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**Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future**

**IMADOLOGICAL MYTHS IN “ANNA KARENINA”**

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***Abstract***

The aim of the research is to compare the imagological myths found in the film adaptation “Anna Karenina” (2012) directed by Joe Wright, the script created by Tom Stoppard and the novel “Anna Karenina” written by Leo Tolstoy, to determine the impact of the British and Russian imagotypes and imagological myths on the cultural dialog between nations, the interconnection of science and art. The subjects of the study were the film adaptation “Anna Karenina” (2012) by Joe Wright, the script written by Tom Stoppard and the novel Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy. They are analysed with the use of the theory of imagology and comparative studies, literary analysis and the text corpus analysis. The analysis shows that there are lots of stereotypes, dating back to the past centuries and newly born. Some of them may coincide. The author’s stance is influenced by them, on the one hand. The author’s attitude towards the people and country depicted determines the choice of a myth, on the other hand. Conclusions. The metanarratives-free postmodern art demands extensive knowledge to understand all shades of its meaning, including the imagological myths. The ability to understand postmodern authors correctly contributes to cross-cultural communication.

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**Keywords:** Imagology, imagotype, metanarrative, postmodern, post-industrial, stereotype.



## 1. Introduction

That humanities and Art are of great importance for scientists and engineers is evident to all nowadays. Though “the argument between Science and Art” dates back to the “earlier argument between philosophy and poetry” started by Plato, “it took modern shape when “Natural Philosophy” evolved into “Science”; and Poetry (or Art in general)” slowly but surely started to substitute “Religion.” (Meisel, 2007, p. 13) Tom Stoppard – a postmodern playwright, writer and screenwriter - “assigned science and poetry to equally necessary <...> and turned it into a dialogue.” (Meisel, 2007, p. 13).

## 2. Problem Statement

There is a certain correlation between science and art, philosophy and poetry, metanarratives and myths of a country and its economic development, which has a great influence on its image. The image has dual nature: the image of the country among other countries and its image among its own people.

Lyotard (1924–1998) in “La condition postmoderne” introduced the term postmodernism, which characterizes the state of culture in a modern post-industrial society. The term “post-industrial society” was coined by Daniel Bell in 1973 in his book “The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting” (Robinson, 2018). The standards of living and education of its members are extremely high. They produce “services” instead of “goods”. This type of society has replaced the one that existed from the time of the scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries to the mid-20th century “post-industrial society” (Robinson, 2018), when “the Reformation [gave] rise to the scientific education” and “knowledge society” (Karpov, 2016, p. 5). One of the main differences between them is the attitude towards irrational and rational – “myth and rasio” (Solovyeva, 2012, p. 78). The main strategy of the modern period was the commitment to science and rasio or rationality, manifested in 5 different types including “cultural-historical scientific rationality” (Lebedev, 2017, p.66). “Rasio becomes a metanarrative <...> striving for <...> “scientific “austerity” (Solovyeva, 2012, p. 78). The word metanarrative means “a comprehensive story common to all. <...> what makes a narrative to be a metanarrative is its power in legitimizing or illegitimizing the mankind’s deeds...” (Mostafalou & Moradi, 2017, p.p.324-325), for example, scientific progress, geographical discoveries. But they can be dangerous, as metanarratives presuppose totalitarian thinking “carry out violence against a person who is in capture of stereotypes” (Dmitrienko, 2013, p. 17). “The totalitarian sign, filling the communicative space, becomes the semiotic basis of the language, which is spoken by both the authorities and the people. <...> [It] is part of the archetypal <...> legacy that <...> provokes to speak and think in a totalitarian way.” (Karpov, 2017, a, p. 197). Unlike rasio myths, which are common narratives are not created to “approve <...> a single world order” (Solovyeva, 2012, p. 79). And they are coming into great demand in post-industrial societies since one cannot explain everything easily from the positivist point of view. Nowadays in post-industrial society the attitude towards science can be radically opposite. On the one hand, knowledge is asserted to “produce” “the unknown”, instead of “the known” (Solovyeva, 2012, p. 79), so the more we learn about the world, the more questions we ask. Hence, “the ideas of scientific and technological progress leading to the improvement of human conditions” (Iritsyan, 2011, p.33) are metanarratives, which are not trustworthy any more. On the other hand, though

admiring “the achievements of engineering and technology” we are disappointed “with the weakness of <...> humanities” (Kobylarek, 2015, p.p. 5, 6).

