

The Zhejiang East Canal and Lu You's Poetry: The Fusion of His Travels and Poems

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Abstract

Lu You is a litterateur of the Southern Song Dynasty in China, who has many literary talents, especially poetry achievements. The Zhejiang East Canal has long been famous under his works, but few people have studied the canal culture based on Lu You's poems. This study reviews Lu You's travels along the Zhejiang East Canal and his poems. By exploring the origin of Lu You's poems and their connection with the canal, and analyzing the poetry of Lu You's canal travels, the research reveals the integration of Lu You's journey along the canal and the related poems, and promotes its international dissemination and development.

Keywords

The Zhejiang East Canal (ZEC), Lu You's poems, International communication.

1. Introduction

The poetry of Lu You offers a unique lens through which to examine the cultural relics along the Zhejiang East Canal. His works not only narrate personal journeys and emotions but also provide vivid descriptions of the canal's landscapes and the lives of people who lived along its banks. These poetic narratives serve as historical records that capture the essence of the canal's cultural heritage, reflecting its significance in transportation, commerce, and daily life during Lu You's time.

Lu You's verses are imbued with detailed imagery of the canal and its surroundings, offering readers an intimate glimpse into the past. The poet's travels along the Zhejiang East Canal have left indelible marks within his poetry, which can be seen as a form of literary archaeology that uncovers the humanistic traces embedded in the canal's history. Through this case study, we can explore how Lu You's poetry has preserved the memory of the canal and its associated cultural artifacts, providing a valuable resource for both academic research and cultural promotion.

Furthermore, the international dissemination of Lu You's poetry and the cultural relics described within it presents an opportunity to share this rich heritage with a global audience. By translating and promoting these poetic works, we can introduce foreign readers to the profound cultural landscape of the Zhejiang East Canal. This not only enhances cross-cultural understanding but also contributes to the preservation and appreciation of China's intangible cultural assets on an international scale.

In the Southern Song Dynasty, the canal played a very important role, not only promoting the exchange of goods and materials between the north and the south, but also developing the cities and towns along the canal. Merchants also needed to use the canal for commercial communication, and accumulated a lot of wealth, forming a famous commercial power. The smooth flow of the canal not only strengthened the ties between different regions, but also promoted the economic and cultural exchanges between different regions, and had a great impact on consolidating political unity. In addition, the canal is also the economic lifeline of the

dynasty, related to the survival of the dynastic regime. The state depended on water transport to transfer money and food, and water transport depended on canals to connect.

At that time, with Hangzhou becoming the place of travel, the Zhejiang East Canal was also repaired more thoroughly, so that the canal traffic reached an extremely frequent degree. Lu You has such records in "Fayun Temple Guanyin Hall Record" (see Lu You's Collection, Weinan Anthology; Volume 19) about Fayun Zen Temple. Temple in Qiantang, Kuaiji Chong, where the east scholar-official official in the court and transfer officials, try in the Ministry of rites, not from the temple and the west, candied to usher in, often belong to also. Rich businessmen, twist rudder hanging mat, clamp with great oar, pearl big bay, feathering treasure, heavy load and go, no empty day also.

Qiandao six years (1170) leap May 18th evening, Lu You from Shanyin (now Shaoxing), with his family to go to Kuizhou (now Fengjie Chongqing) to pass judgment. He walked the Zhejiang East Canal at that time, and then went up the river, and wrote down what he thought and saw day by day, which is the Record of Entering Shu. It consists of six volumes and is the earliest extant diary of a long travel book. The Zhejiang East Canal carries the memories of countless historical celebrities who left their pearls of poetry on the river, but few left systematic writing like Lu You. The Jiangnan section of the book retains the precious historical materials of the canal in the Southern Song Dynasty. From this historical data, we can see the customs and historical sites of Suzhou, Changzhou, Yangzhou, Zhejiang and other places at that time.

