

Translating Chinese Texts of Geographical Indication Products into English from the Perspective of an Integrated Three-Tier Strategy: A Case Study of Duan Inkstone

Peidong Liu

Guangzhou College of Applied Science and Technology, Guangzhou, Guangdong, China

Abstract: This paper explores the English translation of introductory texts of Duan inkstone, a representative geographical indication (GI) product of Zhaoqing and a national intangible cultural heritage. Distinct from previous studies on the translation of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) texts, which tend to apply a relatively uniform integrated strategy, this study starts from the textual heterogeneity of GI products: drawing on Reiss's text-type theory, the Duan inkstone texts are classified into aesthetic (expressive), narrative (operative-cum-expressive) and informative (knowledge-oriented) types, each with markedly different linguistic and cultural features. The paper takes Neoliteralism (Rose) and Reiss's text typology as its principal theoretical axis, distinguishes Neoliteralism's "signifier for signifier" from Venuti's foreignization, and integrates the principles of "two types of closeness" and "Five Cs" into the translation principles of the three text types, with each type assigned a different emphasis. On this basis, an integrated three-tier strategy is constructed: "rendering form to convey spirit" for aesthetic texts, "cultural compensation" for narrative texts, and "terminological standardization" for informative texts. With examples from the album Chinese Duan Inkstone, the paper demonstrates how differentiated translation methods reflect the textual differences across the three types, in the hope of providing theoretical and practical reference for the international communication of China's GI products.

Keywords: Geographical Indication Products; Duan Inkstone; Text Type; Neoliteralism; Integrated Three-Tier Strategy

1. Introduction

Zhaoqing, a city in the west-central part of Guangdong Province, boasts 50 geographical

indication (GI) products, ranking first in the province, with representative items including Deqing Tribute Mandarin, Fengkai Xinghua Chicken, Gaoyao Cinnamon and Duan inkstone. Among them, Duan inkstone is the only category bearing both product protection and certification-trademark recognition. As the foremost of the "Four Famous Inkstones of China," it earned Zhaoqing the title "Capital of Inkstones of China" in 2004, and its crafting technique was inscribed onto the first batch of the national intangible cultural heritage (ICH) list in 2006. At present, Duan inkstone is striving to build an overseas IP to push forward its internationalization, yet systematic research on the precise English translation of its cultural connotations and brand value remains lacking.

The international communication of GI products is an important pathway for local culture to "go global." Jiang and Ye [1], through an analysis of survey data on China's Duan inkstone industry, found that cultural symbols exert a significant positive effect on the marketing of Duan inkstone, which confirms the vital role of high-quality translation. Liu [2], drawing on the theory of Neoliteralism, argues that translation should render not only the "sense" but also the "form," thus providing a methodological reference for the translation of Duan inkstone. Jia [3,4], focusing on ICH introductory texts, successively proposed the principles of "two types of closeness" and "Five Cs" and developed an integrated strategy of alienation, adaptation and compensation; studies on the text type of ICH texts have further noted that such texts are "an informative text with narrative characteristics" possessing "both the informative and vocative functions" [5], yet the strategies applied have often remained uniform across text types. More recently, Shao [6] has explored the globalization strategy for translating cultural heritage texts, highlighting the need to balance global and local cultural elements in cross-cultural communication.

A closer look at the existing studies, however, reveals a gap relevant to GI products. The translation of ICH introductory texts has often been treated in a relatively uniform manner: a single integrated strategy is applied across texts of diverse functions, and the differences among text types are insufficiently distinguished. GI products such as Duan inkstone, by contrast, carry texts of marked heterogeneity — informative descriptions of quarries and craft, aesthetic depictions of stone patterns and landscapes, and narrative accounts of historical figures and craftsmen — and a uniform strategy can hardly serve all three. This textual heterogeneity constitutes the essential difference between the translation of GI product texts and that of ICH texts in general. It is on this premise that the present paper proceeds: each text type has a different emphasis, and the theories and principles applied should likewise be weighted differently. Taking the album *Chinese Duan Inkstone* as the corpus, this paper clarifies the distinction between Neoliteralism and foreignization, builds a type-oriented three-tier strategy, and demonstrates how differentiated translation methods reflect textual differences, with a view to providing theoretical and practical reference for the international communication of Zhaoqing's GI products.

