Eileen Chang in Letters: A Chinese American Writer in Diaspora, 1955–1995

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Abstract

This thesis applies digital humanities methods to analyze the Chinese American writer Eileen Chang's correspondence from 1955 to 1995. It explores the biographical and social contexts of her life in diaspora. Based on a dataset of 656 letters to five major correspondents and articles documenting Chang's correspondence activities, this study maps out Chang's life trajectory, visualizes the correspondence activities, and reconstructs Chang's social network. By combining the findings from digital humanities methods with select annotated readings of Chang's letters to her five major correspondents, it argues that Chang's life and career in the US were significantly shaped by her social network. In particular, the struggles in her first decade in the US largely resulted from her sporadic and inconsistent social connections. In the mid-1960s, a group of US-based Sinologist scholars entered Chang's social network and they played a significant role in stabilizing Chang's life in the US by providing her with job opportunities and connecting her with the Sinophone literary world in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Lastly, my social network analysis of Chang's connections with the literary world in Taiwan reveals how personal and institutional connections underpinned the "Eileen Chang fever" on the island.

Resumé

Cette thèse applique les méthodes des humanités numériques pour analyser la correspondance de l'écrivaine sino-américaine Eileen Chang de 1955 à 1995. Elle explore les contextes biographiques et sociaux de sa vie en diaspora. Sur la base d'un ensemble de données de 656 lettres à cinq correspondants principaux et d'articles documentant les activités de correspondance de Chang, cette étude trace la trajectoire de vie de Chang, visualise les activités de correspondance et reconstruit le réseau social de Chang. En combinant les résultats des méthodes des sciences humaines numériques avec des lectures annotées sélectionnées des lettres de Chang à ses cinq principaux correspondants, il soutient que la vie et la carrière de Chang aux États-Unis ont été considérablement façonnées par son réseau social. En particulier, les luttes de sa première décennie aux États-Unis résultaient en grande partie de ses relations sociales sporadiques et incohérentes. Au milieu des années 1960, un groupe d'universitaires sinologues basés aux États-Unis est entré dans le réseau social de Chang et ils ont joué un rôle important dans la stabilisation de la vie de Chang aux États-Unis en lui offrant des opportunités d'emploi et en la mettant en contact avec le monde littéraire sinophone à Taiwan et à Hong Kong. Enfin, mon analyse des réseaux sociaux sur les liens de Chang avec le monde littéraire à Taïwan révèle comment les liens personnels et institutionnels ont sous-tendu la « fièvre Eileen Chang » sur l'île.

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Introduction

Eileen Chang ([Zhang Ailing 张爱玲] 1920-1995) was one of the most celebrated Chinese (and later Chinese-American) writers in the twentieth century. In the 1940s, Chang established her literary fame as a modernist novelist and essayist in Shanghai. After the Communist takeover in 1949, she spent some years in Hong Kong and worked for the United States Information Service (USIS) as a translator and started to write and publish in English. From 1955 onward, Chang moved to the US, starting her 40 years of living diasporically. In her years in the US, Chang went through struggles and transformations in her career and life. In the early years, Chang had made great effort to write in English and publish her works in the Anglophone market, while taking temporary jobs and commissions such as writing screen scripts and translation to make ends meet. As her ambition in Anglophone literary world failed, Chang turned to write mainly in Chinese again in the 1960s when her audience in Taiwan and Hong Kong started to expand significantly. Later, this phenomenon grew to an "Eileen Chang fever." Meanwhile, Chang's financial status was gradually relieved, and she began to lead a secluded life till her death in 1995.

Beyond her literary writing, Eileen Chang wrote a considerable number of letters during those years in the US. For most of the time, Chang lived solitarily, and she primarily maintained her social relations through writing letters. Among them, one hundred and eighteen letters Chang wrote to the scholar Chih-tsing Hsia (C.T. Hsia, 1921–2013) have been both published in print and made public online by the USC Digital Library archive, titled "Ailing Zhang (Eileen Chang) Papers, 1919-1994."[1] Her eighty-four letters to the scholar and literary critic Zhuang Xinzheng

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[1] Ailing Zhang (Eileen Chang) Papers, 1919-1994. *USC Digital Library*. digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll92. Accessed 30 September 2020.

(1935–) have been published in the book *Zhang Ailing Zhuang Xinzheng tongxin ji* in 2012.[2]

Beyond these, there are letters that Chang wrote to different individuals that have been made

public in an online collection, *Zhang Ailing shuxin,* and three books, *Yuwang yanfan: Zhang*

Ailing de shuxin yinyuan, Ai yu shang: Zhang Ailing pingzhuan and *Renqing zhi mei*.[3] These

publications also include articles written by a selection of Chang's correspondents who

recollected their communications with her. In 2020, one of the major holders of Chang's letters

published four hundred and forty-eight of her previously-never-disclosed letters to close friends,

Stephen Soong (1919–1996) and Mae Soong (1919-2007), a couple with whom Chang

exchanged most of her letters. In total, we have a corpus of about six hundred and fifty-six letters

containing over 350,000 words along with over one thousand records of correspondence. This

corpus is of great value to the scholarship on Chang's career and life from 1955 to 1995 in

diaspora.

Until the present day, scholars have rarely conducted research on Chang's letters, and

digital humanities methods have not been applied to studying Chang and her works. However,

the study of both the metadata of her correspondence as well as the content of the letters through

digital methods would bring various perspectives to understanding Chang. For instance, the

metadata such as Chang's addresses can be used to map her travel routes that visualizes her

frequent relocations in her early years in the US, while the addresses of her recipients can show

the geographical distribution of her correspondence network. The dates of letters can be used to

visualize how Chang's correspondence changed through time. At the same time, people and

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[2] Eileen Chang and Zhuang Xinzheng. *Zhang Ailing Zhuang Xinzheng tongxin ji.* Xin Xing Chu Ban She, 2019.
[3] "*Zhang Ailing shuxin.*" *Du jiujiu mingzhu,* www.ksw8888.com/zhangailing/zhangailingshuxin/. Accessed 15 Oct. 2020. Su Weizhen, editor. *Yuwang yanfan: Zhang Ailing de shuxin yinyuan*. Yun Chen Wen Hua Shi Ye Gu Fen You Xian Gong Si, 2007. Zhou, Fenling. *Ai yu shang: Zhang Ailing pingzhuan*, Shanghai Yuan Dong Chu Ban She, 2007. Qiu, Yanming. *Renqing zhi mei: ji shi'er wei zuojia.* Chu ban ed., Yun Chen Wen Hua Shi Ye Gu Fen You Xian Gong Si, 2015.

events mentioned in the content of Chang's letters can be employed to reconstruct her social network. Therefore, analyzing behaviour around correspondence would provide a breadth of new insight into how social connections shaped Chang's career and life in diaspora.

Based on the text of six hundred and fifty-six letters to five major correspondents and the metadata of 1,114 letters with ninety-six recipients, I employed digital humanities methods including geographical mapping, data visualization, and social network analysis to explore Chang's social life. Combining the findings from the digital humanities methods with examination of the content of Chang's letters to her five major correspondents, I argue that Chang's social network were instrumental in sustaining and promoting Chang's career and life in her diaspora years in the US from 1955 to 1995. Specifically, this can be demonstrated by three aspects chronologically, which are also the three case studies of this thesis.

Firstly, the lack of consistency and effectiveness in Chang's social life and support networks contributed to Chang's struggles in her first decade in the US. The visualization of Chang's correspondence by year (Figure 3) shows that between 1955 and 1965, the average number of letters Chang wrote each year is much lower than the years after 1966. The lower volume of correspondence indicates a relatively smaller network than what she would enjoy in the later decades. The Figure of correspondence between 1955 to 1965 (Figure 4) shows that Chang's recipients during this period mainly include her best friends the Soong couple, Stephen Soong and Mae Soong, as well as individuals in a broad literary milieu in the US, or people who might be able to help her publish her works or get a job. As a new immigrant and a writer who aimed to succeed in a foreign society, social networks were very important for Chang to survive and thrive, and she did her best to develop and maintain connections with various resources. However, both the visualization of Chang's correspondence and the text of Chang's letters to

Mae Soong and Chang's husband Ferdinand Reyher (1891–1967) reveal that the connections that she scrambled to build in this period were sporadic and not very effective. Even her relationship with the Soong couple was not stable and faced challenges. This limited and ineffective network contributed to Chang's struggles not only in her career, of which one significant symptom was the grueling process of *The Rouge of the North*'s publication, but also in her personal life plagued by frequent relocations and financial difficulties in her early years in the US.

Secondly, I explore Chang's interactions with Sinologist scholars and how her Sinologist network contributed to her career and life in diaspora. As the visualization of the number of Chang's letters to recipients per year (Figure 5) shows, in 1963, a critical figure in Chang's social network, C.T. Hsia, came into the scene. Hsia was a professor of Modern Chinese Literature at Columbia University and had wide connections with Sinologist scholars in the US, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The year of 1966 marks an abrupt surge in the volume of Chang's correspondence, and the three major correspondents were all Sinologist scholars rather than the Soong couple who dominated the volume of Chang's correspondence from 1955 to 1965. From then on, Chang's network with Sinologists started expanding, and eventually, Sinologists constituted a significant portion of her network (Figure 8). So, why did Chang keep wide connections with Sinologist scholars? How did this circle, especially the key figure C.T. Hsia, function in Chang's career and life? By examining Chang's letters to C.T. Hsia and Zhuang Xinzheng I found some clues. With their deep appreciation for Chang's literary accomplishment and their institutional resources, the scholars provided Chang with job opportunities and assistance in gaining funding for her writing. They also inspired Chang's writing interests and bridged her to a larger literary market in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Therefore, the academic and

institutional resources that Sinologist scholars brought to Chang was crucial in helping her, as an immigrant and a writer, to settle her career and stabilize her life in the US.

Finally, I discuss Chang's connections with the Sinophone literary circle in Taiwan and Hong Kong and how these connections can help us understand Chang's "return" as a Sinophone writer and her popularity in Taiwan. Both the visualization of Chang's correspondence (Figure 5) and Chang's social network graph (Figure 11) exhibit a Sinophone literary circle composed of writers, critics, editors, and publishers. The network was mainly based in Taiwan, as literary writing in mainland China was strictly controlled by the CCP regime and largely cut off from the Chinese-speaking communities outside of it in the 1960s and 1970s. The geographical distribution of Chang's correspondence (Figure 9, Figure 10) shows that from 1966 onward, Taipei was within the three most frequent correspondence destinations in the following three decades. Through reading Chang's letters, we can find the trend of Chang's increasingly frequent interactions with the Taiwanese Sinophone literary circle, which contributed to the changes in her writing activities. Before 1966, Chang made significant efforts to write in English and to publish her novels in the Anglophone literary market. In 1966, she published the Chinese translation of the novel *The Rouge of the North* in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and after that, Chang turned to write mainly in Chinese again. Meanwhile, during the 1960s and 1970s, there was an "Eileen Chang fever" in Taiwan. The graph of the Sinophone literary network and highly connected nodes in it, most of which are modernist writers, literary critics/scholars, editors, and publishers, illustrate a modernist literary movement that formed the context of this "Eileen Chang fever" in Taiwan. Chang's modernist writing fitted the trends of Taiwanese literature at the time.[4] She was also admired and imitated by a group of young Taiwanese writers. These all

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[4] For example, see Chang, Sung-sheng Yvonne. "Yuan Qiongqiong and the Rage for Eileen Zhang Among Taiwan's 'Feminine' Writers." *Modern Chinese Literature*, vol. 4, no. 1/2, 1988, pp. 201–223.

contributed to her popularity in Taiwan, which has lasted until today and spread to mainland China.

In the pages below, I will discuss how recent digital humanities scholarship has inspired and shaped my study on Eileen Chang's letters. In particular, I focus on the studies in social network analysis, data visualization, epistolary practices, and intellectual and literary communities. Then I will discuss how I employ digital humanities methodologies to analyze the patterns and changes in Chang's epistolary practices and reconstruct the social network of Chang's diasporic life in the US.

Literature Review

This study speaks to the growing fields of digital humanities and digital history, which employ social network analysis to visualize, explore, and interpret communications between a given group of people during a particular period. Eileen Chang's correspondence and interactions with other individuals can be visualized and understood as social networks. Social networks can be simply defined as a set of "nodes" which are connected by "ties." The nodes, also called actors, can be individuals, groups, and other entities that are related in some way with others; the ties, also called edges and links, represent the interactions or relationships between the nodes, which come in many types and are multidimensional. Social networks deserve to be analyzed given that "in the world of social networks, actors never act in isolation. Instead, they influence and are influenced by others" (Yang, et al. 4). Yang, et al. point out that "one of the biggest advantages of social network analysis is that it helps address the multilevel phenomenon by combining individual-level (micro-level) behavior with macro-level environments. [...] The network perspective makes it easier to build the connection between the individual behavior and

the systemic changes or vice versa" (Yang, et al. 17). Therefore, examining social networks can bring new knowledge and insight into a subject. There are a number of studies in the humanities that adopt social network analysis, investigate different levels of structure of the networks, and utilize structure features and theories to understand their subjects. In the following section, I will elaborate upon these and discuss my study as a mode of intervention into a broader set of literature.

My study is first inspired by the Mapping the Republic of Letters project carried out by a team of researchers at Stanford University. This project aims to map and visualize the intellectual networks and exchanges within what is termed the "Republic of Letters" during the Enlightenment. It probes three types of networks established by this intellectual community: the networks of correspondence, the networks created by publication dissemination, and the physical networks brought about by travel. The project is made up of a series of case studies that vary in type, geographic range, time period, and scope. Each of these case studies presents visualizations of the network, which usually contain information of multiple aspects of the subjects and show the patterns or the newly revealed reality. At the same time, they have made a methodological contribution—the data visualization tools such as Palladio (Mapping the Republic of Letters). Concurrently, they have provided their data schema—a visualization of the data tables. The schema not only shows how they build the metadata but also provides references for others who work on similar projects.

With respect to my project, the correspondence networks and travel networks conducted in Mapping the Republic of Letters provide valuable references for me to develop Eileen Chang's correspondence network and to map her travel trajectory and the geographical distribution of recipients. Some of Mapping the Republic Letters' case studies discuss how to

formulate research questions and arguments when handling big data and explores specific problems while working with digital approaches. The authors have also pointed out the importance and modes of combining traditional research approaches with digital humanities methodologies, etc. In the following section of this literature review, I will elaborate upon three case studies to illustrate essential questions and themes demonstrated by this group of researchers, which would inspire and foreground the project on Eileen Chang that you have before you.

The first study I focus on is "The Correspondence Network of Benjamin Franklin: The London Decades." In the article produced in this case study, "Where is America in the Republic of Letters?" Caroline Winterer contends that one goal of her work is to explore the limits of quantitative analysis and the visualization of the Republic of Letters, as well as the fact that digital methodology cannot and should not replace the traditional approaches of the humanist (Winterer 598). Winterer points out three disadvantages that make quantitative data analysis in humanities weak in dealing with "grey-area questions that historians usually delight in tackling" (Winterer 598). The first disadvantage is that only discrete data such as person and location can be digitally analyzed, but not all useful information can be simplified to data points. Secondly, the numerical results need insight and "a larger numerical context" (Winterer 598) to be interpreted. Thirdly, the visualization only provides physical features of the intellectual communication and not necessarily the ideas that the intellectuals exchanged. Therefore, a close reading of the text is still necessary.

