

Awkward Betweenness and Reluctant Metamorphosis: Eileen Chang's Self-Translation

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Known as “the Garbo of Chinese letters”¹ for her celebrated style and the aura of mystery that surrounded her, Chang is now regarded as one of the most influential modern Chinese novelists and cultural critics of the twentieth century. Her novels on domestic life earned her a nickname as the Jane Austin of China. Though studies on her literary works have been empirically well-grounded and painstakingly detailed, her self-translation endeavours are not yet fully studied. Song Qi’s article “Eileen Chang’s Self-translation of ‘Stale Mates’ as a Prelude: A Critical Study on Eileen Chang’s Translation” (1981) pioneered these studies, followed three decades later by Luo Xuanmin and Wang Jing’s “Cultural Mediation: On Eileen Chang’s English Translation of *Jinsuo Ji*” (2012) and Sun Yifeng’s “Transition and Transformation: with Special Reference to the Translation Practice of Eileen Chang in the 1950s Hong Kong” (2013), all of which focus on a single work of Chang’s.² The first full-length study of Chang’s translations is Chen Jirong’s *Self-Translation Approaches to Translation Studies: Illustrated with Eileen Chang* (2009), followed by Bu Xiaoji’s *Studies on Eileen Chang’s Rewritten/Retranslated Works* (2013), and Ruan Guanghong’s *A Study of Eileen Chang’s Self-Translation Style* (2016).³ All were written in Chinese and are not generally included in the studies of Chang’s self-translation in English. Tsui-Yan Li’s *Rewriting the Female Body in Eileen Chang’s Fiction and Self-Translation* (2007) and Lili Hsieh’s *The Politics of Affect: Anger, Melancholy, and Transnational Feminism in Virginia Woolf and Eileen Chang* (2005), are so far the most important works of English studies of Chang’s self-translation.⁴ Different from the previous studies which either focus mainly on a single work or interpret from the perspectives of corpus-based studies, narrative stylistics, and aesthetics in Sinophone studies, this article presents an inclusive view of Chang’s self-translation by contrasting her practices in the 1940s with that of the

¹ Greta Garbo (1905-1990), the Swedish-born American film actress famous for her glamorous roles during the silent era and golden age of Hollywood cinema, was hugely popular in China of the 1930s.

² There are also studies on Eileen Chang’s translation from the perspective of Feminist translation, such as Wang Xiaoying’s “On Eileen Chang’s Feminist Translation Poetics in Translating ‘The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai,’” and Chen Jirong and Zhang Xiaopeng’s “On Eileen Chang’s Native Strategies in Her Feminist Translation Poetics.”

³ 陈吉荣, 《基于自译语料的翻译理论研究: 以张爱玲自译为个案》(北京: 中国社会科学出版社, 2009); 布小继, 《张爱玲改写改译作品研究》(中国社会科学出版社, 2013); 阮广红, 《张爱玲自译风格研究》(北京: 中国书籍出版社, 2016)

⁴ Though Xing Liu’s 《英语世界的张爱玲研究》 is written in Chinese, it gives a thorough survey of criticism on Eileen Chang in the English-speaking world. Refer to Xing Liu, 《英语世界的张爱玲研究》(*Eileen Chang Studies in the English World*) (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan P., 2016).

post-1950s, examining the changing skopos that dictates how she conducted and metamorphosized her self-translations.

Eileen Chang's translation career began with a bilingual essay period of 1943-1944 and blossomed in the 1950s when she translated Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1952, Marjorie K. Rawings' *The Yearling* in 1953, and Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in 1954, after which Chang shifted her attention more on self-translation,⁵ and her translation career ended with a translation of Han Bangqing's 海上花列传 to *The Singsong Girls of Shanghai* in 1982.

In her early writings, Chang explored both the Sinophone and Anglophone worlds and wrote bilingually between different communities, in which she adopted an omniscient knowing voice that explained the behavior and perspective of one community of readers to the other. In her later writings, particularly after her relocation to the United States, she attempted a similar authorial persona to act as a cultural broker, introducing China to the United States, while conducting extensive translations and rewritings of her old works. Different from Lin Yutang (1895-1976), a renown Chinese linguist and novelist, who reconciles Chinese and American cultures through his self-translations, Chang presents a somewhat awkward betweenness and reluctant metamorphosis in her self-translation and reveals her disinclination in bringing forth the conciliations between her Sinophone and Anglophone writings.

Chang's Opinion on Translation

Although Lin Yutang was her major influence, Chang's approach to translation was significantly different from him. Chang focused more on the social, cultural, and ideological impact of translation rather than the linguistic. In her speech "Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence" (1966-1969), Chang discusses the complex intersections between translation and society, especially China's fraught relationship with the outside world.⁶ Her speech traces these intersections through the late-Qing period, the early years of the republic, the May Fourth Movement, the Japanese invasion and occupation, the founding of People's Republic of China (1949), and the decades of the 60s and 70s. Situated in literary historiography, a new scholarly subject in China at the beginning of the twentieth

⁵ *Naked Earth: A Novel About China* (1954) into 《赤地之恋》 (Chidi Zhilian, 1954); *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955) into 《秧歌》 (Yang Ge, 1955); "Stale Mates (1957)" into "五四遗事 (1957)"; "等 (1961)" into "Little Finger Up (1962)"; "桂花蒸 • 阿小悲秋 (1961)" into "Shame, Amah! (1962)"; 《金锁记》 into *The Rouge of the North* (1967) and *The Golden Cangue* (1971); *The Spy Ring* (1955) into 色戒 (1974); "A Return to the Frontier (1963)" into 重访边城.

