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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**Translator's Earnestness and Conveyance: Eva Lüdi Kong's Translation of Chinese Classics**

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**ABSTRACT**

Translators play a very important role in the exchanges between Chinese and foreign civilizations and in the translation of Chinese culture to foreign countries. The Swiss sinologist Eva Lüdi Kong devotes herself to translating Chinese classics into German and makes outstanding contributions to the dissemination of Chinese culture in the German-speaking world. This study takes the course of Eva Lüdi Kong's translation of *Xiyou Ji* and *Qianzi Wen* as a clue and analyzes her translation activities from three aspects, namely, "what to translate," "how to translate," and "how to promote," to explore her love, earnestness, and conveyance in translating Chinese classic works.

**KEYWORDS**

Chinese culture, Eva Lüdi Kong, *Die Reise in den Westen*, *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik*.

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**1. Introduction**

Translation is a must for cross-cultural communication, and the role of translators is becoming more and more significant in the exchange between Chinese and foreign civilizations and the translation and dissemination of Chinese culture to foreign countries (Liu & Xu, 2020: 76). As Liu (2019: 104) puts it, the quality of the translated works, the effect of translation and introduction, and even whether the goal of Chinese literature and culture "going out" can be realized... all of them, to a large extent, rely on the autonomous and creative work of the translators. Among them, those overseas translators who are dedicated to the translation and dissemination of Chinese works deserve the attention of translation scholars. By now, scholars have discussed much about English translators. Relatively little attention has been paid to the important translators of other languages, who also contribute a lot to spreading Chinese culture around the world. Eva Lüdi Kong, a German translator, is one of them.

Eva Lüdi Kong is a Swiss sinologist and translator who has been working on translating Chinese masterpieces, especially ancient literature, into German. In 2016, the German version of *Xiyou Ji*, *Die Reise in den Westen*, which took Lüdi Kong 17 years to translate, was published by Reclam Verlag. It is the first full translation of this Chinese classical work, and it created a "fever for *Xiyou* (*Journey to the West*)" in the German-speaking world as soon as it was released. *Die Reise in den Westen* was honored as one of the "Best Books for Christmas Gift" by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and won the Leibzig Book Fair Prize in the Translation category. The Book Fair describes Lüdi Kong that not just translating one language into another one but also building a bridge between different times and different ways of thinking (Shi, 2017). *Die Reise in den Westen* is priced at up to €88. As of November 2018, it has been reprinted five times and sold more than 7,000 copies. Such a remarkable response from the market is quite rare for translations of Four Great Classical Novels of China. In 2018, Lüdi Kong translated and published the German version of *Qianzi Wen*, *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik*, which was also recommended by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and sold 3,500 copies in just two months. In Europe, this translation is praised by both the academy and the public.

The success of *Die Reise in den Westen* and *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik* cannot be separated from the efforts of Eva Lüdi Kong, the translator. Xu Jun (Xu 2017) points out that the translator's activities run through the whole process of translation and dissemination, with the translator participating in the selection, interpretation, and promotion of the text. Based on this, this paper takes Lüdi Kong's experience of translating *Xiyou Ji* and *Qianzi Wen* as a clue and analyzes her translation activities from three aspects, namely, "what to translate," "how to translate," and "how to promote." The aim is to discuss Lüdi Kong's subjectivity in the process and explore her spiritual world as a translator. This case study could be helpful in presenting the efforts of German translators to bring Chinese culture to the world.

## **2. Literature review**

There have been two categories of studies on Eva Lüdi Kong and her translations. The first one, focusing on the content of the translations, discusses the approach the translator applied and the insights it brings from different theoretical perspectives (Hu & Tan, 2021; Yin, 2023; Wu, 2019). For instance, Hu and Tan (2021) point out that *Die Reise in den Westen*, translated by Lüdi Kong, is rich in textual and graphic paratexts related to Chinese tradition, which emphasize the Taoist and Buddhist ideas in the original text, correct the potential misunderstanding caused by Christian terminology and western mythological imagery, and play a role in conveying a positive image of "Cultural China." Yin (2023), taking Lüdi Kong's *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik* as an example, analyzes her strategy of combining semantic and communicative translations organically with the expectation of providing a reference for the subsequent translation of studies of Chinese ancient culture. The second category sorts through the translation and dissemination history of *Xiyou Ji* or *Qianzi Wen* in the German-speaking area and analyzes the uniqueness of Lüdi Kong's works as well as the impact they have (Teng & Wang, 2019; Hu & Tan, 2023; Li, 2017; Mu & Fu, 2021). Teng and Wang conduct a descriptive study of the translation of *Xiyou Ji* in German-speaking regions and found that the political field of a particular period often plays a decisive role in the spread of the translation, and Lüdi Kong's effective interaction with other participants in the translation field contributes a lot to the popularity of her version. Mu and Fu (2021), studying Lüdi Kong's *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik* in a multidimensional way, conclude that her flexible translation strategy and cooperation with mainstream publishers identify with the ideal model of Medio-Translatology, which serves as a good practice for translating Chinese classics.

