

# The Image Memory and Imagination of Princess Wencheng

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**Abstract:** *Princess Wencheng has been praised by the people for more than 1,300 years. She is a typical historical image. Whether it is history or reality, and whether the subject of memory and imagination is personal or official, the memory and imagination of the image of Princess Chinese in artistic creation never stop. This article examines how the artistic image of Princess Wencheng is constructed from the aspects of traditional Chinese painting, murals, stone carvings and media, and attempts to explore the value and meaning behind the construction of Princess Wencheng's image.*

**Keywords:** *Princess Wencheng, history, image, creation*

## 1. Introduction

Princess Wencheng appeared in history as one of the many friendly princesses in the Tang Dynasty, and she was the only princess who sang the most and had the greatest influence for later generations. The marriage of Princess Wencheng and Tubo King Songtsan Gampo was a major event in the early years of the Tang Dynasty, which was recorded and imagined in various forms by the people of the time and later generations. In all the information that can be viewed, the true image of Princess Wencheng no longer exists, and all that can be seen is the shadow of various forms of history she left to the world.

"Serve the way of the country, serve the peace, and once you fight against the captives, there will be casualties." [1] Emperor Taizong of Tang knew that his dynasty could subdue the Tubo, but then his people would suffer from the war again. He was willing to take the smallest Sacrifice in exchange for peace in the world is also in line with the will of the people. What's more, the surrounding countries all yearned for the Tang Dynasty, and the Tubo came to ask for marriage twice. Emperor Taizong of Tang embrace, Emperor Taizong of Tang agreed to marry Princess Wencheng to the Tubo King Songzan Gampo in the fifteenth year of Zhenguan. "Shen became a country of nephews and nephews because of their good marriage. When they were old, they went back and forth, and messengers met each other." [2] In 641 AD, Princess Wencheng was escorted by Li Daozong, the minister of rituals of the Tang Dynasty, to Jiangxia King Li Daozong. In the area (now Zhaling Lake and Eling Lake in Qinghai Province), Songtsan Gampo came to greet the princess and held a grand welcome ceremony. He also met Li Daozong as a son-in-law. In the days that followed, Songtsan Gampo built a palace for Princess Wencheng in the Luosei area.

Princess Wencheng is an outstanding woman in the history of China. She is not afraid of the twists and turns of the road and the barriers of language barriers. She is far away from relatives and friends. Her homeland bravely and strong marches to the distant and unfamiliar land of Tubo, and seeks happiness for the people of Tubo. As far as she is concerned, the Tang Dynasty's arrangement of her life and destiny is unfair. She has suffered a lot of grievances and lived a very hard life. However, she did not bow to her fate, she resolutely married Songtsen Gampo and took on the important task of establishing Sino-Tibetan friendly relations. How great and admirable her image was in the hearts of the Tang Dynasty. "The cunning captives have never been captured, and they know dragons and snakes in the camp of Montenegro. Since the noble master and his relatives, half of Hu Feng's style is like the Han family." [3] It is a portrayal of the dedication value of Princess Wencheng.

## 2. Image memory of Princess Wencheng

Emperor Taizong of Tang received the Tubo request to marry Ludongzan, and agreed to Princess Wencheng's marriage to Songtsan Gampo. This famous scene was vividly reflected in the work "Paper

Carriage" painted by Tang Dynasty painters. "Yan Lide has pictures of Princess Wencheng's Descending Fan, Picture of Yuhua Palace, and Picture of Cockfighting, which have been passed down from generation to generation." The Statue of Master Fa" and the "Statue of Five Stars" are all objects of Xuanhe Mingchang, and I also see them. Also see the "Bu Chai" where Taizong sits on a chariot, and the palace servants are all in ten chariots, all with curvaceous eyebrows and cheeks. Born, a Zhu-robed official was in charge of the wat-inducing class, followed by Zanpu messengers, dressed in small flower robes, and a servant. The emperor of Zan Li Weigong inscribed it in small seals, the Tang Dynasty eight-point book Zanpu resigned from the marriage, and Song Gaozong inscribed it. The real thing." [4] Regrettably, "Yan Lide painted the human feelings of the characters", although his painting "Princess Wencheng Descending Fan Tu" was mentioned in the Xuanhe painting manual, it was not passed down in the end. , otherwise you can see the image of Princess Wencheng. The other is Yan Liben's "Picture of a Walking Carriage". The author showed the audience such a picture: Emperor Taizong of Tang was sitting on the walking carriage, surrounded by nine palace maids. , some hold a fan, some open an umbrella. Standing in front of the Emperor Taizong of Tang were three men in different costumes, namely the ceremony officer, Lu Dongzan (the Tibetan messenger), and the interpreter. The ceremonial officer wears a head, a red round-neck robe, and holds the wat board in both hands; Lu Dongzan wears a brocade robe with small. As is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Yan Liben's "Walking Road"

