International Journal of Education and Social Development
ISSN: 3078-2287 (Online) | Vol. 1, No. 2, 2024

Research on the Development of Chinese Art in the Economic Perspective

Yumo Cao

SSAL College, Grade 12 Class 1, Guangzhou 510375, China

Abstract: This article analyzes the internal mechanisms and external manifestations of the development of Chinese art from an economic perspective, with the aim of highlighting the important role of economic elements in the development of art. Starting from the connection between economic definition and art, based on the definition and theoretical framework of economics, analyze the interaction between art and economy. Subsequently, the article examined the economic environment and characteristics of Chinese art in different historical periods, such as ancient times, modern times, and after the reform and opening up, through a timeline analysis. It is proposed that under the current economic situation, the development of Chinese art has encountered challenges such as market foam, intellectual property disputes and uneven talent cultivation. Suggestions include strengthening market standardization management, improving the legal system for copyright protection, enhancing the quality of art education, and promoting the integration of art and financial innovation. Research suggests that economic theory has brought new perspectives to the development of fine arts, providing theoretical support for solving practical problems and promoting high-quality growth in the art industry.

Keywords: Economics; Chinese art; Development history; Copyright protection; Personnel training.

1. Introduction

The field of economics focuses on exploring resource allocation and human economic activities, and there is a profound integration between it and art. Driven by the sustained development of the economy and the increasing demand for cultural consumption, art has gradually transcended the scope of cultural creation and evolved into a cultural industry with economic characteristics. The development process of Chinese art is closely related to its economic background. Whether it is the golden age of art brought about by the support of ancient royal families, the diversification of art forms brought about by modern market economy, or the deep influence of market mechanisms in the art world after the reform and opening up, economic factors have always played an important driving force in promoting the development of art. With the development trend becoming more and more rapid, the industry began to expose many problems such as market foam, intellectual property disputes, uneven talent training, etc. Based on this, this article will analyze the growth trajectory, current challenges, and future development strategies of Chinese art from an economic perspective, aiming to provide a solid theoretical basis for the sustained prosperity of the art field.

2. Basic Theories of Economics

2.1. Definition of Economics

Economics is a science that explores how people allocate and make choices reasonably under the premise of limited resources, pursuing the optimal allocation of resources, as shown in Figure 1. This discipline mainly consists of two branches, micro and macro, which jointly construct the basic framework of traditional economics. Microeconomics focuses on analyzing individual behavior and its impact on the market, including consumer purchasing choices and business production decisions. Macroeconomics focuses on the regularity of the overall operation of the national economy, exploring macro phenomena such as gross domestic product, employment rate, and price increases. In modern society, the research perspective of economics has gone beyond pure economic behavior and also involves analysis in non economic fields such as culture and art. In the process of economic transactions, the price of a commodity is the result of the combined effect of its practicality and market exchange capacity. Artworks have unique characteristics in the field of economics due to their fusion of spiritual enjoyment and commodity buying and selling. Artworks are representative of non standardized commodities, and their pricing mechanism is influenced by various factors such as the artist's reputation, the rarity of the work, market purchasing desire, and investors' psychological activities. These characteristics make economic analysis in the field of art difficult and meaningful.

2.2. Theoretical Connection between Economics and Fine Arts

The correlation between economics and art can be observed from three dimensions: resource allocation, market supply-demand balance, and value realization. Art creation is actually a cycle involving resource input and output, with the input resources covering the creator's labor time, material costs, and creative inspiration. This process follows the principle of resource scarcity in economics. Economic research helps artists make wiser decisions in resource allocation, improve creative efficiency, and enhance the economic value of their works. In the art trading market, the formation of prices is directly influenced by the supply and demand relationship. The supply of artworks is unique and non replicable, while the demand is influenced by multiple factors such as buyers' aesthetic preferences, cultural identity, and economic conditions. The law of supply and demand explains the basic operating mechanism of the art trading market in the field of economics, and analyzes the phenomenon of price distortion, such as value inflation caused by speculative behavior. As the core part of cultural and creative industries, the value transformation process of art must rely on market-oriented means. Concepts in economics such as value chain analysis and market structure theory provide theoretical support for studying the value generation of art from creation to end consumption[1].

