

little-known documents

Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence

EILEEN CHANG

EDITED AND WITH AN
INTRODUCTION BY
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Introduction

Translation played a central role in the life of Eileen Chang (Zhang Ailing, 1920–95).¹ One of the most iconic figures in twentieth-century Chinese literature, Chang also wrote extensively in English throughout her career, which began in the early 1940s in Japanese-occupied Shanghai. She achieved fame quickly but fell into obscurity after the war ended in 1945. Chang stayed in Shanghai through the 1949 Communist revolution and in 1952 moved to Hong Kong, where she worked as a freelance translator and writer for the United States Information Service and wrote two anti-Communist novels in English and Chinese, *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955) and *Naked Earth* (1956).

In 1955 she immigrated to the United States, where she sought to establish a career as an English-language writer.² She was largely unsuccessful, however, and by the late 1960s she had mostly abandoned these efforts even though she continued to pursue translation projects. From 1967 to 1969, a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute of Independent Study enabled her to work on an English translation of the late-Qing novel *The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai*.³ A subsequent position at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1969 to 1972 involved translating official publications from mainland China. Around the same time, her literary reputation underwent a revival as her earlier Chinese writings were republished outside the mainland to great acclaim.⁴

The text presented here is a speech that Chang gave in English on several occasions between 1966 and 1969.⁵ The untitled typescript is being published here for the first time in edited form.⁶ Its history can be partially traced through Chang's correspondence with her close friend, the noted translator Stephen Soong (1919–96).⁷ In a letter dated 6 March 1969, Chang tells him that she gave a talk on translation and East-West relations at the State University of New York, Albany, the previous day and quotes a brief passage that can be found in the present text.⁸ In a subsequent letter to Soong, written on 1 April 1969, she reports that she delivered a revised version that day at the Radcliffe Institute.⁹ According to records at the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University, the title of her lecture was "Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence," and this title has been adopted here (Radcliffe Institute).

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Insofar as it endeavors to explain Chinese history and culture for Western audiences, “Chinese Translation” is itself a performance of translation. Given Chang’s notorious reclusiveness, it also offers a rare glimpse into her public persona. Many commentators have noted that her written English, though fluent, is somewhat formal and stilted, a quality that betrays her foreignness to the language.¹⁰ A more colloquial and relaxed voice emerges here as she employs irony and humor to convey the absurdities of (mis)translation. While scholars and readers may take issue with her specific claims, perhaps most interesting are the ways in which Chang explicates the complex intersections between translation and society, especially in regard to China’s fraught relationship with the outside world.¹¹ Her talk traces these intersections through the late-Qing period, the early years of the republic, the May Fourth Movement, the Japanese invasion and occupation, the 1949 Communist revolution, and the Cultural Revolution. Chang speaks as an avid reader, and the inclusion of numerous authors and works, sometimes with little explanation, reconstructs the literary milieu in which her writing emerged.¹² Even though she does not directly address her own experiences as a translator, she calls attention to the West’s tendency to exoticize China while dismissing its modernity as inauthentic and unworthy of interest, prejudices that adversely affected her reception in the United States.

“Chinese Translation” engages with Western imperialism, modernization, and the ideological polarization of the Cold War, belying Chang’s reputation as an apolitical figure. While her disapproval of Communism is evident, she also criticizes the regime in Taiwan for censoring literary expression. In what may be the manuscript’s most enigmatic passage, subsequently crossed out by hand, she furtively critiques Americanization: “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.”

Why did she change her mind about these words (it is not known whether she ever delivered them orally)? Was she worried that her audience would react negatively, and so she preemptively censored herself? Under erasure, these words leave a suggestive reminder of the translator’s tenuous position.

NOTES

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1. For discussions of Chang’s translation practices, see Li; Shen, “Betrayal” and *Cosmopolitan Publics*.

2. Chang’s novel *The Rouge of the North* was published in Britain in 1967. Recently, two autobiographical novels written in English during this period, *The Fall of the Pagoda* and *The Book of Change*, have been rediscovered and published.

