



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

Presentation Details	
Title of Paper:	Translating Texts of Memory: Problems and Solutions
Abstract:	<p>Exploring the temporal dimension of cross-cultural transfer, we should not neglect “museum texts”, typical texts of memory since a museum is “a collective memory bank” (Frykman 2009: 303). “Museum texts” refers to both “texts in museums” (e.g. labels, wall texts, catalogues, and brochures) and “museums as texts” (i.e. how the museum as a whole operates as a text and communicates with its public) (Ravelli 2006). This paper concerns “texts in museum”, which tell stories of the past. Recent decades have witnessed a popular practice in Chinese museums of providing English translation of museum texts for international visitors. However, the translation quality has been unsatisfactory to both visitors and researchers. Studies of museum text translation have paid much attention to translation errors and sometimes to models for translation quality assessment (see Neather 2004 &amp; 2005, Zuo 2003 &amp; 2005, Jiang 2010, Xu 2014, Liu &amp; Xu 2015). This study is not intended to join the criticism, but to investigate the reasons behind the generally indifferent quality. In this paper, I will first make a brief overview of the translation problems, and then discuss the reasons, drawing on the questionnaire I recently conducted to museum professionals. Solutions to the problems will surface when the reasons are made clear. While it is important to look for errors in the translated texts and models for translation quality assessment, it is time to inspect the reasons behind and find solutions to the problems, which will contribute to more effective cross-cultural transfer in texts of memory.</p>

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