

Study on the Application of Traditional Elements in Modern Paint in Chinese New Year Wood-block Paint

Mo Liu, Baharudin Bin Mohd Arus

City Graduate School, Faculty of Creative Industries (FCI), City University Malaysia, Petaling Jaya, 46100, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract: The paper discusses the application of traditional elements in woodblock prints in contemporary painting as well as the difficulties and optimization strategies. Firstly, the probability and current situation of the combination of traditional elements and modern aesthetics are described, and then many problems such as the block of traditional culture, the test of contemporary conversion, and its theoretical and practical derailment appear in the practical activities of contemporary painting are elaborated. In response to the above problems, enhancement strategies are given such as upgrading traditional culture and education, promoting innovation and integration, and strengthening the integration of theory and practice. The paper hopes to promote the effective use and inheritance of traditional elements of woodblock prints in contemporary painting and development through in-depth research and practical exploration, providing new ideas and design inspiration for artistic creation in China.

Keywords: Chinese New Year Wood-block Paint; Traditional Elements; Modern Painting; Cultural Heritage.

1. Introduction

As an important part of China's traditional culture, woodblock prints contain rich historical content and cultural value. The unique pattern design, color and technique not only reflect the pursuit of ancient human aesthetics and cultural concepts, but also provide valuable material content and design inspiration for contemporary art creation. Accompanied by economic globalization and modernization, how to reasonably integrate the traditional elements of woodblock prints into modern paintings has become an important issue worthy of in-depth analysis. This study will discuss the combination of traditional elements and modern aesthetics, difficulties and optimization strategies, in order to provide new perspectives and ideas for the creation of contemporary art.

2. Characteristics of Traditional Elements in Woodblock Prints

2.1. Artistic Characteristics of Woodblock Prints

As a national treasure of traditional folk art in China, the artistic style of woodblock prints deeply reflects the cultural heritage and aesthetic pursuit of Chinese culture. In woodblock prints, traditional cultural elements are given colorful artistic expression and vitality, showing a distinctive artistic charm. First of all, woodblock prints pursue simplicity and tension in photographic composition, with obvious sense of hierarchy. The reasonable layout of the picture is usually balanced and even, the curves are smooth and clear, and the rigidity and flexibility are combined, which not only highlights the delicate carving skills, but also reflects the rough and bold artistic style, this kind of composition method not only makes the picture have visual impact, but also contains deep cultural value and aesthetic interest [1].

Secondly, the woodblock prints are beautiful and contrasting in color. Artists skillfully use red, yellow, blue, green and other bright colors to create a festive atmosphere of joy and good fortune. At the same time, the comparison and harmony of colors also reflect the true meaning of "using

color to convey the spirit" in traditional Chinese aesthetics, making the picture more vivid and exciting. Secondly, woodblock prints have a wide range of subjects and clear themes. There are not only reflecting daily life, historical figures, opera stories and mythological stories, but also closely around the auspicious themes of fortune, wealth, longevity and happiness. This theme not only shows the long history and rich folk culture of Chinese culture, but also carries people's desire and pursuit of a better life [2].

2.2. Refinement and Classification of Traditional Elements

In the rich cultural heritage of woodblock prints, the extraction and classification of traditional elements is the key to understanding their distinctive aesthetic value and cultural connotation. Such elements not only carry rich and diversified historical contents, but also fully embody the wisdom and creativity of folk handicrafts. First of all, as the most obvious traditional element in woodblock prints, the patterns have many varieties and deep meanings. Such as the lotus flower symbolizes purity and elegance, the wind and water symbolize the general high school in the imperial examinations, and the spider and the longevity peach mean longevity and well-being respectively. This pattern design, based on meticulous carving techniques, is given a vivid image and in-depth meaning, becoming a cultural symbol connecting the past and the present.

Secondly, the line technique is another important traditional element of woodblock prints. Its lines are smooth and natural, strong and soft, which not only show the exquisite skills of jade carvers, but also reflect the core value of "modeling by lines" in traditional Chinese art aesthetics [3]. According to the changes in the size, curvature and affinity of the lines, the artist is able to accurately outline the expressions of the characters, the dynamics of the animals and the distance hierarchy of their landscapes, so that the picture is full of dynamism and vitality. Ultimately, the refinement and categorization of cultural symbols exposes the deeper cultural connotations behind the woodblock prints. These symbols include, but are not limited to, myths, historical allusions, folk cultures, etc. They not only broaden the specific content of

the woodblock prints' story subjects, but also reflect the values, national religions and aesthetic concepts of the society at that time. Through in-depth analysis and classification of these cultural symbols, we can understand the cultural connotation and historical significance of woodblock prints in a more comprehensive way.

