



A Stereotype in Jay Chou’s “Snake Dance” as a Cross-cultural Phenomenon in Contemporary Mandopop

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Abstract: Certain typical elements of ancient Egyptian culture have already become particularly symbolically charged. Even today, this sort of fascination for ancient Egypt and its relevant things still exists. Many different showing examples of ancient Egyptian culture in a variety of domains around the world demonstrate people’s continued interest in it. This article discusses a song which was composed by Jay Chou, titled “Snake Dance”, and as a pertinent example in Mandopop, how popular music and Jay Chou’s creative style were intertwined with the cognition of ancient Egypt. It demonstrates how this song directly reflects the features related to the stereotype in cross-cultural communication. Through textual and visual analysis in terms of lyrics, music, and music video, this article shows the connection between already existing examples in contemporary Mandopop under the context of global cross-cultural phenomenon, especially the holistic presentation of this form of Egyptian elements observed. This study also aims to fill the previously cross-cultural research gap while explaining an acceptable form of blending ancient Egyptian elements in Mandopop.

Keywords: Stereotype, Cross-cultural, Jay Chou, Mandopop, Popular Music

1. Introduction

The analysis of popular music has become an academically feasible and even stylish event consisting of a wide range of subjects and methodologies over the past decades. Mandopop has a great deal of cultural compatibility and musical inclusiveness, but current research on Mandopop rarely mirrors certain aspects. In addition, a series of concepts and theories applied in the study of popular music regarding the relationship between music and culture and popular music as a cultural form itself (DeNora, 2000; Wall, 2013) was being focused on and discussed. This article aims to examine the representation of Egyptianizing and how it reflects the stereotype in the cross-cultural phenomenon in popular music. Traditionally, the field of Egyptianizing studies was founded on the historical and cultural formulation of ancient Egypt. For a long time, presenting Egyptian elements in popular culture has been seen as a subject matter for musical experts and research scholars who are interested but had less contribution to the popular music study related to ancient Egyptian culture.

The term ‘stereotype’ is mainly employed in the field of sociology and psychology. It refers to a generalised view of a particular type of person, thing, or object, which may be derived from the perception of an individual within the same type of person or thing (Perkins, 2018). In general, when people’s understanding is inadequate and incomplete, it could arise a variety of inherent perceptions and impressions. Stereotypes are the result of direct observation of different objects and information obtained from the media or other sources. In cross-cultural communication, the media enables mass reproduction and widespread dissemination of information so that people focus on those contents that are noticed by the media. It can be formed a stable perception. Therefore, it suggests that the stereotype owns certain stability over time and space. Especially cultural stereotypes are able across time and regions, with some cultural groups having very similar types in different parts of the world and in different historical periods. This is related to their stereotypical cultural and image output over time, which has been developed and relatively fixed throughout history.

The cross-cultural universal phenomenon made the popular music discipline more focused on the Egyptian historical-cultural dimensions with other cultures. The research field of ancient Egyptian history and culture has always received considerable attention from researchers from a variety of fields, including literature, architecture, and arts. Since ancient times, the antique Egyptian culture has had a

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unique mystique of its own, which can be described as a mixture of diverse cultures. Using textual and audio-visual analysis methods, the study focuses on the lyrics, music, and related music video of the song “*Snake Dance*” 蛇舞, which was composed by Jay Chou Chieh-lun 周杰伦. This article discusses the ways of expressing Egyptianizing through the analytical results of this song and how popular music, especially the creation by Jay Chou, embodies intercultural fusion and reflects the stereotype of cross-cultural phenomenon.