To summarize, existing studies have concentrated on discussing the translated works themselves or their dissemination and acceptance, while not enough attention was paid to the translator, the key subject of translation activities. Therefore, this study focuses on presenting Lüdi Kong's translation proposition and cultural stance in an attempt to fill this research gap.

## **3. Eva Lüdi Kong and her translation activities**

Lüdi Kong's experience of learning Chinese culture and translating Chinese classics is representative and enlightening for the practice and research of "Chinese culture going out." The following part will introduce Lüdi Kong in detail and summarize the embodiment of the translator's subjectivity from three aspects, namely, the selection of translation materials, the translation process, and the post-translation recommendation.

### **3.1 Lüdi Kong and China**

Born in 1968, Lüdi Kong became interested in Chinese language and culture at the age of 14. At that time, an acrobatic troupe from Guangxi, China, came to her hometown, Biel, a small Swiss city. Lüdi Kong was instantly mesmerized by the Chinese characters on the brochures. She began to learn Chinese on her own and read books related to Chinese culture (Peng, 2017). When Lüdi Kong was 21 years old, she was given the opportunity to study in China. By then, she had already studied for two years at the University of Zurich in the Department of Sinology and could speak fluent Chinese. During her study in China, Lüdi Kong learned calligraphy, Tai Chi, Erhu, Chinese meditation, and so on, gradually figuring out the essence of China's profound traditional culture. She realized that one year was not enough to understand China. In 1992, Lüdi Kong enrolled in the Printmaking Department of the China Academy of Art. After graduating from the university, she returned to Switzerland and worked on the translation of *Xiyou Ji*. The deep meaning embedded in this book gave her invaluable spiritual support on the one hand, but it also brought her unprecedented challenges on the other. In order to better understand it, Lüdi Kong returned to China to pursue her master's degree in Ming and Qing literature at the School of Literature, Zhejiang University, where she supplemented her knowledge of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and read more classics. Living in China for 25 years, Lüdi Kong loves traditional Chinese culture and philosophical ideas. She identifies more with Taoism in the Tao Te Ching than with Western religious concepts such as Christianity. She considers Laozi's words to be persuasive and acceptable, hoping to pass on these illuminating Chinese philosophies to more people (Southern Weekly, 2017). In 2018, Lüdi Kong translated *Qianzi Wen*, the ancient Chinese enlightening classic. Now, she continues to translate a number of Taoism classics of the Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties, taking translation as the core of her life (Qianjiang Evening News, 2019). In addition, she also writes German articles on Chinese culture or Sino-German translation techniques, trying to build a bridge between China and Europe.

### 3.2 "What to translate": a choice based on the interests and values

According to Eco-Translatology, translation is defined as "the translator's selective activity of adapting to the ecological environment of translation" (Hu, 2008:13), with the translator at its center and his/her adaptation and selection running through the whole translation process. An important factor determining translation choice is the translator's translation values. That is to say, the translator's choices in the translation process are aimed at realizing the values carried by the translation according to his/her understanding (Liu & Xu, 2020: 78). If we consider translation as a process of choice, then what kind of work the translator chooses to translate is the beginning of this process. Based on her own translation values, Lüdi Kong has certain principles for selecting works to translate: she only translates the works that she truly loves, and that are worth translating, which means that she can gain something from them and convey this gain to more people.