⁶ Christopher Lee edited and republished the speech that Chang gave in English on several occasions between 1966 and 1969. According to Lee, in a letter dated Mar. 6, 1969, Chang tells Stephen Soong that she gave a talk on translation and East-West relations at the State University of New York, Albany. In a subsequent letter to Soong, written on Apr 1, 1969, she reports that she delivered a revised version that day at the Radcliffe Institute. Refer to Eileen Chang, "Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence," ed. Christopher Lee, *PMLA* 130.2 (2015): 488-489.

century, Chang's discussion of translation includes numerous authors and works which recreate the literary milieu in which her writing emerged.

Chang mentions the importance of Lin Shu's translation and points out that the decade of the Lin Shu's translated fiction overlapped with the launching of vernacular literature (though Lin Shu himself strongly opposed the use of vernacular language as the language for translation). Chang situates translation in history, noting that translation has flourished alongside Westernization, as the fruition of the May Fourth Movement, with full references to "Shelley the golden-haired poet... the skylark, the nightingale—birds that China doesn't have... It's a catch-all—Greek myths, Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, Oscar Wilde's *Salome*" (496). Chang highlights the role translated literature has played in Chinese modernity: the impact of English Romanticism, realism, and aesthetics upon the May Fourth Movement (1917-1921), an intellectual revolution and sociopolitical reform movement. The effects of the movement were widespread: the authority of Confucianism and traditional ethics suffered a fundamental and devastating stroke and new Western ideas were exalted; a new vernacular literature was established and popular education was greatly facilitated thereby; the Chinese press and public opinion made great progress.⁷ The translation of the 19th- and 20th-century English writers was published in *Fiction Monthly* (小说月报) where most of the best-known Chinese writers had their stories debuted. Translation of writers from Russia and East Europe was also published because the editors believed that China belonged with these countries ideologically and could learn from their experience as well.

Chang's view of translation echoes the current trends of translation studies, that is Susan Bassnett and Lefevere's culture translation which attaches great importance to the role of culture, the social background, and the subjectivity of translators in translation, the core of which is incorporated in her practice of self-translation. When the context and audience changes, Chang transmutes her rhetoric. Lefevere developed the idea of translation as a form of rewriting and argues that "rewriting can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another" (vii). Since Chang is her own translator, she may be classified as creating what Eugene Eoyang calls "co-eval" translations in which the "spirit and meaning of the original is present." Eoyang explains that such translations are like Vladimir Nabokov's self-translations of Russian into English: "in some cases it might be hard to discern which is artistically the more original; however easy it might be to determine originality in terms of chronological priority" (Paolini 134).

Likewise, Chang's habit of rewriting and translating back and forth between English and Chinese becomes her lifelong pursuit and presents an occasion to examine the author's bilingual and bicultural journey from the perspective of the performance of the self and analyze the various aims of her self-translation practice, through the prism of the Skopos theory (the Skopos rule, the Fidelity

⁷ Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1960) 2.

Rule and the Coherence Rule). Whereas Chang's earlier self-translation in the 1940s can be viewed as a form of impersonation for the purpose of producing a defamiliarized perspective on "China" and "Chineseness," her practices after the 1950s present an extreme case of self-translation in the complex context of the diasporic subject in the Cold War era (1947-1991). She comes to realize and crystalize her self-imposed exile, and militates ferociously against her own time through unrelentingly rewriting.

Chang's Bilingual Writings in the 1940s

Chang's bilingual writings introduced Chinese culture and traditions to the Westerners in Shanghai. From January to December 1943, Chang published three cultural critiques in *The XXth Century*, respectively "Chinese Life and Fashions," "Still Alive," and "Demons and Fairies," which were later self-translated into Chinese as "更衣记" ("A Chronicle of Changing Clothes"), "洋人看京戏及其他" ("Westerners Watching Peking Operas and Other Issues") and "中国人的宗教" ("The Religion of the Chinese").⁸

Chang's writing at that time focused more on apolitical issues, such as fashion, leisure, style and movie reviews, but *The XXth Century* that published Chang's English essays in the 1940s had a clear pro-Axis (pro-Germany, Italy, or Japan) political agenda with funding from the German foreign ministry.⁹ Its editor Klaus Mehnert was a Russian émigré to Germany and most of the articles he wrote for the magazine were either scholarly analyses of Soviet politics or defenses of Fascism from an intellectual perspective (Shen 99). The target audience of the journal were Westerners in Shanghai, especially those who lived in foreign concessions. Published in the politically charged context of Shanghai under Japanese colonialization and rendered for different audiences, Chang's self-translation of the 40s should not be perceived as purely linguistic exercises; they are the textual site of an identity performance, namely "impersonation," the intentional act of copying another person's characteristics (99). The metaphor of impersonation allows readers to consider linguistic, personal, and bodily performances together in trans-lingual and cross-border contexts, which are all under the umbrella of Skopos (Shen 97). Skopos theory is effective in guiding self-translation since both are purpose-oriented. In these pieces, Chang acts as a cultural broker, presenting and mediating between Western and Chinese cultures by defining and explaining cultural dissimilarities and variances. While she engages in making essentialized generalizations about each culture, she adds a dose of irony. Chang satirizes Western interpretation of Chinese culture with an orientalist twist searching for the mysterious East, while at the same time mocking Western behaviors misinterpreted by Shanghainese.

⁸ Another article, "私语," ("Whispers") also published in 《天地》 (*Heaven and Earth*) was self-translated from "What a Life! What a Girl's Life," originally published in 《英美晚报》 (British and American Evening Newspaper). Two of the movie reviews, "Wife, Vamp, Child" and "China: Educating the Family," were self-translated as "借银灯" and "银宫就学记" in *The XXth Century*.

⁹ In June of 1941, Klaus Mehnert accepted a position in Shanghai as editor-in-chief of a new publication to be called *The XXth Century*, which became the leading English-language journal in Japanese-occupied Shanghai. The final issue was in June of 1945.

