

# **The Constructive Networks of Translators, Publishers and Reviewers in the Inception of Arthur Waley's Chinese Translations**

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This paper focuses on the British sinologist-poet-translator Arthur Waley's translations of classical Chinese poetry in the early twentieth century. While examining the function of patronage in its conventional sense – publishers, institutions etc., I try to avoid isolated and deterministic accounts of the powers of patronage by situating such forces within the larger mechanisms of the making and dissemination of translation, involving the translators themselves and “professionals” like reviewers and critics as active agents participating in various types of patronage system.

The early twentieth century is marked by the gradual professionalization of British sinology and the awakening of aesthetic interest in Chinese poetry, manifested in the emergence of indirect translations by poet-translators who had relative artistic autonomy as patrons to themselves and published translations of Chinese poetry in private presses and modernist little magazines. Waley combined the status of a sinological professional (being an “expert from the British Museum”) and a member of the London avant-garde literary circles; his translations address and encompass both the academic sphere and the literary sphere, with sinological journals and literary magazines as venues of publication, eliciting reviews from prominent sinologists and pioneering poets and critics in the Modern Movement of English literature. Examining Waley's translation practices would thus bring to light the dynamic, constructive networks between translators, publishers and reviewers from various discursive fields, through which representations (translational or otherwise) of classical Chinese poetry are made and the cultural meanings of Chinese literature are conceptualized and constructed.