industrial aesthetics, full of a sense of power, order, and mechanical rhythm. Secondly, the Fuxin Haizhou Open-Pit Mine National Mining Park, as Asia’s first and a world-renowned large-scale open-pit coal mine, features a gigantic man-made pit that is a magnificent spectacle of humanity transforming nature, telling the glorious history of supplying industrial “grain” for the new China during the First Five-Year Plan period.

2.1.4. The Beauty of the Region: The Fusion of Red Heritage Sites and the Charm of Guandong

This beauty is the product of the combination of red historical memory and Liaoning’s unique natural and cultural geography, creating an irreplaceable spatial aesthetic feature. It is mainly concentrated in the cities of Dandong and Benxi. One example is the Yalu River Broken Bridge, which, as a historical witness of the Korean War, together with its ruined structure, the quietly flowing Yalu River, and the North Korean city of Sinuiju across the river, forms a unique riverside land-

scape filled with historical tension and reflections on peace. The second example is the hidden bases of the Anti-Japanese Allied Forces amid the mountains and rivers of Guandong, where the survival and combat tracks of the soldiers have become integrated with the dense forests, canyons, and ice waterfalls of the Changbai Mountain foothills. This “red landscape of mountains and rivers” makes the arduous struggle historically tangible, with concrete and perceptible geographical coordinates and natural ambiance.

2.2. Three Major Challenges in the Application of Aesthetic Education

Although resources are abundant and characteristics are distinctive, there are still structural difficulties in transforming them into effective aesthetic education practices.

2.2.1. Sense of Distance between Historical Context and Contemporary Life

The temporal and spatial distance has led the younger generation to lack firsthand experience of the extreme conditions and value choices during the revolutionary and construction periods. For example, Generation Z has little intuitive understanding of concepts such as “food shortages,” “planned economy,” and “collective supremacy,” making it easy for their comprehension of Meng Tai “picking up scrap iron” and Lei Feng’s “spirit of a single penny” to remain superficial, and difficult to evoke deep emotional resonance and value identification. Historical events have become “someone else’s story” rather than “our tradition.”

2.2.2. Disconnection Between Expression and Contemporary Needs

Many exhibitions in red-themed venues still primarily use displays of artifacts, graphic panels, and sculptural models, with a grand unified narrative perspective that insufficiently portrays individual destinies, human details, and conflicts. The communication discourse system updates slowly and fails to fully utilize contemporary audience-favored approaches such as immersive theatre, interactive digital art, documentary aesthetics, and social media storytelling. For Generation Z, who are accustomed to short videos, gamified interactions, and immersive experiences, rigid narrative modes result in reduced appeal and emotional impact.

2.2.3. Fragmented Distribution and Lack of Systematic Development

Although Liaoning has abundant red resources, they are often scattered across cities in isolated points, lacking systematic linkage and in-depth integration based on aesthetic themes such as “Industrial Creation Journey,” “Anti-Japanese Allied Secret Tour,” or “Hero Cities Pilgrimage.” There is insufficient interaction among resources to form aesthetic education routes or product matrices with complete narrative threads and gradient experience design. This makes aesthetic education activities easily devolve into isolated “check-in” visits, making it difficult to generate sustained, deepened, and multi-dimensional aesthetic experiences and processes of value construction.

3. Theoretical Framework of Aesthetic Transformation of Red Gene

3.1. Gene Decoding and Aesthetic Coding

The key to the contemporary inheritance of red cultural resources lies in the effective transmission of their intrinsic spiritual value. The research aims to construct a theoretical framework with “aesthetic transformation” as the core, and clarify how to decode the abstract red gene into a perceptible aesthetic experience, and finally internalize it into individual value identity and action consciousness.

In the context of Liaoning, the “red gene” is not an abstract slogan, but a consistent and timeless spiritual code and code of conduct that runs through its century-old red history. It mainly changes into the following three levels, the first level is loyalty and responsibility. stepping forward at the time of national crisis, such as the absolute loyalty of the soldiers of the Anti-Japanese Federation who “did not spare their heads and gave their blood to China”; the responsibility of the family and country of industrial workers who “dedicated their youth and life” in the construction era; The second level is innovation and hard work. The wisdom and courage to create the “cradle of New China’s industry” on the basis of “one poor and two white”, such as the “craftsman spirit” of overcoming cutting-edge technology, and the pragmatic style of “doing earth-shattering things and burying celebrities incognito”; The third level is dedication and struggle. From Lei Feng’s simple philosophy of “devoting his limited life to infinite service to the people” to Meng Tai’s arduous struggle to rebuild the blast furnace in the ruins.

