

The Inspiration of "Pen and Ink Games"

Hui Gao*

Sichuan Minzu College, Kangding, Sichuan, China

Corresponding Author.

Abstract: Chinese calligraphy has existed for thousands of years with Chinese culture, inheriting and promoting traditional Chinese culture in the form of writing. With the changes and development of society and the changing times, calligraphy art has gradually become desolate. However, with the proposal of reviving traditional culture, calligraphy has gradually been valued. How to develop calligraphy at present is something we should deeply consider, and we should delve into the elements that are suitable for the development of contemporary calligraphy in traditional calligraphy. In old time, when faced with calligraphy, the concept of "brush and ink games" was proposed, treating calligraphy as a form of entertainment for both the body and mind. Currently, calligraphy, as a pure art, should not only explore the peak of calligraphy art, but also pay attention to the popularization of calligraphy. From the perspective of entertainment for the body and mind, this meets the needs of the development of calligraphy in the new era and is more easily accepted by the public. This article aims to explore the entertainment value of calligraphy and explore ways suitable for the current development of calligraphy.

Keywords: Calligraphy; Pen and Ink Game; Calligraphy Education; Aesthetic Education

1. Introduction

During the Song and Yuan dynasties, ancient Chinese art not only had a consistent educational function, but also emerged as a functional category with entertainment as the main body. In the late Warring States period, Xunzi proposed the entertainment function of art, which had a profound impact on later generations. During the Han, Wei, and Six Dynasties periods, the entertainment nature of

literature, music and dance, calligraphy, painting, and other arts gradually emerged. Scholars often tended to appreciate themselves in artistic creation and referred to it as "play". Throughout various types of art, there is a lot of discussion about the word "play" in calligraphy theory. During the Wei and Jin dynasties, people's pursuit of calligraphy art had risen to the level of conscious expression, making calligraphy, which used to be a tool for ritual education, a form of self-entertainment for ancient literati. Nowadays, calligraphy art is gradually breaking free from the constraints of rationality and moving towards daily life. On the one hand, the educational function of calligraphy has made it an important carrier for inheriting traditional Chinese culture and gradually being promoted; On the other hand, the aesthetic function of calligraphy gradually leads it towards a path of pure artistry. The entertainment function of calligraphy is precisely the fundamental reason for its popularity. The entertainment function of calligraphy is reflected in two aspects: first, "self-entertainment", that is, the calligrapher can obtain spiritual and aesthetic pleasure in the process of calligraphy creation, making the body and mind happy and resting; The second is "entertaining people", which means that the public can gain relatively independent beauty, spiritual enlightenment, and emotional resonance from appreciating excellent calligraphy works. There were many views on the entertainment function of calligraphy among the ancients, and the most representative one was Ouyang Xiu in the Song Dynasty. His "brush and ink game" view, represented by "learning to write for fun", "learning to write to dispel the sun", and "integrating the heart and dispel the sun", changed the utilitarianism of the Tang Dynasty, broke the aesthetic concept of "perfection and perfection" in calligraphy since the Jin and Tang dynasties, which emphasized the unity and harmony of form, and further freed and

weakened the Confucian advocated function of benefiting the world, As a result, it has embarked on an artistic path that leans towards aesthetic entertainment and expressing emotions.

The formation reasons of the calligraphy concept of "brush and ink game"

The formation of an idea is influenced by both the historical background and personal factors. The formation of the aesthetic concept of "brush and ink games" appears to be a Laozi philosophy of birth and a good way to cultivate one's mind and body. However, behind this playful attitude, it is influenced by the complex social background of the Song Dynasty, as well as a significant relationship between personal temperament and career experiences.

During the Song and Yuan dynasties, the social entertainment culture promoted the emphasis of literati and literati on the function of artistic entertainment. Calligraphers and painters valued the expression of inner emotions, highlighting the emotional value of personal aesthetic pleasure. "Focusing on principles and methods, with spiritual interests as the focus, and emphasizing the description of the soul" [1], it has become a carrier for literati painters to attach importance to personality, cultivate temperament, and express their thoughts. The leisure, self-entertainment, and lyrical calligraphy of literati has transcended the constraints of utilitarianism, becoming a free form of expression and expression for literati, and an elegant way for literati to cultivate their character and self-cultivation. Therefore, literati freehand brushwork flourished, and the trend of advocating for artistic conception became mainstream. The "artistic conception" became the soul and highest aesthetic category of artistic works, such as the presence or absence, reality, form and spirit, and charm on the screen, all contained in this "artistic conception" creation, allowing viewers to taste, express, and pursue it. They use calligraphy and painting as a means of entertainment, revealing their emotions and spiritual world through their brushstrokes and ink interests. The artistic ideas of Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, Mi Fu, and others all discuss the relationship between the "joy" of art and the "joy" of life.