2. Ancient Egyptian Elements in Popular Music

Many academic researchers have been fascinated by the examination of ancient Egyptian history-culture and related fields in the past few decades. These studies include literature (e.g., Lichtheim, 2019), architecture (e.g., Stewart, 2019), art (e.g., Lotfy Mahmoud Saad, 2007), and even film (e.g., Huckvale, 2014). As a medium of mass reception, modern popular music has rarely been taken into the narrative from the perspective of popular music studies. One of the genres in which a certain acceptance degree of ancient Egypt is metal (e.g., Olabarria, 2019). Although some works that use this culture as an element in operas, musicals, or piano pieces (Gauthier & McFarlane-Harris, 2012; Gooley et al., 2013; Diehl, 2012) such as Rossini’s “*Moses in Egypt*”, Verdi’s “*Aida*”, Saint-Saëns’s piano concerto “*The Egyptian*”, musical “*The Prince of Egypt*”, and Maxim’s recording piece “*Exodus*” (Mrvica, 2021) once appeared as the background music of Russian artistic gymnast Anna Pavlova in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

In popular music productions, ancient Egyptian elements are also sometimes blended into melody or presented in music videos. For example, the American pop band The Bangles performed the song “*Walk Like an Egyptian*” (Bangles, 2013) in the 1980s. They dressed pharaoh-clad in a video version like fanatical worshippers, acting with the Egyptian style hand and arm dancing gesture to hail performers of ancient Egyptian reliefs. “*Remember the Time*” (Jackson, 2009), the second hit song from the album *Dangerous* by Michael Jackson, is more like a nine minutes short film. Its music video set the scene in an Egyptian palace, where he performed as a magician in front of the Egyptian king and his wife. He showed Egyptian dancing elements with his very talented dance movement. Swiss artist DJ Bobo’s song “*Pray*” (BoBo, 2013) quoted the biblical Exodus as a theme and obtained success in Europe. The official video showed a live performance on the stage, which appeared in Egyptian pyramids and sphinxes, as well as dancers in pharaonic costumes. Nick Carter, a member of the Backstreet Boys, played a mummy in the music video of the song “*Everybody*” (Backstreet Boys, 2011). Kate Perry featuring with the rapper Juicy J released “*Dark Horse*” (Perry, 2014). Perry acted as a famous character named Katy Pättra, a take-off on the Egyptian queen Cleopatra in this hit song’s music video, which integrated Ancient Egyptian culture.

Someone who is obsessed with Egyptian culture is not only found in European and American popular music but also in Asian popular music. For instance, South Korean singer Lee Hyori straightforwardly used “*Cleopatra*” as the title of the song (HVS MV, 2011), and the song’s loop had an Egyptian music groove. Mandopop singers and songwriters also do not miss the opportunity to appropriate this culture. The music video of the song “*Against the Light*” by Stefanie Sun 孙燕姿 (Timeless Music, 2017) was shot on location in Egypt. Another Mandopop song, “*The Mummy*” (Taihe Music, 2011) which was composed by JJ Lin 林俊杰, fully embodied the characteristics of ancient Egypt in both melody and music video visuals, with backup dancers dressed as mummies.

3. Jay Chou and His Imagined Egyptian Culture

Jay Chou is arguably one of the most representative and influential pop stars in the contemporary Mandopop industry. For Jay Chou, who is adept at composing and blending diversified music styles, incorporating Ancient Egypt into his pop song can give an extremely compelling audio-visual experience for the public. Shortly after the release of Jay Chou’s ninth studio album *Capricorn* in 2008 (see Figure 1), he directed and acted for himself in the music video for the song “*Snake Dance*” (Chou, 2013), and he seemed to have a tendency to emulate or offer respect to Michael Jackson’s music video “*Remember the Time*,” where he appeared as a hip-hop dancer in an Egyptian palace. The Taiwanese artist presented the most Egyptian-inspired song in Chinese-language popular realm up to now. It was the third single from his ninth album *Capricorn*, and it was recorded as a duet song with the Taiwanese female singer Lara Liang 梁心颐, who sang the chorus and acted as the leading actress in the music video. The entire song is a hip-hop-integrated Egyptian music style, and some of the words in the lyrics lay out the magnificent scene of Egypt. In conforming to the song’s taste, the label spent millions to build an Egyptian palace scene and light fire to transmit a more authentic Egyptian experience.