Aesthetic transformation is the core mechanism proposed in this study, which refers to the systematic process of decoding the above-mentioned abstract “red genes” through creative means such as art form, emotional experience, and aesthetic design, and then encoding them into aesthetic images and emotional symbols that can be felt, known, and participated in. Its essence is a creative translation and reproduction of meaning. For example, the abstract gene of the “spirit of resistance” is transformed into a series of tangible symbols—the tragic melody in a symphonic poem “Iron-Blooded Heroic Soul”, the tenacious dance posture in a set of dance drama “Unyielding Backbone” set in dense forests and snowfields, and an interactive narrative game that allows players to experience survival and choice in the virtual mountains and forests. At this point, the “spirit” has become an “aesthetic object” that can be captured by the senses, experienced by emotions, and understood by the mind.

3.2. Quadruple Progressive Aesthetic Practice

3.2.1. Narrative Transformation

This is the foundational layer of transformation, aimed at turning historical facts into compelling narratives. The key lies in uncovering humanized, dramatic details and constructing a narrative arc with emotional tension. For example, when the Shenyang “September 18th” Historical Museum displays the history of the

War of Resistance, focusing on an ordinary soldier's letter home or the life story behind a relic of a Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army fighter can have far more emotional impact than simply presenting a timeline. Similarly, when telling the history of Anshan Steel, it's not just about production milestones, but also about stories like how "Old Hero Meng Tai" safeguarded the blast furnace water pipes during the harsh winter and shared his family's rations with coworkers, making the concept of "dedication" tangible and relatable.

3.2.2. Symbolic Transformation

This is the creative layer of transformation, which aims to condense and sublimate the spiritual core into an artistic image or aesthetic symbol with strong visual and auditory impact. For example, in the creation of major theme art, the "beauty of creation" can be transformed into a series of sculptures called "Industrial Movement"—using steel materials and smooth and powerful lines to abstractly express the precision of machine tools, the bite of gears, and the boiling of furnaces. Lei Feng's image can go beyond photos, and through the hands of contemporary illustrators, it is transformed into a series of warm, bright, and modern design "spiritual totems", which are applied to various public welfare visual designs to adapt its symbols to the aesthetics of the new era.

3.2.3. Spatial Transformation

This is the transformational experience layer, aiming to transform static sites and venues into dynamic and immersive aesthetic situations. It uses space, lighting, sound, images and even smells to create an "atmosphere aesthetic" where the body and mind are present. Through "spatial transformation", the Fushun Lei Feng Memorial Hall can design a "dialogue through time and space" situational experience area. Visitors do not walk through the showcase, but step into a restored 60s workshop or dormitory scene, and through AR glasses, they can see the avatar of "Young Lei Feng" working, studying, and writing a diary around them, and can answer visitors' questions about life and ideals through voice interaction. At the battle site of the Liaoshen Battle in Jinzhou, a ten-minute miniature immersive drama was staged at night using sound and light technology combined with ruins and broken walls, allowing the audience to be immersed in the tension and heroism of the battle.

3.2.4. Subject Transformation

This is the sublimation stage of transformation, aimed at guiding the audience from being passive viewers or listeners to becoming active participants, co-creators, and even disseminators. For example, for primary and secondary school students, a digital picture book co-creation workshop titled "The Anti-Japanese Heroes in My Heart" can be organized, where children, after learning about historical facts, create illustrations of heroic stories and add voiceovers, with their works displayed on online platforms. In community aesthetic education, activities such as "Industrial Memories·Family Album" can be organized, inviting the families of

veteran workers to provide old photos and artifacts, which young volunteers help turn into digital stories to be showcased in specific exhibition areas of industrial museums. Such a co-creation process transforms the transmission of red culture from “teach me to learn” into “I tell,” realizing a fundamental shift in the role of the communicator (Yi & Shi, 2025).