In her study of American intellectuals in the Republic of Letters, Winterer points out the specific problems in the digitization of the data of letters of Benjamin Franklin. These include the difficulty of identifying the authors and recipients of the letters when a group wrote to

different people and the letters were sent in one packet (Winterer 608). Moreover, she highlights the difficulty of determining what is more important: the geographical locations or the identities of the writer and recipient (Winterer 608). Furthermore, in the attempt to determine where the intellectual centers and peripheries were, Winterer brings up the issue that the cartographic map of the correspondence created illusions and distortions. In particular, the Atlantic Ocean would make American authors appear more peripheral and exotic to the "cosmopolitan" Europe (Winterer 611). In comparing geographical visualization of Benjamin Franklin's correspondence network with Voltaire's, she found that one fact can be interpreted differently: many of Franklin's letters crossed the Atlantic, while only a few of Voltaire's did, so it can be interpreted that Franklin was either more peripheral than Voltaire to the Republic of Letters or more worldly than Voltaire (Winterer 611). Therefore, Winterer argues that non-geographical visualization, such as network graphs, is useful to correct the illusion generated in geographical visualization.

The limitation of quantitative analysis in humanities that Winterer mentions brings to light the need for caution when looking at data and quantitative results and the necessity of integrating the examination of the text into analysis. How to determine the significance of the geographical data and how to interpret cartographic maps are questions that needed to be kept in mind when mapping Eileen Chang's correspondence networks. In Chang's case, for example, even though a large number of Chang's letters were sent within the US, the recipients are still Chinese nationals who were living in the US. Therefore, it does not mean that she developed deep connections with Americans, and her network is still narrow in terms of diversity in the recipients' national origins.

The second case study I would like to mention is "How England Fell off the Map of Voltaire's Enlightenment." In this study, Dan Edelstein and Biliana Kassabova probe into

Voltaire's correspondence and challenge the long-standing and widely held view that England and thoughts from England in the late 1720s played pivotal roles in the development of Voltaire's intellectual works. They combine the findings in the geographical visualization of Voltaire's correspondence network with the close reading of Voltaire's letters, fiction, and historical works to reconstruct his arguments and thoughts about England (Edelstein and Kassabova 29).

By mapping Voltaire's correspondence network throughout his life, the authors have found that England was a cold spot in this network, which counters the belief held by historians that the country was important to his intellectual life (Edelstein and Kassabova 33). They argue that it is not a data glitch, although the location data of a large portion of letters is missing, and a great number of letters of Voltaire are lost. To support their argument, they use the "nationality" of recipients as the representation of cultural identity instead of the location. At the same time, they contend that the chance is very small that most of the lost letters belonged to English correspondence since by that time Voltaire was already very famous, and the English correspondents were proud to have him among them. Even if most of the letters before 1730, when Voltaire had spent thirty-three months in England, were lost, the volume of Voltaire's English correspondence remained very small through the rest of his life comparing to his correspondence to other countries such as Germany and Italy (Edelstein and Kassabova 38).

Furthermore, to explain the discrepancy between the findings from the correspondence network and the idea of England's critical impact on Voltaire, Edelstein and Kassabova emphasize the need for analyzing the content of Voltaire's 179 letters to British correspondents and his works. The letters show that Voltaire wrote few letters to renowned figures in England, and in the limited number of letters to those people, he discussed insubstantial matters (Edelstein

and Kassabova 41). In his letters to two major British correspondents, Sir Everard Fawkner and George Keate, Voltaire showed pessimistic attitudes towards England: "The sun had already set on England's empire of the mind" (Edelstein and Kassabova 44). By analyzing Voltaire's work *Letters Concerning the English Nation* published in 1733, three years after he came back from England, Edelstein and Kassabova suggest that Voltaire praised the English effusively, and his applause to England was toward its past (Edelstein and Kassabova 49). Moreover, through the reading of his works, they find that Voltaire believed that England owed its cultural glory to France (Edelstein and Kassabova 51). To sum up, the researchers assert that the standard narrative about Voltaire's appreciation of England is untenable, and he had a pre-existing admiration for England and its culture from a period in which English was under heavy French influence. This study underscores the ability of quantitative analysis of historical archives to reveal obscured realities and pose questions on the historical phenomena. More importantly, Edelstein and Kassabova raise questions about the surprising findings revealed by data visualization, then formulate arguments, and support them with both quantitative and qualitative analysis of Voltaire's texts. Thus, they provide a good example of conducting the study driven by large-scale data of correspondence and visualization of the network.

The third case study from Mapping the Republic of Letters is "British Architects on the Grand Tour Eighteenth Century." Ceserani et al. visualize the tours of sixty-nine English travelers, who were architects or whose most distinctive interest in visiting Italy was architecture during the Grand Tour. Studying the Grand Tour faces challenges brought by the lack of archival records and the dispersal of historical documents. Among the limited resources, only a small portion of prominent travelers' documents have drawn attentions of scholars. Ceserani et al. assert that applying digital approaches allows them to "cast an unusually wide net, bringing into

the picture travelers both prominent and obscure, who together represent a far more diverse scope of touristic experiences" (426). Based on the data from the digitized 1997 prosopographical *Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy*, *1701–1800,* they map out the places visited by English architects with the demonstration of the total number and timeframes of the visits (Ceserani et al 427). Meanwhile, they make a time chart to show the places each architect visited, the date of their travel, and the lengths of their stay (Ceserani et al 437). They also make a set of network graphs on travelers' education, funding, societies, and employment to explore their educational background, the sources of their funding, their affiliations with institutions, and the travel's impact on their future career (Ceserani et al 443). Those visualizations show patterns within and among architectural travel routes. The patterns combined with the qualitative analysis of the biographical information of the Grand Tourists allow the authors to "catch a glimpse of a history of architecture that goes beyond the influence of Italian architectural models on British thought and design" (Ceserani et al. 427). Meanwhile, this architectural history includes the significance of the ordinary architects who are often overshadowed by the famous ones.

Ceserani et al. illustrate the idea that the quantitative study of the data and visualization can provide a more inclusive and comprehensive picture of the subject, and that is where new knowledge is likely to emerge, which is also true for my study. Chang sent letters to around one hundred different recipients. However, only limited correspondence of Chang has been documented in published sources. As Chang refrained from meeting people in person and writing letters was the primary way that she maintained social connections, the ostensibly limited number of consistent recipients thus contributed to the assertion that Chang led an isolated and reclusive life (Louie 13). Letters to many of Chang's recipients are scattered in dispersed

resources, and a large part of the information of correspondence activities only existed in the content of her letters. Collecting this data and visualizing it shows a new and broader picture of Chang's social life. Also, the way that Ceserani et al. built the timechart and the graphs of education and employment has inspired my visualization of Chang's life, including correspondence, the location timechart, and her recipients' occupational network graph.

Apart from Mapping the Republic of Letters, the study "Protestant Letter Networks in the Reign of Mary I: A Quantitative Approach" also focuses on correspondence networks and analyzes how a community was maintained by networks. Ruth Ahnert and Sebastian E. Ahnert have explored 289 letters to develop networks of the underground Protestant communities in England, which operated in the Catholic reign of Mary I. They identify relationships between Protestant members documented in the letters and build a network graph (Ahnert R., and Ahnert S.E. 8). The network has helped them formulate research questions: "To what extent was the survival of Protestantism in Marian England ensured by them?" (Ahnert R., and Ahnert S.E. 12). Then, they utilize quantitative measurements, including betweenness, eigenvector centrality, and robustness to analyze the network infrastructure. Putting the infrastructural nodes into seven categories, they point out that nodes sharing similar properties tended to have the same functions in the network and the categorization of nodes also helps discern general rules for the entire structure of the network (Ahnert R., and Ahnert S.E. 20). Furthermore, they analyze how the Protestant community responded to and survived internal attack by Freewillers and outer attack by the authorities from a network perspective (Ahnert R., and Ahnert S.E. 29).

Epistolary conventions during the era of Mary I are essential evidence of information exchange and social connection. In this way, this case study proves highly important for my thesis and its potential consequences. The authors create the social network of the Protestant

community in England not only based on the exchange of letters but also through digging the connections recorded in the content of letters. This approach provides a useful reference for building Eileen Chang's social networks by digging through her own documentation of correspondence in her letters, based on which we can learn how Chang established her source of income and seek assistance and support for subsistence in her years in the US.

The network theory, such as betweenness, eigenvector centrality, and robustness, used to reconstruct the network infrastructure of the Protestant community and explain how the community functioned and was sustained are also helpful to my case studies. However, in contrast to the network within the Protestant community based on the correspondence of all members, Chang's network centers on her personal correspondence.

Besides the betweenness and eigenvector centrality, humanities scholars also apply network concepts and measurements such as geodesic distance, network diameter, network density, and degree centrality to analyze the social network and interpret research subjects. Sam Alexander looks into the social scales of English modernist fiction through developing character networks of the modernist writer Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Dos Passos's *U.S.A,* and the Victorian writer Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* (Alexander 3). He adopts network measurements to those character networks to show how the social scales in fiction simultaneously reveal the social reality of the time period.

Firstly, Alexander asserts that the social scale of a novel does not seem to be strictly determined by its length. By comparing the geodesic distance, the smallest number of steps necessary to connect two nodes, and network diameter, the maximum geodesic distance of the character networks of both *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Our Mutual Friend*, the study shows that though *Our Mutual Friend* is more than seven times as long as *Mrs. Dalloway*, the two networks share

the same network diameter of 6, indicating that they share the same social scale. Moreover, Alexander argues that network diameter, which means the longest shortest path between two characters, is, in fact, a measure of disconnection and a count of missing events—of conversations that do not happen, and the missed encounters create the white space in the network. These negative social spaces can be measured by network density. Alexander defines this as such: "Network density is computed by dividing the total number of actual edges in a network by the total number of possible edges—in other words, by dividing the number of communications between characters in a novel by the number we would get if every single character communicated with every other character." (Alexander 6). Through comparing the network density of *Mrs. Dalloway*, *U.S.A*, and *Our Mutual Friend*, Alexander contends that Dickens uses a densely connected web to undermine social hierarchy by exposing hidden connections between different social worlds, while Woolf and Dos Passos "create porous networks, increase the distances between characters, and expose social gaps that are virtually unbridgeable" (Alexander 7).

Furthermore, based on the large number of the one-degree characters and the less connected components in the networks, Alexander reveals the "centrifugal tendency" in modernist novels, which means bringing forward the secondary characters and eclipsing the relationships of the main character. However, Alexander points out that in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *U.S.A.* "the center of the novel's narrative network is also a locus of power and influence that some characters can never access" (Alexander 10), and "narrative connection embodies the force of social networks as aggregators of power and influence" (Alexander 15) by applying the centrality theories. Alexander concludes that "Both by multiplying their characters and by

minimizing the density of the relations between them, Woolf and Dos Passos embed their plots in a vast social space that reminds readers of this inevitable act of exclusion" (Alexander 15).

Alexander's study exhibits the potential of network theories in the analysis of texts. Measuring the geodesic distance, network diameter, etc., unveils the underlying patterns of the construction of fiction by modernist writers and also reflects the social facts to some degree. Alexander's interpretation of the network diameter as a measure of disconnection and missed encounters uses network density to illustrate negative social spaces, and as such, is an inspiring angle to examine the meaningfulness of a network. This is an important lesson in not only focusing on the centrality of dense connections but rather that the disconnection and the empty space can also hold meaning.

With regard to visualizing the network of intellectual communities, there are two examples that I would like to include. The project "What does the computer tell you about the relationship between Tang poets?" [5]employs network analysis on Chinese poets in the Tang Dynasty to discover how these prominent poets connected with each other and how the community looked like throughout the different periods of the dynasty (Qianjin). The Tang dynasty was a prosperous period for Chinese poetry, and many great poets emerged and thrived in this era. The poets interacted frequently, and their relations can be revealed by their poetry. The Tang poets often referred each other's works in their own poems, and many poems were composed for social purposes or written as tributes to other poets, and sometimes they exchanged opinions with each other in their poetic work. Thus, Qianjin Sixiansheng is able to develop directed network graphs of those poets based on "who mentioned whom in poems"

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[5] Qianjin, Sixiansheng. "What does the computer tell you about the relationship between Tang poets?" *Guokr*, 14 March 2017, www.guokr.com/article/442052. Accessed 2 February 2021.

relation (Qianjin). In the integrated network graph, two major sub-circles emerged, and the network graphs of each stage, from Early Tang, the Height of the Tang, Middle Tang, to Late Tang, also reveal the topography of the Tang poetic community in different periods (Qianjin). Some of the relationships, interactions, and anecdotes between poets are well known and played key roles in literary history. Some of the poems that poets composed as a communication with their peers or tributes to other poets are masterpieces, and the interaction of poets and the exchange of ideas boost the prosperity of Tang poems. The network graphs illustrate this active community in a visually compelling way. Another contribution of the project is to bring the infamous figures that often don't draw much attention into this bigger picture. As a result, the social network of 762 Tang poets formed within a timespan of almost three hundred years, which otherwise would remain scattered and submerged in over forty thousand poems, has provided a glimpse of a new perspective to look at the history of the Tang poems.

The second example is a more contemporary one that relies upon the network capacities of social media. Martin Grandjean explores the digital humanities community with a social network analysis of 2500 Twitter users identified as part of this community (Grandjean 1). He develops the network graph based on the relation of "who's following who" on Twitter. The graph shows a small world pattern; however, the density of the network is not high. In fact, the majority of the network is made up of weakly connected nodes as "more than half of the users follow less than 100 people and are themselves followed by less than 100 people" (Grandjean 4). He measures the centrality, including in-degree centrality, out-degree centrality, betweenness, and Eigenvector centrality, to interpret the structural features of this network, and situate the key members in the community. He also points out that "the language factor strongly influences the

network structure": the French-speaking and German-speaking communities are clearly detached from the main community (Grandjean 13).

These varied network analysis projects have provided valuable references and models for my reconstruction of Eileen Chang's social networks and inspired my analysis of how these networks reveal Chang's connections with the Sinologists circle and the Sinophone literary circle in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Also, these projects show how to analyze different measurements of network centrality, which can also be applied in Chang's social network to identify the roles of important nodes in the network.

Lastly, social network analysis can also provide useful insights in measuring the flow of information and the historical importance of media. For example, Elizabeth A. Bond builds a network of letters to the editor on newspapers written by French men and women during the 1770s and 1780s to investigate how the general educated public made sense of their world during the Enlightenment and how the ideas disseminated among the media of newspaper (Bond 535). From around thirty-five hundred letters published in sixteen Parisian and provincial newspapers during the last two decades of the Old Regime, Bond focuses on the republished letters to the editor, which is about 10 percent of the whole corpus. She employs a directed network in which nodes are newspapers, and each tie with the arrow means one letter reprinted from one paper to another (Bond 554). This directed network demonstrates which publications were most often cited and locates the sites from which they gathered information.

Moreover, tracing the routes of information transfer reveals the flow of popular ideas and tracks the interactions among provincial papers, the Parisian press, and more specialized publications. By further analyzing this information network, Bond discovers that the varied sources of information that appeared in the provincial newspapers are a reflection of the

demographic makeup of the site where the paper was published. Additionally, the reprinting of the letters had connected the provinces to regional centers and to the information hub of Paris, and these connections tended to favor information sharing between publications in geographically proximate places. Beyond this, information was not diffused in a top-down manner. Instead, the provincial press preferred information that appealed to local readership.

In line with other research, Bond's study invites us to rethink the taken-for-granted models of information flow determined by geographic and political structures. As I will discuss in the case of Eileen Chang, the reception of Chang's work was, of course, shaped by geopolitical factors in the Cold War era but also conditioned by friendship and other intimate and contingent connections.

