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# “Include Me Out”: Reading Eileen Chang as a World Literature Author

Carole Hang Fung Hoyan

## Abstract

This article examines the notion of “world literature,” together with its applicability and limitations, by re-visiting the case of modern Chinese writer and cultural-translator Eileen Chang. The first section juxtaposes Chang’s “hypercanonicity” in modern Chinese literature with her obscurity in world literature. The second section addresses Chang’s “Lin Yutang dream” and traces her early aspiration to become a world literature author by looking at her English publications and translations between 1938 and 1941. The third section discusses how Chang views world literature by analyzing closely a speech she gave in the US on translation. The fourth section discusses how English-writing scholars of modern Chinese literature are attempting to map Chang into the realm of “world literature” by reversing the “technologies of recognition” through the act of anthologizing and actively participating in academic discussions. This article considers the dialectic of rebellion and complicity in the production of the reverse discourse of “World Literature,” with a view to opening up new possibilities for the application of the notion. The argument is that when we read Chang as an author of world literature, we are reading how Chang was gradually mapped into the sphere of world literature through a continuous and incomplete process.

**KEYWORDS** Eileen Chang, world literature, worlding, technologies of recognition, Sinophone, Lin Yutang

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## Introduction

When the notion “world literature” meets Eileen Chang, her image as a literary star in wartime Shanghai and a canonical figure in the Chinese-reading communities undergoes a radical shift. She remains little known in world literature and is even regarded as a case of “failure” in achieving a reputation outside of China. In his plenary lecture for the 2016 IWL (The Institute for World Literature) program at Harvard, “What Isn’t World Literature? Problems of Language, Context, and Politics,” David Damrosch quoted the chart “Canonicity by MLA Citation 2006-2015,” in which Chang was ranked as a “minor author” for having been quoted 90 times in the MLA Bibliography-indexed articles between 2006 and 2015 in North America, while Lu Xun is ranked as a “major author” having been quoted 247 times during the same period (Damrosch, “What”).

If we compare the visibility of Lu and Chang in anthologies on world literature, we will find that Lu appears in *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature* (6 pages; D’haen 198), *The Routledge Companion to World Literature* (1 page; D’haen, Damrosch, and Kadir 511), *World Literature: A Reader* (1 page; D’haen, Domínguez, and Thomsen 366), and *Companion to Comparative Literature, World Literatures, and Comparative Cultural Studies* (9 pages; Tötösy de Zepetnek and Mukherjee 526) while Chang remains absent.

Chang’s invisibility in world literature is an issue worthy of thought if we consider the similar level of hypercanonicity she has attained as compared with Lu in modern Chinese literature. In his “From Counter-Canon to Hypercanon in a Postcanonical Age: Eileen Chang as Text and Myth,” Zhang Yingjin probes into the issue by measuring Chang against Damrosch’s “threefold definition” of world literature, which goes as follows:

1. World literature is an elliptical refraction of national literatures.
2. World literature is writing that gains in translation.
3. World literature is not a set canon of texts but a mode of reading: a form of detached engagement with worlds beyond our own place and time. (Damrosch, *What* 281)

In response to the three parts of the definition, Zhang observes that firstly, Chang’s self-conscious distance from “national literature” has precluded her from

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becoming a Chinese “representative” in world literature; secondly, she does not gain in translation, or even in her self-translation in English; and thirdly, Chang may have evaded inclusion in world literature because she has largely failed to inspire “detached engagement” in either English or Chinese (Zhang Yingjin, “From” 628-29). Zhang holds that Damrosch’s definition of world literature “does not specifically address the issue of hypercanonicity in Chang” (629).

Zhang subsequently expands his scope of investigation in the article “Mapping Chinese Literature as World Literature,” in which he evaluates the consequences of mapping Chinese literature by the Western view and tests a different set of “technologies of recognition” introduced by Shu-mei Shih in the context of the debate over Chinese versus Sinophone studies. Chang is discussed together with Jing Yong as authors who obtain a “hypercanon” status and exert a global impact without representing a given national literature in the world republic of letters, while Gao Xingjian, Bei Dao, and Mo Yan are discussed as world literature authors who “gain in translation” (Zhang Yingjin, “Mapping” 7).

Julia Lovell also juxtaposes Chang’s case to Gao Xingjian in her “Chinese Literature in the Global Canon: The Quest for Recognition”:

The notable failure of Eileen Chang—an undisputed literary star since the 1940s in Sinophone reading communities, and able to translate her own works into English—to relocate her Chinese literary celebrity into Anglophone reading markets after moving to American in the 1950s is a case in point. Achieving a reputation outside China depends also on a writer’s ability to embrace the particularities of a new cultural environment. In the case of Gao, his success has been generated not only by his own talents but also by his endorsement of the national literary values of his adopted country, France. (207)

Instead of a “hypercanon” not receiving her recognition for representing China in world literature, Chang is regarded as a “notable failure” in comparison with Gao Xingjian’s success in gaining global recognition, due to her inability to embrace a new cultural environment, that is, the United States in her case. The studies of Zhang and Lovell lead us to consider the following questions: How effective is “world literature” as a concept for the analysis of modern Chinese literature? Is it necessary to map China onto “world literature”? What can recent debates on world literature bring to Chinese literary studies and what does Chinese literature have to offer to such debates? Regarding the case of Chang, how can we understand her late years in the United States from a global literary perspective?

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This article aims to examine the category of “world literature,” together with its applicability and limitations, by re-visiting the case of Eileen Chang as a writer and cultural-translator. The issue of reading Eileen Chang in the light of “world literature” can be investigated in two aspects: how Chang or modern Chinese literature is brought to the world, and how the world is brought to Chang or China. The former involves Chang’s own efforts in bringing herself to the world, especially to the West, by publishing in English and translating her own Chinese works into English, as well as the efforts of English-writing scholars in introducing her and modern Chinese literature to the West by reviews and anthologies. The latter involves, on the one hand, Chang’s role as a playwright writing for a Chinese-speaking readership across national geographic divides and appropriating Hollywood comedies and musicals in her film scripts and, on the other hand, as a cultural-translator of English works into Chinese in the global literary context.