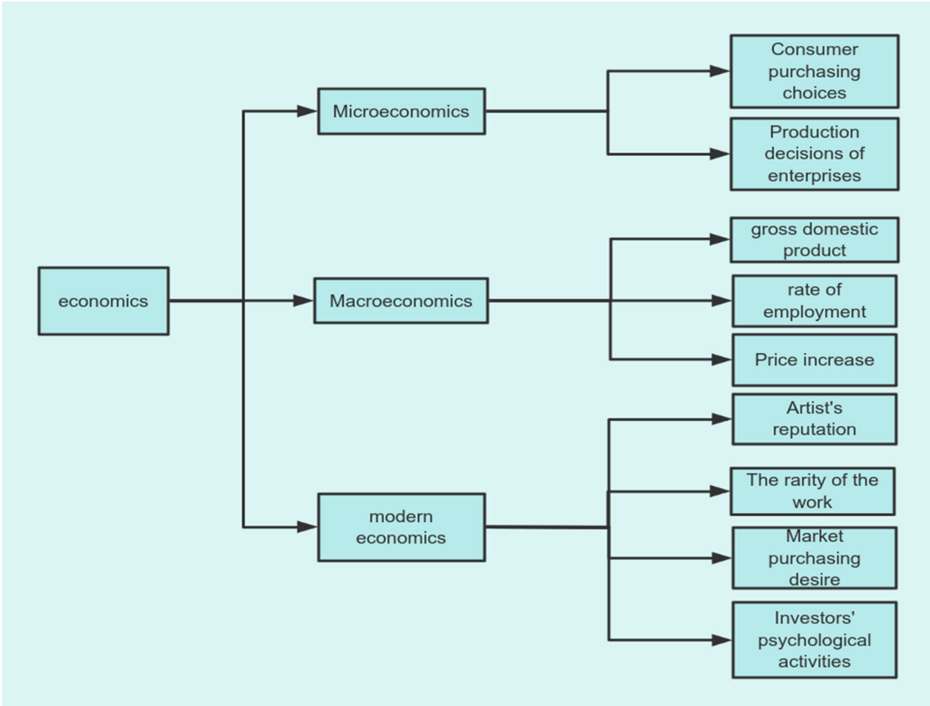

Figure 1. Branches of Economics.

3. Analysis of Economic Factors in the Development of Chinese Art and Design

3.1. The Relationship between Ancient Chinese Art and Economy

The development of ancient Chinese art closely followed the pulse of the social economy, and its rise and fall were closely related to the economic situation, as shown in Table 1. In feudal society, agriculture was the foundation of the national economy, and the accumulated material wealth provided strong material support for artistic creation. During the Han and Tang dynasties, agriculture continued to grow and the Silk Road ran smoothly, driving the prosperity of the domestic economy and deepening the integration of Chinese and foreign cultures, bringing rich and colorful cultural factors to the field of Chinese art. The huge demand for palace economy played a key role in promoting the prosperity of art. The royal family's huge demand for paintings, porcelain, and calligraphy works provided a stable source of income for artists and nurtured countless outstanding artistic achievements. The prosperity of folk art is attributed to the progress of handicrafts and commerce. In the Song Dynasty, with the rapid growth of urban economy and the promotion of civic culture, folk paintings, ceramics, embroidery and other artworks were frequently traded in the market, which led to the formation of the primitive art trading market. At this time, art gradually transformed from treasures exclusive to the royal family to everyday items in the public's lives, and the connection between artistic creation and commercial activities became even closer[2].

