

Roaming *Nüxia*: Female Knights-errant in Jin Yong's Fiction

by

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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This thesis will explore the images of *nüxia* or “female knight-errant” in Jin Yong’s novels: *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, *the Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, and *the Heaven Sword and the Dragon Saber*. The depiction of *nüxia* underwent a significant development from the classical to modern literature of knight-errantry-related genre. Jin Yong, the master of *wuxia* fiction, has created many remarkable *nüxia* that distinguishes his *nüxia* images from the literary conventions. To examine Jin Yong’s uniqueness in portraying *nüxia*, this thesis will look into the history of *nüxia*-related works of poetry and classical literature, and analyze Jin Yong’s *nüxia* in the context of the literary history.

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Introduction

A long tradition of knight-errantry (*xia* 俠) can be found in pre-modern Chinese literature, and underwent a significant development in modern fiction, such as *wuxia* novels.¹ Jin Yong 金庸 (1924-present) is the most influential writer of the genre and made a significant contribution to the transformation of *xia*-related stories from classical to modern literature. Particularly, the image of female knight-errant (*nüxia* 女俠)² stands out in the tradition. Jin Yong has successfully created many remarkable *nüxia* in his fiction, such as Huang Rong 黃蓉 in *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes* (*Shediao yingxiong zhuan* 射雕英雄傳), Xiaolongnü 小龍女 in *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion* (*Shendiao xialu* 神雕俠侶), and Zhao Min 趙敏 in *The Heaven Sword and the Dragon Saber* (*Yitian tulongji* 倚天屠龍記) that have been made into television series and other entertainments for people to consume,³ and thus, their images have become the norm among the broader community of Chinese in identifying *nüxia*.

As Jin Yong's fictional collections are widely read and consumed, a research phenomenon in studying Jin Yong and his fiction, called "Jin Yong-ology" (Jin Yong xue 金庸學), is raised among scholars as well. Studying subjects, such as story themes, characters, narratives, and various aspects, are common in the field; but, the subject concerning *nüxia* is

¹ A *wuxia* novel is a genre of Chinese fiction featuring martial arts and knights-errant of ancient China.

² The thesis with *nüxia* when mentioning female knight-errant/ female knight.

³ Many of Jin Yong's novel series have been made into television dramas, movies, or games by entertainment industries. For example, *Condor Trilogy* (a series that includes *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, *The Return of the Condor Heroes*, and *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Saber*) has been made into dramas and even remade into different versions in Hong Kong and Mainland China. This allows the audience to access Jin Yong's characters without reading the novels, even though some adjustments are made. No wonder Xia Leng 冷夏 notes in her work, "There are Jin Yong's *wuxia* novels when there are Chinese." See *Jin Yong zhuan* 金庸傳 (*Biography of Jin Yong*). (Wuhan: Hunan chubanshe, 2008), 1.

rarely found. In the development of *xia*-related literature, *nüxia*'s existence is important and also makes contributions to the genre making it no longer a male-only subject. This thesis seeks to explore and find out Jin Yong's uniqueness in creating his *nüxia* in comparison with the previous literary works; that, perhaps, would unveil the secret of his *nüxia*'s popularity.

Xia and Nüxia

It is important to introduce significant terms regarding *nüxia* before going into the available literature of this subject. The term *nüxia* consists of two words *nü* and *xia* that can be translated as “woman” and “knight-errant,” and together as “female knight-errant.” The term *xia* applies to the kind of the men who roam around the country and use force to correct wrongs. However, the word *xia* contains cultural phenomena existed in ancient China that cannot simply be explained as the western medieval knights.⁴

In history, *Xia* or *youxia* 游俠 emerged in early ancient China, originally referred to those influential lords and commoners who owned swordsmen called “individual swordsmen” (*sijian* 私劍) as warriors and assassins.⁵ Began from the Han dynasty, *xia* and *sijian* were differentiated due to the policies of the Han court to retain political authority.⁶ Local commoner-knights were

⁴ James J.Y. Liu has argued that the term “knight-errant” is literarily close enough to the original and the least misleading translation. James J. Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), xiii.

⁵ Tsung-Cheng Lin, “Tangchao xiake shifeng” 唐朝俠客詩風 (Poetry of Knight-errantry in Tang Dynasty) in Lin Tsung-Cheng 林宗正 and Jiang Yin 蔣寅 ed., *川合康三教授榮休紀念文集 (A Collection of Essays on Classical Chinese Literature in Honor of Professor Kawai Kozo)*. (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2017), pp. 154-184 and “Knight-errantry: Tang Frontier Poems” in Zong-Qu Cai ed., *Stories of Chinese Poetic Culture: Earliest Times through the Tang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), Chapter 10, pp. 159-172. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, 1.

⁶ Lin, “Tangchao xiake shifeng,” 154-184. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, 40-41.

killed or forced to relocate. Therefore, the early form of *youxia* were reduced, and *sijian* started to identify themselves as *youxia*.⁷

In addition to the historical aspect, the culture of *xia* also consists a literary aspect. The *xia* in literature first appeared in historical biographies in the *Shiji* 史記 and *Hanshu* 漢書.⁸ From that, narratives of *xia* were developed further through poems, fiction, and dramas, and the images of *xia* were emphasized. Some significant *xia* characteristics include: returning the debts (and being willing to sacrifice himself), valuing friends more than family, valuing individual freedom, showing generosity and more.⁹ It should be mentioned the female *xia* is hardly found among the historical and literary *xia* of Qin and Han.¹⁰ Therefore, the characteristics that have been specified refer to the historical and literary male *xia*. Despite that, the development of the *xia* culture, still proves a foundation for *nixia* literature to be created.

Literature and Studies

⁷ Dr. Tsung-Cheng Lin has explained the history of *xia* in his researches. See Lin, "Tangchao xiake shifeng," pp. 154-184 and "Knight-errantry: Tang Frontier Poems," pp. 159-172. Pingyuan Chen 陳平原, *Qianggu wenren xiaokemeng* 千古文人俠客夢 (*The Literati's Age-Old Dream of Knight-errantry*). (Beijing: Xinshijie chubanshe, 2002), pp. 4-5.

⁸ Some famous *xia* stories, such as Jing Ke 荊軻 and Guo Jie 郭解 can be found in *Shiji*, and Ji Bu 季布 in *Shiji* and *Hanshu*.

⁹ It should be noticed that *xia* images shown in historical biographies, poems, and fiction are different. For *xia* characteristics in poetry, see Lin, "Tangchao xiake shifeng," 154-184 and "Knight-errantry: Tang Frontier Poems," in Zong-Qu Cai ed., *Stories of Chinese Poetic Culture*, 159-172. Other *xia* images can be found in Fengyuan Cui 崔奉源. *Zhongguo gudian duanpian xiayi xiaoshuo yanjiu* 中國古代短篇俠義小說研究 (*A Study of Chinese Classical Short Knight-errantry Fiction*). (Taipei: Lianjing cuban shiye gongsi, 1986), 1-19. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, 4-7.

¹⁰ Baochun Lin 林保淳, "Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuozhong de uuxia xingxiang" 中國古典小說中的女俠形象 ("The Images of Lady Knight-errants in Classical Chinese Fiction"). *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* 中國文哲研究集刊, no. 11 (1997): 43-88.

The subject of *nüxia* does not seem to be noticed in the field of “Jin Yong-ology” that the relevant studies and literature about Jin Yong’s *nüxia* is hardly found. Despite that, there are some studies and literature relate to *nüxia* that can be vehicles for filling the gap in studying Jin Yong’s *nüxia*. The pioneer of the *xia*-related field, James J. Y. Liu, in his book *The Chinese Knight-errant*, has already noticed *nüxia* are “a species apart...retain their feminine charms...and can fight like men.”¹¹ Nevertheless, Liu’s book is considered as a study focused on *xia* development other than *nüxia*. Roland Altenburger, on the other hand, has provided a comprehensive book that focused on studying *nüxia* in Chinese fiction. His work *The Sword or the Needle: The Female Knight-errant (Xia) in Traditional Chinese Narrative* gives a brief introduction to the genre of *xia* and *nüxia*-related fiction. Altenburger discusses the image and narrative of *nüxia* in fiction from the Tang dynasty to around the 1930s, which proves a solid literary history of *nüxia*. By that, he has mentioned some important images that literary *nüxia* have portrayed in different periods, such as using magical skills and developing a romantic relationship between male knights. Moreover, the author points out the gender issues of the *xia*-related genre that has affected how *nüxia* is illustrated—whether the portrayals of *nüxia* are just illusions of the *xia* in female gender lacking femininities. He indicates the bravery and heroism of the *xia* is a successful performance of the male gender role as it has shown on the historical and literary male *xia*. These elements of *xia* thus further structure the image of *nüxia* in the early stage of its development.¹² But, *nüxia*’s portrayals in Tang literature can still be explained as the traditional *xia* in another form. This points out the shape of *nüxia*’s image is male orientated and employs markers of masculinity, and the distinction between the male and female *xia* is therefore

¹¹ James J. Y Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 205.

¹² Roland Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle: the Female Knight-errant (xia) in Traditional Chinese Narrative* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 368-372.

blurred. This issue of an unclear gender identity gradually fades away in the *nüxia*-related fiction of Ming and Qing. However, Altenburger does not discuss anything related to female knights in poetry, which is also an important area in studying *nüxia* in traditional Chinese narrative.

Moreover, since Altenburger has mentioned the development of *nüxia* in modern fiction, Jin Yong's series can also be taken into the study to see the peak of *nüxia*'s narrative.

Besides fiction, poetry has been an important focus in classical Chinese literature, and this is also the case in studying *nüxia*. Scholars Wang Li 王立 in "Discussion of the Theme of Female Knight's Revenge in Old Chinese Literature" ("Lun zhongguo gudai wenxue zhong de xianü fuchou zhuti" 論中國古代文學中的俠女復仇主題) and Lin Tsung-Cheng in "Lady Avengers in Jin He's (1818–1885) Narrative Verse of Female Knight-errantry" argue that to perform filial piety is a motivation for *nüxia* to seek revenge on their enemies,¹³ and Lin further points out this filial act of revenge is distinct from male *xia* avengers.¹⁴ This directs the research to the social sphere and moral conventions of ancient China to see the cause of female vengeance. Luo Manling in "Gender, Genre, and Discourse" and particularly, Lin note that *nüxia*-related poetry has made a huge progression in Tang poetry through Li Bai's 李白 "There was a brave woman in Eastern Sea" ("Donghai you yongfu" 東海有勇婦), which creates the first *nüxia* in poems and later influences the fiction of female knight-errantry.¹⁵ Lin also points out Jin

¹³ Tsung-Cheng Lin, "Lady Avengers in Jin He's (1818–1885) Narrative Verse of Female Knight-errantry," *Frontiers of History in China* 8 no. 4 (2013): 494. Wang, "Lun zhongguo gudai wenxue zhong de xianü fuchou zhuti," 91

¹⁴ In the poetic tradition of knight-errantry, only female knights will revenge for their families; whereas, male knights revenge for their friends and people who recognize them but families are never their concerns. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 498.

¹⁵ Lin, "Lady Avengers," 508. Luo, "Gender, Genre, and Discourse," 586, but it's regrettable that Luo did not provide a detailed discussion on "东海有勇妇", a poetic work which is a landmark for a new tradition of female knights in poetry and literature of this theme as well.

He's 金和 (1818-1885) contribution to creating a new tradition of *nüxia* such as “intelligence.”¹⁶

By that, *nüxia*'s portrayals are gradually apart from the traditional *xia*.

Among studies of Jin Yong, numbers of books discuss about characters in Jin Yong's fiction, such as Ni Kuang's 倪匡 series *I Read Jin Yong's Novels* and Chen Mo's 陳墨 series of *Commenting about Jin Yong*. Among them, Wu Aiyi's 吳靄儀 *Women of Jin Yong's Fiction (Jin Yong xiaoshuo de nüzi 金庸小說的女子)* analyzes more than 70 female characters of Jin Yong's fiction in a clear context. Wu categorizes these female characters into different groups, such as the “evil woman” (*yaonü* 妖女) and the “heartbroken woman” (*shangxin nüzi* 傷心女子) based on their backgrounds and experiences. Although some characters cannot be defined exactly by the group titles, her method still helps to identify some possible *nüxia* characteristics creating by Jin Yong. However, these books relating to Jin Yong's characters are mainly non-academic writings that cannot prove a further and thoughtful discussion on the topic.

Aims of the Thesis

Until now, Jin Yong *nüxia*'s identities as *nüxia* seem not to be recognized. Rather than that, the recognition of his *nüxia* stays at the perspective of it being female characters. The thesis will trace the origin of the literary *nüxia* to the period when it first emerges in poetry and fiction, examine the significant contributions in portraying *nüxia* from the beginning to the recent era, and analyze Jin Yong's *nüxia* in the context of the literary history. I believe the overview of the

¹⁶ Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 511.

history proves a basic understanding of who the *nüxia* is and why the *nüxia* is special that is influential to Jin Yong's fiction.

Before examining Jin Yong's *nüxia*, the thesis will summarize the author Jin Yong's life and career, aiming to give a better understanding of the author and the motivation for writing his fiction. This part will also introduce Jin Yong's fiction by giving a brief summary. Since Jin Yong has 15 series of novels in total, the introduction will only focus on three novels: *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, and *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre*. The *nüxia* in the three novels are the primary focus of the thesis, which will be discussed in Chapter 3. The three novels are among the most popular in Jin Yong's fiction; the stories and characters are highly regarded by people. More importantly, they are a series, which means some characters are related. By that, they help to identify a certain *nüxia*'s transformation of images. Thus, a specific plot summary will be helpful for the reader to associate the story with the analysis.

After introducing Jin Yong and his fiction, the thesis will explore the *nüxia*'s tradition in classical Chinese literature, including poetry and fiction from Tang dynasty to the modern era, by referring several sources relating to literary *nüxia*'s history. This part aims to identify features and conventions in writing *nüxia* from each of the poems or stories to see what images had already been created from the previous works prior to Jin Yong's fiction. I will show some significant images, such as avenging theme and adding femininity, which have been used to portray different literary *nüxia*. Thus, they can be juxtaposed, against Jin Yong's *nüxia*, to see the differences and how the author's writing is influenced by the tradition.

Finally, the thesis will examine images of Jin Yong's *nüxia* in comparison with previous literary works. The section includes four aspects: appearance, the martial arts skill, the spirit of

xia, and *nüxia*'s individuality. By doing this, I will show that there are literary conventions inherited and innovations made by Jin Yong in his portrayals of *nüxia*.

Chapter 1

Jin Yong: A Legend in *Wuxia* Fiction

Cha Leung-Yung 查良鏞 (1924—present) better known by the pen name Jin Yong 金庸, was born in Yuanhua town in Haining City, Zhejiang province, in 1924. His career spans literature, political commentary, and commerce. He is well known among the public for his *wuxia* fiction, which has been introduced in newspapers and printed in books from the 1950s. The slogan “Jin Yong’s martial arts fiction—the common language of Chinese the world over” used by publishers is embraced by his fans.¹⁷ Lin Yiliang 林以亮 also said that “wherever there is Chinese, there is Jin Yong’s *wuxia* fiction.”¹⁸ His reputation and talent allow his literary works to appear not only on paper but also on the screen and in video games, which makes him one of the most popular writers in the *wuxia* fiction.

Chapter one will introduce Jin Yong and his *wuxia* fiction. The first part of this chapter will introduce Jin Yong’s life, from his youth to his recent activities. The second part will analyze the key features of the author’s *wuxia* novels. The chapter will conclude with a brief introduction to Jin Yong’s novels, especially three novel series that this thesis is going to discuss: *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes* (*Shediao yingxiong zhuan* 射鵬英雄傳), *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion* (*Shendiao xialu* 神鵬俠侶), and *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre* (*Yitian tulongji* 倚天屠龍記).

¹⁷ John Christopher Hamm, *Paper Swordsmen: Jin Yong and the Modern Chinese Martial Arts Novel*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii press, 2005), 1.

¹⁸ Du Nanfa 杜南發 et al, *Zhuzi baijia kan Jin Yong* 諸子百家看金庸 (五) (*Hundred Schools of Thought Read Jin Yong vol.5*). (Hong Kong: Mingchuang chubanshe, 1997), 15.

1. Life of Jin Yong

In the article “The Third and the Fourth Dreams” 第三個和第四個理想 in *Ming Pao* 明報, Jin Yong talked about his four lifetime dreams and was grateful that he could achieve them all. His four dreams are quoted,

For me, my first dream is to study hard and gain a decent level of knowledge and skill during my youth. The second dream is to work hard and do a couple of things that are beneficial to society, others, and myself after starting to work. The third dream is that I do not have to work while aging, and have a wealth, health, peaceful and happy moods, and spare times to spend the later remaining years. The fourth dream is I hope that the *Ming Pao*, the Newspaper I have established, can last longer, continue to develop, and contribute to the community, and that the *Ming Pao* is, for certain, beneficial to society.¹⁹

The following sections aim to focus on Jin Yong’s four dreams as a whole, and to illustrate his lifetime experiences from his youth to the present.

1.1. The Youth Stage

Jin Yong was born into a family of scholars, which include some famous scholars who had been punished by the literary inquisition, such as Cha Jizuo 查繼佐 (1601-1676), Cha Shenhang 查慎行 (1650-1727) and Cha Siting 查嗣庭 (17th century-1727) from Ming to Qing.²⁰ Jin Yong’s father Cha Shuqing 查樞卿 (?-1950) was also a locally famous member of the scholar gentry. The most influential person to Jin Yong in his family is his grandfather Cha Wenqing 查

¹⁹ Leng Xia 冷夏, and Xin Lei 辛磊, *Jin Yong Zhuan* 金庸傳 (*A Biography of Jin Yong*). (Wuhan Shi: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2008), 193. English translation is mine. The original article published on *Ming Pao* on 2 April, 1993.

²⁰ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 3

文清 who used to be a magistrate of Danyang county but resigned from the position due to his refusal to repress a group of anti-imperialists, and later edited *The Poetry Collection of Family Cha of Haining* (*Haining chashi shichao* 海寧查氏詩鈔).²¹ Jin Yong mentions that there are two things his grandfather influenced him on: one is Chinese are bullied by foreigners; another is to do more reading because reading is a way of self-strengthening.²²

Jin Yong's scholarly family had a large collection of books which gave him an advance opportunity to read and allowed him to develop an interest in reading at a young age. He was already a reader of classical and *wuxia* fiction at that time. One day, he happened to read *The Female Knight from Deserted River* (*Huangjiang nüxia* 荒江女俠) by Gu Mingdao 顧明道 (1897-1944) and soon became obsessed with this combination of romance and martial arts genre and then started to find more *wuxia* and chivalric fiction to read.²³ Nevertheless, Jin Yong never thought he would start writing *wuxia* fiction, though he eventually turned out to be the finest *wuxia* writer in his later years.

Jin Yong showed his talent for writing and doing business while studying in middle school. He and two of his friends collaborated on editing a reference book of exams for students to prepare for the school's entrance examination. Evidence of Jin Yong's business acumen was the book *For the Middle School Entrance Examination Candidates* (*Gei toukao chuzhong zhe* 給投考初中者), which was a great success and popular in several provinces.²⁴ Moreover, he wrote an article, "Alice's *Journey of Wondering*" ("Alisi manyou ji" 阿麗斯漫遊記), which satirized the Dean of Discipline as severe and as a vicious and scary cobra. Because of this article, he was

²¹ The incident is called Religious Incident of Danyang 丹陽教案. Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 5.

²² *Ibid*, 5.

²³ *Ibid*, 7.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 9-10.

expelled from the high school and transferred to another school.²⁵ He later went to the Department of Diplomacy at the Central School of Governance 中央政治學校 to pursue his dream of becoming a diplomat. During this time, he wrote a short story entitled “Love of a White Elephant” (“Baixiang zhilian” 白象之戀), which was about the life of a Thai Chinese oversea, and it earned him second place in a writing competition held by the Chongqing City Hall 重慶市政府.²⁶ Jin Yong was again forced to leave the school due to his protests against the injustices of the school.²⁷

During Jin Yong’s youth stage, literature has an immense influence on his life, and career. By absorbing the chivalric attitude from *wuxia* fiction, Jin Yong was able to stand out against injustices during his school life. Although his school life was not as smooth as others, it was part of a basis for his later achievements.

1.2. Entering the Workforce

At the age of 21, Jin Yong started his first job as a reporter for *Southeast Daily Newspaper* (*Dongnan ribao* 東南日報); this position was only a stepping stone for his later career in the newspaper industry.²⁸ In 1946, Jin Yong was selected by *Ta Kung Pao* 大公報 from more than 3,000 applicants and worked as a translator in charge of editing international news

²⁵ Ibid, 10.

²⁶ Kong Qingdong 孔慶東, and Jiang Ni 蔣泥, *Zui yan kan Jin Yong* 醉眼看金庸 (*Read Jin Yong with Enchanted Eyes*). (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2005), 6.

²⁷ It was the time during the Second Sino-Japanese War that the Communist party and the Nationalist party of China were working together fighting against the Japanese invaders. In Jin Yong’s School, some students of the Nationalist party were bullying those who were considered as the members of the Communist Party. Jin Yong complained about it and questioned the school why they allowed this violent act. Jin Yong was therefore having a debate with the school, which led to him being expelled,

²⁸ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 14.

sections.²⁹ In 1948, he was transferred to the Hong Kong branch, which was an important turning point in his life.³⁰ The next year, Jin Yong wrote an article about international law that got published by *Ta Kung Pao*; which transformed him into an active writer of *Ta Kung Pao*.³¹ For that, Jin Yong had a chance to know Mei Ru'ao 梅汝璈 (1904-1973)³² who gave him an opportunity to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had been a dream he always hoped to fulfill since he was a student.³³ Yet, this dream turned nightmare due to his non-communist background.³⁴ He had been, at that time, deeply influenced by the democracy established by British colonial government in Hong Kong,³⁵ so he returned to his original job.³⁶ In 1952, he left *Ta Kung Pao* and started to work for *The New Evening Post* 新晚報, where he met Liang Yusheng 梁羽生 (1924-2009).³⁷ Besides that, he had also begun to write film critique under the name Yao Fulan 姚馥蘭 and Lin Huan 林歡, and he even started to write movie scripts for *Belle of Rare Charm* 絕代佳人 (1952) and *Lan Huahua* 蘭花花 (1952).³⁸

²⁹ Ibid, 15.

³⁰ Jin Yong has built his empire in Hong Kong. If he did not decide to go to Hong Kong in 1948, his future career might have ended as the regime changed. Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 16-17.

³¹ The article discusses about the property right of Chinese in foreign country. Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 19.

³² Mei Ru'ao served as a ROC's delegate in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East 遠東國際軍事法庭 1946-1948 and then the senior adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PROC after 1949.

³³ Mei Ru'ao was one of authorities of Chinese International Law of the time who valued Jin Yong's talent and recommend him for the job at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after a few years. Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 20.

³⁴ The composition of the communist party was complicated. Jin Yong wanted to become a part of communist members without having an associate was impossible.

³⁵ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 22.

³⁶ In fact, he was rejected to resume his position at the first. The reason was: why coming back after left?

³⁷ Liang Yusheng is one of leading writers of *wuxia* fiction, who starts the "new school" of the *wuxia* genre.

³⁸ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 24-25.