3.3. Cognitive Recognition, Identification, and Practice of Aesthetic Internalization

The ultimate goal of aesthetic transformation is the effective transmission and internalization of values. This process naturally achieves a three-stage value leap through aesthetic experience.

3.3.1. Cognitive Stage

Through vivid stories, strong imagery, and immersive scenarios, the first step is to break historical barriers on a perceptual level, capture attention, stimulate curiosity, and form an initial historical understanding and aesthetic perception based on emotions and imagery. For example, through an immersive drama about the Liaoshen Campaign, the audience first experiences an intuitive shock at the cruelty of war and the bravery of soldiers.

3.3.2. Identification Stage

On the basis of emotional resonance, through value conflicts in the narrative, the spiritual symbolism behind imagery, and the emotional engagement triggered by situations, the audience is guided to develop empathetic responses. This process aligns closely with Dewey’s theory of “aesthetic experience,” which emphasizes the unity of emotion and meaning. At the same time, Gadamer’s concept of “fusion of horizons” reminds us that understanding between historical texts and contemporary audiences occurs in the blending of two perspectives. By providing background knowledge and setting up discussion sessions, audiences are encouraged to engage in rational reflection, understanding the historical inevitability and contemporary relevance of the values carried by these emotions, such as loyalty, responsibility, and dedication, thereby achieving a leap from “I know” to “I understand and identify with.”

3.3.3. Practice Stage

When values are internalized in the heart, there will be a search for ways to express them through action. The sense of the sublime, willingness to contribute, or creative enthusiasm sparked by aesthetic experience can guide the transformation into concrete behavioral intentions. This is not only the ultimate goal of aesthetic education but also corresponds to the core mechanism of the “active experimentation” stage in Kolb’s “experiential learning cycle”. In addition, Assmann’s theory of “cultural memory” emphasizes that memory does not only exist in texts and rituals but must also be sustained through participation and reenactment. Co-creation activities themselves are the most direct means of “practical” experience and represent a living transmission of cultural memory in contemporary times.

4. Four-Dimensional System of Liaoning Red Aesthetic Education Application

Based on the previous analysis of the characteristics of Liaoning's red cultural resources and the construction of aesthetic transformation theory, this chapter aims to propose a systematic and operable practical framework—a four-dimensional linkage system of “resource-transformation-practice-evaluation”. The system aims to transform theoretical ideas into concrete actions, forming a complete closed loop from resource activation to effect evaluation of Liaoning's red aesthetic education.

4.1. Construction of Themed and Hierarchical Aesthetic Education Resource Library

The resource layer is the cornerstone of the whole system, and its task is to sort out and reconstruct the genealogy of Liaoning's red culture from the perspective of aesthetic education, and change the “historical resource library” into an “aesthetic material library”.

Breaking the limitations of geography and type, three core theme resource series are established according to aesthetic characteristics and spiritual core. First, focus on sublime beauty. Integrate the war and resistance sites, cultural relics and stories with the Shenyang “September 18” History Museum, the Jinzhou Liaoshen Battle Memorial Hall, the Benxi Northeast Anti-Japanese Federation Historical Exhibition Hall, and the Dandong Memorial Hall to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea as the core. Focus on excavating narrative materials with dramatic tension, human brilliance and sacrificial spirit; Second, focus on the beauty of dedication. With the Fushun Lei Feng Memorial Hall and the Anshan Iron and Steel Meng Tai Memorial Hall as the axis, it radiates the deeds of model workers, moral models, and outstanding party members in various periods in the province. collects and sorts out his daily life objects, letters, quotations and stories of contemporary descendants, emphasizing his greatness and lasting appeal in the ordinary; Third, focus on the beauty of creation. With the China Industrial Museum, Fuxin Haizhou Open-pit Mine National Mining Park, and Dalian Modern Industrial Heritage Group as the core, it systematically sorts out typical industrial sites, iconic machinery and equipment, major technological breakthroughs, labor competition images, and workers' living community styles, highlighting the beauty of their strength, order and wisdom.