The canal is not only the channel for Lu You to travel, but also the witness and important carrier of his life experience, emotional change and cultural experience. The flow and change of the canal, echoing Lu You's life experience, became an important theme in his poems. The local customs and historical sites along the canal provide a rich cultural experience for Lu You. Through his canal trips, he gained insights into the cultural characteristics of each region, and these experiences are also reflected in his poetry. In summary, this study aims to uncover the cultural relics depicted in Lu You's poetry concerning the Zhejiang East Canal, analyze their significance, and investigate effective strategies for their international dissemination. Through such efforts, we hope to foster greater awareness and appreciation of this important cultural heritage site among both domestic and international audiences.

2. Mengbi Bridge in Lu You's Poetry about His Land Travels Along the ZEC

2.1. The Importance of Mengbi Bridge

Gone are the sages, yet their poetry endures. For millennia, Mengbi Bridge (Dream Pen Bridge) has stood as a renowned crossing and post station, inspiring tributes from celebrated poets across the dynasties, including Dai Shulun, Huazhen, Wang Shipeng, Lu You, Jiang Kui, Liu Ji, Wang Shouren, and Mao Qiling. Over the long course of history, these poetic exchanges have woven a tapestry of cultural heritage along the Grand Canal, known for its "meandering streams with floating goblets", leaving an everlasting fragrance through the ages.

Among the various locations mentioned in Lu You's poems about his travels along the canal, Mengbi Bridge stands out with relatively more frequent references, indicating its profound impact on him. Preliminary statistics show that Mengbi Bridge is repeatedly mentioned in Lu You's canal travel poetry under different moods, highlighting its significance to the poet.

2.2. Analysis of Poems Related to Mengbi Bridge

This section delves into the analysis of poems associated with Mengbi Bridge, exploring their artistic characteristics, historical context, and the cultural significance they reflect. By studying the poetry written about Mengbi Bridge across different eras, we can gain a deeper understanding of this ancient landmark's place in literary history and its influence on subsequent generations.

Mengbi Bridge, as a site rich in history and cultural depth, has attracted numerous literati who have composed verses inspired by it. From ancient times to the modern era, many renowned poets have left their mark here, drawing inspiration from the bridge to create several well-known masterpieces. These poems not only document the natural scenery and cultural landscapes surrounding Mengbi Bridge but also express the authors' moods and emotions at the time, serving as crucial materials for researching the region's history and culture.

Through the analysis of poetry related to Mengbi Bridge, we can observe the evolution of literary sentiments among scholars from different dynasties, understanding how they expressed personal feelings and social ideals through depictions of natural scenery. Additionally, these poems reflect changes over time in the area around Mengbi Bridge, as well as its role in ancient Chinese transportation and cultural exchange.

2.2.1. *Chang Xiang Si (Longing; No. 4)*

Chang Xiang Si (Longing; No. 4) is a poignant poem written by the renowned Song Dynasty poet Lu You. This piece, like many of his works, reflects deep emotional resonance and a profound connection with nature, blending personal sentiment with vivid imagery.

长相思 (其四) chǎng xiāng sī (qí sì) 陆游 lù yóu	<i>Longing (No. 4)</i> Lu You
暮山青，暮霞明，梦笔桥头艇子横。蘋风吹酒醒。 mù shān qīng, mù xiá míng, mèng bǐ qiáo tóu tǐng zǐ héng。 Píng fēng chuī jiǔ xǐng。	The evening mountains are green, the evening clouds aglow, at Mengbi Bridge, a boat lies still in the stream below. The breeze from the water lilies sobers me from wine's embrace.
看潮生，看潮平，小住西陵莫较程。菰丝初可烹。 kàn cháo shēng, kàn cháo píng, xiǎo zhù xī líng mò jiào chéng。 chūn sī chū kě pēng。	I watch the tide rise, then settle into calm, pausing briefly at Xiling, no need to hasten on my journey's path. Just as the water shield tendrils first grace the pot with taste.