The significance of such a type-differentiated approach extends beyond a single product. GI products, by their nature, bundle together place, craft and reputation, and their introductory texts routinely mix scenic, historical and technical discourse; a framework that distinguishes among these text types is therefore transferable to other GI products of Zhaoqing, such as *Deqing Tribute Mandarin* and *Fengkai Xinghua Chicken*, and more broadly to the international communication of China's GI products. By clarifying the boundary between Neoliteralism and foreignization, and by weighting the "two types of closeness" and the Five Cs differently across text types, the paper also contributes a refined theoretical instrument to the translation studies of culture-bearing texts at large.

2. What Does a Geographical Indication Product Refer to?

A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. According to the international instruments concerned, a GI functions as an

indispensable part of a region's cultural and economic identity; it is traditional, place-bound and reputation-bearing, and it is community-based, recognized and maintained by the communities that create, maintain and transmit it. In this sense, a GI product is not merely a commodity but a carrier of local culture, craft and history, and its international publicity is an important way for local culture to "go global."

Duan inkstone is a typical case in point. As a GI product of Zhaoqing, it is at once a craft product protected by geographical indication and an item of national intangible cultural heritage, thus possessing dual cultural and economic value. Geologically, the Duan inkstone ore formed after about 400 million years of evolution, and the main ore deposits are distributed in the Fuke Mountain Range in eastern Zhaoqing and the Beiling Mountain area north of the Seven Star Crags. Among them, the stone from four quarries — Laokeng (the Old Quarry), Mazikeng, Kengzaiyan and Songkeng — is regarded as the finest, known as the "Four Famous Quarries." The inkstone is celebrated for its diverse "stone patterns" (*shipin huawen*) such as Fish-brain Gelatin (*Yunaodong*), Plantain White (*Jiaoyebai*) and Sky-blue (*Tianqing*), and for its tactile and functional qualities — soft and tender as a baby's skin yet with a hint of "astringency," and yielding a lingering union with the ink. Historically, Zhaoqing (formerly Duanzhou) has been the cradle of Lingnan culture, and the Duan inkstone, forged by the land and shaped by generations of craftsmen, has become a symbol of Chinese literati aesthetics.

Seen from space, the karst limestone peaks rise like dragons soaring from the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, winding through Guangxi for thousands of miles before abruptly ending in the west-central part of Guangdong Province, where nature has crafted a renowned city of mountains and waters — Zhaoqing. Once a prefecture and county in the Qin and Han dynasties, a regional administrative center in the Sui and Tang dynasties, and a prefectural seat in the Song dynasty, Zhaoqing is widely regarded as the cradle of Lingnan culture. The crafting of Duan inkstone proceeds through such procedures as quarrying, designing, carving, polishing and box-matching, and the technique, handed down from generation to generation, was inscribed onto the first batch of the national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006. Such a product, at

once geological, artisanal and cultural, demands that its translation be treated as the cross-cultural transmission of a culture-saturated GI product rather than as a mere linguistic conversion. The diversity of its introductory texts — scenic, historical and technical — further means that no single strategy can serve them all.

3. Textual Features of Duan Inkstone Introductory Texts

In view of linguistic and cultural transmission from the source text into the target one, studying and understanding the types and characteristics of the original text is an essential phase for translation work, and it is the basis for choosing and determining translation principles, strategies and methods. In the light of Reiss's [7] text-type theory, the introductory texts of Duan inkstone, despite their shared subject, are not uniform in linguistic feature; rather, they span three text types — aesthetic (expressive), narrative (operative-cum-expressive) and informative (knowledge-oriented) — each with its own linguistic and cultural characteristics. It is this heterogeneity that underlies the present study and sets it apart from a uniform treatment of texts. Below is discussed and analyzed in detail the features of the three types.