3. Chang’s translation was edited and published posthumously in 2005 (Han).

4. Readers in mainland China would not have access to her works until the early 1980s.

5. There is no known Chinese version. A translation of this text into Chinese is being prepared.

6. The manuscript is held in the University of Southern California’s Special Collections at the East Asian Library (Ailing Zhang Papers, box 5, folder 5).

7. I thank Roland Soong for sharing unpublished correspondence between his father and Chang.

8. Chang’s host in Albany, the writer Yu Lihua, recalls that her talk was titled “The Exotic West: From Rider Haggard On” (147).

9. Chang adds that she had already given the talk eight or nine times in the Midwest. Chang’s curriculum vitae includes a presentation on translation in China given in November 1966 at Miami University, where she was a writer in residence (Zhang 191).

10. For discussions of Chang’s English style, see Kingsbury; Lee.

11. Liu, “Translator’s Turn,” and Tsu give overviews of translation in modern China; Liu, *Translingual Practice*, and Gunn (esp. 31–61) discuss it in greater depth.

12. For instance, Chang demonstrates her affinity for Somerset Maugham (1874–1965), a once popular but now neglected writer (Deppman).

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Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence

IN AN EARLY-NINETEENTH-CENTURY CHINESE journal, the scholar 毛慶臻 [Mao Qingzhen] attacked the novel *A Dream in the Red Chamber* as hidden pornography and praised a Mr. Pan among others for contributing money to buy it up and burn it, and petitioning to have it banned permanently.¹ Later it was banned for quite some time, ineffectively. "But how can we stop the circulation?" he asked. "The best thing

to do is to collect this pornography and send it abroad, as an answer to the opium trade that spreads poison among us." You would notice that it's assumed that all you have to do is ship the book overseas and it'll do its damage. There seems to be no conception of translation. China had been isolated for so long. The Manchu emperors played down their foreign origins and did become assimilated. Some official documents were in both Manchu and Chinese, by then just a matter of form. The Buddhist translations from Sanskrit, the only

significant body of Chinese translation, [were] over a thousand years ago and fully absorbed.

After the Opium War in the mid-nineteenth century, under the mounting pressure of foreign aggression and exploitation, there was desperate need for reforms, at first only in armament, what was termed “the firm ship, the sharp cannon,” but even that was impossible with a corrupt monarchy. The reformers came to demand constitutional monarchy, then downright revolution. Early this century, Yen Fu translated Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and Thomas Huxley, all in elegant classical Chinese and widely read.² Darwin’s theory of Natural Selection became: Creatures compete, heaven chooses. Sounds rather like Confucius. A frequent phrase in the writings of the time goes, “Western sages have a saying.” The quotation was probably more reliable than the American “Confucius say.”

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 Chinese under the title *The Chronicle of the Melancholy City of Haze and Water*, about three Englishmen and a Zulu warrior who went through the center of the earth and came out on the other side in a country rather like Mexico or Peru, ruled jointly by two beautiful young queens, sisters.³ The good sister was blonde, the bad sister had black hair. They both fell in love with fair-haired Henry and fought a civil war over him. The bad sister lost the war and committed suicide like Cleopatra.

It was translated by Lin Shu, a classical stylist who did not know English and collaborated with a Mr. Wei [Yi] who read

it out to him in Chinese.⁴ They were a prolific team with lots of imitators. Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, *The Arabian Nights*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, and Sherlock Holmes—福爾摩斯 [Fu’er Mosi] Holmes, became a household word—all in classical Chinese,⁵ like a reflection in a bronze mirror. No less an authority than Arthur Waley praised Lin Shu highly as a translator,⁶ especially of Dickens, in his “Notes on Translation,” in *The Atlantic Monthly*, Nov. 1958: “Dickens, inevitably, becomes a rather different and to my mind a better writer. All the overelaboration, the over-statement and uncurbed garrulity disappear,” said Waley.