During his time in *The New Evening Post*, Jin Yong started writing first *wuxia* fiction *The Book and the Sword* (*Shujian enchou lu* 書劍恩仇錄) in the newspaper, which is a milestone for his *wuxia* writing career.³⁹ The fiction did not gain too much attention at first, because there was nothing special in the beginning chapters. As the fiction continued to serialize developing the story further, the readers found the story was getting so interesting and surprising that they could not stop reading. Therefore, Jin Yong became very popular after a month of writing and also made *The New Evening Post* the most popular paper at the time.⁴⁰ In 1956, he started his second fiction *Sword Stained with Royal Blood* (*Bixue jian* 碧血劍) serialized in *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*, and wrote *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (*Xueshan feihu* 雪山飛狐) in *The New Evening Post* after *Sword Stained with Royal Blood* came to the end in 1957.⁴¹ Then, he spent three years (1957-1959) serializing *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, which was not only a great success in Hong Kong but also even became popular in South East Asia such as Malaysia and Singapore.⁴² The great success of *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes* won him the title of *wuxia* fiction master, and established him as the leading and most eminent writer of the genre.⁴³

From *the Book and the Sword* to the success of *the Eagle-Shooting Heroes* and finally to *the Deer and the Cauldron*, Jin Yong wrote a total of 15 fictional series, which established him as the master of *wuxia* fiction. Jin Yong was successful with his *wuxia* fiction through which he

³⁹ The story's setting is at Jin Yong's hometown Haining about Emperor Qian Long. Jin Yong is inspired by the story he heard about Qian Long when he was young. Therefore, some of characters are real historical figures.

⁴⁰ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 29.

⁴¹ The opened end of *Foxy Volant of the Snowy Mountain* created an immense response among readers. Luo Xianshu 羅賢淑, *Jianguang xiaying lun Jin Yong* 劍光俠影論金庸 (*The Sword's Light and the Knight's Shadow: A Discourse on Jin Yong*). (Taipei: Wanjuanlou chuban, 2003), 64.

⁴² Kong, *Zui yan kan Jin Yong*, 26.

⁴³ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 37.

was able to fulfill his dream of doing something beneficial for himself and others through his work; to his readers, he brought enjoyment and new experiences of reading.

1.3. Founding *Ming Pao*

In 1959, Jin Yong founded the newspaper, *Ming Pao* using the money he had earned from writing *wuxia* fiction.⁴⁴ *Ming Pao* was not popular in the beginning; however, the publication of Jin Yong's *wuxia* fiction later on successfully and significantly promoted his newspaper to be one of the main presses in Hong Kong. He serialized *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion* and followed by *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Saber* in *Ming Pao*. During the 1960s, *Ming Pao* earned its reputation with its fair and objective point of view, being recognized by the public. In 1963, Jin Yong began to serialize *Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils* (*Tianlong babu* 天龍八部) and launched *Ming Pao Monthly Magazine* (*Mingbao yuekan* 明報月刊), which he described as liberal and independent.⁴⁵ Later during the Cultural Revolution, Jin Yong had published a great number of critiques on the reason behind the Cultural Revolution which made *Ming Pao* become the most highly respected newspaper in Hong Kong.⁴⁶

At this point, Jin Yong's *wuxia* fiction served not only to prompt his newspaper's sales numbers but also to express his views on politics, society, and life. For example, *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer* (*Xiaobao jianghu* 笑傲江湖), which was published in *Ming Pao*, conveyed his view on the struggle for power and political viciousness.⁴⁷ In 1972, Jin Yong announced *The*

⁴⁴ Ibid, 44

⁴⁵ Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 63.

⁴⁶ When every other newspaper was reporting the reason for the Cultural Revolution was to break the "four olds," only *Ming Pao* wrote that the reason for the revolution was to seize the political power. See Leng, *Jin Yong Zhuan*, 66.

⁴⁷ In the epilogue of the novel, Jin Yong writes about his main purpose of the fiction is to describe the Chinese political life over 3000 years. "Like most novels, I wrote *wuxia* fiction is wanting to write about human nature. The novel aims to depict the common political phenomena throughout the past 3000 years

Deer and the Cauldron was to be his final *wuxia* fiction. After finishing this fiction, he spent ten years reediting his *wuxia* fiction.

1.4. Old Age

In the late 70s, Jin Yong was active in the political arena and was often invited to political conferences and meetings in Taiwan and the mainland.⁴⁸ In 1989, he announced his resignation from *Ming Pao*'s presidency and then sold his business in 1991. Two years later, he resigned from the chairmanship of the Board of *Ming Pao*.⁴⁹

After his retirement, he started studying,⁵⁰ traveling, and attending conferences. He went to Oxford University as a visiting scholar for a half year and was invited by schools, such as University of British Columbia, for speeches.⁵¹ He also earned Honorary Doctorate degree and

in Chinese history through some of its characters... To seize the power in spite of everything is the general political state at all time and in all countries... When I imagined, Ren Woxing, Dongfang bubai, Yue Buqun, and Zuo Lengchan, these people were not experts in *wulin*, but political figures... Ren Woxing becomes corrupted because of holding power. That is the common phenomenon of human nature...the similar circumstances could happen in any dynasty. 我寫武俠小說是想寫人性，就像大多數小說一樣。這部小說通過書中一些人物，企圖刻畫中國三千多年來政治生活中的若干普遍現象...不顧一切地奪取權力，是古今中外政治生活的基本情況...任我行、東方不敗、岳不群、左冷禪這些人，在我設想時主要不是武林高手，而是政治人物...任我行因掌握大權而腐化，那是人性的普遍現象...類似的情景可以發生在任何朝代。The original text see Jin Yong, *Xiaoao jianghu*, 1681-1684. The English translation is mine.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 100-115.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 171-179.

⁵⁰ In 1992, Jin Yong went Oxford University studying as a visiting scholar for 6 months. In 2005, he went Cambridge University studying both Master and Doctoral degrees in history. He received his doctoral degree in 2010. "Octogenarian novelist wants to be student" *Shenzhen Daily*. 23 June 2005. Retrieved 20 June, 2017, <http://www.newsgd.com/culture/art/200506230034.htm>. Tao Jie 陶傑, "Jianzheng Jin Yong huo Jian Qiao boshi" 見證金庸獲劍橋博士 (Witnesses Jin Yong receiving Cambridge Ph.D.). *Ming Pao Monthly Magazine* 明報月刊. (2010), accessed June 20, 2017, [http://mingpaomonthly.com/見證金庸獲劍橋博士%E3%80%80\(陶-傑\)](http://mingpaomonthly.com/見證金庸獲劍橋博士%E3%80%80(陶-傑)) /.

⁵¹ He also went to Oxford University to give a speech titled with "Hong Kong and China: In 1997 and Five Years after" in 1992.

Honorary Professor from several Universities which was seen as the high recognition of his accomplishments.

Jin Yong has devoted his life to pursue his dreams and gone through a variety of experiences such as being a reporter, writer, and a literary and political critique. Based on the reports from media, he is now still learning like a student of life.⁵²

2. Features of Jin Yong's Novels

Jin Yong produced a great quantity of *wuxia* fiction; however, it is apparent to see that his fiction is different from the works of his predecessors which present a tradition in which knights-errant were always inclined to achieve the highest title of swordsmanship in so-called “Rivers and Lakes” (*Jianghu* 江湖), the world of swordsmen. Jin Yong's fiction attempts to reflect the real world in his fiction and further explore the meaning of human beings and life. This section will discuss some features Jin Yong presents in his novels including: various characters, human nature, sentiments, life, and society.

2.1. Various Characters

Characterization plays an important role in literary works and has been taken as an essential device for literary writing. Understanding characterization is an important way to better understand a literary work. In *Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Honglou meng* 紅樓夢), the image of depressive Lin Daiyu 林黛玉, affectionate Jia Baoyu 賈寶玉, or shrewd Wang Xifeng 王熙鳳

⁵² A reporter interviewed him and he said, “[I] want to learn weiqi, play piano, travel to different countries and learn their languages...the more you grow older the more difficult things you need to learn because life will not go down when you continue to challenge yourself.”

are always impressive and unforgettable.⁵³ Similarly, Jin Yong successfully created a number of characters who give readers a strong impression such as Guo Jing 郭靖 and Huang Rong 黃蓉 (in *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*), Qiao Feng 喬峰 (in *Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils*), Ling Huchong 令狐冲 and Ren Yingying 任盈盈 (in *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer*), and Zhang Wuji 張無忌 and Zhao Min 趙敏 (in *The Heavenly Sword and the Dragon Sabre (Yitian tulong ji 倚天屠龍記)*).

Jin Yong sees characterization as an important element in writing fiction. He mentioned in the epilogue of *The Deer and the Cauldron*, “One of the key missions of fiction is to create characters: good men, villains, good men with bad qualities, villains with good qualities; [we] can write all of them.”⁵⁴ It’s apparent to find from Jin Yong’s works that he made a great effort to create a number of representative characters who bear distinguishing features and characteristics from each other. For example, Guo Jing and Yang Guo 楊過 are both being called Master of Knight-errantry (daxia 大俠); Guo Jing’s knight errantry is for the greater good (he is willing to sacrifice his life for the country), whereas Yang Guo’s knight errantry is sometimes selfish (he can betray someone who readers think is good and help those we think are bad, for his benefit).⁵⁵

Yang Guo is not the only case that has complex characteristics. Jin Yong has also created many different characters with good and bad qualities. For example, Duan Yu 段譽

⁵³ More information about characters, see Cao Xueqin, *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Translated by David Hawkes and John Minford. *The Story of the Stone: A Chinese Novels in 5 Volumes*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

⁵⁴ “小說的主要任務之一是創造人物：好人，壞人，有缺點的好人，有優點的壞人等等，都可以寫。” Jin Yong, *The Deer and the Cauldron*, 1628. The English translation of the cited phrases is mine.

⁵⁵ Yang Guo colludes with enemy to kill Guo Jing, and also tries to kill Guo Jing and Huang Rong when they try to kill his adopted father Ouyang Feng 歐陽鋒. Ouyang Feng is notorious in *jianghu* and has done a lot of wrongdoings, but Yang Guo protects him because Ouyang Feng sees him as a son.

comically claims he is a fool for love who dreams to spend his life with every woman he met.⁵⁶

Li Mochou 李莫愁, on the other hand, is a vicious character with good qualities who expresses her deep and sincere compassion for an infant while everyone is calling her a killer.⁵⁷

2.2. Human Nature

Human nature has been an important issue in Chinese philosophical thought which drew a lot of attention from scholars, especially Mencius 孟子 (c. 372-289 BC) and Xun Zi 荀子 (c. 313-238 BC), in ancient China. It's apparent to find that Jin Yong is particularly interested in the discussion about human nature. He indicated that "Like most fiction, I want to write about human nature through writing *wuxia* fiction...[the novel] can have a long-term value only when expressing human nature."⁵⁸

In Jin Yong's fiction, human nature is often described as good when one sees others having difficulties. For example, Zhou Zhiruo 周芷若 carefully fed Zhang Wuji 張無忌 on the boat when he was injured the first time they met.⁵⁹ When Zhang Wuji refuses to eat, she says, "If you don't eat, the old Daoist priest will be so displeased that he won't eat, either. Isn't that making him hungry?" Zhou Zhiruo's father was killed earlier in the day, but she did not blame

⁵⁶ Duan Yu has feelings for four different girls: Zhong Ling 鍾靈, Mu Wanqing 木婉清, Abi 阿碧, and Wang Yuyan 王語嫣. His thought is quoted from *Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils*, "[Duan Yu] gives up the thought and thinks, "If I can be with a girl sailing on the Lake Tai all my life, I will be absent-minded with Miss Wang...I will pity her, treasure her, and take care of her if I can be with Abi." [段譽]轉念又想: 要是我一生一世跟一個姑娘在太湖中乘舟盪漾, 若跟王姑娘在一起, 我會神不守舍, 魂不附體...若跟阿碧在一起, 我會憐她惜她, 疼她照顧她." The English translation is mine.

⁵⁷ Li Mochou seizes Huang Rong's child to treat Yang Guo to go Passionless Valley (Jueqinggu 絕情谷) to find a cure for poison. She could kill the infant any time she wants, but reveals her love as a mother to protect the baby from getting hurt for many times.

⁵⁸ Jin Yong, *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer*, 1682.

⁵⁹ It happened when both Zhang Wuji and Zhou Zhiruo were little kids, and before Zhou Zhiruo went to the Ermei Sect.

anyone, and still shows her caring nature toward others. On the other hand, human nature is seen to be bad when the fame and wealth are taken to be the major concern. For example, Yang Kang chooses the fame and wealth over his family and nation even after he knew Wanyan Honglie 完顏洪烈 was responsible for the destruction of his family.⁶⁰ Yang Kang cannot accept the truth of his real father is Mu Yi 穆易, who is a poor and old man that cannot provide the wealthy life he has now. Moreover, he betrays Guo Jing letting Wanyan Honglie escape when Guo Jing tells Yang Guo he is going to sneak in the Jin's camp and kill this sworn enemy. The decision Yang Kang made makes him a traitor to the Han nation and an ungrateful son.

2.3. Human Relationship and Emotion

Love between humans is an important value highly praised by Jin Yong. In *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre*, the relationship between Xie Xun 謝遜 and Zhang Wuji 張無忌 or Zhang Sanfeng 張三丰 and Zhang Cuishan 張翠山 displays the deep love like the one between a father and a son, while *the Giant Eagle and Its Companion* conveys the love between Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü. In addition to the positive emotion such as love and affection, Jin Yong's fiction pays special attention to the negative emotion such as hatred and jealousy. Examples of this can be found in Li Mochou and Madam Wang's 王夫人 romance history, both of whom reveal their hatred when they fail to win a man's favor so they murder the ones that did.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Wanyan Honglie is Yang Kang's foster father, but he tried to kill Yang Kang's father and Yang Kang's father's family friends in order to take Yang Kang's mother in possession.

⁶¹ In *Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils*, Madam Wang wants to be with Duan Zhengchun 段正淳 but it is impossible for she to have him for herself since Duan Zhengchun has many lovers. Therefore, she tries to kill every woman around him. In *the Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, Li Mochou is heartbroken and betrayed by her lover; thus, she starts to destroy those who are in love, as Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü.

In the epilogue of *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, Jin Yong explicitly indicated his intention and goal of why relationship is an important topic in his fiction, “I hope to write about [human relationship] as it is real and impressive and to explore and express relationship that is often not noticed by ordinary people.”⁶² He especially points out that the feelings of villains are oftentimes ignored by readers.⁶³ He uses the antagonist Shang Laotai 商老太 (in *The Young Flying Fox*) to express the strong family bond, which also exists among villains. Shang’s family member has done terrible things, but she still defends her family.

2.4. Life

One of the goals of Jin Yong’s *wuxia* fiction is to “reflect the real life in fiction.”⁶⁴ When a reader asks why A’zhu 阿朱 has to die,⁶⁵ he replies that, “Life is not always what goes around comes around...life is actually complicated; fate and things that we encounter change constantly.”⁶⁶ He especially uses this idea to write *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre*:

The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre is a work in which I wrote about my point of view on life. [I] want to express a theme to explain the notion of good and bad, or right and evil are sometimes difficult to distinguish...In the novel, I write about a cult in the beginning, but later sympathize with them. On the other hand, the so-called decent characters are not so decent after all.⁶⁷

⁶² Du, *Zhuzi baijia kan Jin Yong*, 193.

⁶³ In the epilogue of *The Young Flying Fox* 飛狐外傳, Jin Yong mentions that oftentimes we think the antagonists should be killed or defeated by protagonists in *wuxia* fiction; therefore, the antagonist will end up dead without any other more explanations.

⁶⁴ Du, *Zhuzi baijia kan Jin Yong*, 178.

⁶⁵ Azhu is one of female characters in *The Demi-Gods and the Semi-Devils*; a lovely girl who is in love with Qiao Feng. They have spent time together and decided to go frontier herding after Qiao Feng avenges his father. She finds out her real father Duan Zhengchun was the killer of Qiao Feng’s father; therefore, she disguises herself into Duan Zhengchun and allures Qiao Feng to kill her.

⁶⁶ Du, *Zhuzi baijia kan Jin Yong*, 209.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 22.

An example of this is Zhou Ziruo. She would have not turned evil if she had stayed at Wudang or never had a chance to meet Zhang Wuji in her life. Even so, she cannot decide what is going to happen to her, and that is life— a life with constant changes beyond her control.

2.5. Society

Sometimes what happens in current society will be a useful source for a writer to create his/her work. The setting of *wuxia* fiction is in ancient China, but according to Jin Yong, in some aspects ancient society is not that much different from the present due to the human nature and sentiment. Jin Yong points out that, “Society is reflected in fiction,”⁶⁸ and his *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer* aims to “express some common political phenomena that appeared throughout the past three thousand years in Chinese history.”⁶⁹ When Jin Yong was writing *Wanderer*, it was during the Cultural Revolution, and he admitted that he was disgusted with some political struggles.⁷⁰ Though, this fiction is not meant to merely reflect the Cultural Revolution since political battles have happened again and again throughout history of ancient China.⁷¹ Jin Yong not only writes about the negative aspects of society such as seizing power, fame, and wealth but also the positive ones, such as traditional paintings, music, calligraphy, food, drink, and martial arts. Additionally, traditional Chinese philosophical thoughts such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism are adopted into his fiction. Jin Yong’s fiction successfully brings to readers a lively world of ancient China which serves as the reminiscence through which readers rebuild their own imagination of ancient China.

⁶⁸ Original Chinese texts: 小說反映社會. Jin Yong, *The Deer and the Cauldron*, 1628.

⁶⁹ Jin Yong, *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer*, 1682.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 1682.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 1682-1684.

3. Jin Yong's *Wuxia* Fiction

Jin Yong has written a total of 15 series of *wuxia* fiction, which he spent 20 years writing from 1955 to 1972; this edition written at that period is generally called the “Old Edition” (jiuban 舊版), which is no longer available on the market. He took another 10 years to revise all of his *wuxia* fiction, from 1970 to 1980, which formed the “New Edition” (xinban 新版). From 1999 to 2006, Jin Yong revised his novels for the second time and reissued them. This new edition is known as the “Newly Revised Edition” (xinxiuban 新修版). Among different editions, the “New Edition” is closer to the original edition, widely popular for a long time, and highly recognized by readers; therefore, the thesis will use that edition of the text. Moreover, due to the huge size of the collection, the thesis will only be concerned with *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, and *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre*. These three novels are among the most popular in Jin Yong's fiction and have been made into television series and other entertainments; the stories and characters are highly recognized by people. More importantly, they are a series, which means the setting, stories, and even some characters are related. Therefore, they help to identify the transformation of *nixia*'s images.

3.1 *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*

The Eagle-Shooting Heroes, published in 1957, was the first lengthy fiction Jin Yong wrote. The story is set in the Southern Song dynasty at the Jurchen-ruled period. It begins at Jiangnan 江南 (South of Yangtze River) where two swordsmen, Yang Tiexin 楊鐵心 and Guo

Xiaotian 郭嘯天, meet Qiu Chuji 邱處機 of the Quanzhen Sect (Quanzhen jiao 全真教) on a snowy night.⁷² While being chased by the Jin soldiers, Qiu accidentally enters Niu Family Village (Niujiacun 牛家村) where Guo Xiaotian's and Yang Tiexin's families live. At first, Guo Xiaotian and Yang Tiexin invite Qiu Chuji to drink with them, but Qiu Chuji is suspicious about them thinking they might also be the enemy chasing after him. They then have a fight, but Guo Xiaotian and Yang Tiexin both agree that Qiu Chuji has better skill at that point. Through the fight, Qiu Chuji realizes Guo and Yang are descendants of two great heroes, and they then become friends.⁷³ Qiu Chuji helps them name their unborn sons Yang Kang and Guo Jing, and gives two bronze daggers with the two children's name on them as gifts.

On that night, the people chasing after Qiu Chuji arrive Niu Family Village and they have a fight with Yang Tiexin and others. With the help of Qiu Chuji, they defeat the Jin soldiers including the Song soldiers who was helping the Jin soldiers. Within one of the Jin soldiers, the sixth Prince of the Jin Empire is injured and hidden at the village. Yang Tiexin's wife Bao Xiruo 包惜弱 discovers the sixth Prince of the Jin Empire at the place where they buried the corpses of Jin soldiers. She saves him, heals his wounds, and releases him. This is the turning point of all episodes in the story. Bao Xiruo's kindness later bring the disaster of the destruction of the village and the change of their family's life as well as initiating the following new episodes. Both

⁷² Qiu Chuji is an actual historical figure, who is one of the Seven True Daoist of the North 北七真. He is also an important figure in both *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes* and *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*. The detailed biography, see Zhao Weidong 趙衛東, *Qiu Chuji ji* 邱處機集 (*Anthology of Qiu Chuji*). Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2005. The Seven True Daoist also include Ma Yu 馬鈺, Tan Chuduan 譚處端, Liu Chuxuan 劉處玄, Wang Chuyi 王處一, Hao Datong 郝大通, and Sun Buer 孫不二. Their biographies are also recorded in books and on stone tablets. Jin Yong, *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*. (Taipei: Yuanliu, 1996), 1612-1614.

⁷³ Yang Tiexin is the descendant of Yang Zaixing 楊再興, who is famous for his spear skills. Yang Tiexin is specialized in this "Yang Family Spear" (Yangjia qiang 楊家槍) and able to present it when fought against Qiu Chuji. Guo Xiaotian is also a descendant of Guo Sheng 郭盛, one of the heroes at Mount Liang (梁山 Liangshan).

Yang and Guo families are destroyed, and Madam Yang and Guo go missing. When Qiu Chuji knows this bad news, he is in great sorrow and decides to find his friends and their families. Following the tracks of the evildoers, he goes to Jiaxing 嘉興 where a conflict is stirred up between him and the Seven Freaks of Jiangnan (Jiangnan qiguai 江南七怪).⁷⁴ After resolving the conflict, the seven freaks and Qiu come to a mutual promise to find the missing Yang and Guo families. Qiu Chuji will look for Bao Xiruo and the Seven Freaks will search for Guo Xiexin's wife Li Ping 李萍. They make a promise to have a competition of their martial arts skills after 18 years, for which Qiu Chuji will mentor Yang Kang and the others will mentor Guo Jing when they have found them.

After the disaster, Li Ping has been drifting a long way to Mongolia, and she manages to settle down and give birth to her son, Guo Jing, there. When Guo Jing is 6 years old, he risks his life to save a stranger Zhe Bie 哲別.⁷⁵ The Mongol warlord Temüjin (Tiemuzhen 鐵木真) recognizes Guo Jing's courage and brings him back to his battalion where Guo Jing meets his son Tolui (Tuolei 托雷) and the two become sworn brothers. Meanwhile, the Seven Freaks come to Mongolia in search for Guo Jing and his mother and finally found them after 6 years of search. One night, Guo Jing and the Seven Freaks are practicing martial arts skills in a mountain where they encounter the notorious killer couple, called "Twin Killers in the Dark Wind" (Heifeng shuangsha 黑風雙煞), Mei Chaofeng 梅超風 and Chen Xuanfeng 陳玄風. The two parties fight against to each other and it ends up Guo Jing accidentally kills Chen Xuanfeng, one of the Freaks

⁷⁴ The Seven Freaks of Jiangnan includes: Ke Zheng 柯鎮惡, Zhu Cong 朱聰, Han Baoju 韓寶駒, Nan Xiren 南希仁, Zhang Asheng 張阿生, Quan Jinfu 全金發, and Han Xiaoying 韓小瑩.

⁷⁵ Zhe Bie comes from Mongolian "Jebe," which means "arrow."

Zhang A'sheng dies, Mei Chaofeng is blinded, and then Mei escapes with Chen Xuanfeng's body.