She adopts an authoritative and explanatory tone that is nevertheless accompanied by a sense of humor. Chang's writing on traditional Chinese culture reflects Shanghai's multicultural, polyglot nature, and she often addresses and speaks for a number of different subject positions simultaneously.

Case Study: “Chinese Life and Fashions”/ “更衣记” (1943/1943)

Appearing for the first time in the January 1943 issue of *The XXth Century*, Chang's “Chinese Life and Fashions,” is a meticulous meditation on various changes in clothing styles from the Qing dynasty (1636-1912) to the Republic of China (1912-1949). To facilitate her arguments, Chang attaches to her article twelve sketches all drawn by herself to show the evolution of fashions. Less than a year later, Chang translated, revised, and expanded the piece for publication in a Chinese-language journal, 《古今》 (*Past and Present*), retitling it “更衣记 (Gengyi Ji)” (“A Chronicle of Changing Clothes”). In the self-translation, those drawings were excluded since the Chinese audience was fairly familiar with the designs. While much of the writing remained the same, “this retooling of the essay involved a subtle reconfiguration of Chang's authorial voice and self-positioning vis-à-vis her Chinese readers, who are addressed less as psychiatric subjects than as collaborators in a troubled cultural history that extends through the largely unspoken (but ever present) privations of life during wartime” (428).

In war-time Shanghai where nothing was fixed and the present was scarcely more than a form of disappearance, the ever-changing moods of women's fashion ironically seemed relatively stable and reliable (Huang xxvi). In a time of severe censorship, fashion as an “apolitical” topic was easily publishable. Poshek Fu quotes a telling remark by Chang: “...political topics are rarely favored because our private lives are already packed full of politics” (Louie 134). Revealing layers of cultural sediment, Chang traces the changes in fashion in China (for both men and women) over three hundred years. In 1890, Chang's great-grandfather, Li Hongzhang established China's first cotton textile mill (Finnane 106-107). Being a fashionable woman with pioneering boldness, Chang liked to collect unusual and luxurious materials, and had them made into costumes according to her own designs—she once ran a short-lived fashion design firm. When conducting self-translation, Chang is conscious of and attentive to the Skopos of her bilingual essays and is careful in negotiating between different language communities. In Vermeer's skopos theory, the function approach to translation aims at producing a text which lives up to the cultural expectations of the target reader. Different from traditional translation, the functional approach to translation claims that the same text can be translated differently on the basis of the communicative function of the translated text. The following example presents such a difference through a shift in tone.

“Chinese Life and Fashions” opens with an invitation to the western audience to enter the private sphere of the Chinese home and observe the Chinese ritual of clothes-sunning:

Come and see the Chinese family on the day when the clothes handed down for generations are given their annual sunning! ... If ever memory has a smell, it is the scent of

camphor, sweet and cozy like remembered happiness, sweet and forlorn like forgotten sorrow (54).

The syntax of the imperative first sentence calls out to an addressee, foreign to the Chinese tradition. In a subsequent self-translation of this essay in Chinese, along with the change of audience, the tone of the first sentence changes to one that is less inviting and more matter-of-facts:

如果当初世代相传的衣服没有大批卖给收旧货的，一年一度六月里晒衣裳，该是一件辉煌热闹的事罢。(Chang, *Liu Yan* 14)

[If all the clothing handed down for generations had never been sold to dealers in secondhand goods, their annual sunning in June would be a brilliant and lively affair.]¹⁰

To the Western audience, clothes-sunning is unheard of and eye-opening and the excitement could be captured in the tone, while to Chinese people this ritual is routine and known to all, and thus the tone of the accounts is more documentary with a touch of remorse about the disruption of fashion.

In the second paragraph of “Chinese Life and Fashions” and the third paragraph of “更衣记” (“A Chronicle of Changing Clothes”), Chang writes,

...such was the stability, the uniformity, the extreme conventionality of China under the Manchus that generation after generation of women clung to the same dress style (54).

这么迂缓，安静，齐整——在满清三百年的统治下，女人竟没有什么时装可言！一代又一代的人穿着同样的衣服而不觉得厌烦。(54)

Here “stability, the uniformity, the extreme conventionality” is translated as “迂缓，安静，齐整 (slowness, tranquility, and uniformity).” Chang does not translate “extreme conventionality”; instead, she changes this derogative term to a neutral term, “tranquility.” When it comes to expressing her feminist voice, however, Chang explicitly states her opinion:

Under those layers of clothing, the ideal Chinese female, petite and slender, with sloping shoulders and a hollow chest, made herself pleasantly unobtrusive, **one of the most desirable qualities in a woman.** (54)

削肩，细腰，平胸，薄而小的标准美女在这一层层衣衫的重压下失踪了。(66)

¹⁰ Andrew F. Jones’s translation is a triangulated translation into English of Chang’s translation of her original English article into Chinese. Jones’ translation is comparatively more faithful than Chang’s self-translation. Refer to Eileen Chang and Andrew F. Jones, “A Chronicle of Changing Clothes,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 11.2 (2003): 28.

