

**USIS-Commissioned Translation in Hong Kong in the 1950s  
—With Reference to Mae Soong’s Chinese Translation of  
American Literature**

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In Hong Kong, the British colony with a majority of Chinese population, the launch of the United States Information Service (USIS) made the ideological conflict more complicated. The central function of the USIS in Hong Kong was to produce print materials to influence and ‘win over’ the overseas Chinese audience. One major project was the commissioning or optioning of novels with a subtly anti-communist theme by Hong Kong authors, Eileen Chang being the most important representative. While the USIS-commissioned writings have received substantial academic attention, the USIS-commissioned translations have gone unregarded and merit further research. After a review of the critical literature, this paper will focus on literary translation practices in Hong Kong in the 1950s to 1960s, with special reference to those commissioned by the USIS, trying to delineate how translators applied self-censorship and manipulated the texts during the translation process. This paper will try to reveal their effort to discredit the Soviet Communist Party and their attempt to picture the US as a beautiful paradise against the background of Cold War. I will focus in particular on the prominent translator Mae Soong. Mae graduated from a Shanghai University and moved to Hong Kong as a writer and translator in the late 1940s. She was an editor for USIS and was involved in literary translation. She translated literary works by Washington Irving, Henry James and George and Helen Papashvily, etc. This paper will focus on her translation with reference to the triad of translation, patronage and censorship.