



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

Presentation Details
<p>Title of Paper:</p> <p>A Chinese Classic across Time: The English Reception of <i>Liaozhai</i> from the Colonial Period to Today</p>
<p>Abstract:</p> <p>This research will examine all the English translations of the Chinese literary classic <i>Liaozhai Zhiyi</i> (聊齋志異), a collection of 498 stories, written by Songling Pu in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Since Friedrich Gützlaff first published his English translation of nine <i>Liaozhai</i> stories in 1842, twenty more translators (or co-translators) have made the same attempt. These translations span three periods in Chinese history: the colonial period, the decolonizing period and the “open-door” period. Before Sidney Sondergard finished his complete translation of <i>Liaozhai</i> in 2014, all the English translations made by his predecessors are partial, which makes the selection of texts an important factor in analyzing these editions.</p> <p>Translation scholars have discussed translation as a highly subjective activity. The whole process of translation, from the selection of what to translate to the reception of the published translations, is constrained by factors such as ideology, poetics and patronage (Lefevere, <i>Rewriting</i> 2-10). This study will discuss how such factors shaped the translation and packaging of <i>Liaozhai</i> across the three historical periods mentioned above.</p> <p>This research will provide a quantitative analysis of all the English translations of <i>Liaozhai</i> in the three periods. The stories will be classified into four categories according to their dominant themes. I will then determine whether the translations of each period demonstrate a common thematic preference, and whether, consequently, the image of <i>Liaozhai</i>, and, perhaps, China as a whole, was constructed differently for English readers in the three historical periods under investigation.</p>

Author's biography:

**Yongming Pei** is currently a PhD candidate majoring in translation studies in Kent State University and an associate professor in the Foreign Language Department of China University of Geoscience (Beijing). The courses she taught include Introduction to Interpreting, Consecutive Interpreting, both of which are at the master level. She also taught College English to undergraduate students. Prior to this, she received a Master's degree in English Language and Literature in Southwest University. She translated about 12 English books into Chinese, which cover the subjects of economy, literature and medicine. She also worked as a part-time interpreter in a Chinese factory for about three years.