Table 1. The Influence of Economic Factors on the Development of Fine Arts in Different Periods.

period	Economic characteristics	Artistic expression	Relationship analysis
Han Dynasty and Tang Dynasty	The prosperity of the agricultural sector and the Silk Road trade drive foreign trade	Exquisite techniques in painted pottery have given rise to masterpieces such as Dunhuang murals	Stable agricultural production lays the foundation for resource supply, and foreign trade promotes cultural and artistic exchanges
Song dynasty	Handicrafts and commerce are flourishing, and the economy of urban residents is rising	The art of literati painting began to emerge, and various types of porcelain such as blue and white porcelain were widely circulated. Calligraphy and painting art gradually became popular among the public	The prosperity of commerce provides opportunities for art trading, and the literati class promotes the formation of diversified artistic styles
Yuan dynasty	Grassland culture and Central Plains civilization complement each other, and the ancient Silk Road is revitalized	Yuan Dynasty painting and ceramic art reached their peak	Economic integration promotes the integration of diverse cultures, and art forms become more diverse
Ming and Qing Dynasties	The decline of feudal economy and the emergence of commercial capital	The four treasures of the study are exquisite, and folk New Year pictures and Paper Cuttings art are popular	Commercial capital promotes the prosperity of folk art, while the overall economic downturn restricts the diversification of artistic expression

Observing the data in Table 1, it can be found that the level of economic development plays a decisive role in the richness of artistic forms, and has a significant impact on the schools and dissemination methods of artistic creation. In the stage of economic boom, art presents a more grand and exquisite style, while in the period of economic downturn, folk art becomes the main force of development.

3.2. Economic Background of Modern and Contemporary Chinese Art Development

Chinese art has undergone earth shaking evolution in modern times, and the economic environment behind it presents a unique imprint of the times. In the second half of the 19th century, the Qing Dynasty's national strength declined day by day, and coupled with the invasion of Western powers, China's economic system underwent a fundamental turning point, transforming from an agricultural economy to a capitalist economy. During this stage, art creation was influenced by both Western industrialization and modern economic concepts, and Western art forms such as oil painting and sculpture were introduced to China. With the initial formation of global economic integration, the exchange of Chinese and Western art is becoming increasingly frequent, and art forms are blending with each other. In the 20th century, especially after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the development trajectory of Chinese art was closely integrated with the overall economic construction of the country. In the era of planned economy, the field of art was deeply influenced by political propaganda, and artistic creation activities relied almost entirely on state funding and planning. The establishment of art schools and the standardized training system for artists have achieved significant results in serving the general public and promoting education in the field of art. However, due to the lack of market mechanisms, art creation emphasizes more on social significance rather than its market value.

3.3. Integration of Chinese Art and Market Economy Since the Reform and Opening Up

Since the reform and opening up, the field of Chinese art has gradually abandoned the previous single planned economy system and shifted towards a new pattern of diversified market economy[3]. With the integration of market mechanisms, art creation has freed itself from dependence on government funding, and the prosperity of art auctions and exhibitions has brought artists a broader trading platform. In the late 1990s, the Chinese art market gradually received widespread attention from the international community, and many art creators took advantage of this market opportunity to showcase their personal value through market means. With the rapid rise of the economy and the continuous improvement of consumption levels, the art field has ushered in a new wave of collection and capital operation. Classic art forms such as traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy are flourishing in the trading market, while modern art forms such as oil painting and installation art are also rapidly emerging. This diversified trend reflects the continuous growth of demand for art in the market. Since the reform and opening up, Chinese art has been closely intertwined with the market economy, gradually transforming into a key way to showcase cultural soft power. Thanks to the promotion of relevant government policies, the construction of public cultural service facilities such as art funds and museums has been continuously improved, creating a new pattern of art development with the market as the core and government assistance.

