

Yinan Li*

Yi Lijun, Renowned Polish Language Educator and Literary Translator in China

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Abstract: Yi Lijun devoted her life to Polish language education in China and made outstanding contributions to Polish language teaching and literary translation and research, and China-Poland cultural exchanges. Throughout her fifty-year teaching, she exerted herself tirelessly to establish and develop the discipline of the Polish language and to engage in talent cultivation in the discipline, bringing out a number of Polish language talents in diplomacy, business, trade, education, and research. Mastering the language and culture of both China and Poland, Yi Lijun translated the classics of famous ancient and contemporary Polish writers and poets into Chinese, introducing splendid Polish literature and culture to Chinese readers. With her translation achievements and personal charisma, she facilitated the multi-level and all-faceted communication between Chinese and Polish peoples through literary translation and research. Her teaching philosophy, translation works and research left behind invaluable assets for the fields of foreign language education, and translation and research of foreign literature in China.

Keywords: Yi Lijun, Polish language, Polish literature translation, China-Poland cultural exchanges

1 Pioneer of Polish Language Education in China

In 1954, China's first major of Polish language was set up in the Department of Russian, Peking University. By then, Yi Lijun had just finished her first year as a student in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, Wuhan University. She was selected to study the Polish language and literature at Warsaw University. After her one-year study in the preparatory course and five-year study at the University, she mastered Polish, delved into the knowledge about Polish history, culture, and society, and gained a full understanding of Polish literature. In 1960,

*Corresponding author: Yinan Li, School of European Languages and Cultures, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China, E-mail: liyinan@bfsu.edu.cn. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5777-6622>

she returned to China after receiving the Master of Arts degree with distinguished academic records. The knowledge she had acquired and the experience during her study abroad laid a solid foundation for her career in Polish language education and translation studies of Polish literature.

Yi Lijun started to teach Polish at Beijing Foreign Languages Institute in 1962. There was some noteworthy information about this earliest Polish major in China. In 1950, the Chinese government began to fund some students' studying abroad in the USSR and other Eastern European countries. Xiao Huimin, one of the first batch of students who had been sent to Poland to study the Polish language and literature, founded the first Polish major back in China. In 1956, the Polish major was transferred from Peking University to the Beijing Russian Institute. In 1959, the Institute merged with Beijing Foreign Languages Institute into a new institute, which later took on its current name Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU). The Department of Polish-Czech-Romanian Languages, made up of the Polish major, the Czech major and the Romanian major, was formed in the same year. Before Yi Lijun joined the Polish Teaching and Research Section, experts such as Cheng Jizhong, Chen Yuanzhi and Wu Yingzeng had worked there.

When Yi Lijun commenced her career at the new Institute, the first group of Polish major undergraduates were to take advanced courses. She taught core curricula such as Polish intensive reading, Polish grammar, and the history of Poland and became a key member of the faculty very soon. Yi and her students were about the same age. Most students were only three or four years younger than her, and one was even one year older. She worked with conscientiousness and evinced integrity, open mind and generosity towards students, making friends with them and guiding them in learning about the language, culture and national conditions of Poland. Most of the students later became the backbone of China's diplomacy with Poland.

From 1954 to 1964, there were totally four cohorts of undergraduates in the Polish major. During the next twenty years, only the year 1971 saw the enrollment of undergraduates. It was only after 1983 that the Polish major resumed regular and continuous undergraduate admissions (once every two to four years). In 1990, the Polish major enrolled postgraduates for the first time. In 1998, it began to recruit doctoral students. By then, the three levels of Polish language education at BFSU had become complete. Yi Lijun acted as the director of the Polish Teaching and Research Section for many consecutive years. She immersed herself in the cultivation of advanced talents and the construction of teaching-related infrastructure. She practiced what she advocated and became China's first master and Ph.D. supervisor in the field of Polish literature. *Literatura Polska* (*Polish Literature*), the textbook she compiled, is still a must-read for Chinese

Polish majors. She planned and built up a faculty of excellent teaching and academic strength. Her student Li Jintao carried on her teaching philosophy and methodology. Li presided over the compilation of the textbook series *Język Polski* (*Polish Language*) and *Gramatyka Języka Polskiego* (*Polish Grammar*), which were the earliest textbooks on intensive reading and grammar of the Polish language published for Polish major undergraduates. Under the guidance of Yi Lijun, the Polish teaching system was established, featuring a focus on honing language skills, enriching knowledge, building up competence in translation and interpreting, and improving humanistic quality.

