

# ***Animation Production Contributes to the Innovation and Development of Intangible Oil Paper Umbrella Culture***

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**Abstract:** This study explores using animation to enhance the cultural promotion and innovation of intangible heritage oil paper umbrellas. These umbrellas, rich in history and craftsmanship, face modern challenges like market decline and skill inheritance issues. The research seeks to offer fresh insights and strategies for cultural preservation and innovation through animation. It starts by examining the cultural significance and current challenges of oil paper umbrellas, such as waning market interest and a lack of youth engagement with tradition. The study then discusses the role of animation in promoting intangible culture, highlighting its potential to raise awareness, engage the youth, and showcase traditional Chinese charm. The research suggests innovative promotional ideas like animation series, interactive platforms, and cultural events, focusing on multimedia, storytelling, and technology. It also proposes new concepts like cultural element extraction, cross-industry collaboration, and digital presentation to highlight the umbrella's unique appeal and facilitate its promotion. The conclusion emphasizes that animation is a powerful tool for cultural promotion and preservation, with the potential to revitalize the oil paper umbrella culture in the modern era. It anticipates future developments in market reach, education, cultural exchange, and social engagement, stressing the need for ongoing innovation in cultural inheritance. Overall, the study aims to provide a theoretical foundation and practical guidance for the preservation and innovative development of the oil paper umbrella culture, fostering integration with modern society and promoting sustainable cultural growth.

**Keywords:** Animation Production, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Oil Paper Umbrellas, Cultural Promotion, Inheritance Challenges

## **1. Introduction**

In theoretical significance, this study delves into the heart of cultural heritage preservation and innovation, particularly focusing on the role of animation production as a catalyst for the revitalization of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The exploration of animation's potential to breathe new life into traditional narratives and practices is not merely an academic pursuit; it is a venture that seeks to bridge the divide between ancient wisdom and contemporary sensibilities. By examining case studies and employing qualitative and quantitative research methods, this study will uncover the theoretical underpinnings that support the fusion of time-honored cultural elements with cutting-edge animation techniques. The insights gained are expected to contribute to a robust framework that encourages a

symbiotic relationship between tradition and modernity, offering a comprehensive theoretical toolkit for future endeavors in cultural preservation and innovation.

The practical significance of this study is manifold, particularly in the realm of cultural outreach and education. Animation, with its universal appeal and narrative power, serves as an ideal medium for engaging audiences across the demographic spectrum. By harnessing the emotive and visual strengths of animation, the stories and histories of the oil paper umbrella can be retold in a manner that is both accessible and captivating, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers. This approach not only fosters a deeper appreciation for ICH among younger audiences but also equips them with the knowledge and inspiration to become advocates for cultural preservation within their own social circles.

Moreover, the strategic use of animation in cultural promotion can yield tangible outcomes in terms of cultural exchange and diplomacy. By presenting the oil paper umbrella through the universal language of animation, this study aims to showcase the richness of Chinese cultural heritage on a global stage. This, in turn, can foster a greater international understanding and appreciation of China's contributions to world culture, strengthening cultural soft power and global cultural diversity.

The study will also explore the integration of educational curricula with animated content, proposing innovative pedagogical strategies that can be implemented in schools and cultural institutions. These strategies will be designed to educate the next generation about the importance of ICH, while simultaneously nurturing their creativity and critical thinking skills.

Furthermore, this research will investigate the commercial viability of animated cultural products, examining market trends and consumer behaviors to identify opportunities for sustainable economic models that support the continued production of culturally rich animated content.