This poem was composed by Lu You in 1682. In front of the Jiang Temple lies a river, with a bridge spanning its waters; this river is none other than the Zhejiang East Canal, and the bridge is known as Mengbi Bridge. The Mengbi Post Station, situated beside Mengbi Bridge in front of the Jiang Temple in Xiaoshan, served as a resting place for travelers and wanderers passing through the canal.

The poem lightly sketches the journey from Mengbi Bridge to Xixing Ferry along the canal, with a mood as clear and peaceful as the scenery it describes, brimming with vitality and charm. It shares a similar elegance with the lines "Listening to spring rain all night in a small pavilion, tomorrow morning apricot blossoms will be sold in deep alleys," both exemplifying one of the recurring themes in Lu You's poetry.

Moreover, this work also echoes the predominant melody found in much of Lu You's oeuvre: the grand aspiration to serve the country from afar and the sorrowful frustration of unfulfilled ambitions and lack of opportunities to prove oneself. This adds a touch of heroic spirit to the poetry about Mengbi Bridge.

The poem paints a beautiful picture of a sunset scene, where the evening mountains are tinged with green and the twilight clouds glow brightly. The poet watches boats gliding past at the head of Mengbi Bridge by the riverside, marveling at how the breeze from the water lilies sobers him from wine's embrace. The second part of the poem describes watching the tides rise and

fall, referring to the observation of tidal changes. The poet suggests pausing briefly at Xiling to savor the local water shield tendrils dish. Throughout, the poem exudes an atmosphere of comfort and tranquility, expressing the poet's love for nature and yearning for life.

Chang Xiang Si (Longing; No. 4) captures Lu You's contemplative state of mind, reflecting on the transient beauty of nature and the impermanence of human experiences. The poem not only celebrates the scenic charm of Mengbi Bridge but also delves into the poet's inner world, revealing his longing for peace and tranquility amidst life's uncertainties.

Through this work, Lu You expresses a yearning for harmony with nature and a desire to find solace in the face of life's challenges. The poem resonates with themes common in classical Chinese poetry—such as the fleeting nature of time, the beauty of solitude, and the importance of living in the moment—while offering a glimpse into the poet's own travels and reflections along the Zhejiang East Canal.

Mengbi Bridge, located near Xiaoshan, was a significant landmark during the Song Dynasty, serving as a crossing point and post station for travelers. It has inspired numerous poets over the centuries, becoming a symbol of cultural heritage and literary inspiration. Lu You's depiction of Mengbi Bridge adds to its legendary status, immortalizing it in the annals of Chinese literature.

2.2.2. *Misty Waves Amidst the Scene*

Misty Waves Amidst the Scene is a classic poem penned by the renowned Song Dynasty poet Lu You. This work, like many of his poems, masterfully blends natural scenery with personal sentiment, creating a vivid and evocative scene that resonates with readers.

烟波即事 yān bō jí shì 陆游 lù yóu	<i>Misty Waves Amidst the Scene</i> Lu You
梦笔桥边听午钟，无穷烟水似吴淞。 mèng bǐ qiáo biān tīng wǔ zhōng, wú qióng yān shuǐ sì wú sōng。	Beside Mengbi Bridge, the noon bell tolls, Endless misty waters mirror the Wu Song's flow.
前年送客曾来此，唯有山僧认得依。 qián nián sòng kè céng lái cǐ, wéi yǒu shān sēng rèn de yī。	Two years ago, I came here to see a guest off, Only the mountain monk remembers me so.

