

A Brief Discussion on the Possibility of Applying Marshall's Neoclassical Economics Theory in Art Economics

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Abstract: As a discipline with the characteristics of both art and economics, art economics is discussed according to the views of existing scholars, and the characteristics of art economics as art economics are different from other disciplines. This paper introduces Marshall's neoclassical economic theory, which is an important part of Marx's economic theory, and explores the possibility of its application in art economics.

Art economics, as the name suggests, has both art and economic components, and is a discipline that links the two fields of art and economics, and thus interdisciplinary search for their connections and laws, which is considered to be the integration of art disciplines and economic disciplines. Talking about the "duality" of art in particular, Lin Rikui believes that "it is not only a spiritual production activity, but also a special economic activity"[1]. It is different from simple material production, as Marx said: "The product of intellectual labor, science, is always valued much less than its value". This is true of science as intellectual labor, and so is art, which needs to be constrained by the common production costs and market laws of other material production, and also has its particularity as a law of artistic production, such as supply and demand do not necessarily affect prices, and production costs do not necessarily decrease with the increase in quantity.

Art and economics originally belonged to two different disciplines and categories, but due to the gradual development and vitality of the market economy, the two have become more and more closely linked. As an important economic means, the characteristics of art products as commodities have also become more clearly highlighted. This is contrary to and misplaced with our long-standing theoretical proposition that it is an important component of the superstructure [2].

With the development of society, we pay more and more attention to the art and culture industry, focus on art and culture from the perspective of economics, and extend and develop it from the framework of economics.

Marshall's main theories of neoclassical economics mainly revolve around the "equilibrium price theory", and successively put forward the theory of supply, demand and distribution. The law of marginal diminishing desire and utility is proposed, and the demand curve and supply curve are discussed in the form of charts, and the theory of demand elasticity and supply elasticity are developed.

As an important part of economic research, his theory has a certain guiding role in the current art economics.

1. The Origin and Development of Art Economics

The origins of art economics in the West can be traced back to the time of Hume, Dulgo, and Adam Smith, who began to pay attention to the issues of art and economics. It was not until 1966 that the American economists William Powell and Bowen published "Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma", and the economics of art as a branch of the fringe science of economics was born [3]. In the 70s of the 20th century, the first magazine on art economics appeared, and William Handon and others in the United States founded the Cultural Economics Association and published the Journal of Cultural Economics; In 1984, the first textbook on the economics of art and culture, The Economics of Art and Culture, appeared. In 1995, Leonard proposed the concept of arts legislation.

The study of art economics in China began in the early 80s of the 20th century. In 1981, Li Shuliang put forward the idea of strengthening the research of art economics, and put forward the research scope and objects of art economics in general, and in 1983, he further clarified the rational basis of art economics with "Introduction to Art Economics". In 1986, Foreign Social Science Digest translated and introduced the French Messilon's "Art Economics", providing a window into foreign countries. In 1987, Wang Wenwen et al. studied the system and efficiency of Chinese art performance groups from the perspectives of economics and art. In 2002, Yin Shijie studied the propositions related to cultural economics from the perspective of consumption. In 2004, Qin Chunrong et al. studied the issue of auction of artworks. In 2005, Li Wankang conducted research on the economics of art from the perspective of the art market. In 2007, Gu Jiang elaborated on the concept and impact of the cultural industry. In 2009, Lin Rihua started from the production of art commodities to explore the development of art economic resources. In 2009, Jia Chengcheng proposed the concept of "music economy". In 2010, Wang wrote an article on the protection and development of intangible cultural heritage. Although the development of art economics in China is later than that of the West, it is precisely by using the transcendental research of its research to enrich and learn from theories and guide the development of China. Looking at the trend of the development of the domestic art economy, China has changed from the past focus on a single art phenomenon to the study of the essence of the combination of art and economy, and it has become more and more refined, and the research on different issues is classified and more specialized.

2. Research content and methods of art economics

The study of art economics, in terms of its research object, has perspectives from art, art studies, and art economics, considering it as "a science that studies the laws of the entire process of art production and consumption, or, a science that integrates the general laws of art and economic development". The content of art economics research usually starts from the productivity and production relations of art, and then specifically covers art resources, art products, art market, art circulation, and art consumption, and runs through the innovation of art economy and the laws and policies of art economy. We need to elucidate the economics of art from the perspectives of art, art culture, and art economics, and propose the indirect relationship between art and economy — "imbalance." There is also a division of the research objects of art economics from three aspects: the productivity of art, the production relations of art, and the dialectical unity and opposition between them, leading to the conclusion that "when the art economic relations adapt to the development status and nature of the productivity of art, they play a promotional and driving role in the development of the productivity of art, and vice versa." There are also opinions that art economics has a unique research object, specifically pointing out that art goods are its main research object, as it embodies

the intrinsic characteristics of the structure of artistic value, the characteristics of artistic labor, the channels of market circulation, and the results of artistic consumption. The above several viewpoints show that the macro overview of art economics and art culture, or the specific micro study of art products, production channels, market circulation value, labor, and production relations, or the specific discussion of art commodities, regardless of how the research object of art economics is discussed, is about the study of every process or "procedure" that the art goes through from its creation, production to its specific entry into the hands of consumers, which is a series of practical applications.