3.1 Aesthetic (Expressive) Texts

Aesthetic texts, found chiefly in such sections of the album as “Into Zhaoqing” and “The Capital of Inkstones of China,” take scene-painting and lyric expression as their core function. Linguistically, they are characterized by a dense use of four-character expressions (e.g., hushan yiti “lakes and mountains as one,” boguang yanying “ripples mirroring the crags,” jiaran erzhi “coming to an abrupt end”), which create a sonorous, cadenced rhythm; by imagery-laden depiction (e.g., tenglong erqi “rising like soaring dragons” for mountain ranges); and by a loose, paratactic “flowing” sentence structure with alternating presence and absence of subjects, a typical prose-like paratactic (yihé) organization. The cultural load lies less in proper nouns than in literary allusion: “combining the mountains of Yangshuo with the waters of Guilin” invokes a canonical landscape imagery, and “the No. 1 Spectacle in Lingnan” presupposes a regional cultural frame. The aesthetic effect, in short, resides as much in form — rhythm, parallelism, imagery — as in sense.

3.2 Narrative (Operative-Cum-Expressive) Texts

Narrative texts, found chiefly in such sections as “Hometown of Duan Inkstone” and “Heart of the Inkstone Artisan,” take historical anecdotes and craftsman biographies as their core. Linguistically, they are organized along a “name—identity—achievement—style—realm” narrative axis, with a clear linear structure; a montage-like rhythm is created by stringing together episodes with semicolons (e.g., “brushing aside the mists of history... Bao Zheng proclaimed...; Emperor Huizong ascended the throne...; Zhu Youlang was crowned...; and Ye Ting's Iron Army marched...”). The cultural load is dense and figure-centered: figures such as Bao Zheng, Emperor Huizong, Zhu Youlang and Ye Ting each stand for a distinct cultural tradition — incorruptible officialdom, imperial politics, the Southern Ming and modern revolution — and the narration often rises from “deeds” (shigong) to “realm” (jingjie) of aesthetic pursuit, as in “tranquility returns to plainness, splendor returns to simplicity.” A vocative appeal (“you can see”) further draws the reader into the scene.

3.3 Informative (Knowledge-Oriented) Texts

Informative texts, found chiefly in such sections as “Knowing Duan Stone” and “The Quarries of Duan Inkstone,” take artifact knowledge and craft popularization as their core. Linguistically, they employ objective, defining and descriptive syntax with a high information density (e.g., “formed after about 400 million years of evolution,” “the main ore deposits are distributed in...”); precise spatial markers build a clear geographic coordinate system (“eastern,” “north of,” “from... in the west to... in the east”). The cultural load lies in a fairly closed terminological system — the “Four Famous Quarries” (Laokeng, Mazikeng, Kengzaiyan, Songkeng) and the names of stone patterns (Yunaodong, Jiaoyebai, Tianqing) — together with craft-specific terms (e.g., “wooden resonance when struck”). These terms enjoy a unique cultural status and, when rendered inconsistently, directly impair clarity.

The three types differ markedly in linguistic feature and cultural load: the aesthetic type is form-driven, the narrative type culture-driven, and the informative type term-driven. These differences dictate that the translation strategy should be differentiated accordingly — a premise developed in the following sections. It is

precisely this differentiation that distinguishes the translation of GI product texts from the relatively uniform treatment common in ICH translation research.

4. Translation Principles

The foregoing analysis of text type entails a type-differentiated set of translation principles. This paper takes Neoliteralism [8] and Reiss's text-type theory as its principal theoretical axis, and integrates the "two types of closeness" and "Five Cs" into the translation principles of the three text types, assigning each type a different emphasis rather than applying a single uniform checklist.

