

# A Study on Chinese History Museum Text Translation from the Perspective of Text Type Theory: Taking the English Translation of Nanchang Relic Museum of Haihunhou State of Han Dynasty as an Example

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## Abstract

There is a scarcity of academic research on museum translation in China. In 1991, Professor Mu Shanpei, based on his personal translation experience, initiated the first discussion on museum translation in China in his paper Faithfulness and Fluency in the Chinese-English Translation of Historical Relics. However, since then, little progress has been made in this area even though research on museum translation from the perspective of functional translation theory emerged as early as 2011. The text type theory, viewed from the perspective of functional translation theory, shifts its focus from achieving literal equivalence to attaining the communicative functions expected of the translated text in the target language and in the context of culture. This approach presents novel ideas and perspectives for museum translation, as museums play a crucial role in cultural dissemination and ultimately aim to facilitate cultural exchange. Given the significant differences between Chinese and English languages and cultures, mere discussion on literal equivalence falls short in assisting museums to fulfill such mission effectively. Therefore, guided by Lesley's text type theory, this paper takes into consideration the English translation of texts within Nanchang Museum of Haihunhou State of Han Dynasty as its research object, exploring strategies to achieve desired functions of museum texts while ensuring the effective realization of cultural dissemination.

**Key words:** Chinese history museum translation; Text translation; Text type theory; C-E translation

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## 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF MUSEUM TEXTS

Museum texts encompass all relevant content, including the names and introductions of cultural relics, exhibition hall descriptions, and museum guidebooks, which possess the following characteristics.

### 1.1 Conciseness and Strong Summarization

Whether it is the name of a cultural relic or an introduction to an exhibition hall, the text strives to be concise and thus not take up too much space. At the same time, the texts are highly summarised, aiming to convey the maximum amount of information to readers within a limited space.

### 1.2 Rich Cultural Information

Despite the concise and summarized nature of the texts, the museum exhibits a wealth of cultural information, encompassing a plethora of cultural connotations. The cultural relics not only convey literal surface-level cultural details but also encapsulate profound underlying cultural significance that cannot be solely conveyed through words.

### 1.3 Strong Intuitiveness in Introductions

The texts should be designed to enhance reader comprehension and acceptance, taking into account

the overall cultural quality of the audience and the educational function of museums. They should strive for intuitiveness, simplicity, and clarity in order to maximize their effectiveness and reader acceptance.

## 2. MUSEUM TEXT TRANSLATION

The target readership of the translated museum text primarily comprises foreign tourists. Given the limited cultural background knowledge among foreign visitors in the museum, our translation aims to accurately convey relevant cultural context to facilitate their understanding of the cultural background and significance behind the exhibited relics, thereby promoting Chinese culture dissemination. This study mainly focuses on translating the prefaces of museum halls and the names of cultural relics. Different translation materials require adherence to corresponding principles and methods when translating.

### 2.1 The Translation of Exhibition Hall Introduction

The introduction of each exhibition hall primarily serves to acquaint visitors with the historical background and fact information of each exhibition hall, enabling them to gain a fundamental understanding of the cultural context and knowledge associated with the hall. This aligns with Reiss' (1971/2000) concept of informative text, as it focuses on conveying objective facts, information, and knowledge.

#### 2.1.1 Emphasis on primary information and simplification of secondary information

According to the functional characteristics of Leiss text types and its translation methods, for informational texts, the translated text should prioritize content over form, effectively conveying identical concepts and information as the original text in a concise and lucid manner (Zhang, 2009).