Instead of rewriting, Chang faithfully translates this feminist remark into her Chinese article. She ironizes old-fashioned suppression of women through her vivid descriptions of the clothing style. Feminism in the 1920s and 1930s was gaining momentum in China. Contending groups of Chinese intellectuals used the “woman question” as a keyhole through which to address issues of modernity and the nation. The process of national invention and the struggle to create a new idea of womanhood reveals not only the anxieties associated with changing roles for women, but also the anxieties associated with modernity and the modern nation (Stevens 82). In this context, Chang voices her opinion with this account of changing clothes, an alternative history of constant redefinitions of female beauty, feminine propriety, and the place of women in a modern society. Chang adds in her self-translation: “男子的生活比女子自由的多 (men enjoy far more [sartorial] freedom than women),” and goes on to tease out the absurdity of gendered assumptions in cultural discourses:

衣服似乎是不足挂齿的小事。刘备说过这样的话：“兄弟如手足，妻子如衣服。”... 有个西方作家（是萧伯纳吗？）曾经抱怨过，多数女人选择丈夫远不及选择帽子一般聚精会神，慎重考虑。在没有心肝的女子说起她“去年那件织锦缎夹袍”的时候，也是一往情深的。(21)

[Clothes seem to be quite inconsequential. **The ancient hero Liu Bei** had this to say on the matter of clothes: “Brothers are like one’s hands and feet; wives and children are like clothes **that can be put on and taken off.**” ... One western author (was it Bernard Shaw?) once complained: “Most women put more careful thought and consideration into the choice of their hats than their choice of husband.” Even the most heartless of women will wax passionate when she starts to speak of “last year’s quilted silk gown. (Chang and Jones 439-440)]

Chang has only to remind the Chinese audience that women have been insincerely treated and were considered no more than a piece of clothing and Bernard Shaw’s jokingly comments adds a foreign flavor to the metaphorical description. But the essay does more than tease out the gendered categories embedded in discourses on fashion. Chang’s account stages history as a “costume drama” (Huang xxv). Her representation of history presents “a museum of human fantasies” and “a gallery of artifacts that are constantly in motion” (Huang xxv). Clothes are personified and animated in both words and a series of drawings. Costumes seem to replace the characters; the stage is composed of shapes, colors, lines, and circles instead of people. Another example of tone shifting is found in Chang’s account of fashion history:

In **pre-Revolution costumes**, the individual was wholly submerged in the form—the form being a subjective representation of the human figure, conventionalized as always in **Oriental art**, dictated by a sense of line rather than faithfulness to the original. **Post-Revolution clothes** slowly worked towards the opposite direction—the subjugation of form by the figure. (61).

最近的发展是向传统的一方面走，细节虽不能恢复，轮廓却可尽量引用，用的活泛，一样能够适应现代环境的需要。旗袍的大襟采取围裙式，就是个很好的例子，很有点“三日入厨下”的风情，耐人寻味。(20)

Here, the sermonizing and formal tone is replaced by an intimate and informal tone. The indication of two distinct eras, “pre-Revolution” and “post-revolution”, are removed in the translation to avoid generalization. “Oriental art” is also deleted for its somewhat foreign perspective. The translation adds the example of *Qipao* and a well-known verse “三日入厨下 (serve in the kitchen three days after the wedding)” from a famous Tang poet, Wang Jian’s “Ode to Bride” (新嫁娘词), which instantly shortens the distance between the author and her readers, and adds familiarity and intimacy to the tone.

Shift of tone also occurs with the following example where the original English essay ends with a tone of seriousness:

Once again, China is standing at the threshold of life, more grim and practical this time, surer of her own mind because of the lessons she has learnt. (61)

In the translation, Chang rewrites the conclusion by adding this last section and ends her article in a more light-hearted and positive tone:

有一次我在电车上看见一个年轻人，也许是学生，也许是店伙，用米色绿方格的兔子呢制了太紧的袍，脚上穿着女式红绿条纹短裤，嘴里衔着别致的描花假象牙烟斗，烟斗里并没有烟。他吮了一会，拿下来把它一截截拆开了，又装上去，再送到嘴里吮，面上颇有得色。乍看觉得可笑，然而为什么不呢，如果他喜欢？……人生最可爱的当儿便在那一撒手吧？(21-22)

[Once when I was on the streetcar, I saw a young man... who had tailored himself a rather tight mohair robe with green checks over a rice-colored background. He was wearing women’s stockings, striped red and green, and an exquisitely carved fake ivory pipe hung from his mouth, although there was no tobacco inside the bowl... At first, I found him ridiculous, but then I thought to myself, Why not, if this was what gave him pleasure?... Might it be that in this life that moment of letting go is the very loveliest? (Chang and Jones 440-441)]

The reflective and sincere tone of the English ending gives way to a frivolous and anecdotal thought. Chang seems to be telling her Chinese audience that if the future is not dependable, then one must enjoy the present. This translation elucidates the metamorphosis of Chang’s aesthetic style back to her “embellished writing style infiltrated with elaborate vocabularies and exquisite imageries, which

characterizes her early writings” (Wang 291). Chang is known for her aesthetic writing in Chinese, and in her translation, she is aware of the employment of knowledge in psychology and aesthetics as well as imagination, so as to revive her artistic originality through translation. According to Skopos theory, the purpose of translation determines the means of translation and the theory adopts a prospective attitude to translate, as opposed to the retrospective attitude adopted in theories which focus on prescriptions derived from the source text.

Besides the employment of shift, a rational use of addition, omission and deletion (AOD), could also help with achieving the skopos: addition will augment and deepen underdeveloped content, omission will partially drop undesired content, and deletion will completely remove superfluous or unwanted content in the source texts.

Omission means dropping words when they are culturally insignificant or syntactically unnecessary. As Chang recounts fashion history, she exclaims over the passing of history:

We find it hard to realize that **less than fifty years ago it seemed a world without end. Imagine the reign of Queen Victoria prolonged to the length of three centuries** (54)!
我们不大能够想象过去的世界。(14)

In the translation, Chang omits the analogy between Victorian England and Manchu China because most Chinese readers would not appreciate the connection with the Great Britain reminiscent of the strong colonial ties. Also, “less than fifteen years ago” is not rendered into Chinese in that Chinese writings can be general and vague when the focus is placed on the timelessness of a statement.