The research discussed above provides valuable examples with regard to social network analysis, geographic mapping, and data visualization in order to study issues in literary, cultural, and political histories. They have inspired my study of Eileen Chang's letters. By analyzing and visualizing the metadata of Chang's letters, we can discern the pattern of Chang's correspondence and reconstruct the social network that Chang established and maintained during her years in the US. Such a network can help us understand how Chang faced the challenges in starting a new life and a writing career in the US. In particular, how she found sources of income and support in a foreign country, especially in the 1950s and 1960s when the Cold War dominated the political climate in the US. My analysis will also help identify key individuals as well as institutions who helped Chang survive and thrive in the US. Combining with reading the content of letters, this study will significantly enrich our understanding of the history of Chang's diasporic life in America.

Hence, the digital humanities methods have provided methodological tools for researchers to ask and tackle new research questions and generate creative understandings of old ones. For this study, the abovementioned studies inform the ways in which I model and structure the data collected from Eileen Chang's personal letters and formulate questions to reconstruct and analyze her social life in her diasporic years (1955–1995). Building on these preceding studies, my project will further demonstrate how social network analysis, geographic mapping, and data visualization can help analyze the issues and historical actors shaping the Chang's lived experience and the changes in her career during her years in the US, as well as testing and reflecting upon the limitations of digital humanities methods broadly.

Methodology

The project commences with data preparation, a fundamental step directing the project. This process includes corpus building, data cleansing, and metadata formation for further analysis. The data has two parts: the texts of six hundred and fifty-six letters Chang wrote to her five main recipients and the metadata of all letters that Chang wrote to all recipients that have been identified and collected. The six hundred and fifty-six letters are published in four books, and five hundred and thirty-eight letters in two books were not digitized and needed to OCR (Optical Character Recognition). Among five hundred and thirty-eight letters, eighty-four letters that Chang wrote to Zhuang Xinzheng and six letters that Chang wrote to Ferdinand Reyher are published in simplified Chinese, and four hundred and forty-eight letters that Chang wrote to the Soong couple are published in traditional Chinese and in vertical composition. I scanned two books and performed OCR to digitize them. The OCRSpace is a free online OCR API that can process simplified Chinese, English, and horizontal composition text nicely, but it is weak with

OCR on the text in the vertical composition, and the text with mixed Chinese and English. Chang frequently used English words and phrases when writing letters in Chinese, especially in letters to the Soong couples, thus making the OCR process more difficult. To cope with four hundred and forty-eight letters that are in traditional Chinese with English phrases in the vertical composition, the paid online OCR tool Convertio has a very high recognition rate. However, English in italic and some English words in vertical composition are hard to recognize. Therefore, the text after OCR contains typos and messy words, which need to be corrected manually. In total, I have obtained a digitized corpus of about 350,000 Chinese words.

Beyond five main recipients, Chang also wrote to many others. The information of those letters can be found in two printed books, *Yuwang Yanfan: Zhang Ailing de Shuxin Yinyuan* and *Ai yu Shang: Zhang Ailing Pingzhuan*, in which some scholars, writers, and editors recall their correspondence with Chang. In addition, one digital archive, titled "Zhang Ailing Shuxin," selects letters that Chang wrote to some recipients.[6] I also collected Chang's correspondence information from news and magazine articles online. During the OCR process and the preliminary reading of the six hundred and fifty-six letters, I found Chang mentioned much her correspondence activities in those letters. As a result, I extracted information of over 300 letters to other recipients in that corpus. In total, I have gathered the information of 1,114 letters to 96 recipients from the sources mentioned above.

Also, in her letters, Chang talked about various people and mentioned their relationships in both direct and indirect ways. For some people, Chang mentioned their relationships straightforwardly. For example, she once wrote, "He is my aunt's boss at that time" (Chang, "Shuxin Ji" 139)[7], "They married before I left Shanghai" (Chang, "Shuxin Ji" 139), and "The

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[6] The collection can be accessed at: https://www.ksw8888.com/zhangailing/zhangailingshuxin/.
[7] All quotes from Chang's letters are my translation.

poet Ye Shan and her wife, Nora, are proteges of the Chen couple. Therefore, Chen appointed Nora as my assistant" (Chang, "Shuxin Ji" 213). In most instances, Chang wrote the interactions among people, for instance, "Hu Shih told me that Stephen mentioned me in his letters to him, and I am really grateful for that" (Chang, "Shuxin Ji" 32), and "Dick introduced me to Frillmann, or if there was any translation work that I can do, so I was going to write to make an appointment" (Chang, "Shuxin Ji" 30). Also, Chang hinted at other people's relationships in her letters. For instance, she wrote, "Shui Jing told me that Vivian Hsu suggests that the series which Leo Ou-fan Lee and Joseph Lau are editing should have a book titled 'Women in Modern Chinese Fiction,' which should include my fiction *Love in a Fallen City*" (Chang, "Shuxin Ji" 416). From this passage, we can infer that Leo Ou-fan Lee, Joseph Lau, and Vivian Hsu knew and worked with each other, and Shui Jing knew Vivian Hsu as well. In fact, Leo Ou-fan Lee and Joseph Lau, together with others that include Lucy Chen and Bai Xianyong, who were also mentioned in Chang's letters, established a literature magazine *Xiandai Wenxue* (現代文學 Modern Literature) when they were studying in Taiwan. When Chang mentioned them in the letter, they were both professors in universities in the US. Vivian Hsu was a professor at Oberlin College, Ohio, and Shui Jing was teaching at California State University, Los Angeles. Besides, C.T. Hsia and Zhuang Xinzheng also provided some background of people in letters from Chang in their books, which help identify some interpersonal links. Moreover, in the process of examining the biographies of individuals mentioned in Chang's letters, I am able to establish their relationships in archives such as Wikipedia or news and magazine articles. To conclude, I chose people whom Chang had noted that they knew each other and whom she had met and contacted to form their links with Chang. Meanwhile, I have constructed the links among other people by the information mentioned above.

The next step is to build data tables for analysis. Firstly, to visualize the correspondence, I made a table containing metadata of all letters. The metadata includes sending date, recipient's name, recipient's nationality, recipient's gender, recipient's occupation, recipient's location, the coordinate of recipient's location, and Chang's location. Chang's location from 1955 onward was identified mainly through the address provided along with the letters in *Zhang Ailing Zhuang Xinzheng tongxin ji*, the address recorded in the USC Digital Library archive "Ailing Zhang (Eileen Chang) Papers, 1919-1994", and from the letters she wrote to the Soong couple. As such, my investigations allow me to uncover variables including gender, nationality, occupation, and location either in Chang's letter or in my digital research on these parameters. Preparing the metadata is a time and labor-intensive process in which I have referenced multiple sources to identify specific pieces of information on the letters, and the date of some letters could only be inferred according to their content. Secondly, I make two tables of Chang's travel information in order to map her life trajectory: one is her travel routes between cities throughout her life, another one is her moving trajectory within Shanghai. Chang's living locations between 1920 and 1954 are well documented. The information of places where she lived after 1955 comes from letters' metadata. Furthermore, for the social network analysis, I form a set of node tables and edge tables. The original node table and edge table contain all 189 individuals' metadata and the 473 pairs of relationships among them. To build a Sinophone literary network centered on Chang, from the original node table, I select nodes whose occupation is one of "writer, literary translator, literary critic, editor, journalist, and publisher," and meanwhile, their nationality is China, Taiwan (ROC), or Hong Kong. Next, I extract the edges between these nodes from the original edge table. The scholar node table includes the metadata of all Sinologist

scholars. The data preparation is a dynamic process in which I need to update data along the way or modify the tables in the research process.

The digital analysis of the data has three aspects. Firstly, I map out Chang's life trajectory using ArcGIS Online. One map is of Chang's living locations and her travel routes on the city level from 1920 to 1995. Another one is of the places where she once lived and her moving trajectories in Shanghai between 1928 to 1952. To map both the spatial and temporal information of Chang's trajectory, I have encoded the geographic data with not only the coordinates of the places but also the time periods of her stay and the amounts of time in each place. On the map, the places are displayed as dots, and how long Chang had been living in each place is differentiated by the scales of the dot. The details of when and where she lived are shown by pop-up lists when the dot is clicked on.

Secondly, I visualize Chang's correspondence data in Tableau. Tableau is powerful as it provides various visualization methods, styles, and data analysis functions, which allows users to explore and display data in different ways and inspires new findings. To start with, I have visualized the distribution of the number of letters by year to see how the correspondence activities changed by time and by recipients to identify important individuals. Then I combined both to find how many letters went to whom each year and how important recipients changed according to time. Tableau allows me to investigate many variables at one time. For example, I have visualized the number of recipients and the number of letters by location according to years. Furthermore, I have mapped the recipients' geographical distribution to demonstrate the volume of correspondence to each location by the scale and color of the mark. I also add a filter of years to see the change of geographical distribution by time. In exploring the aspects such as gender, nationality, and occupation, I analyze not only the gender, nationality, and occupation

distribution of the recipients but also the number of letters that recipients of different genders, nationalities, and occupations received.

Thirdly, I visualize the correspondence network of Chang through Cytoscape. I have first created a network graph with all the nodes and connections. Based on that, I explore the network by adding properties to nodes, such as gender, nationality, and location, to see if it displays patterns. In the visualization of the correspondence data, I have already identified that the Sinologists constitute a significant part of Chang's recipients; therefore, I highlight nodes that have the property of "scholar" to investigate how Sinologist scholars contributed to Chang's social life. Moreover, I have constructed a graph of the Sinophone literary circle based on the data of Sinophone literary intellectuals extracted from the whole data set. Through the "Analyze Network" function, I explore different measurements, such as network diameter, network density, degree centrality, betweenness centrality, and Eigenvector centrality, to find out which factor is meaningful to this network. At last, I differentiate the nodes in the Sinophone literary network by scale and color according to their degree centrality.

Beyond the digital methods, an examination of the letters' content is also indispensable in this study. In data collection and preparation, I extract Chang's correspondence data by searching keywords such as "*xin* 信 (letter)," "*ji* 寄 (send)," "*hui* 回 (reply)," and "*lianxi* 联系 (contact)," and then read the sentences and their contexts to determine if Chang wrote a letter. To extract the relationship from the letters, I first search names in the text, which I have extracted during the OCR process, and then read the text to identify the relationship among the individuals that I have mentioned above. This form of reading and data extraction is necessary because people and their relationships were mentioned randomly in letters, and there is no apparent pattern to help determine their relationship. For instance, two individuals have interactions when they appear in

the same scene in a play, but we cannot be sure that they have interactions when their names appear in one sentence or in the same letter. Thus, we need to read the text to decide.

The content of the letters is also crucial in discussing the results from digital methods. In this study, the dots and lines on the map can visually represent Chang's extensive movements and demonstrate the instability of her life. Still, the context and historical events that led to Chang's travels and instability needed to be considered, and other aspects of Chang's life, such as her financial situation, can only be understood from the text itself. Though the visualization of the correspondence data provides various angles to investigate Chang's correspondence activities and reveals patterns, changes, and anomalies, it is limited in probing the reasons behind the scenes, which requires further analysis of the content of Chang's letters. Therefore, the combination of digital methods and textual analysis is necessary for studying Chang's correspondence.

In the analysis that follows, I combine these DH methods with textual analysis of Chang's letters to reconstruct Chang's social life in diaspora. As mentioned in the Introduction, the case studies follow chronological order. Before we delve into Chang's first decade in the US, I want to provide the historical context of the start of her diasporic life. I highlight that by the time she left China in 1952, Chang entertained very limited social connections and especially that she did not have meaningful connections and bonds with family and friends in China. Hence, rebuilding a network in the US would be challenging but also critical for Chang's survival as a new immigrant.

Case Study

<div align="center">

Prior to Exile

</div>

Leaving China for the rest of her life was not a difficult decision for Eileen Chang to make in 1952. She had little attachment and connections with her family, and the political situation in the early years of the Communist regime had made her impossible to stay. Since her childhood, Chang's family life was hardly happy. She was born into a wealthy and privileged, yet declining, family in 1920 in Shanghai. In the 1920s, his father served shortly in the warlord government in Tianjin, where he became addicted to opium. Chang's mother lived a self-indulgent bohemian life, frequently traveling to Europe, and was largely absent in Chang's childhood. The couple divorced in 1930, and Chang lived with her father until 1938 when she could no longer stand her father's abuse and escaped to living with her mother.[8] However, Chang did not warm up with her mother as well. Her mother left after only two years living with Chang. In Chang's own words, she felt aloof and remote from her mother (Zhang, "Written on Water" 161). Chang was not close to her brother Zijing as well, whom she described as sickly, greedy in eating, and unpromising in *Whispers* (Zhang, "Written on Water" 161). The family member that Chang spent most time with was her paternal aunt, who filled much of the void left by her abusive father and absentee mother. (Figure 1 shows that Chang's frequent relocation caused mainly by her familial changes)

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[8] For more details about Chang's early years in her life, see Yu, Bin 余彬. *Zhang Ailing zhuan* 张爱玲传. Di 1 ban ed., Guangxi Shi Fan Da Xue Chu Ban She, 2001.

Figure 1 Eileen Chang in Shanghai
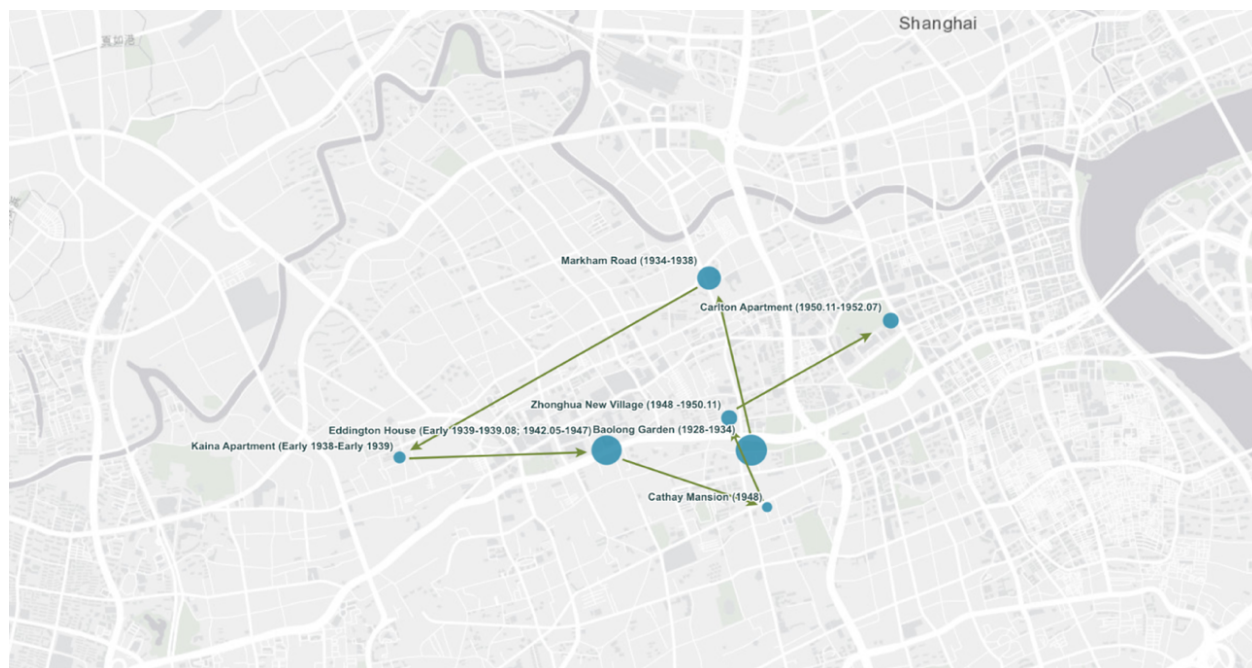
Chang's living places and moving trajectory in Shanghai between 1928 and 1939, and between 1942 and 1952; the larger the dot, the longer she lived in the place. (https://arcg.is/0DC8fC)

The political realities in China after 1949 also made it clear that Chang could leave with little hesitancy. On the one hand, as the former wife of a notorious Japanese collaborator, Hu Lancheng,[9] and descending from a privileged family from the "feudal elite," Chang faced potential peril of political prosecution. On the other hand, her "insistence of being 'apolitical'" also made it hard for her to continue to live as a writer in post-1949 Mainland China (Louie 9).