Couplets and narrow sleeves, and stands with his hands closed. The author depicts the image of the Emperor Taizong of Tang vividly and meticulously. The Emperor Taizong of Tang in the painting is tall, handsome, with deep eyes and a solemn expression, fully revealing the supreme demeanor and majesty of the Tang Dynasty. Compared with Emperor Taizong of Tang, the maids beside him were small and delicate; the messenger Lu Dongzan was thin and serious, which set off Emperor Taizong of Tang dignified, peaceful and amiable. ... After looking at this picture, you will think that since Princess Wencheng was married to Songtsan Gampo Zamp of Tubo, then the protagonist of the picture should be Princess Wencheng instead of the Emperor Taizong of Tang, but Princess Wencheng is not in the picture, but Through the Emperor Taizong of Tang meeting with the envoy Lu Dongzan, it alludes to the importance of Princess Wencheng's marriage to Songtsan Gampo in Tubo. Emperor Taizong of Tang marriage of Princess Wencheng to Songtsen Gampo was an alliance and communication between the two regimes. Princess Wencheng seemed to be just an emotional messenger, which made the two ethnic groups more compatible.

Qing Dynasty temple mural "Princess Wencheng Entering Tibet", painted in the Potala Palace in Tibet. When the fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso, was rebuilt in the eleventh year of Shunzhi (1654) in the Qing Dynasty, he drew it according to the "Mingjian of the Genealogy of Tibetan Kings", depicting the historical deeds of the marriage between Princess Wencheng and the Tibetan King Songzan Gampo in the fifteenth year of Tang Zhenguan (641). It is divided into "Identifying the Princess in the East Church Field", "The Princess Arrives in Lhasa", "The Grand Ferry of the Han Dynasty", "Filling the Lake and Filling the Devil to Build the Jokhang Temple", "The Marriage of Songtsan Gampo", etc. The plots are specific and vivid. Among them, "The Princess Arrives at Lhasa Lake", the princess rides a horse in a high bun, and there are entourages at the front and rear, which is extremely spectacular. The pictures are colorful and full of Tibetan characteristics. Although Princess Wencheng depicted in "The Princess Arrives at Lhasa Lake" has some colors of Tang Dynasty figure paintings, it is no longer a Tang Dynasty figure, and its decoration surpasses painting. Because Princess Wencheng believed in Buddhism, the fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Losang Gyatso, redrawn the map of Princess Wencheng's entry into Tibet. The purpose is to use the image of Princess Wencheng as a respected historical figure to promote Buddhism and carry it forward. Princess Wencheng here is no longer just a mere image of Princess Wencheng. He is a historical figure but a god who is trusted and worshipped by the Tibetan compatriots.

According to archaeologists, there are five figures painted on the cliff at Leba Goukou. The first

and fourth figures are servants or maids. It is inferred that the Tubo people are Songtsan Gampo, wearing Tubo clothes. The image of the woman in the stone carving is inferred to be Princess Wencheng. Because this woman's hair is combed and the top bun is leaning forward, she is wearing a collarless cloak, and she holds lotus flowers in both hands. These are all Han-style statues. This stone carving is called "Princess Wencheng Ritual Buddha", and it is also a testimony to the marriage between Tang and Fan. It reproduces two real figures in history who symbolize the integration of ethnic groups, and also reproduces the artistic style of ethnic integration.

Princess Wencheng Temple is also a space that carries the cultural memory of Princess Wencheng. Portraits of Princess Wencheng and Songtsan Gampo are hung in the temple hall, and the murals of Tibetans grandly welcoming Princess Wencheng are completely preserved on the stele outside the temple gate. These contents are the result of people's active memory at that time, and also contain the subjective feelings and cultural concepts of individuals in a specific era.

### 3. Princess Wencheng's imagination

Princess Wencheng did not say that it was forgotten by the people because of historical changes, but it was still an important historical theme for her creation. Such as Geng Shen (1980) Xia June Liu Lingcang's figure painting "Princess Wencheng"[5], the material is still the Tang Dynasty and Princess Wencheng who was close to Tubo. The picture depicts Princess Wencheng and her two attendants. The characters have full faces and calm expressions, with their hair in a high bun, and wearing long skirts swaying. The author put a lot of effort into the proportions of the characters in the picture and the virtual reality. The Princess Wencheng in the picture is taller than the teacher and occupies the main position. The two attendants are side by side on the left and right of Princess Wencheng. The lines are gentle and flowing, the colors are beautiful and elegant, and the details are meticulously portrayed, which fully reflects the painter's strong brushwork and coloring skills. Through the painter's inscription, it can be seen that Liu Lingcang not only based on historical materials when creating this work, but also absorbed the inspiration of the Tang Dynasty tomb mural figure paintings such as Zhang Xuan, a lady painter in the Tang Dynasty, and then vividly portrayed Princess Wencheng as a rich and noble person. Gorgeous lady figure. "Princess Wencheng Entering Tibet to Hong Buddha", now in the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, is a work about Princess Wencheng created by Nima Zeren in 1993. Then there is the thangka painting "Princess Wencheng Entering Tibet" created to celebrate the 60th birthday of the People's Republic of China. As is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: "Princess Wencheng Entering Tibet" Thangka 2009 Drafted by Master Niangben and co-drawn with Renqingjia and Sanjiben.