Reiss's text-type theory implies that different text types call for different translation priorities: the informative type stresses fidelity and clarity, the expressive type stresses aesthetic form, and the operative type stresses the reconstruction of cultural logic. This typological premise is the starting point of the present principles: rather than treating all Duan inkstone texts alike, it requires that the principle be weighted differently for each type.

The second axis is strategic orientation. Rose put forward "Neoliteralism", a post-structuralist translation theory that advocates a shift from the traditional "word for word, sense for sense" to "signifier for signifier," maintaining that translation should render not only the "sense" but also the "form" so that the translated text acquires an independent "literary quality." Venuti's [9] "foreignization," though inspired by Neoliteralism, differs from it in essence: foreignization is oriented towards a cultural-political strategy of resistance, whereas Neoliteralism is directed at the poetic essence of translation, pursuing a delicate fusion of the source text's mode of signification in the target text. Liu [2] has explicitly pointed out this distinction, arguing that foreignization, to a certain extent, "eclipses the light of Neoliteralism." For the Duan inkstone texts, which are at once informative and literary, this distinction is particularly crucial: the translation should not stop at retaining cultural "otherness," but should pursue the unity of "rendering sense" and "rendering form" so that the translated text itself possesses literary and aesthetic value.

On this dual axis — Reiss's typological priority and Neoliteralism's poetic orientation — the "two types of closeness" and "Five Cs" are integrated as operational guidelines, not as a

uniform yardstick but as a set of principles weighted by text type. The "two types of closeness" require that the translated text be close to the cultural characteristics of the source text and close to the thinking mode of target readers; the "Five Cs" require that the translated text be content-centered, culture-oriented, concise, clear and coherent. Nida's [10] notion of "the closest natural equivalence" orients the text towards target readers, yet the source-language culture, as an indispensable part of the source text, should be retained as much as possible so as to achieve the goal of exchanging cultures. The key move of the present paper is to weight these principles differently across the three text types.

To see why the weighting matters, consider how a uniform application would fare. If the "two types of closeness" and the Five Cs were applied identically across the three types — as a single checklist — the aesthetic text would lose its rhythm in the name of "clarity," the narrative text would lose its cultural depth in the name of "conciseness," and the informative text would lose its terminological precision in the name of "culture-orientation." The defects would lie not in the principles themselves but in their undifferentiated use. The present paper therefore keeps the principles as a shared repertoire while assigning each text type a distinct center of gravity: form for the aesthetic, context for the narrative, and accuracy for the informative. In this way the principles become at once common and differentiated — a structure that mirrors the textual heterogeneity of GI products themselves. For aesthetic texts, the emphasis falls on "rendering form" and on closeness to the source culture. Neoliteralism insists that four-character expressions, parallelism and imagery-laden depiction are themselves sources of aesthetic effect; hence the principle of "two types of closeness" is weighted toward closeness to the cultural characteristics of the source text, and the Five Cs toward conciseness and clarity of imagery, so that the translated text may evoke aesthetic resonance rather than flatten rhythm into plain enumeration.

For narrative texts, the emphasis falls on cultural compensation and coherence. The culture-bearing figures and titles in craftsman biographies are a cognitive blind spot for Western readers; hence the principle is weighted toward closeness to the thinking mode of target readers, and the Five Cs toward

culture-orientation and coherence, so that the narrative integrity is ensured and the rise from “deeds” to “realm” is not ruptured.

For informative texts, the emphasis falls on terminological accuracy and standardization. The fairly closed terminological system of the Duan inkstone domain demands consistency; hence the principle is weighted toward content-centeredness, conciseness and clarity, so that quarry and stone-pattern names follow a unified mode and the objective description remains accurate.

In this way, the “two types of closeness” and “Five Cs” cease to be a single yardstick applied uniformly — as in much ICH translation research — and become a type-differentiated set of principles, each text type carrying its own emphasis. It is on these differentiated principles that the integrated three-tier strategy in the next section is built.

