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The Application of National Patterns in Online Game Art and Design—On the Formal Innovation of Traditional Cultural Content

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Abstract: *With the development of market economy and the influx of foreign culture, the sense of existence of traditional culture, such as ethnic patterns, which has existed in the daily life of the general public since ancient times, has gradually declined. Nowadays, with the impact of the contemporary network culture and the digital age, ethnic patterns are facing the situation that they may wither at any time. Surrounded by a variety of new technologies and new forms, online games, which are loved by young groups, provide practical application examples with reference value, which will help traditional culture re-enter the aesthetic vision of contemporary youth.*

Keywords: *National patterns; Online games; Innovation*

Introduction

As a combination of culture and art in ethnic areas, ethnic patterns mainly use graphics as the theme, and use symbolic techniques, homophony and cultural implication to draw images. It is a combination of decorative patterns and cultural meanings. With the evolution of history, ethnic patterns, as a symbol, carry regional national culture and reflect the emotional cognition and values of ethnic groups. Its application has long been popularized from the sacrificial ceremony in the temples to the people's daily life.

It is still facing the challenge of traditional culture and technology in our country. With the rapid development of urbanization and Internet popularization, the traditional culture represented by patterns is facing an irresistible fate. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the State Council has issued several communiques on the protection and development of traditional culture, which seems to reflect this embarrassing situation to some extent. This is undoubtedly an opportunity for development. Network technology promotes the development of global integration and the advent of digital era, and solves the problem of cross regional communication and timeliness of culture. The gradual maturity of interactive technology can even make people feel the charm of culture vividly.

When we are thinking about how patterns can rejuvenate with the help of new technologies and new media in the new era, online games, as a digital product, can easily enter our research field. Thanks to its natural strong interactivity, entertainment and social properties, online games are very qualified to become excellent cultural media. Traditional cultural elements such as national patterns have always been the inspiration source

of online game art design. Through its game content, online games have given new forms of expression and semantics to national patterns, making people re interested in traditional culture.

Application Cases of National Patterns in Foreign Online Game Art Design

Online games were born in the United States in the late 1960's, but it was not until the 1980s that the online games had the conditions to use all kinds of graphic elements with the development of computer graphics technology.

According to the data, the earliest application of national patterns in online games as visual elements can be traced back to the "forgotten country" in golden box series Games launched by American game company stormfront studios and publisher TSR in 1988 (Figure 1). A large number of medieval Germanic folk tales "the song of Nibelungen" are referenced in the game. Since then, the "dragon and dungeon" series based on the medieval European culture has gradually become a hot topic in the film and video game entertainment industry, and has become popular all over the world.

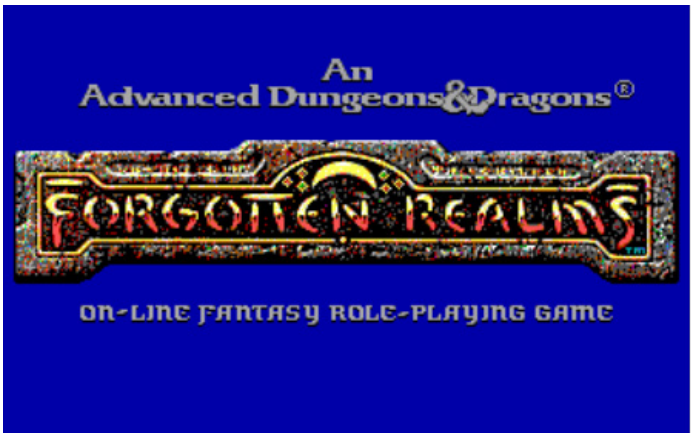

Figure 1. Welcome interface of the game "Forgotten Country"

In the 1990s, there are so many online game development companies that there are too many products to enumerate. In this paper, based on the factors of product quality, industry status and global influence, the author chooses only one game company to analyze, Blizzard, a world-famous online game production and distribution company. In addition to the reason why Blizzard is good at introducing its products in the whole world, it is also good at selecting the classic products in the world.

For example, the world of Warcraft, a large-scale multi player online role-playing game that is popular all over the world, has applied a large number of Maya cultural elements to create the classic "Troll" ethnic role image, and widely applied the Maya totem pattern to its game related role equipment (as shown in Figure 2) props and architectural design. As a result of the popularity of the "Maya" game, the role of "Maya" has become a popular topic in the world. For example, the role of Maya in the design of large-scale game (such as Maya culture) has been widely used in the world. To a certain extent, it promotes the development of tourism

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industry in Mexico and Honduras.