I’ve read the improved *David Copperfield*, perhaps the best-known among the Lin-translated fiction as they were called regardless of the author. Their popularity seen against the traumatic national experience was a reaching out as well as an escape. Commercially at least this was the Golden Age of Chinese translation although strictly speaking it’s not translation. A critic quoted from a detective story where the detective was angry: “he flicked his sleeve and left,” a classical Chinese phrase referring to the wide kimono sleeves worn in ancient China. It’s a natural gesture of annoyance to give a jerk the big sleeve as you walk away. The critic wanted to know if the detective was wearing the academic gown of the students at Oxford.

The decade of the Lin-translated fiction overlapped [with] the launching of the vernacular literature, dated by the leading magazine *The New Youth* [新青年], 1915–20—after 1921 the magazine turned Marxist with a dwindled following. In the first five years there was enormous public response. So ended the cumbersome practice of translating a foreign language into a dead language—a sort of double translation.⁷

The movement for a vernacular literature was later identified with the patriotic May Fourth Movement of 1919.⁸ After the fall of the [Qing] dynasty through the age

of the warlords, China was in a chronic state of emergency.⁹ A massive influx of the best of the West began. Tolstoy, Marx, Bertrand Russell and the philosopher John Dewey were translated in *The New Youth* from 1915 on, with a special issue on Ibsen because Dr. Hu Shih, the leading figure in the May Fourth, believed that a wholesome individualism would be a corrective for the excesses of the familial system that, under neo-Confucianism, took away many fundamental human rights.¹⁰ Understandably foremost in young people's minds was the right to marry for love, and in cases where they had been forced into a blind marriage that turned out badly, to get a divorce. Hopefully, individual responsibilities come with individual rights. With a strengthened ego, a man would place his personal integrity above his duties to provide for his many dependents in the extended family—which is at the root of graft in China as in the emerging nations today.

The emphasis was on nation-building. The first short stories translated in the vernacular keep turning up in our school books, everybody has studied them about five times: *The Last Lesson* by Alphonse Daudet, and another one about the Franco-Prussian War, I think by Maupassant, about the old army captain saluting at the window, only to find it was the enemy marching into Paris. The Franco-Prussian War loomed large in our childhood, a major war. Runners-up are *The Little Match-girl* by Hans Christian Andersen and Maupassant's *The Necklace*.

Western literature was to help shape [an] immature new literature. Why [does] a country with a heritage it could be proud of abandon it and start from scratch? Because things deteriorate. Like a period of art once it has passed its peak. China had several peaks, generally in different fields of art and letters. By this century, as Dr. Hu Shih said, all our current novels are about officials and prostitutes, or non-officials who actually are officials, and non-prostitutes who actually are prostitutes.

Novels about courtesans and their patrons were in vogue and this was extended to the demimonde and the powers behind the scene. We need a literature that's more relevant to our lives. The old things are there, as good as ever, but like old clothes, no longer fit.

But why tear ourselves down, people keep saying. Why not just add to it as in Japan?¹¹ In fact that *was* the slogan at the beginning of China's Westernization, "Chinese studies in substance; Western studies as functions"—that is, basically Chinese with Western technology. It didn't work. The tremendous inertia that comes with the weight of history and the size of the population in a country that's almost a continent in itself—a complacency and sense of superiority so great [that] make[s] it impossible to absorb anything but the most superficial.

Somerset Maugham went to China in 1920 and published the book *On a Chinese Screen* in 1922. Two of the sketches in it, interviews with anonymous Chinese scholars, seen in retrospect do more than just show the temper of the times. "The Philosopher" is known to be Dr. 辜鴻銘 [Gu Hongming], the only person, white or Chinese, that impressed Maugham favorably on his trip.¹² "A Student of the Drama" has now been identified as Prof. 宋春舫 [Song Chunfang] of Peking University, a linguist who studied in Geneva, Paris, Berlin and Vienna, and had written a book in French about Chinese drama.¹³ Maugham wrote, "His studies abroad had left him with a surprising enthusiasm for Scribe, and this was the model he proposed for the regeneration of the Chinese drama."¹⁴ Instead of the symbolic Chinese opera, Prof. Soong wanted the "well-constructed play," the surprise, the curtain.