Chang's detachment from Mainland China could also be understood through the two anti-Communist novels that written during 1952 to 1955 in Hong Kong. In 1952, Chang moved to Hong Kong and was recruited by Richard M. McCarthy (1921–2008) to serve in the United States Information Service in Hong Kong. During her service from 1952 to 1955, Chang wrote

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[9] Hu Lancheng served as the undersecretary in the Ministry of Information of Wang Jingwei's puppet regime. Their marriage lasted from 1944 to 1946.

two anti-Communist novels, *Rice Sprout Song* and *Naked Earth*.[10] The two novels, criticizing the

land reform movements, clearly expressed Chang's distrust of the Communist regime in the

mainland. (Chang's relocation caused by political climate can be illustrated by her travel routes

in Figure 2)

Figure 2 Eileen Chang's Life Trajectory
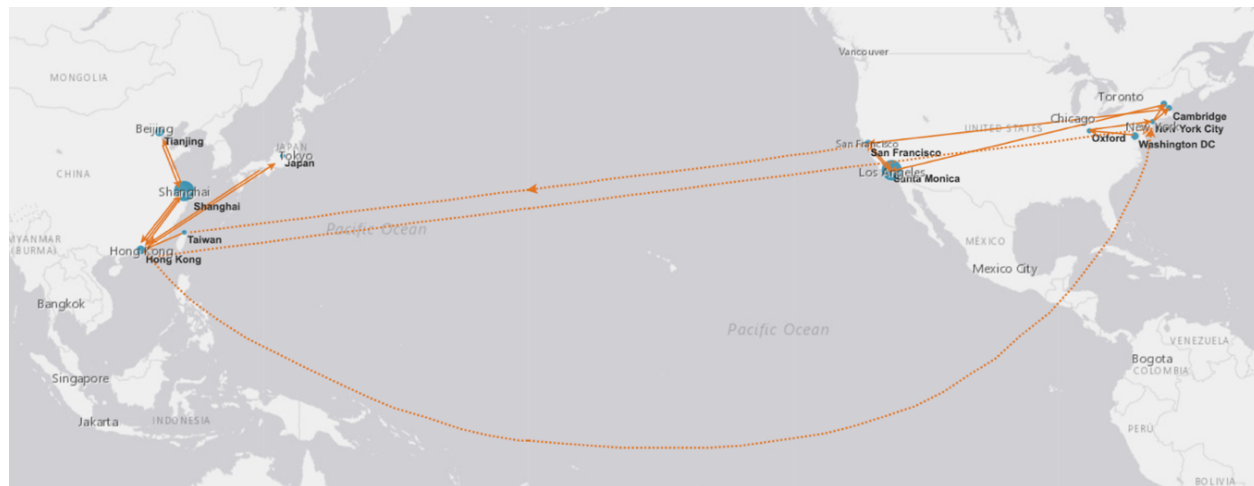
This map provides a visual context of Chang's life trajectory in time and space (https://arcg.is/111WL8). The length of time she lived in each place is marked by the scale of the dot. The larger the dot, the longer she stayed in the place. The details of when and where she lived are shown in the pop-up list.

By the time she arrived in New York in 1955, Chang had lived through a turbulent time

both in terms of dramatic family misfortune and chaotic social and political realities. However,

as a new immigrant from China and arriving at the beginning stage of the Cold War, Chang

faced a series of challenges in establishing herself in the US. The brief Hong Kong years, from

1952 to 1955, may have served as a springboard for Chang to start a career in the US. Her

recruiter at the USIS, Richard M. McCarthy, helped her establish a hopeful network in the US to

start a career as a writer.

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[10] For a brief analysis of the two novels, see David Der-wei Wang, "Reinventing National History: Communist and Anti-Communist Fiction of the Mid-Twentieth Century," 50–53.

Maybe Chang's difficult family life and the tumultuous social and political realities had created little attachment to China for Chang and made her decision to start a diasporic life easier. However, as the following pages will show, the social network that McCarthy brokered provided only limited assistance. The first case study will, through Chang's letters, demonstrate how Chang struggled for subsistence in her personal life and career with a limited and inconsistent social network.

Struggle in the Early Years, 1955-1965

This section discusses the first decade of Chang's life in the US. From 1955 to 1965, Chang lived an extremely insecure life in America. She struggled for subsistence through a relatively limited social network. Almost cut off from other family members and friends in the Mainland China, Chang had to largely rely on a network that took form during her three years in Hong Kong to build connections in the US. As we will see more details below, this new network in the US, primarily composed of her literary agent, writers, editors, and publishers, was mainly brokered by Richard M. McCarthy. However, this network provided Chang with only limited and often inconsistent assistance in establishing her career as a writer in the new country.

To begin with our analysis, it is helpful to take a look at the trends, clusters, and anomalies in Chang's correspondence over the decades. Figure 3 visualizes the number of letters sent by Chang each year from 1955 to 1995. We can identify a cluster between 1955 and 1965. The average number of letters Chang wrote each year during this period is much lower than the years after 1966. Although Chang still socialized with people in person then, the lower volume

of correspondence during those years can still indicate that she had relatively limited social connections and a smaller network than what she would enjoy in the later decades.[11]

Figure 3 Number of Letters by Year

(https://public.tableau.com/profile/robyn5381#!/vizhome/EileenChangsCorrespondencefinal/LettersbyYear)
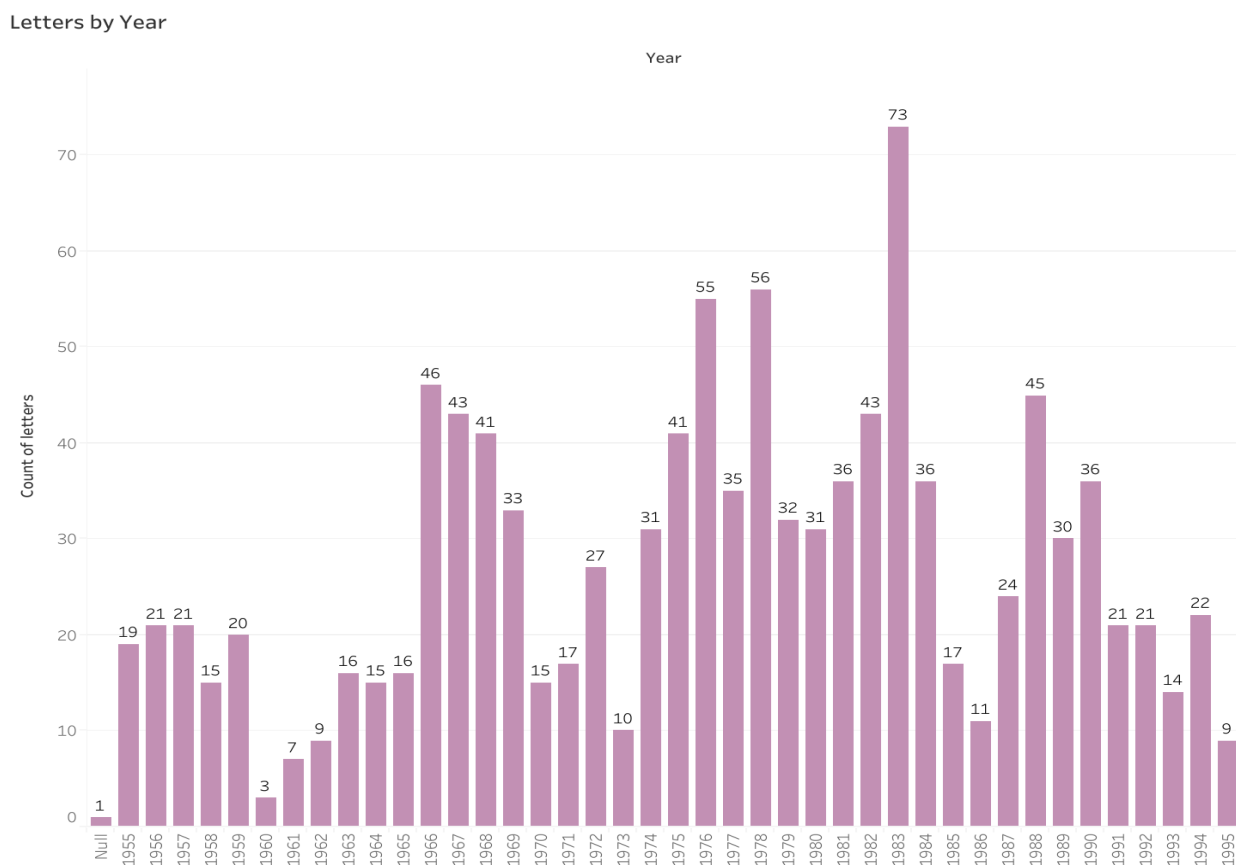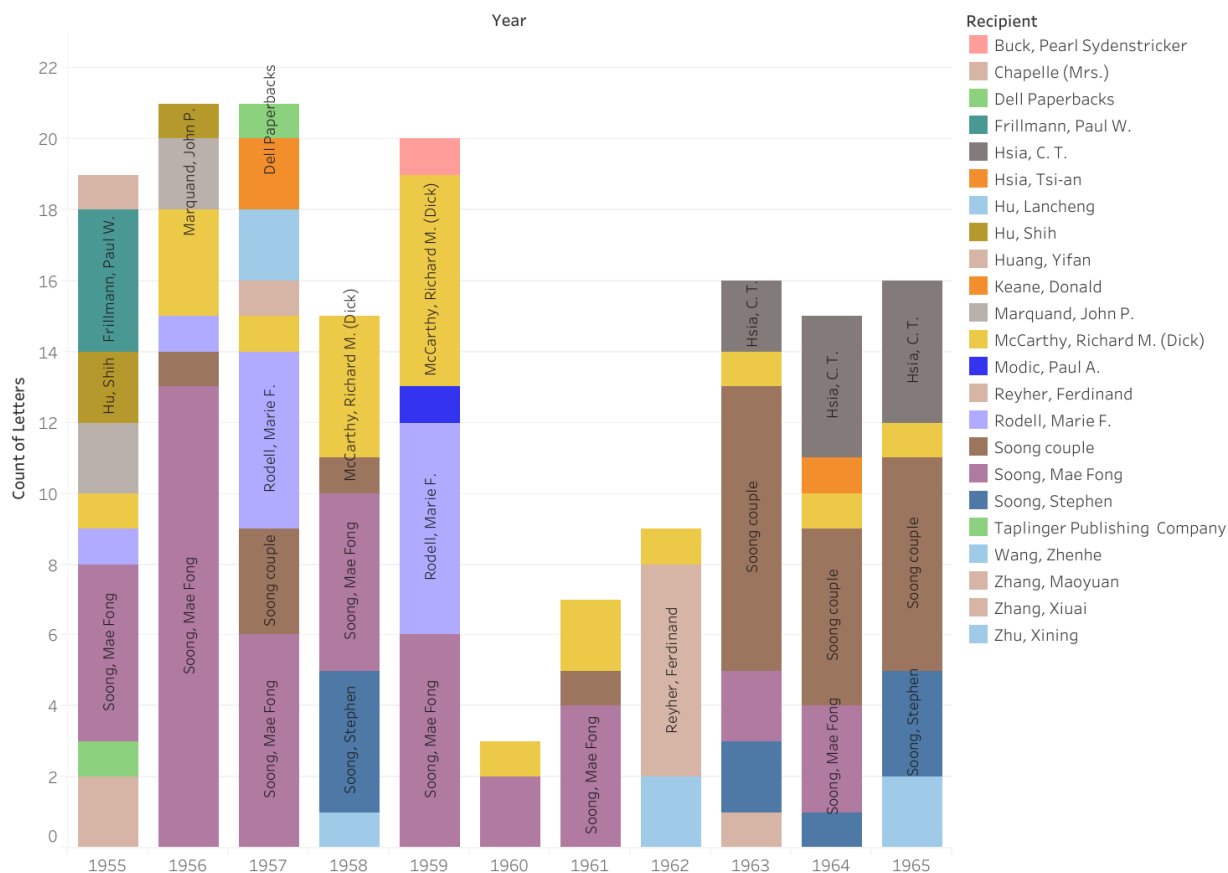
Figure 4 is a zoom-in of 1955 to 1965 to show the recipients and the volume of letters that Chang wrote to them. We can see that she wrote to Mae Soong (represented by dark purple), Stephen Song (represented by dark blue), and the couple (represented by brown) for the most portion of her letters. Besides, Chang primarily wrote to individuals in a broad literary milieu in

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[11] In Chang's letters to Mae Soong between 1955 to 1965, Chang mainly talked about her correspondence with individuals that have been visualized in this study and mentioned her meeting others in person for very few times. Therefore, we can say that her connections with people via in-person meetings were very limited as well.

the US or those who could help her with publishing her works or getting a job. Those recipients include Richard M. McCarthy, Marie Rodell (1912–1975), Paul W. Frillmann (1911–1972), John P. Marquan (1893–1960), Hu Shih (1891–1962), and C.T. Hsia (1921–2013), etc.

Figure 4 1955-1965 Letters by Recipient per Year

(https://public.tableau.com/profile/robyn5381#!/vizhome/EileenChangsCorrespondencefinal/1955-1965LettersbyRecipientsperYear)

Among those figures, McCarthy (represented by yellow in Figure 4) was the most important in Chang's transition to living in the US. He introduced several of his acquaintances to Chang to help her develop a social network in the US. McCarthy had worked as the information officer at USIS (United States Information Service) based in Hong Kong from 1950 to 1956. As mentioned before, recruited by McCarthy. In Chang's letters to Mae Soong, she documented

many details about her interactions with the figures introduced by McCarthy. From Chang's own words, we know that McCarthy not only introduced Chang to her literary agent Marie Rodell but also to Paul W. Frillmann and John P. Marquand. Frillmann was the former Consul at the United States Consulate in Hong Kong, and by 1954 he was working in public relations and running fund-raising for non-profit institutions.[12] McCarthy believed that Frillmann might be able to find some translation work for Chang (Chang, "Shuxinji" 29). Marquand was the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, and he and Chang were introduced by MaCarthy when Marquand visited Hong Kong years earlier (Gao). Chang contacted the famous writer hoping that he could help publish her fiction (Chang, "Shuxinji" 26). Besides the circle introduced by McCarthy, Chang also contacted Hu Shih (1891–1962), the famous Chinese intellectual who was then residing in New York, several times on her own. She sent her new works to Hu for his feedback and told him that she was looking for translation jobs (Chang, "Shuxinji" 29). Although she often felt awkward to socialize and did not enjoy seeing people in person frequently, Chang did her best to make connections with those potentially helpful figures to make a living and to be recognized in the American literary academy.[13]

Unfortunately, Chang's connections with many of these figures did not last long, and this sporadic network she scrambled to build did not help her much. Figure 4 shows that her correspondence with Frillmann lasted only one year, and her correspondence with Marquand and Hu Shih lasted two years. Also, she just exchanged one letter with Pearl Buck and stopped further correspondence. Many of the people from whom Chang sought help did not show great

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[12] Paul Frillmann papers. 1941/1969. undefined. Hoover Institution Library & Archives, Stanford, CA. https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/61618/paul-frillmann-papers. http://digitalcollections.hoover.org, Accessed 2021-06-30.

