

Digital Narrative and Design Practice of the Sixth Panchen Pilgrimage Event

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Abstract: *This study puts forward an activation path based on digital narrative for the cognitive fault problem faced in contemporary communication of the major historical event of the Sixth Panchen Pimajj. Based on the historical basis of Panchendong's behavior in 1780, the research innovatively integrates paper-cutting art and digital technologies such as naked-eye 3D to build a complete practical framework of "history combing - narrative design - technology realization - value sublimation". With the help of interactive design and naked-eye 3D technology, the multi-dimensional experience of "conspicuous-touchable-immersible" has been further created. It aims to explore how to transform historical heritage into perceptible and interactive cultural memories through digital translation, so as to provide a new narrative paradigm and emotional motivation for building a sense of community of the Chinese nation.*

Keywords: *Sixth Panchen; Digital Narrative; Community Consciousness of the Chinese Nation; Intangible Cultural Heritage*

1. Introduction

In the contemporary context of cultural inheritance and national identity construction, events such as the Sixth Panchen Hajj, which carries great historical significance, have created a significant communication gap with the public, especially young groups, because of their heavy historical materials and single presentation form[1]. How to break through the limitations of traditional texts and static exhibitions and inject new vitality into historical narratives has become a key research topic in the field of cultural heritage digitization.

This study takes the real historical event of the sixth Panchen's pilgrimage to the Qianlong Emperor in 1780 as the core object[2,3]. It is not only a model of ethnic relations in the Qing Dynasty, but also contains a rich layer of political mutual trust, cultural mutual learning and emotional integration. In terms of artistic media, this article selects national non-heritage paper cutting as the core translation language, because it has both cross-cultural affinity and digital plasticity; in terms of technical path, it focuses on two-dimensional paper-cutting animation translation, naked-eye 3D and interactive design to achieve immersive reproduction of historical scenes.

This research aims to systematically explore the effective path of digital narrative in activating historical memory and promoting cultural identity through a specific interdisciplinary design practice. This article adopts the case design method and follows the logical framework of "historical combing-narrative design-technical practice-theoretical sublimation". It strives not only to complete an artistic creation, but also hopes to provide a methodology for the digital revitalization of similar cultural heritage, and contribute to the construction of the sense of community of the Chinese nation from the field of design. This paper proposes an innovative plan for practical application and research promotion.

2. The historical facts of the sixth Panchen's trip to the east and its contemporary value

2.1 The journey and key nodes of the sixth Panchen to the east

The east-bound pilgrimage of the sixth Panchen Erdeni Rosambadan Yixi is a thousand-mile trip carrying a major political and cultural mission[4]. Based on the "Records of the Qing Dynasty" and the Selected Archives of the Sixth Panchen Pilgrimage and other documents, and combined with the field

research of the Temple of Sumi Fushou, summer resort and other places in Chengde, the project team accurately restored the route that started from June 17, the 44th year of Qianlong (1779) and from the Later Zhashunbu Temple[5]. This route is not only a geographical trajectory, but also a link for ethnic exchanges. Through paper-cutting drawing technology, the team clearly marked Tal Temple, Daihai, Summer Resort, Forbidden City and other places, and built an accurate spatial and time skeleton for subsequent digital narratives.

2.2 The diverse historical echo of the pilgrimage event

This pilgrimage has had a far-reaching historical echo at the political, cultural and emotional levels. In terms of political mutual trust, it is the successful practice of the Qing Dynasty's national policy of "ruling according to customs". The pilgrimage of the sixth Panchen and the grand reception of Emperor Qianlong jointly consolidated the relationship between the central government and the western region, reflecting the strategic wisdom of "promoting the Yellow Religion to reassure the people of Mongolia". As stated in the archives of the inner government, the Qing court's preparation for the pilgrimage was extremely thoughtful secret [6]. In terms of cultural mutual learning, from the Temple of Sumi Fushou built by Chengde, which imitated the Temple of Zhashunbu, to the Zhao Temple, which integrates the Chinese architectural style in Xiangshan, Beijing, the process of pilgrimage has promoted the deep integration of multi-ethnic art, architecture and religious rituals, and has become a vivid footnote of the diversity of Chinese culture. In terms of emotional integration, both the devout tributes presented by people of all ethnic groups along the route and the profound friendship between the Sixth Panchen Lama and Emperor Qianlong—one that transcended conventional monarch-minister boundaries—jointly weave a nationwide emotional landscape, leaving valuable historical heritage for contemporary national unity.

3. Hajj event design framework based on digital narrative

3.1 Three-dimensional principles of narrative design

In order to ensure that the digital narrative not only respects history but also touches people's hearts, this project has established three core design principles:

The principle of historical authenticity. This is the unshakable foundation of the narrative. The project adopts the "dual-track system" guidance mode. On the one hand, Qing history research experts are invited to participate in the script demonstration throughout the whole process, and strictly control the historical facts according to the "Sixth Panchen Hajj" and other documents, as shown in Figure 1; on the other hand, feedback is collected through the organization of experience activities for primary and secondary school students to ensure the popularity and attractiveness of the narrative, as shown in Figure 2. As shown in relevant materials, the research team investigates details including characters' costumes, architectural forms and ceremonial objects, and strives to accurately restore the authentic historical landscape within the digital space.



