

WESTERN MODERNISM TRANSLATED AND RETRANSLATED IN IRAQI POETRY: AL SAYYAB BETWEEN ELIOT AND SITWELL

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ABSTRACT

This article is part of the bigger project of my PhD thesis which investigates the influence of the British war poetry of the twentieth century on the development of Iraqi poetry in the century/Plymouth University/UK. The article examines the influences of British poetry on the development of the forms of poetry in Iraq after the Second World War. The aim is to shed the light on the creation of the 'third product' or the Iraqi poetry that shows the influences of the translated British poetry or the 'second product'; which was written in prose for it is almost impossible to transfer the rhyme and rhythm of poetry from one language to another. Those who translated the poetry were also the pioneers of the major formal revolution in Arabic poetry and they were also influenced by the 'first product' which is the Poetry written in English language and its modern free forms. T. S. Eliot is one of the main influences that initiated the massive changes in the form of writing Arabic poetry which for the first time was written in the free verse form. The poetry of BadrShakir Al Sayyab (1926-1964), the Iraqi poet and the celebrated prince of the free verse movement in Arabic poetry, shows these influence and sample of his poems are analyzed in this article to reveal the influences of the poetry of T. S. Eliot and Edith Sitwell on his poetry.

KEYWORDS: Al Sayyab, Free Verse, Iraqi Poetry, War Poetry, Arabic Poetry, T. S. Eliot, Edith Sitwell, Third Product, Poetry Forms, Poetry Translations, Modernism, Modern Poetry, WWII, Post-WII, Iran-Iraq War 1980s