[13] For a discussion of Richard McCarthy and Chang's service at the USIS in Hong Kong, see Richard Jean So, "Literary Information Warfare: Eileen Chang, the Us State Department, and Cold War Media Aesthetics." *American Literature*, vol. 85, no. 4, 2013, pp. 719–744.

commitment in actually lending their aids. In Chang's letters to Mae Soong, we can clearly see

Chang's frustrations in finding a reliable source of support from her social connections. For

example, in her letter to Mae Soong on December 18th, 1955, Chang wrote about Frillmann:

"Dick [McCarthy] introduced me to meet Frillmann. Frillmann seemed very keen to help and

gave me plenty of advice. He [Frillmann] also said that if he can help me become famous, that

would be good for the value of their Free China Fund. But unlike Dick, he was obviously too

cunning, and I have to take his words with a grain of salt (Chang, "Shuxinji" 30)." In the letter

on January 14, 1956, Chang wrote: "When Taplinger told me they would not publish it, I revised

the mimeographed version and sent it to Frillmann. But there is still no news from him. It looks

like he gave good words but not deeds Chang, "Shuxinji" 36)." Chang also expressed her

disappointment in Marquand. She wrote in the letter on February 10th, 1956, "After meeting

Brague, it turned out that Marquand never mentioned me to Scribner, and I do not care about it at

all (Chang, "Shuxinji" 40)." Hu Shih once mentioned to Chang that there was a potential

opportunity to be hired by someone of Harvard University to translate some materials, and the

Harvard person asked Hu for help. Hu recommended Chang for the job. However, this

opportunity did not come to fruition for Chang (Chang, "Shuxinji" 31). Many of the

abovementioned figures' non-committal attitudes very likely contributed to the inconsistency of

Chang's correspondence with them. People like Frillmann and Marquand might not see clear

interests in investing in their relationship in Chang, or they might not appreciate Chang as an

important writer as some Sinologist scholars would do, which we will discuss in the second case

study.

Meanwhile, some contacts ended because of Chang's contradictory attitudes towards

socializing with people. She strived to interact with potentially helpful figures, but at the same

time, she showed extreme introversion. For example, Chang wrote to and wanted to befriend with Pearl Buck, the Nobel Prize-winning writer who had lived in China and wrote fiction about China. However, when Buck invited Chang to meet, Chang stopped contacting Buck. She told Mae the reason: "Rather than wishing for such social contact, I decided not to write a second letter (Chang, "Shuxinji" 85)." Similar attitudes also contributed to the end of her connection with Hu Shih. I previously mentioned that Chang hoped that Hu could find some translation work for her. Later, Chang sent two new short stories to Hu for his feedback but received no reply. Since then, Chang never contacted Hu again. On February 10th, 1956, she wrote to Mae Soong: "Fatima and I didn't go back to the Hu's after we visited them once. You know I am too self-centered to be a fan [of him]. When others give me the cold shoulder, I become indifferent immediately. […] Everyone is full of contradictions. Sometimes I tolerate a lot, sometimes very little. It is hard to say (Chang, "Shuxinji" 40)."

As a new immigrant, seeking to anchor a writing career in the US was not easy for Chang. Another sign that Chang did not find reliable support from the network she built in the US was that she still sought most emotional and career support from her best friends, the Soong couple, across the Pacific Ocean in Hong Kong. In particular, much of her source of income was brokered by Stephen Soong. As a producer at MP&GI in Hong Kong, Stephen Soong provided Chang commissions to write screen scripts for the film company. Meanwhile, as her best girlfriend, Mae Soong played the role of an emotional support for Chang. The letters addressed to Mae Soong occupied a significant portion of Chang's correspondence in these years.[14] From

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[14] In the decades that Chang corresponded with the Soong couple (the 1950s to the 1990s), she had addressed them in three different ways: to Mae, to Stephen, and to "Mae & Stephen." Generally, from reading her letters, we know that in the letters solely addressed to Mae, Chang communicated mostly her personal life and private feelings. In the letters to Stephen Soong, she mainly discussed matters related to work. In the letters addressed to both of the couple, she wrote about both her life and work-related matters (Chang, "Shuxinji").

these letters, we can learn many details about the struggles and difficulties that Chang had experienced, such as her frustration with American editors and publishers, her strained financial status, and her uncertainty about her career. From Figure 5, we can see that Chang wrote primarily to Mae (represented by dark purple) from 1955 to 1961, when she experienced intense pressure in starting a new life. The texts of the letters are saturated with anxiety regarding her livelihood and uncertainty about her future career.

Figure 5 Number of Letters by Recipient per Year
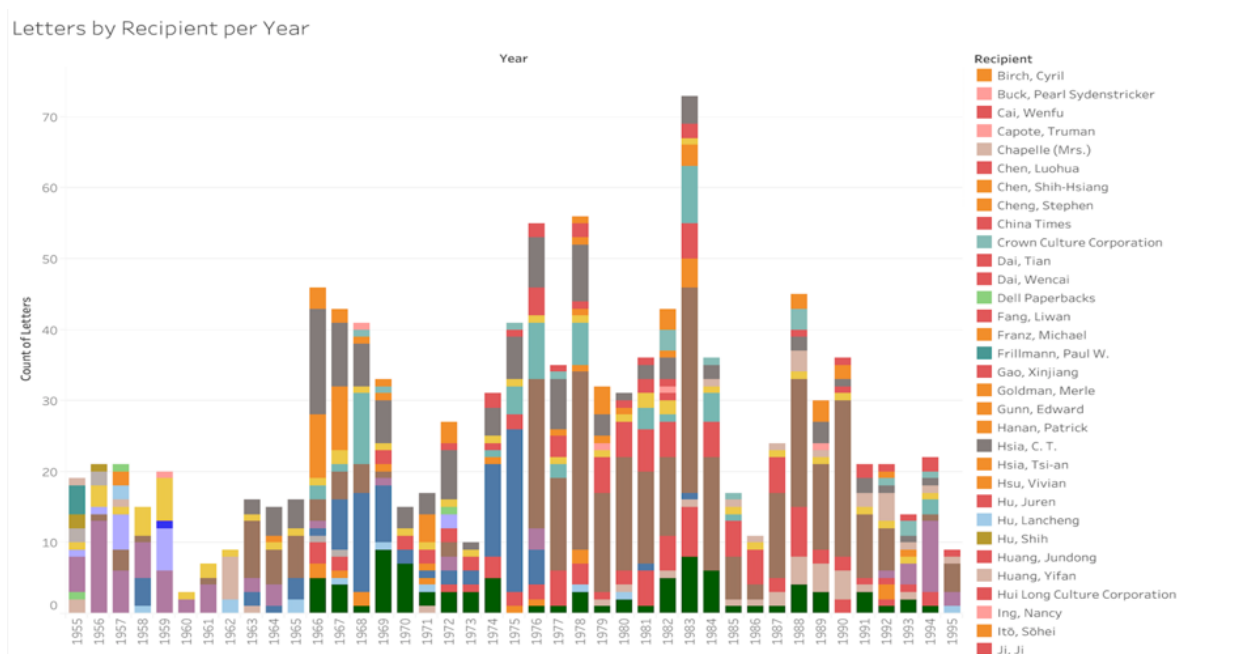
Only some of the major recipients are represented by distinctive colors, such us the Soong couple and C.T. Hsia, etc. Recipients belong to the same group are represented by the same color. For example, the editors and publishers in Taiwan are represented by red.
(https://public.tableau.com/profile/robyn5381#!/vizhome/EileenChangsCorrespondencefinal/Lettersbyrecipientsperyear)

Although the Soong couple were the most stable part in Chang's social network, and they maintained correspondence for four decades, their relationships also faced challenges during Chang's first decade in the US. Figure 4 shows an anomaly in 1962 that Chang did not write to the Soong couple at all. To get a sense of what happened between them, Chang's trip to Hong

Kong in 1961 needs to be closely examined. The aim of the trip was preparing a screen script of

Dream of the Red Chamber for the MP&GI. In October 1961, after spending around ten days in

Taiwan, Chang went to Hong Kong, where she spent almost five months writing scripts and

working with Stephen Soong (Zhou, 110). Through reading Chang's six letters to her husband

Ferdinand Reyher from January to February 1962, we can learn that she had bitter disagreement

in her writing strategies and styles in the screen plays commissioned by MP&GI with Stephen

Soong.[15] Eventually, her screen script of *Dream of the Red Chamber* was not approved by the

company, and she had to revise it to get payment.[16] At the same time, Chang started writing new

scripts as Stephen suggested while waiting for the review of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* to

relieve her tight budget. Chang also postponed her return to the US many times to write more

scripts and wait for the payment (Zhou, 114). Chang wrote to Reyher: "The last five months have

been the worst of my life (Zhou, 128)." The following are some more detailed excerpts from the

letters in which Chang described her tough situation in Hong Kong to her husband.

> "(1962.02.10). The reason I said I would be back on February 30 (That is March
>
> 2, but February doesn't have a 30, you probably didn't realize that), and then I
>
> changed it to March 16 to make an extra $800 -- I call it the 'Two Payoff Weeks.'
>
> I worked like a dog for months, but I didn't get paid a dime. That's because I was
>
> waiting and revising (Zhou, 120)."
>
> "(1962.02.20). My hands and feet are swollen (slightly) because I can't afford
>
> bigger shoes. I would like to wait till the big sale around the Chinese New Year.

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[15] For Chang's six letters to her husband Ferdinand Reyher, see Zhou, Fenling 周芬伶. *Ai yu shang: Zhang Ailing pingzhuan* 哀与伤: 张爱玲评传. Di 1 ban ed., Shanghai Yuan Dong Chu Ban She, 2007.

[16] For an analysis of Eileen Chang's adaptation of *Dream* to screen writing in Hong Kong, see Xiaojue Wang, "Eileen Chang, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, and the Cold War."

Borrowing money from the Soong family was a painful decision, and it broke

everything between us (Zhou, 122)."

"(1962.03.02). The Song family's cold attitude was irritating, especially because

he thought my script had been written in a rough way as I was pressed for time

and felt I had cheated them. Stephen told me that they would pay for the new

script, which implies that they would not pay for the previous two scripts, which

are two of *Dream of the Red Chamber.* [...] Being in my small room, I felt I was

almost in shock, and I was going to explode. After working hard for three months,

I was even in debt to them for hundreds of living and medical expenses, and I

guess they would take the money from the payment for *Dream of the Red*

Chamber. [...] They are no longer my friends; however, I would get several

hundred from the bad deal (Zhou,124)."

These letters exposed Chang's challenging financial situation and her frustration in the

engagement of writing screen scripts and meeting requirements from the film company to make

her ends meet. Her friendship with the Soong couple strained since Stephen Soong, as the film

producer, was the intermediate between Chang and the company. At the same time, Chang

moved to Soong's apartment after postponing her return to the US. Staying with them also

brought some more friction (Zhou, 116). Hence, we can infer that their relationship cooled down

for a while, and that was the reason why Chang did not write any letters to them after she

returned to the US in 1962 for about a year.

Social networks were very important for Chang to survive in a new and foreign

environment, and she made great effort to build and maintain connections with various groups of

people. However, Chang's social connections in her first decade in the US were limited and

inconsistent. Not surprisingly, they turned out to be not very effective in supporting her to thrive as a writer in the Anglophone literary world. The grueling process of *The Rouge of the North*'s publication was a significant symptom of this limited and ineffective network. After gaining confidence from the positive reviews of *The Rice-Sprout Song* (published by Charles Scribner's Son in the US) in 1955, Chang started the project *Pink Tears* which would eventually grow into *The Rough of the North* (Chang, "Shuxinji" 38).

The novel *Pink Tears,* finished in 1957, was based on one of Chang's early prominent works, *The Golden Cangue*. However, *Pink Tears* did not receive positive responses and was rejected by several publishers in the US. During the following years, Chang made great efforts to revise and publish it. She asked for help from many people and received different opinions. For instance, McCarthy advised her to publish it with Union Press in 1958 (Chang, "Shuxinji" 76) and later changed his advised to Tuttle, a publisher specialized in English translation of Japanese books in Tokyo in the following year (Chang, "Shuxinji" 84). But her agent Marie Rodell did not agree with McCarthy and insisted that Chang should exhaust all the possibilities to publish it within the US first (Chang, "Shuxinji" 84).

Chang spent years revising the novel and finally changed the title to *The Rouge of the North*. In 1964, she sent the revised novel to C.T. Hsia and asked him to help distribute it to literary critics and publishers (Chang and Hsia 20). In 1965, Chang translated it into Chinese and serialized it in newspapers in Taiwan and Hong Kong (Chang, "Shuxinji" 140). Next year, the English version of *The Rouge of the North* was finally published by Cassell & Company in London, UK, but received few responses from the market (Chang, "Shuxinji" 158). One year later, the entirety of the Chinese version was published in a single volume in Taiwan (Chang, "Shuxinji" 157). In the eleven years of revising the novel and promoting it, Chang kept asking

help and got opinions from different people, finally having it published in the Anglophone literary market. However, the long publishing process and poor market performance implied a failure of Chang's ambition to be recognized as a writer in the US.

Another outcome of the limited and ineffective social networks is Chang's unstable life characterized by frequent relocations and financial difficulties in her early years in the US. Writing novels was not a reliable source of income for Chang. Meanwhile, without a completed university degree, she could not get a stable job, such as an academic position. As a result, Chang had to secure her subsistence from various temporary means, including writing screen scripts, translation, and applying for fellowships and writing residencies in academic institutions. These temporary works and positions led to a prolonged uncertainty and frequent relocations in Chang's first decade in the US, which can be illustrated by the map of her movements in the US (Figure 6). In February 1956, she first left New York for Peterborough, New Hampshire, to attend the MacDowell Colony and stayed there for nearly three years (Chang, "Shuxinji" 41). From then on, she mostly moved between cities where she was funded or hired by institutions such as Huntington Hartford Foundation Colony (Los Angeles) or Miami University (Oxford, Ohio). As these were all short-time programs, Chang usually stayed in a place from several months to less than three years. Chang had stayed in eleven different places from 1955 to 1972 before she finally settled in Los Angeles.

Figure 6 Eileen Chang's Travel Routes in the US

(https://arcg.is/K5yKP)
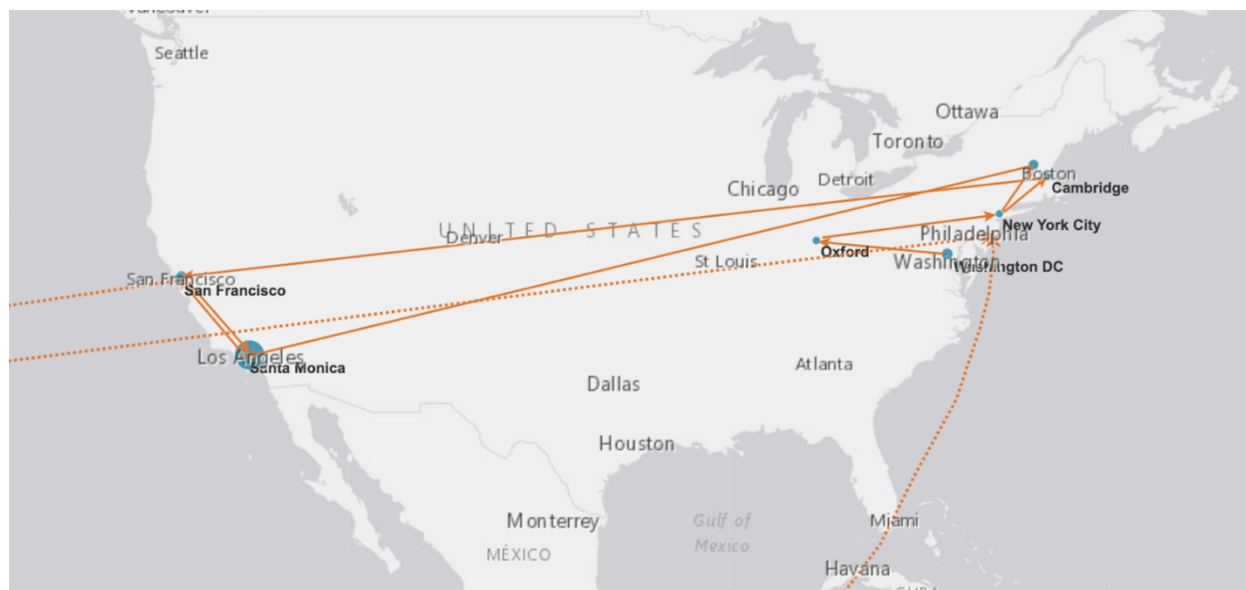
     Along with the frequent relocations was Chang's financial insecurity and uncertainty of the future. In her letters to Mae Soong, Chang often discussed how much money she earned from writing and expressed her upset if her works were ignored or rejected. For two times, she mentioned that she had performed divinations, bespeaking her extreme uncertainty and worries about her future: "One day, I came across the results from the divination I did last time, and it said that my luck would not turn better until 1963! (I remembered wrong and thought it was 1960.) Don't you think I will wait for luck until I die? The saying 'the article curses life' sounds sour, but it is bitter when applied to me (Chang, "Shuxinji" 33)."