For 10 years, Guo Jing has spent his time practicing martial arts skills. He is not a fast learner, so he can only master a part of martial arts skills. During this time, he luckily meets Ma Yu 馬鈺 of the Quanzhen Sect from whom he later learns internal skill (neigong 內功) and therefore is able to rapidly improve his martial skills. During this period, Temüjin constantly goes on expeditions and finally unites all Mongol tribes and becomes Genghis Khan (Chengji sihan 成吉思汗). Guo Jing also attends some of the expeditions where his outstanding performances are valued by Genghis Khan that he becomes Genghis Khan's son-in-law.

When the date of the competition of Qiu Chuji and the Seven Freaks' martial arts skills is near, the Six Freaks ask Guo Jing to go back to the South ahead of them to gain some experiences by wondering around *jianghu*. On the way, he meets Huang Rong who is in disguise as a dirty beggar, and they become friends. While traveling towards the South, they come across a "joust to find a spouse" (*biwu zhaoqin* 比武招親) where the Prince of Jing takes advantage of the host Mu Nianci 穆念慈. This Prince, named Yang Kang (who is called Wanyan Kang 完顏康 at that time), is actually the son of Yang Tiexin and Bao Xiruo. On the day of the disaster, Bao Xiruo was separated from her husband. She was forced to marry Wanyan Honglie the Prince of Jing to have sufficient resources for raising her child. Guo Jing fights against Yang Kang to do justice for Mu Nianci, but Guo Jing is at a disadvantage because of his imperfect martial arts. Wang Chuyi 王處一 of the Quanzhen Sect interrupts the fight and saves Guo Jing. From that, they know Yang Kang is Qiu Chuji's apprentice. Yang Kang then invites Wang Chuyi to visit the Prince Zhao's mansion and Guo Jing goes together to ask Yang Kang to marry Mu Nianci since he won the joust. At the mansion, Yang Kang and his men want to take down Guo Jing, but

Wang Chuyi saves him again and they escape. It turns out Wang Chuyi is poisoned by Yang Kang's men, and he needs a cure. While Guo Jing is searching for the cure outside, he meets Huang Rong again, but this time, she reveals her female identity. The two of them sneak in the Prince Zhao's mansion again because Yang Kang has collected all the cures in town, and now they can only steal from Yang Kang. By sneaking into the mansion, they discover the existence of *Book of Wumu* (*Wumu yishu* 武穆遺書). While they are having a fight with Yang Kang's men such as Ouyang Ke 歐陽克, Sha Tongtian 沙通天, and Lingzhi Shangren 靈智上人, Bao Xiruo reunites with Yang Tiexin and Yang Kang's true identity is revealed.⁷⁶ When Guo Jing and Huang Rong try to flee away, they encounter Mei Chaofeng, who has served as the martial arts master to Yang Kang and accommodated in underground of the mansion for a while. Huang Rong asks Mei Chaofeng to protect them in the name of her father Huang Yaoshi 黃藥師.⁷⁷ Later, the Six Freaks, Qiu Chuji, and Ma Yu show up and join the fight. Finally, the fight ends with Bao Xiruo and Yang Tiexin committing suicide. The rest of them decide to continue going for the competition in Jiangnan after 6 months. Qiu Chuji feels ashamed of Yang Kang's immoral behaviour; thus, he admits defeat to the Seven Freaks of Jiangnan. At the same time, Qiu Chuji wishes Guo Jing to marry Mu Nianci as Yang Tiexin's last wish. Nevertheless, Guo Jing has affection for Huang Rong, and he refuses to marry Mu Nianci. Huang Rong then takes Guo Jing away and decides to resolve this tangled relationship later.

While Guo Jing and Huang Rong wondering around, they meet Hong Qigong 洪七公, the chief of the Beggar's Sect (Gai Bang 丐幫) on their journey. Huang Rong excels in cooking

⁷⁶ After the disaster, Yang Tiexin has changed his name to Mu Yi 穆易 and adopted Mu Nianci as his foster daughter.

⁷⁷ Mei Chaofeng is used to be Huang Yaoshi's apprentice.

while Hong is gourmet. Huang recognizes that Hong is the chief of the Beggar's Sect, and for the sake of persuading Hong to teach Guo the famous martial arts—the “Eighteen Dragon-Subduing Palms” (“Xianglong shiba zhang” 降龍十八掌), she, everyday, prepares different but also delicious dishes to make Hong stay with them. Hong Qigong recognizes that Huang is the daughter of his friend Huang Yaoshi 黃药师 as well, and knows her purpose of making all those good dishes. He therefore stays and teaches Guo Jing and Huang Rong martial arts skills. After Hong left, Guo Jing and Huang Rong go on their own trip and later bump into the Master of Guiyun Manor (Guiyun zhuang 歸雲莊) Lu Chengfeng 陸乘風.⁷⁸ While Guo Jing and Huang Rong are visiting Lu Chengfeng's manor, Yang Kang and Duan Tiande 段天德 come. Guo Jing tells Yang Kang that Duan Tiande is responsible for the disaster of their families and the murder who killed Guo Jing's father. Yang Kang then kills Duan Tiande and pretends to be sworn brother with Guo Jing.

After that, Huang Rong and Guo Jing go to Peach Blossom Island (Taohua dao 桃花島) to see Huang Yaoshi of the “Eastern Heretic” (Dongxie 東邪), but Guo Jing gets lost and meets Zhou Botong 周伯通, who has been guarding the grotto for 15 years. Guo Jing becomes sworn brother with Zhou Botong by saving his life. Zhou Botong then tells him about the *Nine Yin Classic* (Jiuyin zhenjing 九陰真經), a most coveted martial arts classic of that era. They happened to find a part of the classic from Guo Jing, which is written on a piece of dried human skin.⁷⁹ Since Zhou Botong is able to memorize the other half, he then teaches Guo Jing the skills

⁷⁸ Lu Chengfeng is one of Huang Yaoshi's apprentices.

⁷⁹ This piece of dried human skin came from Chen Xuanfeng. After Chen Xuanfeng is dead, Mei Chaofeng takes off this part from his body and wraps the bronze dagger with the skin. The bronze dagger is owned by Guo Jing, who used it to kill Chen Xuanfeng when he was young.

in the classic.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, Ouyang Feng of the “Western Venom” (Xidu 西毒) brings his nephew, the vicious Ouyang Ke, to the island to propose marriage to Huang Rong while Hong Qigong also comes to the island as a match-maker for Guo Jing. In order to find a way to sort out the conflicts between the two proposals, Huang Yaoshi thus propose a competition for Guo Jing and Ouyang Ke, and sets 3 questions to test Guo Jing and Ouyang Ke. It turns out that Guo Jing wins the competition, but Huang Yaoshi regrets it and sends them away from the island.⁸¹

When all the guests including Hong Qigong, Zhou Botong, Guo Jing, Ouyang Ke and Ouyang Feng leave the island and set forth to their destinations, Hong Qigong is injured and poison by Ouyang Feng. With his life hanging by a thread, he passes down the Dog Beating Stick (Dagou bang 打狗棒) to Huang Rong and names her the next chief of the Beggars’ Sect (Gai bang 丐幫).⁸² Huang Rong later goes to the Beggars’ Meeting, where she confronts Yang Kang who possesses the stick and pretends to be the new chief, and his lie is exposed by Huang Rong and Guo Jing.

Soon after the meeting, Guo Jing and Huang Rong venture to Mount Iron Palm (Tiezhang shan 鐵掌山)⁸³ and successfully find the *Book of Wumu*. Nevertheless, Huang Rong is injured by Qiu Qianren 裘千仞 the chief of the Iron Palm Sect. Huang Rong, with the company of Guo

⁸⁰ Zhou Botong is forbidden to practice the *Nine Yin Classic*, which is used to own by his sect. So, he lets Guo Jing to learn.

⁸¹ Huang Yaoshi regrets it because he favors Ouyang Ke over Guo Jing.

⁸² Zhou Botong, Hong Qigong, and Guo Jing fall into the sea by accident, and Huang Rong can only save Hong Qigong at that time. They drift to an island, and Guo Jing and Ouyang Feng drift to there, after few days. Hong Qigong is seriously injured by Ouyang Feng; thus, he decides to pass down the Dog Beating Stick to Huang Rong. Whoever owns the stick and is able to deliver the “Dog Beating Stick Techniques” (Dagou bang fa 打狗棒法) proving that the person is the chief of the Beggars’ Sect.

⁸³ Guo Jing and Huang Rong figure out the actual location the *Book of Wumu* is, which is Mount Iron Palm. Before that, they were misleading by Lingzhi Shangren and others of Jin invaders thinking the *Book of Wumu* is at the Emperor’s Palace. So, Guo Jing and Huang Rong venture to the mountain in advance of the Jin invaders.

Jing, later seeks the treatment from Master Yideng (Yideng dashi 一燈大師) of the “Southern Emperor” (Nandi 南帝) and finally recovers. During this period, Ouyang Feng and Yang Kang sneak on Peach Blossom Island, kill five of the Six Freaks, who are visiting Huang Yaoshi, and frame it to Huang Yaoshi. The loving couple Guo Jing and Huang Rong become enemies with each other after the incident. Huang Rong sees through Ouyang Feng’s deception by delivering her theories, which are also the truth, in Iron Spear Temple (Teiqiang miao 鐵槍廟). Yang Kang attempts to stop her by attacking her with a palm strike, but he hits on Huang Rong’s soft armour, which is stained with the deadly venom from Ouyang Feng’s snake. The venom is used to kill one of the Freaks on the island that ironically kills Yang Kang as well. 待续

Guo Jing starts searching for Huang Rong after knowing the truth happened on the island. While looking for Huang Rong, he comes across Tolei and helps Genghis Khan to defeat the Jin dynasty. After successfully conquering the Jin empire, Genghis Khan moves forward to carrying out his real plan—expend his kingdom by attacking the Song Empire, but Guo Jing refuses to help and returns to Song. On his way back to the Song, Guo happens to run across Qiu Chuji, and later both join the trip to Mount Hua (Hua Shan 華山) to find Hong Qigong who is going to have martial arts contest with the other three masters—Huang Yaoshi , Yi Deng and Ouyang Feng. When they are arriving at the foot of Mount Hua, Guo finally finds Huang Rong who Guo thought is dead and is now hiding herself in a cave from the harassment of Ouyang Feng. The couple later go up to Mount Hua to meet the four masters. It turns out that Guo Jing and Qiu Qianren 裘千仞, a notorious master of martial arts in the fiction, join the competition. The outcome is that Ouyang Feng surprisingly wins the contest with his improperly practiced *Nine Yin Classic*; however, the improper practice drives him insane.

3.2. *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*

The Giant Eagle and Its Companion is the sequel to *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, but it focuses on different protagonists. Guo Jing and Huang Rong continue their roles as middle-aged husband and wife in the story and live on Peach Blossom Island with their daughter Guo Fu 郭芙.

In the Southern Song dynasty in the Lizong-reign-period, a personal vendetta happens at Jiaying. It is triggered by the incident 10 years ago. The “Scarlet Serpent Fairy” (Chilian xianzi 赤鍊仙子) Li Mochou was betrayed by her lover Lu Zhanyuan 陸展元, and she swore to eliminate the entire Lu family after 10 years. By chance, Yideng Dashi’s apprentice Wu Santong 武三通 and his wife Wu Sanniang 武三娘 come and help defeating Li Mochou so that the daughter of Lu family is able to survive. The little beggar Yang Guo witnesses the entire fight and is injured by Li Mochou’s poison needles. Ouyang Feng, who is now insane, meets Yang Guo, saves him, and accepts him as his godson. After that, Huang Rong and Guo Jing pass by and recognize Yang Guo’s identity as Yang Kang’s son, and then take him back to Peach Blossom Island. Huang Rong does not like Yang Guo because of his father’s wrongdoings; Guo Fu does not like him either and often bullies him. Later, Guo Jing has to take Yang Guo to the Quanzhen Sect (Quanzhen Jiao 全真教) because he has offended Guo Jing’s master Ke Zhen’e 柯鎮惡. Yang Guo becomes Zhao Zhijing’s 趙志敬 apprentice. Yang Guo is oftentimes bullied by his master. He does not want to be insulted anymore; thus, he escapes from Quanzhen to a nearby Tomb of the Living Dead (Huosiren mu 活死人墓), where the Ancient Tomb Sect (Gumu pai 古墓派) is.

Yang Guo meets Xiaolongnü there and becomes her apprentice. As the time passes by, the love grows between the two through their constant interactions.

Later on, Li Mochou and her apprentice show up at the tomb and try to steal *Jade Maiden Heart Sutra* (*Yünü xinjin* 玉女心經), which is the profoundest martial art classic of the Ancient Tomb Sect, but in vain. After a fight against Li Mochou, Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü escape the tomb then meet Ouyang Feng. Ouyang Feng attacks Xiaolongnü's acupoint and covers her eyes to prevent her from stealing the martial arts skill while he is teaching Yang. This causes Xiaolongnü to lose her virginity to Yin Zhiping 尹志平 of the Quanzhen Sect whom she thought was Yang Guo at that time. The next day when Xiaolongnü tells Yang Guo that she wants to be his wife; he does not know the reason and, thus, does not dare to agree. Xiaolongnü then leaves the tomb.

While Yang Guo is looking for Xiaolongnü, he meets Hong Qigong on the Mount Hua, and Ouyang Feng follows after Yang Guo. For 4 days, Hong Qigong and Ouyang Feng fight against each other until Ouyang Feng finds his memories that they feel relieved and die together. After he buries their bodies, Yang Guo comes across the Heroes Meeting (*Yingxiong dahui* 英雄大會), which is hold by Guo Jing to solicit heroes to defeat Jin invaders and elect the chief of Martial Arts Circles (*wulin* 武林). The Golden Wheel Guardian King (Jinlun Fawang 金輪法王) of Mongolia appears and spoils the event. Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü, who has drifted here, fight and defeat the Guardian King together. When they announce their love relationship in public, everyone thinks that is ridiculous because they are master-and-apprentice relationship. Xiaolongnü leaves again so that Yang Guo will not despised by others. Yang Guo then finds her at Passionless Valley (*Jueqing gu* 絕情谷), but he is poisoned by the Passion flower (*qinghua* 情花) at that point that he is in despair. Qiu Qianchi 裘千尺, the wife of the valley owner, then

offers Yang Guo a deal as an exchange of the cure, which is to bring Guo Jing and Huang Rong's heads. By this time, Yang Guo has known Huang Rong is the one who is responsible for his father's death, he then takes the deal.

Both Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü come to Xiangyang 襄陽 seeking Guo Jing, who helps defend the country for the people. Yang Guo is touched by his heroic move and thus, gives up his plan of killing Guo Jing and Huang Rong. He then joins the front line. After the battle, Huang Rong gives birth to her daughter Guo Xiang 郭襄 at Xiangyang, but the Guardian King then appears to kidnap Huang Rong. Guo Jing is injured in the battle; therefore, Yang Guo helps to defeat the Guardian King. While Yang Guo and the Guardian King are fighting, Xiaolongnü takes the newborn baby away wanting to offer her as an exchange for Yang Guo's cure. Suddenly, Li Mochou shows up and takes away the baby not knowing the baby is Huang Rong's daughter. In order to save the baby, Yang Guo and Li Mochou work together to defeat the Guardian King. After the fight, Li Mochou and Yang Guo find themselves in the wood away from Xiangyang. Li Mochou believes the baby is Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü's daughter, thus she threatens Yang Guo with the baby in exchange of *Jade Maiden Heart Sutra*. While two of them is being in a deadlock situation, the baby cries loudly with her empty stomach. Yang Guo and Li Mochou is able to solve the problem with a leopard's milk. After that, they get along with each other for a while, and they encounter Wu Santong and his sons Wu Dunru 武敦儒 and Wu Xiuwen 武修文. Wu Santong and his sons attack Li Mochou, but Li attacks them with the poison. Yang Guo is thus in a dilemma of saving the baby or the Wu family. However, Yang Guo chooses to save the Wu family and helps to get rid of the poison within Wu Santong's sons. He sucks out the poison with his mouth so that he gets poisoned and passes out. By the time Yang Guo woke up, Li Mochou has already gone away with the baby. Yang Guo returns to

Xiangyang, where Gao Fu cuts off one of his arm and blames him for the loss of her sister. He escapes and meet the Divine Condor (Shen diao 神鷲), which later becomes his only and best friend and teaches him martial arts skills. He then finds Xiaolongnü is attacked by the people of the Quanzhen Sect. She is seriously injured, but Guo Fu makes her condition worse by attacking her with a poison needle. Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü go to the Passionless Valley, where they find Huang Rong, Li Mochou, and others. Yang Guo has his cure, but Xiaolongnü's wound is incurable. She is afraid that Yang Guo would commit suicide after her death; she then leaves words on the cliff promising him they will meet again after 16 years, and then she jumps off the cliff.

After the incident, Yang Guo starts wandering around to look for Xiaolongnü, and he performs chivalric deeds for 16 years. During this period, he is accompanied by the condor and improves his martial arts skills. Moreover, he becomes a friend of Guo Xiang. When the promised date comes, Yang Guo waits for Xiaolongnü to come, but she does not show up, and Yang Guo decides to commit suicide and jumps off a cliff. Surprisingly, he finds Xiaolongnü alive in the bottom of the valley. They leave the valley and help to defeat Mongol. After their victory, Yang Guo, Xiaolongnü, and others go to the Mount Hua and held a memorial ceremony for Hong Qigong. Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü then leave together and live in seclusion.

3.3. *The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre*

The Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre is the third part of the *Condor Trilogy* (*Shediao sanbuqu* 射雕三部曲). Even so, the story is not very closely related to the others; only Guo

Xiang, Zhang Baojun 張寶君,⁸⁴ and Huang Rong and Guo Jing remain from the previous volume. The latter two, the makers of the Heaven Reliant Sword (Yitian jian 倚天劍) and the Dragon Slaying Sabre (Tulong dao 屠龍刀), are the key figures connecting the episodes between the former two novels and the current one.

The story begins with Guo Xiang inquiring about Yang Guo's whereabouts while wandering around the *jianghu*. One day, she passes by the Shaolin Temple, where she meets Jueyuan 覺遠 and his apprentice Zhang Baojun. They are punished and have conflict with the abbot in the temple because they lost the *Nine Yang Classic* (Jiuyang zhenjing 九陽真經) and Zhang Baojun displays a knowledge of Shaolin martial arts which he is not allowed to know; the three therefore flee from the temple. Jueyuan uses up all his strength to protect them and is later dying of exhaustion. Before his death, he recites the *Nine Yang Classic*, and the other two therefore have an opportunity to remember part of it. Later, Guo Xiang establishes the Emei Sect (Emei pai 峨嵋派); Zhang Baojun founds the Wudang Sect (Wudang pai 武當派) and names himself Zhang Sanfeng 張三丰, the master of Tai Ji.

After several years, the Dragon Slaying Sabre appears in *wulin* that people stir up conflicts for it. A young swordsman Yu Daiyan 俞岱巖, the third apprentice of Zang Sanfeng, accidentally obtains the Dragon Slaying Sabre and wants to send it for Zhang Sanfeng. Nevertheless, the sabre is taken and he becomes disabled when he encounters the members of the Heavenly Eagle Cult (Tianying jiao 天鷹教). Zhang Cuisan 張翠山, the fifth apprentice of Zhang Sanfeng and also the father of the main character Zhang Wuji 張無忌, wants to find out

⁸⁴ In the last chapter of *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, Yang Guo teaches Zhang Baojun some martial arts skills.

the truth; therefore, he searches for every clue he could find. While he is searching, he meets Yin Susu 殷素素, who is the daughter of the chief of the Heavenly Eagle Cult and the mother of Zhang Wuji. After the Heavenly Eagle Cult steals the Dragon Slaying Sabre, they gather people from *wulin* to show their authority and power by using the sabre on Mount Wangpan Island (Wangpansan dao 王盤山島). Unexpectedly, Xie Xun 谢逊, known as the Golden Haired Lion King (Jinmao shiwang 金毛獅王), appears, using his martial arts “Lion’s Roar” (Shizi hao 獅子吼) to attack everyone and takes the sabre. He brings the weapon and seizes both Zhang Cuisan and Yin Susu to escape but they later encounter a severe storm when they are sailing away from Mount Wanpan Island. They are drifting to the north by the current, and unexpectedly, they land on Ice Fire Island (Binghuo dao 冰火島) in the north and live there for 10 years. During this period, Zhang Cuisan and Yin Susu marry and have a son Zhang Wuji, who is also Xie Xun’s godson.

After 10 years, with the help of Xie Xun who refuses to leave the island in order to avoid revenge and to study the Dragon Slaying Sabre, the family of three return alone to the mainland. On their way back to Wudang, Zhang Wuji is kidnapped by the Xuanming Elders (Xuanming er lao 玄冥二老). After several attempts to search for him, the couple still fails to find their son. They have no choice but return to Wudang to look for help. At the same time, different sects around the *wulin* come to Wudang to ask for Xie Xun’s whereabouts. Zhang Cuisan and Yin Susu refuse to tell, and later decide to take the worse way—killing themselves—to protect the secret. Zhang Wuji, on the other hand, is seriously injured by Xuanming Elders’ “Xuanming Divine Palm” (Xuanming shenzhang 玄冥神掌) that is impossible to be cured without practicing the “Nine Yang Divine Skill” (Jiuyang shengong 九陽神功), the classics of the martial arts only

stored in the Shaolin Sect. Therefore, Zhang Wuji seeks help at Butterfly Valley (Hudie gu 蝴蝶谷) from a Ming Cult (Ming jiao 明教)⁸⁵ physician, Hu Qingniu 胡青牛, as an alternative. For 2 years, Zhang Wuji is still not cured, but he has made himself well familiar with learnt medical skills. Later on, an unforeseen event happens at the valley, and Zhang Wuji meets Ji Xiaofu 紀曉芙 of the Ermei Sect. He promises her to bring her daughter Yang Buhui 楊不悔 to her father in the Kunlun Mountains (Kunlun san 崑崙山). After the mission is complete, Zhang Wuji meets Zhu Changling 朱長齡 and his daughter on his way back to the Central Plain (zhongyuan 中原), but Zhang later finds out their plan to find the whereabouts of Xie Xun and the Dragon Slaying Sabre, and therefore runs away. While Zhu Changling is chasing Zhang Wuji, Zhang Wuji and Zhu Changling fall down a cliff, where Zhang Wuji finds a cave and squeezes himself into the narrow and deep cave to protect himself from being caught by Zhu. He finds a valley after climbing through the narrow tunnel in the cave. He lives in the valley for the next 5 years, where he finds the *Nine Yang Classic* inside an ape's abdomen. He later learns all the skills from the classic and his injury is then fully healed.

After Zhang Wuji returns to *jianghu*, he learns that the six major sects in *wulin* plan to attack the Ming Cult on Bright Peak (Guangming ding 光明頂). Zhang Wuji goes to the peak ahead, where he discovers an evil plot by Cheng Kun 成崑, Xie Xun's sworn enemy, to create conflict between the Ming Cult and the other sects. By accident, Zhang Wuji and Xiaozhao 小昭, a servant of Yang Xiao's 楊逍 family meet on the peak, find the classic of the "Heaven and

⁸⁵ Ming Cult is known as Jingjiao 景教, which is the Church of the East that had a presence in China during the 7th through 10th century and the later during the Yuan Dynasty in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Earth Great Shift” (Qiankun danuoyi 乾坤大挪移) and Zhang Wuji masters it.⁸⁶ He later represents the Ming Cult to fight the six sects and finally solve the conflict between the two sides.⁸⁷ He then becomes the chief of the Ming Cult.