### 3. Research Questions

Are there any reasons for this disappointment? Postmodern culture, including literature, uses "deconstruction" - "the concept of systemic disproving" - that dethrones "metanarratives (ideas of progress and rationality," logocentrism") (Dmitrienko, 2013, p.9). But the problem is that every society which becomes free of any metanarratives, "great narratives" such as "Christianity, humanism" etc. (Iritsyan, 2011, p. 34) is at risk of depriving its members of any reference points and things that seemed to be impossible in the past happen to be legalized, for example, euthanasia. When in 2010 “the ritual of “thalaikoothal” – killing old family members <...> was discovered <...>”, the attitude towards this fact among Christians was rather negative, in spite of the fact that “in a world without Old Testament’s commitments and Christ’s teaching of love, the above-mentioned practice is treated as normal” (Sanecka, 2015, p. 253). However, slowly but surely the number of Western countries abandoning Christian metanarrative and, for example, legalizing euthanasia is constantly growing. In 2014 even the euthanasia of children became possible.

What can people do to solve the problem? Some of them turn from science to religion and its substitutes – poetry and literature, in particular to old fables, myths and legends, which during the industrialization period were considered “signs of a primitive mentality” (Solovyeva, 2012, vol. 2, p.78), but are becoming increasingly popular nowadays. Without being metanarrative, they nevertheless lie at the heart of any literary work and are regarded as mankind’s experience and knowledge quintessence and are able to give clear answers to the eternal questions. As far as postmodern literature is concerned, it never offers simple answers and, avoiding metanarrative issues and tragedy, as “every metanarrative is a tragedy and every tragedy is a metanarrative” (Mostafalou & Moradi, 2017, p. 327). In tragedy “plot is more superior to character; <...> the genre of tragedy [is] more action based than dialogue based. <...> there is no freedom for characters to express and reveal themselves.” (Mostafalou & Moradi, 2017, p. 323). Postmodern authors prefer minor topics. Being sure that “the world is logocentric; words rule the world” (Serkova, Pylkin., Safonova, & Savitskaya, 2017), they do not devise plots, but dialogues, they let their characters speak with such a wide use of the principles of citation and intertextuality, that a university degree in Arts is often required to be able to decipher them. They employ irony and grotesque to turn Christian values into “a subject of mockery” (Timermanis, Ivanov, Zamorev, & Smaragdina, 2017).

In post-industrial, postmodern era, with intensifying globalization, further development of diverse cultures of our planet being at risk, both mutual understanding between peoples and their right to cultural independence and self-determination, which have influence on individual life stance, are becoming imperative.

“Culture primarily is concerned with production and exchange of meanings between members of the group” (Kaïre, 2016, p. 132) and between different groups, i.d. nations, when speaking about multicultural exchange. Therefore “...culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is around them and ‘making sense’ of the world, in broadly similar way” (Hall, 1997, p. 2). But nowadays, on the one hand, the world community faces several problems that are closely connected to the “cultural

identity”, such as “the rebirth of nationalism” in the former communist countries, that is the result of the attempt to “redefine their cultural identities” (Balko, 2015, p. 210) and the flow of refugees from “culturally distant” countries, for example Syria (Patonia, 2017, p. 18). “An attempt to eclectically merge classic models of social integration is the source of multiculturalism failures” (Karpov, 2017b, p. 723). European future “depends on the capacity of the EU to integrate all the new-incorporated cultures so that they will accept the common European values” (Patonia, 2017, p. 18), otherwise “cultural aspects might <...> shatter” (Patonia, 2017, p. 18) Western societies.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Striving for a practical application of achievements in humanities the research purpose is to compare the imagological myths of the film adaptation “Anna Karenina” (2012), its script written by T. Stoppard and the novel “Anna Karenina” by L. Tolstoy and to determine the impact of imagological myths on the cross-cultural communication between the British and Russian people.

#### **5. Research Methods**

To achieve this the theory of imagology and comparative studies, literary analysis and the text corpus analysis will be applied.