Figure 1: The Cover of the Album Capricorn.
[Source: JVR Official Website]

3.1 Synopsis of “Snake Dance” and Its Music Video

This song was inspired by the Egyptian marketplace flute-playing snake charmers. The whole work transmitted an enigmatic and captivating enticement. The introduction began with a synthesizer soundtrack accompanied by a looped flute tune. In the music video, the doors of an Egyptian palace gradually being pushed open can be seen as if audiences are placed in the temporal and spatial surroundings (see Figure 2). It is a perfect way which sets up an authentic site to get an imaginary trip for what is going on. After that, female dancers start to twist their bodies and turn to show off their appealing dance movements. Jay enters the verse part (0:27) by way of rapping and finishes the entire verse paragraph in one take. He hybridizes popping, arm-waving, and figure-tutting dance gestures to present the impression of Egypt and snakes. Lara sings the melody of the chorus (0:54) with a seductive voice character. She gradually rises up like a snake and dances like ‘Cleopatra’ in the music video. The whole piece seems to highlight the keyword temptation and to unfold. Jay is more likely an intruder in a mysterious land. In the final scene of the music video, this intruder is eventually enticed by the enchanting ‘Cleopatra.’



Figure 2: The Screenshot of the Opening in the Music Video of “Snake Dance.”
[Source: JVR Official Website]

4. Shaping Unique Egypt Style: Lyrics, Music, and Visual Presentation

This part aims to explore how the song “Snake Dance” is shaped by a unique Egypt style after analysing lyrics, music, and visual presentation. From the historical perspective, ancient Egyptian culture itself was a kind of hybrid product integrating diverse cultures from a distant era. It always gave people a distinctive, even unique, mystique. Jay Chou was not the first artist who attempted to embody Egyptian elements in popular music works, but he created this exotic song, prominently representing the most Egyptian style of popular music creation in the history of Mandopop. As Rice and MacDonald (2016) once argued that the influence of Egyptianizing is often second-hand and mostly derives from literature, films, theatres, or intentional parodies by the director. If the entirety of a song could interact with current values and aesthetics, the external setting can convince the audience to believe a historical theme which is far from oneself. Thus, both the melody composed by Jay Chou and the director of the song’s music video, as well as the song’s lyricist Alang Huang Chun-lang 黄俊郎, the arranger Yanis Huang 黄雨勋, all of them have transformed these standards within the song “Snake Dance” by choosing for typical elements of the traditional perception towards ancient Egypt. As follows, some relevant features of the song are shown by analysing of lyrics, music, and music video.

4.1 The Lyrics of “Snake Dance”

Usually, the guiding ‘idea’ for a song is initiated by the lyricist, melody-writer, or singer, sometimes a single person, or they are a production team in popular music. Alang Huang, as a lyricist in the entire production team, completed the filling of lyrics based on Jay Chou’s musical creative inspirations. Although the lyrics were woven into the music afterwards, rather than driving its musical writing at the outset, there is no denying that Alang’s lyrics make the feeling of the song richer and more Egyptian. The Nile, the papyrus, the pyramid, and the sphinx all are typical symbolic elements which remain from ancient Egyptian civilization and adequately are reflected in the lyrics, which can guide the audience to understand the meaning of this song. In contrast, these unremarkable elements, such as the barefoot, the gods, and the scales in the lyrics, really support the sense of tableau and the level of completion of the worldview. And like eyes, allure, love, and soul in the chorus part, these are words, in turn, suggesting the intricate and ambiguous relationship between men and women. While embedded in the culture, the Chinese rhyme is meticulously rhymed. This means if lyrics do not express organizing ideas that regulate song construction, then how do lyrics contribute to songs’ meanings (Coats, 2016)?