The six sects, on their way back, are poisoned and captured by Zhao Min of the Mongol Princess after they left Bright Peak. Zhao Min aims to weaken the great forces of *wulin*. Therefore, she impersonates herself as the chief of the Ming Cult and has her man disguised as Shaolin monk Kongxing 空相 attacking Shaolin Temple and then the Wudang Sect. Zhang Wuji figures that out and he and the leading members of the Ming Cult flee to Wudang helping Zhang Sanfeng. However, Zhang Sanfeng has been injured by the impersonated Kongxing when Zhang Wuji gets there. In order to stop Zhao Min, Zhang Sanfeng teaches Zhang Wuji “Taiji Fist” (Taiji quan 太極拳) and “Taiji Swordplay” (Taiji jianfa 太極劍法) to defeat Zhao Min’s men and further expose her evil plot. Meanwhile, Zhao Min agrees to give Zhang Wuji the cure to heal Yu Daiyan if he fulfils three conditions.

The first condition is taking Zhao Min to Xie Xun and bring the Dragon Slaying Sabre. Two of them, Xiaozhao and Zhou Zhiruo come to Divien Snake Island (Lingshe dao 靈蛇島), where they see Xie Xun is attacked by members of the Beggar’s Sect. Zhang Wuji is able to reunite with Xie Xun. However, they are interrupted by the messengers of the Persian Ming Cult. The owner of the island Golden Flower Granny (Jinhua popo 金花婆婆) reveals her real identity of Purple Dress Dragon King (Zishan longwang 紫杉龍王), who is the former “Sacred Maiden” of the Persian Ming Cult. She further exposes the mother-and-daughter relationship with

⁸⁶ Yang Xiao is the Bright Left Messenger (Guangming zuoshi 光明左使) of the Ming Cult, who serve as the acting leader before Zhang Wuji becomes the chief.

⁸⁷ The six sects include: Mount Hua (Huashan 華山), Kongdong 崆峒, Emei 峨眉, Kunlun 崑崙, Shaolin, and Wudang.

Xiaozhao. As the descendant of “Sacred Maiden,” Xiaozhao is requested to return to the Persian Ming Cult. In order to save Zhang Wuji and others from the attack of the Persian Ming Cult, Xiaozhao and Granny agree to return. After that, the rest of people return to the mainland with the Heaven Reliant Sword and the Dragon Slaying Sabre. To avoid attracting attention, they do not sail on the regular route to the mainland. While sailing, they have an accident and drift to an uninhabited island, where Zhou Zhiruo uses Zhao Min’s poison “Ten Fragrances Tendon Weakening Powder” (Shixiang ruanjin san 十香軟筋散) on the others. In order to fulfill her master’s dying wish of retaining the secret of the swords, she takes two swords and *Nine Ying Classic* and *Book of Wumu* within the swords, and then kills Yin Li 殷離, Zhang Wuji’s cousin, and lets Zhao Min drift on sea making the entire incident as Zhao Min’s conspiracy. Zhou Zhiruo succeeds in making Zhang Wuji believe it was Zhao Min’s evil plot, he then decides to engage with Zhou Zhiruo on the island.

After returning to the mainland, Xie Xun is captured by Cheng Kun and trapped at Shaolin Temple. Zhang Wuji fails to find his godfather, he then returns to Bright Peak holding the ceremony for his wedding. Zhao Min interrupts the wedding and tells Zhang Wuji that she knows where to find his godfather. Zhao Min then gives Zhang the second condition—that is, he cannot marry Zhou Zhiruo.

Meanwhile, Cheng Kun holds the Lion Slaying Ceremony (Tushi dahui 屠獅大會) at Shaolin Temple, which uses Xie as a bait to make sects of *wulin* to destroy each other. Zhou Zhiruo, the chief of the Ermei Sect, defeats everyone, and together with Zhang Wuji, they challenge three Shaolin elders guarding Xie Xun. Zhou Zhiruo intends to kill Xie Xun, but she is stopped by the Yellow Dress Maiden (Huangshan nüzi 黃衫女子), and her crime is also

revealed.⁸⁸ At the same time, Xie Xun identifies his master Cheng Kun that he fights and defeats Cheng. Xie Xun then converts to Buddhism.

After the incident at Shaolin Temple, Zhang Wuji and Zhao Min retrieve the *Nine Yin Classic* and the *Book of Wumu* from Zhou Zhiruo and reveal the secret of the Heaven Reliant Sword and the Dragon Slaying Sabre.⁸⁹ Zhang passes the *Book of Wumu* to one of his fellows and successfully defeats the Yuan dynasty, thus, realizing Huang Rong and Guo Jing's dying wish of taking back the country for the Han people. In the end, Zhang Wuji retires from *jianghu* and lives a reclusive life with Zhao Min.

⁸⁸ The Yellow Dress Maiden is the descendant of Yang Guo and Xiaolongnü. She defeats Zhou Zhiruo with the skills in the *Nine Yin Classic*.

⁸⁹ Before Xiangyang was occupied by the Yuan armies, Guo Jing and Huang Rong asked the blacksmith to make the Heaven Reliant Sword and the Dragon Sabre. Two sword were forged from Yang Guo's Heavy Iron Sword 鐵玄重劍. Both the *Nine Yin Classic* and Guo Jing's Eighteen Dragon-Subduing Palms are concealed in the Heaven Reliant Sword. The Dragon Slaying Sabre was given to Guo Jing's son Guo Polu 郭破虜 while Guo Xiang had the Heavenly Reliant Sword. The secret about two swords was passed down only from the leader of the Emei Sect to her successor.

Chapter 2

Amazing *Nüxia*: The Literary History in Classical Chinese Literature

Jin Yong has created many different *nüxia* in his *wuxia* fiction. The classical literature of *nüxia* has proved a foundation, which has influenced Jin Yong in creating his *nüxia*. Therefore, we should mention the literary history of *nüxia* in poetry and fiction before looking into Jin Yong's novels. Both literary styles have contributed to the *nüxia* tradition in different ways, such as a theme of vengeance in the poetry or a comprehensive narrative of the fiction. Developments of two literary styles will be illustrated in separate sections in this chapter. Thus, the reader can learn the possible origins and impacts of those *nüxia* in Jin Yong's fiction.

1. *Nüxia* in Poetry

Nüxia in poetry first appears in the Six Dynasties along with the male knight (*nanxia* 男俠). They both share the tradition of knight-errantry,⁹⁰ but *nüxia* has her uniqueness which sets

⁹⁰ Literary *xia* traditions begin from *Shi ji* and *Han shu*. Some of traditions include: returning the debts (and willing to sacrifice himself), valuing friends more than the family, individual freedom, and more. See Cui Fengyuan 崔奉源. *Zhongguo gudian duanpian xiayi xiaoshuo yanjiu* 中國古代短篇俠義小說研究 (*A Study of Chinese Classical Short Knight-errantry Fiction*). (Taipei: Lianjing cuban shiye gongsi, 1986), 1-19. Lin Tsung-Cheng, "Knight-Errantry: Tang Frontier Poems", in Zongqi Cai, ed., *Stories of Chinese Poetic Culture: Earliest Times through the Tang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), Chapter 10, pp. 159-172. Lin Tsung-Cheng "Tangchao xiake shifeng" 唐朝俠客詩風 ("Poetry of Knight-errantry in Tang Dynasty"). Lin Tsung-Cheng 林宗正 and Jiang Yin 蔣寅 ed., *川合康三教授榮休紀念文集* (*A Collection of Essays on Classical Chinese Literature in Honor of Professor Kawai Kozo*) (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2017), pp. 154-184. James J. Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 4-7.

her apart from *nanxia*. The following sections will discuss features of *nüxia* in Chinese poetry from different periods and the possible impacts for *nüxia* to be created and developed.

1.1. The Female Avenger: Through Han to the Six Dynasties

During this period, it is the earliest stage for *nüxia* in poetry to develop her own features distinct from *nanxia*. The most significant tradition is the concept of vengeance of *nüxia*.⁹¹ In *xia* tradition, vengeance is from the concept of reciprocity (*bao* 報), but with a negative connotation of “avenging a wrongful event” (*bao chou* 報仇) that is the opposite of “returning a favour” (*bao en* 報恩).⁹² Therefore, *nüxia* shares the same tradition—vengeance—with *nanxia*. However, unlike the vengeance tradition of *nanxia*'s,⁹³ *nüxia* mainly takes revenge on the enemies for the wrongful event against her family.⁹⁴ This can be traced to the *Book of Rites* (*Li ji* 禮記) that notes “one should not live under the same heaven as the enemy who has slain one’s father” 父之仇，弗與共戴天，⁹⁵ and “the enemy must be killed to end this” 必殺之乃止。⁹⁶

⁹¹ Studies about the female knight’s tradition of vengeance in ancient China, see Manling Luo, “Gender, Genre, And Discourse: The Woman Avenger in Medieval Chinese Texts”. *Journal of The American Oriental Society* 134, no.4 (2014): 579-599. Wang Li 王立, “Lun zhongguo gudai wenxue zhong de xianu fuchou zhuti” 論中國古代文學中的俠女復仇主題 (“Discussion of the Theme of Female Knight's Revenge in Old Chinese Literature”). *Zhongzhou Xuekan* 中州學刊, no.2 (1991): 91-96.

⁹² Roland Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle: the Female Knight-errant (xia) in Traditional Chinese Narrative* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 29.

⁹³ About the male knight’s tradition of vengeance in Chinese poetry, see Lin, “Knight-Errantry: Tang Frontier Poems,” 11-13. Lin, “Tangchao xiake shifeng,” 12-14.

⁹⁴ In Lin Tsung-Cheng’s study, the *nanxia* only avenges his friend, someone who recognized his value, and wrongs done to himself. Filial piety or his family is never the reason for him to revenge. More details, see Tsung-Cheng Lin, “Lady Avengers in Jin He’s (1818–1885) Narrative Verse of Female Knight-errantry,” *Frontiers of History in China* 8 no.4 (2013): 496-498.

⁹⁵ The Chinese text, see *Li ji zhengyi: Qu li* 禮記正義: 曲禮. (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), 84. Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 494. English translation, see Luo, “Gender, Genre, And Discourse,” 580.

⁹⁶ *Li ji zhengyi*, 84.

The theme of female vengeance is first mentioned in Cao Zhi's 曹植 (192-232) poem "Deep Thoughts"⁹⁷ ("Jingwei pian" 精微篇).⁹⁸ The poet describes Su Laiqing 蘇來卿 and Nüxiu's 女休 acts of avenging their fathers' deaths with one ending up dead and the other ending up being forgiven by the court. Not to mention the court forgives Nüxiu's violent action (Nüxiu received the order of amnesty (before her execution) 女休逢赦書). In Su Laiqing's case, she is executed after her revenge, but her act is still praised. Such violent acts are accepted by the court, shows how this is influenced by the social phenomenon of revenge dating back to the Han dynasty.⁹⁹ It was encouraged by the Confucian ethics of filial piety that the act of revenge was mostly caused by the wrongful event against the family,¹⁰⁰ and most of the cases were pardoned by the court.¹⁰¹ However, in terms of narration, Cao Zhi's poem shows very little detail of the process of how two women avenge their fathers. Nevertheless, Cao Zhi provides a topic of female vengeance in poetry for later poets to develop.

Based on Nüxiu and Su Laiqing's acts of revenge from Cao Zhi's poem, two poets, Zuo Yannian 左延年 and Fu Xuan 傅玄 (217-278) developed the revenge plot further in their poems both titled "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" ("Qin Nüxiu xing" 秦女休行). In Zuo Yannian's poem, he writes about a woman named Qin Nüxiu, who could be the same person mentioned in Cao Zhi's

⁹⁷ This has mentioned in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 494. Title translated by Lin Tsung-Cheng.

⁹⁸ For the complete poem, see Zhang Qiang 張強 et al., *San Cao shiji* 三曹詩集 (*The Poem Collection of Cao Cao, Cao Pi, and Cao Zhi*). (Taiyuan: Shanxi guji chubanshe, 2008), 146.

⁹⁹ Lin, "Lady Avengers," 494.

¹⁰⁰ Gao Mingshi 高明士, *Zhongguo wenhua shi* 中國文化史 (*History of Chinese Culture*). (Taipei: Wunan tushuchuban gongsi, 2007), 130. (Cited from Lin, "Lady Avengers"). Wang, "xianu fuchou zhuti," 91.

¹⁰¹ Lee Long-Shien 李隆獻, "Lianghan weijin nanbeichao fuchou yu falu hushe de shengcha yu quanshi" 兩漢魏晉南北朝復仇與法律互涉的省察與詮釋 ("An Analytical Investigation into the Relationship Between the Law and Revenge from the Han Dynasty to the Southern and Northern Dynasties"). *Taida wenshi zhexue bao* 台大文史哲學報, no. 68 (2008): 44-54.

poem.¹⁰² Despite her identity, the process and the result of her revenge are the primary discussion here. Zuo Yannian continues Cao Zhi's theme of avenging the family and further reinforces the importance of filial piety. Zuo Yannian mentions Nüxiu's age in line "She was about fourteen or fifteen" 休年十四五 and she is aware that she will become a "prison" 囚 from "the Lord of Yan's wife" 燕王婦.¹⁰³ However, she does not fear death and sticks to her action as she response to the court "[confirming] the resolution that in avenging the family,/ without hesitation even in death" 堅詞為宗報仇，死不疑。¹⁰⁴ It shows that a girl, despite such a young age, has already had the determination to avenge and to practice filial piety, even though she can live a wealthy life without revenge. The ending also reveals the same notion that Nüxiu received the order of amnesty due to her filial move. Also, Zuo Yannian makes a contribution, in creating the image of *nüxia*, by showing female's ability in martial arts.¹⁰⁵ In the lines, "She held a Baiyang dagger in her left hand, /there was a Wanlu spear in her right hand" 左執白楊刃，右據宛魯矛，¹⁰⁶ the speaker shows Nüxiu's ability in using special weapons, with two hands, to kill and, thus, suggests the possibility of possessing skills in martial arts. In addition to that, it is possible the first *nüxia* who practices martial arts skills.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, Zuo Yannian also continues Cao Zhi's narrative style in "Jingwei pian" that uses male characters to emphasize the

¹⁰² For the studies about the story origin of Zuo Yannian's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu," see Ge Xiaoyin 葛曉音, "Zuo Yannian 'Qin Nüxiu xing' benshi xintan" 左延年《秦女休行》本事新探 ("New Approach to the Story of Zuo Yannian's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu"). *Suzhou daxue xuebao* 蘇州大學學報, no. 4. (Cited from Lin, "Lady Avengers.")

"]. *Suzhou daxue xuebao* 蘇州大學學報, no. 4 (1984): 63-65. Ye, "Qin Nüxiu xing benshi kao," 42-42.

¹⁰³ The complete poem of Zuo Yannian's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" in Chinese, see Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩, *Yuefu shiji* 樂府詩集 (*Collection of Music Bureau Poetry*) (Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1968), vol. 61, 886. (Cited from Lin, "Lady Avengers"). In English translation, see Lin, "Lady Avengers," 494-495.

¹⁰⁴ Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol. 61, 886. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 494.

¹⁰⁵ The convention has been discussed in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 496.

¹⁰⁶ Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol. 61, 886. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 495.

¹⁰⁷ In discussion with Dr. Lin Tsung-Cheng. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 497.

heroic move of *nüxia*.¹⁰⁸ In the lines “Older brother verbalized his upset with the verdict, /while younger brother voiced his worries about the lack of principles” 兄言怏怏，弟言無道憂，¹⁰⁹ the brothers are afraid and unwilling to seek for revenge. It stresses on *Nüxiu*’s brave and filial move by making the contrast with her useless brothers.

Fu Xuan’s “Ballad of Qin *Nüxiu*”¹¹⁰ writes about Lady Pang’s 龐 legend, which encounters the same fate of being executed after the revenge as Su Liaqing. In convention of writing *nüxia* in poems, the strong emphasis on the virtue of filial piety (avenging the family) and using male characters to highlight *nüxia*’s brave moves are still significant here. In the opening of the plot, the lines “Although she had brothers, / they were too weak to carry out the task of revenge” 雖有男兄弟，志弱不能當¹¹¹ clearly indicates the uselessness of the male in the family. This notion is further enhanced by the lines “What is the benefit of having one hundred sons? /they are not worth one good daughter” 百男何當益，不如一女良。¹¹² It not only shows that men cannot take the duty of revenge but also suggests that men are unable to practice the duty of filial piety as a female (knight) did. In addition to that, these two lines are similar to the lines in Cao Zhi’s “Deep Thoughts,” “What is the usefulness for having many sons? / one daughter is enough to take on family duty” 多男亦何為，一女足成居。¹¹³ On the other hand, Fu Xuan’s narration functions better than Cao Zhi’s in criticizing men’s (and *nanxia*’s) lack of filial duty when he mentions Lady Pang “has brothers” beforehand instead of Cao Zhi’s “no sons” 無

¹⁰⁸ The tradition has been mentioned in Lin, “Lady Avenger,” 496.

¹⁰⁹ Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 886. Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 495.

¹¹⁰ The complete poem of Fu Xuan’s “Ballad of Qin *Nüxiu*” in Chinese, see Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol. 61, 887. In English translation, see Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 498-499.

¹¹¹ Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol. 61, 887. Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 498-499.

¹¹² Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 887. Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 499.

¹¹³ Zhang, *San Cao shiji*, 146.

男.¹¹⁴ Besides the contrast between male and female, Fu Xuan also describes that officials are touched by Lady Pang's heroic move, and that, once more, stresses practicing filial piety. Nevertheless, Fu Xuan's version of "Qin Nüxiu," in contrast to Zuo Yannian's version, has even more details on the process of revenge. The first thing to mention is the extra detail of expressing *nüxia*'s emotion.¹¹⁵ The lines "The female martyr was sad when thinking of this.../ but her thought was without means inside" 烈女念此痛...內潛思無方¹¹⁶ show Lady Pang is in despair and feels sad that her brothers cannot carry out the revenge task; she wants to avenge, but she is helpless in that she has no plan or idea to do so. Describing Lady Pang's feeling before the revenge helps to enhance her braveness and firm determination of carrying out the act, which is a stronger consciousness of vengeance than that is presented in Cao Zhi or Zuo Yannian's poems. After the description of Lady Pang's feeling, Fu Xuan presents the entire avenging process and scene, which is bloody and messy. Fu Xuan's long bloody fighting scene emphasizes the heroic but violent image of a *nüxia*, and greatly influenced later works of literature on *nüxia*.¹¹⁷

Zuo Yannian and Fu Xuan's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" expend the tradition of *nüxia* in poetry and reveal more characteristics of *xia*, such as strong emphasis on avenging family to fulfill the duty of filial piety, having martial arts skills, and having more emotions, which makes a pure avenger and further transfer into a heroic *nüxia*.

1.2. The Swordswoman: *Nüxia* in Tang Poetry

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 146.

¹¹⁵ The tradition has been mentioned in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 500.

¹¹⁶ The full text see Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 887. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 498-499.

¹¹⁷ Fu Xuan's contribution has been discussed in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 500.

The literary tradition of *nüxia* is originated from Cao Zhi's "Deep Thoughts," Zuo Yannian, and Fu Xuan's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" continued to develop during the Tang dynasty. The most significant pieces that had a great contribution to the poetry of *nüxia* were Li Bai's 李白 (701-762) "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" ("Qin Nüxiu xing" 秦女休行) and "There is a Brave Woman from the Eastern Sea" ("Donghai you yongfu" 東海有勇婦)¹¹⁸.

Most conventions of writing female knight-errant poems from the Six dynasties can be found in Li Bai's "Qin Nüxiu." The text is especially similar to Zuo Yannian's poem, but with fewer details. However, the description of the *nüxia*'s appearance is something different from the previous poems. In the poem, Nüxiu's beauty is described "as gorgeous as a white viburnum" 秀色如瓊花,¹¹⁹ which gives the *nüxia* an extra femininity, instead of simply describing as a "good daughter" 良女 or a "female martyr" 烈女.¹²⁰ The focus on the *nüxia*'s appearance is later developed and expanded to a certain extent mostly in fiction of *nüxia*.¹²¹ Moreover, the scene of execution in Li's poem is narrated differently. The lines "Her white neck has yet to be severed,/ but her eyebrows are pushed into the mud and sand" 素頸未及斷，摧眉伏泥沙¹²² creates a mood of suspense to this frightening scene,¹²³ which makes readers feel the direct tension of the event.

¹¹⁸ The Chinese text of Li Bai's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" see Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 887. The English translation, see Lin, "Lady Avengers," 501. Li Bai's "There is a Woman from the Eastern Sea" see Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 780. The English translation see Lin, "Lady Avengers," 502-504.

¹¹⁹ Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 887. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 501.

¹²⁰ Nüxiu is described as a good daughter in Zuo Yannian's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu" and Lady Pang is described as a female martyr in Fu Xuan's "Ballad of Qin Nüxiu." See the poem in Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 886-887.

¹²¹ Jin Yong provides more descriptions on *nüxia*'s appearances in his fiction. For example, Huang Rong is dressed in white from head to toe and has a golden ribbon in her hair which shines like fire in the snow. She also has very smooth skin that is as white as snow, with beautiful colour on her cheeks and has a beauty which is incomparable. *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 372.

¹²² Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 887. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 501.

¹²³ This tradition has been discussed in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 502.

Besides Li Bai's "Qin Nüxiu," the poem "There is a Brave Woman from the Eastern Sea" is the most significant piece in adopting the tradition from previous eras and also adds some new elements to the development of *nüxia* in poems. Unlike Nüxiu, the brave woman from the Eastern Sea is avenging her husband and has exquisite martial arts skills. The lines "She learns swordsmanship from the girl of Yue,/ her moves are as fast as a shooting-star" 學劍越處子，超然若流星¹²⁴ indicates the brave woman from the Eastern Sea is skillful in "Sword of Maiden Yue" ("yuenujan" 越女劍), which is a specific martial art skill practiced with a sword. This is the first *nüxia* that is identified as a swordswoman in poetry and also a new image of *xia* in Chinese literature that forms the notion that being a knight is equal to being a swordsman.¹²⁵ This image later influenced other *xia*-related literary works; especially fiction, which relates to the theme of martial arts, such as *wuxia* novels. Moreover, in terms of the avenging process, Li Bai inherits the description of the bloody fighting scene from Fu Xuan but is described in a completely different mood. The lines "The bright sharp blade glittered like white snow.../ and trampled their organs to move on" 白刃耀素雪...蹴踏五藏行¹²⁶ show a skillful swordswoman moving and killing calmly with ease and treating her enemies' corpses in cold blood.¹²⁷ In contrast to Fu Xuan's seriousness, heavily burdened revenge, Li Bai presents an act of revenge with a casual and easy atmosphere.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Li Bai also continues the convention of using useless men to highlight the *nüxia*'s heroic act; however, Li Bai makes a new contribution to it

¹²⁴ Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 780. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 503.

¹²⁵ This new image of learning a specific martial arts skill and using the sword has been discussed in Lin, "Tangchao xiake shifeng," 24.

¹²⁶ The full text see Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 780. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 503.

¹²⁷ The image of the female knight as a calm and violent killer has been discussed in Lin, "Tangchao xiake shifeng," 24.

¹²⁸ Lin, "Tangchao xiake shifeng," 25.

by teasing some famous *nanxia* in history to praise the heroic act of the *nüxia*.¹²⁹ The last eight lines, “Yu Rang cut up a gown as a gesture,/...she was burned in exchange for his hollow fame” 豫讓斬空衣...焚之買虛聲,¹³⁰ show a great disapproval and even question the absurdity toward the act of the historical *nanxia*, Yu Rang 豫讓 and Yao Li 要離,¹³¹ whose act of revenge had previously been recognized as heroic behaviour.