Figure 1. Expert Guidance Script



Figure 2. Local primary schools visit this project

The principle of emotional peak experience. Narrative is not only about the transmission of knowledge, but also about the pursuit of emotional resonance. The team deeply explores the inner emotional curve in the process of the pilgrimage, and deliberately creates emotional peak points such as the process of "set off in the snowy area, spreading the law in the grassland", the magnificence of "seeing the morning in the hot river, entering the silence of the capital" and the sadness of "returning to the west". Through the collaborative design of the picture and lens language, it guides users to produce deep emotional input and common Ming.

The principle of user interactivity. In order to change the passive reception status of users, the project has created an interactive system. By writing detailed interactive scripts, a series of information layers that can be clicked to explore are designed, so that users can independently understand the characters' lives, architectural backgrounds, cultural relics stories and other extended contents, so as to transform one-way communication into two-way interaction and stimulate users' desire to explore and cognitive initiative.

3.2 The emotional narrative structure of "five-act drama"

Based on the historical context and emotional rhythm, the project innovatively constructs the emotional narrative structure of the "five-act drama", transforming the linear history into a dramatic experience with ups and downs, as shown in Figure 3:

Act 1: Set off in the snowy area. This work focuses on the Sixth Panchen Lama's firm determination to travel eastward and establishes the grand narrative tone.

Act 2: Grassland spread the law. It depicts the hardships of the team crossing Qinghai, western and Mongolia and along the way, especially the flood of pox, showing the determination of the sixth Panchen for ethnic exchanges.

Act 3: Hot River Hajj. As the climax of the whole article, the historic meeting of the summer resort and the celebration of the Wanshou Festival are presented in a colorful way, highlighting the peak of political mutual trust and cultural exchange.

Act 4: The capital enters the silence. It describes the Buddhist activities of the sixth Panchen in the Forbidden City and the Yonghe Palace and its misfortune. His emotions changed from prosperity to decline, which caused deep thought.

Act 5: Return to the West like this. It depicts the continuation of the return of the Dharma body and its historical influence, and completes the sublimation from event narration to spiritual inheritance. This structure ensures the continuation of narrative tension and the immersion of user emotions.



Act 1. Construction drawing of the Temple of Sumi Fushou



Act 2. The starting map of the sixth Panchen



Act 3. Picture of Wanshuyuan Banquet



Act 4. The death picture of the sixth Panchen



Act 5. Construction drawing of Qingpu City Tower

Figure 3. Representative pictures of the five major chapters

3.3 The choice of artistic medium

Among many art forms, non-heritage paper cutting has been established as the core medium of digital translation. Compared with western Buddhist art Tangka, paper cutting shows three unique advantages in digital narrative:

Cross-cultural affinity. Paper cutting is a folk art rooted in the north and south of the Yangtze River. Its visual language is familiar to the audience of many ethnic groups such as Han, Manchu and Mongolian[7]. It can effectively dispel the sense of cultural distance and avoid the barriers to understanding that may be brought about by religious art symbols.

Morphological plasticity. The two-dimensional flatness and generalization of paper cutting make it very easy to be transformed into vector graphics, and use Spine and other software for bone binding and animation production. Its view of "mind modeling" (such as multi-angle unfolding pictures) is highly compatible with the deformation principle of digital animation.

Visual tension and symbolism. The strong color contrast of paper-cutting art, generalized contour

lines and its rich metaphorical symbol system (such as lotus, long and other auspicious patterns) provide abundant visual symbol resources for expressing the political connotation and emotional connotation of the pilgrimage, and is easy to create both traditional and modern visual styles.

4. Digital reproduction and technical realization of pilgrimage events

We use historical and cultural materials and AI generation technology to complete the unified creation of paper-cutting style visual elements, and use PS fine keying, animation binding and editing tools to give static paper cutting dynamic vitality. Finally, with the help of Unity interaction engine and 3D production technology, we create naked-eye 3D digital works with both traditional aesthetics and modern immersion.

4.1 Generated from paper to AIGC

The project has established a systematic digital workflow to realize the transformation of paper-cutting art from static to dynamic and from traditional to intelligent:

Style tuning and AIGC auxiliary generation. First of all, the team determined the visual specifications of paper-cutting art and retained the characteristics of traditional patterns. Then, AIGC technology is innovatively introduced, and its powerful image generation ability is used to assist in the production of scene and character drafts in line with the setting style in PS, Procreate and other software[8]. This not only improves the efficiency of early conceptual design, but also provides technical support for the huge material library.

Dynamic translation and texture simulation. This is the core link of "getting paper cutting to life". The team mainly uses Spine two-dimensional skeleton animation software to add bones to paper-cutting characters to achieve natural and smooth movement. At the same time, the paper texture, light and shadow relationship and cascading effect of paper cutting are finely simulated in After Effects (AE) to ensure that the dynamic picture does not lose the charm of traditional handicrafts.