## 2. Based on literature review

In the field of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) communication and promotion, there is a growing interest in both the academic and practical fields. This paper reviews a series of literatures on cultural propaganda, animation production, ICH inheritance, and innovative communication methods, aiming to provide a comprehensive perspective for research in this field. Lu J. investigated the communication effects of Lingnan culture promotion videos on social media through a multimodal critical discourse analysis approach, emphasizing the importance of visual and auditory elements in cultural communication [1]. Li X. explored the World War II period Chinese militia's cultural propaganda function and influence, providing a perspective for understanding the role of cultural propaganda within a specific historical period [2]. Zhang Weidong deeply analyzes the practical operation of animation production enterprises in terms of revenue and cost recognition, providing an economic perspective on the application of animation in cultural propaganda [3]. The dialogue between Wang Xinbin and Zheng Xiaoli emphasized the key role of innovative thinking in the inheritance of non-heritage culture [4]. Yixin discusses how China Mobile builds a "digital cornerstone" for the construction of a strong cultural country by observing integrity and innovation, showing the important role of digital means in the dissemination of non-heritage culture [5]. Xiao Nan and Wen Jing emphasized the importance of innovation in cultural propaganda in Yingkou Daily and Shaoguan Daily respectively [6] [7], and Liu Jiachen and Wang Huiru analyzed the realistic dilemma of the cultural communication of non-legacy of wushu in the era of the new media and the path of innovation and development [8]. Lu Yan, Chen Huanhuan and Zhao Zisong studied MG and stop-motion animation, the artistic language of ink animation, and the application of MG animation in specific cultural propaganda [9][10][11], respectively. Huang Zhaoqi provides practical guidance for the combination of non-heritage culture and tourism [12]. An article in The People's Servant reviewed cultural promotion during the Anti-Japanese War [13], while Inside Washington's FDA Week discussed the World Health Organization's hesitancy to promote ICH documentation [14].

Taken together, the above literature shows that the dissemination and promotion of ICH is a multidimensional and interdisciplinary field. From history to modern times, from traditional media to digital platforms, the application of innovative thinking and technology plays an increasingly important role in cultural promotion. As a powerful visual communication tool, animation shows great potential in the inheritance and promotion of non-heritage culture. The use of digital means and social media platforms has provided new ways for the wide dissemination of non-heritage culture. However, challenges in the process, such as cost control, popularization of technology application, and innovativeness of cultural promotion, need to be further explored in future research to promote the sustainable development and effective dissemination of NRH culture.

### **3. Intangible cultural heritage oil-paper umbrella history and cultural development**

As a distinguished element of Chinese intangible cultural heritage, the oil paper umbrella stands as a testament to the ingenuity and aesthetic sensibilities of ancient Chinese civilization, with a history that extends over two millennia. The evolution of this remarkable artifact reflects the transformative journey of materials and techniques, starting from the use of animal skins and silks in its early forms to the advent of paper umbrellas during the Eastern Han Dynasty. The craft reached a pinnacle of sophistication in the Tang and Song Dynasties, where the oil paper umbrella became not only a symbol of artisanal excellence but also an integral part of Chinese cultural identity.

The practicality of the oil paper umbrella in shielding individuals from the elements is matched by the depth of its cultural symbolism. The bamboo ribs of the umbrella are emblematic of resilience and continuous improvement, as the phrase "rising" or "ascending" in Chinese is phonetically similar to "bamboo". This symbolism is further enriched by the round shape of the umbrella's canopy, which represents unity, harmony, and the ideal of a family gathering, or "reunion". These attributes have made the oil paper umbrella a poignant symbol in Chinese culture, resonating with values of prosperity and familial bonds.

Beyond its symbolic meanings, the oil paper umbrella has also been interwoven into the fabric of Chinese social customs and rituals. In traditional weddings, the appearance of an oil paper umbrella is often seen as an auspicious sign, symbolizing the wish for a couple to "have a son" and ensuring the continuity of the family lineage. This is deeply rooted in the cultural significance attached to the propagation of descendants and the importance of familial succession.

Furthermore, the oil paper umbrella extends its cultural reach into the spiritual and supernatural realms. In folk beliefs, the red oil paper umbrella is believed to possess the power to ward off evil spirits and bring about safety and good fortune. This belief has led to the incorporation of the oil paper umbrella in various ceremonial practices, where it serves as a protective talisman against misfortune.

The cultural significance of the oil paper umbrella is further underscored by its presence in Chinese mythology and folklore. Tales such as the legendary love story of the White Snake, where the oil paper umbrella played a pivotal role in the fateful encounter between the characters, have immortalized the umbrella as a symbol of love and commitment. This narrative has been passed down through generations, reinforcing the cultural connotations associated with the oil paper umbrella.

In the modern era, the cultural relevance of the oil paper umbrella is being revitalized through various forms of media and artistic expression. The integration of its iconic imagery into animation, film, and literature serves to introduce this ancient artifact to new audiences, ensuring that its legacy endures in the collective cultural consciousness.

