Highlights in Art and Design
ISSN: 2957-8787 | Vol. 3, No. 3, 2023

Traditional Chinese Mythology in Animation Art

Yiming Zhao [1,*], Dongfang Zheng [2]

[1] Department of Animation Art, Beijing Forestry University, Beijing, Co 100083, China
[2] Majoring in Fine Arts, Beijing Forestry University, Beijing, Co 100083, China

*** Corresponding author:** Yiming Zhao (Email: 384180604@qq.com)

Abstract: Chinese traditional myths, as an important part of Chinese culture, have been widely applied and expressed in animation art. From the perspective of animation art, this paper will discuss in depth the expression forms and expression methods of traditional Chinese myths in animation art, including the use of myth elements in animation, the creation of myth characters, the way of narrating myth plots, and the expression of myth meanings. Through analyzing and comparing related animation works, this paper will explore the performance characteristics of Chinese traditional myths in animation art and its relationship with contemporary animation art, so as to provide reference for the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture.

Keywords: Animation Art; Chinese Traditional Mythology; Expression; Presentation.

1. Traditional Chinese Myths in the Animation Art of the Form and Expression Methods

1.1. The Use of Mythological Elements in Animation



Figure 1. The animated film "The Heavenly Palace"

Various elements of traditional Chinese myths, such as gods, fairies, demons, devils, dragons and phoenixes, often appear in animation works. These mythological elements not only enrich the image and plot of animation works, but also convey the unique charm of Chinese culture. For example, in the animated movie "The Palace of Heaven", mythological elements such as gods, fairies, monkeys, dragon kings, etc., constitute a complete mythological world, adding a sense of mystery and magic to the animated works.

1.2. Creation of Mythological Characters in Animation

The creation of mythological characters is crucial in animation art. To create a vivid mythological character, it is necessary to dig deep into its mythological background, personality traits and image characteristics. For example, in the animated movie "Feng Shen Bang", mythological characters such as Jiang Ziya, Ne Zha, Yang Jian, etc. have distinctive personalities and image characteristics, thus attracting the audience's attention.

1.3. Mythological Plot Narrative in Animation



Figure 2. The animated film "New Big Head Son and Little Head Dad"

The way the mythological plot is narrated is also an important aspect in the art of animation. Different from the traditional narrative way, the animation narrative has more sense of picture and rhythm. For example, in the animated movie "New Big Head Son and Little Head Dad", the mythological plot combines traditional myths with contemporary culture through innovative narrative and funny techniques, making the mythological plot more modern and interesting.

1.4. Mythological Meanings in Animation

In the art of animation, the expression of mythological meaning is its most central part. As an important part of Chinese culture, myth has rich cultural connotation and profound historical significance. In animation art, the expression of mythological significance is not only the interpretation of the mythological story itself, but also the inheritance and promotion of Chinese traditional culture. For example, in the animated movie Fengshenbang, the mythological story is innovated and interpreted through modern perspectives and techniques, and at the same time conveys the core values of traditional Chinese culture, such as loyalty, courage and unity.

Another example is the animated movie Journey to the West. Based on Journey to the West, the work combines mythological stories with contemporary society through modern perspectives and techniques, expressing thoughts and

explorations on issues such as peace, environmental protection and humanistic care. These thoughts and discussions are not only fully expressed in the art of animation, but also provide useful reference for the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture.[1]

The expression of Chinese traditional myths in animation art is a rich and diverse topic. By exploring the use of mythological elements in animation, the creation of mythological characters, the way of narrating mythological plots and the expression of mythological meanings, we can gain a deeper understanding of the connotations and charms of Chinese traditional culture, and at the same time provide useful references and insights for the development of contemporary animation art.