It seems that Princess Wencheng who only creates images is not enough. Princess Wencheng was once put on the screen. In 1999 and 2000, Princess Wencheng was repeatedly filmed as a special TV series. In 1998's "Journey to the West", 2001's "Love in the Tang Dynasty" and 2006's "The Reign of Zhenguan", Princess Wencheng was also treated as such image is shaped. Princess Wencheng on the screen mostly uses her love with Songtsen Gampo Zamp as a clue, depicting Princess Wencheng starting from Chang'an and walking all the way to Lhasa, Tibet, the key historical events experienced in the three years "Making Tang Propose", "" "Five Difficulties in Marriage", "Throwing a Bronze Mirror", "Princess Entering Tibet" and other scenes were created as the main subjects, which rendered Princess Wencheng's mind and emotions. Princess Wencheng faced thousands of difficulties and obstacles in the process of walking. After many twists and turns, she showed Princess Wencheng's courage and insight. In her rigid expression, she contrasted with Songtsen Gampo, revealing that she is not only gentle but also assertive. And a sexy and strong woman, it also shows that Princess Wencheng has gradually transformed from a childish and delicate into a truly great woman, which is welcomed by

the Tibetan people. The 20-episode TV series "Princess Wencheng" looks at and interprets history from a modern perspective, and integrates two dynasties with completely different historical civilizations and national customs, the Tang Dynasty and the Tubo Dynasty, and vividly shapes Wencheng through sharp and complex conflicts. The princess is the image of an oriental woman admired by the Tibetan and Han people for generations, revealing the rich character connotation of Princess Wencheng in her boudoir and the special historical background of her destiny, and praised the grand occasion of the Tibetan and Han family. The vivid image of the vivid personality in the play makes us obtain a strong aesthetic pleasure and leave a deep memory.

#### **4. Discussion**

##### ***4.1 Field of history***

The sorting and analysis of the basic historical facts of Princess Wencheng's marriage. Some scholars' research on Princess Wencheng involves more historical scrutiny. In addition to providing accurate statistics on the reconciliation activities conducted during the Tang Dynasty's 289 years, he conducted a detailed study of the reconciliation history between the Tang Dynasty and various tribes based on the division of border regions. Some scholars have also examined the family life of the Tang Dynasty and listed various situations in which the Tang Dynasty and the Tang Dynasty lived in border tribes. By analyzing the situation, status, and various crises faced by these married princesses, they can indirectly reflect the changes in political relations between the Tang Dynasty and border ethnic groups in different periods. Among them, he deeply sympathized with the fate of Princess Wencheng's family life, which was linked to political disputes, and positively affirmed this self sacrifice. Some scholars also believe that the marriage of Princess Wencheng was an inevitable historical event jointly facilitated by the Tang and Tibetan dynasties. In order to stabilize the border areas and reduce border disasters, the Tang Dynasty consolidated the unified situation, absorbed the advanced culture of the Tang Dynasty, and placed Princess Wencheng's marriage in this context. At the same time, they detailed the process of Songtsen Gampo's marriage to the Tang Dynasty, as well as the process and influence of Princess Wencheng's entry into Tibet.