The results obtained by a new branch of comparative studies – imagology - may help to avoid cultural misunderstanding. Imagology offers a “paradigm of “strangers” reception by national consciousness”. Taking into consideration “stranger’s “national mentality, character, value systems, worldview, type of behaviour <...> from the point of view of an ethnos [ it] serves as a characteristic by (contrast or similarity) of the perceiving subject’s own national <...>mentality” (Papilova, 2013, p. 3), “historically formed by a nation’s psychology, culture, ” etc. (Papilova, 2013, p. 9). “Mentality can be interpreted as <...> a strategic cultural program of the subject.” (Gubanov & Gubanov, 2017, p. 38). Imagology compares the nation’s “stereotyped images of “other” <...>cultures “(Papilova, 2013, p. 9). and “imagotypes” (Papilova, 2013, p.10) reflecting the nations’ opinions about themselves which may not coincide with other peoples’ thoughts of them. The stereotypes and imagotypes can be considered myths. According to Eliade, “mythological thinking forms an important part of the human being” (Koroleva, 2014, p.3). They are often presented in fiction and films. Imagology interprets this “national narrative of literatures” (Polyakov, 2012, p.4, Papilova., 2013, pp. 10-11). “National narrative” is often based on “imagological myths” (Koroleva, 2014, p. 4). To remove barriers between nations it is necessary to overcome these stereotypes. Knowledge of national imagotypes promotes mutual understanding. For the imagology as a section of comparative studies, which began to develop actively since the end of the 20th century, the centuries-old foreign myths of Russia as an “anti-world” are important. For example? there is a correlation between the “literary and artistic images of Russia” and the “general cultural myth about Russia in Britain” (Koroleva, 2014, p.5), as well as between the myth of Russia and the historical situation, which influences the “ Russian stranger ” image literary canon as well” (Koroleva, 2014, p. 10). The other nation image literary canon, in turn, is capable of influencing the image of the Russian world in literature. The literary images of a foreign nation are rooted in the general cultural stranger myth (Koroleva, 2014, p.11).

It is important to remember that "some other nation image development is influenced by the backdrop notion of" one's own "nationality" (Koroleva, 2014, p. 15). The artistic images of a non-national in any work do not depend only on the will of the author and the genre laws but are closely related to the imagological myth - "great mental structure" (Koroleva, 2014, p. 17), influencing the author. The imagological myths and imagotypes correlation analysis are also important.

The British myth-making about Russia can be traced in literature since the 12th century, for example, in the poem "Brut" by Layamon the King of "Rusia" is described as "the richest of knights" (Koroleva, 2014, p.19), in "The Canterbury Tales" by Geoffrey Chaucer there a Knight who used to fight in "Rusia", in plays by Shakespeare there is a theme of "cold Russian land" (Koroleva, 2014, pp. 20, 21). Their comparison makes it possible to highlight the following constant features in literature: 1. Russia is rich; 2. Russia is "indigenous", not truly Christian, wild; 3. Russia is cold, "frightening"; 4. Russia is an enemy, a monster, dwelling in the "anti-world", resisting to the British national missionary idea; 7. During the 18th and the 19th centuries one of the Russian aristocrats and intelligentsia's stereotyped image of "unenlightened, "perverse" Russian people affected by the "serfdom" and "despotic tsarist rule", (Koroleva, 2014, p. 22) and the British stereotype about Russia coincided. 8. A "fashion for everything Russian" arises at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries when its image changes drastically under the growth of Russian literature influence abroad. The Russian native imagotype of "spirituality" leads to the creation of one more stereotype in Western societies - of the mysterious "Russian soul". "The period of the 1880-1920-ies. for the British culture was a revolutionary era of the modern civilization aggressive soullessness awareness, ... [and] a new explanation of the Russian culture religiosity as a natural spirituality and simplicity is born" (Koroleva, 2014, p.p. 26, 27).