Lüdi Kong translates works that are in line with her own interests and values. She said that the biggest pleasure of being a translator or teaching is to be able to transfer some ideas that are meaningful and helpful to life to others (Shi, 2017). During her college years, Lüdi Kong happened to read *Xiyou Ji* in an antiquarian bookstore in Shanghai. The ancient Chinese worldview contained therein deeply attracted her and provided her with a guide for spiritual cultivation in life (ibid., 2017). "*Xiyou Ji* can be called a crystallization of the Chinese philosophies of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, which have many Chinese cultural characteristics that I appreciate, such as the macroscopic perspective of looking at the worries in daily life, the comical spirit of being free and at ease, the positive attitude towards life, and the efforts of cultivating virtue, improving temperament, understanding the inner nature of your mind (Sina.com, 2021)." These are insights Lüdi Kong gained from *Xiyou Ji*. After her translation was published, she was gratified to learn from the feedback of many readers that the novel's moral in these aspects was effectively conveyed. The great success of *Die Reise in den Westen* made Lüdi Kong a highly sought-after German translator. She was contacted by some publishers to translate works such as *Jinpingmei (The Golden Lotus)* and Yuan drama, but she turned them down because that was not her interest. "I want what I do to be really beneficial for someone else. Other things are tossed around as little as possible (Shi, 2017)." In 2018, Lüdi Kong translated *Qianzi Wen*, one of the three major readings of traditional Chinese primary education. Although the book is targeted at children, the text is relatively obscure and profound, with a large number of information about nature, history, architecture, cultivation, humans, etc., which can be called "a condensed encyclopedia of China." Lüdi Kong thought it was admirable that such a piece of poetry in only 1,000 words was so rich in content. She spent more than half a year translating it into German. She was also involved in the layout and design of this book in order to present its full cultural charm.

When it comes to the translation of *Xiyou Ji*, there is another issue of vital importance, that is, which version of the original text to choose. Unlike the popular hundred-chapter *Xiyou Ji* printed by Shidatang Workshop in the Ming Dynasty chosen by most translators, Lüdi Kong took *Xiyou Zhengdaoshu* (Book of the Fulfillment of Tao on the Western Journey) revised by Huang Zhouxing and other men of letters in the Qing Dynasty as the basis. On the one hand, *Zhengdaoshu* marks the classicization of *Xiyou Ji*, whose literary value is affirmed by many researchers. On the other hand, it deletes some of the repetitive poems and culture-loaded information but retains the best storyline and religious connotations of *Xiyou Ji*. For German readers, *Zhengdaoshu* has a relatively low reading threshold, which makes it easier for them to understand the spiritual core hibernated in the book.

### 3.3 "How to translate": representing the complete ideas and the same style of the source text in fluent German

After comparing the source text and the target text and taking Lüdi Kong's self-statement into consideration, this study draws a conclusion that she tries her best to convey the content and cultural connotations of the source text and, on this basis, ensures the target text is as natural and fluent as possible so that German readers can have the same reading experience as the original readers. To complete this goal, Lüdi Kong synchronizes her translation with research and refines her writing.

#### 3.3.1 Giving a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work

When translating, Lüdi Kong pays extra attention to whether the original work is complete and currently expressed in terms of writing style, content, and implications. Prior to her translations, there had been several German versions of both *Xiyou Ji* and *Qianzi Wen*. However, Lüdi Kong points out that there are problems with the writing style or the content of the earlier translations and that retranslation is still necessary. In the case of *Xiyou Ji*, for example, there were three translations before Lüdi Kong's, namely, the segment translation of the first seven chapters of *Xiyou Ji* by the German missionary Richard Wilhelm in 1914, the translation paraphrased from the English version, Arthur Waley's *Monkey*, by Georgette Boner and Nadja Jollos in 1947, and the version directly translated from Chinese by the East German translator Johanna Herzfeld in 1962 (Teng & Wang, 2019:125-127). None of them are full translations. Respectively, Wilhelm regards *Xiyou Ji* as a folk fairy tale, deleting a great deal of the original plots and retaining only the most exciting fighting episodes. In addition, as the target readers of the fairy tale are children or teenagers, he mainly adopts a domesticated strategy of the culture-loaded words in the source text to enhance the readability of the translation. Secondly, although Boner and Jollos' translations are easy to understand, they retain some English expressions. For instance, "八戒" and "沙僧" still retain the English names "Piggy" and "Sandy" when they are translated into German, which adds an undesirable

English flavor to Chinese literature. Herzfeld's translation is similar to Wilhelm's in that it also deletes many of the poems, dialogues, etc. This version even exudes an anti-religious spirit, far away from the main theme of the original work. For these reasons, Lüdi Kong decides to retranslate *Xiyou Ji*. She adopts a method of "sense-to-sense translation + interpretation" to translate culturally distinctive content.