5. An Integrated Three-Tier Strategy

In the light of the differentiated principles discussed above, an integrated three-tier strategy is constructed, with the combined application of Neoliteralism-guided “rendering form,” cultural compensation and terminological standardization, together with alienation, adaptation and compensation for contextual and cultural default. What distinguishes the present strategy from a simple combination of alienation and adaptation — the approach common to much ICH translation research — is its tiered design oriented towards the three text types: one strategy for one type.

First, for the aesthetic (expressive) texts, the strategy of “rendering form to convey spirit” (yixing chuanshen) is adopted. Neoliteralism emphasizes “rendering sense” together with “rendering form:” four-character expressions, parallelism and imagery-laden depiction are themselves important sources of aesthetic effect. Four-character expressions may be functionally compensated through English parallel structures and alliteration; culture-specific proper nouns adopt the mode of “transliteration plus annotation” (e.g., “the No. 1 Spectacle in Lingnan, the region south of the Five Ridges”). Aesthetic translation should pursue the “literary quality” of the translated text itself so as to evoke aesthetic resonance, rather than reducing cadenced prose to plain enumeration.

Second, for the narrative (operative-cum-expressive) texts, the strategy of

“cultural compensation” (wenhua buyi) is adopted. The culture-bearing information in craftsman biographies and historical narratives is often a cognitive blind spot for Western readers, and mere literal translation cannot convey its cultural weight. Hence a two-layer structure of “concise in-text translation plus annotative supplementation of background” is employed; for instance, “Chinese Arts and Crafts Master” may be rendered as “Chinese Arts and Crafts Master (the highest national title for artisans in China).” Meanwhile, the narrative integrity should be ensured so that descriptions of artistic style and aesthetic “realm” are not omitted, avoiding a rupture between “deeds” and “realm.” Third, for the informative (knowledge-oriented) texts, the strategy of “terminological standardization” (shuyu guifan) is adopted. The Duan inkstone domain possesses a fairly closed terminological system — the “Four Famous Quarries” and the names of stone patterns — and inconsistent treatment of terms directly violates “Conciseness” and “Clarity.” Therefore a unified standard is established: quarry names adopt “pinyin transliteration plus English gloss” (e.g., “Laokeng (the Old Quarry),” using “quarry” instead of “pit” to avoid negative associations), and stone-pattern names adopt “imagery-oriented translation plus pinyin” (e.g., “Fish-brain Gelatin (Yunaodong)”). Informative translation needs to strike a balance between “content-centeredness” and “conciseness.”

In the process of translating the Duan inkstone texts, much importance should also be attached to compensation for mending contextual and cultural default. According to Wang Dongfeng [11], in communication the part omitted by both parties as shared background is known as “situational default;” the part related to information omitted in the text is “contextual default;” and the part related to cultural background omitted in the text is “cultural default.” There is a great deal of contextual and cultural default in the Duan inkstone texts: a name such as “Bao Zheng” presupposes the whole legend of an incorruptible magistrate, and a term such as “Lingnan” presupposes a regional culture south of the Five Ridges. To mend the gap, the strategy of compensation is employed — through intra-text annotation, addition or supplement — so as to make the translated text readable and communication effective.

In order to make the translated text content-centered, culture-oriented, concise, clear

and coherent, researchers may, on the basis of the integrated three-tier strategy, utilize such methods as transliteration, transliteration plus literal translation, transliteration plus annotation, addition or supplement, interpretation, intra-text annotation, condensation and substitution.

6. Translating Texts of Duan Inkstone into English

With the guidance of the differentiated principles and the integrated three-tier strategy, the present section explores the translation of the Duan inkstone texts in the album Chinese Duan Inkstone. Rather than surveying existing renderings, it takes typical examples to demonstrate how the three-tier strategy is applied to each text type, so that the translation may reflect the textual differences across the three types. The discussion proceeds from the commonalities shared by all three types to the differences peculiar to each.