The research methods of art economics usually include several viewpoints: analyzing from the perspective of artistic value, using specific analytical methods such as quantitative statistics, comparative studies, or surveys, analyzing with specific theories such as the Marxist theory of artistic production, aesthetic economics, etc, or summarizing. Li Shuliang proposes in "A Brief Discussion on Art Economics": "As the cornerstone for the study of art economics, Marxism requires us to apply the method of historical materialism," therefore, we should take the Marxist economic view as the starting point and guiding direction for the study of art economics. We need to study the logical laws of the natural formation and development process of the historical study of things, from concrete to abstract, from phenomena to essence [4]. In summary, the research method of art economics is essentially a method of logic and history, a method from concrete to abstract, a method of analyzing things from phenomena to essence through analysis and synthesis, and a statistical method based on factor analysis, such as the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis.

3. Marshall's Neoclassical Economic Theory

In the late 70s of the nineteenth century, the British economy was in recession, monopoly capital intensified the exploitation of workers, exacerbated class contradictions, and the workers' movement continued to rise. The original economic system was attacked by the German historical school and the Austrian marginal school, and it was difficult for it to continue its role as a justification for its social order. At the same time, the economic characteristics of the capitalist countries in the second half of the 19th century changed dramatically compared with the period of classical economics, and the changes in the socio-economic background made it difficult to support the original theories, and neoclassical economics was born.

Marshall's main theories revolve around the "equilibrium price theory," and he successively proposed theories of supply, demand, and distribution. More specifically, these can be elaborated as wage theory, interest theory, profit theory, and land rent. He also put forward the law of diminishing marginal utility of desire, and discussed the demand curve and supply curve in the form of graphs. He developed the theories of demand elasticity and supply elasticity. He believes that "to understand a person's demand for a certain commodity, it is necessary to determine how much of the commodity they are willing to buy at each price. By observing the different prices corresponding to various quantities of the same commodity sold, one can see people's demand. Summing up the individual demands in the market is the market demand." He proposes the law of demand, that is, the greater the quantity of a certain item for sale, the lower the price. In my view, this is actually what we refer to as "rare things being valuable" today. Of course, Marshall also discussed his particularity: it applies only to general things, not to special ones. For example, the price fluctuation of an operation is definitely more stable compared to the price increase of pork. Marshall also proposed the theory of price elasticity of demand, believing that the quantity of goods demanded by consumers is correspondingly increased or decreased due to the rise and fall of prices. Similarly, different goods have different price elasticity of demand. When mentioning the price elasticity of supply, he specifically pointed out the factor of time length, considering it as a key difference from the price elasticity of demand. In the concept of equilibrium price, he thought that the so-called equilibrium price is the price at which the

demand price and supply price of a commodity are consistent, or the price at which supply and demand are consistent in the market.

4. The possibility of applying neoclassical economic theory in the field of art economics

The ecosystem of culture and art is much more complex than the single discipline we have mastered before, far from being a simple addition, let alone a common market exchange. The promotion and consumption of culture and art cannot be separated from the guidance of scientific theories. Due to the unique, original, and heterogeneous characteristics of cultural and artistic products, the mature economic theories in the industrial and commercial fields may not be directly applicable to the guidance of the cultural and artistic industry. However, the basic principles of economics have universality, so combining it with the cultural and artistic industry in an appropriate way will have the opportunity to achieve a certain guiding role.

Marx's theory of artistic production holds that, from the perspective of the origin of art, the production of art has undergone a long process before differentiating from material production. As an important origin of Marx's economic theory, Marshall's neoclassical economic theory's basic principles may play a certain guiding role in economic theory, especially its principle of supply and demand equilibrium. It focuses on the balance between supply and demand. As a result of cultural and artistic creation being a product of intellectual labor, it has characteristics different from general products, so we need to analyze its supply and expected consumer group according to its characteristics, find its balance point, and promote the production and consumption of cultural and artistic products.

5. Conclusion

Art economics is an integrated discipline that combines the characteristics of art and economics, exploring the production and consumption process of art products from an economic perspective. Cultural and artistic products, as intellectual products that realize human spiritual enjoyment, have characteristics that are different from ordinary products that satisfy material needs. However, they still belong to the undifferentiated human labor. Therefore, applying the basic principles of neoclassical economic theory to art economics to promote the production and consumption of cultural and artistic products has certain feasibility and is worth further exploration.

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