Eg. I

ST: 灵根育孕源流出 心性修持大道生

(Huang, 2009: 1)

TT: Die beseelte Wurzel keimt, der Quell nimmt seinen Lauf

Mit innerer Vervollkommnung beginnt der Große Weg

(Kong, 2016: 15)

First of all, the capitalization of the first letter "G" of the adjective "groß" is an impressive feature, which immediately draws the attention of German readers. Secondly, the translator provides an in-depth explanation of this proper noun by adding a footnote: "der Große Weg (大道 dà dào): daoistischer Ausdruck für die mit praktischen Methoden unterstützte geistige und körperliche Entwicklung zur inneren Einheit mit der ursprünglichen kosmischen Energie" ("the Big Way (大道 dà dào): a Taoist term for the support of spiritual and material development by means of practical methods in order to achieve inner unity with the primal energies of the universe") (Kong, 2016: 15). In addition, Lüdi Kong cites the Daoist critic Liu Yingming's interpretation: "Der daoistische Kommentator Liu Yiming (1734–1821) erklärt dazu: »Der Weg der Reise in den Westen ist der Weg des Goldenen Elixiers, der Weg aller Schöpfung und damit auch der Weg des zyklischen Laufs aller Dinge.«" ("In *Xiyou Ji*, the Way to the West is the way of the golden elixir, the way of the creation of all things, and the way of the cycle of all things") (Kong, 2016: 15). It further supports her divergent understanding of the Dao and shows her serious attitude towards cultural exchanges.

Eg. II

ST: 三皈五戒总休言

(Huang, 2009: 34)

TT: Drei Gelübde, Fünf Gebote. Davon rede hier kein Wort.

(Kong, 2016: 100)

For "三皈五戒," a culture-loaded religious term, Lüdi Kong chooses two Christian words, "Gelübde" and "Gebote," which are familiar to German readers. "Gelübde" originally meant a solemn promise to God. "Gebote" is derived from "Zehn Gebote" ("The Ten Commandments") in the *Bible*. Then, in the footnote, she elaborates: "Drei Gelübde" refers to the "dreifache Zuwendung« zu Buddha, Dharma (Lehre) und Sangha (Mönchstum)" ("threefold concern for the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha"), and "Fünf Gebote" are "nicht töten, nicht stehlen, keine unheilsamen sexuellen Tätigkeiten, nicht lügen, keinen Alkohol trinken" ("not to kill, not to steal, not to engage in evil sexual behavior, not to lie, and not to drink alcohol") (Kong, 2016: 100). This strategy of domestication and in-text interpretation enables German readers to understand the general meaning of the original while avoiding possible cultural misinterpretation.

### **3.3.2 Having the same style and manner as that of the original**

Lüdi Kong has mentioned many times in interviews that it is meaningless to do a literal translation of the original text and that the German readers should be given the same reading experience as the original readers. In other words, the translation should use fluent German and creatively reproduce the linguistic features of the original text.

Eg. III

ST: 诗曰:

混沌未分天地乱,  
茫茫渺渺无人见。  
自从盘古破鸿蒙,  
开辟从兹清浊辨。

...

(Huang, 2009: 2)

TT: Ein Gedicht besagt:

Einst war das Chaos ungetrennt,  
Himmel und Erde dämmrig vermengt;  
Verschwommen war alles und endlos weit,  
Nie sah ein Mensch jene Zeit.  
Doch als der Urriese Pan Gu erwachte,  
Und die Zerstörung des Chaos vollbrachte,  
Erschloss sich die mächtige Nebelwelt,  
Reines und Trübes ward zweigeteilt.

...

(Kong, 2016: 15)

Example III is an excerpt from the opening setting poem of *Xiyou Ji*, which is the origin of the whole story, describing the process of the universe, heaven, and earth from chaos to their final formation. In terms of the poem's structure, Lüdi Kong splits each line of the original poem into two lines in the target text, which makes it short and avoids the common German grammar of multiple pronouns and complex subordinate clauses. In this way, the translated poem reads more rhythmic. In terms of the poem's rhyme scheme, she adopts the usual iambic pentameter of epic poems and couplets of "aabbccdd," restoring the ancient atmosphere created by the original poem. In terms of the content of the poem, Lüdi Kong basically retains the meaning of the original. She translates "Pan Gu," a Chinese mythological figure, as "der Urriese Pan Gu" (the primitive giant Pan Gu), which reproduces the cultural connotations of the original without destroying the rhyme of the poem and eliminates the unfamiliarity of target readers.

