



The Historical Evolution of Central Plains Fine Arts and Its Value in Contemporary Art Education

Shuai Zhao*

¹ School of Fine Arts, Zhengzhou University

* **Corresponding Author:** zs10251779@163.com

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ABSTRACT

Central Plains art, as an important treasure of traditional Chinese culture, carries rich historical information and profound cultural heritage. Central Plains art has gone through a long and colorful development process, gradually forming a unique artistic style and aesthetic concept. In contemporary art education, the value of Central Plains art is increasingly prominent. Its rich artistic forms and unique aesthetic characteristics provide valuable resources for cultivating students' aesthetic and creative abilities. By studying Central Plains art, students can not only gain a deep understanding of the essence of traditional Chinese culture, but also draw inspiration from creative practice, enhance their artistic literacy and innovation ability. This article will conduct an in-depth analysis of Central Plains art from three dimensions: historical evolution, contemporary value, and practical application, in order to provide new teaching ideas for art educators and promote the inheritance and development of Central Plains art in contemporary art education. Through this study, we hope to raise more people's attention to Central Plains art and contribute to the inheritance and promotion of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

Keywords: Central plains art; Historical evolution; Art education; Aesthetic ability

1 INTRODUCTION

On the vast cultural map of China, the Central Plains has become an important source and core area for the development of traditional art with its profound historical accumulation and unique artistic features ^[1]. As an important carrier of this regional culture, Central Plains art records the historical changes and also carries people's spiritual pursuit and aesthetic ideas ^[2]. The historical evolution of Central Plains fine arts, like a vivid artistic epic, witnessed the rise and fall of Chinese civilization. As an important part of China's traditional culture, the Central Plains art plays an irreplaceable role in understanding the spiritual world and cultural characteristics of China culture with its unique artistic style, technique inheritance and aesthetic concept ^[3]. Through the communication and integration with other regional arts, it has continuously enriched and developed the treasure house of Chinese art. In the context of contemporary art education, the value of Central Plains art is more prominent ^[4]. With the acceleration of globalization and the diversified development of culture, art education is facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. How to absorb the world's advanced artistic ideas and cultivate artistic talents with innovative spirit and international vision while maintaining cultural characteristics has become an important topic in contemporary art education ^[5]. By tapping the educational value of Central Plains fine arts, we can enhance students' cultural self-confidence and inject new vitality into the innovative development of art education.

As the treasure of China traditional art, Central Plains art has attracted the attention of many collectors and investors for its unique artistic charm and investment value ^[6]. In the contemporary art market, the price of Central Plains art works has been rising all the way, and it has become a hot item in the art auction market. This phenomenon not only reflects that the artistic value of Central Plains art has been recognized by the market, but also provides a strong support for its promotion in contemporary art education ^[7]. However, although Central Plains art has such an important value in contemporary art education, its attention in educational practice is far from enough ^[8]. Due to historical reasons, geographical restrictions and contemporary art education is too biased towards the western art system and modern art schools, the study of Central Plains art is relatively backward, and many precious art resources and cultural heritage have not been fully excavated ^[9]. This leads to the marginalized position of Central Plains art in contemporary art education, and its educational value and aesthetic significance cannot be fully reflected.

Therefore, this study aims to systematically sort out the historical evolution of Central Plains art, reveal its unique artistic style and aesthetic characteristics, and explore its value in contemporary art education. Specifically, this study will be conducted from the following aspects: Firstly, reviewing the historical evolution of Central Plains art; Secondly, explore the value and significance of Central Plains art in contemporary art education; Finally, based on specific teaching cases and practical experience, strategies are proposed to integrate Central Plains art into contemporary art education.

In a word, as the treasure of traditional art, the research on the historical evolution and contemporary value of Central Plains art is of great significance to promote the innovation and development of art education. This study is expected to attract more scholars and educators' attention to Central Plains art, and jointly contribute to promoting the inheritance and innovative development of Central Plains art in contemporary art education.