*The River Nile gently overflows across the papyrus
It wanders through like a silk gown without feelings
And after you put it on, you turn around to dance for me*

*You do a dance of exclamation for the lonely earth
The sunset burns the corner of the cloud above the pyramid
The shadow under the Sphinx, it’s an omen
Balm is burning on the stone stairway in my kingdom
The uproar of a several centuries have been accumulated*

*On the corner of the lambskin scroll, the age-old clarity
No one can escape the troubling matters, on the balancing scales
You smile faintly Barefooted, you twist your waist*

In the direction of fate, you chisel out the path of a beautiful symbol

(The verse part of lyrics in the song “Snake Dance,” cited from the website Jay Chou Studio)

[source: <http://jaychoustudio.com/>].

The basic standpoint of this song, then, illustrates that it conforms with an initial ‘idea’ of the meaning of the songwriter. Like Alison Stone (2016: 214) pointed out that “an idea, say, of what emotion a song is to express or what theme it is to explore, that idea is made explicit by the lyrics.” Admittedly, scrutinizing the semantic content of the lyrics is an important way to examine whether the lyrics contribute in their own right. Through analysing the content of lyrics can identify the themes and main concerns in lyrics and trace how they express wider social, cultural, and musical meanings (Frith, 1989). Alang’s contribution is to help to shape the unique Egyptian style of the song by filling in the lyrics. With the development of Mandopop during most years, the accusing that most lyrics are trite and unimaginative, even lyrics are formulaic. Hence, the lyrics of “Snake Dance” break from prevailing conventions, using brief lyrics to connect the civilization of ancient Egyptian and modern humans’ understanding of its cultural implication.

4.2 The Music of “Snake Dance”

As the melody writer and singer, Jay Chou play a core position in the production team. His idea is often regarded as the source of a song’s creative inspiration, by which all the musical materials are shaped. The song “Snake Dance” is based on the hip-pop style, in which the verse part sings in rap, meanwhile using female vocals as an instrument in the chorus part. Jay Chou is not a pure rapper, but he is proficient in hybridizing with other music styles or themes. In particular, he changed the flow technique of Chinese rap, subverting traditionally the structure of rap songs, namely a circular beat with rap and hook. Actually, the dynamically expressive language art form known as rap music first emerged in the streets of New York in the early 1970s and has become the most famous musical genre in the United States today (Forman, 2000). The essence of rap music is a blend of reality and fiction, as well as a response to society, culture, and life in contemporary urban (Smitherman, 1997).

In the two verse sections of “Snake Dance”, Jay Chou uses his unique Chinese flow skill and a superb sense of rhythm to perfectly fuse with the lyrics, demonstrating the appeal of hip-hop music while reflecting the mystique of ancient Egypt. Hip hop’s appeal around the world is interpreted by its hybrid of verbal flexibility, self-expression, emotionally involved and explicit content, and outward physical expressions or body language (Mitchell, 2001). Going on to the chorus part, Lara Liang uses her captivating voice sung psychedelic and melodic tunes. Obviously, there is an interplay between the verse/chorus parts and the voices as highly contrasting audible elements in the song. This is an ideal collaboration in which the two persons, with their respective singing styles and voice qualities, seem to be in a conversation or tempting each other. It is very reminiscent of the romantic relationship between Antony and Cleopatra in the writings of Shakespeare (Gurney, 2016). It could be argued that Lara’s use of her voice in the chorus is reasonable and appropriate for the persona of Cleopatra, which is an important aspect of pop singing. It can be realized that it is through the development of popular music in this century which singers have increasingly focused on the use of the voice in their songs (Frith, Leppert & McClary, 2004).