4. Problems Faced by The Development of Chinese Art from The Perspective of Economics

4.1. Market foam and false high price

Analysis from the perspective of economics shows that in recent years, China's art market has shown obvious market foam and inflated prices. On the one hand, the art auction industry has rapidly expanded, leading to individual artworks priced significantly above their intrinsic value. Some works lacking historical or artistic value are sold at abnormally high prices due to speculation or speculation, which disrupts the equilibrium state of the market. This unreasonable price distorts the true market evaluation of art and may also trigger adverse socio-economic effects, such as slowing down capital flow and shaking investor confidence. On the other hand, the lack of professional competence among market participants further exacerbates the situation. Many investors and art collectors lack the ability to identify the true value of art and blindly follow market trends to purchase, which has contributed to the soaring market price of art. The unequal information in the art market is also one of the key factors causing the price foam. The opacity of the market allows some sellers to mislead buyers through false advertising and excessive boasting about the value of their works, resulting in a significant deviation between the transaction price and the actual value of the artwork. The excessive commercialization of the art market has also led to a shift in the core values of artistic creation.

4.2. Copyright Protection and Infringement Issues

Along with the market-oriented development of art, the issue of copyright protection and infringement has become increasingly prominent. The general public has a relatively weak understanding of copyright in artistic works, especially among grassroots artists and small and medium-sized creative groups, where a large number of creators have little knowledge of copyright laws. The lack of copyright protection in this situation makes the works of art creators vulnerable to theft, imitation, or improper copying, seriously affecting the commercial value of original art. In the field of art trading, infringement is rampant, such as unauthorized copying, pirated printing, and unauthorized adaptation. Some art institutions and online platforms obtain benefits through trading or exhibition activities without obtaining proper authorization for their works. Such behavior damages the economic rights of artists and creates obstacles to the healthy development of artistic creation. With the popularization of digital dissemination of art works, infringement has become increasingly serious. In the current era of informatization, the speed and scope of art dissemination have expanded, but the protection measures for digital copyright are still insufficient, greatly increasing the possibility of works being illegally exploited[4].

4.3. Imbalance between Art Education and Talent Cultivation

From an economic perspective, there is an imbalance in China's art education and talent cultivation, which has a negative impact on the progress of art and the arts field. The allocation of educational resources shows significant differences between regions. In economically advanced regions, art education resources are abundant, covering high-quality art schools, professional teaching teams, and international exchange opportunities. In economically underdeveloped areas, art education is relatively fragile and difficult to meet the basic learning requirements of students. The imbalance of educational resources has resulted in an uneven distribution of talents, leading to significant differences in the level of artistic development between different regions. There is a serious deviation between the curriculum planning of art education and actual needs. Some art schools focus too much on theoretical teaching in their curriculum, neglecting the training of practical skills, resulting in graduates lacking competitiveness and innovation awareness in the job market.

5. Development Strategy of Chinese Art from the Perspective of Economics

5.1. Strengthen market supervision and regulation

5.1.1. Improve laws and regulations to regulate market trading behavior

The core of strengthening supervision in the field of art trading is to improve laws and regulations and regulate art trading behavior. In the current legal environment of art trading in China, there are still many legal vacuum zones, which have led to many false propaganda and market manipulation behaviors in the trading process. In order to curb such problems, it is necessary for the government to introduce laws and regulations tailored to the art industry, establish criteria for evaluating the value of art, clarify specific requirements for transaction procedures and information disclosure, and especially provide detailed regulations for the standardized operation of art auctions and intermediary services. Strengthen the management of personnel engaged in the art market, set industry entry thresholds for auction companies, art galleries, brokers, etc., and ensure that they have corresponding professional skills and professional ethics. In order to improve the enforcement of the law, a professional regulatory agency should be established, whose main responsibilities are to supervise market dynamics, mediate transaction disputes, and crack down on illegal activities. Building a nationwide art trading information database, with detailed records of the origin, trading history, and transaction amount of each artwork, can reduce information gaps in the market. Actively advocating the implementation of an art identity tracing system, utilizing blockchain technology to track the ownership transfer and circulation trajectory of artworks, and preventing the proliferation of counterfeit goods and market price manipulation. In a 2019 auction, a painting claiming to have been personally painted by a famous artist was sold at a sky high price, but later confirmed to be a forgery, causing significant financial losses to the buyer. This incident triggered a thorough examination of auction industry transactions and led to the establishment of more stringent standards for art authentication. Mandatory auction institutions to disclose the source information of artworks and invite independent expert teams to verify the authenticity of auction items have had a positive effect on regulating trading behavior in the art market and enhancing public trust in the art market[5].