This article addresses the above issues as follows: the second section traces Chang’s early aspiration to become a world literature author by her English publications and translations during the period 1938-1941. It reads her admiration for (and jealousy of) Lin Yutang in her high school years as a manifestation of her ambition to get into the global literary scene. This section also traces Chang’s evolution, from the fifties onwards, into a playwright for a transregional and transnational audience and her appropriation of Western film culture after she moved to Hong Kong and subsequently to the US. To Chang, encountering the world implies both bringing her works and Chinese literature and culture to the world, and bringing the world to her works and Chinese literature and culture. This section outlines Chang’s engagement with world literature as a lifelong endeavor, so as to pave the way for discussion of her view on world literature in the next section.

The third section of the article discusses how Chang views world literature through a close reading of the little-known document “Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence,” the transcription of a speech Chang gave in English on several occasions at the State University of New York and the Radcliffe Institute between 1966 and 1969. In this speech given in her forties, Chang shows her concern with Orientalism and with the canonization of world literature through translation, and she holds that it is impossible for the East to meet the West. This section echoes the previous one by revisiting Chang’s Lin Yutang dream, as Lin is repeatedly mentioned in the speech, and addresses the issue as to why Chang could not re-stage Lin’s success as a bilingual writer in the world literary scene.

The fourth section addresses the issues of how Chang (fails to) bring(s) herself

to the world by publishing in English and how English-writing scholars of modern Chinese literature try to *world* her. It also reflects on the applicability of the category of “world literature” and ponders on the possibility of dialogue between various literary perspectives, including those derived from notions such as Sino-phone literature, Chinese diasporic literature, and the *worlding* of literature.

Andrew Jones once commented that the wall around the “cultural ghetto” of modern Chinese literature on the outskirts of the “global village” was set in place by the very entity that was supposed to tear them down: world literature (171). The case of Eileen Chang, when read in light of “world literature,” seems to provide strong support to Jones’s claim. Despite her fame as a hypercanonical writer in modern Chinese literature as mentioned above, Chang encounters great difficulties in her attempts at publishing in the US and the UK. With the recent unearthing and publication of her English novels *The Fall of the Pagoda* (2010), *The Book of Change* (2010), and *The Young Marshall* (2014), we come to a fuller understanding of the discrepancies between her English and Chinese writings. Her exchanges with her friends C. T. Hsia and Stephen Soong actually reveal her intention to cater to the preferences of publishers in order to get her works into the market.

However, after all the critique against “world literature,” perhaps it is time to envision a way to get along with the notion. This article will employ Shu-mei Shih’s term “technologies of recognition” for discussion of the possibility of bringing Chinese literature (in this case Eileen Chang) into the world. The term “technologies of recognition” refers to the mechanisms in the discursive (un)conscious of representation that produce “the West” as the agent of recognition and “the rest” as the object of recognition (Shih, “Global Literature”). Shih holds that there are two technologies of recognition, that of academic discourse and that of the literary market.

This article suggests that while Chang did not seem to gain recognition in the West by the literary market, English-writing scholars of modern Chinese literature have somewhat reversed the mechanism of “technologies of recognition” by their efforts of analogizing and in their constant participation in academic discourses as “agent[s] of recognition.” Despite the fact that these discourses are never part of the huge Western ideological machine, this article considers the dialectic of rebellion and complicity in the production of the reverse discourse of “World Literature,” with a view to opening up new possibilities for the application of the notion.

**Reading Eileen  
Chang as a World  
Literature Author**

## The Lin Yutang Dream and Chang as Cultural Mediator

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Seldom does a Chinese writer manifest his or her desire to become worldly famous like Eileen Chang. In her biographical essay “Siyu” (“Whispers”), written at the age of twenty-four, Chang writes of her admiration for the modern Chinese writer Lin Yutang as a mediator between China and the West:

I was full of vast ambitions and expansive plans. After high school, I would go to England to study. There was one period during which I determined that I was going to learn how to make animated movies as a means of introducing Chinese painting to the United States. I want to make an even bigger splash than Lin Yutang. I wanted to wear only the most exquisite and elegant clothing, to roam the world, to have my own house in Shanghai, to live a crisp and unfettered existence. (Chang, *Written on Water* 156)

It is noteworthy that in the above Chinese original text, Chang is directly expressing her wish to be “more famous” than Lin. As a bilingual writer, Lin came to the height of his English-writing success in the 1930s and 1940s, i.e., exactly the time when the young Eileen started her writing career. Lin was founder of the Chinese journal *Yuzhou feng* (*Cosmic Wind*) and author of the English better-sellers in America, including *My Country and My People*, an essay collection that explained the cultural differences between China and the West to a foreign audience. Lin was twice nominated for a Nobel Prize in Literature, further reflecting his fame in the Anglophone world. As the most renowned bilingual Anglophone Chinese author of fiction and essays of the first half of the twentieth century, Lin also harbored a passion for the Chinese language. He was the inventor of the first Chinese type-writer, which transformed and modernized the Chinese written script.<sup>1</sup>

“Whispers” was a Chinese retelling of Chang’s earliest English-language essay. The essay was titled “What a Life! What a Girl’s Life!” and was published in *Damei wanbao* (*Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury*) in 1938.<sup>2</sup> The fact that the essay was written in English anticipated the “bilingual shuttling in Chang’s career” (D. Wang, Introduction v). Apart from “Whispers,” “What a Life!” also left an imprint on

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion on Lin and his type-writer, see Tsu, *Sound* 49-111; “Salvaging.” For analysis of Lin as an immigrant writer and global figure, see Shen, “Chinese Immigrant.” For a bibliography of Lin Yutang’s works published in English, see Lin Taiyi’s *Lin Yutang zhuan* 367-72.