2 THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF CENTRAL PLAINS FINE ARTS

2.1 The Origin and Development of Primitive Art

(1) Art budding in the Neolithic Age

The Neolithic Age is a crucial period for the origin of Central Plains fine arts. During this period, with the rise of the agricultural revolution, human beings began to settle down and live, and pottery making technology was greatly developed, becoming an important carrier of primitive art ^[10]. At first, pottery was mostly practical utensils, but as time went on, people began to decorate the surface of pottery, and simple geometric patterns and animal images appeared ^[11]. These patterns are often symbolic, which may be closely related to religious beliefs, totem worship or daily life at that time, and are valuable materials for studying primitive society's ideology and culture.

(2) Early Forms of Rock Paintings and Murals

In addition to pottery and jade artifacts, rock paintings and murals are also important components of primitive art. In the Central Plains and surrounding areas, such as the Yinshan rock paintings in Inner Mongolia and the Huashan rock paintings in Guangxi, there are traces of primitive humans depicting life scenes, sacrificial rituals, and totem worship. These rock paintings often use simple lines and colors, with free and dynamic compositions. Although the techniques are primitive, they vividly record the style of that era and are important physical materials for studying primitive social lifestyles, religious beliefs, and aesthetic concepts.

(3) The Aesthetic Characteristics and Social Functions of Primitive Art

The aesthetic characteristics of primitive art are mainly reflected in its simplicity, symbolism, and practicality. Works often convey strong visual impact and emotional expression through concise lines, vivid colors, and exaggerated images. These works are not only creations of beauty, but also a medium for primitive humans to communicate with nature and gods, carrying multiple social functions such as praying for blessings and avoiding evil, recording history, and inheriting culture. In terms of social function, primitive art is not only a reflection of the spiritual life of primitive humans, but also a manifestation of their social structure, religious beliefs, and moral concepts. These works of art played an indispensable role in the social life of that time, serving as a bridge connecting humans and nature, the past and the future.

(4) The Influence on Later Art

Primitive art, as the starting point of Central Plains art and even Chinese art, has a profound influence. On the one hand, it provided rich inspiration and materials for later art creation, such as the patterns on Shang and Zhou bronze vessels, and the patterns on Qin and Han Dynasty tiles, all of which can see the shadow of primitive art. It has created artistic works with profound cultural connotations and aesthetic values using simple tools and a simple mind, providing valuable resources for the development of art in later generations.

2.2 The development stage of Central Plains art

(1) During the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties

During the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, Central Plains art entered a completely new stage of development. With the widespread use of bronze ware, the art works of this period were mainly bronze ware, which not only had solemn shapes and exquisite decorations, but also contained profound etiquette culture and religious beliefs ^[17]. The Taotie and Yunlei patterns on bronze ware, with their mysterious and majestic images, became iconic features of Xia, Shang, and Zhou art, reflecting the society's worship of natural forces and pursuit of order at that time. The production of jade also reached new heights during this period. They are not only symbols of power and status, but also showcase another aesthetic pursuit of Central Plains art with their warm materials and exquisite craftsmanship.

(2) During the Qin and Han dynasties

With the unification of the country and the prosperity of the economy, Central Plains art reached an unprecedented peak of development during the Qin and Han dynasties. The Terra Cotta Warriors in the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, with its grand scale, exquisite depiction and vivid posture, has become a miracle in the world art history, demonstrating the outstanding achievements of the sculpture art of the Qin and Han Dynasties ^[18]. These Terra Cotta Warriors reproduce the majesty of the Qin army, and reflect the social hierarchy and military culture of the time through rich facial expressions and clothing details ^[19]. In terms of painting, significant progress was made in mural and silk paintings during the Qin and Han dynasties. The silk painting "Ascending to Heaven" (Figure 1) unearthed from the Mawangdui Han Tomb in Changsha, with its rich colors, smooth lines, and rich imagination, showcases the Han people's imagination and pursuit of the afterlife.



Figure 1 Ascending to Heaven

(3) During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties period

During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, society was turbulent, but art gained great freedom and development space during this period ^[20]. In the field of painting, the emergence of painters such as Gu Kaizhi marked a new stage of conscious pursuit of artistic beauty and individual expression in Central Plains art ^[21]. Grotto art, such as the Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang, Yungang Grottoes, etc., with their exquisite sculptures and murals, shows the breadth and depth of Buddhist culture and the integration and innovation of art. These grotto artworks not only have extremely high artistic value, but also serve as important windows for studying cultural exchanges, religious beliefs, and social life at that time.