1.3. The New Woman: *Nüxia* in Qing Poetry

The Qing dynasty is the peak of development in the literature of knight-errantry, including both poetry and fiction. The tradition of the *nüxia* in this era has also made a significant progress. Jin He 金和 (1818-1885) is the most important poet of this time; he wrote poems about *nüxia* and the female martyr. The completely new image of *nüxia* can be found in Jin He’s “Ballad of the Girl from Lanling” (“Lanling nüer xing” 蘭陵女兒行) and “Story of the Female Martyr Huang Wanli” (“Lienü xingji Huang Wanli shi” 烈女行紀黃婉梨事).¹³²

The poem “Girl from Lanling” is about a story of how a powerful military general forces a beautiful girl from Lanling to marry him, and how the girl fights against this powerful force by kidnapping the general at the wedding and negotiates with the general’s fellows, to win her

¹²⁹ This new way of making contrast between the male and the female knight has been discussed in Lin, “Tangchao xiake shifeng,” 25.

¹³⁰ The Chinese full text, see Guo, *Yuefu shiji*, vol.61, 780. The English translation, see Lin, “Lady Avengers,” 504.

¹³¹ The stories of Yu Rang and Yao Li are mentioned in *Shiji* and *Wuyue chunqiu* 吳越春秋.

¹³² The Chinese texts of the two poems, see Jin He, *Qiu hui ying guan shi chao* 秋蟬吟館詩鈔 (*Compendium of poems from the studio “Autumn Cicada’s Chirp”*), 316–320, 323–325. The English translation of “Ballad of the Girl from Lanling,” see Irving Yucheng Lo and William Schultz, ed., *Waiting for the Unicorn: Poems and Lyrics of China’s Last Dynasty, 1644–1911*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 296–302.

freedom. As in Li Bai's poem, Jin He's poem also uses a mood of suspense to increase the tension while the *nüxia* is sizing the general, and the mood continues to the end of the narration.¹³³ Jin He developed this tradition further into four specific writing techniques to emphasize not only the *nüxia*'s bravery and determination but also to justify her act of revenge.¹³⁴ Moreover, Jin He highlights the *nüxia*'s "intelligence," a feature that had never been included in poetry of either the *nanxia* or *nüxia*.¹³⁵ According to Lin Tsung-Cheng, there is no evidence that Jin He was influenced by the *xia* fiction; even though this image can be found for *nüxia* in fiction of Late Imperial China¹³⁶ and is a completely new invention in poetry about *nüxia*. Also, in Jin He's "Female Martyr Huang Wanli," he presents a *nüxia* who also avenges her family, but she does so with her capacity for endurance instead of martial arts skills. This new image of a *nüxia* further points out the new idea that there is no requirement for a *nüxia* to be excellent in martial arts in order to seek revenge.¹³⁷ Therefore, the martial arts skill is no longer a defining feature of *nüxia* in poetry.

Nüxia's images in poetry before Jin He's time are influenced or defined by the tradition of *nanxia*; in another word, *nüxia* does not stand out on her own under the shadow of *nanxia*.

¹³³ The mood of suspense uses in Jin He's "Ballad of the Girl from Lanling" has been discussed in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 506.

¹³⁴ The four writing techniques Jin He uses to strengthen the sense of suspense are "a pending crisis," "a series of conflicts," "an open-ended conclusion," and "an open narrative;" the techniques and their results of usage have been discussed in Tsung-Cheng Lin 林宗正, "Jin He yu shijiushiji shige de nüxia shuxie" 金和與十九世紀詩歌的女俠書寫 ("Jin He and the Writing of Female Knight-errantry in Nineteenth Century China") in Tsung-Cheng Lin and Bawei Zhang eds, *Cong chuantong dao xiandai de Zhongguo shixue 從傳統到現代的中國文化史* (From Tradition to Modernity: Poetic Transition from 18th to Early 20th Century China) (Shanghai: Shashanghai Guji, forthcoming in 2017). This paper also presented at the 1st Advanced Classical Chinese Literature Conference 第一屆中國古典文學高端論壇, Nanjing, August 2015, 8. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 506-507.

¹³⁵ The newly created image of intelligent female knight has been discussed in Lin, "Lady Avengers," 507.

¹³⁶ Lin, "Gudian shige de xiandaixing," 8. Lin, "Lady Avengers," 507.

¹³⁷ The female knight avenging her family through endurance, but not martial arts skills; this idea has been discussed in Lin, "Gudian shige de xiandaixing," 10.

Nevertheless, Jin He opens up a whole new world for *nüxia* for her act of revenge through her own unique ways, such as intelligence, endurance, and without martial arts skills. Thus, in doing so, *nüxia* can be distinguished from *nanxia* and be independent.

2. *Nüxia* in Fiction

The narrative histories of poetry and fiction have completely different traditions in terms of their presentations of *nüxia*. The fictional history was rooted in the poetry;¹³⁸ however, the fiction had more freedom in describing themes that were not found in the poetry.¹³⁹ The following sections will discuss the features of *nüxia* in Chinese fiction through the Tang Dynasty to the modern era (around the 1930s) and the possible impacts the poetic history and the society had on the female knights developing in the fiction.

2.1. The Archetype: *Nüxia*'s Tradition in Tang

The Tang Dynasty was the beginning for the formation of the fictional images regarding *nüxia*; the Tang tales (*tang chuanqi* 唐傳奇) about *nüxia* established an archetype of *nüxia*'s images that was developed afterward. The female knights in Tang tales are swordswomen, assassins, avengers, and bandits that practice magical skills. This is a bit different from what we

¹³⁸ The poetic history of *nüxia* developed earlier than the fiction, which started from the later Han. Thus, the fictional tradition of the female knight originated from the poetic tradition and also influenced by it.

¹³⁹ Dr. Lin Tsung-Cheng briefly mentions about the differences between the poetic tradition and the fictional tradition of the female knight in his study, see Tsung-Cheng Lin, "Lady Avengers," 512-514.

have known about *xia*, who practice martial art skills physically. The following sections will list out and discuss the features of *nüxia* in the Tang tales.

2.1.1.1. Magical and Supernatural Skills

Li Bai created the first swordswoman, in his poem “There is a Brave Woman from the Eastern Sea;” the image of a swordswoman is also an important theme in *nüxia* fiction.¹⁴⁰ For example, Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘 and Hongxian 紅線 are two famous *nüxia* featured that are also swordswomen in the Tang tales of *nüxia*.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, skillful swordswomen are not always the case in stories. *Nüxia*’s martial arts skills are oftentimes neglected and replaced with supernatural and magical elements; however, this is a new image in *nüxia*’s presentations.¹⁴² *Nüxia*, excluding Hongxian and Nie Yinniang, their magical skills (*qishu* 奇術/ *fashu* 法術) are strongly emphasized rather than their martial arts skills. For example, Hongxian, Cui Shensi’s concubine (Cui Shensi qie 崔慎思妾), Guren qi 賈人妻, and the woman in the carriage (Che zhong nuzi 車中女子) show having flying skills (*qinggong*/ *feitian yecha shu* 輕功/ 飛天夜叉

¹⁴⁰ The theme of the swordswoman in female knight Tang tales are indicated by several studies, see Roland Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle: the Female Knight-errant (xia) in Traditional Chinese Narrative* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 57. Lin Baochun 林保淳, “Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuozhong de nüxia xingxiang” 中國古典小說中的女俠形象 (“The Images of Lady Knight-errants in Classical Chinese Fiction”). *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan*, no. 11 (1997): 8. Fang Yunping 方韻萍, “Tangdai xianu xiaoshuo yanjiu” 唐代俠女小說研究 (“The Study of the Tang Female Knight-errantry Fiction”). Master Thesis, National Dong Hwa University, (2009): 127-130.

¹⁴¹ Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘 in the Tang tale “Nie Yinniang” by Pei Xing 裴鏘 (825-880) and Hongxian 紅線 in the tale of “Hongxian” by Yuan Jiao 袁郊. “Hongxian” has been regarded as the sister tale of “Nie Yinniang” based on the related theme of the swordswoman, see Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 60.

¹⁴² The female knight’s martial arts skills accompanied by magical and supernatural elements have been mentioned in Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 62. Fang, “Tangdai xianu xiaoshuo yanjiu,” 118-126. Wang Xin 王昕, “Lun tangren xiaoshuozhong de xianu xingxiang jiqi yingxiang” 論唐人小說中的俠女形象及其影響 (“A Discussion on the Images and Influences of Female Knights-errant in Fiction of Tang”). *Wenxue pinglun*, no. 3 (2009): 157-158.

術)¹⁴³ so that they can move like a “flying bird” 飛鳥, and Hongxian can even travel seven hundred *li* on foot back and forth 往返七百里 in four hours, which shows her magical skill of high-speed walking (*shenxing shu* 神行術).¹⁴⁴ Also, Nie Yinniang can transform into an insect, which indicates her magical skill of transforming (*bianxing shu* 變形術).¹⁴⁵ In addition to that, Nie Yinniang uses a chemical substance to dissolve the corpse after killing Jingjinger 精精兒,¹⁴⁶ this shows the possibility that Nie Yinniang has the knowledge of making poison, like dissolving bones water (*huagu shui* 化骨水).¹⁴⁷ The development of magical and supernatural elements in the *nüxia*'s swordsmanship and martial arts skill serves as the vehicle to overcome women's physical limitations.¹⁴⁸ Su Shi 蘇軾 also suggests that adding the extra layer of magical skill is driven by the weakness and delicacy of the female body.¹⁴⁹ *Nüxia* may not have equal strength, compared to *nanxia*, but their physical limitations open up a new possibility of using magical skills to compete with *nanxia* and stand out in the *wuxia* world. This can explain why *nüxia* are

¹⁴³ The name of the magical skill is mentioned in Gong Pengcheng 龔鵬程, *Xia de jingshen wenhua shi lun* 俠的精神文化史論 (*A Discourse on the History of the Spiritual Culture of Knight-errantry*). (Jinan Shi: Shandong huabao chubanshe, 2008), 99.

¹⁴⁴ Guren qi and the Che zhong nuzi are all described as flying bird when they move, indicating they are good at the flying skills, see *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), vol.4, 1451 and 1472. In the tale “Hongxian,” Hongxian travels seven hundred *li* back and forth (equals to 700 kilometres) that took only four hours, which shows she can move in an incredibly high-speed. See, *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:195, 1461. The name of the magical skill of high-speed walking is mentioned in Gong, *Xia de jingshen wenhua shi lun*, 102. This skill can also be found on the character Shenxing taibao 神行太保 in *Water Margin* 水滸傳.

¹⁴⁵ The name of the magical skill is mentioned in Gong, *Xia de jingshen wenhua shi lun*, 101.

¹⁴⁶ *Taiping guangji*, vol. 4:194, 1458.

¹⁴⁷ Huagu shui is a poison for dissolving bodies, which in later *xia* fiction can find a poison with a similar function. The name of the magical substance is mentioned in Gong, *Xia de jingshen wenhua shi lun*, 103-104.

¹⁴⁸ The purposes for the development of magical skills have been discussed in Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 80. Fang, “Tangdai xianu xiaoshuo yanjiu,” 121. Wang, “Lun tangren xiaoshuozhong de xianu xingxiang jiqi yingxiang,” 157-158.

¹⁴⁹ Su Shi 蘇軾, *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集 (*Anthology of Su Shi*). (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 2617.

often good at using poison and magical skills in later *xia* fiction, such as Li Mochou 李莫愁 in Jin Yong's fiction.¹⁵⁰

2.1.2. Assassins, Avengers, and Bandits

Nixia in Tang tales are swordswomen with magical and supernatural skills; however, these *nixia* play different roles and are driven by different motivations. The female assassins make one of the groups of *nixia*, motivated by the purpose of returning a favor and has exquisite martial arts skills. This group has a lot of similarities to male assassins, which are recorded in “Biographies of Assassins” (“Cike liechuan” 刺客列傳) and commonly recognized as *nanxia*.¹⁵¹ Male assassins such as Jing Ke 荊軻, Nie Zheng 聶政, and Yu Rang 豫讓 all underwent the similar experience of being recognized by someone and taking the mission of assassination to return the debt of this person's appreciation. However, a slight difference between the two groups is that *nixia* does not sacrifice herself for her master; she ends up staying alive.¹⁵² The female knights Nie Yinniang and Hongxian belong to this group of female assassins, who are, of course, examples of this tradition.

In the story of “Nie Yinniang,” the idea of being recognized by someone and, thus, returning the favour to the person is illustrated through Nie Yinniang's relationship with Tian and Liu. Liu does not kill Nie Yinniang; even though, she is sent to take away his life, instead, he recruits them and fulfills their requests. On the other hand, Tian sees Nie Yinniang as an unusual

¹⁵⁰ Li Mochou is a female knight-errant in the series *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion* (*Shendiao xialu* 神雕俠侶), who is good at using poison either in her martial arts skill or weapons. For example, “Five Poison Divine Plam” (“*wudu shenzheng*” 五毒神掌) and “Iced Soul Silver Needle” (“*bingpo yinzhēn*” 冰魄銀針) are one of skills and weapons she uses.

¹⁵¹ For stories of male assassins see, *Shi ji* 史記 (*Records of the Historians*). (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), vol. 8:86, 2515-2538.

¹⁵² Wang, “Lun tangren xiaoshuozhong de xianu xingxiang jiqi yingxiang,” 160.

person, but he does not value her before he sends her on the mission. The contrast makes it obvious that Tian is no better than Liu.¹⁵³ First of all, Liu is more powerful than Tian with his ability. Also, Nie Yinniang owes a debt to Liu for saving her life and giving her support. Therefore, she is willing to turn on Tian to protect Liu. In the tale of “Hongxian,” Hongxian repays the debts to Xue Song 薛嵩 by stealing Tian Chengsi’s 田承嗣 golden box to prevent the war between the two and to save Xue Song’s family property.¹⁵⁴ She steals the golden box as a warning to Tian, which shows her intelligence and also her capability of killing as an assassin.¹⁵⁵

The second group of *nüxia* in Tang tales is the female avenger who aims to avenge her family as her righteous motive. The theme of vengeance is a convention in the *xia* literature that can also be found in fiction about *nüxia* and *nanxia*.¹⁵⁶ Through the whole avenging process, it further reveals the *nüxia*’s endurance, intelligence, and bravery in carrying out the action. The *nüxia* Xie Xiao’e 謝小娥, Ni Miaoji 尼妙寂, Cui Shensi’s concubine, and Guren qi are in this group.

“The Tale of Xie Xiao’e” (“Xie Xiao’e zhuan” 謝小娥傳) and “Ni Miaoji” are two tales with different character and place names, but the tales tell the same story with many corresponding details.¹⁵⁷ However, in terms of the narrative, there are differences between the two tales. “The Tale of Xie Xiao’e” gives more information about the avenging process and the

¹⁵³ The tale “Nie Yinniang,” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:194, 1456-1459.

¹⁵⁴ *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:195, 1461-1462.

¹⁵⁵ Hongxian steals the golden box from Tian Chengsi and tells Xue Song to send back as a warning to show Tian Chengsi that she could steal the golden box without getting notice as well as to chop off Tian Chengsi’s head. For the tale of “Hongxian,” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:195, 1460-1462.

¹⁵⁶ As mentioned in the poetry section, the theme of avenging one’s family reflects the avenging phenomenon in society, dating back to the Han dynasty and continuing to the Tang. It is adopted by both the fiction and poetry of female knight-errantry. Thus, it can be found in Tang tales.

¹⁵⁷ For the tale of “Xie Xiao’e zhuan” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.10:491, 4030-4032. For the tale of “Ni Miaoji” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.3:128, 906-908.

plot than in “Ni Miaoji” does. Moreover, the avenging theme is more strongly emphasized by Xie Xiao’e than by Ni through the outcome of the revenge. Xie Xiao’e witnessed the deaths of her father and husband, and she was injured by her enemies. Her experiences strengthened her hatred towards her enemies; thus, she had to slay the enemies with her own hands.¹⁵⁸ In contrast, Ni Miaoji told the court to capture her enemies but not finish it on her own weakened the purpose of revenge and emphasized the government’s authority. Furthermore, Xie Xiao’e and the *nüxia* in Jin He’s “Female Martyr Huang Wanli” are similar in that they do not have martial arts skills, but they avenge their families through their strong faith and endurance. Xie Xiao’e’s story is appreciated by the official and recorded in *Biographies of Exemplary Women (Lienü zhuan 烈女傳)* due to her filial act that further shows that the court encourages the act of revenge.¹⁵⁹

The tales of “Cui Shensi”, and “Guren qi” are also share the same storyline with different degrees of similarities.¹⁶⁰ They both marry a man for the purpose of revenge, kill their children and leave after their revenge is accomplished. However, “Guren qi” describes more details about the *nüxia*’s emotional feeling than in “Cui Shensi.” For example, Guren qi does feel sad and even weeps when she must leave, and she also gives a smile and comforts her husband telling him not to worry when he sees the chopped-off head.¹⁶¹ In contrast, “Cui Shensi” does not show any description about the feeling of Cui Shensi’s concubine.

¹⁵⁸ *Taiping guangji*, vol.10:491, 4032.

¹⁵⁹ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 84.

¹⁶⁰ The tale “Cui Shensi” 崔慎思, see *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:194, 1456. The tale “Guren qi,” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:196, 1471-1472.

¹⁶¹ *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:196, 1472.

The last group of *nüxia* is the female bandit. In the *xia* tradition, the association between *xia* and banditry had been established before Tang.¹⁶² The boundary between their identities and images had been blurred over time and blended into the bandit-cum-knight (*daoxia* 盜俠) that emerged in Tang tales.¹⁶³ “The Woman in the Carriage” is one *daoxia* story among Tang tales. The story shows a *nüxia*, who is the head of a gang of bandits, saving an innocent man from prison with her excellent flying skill.¹⁶⁴ Despite her righteous move of rescuing the man, it is her gang’s criminal activity that leads the man to jail. This shows the woman has the power to save or ruin the man’s life and reflects the idea “femme fatale”¹⁶⁵ that is structured in the later *nüxia*’s image.

2.1.3. Neutralization of Femininity

Nüxia in Tang tales present different female identities in society, such as the servant, the wife, the daughter, and the concubine. However, similar to the poetry, the Tang stories oftentimes emphasize *nüxia*’s characters of *xia* and neglect their feminine features. *Nüxia*’s appearances and beauties are hardly described in comparison of other non-*xia*-related Tang tales.¹⁶⁶ There are no descriptions about Nie Yinniang’s appearance in the story nor in “Hongxian.” Cui Shensi’s concubine is “having good looks” 亦有容色,¹⁶⁷ and Guren qi is a

¹⁶² Two groups have many similarities such as respecting justice, personal freedom, not dare to offence the laws, and more. More details about the history of *xia* and banditry see, Luo Liqun 羅立群, *Zhongguo wuxia xiaoshuo shi* 中國武俠小說史 (*History of Chinese Wuxia Novel*). (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1990), 8-11.

¹⁶³ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 98.

¹⁶⁴ For the tale “The Woman in the Carriage,” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:193, 1450-1451.

¹⁶⁵ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 101.

¹⁶⁶ Another genre that was popular during Tang was the scholar-and-beauty romance (才子佳人 *caizi jiaren*), which emphasized on writing feminine beauty. The female characters’ appearances and other feminine images are usually being described in details.

¹⁶⁷ *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:194, 1456.

“beautiful lady” 美婦人。¹⁶⁸ The woman in the carriage is described close to a normal woman, who has very good looks and wears floral accessories in her hair.¹⁶⁹ It is obvious that the more skillful the *nüxia* is, the less feminine features are depicted. Another feature of *nüxia*'s appearances is their clothing. Most *nüxia*, such as the Woman in the carriage, Xie Xiao'e, and Ni Miaoji, wear men's clothes. This is in part due to the social phenomenon of women's wearing men's clothes in Tang society and in part because of the open-mindedness and encouragement of martial arts in society. In addition, wearing men's clothes was more convenient for women to move around when they practice martial arts.¹⁷⁰ However, gender boundaries between males and females are blurred as *nüxia* must become men in order to fit into the *xia* narrative. Although *nüxia* wearing men's clothes is reflecting a social trend at the time, it still unintentionally raises a question of gender in a genre dominated by male characters.

The lack of descriptions of feminine appearances blurs the female gender identity of *nüxia* in Tang tales. Moreover, *nüxia*'s inward and outward activities are not very different from those of *nanxia*.¹⁷¹ They are not given the feminine characteristic of being emotional, but rather, they have rational personalities. In most stories, there are no descriptions of *nüxia*'s internal feelings except for anger and thirst for revenge. The cold-blooded acts of infanticide in stories “Nie Yinniang,” “Cui Shensi,” and “Guren qi” also reinforce the notion of *nüxia*'s ruthlessness, as if the child is merely an obstacle or a tool for their goals. The features of *xia*, such as vengeance and assassination, are strongly emphasized and the fact that the developments of feminine features seemed to be ignored compared to other non-*xia*-related Tang tales.

¹⁶⁸ *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:196, 1471.

¹⁶⁹ *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:193, 1450.

¹⁷⁰ For a study about the social phenomenon of women wear men's clothing during Tang see, Rong Xinjiang 荣新江. *Sui Tang Chang'an: Xingbie, jiyi ji qita* 隋唐長安：性別、記憶及其他 (*Sui Tang Chang'an: Gender, Memory and Others*). (Shanghai Shi: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 39-46.

¹⁷¹ Wang, "Lun tangren xiaoshuozhong de xianu xingxiang jiqi yingxiang," 159.

2.2. Continuing the Tang Legacy: *Nüxia* Tradition in Song

Tang was the golden period for the development of the fictional genre of *nüxia*, and most of the traditions were inherited in stories of *nüxia* in Song. However, a slight tendency of the genre's downfall is reflected in the female knights of Song. The features of *xia* on *nüxia* are blurred, and *nüxia* are portrayed more closely to the women in real life.

2.2.1. Carry on the Tang *Xia* Traditions

The fictional genre of *nüxia* continues to develop during the Song Dynasty, and some of themes and images have been inherited in creating *nüxia*. One theme that can still be found in Song tales is the avenging theme, such as in stories “Li Yunniang” 李云娘, “A Loyal Woman’s Act of Revenge” (“Yifu fuchou” 義婦復仇), and “Uncle Wen Met a Knight-errant” (“Wenshu yuxia” 文叔遇俠).¹⁷² In “Uncle Wen,” the widow 孀婦 patiently waits for years for her revenge and that narrative structure is similar in both “Xie Xiao’e” and “Guren qi.”¹⁷³ Another inherited theme from the Tang tales is the theme of banditry. In “Baibao Pearls” (“Baibao nianzhu” 百寶念珠), the girl servant steals the pearls from Empress Cao with her impressive flying skills.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² The story of “Li Yunniang” see, Liu Fu 劉斧 *Qingsuo gaoyi houji* 青瑣高議後集. (Henan :Zhengzhou daxiang chubanshe, 2006), 140. The story of “Yifu fuchou” see Hong Mai 洪邁, He Zhuo 何卓, *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 1797. The story of “Wenshu yuxia” see, *Fenmen gujin leishi* 分門古今類事, vol.5, n.p.

¹⁷³ Hong and He, *Fenmen gujin leishi*, vol.5, n.p.

¹⁷⁴ The story of “Baibao nianzhu” see Gu Xijia 顧希佳, *Zhongguo gudai minjian gushi zhangbian Song Yuan juan* 中國古代民間故事長編-宋元卷 (*Long edition of Folklore in Ancient China: Volume of Song and Yuan*). (Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2012), 319.