In addition, resources should be graded and adapted according to the age of the audience, cognitive level and aesthetic education goals. For example: picture books, children's songs, and cartoon images are the main ones, and simple and distinctive stories and symbols are extracted; introduce more complex historical backgrounds and value conflict discussions, and adapt them to documentaries, theme dramas, and in-depth research tasks; Provide high-precision cultural relics images, oral history materials, site surveying and mapping data, etc., to support artistic creation and in-depth research.

4.2. Four Core Transformation Strategies

The transformation layer is the driving core of the system, responsible for converting the “materials” from the resource layer into “products” and “experiences” that can be directly used in aesthetic education practice through creative means.

Artistic Creation Transformation. Encourage cross-disciplinary artistic creation to transform the Red Gene into contemporary artistic language. Launch the “Red Liaoning · New Artistic Creation” program to fund works such as the painting series “Iron Horses and Icy Rivers—Anti-Japanese League Series,” the symphonic poem “The Song of Liaoshen,” and the modern dance drama “City of Steel.” Promote institutions like Shenyang Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts to use industrial heritage sites as bases for public art creation, producing a series of outdoor sculptural installations that blend history with contemporary elements.

Spatial Narrative Transformation. Enhance the aesthetic narrative capability of physical spaces and design thematic study tour routes. Develop the “Retracing the Anti-Japanese League Secret Camps” eco-aesthetic route (Benxi-Huanren), linking secret camp sites and natural landscapes, with scenario-based recitation points and ecological art installations along the way grounded in historical facts. Design the “Journey of the Birth of National Power” (Shenyang-Anshan-Dalian), connecting museums, old factories, and innovation labs to form a complete narrative chain from entrepreneurship to innovation. Additionally, at the Jinzhou Liaoshen Campaign Memorial Hall, utilize immersive sound and light technology and panoramic projection to create the “Capturing Jinzhou” immersive tactical simulation theater. At the Ansteel Museum, the “Forging of Steel” interactive art installation was set up, where visitors can “virtually forge steel” through motion sensors, experiencing the power and rhythmic beauty of industrial processes (Qu & Ye, 2024).

Transformation of course activities. Develop systematic, experiential aesthetic education courses and workshops. Create a school-based course “Liaoning Red Aesthetic Reader”, divided into themed modules, integrating literature, history, fine arts, and music. Conduct workshops such as “Hero Engraving in Printmaking” (focused on anti-Japanese guerrilla heroes), “Industrial Machinery Aesthetics” assembly and design workshop, and “Lei Feng’s Diary” modern drama rehearsal workshop. Integrate deeply with after-school services and club activities.

Digital media transformation. Use digital technology to expand the spatial and temporal boundaries of aesthetic education. Develop the interactive applet “Liaoning Red Map,” featuring AR guides, 3D artifact appreciation, historical site check-ins, and user-generated content sharing functions. Create a “Cloud Industrial Museum,” using VR technology to let users “enter” classic workshops that have been relocated or no longer exist. Produce the interactive hand-drawn comic series “A Day in the Forest with Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Fighters,” allowing users to make choices at key plot points and experience the complexity of history (Yi & Shi, 2025).