(4) During the Sui and Tang dynasties

During the Sui and Tang dynasties, Central Plains art reached a new glorious stage. In terms of painting, various painting disciplines such as figure painting, landscape painting, and flower and bird painting have developed comprehensively, and painting masters such as Yan Liben, Wu Daozi, and Li Sixun have emerged ^[22]. Their works are not only exquisitely crafted, but also showcase the prosperous scene and aesthetic pursuit of Tang society in terms of content and form. In terms of sculpture, significant achievements were made in grotto art and tomb sculpture during the Sui and Tang dynasties ^[23]. The Lushena Buddha in Longmen Grottoes, with its magnificent scale and exquisite carving skills, has become a representative work of Tang Dynasty sculpture art.

(5) During the Northern Song Dynasty

During the Northern Song Dynasty, Central Plains art presented a more refined and diverse development trend based on the inheritance of previous generations. The establishment of Hanlin Painting Academy provided a good creative environment and communication platform for painters, promoting the prosperous development of painting art. At the same time, folk art during the Northern Song Dynasty also showed a vigorous development trend. They reflect the folk customs and aesthetic tastes of the society at that time with simple and plain materials and vivid and interesting patterns.

2.3 The Inheritance and Innovation of Central Plains Art

(1) Ancient Inheritance

In ancient times, the inheritance of Central Plains art mainly relied on two methods: mentorship and family inheritance. Artists such as painters and sculptors pass on their skills, composition rules, and color usage to their disciples or future generations through oral transmission, ensuring the continuity of traditional techniques ^[25]. In the process of creation, ancient artists focused on the artistic pursuit of "meaning before writing" and "combining form and spirit". This spiritual inheritance has enabled Central Plains art to contain profound cultural heritage and philosophical ideas beyond its technical skills.

(2) The Song Dynasty's Reforms

In the Song Dynasty, especially during the Northern Song Dynasty, with the prosperity of social economy and culture, Central Plains art underwent an important transformation. The rise of literati painting marked a shift in Central Plains art from emphasizing craftsmanship to pursuing artistic expression and spiritual sustenance^[26]. Literati and painters, such as Su Shi, Wen Tong, Mi Fu, etc., were not only writers and calligraphers, but also outstanding painters. They advocate for an integrated art form of poetry, calligraphy, painting, and printing, integrating personal emotions, knowledge, and cultivation into painting, forming a unique literati painting style.

(3) Integration of Ming and Qing Dynasties

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, while inheriting tradition, Central Plains art placed greater emphasis on integrating with folk art. Folk arts, such as Paper Cuttings, woodcut New Year pictures, shadow play, etc., inject new vitality into the Central Plains arts with their simple artistic language and themes close to life. These folk art forms not only enrich the expressive techniques of Central Plains art, but also promote the close connection between art and social life, reflecting the purpose of art serving the people.

(4) Modern Transformation

Entering modern times, with the influx of Western culture, Central Plains art is facing unprecedented opportunities. The introduction of Western painting techniques and artistic concepts, such as oil painting, watercolor painting, sketching, etc., has provided new creative tools and expression techniques for artists in the Central Plains, promoting the diversified development of art [27]. Some artists have begun to explore the path of combining Western art with traditional Chinese culture, absorbing the advantages of Western art and making important contributions to the modernization transformation of Central Plains art.

(5) Contemporary Innovation

In contemporary times, the development of Central Plains art has shown a more diversified and international trend. With the acceleration of globalization and the popularization of information technology, artists can more conveniently access art styles and creative concepts from around the world, providing them with a broad perspective and infinite possibilities for their creations. Artists are no longer limited to traditional canvases and brushwork, but actively explore new artistic languages and forms of expression, showcasing the charm and innovative spirit of Central Plains art with a more open and inclusive attitude.

3 THE VALUE OF CENTRAL PLAINS ART IN CONTEMPORARY ART EDUCATION

3.1 The Cultivation of Aesthetic Concepts by Central Plains Art

(1) the enlightenment of primitive art to aesthetic consciousness

Tracing back to the Neolithic Age, the primitive art in the Central Plains provided the initial enlightenment for human aesthetic consciousness with its simple and vibrant form^[28]. Such as the painted pottery basin with fish pattern on the face, the simple and symbolic pattern not only shows the life scenes of the ancients, but also reveals a simple and pure beauty. These primitive works of art, with their unique shapes and decorations, have stimulated people's initial perception of the beauty of form and rhythm.

