



## **Translation and Time: Exploring the Temporal Dimension of Cross-cultural Transfer**

### Presentation Details

Title of Paper:

It's Time to Translate: An Outlook on History through the Lens of a Literary Translation Magazine

Abstract:

This paper will adopt a temporal perspective to reflect on the correlation between literary translation, cultural transfer and history with reference to Chinese-English translation, taking the Hong Kong-based literary translation magazine *Renditions* as a case study. Journals and magazines are still rather sporadically studied; their contents are not homogeneous, which makes any attempt at their systematic assessment and study “a formidable task” (Gimpel, 1999). By the same token, however, their format offers a kaleidoscope of material that allows to adopt a microscopic approach which focuses on turning points within a specific stretch of history and explores in detail how such ‘external’ events are mirrored in the magazine’s own ‘internal’ timeline. The nature and purpose of a magazine dedicated primarily to translation brings cross-cultural transfer into this equation; *Renditions* is a very telling example, both for its strong connection to the times it has sailed through, and for the extraordinarily rich outlook on changes in Chinese culture and identity it has opened to English-speaking readers along the way. This paper therefore points to journals and magazines as an important, but largely overlooked, source of information, and discusses the relevance of reducing scale in descriptive or historical approaches to translation for the sake of enhancing detail and adding clarity. More specifically, it illustrates how methods and materials used more frequently in other fields, notably microhistory (Munday, 2014), can help gaining insight on temporal aspects of translation and link these to a broader, wider-known historical context.

Author's biography:

**Caterina Weber** is a PhD candidate from the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies at the University of Nottingham, UK. She completed a BA in Chinese Studies and English Language and Literature at the University of Geneva in Switzerland, including one year of Chinese language studies at Southwest University in Chongqing, and moved to the UK in 2006 to take an MSc in Chinese Business and International Relations at the University of Sheffield. She then worked as a project coordinator at the Confucius Institute at the University of Sheffield before embarking on a PhD, while continuing to pursue her interests in Chinese language and arts. Her current research focuses on the process of translating literary texts from Chinese to English, and on what role some of the widely acknowledged differences between these two languages and their respective cultural contexts can play in a translator's work.