This poem was composed by Lu You in March 1207 in Yuecheng District, Shaoxing City, Zhejiang Province. It is the sixth of ten poems in his collection titled *Misty Waves Amidst the Scene*. The poem vividly portrays the poet's experience at Mengbi Bridge, either from a dream or a memory. The poem opens with the poet standing beside Mengbi Bridge, listening to the tolling of the noon bell. The imagery immediately transports the reader to a tranquil setting, where time seems to slow down. The endless misty waters stretching before him evoke the Wusong River, known for its expansive and serene flow. This comparison not only highlights the beauty of the surroundings but also suggests a sense of continuity and timelessness. In the line "Beside Mengbi Bridge, the noon bell tolls", the scene comes alive with the resonant chime of the afternoon bell, transporting the poet into a world that feels dreamlike and ethereal. In the line "Endless misty waters mirror the Wu Song's flow", through a metaphor, the river's surface, shrouded in mist, is likened to the pine forests of Wu (modern-day Jiangsu), creating an atmosphere that is both hazy and profoundly deep.

In the second part of the poem, Lu You reflects on a past experience—two years ago, he had come to this very spot to bid farewell to a guest. This recollection introduces a layer of nostalgia

and personal history, deepening the emotional texture of the poem. The final line brings in the solitary figure of a mountain monk who alone remembers the poet from that previous visit. This detail underscores themes of solitude and the fleeting nature of human connections, while also suggesting a spiritual or philosophical contemplation. In the line “Two years ago, I came here to see a guest off”, the poet recalls a moment from two years past when he bid farewell to a friend here, the scene of parting still vivid in his mind. In the line “Only the mountain monk remembers me so”, it suggests the poet's sense of estrangement from the outside world; only the monk from the mountains remembers him, evoking feelings of solitude and the passage of time. Overall, the poem weaves personal experiences and emotions into the depiction of natural scenery, expressing the poet's nostalgia for the past and reflection on his present circumstances. It embodies the common themes of longing and loneliness found in Song Dynasty poetry, offering a poignant glimpse into Lu You's inner world.

Through *Misty Waves Amidst the Scene*, Lu You explores several recurring themes in classical Chinese poetry: the transient beauty of nature, the impermanence of human experiences, and the search for solace and continuity amidst change. The poem's tranquil yet poignant tone invites readers to reflect on their own journeys and the passage of time. The mention of Mengbi Bridge and the Wusong-like waters situates the poem within a specific geographical and cultural context, enriching its layers of meaning. Mengbi Bridge, as a significant landmark, has inspired numerous poets over the centuries, symbolizing both a physical crossing point and a metaphorical bridge between different moments in time.

Lu You was a prolific poet whose works often reflected his deep connection to nature and his introspective reflections on life and society. His travels along the Zhejiang East Canal provided ample inspiration for his poetry, capturing the landscapes and sentiments of the places he visited. *Misty Waves Amidst the Scene* exemplifies his ability to weave personal experience with broader cultural and natural elements, creating poetry that remains relevant and moving across centuries.

2.2.3. *Aquatint in Late Summer and Early Autumn*

Aquatint in Late Summer and Early Autumn is a poignant short poem written by the renowned Song Dynasty poet Lu You. This work captures a moment during the transitional period between summer and autumn when the poet finds himself traveling by boat on a lake at night. The poem reflects Lu You's introspective mood and his sensitivity to the natural world around him, as well as an underlying current of historical and emotional depth.

夏秋之交小舟早夜往来湖中绝句 xià qiū zhī jiāo xiǎo zhōu zǎo yè wǎng lái hú zhōng jué jù hú zhōng jué jù 陆游 lù yóu	<i>Aquatint in Late Summer and Early Autumn</i> Lu You
梦笔桥东夜系船，残灯耿耿不成眠。 mèng bǐ qiáo dōng yè xì chuán, cán dēng gěng gěng bù chéng mián。	Beside Mengbi Bridge, I moor my boat at night, With a faint lamp flickering, sleep eludes me still.
千年未息灵胥怒，卷地潮声到枕边。 qiān nián wèi xī líng xū nù, juàn dì cháo shēng dào zhěn biān。	The wrath of Ling Xu endures through a thousand years, Its roaring tides reach my pillow, unrelenting.