He further disgusted Maugham by praising Brioux's play *Les Avariés*—the English adaptation called *Damaged Goods* was a great success in Britain and America early this century; it has been translated into Chinese under the title *Syphyllus*.¹⁵ "I think that is the

finest play that has been produced in Europe since Scribe. . . . You see our students are greatly interested in sociological questions,” he told Maugham.

Professor Soong wrote in 1921, after seeing the problem plays of Ibsen and Bernard Shaw fail on the Chinese stage, “Of all the famous Western plays I’ve read, there is in fact none as applicable to our countrymen’s psychology as Scribe’s.” It’s just to reach the Chinese audience, to get the country moving. But it seems to me it’s not necessarily bad taste to admire the surprise and the electrifying curtain even if it’s dated. The curtain as a theatrical prop was unknown in China, its dramatic possibilities unexplored. Chinese opera is a composite art—drama, music, dancing and acrobatics combined. There’s no stark focused dramatic climax. You have to *have* a thing before you can go beyond it. It’s generally acknowledged that our playwright Tsao Yu who wrote in the late ’30s was influenced by Eugene O’Neill.¹⁶ Americans studying Chinese drama discovered recently that he was influenced by the Scribean school. So it seems to be an inevitable development, only Prof. Soong was nearly twenty years ahead of his time. In 1920, the legitimate theater, newly introduced from Japan, was given to ad lib, long political speeches on current events, to thunderous applause that stopped the show—a sign of the times. Well, if they prefer their message this way, you might say.

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.¹⁷ But he was mostly known as a colorful personality that figured in many anecdotes. An opium smoker, he wore a pigtail when it was already a curiosity, to show his devotion to the fallen dynasty. Once two foreigners sitting near him at the

movies looked amused, obviously talking about him. So he purposely scratched himself and spat on the floor and picked his nose, then talked to his companion in his Oxford English on some learned subject. Another time he defended polygamy to foreigners by pointing to the tea set on the table. “You have one teapot and many cups, not one cup and many teapots.” The story has also been attributed to the diplomat Wellington Koo.

He talked to Maugham knowledgeably about the English philosophers Hume and Berkeley, their concessions to theology. Everything goes to prove the superiority of Confucianism. He grew bitter speaking of the students fresh from foreign universities who tore [down] the oldest civilization in the world. “You have thrust your hideous inventions upon us. . . . What will become of your superiority when the yellow man can make as good guns as the white and fire them as straight?” It was the gut reaction, not the philosopher speaking. The words have a contemporary ring. Maugham’s attitude is also typical of the Western intellectual even today—his respect for national pride and the recluse who wants nothing of the West with all its wealth and power. He does not want China to change, it’s mysterious and lovely and good, the way the Jesuits found it in the eighteenth century, such was the impact of the first encounter. Peking being a Forbidden City once again makes it still easier to see it that way.

The next phase of Westernization, the fruition of the May Fourth, could be dated by the leading magazine *Fiction Monthly* [小說月報], 1921–32. In 1932 it was still flourishing when its publisher The Commercial Press was hit by a Japanese bomb during the fighting in Shanghai, the fitting end of a period. It was an era of tremendous freshness as though the West was newly discovered, [with] a child-like exuberance, full of references to Shelley the golden-haired poet who died so young, drowned in the sea he loved; the skylark, the nightingale—birds that China doesn’t have.

There were certainly strong feelings against the West where it impinges on the Orient¹⁸ [or] Africa but there was the general assumption that the West is good at home, fair and decent, progressive.

Drawing attention to the ills of Western society was an attitude described as “Foreign countries have bedbugs too,” was an excuse for our own evils.

Most of our best-known writers had their first stories published in *Fiction Monthly* but it devoted a lot of space to the translation of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western writers, especially the Russians and East Europeans because the editors believed that China belonged with these oppressed countries and could learn from their experience. It’s a catch-all—Greek myths, Bernard Shaw’s *Arms and the Man*, Oscar Wilde’s *Salome*. The Japanese writers Kikuchi Kan and Akutagawa Ryunosuke were both well-known with considerable influence, especially the latter who wrote the story on which the film *Rashomon* was based.