With a deep affection for students, Yi Lijun taught them according to their aptitude and never gave up her enthusiasm for teaching. She was meticulous in the preparation for courses. She tutored students who had difficulties studying after class and offered extra guidance to quick learners, assigning more reading and translation tasks to the latter. “We regarded her as an erudite, wise, frank, generous and righteous teacher. In her class, even those students with extreme difficulties in studying will be mobilized to interact with her,” said Zhao Gang, who had been a student of Yi Lijun. “She always expected to do better in scholarship. Such qualities inspire and benefit us all our lives. When she taught us how to translate, she often encouraged us to deliberate on the meaning and usage of every single word and refine our translation carefully. She was precise about each small mistake in our homework, even if it was just an incorrect punctuation mark. Therefore, you can always see many remarks on our homework papers. I still kept those papers, because they are the greatest testament to her conscientiousness and to her tireless efforts in teaching, and were also the best memorial she left to me” (Zhao, 2022, p. A7).

The Polish major graduates of Beijing Foreign Studies University are active in the fields of diplomacy, business, trade, culture, media and education, participating in and witnessing the friendly cooperation between China and Poland. The master’s and doctoral graduates who had been supervised by Yi Lijun are the mainstay in China of Polish language education and research on Poland. Zhao Gang, a doctoral student of Yi, is now vice-president of BFSU, and the pilot of the Polish language teaching and research on Poland and Central and Eastern Europe. Mao Yinhui, another doctoral student of hers, is the deputy dean of the Faculty of European Language and Cultures and the director of the Department of Polish at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. Yi Lijun’s academic thoughts have spread to the land of south China, thanks to Mao’s efforts.

Since the founding of the Polish major at BFSU, Yi Lijun, together with her colleagues and younger generations in this field, has worked hard for more than fifty years to form the basic pattern of Polish language talents training. With the advent of a new millennium and the advancement of China’s reform

and opening-up, China-Poland relations have been bettered, leading to growing demand from both government and the market for quality Polish language talents. In 2009, Harbin Normal University became the second university to set up a Polish major in China. In 2014, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies became the third. Shanghai International Studies University, Beijing International Studies University, and Sichuan University then joined in the trend. Yi Lijun was concerned about the development of Polish language education in China, so for many times she visited universities that had newly set up the major and provided guidance for faculties and students face to face. In lectures, meetings, competitions and other activities, she impressed Polish major students all over the country with her humorous and instructive remarks that provoked thoughts.

Apart from imparting knowledge about the language and culture of Poland and research methodology, Yi Lijun also showed concern for students. “She loved students as if they were her own children, and she was beloved by students,” said Gao Xing, editor-in-chief of *World Literature*, in an interview. “She always invited students to her home with hospitality and they were willing to open their hearts to her. The happiness she displayed when referring to the students she was proud of demonstrated her devotion to education. I will never forget it” (Wang & Liu, 2022).

Yi Lijun used to tell students to prioritize the cultivation of moral characters over scholarship and to deal with honor and disgrace in a detached manner. For years, less commonly-taught languages education in China were not given enough prominence. With independent thinking and lofty dreams, she was ready to bear poverty and loneliness for her enthusiasm. Although she lived frugally, she remained optimistic and generous. She was awarded the Distinguished Teacher of Beijing for her attainments in Polish language education in 1995 and 2007.

2 Pilot of Polish Literature Translation

Poland, a country in Central and Eastern Europe, saw eminent cultural figures such as Nicolaus Copernicus, Frédéric Chopin and Maria Skłodowska Curie, and great writers such as Adam Mickiewicz and Henryk Sienkiewicz. Polish writers enjoy worldwide fame, and five of them have won the Nobel Prize in Literature. Polish literature, integral to the literature of Central and Eastern Europe, featuring great literary value and unique national character, has won the recognition of literati around the globe.

In the early 20th century, Chinese progressive intellectuals, represented by Lu Xun, began to pay attention to literature in the West, and especially in Russia and other Eastern European countries. It was then when Chinese people started to

translate Polish literature on a large scale. To enlighten the public with foreign works, these intellectuals introduced with enthusiasm to Chinese people the national prophets and patriotic writers respected by Polish people, such as Mickiewicz and Sienkiewicz. Lu Xun and his contemporaries blazed a trail for Polish literature translation in China. Since then, such a “Lu Xun model” has been carried forward. The Polish literature has thrived even in the new era. The translation of Polish literature has become an important part of foreign literature translation in China and opened the door for Chinese readers and the public to understand Polish history, society and culture.

