

Chang An and Chinese Culture Communication

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Manuscript received January 1, 2024; revised February 7, 2024; accepted February 28, 2024; published April 28, 2024

Abstract—*Chang An* is a good example of telling Chinese stories and promoting Chinese culture internationally. This article explains the reasons why *Chang An* has been so successful and how it has gained international recognition. It emphasizes the importance of translation quality when spreading Chinese culture and the effective utilization of new media to successfully promote it abroad.

Keywords—*Chang An*, Chinese culture communication, translation

I. INTRODUCTION

In the summer vacation of 2023, a movie, *Chang An*, was released, once again attracting great attention to Chinese culture both domestically and internationally. Set in the Tang Dynasty, the story tells of Gao Shi, who was trapped in a besieged city after the outbreak of the An Lushan Rebellion, recalling his past life with Li Bai to the military supervisor eunuch. It further showcases the magnificent prosperity of the Tang Dynasty, the heroic ambitions of Gao Shi, Li Bai, and other poets, as well as the timeless charm of Tang poetry that has been passed down for thousands of years.

There are a large number of poems by Tang Dynasty poets such as Li Bai, Gao Shi, Du Fu and so on in the movie. These poems have already had good translations, but in the movie, Linda Jaivin still retranslated these works, and received praise from the audience.

II. THE SUCCESS OF *CHANG AN*

The total box office exceeded 20.6 billion yuan, and the total number of moviegoers exceeded 500 million. The daily box office exceeded 100 million yuan for 72 consecutive days. Four domestic films exceeded 2 billion yuan in box office, and two exceeded 3 billion yuan [1]. The popularity of *Chang An* has not only sparked a cultural craze in China, but also gained solid acceptance from netizens abroad [2]. Using animation as a form that is easily accepted by both adults and children, it has become a new way for China to export its culture. The scene in which Li Bai recites “Drinking Alone in the Moonlight” in the film showcases the ultimate expression of romanticism and magnificent imagination, leaving people in awe [3].

A. Excellent Craftsmanship

Chang An contains a large number of poems, which can be said to be a poetic work. *Chang an* presents the traditional Chinese aesthetics of “painting in poetry and poetry in painting” through cinematography, composition, lighting, and music. “There are several scenes in the film that are presented in a two-dimensional scroll, using the compositional sense of Chinese landscape painting to depict the passage of time,” said Zou Jing, this film director, “In terms of music, we combine a variety of colorful ethnic

instruments such as guqin, pipa, konghou, flute, and xiao to create an atmosphere that complements the recitation of poetry, achieving a seamless integration”.

Whenever a new character appears, the film often introduces them in the form of poems. For Chinese audiences, they can understand the relationship between the poet and the character, as well as the emotions between them, through these poems. Foreign audiences, on the other hand, first see the images presented in the animation, and from this, they can also feel the emotions of the poet and understand the meaning of the film. To achieve such success, it must have required tremendous effort in the production of the animation.

This animation cleverly combines modern painting techniques while focusing on presenting its vivid and delicate aspects. It is precisely because of the meticulousness of the visuals that the audience is immersed in it and reluctant to leave. From the arrangement of the scenes to the design of the costumes, every detail has been carefully polished, making the audience feel as if they have traveled to the city of Chang’an in the Tang Dynasty.

B. Unique Character

The film brings to life the poets who we only know them from textbooks. For poets like Li Bai and Du Fu, people may be more familiar with their works, but after watching the movie, they realize that they were actually friends who even influenced each other. After watching this film, many people will inevitably identify with and resonate with it, because Li Bai and Gao Shi can really touch many people. Many people want to live like Li Bai, talented and unrestrained, but such people are rare. What about Gao Shi? He can be said to be a very foolish person, but he keeps working hard and down-to-earth, eventually becoming great. It can be said that Li Bai and Gao Shi are two extremes, and it is this extreme contrast that elevates this film and makes many people like it [4].