2.3. Integration of Traditional Elements and Modern Aesthetics

When exploring the topic of fusion of traditional elements and modern aesthetics in woodblock prints, it is not difficult to find that this fusion process is not only a cross-border dialogue of art forms, but also an epochal reshaping of cultural values [4]. Traditional elements, such as auspicious patterns, symbolic color combinations and unique line techniques in woodblock prints, have been given new vitality and expression in the modern aesthetic context. Through in-depth study and refinement of traditional elements, modern artists skillfully integrate them into the creation of modern paintings. On the one hand, they retain the essence and characteristics of the traditional elements, such as making use of the principle of color contrast in woodblock prints to create modern works that are both vibrant and harmonious; or drawing on the wisdom of their composition and layout to achieve balance and tension in the picture. On the other hand, artists also actively introduce modern aesthetic concepts and expression methods, such as using abstract thinking, deconstructionism and other modern art theories to reconstruct and innovate the traditional elements, so as to make them more in line with the contemporary aesthetic needs and aesthetic habits.

This kind of integration not only enriches the expression language and creative themes of modern painting, but also promotes the inheritance and development of traditional culture. Through the perspective and methods of modern art, traditional elements can be presented to the world in a new look, stimulating people's interest in traditional culture and attention [5]. At the same time, this integration also promotes the diversified development of artistic creation, injecting new vitality and inspiration into modern art. Therefore, the fusion of traditional elements and modern aesthetics in woodblock prints is not only the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture, but also the positive exploration and practice of the development direction of modern art. It shows the infinite possibilities and broad space of artistic creation, and also provides new perspectives and thoughts for us to understand the relationship between tradition and modernity, the East and the West.

3. Problems of Using Traditional Elements in Woodblock Prints in Modern Painting

3.1. Disconnection of Cultural Inheritance

In exploring the application of traditional elements in woodblock prints in contemporary painting, the problem of traditional culture has become a topic that cannot be ignored. This fault is mainly manifested in the shallow acceptance of traditional elements, fragmentation in the application process, and the lack of a systematic promotion system. First of all, with the change of time, the characteristics of traditional culture contained in woodblock prints have gradually faded out of people's sight, resulting in the fact that when modern

artists use their traditional elements, they usually only stay at the surface level of pattern imitation and color references, and are unable to deeply understand the underlying cultural connotations and meanings. This kind of shallow understanding hinders the deeper application and innovative expression of traditional elements in contemporary paintings.

Secondly, the natural environment of contemporary painting focuses on individuality and randomness, which often leads to the isolation and fragmentation of traditional elements in the process of application. Artists may also choose to lay or reconstruct a certain actual pattern or color fragment, ignoring the interrelationship and coordination between traditional elements. This type of fragmented application reduces the overall expressiveness and humanistic value of traditional elements in contemporary painting. Ultimately, the broken block of traditional culture is mainly reflected in the lack of systematic promotion mechanism. At the present stage, the workload for the protection and inheritance of traditional aesthetics, such as woodblock prints, depends heavily on the diligence of a very few experts and scholars, and lacks the application of a wide range of social participation in the systematic software of the educational system. This leads to the fact that the application of traditional elements in contemporary paintings usually lacks continuity and depth, and is unable to form an effective transmission chain of traditional culture.

3.2. Challenges of Modern Transformation

In the practice of integrating the traditional elements of woodblock prints into modern paintings, the test of contemporary transformation has become a problem to be solved. This test is not only related to the crossing of artistic genres and language expressions, but also involves profound changes in cultural contexts and aesthetic concepts. First of all, there is a significant difference between traditional elements and modern painting in terms of expression techniques and styles. While woodblock prints are famous for their unique woodblock technique, contrasting colors and metaphorical colorful patterns, modern paintings pay more attention to individual expression, abstract thinking and the use of diversified materials. Therefore, how to naturally integrate the traditional elements into the management system of modern painting and prevent rigid grafting and imitation is the main difficulty in the process of contemporary transformation.