##### ***4.2 Sociological field***

The evaluation and research on the event and characters of Princess Wencheng's marriage to Tibet has always been a core field of research for many scholars, and the research results are fruitful. The research of domestic scholars is mainly divided into two categories. One is the evaluation of the reconciliation policy, which analyzes the overall contribution brought by Princess Wencheng and the Tibetan reconciliation from the perspective of politics, economy, culture, and other aspects. Politically, some scholars summarize the political significance of Princess Wencheng's reconciliation as "son-in-law relationship" and "nephew uncle relationship", which are the reasons for the good alliance between the two parties. In terms of economy, the Central Plains Dynasty, represented by Princess Wencheng, established a Tibetan peace circle centered around Lhasa with political regimes such as Tuyuhun and Tubo, and opened up or expanded the Silk Road on the Qinghai Tibet Plateau. Some scholars, from a modern perspective, interpreted Princess Wencheng as a symbol of spirit. By comparing the social status quo in Tibet before and after marriage in history, they affirmed Princess Wencheng's historical and epochal contributions to the development of Tibet [6]. In terms of culture, domestic scholars discussed the impact of Princess Wencheng's marriage on the material and spiritual civilization of Tubo in their book "Harmony between Han and Tang Dynasties and Western Civilization". They compared the changes in Tubo's development before and after, and analyzed the introduction and development of Central Plains culture in Tubo. The other is from the specific aspects of Princess Wencheng's personal contributions. In the 1960s, some scholars affirmed Princess Wencheng's political contributions from the perspective of the integration of Han and Tibetan ethnic groups, saying that she was "an outstanding woman in the great cause of friendship and unity between Han and Tibet." 9 Han Xinghai believed that Princess Wencheng introduced tea and tea seeds to Tibet and had a profound impact on the tea drinking culture of modern Tibet, Some scholars specialize in studying the spread of papermaking from Princess Wencheng. In addition, Princess Wencheng brought advanced production technology and a large number of Tang Dynasty classics to Tubo, making it a common practice for Tubo to learn Tang Dynasty culture. Most importantly, Princess Wencheng's dissemination of Buddhist culture earned her respect from the Tibetan people and later generations.

### **4.3 Archaeological field**

Research on Princess Wencheng from aspects such as unearthed cultural relics and relics. In the "Anecdotes of Taizhao and Princess Wencheng" and "Preliminary Exploration of Princess Wencheng's Journey to Tibet", scholars attempted to restore Princess Wencheng's journey to Tibet thousands of years ago through methods such as Han and Tibetan classics and on-site interviews. Some scholars interpret the history of Princess Wencheng and the spread of Tibetan Buddhism through the study of several existing cultural relics, including many unearthed classics and Buddhist artifacts. Some experts believe that the "Bu Nian Tu" faithfully records important historical facts of Han Tibetan ethnic friendship over 1300 years ago and uses it as a research object to sort out the historical information of Tang and Tubo hidden behind the painting[7].

### **4.4 Literature and art field**

Research on literary and artistic creation of Princess Wencheng. There are eight traditional Tibetan operas circulating among the eight major Tibetan areas in Tibet. Every year, Princess Wencheng's memorial activities are performed in temples and activity squares. Some scholars analyze the music, singing characteristics and drama performance in the traditional Tibetan opera Princess Wencheng, and explore the drama connotation contained in the traditional Tibetan tone. Some experts also discuss the shaping of Princess Wencheng's character image from the perspective of music themes. Like many other characters that have been processed into artistic forms, Princess Wencheng has also been continuously endowed with layers of mysterious and romantic colors by future artistic creations.

Princess Wencheng, as a medium of ethnic communication during special historical periods, presented a positive image in both official and folk media memories. However, there were different memory focuses in different periods and places, which were related to the issues of concern in that era. Therefore, at different times, the official either directly influenced the generation of memory through the media or influenced the content of folk memory through the input of mainstream ideology. Finally, Princess Wencheng is endowed with a media image that conforms to the times and social development, and forms a unique cultural memory. Overall, the current academic research on Princess Wencheng involves multiple fields, but most of it is still discussed from the perspective of her historical contributions. Scholars still repeat their original research and have less innovation.

## **5. Conclusion**

Princess Wencheng, who is currently creating, although there are historical references and realistic factors, she wants to achieve the work specification of "reality is true to the end". It is also difficult to create a fact based on the borrowing, which can be tested." "Art comes from life and is higher than life." Any art work is the result of a high understanding, generalization, summary and creation of life. The artistic creation of historical themes is a high-level creation that is close to history but not history. It is very difficult to correctly embody the truth of history and the truth of art to reshape the disappearing visual image in the historical space. If historical stories are chosen as the subject matter, they are mostly based on the conflicts of the characters' emotions, emotions, and other events, and they mostly express people's daily emotions and beautiful yearnings. It is shaped by the steadfast love of cloth and the warmth of human relations. That is to say, art is close to historical facts, historical events that can be based on, but not real history.

When historical events are read as a historical material by later generations, the communication of this information has undergone fundamental changes. Whether Princess Wencheng appeared on the silver screen as a visual image or appeared in the picture, as the next audience became the audience. Then these appreciators have absolutely nothing to do with the image of Princess Wencheng herself. They are more concerned about the techniques, colors and composition of the characters in the picture. They are attracted by these, so they don't consciously walk around the painting with this emotion.

In today's increasingly developed information media, various media mention Princess Wencheng from different cultural perspectives. There are many artistic creations based on Princess Wencheng's characters and deeds, using videos, pictures and other forms to report and comment on "Wencheng" The princess is a historical figure...and has become a historical bridge for the harmony and unity of the Han and Tibetan peoples." Showing the positive image of Princess Wencheng, Princess Wencheng is re-understood in every performance and creation, and is also disseminated in every media. is remembered and interpreted again.

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