Li Bai, a talented but unpopular man, had in his bones both a wild and uninhibited spirit and a side of chasing fame and fortune. His life experience is like a confusing poem, which has left various imprints in the historical records. His life is unique, both in his unruly youth, traveling and making friendships; and in his middle age, when he was a loyal servant of the country, serving as an official, assisting his honors, and displaying his political wisdom; After achieving success, he chose to retire to the mountains and forests in pursuit of cultivating his body and mind and exploring the realm of the Tao. He lived a life of great talent, but at the same time suffered greatly from pain and struggle. He was both a man of letters and a warrior; a poet chasing freedom and an official pursuing merit. It is this complexity that makes his poetry and personality all the more real, and makes us curious and inquisitive about him.

Gao Shi, his way of doing things and principles are worthy of admiration and learning in future generations. First, Gao

Shi was always thick and thin, whenever he hit a wall in life he went back to Liang Yuan to continue his study, although he was also famous in the jianghu, but he did not often use this fame to speculate. Secondly, Gao Shi is very capable, he was forty-nine years old to defect to Goshu Han, fifty-two years old official left pick, fifty-three years old to follow the Tang Emperor Xuanzong into the Shu, on the basis of his opportunity than Li Bai Du Fu to late, but even if he is still able to get the trust of Tang Suzong in the side of the Emperor Xuanzong, or because of his steadiness and uncommon ability. At the time of unrecognized talent, Gao applied the bold language to express the indignation in his heart, not only to his friends but also to his own motivation, such a life, career, life is full of positive spirit of Gao Shi, it is the role model for us to learn.

C. Excellent Translator Linda Jaivin

This is also the key factor that enables *Chang an* to have such a great influence internationally. *Chang an* invited Linda Jaivin, a best-selling author and sinologist from Australia, to translate the dialogue. Linda Jaivin has been engaged in related work for nearly 40 years and has provided subtitle translation for Chinese films such as *Farewell My Concubine*, *Hero*, and *The Grandmaster*. In the process of translation, Linda Jaivin discovered that the film tells the story of the friendship between Li Bai and Gao Shi, who represent two completely different traditional cultures in Chinese culture. Gao Shi represents orthodox Confucianism, so when translating his poems, Linda tends to use a more serious and straightforward language style. Li Bai is a very unrestrained poet who desires to be accepted by orthodox Confucianism and recognized by the court. However, fundamentally, he represents Taoist culture, so Linda used a completely different style when translating Li Bai's poems.

Stephanie Stone, a foreign journalist from China Daily, also watched *Chang an* and dressed up in Hanfu with a strong sense of ceremony. She said that before watching the movie, she always thought that Tang poetry was lofty and pure like the snow in early spring, but after watching the film, she understood the poet's feelings in different experiences and situations, and truly and intuitively felt Li Bai's character and attitude towards life, which naturally made it easier for her to understand Tang poetry.

III. REFLECTIONS ON THE TRANSLATION AND DISSEMINATION OF CHINESE CULTURE AND POETRY

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that we should make the most basic cultural genes of the Chinese nation adapt to contemporary culture and coordinate with modern society, promote them in a way that is popular and widely participated in, and promote the cultural spirit that transcends time and space, transcends national boundaries, has eternal charm, and has contemporary value [5]. We should promote the innovative achievements of contemporary Chinese culture that inherit traditional excellent culture, are rooted in our country and face the world. We should expand the channels for the external dissemination of Chinese excellent traditional culture, show the profound historical accumulation of Chinese culture to the world, demonstrate the charm of the times that keeps pace with the times, interpret the world significance of Chinese civilization.

Domestic animation can be like Disney's movies, or like Japan's secondary, but ultimately it has to have its own characteristics, and that's what we need to promote our culture. The movie exports the beauty of traditional Chinese culture to the world. At a time when Hollywood blockbusters are strongly exporting their values globally, we are fortunate that there are still animated movies like *Chang An*, which are working hard to export Chinese culture, Chinese history and the beauty of national style.

It is even more worth mentioning that although *Chang An* has gone out of the door to the world, it is not a "pleasing" output, it does not try to please foreigners, not to do dog-licking publicity, but to use the traditional Chinese culture to really attract those international friends who love Chinese culture.

