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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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is a new text, a new reading of the original work, but it is also an original product of the cultural, temporal and social context in which it was born, and the relationship that it has with previous translations. The paper will focus on an analysis of some ‘poetic’ translations published in China during the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st Century, Qian Daosun (1921), Huang Wenjie (2000) and Wong (2003), with the intent of interpreting the Chinese reception, or mis-reception, of the *Divine Comedy*, as well as the aim and contribution to the target culture of these translations. The analyses will also attempt to demonstrate that modern Chinese language, in some cases, is more apt than modern English in rendering Dante’s verse scheme as Wong suggests (Wong 2008).

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Institutional Determinants and Quality of Policy-Oriented Research in P.R. China

Since the early 1980s, there has been a consistent effort by Chinese authorities to make use of well grounded policy-oriented research to pursue the strategic development goals of the country. This tendency has been strengthened by the Hu-Wen administration in the last decade: The concept of ‘Scientific development’—in itself describing a model of development balancing economic with social and environmental concerns, aiming at the realization of a so-called ‘harmonious society’—can indeed be understood through the lens of an increasing reliance on scientific research as a tool to guide definition, implementation and evaluation of national policies. Despite the increased reliance on scientific work to address issues of public concern and the growing amount of pertinent literature, quality of policy-oriented research is often questioned in epistemological terms, by both domestic and foreign trained scholars. Indeed, recent research on the issue shows how in transitional China avenues to produce and construct knowledge can be influenced by institutional determinants—cultural, social, political—or, in other terms, how research, especially when implying the collection of first-hand data through on-field activities, can still be considered a sensitive activity in itself, potentially constricted and biased by institutional factors. Drawing largely from observations made during a four year appointment as policy analyst, researcher and health program officer of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in China, this presentation intends to introduce a preliminary assessment of institutional factors potentially impacting on the quality of policy-oriented research, introducing methodological considerations which hopefully will provide useful in bridging the broader epistemological debate to the everyday practice of policy research in China.

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