Figure 2. Patterns of the ancient Mayan Eagle God (Huitzilopochtli) (left) Ekilsson, the leader of Armani troll in world of Warcraft (right)

Chinese civilization with a long history will naturally enter the visual field of Blizzard game art design. In October 2012, world of Warcraft specially updated a game version with Chinese elements as the theme, "the mystery of Panda Man". Whether it's the newly launched game race panda, or the whole game map, pandaria is composed of panda English and root RIA. The visual elements in Panda land make Chinese players feel more cordial.

In the design details, the accurate application of various patterns reflects the manufacturer's research efforts. For example, a large number of thunder patterns are used in the Mogu mountain palace under the jurisdiction of Raytheon (enemy leader) to fit the set attributes of lightning (Figure 3), while in the player's main city area, a lot of auspicious cloud patterns are used to show good luck (Figure 4). In this version, Blizzard presents a world of Warcraft with strong Chinese color for players all over the world. In addition, with the background of the film watching boom of Kung Fu Panda, it has become a Chinese style in the field of cultural and entertainment consumption all over the world.



Figure 3. Application of thunder pattern and cloud pattern in the scene design of magic mountain palace in world of Warcraft

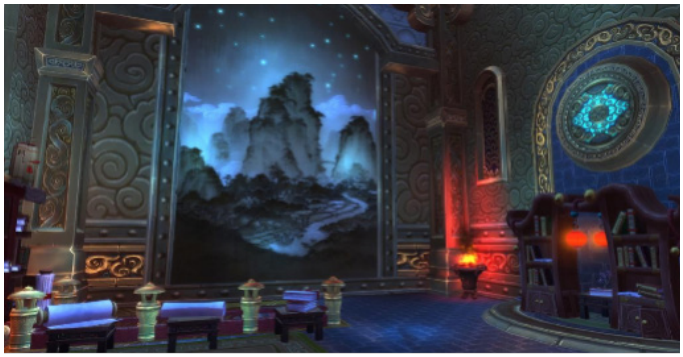

Figure 4. Application of auspicious cloud pattern in the scene design of the Seven Star hall in the main city of world of Warcraft

If the overall game style of "world of Warcraft" is inclined to the medieval style, which can not play an exemplary role in the current era background, then blizzard in its another future style of the first person shooting game Overwatch shows the possibility of cross era application of national patterns in game art design.

For example, in 2017, the game launched the role of "iron fist of doomsday". The game was set as the warrior of African ethnic group. Blizzard designed a set of appearance with the color of African tribal culture: War makeup, which was originally a texture coating applied to warriors, soldiers and adults in African tribes. Later, the tattoo was used in many occasions, such as religious ceremony, religious ceremony and so on. Many of these patterns can only be found in clothing and ornaments. By comparing with the general interpretation table of African tribal war makeup compiled by anthropologists, it can be found that the tattoos and clothing patterns on the appearance of "iron fist of doomsday" are based on which they show the protection and strength of gods. This is very appropriate to the original intention of the role setting and the background story (as shown in Figure 5). Similar to the art design which integrates traditional ethnic elements and future technology style, I believe many Chinese audiences have already experienced it in the Marvel film "the Black Panther", which was released in 2018. From the perspective of development and release time nodes, the game is once again ahead of the film and television.



Figure 5. The appearance of the iron fist character's costume in Overwatch (left) and the common interpretation table of African tribal war makeup (right)

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In Japan, a neighboring country in Asia, the traditional Japanese patterns represented by family patterns have long been popular all over the world with its popular animation culture. However, in the online games developed by Japan, there are few representative patterns, so I will not repeat them here.

Local Practice of Ethnic Patterns in the Application of Online Game Art Design

Although the development of online games in China started relatively late, relying on the huge user market and considerable economic development speed, the output value of the whole industry has leapt to the second place in the world, second only to the United States. However, due to the influence of technological level and capital profit seeking, the types and themes of domestic online games are relatively single. The application of national elements is based on the theme of ancient martial arts. For example, "Chinese Paladin 3", "Demi-Gods and Semi Devils", "Jade Dynasty" and so on.

Most of the fine arts design of domestic high-quality online games follow the traditional Chinese standard or follow the art design of Hong Kong martial arts movies. On this basis, some modern elements are integrated and a strong art team is used to redesign. For example, " Chinese Paladin 3" produced by Xishanju production company of Jinshan software is deeply loved by female players all over the world due to its aesthetic appearance design and unique Oriental Aesthetics (as shown in Figure 6), which has become the front door recruitment of domestic online games to a certain extent.



Figure 6. The role of Wudang sect in Chinese Paladin 3

But we can feel through the actual experience that compared with the fine arts design of foreign high-quality online games, there is still a big gap in the details of domestic works, such as the application of patterns is not too particular.