One cannot be ignored an important aspect, that is the arrangement part of “Snake Dance”. The song begins with a lower-pitched synthesizer riff sound using tonic arpeggio in A flat minor scale. After looping twice, the

flute sound appears in the high-pitched melodic audio track, which embodies the implication of ‘dance to the music’ of ancient Egyptians. At the start, this communicates the theme meaning of the song and sets the expectations of the listener with an exotic tune and, therefore, a rhythmic and alluring mood. The arranger, Yanis Huang, said, “Rhythm or beat is what we often think about as central to popular music.” The minimal drum beat and synthesizer riff sound continue throughout the verse part of the song, which interacts with the rhythm of Jay Chou singing rap, further emphasizing the singer’s status in the song. It is enough identified that rhythm is the way that sound is ordered into structured patterns (Komaniecki, 2017). Additionally, he also used psychedelic electric synthesizer sound in the chorus part as the soundtrack, which acts in cooperation with Lara’s singing. It needs to be acknowledged that Yanis contributed a lot to shaping the Egyptianizing style of the entire song.

4.3 The Music Video of “Snake Dance”

As the authors have reported in the previous content, the introductory scene begins with a zoom gradually pushing open a palace door, and several female dancers posed gestures in sexy dresses inside (0:06). The interior of the palace is decorated as if it were a reproduction of a real scene. It can be seen those artifacts symbolizing the art of ancient Egypt (Robins, 2008) in the music video, such as the reliefs (0:13) (see Figure 3), the Egyptian hieroglyphs inscribed on the door, and the statue of the Pharaoh (0:27) (see Figure 4). In the choreography of “*Snake Dance*”, which the authors want to emphasize, Jay Chou appropriated hybrid finger-tutting and waving dance skills to manifest the feeling of ‘snake’ and ‘Egyptized’ with a few male dancers. They dressed in black and golden clothes, which similarly presented some kind of symbolic meaning in ancient Egyptian culture.



Figure 3: The Screenshot Presenting Ancient Egyptian Reliefs in the “*Snake Dance*” music video. [Source: JVR Official Website].



Figure 4: The Screenshot of Presenting Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs and the Statue of the Pharaoh in the “*Snake Dance*” music video. [Source: JVR Official Website].

Just as people all have their own preferred colours, rather, colour represents feelings, people, countries, cultures, and colour symbolism (Sahlins, 1977: 175). In ancient Egypt, colour was an integral part of the substance and being of everything in life (Yu, 2014: 50), the colours black and green represent the concept of regeneration (Foroughi & Javadi, 2017), and gold symbolizes the sun and eternity (Robins, 2008). Lara acted in the imagined role of ‘Cleopatra’ (see Figure 5) and appeared in a close-up shot from the beginning of the music video’s chorus part (0:59). She danced like a wiggly snake and rose slowly, revealing a sense of seduction over sensuality and femininity, the blue light reflected on her face, which highlights the fascinating appearance. The ornaments on Lara, including the ancient Egyptian broad collar, bracelets, blue headdress, and treasured gemstone (1:06), may not be as close to Katy Perry’s Cleopatra in the music video “*Dark Horse*”, but these also can be assumed as a similar parody in other dimensions, especially the importance of blue in ancient Egyptian culture. It is unsurprising that Lara Liang reclined on a bed in the later scene (2:33) because the figure of a reclining Cleopatra has a cinematic history. Most striking is the comparison with the poster design for the movie “*Cleopatra*” (Mankiewicz, 1963) with Elizabeth Taylor in the title role. Moreover, on the cover of Nancy Sinatra’s hit “*These Boots Are Made for Walkin’*” (Weissebrauen, 2010), she strikes a similar pose with the modern garment. This should be

counted as a symbol of female emancipation in the American reception; probably, Cleopatra as an antique pharaonic queen, is associated with feminism in the modern imagination. Nevertheless, this situation is extremely rare in Mandopop. In the final scene, Jay Chou comes next to Lara Liang, and both reach out to each other (2:49) in what seems like an Antony and Cleopatra romance, ending with the closing of the palace doors (2:52). This song was replayed on the stage during Jay Chou's The Era Tour in 2010, which more visually embodies an Egyptianizing representation that crosses the temporal and spatial dimensions.



