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# An Ethical Inquiry into Translation in the International Communication of Ginseng and Deer Antler Culture: From Cultural Representation to Value Negotiation

Yuanyuan An ✉

School of Language and Culture, Changchun Institute of Science and Technology, Changchun, 130600, Jilin, China

✉ Corresponding author: [15904310496@163.com](mailto:15904310496@163.com)

International Journal of Horticulture, 2026, Vol.16, No.1 doi: [10.5376/ijh.2026.16.0001](https://doi.org/10.5376/ijh.2026.16.0001)

Received: 02 Dec., 2025

Accepted: 05 Jan., 2026

Published: 21 Jan., 2026

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## Preferred citation for this article:

An Y.Y., 2026, An ethical inquiry into translation in the international communication of ginseng and deer antler culture: from cultural representation to value negotiation, International Journal of Horticulture, 16(1): 1-14 (doi: [10.5376/ijh.2026.16.0001](https://doi.org/10.5376/ijh.2026.16.0001))

**Abstract** This study conducts a systematic investigation into the ethical issues of translation in the international dissemination of ginseng and deer antler (shenrong) culture, focusing on how these traditional medicinal and dietary resources are culturally represented, reinterpreted, and ethically challenged in cross-cultural contexts. The article first outlines the core connotations of shenrong culture, emphasizing its roots in the holistic life philosophy and Yin-Yang balance theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), while highlighting how differences in functional consumption preferences, regulatory systems, and ethical orientations in global markets significantly influence translation practices. It then constructs an analytical framework from three perspectives-cultural representation ethics, cross-cultural adaptation ethics, and value-negotiation ethics-to reveal the structural dilemmas faced by translators when striving to faithfully convey traditional knowledge, comply with target-language regulations, and address animal-ethics debates and cultural differences. Through case analyses of brand translations, packaging and promotional language, efficacy claims, and typical mistranslations, the study illustrates the mechanisms by which shenrong culture is functionalized, commodified, and deculturalized in global discourse. Building on the tension between responsibility ethics and communicative ethics, the article proposes balanced approaches such as a “stratified cultural visibility strategy,” emphasizing that explanatory translation, contextual supplementation, and cross-stakeholder collaboration are essential for protecting the cultural knowledge system of shenrong while ensuring effective intercultural communication. Ultimately, the study calls for establishing an ethics-oriented translation system for TCM culture to promote the precise, sustainable, and responsible international dissemination of shenrong culture.

**Keywords** Shenrong culture; Translation ethics; Cross-cultural communication; Cultural representation; Value negotiation

## 1 Introduction

As global interest in health and wellness continues to rise, the value of traditional medicinal and dietary resources is being re-evaluated within cross-cultural contexts. As a composite resource that embodies medicinal efficacy, nutritional functions, and cultural symbolism, shenrong-primarily referring to ginseng, deer antler, and related products-has gradually moved beyond its East Asian epistemological roots into the international marketplace of health products and cultural discourse. Existing studies show that ginseng is valued not only for its traditional therapeutic functions but also for its wide-ranging applications in modern agriculture, nutrition, and animal sciences. For example, residues from American ginseng extract have been used as feed additives for sika deer, significantly improving livestock immunity and production performance (Wu et al., 2024). Deer antler, renowned for its remarkable regenerative capacity, has become a prominent model in global mammalian regeneration research, with evidence spanning stem cell discovery (Qin et al., 2023), organ regeneration mechanisms (Wang et al., 2019), and cartilage protection (Yao et al., 2020; Guan et al., 2021). As global consumption patterns shift toward “wellness-health maintenance-functional foods”, the demand for cross-cultural communication of shenrong culture continues to expand. This trend reflects not only international consumers’ growing preference for natural health products but also increasing global curiosity about Eastern philosophies of life, holistic medical frameworks, and traditional knowledge systems. Consequently, how to accurately represent shenrong culture,