

## **Institutions in Translating *San Guo Yan Yi* in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

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Patronage is a vital social and literary phenomenon often discussed in the humanities and the social sciences. Lefevere interprets patronage as “something like powers (persons, institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature”. This paper elaborates institutions as a patronage of power in translation, including the involvement of agents like editors, publishers, political ideologies and so forth in the translation process. Among the English translations of a classic Chinese novel *San Guo Yan Yi*, institutions where the translations are produced and articulated plays an important role of linking those early partial translators and has a hand in the process from selecting the original text and influencing the translator’s strategy to editing and publishing the translations. In this paper, three kinds of institutions as patronage would be examined—academic, political and publishing institutions—including Royal Asiatic Society, Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs, and Foreign Language Press, based on the English translations by C. H. Brewitt-Taylor, Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Moss Roberts. Translation in this case studies is a distinct form of translational activity, different from institutional translation which has been well-trodden in translation studies. Thus, a spider web of relations is reconstructed to describe the history of English partial translations of *San Guo Yan Yi* in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. To sum up, this paper spells out the tenuous and fluid connections between institution, translator and translation, and extends the traditional theory of institutional translation as well as institution as a patronage.