2. The Role of Traditional Chinese Myths in the Cultural Transmission of Animation Art

2.1. Linguistic and Cultural Adaptation Issues in Animated Films

Traditional Chinese myths are part of Chinese culture, and their inheritance and development require a process of cultural adaptation. In the creation of animated movies, how to make these myths to be inherited and carried forward, and at the same time be able to adapt to the needs of contemporary culture is a very worthwhile issue to be explored. For example, the animated film "White Snake: The Rise of the Fate" is set in the Southern Song Dynasty, but many modern elements have been added to the film, such as the characters' resourcefulness, bravery, and resilience for the tone of today's era, which is in line with the modern values and aesthetic needs of the audience.[2]

2.2. The Cultural Heritage and Educational Role of Animated Films

Chinese traditional myths have profound cultural connotations and values, which can provide useful inspiration and guidance for the cultural inheritance and development of contemporary society. As a popular cultural medium, animated movies have strong communication power and influence, which can provide powerful support and assistance for the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture. For example, the animated film "The Great Follower of Heavenly Palace" and its sequel "The Great Follower of Heavenly Palace's Demon Locking Pagoda", through modernizing and innovating the mythological story, provide a way for the general audience to gain a deeper understanding of and learn about traditional Chinese culture.

2.3. Linkages and Exchanges between Animated Films and Other Art Forms

As a cultural resource, traditional Chinese mythology can be deeply exchanged and linked with other art forms to create even better works of art. For example, the production team of the animated film "The Descent of Nezha the Magic Boy" conducted in-depth exchanges and collaborations with professionals in a number of artistic fields, such as vocal music and dance, to create a more complete and artistic animated film production.

To sum up, by analyzing many aspects of animation works, such as language and cultural adaptation problems, cultural inheritance and educational role, and linkage and communication with other art forms, we can better understand the connotation and charm of traditional Chinese culture, and at the same time provide richer and more diversified elements and inspirations for the creation of animation art. [3]

3. The Application of Traditional Chinese Myths in Animation Art to Promote Cultural Development

The visual presentation, storytelling and characterization of the animated movie are discussed. In terms of visual presentation, many traditional Chinese cultural elements and artistic techniques are used in the production of the animated movie, such as landscape painting, Chinese painting, paper-cutting and so on, which make the picture of the movie have more Chinese flavor and cultural characteristics.

For example, the animated movie "Big Fish Begonia" adopts the traditional Chinese hand-painted ink painting style, which makes the movie more poetic and artistic. In terms of storytelling, the innovation and adaptation of mythological stories in animated films is also an important exploration. For example, "The Descent of Nezha" rewrites the original mythological story, adding more modern elements and humanized depictions to make the story closer to the psychology and needs of contemporary audiences. In terms of characterization, the animated film also adopts many characters from traditional Chinese myths, such as the Monkey King, Nezha, Chang'e, etc., presenting a colorful mythological world for the audience.[4]

In the future, there is still a lot of room for the development of traditional Chinese myths in animation art. With the continuous progress and innovation of science and technology, animation production techniques and means will become more and more mature and diversified, which can better present the charm of Chinese traditional culture. At the same time, with the continuous growth and development of the domestic animation movie industry, Chinese traditional culture will also be displayed and spread on a wider stage.

First, we can explore more traditional Chinese myths and stories to provide more diversified and innovative materials for the creation of animated films. For example, we can explore more myths and stories from different regions, nationalities and cultural backgrounds to expand the cultural connotation and audience of the movie. At the same time, we can also draw on modern literature, film and television works and other elements, combining traditional Chinese myths with modern elements to create more creative and contemporary works.

Secondly, we can further improve the production quality and artistic level of animated films with the help of advanced technology. For example, adopting higher definition, more colorful 3D technology and virtual reality technology to create more realistic and shocking image effects; at the same time, using AI technology and machine learning technology to improve the production efficiency and quality of the film, and exploring more new ways and means of creation.

Finally, we can strengthen the communication and integration between Chinese traditional culture and international culture. In international animation movie production, Chinese traditional culture can also provide a lot of rich materials and inspirations for creation. At the same time, traditional Chinese myths and stories can also be spread to the international community through the form of animated movies, so that more people can understand and know

Chinese culture.

To summarize, the expression of traditional Chinese myths in animation art is not only an art form, but also a way of cultural inheritance and development. We can explore and study it in depth from many aspects, explore more innovation and development direction, so that Chinese traditional culture can be carried forward in animation movies.