The technique of deletion in the self-translation can be found when Chang explains women’s dress style:

Young ladies brightened up the bleak winter months with the ‘Chow Kwuen Hood,’ named after the historical beauty **Wang Chow Kwuen, an imperial handmaid in the second century A. D. She is always pictured on horseback**, with a fur hood and despondent expression, **on her way north to marry the king of the Huns, whom it was China’s policy to pacify**. Her celebrated hood had the grand simplicity of the modern Eskimo variety which Hollywood made popular. But the nineteenth-century Chinese version was gay and absurd (54)”

姑娘们的“昭君套”为阴森的冬月添上点色彩。根据历代的图画，昭君出塞所戴的风兜是爱斯基摩氏的，简单大方，好莱坞明星仿制者颇多。中国十九世记的“昭君套”却是颠狂冶艳的。(16)

[Young ladies lent a spot of brightness to the gloom of winter months with their ‘Zhaojun’ hoods. In historical illustrations, the hood Zhaojun is wearing as she is sent off on horseback

to marry the king of the Huns is of the simple, generous Eskimo type made so popular by Hollywood starlets in recent years. (Chang and Jones 431)]

In the translation, Chang deletes the explanatory sentences about Chow Kwuen and China's pacifying policy since Chinese people are fairly familiar with the historical figure and the context of the pacifying policy and it would be redundant to add any explanation. The translation also exemplifies the change of tone in the description of the hood: the "absurdity" is euphemized into "gaiety". Another example of deletion is as follows:

In periods of political unrest and social upheaval—the Renaissance in Europe, for instance—tight-fitting clothes which allow for quick movement always come into favor. Jerkins in fifteenth-century Italy were so tight that slits had to be made at the joints of the body. Chinese clothes just stopped short of bursting open in the turbulent days when the Revolution was in the making. The last emperor, **Pu-yi, reigned for only three years**, and by then the jacket clung like a sheath to the arms and body. And such were the wonders of Chinese corseting that even then we did not see the realistic picture of a feminine figure, but rather the disembodied conception, **one of Byzantine severity and Pre-Raphaelite spirituality**: slim, straight lines flaring a little at the knees, whence issued tiny trouser legs which dropped a timorous hint of **even tinier shoes** apologetically attached to the ground. (56-57)

在政治动乱与社会不靖的时期——譬如欧洲的文艺复兴时代——时髦的衣服永远是紧匝在身上，轻捷俐落，容许剧烈的活动，在十五世纪的意大利，因为衣裤过于紧小，肘弯膝盖，筋骨接榫处非得开缝不可。中国衣服在革命酝酿期间差一点儿就胀裂开了。“小皇帝”登基的时候，袄子套在人身上象刀鞘。中国女人的紧身背心的功用实在奇妙——衣服再紧些，衣服底下的肉体也还不是写实派的作风，看上去不大像個女人而像一缕诗魂。长袄的直线延至膝盖为止，下面虚飘飘垂下两条窄窄的裤管，似脚非脚的金莲抱歉地轻轻踏在地上。(17)

Here, Pu-yi is translated as "little Emperor" and the phrase that he "reigned only three years" is deleted since it is a fact known to all Chinese. The expression of "Byzantine severity and Pre-Raphaelite spirituality" is simplified as "poetic soul" in that few Chinese audience would know much about the Renaissance artist, Raphael or the Byzantine art style. The expression of "Bound feet in shoes" is euphemized as "Tinier shoes" in the original, which translates as "Golden Lotus," a further beautified euphemism.

Similarly in the original English text, Chang elaborately explains the woman's hairstyle with various cultural analogies by quoting from Lin Shu's book *Sketches in the Hut of Fear*.

When I was young, a women's hair-knot was usually in the shape of a **Sycee**. A little later it was prolonged to the shape of a spoon, called the 'Soochow Hair-knot.' Two knots right and left were called the Pipa Style. [**Pipa** is a form of **guitar**.] Wire-matting was tucked inside the '**Castanet** Hair-knot' to give it shape...Another style has the hair twirled over the forehead like **spirited serpents**; some call that the "**Republican** Hair-knot." (58)

Various metaphors and analogies, were employed to help its Western audience understand the Chinese hair styles, such as "Sycee," "Pipa/guitar," "Castanet," or "Republican." However, the Chinese audience take their hairstyles for granted and seldom associate them with those exotic terms, like "spirited serpents." Chang deletes this passage altogether in her self-translation.

Chang's composition of the original essay aims not only to introduce fashion to its English-speaking audience, but also Chinese society and history. Thus, Chang reveals:

Ching His Huang, the first emperor of united China and the builder of **the Great Wall**, found pleasure in the 'Hair-knot which Rises, above the Clouds,' very becoming to petite maidens, if we are to believe the writers of modern beauty columns. Ladies at the **Han Court** designed coiffures entitled 'Welcome Spring,' (with an eager forward tilt) and 'Two Hearts in One,' "Smoky..." **The Han princesses** were the first to wear wigs...Aside from those **courts fashions**, the wife of an official dressed her hair in a style called 'Falling off the Horse,' with a towering puff tilted on one side and plenty of soft loops flying free." (58)

Chang does not include this part in her translation probably because she finds the common knowledge mundane, like the first emperor of China, the Great Wall, and the hairstyles women wore. Chang continues to describe the hairstyle of the latest:

...that which ties a false knot at the end of loose-hanging hair, a likely name for it should be the '**Hair-knot of Disintegration and Homeless Wandering**.' What an omen! The times are indeed **out-of-joint**! I tremble to think of what is to come. (58)

The deletion of this part is justifiable in that Chang does not want to offend her Chinese audience by revealing her overt criticism.

Other than the minor changes to cultural terms or explanatory sentences, Chang drastically deletes two whole sections: "Profusion and Confusion" about women's hair-style and "Hats and Mental Equilibrium" about hat fashion. The two sections are suffused with explanatory comments about basic Chinese history and society.

