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Regional Roots: A Study of Communication Strategies for the Sustainable Development of China's Animation Industry

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Abstract: Animation industry is known as the most promising cultural industry in the 21st century. China's animation industry, taking advantage of the popularity of international animation, has developed rapidly and produced an astonishing number of animations. How to ensure the high-quality and sustainable development of Chinese animation in the context of high output is an urgent issue that needs to be addressed in current Chinese animation industry. Through the analysis of the relevant literature of Chinese animation, this study, starting from the development history of animation, analyzes the problems encountered in Chinese animation during development, and proposes corresponding solutions to the current bottlenecks in development, with the aim of allowing Chinese animation to take root in the region, lead the world, and become a sustainable art and cultural industry.

Keywords: Chinese animation; Development history; Development problems; Solutions.

1. Introduction

The development of the world's animation industry is led by Japan and the United States. The United States dominates the business model of the development of the animation industry, while Japan dominates the market model of the development of the animation industry. According to incomplete statistics, 87% of people in Japan like animation. Compared with Japan and the United States, there are significant differences and insufficient development in China's animation industry. For a long time, China's animation viewing has been limited to "Dunk Master", "Da Xia Tian Gong", "Ichigo", "Hulu Wa", "Astro", "Flower Fairy", "Turbo Rider", "Seven Dragon Balls", "Lao Fu Zi" etc. Until the release of the high box office anime "Journey to the West: The Return of the Great Sage" in 2015, it shattered the impression of Chinese people on anime, and China's anime industry began to take off. Unlike previous animation blockbusters, it took 8 years to create "Journey to the West: The Return of the Great Sage " and grossed nearly 1 billion yuan at the box office. Afterwards, domestic animals such as "Big Fish and Begonia" and "100000 Cold Jokes" also achieved excellent box office results, reaching new heights in terms of market share and animation production level. According to incomplete statistics, the box office of Chinese anime has increased from 1.9 billion yuan in 2015 to 7 billion yuan in 2019. The proportion of domestic anime to the total box office and the number of viewers are both significantly increasing, and the level is also steadily improving. Domestic animation is experiencing an outbreak, which is expected to lead the animation industry as a whole into a new stage of development.

Anime refers to the synthesis of animation and cartoon, using hand-drawn or computer tools to simulate the relevant virtual cartoon image, so as to convey a certain story content and plot, which is an important form of artistic expression. The anime industry refers to a series of derivatives generated through the development of anime products based on anime as the general principle of creation. In recent years, China's animation industry has developed rapidly. Data shows that in 2020, the output value of China's animation industry exceeded 200 billion yuan. However, compared with the United States and Japan, China's animation is still facing many problems such as, incomplete industry chain, insufficient innovation and intellectual property protection, low production level, shortage of personnel, money, and patience.

China's animation industry has an important impact on other industries and economic development. Unlike the traditional manufacturing industry, the animation industry is an emerging industry without borders.

At present, the development of China's animation industry is still at the stage of preliminary development, and most of the hidden market, have not yet been explored. There is a shortage of the originality of the animation industry, and the overseas share of the animation market is relatively low. With the rapid development of China's animation industry in recent years, derivative markets related to the animation industry have gradually been developed, and many peripheral animation products and exhibitions have come into public eye. With the support of the state, anime has gradually begun to explore its own creation path.

2. Problems in the development of Chinese animation

The anime industry is developing rapidly, and compared with Japan and the United States, the shortcomings of China's anime industry are obvious. For example, the ability to tell Chinese stories is lacking, the audience positioning is not clear, and the derivatives market is not mature enough.

Compared with the United States and Japan, China's animation industry has been developing rapidly, but it started late and has not yet formed a relatively complete industry chain. The current anime operation and product promotion lack a complete business philosophy, with a focus on marketing, neglecting the development of original content and localized creation of works, and even lacking the development and design of later derivative products. The

overall industry chain is relatively lacking, and there is no sustainable development path.

Innovation is the source of effective dissemination of works, and a key factor for the success of animation creation. The creation of Chinese anime products is mostly just rote imitation, without integrating better creative points into their own works. The traces of secondary processing are relatively obvious, making it difficult to generate high-quality ideas that can be disseminated overseas. At present, most of the animation products in the market which lack imagination and originality do not dig deeper into the potential elements and market value of the animation content. They cannot reflect the national characteristics of China and the trend of the times, and basically do not reflect the profound Chinese stories.

Similarly, insufficient protection of intellectual property rights is also a more obvious problem in the development of China's animation. China's own copyright awareness protection is relatively weak and the laws and regulations on intellectual property protection are relatively imperfect. Piracy is still rampant in the market, and malicious dissemination is still hindering the development of the animation industry. Even under the vigorous national regulation, unhealthy practices in the market are still prevalent. The creation of intellectual property rights in the anime industry will not be highly respected and protected in the whole Chinese environment.

The development of China's animation industry lacks both capital and creativity, and the localized creative elements have not been well explored, and the lack of talents also restricts the development of Chinese animation. Every year, among students graduating from professional colleges, there are relatively few who can fully devote themselves to the animation industry and truly love it. Those who can devote themselves to this industry lack aesthetic thinking, artistic skills, and corresponding aesthetic skills. The created anime images are relatively single and outdated, and do not have much vitality. A series of creative talents are lacking, resulting in a serious shortage of Chinese animation creation in terms of overall competitiveness.