This story not only reveals the same theme as “the Woman in the Carriage,” but it also has the same storyline as “General Pan” (“Pan jiangjun” 潘將軍).¹⁷⁵

Tang tales also influence the images of *nüxia* in the Song tales. Both Tang and Song’s tales of *nüxia* pay no attention to illustrating *nüxia*’s appearances, with Dong Guodu’s 董國度 concubina only being described as “having good looks” 有姿色, and the woman married to Xie Xun 解洵, being described as “looking beautiful” 眉宇秀整.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, writers of *nüxia* in Song continue the magical and supernatural features in *nüxia*’s images to make them even stranger than Tang’s *nüxia*.¹⁷⁷ For examples, the widow Wenshu met goes to the heavenly court and hell to seek help for her revenge, and Li Yunniang is not even a human being who takes revenge in a form of a ghost.¹⁷⁸ However, *nüxia*’s martial arts skills are rarely mentioned and are replaced by descriptions of magical elements.¹⁷⁹ Although *nüxia* in Song are merely human beings when identified as *xia*, the writers still present them with the images of firmness and endurance that we have seen in the Tang tales. The widow shows her endurance by waiting for ten years for her revenge; Li Yunniang shows her firmness towards her revenge by being willing to go to the heavenly court and hell and even becoming a ghost.

¹⁷⁵ Female knights in two stories both steal the pearls from the people with a higher status without being noticed, and at the end return the pearls to the owners. The tale of “The General Pan,” see *Taiping guangji*, vol.4:196, 1470-1471.

¹⁷⁶ The story of “A Chivalric Woman” (“Xia furen” 俠婦人) and “The Woman Married by Xie Xun” (“Xie Xun qifu” 解洵娶婦), see Hong and He, *Yijian zhi*, 190, and 1675-1676.

¹⁷⁷ Song stories of *nüxia* is still influenced by Tang tale genres of *chuanqi* 傳奇, therefore, magical skills continue to develop in *nüxia*-related stories to stress on the element of strange. Nevertheless, *nüxia* are no longer assassins or bandits; they only have roles like wives and concubines that are close to women in real life. This idea has been mentioned in Lin, “Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuozhong de nüxia xingxiang,” 55.

¹⁷⁸ Liu, *Qingsuo gaoyi houji*, 140. Hong and He, *Fenmen gujin leishi*, vol.5, n.p.

¹⁷⁹ Li Yunniang or the widow in “Uncle Wen Meets a Knight-errant” do not show their martial arts skills when taking revenge. Moreover, the fighting scenes are also eliminated from Song’s *nüxia* stories. For example, the story “Xia yu” (俠嫗 “The Chivalric Old Woman”) shows the *nüxia* kills the bandit by chopping off his head, but does not describe the whole fighting scene. The story of “The Chivalric Old Woman,” see Long Fu 龍輔, *Nuhong yuzhi* 女紅餘志, 7-8.

2.2.2. From *Xia* Transfers to an Ordinary Woman

Tang tales of *nüxia* had a significant impact on Song stories of *nüxia*; however, the differences in the periods and societies that distinguish the genre in the two dynasties from each other. Unlike Tang, Song has more restrictions for women in the family and society that are revealed through the images of *nüxia*. The marriages and the relationships between men and women change significantly. Female knights in Tang tales choose their mates and have absolute power over men in the family,¹⁸⁰ but in Song tales, this relationship is reversed. For example, the marriage between Xie Xun and the concubine is arranged by Xie Xun's brother; likewise, Dong Guodu has someone find a wife for him. This shows women have no control over their marriages, and this is due to the Song marriage law that elders have absolute power over decision making.¹⁸¹ Moreover, images that relate to *xia* are reduced and replaced by images of women's domestic life.¹⁸² For example, the character's *xia* image highlighted in the title of "A Chivalric Woman" is far from evident in the story, and it mostly stresses the woman's role as "a good

¹⁸⁰ *Nüxia* of Tang tales see marriage as an inevitable duty or a requirement to achieve her goals, so they choose mates carelessly. For example, Nie Yinniang decides a young mirror grinder (*mojing shaonian* 磨鏡少年) should become her husband when he passes by her horse. Guren qi also invites the beggar Wang Li 王立 to live with her. Both *nüxia* do not treat marriage as a serious matter, choosing partners who are powerless and having lower status than theirs. When the *nüxia* achieves her goals, she would not live happily ever after with her mate, but would leave, especially avengers like Guren qi and Cui Shensi's concubine. They see revenge as a life-project, and once they have done the mission, they will not linger this world because they have fulfilled their duty. Moreover, the family relationship between the husband and the wife is oftentimes reversed so that the *nüxia* would go out and provide the basic needs for her husband. Nie Yinniang asks Liu to give her husband a position to support his life before she leaves, and Guren qi leaves all her property and money behind for Wang Li on her day of departure. The *nüxia* ensure their husbands can have carefree lives without them.

¹⁸¹ More discussions on the marriage law of Song, see Ebrey, Patricia Buckley, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 47-50.

¹⁸² This transformation has been noticed and discussed in Lin, "Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuozhong de wuxia xingxiang," 13.

wife.”¹⁸³ But still, *xia*-related images can be found in the stories that are relevant to these women. As in “A Chivalric Woman,” the story indicates the relationship of the concubine and her brother is based on the principle of *bao*.¹⁸⁴

Nevertheless, *nixia* in the Song tales reveal more personal feelings or emotions than female knights of Tang tales, and this contributes a new motive for them to perform their knightly acts of revenge.¹⁸⁵ The examples can be found in “Xie Xun” and “The Lady with the Fragrance Pill” (“Xiangwan furen” 香丸夫人). The concubine kills Xie Xun to punish his ingratitude towards her after she has saved his life, when she is gradually left out by Xie Xun and he responds to her accusation of ingratitude with physical violence.¹⁸⁶ The concubine is hurt by how she has not been equally treated by Xie Xun after she has done so much for him. Thus, killing Xie Xun is a knightly act committed in response to his injustice. This, again, reveals a similar image of women as lifesavers and on the other hand, manslayers. In “Fragrance Pill,” the scholar, driven by the female knight’s emotional cruelty, commits the act of revenge. The mysterious woman is treated disrespectfully by a gang of young hooligans, and asks the scholar to kill them for her in return for the favour of killing the men who bullied him.¹⁸⁷ The concept of reciprocity is the core of this story; however, the scholar’s return of the favour seems forced by the woman’s cruel murder rather than the scholar’s willingness.

¹⁸³ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 109-110. Lin, “Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuozhong de uxia xingxiang,” 13.

¹⁸⁴ The concubine’s brother, the man with the curly beard, received the favour from her in the past, and he is repaying the debt now.

¹⁸⁵ This new contribution has been discussed in Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 113-114.

¹⁸⁶ Hong and He, *Yijian zhi*, 190, and 1676.

¹⁸⁷ The story of “Xiangwan furen,” see Long, *Nuhong yuzhi*, 6-7

2.3. Wei Shiyiniang:¹⁸⁸ *Nüxia*'s Tradition in the Late Ming

The fictional genre of *nüxia* in the Ming period does not have much contribution to the development of *nüxia*'s image. For the most part, the Tang and Song tales are being recollected and reissued in new editions by anthologies in the late-Ming, and the stories are being organized systematically.¹⁸⁹ For example, *Stories of the Two Kinds of Knights* (*Er xia zhuan* 二俠傳) separates *nanxia* and *nüxia* into two sections, “Stories of Male Knights” (“*Nanxia zhuan*” 男俠傳) and “Stories of Female Knights” (“*Nüxia zhuan*” 女俠傳).¹⁹⁰ “Stories of Female Knights” consists of six subjects, titled, “Bravery Knight” (*Haoxia* 豪俠), “Chivalry Knight” (*Yixia* 義俠), “Integrity Knight” (*Jiexia* 節俠), “Dutifulness Knight” (*Renxia* 任俠), “Wandering Knights” (*Youxia* 游俠), and “Sword Knights” (*Jianxia* 劍俠); they help to specify the theme of each category.¹⁹¹ Other previous stories of *nüxia* can also be found in the anthology, *The Female Historian of the Women's Quarters* (*Luchuang nushi* 綠窗女史), which was designed for a female readership.¹⁹²

Although Ming is considered a period for recollecting and compiling the stories of knight-errantry, there is still a certain development in the writing of *nüxia*. The narrative style

¹⁸⁸ Wei Shiyiniang (韋十一娘 Lady Wei Eleven) is the name of a swordswoman in Ling Mengchu's 凌濛初 *Slapping the Table in Amazement* (*Pai'an jingqi* 拍案驚奇).

¹⁸⁹ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 151-159.

¹⁹⁰ Reference is made to the copy in the Harvard-Yenching Library, Rare Books Collection.

<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:4723749>

¹⁹¹ The categories of *nüxia* further define different *nüxia*. “Sword Knights” *Jianxia* is related to *nüxia*'s martial arts skills, and the rest of categories are related to *nüxia*'s temperament. (Discussion with Dr. Lin Tsung-Cheng).

¹⁹² On the late-Ming publishing of compilation targeting at female readers see Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the inner chambers: Women and culture in seventeenth-century China*. (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1994), 53-59.

changes from a shorter narrative form of the classical tale of Tang and Song to a longer form of the vernacular story of the late 16th century that allows more commentaries on stories' interpretations.¹⁹³ The most well-known and the most important piece is in Ling Mengchu's 凌濛初 (1580-1644) *Slapping the Table in Amazement* (*Pai'an jingqi* 拍案驚奇), titled, "Cheng Yuanyu Pays Somebody Else's Bill at an Inn; Lady Eleven Gives a Talk about the Genealogy of Knights on Yungang" ("Cheng Yuanyu diansi daichang qian Shiyiniang Yungang zongtan xia" 程元玉店肆代償錢 十一娘雲岡縱譚俠). The story is divided into two parts, as indicated by its title. The first part is about how a merchant Cheng Yuanyu 程元玉 helps a woman to pay her bill at an inn, and later the woman saves Cheng from a group of bandits to repay his generosity. The woman introduces herself as Wei Shiyiniang 韋十一娘, then invites him to her place on Yungang 雲岡. In the second half of the story, Wei identifies herself as a swordswoman and talks to Cheng about the history and ethics of *xia*.¹⁹⁴

Ling Mengchu's story of Wei Shiyiniang is adapted from Hu Rujia's 胡汝嘉 (jinshi 進士, 1553) "The Story of Lady Wei Eleven" ("Wei Shiyiniang zhuan" 韋十一娘傳), with an additional prologue and more details. The prologue tells nine stories of *nüxia* in the Tang and Song periods, which serve as cross-references of *nüxia* for the main story that follows.¹⁹⁵ These stories prepare readers for what to expect in the main story by introducing the themes and

¹⁹³ This is influenced by the storytelling activities in Song, which later develop into the vernacular story or novella (*hua-pen* 話本). Y. W. Ma, "The knight-errant in hua-pen stories". *T'oung Pao* 61, no. 4 (1975): 266-300.

¹⁹⁴ The story of Ling's "Wei Shiyiniang" see Ling Mengchu 凌濛初, *Pai'an jingqi* 拍案驚奇 (*Slapping the Table in Amazement*). Suzhou: Shangyou tang. chapter 4.

¹⁹⁵ The nine stories of *nüxia* are: "Hongxian," "Nie Yinniāng," "Xiangwan nuzi," "Cui Shensi," "Xia yu," "Guren qi," "Xie Xun qu fu," "Sanhuan nuzi" (in "Pan Jiangjun"), and "Che zhong nuzi." Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 152.

conventions of *nüxia*.¹⁹⁶ Doing this strengthens the purpose of defining the *nüxia* that follows in the second part of the story. In the second part of the story, it is Wei Shiyiniang lecturing Cheng Yuanyu about what the sword knights are and where they should put their sword skills for practical use. She especially notes that the act of revenge must be done by the purpose of social justice that includes the fields that the law normally does not apply to.¹⁹⁷ This further explains Wei Shiyiniang's (as well as other sword knights') role as a social police who helps Cheng Yuanyu to escape from the bandits. Later in the story, the bandits reveal the close relationship with Wei Shiyiniang and that they would not dare to disobey Wei Shiyiniang's order.¹⁹⁸ From this, we can conclude that the bandits share the same characteristics as Wei Shiyiniang to support social justice, in that they only rob the ones deserves to be robbed. In addition to that, it is hard to avoid the similarity between the bandits in the story and "good man" (*haohan* 好漢) in *Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳) that both function as the support of social justice.¹⁹⁹ This further shows the blurring boundary between the knight-errant and the bandit; they both share the same characteristics.

Besides the aim of defining *nüxia*, Ling Mengchu's story of Wei Shiyiniang also presents some new features in writing about *nüxia*. The most significant writing technique is to increase the element of sensation.²⁰⁰ At the scene when Wei Shiyiniang enters the inn, the men in the inn are talking about her appearance and debating her identity. Here, Ling Mengchu focuses on the

¹⁹⁶ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 151-153.

¹⁹⁷ Ling, *Pai'an jingqi*, chapter 4.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, chapter 4.

¹⁹⁹ The novel *Water Margin* by Shi Nai'an 施耐庵 presents how a group of one hundred and eight outlaws journey to Mount Liang (Liangshan Po) to form a sizeable army before the government of the Song offers amnesty to them and sends them to fight with foreign invaders. English translations see Shi Nai'an, and Sidney Shapiro, *Outlaws of the Marsh*. (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1981).

²⁰⁰ This writing technique has been discussed in Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 141-142.

element of female beauty to describe the woman and thus creates a stereotype of *xia* literature, asserting that the *nüxia* with the outstanding martial arts also has a high standard of beauty.²⁰¹

2.4. Romance Combined with *Xia*: *Nüxia* in Qing

The fictional genre of *xia* in Qing has become popular among writers and thus had more stories produced than before.²⁰² Since the genre has its long history, it is hard for the writers of Qing to avoid the influences of the conventions. By the impact of Tang tales, the avenging theme is still an important field that can be found in *nüxia*'s stories of Qing, such as “A Chivalric Girl” (“Xianü” 俠女) and *The Tales of Lovers and Heroes* (*Ernü Yingxiong Zhuan* 兒女英雄傳).²⁰³

The story of “A Chivalric Girl” is similar to “Cui Shensi” with the setting; however, Pu Songling's story has the element of reciprocity that the *nüxia* repays the debt for Gu's generosity. Furthermore, the martial arts skills present by the *nüxia* no longer alienated that practice with actual swords and fists. The main character, Shisanmei 十三妹, clearly indicates that her martial arts skills were neither learned from an old mother descending from her mountain to teach her, nor did she go to the mountain to learn the skill.²⁰⁴ This is referring to “Nie Yinniang” and some other stories like “Wei Shiyiniang” that *nüxia* learn their skills privately from a female teacher,

²⁰¹ This has been evident in the later *xia* related fiction by authors like Jin Yong and Gu Long 古龍. Most of their *nüxia* are qualified with the outstanding martial arts and the high standard beauty.

²⁰² More discussion on the development of the fictional genre of *xia* during the Qing period see Luo Liqun 羅立群, *Zhongguo wuxia xiaoshuo shi* 中國武俠小說史 (*History of Chinese Martial Art Novel*). (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1990), 114-156.

²⁰³ For the story of “Xianü” see Pu Songling, Victor H. Mair, and Denis C., *Strange tales from make-do studio: Liaozhai zhiyi*. English. (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989), 106-115. For the story of *Ernü Yingxiong Zhuan* see Wen Kang 文康. Translated by Fei Zhide, *Ernü yingxiong zhuan* (Beijing: Xin Shijie, 2003).

²⁰⁴ Wen, *Ernü yingxiong zhuan*, 198

whereas, Shisanmei's skill is inherited from the family. Moreover, the thrilling fighting scenes between the *nüxia* and enemies stand out from the rest of the stories of other periods, especially in *Ernü*. In Chapter Six, there is a long episode writes about Shisanmei fighting with ten bandits that not only shows her skill but also describes her movements in details, which catches the readers' eyes with her movements.²⁰⁵ This is no doubt a similar narrative style to *Water Margin* that increases the presence for the readers, as if they are right in the scene.²⁰⁶

The most striking element that is new to the genre of *nüxia* is the theme of the scholar-and-beauty romance (*caizi jiaren* 才子佳人).²⁰⁷ This means that a *nüxia* starts a romance, with a male character, to fulfill the element of love that used to be non-existent in the previous images of *nüxia*. *The Fortunate Union* (*Haoqiu zhuan* 好逑傳),²⁰⁸ “A Chivalric Girl,” and *Ernü* all included, this theme in their stories. In *Ernü*, Shisanmei is described as a *nüxia*, who has *xia* characteristics, with affectionate feelings.²⁰⁹ Her *xia* characteristics are portrayed in the novel perfectly; however, they disappear along with her mission of revenge when she discovers that

²⁰⁵ Wen, *Ernü yingxiong zhuan*, 134-157

²⁰⁶ John Christopher Hamm, "Reading the Swordswoman's Tale: Shisanmei and *Ernü Yingxiong Zhuan*". *T'oung Pao* 84 no. 4 (1998): 339-341. Wang Xin 王昕, "Lun 'Ernü yingxiong chuan' de xianu xingxiang Jiqi yi" 論《兒女英雄傳》的俠女形象及其意義 ("A Discussion on the Images and Significances of Female Knights-errant in *Ernü yingxiong chuan*"). *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu* 中國文化研究, no. 1 (2010): 121-122.

²⁰⁷ This has been discussed in Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 234-235. Chen Pingyuan 陳平原, *Qianggu wenren xiakemeng* 千古文人俠客夢 (*The Literati's Age-Old Dream of Knight-errantry*). (Beijing: Xinshijie chubanshe, 2002), 59-61. Luo, *Zhongguo wuxia xiaoshuo shi*, 148.

²⁰⁸ The story of *Haoqiu zhuan* see Mingjiao zhongren 名教中人, *Haoqiu zhuan* 好逑傳 (*The Fortunate Union*). (Hefei: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 2005).

²⁰⁹ Shisanmei is described as [A] girl of heroic and affectionate feelings, a heroine and leader among female figures. She had a matter of infinite regret and a deep-rooted hatred inside herself. Hence, she had disposition to curb the violent and help the weak. She had performed numerous gallant and noble deeds of safeguarding good people and wiping out evildoers (這人天生的英雄氣壯，兒女情深，是個脂粉隊裏的豪傑，俠烈場中的領袖。他自己心中又有一腔的彌天恨事，透骨酸心，因此上，雖然是個女孩兒，激成了個抑強扶弱的性情，好作些殺人揮金的事業。路見不平，便要拔刀相助；一言相契，便肯瀝膽訂交)。 Wen, *Ernü yingxiong zhuan*, 120-123.

her enemy is killed. She suddenly becomes a good wife and slowly forgets her martial arts skills, which sets her apart from the knightly world. Besides, Shisanmei's affectionate feelings do not seem to be expressed well, in the story, when she is identified as a *nixia*. The author aims to create a character that is both heroic and affectionate.²¹⁰ However, he fails to do that when he wipes off Shisanmei's identity as a knight-errant and places her in the inner quarters.²¹¹ James J. Y. Liu also comments on the last part of the novel, "The rest of the romance, dealing with the domestic life of An family and An Ji's successful official career, is of little interest."²¹² Nonetheless, the author's writings of Shisanmei's *xia* images are particularly successful among *nixia* literature.

2.5. *Nixia* Tradition after the Republic of China

The knight-errant craze grew even stronger from the mid to late Qing Dynasty and become the leading popular genre after the Republic period.²¹³ There are several pieces of fictional works related to *nixia* from this era that have contributed to the genre. The novel *Predestined Marriage in Tears and Laughter* (*Tixiao yinyuan* 啼笑因緣) by Zhang Henshui 張恨水 is a popular work of fiction from the 1920s and 1930s that has been marketed as "unique in

²¹⁰ The author reveals his intention in prologue and explains, "Sensible affections and noble bravery are one and the same thing. Both join up in the attainment of the status of a hero or heroine in the fullest sense of the term" (有了英雄至性,才成就得兒女心腸;有了兒女真情,才作得出英雄事業). Wen, *Ernü yingxiong zhuan*, 10-13.

²¹¹ Many scholars argue the shift of Shisanmei's image from a knight-errant to a good wife is to fit the purpose of traditional ethics. More discussions see James J. Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 129. Luo, *Zhongguo wuxia xiaoshuo shi*, 154-155. Wang, "Lun 'Ernü yingxiong chuan'," 122-123.

²¹² Lin, "Lady Avengers," 519-521. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, 129.

²¹³ The impacts for the knight-errant genre becoming the leading popular genre see Luo, *Zhongguo wuxia xiaoshuo shi*, 165-168.

modern popular Chinese fiction for its weaving together of three major types of tradition—the love story, the *xia*-related story, and the social novel.”²¹⁴ The novel is intertextual with *Ernü*, in which the character Guan Xiugu 關秀姑 is portrayed as Shisanmei as a *nüxia*.²¹⁵ However, there is no significant *nüxia* image that stands out in the novel compared to previous works. The other two novels that are significant to the genre are *Female Knight-errant Red Pants* (*Nüxia hong kuzi* 女俠紅褲子) and *The Female Knight from Deserted River* (*Huangjiang nüxia* 荒江女俠).²¹⁶ The elements of Western mystery, crime and detection were added to *Female Knight-errant Red Pants*. The *nüxia* leaves a pair of red pants to indicate her authorship whenever she conducts an act of *xia* to punish the evil and correct wrongdoings. Moreover, the *nüxia* hides her identity by disguising herself as people of different genders, ages, or social status. By doing this, she can assume different social roles in addition to her young, female identity. The image of changing identities can also be found in later works of fiction, such as Huang Rong and A’zhu 阿朱 in Jin Yong’s novels.²¹⁷

The most striking development of the fictional genre of *nüxia*, and perhaps for the genre of *xia* itself, is for the first time *nanxia* and *nüxia* roam together in a story. In *Deserted River*, the *nüxia* no longer appears alone; she is accompanied by another male knight and as well as other knights. This also introduces the element of romance between two knights. Furthermore, the

²¹⁴ E. Perry Link, *Mandarin ducks and butterflies: Popular fiction in early twentieth-century Chinese cities*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 37.

²¹⁵ More detailed discussions on the intertextual narrative see Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 328-224.

²¹⁶ The story of *Nüxia hong kuzi* see Xu Zhuodai 徐卓呆, *Nüxia hong kuzi* 女俠紅褲子 (*Female Knight-errant Red Pants*). (Shanghai: Zhongyang shudian, 1930). The story of *Huangjiang nüxia* see Gu Mingdao 顧明道, *Huangjiang nüxia* 荒江女俠 (*The Female Knight from the Deserted River*). (Huerhaote : Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2004).

²¹⁷ Huang Rong in *Shediao yingxiong chuan* disguises herself as a dirty male beggar; A’zhu in *Tianlong babu* also likes to change her identity to different person.

story advances the concept of *nüxia*, which is no longer portrayed as a special identity but has become a norm among women. In the opening scene of the first chapter, a young woman, who fits the image of a *nüxia*, sneaks into a village. She peeks into a room where there is a young woman whose back is turned to her and does not seem like the person she is looking for. When she is about to search another place, the woman whom she just watched suddenly attacks her fiercely with a sword.²¹⁸ A woman in the chamber without martial art appearance also knows how to use a sword; this breaks the conventional mode of female domestic life that illustrates any woman may turn out to be a swordswoman.²¹⁹

The increasing in the roles of swordswomen in *Deserted River* also raises a discourse about the dangers of sexuality.²²⁰ Both heroic *nanxia* and *nüxia* have to fight against it and remain chaste and faithful to their lovers. For example, the three swordswomen sisters that Yue Jianqiu 岳劍秋 encountered, attempt to seduce him.²²¹ So does the girl Jinling 金鈴, a waitress in a roadside inn who keeps handsome customers for her sexual desires and kills them when she gets tired of them.²²² They all represent the reverse image of the asexual feature of the heroic *nüxia*.