Yi Lijun, with her great passion, superb skills and incredible perseverance, rendered dozens of Polish works into Chinese and got them published. Her experience exactly presented how the Polish literature translation activities developed in China after the founding of the PRC. She was the most prolific and prominent translator of Polish literature in China. She worked on the writings of Mickiewicz, Sienkiewicz, Czesław Miłosz, Wisława Szymborska and Olga Tokarczuk. A wide scope of genres, such as poetry, fiction, prose and theatre involving Polish romanticism, positivism, absurdism, and postmodernism were covered. In the words of Gao Xing, editor-in-chief of *World Literature*, “Yi Lijun’s translations are an embodiment of the history of Polish literature” (Xu, 2022).

In the 1950s and 1960s, Polish literature exerted phenomenal influence within China several times. On the 100th anniversary of Adam Mickiewicz’s death, there was an upsurge in the translation of his writings in China. The anti-fascist movement earned Leon Kruczkowski, a dramatist who wrote about World War II, popularity among Chinese people. He amplified the voice of Polish literature of realism. *Dziady (Forefathers’ Eve)*, a poetic drama by Adam Mickiewicz, revealed the fact that the Russian Tsar had persecuted young Polish patriotic poets. In 1968, the performance of the drama at the National Theatre in Warsaw triggered a protest among Polish youngsters, which was subsequently suppressed by military police. This political incident shocked the country and raised global concerns. It also attracted Chinese leaders’ attention, which provided Yi Lijun with an opportunity to translate the third volume of *Dziady*.

The translation of volume III of *Dziady* was done during Yi’s days in Shayang County, Hubei Province, to which the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute transferred to continue its running. When she worked on the first draft by the light of a kerosene lamp in a shanty, she put up with the poor conditions and annoying mosquitoes there in summer. Back in Beijing, she did research after work for the solutions to problems she had encountered in translation so that the quality of the first draft could be improved. In 1976, People’s Literature Publishing House published the Chinese version of the third volume of *Dziady*, rendered by Yi Lijun. It was the first published translation of foreign literature

after related activities had been suspended for ten years. “This is a well-written, beautifully-translated and timely-published work of literature, like a swallow or a flower heralding the spring,” said He Qifang, who was the director of the Institute of Literature at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Beijing Evening, 2015). Yi’s efforts to translate *Dziady* ushered the translation of Polish literature into a new era, different from the era of the “Lu Xun Model”. She built on past achievements and furthered the progress. Yi Lijun, Lin Hongliang and Zhang Zhenhui were thus regarded as three new major translators of Polish literature. In the 1980s, scholars studying the Polish language and literature, notably Yi Lijun, exerted their utmost efforts to render Polish literature into Chinese and achieved important results. That period marked the peak of Yi’s translation. She retranslated and revised some published translations, including *Busta Petra Velikého* (in *Foreign Literature*, 1983), *Krzyżacy* (*The Knights of the Cross*, translated by Yi Lijun and Zhang Zhenhui, published by Huashan Literature and Art Publishing House in 1996), *Ogniem i Mieczem* (*With Fire and Sword*, translated by Yi Lijun and Yuan Hanrong, published by Huashan Literature and Art Publishing House in 1997), *Pan Tadeusz* (*Mister Thaddeus*, translated by Yi Lijun and Li Hongliang, published by People’s Literature Publishing House in 1998).

What is noteworthy is the Chinese translation of *Pan Tadeusz* (*Mister Thaddeus*), a national epic by Mickiewicz. It was initially done by the renowned translator Sun Yong, based on a prose-style English version. Although he beautifully rendered the work with precise terms, Sun expressed his “deep anxiety” more than once over translating such a great epic from a prose-style English translation, according to Yuan Hanrong, Yi Lijun’s husband.¹ Sun Yong hoped that later translators would translate the Polish original version into Chinese. In the 1980s, at the invitation of Sun Shengwu, deputy editor of People’s Literature Publishing House, Yi Lijun began to retranslate *Pan Tadeusz* (*Mister Thaddeus*). She used the original AABB rhyme scheme and ensured that each line contained thirteen syllables to maintain the form and the number of lines of the original poem. She preferred not to use rhyme schemes in Chinese poetry unless she had to do it. Her husband Yuan Hanrong, who had studied abroad with her at Warsaw University, played a significant role in the preparation, problem solution, and checking and polishing of the translation. He deliberated on the wording when transcribing the manuscript. His assistance contributed to the improvement of the translation quality.