Second, influenced by personal temperament and official career. Ouyang Xiu ship "Zuiweng", in its body reflects the spirit of

Zuiweng, optimism and openness, positive and cheerful is Ouyang Xiu in trouble, expressed its magnanimous mind and attitude towards life, we can also glimpse in his works (Figure 1). The spirit of Zui Weng and the "self-adaptive" mentality embodied in his daily life have obvious super utility. In Ouyang Xiu's view, the bright and clean environment, the excellent pen, paper and inkstone, and the desk to do books are really a great pleasure in life. However, there are not many people who can truly realize this pleasure, and even fewer people who do not transfer this love for foreign things. Ouyang Xiu discusses books with "joy" and believes that a good writing environment and writing tools are the joys of life. Although the "font is not working", it is far from the book of the ancients, but he felt a lot of fun, which shows the real interest in learning books.

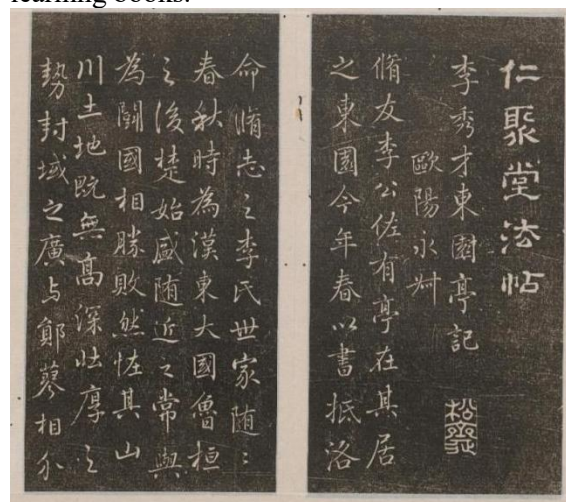


Figure 1. Part of Ouyang Xiu's Dongyuan Pavilion

Su Shi, whose calligraphy ranks the first of the "four families of Song Dynasty", has many profound and unique views on the book in the Dongpo Inscriptions, which are valued by the world. Su Shi admired his teacher Ouyang Xiu's moral character and intellectual accomplishment, and also believed that calligraphy was for his own entertainment. He mentioned that calligraphy can "live in the heart and forget about", this view is also a direct inheritance of Ouyang Xiu, "talk about the heart, forget about the late" is to say that calligraphy creation is a kind of entertainment through the heart and achieve sorrow. He said modestly and arrogantly, "Although my book is not very good, it still has new ideas." [2] From the new, is a kind of expression of

self-interest; Do not practice the ancients, is a unique creation. Such as Su Shi's calligraphy works cold food post (Figure 2) is indeed the pursuit of self-spirit of the roam, casual, show its naivete. It can be seen that calligraphy should freely express the spirit and express the interest, and Su Shi is undoubtedly the pioneer. Huang Tingjian is the second largest in the "Four Song Families" second only to Su Shi. Su Shi once commented on his calligraphy and said: "Lu Zhi uses the concept of equality as a side character, uses the truth to play the game, and writes the small things with the people, which can be described as three antis." [3] It reveals Huang Tingjian's unique way of grasping pen and ink, in which the "game method" refers to the freedom of the valley pen and the expression of true temperament, so it is "true appearance", which shows Su's praise for Huang calligraphy. "Game" has the

meaning of being free and unhindered, and by extension, it means that you can understand something deeply and use the game to travel the world. In the calligraphy and painting theory of the Song Dynasty, we often see words such as "game Han Mo", "Game of brush and ink", "Teasing Han Mo" and "Mo opera", which convey the meaning of ancient Chinese literati who regarded pen and ink as entertainment and play. Su Shi used the "game method" to describe the calligraphy of the valley, which illustrates Huang's aesthetic interest in pursuing entertainment in the process of calligraphy creation. Whether it is regular script, line script or cursive script, they are all written in a wide open and wandering manner, and this humorous and playful posture and turbulent momentum constitute a "game" meaning, reflecting the calligraphy art style of the valley.