With the change of audience, Chang would more often modify her use of cultural metaphors other than employing the drastic deletion. For example, as she describes the dress code of Chinese women and emphasizes the minute details in the design of dresses, she uses similes:

The trouble with old Chinese dress designers was that they did not know the all-importance of brevity. After all, a **woman is not a Gothic cathedral**. And even with the latter, the diffusion of interest by the heaping up of distracting details has occasioned much criticism. The history of Chinese fashions consists almost exclusively of the steady elimination of those details. (56)

Its translation reads as:

古中国的时装设计家似乎不知道，一个女人到底不是大观园。太多的堆砌使兴趣不能集中。我们的时装的历史，一言以蔽之，就是这些点缀品的逐渐减去。(16)

[Chinese fashion designers of old seemed not to have understood that a woman is not a Prospect Garden. The heaping together of details will inevitably diffuse interest and result in a loss of focus. The history of Chinese fashion consists almost exclusively of the steady elimination of those details. (Chang and Jones 432)]

The well-known Western architecture, “Gothic cathedral” is translated into 大观园 (Prospect Garden), the large, idyllic, and elaborately wrought fictional space that serves as the principal setting of Cao Xueqin’s masterpiece of eighteenth-century fiction, *Dream of the Red Mansions*. The conversion of cultural symbols facilitates the audience’s perception.

Another common practice employed by self-translators is addition. Chang adds a new section discussing men’s clothing which is nowhere to be found in the original English essay:

直到十八世纪为止，中外的男子尚有穿红着绿的权利。男子服色的限制是现代文明的特征。不论这在心理上有没有不健康的影响，至少这是不必要的压抑 (21)。

[Until the 18th century, men in China and abroad still had the right to wear red and green. The restriction of wearing colorful clothing only began in modern time. Whether such practice would have bad impact upon mental health, it was an unnecessary repression. (72)]

Chang points out that the modern history of men’s clothing has been less eventful. Chang feels confident adding this remark of generalization in the Chinese essay, while for the English essay such generalization would require a stronger textual support.

Chang's self-translation of this article reveals that her English essay, written for foreign readers, seems to be informational and historical, while the translations for Chinese readers analytical and elaborate. Because of the introductory nature of the English articles, Chang adds some explanatory remarks concerning Chinese history, culture, and tradition but meanwhile deletes intricate historical allusions and labyrinthine literary references. In translation, she gets opportunities to compensate for the loss of the complexities. In general, the English-language versions adopt a more unequivocally anthropological standpoint in terms of introducing the "Chinese way," while the Chinese-language versions express a world-wise perspective in which she turns an observant eye toward traditional and historical Chinese behavior. Chang is an exemplary of a "translocal" writer: a writer whose worldliness is routed through the byway of cities and local dialects rather than the highway of nation-states and official languages (Jiang).

Chang's approach to self-translation works both in line with the commonly held notion of "fidelity" in translation and against its grain. Chang aims to show that her self-translations should be understood as different versions of the same text. Although we have a text—the English one—that chronologically comes first, translation makes it acquire a new existence in the native language. As each language actively produces different axiological systems, the two versions will be subject to different modes of reading and reception. By going against the idea of translation as a one-way movement of departure and arrival, Chang aims to open up her texts to a process of estrangement carried out through linguistic displacement and repeated readings. In the process of self-translation, both the writer and the reader are asked to recontextualize their frames of reference: the text thus takes on new meanings that exceed the biographical, national, linguistic positionality of the "original" text and of its author, and thus serving the diversified skopos.

Chang's Self-Translation in the 1950s and onward

Though Chang spent the first few years in Shanghai after the New China was founded in 1949 and wrote *Eighteen Springs* in 1951 and "Xiao'ai" in 1952, both of which carry the leftist message of the time, Chang soon realized that she did not belong to the new literary environment. Her "modernist style and emphasis on middle-class stories clashed with an increasingly... leftist proletarian aesthetics" (So 719). Anatomizing the heart during a time of war, Chang's stories transpose from the intimate sphere of romantic and conjugal relations to the public sphere of diplomatic and geopolitical ties (Jiang). In 1952, Chang left for Hong Kong and stayed till 1955, during which time she finished two novels, *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955) and *Naked Earth* (1956) that were widely regarded as being critical in tone since they fictionalized failures of political campaigns like the land reform. Those works earned her a controversial title of being a propagandistic writer. Following that, her works were banned in China for decades until the early 1990s. One important reason why Chang got intensely involved in politics was that both novels were commissioned and sponsored by the United States Information Agency (USIS) and were the special fruits of the US Cold War political strategy. Chang's three-year stint (1952-1955) working for the US agency signaled a sharp break in her writing career, and this

break has long puzzled scholars of her work. After 1952, she switched to composing in English, began writing in a “thick realist style,” drafting popular tales for American audiences (So 720). The US agency came to recruit diasporic authors to develop new modes of writing crucial to the cold war battle against the opposing ideology. Chang became the best candidate for this mission due to her outstanding bilingual capacity. For lack of better job opportunities in Hong Kong, Chang accepted the job and wrote the two novels with provided plots. Some critics accuse Chang’s choice as opportunistic while Dai Qing argues that it is far-fetched to imagine that Chang’s writing was distorted by USIS since she is too powerful a writer for that—“too immune from being tricked...If nothing else, the beauty of Chang’s writing makes it hard to view as anyone’s propaganda” (Perry, *New York Book Review*). David Der-wei Wang also explains that “Chang’s movement from the leftist to the rightist camp in the short span of five years . . . bespeaks, however, not her opportunism but her predicament as a Chinese writer trapped in the drastic imperatives of an ideological age” (David Der-wei Wang, *Foreword* xiv). Chang later translated the two political novels into Chinese which, however, were received with checked enthusiasm.