Figure 5: The Screenshot Presenting Lara acting in the role of ‘Cleopatra’ in “*Snake Dance*”. [Source: JVR Official Website].

5. Travelling the Time and Space: Cross-cultural Communication in Popular Music

The above analysis towards “*Snake Dance*” shows that Jay Chou, with his production team, integrates some stereotypes on multiple levels, connecting ancient Egypt with mystery, luxury, and culture. Hence, it is a product of a sub-collection of pop culture and a keen interest in ancient Egypt to a certain extent. It obviously captures the typical motivation about Egyptian elements. It can be all correlated this work with the ancient Egyptian civilization, history, culture, and art, as well as the story about Cleopatra, who was an Egyptian female pharaoh of the Ptolemaic Empire is famous for her love affairs with the Roman emperor Cesar and Marc Antony. Historically there is a saying that she let a poisonous snake bite her to end both her life and the ancient Egypt Empire's. In fact, the snake was an important symbol of royal power in ancient Egyptian history and a protector of the pharaohs, the snake totem, therefore, was also an indispensable element of royal attire. However, in the process of analysing “*Snake Dance*”, information presented in work related to the ‘snake’ element cannot be found, either in the lyrics or the visual presentation, but the core word ‘snake’ in the song title directly sets the thematic connotation of the production.

Both China and Egypt, as ancient civilizations in the past, have their own cognition and inheritance for history and culture. From the overall perspective of the “*Snake Dance*”, creation essentially reflects a universal cross-cultural communication in popular music. Music may be local, marking the differences within identity, place, and separate boundaries of the people. The fact that Jay Chou as a musician from China actively collects external creation material from around the world undeniably this way helped Chinese pop artists attempt cross-cultural communication. It seems to have been a perfect encounter, and perhaps this is why many artists figured that their cross-cultural communication concerned music rather than talking words (Gfeller, 2002). Unquestionably, in popular music, cross-cultural communication between Eastern and Western musicians is flourishing. In general, popular music had always changed when people moved over time and space. Throughout music history, musical communication of artists from different cultures has continually resulted in a practical exchange of musical ideas and creations. In this case, the stylistic syntheses of Jay Chou's “*Snake Dance*” add further corroboration to Henry Cowell's assertion that cross-cultural appropriations draw on “those materials common to the music of all the peoples of the world” (Robinson, 2011).

6. Contemporary Mandopop in the Cross-cultural Context

Mandopop has not undergone the long and complete development period that Western popular music has. In other words, the emergence of the contemporary Mandopop was a process of appropriation musically. The beginning of Mandopop industry initially was rooted in jazz music in Shanghai, China, in the 1930s. Subsequently, it relocated to Hong Kong and then spread to Taiwan in the 1970s (Chik, 2010: 508). After the Taiwan campus folksong movement, Taiwan has gradually become the undisputed production centre in the Mandopop scene. With the promotion of Western popular music in the post-1990s, Mandopop in Taiwan became a hotspot and gained the opportunity to develop. Except for Japanese *enka* styles, Mandopop was influenced by various genres and styles of popular music over the past long decades, from its stage in germination to its formation. Western popular music constantly got the musical elements it needs from around the world through cultural pluralism. However, Mandopop has always been situated in the cross-cultural context, finding opportunities in the clash and exchange of Western and Chinese cultures, and has therefore been the subject of interpretation and questioning. The development of technology, the entertainment industry, digital media, and commodification on a global scale have accelerated the spread and globalisation of popular music. Some styles and genres have spread far from their place of origin, gradually becoming the inspired sources in music creations of those who are so-called ‘outsider’

musicians. Clearly, both *zhongguofeng* 中国风 songs composed by Jay Chou and Chinked-out style songs composed by Leehom Wang 王力宏 are examples of fusion between different musical cultures.