There is insufficient depth in the utilization and development of high-quality cultural resources, insufficient exploration of local excellent cultural elements for creation and a preference of rapid profit-seeking of capital. Independent originality is neglected and scope of materials is narrow, which restricts the improvement of creative ability. The content is filled with negative connotations such as violence and darkness, which can easily cause negative social impacts. More problems, like potential problems in industrial connections, serious imbalance in target group positioning, and lack of creative patience, are exposed in the fast-developing animation industry.

The biggest event of Chinese animation is the International Animation Festival, which attracts countless animation practitioners and enthusiasts from home and abroad to come to the scene every year to show the latest animation products. The China International Cartoon & Animation Festival, which has been hosted for eight times, is the best communication between animation culture and practitioners and fans. However, it has been almost unchanged over the years, and there is relatively little exploration for the sustainable development of animation, which can provide the animation industry with insufficient development value.

3. Measures for the development of Chinese animation

How to solve the problem of China's animation development, let China's animation follow the path of sustainable development, and lead the world's creative trend, is an urgent problem that the entire animation industry needs to solve.

To develop Chinese animation well, China's animation industry should focus on original animation products and take the road of sustainable development. And it is necessary to pay attention to the excavation of local elements, carry out the output of animation products with the creative concept of "balancing quantity and quality, prioritizing quality", and make efforts to promote mainstream values. Moreover, it is vital to adhere to integrated development, allowing animation to integrate across borders and inject vitality into economic and social development. Animation is a unique international language and cultural lifestyle. In terms of animation production, we should focus on traditional Chinese culture and tell Chinese stories from the perspective of young people.

To achieve sustainable development in China's animation industry, it is necessary to build a complete animation industry chain and adopt an elite market model. And we are supposed to improve the propaganda, marketing, and the development and design of peripheral derivatives of the whole animation industry chain. We should combine the needs of consumers, improve the market positioning of the animation industry, instead of positioning the market at the teenage groups to expand the animation industry chain. Efforts will be made to develop and create a group of unique IPs that belong to China in the industrial chain.

Creativity is the original power of the work. By taking its own path, Chinese animation, with a focus on originality and local development, should strive to dig the story belonging to China and create Chinese elements of animation, which can make the core competitiveness of the animation industry-creativity and innovation- be enough, thorough, deep and strong. With strong innovation ability, Chinese animation can resist market risks and increase competitiveness.

The state should vigorously support the development of Chinese animation, not only in terms of financial support, but also to strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights and market supervision. At present, piracy of Chinese animation is very serious, it is necessary to establish a set of intellectual property protection system with Chinese characteristics, with which perfect laws and regulations can maximize the interests of the industry. The government and society should create a good atmosphere to respect and encourage original works, improve the enthusiasm of originality, enhance the intrinsic value and brand image of original animation, promote the benign development of the industry, and let the creation and dissemination of animation be respected and be benign.

We should increase the cultivation of high-level and specialized talents. With the rapid development of China's animation industry, talent cultivation is not about selecting professional colleges, but rather expanding the age of talent cultivation, so that animation creation is rooted in every stage of students. There is a great shortage of animation talents in China, especially the lack of versatile talents who know both art and computer technology. This has seriously affected the development of China's animation industry. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve the talent cultivation model of

China's animation industry and make more efforts to cultivate high-level and specialized talents. We need to cultivate professional and versatile talents through multi-party cooperation, so that animation talents can integrate with the industry as soon as possible.

On the road of developing China's animation industry, we keep a close eye on the current problems, make up for the shortcomings, and rise to the sun. Combining with the current popular international anime festivals that cater to the public, and taking the anime festival as an opportunity for the development of Chinese anime communication, we integrate more elements of national style, folk customs, and localization into the anime festival, which not only spreads Chinese anime but also takes root in regional development, to create a unique and sustainable anime industry that belongs to China. Times are changing and the audience's needs are also changing. In the process of animation creation, we should keep close to the new mainstream of the main theme of creation. At the same time, we will delve deeply into Chinese elements, take a strong path of localization, and showcase the confidence of Chinese culture in anime, such as national style and Song rhyme. The development of animation and the metaverse should be closely combined, and new technological means should be used to promote the improvement and development of the animation industry. A series of new methods such as 3D, holographic imaging, and digital humans should be integrated into the dissemination and creation of animation, opening up a new era for the development of the animation industry.

4. Conclusion

Long and difficult as the journey may be, sustained actions will take us to the destination. During the rapid development of China's animation industry, many problems will inevitably be exposed. Only by facing these problems directly can sustainable development be achieved. Chinese animation industry should establish the concept of "unique and original creativity is the source of industrial development and growth", inherit the spirit of craftsmanship in animation creation, abandon the bad atmosphere of creating market gimmicks, and expand the perspective of the Chinese animation industry to obtain the source of creation from a broader field. In terms of target group orientation, we should strengthen the development of animation works suitable for various age groups, develop more original animation works with positive worldview, root in regional development, make full development of regional industry, and build a more complete, sound and interoperable ecological environment for Chinese animation industry chain. In the process of animation development, we should also consider the animation level of the audience, so that anime can reach more people, benefit more groups, and enter the hearts of the public. Everyone should be the strongest disseminator of animation.

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