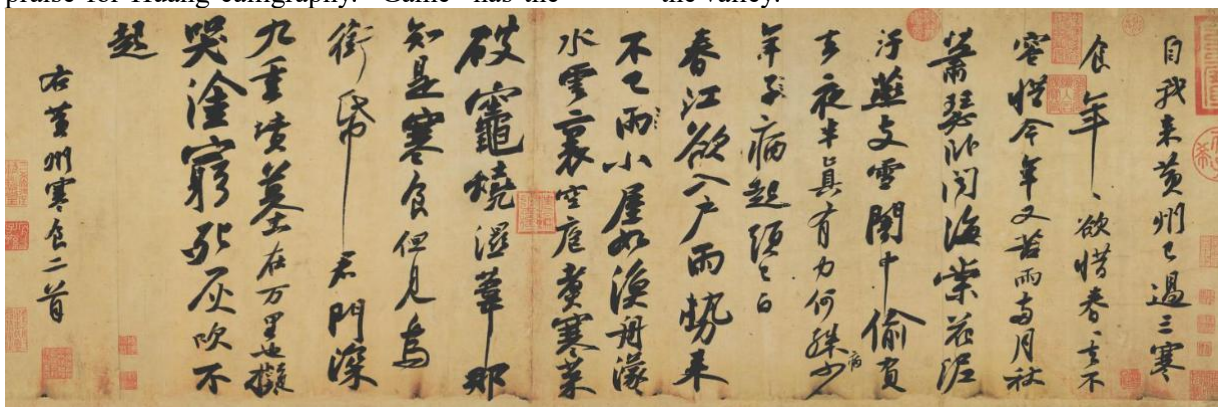


Figure 2. Su Shi's Cold Food Poems

Mi Fu, Song Huizong for painting and calligraphy doctor, Mi Fu taste calligraphy and painting is "a play", in the "answer Shao Peng book on Jin post error word", he said: "To know all a play, not to ask clumsy work. I am so satisfied that I can write nothing." [4] Mi Fu regarded calligraphy as a game and attached importance to the pleasure and pleasure in the process of writing, so "it is improper to ask clumsy work". This kind of focus on internal self-adaptation, while ignoring the external writing norms, is the symbol and characteristics of "self-entertainment", in Mi Fu's calligraphy works I can also see Mi Fu's calligraphy game spirit as shown in Figure 3. This is no different from Ouyang's thought of "why use less than his work" in his practice book. The creative attitude of the game, the free expression of aesthetic interests, is the form of the creative body to deposit the spirit, it goes beyond the direct utilitarian purpose,

abandon the direct personal interest, which is the internal need of the subject. Mi Fu reveled in this, and his writing state was the brush brush of constant rapid movement, which he described as "brush". "Brush" highlights the dynamic of his creation, which takes pen and ink as the play. "Put the pen a play empty" is also through the "brush" to make the line flow out of twists and turns, flying.



Figure 3. Mi Fu "Coral Patch"

3. The Role of "Pen and Ink Games" in the Popularization of Calligraphy

China has been around for 5,000 years, and many excellent traditional cultures have been nurtured in these long years, and Chinese calligraphy, as a shining pearl of Chinese culture, has existed with this thousands of years of Chinese culture. Calligraphy inherits and promotes traditional Chinese culture in the form of writing, and records and witnesses history.

In recent years, as the country has paid more and more attention to traditional culture, calligraphy, which can best reflect the traditional Chinese culture, has gradually been paid attention to. However, contemporary calligraphy has lost its original soil, and it is not easy to make calligraphy shine in the present. In view of the urgent need for improvement in the development of calligraphy art in contemporary society, the state began to incorporate calligraphy art into primary and secondary education, affirming its artistic and cultural value, and providing a strong guarantee for the development of calligraphy art. In particular, it recognizes and attaches great importance to the profound cultural connotation behind it. As an ancient art, calligraphy has an incomparable cultural heritage. The development of society is inseparable from looking back, and the art of calligraphy plays a pivotal role in reviewing history and tracing back to the present.

Therefore, the popularization of calligraphy education is an urgent matter, and only by popularizing calligraphy education and arousing national pride and love for national culture is the foundation of calligraphy inheritance. The popularization of calligraphy can stimulate the enthusiasm and interest of the masses, promote the popularization and improvement of calligraphy, enhance the level of cultural service to the masses, promote the enrichment of the public's spiritual life and the improvement of taste, and become a strong support for the construction of the people's spiritual home.