<sup>2</sup> “What a Life! What a Girl’s Life!” is in itself a rewriting from Chang’s Chinese essay “Boxing de ta” (“An Unlucky Girl”), which is her first published work. “An Unlucky Girl” first appeared in *The Phoenix* (Shanghai: St. Mary’s Hall, 1932), and was republished in *Lianhe bao*, 10 Oct. 1995. For reviews on this essay, see Chen, “Tiancai.”

other essays of the same period, such as “Tongyan wuji” (“From the Mouth of Babes”). These essays subsequently form the source text for her English novel, *The Book of Change*, in which *The Fall of the Pagoda* constituted the first part and later became an independent piece. In the process of writing *The Book of Change*, Chang developed its Chinese counterpart, which became the Chinese novel, *Xiao tuanyuan* (*Little Reunion*). While Wang focuses on Chang’s aesthetic of rewriting and bilingualism, I would like to return to Chang’s ambition as a cultural translator.

In 1939, the year following the publication of “What a Life!”, Chang wrote the Chinese essay “Tiancai meng” (“Dream of Genius”) for an essay competition organized by *Xifeng* (*The West Wind Monthly*), for which Lin served as adviser-editor and one of the important contributing writers.<sup>3</sup> As indicated by the motto printed next to the journal title in every issue: “Translating the essence of Western magazines, introducing European and American life and society,” *The West Wind Monthly* aimed to introduce Western culture and scientific knowledge through the translation of essays from magazines such as *Reader’s Digest*, *New York Times*, *Scientific American*, *Forum*, etc. (*West Wind Monthly* 35: 501-06, 507-09, 518-20; 61: 33-36).

Chang manifested her dream of becoming a cultural translator by contributing to the English magazine, *The Twentieth Century*. She published three cultural critiques and six film reviews in English between January and December of 1943 (Chang, “China”; “Chinese Life”; “Demons”; “Mother”; “On the Screen”; “On ‘With the Snow’”; “Opium War”; “Still”; “Song”). However, it was not until 1955 that she returned to her creative writings in English. In between times, she concentrated on the publication of short stories and essays in Chinese, and became one of the most famous writers in the Shanghai International Settlement.<sup>4</sup> After the war, Chang went to Hong Kong in 1952 and left for the United States in 1955. During her Hong Kong and US years, Chang earned her living as a translator for the United States Information Agency (USIA) and a playwright for the Hong Kong Motion Picture & General Investment Company Limited (MP & GI).

Recent scholarship on Chang tends to pay closer attention to her transformation from a Shanghai writer to a translator and playwright who envisioned and wrote for a Chinese-speaking readership across national geographic divides (Huang 128). Chang wrote a total of ten scripts during her eight-year collaboration with MP & GI:

<sup>3</sup> The chief editors of *The West Wind Monthly* were the Huang brothers, Huang Jiade and Huang Jiayin. Huang Jiayin was the translator of the Chinese version of Lin Yutang’s *The Importance of Living*, which was published in New York in 1937.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion on Chang’s Shanghai-settlement years, see Gunn 200-31.

until the studio underwent a major reshuffle in 1964, eight of the scripts were brought to the screen.<sup>5</sup> These scripts displayed a sense of humor that was rarely found in Chang's fiction and essays, and many of them had solid box office successes in Hong Kong. Contrary to the belief that Chang's creativity had already dried up in her US years, her creative energy found an outlet in her script writing and translation. She served as a cultural translator in the transnational film culture by trying her hand at new genres and media. She appropriated Hollywood comedies and musicals in her film scripts, and readjusted her textual strategies in response to the demands of the film industry (Liao, "Travels"; Ng).

Apart from her connection with the transnational film culture, Chang's role as a translator is also important for the discussion of her as a cultural mediator in the global literary context. The term "cultural translator" in this article refers to Chang as a cultural mediator who acts upon the transcultural site.<sup>6</sup> Contrary to the impression that Chang was merely a commissioned translator who worked for the USIA for a living, this article views Chang as an "agent of initiation" by reconsidering her early ambition to introduce China to the West through translation and her writing of cultural critique in English. Her comments on the role as a translator in her speech delivered in the sixties in the United States will also be discussed in this section.

The translation career of Chang started as early as 1941, when she published the abridged translation of Margaret Halsey's *With Malice toward Some* under the title "Nue er nue" ("Sarcasm and Irony") in *Xishu jinghua Quarterly (Essence of Western Books)*.<sup>7</sup> Both *Essence of Western Books* and *The West Wind Monthly* belong to the "West Wind Series," and the motto of *Essence of Western Books*, "translating the essence of Western books, introducing European and American readings," bears a great similarity to that of *The West Wind Monthly*. Eileen Chang added a prologue before the translation:

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<sup>5</sup> All of the screenplays Chang wrote for MP & GI were anthologized into a four-volume collection, except for the script of *Dream of the Red Mansion*, which cannot be traced. See Zhang Ailing, *Zhang Ailing dianmou jubenjji*; "Eileen Chang: MP & GI Screenplays").

<sup>6</sup> I am indebted to Peng Hsiao-yen in the use of the term "Cultural Translator," which she uses to refer to the "self-conscious actors who find the intermediary or interstitial space a site for creative transformation." According to Peng, "[A]n artist or writer in cultural translation is more an actor who acts upon the transcultural site than a character who is the site itself. He is not merely a 'receptor/transmitter within that network of communication,' as Taylor puts it, but one who finds 'an agency of initiation' in that network, as Homi Bhabha says in *Location of Culture* when discussing minority communities" (Peng 191). See also Peng and Rabut, Introduction 1.

<sup>7</sup> Zhang Ailing, "Nue er nue"; Hasley. For a detailed discussion of the translation of "Sarcasm and Irony," see Hoyan, "Nue er nue."