The version of *Mister Thaddeus* won the second prize in the National Best Book Awards for Translated Literature in 1999. The Chinese version’s coming out

¹ This description is based on unpublished memoirs of Yi Lijun’s husband, Yuan Hanrong.

caused a sensation in Poland. When visiting Poland, Yi Lijun was always asked to read the highlights in the Chinese translation.

In 1997, Yi Lijun and Yuan Hanrong collaboratively translated the first book of Sienkiewicz's historical trilogy, *Ogniem i Mieczem* (*With Fire and Sword*). Then the translations of the second, *Potop* (*The Deluge*), and the third, *Pan Wołodyjowski* (*Sir Michael*) respectively came out in 2001 and 2011, both done by the couple, who were the only two translators completing the Chinese translation of the trilogy. These historical novels have delicate words and expressions as well as many Latin words and Ukrainian words spelled in Polish letters. Allusions in the novels involve Polish history, customs, wares and weapons. The couple worked all out to present the original style, historical and cultural patterns, and intriguing connotations of the masterpiece with appropriate Chinese expressions. They accurately spelled out the historical events and traditions in the book and integrated the elements of classical Chinese novels and *wuxia* (martial heroes) novels into the translation, which made the translation vivid and appealing to readers.

In addition, Yi Lijun kept herself up with the development of Polish literature, seeking and translating the writings of influential contemporary authors in Poland. She was the first to translate the works of Polish essayist Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Theatre of the Absurd playwright Witold Gombrowicz, and post-modern writer Olga Tokarczuk.

In 1980, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz passed away. The year also witnessed the success of Czesław Miłosz, a Polish-American writer, in winning the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Yang Leyun, editor of *World Literature*, invited Yi Lijun to translate their works. The same year, *World Literature* published *Poziomka* (*Wild Strawberry*) and other two short stories by Iwaszkiewicz. *Foreign Literature* published *Pożegnanie ze Światem* (*Farewell to the World*), also a work by Iwaszkiewicz. In 1981, *World Literature* published *Poetry of Traktat Poetycki*. All of these works were translated by Yi Lijun.

Yi Lijun was the first to translate the writings of Iwaszkiewicz and Miłosz. What is interesting is that *Poziomka*, though a short prose, was reprinted by dozens of newspapers and periodicals in China. In the 1980s and the 1990s, she translated more works by Iwaszkiewicz, such as *Nocleg w górach* (*Overnight in the Mountains*), *Żelzowa Wola* (*Chopin's Hometown*), *Młyn nad Lutynia* (*The Mill over Lutynia*) and *Tatarak* (*Calamus*). They were respectively published in *World Literature*, *China Television*, *Appreciation of Fine Foreign Prose*, *The World's Anti-Fascist Literature Series 35, Poland Volume*, and *A Library of the World's Fine Short Stories, Eastern Europe Volume*. In 1986, Yi Lijun and Pei Yuanying, her old classmate at Warsaw University and former PRC Ambassador to the Republic of Poland,

collaboratively translated *Śława i gwława (Fame and Glory)*, written by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz. It was published by Foreign Literature Publishing House in three volumes.

In her translation activities, Yi Lijun not only focused on the future and history of Poland but also was “in quest of an innovative social-life mode which was not against human nature, ordinary while dramatic, and with ever-lasting value” (Zhang, 2022). In 2003, she translated *Ferdydurke*, written by the absurdist novelist Witold Gombrowicz. The version was published by Yilin Press. The preface to the version was done by Ksawery Burski, then sinologist and Ambassador of Poland to China. He remarked that the publication “offers an unprecedented opportunity for the interaction between Chinese readers and Gombrowicz. The works of another Polish writer can be introduced to Chinese readers thanks to the efforts of Yi Lijun, the distinguished scholar in the field of Polish studies and determined translator of Polish literature, and her husband Yuan Hanrong” (Burski, 2003, p. 2). In 2019, after Olga Tokarczuk’s being awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, Yi Lijun, in her eighties, was once again under the spotlight. She and her husband took the lead in translating the works of the writer with rich imagination and profound thoughts. In 2006 and 2007, the Chinese versions of *Prawiek i inne czasy (Primeval and Other Times)* and *Dom dzienny, dom nocny (House of Day, House of Night)*, two major masterpieces of Tokarczuk, came out successively and saw great success.