At present, there are many problems in the popularization of calligraphy. With the lack of an environment for learning calligraphy, there are many problems in the public when accepting calligraphy, such as learning methods, learning concepts, learning the value of calligraphy, etc., and cannot effectively

understand the connotation of calligraphy. Therefore, it is very difficult to popularize calligraphy, especially in the early stage of learning calligraphy, which is extremely boring, and most people also give up because of this. The "pen and ink game" learning concept can help calligraphy lovers realize the true meaning of learning calligraphy! For most calligraphy learners, the purpose of learning calligraphy is not to become an artist or calligrapher, but to learn calligraphy for self-entertainment and pastime. Doing calligraphy as an entertainment thing makes it easier for the public to like calligraphy. Only by making everyone like calligraphy can we talk about popularizing calligraphy. Therefore, in the calligraphy education of primary and secondary schools, children are active by nature, and they must calm down to learn calligraphy, which is contradictory. Therefore, we should explore interesting learning methods in calligraphy, so that students can feel the joy and interest of learning calligraphy, and this kind of entertaining learning concepts and methods will make learning calligraphy easier, so as to better popularize calligraphy.

4. The Enlightenment and Value of the Concept of "Pen and Ink Game" Calligraphy to Contemporary Calligraphy

Looking at the current book world, the one-sided pursuit of utilitarianism has changed the main mentality of calligraphers, "resulting in the extreme expansion of the impetuous psychology of a few people's extreme self-interest" [5]. Driven by a utilitarian mentality, blindly following the trend of the times and ignoring the study of tradition, most of the works as a whole lack the inherent touching power. The author believes that contemporary people should study calligraphy with a normal mentality, so Ouyang Xiu's idea of "learning calligraphy for pleasure" has important reference value for the calligraphy practice of contemporary calligraphers and the healthy development of contemporary calligraphy.

First, it deepens the cultural character of calligraphy. The Song Dynasty neither regarded calligraphy art as the great cause of the country, exaggerated its function of social education, nor regarded calligraphy art as a trivial path and final skill, but regarded it as a way and way for ancient social literati to

cultivate their sentiments and relieve their worries and happiness, and regarded calligraphy as a unique elegant thing for literati. In Ouyang Xiu's view, the reason why literati officials like calligraphy is first because there is a cultural situation and atmosphere that other arts do not have. The so-called clear Windows, fine brush and good inkstone, books and calligraphy, and the fragrance of books fill the room. When literati officials sit in such a study, they feel the infiltration and influence of this strong cultural atmosphere, just like sitting in meditation. Into a state of oblivion. The calligraphy of the contemporary calligrapher Xie Wowang has already reached this realm, as shown in Figure (4). Write a book, temporarily isolated from the world, forget the disputes of society, lift the troubles of the world, express the injustice and anger in the heart, so that their inner mind to obtain a temporary rest and calm. In this strong cultural atmosphere, he can meditate on his inner world and observe it, and also reflect on the ancient feelings, explore the true meaning of art and enjoy the pleasure of artistic aesthetics and creation in the fun of ancient people's postures.

Second, it shows the artistic mentality of being mindful, clumsy, and super-utilitarian. Ouyang's idea of learning books for pleasure is embodied in the artistic mentality of "forgetting the heart, ignoring the work", the so-called artistic mentality of the heart, the meaning, and the clumsiness, that is, in the process of learning books, insisting on the absolute control and transcendence of people's books and hearts and laws, people and hearts are super utilitarian, infinitely free, not bound by books, nor trapped by law, the pen moves with his heart, so that the writing process maintains and embodies the freedom and pleasure of the soul, only in this way can he achieve "the meaning of the meaning, do not know the body for the work; Happy heart, do not know the object is tired" [6]. In order to achieve the happiness of "winning straight and working hard for others". On the contrary, if too much attention is paid to the work and clumsiness of calligraphy skills and laws, then in the relationship between people and books, hearts and skills and laws, it is necessary to follow the book with people and follow the law with the heart, and lose the joy of the writing process. However, the art is endless, in order to continuously improve the level of

calligraphy, temper skills and laws, and strive for perfection, he needs to make long-term efforts, more of the pain of physical and mental labor, less of ease and pleasure, and the work of cultivating nature, which is "more clumsy than his work", "ten years of tireless deserving of fame, but the fame has been obtained, and the true qi is exhausted" [6]. Later, Su Shi summarized this non-utilitarian and utilitarian mentality of learning books as the mind and the mind on things. Ouyang Xiu revealed the intentional and unintentional mentality of calligraphy creation, implicitly distinguishing between literati calligraphy and craftsman calligraphy, and also showed the intention of strengthening the cultural literacy of calligraphers, which has important theoretical value.