Although the majority of introductory content found in exhibition halls comprises informational texts, it is crucial to acknowledge that certain introductions are exquisitely crafted, possessing aesthetic qualities that effectively convey the beauty of Chinese traditional culture to visitors and evoke emotional responses. These introductions can be classified as expressive text types, where the focus lies on the sender of information and its mode of transmission according to Leiss's translation requirements. Therefore, a faithful reproduction of the original author's style or text should be pursued through an imitative approach during translation. In dealing with expressive texts, however, faithful translation does not entail a literal reproduction of the original information. It is crucial to ensure that important textual information is conveyed in the translation; otherwise, its intended meaning would be lost. Moreover, when translating this type of text, emphasis should be placed on employing diverse styles, rhetoric devices, and other techniques to achieve the aesthetic

effects characteristic of expressive texts. In other words, translators possess the liberty to effectively convey the emotional and aesthetic dimensions of the text based on their comprehension and expertise, thereby granting them considerable autonomy in selecting appropriate translation strategies and styles.

Example 1: 侯府器物，包罗万象，匠心独具，或飘逸洒脱，或流光溢彩，或奇幻空灵，技艺精湛，尽藏礼乐。

Official Translation: The elegant and graceful artifacts in the marquis' palace, with their beautiful shapes, smooth lines and dazzling colors, are all inclusive and unique in craftsmanship, representing the ritual propriety and music culture from exquisite skills.

This is a typical four-character structure in Chinese, with a strong aesthetic color, allowing readers to clearly feel the beauty between the lines. In this text, a large number of four-character idioms, such as “包罗万象，奇幻空灵” are considered secondary information, which are used to express the magnificence of the cultural relics and the high craftsmanship. Given that a direct translation may impede comprehension for the target readers, translators can distinguish between primary and secondary information based on specific contexts. They should focus on conveying the main information while simplifying the translation of secondary details. Consequently, translators possess considerable freedom for re-creation to ensure the transmission of emotions and attitudes. However, certain crucial aspects such as the exquisite nature of artifacts and skilled craftsmanship ought to be preserved.

Example 2: 天曜日月星，三光不朽；心明儒释道，终以儒尊。

Official Translation: High up in the sky shine the sun, the moon and the stars with their immortal light; deep down in people's heart shine the lights of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and Confucianism finally rose to supremacy over the two others.

The phrase “三光” comes from the *Song Dynasty Three-Character Classic* by Wang Yinglin, which states: “三才者，天地人。三光者，日月星。” “三光” refers to the sun, moon, and stars.” “三光” expresses the ancient understanding of the universe. In this case, a metaphorical approach was used to describe Han Dynasty Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism thoughts, adding rhythm and highlighting the theme of Confucianism, as well as enhancing the artistic effect of the text. However, for the translation, consideration was not given to how the concept of “三光” might be received by foreign readers. A literal translation may make it difficult for the target readers to understand. Therefore, it is advisable to omit the translation of “Three Lights” and directly translate the following parts.

#### 2.1.2 Incorporating the writing conventions of the target language

A good translation should be fluent, naturally expressed,

and aligned with the writing conventions of the target language. Obscure and challenging museum translations not only hinder readers but also impede the desired cultural exchange effects. When translating between Chinese and English, it is crucial to consider their distinct linguistic characteristics.

For instance, English exhibits hypotaxis while Chinese demonstrates parataxis – a fundamental difference in linguistics (Nida, 1982: 58). Chinese sentences that appear parallel relations often imply various logical subordinate relationships; therefore, their translation necessitates the use of different conjunctions on the basis of connotative connections.

Additionally, English places emphasis on impersonal subject sentences, whereas Chinese prioritizes personal ones (He, 2003). The grammatical structures in English that lack animate subjects are concise and better suited for formal written language. Furthermore, due to its impersonal subject construction, it reduces subjective judgment and enhances objective experience, thereby rendering it more objective and authoritative. The nominalization structure of English with non-animate subject sentences facilitates the highlighting of themes, thus contributing to coherence and cohesion in discourse while enhancing naturalness and fluency in language expression.

Secondly, English exhibits a higher degree of stability in its verb morphology compared to the more dynamic nature of Chinese. While English verbs possess complex and enduring morphological changes, Chinese word classes lack such alterations. In contrast to nouns which tend to be more static in Chinese, verbs are characterized by their dynamism and play an active role within the language (Liu, 2007). Consequently, Chinese narratives often feature a greater emphasis on verbs, resulting in a more dynamic storytelling approach as opposed to the predominantly noun-focused narrative style found in English.