### **4. Strategies to boost national development and innovation**

The protection and innovation of intangible cultural heritage is an important part of the national cultural development strategy, which is not only related to the inheritance of national culture, but also

the key to promote the cultural industry and enhance the national soft power. As a representative of China's intangible cultural heritage, the protection and innovation of oil paper umbrella is particularly important. The promotion of the oil paper umbrella culture through animation production can effectively enhance the national cultural confidence, promote the development of cultural industry, and then enhance the national soft power. To this end, we have formulated a series of strategies, including policy support, educational promotion and technological innovation.

#### **4.1. In terms of policy support**

The government will formulate relevant policies to provide the necessary financial and policy support for non-heritage cultural innovation to ensure the smooth progress of animation production and other innovative projects. For educational promotion, we will integrate non-heritage culture into the education system, cultivate young people's interest in and knowledge of traditional culture through school education, so that the oil-paper umbrella culture can be passed on and carried forward among the younger generation.

#### **4.2. In terms of technological innovation**

We will utilize modern information technology, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), to enhance the interactivity and experience of the oil-paper umbrella culture. Through these technologies, users can have a more intuitive understanding of the production process and cultural background of oil paper umbrellas, and increase their awareness of and interest in traditional culture.

#### **4.3. In terms of publicity programs and project features**

We will carry out diversified publicity and promotional activities by combining the cultural characteristics and modern aesthetics of oil paper umbrellas. The production of the animation series will tell the history, production process and cultural stories of oil paper umbrellas through the form of animated short films, attracting the audience's attention and conveying the deep connotations of the oil paper umbrella culture with vivid visual effects and fascinating narratives.

### **5. Research on innovation points and features**

Through the multimedia integration strategy, we skillfully combine animation, music, literature and other art forms to show the rich connotation and artistic charm of the oil paper umbrella culture in an all-round way. This integration not only enriches the expression of the oil-paper umbrella culture, but also broadens its dissemination channels, so that the traditional culture can be presented to the public in a more vivid and three-dimensional way.

#### **5.1. In terms of storytelling**

We tell the historical stories and folklore behind the oil-paper umbrellas through animation, combining the essence of traditional culture with modern narrative techniques to enhance the attractiveness and infectiousness of cultural communication. This kind of narrative can better attract the audience's attention and stimulate their interest and curiosity in the culture of oil paper umbrellas.

For the application of technology, we use the latest animation techniques, such as 3D animation and CG special effects, to enhance the expressiveness and visual impact of the oil-paper umbrella culture. The application of these technologies not only improves the artistic level of the animation works, but also provides more possibilities for the innovative expression of the oil-paper umbrella culture.

## 5.2. In terms of new ideas and innovative solutions

We put forward the concept of cultural elements extraction, applying the patterns, colors and other cultural elements of oil paper umbrellas to modern product design, realizing the organic combination of traditional culture and modern aesthetics. Meanwhile, through cross-border cooperation, we cooperate with other industries, such as fashion and tourism, to develop cross-border products and experiential programs on the theme of oil paper umbrellas, which broadens the application fields and market space of oil paper umbrella culture.

## 5.3. In terms of digital display

We set up a digital display platform for oil paper umbrella culture, and use the Internet and mobile terminals for wide dissemination. This digital display not only improves the accessibility and convenience of the oil paper umbrella culture, but also provides a new channel and platform for the dissemination of traditional culture.

## 6. Conclusion

This study concludes that animation production, as a modern means of communication, has a significant contribution to the promotion and inheritance of the intangible cultural heritage of oil paper umbrellas. Animation can not only vividly reproduce the historical situation and production process of oil paper umbrellas, but also convey the cultural value and aesthetic characteristics of oil paper umbrellas to a wider audience through creative expression. Through the dissemination of animation, the story and symbolism of oil-paper umbrellas can transcend the limitations of time and space, and stimulate the audience's emotional resonance and cultural identity, thus enhancing the vitality and influence of this cultural heritage.

With the continuous progress of science and technology, such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), 3D printing and other technology applications, will provide more possibilities for the inheritance and development of the oil paper umbrella culture. These technologies can make the oil paper umbrella culture in a more three-dimensional and interactive way to present, enhance the user's sense of immersion and experience, so that the traditional culture in the modern technology with the assistance of a new luster. Oil paper umbrella culture is expected to develop a broader market space under the promotion of animation and other new media. Through the combination with fashion, home, tourism and other industries, the oil paper umbrella culture can be transformed into diversified products and experiences to meet the needs of modern consumers for personalization and culture, and realize the diversified development of the cultural industry.

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