Conclusion

Literary *nüxia* gradually developed its tradition apart from the *nanxia*, and successfully formed a set of *nüxia* traditions beginning from the poetry to fiction from the Six dynasties to the

²¹⁸ Gu, *Huangjiang nüxia*, chapter 1.

²¹⁹ Altenburger, *The Sword or the Needle*, 356.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 359.

²²¹ Gu, *Huangjiang nüxia*, chapter 14-15.

²²² Gu, *Huangjiang nüxia*, chapter 11.

modern eras. By extracting from the *nanxia*'s tradition of returning a debt, the vengeful *nüxia* of poetry was created to take revenge on wrongful events that was committed against her family. Continuing the traditions of the poetry, the fictional traditions of *nüxia* provide several basic images of *nüxia* for later development that can still be found in the *nüxia* novels after the Republic of China. The images of the female assassin, avenger, and bandit eventually merge together, and their characteristics of endurance, intelligence, and other feminine traits separate them from the *nanxia* traditions to form unique *nüxia* traditions of their own. Thus, we can still see these images in Jin Yong's *nüxia*.

Chapter 3

Jin Yong's *Nüxia*

The previous chapter, introduced the literary history of *nüxia*'s images in poetry and fiction. This chapter aims to analyze some significant images of Jin Yong's *nüxia* through four different aspects: the appearance, the martial arts skill, the spirit of *xia*, and the individuality. At the same time, compare and contrast different *nüxia* in Jin Yong's novels, so that, the reader can see the unique images that were created by the author.

1. Appearance

An appearance description is one of the key steps for creating a character and often gives the first impression of that character to readers. It was not until literature in the Ming dynasty, that a *nüxia*'s appearance was described by using more than a few words. This appearance description usually related to a *nüxia*'s beauty, which is a *nüxia*'s standard feature and reveals her femininity. Jin Yong also presents an appearance description on his *nüxia* with many details; he gives her a unique look, instead of simply being a beautiful woman.

1.1. In Male Disguise

In Jin Yong's novels, in some cases, the first impression of a *nüxia* is in male disguise. Zhao Min dresses up as a handsome man to hide her identity of Mongolian princess when wondering around Central Plain. Yin Susu dresses up as a scholar to attract Zhang Cuishan's 張翠山 attention. The disguise hides away a *nüxia*'s female identity and puts her on an equal position as men; as well as, making it easy to travel around without too much attention. An

interesting example of this is Zhang Cuishan is shocked and runs away when knowing Yin Susu's female identity.

The scholar on the boat stands up, smiles, and gestures with his arm for Zhang Cuishan to sit down...Zhang Cuishan immediately realizes that this scholar is actually a beautiful young woman in disguise...He is stunned and his face begins to blush bright red. As he stands up and quickly gets off the boat, he says, "I did not know that you are a woman disguised as a man. Sorry to bother you."²²³

Zhang Cuishan's reaction shows a man's attitude towards a strange woman in ancient time.

Women, especially unmarried women, cannot have too much close contact with men; this idea also applies to the *wuxia* world. Therefore, in order to blend into the society and travel freely like a *nanxia*, it is easier for a *nüxia* to move around in disguise. Furthermore, the fact that Yin Susu dresses up as a man and has close contact with Zhang Cuishan all shows her being an unique individual, who follows her own principles without being manipulated by others. She ignores those conventional rules just for robbing the Dragon Slaying Sabre and getting close to Zhang Cuishan.²²⁴ In addition to that, the disguise creates a mysterious atmosphere, and both readers and characters will be curious about the real identity of the *nüxia*.

In contrast to Yin Susu, Huang Rong's disguise shows different images that stand out among Jin Yong's *nüxia*. The first impression of Huang Rong is not a gorgeous or good-looking young lady, but a dirty little man who is despised by others. She is treated with disrespect in

²²³ *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 149. English translation available on <http://wuxiasociety.com/the-heaven-sword-and-the-dragon-sabre/>.

²²⁴ Before Yin Susu has close contact with Zhang Cuishan, she has harmed Zhang Cuishan's senior Yu Daiyan when stole the Dragon Slaying Sabre from him. At that time, she was also dressed up as a man and had an contact with others. While Zhang Cuishan was looking for the person who harmed Yu Daiyan, he was attacked by monks of Shaolin Temple. The monks accused him the murder of their apprentices, but Zhang Cuishan is innocent. The truth is Yin Susu sets up this trap by putting the same outfit as Zhang Cuishan and then kills those monks to frame him. The reason Yin Susu wore the same outfit as Zhang Cuishan was because his outfit looks good.

front of an inn, and the food is taken from her because “[she] wears an old leather hat with holes, and [her] face and hands are dirty; so much so, that one cannot distinguish his features clearly.”²²⁵ The *nüxia*’s disguise usually tends to be dressing up as a handsome young man rather than a filthy beggar. No *nüxia* destroys her image like Huang Rong, especially in the first impression. Even with the disguise, Huang Rong’s energetic personality is still revealed through her eyes, which are “lively” and “shine with intensity.”²²⁶ Her cleverness and forthrightness are revealed through her unforgettable eyes and disguise that is further revealed in her presentation of ordering food. She orders different quality dishes like a professional epicure and distinguishes the quality of food that shows her knowledge towards fine dishes;²²⁷ moreover, Huang Rong earns the waiter’s respect that he is stunned by her knowledge and no longer underestimates her.

1.2. Beauty

Besides a disguised male identity, beauty is another key feature in describing *nüxia*. In the literary history of *nüxia*, *nüxia*’s beauty is barely described, which is usually using a simple word as a description of their appearance.²²⁸ In Jin Yong’s novels, the author stresses on *nüxia*’s feminine features, such as skin condition and facial features of different *nüxia*, that further creates several unique characters.

Most of time, the colour white is applied to describe or compare with Jin Yong’s *nüxia* and thus, shows their beauty. Their skins are usually smooth and white without any

²²⁵ *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 271.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 271.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 272-274.

²²⁸ There are no descriptions about Nie’s appearance in the story nor in “Hongxian.” Cui Shensi’s concubina is “having good looks” 亦有容色, and Guren qi is a “beautiful lady” 美婦人. The woman in the carriage is described close to a normal woman, who has very good looks and wearing floral accessories in her hair.

imperfection.²²⁹ For example, the first-time Huang Rong appears in her real look, Jin Yong writes,

She is dressed in white from head to toe and has a golden ribbon in her hair which shines like fire in the snow ... She has very smooth skin that is as white as snow, with beautiful colour on her cheeks and has a beauty which is incomparable, so that people dare not to look at her.²³⁰

The beauty of the *nüxia* is finally revealed at this moment. Her whiteness is in contrast to the disguise of the dirty black beggar and corresponds to the clear snow of the scene. The author also uses Guo Jing's reaction to show what would happen when ordinary people see Huang Rong. He is dumbstruck by her beauty and retreated a few steps before turning away, not daring to look at her.²³¹ His reaction is as seeing a sacred thing that further highlights the outstanding beauty that she has. Xiaolongnü 小龍女, too, is wearing all white when she is introduced.²³² Also, the author focuses on describing *nüxia*'s hands and facial features to reveal their beauty. When the first time Zhang Wuji 張無忌 sees Zhao Min 趙敏, he notices her hands, which are as white as the white jade handle of her folding fan.²³³ Zhou Zhiruo 周芷若, Yin Susu 殷素素, and Ji Xiaofu 紀曉芙 all have hands or arms that are described as white as the white jade or snow.

²²⁹ The description of women's beautiful skin and the use of colour white is influenced by the literary tradition of poetry. In the poem "Shuoren" 碩人 (from *Shijing*), the Princess of Qi Zhuang Jiang's 莊姜 hand and neck are described using white colour. The poem "Jiaonü shi" 嬌女詩 by Zuo Si 左思 (250-305) also describes his daughters' skin as white and clean. For a discussion of women's outer appearance in pre-modern Chinese poetry, see Tsung-Cheng Lin, "A Study of Narrative Speed in *Yuefu* (Musical Bureau) Poetry of the Han and Six Dynasties," *Newsletter for International China Studies* (Guoji Hanxue Yanjiu Tongxun 国际汉学研究通讯) (the International Sinological Center, Peking University 北京大学, published by Zhonghua Book 中华书局), No. 4 (December, 2011), pp. 23-45.

²³⁰ *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 372.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 372

²³² *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 170.

²³³ *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 921. This can be traced back to the description of the combined feature of the woman in "Shuoren" 碩人 in the *Book of Songs* and Liu Lanzhi's 劉蘭芝 outer appearance

Jin Yong further presents different types of beauties through some important *nüxia* in his stories. Xiaolongnü has a “morbidly beautiful” (*bingtaimei* 病態美) image with the description, “her face is pale white as if she is ill ... her face has no hint of blood in it, showing off her elegance even further, her beauty is incomparable.”²³⁴ Her coldness and lifeless condition, plus her beautiful look, gives her the image of a non-human being, like a goddess. Li Mochou has the beauty that is at variance with her image of a murderer. She has beautiful eyes, pink cheeks, her voice is soft and graceful, her form exuding a delicate air.²³⁵ No one can tell Li is a killer who kills without blinking her eyes from her beautiful appearance. The most interesting example is Zhao Min, who has a beauty that blends in “handsomeness” (*junmei* 俊美), which is different from Huang Rong, Li Mochou, or other *nüxia* in Zhongyuan. For example, when she drinks with Zhang Wuji and his fellows, Zhang describes her image,

A beautiful woman would either be refined and elegant, or tender and glamorous; but this Miss Zhao, in her extreme beauty, also carries a third part boldness, and a third part heroic attitude, while maintaining her elegance. Plus, she also carries an air of authority, which gains other people’s respect and made them not dare to stare intently at her.²³⁶

Zhao Min’s Mongolian background gives her very explicit facial features that are dissimilar to those Han ethnic *nüxia*.²³⁷ Her heroic attitude and the air of authority are influenced by her

in “Southeast the Peacock Flies” (“Kongque Dongnan Fei” 孔雀東南飛. Cited from discussion with Dr. Tsung-Cheng Lin.

²³⁴ *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 487.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 31,44.

²³⁶ *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 928.

²³⁷ Chen Mo points out Jin Yong often places Han ethnicity in comparison with ethnic minorities in his novels. For example, in *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, Zhou Zhiruo and Yin Li are Han ethnic and Zhao Min and Xiao Zhao are ethnic minorities. Chen Mo uses Zhou Zhiruo and Zhao Min to analyze the differences between two ethnics, especially focused on their personalities, but not their appearances. See, Chen Mo 陳墨, *Renlun Jin Yong* 人論金庸. (Beijing: Haitun chuban, 2015), 362-365.

ethnicity and her family background of being the ruling power of the country; which Genghis Khan is her ancestor and her father is the Prince of Ruyang (Ruyangwang 汝陽王), who holds the military power of the Yuan dynasty. Zhao Min has been immersed and grown up in the atmosphere of the ruling class. This atmosphere shapes her personality, as well as her appearance, with masculinity. Masculinity differentiates her from the other *nüxia*'s soft and feminine images.

Male disguises provide Jin Yong's *nüxia* a way to be unrestrained from the conventional values and allows them to express their own personal will. Besides, wearing a disguise or not, most of them are extremely beautiful. Their beauties are presented in different ways to reveal their unique features such as coldness or enthusiasm. Through Jin Yong's highlights of *nüxia*'s outer appearances, *nüxia* is no longer a monotonous image in literature that is illustrated as *nanxia* (male knights-errant); but has been developed further.

2. Martial Arts Skills

Since the Tang tales, the martial arts skill has been one of the important elements in all fiction about *nüxia* to achieve her knight-errantry.²³⁸ Their skills tend to be depicted as *fashu*; however, most of the *nüxia* do not have to have excellent martial arts skills in fiction from the Ming and Qing periods.²³⁹ Instead, their braveness and intelligence are shown in different ways. Jin Yong continues the standard writing features of *nüxia*'s martial arts skills, but with a twist.

²³⁸ In the literature of female knights, the martial arts skill was highlighted, for the first time, by Li Bai 李白 in his "Brave Woman from Eastern Sea" ("Donghai you yongfu" 東海有勇婦). See Tsung-Cheng Lin, "Lady Avenger", 502-503, and "Tangchao xiake shifeng" 唐朝俠客詩風 (Poetry of Knight-errantry in Tang Dynasty) in Lin Tsung-Cheng 林宗正 and Jiang Yin 蔣寅 ed., *川合康三教授榮休紀念文集 (A Collection of Essays on Classical Chinese Literature in Honor of Professor Kawai Kozo)* (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2017), pp. 154-184.

²³⁹ An exception is Shisanmei in *The Tales of Lovers and Heroes (Ernu Yingxiong Zhuan 兒女英雄傳)*.

His portrayal of *nüxia*'s martial arts skills are focused on their internal skill (*neigong* 內功) and femininity and include different tools as weapons.

2.1. Poison and Hidden Weapons

A certain number of Jin Yong's *nüxia* are good at using poison and the hidden weapon (*anqi* 暗器) that are more specific than the *fashu*.²⁴⁰ Li Mochou is a good example. Her signature weapon is the "Iced Soul Silver Needle" ("Bingpo yinzhen" 冰魄銀針), an *anqi* that has deadly poison on it: people will get poisoned right away, even the hand of the person who uses the needle will turn black and numb. Another evidence of this is Huang Rong who learns the "Rain of Petals" ("Mantian huayu zhi Jinzhen" 滿天花雨擲金針) from Hong Qigong 洪七公 to fight against Ouyang Ke's 歐陽克 snake tactical form (*shezhen* 蛇陣). The *nüxia* uses the *anqi* to overcome her physical disability of being weak when facing a strong enemy. The *anqi* can be shot from a distance so that the *nüxia* can attack before her enemies, without making direct contact with them.

2.2. *Nüxia*'s Martial Arts and Her Femininity

Besides using the *anqi*, the actual martial arts skills still play a part when it is time for Jin Yong's *nüxia* to fight. To be noticed, many skill formulas that the *nüxia* practice are created to highlight elegant gestures. For example, in Huang Rong's "Falling Flower Divine Sword Palm" ("Luoying shenjian zhang" 落英神劍掌), "the beauty of the gestures resides in their lightness

²⁴⁰ The element of *fashu* could turn the *wuxia* story genre into tales of the strange (*Zhiguai* 志怪). *Zhiguai* (Tales of the strange) deals with the existence of supernatural, gods, ghost, and more. Most of Tang tales about the *nüxia* focus on describing their strange methods, like *fashu*, and their mysteriousness. Very few human emotions are added on the *nüxia* that makes the *nüxia* less-human. Lin Baochun, "Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuozhong de nüxia xingxiang" 中國古典小說中的女俠形象 (The Images of Lady Knight-errants in Classical Chinese Fiction). *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* 中國文哲研究集刊, no. 11 (1997): 50.

and their aerial grace [and] resemble a butterfly taking flight,”²⁴¹ while her “Orchid Touch” (“Lanhua fuxue shou” 蘭花拂穴手) contains finger gestures that look like orchids. The graceful posing of flowers or floating in the air all suggest the softness and lightness feelings that fit the feminine image of the *nüxia*, and correspond to Huang Rong’s beauty while practicing the martial arts skills. Moreover, the *nüxia*’s beautiful skill further reveals the ingenuity and delicacy in it. Huang Rong’s “Orchid Touch” devotes particular care to its movements as it is described,

The “Orchid” style relies on speed, accuracy, surprise, and clean. Of these, purity is the most important. It requires graceful execution and an easy, relaxed manner to execute properly, as if the person using it has not a care in the world. If it is executed with too much urgency or viciousness, then it loses its advantage in a fight.²⁴²

A simple movement of “Orchid Touch” contains the knowledge of “speed, accuracy, surprise, and cleanliness” (kuai, zhun, qi, qing 快, 准, 奇, 清); this is a performance of art that goes beyond the understanding of a traditional martial arts skill, which is full of strength and has some furious moves. Its tricks are designed for people who have a light and slender body structures, which makes it easier to carry out its graceful moves. Similar to “Orchid Touch,” Xiaolongnü’s “Fist of Beauties” (“Meinu quanfa” 美女拳法) is a technique consisting of different gestures of beautiful famous women of the past.²⁴³ Each stance presents each beauty’s aura and impression. Even the masculine hero Yang Guo has to adjust some of the appearances of the stances for a male to use; otherwise, the stances will not look elegant at all.

²⁴¹ *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 465. English translation available on <http://wuxiasociety.com/the-legend-of-the-condor-heroes/>.

²⁴² *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 353.

²⁴³ The beautiful famous women here refer to Diao Chan 貂蟬, Xi Shi 西施, Wang Zhaojun 王昭君, Yang Guifei 楊貴妃, Wu Zetian 武則天, Magu 麻姑, Chang’e 嫦娥 and more. See *the Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 333-336, 522-528

Nüxia's martial arts skills not only show femininity and beautiful gestures; but, also reveal her image. Li Mochou learns all kinds of vicious skills that match her image of a "demoness" (*nümotou* 女魔頭). Besides the "Iced Soul Silver Needle", she practices the "Scarlet Serpent Divine Palm" ("Chilian shenzhang" 赤煉神掌), a poisonous palm technique developed from the *Secret of Five Poison* (*Wudu michuan* 五毒秘傳). Similar to Li Mochou, Mei Chaofeng 梅超風, who has betrayed her master, Huang Yaoshi, by stealing the *Nine Yin Classic* (*Jiuyin zhenjing* 九陰真經), later becomes a killer along with her husband. She learns and practices the skills improperly from the classic, a horrific martial arts skill "Nine Yin White Bone Claw" ("Jiuyin baigu zhao" 九陰白骨爪) developed from the *Classic* by her husband, which attacks target's head and creates five deep holes on the skull that causes death or serious injury. Such an evil skill is not honorable, and that further reflects Mei Chaofeng's violent and cruel image. One of Xiaolongnü's weapons is the "Long sash of golden bells" ("Jinlingsuo" 金鈴索), which is a long and flexible weapon with two golden bells at each end of the sash, and the bells can be used to attack the enemy's acupuncture points from a distance. This soft and unusual weapon is not for everyone; its rareness and elegant materials all fits Xiaolongnü's goddess-like image as it does not belong to the mundane world.

2.3. *Nüxia*'s Internal Skills

Even though some of Jin Yong's *nüxia* have great martial arts skills, some *nüxia*'s physical skills are not always good. Instead, other features are highlighted, such as *nüxia*'s internal skills and intelligence. Huang Rong, for example, does not have good martial arts skills in her emerging adulthood because she is not serious about practicing. When Hong Qigong teaches her skills, she only wants to have fun; without applying herself, she has learned these

skills for amusement.²⁴⁴ Her real intention of learning is to encourage Hong Qigong to give more lessons to Guo Jing. If she really wanted to learn martial arts, she could learn from her father who is a great master in Jin Yong's fiction. When she was on Peach Blossom Island (Taohua Dao 桃花島), she received education from her father for a variety of knowledge such as an appreciation of writing and painting, the formation of the five elements (*wuxing* 五行), and the eight trigrams (*bagua* 八卦) in all of which she seemed to be more interested. She was intelligent and quick to learn but did never pay attention to on learning her father's martial arts. No wonder Hong Qigong would say, "[She] has learned not even a tenth of her father's martial arts, but who has inherited all his trickery and cleverness."²⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Huang Rong does take learning martial arts seriously when it is really necessary. When Hong Qigong is dying on Bright Glow Island (Mingxia Dao 明霞島), he asks Huang Rong to take over his position as the chief of the Beggars' Sect. He teaches her "Dog Beating Stick Techniques" ("Dagoubang fa" 打狗棒法), which are a set of secret martial arts skills only passed down to the chief of the Sect.²⁴⁶ She does not want Hong Qigong to worry, which may make the difficult situation both Hong and she were encountering while on that island even worse, so she has no choice but to follow his orders.

Another important *nixia* in Jin Yong's fiction, Zhao Min, does not have excellent physical skills either. Although she has captured Chinese masters of different Sects and forced them to teach her martial arts skills,²⁴⁷ she still cannot make good use of them. One of the reasons that she is not able to succeed in learning those martial arts she wishes to learn is those masters she captured are not willing to teach her because of her identity as an invader and her use of unjust ways to

²⁴⁴ *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 486.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 467.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 828-830.

²⁴⁷ Zhao Min captures the chiefs from Kunlun, Emei, and other Sects to force them teach her martial arts skills. She tortures them if they refuse to teach. *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 1033-1038.

achieve her goals. In addition, the major reason is Zhao Min's learning strategy is quantity over quality. Thus, Zhao Min can never learn the essence of each technique and therefore is not able to advance her martial arts skills. Nevertheless, her other qualities, such as flying skill (*qinggong* 輕功) and the use of strategies, are highlighted by Jin Yong. Her failure to promote her martial arts skill but excellence in flying skill and strategies well reflects her image described in the fiction and further reinforces her features—intelligence, beauty and willfulness.

Although Jin Yong's *nüxia* may not have the best physical skills, their internal skills are usually impressive. One way to see an excellent internal skill is to examine *nüxia*'s *qinggong*. Zhao Min's physical skills may be the poorest among the leading *nüxia* characters; but, she is incredibly good with her *qinggong*. Even a master like Zhang Wuji, who has learnt the “Nine Yang Divine Skill” (“Jiuyang shengong” 九陽神功), a profound internal skill in his time, has to move very fast behind Zhao Min while trying to catch up with her.²⁴⁸ Xiao Zhao 小昭, who seems to know nothing about martial arts skills, is able to match Zhang's *qinggong* speed.²⁴⁹ Besides *qinggong*, Huang Rong and Xiaolongnü also learn internal skill from the *Nine Ying Classic*, the most desired martial arts classic of Huang Rong's era that is still powerful in Xiaolongnü's generation. Their outer skills are limited by their physical structures, which are weaker than *nanxia*; but, there is no limitation when it comes to learning internal skills. It is apparent to see that the *nüxia* have an advantage because of their lighter weight that makes it easier to use *qinggong*. But it would also be plausible to conclude that the main reason that Jin Yong highlights their *qinggong* is to convey the elegance of their feminine move.

²⁴⁸ *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 1122.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1122.

To distinguish *nüxia*'s features of martial arts skills apart from *nanxia*, Jin Yong has focused on describing their gestures, internal skills, and weapons. Through his descriptions, *nüxia*'s femininity and body advantages are revealed that further highlights *nüxia*'s identity as a woman not “like” a man. In another word, Jin Yong emphasizes the female gender of *nüxia*; thus, *nüxia*'s inner and outer feminine features can be truly revealed in the literature.

3. Spirit of *Xia*

The altruistic behaviour, the sense of justice, and being generous are the fascinating characteristics of the *xia* that also define it. Likewise, *nüxia*'s actions such as taking revenge, returning a favor, or helping others against injustice are parts of her role as a knight errant. Jin Yong's *nüxia*, too, conducts her action as a knight errant; however, most of her actions are for selfish purpose or her own satisfaction. This shows their sense of individualism rather than altruism. Li Mochou, Mei Chaofeng, and Huang Rong are examples of this type of *nüxia*.