Ms. Halsey went to Britain with her husband—her husband went to England to take up a position in Devon as an exchange-professor from the British-American educational institutions—Halsey published her diary with the title “Sarcasm and Irony,” in the style of British black humor to reflect the impression of Britain, Switzerland and Norway from the American’s point of view. It was very popular.<sup>8</sup>

This translator’s note is noteworthy as it indicates that the reason why Chang translates Halsey’s work—Halsey was also a cultural mediator who travelled with her husband from the US to England and wrote about her observations of England, Switzerland, and Norway. Chang was interested in the dynamics of travel (both in physical mobility and the conceptual exchange in this case) and transculturation.

Considering that Chang’s essay “Dream of Genius” and translation “Sarcasm and Irony” were published in two consecutive years, 1940 and 1941, in *The West Wind Monthly* and *Essence of Western Books* respectively, we have a good reason to believe that the choice of translating *With Malice towards Some* was Chang’s own. She was in her “Lin Yutang Dream” at that point of her life and crossed paths with “world literature” in the sense that she aspired to become famous in the world through introducing China to the West, by means of translation, writing and making animated movies. She started her literary career in the direction of a cultural mediator with self-initiation and a strong motivation. She also wrote an essay “Lun katung yinghua de qiantu” (“On the Future of the Animated Movies”) at the age of seventeen, in which she held a positive view for the development of animated movies as a cultural vehicle for the dissimilation of knowledge and ideas, including that of science, history, and literature.<sup>9</sup> The following section will further discuss Chang’s view on translation as a cultural vehicle through a close reading of the transcription of a speech she once gave.

## Translation as a Vehicle of Cultural Influence

In a little-known document, “Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence,” a transcription of Chang’s speech given in English on several occasions at the State University of New York and the Radcliffe Institute between 1966 and 1969, Chang openly addressed her concern about Western Orientalism and about the canonization of world literature through translation, holding that it is impossible for the

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<sup>8</sup> See “Translator’s Note” in Zhang Ailing, “Nue er nue” 168.

<sup>9</sup> The essay was published in *The Phoenix*, the school magazine of St. Mary Hall in 1937 (Zhang Ailing, *Zhang Ailing wenji* 8-11).

East to meet the West.<sup>10</sup> In the speech, she explicates the complex intersections between translation and society, and attributes the adversity she faces in the US to the West's tendency to exoticize China while dismissing its modernity as inauthentic and unworthy of interest.

Chang's speech starts by showing a concern for the world literary atlas by explicating the complex intersections between translation and society. It traces China's relationship with the world through the years of the late-Qing period, the Republican era, May Fourth, the Japanese Occupation and the Cultural Revolution, including numerous authors and works from China and the West.

What is noteworthy is that with Chang's endeavors to explain Chinese history and culture for Western audiences, she is at the same time mapping out a world literature atlas in relation to major historical events. In this world literature atlas, though emphasis is placed on the introduction of Western literature to China through translation, she also mentions writers whom she views as important in the world literature atlas. While these writers may not be canonical or hypercanonical, some of them are writers whose artistry Chang admires, such as Maupassant and Maugham, and others are those who highlight the contingency of history, like Rider Haggard.

As present studies have already addressed on how Chang maps Maupassant, Maugham, and Marquand into the world atlas through introducing and translating their works,<sup>11</sup> this article will focus on how Chang relates the role of translator as a cultural vehicle to canonization, and how she highlights "the contingency of history" in the case of Rider Haggard, which is closely related to Chang's view on (the impossibility of) world literature.

As indicated by the title of Chang's talk, Chang views translation as a form of cultural mediation that plays a significant role in cross-cultural relations. To her, translation is an important medium of transculturation through which China and other civilizations encounter and generate new forms of knowledge, feeling, and power exchange.<sup>12</sup> In the speech, Chang raises Lin Shu as an example to show the impact of the translator in canonization. She says:

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<sup>10</sup> The speech was transcribed with an introduction by Christopher Lee and published in the section "Little Known Documents" in *PMLA*. Chang was staying at the Radcliffe Institute of Independent Study from 1967 to 1969 with a fellowship to work on an English translation of the late-Qing novel, *The Sing-Song Girls of Shanghai*.

<sup>11</sup> For a study on Maugham and Chang, see Deppman. For discussion on Chang's appropriation of Marquand's *H. M. Pulham, Esq.* in Chang's *Life of a Half-Time Destiny*, see Hoyan, "Hualiyuan."

<sup>12</sup> For discussions of translation as a medium of transculturation, see also D. Wang, "Worlding" 19; Peng and Rabut, Introduction 1.

A Chinese critic complained at about the end of the first World War, “Judging from the number of books translated, Rider Haggard must be the greatest Western writer.” I don’t know if you have heard of him. I myself came across the name Rider Haggard without realizing that he is none other than the great 哈葛德 [Ha Ge’de], master of Western fiction. I’ve never seen the movie *She*, based on his best-known fantasy, but I’ve read one of his lesser works in fine Chinese under the title *The Chronicle of the Melancholy City of Haze and Water*. . . . It was translated by Lin Shu. (Chang, “Chinese Translation” 491)

Here Chang is highlighting the impact of the translator, in this case Lin Shu, in promoting foreign literature regarding his choice of work to translate and his artistry in translating the work. An ordinary writer like Rider Haggard (according to Chang) could be presented as “the greatest Western writer” to the Chinese if he is promoted by translation.

Re-reading the speech in the context of Chang as a translator herself, it is noteworthy that she crossed out a passage in her manuscript, in which she criticizes Americanization and the hegemony of the West:

The May Fourth has set the tone for a rather sterilized view of the West as mentor, and now Hong Kong and Taiwan have perforce become part of the picture of worldwide Americanization, only more so because of their precarious existence—without the disinterested exploratory enthusiasm of the May Fourth. Imagination needs room, it needs distance and an absence of pressure.<sup>13</sup>

This passage shows that as a translator working for the USIA, Chang is highly aware of the power struggles between individual and institutional powers involved in transcultural and transnational interactions. Peng Hsiao-yen and Isabelle Rabut, in their introduction to *Modern China and the West: Translation and Cultural Mediation*, note that “cultural mediators include not only individuals, but also transnational organizations that bring about cross-cultural interactions, and regulating authorities, in the form of both nation-states and ideologies, which dictate what, and even how, to translate” (Introduction 1). The question Peng and Rabut ask is, in the face of institutional powers, is there room for individuals to exercise their freewill, and to what extent are they allowed to do so.