Of the second period of Chang’s self-translation, one work that deserves our special attention is 《金锁记》 (*Jinsuo Ji*), one of her most widely acclaimed works and arguably the darkest and most claustrophobic of her stories, originally published in Shanghai in 1943. It was later compiled into Chang’s first collection of stories, *Chuanqi* (romance), which claimed in the preface that “its objective is to look for ordinary humanity in legends and look for the extraordinary in the quotidian.”¹¹ Over a span of three decades, Chang translated and rewrote this particular story seven times. This is a rare phenomenon even in the field of self-translation worldwide. Such ongoing re-translating and rewriting clearly show Chang’s strenuous attempts to get her work published outside of her home country and her determination to give her work new lives and new identities.

The novel was based on Chang’s family anecdotes about her remote relative, Li Jingshu (1864–1902), the second son of her great grandfather, Li Hongzhang (1823–1901), a leading Chinese statesman of the 19th century, who made strenuous efforts to modernize China. Working from the characters and plot of *Jinsuo Ji*, Chang wrote *Pink Tears* during her stay at the MacDowell Colony from 1956 to 1958; it was not accepted for publication. Chang then rewrote it and renamed it *The Rouge of the North*, which was not published either. She subsequently translated *The Rouge of the North* into Chinese under the title 怨女 (*Yuannü*), which was first serialized in 星島晚報 (*Singdao Night Newspaper*) in Hong Kong and by 皇冠 (*Crown*) in Taiwan in 1966. She retranslated *Yuannü* into English under the same English title as her earlier novel, *The Rouge of the North*. The revised English version was eventually published by the Cassell Company of London in 1967.¹² She then revised *Yuannü* again after she thought its manuscript was lost in the mail when she sent it to Hong Kong in 1965;¹³ it was

¹¹ The original Chinese text is “书名叫传奇，目的是在传奇里找普通人，在普通人里寻找传奇” (epigraph on the cover page of the first edition of *Chuanqi*).

¹² It was republished by the University of California (two decades later) in 1998.

¹³ Mentioned in her letter to Hsia Chih-tsing dated March 31, 1966.

published by the Crown Publishing Company in 1968. Later on, Chang translated her Chinese novella *Ji Jinsuo* into English as *The Golden Cangue*, which was anthologized in *Twentieth Century Chinese Stories* published by Columbia University Press in 1971.

Different from the first period when Chang's self-translations were published in Shanghai for the readership in China, the self-translated works of the second period were targeted towards an American audience and sought publishers in the United States. Chang wrote in the mindset of an exile. Even if exile can be perceived as a positive experience in terms of a liberation and/or reinvention of the self, in the case of Chang, exile was a traumatic experience where one's emotional stability was lost in transit as the mother tongue became uprooted and was unable to provide meaning for the new reality. In order to find a breakthrough in the new literary world, she resorted to self-translation for a possible literary metamorphosis. According to Janine Altounian, writing in the language of the other is in fact a part of the healing process (Klimkiewicz 196). In the absence of unity, fusion and proximity, self-translation works as a way of repairing the broken tie, preventing the self from becoming dispersed, and finding an appropriate channel to produce an intelligible narration out of chaos. However, the healing process is not that simple for exiles. For Chang, her solution was to dwell obstinately and obsessively in her memory in order to save every detail from oblivion, which partially explains Chang's obsession with the retranslating/rewriting of the same work seven times over span of almost three decades.

By the time Chang entered the American literary stage in the 1950s, the reception of China in the West had very often been dominated by Chinese scholars/translators like Lin Yutang who once defined the Chinese people as "joyful beings" and Chinese civilization as a "civilization of joy." Even though Lin later expressed a more critical voice, dominating interpretation of the Western media still endorsed Lin's earlier portraiture. Chang's works featured the expression of sadness, "fragments," a "world of details," rather than a panoptic or coherent view of society, as is pointed out by Leo Ou-Fan Lee. Lee further points out that Chang's emphasis on fragment and fugitive presence as a resistance to grand historical narratives (Lee 271). She metamorphosed her work through repeated self-translations, but her works were met with an unenthusiastic response. In a letter to Hsia Chih-tsing, Chang expressed her confidence, stating that the difficulties in getting her works published were largely due to the Orientalism, which limited their view of China, and thus, her works (Xia 39). It seems that American audiences were not interested in tales of old Shanghai, preferring less morally ambiguous works.

Chang's role as self-translator is also reflected in her screenwriting. She wrote screenplays for MP&GI from 1957 to 1964 while trying to support herself and her husband, Ferdinand Reyher.¹⁴

¹⁴ Once a prominent American leftist writer in the United States, he began to suffer from declining career and health. Their marriage was beset by financial difficulties and Chang's screenplays became the couple's primary source of income.

Eight of Chang's screenplays were made into motion pictures, mostly in the comedy genre.¹⁵ As a creative agent, Chang mediated between differing cultural regions, media, and languages in the context of mass culture and commercial cinema. Chang not only reconciled artistic and commercial sensibilities within the confines of the film industry, but also crossed over different historical locations, cinematic traditions (Hollywood vs. Chinese films), and narrative forms and media (fiction/stage/film/comedy), recreating new meanings for different local film audiences. The study in this field is beyond the scope of the current work, but this will serve as a good research topic for a future study.