Example 3: 梳妆敛容，衣佩华美；熏香养生，喜文弄剑，好古赏珍，追求风雅意趣。

Official translation: He was very attentive to his appearance and always dressed in gorgeous clothes. He was good at using perfume and keeping healthy. He liked writing and playing with swords. He was fond of antiques and treasures, and pursued elegance charm.

These sentences describe the life, art, material, and spiritual aspects of Prince Liu He of Haihun, and seemingly parallel Chinese sentences have logical relationship: all the four-character descriptions in the previous text reflect Liu He's "追求风雅意趣 (pursuit of elegance and charm)" while the translated structure is loose, independent sentences, lacking coherence, and not in line with the characteristics of hypotaxis. Additionally, the official translation commences with four instances of "he", although the sentences' meaning remains intact.

However, such subjective sentence structures starting with personal pronouns are excessively biased and unsuitable for maintaining the objective authority expected in museum texts. Moreover, an overabundance of verb expressions also deviates from English's inherent static nature, thereby failing to reflect the writing conventions of the target language. In summary, a translation that closely adheres to the writing conventions of the target language should be considered a necessary prerequisite for facilitating readers' comprehension and achieving the desired cultural exchange effect.

## 2.2 The Name Translation of Cultural Relics

Translating the names of cultural relics is a task of utmost importance for museums. As invaluable treasures of human culture, cultural relics play an exceptionally significant role in the preservation and advancement of our cultural heritage. The names assigned to these relics serve as crucial means for identification and differentiation, offering a concise depiction of their cultural attributes. Hence, naming such artifacts necessitates appropriateness, relevance, and linguistic elegance while encompassing profound cultural connotations. From this perspective, translating relic names essentially serves as a platform to showcase and promote the source culture to target readership. Furthermore, given that the primary function of relic names is to convey information about these artifacts to readers, they can be classified as informational texts.

For long-standing and widely adopted cultural relics names, we can directly name them, such as "陶罐 (Ceramic pot)" and "铜镜 (Bronze Mirror)". However, standardized guidelines are necessary for newly excavated relics or those with inaccurate translations. Drawing on the principles of translating informational texts, it is essential to ensure that translations are concise and structurally straightforward while effectively conveying detailed information to convey cultural connotations.

### 2.2.1 Discussion on the principles of translating cultural relics names into English

Regarding the discussion on the principles of translating cultural relics names, four points were summarized in Shi Xinmin's (2007) *Discussion on the English Translation of Archaeological Artifact Terms*: the principle of nationality, conciseness, informativeness, and back-translation. The back-translation principle suggests that the English translation of cultural relics names should closely resemble the Chinese names in form and structure, enabling Chinese readers or listeners to immediately recognize the expression in Chinese when reading or hearing the English translation. However, this principle is debatable, for the use of back-translation may lead to literal translations that do not contribute well to cultural transmission, which is the mission of museums in cultural exchange. Furthermore, Li Qing and Hu Xueying (2011) argue that in the translation process of cultural relics, it is

crucial to prioritize intentionality and acceptability of the text. Therefore, they propose four principles for translating cultural relics: providing clear information, employing concise writing style, ensuring grammatical correctness, and maintaining unified naming conventions. While these principles are reasonable considering the characteristics of museum texts, the requirement for unified naming necessitates a thorough discussion in my opinion. The essence of cultural relics names lies in culture, and museums are primarily dedicated to the transmission of culture rather than a mere correspondence with literal names. Given that museum translations primarily target foreign readers, who may possess varying degrees of cultural understanding behind cultural relics compared to Chinese readers, it becomes necessary to supplement translations with cultural information. However, excessive addition of such information may lead to excessively long artifact names, which contradicts the previous requirement for concise writing. Therefore, achieving unified naming while maintaining concise expression and conveying cultural significance is an issue worth considering.