(2) The shaping of aesthetic standards by traditional art.

After entering the feudal society, Central Plains fine arts made brilliant achievements in painting, sculpture, calligraphy and other fields, and formed a unique aesthetic standard and style^[29]. For example, the murals in the Qin and Han Dynasties, with their majestic momentum and delicate brushwork, showed the prosperity of society and people's aesthetic pursuit at that time. These works not only pay attention to the ingenious composition and harmonious colors, but also embody profound cultural connotations and aesthetic concepts in the choice of themes and expression techniques. In contemporary art education, these traditional elements of Central Plains art have been re-excavated and re-interpreted, which has become an important resource for cultivating students' aesthetic concepts.

(3) The development of modern aesthetic concept by Central Plains art.

Under the pen of contemporary artists, the traditional elements of Central Plains art are combined with modern aesthetic concepts, resulting in many works of art with the characteristics of the times. These works not only retain the unique charm of the Central Plains art, but also incorporate the expression techniques and aesthetic concepts of modern art, providing new possibilities for the expansion of aesthetic concepts^[30]. For example, some artists integrate the elements of folk art in the Central Plains into modern design, creating design works with both traditional charm and modernity. By contacting and studying these works, students' aesthetic vision can be broadened, and their understanding of beauty is more diverse and open.

3.2 Practical Application of Central Plains Art in Art Education

(1) The Integration of Central Plains Art Elements into Art Education Courses

In contemporary art education, Central Plains art elements have been widely integrated into various art education courses. Whether it is painting, sculpture, calligraphy and other traditional art categories, or design, photography, new media and other modern art fields, you can see the shadow of the Central Plains art. Calligraphy art in Central Plains art is also an indispensable part of art education^[31]. By studying the stroke structure, composition layout and aesthetic characteristics of Central Plains calligraphy, students can improve their understanding and appreciation of Chinese character writing and cultivate their interest in calligraphy and creative ability.

(2) The Application of Innovative Teaching Methods in Art Education

In order to meet the needs of contemporary art education, Central Plains Fine Arts has also made positive innovations in teaching methods. Traditional spoon-feeding teaching has been unable to meet the diverse needs of students for art, so teachers began to try to adopt more flexible and diverse teaching methods to stimulate students' interest in learning and creativity. By integrating Central Plains fine arts with other disciplines such as history, literature and philosophy, teachers can guide students to examine and understand Central Plains fine arts from multiple angles, thus cultivating students' comprehensive literacy and interdisciplinary thinking ability.

(3) The Expansion of Central Plains Art in Artistic Practice

Central Plains art has also been widely used in various artistic practice activities. For example, the school can organize an exhibition on the theme of Central Plains fine arts, so that students can show and exchange their works with those of other students. Such activities can not only enhance students' self-confidence and sense of accomplishment, but also enable them to improve their artistic level by learning from each other^[32]. By organizing students to visit these places, so that they can get close contact with and feel the physical works and historical sites of Central Plains fine arts, we can more intuitively understand the development process and artistic achievements of Central Plains fine arts. At the same time, these practical activities can also stimulate students' cultural pride and cultivate their cultural heritage awareness and innovative spirit.

3.3 The Role of Central Plains Art in Cultural Inheritance and Innovation

(1) Central Plains Art and Cultural Inheritance

Cultural inheritance refers to the process of transferring the cultural knowledge, values and artistic skills accumulated in history to future generations^[33]. As a treasure of traditional art, Central Plains art itself is an important cultural heritage, bearing rich historical information and cultural connotation. By studying and inheriting Central Plains fine arts, students can better understand and inherit traditional culture. In addition, the Central Plains fine arts has realized a new way of cultural inheritance by combining with modern scientific and technological means. For example, using digital technology to restore and display the works of Central Plains art, so that more people can understand and appreciate the essence of Central Plains art through the Internet. This new way of inheritance breaks the limitation of time and space, and makes the Central Plains art presented to the world in a more vivid and intuitive way.