5.1.2. Strengthen market order supervision and industry self-discipline

On the premise of a sound regulatory system, strengthening the supervision of market order and industry self-discipline are equally crucial, which is the core way to promote the orderly development of the market. Regulatory agencies need to conduct routine reviews and real-time monitoring of the art trading industry, and severely punish illegal activities such as speculation and false quotations. For the trading activities of high-value artworks, third-party appraisal institutions should be introduced to ensure the fairness and reliability of transaction prices. Strengthen the punishment intensity for illegal activities, implement industry ban list management for institutions and individuals who violate regulations, and fundamentally eliminate market misconduct. The self-management of the industry is an effective auxiliary means to increase market transparency and standardization. Advocate for art industry organizations to establish consistent professional codes of conduct and industry norms, and organize ethical and legal education courses for professionals. This can enhance the overall professional quality and self-restraint ability of the industry, and reduce market risks caused by information mismatch and non-standard operations. In 2022, a famous gallery in China was exposed for selling counterfeit works, and the gallery manager was subject to legal sanctions. After this incident, the corresponding art industry organizations conducted a profound review and introduced a series of industry self-discipline norms, such as improving the art evaluation procedures and enhancing the clarity of information disclosure. This series of measures has restored the image of the industry and established the correct action guidelines for industry professionals.

5.2. Improve copyright protection laws and mechanisms

5.2.1. Improve the legal framework to clarify the ownership of art copyright

The legal protection of copyright in the field of Chinese art is still weak, and some regulations are too broad and lack specific operability, which brings difficulties to the protection of artists' rights and interests. In order to improve this situation, it is necessary to deepen and revise the current copyright legal system, especially to make clear provisions on the definition of rights and interests of artistic works, the boundaries of rights protection, and the criteria for determining infringement behavior. Provide more detailed legal protection for artists' rights to attribution, reproduction, display, and adaptation when formulating laws, and enhance the enforcement of the law. Create a copyright registration and review system tailored to the characteristics of the art industry, and promote artists to register and file their works' copyrights. Build a nationwide copyright information database for art works, implement unified management of copyright for art works, and ensure the convenience of copyright ownership inquiry and dispute resolution. Adopting efficient copyright arbitration procedures, reducing the time required to resolve copyright disputes, reducing the economic burden that creators need to bear in the process of safeguarding their rights, and improving judicial efficiency. In 2021, a creator who illegally copied and sold their original work without permission, relied on the work information recorded in the copyright registration system to provide key evidence to the court, effectively protected their rights, and obtained corresponding economic compensation and emotional distress relief[6].

5.2.2. Strengthen copyright law enforcement and punish infringement behavior

On the basis of strengthening the legal system, the actual protection efficiency of copyright must also rely on resolute legal enforcement. At present, infringement phenomena are not uncommon in art transactions, and one key factor is the weak enforcement of laws and the low cost of illegal activities, which fail to have sufficient deterrent effect on infringement activities. It is necessary to strengthen the punishment for infringement, implement heavy penalties and administrative sanctions, and increase the cost of infringement. It is recommended to establish a specialized copyright enforcement unit for the art industry and arrange professionals to quickly investigate and handle infringement incidents. Law enforcement agencies can use artificial intelligence and blockchain technology at the technical level to monitor the dissemination and use of art in real time. Using blockchain technology to record ownership information of artworks, once illegal use is discovered, the infringing party can be quickly identified and legal accountability procedures can be initiated. In 2022, a certain digital artwork was used for online advertising without permission, which attracted widespread public attention. Law enforcement agencies used digital copyright tracking technology to quickly locate infringing companies and imposed severe penalties on them according to the law, requiring them to compensate artists for their economic losses. This incident safeguarded the legitimate rights of artists and also served as a warning against potential infringement.