There was a change in the air with stepped up Japanese aggression. Frustration with the government’s refusal to take a stand, bitterness toward the West and the League of Nations—what help there was came from Soviet Russia, through the early years of the war with Japan when it finally broke out—these, plus the Depression and intellectuals going left all over the world, were the external factors leading to the politically slanted literature after 1932. Of the Western writers introduced, only the Russians survived. Stendahl’s *The Red and the Black* was translated without making a ripple, so was Homer, the Greek dramatists, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Baudelaire and Bernard Shaw, Hamsun’s *Hunger*, and Sinclair Lewis’ *Main Street*—but that was dull. There was no attempt to reproduce [their styles]; imagine Sinclair Lewis in basic English. Hardy, Dreiser, Steinbeck and O’Neill did somewhat better. The field was limited to begin with. The new literature

being part of a reform movement and the reformers being charged with immorality, they had to be specially careful about what to translate. Marx was all right but not Freud. Positive values, not ambiguity or cynicism. Squalor and negativeness [go under] “Foreign countries have bedbugs too.” That ruled out a great deal of modern Western literature and left mainly the Great Russians, the only nineteenth-century writers whose stature has grown if anything in our time.

Of Ibsen, only *A Doll’s House* remained, the standard graduation play of every girls’ school in the country. Oscar Wilde’s *Lady Windermere’s Fan* was the only alternative, considered a bit too daring. It’s interesting to note that both these plays were done in modern Western dress. So is *The Lady of the Camellias*, I remember seeing her in a backless evening gown. Western period costumes are hard to get, but the fact is in China the situations in *A Doll’s House*, *Lady Windermere’s Fan* and *The Lady of the Camellias* were contemporary. There was a time lag here.

Reaction to the Japanese aggression ushered in a boom in legitimate stage with a rash of patriotic plays, historical romances about resistance to foreign invasion. After the public got tired of the historical plays, the limited repertoire of the Post-war theater included four foreign adaptations out of a total of only eight or nine—*Wuthering Heights*, Gogol’s *The Government Inspector*, Gorky’s *The Lower Depths*, Andreyev’s *He Who Gets Slapped*. Three adapted from the Russian.

Russian popularity has been ascribed to similarities in social structure, the bureaucracy for instance. That’s why *The Government Inspector* goes down so well. But the interest in Czarist Russia goes deeper than that. It’s past and gone, as dead as old China and met with a more violent end. Its elegance is nostalgic and comfortable, and could be safely enjoyed by even the radical left. Just as Christmas is called the Foreign Winter Solstice, *War and Peace* was called the Foreign

Dream in the Red Chamber after the Chinese novel for its size and scope and the number and variety of attractive female characters. But Turgenev was by far the greatest favorite. Even Dostoyevsky was not too heavy for the popular taste. Gorky of course, and Gogol did not quite get across except for *The Government Inspector*.¹⁹

Stalinist influence was strongest in the films. Some Soviet short stories were translated, mostly satires. The Poet Yesenin took the place of Shelley—a suicide at an early age, also golden-haired like Shelley. I wonder if it has anything to do with a Chinese poet in the '30s writing under the name 李金髮 [Li Jinfā] Golden Hair Li.²⁰

As translation from the West withered away, only the hacks made a good business of school books with the English and Chinese text on facing pages, often forbidden because they were full of mistakes. . . . The prolific translator 傅東華 [Fu Donghua] did *Gone with the Wind*, the first American book that really left an imprint.²¹ In 1942 it was adapted into a play set in China during the civil wars between the warlords. The play also had a long run. Only a couple years ago I read in a Taiwan publication, “As Scarlett O’Hara said, ‘I won’t think of it today, I’ll think of it tomorrow.’” Another time a less famous quote from some minor character, a woman.²²

The same translator also did *Forever Amber*, not such a success. He was known for a famous line in *Rip Van Winkle*, where he translated “the heroes of ’76” into “the 76 Martyrs.” (*Rip Van Winkle* has just been retranslated as *Uncle Lee’s Big Dream*.)²³ I’m not sure who’s responsible for *this* famous line: at a banquet somebody “raised a piece of toast.”