E.g. IV

ST: 行者道：“我是朱紫国拜请来的外公，来取圣宫娘娘回国哩！”...妖王道：“这来者称外公，我想《百家姓》上，更无个姓外的...”娘娘道：“止《千字文》上有句‘外受傅训’，想必就是此矣！”

妖王喜道：“定是，定是！”...厉声叫道：“那个是朱紫国来的外公？”行者把金箍棒搭定道：“贤甥，叫我怎的？”

(Huang, 2009: 335)

TT: »Ich bin der von Purpurien abgesandte Ahnherr von Außen und bin hier, die Königin der Goldenen Heiligkeit heimzuführen!«  
... »Der Eindringling nennt sich Ahnherr von Außen, doch will mir scheinen, im ›Buch der Hundert Sippen‹ sei kein solches Geschlecht verzeichnet ...« Da gab die Königin zur Antwort: »Nur im ›Tausend-Zeichen-Klassiker‹, da gibt es eine Stelle, die lautet: ›Von außen her erhalte man des Meisters Anweisung‹. Das wird es wohl sein?«

»Ja, das muss es sein!« rief der Dämon erleichtert. ... schrie: »Wo ist dieser Ahnherr von Außen aus Purpurien?«

Pilger zückte den Goldreifstab und rief: »Wie nennst du mich, liebes Kind?«

(Kong, 2016: 882-883)

Lüdi Kong views *Xiyou Ji* as a work in between a children's book and a "book of immortals." It contains a deep-rooted moral on the one hand but is at the same time a popular and entertaining book suitable for children. Therefore, when translating, she tries her best to reproduce the humorous and lively plots in addition to preserving the Buddhist and Taoist metaphors implied in the original text. Example IV is taken from the 71<sup>st</sup> chapter, in which Sun Wukong teases the demon Sai Tai Sui (der Dämon), who snatched the queen of Zhuzi Kingdom (die Königin). In fact, this plot is not essential to the development of the story but only serves to humor the reader by creating a funny atmosphere. Lüdi Kong keeps it in her translation and creatively adapts it to the target culture. In German-speaking regions, some people have the word "von" in their names, which is considered a symbol of nobility. In the target text, "Außen" stands for "outside," and "Ahnherr" means "male elder." Hence, the translation of "外公" ("Grandpa") as "Ahnherr von Außen" achieves a similar effect to the original in terms of both the surface meaning and connotation. Also, in order to prevent readers from misunderstanding, Lüdi Kong adds a footnote here to further explain the connection between "外公" and "Ahnherr von Außen."

### 3.3.3 Researching while translating

By now, Lüdi Kong has not published many translations. But her two works, *Xiyou Ji* and *Qianzi Wen*, are Chinese classics that are very difficult to render in other languages. Talking about the reason why she always chooses challenging works to translate, Lüdi Kong said, "with challenges comes fun" (Qianjiang Evening News, 2019). In order to complete these challenging projects, Lüdi Kong is constantly researching while translating. When translating *Xiyou Ji*, she uses the Internet, as well as books such as *Dictionary of Chinese and English Official Names*, Xu Lunhu's *Code of Ancient Chinese Architecture*, and Wang Zhenfu's *Habitat Culture* to

learn about the history of the Ming Dynasty in terms of dress, etiquette, currency, and architecture. She also visits the National Museum, the Museum of Ancient Architecture in Beijing, the Forbidden City Museum, and other cultural venues, as well as experts in Buddhist or Taoist Academy to look for physical and textual information. When translating *Qianzi Wen*, although she already accumulates a deep knowledge of the Chinese language and traditional culture, she still refers to many reference books, such as Liu Hongyi's *Lectures on Thousand Character Classic*, Li Yi'an's *Three Character Classic*, *Hundred Surnames*, *Thousand Character Classic* and *The Rules of the Disciple*, Wang Xiaoyin's *Interpretation of Thousand Character Classic*, and so on. She repeatedly scrutinizes them to find the most reasonable interpretation.

Apart from enhancing her understanding of the original texts, Lüdi Kong also studied the works of 18th- and 19th-century German writers such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Joseph Karl Benedikt Freiherr von Eichendorff, as well as other world-famous works such as *Don Quixote*, to improve her writing skill. The study of German classics has contributed to her poetic and aesthetic style in translation.