To ensure cultural connotations equivalence, a comprehensive understanding of the cultural information embedded in cultural relics is imperative. According to Li Kairong (2001), this cultural information encompasses three levels: surface culture, middle-level culture, and deep culture. Surface culture represents the direct perception of the fundamental appearance of cultural relics, defining their essence. Middle-level culture offers a more profound and holistic depiction from a cultural standpoint, elucidating their characteristics. Deep cultural information, also referred to as implicit cultural information, encapsulates the “meaning beyond words” associated with names of cultural relics; it encompasses traditional concepts, religious consciousness, social customs, and local conditions specific to Han culture.

Therefore, it is imperative to determine the extent and methods of translating cultural relic names in order to effectively convey cultural information. However, the text lacks sufficient elaboration on this matter. According to this study, an ideal approach would involve conveying cultural information from various perspectives and levels. The study suggests principles such as providing comprehensive information, emphasizing cultural significance, and adopting a unified naming system. To illustrate effective translation of the cultural aspects of cultural relic names, I will provide examples below.

### 2.2.2 Principle of completeness of information

The translation of cultural relic names should strive for the presentation of comprehensive information. As informative texts focusing on content, cultural relic names aim to achieve semantic equivalence with the original text, conveying identical concepts and information. Therefore,

it is crucial in translation to accurately convey the primary information of cultural relics without any omission or redundancy. For example, the translation given by the museum for “龙凤纹鞞形玉佩” is “Ring-shaped Jade Pendant.” The main information of this cultural relic should be “龙” (Loong), “凤” (phoenix), and “鞞形” (ring-shaped). However, the translation completely fails to faithfully convey the concepts and information between the target language and the source language, making this translation unacceptable.

### 2.2.3 Principle of Cultural Centrality

Considering the functions and missions of museums, the principle of cultural centrality should be regarded as one of the foremost principles in translating names of cultural relics. If a museum fails to utilize cultural relics as carriers and translation as a means to accomplish its goals of cultural transmission and communication, then its external publicity efforts can be deemed unsuccessful. Furthermore, Chinese culture is an invaluable treasure of world civilization, characterized by its distinctiveness and national identity. The accurate and appropriate conveyance of the underlying culture behind cultural relics, from surface manifestations to profound depths, while preserving their unique cultural essence, poses a matter worthy of profound contemplation. For instance, within the Nanchang Relic Museum showcasing artifacts from Haihunhou State during the Han Dynasty era, “Loong (long been regarded as dragon)” totems are omnipresent. Loong, serving as a totem of the Chinese nation, not only embodies ancient imperial authority but also conveys auspicious meanings within cultural symbolism. The distinctiveness and significance of the Loong in Chinese culture are readily apparent. However, all cultural artifacts associated with the Loong in the Haihunhou Museum, which significantly differ from Western dragon symbolism, have been uniformly translated as “dragon”. This issue has been comprehensively discussed in Huang Ji’s (2006) *Regarding the Modification of the English Translation of “龙”*. Therefore, how to accurately and appropriately convey Chinese culture, while maintaining its unique cultural aspects during transmission, is an issue that requires in-depth research.

### 2.2.4 Principle of unified naming

The principle of unified nomenclature entails employing consistent terminology for cultural artifacts and, whenever possible, adopting commonly used translated names while ensuring accuracy. Additionally, the structural expression of similar cultural relics within the museum should be standardized to achieve a uniform artifact naming effect, facilitating reader comprehension and enhancing the museum’s authority and objectivity. For instance, at the Haihunhou Museum, the translation of “鼎” (tripod) is presented in two variations: “bronze tripod” and “bronze ding”. Although the term “tripod” has gained widespread acceptance for translating “鼎”, the transliteration “ding”

not only lacks readability but also hampers achieving consistent nomenclature. Therefore, prior to translation, museum staff should verify if there are established translations for cultural relics and strive for uniform terminology and formatting throughout the museum.