On the mainland since 1949, writers freeze under ideological requirements even stricter than Stalinist Russia. But as in Russia, there was this double standard for the literature of the past. In the early '50s there was talk of setting a fine translator to work on the complete Balzac. It looked as if China was

going to be a haven for Western classics like the Soviet Union where from sheer shortage of reading matter these books are still being read and enjoyed and really live, instead of the dubious immortality they have in the outside world, where we generally wait for the movie.

Of course since the Cultural Revolution all Western and Russian Literature is suppressed. Eventually even if Mao Tze-tung’s successors reverse his policy, Balzac is bound to be very low on the priority list. Mao’s xenophobia has been attributed to his provincial education. It’s [a] reaction against the discrimination that came with [the] pressures of Westernization, only with him the resentment is extended to the Russians, probably due to the discrimination he met with in the Party in the '20s and early '30s. While this is an unfortunate aspect of modernization in any emerging nation, in China feelings run specially deep and bitter, because education [cost] very little under the old system of civil examinations, the basis for a mobile society. Many boys got free education in the clan schools, financed by the successful members of the clan. Country teachers were often paid in kind. Theoretically any peasant boy could rise to be premier. In all four examinations, from the primary held in the county seat to the highest held in the capital, the examinees [wrote] stilted poetry and an artificial form of essay with quotes from the classics, an intellectual exercise that had hobbled the Chinese mind for centuries. It’s an arbitrary [intelligence] test but fair enough, with an elaborate system of safeguards against wire-pulling and graft. For instance, the examiner’s name was sealed,²⁴ and not known to the board of examiners. The system was suspended early this century as part of much-needed reforms. But the modern schools and colleges and foreign universities are so expensive, the classes [perpetuate] themselves.

Mao is consistently against Western influence in literature and *for* “national forms.” He wrote [in] Yanan in 1938, “Foreign-slanted pedantry and obscurantism must be

abolished . . . so that a fresh and vivid Chinese style and manner, of which the Chinese masses are fond, may take their place.”²⁵ The Western-oriented leftist literature has done a good job in winning students and intellectuals over to Yen-an’s side and with that, emphasis has shifted to the peasant masses and their tastes—and Mao’s own. To this day the Communist press typifies the “foreign-slanted pedantry and obscurantism,” a turgid prose modeled on the literal translation favored by the leftists of the ’30s. 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.²⁶

Mao has negated modern Chinese literature, much of which is derivative. To the rest of the world it’s of value mainly as social documentary. The best works are distinguished by anger and self-disgust, which again does not appeal to the West since the West doesn’t see anything wrong with China as [it is or] was. That’s one reason why there’s very little cross-flow. As for old Chinese literature, 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.

The novel has developed along different lines from Western fiction, liable to seem too externalized to the Western eye and spread too thin. And it happened that at the culmination of the Chinese novel, when the author of *A Dream of the Red Chamber* spent a lifetime rewriting it, slowly evolving this startlingly modern and complex novel when Richardson’s *Pamela* was just published in England, he died before 50 without finishing it, so it’s cheapened by a last third tagged onto it that has nothing to do with him. It was so much ahead of its time it was not properly understood, and the classical Chinese novel never quite recovered from the setback.

Both Chinas play down the May Fourth Movement and suppress its literature for be-

ing too liberal. In Taiwan also because liberalism eventually led to Communism, or the writer has stayed in the mainland, students only study classical Chinese and the West. But without modern Chinese literature as a link, somehow nothing seems to have anything to do with anything else any more, least of all life. The current escapist literature is vacuous and naive. The Western influence has separated like oil and water, although some native Formosan writers still show Japanese influence. Translations lean to the prestigious: the philosopher John Dewey, still an oracle in Taiwan; Bertrand Russell; an anthology of American poetry; of American literary criticism. Dewey sold well. There’s even a pirated edition of [American] poems. Two novellas of Henry James have been translated in Hong Kong, *Daisy Miller* and *The Turn of the Screw*. The preface points out that *Daisy Miller* is the prototype of *Daisy* in *The Great Gatsby* and the heroines of *The Moon is Blue* and *The Seven Year Itch*—all three were known by the films—very cleverly establishing points of reference. *The Turn of the Screw* needs no introduction, it was an Ingrid Bergman picture. Similarly Hemingway was completely identified with the film adaptations.