Secondly, the change of cultural context also brings challenges for contemporary transformation. Woodblock prints are an important part of traditional culture, and the cultural and artistic soil layer, social status and aesthetic concepts behind them are significantly different from modern social consciousness. This phenomenon prompts the presentation of traditional elements in contemporary paintings to be considered more carefully in order to prevent cultural and artistic misinterpretation and aesthetic stigma. Ultimately, the diversity and constant change of contemporary aesthetic concepts also puts higher demands on the modernization and transformation of traditional elements. Contemporary audience's acceptance of aesthetics and aesthetic norms are becoming more and more diversified, and they not only expect to see the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture, but also demand that the writings meet the contemporary aesthetic trends and spiritual needs. Therefore, how to guarantee the essence of traditional elements and at the same time, give it a new era of connotation and aesthetic

value is the key test in the whole process of contemporary transformation.

3.3. Disconnection between Theory and Practice

In the process of exploring how the traditional elements of woodblock prints can be effectively integrated into modern painting, the disconnection between theory and practice is particularly prominent, which not only restricts the innovative application of traditional elements in the field of modern art, but also affects the in-depth excavation of the traditional value of woodblock prints and inheritance. Theoretically, scholars have analyzed and interpreted the traditional elements in woodblock prints, revealing the cultural significance and aesthetic value behind their patterns, colors and techniques. These research results provide rich theoretical support and creative inspiration for the application of traditional elements in modern paintings. However, at the practical level, due to the complexity of the environment in which modern painting is created, the diversity of artists' personal styles, and the variability of market demand, it is often difficult to directly translate these theoretical results into concrete creative practice.

On the one hand, artists may face technical difficulties in the process of creation, such as how to transform the unique techniques of woodblock prints into modern painting language, and how to maintain the essence of traditional elements while giving them new contemporary features. On the other hand, the market and the audience have different acceptance and aesthetic expectations for traditional elements, which requires artists to consider not only the purity of artistic expression, but also the market feedback and audience demand. Therefore, the disconnection between theory and practice requires that in the process of promoting the modern transformation of traditional elements, we should not only strengthen theoretical research and academic discussions, but also pay attention to the accumulation and summarization of practical experience, and establish a set of effective transformation mechanisms combining theory and practice. At the same time, we should encourage cross-border cooperation and communication between artists and scholars, and jointly explore the innovative application path of traditional elements in modern painting, so as to realize the deep integration and common development of tradition and modernity.

4. Optimization Countermeasures for the Use of Traditional Elements in Woodblock Prints in Modern Painting

4.1. Strengthening Cultural Inheritance and Education

In view of the cultural inheritance faults of traditional elements in woodblock prints in modern paintings, strengthening cultural inheritance and education has become a crucial optimization countermeasure. This countermeasure aims to fundamentally enhance the understanding and respect of the public and art creators for the traditional elements of woodblock prints, and to promote their effective integration and innovative development in modern paintings. First of all, the education system should play a key role in integrating woodblock prints and their traditional elements into art

education and cultural programs. Through systematic curriculum and teaching activities, students can not only master the basic techniques and theoretical knowledge of woodblock prints, but also deeply understand the cultural connotations and symbolism behind them. This can not only provide rich materials and inspiration for modern painting creation, but also cultivate a group of artistic talents with profound cultural background.

Secondly, it is also crucial to strengthen cultural inheritance and popularization at the social level. Through organizing various forms of activities such as exhibitions, lectures and workshops, the unique charm and artistic value of woodblock prints can be shown to the public, and the public's awareness of and interest in its traditional elements can be raised. At the same time, cooperation and exchanges among artists, scholars and cultural organizations should be encouraged to jointly promote the inheritance and innovation of the traditional elements of woodblock prints. In addition, it should also focus on the practical application and case study of traditional elements in modern painting creation. Through the analysis and interpretation of specific works, the integration path between traditional elements and modern painting techniques and aesthetic concepts should be explored, so as to provide artists with creative experience and inspiration. This can not only enrich the expressive language and stylistic characteristics of modern painting, but also further promote the inheritance and development of traditional elements of woodblock prints in the field of contemporary art.