In the context of globalisation, the cross-cultural phenomenon has become widespread. The cross-cultural phenomenon implies the integration or exclusion of their consciousnesses in various cultural contexts, on the basis of which they gradually form, develop and spread. The musical cross-cultural phenomenon arises when a song with a certain cultural background is combined with the culture of another country. However, the stereotype is an inevitable consequence of the communication of cross-cultural phenomenon. Stereotype refers to the relatively inherent, generalised, and sweeping perceptions that people have of a certain type of person or thing. It is true that the stereotype of a country's culture can simplify the cognitive process to some extent and enable quick access to relevant information in the current information age. Due to the limitations of the communication of cross-cultural phenomena, people are unable to truly understand other cultures, even if they are not well aware of the cultural environment where they are in. This leads to the fact that sometimes the stereotype that people pass on by word of mouth becomes the only impression people have of that country or culture. Just as by analysing the song "*Snake Dance*" created by Jay Chou and his produced team, they have no personal real understanding of ancient Egypt and the cultural presence there.

The existence of the stereotype cannot be generalised simply in terms of right or wrong. It is because of the spread of cross-cultural phenomenon that people have access to other cultures, and that stereotype is created. It is also because of the lack of cross-cultural communication that people only have a stereotype about other countries and cultures. It is therefore worth noting that popular music, as an important tool for cultural communication, becomes crucial regarding the future development of cross-cultural communication or focusing on stereotypes.

7. Conclusion

The Greeks created an image of the ancient Egyptians for future generations, what is an intelligent civilization with abundant knowledge and unbelievable secrets. The fertile basin of the Nile, ancient Egypt, as an antique theme in historical and cultural reception, is linked on the one hand to the contemporary cross-cultural tendency and, on the other hand, a typical and traditional symbol with a mythical kingdom as a popular character. Based on a study of Jay Chou's work "*Snake Dance*" this article sought to explore the implications of the Egyptianizing in the song and how his creation presented the cross-cultural dialogue in popular music. As is well known, Jay Chou is talented in the aspect of songwriting ability, and his works always reveal a powerful and unconstrained style. Accordingly, the song "*Snake Dance*" fits perfectly within the relevant context of 'Egyptian mania' and the wave of cross-cultural creation with the globalization of popular music. Through textual and visual analysis, the study also illustrates that the song embodies Egyptianizing elements on multiple levels while using popular music to bring modern audiences closer to the history-culture of ancient Egypt.

Nowadays, cross-cultural integration goes beyond the passive acceptance of societies' multiple cultures and promotes more intercultural exchange and interaction, which is a new tag for an old phenomenon (Bolino et al., 2008). Musical and cultural interactions across state boundaries are an everyday occurrence in today's interconnected world. It makes the connection, accessing, and overlap among the popular music cultures around the world. In the case of contemporary Mandopop, it represents the fusion of form or content which is based on various popular music genres and different cultures. The cross-cultural nature of popular music facilitates a meaningful examination of the multicultural-musical connections between local music and other locations in the transnational scene and how these connections affect local music practices. However, the stereotype is probably still subsistent in cross-cultural creations for those who are totally unfamiliar with the external culture. People's curiosity about foreign cultures can accelerate the spread of representative cultural elements and bring them a deeper understanding. The simplification and stereotyping of foreign cultures can generate a recreation of the image of the other.

By listening to music, appropriating music, and creating globalized fusions (Bridge, 2019), the audience of Mandopop can access innovative songs; meanwhile, the creators demonstrate their combination of different music and culture under a cross-cultural context. Whether by creators or audiences, in a word, it can only be located in the context of cross-cultural communication by recognising the nature of the stereotype. This example of popular music in the article shows that the stereotype of ancient Egyptian culture is still a noteworthy concern in the popular culture sphere. It offers a new possibility and direction for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research. Jay Chou, as an icon of Mandopop, transmits a creative new idea to other artists in Chinese popular music by blending different popular music and cultures and how his production teamwork across geographical boundaries to create and find new material.

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