## 6. Findings

**6.1.** The very first myths appeared in ancient times and still underpin the plots of many works of art. New myths arise in modern times too. "In the late 1990s and 2000s" a new myth was created – "the end or the death of cinema." But "in the past ten years" it turned out that cinema has been transformed into "postcinema", having become part and parcel of "postmodernism" (Akervall, 2018, pp. 132, 133). This new stage in cinema development is closely related to the postmodern literature, which often revises both national and foreign classics, in particular the Russian one. There are some imagological myths which deal with the Russian literature. For instance, in Western societies "Anna Karenina" is considered to be just a romance, a love story, in spite of the fact that L. Tolstoy liked "the family idea" in it (Tolstaya, 1978, p. 502) and discussed a lot of important social, economic and psychological issues in the book. In numerous novel adaptations for different kinds of art – ballets, operas, musicals, film adaptations which are created "when artists (for example, scriptwriters, composers, illustrators) interpret a prose work and turn it into another form (for example, film, animation, painting, opera) (Porter, 2012, p. 22) this fact was usually neglected. The analysis of numerous film adaptations showed that, with the exception of the 1997 film by B. Rose, where Levin symbolizes L. Tolstoy, Levin's story is usually dropped out. As far as Tom Stoppard's film "Anna Karenina" is concerned, the scriptwriter - an outstanding postmodern style author - uses numerous British imagological myths of Russia and Russians' imagotypes in the film as part and parcel of his narration strategy. Following the postmodern tradition, he treats them with irony, uses parody and

grotesque, tries to shatter the imagological myths. Here are some of them found in the script and the film and analysed.

**6.1.1. The image of Russian unlimited and cold space:**

**6.1.1.1.** A sledge, rushing through the snow-covered fields.

**6.1.1.2.** Peasant women walking on the field with brushwood make us recollect the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch winter paintings.

**6.1.1.3.** A train at the station covered with ice and snow and a toy train, that Anna and her son play with on the white background- symbolizing white snow.

**6.1.1.4.** A field where Levin goes away right from the old dilapidated theatre stage after his unsuccessful proposal to Kitty.

**6.1.1.5.** Haymaking on the endless field: "HAYFIELD<...> It's nearly the last of the hay. The scythe is being swung by Theodore <...>. He is one of a dozen Mowers. Levin is among them, wielding his scythe. They have almost reached the end of the field" (Stoppard, 2012, 194).

**6.1.1.6.** Meadow with high grass and white flowers, which Anna's children are trying to cross, look like snowflakes, having fallen on the grass quite unexpectedly in summer: "FLOWERING MEADOW Baby Anya, <...> wavers through wild flowers half her height. She falls over, almost disappearing. <...> Serozha <...> enters his view, going to Anya to haul her upright, and keeping hold of her hand as she staggers on" (Stoppard, 2012, p. 198).

**6.1.2. The image of "indigenous" Russia, of "the unenlightened Russian people, but possessing "natural spirituality and simplicity":**

**6.1.2.1.** Konstantin Levin's house, being wooden, is shown in contrast to the European stone and brick mansions.

**6.1.2.2.** The grotesque scene of sex in the bathhouse, finally excluded from the film. A serf girl Serafina has sex with Levin, talks to him about God and asks him to bring her a piece of soap from Moscow. Tom Stoppard tries to be serious but fails. During this "postcoitum" episode Levin "almost naked", expresses his "doubt that God exists" and laughs at the girl's naive faith, saying: "God forgive us then, for committing the act of love." Serafina tries to set him on the right path: "How can there be anything if God didn't make it? <...> That's sinful talk if the priest heard you." But she sees that it is useless and asks very businesslike to buy her some soap: "Soap, the kind wrapped in paper to look pretty, and smelling like for a proper lady" (Stoppard, 2012, pp. 47-49).

**6.1.2.3.** Levin's talks with peasants. They start to discuss business: "Levin I'll be buying in feed before winter's over. Theodore (scything) Well, you don't press people hard," - and immediately turn to philosophy - " ... you live rightly, for your soul, not your belly" Levin My soul! What's that? I believe in reason" (Stoppard, 2012, pp. 194- 195). Theodore teachers his master and makes fun of him. "And was it reason that made you chose a wife?" (Stoppard, 2012, pp. 194-195).