In the same game "Chinese Paladin 3", the same cloud patterns (even regardless of auspicious clouds or rolling clouds) are displayed on the characters of various sects. Although the cloud patterns represent the overall aesthetic orientation of the Chinese nation in some aspects, they are not careful when they are used in such a rampant way. Undoubtedly, they are used as purely decorative patterns. It is separated from the cultural implication and becomes thin.

In addition to these high-quality games, there are a large number of products that are poorly made in terms of visual aesthetics and content development and are only for simple and crude pursuit of economic benefits, including some works in the forefront of the game list for a long time, such as journey. Among these products, the existence of patterns is only to increase the appearance complexity of armor weapons. At present, the aesthetic level of Chinese cultural consumer groups is low and single, and the income of this kind of products is quite high, but it is difficult to go abroad, and it is more anxious to promote the internationalization of local culture.

The Crux of Form Innovation of Traditional Culture Content

To solve the problem of traditional culture development in China, the author thinks that we should divide it into two levels. Only by solving one level can we get to the other level.

The first level is the problem of inheritance. The basic solution to the problem lies in fully understanding and mastering the spiritual connotation and basic forms of traditional culture through theoretical study and practical operation. What are the basic categories of patterns? What are the similarities and differences of the same kind of patterns in different national cultures? These may be common for experts and scholars who study ethnic patterns. However, when we apply these patterns in the design and in the specific work practice, we undertake the obligation of inheritance. It is very important to realize the awareness and attitude of this responsibility. Because cultural heritage is in every specific application. The work of experts is not just that of scholars.

The second level is the problem of development. To solve the problem of inheritance can only talk about development. Of course, form is important, but without the understanding of cultural connotation, it is easy to make mistakes, which is particularly prominent in the use of patterns. For example, the Wanzi pattern “ 卍 ”, which originated in western Asia and was introduced into China through Buddhism, is a global popular auspicious pattern. It is usually used to mean "eternal, firm and unchangeable". However, some unskilled designers can't distinguish left-handed and right-handed, and mistakenly use the swastika of Nazi logo“ 卐 ”, which has caused bad public opinion and social influence. This kind of scandal not only happens occasionally in the design circle, but also in the entertainment circle.

Common Digital Processing Technology in the Process of Innovation of Traditional Cultural Forms

In the era of digital media, traditional cultural innovation is inseparable from "digitization". At present, a wide variety of digital production equipment, software programs, intelligent media terminals and digital

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platforms provide researchers and workers engaged in the innovation of traditional cultural forms with rich tools,Therefore, the author tries to summarize the common technologies and platforms in the market from three aspects: image recording or generation, image processing and production, image storage and display.

First, image recording or generation: traditional devices such as cameras and cameras have long had digital versions, which are also the most commonly used equipment in field investigation and material collection activities; many smart phones can also play the same role when the accuracy requirements are not particularly high, and they also benefit from the infrastructure construction of China's communication network,It greatly improves the convenience of transmission and sharing across geographic and time zones.

Second, image processing and production: when the scale and pixel effects of photos do not meet the creation requirements, computer software such as Photoshop, Lightroom, etc.; illustrator and CorelDRAW are used for graphic production; and Cinema 4D, Maya, 3DMAX, etc. are used for reproduction to obtain the image graphics that meet the target requirements. Even the dynamic effect of image graphics generation.

Third, image storage and display: as a personal storage device, mobile hard disk does not need more introduction. Cloud storage is a new favorite in the Internet era. Basically, cloud storage on the market needs to pay to use larger storage space and more optimized transmission function. Personal cloud storage service represented by Dropbox is a prominent representative of the development of public cloud storage. The outstanding representatives in China are Baidu Netdisk, Kingsoft disk, 115 network disk, DBank, 360YunPan, Sina micro disk, etc., they can provide a lot of file storage space, and keep each customer's storage and application independent and private. As long as there is a network, they can be stored and downloaded anytime and anywhere.

The general office of the CPC Central Committee and the general office of the State Council in 2017 No. 6 "opinions on the implementation of the project of inheriting and developing excellent traditional Chinese culture" provides an excellent annotation for this article: "adhere to creative transformation and innovative development, adhere to the dialectical materialism and historical materialism, and uphold the objective, scientific, courteous attitude. We should take its essence and discard its dross, sublate inheritance, transform and innovate. We should not go back to the past and simply deny it. We should constantly give new era connotation and modern expression forms, and constantly supplement, expand and perfect it, so that the most basic cultural gene of the Chinese nation can adapt to the contemporary culture and coordinate with the modern society. Only in this way can the traditional culture of our country continue to maintain vitality and highlight the cultural connotation of the Chinese nation in the new era.

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