

Introduction

This online exhibition pays tribute to Eileen Chang (1920-1995), a major twentieth-century writer and one of the most illustrious alumni in the history of the University of Hong Kong, on the occasion of the centennial celebration of her birth. With this collection of images and documents selected largely from the HKU Archives, we hope to identify new material and help generate fresh scholarship in the burgeoning global Eileen Chang studies. By piecing together a narrative that highlights the beginning of an extraordinary literary career, we celebrate Chang's connection with HKU as an important chapter in the history of both the Faculty of Arts and the larger university community.

Eileen Chang was educated bilingually from an early age. She had a tormented childhood growing up in an aristocratic family, with an opium-addicted father and a flamboyant mother who often left her and her younger brother behind for long periods of sojourning in Europe. Chang attended St. Mary's Hall in Shanghai and enrolled in the University of Hong Kong in 1939, only to see her college education abruptly ended two and a half years later by the bloody Hong Kong Battle of December 1941. In May 1942, she left the war-torn colony and returned to the equally ravaged metropolis of Shanghai, where she formally launched her bilingual (Chinese and English) writing career. At the age of 23, Chang had become an overnight literary sensation. Two volumes marked Chang's early literary success in Shanghai: a collection of short stories and novellas entitled *Romances* (1944) and a book of prose entitled *Written on Water* (1945). Her "tales of two cities"—Shanghai and Hong Kong—were some of the most endearing narratives in her early literary output, contrasting two urban environments as mirrors and shadows of one another.

In 1952, Chang bid farewell to Shanghai and returned to Hong Kong to complete her college degree. Though she never finished her studies, her bilingual mode of writing was switched back on. Writing, rewriting, translation, and self-translation kept her busy and productive. For three years, she was employed as a translator for the United States Information Agency, rendering works by Ernest Hemingway, Washington Irving, and Ralph Waldo Emerson into Chinese while transmitting Chinese propaganda material and narratives into English. Her own fiction writing also persisted. In the fall of 1955, Chang boarded a ship sailing for Honolulu and began four decades of diasporic life in America until her quiet death in a West Los Angeles apartment in 1995.

In recent Eileen Chang scholarship, the focus has shifted from her early canonical works to later works of her American years. The scholarly consideration of her as a bilingual writer, with a unique place in world literature, has gained momentum with recent publication of a series of formerly unpublished manuscripts, including novels, essays, letters, and notes. Three novels stand out among these "new" old works: Two were written in English— *The Fall of the Pagoda* and *The Book of Change*—and the third, the most critically acclaimed of all, in Chinese, titled *Little Reunions*. Significant portions of the latter two texts are a retelling of her wartime Hong Kong experience. Her time spent as a college student in Hong Kong continued to find its manifestation in a literary career deeply haunted by memories of war, of migration, and of permanent loss.

The University of Hong Kong hosted several Eileen Chang events and exhibitions in the past, but we still have hidden treasure on this campus. Drawing from previously unseen material

from the HKU Archives and other public and private collections, this exhibition seeks to redefine Chang's solitary experiment as an important chapter in our collective knowledge of global Chinese and global English. As Chang's alma mater and a starting point of her literary journey, HKU and the Faculty of Arts have a responsibility to help preserve her legacy. The narrative that emerges from these images and documents in this online presentation is only the beginning. When public events are permitted again on campus, we will unveil a physical exhibition at the historic Fung Ping Shan Library with a larger collection of images and documents. Our work will continue and the legacy of Eileen Chang lives on.

今年是張愛玲誕辰百年，也是她逝世二十五週年。張愛玲戰爭年代在香港大學文學院度過兩年半的時光，她說過香港記憶與她有著「切身的、劇烈的影響」。我們此番發掘和梳理的資料大多是第一次面世，將這些零散的文字和影像融合在一起，我們可以看到，港大的人文教育以及香港之戰帶給張愛玲的衝擊，直接影響到她日後的一舉成名。港戰前的張愛玲是個安靜的、不太引人注目的年輕學生。港戰的爆發是重要的契機，使她萌生要以最個人的方式書寫亂世眾生相的強烈願望，並在一夜之內脫穎而出：「時代的車轟轟地往前開。我們坐在車上，經過的也許不過是幾條熟悉的街衢，可是在漫天的火光中也自驚心動魄....」。〔〈燼餘錄〉〕

「百年愛玲，人文港大」以原始檔案中張愛玲及其師友的資料文獻來全面呈現她的港大生活與因緣。首次面世的文件與圖片包括有張愛玲、許地山等人在內的文學院師生的集體合影，列有張愛玲在大學二年級獲得的獎學金的原始檔案紀錄，張愛玲所住的港大女生宿舍的文字和影像記載，歷史講師諾曼·佛朗士的照片和檔案資料，文學教授許地山的珍貴手稿，好友炎櫻及家人在港大就讀的相關文件等。這個線上展覽只是一個開始，我們的梳理和研究還將繼續，在外界條件允許的時候我們會在馮平山圖書館舉辦一個更全面的文獻展。將這次挖掘的文獻資料與張愛玲筆下的港大和戰時香港並置對照，我們希望能重構一個重要的歷史場景，還原作家早期生活的一些片段，並為下一階段的張愛玲研究提供新的材料和靈感。