**6.1.2.4.** Characteristics of servants and peasants are positive and sympathetic. They are loyal and obedient: “His valet, Matvey, is older and almost a friend”. (Stoppard, 2012, p.6) “Anna’s maid <...> Annushka is young, loyal, modest.” (Stoppard, 2012, p. 9). “Lukich bows” (Stoppard, 2012, p.12). “A Young Woman looks at him fearfully from the inner doorway. Levin: Good evening, miss ... madame. Nikolai: Don’t talk to her like that. It frightens her” (Stoppard, 2012, p.29).

**6.1.3.** The image of the enemy - monster from the "anti-world":

**6.1.3.1.** Russians are lustful bacchanals. The scene of officers’ revelry: “INT. “FRENCH THEATRE,” ST. PETERSBURG—NIGHT<...> an area for drinking, cruising, etc., a combination of music hall and a bar <...>. Vronsky is here as the escort of a Foreign Prince (an Indian), watching a “risqué” show with Can- Can Girls <...> The champagne is flowing” (Stoppard, 2012, p.117).

**6.1.3.2.** In the French theatre, where Vronsky and his" Indian prince come (in the novel the nationality is not mentioned), the viewer sees a Can-Can girl stabbing ice with a knife. The viewers remember the erotic thriller "Basic Instinct" with Sharon Stone, which makes them a bit frightened of the Russian unpredictable violent nature.

**6.1.3.3.** Russians are uncouth snappers and alcoholics: “Wheezing, he goes for the bottle again. Masha tries to take it from him, appealing to Levin. Masha: He is sick. Nikolai: Let go or I’ll beat your lights out. He pushes her away and pours himself more vodka” (Stoppard, 2012, p.). This British stereotype coincides with the same Russian imago type, as Russians recognize this problem themselves and feel ashamed of it.

**6.1.3.4.** Russia is totalitarian: “By the entrance/exit gate, a Guards Officer stands holding a bouquet. The Stationmaster stands by. A strip of faded red carpet has been laid on the planks (Stoppard, 2012, p. 32).

**6.1.3.5.** Russia is rich, but deteriorating - The dresses and real diamonds that Kira Nightly wears in the film were rented from Chanel and are very expensive. The ballroom where she and Vronsky perform their sensual dance - “a gilded affair” (Stoppard, 2012, p. 48) - was once luxurious, but already crumbling. Their dance at the ball makes the audience recollect one more film adaptation of L. Tolstoy's novel – a film ballet “Anna Karenina” and one more stereotype of the British concerning Russia -of the great Russian ballet dancers which coincides with the Russian assurance of having the best ballet-dancing school in the world. In the script Tom Stoppard also mentions a small Faberge knife to stress how rich the Karenins were. Faberge is a symbol of the former Russian tsars’ power and luxury: “INT. (ST. PETERSBURG)—DAY CLOSE— Pretty fingers put on several rings, and then pick up a Fabergé jade paper- knife to slit an envelope and withdraw a letter” (Stoppard, 2012, p. 8).

**6.2.** In the novel “Anna Karenina” by L. Tolstoy it is possible to find Russian Englishism examples and Russian myths about themselves. Some of them have been preserved in the script but changed into Francophilia to demonstrate their cultural difference from the rest of the Russian people. For example:

**6.2.1.** Devotion to everything foreign to such an extent that the upper-class used foreign languages more often than Russian: “I told you not to put passengers on the roof, - the girl shouted in English” (Tolstoy, 2013, p.8).

Tom Stoppard considers it strange and uses theatrics in the film as a symbol of the upper-class characters’ insincerity as opposed to unsophisticated K. Levin, whose prototype was L. Tolstoy. In the script the French language is used with irony: “Dolly picks up the youngest, Vasya, to kiss him and hands him to the Nurse, and kisses the others in ascending order. Dolly: Bonjour, Lili; bonjour, Masha; bonjour, Grisha; bonjour, Tanya. Who’s coming to see Grandmama?” (Stoppard, 2012, p. 7). “Oblonsky (cont’d) Cabbage soup? Elderly waiter Potage aux choux a la Russe, as the gentleman ordered” (Stoppard, 2012, p.19).

**6.2.2.** Being Orthodox and having Russian names, the characters are usually called by their English nicknames: Kitty, Dolly, Betsy in the novel. Tom Stoppard uses them too.