4. Cultural Transmission of Traditional Chinese Mythology in Other Media

In addition to the production and presentation of animated movies, traditional Chinese myths can be applied to other aspects of the cultural and creative industries, such as games, comics, novels, and derivative products. These media can also present the storyline, characterization and cultural connotations of traditional Chinese myths in their own way, expanding the influence and audience of traditional Chinese culture.

Among them, games, as a form of entertainment that transcends time and space, can provide a wider dissemination platform for traditional Chinese myths. For example, the game "Yin Yang Shi", which is based on the "Feudal Myths", has achieved great success in the Chinese market, not only because of its excellent gameplay and good user experience, but also because of its accurate restoration and innovative presentation of traditional Chinese mythological stories and character images.

Comics and novels are also excellent mediums for expressing traditional Chinese myths, which can be used to dig deep into the plots and characters of mythological stories through the combination of images and words, giving readers a strong reading experience and a sense of cultural identity. For example, the Liaozhai Zhiqi series created by the famous cartoonist Shigeru Mizuki has become a classic of Chinese cartooning by vividly presenting ancient Chinese ghosts and legends to readers.

Finally, through the development and promotion of creative products, the cultural connotations and images of traditional Chinese myths can also be widely disseminated. For example, through commercialized operation, the images of mythological characters can be applied to various cultural products, such as hand-made items, cultural shirts, cards and so on. This can not only provide financial support for the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture, but also allow more people to understand and recognize traditional Chinese culture through various cultural products.

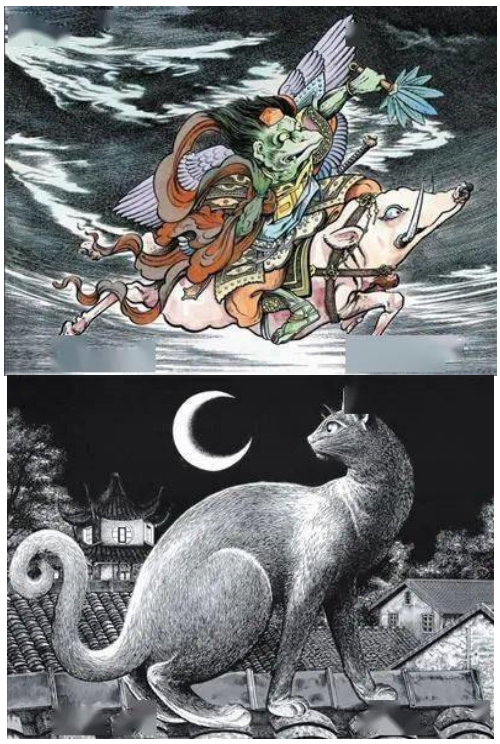


Figure 3. Comic series "Strange Stories from a Studio"

In conclusion, the expression of traditional Chinese myths in animation art is an important aspect of China's cultural creative industry. Through the in-depth excavation and innovative presentation of traditional Chinese mythological stories and character images, it can not only enrich the content and expression of animated movies, but also expand the influence and audience range of traditional Chinese culture, and promote the development and growth of China's cultural and creative industries.

References

[1] Yang Xiaoyun. A Phenomenological Film: A New Chapter Created by Pure China: A Review of the Seminar on the Domestic Animated Film "Journey to the West: The Return of the Great Sage". Contemporary Film, 2015 (09): 198-200.

[2] Wang Zheyu, Zhou Chenhui. Analysis of the Overseas Market and Cultural Competitiveness of Chinese Animation Films - Taking "White Snake: Origins", "White Snake 2: Green Snake Robbery", and "New God List: Nezha Rebirth" as Examples [J]. Contemporary Animation, 2022 (03): 21-27.

[3] Zhong Han Nezha's Demon Child Comes to Earth "and Adapted from Chinese Mythical Anime [J]. Shanghai Art Review, 2019 (05): 32-33.

[4] Xiao Lu The Traditional Aesthetic Style and Cultural Origin of Domestic Animation Movies [D]. East China Normal University, 2006.