4.3. A Multidimensional Collaborative Aesthetic Education Ecosystem

At the practical level, define the specific contexts in which aesthetic education occurs and their interconnections, forming an implementation network that covers the entire domain and spans a lifetime. Fully integrate red-themed aesthetic education into ideological and political education, Chinese, history, arts, labor, and other courses in primary, secondary, and higher education, as well as into club activities, flag-raising ceremonies, and art festivals. Establish a “pairing” mechanism with red-themed venues to conduct regular study activities; red memorial halls, museums, and heritage parks need to transition from being “exhibition centers” to “aesthetic education experience centers.” They should not only offer visits but also routinely host micro-theatres, art workshops, and academic salons, serving as the source and hub of regional aesthetic education activities. Hold public art exhibitions, open-air films, and concerts with red-themed content in urban squares, parks, subway stations, and commercial complexes. In communities, set up “Red Aesthetic Classes” for residents to participate in activities such as paper-cutting, choir singing, and storytelling, integrating aesthetic education into daily life. Utilize social media, online platforms, and mobile applications to create an online aesthetic education community without physical limitations. Conduct cloud exhibitions, live guided tours, online creative submissions, and interactive topics to attract young internet users. Establish a “Red Aesthetic Education Alliance” led by education, cultural tourism, and publicity departments, with participation from venues, schools, communities, art groups, and tech companies. Among them, the education department should take the lead in curriculum development and teacher training, promote the integration of red-themed aesthetic education into after-school services for primary and secondary schools and general education courses in universities, and organize “venues entering campus” activities. Red-themed venues should provide content resources, curatorial support, and research study spaces, appoint aesthetic education officers responsible for implementing immersive projects and organizing workshops. Community institutions should carry out regular aesthetic education activities for residents, such as paper-cutting, choir singing, and red story sessions, collect family memory materials, and collaborate with schools on intergenerational co-creation. Cultural enterprises or universities should be responsible for content design, digital product development, and artistic creation tasks, such as the participation of Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts in sculpture creation and Shenyang Conservatory of Music in musical arrangement. The publicity department should coordinate online communication platforms, promote the “Red Liaoning” brand content, and organize virtual exhibitions and interactive discussions.

4.4. Outcome Evaluation Centered on the “Four Dimensions”

The evaluation level ensures system optimization and sustainable development, and a comprehensive assessment approach should be established, primarily qual-

itative with quantitative support. Assess the intensity and depth of emotional responses triggered by aesthetic experiences, which can be done through observing facial expressions and attention, in-depth interviews, collecting feedback and creative reflections, and analyzing emotional keywords on social media. Evaluate the understanding and recognition of the spiritual values behind the red gene, using pre- and post-activity surveys, focus group discussions, and analyses of viewpoints expressed in essay contests and debates. Assess the extent to which aesthetic education experiences translate into actionable intentions, measured through follow-up surveys regarding participation in related volunteer services, study activities, creative projects, project-based learning outcomes, and online sharing behaviors such as reposting and secondary creations. Evaluate audience engagement depth and creativity from reception to co-creation, which can be directly assessed through the artistic quality and depth of thought in workshop outputs, the number and innovation of submissions in online collection activities, and the activity level of user-generated content within communities.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

This study focuses on the red cultural resources of Liaoning, systematically exploring the necessity and feasibility of constructing an aesthetic education application system around the core themes of aesthetic transformation and value transmission. The research found that Liaoning's red cultural heritage encompasses multiple aesthetic dimensions, including heroic epics, ordinary perseverance, labor creation, and regional integration, providing a rich source of content for aesthetic education practice. However, the current transmission of red culture faces practical challenges such as historical contextual gaps, outdated forms of expression, and insufficient resource integration, which constrain the effective transmission of its contemporary value.

To address this, the study proposes a theoretical framework and practical approach centered on aesthetic transformation. Through the creative transformation mechanism of "gene decoding-aesthetic encoding," the red spirit is transformed into perceivable, participatory, and resonant aesthetic objects. Specifically, a four-dimensional linkage system of "Resources-Transformation-Practice-Evaluation" is constructed: at the resource level, a thematic and hierarchical red aesthetic education resource library is established; at the transformation level, four strategies of narrative, symbolic, spatial, and subject transformation are promoted; at the practice level, a collaborative aesthetic education ecosystem integrating schools, venues, society, and the internet is built; at the evaluation level, an effect assessment framework focusing on "perception-recognition-practice-creativity" is established.

This system aims to achieve the leap of red culture from "historical memory" to "aesthetic experience" and the shift from "passive reception" to "active construction," thereby deepening value recognition through emotional resonance and promoting behavioral transformation through participatory practice. Looking ahead,

the construction and implementation of Liaoning's red aesthetic education system still require continuous development in areas such as policy support, cross-departmental collaboration, technological integration, and long-term evaluation. By continuously exploring the creative integration of red genes and contemporary aesthetics, Liaoning's red culture will surely rejuvenate, becoming an important spiritual force that nourishes the mind, unites consensus, and inspires endeavor, contributing Liaoning's wisdom and practical models to enhance cultural confidence and cultivate the new generation of the era (Zhang, 2019).

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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