Yi Lijun made her contribution to the study and promotion of Polish literature in China. Her monographs include *Polish Literature (Literatura Polska)*, *The History of Polish Post-War Literature*, *Polish Poems of the 20th Century*, and *Polish Folk Tales*. She published a good number of papers on Polish literature in academic journals. Moreover, she contributed about 300 entries to encyclopedias such as *The Dictionary of Foreign Writers* (1989), *The Dictionary of Famous Foreign Writers* (1989), *The New Dictionary of Foreign Literature in the 20th Century* (1998), and *The Encyclopedia of China* (1982).

In recognition of her remarkable work on the translation and study of Polish literature, the Translators Association of China (TAC) awarded her the honorary title of Senior Translator in 2004 and the TAC’s Lifetime Achievement Award in Translation in 2018. In 2012, she was awarded the top prize for Polish literature translators – the Transatlantic Prize, by the Polish Chamber of Books. She was also nominated for the National Outstanding Literary Translation Award of the Lu Xun Literary Prize in 2018, for her translation of *Martwa natura z wędzidłem (Still Life with a Bridle)*.

China’s growing influence on the world over the years promotes the friendship between China and Poland, ushering in a new era for the literary exchanges between the two countries. Even in her eighties, Yi Lijun never stopped working. She translated *Martwa natura z wędzidłem (Still Life with a Bridle)*, *Słoń (The*

Elephant), *Światelko (The Light)* and *Zniewolony umysł (The Captive Mind)*. She was deliberating over the unfinished version even to the end of her life. In her later life, to support young scholars in this field, she translated three books respectively with her three doctoral students, Zhao Gang, Mao Yin-hui and Wu Lan. To sum up, Yi Lijun translated the gems of Polish literature all her life, witnessing the development of the translation of Polish literature in China.

3 Promoter of China-Poland Friendship

China and Poland are far apart, belonging to Asia and Europe respectively. However, the contact between the two nations was initiated as early as in the 13th century when the first Polish traveler Benedykt Polak, on a mission sent by the Pope of Rome, arrived in Halahelin, the first capital of the Mongol Empire. Back in Poland, he wrote *De Itinere Fratrum Minorum ad Tartaros (On the Journey of the Franciscan Friars to the Tatars)*, recording the first “field investigation” of China by a European. It inaugurated Polish and even European people’s exploration of Oriental culture. In the 17th century, the “Polish Marco Polo”, Michał Boym, a Jesuit missionary to China, delved into Chinese history, politics, language, culture, geography, flora, fauna, customs, medicine and the like, and wrote a series of works, playing a significant role in cultural exchanges between China and Poland, and even between the East and the West. In the late Qing dynasty, Chinese statesmen, diplomats and thinkers introduced “weak states” like Poland to Chinese people through their writings and ideas. Poland thus became a mirror for social revolutions in China. In the May Fourth Movement, the translation of Polish literature into Chinese by literati active in the New Culture Movement like Lu Xun, opened up the way of exchange of ideas between the two countries. On October 7, 1949, China and Poland established diplomatic relations. Over the past 70 years, the two nations have been cooperating in all aspects, including politics, economy, trade, and cultural and people-to-people communications. Their friendship has occasionally encountered obstacles, but it has been steadily moving forward. Literary exchanges have served as a bridge. The translation by Yi Lijun, the Polish Language and Culture Ambassador, has contributed to the communication between Chinese and Polish peoples.

Yi Lijun’s fascination with literature started back at her school age. In middle school, she read *Oda do młodości (Ode to Youth)* by Mickiewicz and got deeply impressed. Therefore, she was excited by the prospect of studying Polish language and literature in Poland. At Warsaw University, she was nourished by the immense number of Polish literary works. Whether in the teaching on Polish language and

literature at BFSU, or in literature-related activities, she displayed admirable attainment in Polish literature.

