

The Enlightenment and Influence of Chinese Painting on Animation Art

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Abstract. Chinese painting emphasizes "artistic conception" and "spiritual charm", and its expression is often implicit and poetic. This aesthetic concept, which focuses on emotional expression and spiritual connotation, has a profound influence on animation art. The application of Chinese painting has enriched the visual expressiveness of animation, enhanced emotional rendering and artistic conception, allowing animation works to display a unique Eastern aesthetic. The brush and ink techniques and line application in Chinese painting have been borrowed and innovated in animation, such as ink animation, which is directly inspired by Chinese painting techniques. By simulating the effects of ink painting, a unique animation style is created. It contains rich elements of traditional Chinese culture, such as myths and legends, historical stories, etc. The use of these elements in animation not only spreads Chinese traditional culture but also gives the animation works a profound cultural connotation. In modern animation creation, the elements and concepts of Chinese painting are continuously innovated and developed, constantly integrating modern technical means to present traditional Chinese painting elements in a new form, promoting the development of animation art. The enlightenment and influence of Chinese painting on animation art are all-round, enriching the artistic expression of animation and promoting cultural dissemination and artistic innovation.

Keywords: Chinese Painting, Animation Art, Artistic Enlightenment.

1. Introduction

Chinese painting, as an important part of traditional Chinese art, its unique artistic style and expressive techniques have had a profound impact on various industries and disciplines. From early ink animation to modern digital animation, the elements and spirit of Chinese painting have been throughout, reflecting the strength and inclusiveness of Chinese traditional culture.

Chinese painting emphasizes "observing objects to take images, establishing images to exhaust meaning", pursuing the high unity of form and content, which has an important influence on the aesthetic pursuit of Chinese animation. Chinese animation, in the pursuit of image expression, pays more attention to the conveyance of inner meaning. In the early development of Chinese animation, the exploration of national style was an important direction. Early animations such as "Havoc in Heaven" borrowed elements from ancient paintings, temple art, folk New Year paintings, etc., in terms of modeling, setting, and coloring, integrating traditional Chinese opera performance, with exquisite artistic skills and distinct national style. It is this unique artistic feature that has been spread around the world. At the same time, Chinese animation has also absorbed different cultural elements internationally, forming a cross-cultural hybrid style. The aesthetic ideas and artistic techniques of Chinese painting provide rich localization resources for animation creation. Through animation, the philosophical thoughts and moral concepts of Chinese painting can be inherited and promoted, which has a profound enlightening effect on modern people.

With the development of technology, the application of Chinese painting in animation is also continuously innovating. The application of 3D technology has made traditional art forms such as shadow puppetry shine with new vitality, with more flexible and smooth character movements and expressions, and more diverse animation techniques. This is not only the integration of art forms but also the embodiment of cultural identity and national spirit. Chinese animation, by excavating and expressing Chinese stories and Chinese art, has strengthened the sense of national cultural identity.

Under the background of globalization, Chinese animation creators are facing the challenge of how to maintain local cultural characteristics while absorbing international advanced creative concepts.

2. Research Significance

The influence of Chinese painting on animation art is not only of guiding significance for modern animation creation but also plays a crucial role in spreading Chinese traditional culture and enhancing cultural confidence. As a treasure of traditional Chinese art, the application of the aesthetic ideas and techniques of Chinese painting in animation art is not only a continuation of traditional culture but also an innovative development of traditional cultural elements. Through the modern medium of animation, the artistic style and aesthetic concepts of Chinese painting are not only disseminated and promoted but also enhance national cultural confidence. The integration of Chinese painting's aesthetic ideas elevates the cultural connotations of the Chinese animation industry, the blank space in painting forms, and unique stylistic features. The use of visual styles and unique cultural identities in animation enriches the expressive techniques of animation art and enhances the artistic value and aesthetic level of animation works. It is of great significance for the artistic enlightenment education of children and adolescents, as it not only improves the aesthetic ability of the younger generation but also strengthens their national pride and cultural identity.

2.1. Research Purpose and Questions

The integration of traditional Chinese art styles with animation art, applied in the field of animation, has enhanced the international influence of Chinese culture, promoted exchanges and "resonance" between different cultures, and formed a unique visual language and aesthetic experience. It has carried on and innovated in modern animation, whether traditional or digital, driving the development of the Chinese animation industry. A systematic and comprehensive exposition of the influence of traditional Chinese painting on the style of animation art and its significance in dissemination provides theoretical support for academic research in animation.