A. Emphasis on the Quality of Translations

Translation is the accurate and complete expression of one language in another. Language activity of linguistic thinking content [6]. Chinese traditional culture has a long history and contains both essence and dross. The self-confidence of Chinese culture comes from the profound and excellent traditional culture of China, which is the cornerstone of cultural communication in the new era [7]. Chinese culture is extensive and profound, and poetry is particularly famous for its unique artistic conception and emotions. The quality of translation directly affects whether the characteristics of poetry can be appreciated by foreign readers. Moreover, if the translation quality is poor, it will affect readers' understanding and reading of the work [8]. Furthermore, poetry is renowned for its unique rhythm and cadence, which are important components of its beauty and poetic meaning. During the translation process, it is necessary to pay attention to preserving the original rhythm and cadence, so that the translated work remains consistent with the original in terms of phonetics, allowing foreign readers to experience the beauty of the rhythm in ancient poetry. Moreover, poetry carries rich cultural background and historical significance. The quality of translation requires translators to have a deep understanding of Chinese culture in order to accurately present the cultural connotations and historical background in ancient poetry. Only by accurately conveying these cultural elements in the translated work can foreign readers have a more comprehensive understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture. The traditional culture and poetry is a treasure of Chinese culture. By translating it and spreading it to readers around the world, it can promote cross-cultural communication and understanding. Through high-quality translation, foreign readers can have a better understanding of Chinese culture and values, deepen their knowledge and interest in China, and thus promote mutual communication and understanding between different cultures [9].

In short, the importance of translation quality in spreading Chinese culture cannot be ignored. Accurately conveying the artistic conception and emotions of ancient poetry, preserving the original rhyme and rhythm, accurately presenting the cultural background, maintaining poetic and aesthetic qualities, as well as promoting cross-cultural communication and understanding, are all important aspects of translation quality. Only through high-quality translation can foreign readers truly appreciate and enjoy the charm of Chinese

ancient poetry.

B. Fully Utilized New Media

Spreading Chinese culture is one of the important tasks of inheriting and promoting Chinese culture, and new media plays an important role in this process. With its wide coverage and fast dissemination speed, new media can spread Chinese ancient poetry to a wider audience. Through social media, video platforms, audio platforms, and other new media channels, ancient poetry can be quickly conveyed to readers and viewers around the world, achieving a broader dissemination effect. Moreover, new media platforms can break through the limitations of time and space, making the dissemination of ancient poetry no longer restricted by time difference and geographical location. Whether it is on the subway during the commute or on the other side of the world, people can access ancient poetry anytime, anywhere through their mobile phones or computers and enjoy its beauty and wisdom. The “30,000 Leagues of Chang’an” is an animation work based on the innovative inheritance of traditional culture, which has received a lot of favorable comments from the audience [10].

In conclusion, the importance of valuing new media in the dissemination of Chinese ancient poetry cannot be ignored. With the extensive coverage, diverse presentation forms, interactivity and participation, innovative promotion methods, as well as the advantages of transcending time and space, offered by new media, ancient poetry can be spread to a wider audience, enhancing its influence and dissemination effect, and promoting the inheritance and development of Chinese culture.

C. Chinese Cultural Importance

After 5,000 years, China has many stories and many cultures, all of which can be said to be treasures, all of which are worth developing. Treasures that are not exploited are after all treasures and cannot be reduced to practical things. China is a morality-based society with a homogeneous family and state, a concept that has always been deeply imprinted in the minds of the Chinese people. However, with the development of society, the Chinese people are paying more and more attention to reclaiming the classical culture, taking the best and discarding the worst of it. If you want the world to read and understand Chinese thought, first let the world understand Chinese history.

The benefits of the spread of Chinese culture are countless, and can lead to the development of a series of neighborhoods,

animations, and regions. It has a significant impact on China’s economy and tourism.

IV. CONCLUSION

The translation of *Chang An* is a successful example of translating ancient Chinese poetry. When translating ancient Chinese poetry, the quality of translation should be emphasized first. Secondly, the film and television industry now focus more on high-quality films, which is also in line with it and another major reason for its success. Therefore, the dissemination of ancient Chinese poetry is no longer limited to academic means, but can also be done through new media or the internet, which is more favored by contemporary youth.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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