     Therefore, from Chang's correspondence network and her own accounts of her life experiences, we can infer that Chang lacked a clear and consistent support network that could assist her to navigate through the early stage in a new environment. In particular, as discussed above, in the grueling process of *The Rouge of the North*'s publication, Chang received a series of inconsistent and conflicting feedback from many different sources, including her agent,

publishers, and critics. Along with the difficulty in her writing career, her life was also full of instability and anxiety. The lack of clarity and consistency in Chang's social life and support networks did not fade away until she established increasingly stable networks with the Sinologists in the US and literary circles in Taiwan and Hong Kong about one decade after she arrived in America.

Chang's Sinologists Network

Since the mid-1960s, a group of US-based Sinologist scholars began to occupy a significant part in Chang's social networks. Eventually, they would prove crucial in helping Chang find job opportunities and funding for her writing and bridging her to a large literary market in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Some visualizations of Chang's letters help reveal the importance of Sinologists in her social networks. In Figure 3, we see that Chang's correspondence surged abruptly in 1966, and the high volume continued for three years. Also, there is a trend that from 1966 onward, Chang wrote more letters on average every year.

In Figure 4, we know that, during 1955 to 1965, apart from the Soong couple with whom Chang always exchanged high volumes of letters, Richard M. McCarthy, the former information officer in USIS, and Marie F. Rodell, her literary agent, were Chang's major correspondents. Many other recipients of Chang's letters in the US were mainly introduced by McCarthy. In 1963, another critical figure C.T. Hsia in Chang's social network came into the scene. Already an established scholar, Hsia was crucial in promoting Chang as an influential modernist writer both within and without the academic world. In his most prominent academic publication, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1917–1957,* Hsia spent around forty pages introducing and analyzing Eileen Chang's literary works, which is far more pages than he wrote on Lu Xun, the widely acknowledged most important and influential figure in modern Chinese literature and the

leader of the New Culture Movement.[17] As we will discuss in more detail later, Hsia's

scholarship established Chang as a pioneering modernist novelist in the history of modern

Chinese literature, which would prove instrumental in Chang's induction into the Taiwanese

modernist literary movement in the 1960s. At the same time, Hsia was the node through which

Chang was able to gradually build an extensive support network consisting of Sinologist

scholars, writers, editors, and publishers in both the US and Taiwan.

Figure 7 1966-1969 Letters by Recipient per Year
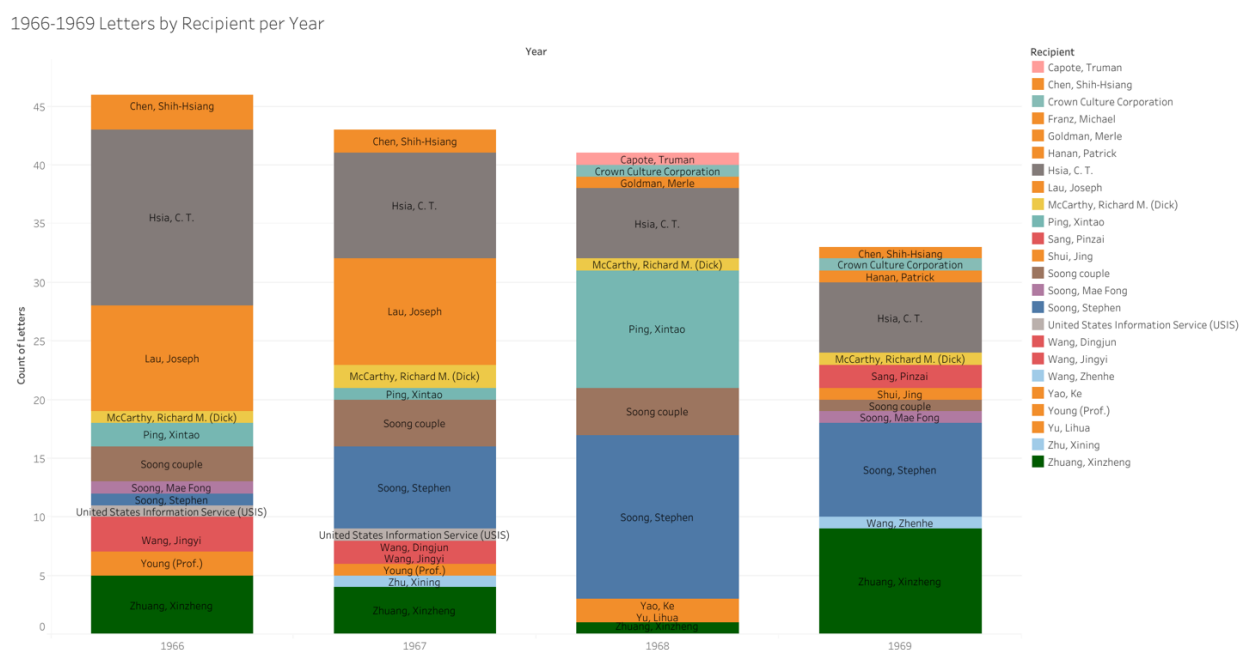
Only some of the major recipients are represented by distinctive colors, such us the Soong couple and
C.T. Hsia, etc. Recipients belong to the same group are represented by the same color. For example, all
the scholars are represented by orange.
(https://public.tableau.com/profile/robyn5381#!/vizhome/EileenChangsCorrespondencefinal/1966-
1969LettersbyRecipientsperYear?publish=yes)

From 1963 onward, when Chang began her correspondence with C.T. Hsia (represented

by dark grey in Figure 5), Chang's network with Sinologist scholars started expanding. In 1966,

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[17] For a discussion of Hsia's promotion and interpretation of Eileen Chang in his *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1917–1957*, see Liu Zaifu, *Eileen Chang's Fiction and C. T. Hsia's* A History of Modern Chinese Fiction. MCLC Resource Center, July 2009. https://u.osu.edu/mclc/online-series/liuzaifu/. Accessed June 26, 2021.

she wrote a large number of letters to Hsia, more than the Soong couple. In the same year, Chang began writing to Zhuang Xinzheng (represented by dark green) and Joseph Lau (represented by orange along with other scholars). One year before, Chang first met them at the Conference on Oriental-Western Literary Relation held at Indiana University where Zhuang Xinzheng was working on his PhD in comparative literature. Zhuang intended to invite C.T. Hsia to be a speaker at the conference, but Hsia could not attend and recommended Eileen Chang instead (Zhuang). In Figure 7, we can also find that Chang wrote extensively to three other scholars (represented by orange), including Shih-hsiang Chen (1912–1971), Franz H. Michael (1907–1992), and a Prof. Young. In the following three years, Chang wrote to four new scholars (represented by orange) Merle Goldman (1931–), Patrick Hanan (1927–2014), Yu Lihua (1929–2020), and Shui Jing (1935–). They were almost all connected by C.T. Hsia. For example, Shin-hsiang Chen was Hsia's brother Tsi-an Hsia's supervisor and later became Zhuang's supervisor in the Department of Oriental Languages of the University of California at Berkeley (Chang and Hsia 179), and Shui Jing was Tsi-an Hsia's student (Chang and Hsia 177). The scholars whom Chang connected with were located mainly in the US and several in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Eventually, throughout nearly thirty years, Sinologists constituted the majority of Chang's social network, as shown by the purple notes in the network graph of Chang (Figure 8). We can identify that C.T. Hsia's crucial position in Chang's network. He is the most connected node in Chang's Sinologist network and many nodes that came into Chang's network only through the introduction by Hsia, which can be illustrated by the nodes in the lower center and lower-right corner in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Social Network in Eileen Chang's Letters with Scholars Highlighted
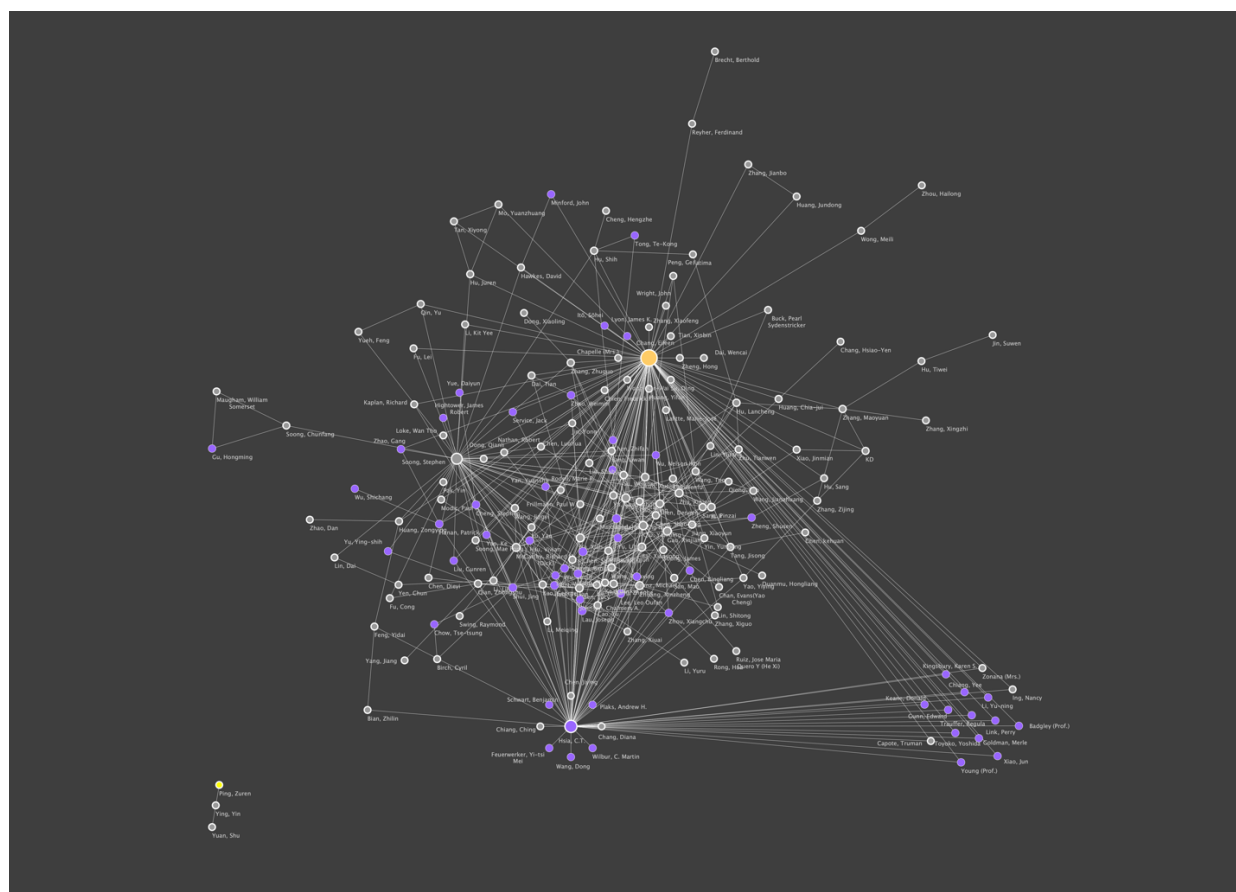
The network built from Chang's letters. The purple nodes are scholars; the orange node is Eileen Chang; the largest purple node with the most connections is C.T. Hsia; the largest grey one is Stephen Soong. Most of the peripheries are people Chang mentioned in her letters but did not have a direct connection with, and those nodes mark the scale of Chang's social network; in other words, how wide her social network reached.

The phenomenon discussed above provokes a series of questions: why did Chang keep wide connections with scholars? How did this Sinologist network and its key figure, C.T. Hsia, contribute to her career? By examining Chang's letters to Hsia and Zhuang, I argue that the Sinologist network was significant in three aspects: They helped Chang find funding opportunities and positions in academic institutions; They inspired Chang's translation and writing projects; Finally, they brought Chang into a larger literary world in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

For Chang, Sinologist scholars served as an important source of information regarding employment opportunities, and they also provided necessary assistance in Chang's grant and job applications. For example, on September 25th, 1963, Chang wrote to ask if Hsia could help ask two professors at Columbia some questions because they were in the organization that provided translation jobs that she was planning to apply for (Chang and Hsia 13). In several letters to Hsia between 1963 to 1965, Chang asked for Hsia's help to forward her book script *The Rouge of the North* to some literary critics and editors, and Hsia recommended the book to the famous scholar and critic Donald Keene (1922–2019) and also had one of his students write a book review (Chang and Hsia 20). In the letter on December 31 of 1965, Chang asked Hsia to help her ask Professor Franz Michael at Washington University about a lecturer job there (Chang and Hsia 39). In 1966, Chang served as a writer in residence at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, through Joseph Lau's introduction because he had studied there for two years himself (Chang and Hsia 44). After that, Chang applied for a fellowship from the Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study, which was also introduced by Hsia. Three reference letters were from Hsia, Shih-hsiang Chen and Joseph Lau (1937–) (Chang and Hsia 44, 72). In 1969, she was recommended by Hsia to succeed Zhuang Xinzheng as a researcher at the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, supervised by Shih-hsiang Chen (Chang and Hsia 158). In order to secure her income, Chang planned to apply for the National Endowment Fund for the Humanities even though she had got the job offer from UC Berkeley. She asked Patrick Hanan, a professor at Harvard University, to serve as her reference (Chang and Hsia 152). These activities discussed above explains why Chang's correspondence volume surged in 1966 and why it remained high between 1966 and 1969.

Moreover, the scholarly works and discussions among the Sinologists also conditioned Chang's own interests in writing, researching, and translating. One of Chang's most significant works in the period, her English translation of *The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai* (*Haishang hua liezhuan*), manifested both the inspiration and logistic assistance from the scholars. From June 1967 to July 1969, Chang spent two years in Cambridge, MA., translating the novel which chronicles the lives of courtesans in Shanghai in the late nineteenth century, and all dialogues in the novel were in the Wu dialect. This project was supported by the fellowship from Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study.