The embodiment and innovative application of artistic elements such as brushwork, color, and composition in Chinese painting in animation have been continuously transforming from traditional animation to modern digital animation. The new forms and innovative applications of Chinese painting elements in modern animation will further affect the future development of animation. To better integrate Chinese painting into animation, it is necessary to cultivate animation talents with traditional cultural literacy. Through the discussion of these research purposes and questions, a deeper understanding of the enlightenment and influence of Chinese painting on animation art can be achieved, providing new perspectives and ideas for animation creation and academic research.

2.2. Research Methods and Data Sources

The creative inspiration for the traditional Chinese ink animation "Tadpoles Search for Their Mother" mainly comes from the works of Chinese painters. The animation displays beautiful ink paintings, such as large lotus leaves, water plants drifting with the water flow, and tadpoles swimming in the water, bringing a unique visual experience to the audience. "Havoc in Heaven" features landscapes, rocks, vegetation, and the design of palace buildings that make people feel the integration of gorgeous visual shapes and lively inner emotions, with distinctive character personalities complementing the gorgeous and colorful magical scenery, presenting a brilliant and rich world of images. "Landscapes of the Mind" aligns with the aesthetic concepts of traditional Chinese painting art, combining traditional Chinese philosophical thoughts to shape works with Chinese aesthetic styles. "The Nine-Colored Deer" is adapted from the Dunhuang mural "The Deer King's Life," with a strong mural style and religious colors in its art, showcasing the beauty of Chinese murals in its shapes and colors. "The Legend of Sealed Book" integrates traditional Chinese stories, transferring Chinese stories into "paintings."

These works not only showcase the artistic charm of Chinese painting but also reflect the efforts and achievements of Chinese animation in inheriting and promoting traditional culture.

3. Artistic Features of Chinese Painting

Chinese painting has a long history, having experienced multiple developmental stages from ancient times to the present, each with its unique artistic style and expressive techniques. Styles such as literati painting and court painting vary among different schools, collectively enriching the artistic connotations of Chinese painting.

Chinese painting, a traditional form of Chinese art, boasts a long history and distinctive artistic features. These features have earned it a unique place in the global art community and have profoundly influenced other art forms, including animation. Chinese painting emphasizes the use of brush and ink, which are not only means of shaping forms but also vital tools for conveying the artist's emotions. The strong lines in Chinese painting can express the essence of objects while also conveying the artist's emotions and personality, revealing deeper meanings and emotions beyond the immediate image, evoking associations and resonance in the viewer. The distinctive use of "blank space" to represent space and layers offers endless imagination, achieving an effect where "the unpictured areas all become wonderful realms." In terms of color application, it follows the principle of "assigning colors according to categories," focusing on the symbolic significance of colors. The composition and layout are flexible and varied, not confined to perspective, often employing a scatter perspective, which gives the image a broader sense of space and dynamic changes. The combination of calligraphy, poetry, painting, and seal carving forms a unique artistic form. Poetry, calligraphy, painting, and seal carving complement each other, enhancing the artistic expressiveness and cultural connotations of the work [1].

The philosophical thoughts of Chinese painting are created by artists through observing nature and experiencing life, conveying specific meanings or philosophies through particular objects, such as the symbolism of the Four Gentlemen (plum, orchid, bamboo, chrysanthemum) and the purity of the lotus, giving the work vivid vitality and a profound view of nature.

4. The Development of Animation Art and Its Connection to Chinese Painting

From traditional hand-drawn animation to modern digital animation, animation art has been evolving, with elements and spirit of Chinese painting playing a significant role. In early animations, elements of Chinese painting were widely used, such as the emergence of ink animation, which is a reflection of the artistic characteristics of Chinese painting in animation. In modern animation, the use of Chinese painting elements has become more diverse. Two-dimensional ink animations break traditional animation methods in production, with each character or animal drawn on paper, and the coloring part uses layered rendering to naturally blend the brush and ink [2]. There are also new attempts at three-dimensional ink animations, presenting traditional Chinese painting masterpieces in the form of three-dimensional animation.