(2) Central Plains Art and Innovation Development

On the basis of cultural inheritance, Central Plains fine arts are also constantly innovating and developing, injecting new vitality into contemporary art.. On the one hand, the traditional techniques and forms of Central Plains fine arts have been inherited through continuous innovation. On the other hand, Central Plains art has achieved innovative development in the integration with modern artistic concepts. With the acceleration of globalization and the diversified development of culture, contemporary art presents a more open and inclusive trend. With its profound cultural background and unique artistic language, Central Plains fine arts have produced a series of new artistic forms and works in the collision and integration with modern artistic concepts. These works show the diversity and inclusiveness of Central Plains art and provide new inspiration for modern design.

(3) Practical Cases of Central Plains Art in Cultural Inheritance and Innovation

Taking the art design course of a university as an example, this course takes Central Plains art as an important teaching resource. In the course design, the teacher explained the historical background and basic knowledge of Central Plains fine arts, and guided students to dig deep into the cultural connotation and innovative elements of Central Plains fine arts.

In practice, students are divided into several groups, and each group chooses a Central Plains art element as the design theme, combining modern design concepts and techniques to create. For example, a group selected the pattern elements in Central Plains murals and combined them with modern graphic design to design a series of poster works with Central Plains characteristics and modernity (see Figure 2). The other group chose the modeling elements in the traditional sculptures of the Central Plains, combined with modern sculpture materials and techniques, and created a number of sculptures with both the charm of the Central Plains and the modernity (see Figure 3).



Figure 2 Poster design



Figure 3 Sculpture design

These practical cases show the important role of Central Plains art in cultural inheritance and innovation. Through such curriculum design and practical activities, students can deeply understand and inherit the cultural essence and innovative spirit of Central Plains fine arts, and also cultivate their own innovative consciousness and practical ability.

4 CASE ANALYSIS

In order to show the practical effect of Central Plains art in contemporary art education more concretely, this section will select two practical cases to analyze: First, the integration of Central Plains art in a middle school art curriculum; The second is the teaching application of Central Plains art works in the art design major of a university. Through the analysis of the results, this article shows the influence of Central Plains art on students' aesthetic ability and innovation ability.

4.1 The Integration of Central Plains Art into the Art Curriculum of a Middle School

With the advancement of basic education curriculum reform, a certain middle school's art curriculum has begun to attempt to incorporate elements of Central Plains art. In the art course of the middle school, the teacher selected classic works of Central Plains art such as "Nymph of the Luo River" (Figure 4) as teaching cases. By explaining the creative background, artistic style, and cultural connotations of the works, guide students to appreciate and understand the unique charm of Central Plains art. Tables 1 and 2 compare the changes in students' learning of Central Plains art before and after.

Table 1: Changes in Students' Aesthetic Abilities Before and After Learning Central Plains Art (Score range: 0-100)

Item	Average Score Before Learning	Average Score After Learning
Appreciation of Central Plains Artworks	45	75
Understanding of Artworks' Cultural Connotations	50	80
Skills in Creating Central Plains Art Elements	30	65

Table 2: Changes in Students' Cultural Confidence Before and After Learning Central Plains Art (Score range: 0-100)

Item	Average Score Before Learning	Average Score After Learning
Identification with Central Plains Art	55	85
Pride in Traditional Culture	60	90
Willingness to Promote Local Culture	40	70

**Figure 4** Nymph of the Luo River

After a semester's study, students have a deeper understanding and understanding of Central Plains art. Their aesthetic ability and creative skills have been significantly improved, and their sense of identity with Central Plains art and traditional culture has also been significantly enhanced. In addition, the integration of Central Plains art has also stimulated students' interest and enthusiasm in learning and injected new vitality into their art study.

4.2 Application of Central Plains Art Works in Art Design Major of a University

In order to improve students' design level and innovation ability, an art design major in a university began to try to integrate Central Plains art works into the curriculum. In the art design course of this university, the teachers selected the classic works of Central Plains art such as Stone Relief in Han Dynasty (Figure 5) as teaching cases. Through in-depth analysis of the artistic style, composition skills and color application of the works, students are guided to understand the aesthetic concept and creative method of Central Plains art. Tables 3 and 4 show the changes of students' design works before and after studying Central Plains fine arts works.