The poem opens with the poet mooring his small boat beside Mengbi Bridge under the cover of night. The setting immediately evokes a sense of solitude and quietude. The faint light from a nearly extinguished lamp inside the boat casts a dim glow, yet despite the stillness of the scene,

sleep does not come easily to the poet. This inability to rest sets the tone for the contemplative nature of the poem.

In the following lines, Lu You introduces a historical and mythological element that adds layers of meaning to the poem. He refers to the enduring anger of Ling Xu (a reference to Wu Zixu, a loyal minister of the State of Wu during the Spring and Autumn period), whose spirit is said to have been transformed into the surging tides of the Qiantang River. The poet imagines that this ancient wrath has persisted for a thousand years and manifests itself in the roaring tides that seem to reach his very pillow. This vivid imagery not only connects the poet's personal experience to a broader historical narrative but also conveys a sense of the timeless power of nature.

Through this poem, Lu You explores themes of insomnia and restlessness, the persistence of historical grievances, and the overwhelming force of nature. The mention of Wu Zixu's story adds a layer of cultural and historical richness, linking the poet's fleeting moment on the lake to the long-standing traditions and legends of China. The roaring tides serve as a metaphor for unresolved emotions and the relentless passage of time, emphasizing both the transient and eternal aspects of human existence.

The poem also highlights the harmony between man and nature, as well as the tension between them. While the poet finds himself in a peaceful setting, he is simultaneously confronted by the powerful forces of nature, symbolized by the tides. This juxtaposition creates a complex emotional landscape within the brief span of the poem.

Lu You was known for his travels and his deep connection to the landscapes he encountered. His poetry often reflected his observations of nature and his reflections on life and history. *Aquatint in Late Summer and Early Autumn* exemplifies this characteristic, combining personal experience with broader cultural references. The poem invites readers to contemplate the relationship between individual experiences and the larger currents of history and nature, offering a glimpse into the rich tapestry of Chinese classical poetry.

During the transition between summer and autumn, a small boat shuttles back and forth on the lake at dawn and dusk. The lake waters expand boundlessly in autumn, with no visible ferry point. Fishing boats circle around, becoming the only neighbors in the surrounding expanse. Surrounded by water as far as the eye can see, the poetic beauty of the scene remains elusive. Even though Lu You imagines himself as clouds in the water, he still feels powerless and regretful.

This poem captures the vastness and boundless feeling of the autumn lake through the depiction of a small boat navigating its waters. The circling fishing boats are portrayed as the sole companions amidst the expansive lake. However, despite being surrounded by such an extensive body of water, the poet is unable to fully appreciate the poetic essence and natural beauty of the scene. In the end, by imagining himself as clouds within the water, the poet expresses his yearning to merge with and transcend nature.

The poem uses concise language to depict the lakeside scenery during the change from summer to autumn, showcasing the poet's delicate perception of natural beauty and pursuit of poetic inspiration. By describing the vastness of the lake and the circling fishing boats, it transports readers into a tranquil yet expansive lakeside world. Yet, the poet also conveys a sense of helplessness and regret at not being able to fully grasp the poetry within the scene. Finally, the poet's imaginative transformation into clouds in the water symbolizes his desire for integration with and transcendence beyond nature.

3. Lu You's Poetry and the Inheritance and Development of ZEC Culture

3.1. Cultural Heritage Preservation and Lu You's Poetic Value

In today's world of diverse cultural development, the protection and promotion of cultural heritage have become increasingly important. The Zhejiang East Canal, recognized as a World Heritage Site, carries within it thousands of years of history and civilization. Meanwhile, Lu You's poetry stands out as a unique cultural symbol and a brilliant gem in the literary treasure trove. The intertwining of these two elements not only enhances awareness for the preservation of the Zhejiang East Canal but also infuses new vitality into the protection and development of this cultural heritage.