Chang's translation/rewriting of *JJ* into *RN* comes as a fascinating project. The two works beget each other's causes and effects, and as such they break open multiple entry points onto the real within the mimetic closure of representationism. Chang is culturally and linguistically well-equipped and prepared in earnest for a bilingual writing career in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Shanghai and post WWII America. When she moved to the United States, she did not become an American writer like Singer or Nabokov. Neither was she successful in the role of a Chinese writer explaining China to the West, like Nobel-prize nominee Lin Yutang, or authors of popular autobiographic novels like Jade Snow Wong with *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, or diasporic authors like Ha Jin with *Waiting*. However, Chang does enjoy an increasingly successful literary career in Taiwan and Hong Kong. David Der-wei Wang chronicles a long list of the "Chang School" (*Chang pai*) writers (303-306). Chang's self-translation and translation become an important way for her to recuperate her literary talent. Besides Chang's self-translated works, attached below is a list of her translation of some prominent western writers during the Cold War era:

The Old Man and the Sea (1952, 1955, 1972, 1988)¹⁶
The Yearling (1953, 1962, 1988).
[Selected translations from] *The Portable Emerson* (1953, 1962, 1969, 1987, 1992).
"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1954, 1962, 1967, 2004).
"Hemingway" (1956, 2004).
Emerson's poems (1953, 1961, 1962, 1969, 1987, 1988, 1992, 2004).
Thoreau's poems (1961, 1988, 2004).
Seven Modern American Novelists (1967)

The list shows that the range of Chang's translations covers almost every genre in the series—essay, fiction, poetry, and literary criticism—which is rare (Shan 109-110). Thus, there should be less doubt about her capacity in rendering her own works, though the translation of her Chinese works into English is indeed a formidable task. Her prose is both idiomatic and idiosyncratic, combining elements from divergent sources, most notably the traditional vernacular fiction of the Ming and Qing dynasties

¹⁵ The plays included *Qingshang ru zhanchang* (*The Battle of Love*, 1957), *Rencai liangde* (*A Tale of Two Wives*, 1958), *Taohua yun* (*The Wayward Husband*, 1959), and *Linyue xinnyang* (*June Bride*, 1960).

¹⁶ The years designate the publications of Chang's translations by different publishers.

and the nineteenth and early twentieth century European literature that nurtured her precocious literary imagination. Chang's prose belongs to the many "deliciously refreshing and always piquant metaphors and similes that enliven the descriptive passages between saucy and spirited dialogue," and it is fair to say that "no character or object appears in her fiction *as is*, without a double life, without being subverted by a mischievously fabulous mind—not even a maid who has less than half a page of fictional life" (Lee, *Eileen Chang*). In rendering Chang's full-bodied and many-flavored prose, her self-translation seems to be on the side of under-translation (in contrast to the method of over-translation adopted by Karen S. Kingsbury, one of the first American scholars to study and translate Chang's fiction). For example, of the 21 novels/novellas by Chang, one could find 255 different words describing colors (Ruan 95). In Chang's self-translation, the translation of minute differences in colors are mediated and minimalized.

Chang's English is moderate compared to the sensuous texture of her Chinese. It seems that a feeling of reverence prevails, which is also a feeling of inadequacy between a foreign language and the self. English for Chang is a formal language with its rituals and rules, a "ceremonial language" that can be seen as restrictive. For Chang's Chinese writing, there is a kind of transparency between everyday life experiences and her literary writings. Words flow easily, embracing life and the self, which Chang highly valued when she created her literary world. Unlike the natural yielding of a first language to the writer's manipulation, a second language blocks easy access to its resources, which perhaps enables Chang to overcome the erudite word-play and clever allusions that tempt her in Chinese, so that she could work with language from a position of inferiority and underdevelopment. Chang's English style is characterized by its stern lack of ornamentation and elaboration. Linguistic transfer and deterritorialization might also explain her awkward betweenness.

A devaluation of one's social status and image might have a strong impact on the reevaluation of the "self" and consequently on Chang's eagerness to go back to her previous work, to rewriting, retranslating and generally reevaluating it according to each new situation and her actual reading audience. Chang's self-translation and her inspiration, even after her move to the United States, does not move on and away from the Shanghai of her youth. Chang confines herself eventually to the role of the nostalgic writer-historian of former Shanghai. She retreats to a world of yesterday (Martin 373). Chang remains faithful to herself till the end, using her freedom and imagination to create and recreate her own intimate universe (Tadevosyan-Ordukhanyan 176).

Chang engages with a number of different audiences and literary markets, which are the key factors of Skopos. As the changes from *JJ* to *RN* demonstrate, Chang takes pains in recontextualizing the original, endeavoring to meet the cultural expectations of her target readers. She frequently breaks away from the narrative to address the stereotypes and foibles of the communities she describes. This role worked well in cosmopolitan Shanghai, but her authority as a cultural broker faltered when she arrived in the United States. While American readers did not question her authority on China, she did not provide them with the type of narratives they were seeking. In part, this may have to do with

Chang's uncompromisingly desolate tone. Lao She's initial success in the American market came in part from his translator and Evan King's unauthorized decision to create a happy ending to what was intended to be a tragedy.

Although Chang migrated from China only to find herself awkwardly trapped by McCarthyism on the other side of the Iron Curtain, Chang's translanguaging practices not only question the restraints of modern Chinese literary and political discourse but also bespeak the equally manipulative ideological and cultural control of the Cold War United States. Knowing all too well the political and cultural rationale that prevents her work from being accepted by major American publishers, she nevertheless maintains her literary and aesthetic stance. Her deep suspicion of ideological hegemony of any kind is brought to the foreground by her prolific repetitions, or to be more precise, her translanguaging and trans-generic fission of works. In this way, self-translation/rewriting, or a kind of "literary schizogenesis," became her strategy of deterritorialization, a way of avoiding any political dominion over literary creation by either side of the Cold War dichotomy (Wang, *Modernity* 129). In today's heterotopic world where cultures converge, intersect, and interact in a multitude of ways and places, Chang's self-translation and rewriting presents less as a study of the schizophrenically divided world but more as a study of metamorphosis, transition, and hybridity across borders. Chang's Anglophone work was marked by a unique use of the Chinese-styled English, a forerunner of that of the critically celebrated Anglophone Chinese writer Ha Jin (Iwasaki 115). Through self-translation, they transgress personal boundaries and cultural constraints to detect a world of newness. For Chang, her unnerving rhetoric constitutes the new idiom of her late style, which epitomizes her reluctant metamorphosis and emphatically renounces possible reconciliation with her own time.

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