### 3. ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CULTURAL RELICS IN NANCHANG RELIC MUSEUM OF HAIHUNHOU STATE OF HAN DYNASTY

#### 3.1 Method One: Transliteration + Annotation

In the Haihunhou exhibition, numerous cultural relics have been unearthed for the first time in history. Due to a knowledge gap in archaeology pertaining to this region, transliteration combined with annotation has been employed for their nomenclature. For instance, “裹蹄金,” which resembles a horseshoe shape and is commonly referred to as “horse-hoof-shaped gold ingots.” Similarly, “麟趾金” takes on the form of a kylin’s hoof and bears resemblance to boots. The museum provides translations such as “niaoti golds” and “linzhi golds” respectively. While this method of English translation can be effective at times by preserving the exotic allure of the original language while enriching native vocabulary and promoting cultural dissemination, blindly relying on phonetic translations within museum artifacts may prove counterproductive, leaving foreign tourists perplexed and failing to fulfill the museum’s role in disseminating cultural knowledge.

In this regard, the translation of cultural relics can be effectively achieved through English translation accompanied by annotations. This approach not only maintains the cultural independence of these relics but also enhances cross-cultural awareness among foreign visitors, enabling them to appreciate the distinctiveness of Chinese culture. Therefore, instead of using terms like “niaoti golds” and “linzhi golds,” it is recommended to employ translations such as “Linzhi Gold (Kylin’s hoof-shaped gold)” and “Niaoti Golds (horse-hoof-shaped gold ingots).” By doing so, we can preserve the authenticity of Chinese cultural characteristics while adhering to the principles of concise informative text translation.

#### 3.2 Method Two: Explanatory Translation

Museums often feature cultural relics with names, cultural imagery, historical figures, dynasties, etc., which are understandable to domestic tourists but requiring additional translation to fill in the gaps in knowledge background to help foreign tourists better understand Chinese culture.

The “鹿形青铜镇” is a cultural relic placed at the four corners to prevent mats from folding when sitting or standing. During the Han Dynasty, these weights

were often shaped like animals, with deer being a popular choice due to its resemblance in sound to “禄” (meaning “fortune” in Chinese) and carrying significant cultural connotations. While the museum translates it as “Deer-shaped Gilded Bronze Weight,” foreign tourists may misunderstand its function as similar to that of a paperweight without further explanation. Therefore, we can use an explanatory translation method such as “Deer-shaped Gilded Bronze Weight (a weight for pressing corners of a mat; a deer represents fortune in China)” to bridge this gap. The name given in the museum is “Deer-shaped Gilded Bronze Weight” where “weight” refers to an object used for stabilization or as a component of a mechanism, such as a paperweight. However, without further elucidation, foreign visitors might erroneously perceive it to function similarly to a paperweight and overlook its actual purpose of exerting pressure on the corners of a mat. Therefore, we can employ explanatory translation to bridge this gap, such as “Deer-shaped Gilded Bronze Weight (a weight designed for pressing mat corners; in Chinese culture, deer symbolizes fortune)”.

The “钮钟” is a metallic percussion instrument, classified as a type of chime bells, characterized by its bowl-shaped body, concave arcs, and a striking knob on top that produces dual tones from a single bell. As an exceptional Chinese musical instrument, the museum translates it as “Gold-inlaid Bronze Bell with a Knob” where “bell” refers to a resonant metal object that emits ringing sounds upon being struck by a small piece of metal within it. Common examples include church bells and bicycle bells. However, in Western culture, there exists no equivalent instrument resembling the “钮钟” thus rendering the translation inadequate in accurately describing its functionality. Therefore, an improvement can be made to: “Gold-inlaid Bronze Bell with a Knob (a type of musical instrument during the Han Dynasty)”.