Throughout his life, Lu You traveled extensively along the Zhejiang East Canal, leaving behind vivid depictions that serve as precious records of the canal's past appearance. By studying and disseminating these poems, more people can come to understand the significant role and unique charm of the Zhejiang East Canal throughout history. Efforts such as organizing scholars for in-depth analysis of Lu You's canal-related verses, publishing relevant research works, and hosting specialized lectures all contribute to raising public awareness of the canal's cultural significance. When people appreciate the former prosperity of the canal through poetry, they recognize its value as a cultural relic and develop a stronger sense of protection.

From a cultural value perspective, the values embedded in Lu You's poetry blend seamlessly with canal culture, enriching the cultural connotations of the canal heritage. The emotions, thoughts, and historical records contained within the poems complement the transportation and cultural exchange functions of the Grand Canal, forming the profound cultural foundation of the Zhejiang East Canal. For instance, Lu You's descriptions of vessels passing on the canal and bustling docks provide literary evidence for researching ancient transportation and commercial activities, offering a more intuitive understanding of the canal's economic role in history. Moreover, the patriotic sentiments and concern for people's livelihood expressed in the poems add to the cultural value of the Zhejiang East Canal, elevating its status in cultural inheritance.

3.2. Integration of Tourism and Culture: Development and Utilization

In recent years, the integration of tourism and culture has become a major trend. Using Lu You's poetry as an entry point offers new pathways for the development of the Zhejiang East Canal's cultural tourism industry.

On one hand, we can create cultural tourism routes themed around Lu You's poetry. By selecting locations where Lu You once visited or mentioned in his poems—such as Shaoxing's Shen Garden or Hangzhou's West Lake—and connecting these scenic spots, we can develop distinctive tourist itineraries. During tours, professional guides can explain the connection between Lu You's poetry and the attractions, allowing visitors to enjoy the scenery while experiencing the essence and cultural depth of the poetry, thus enriching and deepening their travel experience.

On the other hand, developing cultural tourism products related to Lu You's poetry and the Zhejiang East Canal can meet tourists' cultural consumption needs while further promoting both cultures. Examples include designing souvenirs like postcards, bookmarks, and folding fans featuring Lu You's poetry and canal landscapes; staging live performances based on Lu You's poetry to bring the scenes alive on stage; and organizing events such as poetry recitation contests and calligraphy exhibitions. These initiatives not only attract visitor participation and enhance the cultural atmosphere of tourism but also deepen the dissemination of the canal culture and Lu You's poetry.

3.3. Implications for Local Cultural Construction

In terms of cultural confidence, Lu You's poetry and the Zhejiang East Canal are distinctive cultural resources that serve as key identifiers of local culture. Delving into and inheriting these cultural resources allows the local populace to gain a deeper understanding of the rich heritage and unique value of their native culture, thereby strengthening their identification and pride in their hometown culture. When people realize that their homeland possesses such abundant cultural legacies that have played crucial roles throughout history, they naturally develop cultural confidence. This confidence not only aids in protecting and preserving local culture but also stimulates public enthusiasm for participating in local cultural construction, fostering a positive cycle of cultural inheritance and development.

Furthermore, the fusion of Lu You's poetry with the Zhejiang East Canal promotes the exchange and integration of different cultures. As an ancient transportation artery, the canal once facilitated cultural exchanges between the north and south. Today, using Lu You's poetry as a bridge attracts more domestic and international tourists and cultural researchers to focus on the Zhejiang region, promoting interactions between local culture and others, leading to cultural innovation and development through exchange.

4. The International Dissemination and Development of Lu You's Poetry and ZEC Culture

4.1. Current Status

In terms of international dissemination, the Zhejiang East Canal and Lu You's poetry exhibit distinct statuses. Efforts to promote the Zhejiang East Canal internationally have been proactive, such as the production of bilingual cultural videos like *"Bridging the Grand Canal"* by Hangzhou's Gongshu District, the establishment of an international exchange center for the Grand Canal's global promotion along with its core social media accounts abroad, and Jiaxing City's foreign publicity campaign *"Foreigners Tell Stories—Encountering the Grand Canal."* However, challenges remain, including differences in content relevance to foreign perceptions of canals, reliance on traditional dissemination channels, lack of depth and differentiation in carriers, and insufficient synergy among communication professionals.