The influence of Confucian culture gives Chinese animation its implicit and profound characteristics, while Zen thought makes animation creation pay more attention to the depiction of spirit. In the development process of Chinese animation, traditional art forms such as ink painting, paper-cutting, shadow puppetry, and clay sculpture have been widely borrowed. These art forms not only expand the development space of animation but, more importantly, allow the excellent traditional Chinese culture to be inherited. Chinese animation works extensively involve traditional cultural themes, deeply study traditional culture, and cultivate traditional culture in the audience, especially students, thereby improving their cultural literacy. Animation recreates traditional cultural scenes through digital production techniques, causing a wide resonance among viewers and showcasing the artistic charm of Chinese ink painting. Its greatest transformation is the historical breakthrough from static ink to dynamic ink, bringing a huge shock to the animation industry.

5. Specific Influence of Chinese Painting on Animation Art

5.1. Influence on Aesthetic Concepts

The aesthetic concepts of Chinese painting, such as "freehand brushwork" and "capturing the spirit," are reflected in animation, influencing its aesthetic style. Chinese animation tends to express deeper meanings and emotions, pursuing a high unity of form and content. The aesthetic transformation of Chinese painting also affects the value expression of animation. While shaping typical images, it also carries and expresses specific value concepts. "Observing objects to take images, establishing images beyond the image," Chinese painting in image expression is not only about external forms but more importantly about the inner connotations. The spiritual connotations and emotional atmosphere of Chinese painting images create a unique aesthetic concept, such as the vivid tadpoles in "Tadpoles Search for Their Mother," with a strong interest in Chinese painting brush and ink, and the image of Sun Wukong in "Havoc in Heaven," which is based on various elements of Peking Opera, all reflecting this aesthetic concept. Traditional culture emphasizes expressing subjective interests and not being confined to the external similarity of objects, which also affects the aesthetic style of animation art.

5.2. Borrowing Techniques and Styles

The techniques of Chinese painting, such as the use of brush and ink and line drawing, are borrowed in animation creation, enriching the artistic expression of animation. The ink painting techniques of Chinese painting are directly applied to animation creation, such as the first Chinese ink animation film "Tadpoles Search for Their Mother," whose small animal shapes are taken from the master Qi Baishi's pen, showing the natural rendering effect of ink painting, without contour lines, each scene is like a beautiful ink painting.

In today's rapid technological development, computer software also uses special effects of ink particles. Traditional arts such as paper-cutting and shadow puppetry are also integrated into animation. These animations inherit traditional national styles while innovating in combination with modern aesthetics. They integrate Chinese painting techniques in visual presentation and narrative techniques, combining modern youth aesthetics to build a fast-paced, diverse narrative, while exploring the world's cutting-edge animation production technologies, integrating techniques such as blank space and haloing in traditional painting, creating a poetic situation where the virtual and the real are intermingled and vibrant. It not only inherits the painting procedures of traditional painting, continues the freehand view of ink painting, but also expresses the interest in brush and ink of literati painting, and more reflects the literary sentiment of saving the world and the country.

5.3. Integration of Narrative Methods

The narrative method of Chinese painting combined with animation narrative provides new possibilities for telling animation stories. Chinese opera, calligraphy, paper-cutting, puppetry, shadow play, murals, and clothing. These elements not only provide a rich range of expressions and artistic origins but also contain the aesthetic thoughts of traditional Chinese painting, such as the expression of form and spirit, and the humanistic feelings and educational artistic concepts based on traditional moral thoughts. Its narrative types and ethics are mainly focused on the level of art films and propaganda films, mainly for propaganda and education. This narrative method reflects the shaping of national cultural identity and opens a new journey for the creation of national animation.

In the process of using film language, it is customary to use panoramic narrative and less close-up and close shots. This narrative method, combined with the use of traditional Chinese musical instruments, produces a unique artistic effect. Chinese-style animation is not a direct copy of traditional culture but retells traditional stories in a narrative way that conforms to the acceptance habits of modern people and gives new connotations to cultural images. In production, it often uses traditional artistic elements of Chinese painting, such as color painting, line carving, and painting techniques, to add visual style to animated characters and scenes. Inspired by the composition and

colors of Chinese painting, it creates unique animated images and visual experiences. With traditional Chinese literature and epics as the background, it creates stories and characters with Chinese characteristics, using animation technology to combine elements of traditional Chinese stories with modern narrative methods, creating new narrative forms. It shows all aspects of traditional Chinese culture, such as cultural customs, historical stories, and traditional arts, inheriting Chinese culture to the world and contributing to world cultural exchanges. It shows important events and figures in Chinese history and combines them with modern society, allowing people to better understand the richness and splendor of Chinese history.