Table 3: Changes in Design Work Scores Before and After Learning Central Plains Artworks (Score range: 0-100)

Item	Average Score Before Learning	Average Score After Learning
Design Creativity	60	85
Composition Skills	65	90
Color Application	55	80
Ability to Integrate Traditional and Modern Elements	40	75

Table 4: Changes in Students' Innovative Abilities Before and After Learning Central Plains Artworks (Score range: 0-100)

Item	Average Score Before Learning	Average Score After Learning
Independent Thinking Ability	65	85
Problem-Solving Ability	70	90
Cross-Disciplinary Integration Ability	50	75
Innovative Thinking Activity	55	80

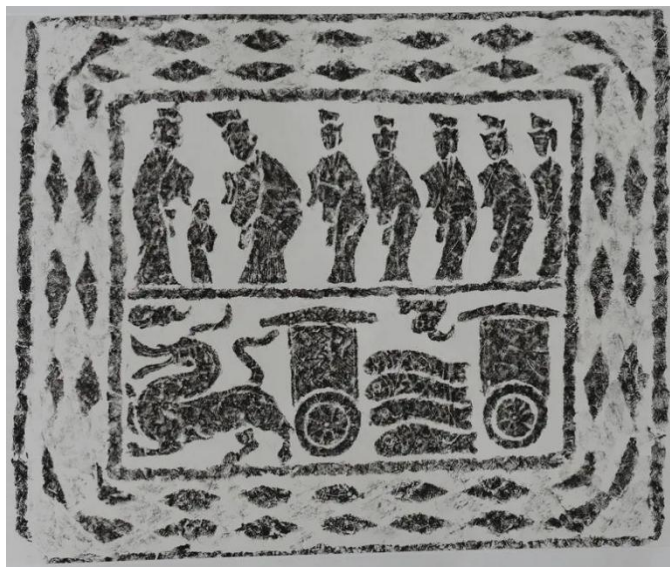


Figure 5 Han Portrait Stone

After a semester's study, students' design works have changed significantly. They began to try to integrate the elements and concepts of Central Plains art into their own designs, and their works showed more diversified and personalized characteristics. Students' composition skills and color application ability have also been improved, and they can better use the composition principles and color matching of Central Plains art to enhance the visual effect of design.

4.2 Case summary and enlightenment

In the actual teaching case, students' aesthetic ability and creative ability have been significantly improved and their sense of identity with traditional culture has also been significantly enhanced by integrating the elements of Central Plains art. This change is reflected in students' appreciation and understanding of art works, but also in their creative practice. By learning the essence and concept of Central Plains art, students began to try to combine traditional elements with modern design to create works with historical charm and sense of the times.

Teachers should flexibly use Central Plains art resources according to students' actual situation and teaching needs, and design more targeted and effective teaching programs. For example, students can be guided to create themes by combining the historical background and cultural connotation of Central Plains art; Or learn the techniques of Central Plains art to improve students' painting skills and artistic expression ability.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended to further strengthen the teaching and promotion of Central Plains fine arts in contemporary art education. By compiling special Central Plains art teaching materials, holding exhibitions of Central Plains art works, and carrying out Central Plains art theme activities, more students can contact and learn Central Plains art. At the same time, art educators should also be encouraged to actively explore and innovate the teaching methods of Central Plains art, so as to better play its unique value in contemporary art education.

5 CONCLUSIONS

As an important part of China traditional culture, Central Plains art has a long history and profound cultural background. The Central Plains fine arts have undergone many evolutions, forming a unique artistic style and aesthetic concept. These precious artistic heritages provide rich historical information and important resources for the inheritance of Chinese excellent traditional culture.

In contemporary art education, the Central Plains art shows its unique value. Through the integration of Central Plains art elements, students' aesthetic ability and creative ability have been significantly improved. The rich connotation and unique charm of Central Plains art have stimulated students' interest and creativity in learning and injected new vitality into their art study. By using the Central Plains art resources flexibly, teachers can design more targeted teaching schemes and improve the teaching effect and students' comprehensive quality.

To sum up, the historical evolution of Central Plains fine arts and its value in contemporary art education can not be ignored. In the future research, we should further strengthen the promotion of Central Plains fine arts, so that more people can understand and learn Central Plains fine arts and contribute to the inheritance and development of Chinese excellent traditional culture.

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