Lu You's poetry initially gained international recognition through introductions by foreign sinologists in their works and limited translations. Recently, it has benefited from international cultural events, such as the 2024 Global Chinese Poetry Recital where American students performed *"The Phoenix Hairpin"* in both Chinese and English, winning accolades and demonstrating the unique charm that transcends cultural boundaries.

It is evident that while both Lu You's poetry and the Zhejiang East Canal have achieved unique trajectories and outcomes in their international spread, there is a noticeable lack of integrated dissemination between the two. Currently, the international promotion of Lu You's poetry focuses mainly on translating the poems themselves, disseminating scholarly research findings, and showcasing poem content through cultural activities, but rarely connects these elements with the rich historical and cultural connotations carried by the Zhejiang East Canal. Similarly, the international promotion of the canal tends to focus on its engineering feats, trade history, and local customs without fully exploring the imagery, emotions, and cultural memories associated with Lu You's poetry related to the canal. This absence of integrated dissemination limits the synergistic effect that could be achieved, making it difficult for global audiences to gain a comprehensive and profound understanding of the interconnected richness of Chinese traditional culture.

4.2. Strategies for the International Dissemination

To enhance the international dissemination of the Zhejiang East Canal and Lu You's poetry, it is crucial to combine their cultural essence with modern elements, presenting them in narrative and visual forms to increase content appeal and accessibility. Innovative dissemination methods should leverage new media technologies, such as creating short videos, live streaming, and other formats to interpret the scenery of the Zhejiang East Canal and the cultural significance of Lu You's poetry, thereby crafting immersive cultural experiences and broadening dissemination channels. Additionally, inviting international friends to participate in these cultural activities can foster cultural exchanges.

4.3. Issues and Challenges in the International Dissemination

4.3.1. Understanding Barriers Caused by Cultural Differences

Cultural backgrounds, ways of thinking, and value systems in different countries and regions differ significantly from Chinese culture. Western cultures lack a comparable historical context to the Zhejiang East Canal, leading to difficulties in comprehending canal culture. Moreover, cultural symbols in Lu You's poetry, such as "picking ferns" (cǎi wēi) or "breaking willows" (zhé liǔ), do not have corresponding concepts in Western culture, which can cause misinterpretations of the emotional and cultural expressions within the poetry.

4.3.2. Limitations of Language Translation

Chinese poetry possesses unique rhythm, meter, and rhetorical devices that are challenging to preserve in translation. Features like tonal patterns and rhyming schemes are often lost when translated into alphabetic languages. The artistic effects of various poetic techniques are hard to replicate post-translation. Handling culturally loaded terms, such as official titles and place names, poses significant challenges during translation, as improper handling can affect the overall comprehension of the poem. Differences in translators' interpretations and styles can also lead to inconsistent translation quality.

5. Deepening Strategies for the International Dissemination of Lu You's Poetry and ZEC Culture

5.1. Integrating Cultural Resources to Build a Cross-Cultural Communication Platform

To enhance the international influence of the Zhejiang East Canal and Lu You's poetry, it is essential to integrate their cultural resources into a comprehensive cross-cultural communication platform. This platform should not only encompass traditional formats like publications and academic conferences but also leverage modern information technologies such as the Internet, social media, Virtual Reality (VR), and Augmented Reality (AR). By employing these tools, the historical appearance of the canal and the artistic allure of Lu You's poetry can be showcased in a more vivid and intuitive manner. Establishing multilingual websites and official accounts on mainstream international social platforms can better attract global audiences and promote cultural exchange.