6. Modern Interpretation of Chinese Painting Elements in Animation

6.1. Innovative Application of Chinese Painting Elements

In modern animation, elements of Chinese painting are endowed with new forms and connotations, showcasing innovative artistic expressions. Animation technology is used to redefine and interpret the essentials of Chinese painting, combining traditional forms with modern animation techniques to create new forms of animation. Exploring the use of Chinese painting's visual style to create animated works, researching various styles and techniques of Chinese painting, and applying them to the creation of animated characters and backgrounds. Drawing inspiration from Chinese painting to create animated stories and characters with Chinese characteristics, attempting to combine traditional stories and content of Chinese painting with modern animated works [3]. Animators are encouraged to actively explore the application of Chinese painting elements and try to combine Chinese painting with various animation styles and technologies.

Chinese-style animation is not a simple replication of traditional culture but rather a retelling of traditional stories in a narrative style that conforms to the acceptance habits of modern people, endowing cultural images with new connotations. This approach makes animated works more accessible and understandable to modern audiences. Traditional Chinese visual elements such as ink wash, green and blue landscapes, folk paper-cutting, New Year paintings, and shadow puppetry have wide applications in animation art, forming a unique national characteristic. For example, the "Chinese Ancient Poetry Animation" series combines characters, stories, and classic ancient poems, explaining poems through stories and reasoning through poems, which is full of novelty. The deepening and expansion of animation art in content, form, and aesthetics have opened up new possibilities for the contemporary expression of excellent traditional culture.

6.2. Cross-Cultural Exchange between Chinese Painting and Animation

The representation of Chinese painting elements in international animation has promoted cross-cultural exchange and enhanced the international influence of animation. Presenting Chinese traditional culture and art to the world in the form of animation improves people's understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture, exchanges Chinese culture with other cultures around the world, understands the traditional arts and cultural customs of other cultures, promotes mutual understanding and respect between cultures, and facilitates cooperation between China and other countries in the fields of culture and art.

Chinese animation, as an important part of Chinese culture, is increasingly spreading globally. According to the "China Animation International Communication Report (2023)," animation has become an important form of China's audio-visual exports, and Chinese animation is entering the international market in the form of a full industry chain, becoming an important carrier of cross-cultural exchange. Chinese animation uses international streaming platforms such as Netflix for global dissemination, eliminating geographical boundaries and allowing global audiences to access a variety of animated works. At the same time, international film festivals such as the Annecy International Animation Film Festival and the Cannes Film Festival's animation sections provide a showcase for animation works, promoting international cooperation projects and copyright transactions.

6.3. The Future Development of Chinese Painting Animation

The market-oriented development of the animation production industry, the localization of animation IP, and the expansion of the age range of animation works are future development trends. Technological progress, especially the development of key technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality, and motion capture, will promote the co-construction of the animation production ecosystem and enhance the technical level of Chinese animation. Chinese animators are committed to spreading contemporary Chinese values and the spirit of the Chinese nation through animation, demonstrating strong cultural creativity. The local identity of Chinese animation is mainly manifested in the modern interpretation and artistic reproduction of Chinese traditional cultural symbols under the context of high-tech. In the future, Chinese painting animation will continue to highlight the cultural identity of the Chinese nation in content, delve into the spiritual world of the people in terms of subject matter, aesthetic expression, and emotional identification. The Chinese animation industry is in a period of rapid development, with the integration of the upstream and downstream of the industry chain, the development of all-age animation, and the localization of IP becoming development trends. More and more companies are not satisfied with only involving in a single field and have begun to extend their business to the upstream and downstream of the industry chain, intensifying the trend of localized IP. The domestic market is in the golden age of rapid growth in cultural consumption capacity and level. In the future, the scale of animation users will continue to expand, market demand will continue to increase, and policy measures will continue to improve, all of which will promote the further development of the animation industry. The Chinese animation industry also shows great potential in international cooperation. The goal of Chinese animation going global is constantly changing with the development of technology, talent, and production capacity in the animation industry, and domestic animation satisfies the aesthetic needs of international audiences with its unique artistic characteristics, enhancing artistic confidence and cultural confidence.