If we consider “cultural translator” as someone who intends to (re)shape certain concepts through the translating act, so as to “negotiate among multifarious

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<sup>13</sup> Chrispher Lee’s introduction to the transcription. See Chang, “Chinese Translation” 489.

institutional powers that coexist, including traditional and foreign” (Peng and Rabut, Introduction 1), Chang might not be considered a “cultural translator” in the strictest sense, even with her self-initiation in mediating China and the West and her awareness of the power struggle between the institution and the individual. Whether Chang intended to or tried to (re)shape certain concepts through the translating act is another question in need of further investigation.<sup>14</sup> I would like to use the term “cultural translator” in a loose sense, to note her critique against Americanization, which parallels her disapproval of Communism, and to take a closer look at Chang’s view of translation as a vehicle of cultural influence.

Chang makes four points on the issue of self-censorship in the crossed-out passage quoted above: first, May Fourth has set the tone for a rather sterilized view of the West as mentor; second, Hong Kong and Taiwan follow the May Fourth tradition to regard the West as mentor; third, Hong Kong and Taiwan are doing that not because of May Fourth curiosity but because of their dangerous positions; and fourth, enthusiasm and imagination need room and take place in the absence of political pressure. In fact, Chang’s crossing out of the passage can be regarded as an act of self-censorship in support of her last point, which adds a pessimistic touch to her awareness of translation as a cultural vehicle.

Towards the end of the speech, Chang revisits the question of whether the East can meet the West:

In this as far as we can go? Can East meet West after all? Even without the political situation the West is in a better position to break that impasse, like Tang China, when China was self-confident enough to take a lot from India and Central Asia without any fear of losing its identity. So far the Western view of China is as set and restricted as the Chinese conception of the West, and in the end a limited view makes for limited interest. (“Chinese Translation” 496-97)

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<sup>14</sup> Chang’s translation career is a complicated topic for scholars in the history of translation in modern China, especially during the Cold War years. As a translator recruited by the Hong Kong-based *World Today Press*, which was fully supported by the US government, Chang was always discussed in light of notions such as “betrayal,” “disloyalty,” and “commissioned literature” (Shen, “Betrayal”). Chang is one of the most prolific literary translators published by *World Today Press*. She established herself as a Chinese translator of American literature by translating works of the following prominent authors: *The Old Man and the Sea*, *The Yearling*, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” and “Hemingway.” As observed by Te-hsing Shan, Chang’s translation focused on American literature and covered almost every genre in the series, including essay, fiction, poetry, and literary criticism. The authors she translated are also representative, including an earlier canonical writer (Washington Irving); masters of the American Renaissance and Transcendentalists (Emerson and Thoreau); a Nobel Laureate (Hemingway); a Pulitzer Prize winner (Rawling); and contemporary American novel criticism. In other words, the authors Chang translated ranged from eighteenth-century to twentieth-century contemporary literature. Her translation of *The Old Man and the Sea* appeared two years before Hemingway won the Nobel Prize (Shan 110-12).

Chang's answer to the question is a pessimistic "no." She also notes in the speech that the West's tendency to exoticize China while dismissing its modernity is inauthentic and unworthy of interest.

Chang's view applies as far as the issue of "world literature" is concerned. As Theo D'haen observes, "For most of its history—that is, the history of the term, the concept, and the practice—'world literature' has been an exclusively European, or Euro-American, concern. Only in the last decade or so has the discussion really broadened to voices from beyond Europe and the Americas" (27). Even with the scope expanded, scholars of modern Chinese literature writing in English have shown little interest in the current debate on world literature, with just a few exceptions including Jing Tsu, Zhang Yingjin, and Ping-hui Liao (Tsu, "Getting"; Zhang Yingjin, "From," "Mapping"; Liao, "Travels," "Sinophone Literature"). Zhang's "Mapping Chinese Literature as World Literature" represents an effort to bring China and world literature(s) together by scholars of modern Chinese literature writing in English. Zhang examines two kinds of geopolitics of mapping which comprise two different sets of viewing positions on centers and peripheries: the first one is a European literary tradition with basically France and later Germany as the center; the second set of geopolitics is the new debate on the Chinese versus the Sinophone (Zhang Yingjin, *Companion* 3).

Is academic discourse between scholars of various disciplines (comparative literature, Asian Studies, modern Chinese literature, and English literature, etc.) and geographical backgrounds (Western scholars, Chinese scholars writing in English, in North America vs. those in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, etc.) possible? Recent research tends to suggest that Chang and other migrant Chinese writers are generally considered from the perspective of either Chinese diasporic literature or Sinophone literature, both of which cover a variety of meanings and critical positions (Shen, "Where" 456).

Before coming back to this issue in the next section of the article, we shall here return to two questions raised by some recent articles written in Chinese relating to Chang and Lin. The first question is: did Chang drop her admiration for Lin in her later years? Was it that she got so disenchanted with Lin that she did not turn to the latter for help with her career as an English-writing author (Yu)? The second question is: why did Chang fail to reproduce Lin's success as an English-writing Chinese author in the Western world (Li and Hu)?

Concerning the first question, we find that Lin was still on Chang's mind in her US years. She mentions Lin three times in the speech on Chinese translation. The first time, Lin is presented as an authoritative figure granting endorsement and recognition to Gu Hongming:

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Maugham specially went to Chengtu [Chengdu] in the southwest to see Dr. 辜鴻銘 [Gu Hongming] who studied English and German literature and philosophy in Berlin and Oxford and wrote in English in the style of Carlyle and Matthew Arnold. Lin Yutang thought very highly of his translation of the Confucian classics. (Chang, "Chinese Translation" 493)

What is also noteworthy in this quotation is that Lin is introduced in a discussion about Maugham, one of Chang's favorite authors. Maugham went to see Gu Hongming, and Chang emphasizes Gu's internationality and his transculturality and interdisciplinary training. Gu was recognized by Lin as a translator of Confucian classics.