6.1 Commonalities in Translating the Three Text Types

Despite their differences, the three text types share a number of common features in translation. First, all three abound in culture-specific items (CSIs) — quarry names, stone-pattern names, historical figures, place names and craft terms [12] — and their handling calls for the combined use of alienation and adaptation: alienation to retain the original culture, adaptation to orient the text to target readers [13,14]. Second, all three should be governed by the “two types of closeness” and the Five Cs: the translated text should be close to the cultural characteristics of the source text and close to the thinking mode of target readers, and should be content-centered, culture-oriented, concise, clear and coherent. Third, all three should respect, in Neoliteralism’s terms, the “signifier” of the source — that is, render not only the sense but also, where it bears aesthetic or cultural weight, the form.

These commonalities may be illustrated by a few brief examples drawn from the corpus. The proper name “Duan yan” is rendered throughout as “Duan inkstone”: the pinyin retains the cultural signifier (alienation; respect for the signifier), while “inkstone” orients the term to target readers (adaptation; the Five Cs’ clarity). The appellation “Zhongguo Yandu” is rendered as “the Capital of Chinese Inkstone” rather than a word-for-word “Chinese inkstone capital,” so

that the collocation is at once close to the source culture and natural to the target reader’s mind (the two types of closeness). The stone-pattern name “Yunaodong” is rendered as “fish-brain frost” rather than a bare transliteration “yunaodong,” so that the image-bearing signifier of the source is carried over (respect for the signifier; culture-oriented). In each case the same pair of principles — retain the culture, orient the reader — is at work, no matter which text type the item belongs to.

These commonalities form the shared ground on which the differences below are built. It should be stressed that these shared features do not imply a uniform method; rather, they are the common base on which type-specific emphases are superimposed, as the following three sub-sections show.

6.2 Differences: Aesthetic Texts

The aesthetic type is form-driven, and its translation should reflect the rhythm, parallelism and imagery of the source. Take the landscape description in “Into Zhaoqing” as an example. The source means: “in the city proper, the Seven Star Crags present a scene where lakes and mountains become one and ripples mirror the crags, combining the mountains of Yangshuo with the waters of Guilin in a breathtaking sight, long reputed as ‘the No. 1 Spectacle in Lingnan’”. To reflect the aesthetic character, the translation may adopt the strategy of “rendering form to convey spirit” and read as follows: “where lakes embrace mountains, where ripples mirror crags; combining the majestic mountains of Yangshuo with the serene waters of Guilin, it offers a breathtaking sight, long reputed as ‘the No. 1 Spectacle in Lingnan, the region south of the Five Ridges.’”. In this rendering, the four-character rhythm “describing the unity of lakes and mountains and the interplay of ripples and crag reflections” is compensated through English parallelism and alliteration (“where lakes embrace mountains, where ripples mirror crags”), so that the cadence is not flattened into plain enumeration; the cultural proper noun “Lingnan” is annotated to retain the cultural image while conforming to the target readers’ way of thinking. The emphasis, distinct from the other two types, falls on form and imagery.

6.3 Differences: Narrative Texts

The narrative type is culture-driven, and its translation should reflect the coherence of the

montage and the cultural weight of its figures. Take the historical passage in “Hometown of Duan Inkstone” as an example. The source means: “brushing aside the mists of history, Bao Zheng raised the cry of ‘a pure heart forms the foundation of governance’; Emperor Huizong ascended the throne from his former title as Prince of Duan, and from then on there was ‘Zhaoqing’”. To reflect the narrative character, the translation may adopt the strategy of “cultural compensation” and read as follows: “Brushing aside the mists of history, you can see echoes of the past on the land of Duanzhou. Here, Bao Zheng (an incorruptible magistrate renowned for justice, popularly known as ‘Justice Bao’) proclaimed his famous maxim, ‘A pure heart forms the foundation of governance’; Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty ascended the throne from his former title as the Prince of Duan (hence the name ‘Zhaoqing,’ meaning ‘the beginning of auspiciousness’)...”. The montage structure strung by semicolons is retained, preserving the narrative rhythm; the cultural default behind “Bao Zheng” and “Prince of Duan” is compensated through intra-text annotation, so that the figures are not reduced to bare names and the rise from “deeds” to cultural “realm” is maintained. The emphasis, distinct from the aesthetic and informative types, falls on coherence and cultural context.