A recent publisher’s list in Taiwan includes Pearl Buck’s *Letter from Peking*, John Hersey’s *A Single Pebble*, James Michener’s *Hawaii*, and one by Daphne du Maurier, three by Victoria Holt—costume novels like *Gone with the Wind*. On the other hand, a writer in Hong Kong has translated a sample chapter of Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited* as a labor of love because no publisher is interested. They’re certainly justified to worry about receptivity, but there’s large areas untouched, ungauged.²⁷

The results fall far short of the auspicious beginning seventy years ago, after two separate starts. Is 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.

EDITOR'S NOTES

My transcription of Chang's text adopts the author's handwritten and typed changes to her original typescript, several of which I call attention to below. I have made minor corrections for spelling, punctuation, typography, and formatting. Editorial interpolations, including pinyin romanization following Chinese characters, have been placed in square brackets.

1. Mao Qingzhen's notorious comments, often cited to illustrate hostility toward the novel, appeared in his 一亭考古雜記 (c. late eighteenth century; "Archaeological Miscellanies of Yiting"). A *Dream of the Red Chamber*, the masterpiece of Cao Xueqin (c. 1715–63), was first printed in 1791 (for a detailed account of its textual history, see Wu). A lifetime devotee of this novel, Chang wrote a screenplay adaptation in 1961–62 that was never turned into a film. In 1976 she published *Nightmare in the Red Chamber*, a Chinese-language scholarly work. Wang gives an account of Chang's engagement with *Dream*.

2. Yen Fu (Yan Fu [1854–1921]) was an influential educator and prolific translator who famously declared that translations must be judged on their "faithfulness (*xin*), comprehensibility (*da*), and elegance (*ya*)" (Schwartz 93; romanization modified).

3. Chang is referring to Haggard's novel *Allan Quatermain* (1887). The Chinese version, translated by Lin Shu (see below), appeared in 1905 under the title 斐洲煙水愁城錄. Chang omits the title's reference to Africa (斐洲).

4. Lin Shu (1852–1924) was a prolific "translator" who published more than 170 widely read works of Western literature. As Chang notes, Lin could not read the original European languages himself and relied on collaborators such as Wei Yi (1880–1930) to orally translate the originals into Chinese so that he could rewrite them in classical Chinese, often altering the contents significantly.

5. After "Chinese," Chang crosses out the following by hand: "that beautiful dead language."

6. Arthur Waley (1889–1966) was a noted English sinologist and japanologist who translated the *Analects of Confucius*, *The Journey to the West* (in an abridged form as *Monkey*), the *Tao te ching*, and many other classical Chinese and Japanese works.

7. Chang is referring to the distinction between classical Chinese, which has little resemblance to daily spoken

language, and the vernacular-based written form that largely replaced it in the early twentieth century.

8. The May Fourth Movement is named after student protests that erupted on 4 May 1919 in Beijing against the Chinese government's response to the Versailles Treaty, which perpetuated incursions on its territorial sovereignty. It has since become identified with the New Culture Movement (c. 1915–21), a period of great ferment in favor of modernization and Westernization. Among the many changes associated with this period are the language reforms that Chang refers to throughout her talk.

9. After "emergency," Chang crosses out the following by hand: "Outside contact as the leaders of the May 4th saw it was not so much communications as a vital transplant for renewal."

10. Hu Shih (Hu Shi [1891–1962]) was a leading reformer during the May Fourth period and one of the most prominent liberal intellectuals in twentieth-century China. Chang later befriended him while they both lived in the United States during the early 1950s.