The combination of Chinese painting and animation, Chinese painting elements will be better integrated into animation creation [4]. Chinese painting animation, as a unique form combining traditional culture and digital technology, has a broad future development prospect. The application of big data and artificial intelligence technology in animation production improves the efficiency and quality of animation production, and the development of new animation production software and tools provides animators with more powerful creative tools. Based on traditional Chinese culture and combined with new media technology, creating animated works with unique styles and stories, exploring new forms of animation, such as virtual reality and augmented reality. The continuous expansion of the Chinese animation market provides a larger sales and distribution platform for animated works, and the continuous growth of the Chinese animation export market brings new sources of income for the animation industry. Deep integration with the gaming industry, film industry, and e-commerce industry brings new value to animated works and actively develops combination models of animation with education, health, and tourism. Chinese animated works can convey positive social values and bring happiness and touch to people, promoting Chinese cultural exchange and enhancing the influence of Chinese brands. While Chinese painting animation has made an important contribution to the development of China's cultural industry, its future development will also be full of possibilities.

7. Conclusion

Chinese painting has had a profound influence on animation art with its unique artistic style and philosophical thoughts. Chinese painting emphasizes the philosophical idea of "the unity of heaven and man," pursuing a harmonious coexistence with nature, a concept reflected in animation art, especially in landscape paintings where the audience can feel the reverence and awe for nature [5]. The "scatter perspective" of Chinese painting and the spatial expression method of ancient Chinese scroll paintings provide animation with a super-temporal and spatial picture processing method. In

addition, elements such as lines, composition, and artistic conception of Chinese painting are widely applied in animation design, showcasing the artistic style of Chinese painting.

The aesthetic thoughts of Chinese painting are of great significance to contemporary animation creation. Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist thoughts have influenced the unique oriental charm of Chinese animation, and animation creators should establish a new era of Chinese animation language based on a full understanding of Chinese culture, promoting the spirit and culture of the Chinese nation. Traditional stories and characters of Chinese painting provide rich material for animation creation, with techniques such as lively brushwork, rich ink, stable colors, and ethereal character images, providing new aesthetic experiences for animation art. Chinese painting animation can spread traditional Chinese culture to the world and contribute to world cultural exchange. At the same time, the development history, artistic characteristics, and specific work analysis of Chinese animation art reveal the internal logic, types, and culture of Chinese animation art.

Although Chinese painting has had a significant impact on animation art, there are also some limitations. The application and dissemination of Chinese painting elements in animation still need deep integration, especially in the context of globalization and digitization, how to better combine the aesthetic thoughts of Chinese painting with modern animation technology still needs further exploration, such as production level, market size, international influence, etc. Looking to the future, Chinese animation should continue to explore national styles, adhere to national styles, and consciously seek inspiration from the excellent traditional culture of China, achieving creative transformation and innovative development of excellent traditional culture.

Animation creation will delve deeper into the aesthetic thoughts of Chinese painting, such as freehand brushwork and blank space, and integrate them into animation creation. Using modern animation technology and digital effects to present the aesthetics of Chinese painting, such as the development of 3D ink animation, combining traditional art with modern technology, strengthening the training of animation talent, especially the inheritance of traditional cultural spirit, allowing animators to better understand and use the elements of Chinese painting. Animators are encouraged to explore new forms of expression, such as combining paper-cutting, shadow puppetry, and other traditional art forms, to create animated works with Chinese characteristics. In creation, it reflects a firm cultural confidence and cultural awareness, building a bridge between traditional culture and modern humanities, and promoting the beauty of Chinese local culture.

Chinese aesthetic thoughts reflected in animation have a subtle influence on social values and cultural trends, helping to spread positive values and promote harmonious social development.

In the future, Chinese painting animation will continue to be influenced by Chinese painting and develop a unique artistic style and content. With the improvement of technical level and the expansion of market size, Chinese painting animation will become one of the world's best animation production centers.

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