The second time, Lin is mentioned to juxtapose the Western-oriented leftist literature and the Communist press typified by its "foreign-slanted pedantry and obscurantism." She describes Lin's style as follows: "Lin Yutang's school preferred free translation, typified by the magazine *West Wind* [西風] and the present *Reader's Digest* [讀者文摘] in Chinese" (Chang, "Chinese Translation" 496). The third time, she acclaims Lin's contribution to "old Chinese literature." She says, "Lin Yutang has done a lot for the casual essay, but it's strongest in poetry and the novel. The poetry has not been as well translated as the Japanese haiku. Some claim it has never really been translated" (496). Here, Chang's remark about the translation of Japanese poetry in contrast to that of the Chinese is remarkable when we consider the fact that politicized assumptions lay at the base of lukewarm interest in modern Chinese literature: during the Cold War, Japan was presented as an ally against Communist China. Japanese literature was translated and viewed as aesthetically humanist, while Chinese literature was at best a source of political (preferably dissident) information on China (Lovell 201).

Concerning the second question, why Chang could not re-stage Lin's success as a bilingual writer in the world literary scene, Chang hinted at the West's tendency to exoticize China while dismissing its modernity as inauthentic and unworthy of interest. She wrote in a letter to C. T. Hsia on November 21, 1964: "I always have a feeling, for those who like the Orient especially, what they like is exactly what I want to expose."<sup>15</sup> Other Chinese critics suggested that she might have achieved greater success if she had continued to write in English after she published her cultural critiques and film reviews in *The Twentieth Century*, or if she had asked Lin, who was more market-oriented and who was also in the

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<sup>15</sup> See Hsia 26; my translation.

United States in the sixties, for help in promoting her *Rice-Sprout Song* instead of turning to Hu Shi (Yu 147-48; N. Li 79).

Before turning to this question in the next section, perhaps it is worthwhile to add the following remarks to round up the story between Chang and Lin. In *Zhang Ailing siyulu (Whispers of Eileen Chang)*, Soong Yilang quotes Chang's comment on Lin Yutang as follows: "I was jealous of Lin Yutang since I was small, because I think he was not up to that [reputation as a good translator], his Chinese is better than his English. . . . Lin Yutang—always alters the original text as he likes, using one word instead of another does not matter much [to him]" (65). In other words, Chang thinks that Lin's English is not as good as his Chinese. The quotation here offers a glimpse into Chang's private persona—her adoration for the successful bilingual writer in the world literary scene is nevertheless not without jealousy.

Another interesting and relevant remark here is Der-wei Wang's linking up of the three literary figures Hu Shi, Lin Yutang, and Chang by their affiliation with Harvard University. Lin was educated at Harvard during the 1910s. Harvard hosted Hu as a visiting professor in 1944, and Eileen Chang as a residential writer (at Radcliffe College) in 1967-1968 (D. Wang, "Worlding" 19). The story of Chang, Hu, and Lin shows that travel and migration play an indispensable role in the facilitating of transcultural China and the *worlding* of modern Chinese literature—a topic of the next section of this article.

### **Worlding Eileen Chang**

Chang had always been eager to pursue her way to World Literature. During her years in Hong Kong and the United States, she wrote altogether six novels in English. From 1952 to 1955 in Hong Kong, *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955) and *Naked Earth* (1957) were written as a part of an anti-Communist literary campaign sponsored by the United States Information Service. *The Rice-Sprout Song* was well received by critics in the United States upon its publication, giving Chang a great encouragement for her attempt at publishing in the Anglophone world. However, the warm reception did not boost the sales of the novel—it disappeared from the market soon after its first printing (D. Wang, Foreword to *Rice-Sprout Song* xvi-xvii). The second novel, *Naked Earth*, received little attention and was regarded as political propaganda lacking in Chang's personalized artistry. *The Rouge of the North* (1967), which was the output of Chang's project at the McDowell Colony in 1956, was received coldly by both the reviewers and general readers as a mediocre version of its blueprint, Chang's renowned novella, "Jin suoji"

(“The Golden Cangue”).<sup>16</sup>

*The Young Marshal*, the recently unearthed and published English-language novel by Chang, was based on the historical figure Zhang Xueliang. The work served as another example of the difficulties Chang faced in establishing herself as an Anglophone writer. Her letters to Mae Fong Soong and Stephen Soong dated May 6, 1964 and November 11, 1964 suggest that the limited knowledge of modern Chinese history of her potential readers may well be one of the reasons for the adversity Chang faced while publishing in English—both McCarthy of USIA and her publishing manager Rodell had problems with the historical background and the Chinese names (Zhang Ailing, *Shaoshuai* 208). Nonetheless, researchers on Chang provide another perspective: it was her unfamiliarity with a foreign language that hindered her from entering the Anglophone market, where the greatest capital of literary recognition is accumulated. As a result, Chang is barely considered a world literature author due to the difficulties for her to publish directly in English and to gain through (English) translation, either by herself or by other translators.<sup>17</sup>

In her “Global Literature and the Technologies of Recognition,” Shu-mei Shih holds that there are two kinds of technologies of recognition, that of academic discourse and that of the literary market. As far as the literary market is concerned, despite strenuous efforts on the part of Chinese critics and Western translators, modern Sinophone literature has for decades struggled to achieve mainstream recognition in the global canon as defined by the publishing markets of the culturally dominant West (Lovell 201). While it is difficult for Chinese writers to publish directly in English, as in Chang’s case, the number of foreign-languages books translated into English and published in the United States has for more than a decade made up approximately 2-3 percent of the publication of new books (Tsu, *Sound* 95; Lovell 210).