5.3. Optimize the system of art education and talent cultivation

5.3.1. Promote the balanced development of art education resources

The imbalance in the allocation of art education resources between regions has long affected the progress of Chinese art. In economically underdeveloped areas, the infrastructure of art education is not perfect, and teacher resources are extremely scarce, which hinders the exploration and cultivation of numerous talents with artistic potential. In response to this situation, it is necessary for the government to increase financial support for the field of art education, establish public welfare art colleges and educational institutions in economically underdeveloped rural areas, and ensure corresponding teaching equipment and funding investment. Offering online art courses to provide students in remote areas with equal opportunities to enjoy high-quality art education resources. Carry out a nationwide art teaching support program, recruit outstanding art educators to go deep into the grassroots, and help improve the quality of art teaching there. This approach is conducive to reducing the education gap between different regions and laying a rich talent foundation for the prosperous development of the cultural and artistic industry. For example, a charity organization has partnered with educational institutions to create the "Cloud Painting School" program, providing free online art education and real-time tutoring to students in remote areas. In less than a year, this program has enabled thousands of students to improve their artistic skills and nurtured a group of promising new artists.

5.3.2. Strengthen the diversification and practicality of art education content

At present, the field of art education is facing the challenge of overly unified curriculum and strong theoretical color, which does not match the actual requirements of the art industry for diversified talents. In the arrangement of courses, attention should be paid to the diversity and applicability of the curriculum, and courses closely related to the industry such as marketing strategies, art management, and digital art creativity should be introduced to enhance students' comprehensive subject literacy. Strengthening the teaching process of practical operation, providing students with more opportunities to participate in artistic creation, exhibition organization, and market promotion, and enhancing their ability to adapt to the market. Art education also needs to pay attention to cultivating students' innovative consciousness and personalized expression, inspiring students to explore diverse artistic expression through innovative artistic creation. When evaluating teaching effectiveness, abandon the single evaluation mode based on traditional skills and increase the emphasis on students' comprehensive growth in innovative thinking, communication expression, and practical operation skills. The art school of a certain university is attempting to add a section called "Art Entrepreneurship Practical Practice" to its curriculum. Students are required to work in groups and independently complete the entire process from creative planning to product marketing promotion. One of the student groups designed a cultural and creative product that was warmly sought after by the market for its unique innovation and successfully transformed into a commercial product. Such practical exercises have improved students' comprehensive quality and provided valuable reference cases for how art education can effectively connect with market demand.

5.4. Promote the integration and innovation of art and finance

5.4.1. Establish an art investment and financial service platform

Cross border cooperation between art and finance requires the construction of a professional and efficient investment platform, creating a diversified art investment market that includes auction institutions, art galleries, creative artists, and investors, promoting information exchange and enhancing market interaction effects [7]. Adopting blockchain technology to implement authenticity verification and traceability of transaction history in art transactions, enhancing market transparency and investment security. The platform can be equipped with an artificial intelligence evaluation system to provide investors with fair valuation analysis of artworks, reducing uncertain risks in transactions. Financial institutions can launch a series of financial products for art investment, such as art pawn financing, art investment funds, and related insurance businesses, to expand the funding sources for art investment. This move expands diversified investment paths for investors, enhances capital circulation in the art trading market, and injects new impetus into the progress of painting and sculpture art. Government agencies and industry organizations need to play a key role in building this platform, promoting the standardization and normalization process of the industry, and enhancing the credibility of the art investment field. In 2022, a domestic commercial bank partnered with a well-known art website to launch the "Art Pawn Loan" business, which opened up new sources of funding for art collectors and small and medium-sized galleries. This approach has activated artistic assets and promoted the prosperous development of the art market.