### **3.4 "How to promote": introducing Chinese culture in and outside the text**

After the translation is finished, the translated book still needs to go through the publishing and suitable promotion methods before it can be presented to the readers. In order to better introduce the relevant works and translations to German publishers and readers who are not familiar with Chinese culture, Lüdi Kong has put a lot of effort both inside and outside the text.

Lüdi Kong's promotion within the text is mainly reflected in the abundant paratexts. Paratexts are "all the verbal and nonverbal material used to describe the text and to coordinate the text with the reader" (Genette, 1991: 261-272), including the front cover, back cover, title, subtitle, foreword, afterword, illustrations, etc. The cover of *Die Reise in den Westen* is printed in Reclam's unique bright yellow, with "西遊記" printed in red vertically at the top and the German title "DIE REISE IN DEN WESTEN" close to it. Lüdi Kong adds a white waistband cover, which is often found on Chinese books, to the outside of the front cover, giving it a Chinese flavor to attract readers. Besides, the large number of illustrations and annotations in Lüdi Kong's translation is also one of its highlights. The most striking one is a diagram of the twelve divisions of day and night in the Tai Chi Eight Trigrams, which is located in the opening chapter of the book. This diagram, drawn by Lüdi Kong herself, corresponds to the alternation of Yin and Yang in the twelve Earthly Branches. The commentary underneath the diagram explains in detail the influence of the Yin and Yang forces in the cycle of all things (Kong, 2016: 297). It provides German readers with a more direct understanding of the abstract Taoist philosophy (Hu & Tan, 2021: 112). The Afterword is also an important vehicle for Lüdi Kong to promote *Die Reise in den Westen* and Chinese culture. *Die Reise in den Westen* has a 35-page afterword. In addition to a detailed introduction to the characters and worldview of the novel, Lüdi Kong highly evaluates the importance of *Xiyou Ji* in the history of Chinese literature, as well as the inspirational significance of the philosophical ideas contained therein. In the publication of *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik*, Lüdi Kong takes greater initiative. She takes part in designing the layout of the translated book: illustrations and notes on the left page, the original text, pinyin, and translation on the right (as is shown in **Picture I**). The original text is arranged vertically, with a direct translation of the German word for each Chinese character on its left and a short German quatrain translated according to the four-character Chinese sentence on the right. Feedback on Goodreads and Amazon suggests that readers praise the layout for its cultural emphasis and aesthetic appeal.



**Picture I:** Layout of *Der 1000-Zeichen-Klassik*

Outside the text, Lüdi Kong participates in various cultural activities. Due to the lack of knowledge of the German literary world about *Xiyou Ji*, *Die Reise in den Westen* once faced the difficulty of not being able to be published. Lüdi Kong did not give up. In 2009, she attended the Frankfurt Book Fair, where she met Dieter Meier, the editor of Reclam Verlag, who is interested in Chinese

literature, which eventually led to the successful publication of the German version. Since its release, the translation has had an unprecedented impact in both Chinese and German-speaking areas. Lüdi Kong was interviewed by many authoritative organizations or media outlets such as Goethe-Institut, Confucius Institute, and the Southern Weekly. She also gives several presentations and produces related articles such as "Literary Translation as an Important Means of Culture Exchange – The German Translation of *Xiyou Ji*" (Hu & Tan, 2021: 113). She argues that "it is the right time to promote Chinese literature, as Western readers realize China's soft power in culture," and literary translation can further strengthen the West's understanding and acceptance of Chinese culture (Kong, 2017: 76). Currently, besides daily translations, Lüdi Kong mainly conducts lectures and courses on traditional Chinese thought, as well as book clubs on ancient classics such as *Xiyou Ji*, to read and discuss with Europeans who are interested in Chinese culture.

#### 4. Conclusion

The success of Lüdi Kong's translation of *Xiyou Ji* and *Qianzi Wen* is not by chance. By sorting through her translation process, this study finds that the translator has spent a great deal of effort, from selecting the works and polishing the translation to promoting after the translation. Lüdi Kong's translation of Chinese cultural classics stems from her inner love for Chinese culture. In the translation, she takes an earnest attitude to ensure that the translation is both faithful to the original work and easy to be accepted by German readers. After the translations are completed, she actively promotes the publication and dissemination of the translations and conveys Chinese culture and excellent Chinese works to the public in various ways. Love, earnestness, and conveyance are the key words of Lüdi Kong's translation of Chinese classics. This kind of translator's spirit (Feng, 2023) not only deserves our deep respect but also brings valuable inspiration for "Chinese culture going abroad."

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