11. After "Japan," Chang crosses out the following by hand: "where the new and the old co-exist."

12. Gu Hongming (1857–1928) was a prominent scholar, educator, and government official. Born in Penang to a Chinese father and Portuguese mother, he studied in Europe and later moved to China.

13. Song Chunfang (known to French speakers as Soong Tsung Faung [1892–1938]) was the father of Chang's close friend and, later, literary executor, Stephen Soong. Chang is most likely referring to Soong's *La littérature chinoise contemporaine* (1919), which focuses on drama.

14. Maugham is referring to the French playwright Augustin Eugène Scribe (1791–1861), who helped establish the well-constructed (or well-made) play as a dramatic form.

15. *Les avariés* (1901) was written by the French playwright Eugène Brieux (1858–1932) and translated into English as *Damaged Goods* by John Pollock in 1912. Upton Sinclair turned *Damaged Goods* into a novel in 1913.

16. Tsao Yu (Cao Yu [1910–96]) is widely considered one of the most important playwrights in modern China. Chang's chronology is inaccurate, since Cao's first and still most famous play, 雷雨 (*Thunderstorm*), was published in 1934.

17. Lin Yutang (1895–1976) was a prolific author who wrote in Chinese and English. After 1935 he lived mostly in the United States, where he was widely known as a writer of books about Chinese history and culture.

18. After "Orient," Chang crosses out the following by hand: "or any non-white area."

19. After "except for *The Government Inspector*," Chang crosses out the following by hand: "although the best Chinese writer 魯迅 [Lu Xun] translated [Gogol's] *Dead Souls* and the novellas. The vogue for Russian novels was still more of a phenomenon considering the Chinese tradition for brevity and the Russian inclination to verbosity."

20. Li Jinfa (1900–76) was a poet who worked for the Republican government and moved to the United States in 1951.

21. Fu Donghua (1893–1971) translated *Gone with the Wind* as 飄 (“Floating”) in 1940.

22. After “woman,” Chang crosses out the following by hand: “I couldn’t identify the Chinese rendering of the name.”

23. The translation Chang refers to was completed by her close friend Mae Soong, who was married to Stephen Soong and published *Uncle Lee’s Big Dream* under the pseudonym 方馨 (Fang Xiang). It appeared in several editions, sometimes in combination with Chang’s translation of Washington Irving’s *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

24. “Examiner’s” is most likely a typo for “examinee’s,” since names of examinees were concealed in the imperial examination system starting in the Song dynasty (960–1279).

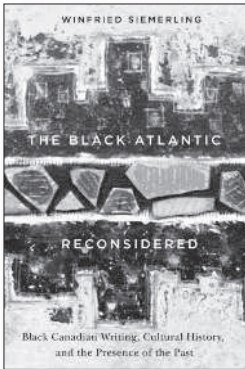
25. Chang appears to be quoting from C. T. Hsia’s translation of passages from Mao’s 1938 speech “The Position of the Chinese Communist Party in the National Struggle” (Hsia 302). For the original context of this passage in full translation, see Mao 126.

26. Lin helped to found *West Wind* in 1936 and regularly contributed translations to the magazine until it ceased publication in 1949. In 1965 Lin’s daughter Lin Taiyi became the founding editor of the Chinese edition of *Reader’s Digest*, a post she held until her retirement in 1988.

27. After “ungauged,” Chang crosses out the following by hand: “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.”

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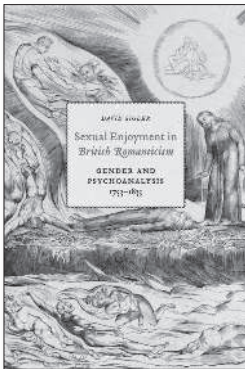
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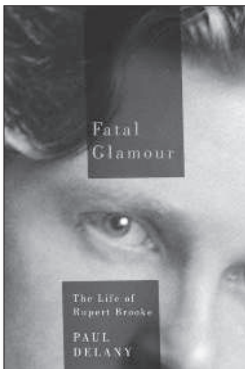
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