#### 3.3 Method Three: Pictographic Translation

The concept of pictographic translation, also referred to as “pictotranslation” was introduced by scholar Cai Wenyin in her work titled *A Brief Discussion on the Translation of English Nouns into Chinese*. In this approach, she proposes utilizing vivid imagery to effectively convey the meaning of the original text and enable readers to visualize the representation of nouns. Although initially intended for translating from Chinese, it holds significant implications for English translation as well. To illustrate this point, this section would provide some examples:

The “李姬家铭文青铜豆形灯” (a kind of ancient lamp, “豆” pronounced “dou” in Chinese, is showcased in the museum. The term “豆形灯” derives its name from its resemblance to the shape of beans found in pottery and bronze artifacts. It is possible that this lamp evolved directly from the concept of beans. In the museum’s translation, it is referred to as a “Dou-shaped lamp with inscription of Li Ji’s home”. However, without

annotations or access to the actual object, understanding its specific shape remains confusing. Zhang Jinfu's (2022) paper titled "Analysis of English Translation for '豆形灯' in Archaeological Cultural Relics from Marquis Haihun State" proposes two translation approaches for "豆形灯": one being conventional translation as "Dou-Shaped" accompanied by annotations; and another utilizing external translation methods for Chinese pictographic vocabulary, retaining the character "豆" while translating it as "豆-Shaped". Zhang Jinfu believes that the latter is more appropriate, as the translation not only maintains the unique charm of Chinese character pictographs but also achieves functional equivalence between the source language and the target language.

While museums advocate for uniformity and standards, incorporating Chinese into English translations of artifact names may contradict this practice. However, the utilization of pictographic translation not only vividly portrays the artifacts but also enhances visitors' comprehension, thereby avoiding the loss of cultural independence inherent in blind phonetic translation. In comparison to direct phonetic translation, this method offers distinct advantages. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the application of pictographic translation is limited to cultural relics where emphasizing actual form and appearance is necessary. Additionally, supplementing such translations with appropriate explanations facilitates a better understanding among visitors.

#### 4. TRANSLATION ERRORS IN NANCHANG RELIC MUSEUM OF HAIHUNHOU STATE OF HAN DYNASTY

**Error Instance (1)** "昌邑食官" 青铜铜: Bronze Xuan (small basins) with inscriptions of "food officer of Changyi"

"昌邑食官" 青铜铜" is a cultural relic within the museum. "昌邑食官" refers to the food officer of Changyi State. Among the burial objects of the Haihunhou Tomb, there are many inscriptions of "食官", such as a lacquered ear cup with the inscription of "食官" carved at the bottom with a needle. The food officer is a special official in charge of the royal meals and sacrificial offerings. According to the *Book of Han, Table of Officials and Nobles*, the Han Dynasty's food officers were generally under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance, with divisions including the Grand Kitchen, Soup Kitchen, and Food Transport Officials, as well as assistants, each with clear responsibilities. The official translation is: Bronze Xuan (small basins) with inscriptions of "food officer of Changyi." The translation provided here is inaccurate. Firstly, "Changyi" is not specified, leaving readers

puzzled. According to historical records, Changyi State was a feudal state during the Western Han Dynasty, with its capital at Changyi. In the sixth year of Emperor Jing of Han (144 BC), Liu Ding was appointed as the King of Shanyang, and Changyi was established as the capital (now Changyi Village, south of Juye County, Shandong Province). Therefore, to make the original information more accurate, we can revise it to Changyi (In Shandong Province, China). Secondly, the "Changyi" here refers to the state at that time. The translation "food officer of Changyi" means an official in charge of all the food in Changyi State, rather than specifically in charge of the royal meals and sacrificial offerings, thus there is a significant deviation in meaning. Here, we can modify it as: Bronze Xuan (small basins) with inscriptions of "food officer in charge of the royal family's victuals".

**Error Instance (2)** "蟠虺纹龙形玉饰": "Dragon-shaped jade with small patterns"

"凤鸟纹青铜提梁卤出土情况": "The unearthed bronze ewer with a loop handle and the phoenix pattern"

The cultural connotations represented by "龙" and "凤" in Chinese and foreign cultures are vastly different. And "龙" does not correspond directly to "dragon" nor does "凤" correspond directly to "phoenix". This has been discussed in Li Xiaohua and Yan Hui's (2007) *Translation of Cultural Symbols in Cross-cultural Communication—Starting from the Translation of 龙, 凤凰, and 麒麟* and Huang Ji's *On the Issue of Modifying the English Translation of 龙*, which suggests translating them as "Loong (龙)" and "Fenghuang (凤)", respectively, accompanied by explanations.

