

Ulster Museum’s “The Troubles and Beyond Gallery” in Chinese: Translating Difficult Histories in Northern Ireland

Rui Sun

Queen’s University Belfast, UK

rsun04@qub.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

Museums and heritage sites offer a forum for presenting difficult histories. As visitors explore the exhibition, they engage themselves with the past and reflect on the present. Any exhibition consists of multiple texts, and these texts in the museum work with each other and with the gallery space to produce the difficult stories within the museum context. This thesis examines the challenges inherent in the translation process when dealing with difficult histories and analyses the way in which difficult histories are presented and curated to a diverse audience. In collaboration with the National Museums NI, I translated exhibitions and texts in the Troubles and Beyond Gallery into Chinese and designed a website for presenting both the images of the exhibits and my translations. This study has two primary objectives: 1) establishing a comprehensive framework for analysing and implementing the translation of difficult histories in multimodal museum contexts and 2) creating a website that showcases both the exhibit images and my translation.

Regarding the above objectives, this study proposes three research questions:

- 1) What are the reasons for translating difficult histories in museums?
- 2) How do museums deal with difficult histories through museum text?
- 3) How to translate multimodal text in museums and present the translation to target audiences?

Chapter One answers the first research question. This chapter first describes three features of difficult histories in reference to relevant research in the fields of history and museum studies. The history of the Troubles in Northern Ireland is then briefly introduced. Through analysing the difficult nature of the Troubles, I propose that the main reasons for translating difficult histories are to meet the needs of the target audience, as well as to serve educational and tourism purposes.

Chapter Two responds to the second research question. This chapter looks at translation in museums, including the presentation of difficult histories in museums and textual issues in museum translation. I discuss the roles of museums and give examples of how museums deal with difficult histories. I then discuss issues surrounding multimodal museum text, with a description of the Troubles and Beyond Gallery in the Ulster Museum. The study finds that museums tend to use authentic objects to present difficult histories and use personal stories to resonate with visitors.

Chapters Three and Four map my translation decision-making process and answer the third research question. Chapter Three covers exhibits selected from the 1970s and 1980s exhibitions, while Chapter Four covers the exhibits selected from the 1990s, and 2000s, as well as independent exhibitions. The translation analysis and commentary include descriptions of the selected exhibits and museum text, reasons for the selection, how I translated the text in terms of the difficulties and particular issues each object presents, along with how I present these exhibits and translations on my Chinese-language website to my target audience. In the process of translation, I integrate multimodal texts and employ various strategies (e.g., addition) to explain the historical content of the exhibits to the target audience. I also consider webpage space when presenting the exhibits and translations. The strategies and methods discussed within this thesis provide a reference for translating multimodal museum texts relating to difficult histories, offering the possibilities in producing museum translation through the design of a website.

KEYWORDS: difficult histories, multimodality, museum text, the Troubles, translation strategies, website

Completion of Thesis

Place: Queen's University Belfast, UK

Year: 2023

Supervisors: Prof. Sue-Ann Harding; Dr. Chen-En Ho

阿尔斯特博物馆《北爱问题展馆》中译版：翻译北爱尔兰的苦难历史

孙睿

英国贝尔法斯特女王大学

rsun04@qub.ac.uk

摘要

博物馆和文化遗址地提供了展示苦难历史的平台。当游客观展时，他们体验过去并反思当下。展览由多重文本组成，这些文本在博物馆中相互作用，在展馆空间下创造了博物馆语境中的苦难故事。本文探讨了翻译苦难历史过程中的挑战，并分析了在面对不同目标群体时苦难历史的呈现方式。我与北爱尔兰国家博物馆合作，我将《北爱问题展馆》中的展品和文本翻译成中文，并设计了一个网站来展示展品的图像和译文。本研究有两个主要目标：1) 构建一个综合框架用以分析和翻译多模态博物馆语境下的苦难历史；2) 创建一个展示展品和翻译的网站。

针对以上研究目标，本文提出了三个研究问题：

- 1) 翻译博物馆中苦难历史展览的原因是什么？
- 2) 博物馆是如何通过文本来处理苦难历史的？
- 3) 如何翻译博物馆中的多模态文本并将其呈现给目标群体？

第一章回答了第一个研究问题。本章首先结合历史学和博物馆学领域的相关研究，阐述了苦难历史的三个特点。然后简要介绍了北爱问题的历史。本章最后阐明翻译《北爱问题展馆》的主要原因是为了满足目标群体的需求，其次是教育和旅游目的。

第二章回答了第二个研究问题。本章并着眼于博物馆翻译，包括博物馆中苦难历史的呈现和博物馆中的文本翻译问题。本章从总体上讨论了博物馆的作用，并举例说明博物馆如何处理苦难历史，然后讨论了多模态博物馆文本，并描述了阿尔斯特博物馆的

《北爱问题展馆》。研究发现博物馆倾向于使用真实的物品来呈现苦难历史，并结合个人故事来引起游客的共鸣。

第三章和第四章讨论了我的翻译决策过程，并回答了第三个研究问题。第三章讨论了 20 世纪 70、80 年代的展览，第四章讨论了 20 世纪 90 年代、21 世纪初展览以及部分独立展览。我对所选展品和博物馆文本进行了翻译分析和讨论，阐述了选择相应展品的原因，对翻译中的困难和问题进行了讨论，并说明了我如何在中文网站上呈现这些展品和译文。在翻译过程中，我整合了多模态文本，并使用增译等翻译策略向目标群体解释展品所包含的历史内容。结合考虑网页空间，我对译文做出适当调整以便在网站上呈现给观众。本文所讨论的策略和方法为翻译苦难历史相关的多模态博物馆文本提供了参考，并提供了通过网站呈现博物馆翻译的可能性。

关键词：苦难历史，多模态，博物馆文本，北爱问题，翻译策略，网站