The initiation of this project was aided by Hsia. In a letter to Hsia on October 31, 1965, Chang told Hsia that she saw the letters between C.T. Hsia and his brother Tsi-an Hsia published in *Modern literature* and she found them interesting, especially she was very interested in the novel *The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai* that they discussed in the letter. Chang wrote: "I always wish to translate it into English, but where should I find this kind of job (Chang and Hsia 37)?" The following correspondence between Chang and Hsia indicated that Hsia introduced and encouraged her to apply for the fellowship from Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study to support her with the translation and wrote one of the reference letters (Chang and Hsia 44).

Perhaps most crucial to the transition of Chang's career since the 1960s, Sinologist scholars also bridged Chang's network in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Many of these US-based scholars, like Chang, were diasporic Chinese, and some of them kept consistent connections with a Sinophone intellectual circle outside the US, mainly in Taiwan and Hong Kong when mainland China was cut off from the West. For example, Yu Lihua, the Chinese literary scholar at the State University of New York, Albany, introduced the editor-in-chief of the Literary Supplement of *China Times,* one of the largest newspapers in Taiwan, to Chang in 1966 (Chang and Hsia 57).

In particular, C.T. Hsia entertained good relationships with writers, editors, and publishers in Taiwan. From August 1966 to March 1967, Hsia lived in Taiwan, and during his stay, he met several publishers to help Chang negotiate the publication of her works on the Taiwanese market (Chang and Hsia 59). The most important meeting was with Ping Xintao, the founder of the publishing giant Crown Culture. Hsia helped Chang with the publication of *Rouge of The North* and also helped begin the long-term cooperation of Chang with Ping and Crown Culture. Hsia documented this in his book on his correspondence with Chang:

> "We might be able to say that my first conversation with Ping Xintao could solve Eileen Chang's financial needs for the rest of her life. Eileen only 'fully authorized me to broker the publication of *Rouge of The North* both in series and as a single book.' Nonetheless, during that meeting, I apparently brought up the suggestion to publish Chang's completed works to Ping. He undoubtedly agreed and promised to give preferential treatment in payment and royalty (Chang and Hsia 21)."

Figure 5 and Figure 7 show that from 1966 on, Chang had been writing to Ping and Crown Culture (represented by light green) for almost three decades. Almost all of Chang's books were published by Crown Culture in Taiwan until this day. Also, the visualization reveals that the year of 1966 marks Chang's beginning of a long-term correspondence with intellectual and publishing circles in Taiwan (represented by red in Figure 5) for the following thirty years. We can say that Chang's Sinologist acquaintances, especially C.T. Hsia, were instrumental in forming this relationship.

In addition, I also want to make a few comments on the reliability and supportiveness of the Sinologist network. Compared to the figures discussed in the first case study, many Sinologist scholars were tenured or tenure-track professors in universities, and thus enjoyed

more dependable institutional resources. Therefore, the aids they could lend to Chang and their connections might hence become more reliable and consistent. Moreover, beyond professional ties, many Sinologist scholars deeply appreciated Chang's literary works and showed great respect for her. For example, we have mentioned that Hsia had promoted Chang as the one of the most influential Chinese writers since the twentieth century in his book. Also, Shui Jing was a self-proclaimed fan of Chang (*Zhang mi*). As scholars of Chinese literature, their good relations with Chang might also be beneficial to their own academic careers. Hence, they had strong motivation to maintain robust connections with Chang. Lastly, their connections were also buttressed by the new connections that they helped Chang build with the larger literary world in Taiwan and Hong Kong.
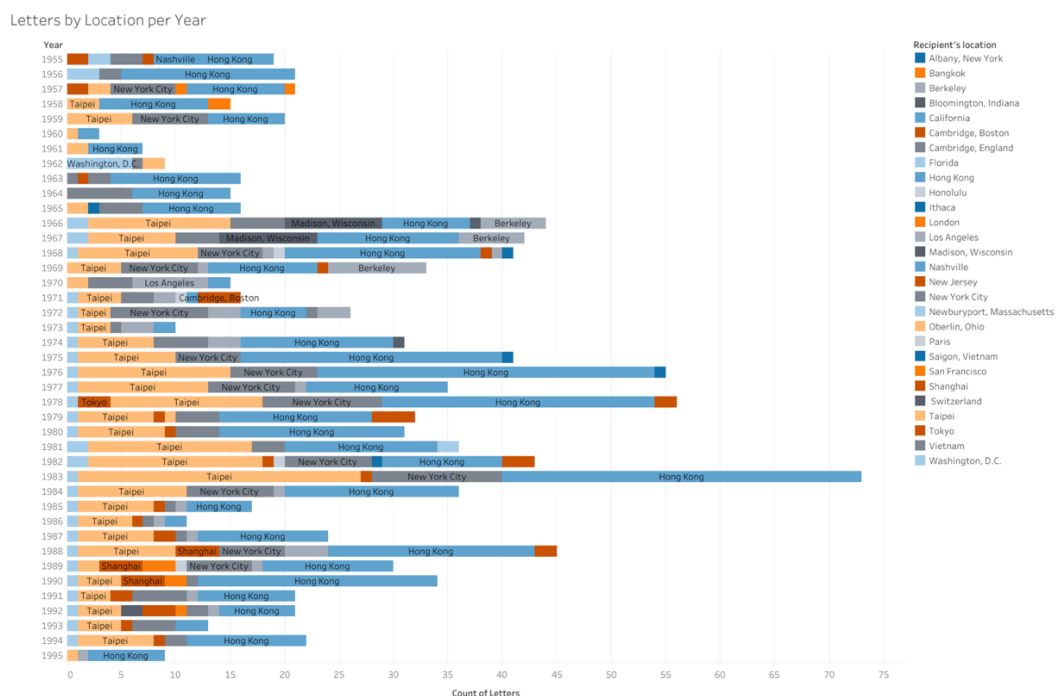
Therefore, the academic and institutional resources that Sinologist scholars brought to Chang was crucial in helping Chang, as an immigrant and a writer, to settle and stabilize her life in the US. Many of them assisted Chang with a deep appreciation and respect for her literary accomplishments. Moreover, as many of these scholars came from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, they also introduced Chang into the institutional connections both in and beyond the US that they cultivated and maintained in their professional lives. In particular, the institutional connections that C.T. Hsia and others brought to Chang were crucial for her return to writing and publishing in Chinese. The following case study examines the social infrastructure behind the rise of Chang's popularity and the "Eileen Chang fever" in Taiwan since the late 1960s.

The Sinophone Literary Circle

Beyond the Sinologists' network, the cache of Chang's letters also contains an extensive network of a Sinophone literary circle. They included writers, editors, publishers, literary critics, and literary translators. In particular, this circle came to the surface from Chang's

correspondence with Chang's network expanding in Taiwan starting from 1966. As can be seen

in Figures 9 and 10, from 1966 onward, Taipei was within Chang's top three correspondence

destinations—the second-highest volume of her letters went to Taipei, and she had the largest

number of recipients in Taipei (Most of Chang's letters went to Hong Kong largely as they were

mainly sent to the Soong couple, and Stephen Soong served as her literary agent). Chang

maintained correspondences with editors based in Taiwan and Hong Kong throughout three

decades (represented by red in Figure 5). At the same time, in her letters to the four major

correspondents, Chang mentioned a wide range of literary figures throughout forty years,

especially from mid-1960 to 1995. The network graph of literary figures reveals why Chang was

welcomed in Taiwan even though she had never lived in Taiwan and never written about

Taiwan, and what boosted the "Eileen Chang fever" in the Sinophone literary world lasting until

today.

Figure 9 Number of Letters by Location per Year

(https://public.tableau.com/profile/robyn5381#!/vizhome/EileenChangsCorrespondencefinal/LettersbyLocationperYear

Figure 10 Number of Recipients by Location per Year

Recipients by Location per Year

(https://public.tableau.com/profile/robyn5381#!/vizhome/EileenChangsCorrespondencefinal/RecipientsbyLocationp
erYear)
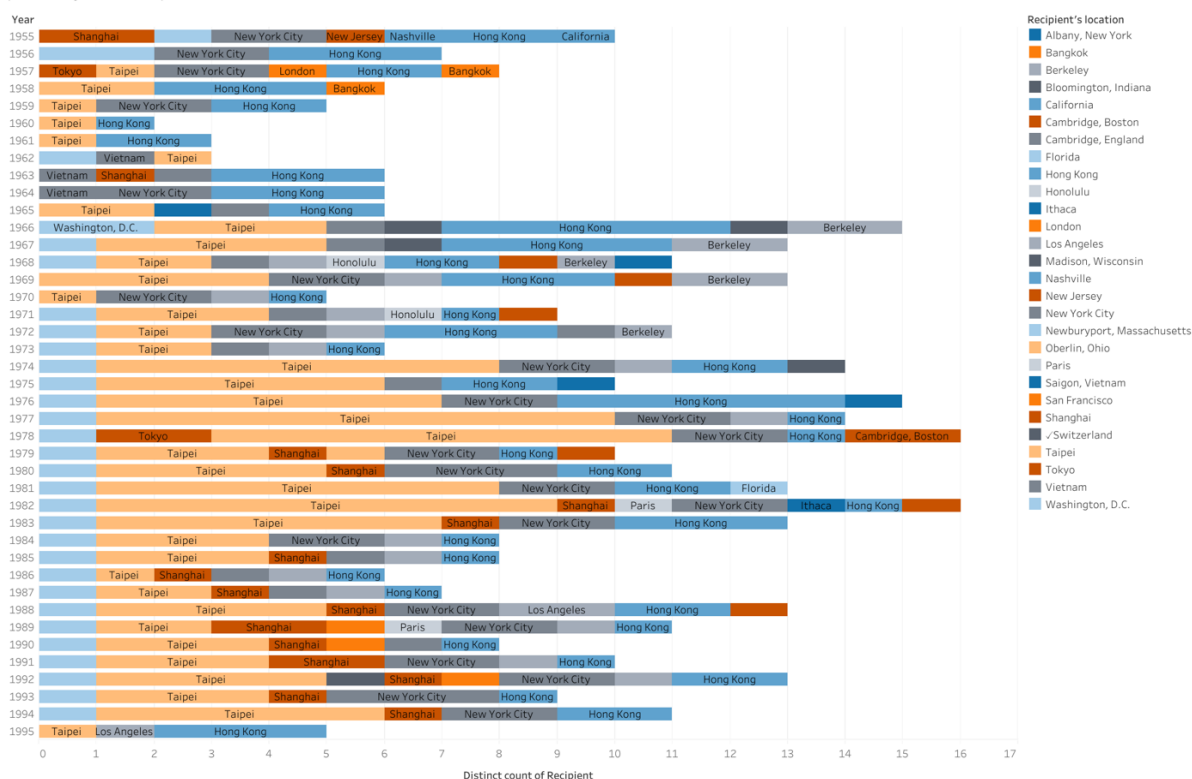
The trend of Chang's increasing interaction with the Taiwan Sinophone literary circle speaks to her turns in writing activities. Before encountering and being inducted into a Sinologist circle dominated by diasporic Chinese scholars, Chang made significant efforts in writing in English and publishing her novels in the Anglophone literary market. But the year 1966 marked a turning point in her career. After eleven years of rewriting and revising, the novel *The Rouge of the North* was first published in Chinese translation in Taiwan in 1966. After that, Chang revised a Chinese-language novel written in 1951, *The Eighteen Spring,* and started to serialize it in

Taiwan and Hong Kong in 1967.[18] The next year, she changed the title of *The Eighteen Spring* into *Half a Lifelong Romance* and published it with Crown Culture in Taiwan. Figure 7 shows that Chang's correspondence to Crown Culture's founder Ping Xintao took up a significant portion in 1968. From then on, Chang turned to write mainly in Chinese again.[19]

From Figure 3, we can see the second cluster of Chang's correspondence from 1974 to 1984 when she sent over 30 letters every year. Besides her regular correspondence to the Soong couple, C.T. Hsia, and Zhuang Xinzheng, most of her letters went to editors and publishers in Taiwan and Hong Kong (represented by red) during these eleven years. Chang's correspondence with the Soong couple and Hsia documented her writing activities and her communication with editors and publishers. By reading those letters, we can understand how Chang's changing and developing social connections with the literary world in Taiwan and Hong Kong shaped her writing career in this period.

First of all, Chang produced some original works aiming at a Sinophone audience. Apart from completing the English translation of *The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai,* which was written in the Wu dialect*,* in 1980, Chang also translated it into Mandarin and serialized it in Taiwan in 1983 and published it as a book later. Meanwhile, she was conducting a research project on the *Dream of the Red Chamber,* and the articles she produced from the project were both published in journals and magazines and later published as a book in Taiwan in 1977 (Because she was so popular that presses and book publishers wanted to publish her works as many as possible).

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[18] For details of Chang's publications between 1966 to 1968, see Chang, Eileen 张爱玲, et al. *Zhang Ailing wanglai shuxin ji* 张爱玲往来书信集. Huangguan chuban wenhua youxian gongsi, 2020.

[19] For more information about Chang's publication between 1970 to 1995, see Chang, Eileen 张爱玲, et al. *Zhang Ailing wanglai shuxin ji* 张爱玲往来书信集. Huangguan chuban wenhua youxian gongsi, 2020. Also see Zhou, Fenling 周芬伶. *Ai yu shang: Zhang Ailing pingzhuan* 哀与伤: 张爱玲评传. Di 1 ban ed., Shanghai Yuan Dong Chu Ban She, 2007.

Moreover, Chang wrote some essays and articles for newspapers and magazines upon their solicitations. Chang also wrote a biographical novel *Little Reunion* in Chinese but spent almost twenty years revising it.

At the same time, Chang revised some of her early works written in Chinese and published them to meet the needs of the Sinophone market. Novels, such as *Spy, Ring, Fuhua Langrui, Xiangjian Huan,* were all written during the 1950s but were not published until the 1970s and 1980s in Taiwan. She also organized her works into anthologies, and they were published by Crown Culture. Along with the prevalence of Chang's literary works in Taiwan and Hong Kong at that time, some of her works were also adapted for screens. From the letters, we know that except for the translation of *The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai,* the study of *Dream of the Red Chamber,* and the writing of *The Little Reunion* were out of Chang's own passion, most of the other works, such as the revising and republication, were encouraged by editors and driven by markets of Taiwan and Hong Kong.[20] Chang's financial status was also improved and became stable after she returned to writing in Chinese and to Chinese-speaking audiences. As she wrote in the letter to Hsia on February 4th, 1983, "Over the years, the Crown Culture gave me a royalty of about two thousand dollars half a year, and sometimes the sum multiplied. This is my only stable source of income (Chang and Hsia 328)."

Besides Chang's literary focus and writing activities, the social network reconstructed from Chang's correspondence exhibits a picture of the Sinophone literary circle related to Chang. Thus, we can catch a glimpse of what took place in the Sinophone literary milieu when Chang's works prevailed from the 1960s and who played key roles in "Eileen Chang fever" during that time. In the network graph Figure 11, both the size and the color of nodes differ according to

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[20] For more details of Chang's documentation of editors and publisher's commission requests, see Chang, Eileen 张爱玲, et al. *Zhang Ailing wanglai shuxin ji* 张爱玲往来书信集. Huangguan chuban wenhua youxian gongsi, 2020.

their degree that illustrates the number of edges connected to the node. The larger and darker the

node, the more edges are connected to the node. The center area of the graph is very dense and

shows a small world in which almost everyone knows each other.

Figure 11 The Sinophone Literary Circle in Eileen Chang's Letters

The scale and the color of nodes illustrate their degree, namely the number of links connected to them. The larger and darker the node, the higher its degree.