**Error Instance (3)** "孔子像漆衣镜": "Lacquer mirror with Confucius portrait"

"孔子像漆衣镜示意图": "Diagram of mirror with Confucius image"

The museum displays two distinct renditions of the same Chinese text. In one instance, "像" is translated as "portrait" while in another, it is rendered as "image". Consistency in translated terms is crucial for maintaining standardization within museum texts. According to the museum's introduction, the phrase "image of Confucius himself" refers to an objective representation of a specific object that remains unaffected by human perception. The mental image formed by different individuals regarding this object is essentially identical. On the other hand, when referring to "孔子像" in relation to cultural relics, the term signifies a tangible likeness of Confucius himself and emphasizes its objective existence rather than being subjectively influenced by individual perception. As per the Oxford Dictionary definition, "image" typically denotes the impression that a person, organization, or product conveys to the public—highlighting its subjective existence within people's minds.

## 5. SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSLATION WITHIN THE MUSEUM

The museum's translations still exhibit numerous deficiencies that necessitate ongoing improvement. Herein, in this section, we propose several suggestions to augment the translation quality of the Nanchang Relic Museum of Haihunhou State during the Han Dynasty.

### 5.1 Supplement of Relevant Cultural Background

The museum houses a vast collection of cultural relics, historical facts, and figures, necessitating an introduction that encompasses the corresponding cultural background. Supplementary explanations are essential to bridge any cultural gaps for visitors' enhanced comprehension.

For instance, in the first-floor exhibition dedicated to the Han Prefecture Theme, there is a titled exhibit called “汉初高祖末年郡国分布示意图” which translates to “A Sketch Map of the Distribution of Prefectures in the Late Years of Gaozu in the Early Han Dynasty (195BC)”. However, it is worth noting that the translation of “高祖” is not entirely accurate. According to historical records, Liu Bang was posthumously honored as Gaozu as he served as the founding emperor of the Han Dynasty. This title has been used since Sima Qian's time during Emperor Wu's reign and has persisted ever since. Therefore, it is recommended to supplement with “Liu Bang, founder and reigning emperor known as Gaozu during his rule over the Han Dynasty” to facilitate foreign visitors' understanding.

Similarly, for “张骞出使西域路线示意图”, the official translation is “The route map of Zhang Qian's visit to the western regions”. It could be supplemented with “Zhang Qian, the pioneer in the Silk Road”.

Also, for “《晋书·舆服志》关于汉代佩剑的记载” with the official translation “Records of sword wearing in the Book of Jin- Yu Fu Zhi”, it could be supplemented with “Jin- Yu Fu Zhi, the Book of Jin Dynasty- A history of Yu Dress”.

### 5.2 Reformation of the exhibition texts of cultural relics

The museum houses a substantial collection of exhibits; however, upon scrutinizing the exhibition texts within the premises, it becomes apparent that they primarily consist of names of cultural relics accompanied by concise introductions, supplemented with QR codes for visitors to scan and access additional information. While this approach effectively provides detailed insights to visitors, it may not be universally suitable due to potential challenges faced by certain individuals such as elderly people who are less familiar with smartphone usage. Moreover, in crowded museum environments, scanning QR codes might prove inconvenient.

Considering the prevailing presentation of cultural relics exhibition texts in China, it is recommended to offer

two exhibition modes for the texts. One mode should cater to quick browsing, specifically tailored for visitors seeking a concise understanding of cultural relics within a limited timeframe. This mode should primarily comprise signage with succinct and well-organized text, encompassing essential details such as the artifact's name, excavation time, era, function, etc. The second mode should target visitors interested in delving into the intricate narratives behind the cultural relics. It should provide comprehensive information about their historical background, symbolic significance, craftsmanship involved, and explanations pertaining to any inscriptions or textual elements present on these artifacts.

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