4.2. Promote Innovation and Integration

When optimizing the use of traditional elements in woodblock prints in modern painting, promoting innovation and integration is one of the core strategies, aiming at breaking the boundaries between tradition and modernity and stimulating new artistic vitality. This strategy requires artists to try new expressive methods, creative concepts and material media on the basis of in-depth understanding and respect for traditional elements, so as to realize the organic fusion of tradition and modernity. First of all, the artists should actively explore the point of compatibility between traditional elements and modern aesthetic concepts, and deconstruct and reorganize the patterns, colors, techniques and other elements in woodblock prints, giving them new forms and meanings. Through abstraction, symbolization and other techniques, the traditional elements are transformed into the language symbols of modern painting, so that they can be revitalized in the modern art context.

Secondly, cross-border cooperation and diversified integration is an important way to promote innovation and integration. Artists can cooperate with creators, designers, scientists and technicians from other fields to introduce different artistic concepts, technical means and material media, providing new possibilities for the modern transformation of traditional elements. For example, combining digital media art, installation art and other modern art forms to expand the expression space and dimension of traditional elements. Finally, encouraging experimental creation and exploratory practice is the key to stimulating innovation and vitality. Artists should be brave enough to try unknown fields, constantly challenge themselves, and capture inspiration and materials in life with an open mind and keen observation. Through repeated experimentation and practice, they should gradually form creative styles and expression methods with personal characteristics, and contribute new

strength to the modern use of traditional elements.

4.3. Strengthen the Combination of Theory and Practice

When optimizing the use of traditional elements in woodblock prints in modern paintings, strengthening the close integration of theory and practice is an indispensable part. This countermeasure aims to promote the effective integration and innovative development of traditional elements in modern painting by guiding the precise implementation of practical operation through in-depth theoretical research. First of all, theoretical research should focus on the in-depth excavation and analysis of the traditional elements of woodblock prints to reveal their cultural connotation, artistic characteristics and potential connection with modern aesthetics. Through interdisciplinary research methods, such as art, history, sociology and other perspectives of the comprehensive use of building a comprehensive and in-depth theoretical framework, to provide solid theoretical support for practice.

Secondly, the practical operation needs to closely rely on the theoretical research results, and transform the theoretical insights into concrete creative guidance. Artists should fully absorb the essence of theoretical research in the process of creation, combine personal creative experience and artistic feelings, and flexibly utilize traditional elements in the creation and practice of modern painting. At the same time, the theoretical framework should be constantly adjusted and improved through practical feedback, forming a benign interaction between theory and practice. In addition, strengthening academic exchange and cooperation is also an important way to promote the combination of theory and practice. Through the organization of seminars, workshops, exhibitions and other activities, we can build a bridge between theoretical researchers and artists, and promote the collision of ideas and inspiration between the two sides. This can not only promote the in-depth development of theoretical research, but also provide richer creative resources and

sources of inspiration for practical operation.

5. Conclusion

Through an in-depth analysis of the use of traditional elements in woodblock prints in modern painting, it reveals the problems it faces, such as cultural inheritance faults, modern transformation challenges, and the disconnection between theory and practice. In response to these problems, optimized countermeasures such as strengthening cultural inheritance and education, promoting innovation and integration, and strengthening the combination of theory and practice are proposed. The implementation of these countermeasures will help promote the effective use and inheritance of traditional elements of woodblock prints in modern painting, and inject new vitality and creativity into modern artistic creation. At the same time, the article also emphasizes the importance of the integration of tradition and modernity, and calls on artists and scholars to be innovative on the basis of respecting tradition, and jointly promote the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture.

References

- [1] Zhang Yuexin,Zhang Yaxin. Integration of Chinese Traditional Cultural Elements in Pingyang Woodblock Prints[J]. *Imago Cultural Creation*, 2022(9):69-71.
- [2] DU Jie, WANG Kaiyu. Application of auspicious elements of Fengxiang woodblock prints in silk scarf design[J]. *Wool Textile Science and Technology*, 2023, 51(7):69-75.
- [3] Li Si-Rui. Application of peach blossom woodblock print elements in silk scarf design[J]. *Western Leather*, 2023, 45(5):103-106.
- [4] Zhang Dayu,DU Haitao. On the influence of modern painting art on the visual expression of food packaging design[J]. *Food and Machinery*, 2023, 39(12):234-234.
- [5] Sun Wei-Nan. The significance of modern painting form innovation for mural creation[J]. *Art Dazhan*, 2023(7):49-51.