Synthesis and sound and painting symphony. In After Effects (AE) and clipping, 53 dynamic shots are edited and synthesized, with emotional dubbing, elaborate background music and sound effects recorded by the professional members of broadcasting and hosting art, and finally complete a nearly seven-minute digital paper-cut animation film to realize the visual The perfect integration of listening to language.

4.2 Multi-dimensional presentation of Hajj events

In order to maximize the communication effect, the project has built a trinity presentation system of "animation + interaction + naked eye 3D":

As the main axis of emotional narrative, dynamic video is responsible for presenting the story of the "five-act drama" in a linear way and conquering the audience with its strong audio-visual influence.

On this basis, an information exploration system has been developed for lightweight interactive experience. Users can pause in key scenes and click on the hotspot to gain an in-depth understanding of the life of characters, architectural history, details of cultural relics, etc., and change "watching" to "reading" and "discovering" to meet the needs of in-depth cognition.

Naked-eye 3D image is the high point of technology. The project adopts multi-layer rendering technology. On specific display devices, iconic buildings such as the Potala Palace and the Temple of Sumi Fushou can be displayed on the screen without glasses, creating a strong sense of spatial depth. This experience of "touchable, felt and immersed" greatly enhances the visual impact and cultural expression of the project, so that the historical scene can be perceived in an almost physical way.

5. Analysis of the path of digital narrative building the sense of community of the Chinese nation

5.1 Emotional construction of common memory

The core value of digital narrative is to realize the leap from cold historical cognition to warm emotional identity[9]. First of all, this project has completed the preliminary construction through the transformation of the narrative perspective: abandoning the grand perspective of God, adopting

multi-subject and scene-based micro-narrative, combined with the dynamic two-dimensional paper cutting, interactive system and naked-eye 3D effect, so that the sixth Panchen Dongxing changed from the static "other" knowledge on the textbook to the user's ability. It is a vivid memory that "we" have together, which is enough to substitute and empathize.

Then, taking the non-heritage symbol of paper cutting as an emotional catalyst, the local emotion and auspicious meaning carried by itself, combined with the emotional curve carefully designed by the emotional model of the "five-act drama", effectively crosses the space gap. When users see the sixth Panchen in the form of paper cutting and finally arrived at the hot river through hardships in the animation, it triggers not only aesthetic pleasure, but also the recognition and resonance of the common spiritual qualities of the Chinese nation, such as tenacity, loyalty and unity. This synergy of cognition and emotion has laid a solid intrinsic foundation for the formation of the community consciousness of the Chinese nation.

5.2 Immersive sublimation of identity practice

If emotional resonance only stays in a moment, it is easy to dissipate, and the immersive sense of technological empowerment can solidify and sublimate it into a more stable identity. The deep immersion created by naked-eye 3D technology and the autonomous exploration given by interactive design together constitute a "body experience". Users are no longer bystanders of history, but "shuttle" to the temple of Sumi Fushou in the two-dimensional dynamic space - this wholehearted participation makes the perception of the Chinese national community sink from the conceptual level to the physical memory level, and the sense of identity becomes more profound and lasting.

In the end, this complete digital narrative practice successfully transformed the historical wisdom of ethnic exchanges in the 18th century into valuable cultural resources and practical driving force to build the sense of community of the Chinese nation. It not only confirms the deep historical foundation of the community concept of "kinship, honor and disgrace, life and death, and fate" in practice, but also injects new vitality into the construction of the common spiritual home of the Chinese nation through a popular form, fully responding to "let the collection in the museum Cultural relics, heritages displayed on the vast land, and words written in ancient books all come to life."

6. Conclusion and prospect

Through the digital narrative practice of the "Sixth Panchen Pilgrimage Event", the core argument is that the narrative mode driven by digital technology and medium of non-heritage art can effectively activate static historical and cultural heritage, making it a "national memory interface" that connects the past and the present and communicates different ethnic emotions. In addition, this study initially forms a set of dynamic grammar of paper-cutting language, explores the emotional narrative model of "five-act drama" of historical events, and integrates a set of low-cost and high-efficiency naked-eye 3D narrative technology schemes, providing replicable experience for similar projects.

Of course, there are also limitations in this study. For example, the case is concentrated in a single historical event, and its universality needs to be verified by more samples, such as: the historical reality of ethnic exchanges such as Tuerhute East Return and Dashdawa; at the same time, the best presentation effect of naked-eye 3D depends on specific hardware equipment, which limits the dissemination to a certain extent. With broad development prospects, the exploration road continues to unfold into the future. Further research directions include deepening the application of AIGC in the intelligent reconstruction of historical scenes, promoting multilingual versions of relevant projects to facilitate the international communication of Chinese culture, and conducting forward-looking exploration on constructing more immersive and interactive scenarios of the Republic of China within the emerging metaverse field. The new form of ethnic community narrative makes the story of national unity bloom more brilliantly in the digital age.

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