The Chinese industrial museums and the times (past / present / future) of globalisation

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This paper analyses the nature and functions of the industrial museum in the context of globalisation. In doing so, the study focuses on the Chinese experience and two different problems: the representation of foreign elements in the narratives of industrialisation produced by the museums; and the reception and interpretation of such narratives by national and international audiences. The analysis of these representations and perceptions of foreign elements lets us discuss the uses of industrial museums and heritage in defining the past, present and future position of China in a global industrialised world.