Third, it promotes the creative spirit of self-adaptation and non-flattering secular. Another connotation of Ouyang Xiu's thought of "learning books for pleasure" is that while revealing the "super-utilitarian" mentality of learning books, he highly praises and carries forward the free creative spirit of self-adaptation and not pleasing to the world. It pointed out in the "study of the book to become a family": "Study of the book when the body of a family, its imitation of others called slave book." [6] It can be seen from this that Ouyang Xiu's mentality of super utilitarianism is not a negative process of entertainment and games, but a kind of publicity of free expression consciousness. His "not being a fool at work" does not deny the existence of law and skill, but contains a kind of free creative spirit that dares to deny and surpass authority, break the original form bondage, and show the face of individuality. The highest realm of learning books for pleasure is to be able to form a family of its own, so that the creative spirit of the subject is fully embodied and materialized. "This aesthetic education idea, which emphasizes the subjectivity and conscious consciousness of the creator, affirming the innovation of calligraphy, has a profound guiding significance for the understanding of the relationship between ancient and modern in the style of Shangyi." [7] Because of this, Ouyang Xiu, while promoting the spirit of free creation, contains the content of opposing nothing new, giving up oneself to follow others, and catering to the secular, he said:

"People in the world like to make fat words, just like thick steamed bread, the food is not necessarily bad, but as it is, it is known that its vulgar things." [6] What Ouyang Xiu criticizes here is also the phenomenon and drawbacks of learning books that Mi Fu pointed out in the Book History in the Song Dynasty. Ouyang Xiu believes that this phenomenon of learning books that "follows The Times and values the books" is aimed at "pursuing the good of the world" and "eager for quick success". Even if such calligraphy has skill and skill, it is not an artistic expression of free emotion and personality creation, but a vulgar style that lacks artistic vitality and expression. Contemporary calligrapher Zeng Xiang's calligraphy seems to be deviant, but his works do not chase the trend of The Times, but have their own unique pursuit, as shown in Figure (5), his works are naive, eclectic and natural. In Ouyang Xiu's view, the creation of calligraphers with artistic achievements and status in the history of calligraphy has the characteristics of super-utilitarian, super-secular and self-adaptive, that is to say, only with self-adaptive and entertaining mentality as the premise, can we get rid of the shackles of utilitarian and secular, stimulate the unique inner temperament, personality and spiritual interest of the artistic subject, and materialize them into touching calligraphy works. This kind of work is not only in line with their own temperament and personality spirit, but also the most free and creative, such artistic expression realm can bring pleasure and aesthetic pleasure to the art subject.