6.4 Differences: Informative Texts

The informative type is term-driven, and its translation should reflect terminological accuracy and standardization. Take the quarry description in “The Quarries of Duan Inkstone” as an example. The source means: “Duan inkstone ore formed after about 400 million years of evolution... among them, the stone from Laokeng, Mazikeng, Kengzaiyan and Songkeng is the finest, known as ‘Four Famous Quarries’”. To reflect the informative character, the translation may adopt the strategy of “terminological standardization” and read as follows: “Duan inkstone ore formed after about 400 million years of evolution... Among them, inkstones from Laokeng (the Old Quarry), Mazikeng (the Hemp-pit Quarry), Kengzaiyan (the Kengzai Quarry) and Songkeng (the Song Quarry) are the finest, known as the ‘Four Famous Quarries.’”. Here a unified mode of “pinyin transliteration plus English gloss” is applied to all four quarry names, and “keng” is rendered consistently as “quarry” rather than

“pit,” so that the negative associations of “pit” are avoided and consistency is maintained with the treatment of the “Four Famous Quarries” throughout. The emphasis, distinct from the other two types, falls on accuracy and standardization.

Read together, the three examples show that the commonalities — CSI handling, the two types of closeness, the Five Cs, and respect for the signifier — are realized differently in each text type: the aesthetic type through form, the narrative type through cultural context, and the informative type through terminology. It is this differentiated realization that reflects the textual heterogeneity of GI product texts and sets them apart from a uniform treatment.

7. Conclusion

This paper explores the differentiated translation principles and the integrated three-tier strategy applied to the texts of Duan inkstone. Starting from the textual heterogeneity of geographical indication products, it classifies the Duan inkstone texts into aesthetic, narrative and informative types, each with markedly different linguistic and cultural features. In contrast to a uniform integrated strategy common in the translation of intangible cultural heritage texts, the present study argues that each text type carries a different emphasis and that the theories and principles applied should be weighted accordingly: Neoliteralism and Reiss’s text typology serve as the principal axis, while the “two types of closeness” and the Five Cs are integrated into the principles of each type. On this basis, an integrated three-tier strategy is constructed — “rendering form to convey spirit” for aesthetic texts, “cultural compensation” for narrative texts, and “terminological standardization” for informative texts — with the compensation of contextual and cultural default as an effective means for handling culture-specific items. Along with the integrated three-tier strategy, such methods as transliteration, transliteration plus literal translation, transliteration plus annotation, addition or supplement, interpretation, intra-text annotation, condensation and substitution are properly utilized.

The examples drawn from the album Chinese Duan Inkstone show that the commonalities shared by the three types are realized differently in each — through form, through cultural context, and through terminology respectively

— and it is this differentiated realization that reflects the textual heterogeneity of GI product texts. Thanks to the integrated strategy and the integrated application of the translation methods, the target text holds the evidence that the cultural elements and features of the source text remain largely unchanged; on the other hand, it conforms to target readers' way of thinking and satisfies their demand for knowing and appreciating the Chinese culture, thus achieving the aim of cross-cultural communication. As is discussed above, the Duan inkstone covers a rich variety of national history, tradition and culture, so only a few typical examples are selected to explore, for the sake of drawing more attention to the translation studies of China's GI products. It is hoped that the type-strategy framework may be extended to other GI products of Zhaoqing and provide reference for their international communication.

The study is not without limitations. The corpus is confined to a single album, so the representativeness of the samples awaits expansion; and the three-tier strategy remains at the stage of theoretical construction, its practical effects to be tested through translation experiments and audience surveys. Future research will enlarge the text samples with corpus methods, conduct quantitative analysis of the three text types, and extend the type-strategy framework to other GI products of Zhaoqing, so as to push the field towards systematic development.

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