**6.2.3.** The English club, “the Anglia” (Tolstoy, 2013, p.32) -England- and the Hermitage restaurants were very popular. They are mentioned in the script, but “Anglia” is changed into French l’Angleterre: “Oblonsky No, five- thirty at l’Angleterre— I owe them more than the Hermitage, so it wouldn’t be fair to withdraw my custom” (Stoppard, 2012, p. 17).

**6.2.4.** Excellent knowledge of European culture and gaps in knowledge of the Russian one. In the novel Stepan Arkadyich quotes in German a stanza from the libretto of “Die Flegelmaus”:

“Himmlisch ist’s, wenn ich bezwungen

Meine irdische Begier:

Aber doch wenn’s nicht gelungen,

Hatt’ ich auch recht hubsch Plaisir!” (Tolstoy, 2013, p. 41).

**6.2.5.** But he forgets the poem “From Anacreon” by Alexander Pushkin: “Bold steeds I can tell by their something-or-other things, and young men in love by the look in their eyes” (Tolstoy, 2013, pp. 36, 820, 821) Tom Stoppard does not include them in the script, probably, because there are not many people in Britain understanding German and very few know A. Pushkin. As for Oblonsky and Levin’s talk about women and love it is eternal, common for all nations and it is included into the script.

**6.2.6.** However, the romantic English myth of Gaelic women presented by James Macpherson in forgery “Fragments of Ancient poetry” (Tolstoy, 2013, p.824) is changed into an oriental image, typical for G. Byron: “You don’t accept that one can like sweet rolls when one has a daily ration of bread – in your opinion, it’s a crime. <...>What, is there something new? asked Levin. Look, you know there’s type of Ossianic women” (Tolstoy, 2013, p. 162) “Levin All right, go on, then. Have you stopped stealing bread rolls? Oblonsky Ballet girl, oriental type. How can I help it?” (Stoppard, 2012, pp.85, 86).

**6.2.7.** At the same time, it is possible to find in the novel the Russian imagological myth of foreigners who were scornfully called Germans. In Russian it’s nemyets, i.e., not able to speak Russian, dumb. They were usually considered restrained, greedy and not trustworthy: When “all was confusion in the Oblonskys’ house, <...>the English governess quarrelled with the housekeeper and wrote a note to a friend, asking her to find her a new place” (Tolstoy, 2013, p. 1) As a contrast, Seryozha’s Russian teacher,



in spite of his duty, “clearing his throat and wiping away his tears” decides to “wait another ten minutes” and not to disturb Anna when she comes secretly to her husband’s place to see her son on his birthday after a long separation (Tolstoy, 2013, p. 535). In the script two governesses are mentioned. The first one is definitely French and frivolous, the second one -without nationality - is old, the screenwriter is laughing at them, but he does not despise them: “Standing by is a French governess, Mlle. Roland, and a Nurse. Mlle. Roland is buxom. (Stoppard, 2012, p. 6) “Oblonsky (leaving) You can introduce me to your new governess. Tanya She’s old! She’s a hundred!” (Stoppard, 2012, p.44).

**6.2.8.** As far as the Russian teacher is concerned, T. Stoppard shares L. Tolstoy’s sympathetic attitude towards him, he is very sensitive and delicate too: “Lukich I’ve had enough of this—it’s my job to get the boy out of bed before His Excellency comes INT. SEROZHA’S ROOM, KARENIN HOUSE, SAME TIME—DAY Lukich cautiously opens the door. He sees mother and son working the puppet and laughing quietly. Lukich backs off (Stoppard, 2012, p. 165).

The analysis of the novel, the film and the script show that there are lots of stereotypes in them, borrowed from the past and newly born. They may coincide (Russia is huge and rich, Russians drink too much, but have a great soul) or differ (violent vs. kind and generous, wild and rude vs. sensitive). They influence the author’s stance. Their choice is determined by the author’s attitude towards the people and country depicted.

## 7. Conclusion

In the era of post-industrial society, the argument between science and art is becoming less intensive. The metanarrative -free postmodern art, including cinema, demands extensive knowledge in the field of humanities for society members in order to understand all shades of its meaning including imagological myths and imagotypes. The ability to perceive and decipher postmodern works of art using imagological myths and imagotypes enables students to understand the culture of both their country and other countries better and promotes the cross-cultural communication.

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