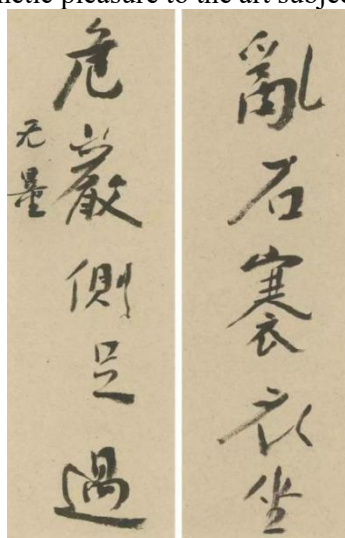


Figure 4. Xie Wuliang's Couplet of Rocky and Dangerous Rocks

To sum up, the thought of "pen and ink games" is rich in connotation, which not only highlights the elegant character of literati calligraphy, but also emphasizes the "characteristics of super-utilitarian, ultra-secular and free creation" of calligraphy [8], promotes the transformation of calligraphy creation and aesthetics, points out the direction and opens up the road for the further deepening and development of calligraphy aesthetic thoughts, and makes important theoretical contributions. It most directly shows the trend of "still meaning" in the aesthetic thought of calligraphy in Song Dynasty, which has an important historical position and far-reaching influence in the history of Chinese calligraphy aesthetic theory. We study and explore the essence of calligraphy theory of ancient sages and their thoughts on The Times, so as to make the essence of modern calligraphy practice and play its modern value. Ouyang Xiu's thought of "learning books for pleasure" [9] improves the spiritual level and connotation of contemporary calligraphers and reduces the bondage of fame on people's calligraphy life. Filtering and sublimating their own soul, etc., should be a rare medicine. Looking at the current book world, the one-sided pursuit of utility mentality has changed the main body mentality of the calligrapher, "making the impetuous psychology of a few people's extreme egoism extremely inflated." Driven by the utilitarian mentality, blindly follow the trend of The Times and ignore the traditional learning.

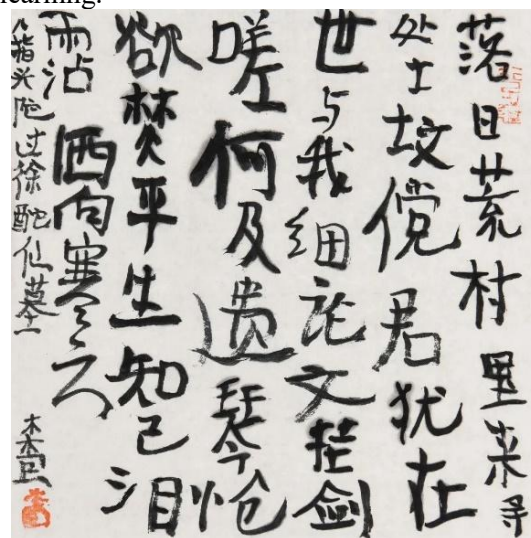


Figure 5. A Poem of the Ancients by Zeng Xiang

5. Conclusions

At present, calligraphy as a pure art, in addition to exploring the peak of calligraphy art, should also pay attention to the popularization of calligraphy, from the perspective of entertainment body and mind, which is in line with the needs of the development of calligraphy in the new era, and is more easily accepted by the public. Chinese characters have infinitely vivid formal beauty because of calligraphy, and calligraphy has incomparably rich connotation beauty because of Chinese characters. Chinese characters are the root of Chinese culture and have a long history, and they are the only ideograms in the world that are still in use today. The significance of promoting the art of calligraphy and promoting its inheritance, innovation and development is not only to develop culture and art itself, to promote the improvement of people's temperament, humanistic quality and spiritual temperament, but also to cultivate a broader consensus and deeper feelings for Chinese culture among the masses, enhance cultural self-confidence, build a strong sense of community of the Chinese nation, maintain a common spirit and ideological value system, stimulate the people's pride and desire, and enhance the sense of national responsibility and cohesion.

Acknowledgments

This article is the key project of "The Enlightenment of Calligraphy Virtue and Entertainment Function on the Development of Contemporary Calligraphy " of the program

of Sichuan Minzu College "2022 Campus level scientific research projects" (project number: XYZB2224SB).

References

- [1] Shen Zicheng, "A Collection of Famous Writings on Painting in the Past Dynasties", World Book Company, 1984 edition, p. 55.
- [2] Liu Zaozhuang: The Complete Compilation of the Preface of the Song Dynasty, Qilu Publishing House, 2015 edition, p. 3025.
- [3] Su Shi, Mao Wei, ed., Su Shi's Collected Works, Zhonghua Book Company, 1986 edition, p. 2195.
- [4] Mi Fu: Mi Fu Collection, Zhejiang People's Fine Arts Publishing House, 2019 edition, p. 60.
- [5] Ma Guojun: Book Realm, Gansu People's Fine Arts Publishing House, 2010 edition, p. 105.
- [6] Ouyang Xiu: The Complete Works of Ouyang Xiu, Zhonghua Book Company, 2001 edition.
- [7] Kong Lingjia, "On Ouyang Xiushu from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education", Calligraphy, No. 11, 2022, pp. 101-104.
- [8] Li Chaoyang, Kong Huiting. On the Entertainment Function of Calligraphy in Ouyang Xiu's Calligraphy Theory in the Northern Song Dynasty. Beauty and Times (II), 2022, (11): 91-94.
- [9] Zhang Minyu. Constructing the function of calligraphy culture to permeate calligraphy and ink education. Education Circle, 2022, (30): 101-103.