5.4.2. Introducing Art Funds to Support Market Capitalization

As an innovative financial product, art funds have established a link between cultural and artistic fields and capital operations. By gathering idle funds from society, funds invest in art or emerging artists with high potential for appreciation, injecting sustained economic momentum into art development and bringing substantial investment returns to investors. In order to promote the further popularization of art funds, the government should implement supportive policies, reduce the difficulty of fund establishment or provide tax incentives, and attract more funds to inject into the art field. The art fund must establish an open and transparent management mechanism to ensure the safe and compliant operation of funds and the fair distribution of investment returns. By linking with art exhibitions, auctions, and other activities, art funds can enhance market influence, improve social benefits, and achieve mutual promotion between art and capital. For example, an international art fund has opened a branch in China, focusing on investing in the creations of outstanding domestic artists and organizing a series of exhibition activities. This action has elevated the artistic status of Chinese artists globally, promoted the circulation of funds in the art market, and become a benchmark case for the combination of culture and finance.

5.4.3. Promote the integration of digital art and financial innovation

With the rapid advancement of information technology, digital art is gradually emerging in the art trading industry. Develop a blockchain based NFT (Non fungible Token) trading system for digital artworks, to confirm the value and property rights of digital artworks. Banks can work together with creators to inject funds into digital art projects, adopting the approach of "crowdfunding+pre-sale", which not only supports creators to turn their ideas into reality, but also brings returns to fund investors. To ensure the stability and growth of the value of digital art, a strong financial backing is indispensable, such as conducting value assessments, market research, and insurance business for NFT art. This series of strategies helps reduce investment uncertainty, increase market recognition of digital art, and promote the long-term prosperity of the digital art market. A batch of NFT artworks issued by a digital creator in 2021 sold out within a few hours and earned millions of RMB in revenue. Subsequently, a Chinese bank launched NFT trading services in the field of digital art, offering value assessment and risk protection services for digital assets, opening up new channels for investment in digital art. This innovative model has successfully expanded the possibility of combining art and finance.

6. Conclusion

The economic perspective provides a unique theoretical tool for exploring the development of Chinese art. Research has revealed that economic factors have influenced the structure of the Chinese art market, playing a key role in artistic creation, trading, and enjoyment. However, on the road of economization, Chinese art still encounters many difficulties, such as the imbalance of artistic value caused by the market foam, inadequate copyright protection that restricts artistic creation, and the unbalanced distribution of educational resources that affect the cultivation of artistic talents. To solve these problems, it is necessary to strengthen market supervision, improve legal protection mechanisms, enhance the quality of education system, and promote the innovative integration of finance and art, in order to promote the healthy development of the art industry. Looking ahead to the future, with the deeper integration of economy and culture, Chinese art will more profoundly demonstrate its dual attributes of economic and cultural value, contributing to the construction of a cultural powerhouse.

References

[1] Xianfen H E , Liu H .Practice and Features of Neo-Chinese Style in Rural Landscape in Zhejiang Province[J].Asian Agricultural Research, 2023, 15(6):30-32.

[2] Yang J .Chinese contemporary art teachers' professional development in the 20th and 21st centuries within the multicultural framework[J].Heritage science, 2022, 10(1):56.

[3] Takahashi W .Half a century as a student in Economics [J]. Journal of Osaka University of Economics, 2022, 73(2):155-174.

[4] Lu T , Song L .Evolution of Color Concepts in Interior Design During the Republican Era: A Case Study of Urban Families in Shanghai[J].Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, 2023, 8(3):54-63.

[5] Yaotext/Photos W .Gardens in Art [J]. Beijing Review, 2023, 66 (50):46-47.

[6] Wang C , Min W .Exploration of the Application of Door and Window Art in Ming and Qing Dynasties in Modern Jewelry[J].Art and Design Review, 2022, 10(1):47-55.

[7] Li W , Li Z , Kou H .Design for poverty alleviation and craft revitalization in rural China from an actor-network perspective: the case of bamboo-weaving in Shengzhou[J].Heritage Science, 2022, 10(1):1-16.