There was a fun story about the interaction between Yi Lijun and Tadeusz Różewicz, a renowned Polish writer. Yi Lijun had rendered Różewicz's novella *Moja córeczka* (*My Daughter*) into Chinese. In 1984, the translation was published in *World Literature*. Różewicz had visited China in the 1950s and had a great affection for Chinese people. In the 1980s, when Yi Lijun taught at Warsaw University, Różewicz was in Warsaw, too. He asked his secretary to make an appointment with her. Yi Lijun met with the author and invited him to write a feature article in *World Literature*. He willingly agreed. In 1987, the article *At a Loss* came out in the fourth issue of *World Literature*. Exclusive to Chinese readers, the article offered frank discussions of some facts about Polish literature. He expressed the "concern and hesitance" (Różewicz, 1987, p. 257) of a serious old writer. He began his writing with the conversation between him and Yi Lijun:

She invited me to write about Polish literature for Chinese readers, but I have to make an apology, as such articles can only be done by literary historians, critics, editors of literary periodicals, or book reviewers ... She understood why I had not written such an article, thus asking me to write about myself ... Writing about myself was still difficult, and even more difficult than writing about modern literature in Poland, because I was looking for ego, and my position in the world of literature ... (Różewicz, 1987, p. 258)

In 2009, Yi Lijun attended the second Polish Literature Translators' Meeting in Krakow where she met Różewicz who was already in his eighties. They happily recalled their meeting two decades ago. When the drama based on *Moja córeczka* (*My Daughter*) was performed at Wrocław Opera, she was invited as a special guest to attend the opening ceremony of the Różewicz Theatre Festival. The interaction between Yi and Różewicz and that between the writer and readers through the translator is a widely-acclaimed story among China-Poland literary exchanges.

Thanks to Polish literature translators, notably Yi Lijun, the heart-to-heart talk beyond time and space between Chinese and Polish writers, translators, critics and readers can be seen. The translators are indispensable to the progress in China-Poland friendship, winning the governments' recognition and people's esteem. Yi was awarded the Meritorious for Polish Culture by the Ministry of Culture of Poland in 1984 and 1997, the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland by the Polish President in 2000, and the Medal of the National Education Commission by the Ministry of Education of Poland in 2004. In 2008, to recognize her contributions to the promotion of Polish language and literature in China, the Council for the Polish Language at the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences awarded Yi Lijun the title of the Ambassador of Polish Language, under the nomination by the Marshal of the Senate of Poland. In 2011, Bronisław Komorowski, then president of Poland who visited China that year, awarded Yi Lijun and her husband Yuan Hanrong the Knight's Cross of the Order

of Merit of the Republic of Poland and Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. At the ceremony, the couple presented him with the just-finished Chinese version of *Pan Wołodyjowski (Sir Michael)* as a gift. With great delight, the president raised the book to show the guests his fondness and regard for it. The year 2016 marked the 170th anniversary of the birth of Henryk Sienkiewicz, the 100th anniversary of his death, and the 110th anniversary of his works' introduction into China. On his second visit to China, Bronisław Komorowski, the former president of Poland who had just left office, went to BFSU to attend the exhibition "Encounter with Henryk Sienkiewicz", which was planned and held by the BFSU Centre for Polish Studies to celebrate the anniversary. He met Yi Lijun again and left remarks on the guestbook, "I'm grateful for meeting in Beijing with Sienkiewicz, of which the Polish people are proud." Literature's frequent presence in China-Poland communications demonstrates the unique role literature plays in the friendship building between the two countries. Yi Lijun's works have played a crucial role in that.

In 2007, Yi Lijun was awarded an honorary doctorate degree by the University of Gdansk "for her heroic translation work, for her educating many generations of Chinese students of Polish studies, and for her exemplary organizational activity in the field of scholarly cooperation with Polish academic centers" (Włodarski & Zeidler, 2010, p. 75). The University wrote in both Chinese and Polish on the title page of a specially-published festschrift, "Ahead of others and second to none in this field" (Włodarski & Zeidler, 2010, p. 75). After Yi Lijun's death, Jidi Majia, vice-chair of the China Writers Association and well-known poet, remarked on her patriotism and global perspective in an elegiac couplet:

*Fed on Changjiang water, endowed with genius, pure and generous, she served the nation,
Singing Polish ditties, nourishing virtues, frank and upright, she embraced the world.*

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