However, if we consider the technology of academic discourse, we will find academic discourses that supplement and complement one another in their joint efforts to bring modern Chinese literature to the world. Chang’s opportunity for publishing in English came posthumously while David Wang read Chang’s aesthetics in the light of “remembrance and repetition, transgression and translation” (D. Wang, Foreword to *Rouge* xxvii). Ping-hui Liao also suggests that Chang’s later

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<sup>16</sup> For the difficulties Chang faced when trying to publish *The Rouge of the North* (originally titled *The Pink Tears*), see Chang’s letter to Hsia on September 25, 1963 and Hsia’s related annotation (Hsia 14-17). Also see D. Wang, Foreword to *Rouge* viii-ix.

<sup>17</sup> For discussion of Chang’s self-translation, see Jessica Tsui Yan Li. For discussion of the translation of Chang’s fiction by others, see Hoyan, “On the Translation.”



work in the US years was not a “reminiscence” but an attempt to piece together the fragments of her life in a new home through her multilingual and polyphonic project. Liao positions Chang as a “Sinophone writer” who attempted to reach out to the Anglophone world in spite of a profound sense of being deserted and estranged (“Sinophone Literature”).

Shih may challenge Liao’s suggestion in positioning Chang as a “Sinophone writer” given her hypercanonical status in the Chinese-writing world. If Chang is seldom considered an “Anglophone world literature” author due to her language proficiency and commercial infelicities, is there a possibility of her being considered, in a broader sense, a “world literature author” in Chinese writing?

In reflection of the limitations of the notions such as “Sinophone” and “diasporic literature,”<sup>18</sup> scholars such as David Wang, Jing Tsu and Shuang Shen proposed the term “global Chinese literature” (Tsu and Wang, “Global Chinese Literature”) and the notion of the *worlding* of modern Chinese literature, which highlight the historical interaction between the production of literatures and moving agents (Tsu and Wang, “Global Chinese Literature”; Shen, “Where”; D. Wang, “Worlding” 457). These discussions not only broaden the scope of modern Chinese literature by going beyond a narrowly defined “China” and the conventional boundaries of Chinese studies as an area studies discipline, but also help to establish Chang as a world author by showcasing her in various controversial discussions.

In *A New Literary History of Modern China*, which is the fourth volume in Harvard University Press’s series of national literary histories, David Wang adopts the concept of “worlding” to relink Chinese diasporic literature with world history, so as to answer the questions of how modernity manifests itself in the specific regional context of China, and to what extent the Chinese experience contributes to the global circulation of modernities.<sup>19</sup> What I would like to point out is that Chang is frequently quoted as a prime example to illustrate the themes Wang suggests regarding the “worlding” of literary China that include “architectonics of temporalities” and “dynamics of travel and transculturation,” “contestation of wen

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<sup>18</sup> As Shih argues for a Sinophone literature that highlights both writings produced in overseas Chinese-speaking communities (including Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese communities in countries such as Malaysia and Singapore) and minority literatures on the Mainland (*Visibility*), Wang proposes to expand its domain from overseas to China proper, which is the source of the Sinophone polemics, and to account for the “linguistic nativity” within the national territory of China (D. Wang, “Worlding” 24-25).

<sup>19</sup> “Worlding” is a term originally coined by Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). By turning the noun ‘world’ into an active verb, Heidegger calls attention to the way in which the world is constructed and exists eternally in a constantly shifting state of becoming” (D. Wang, “Worlding” 13).

and mediality” and the move “towards a new literary cartography.”<sup>20</sup>

To read Wang’s *A New Literary History of Modern China* in the light of Shih’s suggestion, we will find this volume that features over 140 Chinese and non-Chinese contributors from throughout the world a “critic’s work” demonstrating “workmanship” and joint efforts in relating the “literary arc” of text to the world. As “Worlding” China involves bringing China into the world and the world into China, Wang’s conception of “worlding” subtly resonates with the “World Studies 2.0” that Shih proposes in “World Studies and Relational Comparison.”<sup>21</sup>

While it is not the aim of this article to synthesize Wang’s and Shih’s rather divergent viewpoints (as the differences between the two major voices on the Sinophone remain), this article holds that it is the collective effort of these English-writing Chinese scholars that maps Chang into the realm of world literature. When we read Chang as an author of world literature, as this article proposes, we are reading how Chang has been gradually mapped into the realm of world literature through a continuous and incomplete process.<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion: Include Me Out

Returning to the discussion on the status of Chang in world literature, it is worthwhile to note that Chang finally enters “world literature” in 2016. She is included in an anthology titled *Migrancy and Multilingualism in World Literature*, edited by K. Alfons Knauth and Ping-hui Liao—Liao also contributed the chapter “Sinophone Literature and Global Creolization” and analyzed Chang’s case from a post-colonial point of view. While the prestige or value associated with concepts prefaced with “world” or “tans-” may not be indisputable, the *worlding* (or “the coming into the world”) of modern Chinese literature will surely enhance

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<sup>20</sup> Regarding the first theme, “architectonics of temporalities,” Chang is cited as an example as follows: The rediscovery of Eileen Chang “sheds light not only on the sensibilities of the ‘Shanghai Modern,’” but also on the aesthetics of decadence that anticipated fin-de-siècle postmodernism (D. Wang, “Worlding” 17). As for the last theme, “towards a new literary cartography,” Chang is also cited as an example for modern Chinese writers who shaped the spatial imaginary of the mainland from the vantage points of expatriotism, exile, and diaspora (24). It is also noteworthy that there are two entries for Chang in the volume, including “Eileen Chang in Hong Kong” by Leo Lee and “A Provocation to Literary History” by Shuang Shen.

<sup>21</sup> Shih’s “World Studies 2.0” refers to a “world literary studies” that “includes both the West and the rest as one world.” It takes the world-historical perspectives and uses the method of “relational comparison” (“World Studies” 430-31).