5.2. Innovating Communication Formats to Create Immersive Experiences

Innovative communication formats tailored to the needs of different audience segments are crucial. For example, producing high-quality documentaries, animations, or developing mobile applications can tell the story of the Zhejiang East Canal and interpret Lu You's poetry. Particularly, using VR/AR technology to create virtual tour projects allows overseas users to experience the charm of this ancient waterway without being physically present. Additionally, organizing interactive online and offline events such as "Travelling the Canal with Lu You"

themed tours or online poetry recital competitions can stimulate public participation while deepening their understanding of Chinese traditional culture.

5.3. Strengthening Collaborative Exchanges to Form Synergistic Effects

Enhancing cooperation between domestic and international institutions is vital. On one hand, actively seeking collaboration opportunities with Chinese embassies and consulates abroad, Confucius Institutes, and other overseas Chinese Cultural Centers to jointly plan and organize impactful promotional activities. On the other hand, establishing long-term stable partnerships with foreign universities, research institutions, and media outlets is important. Inviting more internationally renowned scholars to participate in the study of Lu You's poetry and encouraging them to write relevant reviews or books is beneficial. Supporting joint creations by Chinese and foreign young artists that blend contemporary art elements can attract more attention from younger generations.

5.4. Emphasizing Educational Promotion and Professional Talent Development

Addressing language barriers and technical challenges encountered during cultural dissemination requires focusing on talent cultivation. Domestic universities should offer specialized courses teaching students about the Zhejiang East Canal and Lu You's poetry, along with training in translation skills and cross-cultural communication abilities. Scholarship programs should be established to attract outstanding foreign students to learn Chinese and related professional knowledge, laying a solid foundation for future international cooperation. Regular training sessions and seminars should be held to continuously improve the expertise of professionals already working in this field.

5.5. Adapting to Cultural Differences to Optimize Content Presentation

Considering the cultural differences among various countries and regions, optimizing content presentation is necessary when conducting international dissemination. First, thoroughly researching the cultural characteristics and social customs of target markets ensures that the content aligns with local values while preserving the essence of Chinese traditional culture. Second, explanations of specific cultural symbols or historical events should use accessible language and expressions to avoid affecting reception due to overly obscure content. Finally, adjusting dissemination strategies according to the features of different media; for instance, short videos are suitable for rapid information delivery, whereas lengthy reports facilitate in-depth analysis.

6. Conclusion

The Zhejiang East Canal, as a historically significant waterway, served not only as a conduit for material transportation but also as a link for cultural exchange. It bore witness to Lu You's travels, while Lu You immortalized his journeys and impressions through poetry. His verses, intertwined with the canal's history, have become an essential part of the Zhejiang East Canal culture, characterized by unique artistic charm and offering invaluable spiritual wealth to future generations.

By exploring the inheritance and development of Lu You's poetry and the Zhejiang East Canal culture, their integration into tourism and cultural industries, and their current status and development strategies in international dissemination, we can see that these two elements are brilliant gems within the treasure trove of Chinese culture. They are not only crucial components of local cultural heritage but also serve as a spiritual bridge connecting past and present, China and the world. Laden with rich historical memories and deep emotional ties, they reflect the fine traditional virtues of the Chinese nation and its unique contributions in the process of globalization.

This thesis proposes a series of concrete measures aimed at deepening the international dissemination of Lu You's poetry and the Zhejiang East Canal culture. These include, but are not limited to, building cross-cultural communication platforms, innovating dissemination formats, strengthening cooperative exchanges, emphasizing educational promotion, and addressing cultural differences. Such measures not only help tackle the current challenges but also provide valuable references for further promoting such cultural heritages on the global stage.

Certainly, in the future, there should be enhanced research and dissemination on the intersection of Zhejiang East Canal culture and Lu You's poetry. This would allow more international friends to understand the profound cultural connotations behind the canal and the poetry, fostering a deeper understanding and recognition of Chinese culture among people worldwide. By doing so, it will boost the international spread and influence of Chinese culture, instill cultural confidence in our domestic populace, and enable the world to better appreciate this unique cultural landscape. Ultimately, this will promote the prosperity and development of Chinese culture on the world stage.

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