The graph clearly shows some hubs. Obviously, Eileen Chang is the largest hub of the

network who has a degree of 58 because it is the network of her interaction with the Sinophone

literary world and developed from her correspondence. The other two large hubs are Stephen

Soong, with a degree of 34, and C.T. Hsia, with a degree of 32. These hubs are not unexpected since Chang mentioned those people whom they knew or had interaction within letters to Stephen Soong and Hsia, and Stephen Soong and Hsia were also very active in the circle and played critical roles in Chang's interaction with others. Besides, more than ten well-connected nodes form the dense area in the network. This part is essential to understand the ecosystem of this circle and Chang's popularity in Taiwan during the 1960s to the 1990s. One thing that I need to make clear is that one degree and two-degree nodes located at the edge of the network do not mean that the individuals were peripheral in Taiwan and Hong Kong literary world. In Chang's letters, there are few links involving the individuals on the margin in Figure 11, which means that they were not an important part of Chang's Sinophone literary network. However, the fact that there are few documented interactions of them within the circle in archives I have researched was shaped by the narrative of literary history and media reports.

Figure 12 The top 15 Individuals with the Highest Degree

Rank	Name	Degree
1	Chang, Eileen	58
2	Soong, Stephen	34
3	Hsia, C.T.	32
4	Ping, Xintao	18
5	Qiu, Yanming	17
6	Ya, Xian	16
7	Gao, Xinjiang	15
8	Bai, Xianyong	15
9	Zhu, Xining	13
10	Luo, Xueliang	12
11	Chen, Lucy	10
12	Engle, Hualing Nieh	10
13	Shen, Dengen	9
14	Ji, Ji	9
15	Wang, Wenxing	8

Among the nodes of the top 15 individuals with the highest degree centrality in the network (Figure 12), we can identify three groups of people. One group includes scholars and literary critics, such as C.T. Hsia, Stephen Soong, Tsi-an Hsia, Wu Luqin (1918–1983), and Hualing Nieh Engle (1925–). First of all, C.T. Hsia played a key role in the development of modernist literature in Taiwan during the 1950s and 1960s (F. Chen 378). As a scholar and literary critic, he provided a new paradigm for literary criticism which completely subverted the impressionistic and impromptu perceptual activities and paid special attention to the independent artistic spirit of literary works (F. Chen 377). The Chinese translation of his publication *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1917–1957* (1961) is a classic in Chinese literature studies till today. He spent a large portion of the book analyzing Chang's novels in a new way of literary criticism, not only exploring the artistic beauty of the novels but also fathoming the darkness as well as the unpredictability of human nature in the novels (F. Chen 376). With his intellectual authority, Hsia first interpreted the modernity in Chang's novels and cemented her role as a significant modernist writer in the history of modern Chinese literature. The article about Chang's work in his book was first published in *Literary Review* (*Wenxue Zazhi,* 文學雜誌) in Taiwan in February 1957 (F. Chen 343). Although Chang had neither been self-identified as a Taiwanese nor written about Taiwan, she was still one of the most significant writers in the modernist literary movement in Taiwan during the 1960s, which paved the way to publish her works there and boosted the "Eileen Chang fever" in Taiwan ever since.

Tsi-an Hsia, Stephen Soong, Luqin Wu, and Engle Hualing Nieh were all key figures in the modernist movement in literature in Taiwan. In 1956, Tsi-an Hsia and Luqin Wu, professors of English literature at the National Taiwan University, together with Stephen Soong, the famous literary critic and translator in Hong Kong, established the magazine *Literary Review,* in which

they introduced and translated many pieces of English modernist literature into Taiwan. *Literary Review* has been regarded as an early base of modernist literature in Taiwan (F. Chen 340).

Among those people, Stephen Soong's role was significant in this network. Soong was himself one of the key members to boost Taiwan's modernist literature movement, and he entertained wide connections in the literary world (F. Chen 342). As Chang's literary agent, he inspired Chang's ideas in many works and helped negotiate with publishers and promote her to a growing audience. In Chang's first decade in the US, Stephen Soong was a film producer, and he offered Chang opportunities to write screen scripts and their relationship involved employment besides friendship. This relationship resulted in frictions between them sometimes. From mid-1960 onward, as Chang published more works in Taiwan and Hong Kong, Stephen Soong served as her literary agent voluntarily. As a literary critic himself, Stephen Soong provided valuable advice for Chang in writing. For instance, Chang's *Lust, Caution*'s idea was originally from a story told her by Stephen Soong, and he gave plenty of advice on Chang's writing of the novel, such as changing the protagonist's identity from a secret agent of the Kuomintang government to a patriotic student so that the novel could pass the censorship in Taiwan (X.Chen). When it was published Chang wrote to the Soong couple: "One day when I publish a collection of stories, I will include all Stephen's letters about *Lust, Caution* in the preface. Please also photocopy my letters about it and send them to me. Those letters would show that we have worked at this short story for more than 20 years (Chang, "Shuxinji" 369)." Also, as her agent, Stephen Soong marks the highest degree centrality in Chang's social network, signifying his significance. His influence and extensive network in Taiwan and Hong Kong's literary circle promoted Chang and broadened Chang's interactions with the circle.

Another important figure, Hualing Nieh Engle, was a writer, editor, and scholar. When she worked as the editor-in-chief of the literary column of the magazine *Free China Journal* (*Ziyou Zhongguo,* 自由中国), she encouraged the writing of liberalist literature and helped liberal thought spread in the literature world. Meanwhile, as a writer, she experimented with modernist and feminist writings (F. Chen 284). In the 1960s, she went to the US and worked at the University of Iowa. There, she and her husband Paul Engle, initiated the International Writing Program (IWP), which grew into a recognized residency program for literary artists later. Many writers from Taiwan had been invited to attend this program, including the figures in Chang's network, such as Yu Guangzhong (1928–2017), Ya Xian (1932–), Bai Xianyong (1937–), Wang Wenxing (1939–), and Wang Zhenhe (1940–1990). Those writers were the backbone of the modernist literary movement. Therefore, the program helped the modernist literature movement in the way of providing writers with opportunities for studying and writing in the US.[21]

As mentioned above, the modernist writers constitute another group of well-connected nodes in Chang's Sinophone literary circle. Bai Xianyong, Wang Wenxing, Lucy Chen (1938–), Joseph Lau, and Wang Zhenhe were all Tsi-an Hsia's students at the National Taiwan University. In 1960, they founded the magazine *Modern Literature*, and it cultivated a group of young modernist writers (F. Chen 360). In October 1961, when Chang visited Taiwan, she met with those young writers (Qiu 188). As modernist writers, they appreciated Chang's novel, and some of them, such as Bai Xianyong and Su Weizhen (1954–), were seen as members of "Chang

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[21] For a discussion of Hualing Nieh Engle and the IWP at University of Iowa's connection to Taiwan, see Richard Jean So, "The Invention of the Global MFA: Taiwanese Writers at Iowa, 1964–1980." *American Literary History*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2017, pp. 499–520. Also, see Maria L. Bo, *Writing Diplomacy: Translation, Politics, and Literary Culture in the Transpacific Cold War.* 2018. Columbia University, PhD dissertation, Chapter 4.

school" who followed Chang's writing style and techniques.[22] Another writer who has 13

degrees is Zhu Xining (1927–1998), a famous fan of Chang. He, as the editor-in-chief of the

huge anthology, *Modern Chinese Literature (1972)* (*Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxue Daxi*, 中国现代

文学大系) promoted Chang by placing Chang's novels at the top in the collection. Zhu also

wrote a *Biography of Eileen Chang* (Zhang Ailing Zhuan, 張愛玲傳) ("Zhongguo xiandai

wenxue da xi"). Moreover, his two daughters, Zhu Tianwen (1956–) and Zhu Tianxin (1958–)

were also identified as Chang school writers by David Der-Wei ("*Luo Di de Mai Zi Bu Si*" 2).

The third group of high-degree nodes in Chang's Sinophone literary network is editors

and publishers who were active and played important roles in literary development from the

1950s to the 1990s in Taiwan. The publishers and editors, including Ping Xintao, Qiu Yanming,

Yan Xian, and Gao Xinjiang, rank from 4th to 7th, and Luo Xueliang, Shen Deng'en, and Ji Ji

rank 10th, 13th, and 14th respectively in the degree centrality. As the founder of the publishing

company Crown Culture and the friend of both C.T. Hsia and Stephen Soong, Ping Xintao

published Chang's first novel in Taiwan in 1966 and made Crown Culture her only authorized

publisher in Taiwan ever since. Ping Xintao created a payment scheme, which he called "*Jiben

zuojia zhidu* ('basic writers' scheme)," to support writers by prepaying their remunerations

("Ping Xintao"). For example, he once paid Chang three thousand US dollars before she finished

the novel *The Little Reunion* (Chang, "Shuxinji" 280). Crown Culture not only provided a stable

source of Chang's income but also cultivated a group of writers ("Ping Xintao"). Other figures,

such as Gao Xinjiang (1944–2009), Ji Ji (Li Ruiyue, 1945–), Luo Xueliang (1926–2005), and Ya

Xian, were once the editor-in-chief of the literary supplement of the two most important

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[22] For a discussion of the formation of the "Chang school" and Eileen Chang's influence in Taiwan in the 1970s and 1980s, see Chang, Sung-sheng Yvonne. "Yuan Qiongqiong and the Rage for Eileen Zhang Among Taiwan's 'Feminine' Writers." *Modern Chinese Literature*, vol. 4, no. 1/2, 1988, pp. 201–223.

newspapers, *China Times* and *United Daily News*. The two literary supplements played key roles in introducing a broader group of overseas authors, including Eileen Chang and C.T. Hsia, to the Taiwanese readership and thus expanded the territory of Taiwanese literature ("Zhi shang fengyun Gao Xinjiang"). The editors from the two newspapers, such as Qiu Yanming, who worked for *United Daily News,* often encouraged Chang to write for their columns or to serialize her works in their newspaper and also competed for Chang's works (Peng). Besides, the two supplements were also major patrons to a young generation of Taiwanese writers by hosting competitions for literary awards (L. Zhang).

To conclude, the fact that many of the high degree nodes are modernist writers or modernist promoters illustrates the modernist literary movement, which formed the context of the "Eileen Chang fever" during the 1950s and 1960s in Taiwan. Chang's literary modernity, defined and spread by C.T. Hsia, was well situated within the literary trends of the period and admired and imitated by a group of young writers contributing to Chang's prevalence in Taiwan.[23] This is reflected not only in the letters themselves but also in the network analysis made possible to a quantitative study of her written correspondence. In this way, we are able to visibly observe the emergence and development of modernist literature in Taiwan by turning to the data. The text itself provides further insight and works in tandem with digital methods, allowing us to add texture to the picture we are painting.

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[23] For an analysis of the history of Taiwan's modernist literary movement, see Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang. *Modernism and the Nativist Resistance: Contemporary Chinese Fiction from Taiwan.* BDuke University Press, 1993. Especially the first two chapters.

Conclusion

This study innovatively examines the entire corpus of Eileen Chang's published correspondence which consists of 656 letters to her five major correspondents, the Soong couple, C.T. Hsia, Zhuang Xinzheng, and Ferdinand Reyher, and articles documenting Chang's correspondence activities. The 656 letters are all published in printed books, and the 448 letters to the Soong couple are printed in traditional Chinese and vertical composition. I have digitized the whole corpus through OCR and made them available for digital analysis. For example, the digitized corpus is searchable so that we can locate specific information immediately, such as years, people's name, the name of a piece of work, or address, etc.

Chang's correspondence contains a wealth of authentic and previously unknown information about her diasporic life in the US and detailed accounts of her interpersonal relationship with a large number of individuals. From examining the corpus of Chang's letters and published sources on Chang's correspondence, I am able to gather the information and identify additional corresponding activities, which culminates in 1,114 letters and 96 correspondents. Moreover, I have also collected the interpersonal relationships among 189 individuals from the letters and also some writings by Chang's correspondents. With this dataset, I am able to format the metadata of Chang's letters, recipients and figures in her social network. These sets of metadata are crucial for this study and valuable for future data analysis as well.

Previously, Chang has been perceived in general as having very few friends and socially isolated (Louie, 13). Through this study we have gained a comprehensive network of Chang's correspondence and a refreshed picture of Chang's social life. Nevertheless, this corpus has its limitations. It does not include the entirety of letters written by Chang. It is only limited to those that have been preserved and made available to the public. Also, the 189 people and their

relationships do not represent Chang's complete network, and they represent a network we can know from this corpus of her letters. Despite these limitations, this corpus forms a solid foundation for my analysis with digital methods.

Based on the correspondence data, the digital analysis begins with mapping out Chang's life trajectory. Although this study focuses on Chang's career and life from 1955 to 1995, during which she wrote most of her letters, Chang's life before 1955 provides essential context to her diasporic life. Therefore, I have mapped out the places that she had lived in and her travel routes throughout her life from 1920 to 1995. Before leaving for the US, Chang's life was already shaped with weak and unstable social connections. She lived through political turbulence, social transformation, and disharmonious familial life, which made her quite detached from her family members. After 1949, the loss of freedom to write, the potential political persecution, the lack of belonging to China under the new Communist regime, and her weak family bond paved the way for Chang's self-exile to the US in 1955. Moreover, the map also marks Chang's extensive travel within the US and one short trip to Taiwan and Hong Kong before 1972 when she finally settled down in Los Angeles. The frequent moving in this period illustrated Chang's uncertain career perspectives and strained financial situation due to the lack of a consistent support network she would enjoy in her later years.

Most importantly, this study provides innovative insights into understanding Chang's career and life in diaspora from the perspective of social network. My digital analysis of the correspondence data and the examination of her letters reveal that Chang's social network were instrumental in promoting her career and sustaining her life in the US from 1955 to 1995. The importance of social network can firstly be demonstrated by the fact that Chang's struggles to be recognized in the Anglophone literary world were hindered by the lack of a consistent and

effective support network during her first American decade. The visualization shows that Chang

socialized with some useful figures in a broad literary milieu in the US but the correspondence

between them did not last long. Also, her relationship with her best friends, the Soong couple,

was unstable at one point. As a result, the limited and sporadic social network led to Chang's

difficulty in publishing her works as well as her unstable and anxious life status. Despite her

efforts to network with the literary and publishing world in the US and Great Britain, Chang did

not prevail as an Anglophone writer in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Drawing on the visualization of the correspondence data and the social network that I

have constructed from Chang's letters, I argue that US-based Sinologist scholars were crucial for

her survival in the country. They proved instrumental in Chang's search for writing and

translation commissions and temporary residency positions in academic institutions. These

opportunities brought by the Sinologists, with their intellectual and social resources, eased many

of the difficulties that Chang had experienced in her early years in the US. One particular

scholar, C.T. Hsia, occupying one of the most connected nodes in Chang's social network, was

critical in Chang's career in the 1960s and onwards.[24] Hsia not only helped cement Chang's

position in the history of modern Chinese literature but also introduced Chang into the publishing

world in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Social network analysis also provides new insights in understanding Chang's popularity

and success in Taiwan and Hong Kong after her returning to write in Chinese in the late 1960s

and thereafter. On the one hand, Chang's identification as a pioneering modernist writer created

and consolidated by Hsia and other literary scholars smoothly translated into her importance in a

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[24] For a discussion of Hsia's promotion and interpretation of Eileen Chang in his *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1917–1957*, see Liu Zaifu, *Eileen Chang's Fiction and C. T. Hsia's* A History of Modern Chinese Fiction. MCLC Resource Center, July 2009. https://u.osu.edu/mclc/online-series/liuzaifu/. Accessed June 26, 2021.

modernist literary movement undergoing in Taiwan in the 1960s. At the same time, as someone who escaped from the CCP-controlled China and who was denounced by the party-controlled literary authorities, Chang was nonetheless welcomed in the literary world in Taiwan. On the other hand, Chang's success was also espoused by a robust textual community across the Pacific Ocean, including writers, literary scholars, literary critics, editors, and publishers.

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