<sup>22</sup> *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Chinese Literature* edited by Carlos Rojas and Andrea Bachner represents another joint effort in worlding modern Chinese literature. In this handbook, there are altogether four entries dedicated to Chang (Liao, “Sinophone Literature”; Wang Xiaojue; Sang; Shen, “Where”). See also Nicole Huang’s entry “Eileen Chang and Narratives of Cities and Worlds” in *The Columbia Companion to Modern Chinese Literature* edited by Kirk Denton. Chang also appears frequently in *A Companion to Modern Chinese Literature* edited by Zhang Yingjin.

its visibility.

While no cultural history of twentieth-century China would be complete without an account of how the Chang mythology took shape amid wartime turmoil and subsequently evolved and traveled across national and political boundaries in the following decades (Huang), Chang seemed to be the one who was most eager to “de-world” herself, so to speak—that is, to make herself disappear from the world. Not only did she lead a reclusive life in her late years, but she also instructed in her will to have her ashes scattered in a “desolate” place.

In her essay “Include Me Out,” first published in *Lianhe bao* (*United Daily News*) on February 26, 1979, Chang quoted this saying of the Polish American film producer Samuel Goldwyn in the following way:

The supplement of *United Daily News* wanted to start a new column, “The Avenue of Culture.” The editor sent me a form to fill out my address and the nature of my job. My particulars were no secret and I liked the title of the column, “The Avenue of Culture” very much.

However, there was me meeting a journalist interviewing the public while strolling along the avenue of culture and window-shopping. The journalist directed the microphone to me—I happened to have met such a reporter on Hollywood Boulevard the day Nixon resigned. I could not help but quote “Include me out.” Having written these two paragraphs, could I be exempted from form-filling?<sup>23</sup>

If Chang were asked by the journalist whether she would like to be included in “world literature,” one could imagine Chang answering, “include me out.”<sup>24</sup> The phrase “include me out” is paradoxical in itself as it can be read in both ways, depending on where the narrating agent stands. If he/she is standing inside, the phrase may mean that he/she would like to be included in the group outside. If he/she is standing outside, he/she may be content with staying where he/she is. But what exactly does it mean to be “included” and yet “counted out”? One possible answer is that Chang would like to be included in world literature, mainly due to her eagerness for fame in her early years and her financial concern in her US years, and at the same time counted out of the literary canon. As argued above,

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<sup>23</sup> “Include Me Out” can also be found in Zhang Ailing, *Wangranji* 119-27. This citation is from pages 119-20; my translation.

<sup>24</sup> Chang quoted the same phrase “include me out” again in a hand-written letter in 1994, in which she declined the invitation of the Taiwan company *Chunhui yingye gongsi* to film a documentary for her (Chen, “Include Me Out”).

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Chang has created her own “world literature atlas,” which consists mainly of the middle-brow works such as those by Maugham and Maupassant. In fact, Chang’s target journals for publication in the United States were also middle-brow ones, such as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Esquire*, and *The New Yorker* (see Hsia). The “world literature atlas” of Chang will constitute a relevant but separated topic for future discussion.

In *Little Union*, Julie wrote about Zhiyong as follows:

There is no me in his past.  
Years pass in solitude.  
The backyard remains unfathomable.  
The empty room is filled with sunlight,  
And it is the ancient sun.  
I have to run into it,  
Yelling: “I am here  
See, I am here.”<sup>25</sup>

Julie, in *Little Union*, was yearning for the recognition of Zhiyong. Reading Julie’s poem in light of the context of “Eileen Chang meeting world literature,” we may visualize Chang yelling in Julie’s voice, “I am here / See, I am here.” This episode could be read as a reminiscence of the days when Chang was once so eager to make a mark in the world.

This article has sought to examine the notion of “world literature,” along with its applicability and limitations, by re-visiting the case of Eileen Chang. The argument has been that while reading Chang as a world literature author reveals the limitations of the concept “world literature” in explicating her hypercanonical status, the concept paves a new path for Eileen Chang studies and the studies of modern Chinese Literature in the following way: it bypasses the dichotomy of including versus excluding China in such concepts as “Sinophone” and “Global Chinese literature.” Conversations over “World Literature” have also pointed out a way of mapping Chinese literature onto the global literary scene by reversing the “technologies of recognition” through anthologizing and critical interventions.

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<sup>25</sup> “她寫了首詩：／他的過去裏沒有我，／寂寂的流年，／深深的庭院，／空房裏曬著太陽，／已經是古代的太陽了。／我要一直跑進去，／大喊「我在這兒，／我在這兒呀！」”(Zhang Ailing, *Xiao tuanyuan* 189-90). Laikwan Pang’s translation, see Pang 189.

## Glossary

Bei Dao	北島
“Buxing de ta”	〈不幸的她〉
Chunhui yingye gongsi	春暉影業公司
<i>Evening Posta and Mercury</i>	《大美晚報》
Gao Xingjian	高行健
Gu Hongming	辜鴻銘
Hu Shi	胡適
Huang Jiade	黃嘉德
Huang Jiayin	黃嘉音
Jing Yong	金庸
“Jinsuo ji”	〈金鎖記〉
<i>Lianhe bao</i>	《聯合報》
Lin Yutang	林語堂
“Nue er nue”	〈謔而虐〉
“Lun katung yinghua de qiantu”	〈論卡通映畫的前途〉
Lu Xun	魯迅
Mo Yan	莫言
<i>Reader's Digest</i>	《讀者文摘》
“Siyu”	〈私語〉
<i>The Rouge of the North</i>	《北地胭脂》
“Tiancai meng”	〈天才夢〉
“Tongyan wuji”	〈童言無忌〉
<i>West Wind (Xifeng)</i>	《西風》
<i>Xiao tuanyun</i>	《小團圓》
<i>Xishu jinghua Quarterly (Essence of Western Books)</i>	《西書精華》
<i>Yuzhou feng</i>	《宇宙風》
<i>Zhang Ailing siyulu</i>	《張愛玲私語錄》
Zhang Xueliang	張學良

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