3.1. Self-aware Avenger—Li Mochou

Nüxia's acts of revenge are for the wrongful events against her family in literary conventions; nevertheless, Jin Yong presents this theme driven through a personal aspect. The *nüxia* does it for her own good, not for anyone else. Li Mochou avenges herself for the betrayal by her lover Lu Zhanyuan 陸展元 by killing everyone who is relevant. Li Mochou was in love with Lu Zhanyuan 10 years ago, which violated a rule of the Ancient Tomb Sect (Gumu Pai 古墓派) in which affection between women and men is prohibited, and she was later expelled by her master. Without regret, Li Mochou went to Lu Zhanyuan and wished to be with him; but, she found out Lu Zhanyuan had turned his back on her and married another woman, He Yuanjun 何沅君. Li Mochou went to the couple's wedding looking for trouble but was stopped by a great

monk from Dali 大理. He requested, as a favour to himself, that Li Mochou would grant the couple ten years of peace.²⁵⁰ Through Li Mochou's aspect, Jin Yong presents *nixia*'s revenge can be a personal affair that is unrelated to the family. For Li Mochou's revenge, she kills the entire family of Lu Zhanyuan and even kills innocent people whose names contain any word of He 何, Yuan 沅, or Jun 君. As an act of knight-errantry, vengeance in here is no longer a self-justified action nor a social justice move that would earn praise from others. Her action has gone beyond the notion of an "acceptable vengeance"²⁵¹ in that she has committed most of her killings for absurd reasons and involved innocents, which makes her a killer rather than an avenger. Li Mochou's revenge emphasizes the *nixia*'s personal desire that enriches her revenge with personal feelings, which no longer aims to fulfill filial piety as in conventional revenge of *nixia*. A *nixia* reveals her personal feeling is evident in the literary tradition of *nixia* in the Song tales that the main motivation is driven by a wrong doing against the knightly act.²⁵² However, Li Mochou's revenge purpose is to release her resentful feeling about Lu Zhanyuan's betrayal and her hatred towards He Yuanjun by killing others. From Li Mochou's perspective, there is nothing wrong to warrant her being angry or in despair, and all she has done is achieve justice for herself. *Nixia* seeking justice for herself is not only with Li Mochou; Jin He's *nixia* in "Ballad of the

²⁵⁰ *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 23.

²⁵¹ In the history of *nixia*'s vengeance, the act was mostly caused by the wrongful event against the family, and most of the cases were pardoned by the court. However, Li Mochou's act is not for the purpose of avenging family. Besides, she has killed many innocent people. See Gao Mingshi 高明士, *Zhongguo wenhua shi* 中國文化史 (*History of Chinese Culture*). (Taipei: Wunan tushuchuban gongsi, 2007), 130. (cited from Lin Tsung-Cheng, "Lady Avengers"). Wang, "xianu fuchou zhuti," 91. 493-516. Lin, "Tangchao xiake shifeng," 154-184.

²⁵² The examples can be found in "The Woman Married by Xie Xun" ("Xie Xun qufu" 解洵娶婦), and "The Lady with the Fragrance Pill" ("Xiangwan furen" 香丸夫人). The concubine kills Xie Xun to punish his ingratitude towards her after she has saved his life, when she is gradually left out by Xie Xun and he responds to her accusation of ingratitude with physical violence. In "Fragrance Pill," the scholar, driven by the female knight's emotional cruelty, commits the act of revenge. The mysterious woman is treated disrespectfully by a gang of young hooligans, and asks the scholar to kill them for her in return for the favour of killing the men who bullied him.

Girl from Lanling” also aims to achieve justice for herself. Nevertheless, the *nüxia* in “Lanling” is rationally fighting for her right through her intelligence and eloquence.²⁵³ Li Mochou, on the other hand, is irrationally giving vent to her anger by killing to prove others wrong. In other words, Jin Yong has created a *nüxia* who is being emotional in her doings. All she has done aims to fight for her justice, even though, what she considers about justice is not the same as everyone else has defined.

3.2. *Nüxia* with Bad Nature Performs Knight-errantry—Mei Chaofeng

On the subject of vengeance, Mei Chaofeng is a *nüxia* who performs the *xia* tradition of loyalty. There are two tasks for Mei Chaofeng to fulfill in the story; one is avenging her husband Chen Xuanfeng 陳玄風, and the other is being loyal to her master Huang Yaoshi 黃藥師. A *nüxia* avenging her husband or showing loyalty are parts of traditions in *nüxia*-related literature; however, these images seem to be unusual appearing on Mei Chaofeng who is portrayed in opposite to the protagonist. The *nüxia* who carries out the act of *xia* is always a heroine figure, like Qin Nüxiu or Shisanmei, but is never a ruthless killer like Mei Chaofeng, who is feared by others. Despite vengeance, which is a normal conflict to drive a *wuxia* story forward, Mei Chaofeng reveals her loyalty toward her master, which is unusual to see, especially as she is the one who betrays Huang Yaoshi in the first place. An example of this can be found when Qiu Qianren 裘千仞 lies to Mei Chaofeng that Huang Yaoshi is dead, she is shocked and cries.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Tsung-Cheng Lin 林宗正, “Jin He yu shijiushiji shige de nüxia shuxie” 金和與十九世紀詩歌的女俠書寫 (“Jin He and the Writing of Female Knight-errantry in Nineteenth Century China”) in Tsung-Cheng Lin and Bowei Zhang eds, *Cong chuantong dao xiandai de Zhongguo shixue 從傳統到現代的中國文化史* (From Tradition to Modernity: Poetic Transition from 18th to Early 20th Century China) (Shanghai: Shasngasi Guji, forthcoming in 2017). This paper also presented at the 1st Advanced Classical Chinese Literature Conference 第一屆中國古典文學高端論壇, Nanjing, August 2015, 8.

²⁵⁴ Qiu Qianren 裘千仞 is the chief of the Iron Palm Sect 鐵掌幫. However, the one appears in this scene is the twin brother of Qiu Qianren, Qiu Qianzhang 裘千丈, who is a liar and knows nothing about martial arts.

After discovering the truth, Huang Rong and another of Huang Yaoshi's disciples, Lu Chengfeng 陸乘風, ask her if she wants to go back to the island to visit the master. However, Mei Chaofeng shows her regret of betraying her master,

I do not have face to see him ... Our benevolent master has compassion on a wretched child like me. He took me as his disciple and raised me. But because of wild ambition, I have betrayed him ... I only want to seek revenge for my husband. Afterwards, I will commit suicide.²⁵⁵

The passage shows Mei Chaofeng's respect toward her master. Another significant example is before Mei Chaofeng dies, Huang Yaoshi re-accepts her as his disciple and she then uses all her strength, to perform the rite of acknowledgement. After her three kowtows, she stiffens, never to move again.²⁵⁶ Mei Chaofeng's life ends in a touching moment of her showing her loyalty. In fact, her loyalty can be explained by her childhood on the Peach Blossom Island that Jin Yong describes,

I was once an innocent young girl who played around and joked all day ... However, my unfortunate parents died one after another, forcing me to suffer under an evil person. Master Huang Yaoshi rescued me and brought me to the Peach Blossom Island where he accepted me into his school ... Under the peach trees, I saw rugged looking youths standing in front of me. One of them picked a bright red peach and gave it to me to eat. That was apprentice brother Chen Xuanfeng ... He often taught me and treated me very well ... Slowly, as everyone grew up, I had him in my heart, and he had me in his heart.²⁵⁷

The precious time and memories that Mei Chaofeng has happened on Peach Blossom Island, including the beginning of her love. The time on the island proves Mei Chaofeng is not born to

²⁵⁵ *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 575.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1037.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 390-391.

be evil; instead, she is attached to the place and people. The island has been a home to Mei Chaofeng, and Huang Yaoshi is like a father who has raised and educated her. When Mei Chaofeng grew up, she fell in love and ran away like a rebellious daughter running away from home in her rebellious stage. Like a real father-daughter relationship, Mei Chaofeng was still forgiven by Huang Yaoshi after all.²⁵⁸ Mei Chaofeng's attitude towards her master can be regarded as a new image of *nüxia* that she betrays her master aiming to make achievement on her martial arts skills; but, she still keeps “returning the favour” in her mind that she is grateful for Huang Yaoshi, who has raised her and taught her skills.

Despite Mei Chaofeng's transformation of personality, Jin Yong presents her as a pure *nüxia* who is faithful to her master and husband.²⁵⁹ She was once blinded by ambition, and more importantly, she lost her husband, the incident that led her to be evil. After the death of her husband, Mei Chaofeng has been focusing on refining her martial arts skills for only one purpose—avenging her husband. In another word, Mei Chaofeng transforms from an innocent girl to a pure *nüxia* and finally becomes a *nüxia* who is a bloody and arbitrarily avenger. If her evil identity is removed, she is as same as those *nüxia* in conventions who have done everything only to avenge their families, to perform their knight-errantry.

3.3. From the Arbitrary Acts of *Xia* to the Traditional Acts of *Xia*—Huang Rong

²⁵⁸ Huang Yaoshi gives three tasks to Mei Chaofeng: to retrieve the *Jiuyin zhenjing*, to look for other Huang Yaoshi's disciples, and to destroy her two hands after all (because she has practiced an evil skill “Nine Yong White Bone Claw” with her hands). She is dying before she can complete the tasks Huang Yaoshi gave her. Therefore, she breaks her two hands before the last breath. Huang Yaoshi is touched and re-accepts Mei Chaofeng as his disciple. *The Eagle-Shooting Heroes*, 1037.

²⁵⁹ The two heroines Qin Nüxiu 秦女休 and the brave woman from Eastern Sea highly praised by the early poetry avenge their families. But it's never been mentioned that their enemies are those of evil or good nature. In other words, no matter what the nature the enemy of the male and female knights is, their act of revenge is always highly recognized in poetry. Cited from a discussion with Dr. Tsung-Cheng Lin.

Li Mochou and Mei Chaofeng both present *nǚxia*'s act of *xia* that focuses on personal debts. Huang Rong, too, has many knightly acts performed in her entire life. Unlike them, Huang Rong has different attitudes in performing act of *xia* shown in two stages of her life—the emerging adulthood and middle-age. Her *xia* acts express her self-willed while in her emerging adulthood. On the other hand, Huang Rong in her middle-age, portrays a role of a pure *nǚxia* who carries out the conventional knight-errantry.

3.3.1. *Xia* Acts Perform in Huang Rong's Emerging Adulthood

In the emerging adulthood, Huang Rong expresses an arbitrary attitude when performing *xia* acts. With this attitude, some of her knightly acts are driven by her impulsive emotion to give vent to her negative emotion. An example can be found in the scene in which Huang Rong and Guo Jing come across a fat couple and their skinny servants on their way to the other town. It seems to show *nǚxia*'s generosity in helping others who are weak and vulnerable, but it reveals some other images of Huang Rong. The story goes like this: the fat couple rest relaxingly on their transportation facilities (a scrawny donkey and a palanquin), while their skinny servants moving difficultly under their heavy weights. By coincident, Huang Rong and Guo Jing see them and Huang Rong is curious about what the person inside the palanquin looks like. In the beginning the fat couple rudely treat Huang Rong and she treats them back with a prank by making them fall from the donkey and the palanquin. She intends to leave after the prank, but the fat couple attack her. The result is Huang Rong cuts off the wife's ear and orders the couple to switch the position with their servants that the couple has to carry the palanquin with their servants in it. She then threatens to cut off their noses if they do not do so. Here, Huang Rong seems to help those poor servants by punishing the couple, but this result of the punishment is unintentional. In the incident, there is no sign Huang Rong shows such sympathy for those

servants that would make her want to help. She approaches to the couple only because she is curious and further amused by her little prank. Moreover, Huang Rong's action is driven by the bad attitude of the couple and Huang has been made by an accident in the previous episode: she is angry about Qiu Chuji 邱處機, who wants Guo Jing to marry Mu Nianci.²⁶⁰ Therefore, Huang Rong punishes the couple mostly for the purposes of releasing her anger and for having fun. The couple just shows up in the wrong place at the wrong time while Huang is in a bad mood, thereby making themselves become her punching bag. Again, the incident reveals a *nüxia* being emotional as it revealed on Li Mochou. However, Huang Rong is even more impulsive and arbitrary driven by her emotions. This image makes Huang Rong an even more humanized *nüxia* than Li Mochou or any other *nüxia* in literary history. In another word, a new image and presentation of the *nüxia* that contains different emotions.

Furthermore, this scene has more of a purpose of showing Huang Rong's ruthless character, and her act of *xia* is a bonus to that. The ruthless character is, again, a new feature of a *nüxia*. This image is similar to, but different from Li Bai's *nüxia* in the poem "There is a Brave Woman from the Eastern Sea" who is treating her enemies' corpses in cold blood.²⁶¹ The *nüxia* in Li Bai's poem, her cold-blooded action is emotionless and her action is driven by her clear goal to avenge her family; but, Huang Rong's act shows no clear intention at all. In addition to that,

²⁶⁰ Yang Kong's father adopted Mu Nianci as his daughter a few years after they were attacked by Jing soldiers. Yang and Guo families have a promise of making their children become brothers if two of them are boys, or a couple if they are different genders. As Yang family's adopted daughter, Mu is eligible to marry Guo Jing. Therefore, Qiu wishes to make Guo and Mu husband and wife.

²⁶¹ The image of the female knight as a calm and violent killer has been discussed in Lin, Tsung-Cheng "Tangchao xiake shifeng" 唐朝俠客詩風 ["Poetry of Knight-errantry in Tang Dynasty"]. Lin, Tsung-Cheng and Jiang Yin 蔣寅 ed., 川合康三教授榮休紀念文集 [A Collection of Essays on Classical Chinese Literature in Honor of Professor Kawai Kozo]. Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2017, pp. 154-184.

the ruthless character can be found on *nüxia* who is in the opposite to the protagonist like Mei Chaofeng and Li Mochou, but rarely on a protagonist *nüxia* like Huang Rong.

Huang Rong's arbitrary attitude is also shown in her knightly act towards her country. The first time this happens is when she is in the Prince Zhao's mansion, she fights with Ouyang Ke and others, and the second time is when she sees Wanyang Honglie gather others to find *the Book of Wumu* in the capital. She despises those who betrays the county and the Han ethnicity and thus, tries to stir up a fight to stop them.²⁶² Her acts are motivated by her patriotic mind; but, because of her impulsive and arbitrary attitude she always places herself in great danger by fighting with many skillful people alone or together with Guo Jing. This further reveals she is yet to be mature. She does show her ambition and confidence to use her own strength (sometimes with Guo Jing) to stand for her nation; but, to protect a country in action is never a simple affair that can be done by one person or two.

3.3.2. *Xia* Acts Perform in Huang Rong's Middle-age

Huang Rong, in her middle-age, shows her actions as a knight-errant in a totally different way from how she did in her emerging adulthood. She values the safety of the country and others. She has developed a strong sense of altruism and justice along the way, that her thoughts and actions have stabilized and become mature and strong as a conventional knight-errant.

Huang Rong presents the sense of justice stronger than any other of Jin Yong's *nüxia*, and is dedicated conveying this value to the younger generations. When Yang Guo helps her to defeat Jinlun Fawang 金輪法王, an invader from Mongolia who comes to kidnap Huang Rong,

²⁶² Huang Rong reveals her disgust when she sees other Han people gather together and flatter the Prince Jin in the Prince Zhao mansion. She further shows her concerns towards the common people of Song that they would be suffered if Wanyang Honglie has the *Book of Wumu*.

Yang Guo asks Huang Rong and the others to leave before Fawang can hurt them. Even though Huang Rong does not get along very well with Yang Guo, she still hesitates and thinks about him risking his life for her, so that she cannot just leave swiftly. However, the Wu brothers (Wu Dunru 武敦儒 and Wu Xiuwen 武修文)²⁶³ keep urging Huang Rong to go. She ignores them at first, but when they keep on pressing her, she says angrily,

What use is it to learn martial arts if you don't behave with *xia* and *yi*? What use have you got living in this world? Yang Guo is a hundred times better than you. Huh, you brothers better think well about this.²⁶⁴

The statement clearly shows her criteria for those who practice martial arts: that they must exhibit both *xia* and *yi* 義, in another word, “behave in a super-moral way.”²⁶⁵ Huang Rong does not treat Yang Guo well because she fears that he might become like his father who betrays his nation.²⁶⁶ For this reason, Yang Guo could just leave as Xiaolongnü tells him to, but he does not. He is driven by a sense of justice and he does not dare to see Huang Rong captured. If it is Huang Rong in her emerging adulthood, she would just leave for her own good because she does not see Yang Kang as Guo Jing's sworn brother by that Yang Guo can be a threat to her love ones.

Furthermore, Huang Rong has a strong patriotic sentiment just like her husband, Guo Jing, that is distinct from other *nüxia*. While Huang Rong is frustrated about dealing with the

²⁶³ Wu Dunru and Wu Xiuwen are sons of Wu Santong. Wu Dunru is the older brother who is also called Dawu 大武; Wu Xiuwen is called Xiaowu 小武.

²⁶⁴ *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 559. English translation available on <http://wuxiasociety.com/the-return-of-the-condor-heroes/>.

²⁶⁵ Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, 4.

²⁶⁶ Yang Guo's father Yang Kang is the sworn brother of Guo Jing. Yang Kang denies his Han identity as being Yang Teixin's son because his real father cannot afford the wealthy life he has in Jin Empire. Later, he betrays his nation by helping the Jin Prince to escape and assisting Ouyang Feng to attack Peach Blossom Island and kill Guo Jing's masters.

incoming enemy and protecting the lives of the people and army, Dawu 大武 and Xiaowu 小武²⁶⁷ are fighting each other over a girl outside the city of Xiangyang 襄陽. Guo Fu 郭芙 comes to Huang Rong for help, but Huang Rong just holds her anger and says, “I have got much more pressing matters on my mind at the moment. If they want to fight, then let them fight all they want.” But Guo Fu does not feel her mother’s anger, and she whines, “Mother, if either of them gets injured, what then?” Huang Rong has spoiled her daughter since she was born, but this makes Huang Rong extremely mad. She says, “If the two are injured while trying to fight off the enemy then they deserve our care. But they deserve to die if they are fighting each other.”²⁶⁸ Huang Rong’s replies explain that she values righteousness and understands correct and incorrect decisions. Even her disciples, who have been raised by her, will be ignored if they fail to see the big picture, which in this case, is the crisis of the country. Moreover, Huang Rong will choose the safety of the country over the others, including her loved ones. The example is when Guo Xiang 郭襄 leaves home to find Yang Guo without telling her parents. Huang Rong is worried, but she still waits and makes sure there is no sign of Mongolian troop movement yet; so that she can go and search for Guo Xiang.²⁶⁹ This shows that Huang Rong will choose national affairs over her daughter without hesitation. Huang Rong also requires the younger generation to do the same to fight and protect the country. She tells Xiaolongnü, “It will be great if you and Yang Guo help to defend the country for the people afterward.”²⁷⁰ Huang Rong is not as close to Yang Guo as Guo Jing, but she still expects them to be devoted and make a contribution to the country.

²⁶⁷ Please refer to note 41.

²⁶⁸ The Wu brothers, Dawu (Wu Dunru) and Xiaowu (Wu Xiuwen) are disciples of Guo Jing, who are sons of Wu Santong 武三通 (he is one of the disciples of Nandi 南帝). *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 883-884.

²⁶⁹ *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 1552.

²⁷⁰ *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 882.

One important point to be noticed, the theme of patriotic sentiment is one *xia* errantry conventions in poem,²⁷¹ but a *nüxia* expresses patriotic sentiment is a new image that Jin Yong contributes to the development of *xia*-related novels.

4. Individuality

In the conventional literature of *nüxia*, we see that most of the *nüxia* spend their lifetimes only seeking revenge. *Nüxia* in the poem “Ballad of Qin Nüxiu” or story of Nie Yinniang, their stories end abruptly after achieving the revenge tasks; or in *the Tales of Lovers and Heroes*, Shisanmei gives up her *nüxia* identity after the revenge. Their life seems to be incomplete without any other achievements except vengeance. The *nüxia* in Jin He’s “Ballad of the Girl from Lanling” is one exception who fights for her own justice through her intelligence and eloquence.²⁷² Other than the *nüxia* in “Lanling,” a certain number of *nüxia* in the classical literature do not have other qualities to make them stand out. However, Zhao Min, Huang Rong, and Zhou Zhirou stand out among the group of *nüxia* because they have a strong individuality. Jin Yong gives his *nüxia* different life goals other than simply taking revenge. Through these goals, they strengthen their *nüxia* images, enrich their life experiences, and further highlight their status as being equal or even higher than the *nanxia* in the *wuxia* world.

4.1. Zhou Zhiruo’s Political Ambition

Compared to other *nüxia* in the *Condor Trilogy*, Zhou Zhiruo’s strong ambition to gain power, aiming to be the ruling power of *wulin* is emphasized by the author. Her ambition is not obvious in the beginning, but it grows stronger while the story develops. It is grounded in the

²⁷¹ The theme expresses patriotic sentiment is one of important topics of poetry of male knight-errant in Tang dynasty. The theme is presented through male knights join the army to fight against the enemy in the frontier. More information, see Lin, “Tangchao xiake shifeng,” 154-184.

²⁷² Lin, “Jin He yu shijiushiji shige de nüxia shuxie.”

conversation between Zhang Wuji and Zhou Zhiruo. Zhang Wuji expresses his desire to live remote life with Zhou Zhiruo after driving out the Tartars, but Zhou Zhiruo disagrees strongly with him.²⁷³ She despises Zhang Wuji for not taking the advantage of his position to seize power. For Zhou Zhiruo, holding the ruling power is way more important than anything else; she will never give up even if the world becomes peaceful. Furthermore, Jin Yong reinforces the notion of she desiring for power clearly through her facial expressions later in the story. As when Lin Haner 林韓兒²⁷⁴ mentions that she will be the Empress, her cheeks blush, and she lowers her head acting as she is shy; but, the corner of her eyes reveal that she is extremely happy. However, Zhang Wuji quickly refuses and swears not to have the thought of usurping the throne. Zhou Zhiruo's expression then changes slightly, and she turns away her gaze outside the window and becomes silent.²⁷⁵ Jin Yong illustrates the transformation of Zhou Zhiruo's emotion from being happy and then becoming depressed explains her obsession with power and her ambition to become the greatest power of the country.

Moreover, Jin Yong presents her cleverness on achieving her goals; so that she can have a career in political life. To accomplish her goal, she forces Zhang Wuji to marry her to glorify and strengthen the Emei Sect. Although Zhou Zhiruo's master makes her swear not to marry Zhang Wuji, she still takes advantage of his position. He is the leader of the Ming Cult and has

²⁷³ Zhang Wuji tells Zhou Zhiruo that, "We can accomplish our main task of driving out the Tartars, and then you and I will live in seclusion in some remote mountain, sharing a peaceful life and forget about the matters of this mundane world." She replies, "You are the head of the Ming Cult. Supposing the Heaven blesses us that we can really drive the barbarians away, at that time, all important affairs of this world will fall into your Ming Cult's hand, how can they let you live a peaceful life?" He then complained that he did not want to be the chief, but she said, "Can't you learn? Besides, I am the sect Leader of Emei; there is a heavy burden on my shoulders... Even if you could live in seclusion in some remote mountain, I am afraid I would not have that luxury." *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 1369.

²⁷⁴ Lin Haner is a member of the Ming Cult in *the Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*. He is also a real historical figure in Chinese history who is one of the civil uprising leaders in the late Yuan period.

²⁷⁵ *Heavenly Sword and Dragon Sabre*, 1380-1381.

control of all the other Cults. He also inherits the Wudang Sect's martial arts skills, which makes him an extremely influential figure in *wulin*. By doing that, just like killing two birds with one stone, Zhou Zhiruo can earn status and power and can be with Zhang Wuji at the same time.

4.2. Zhao Min's Ambition

Similar to Zhou Zhirou, Zhao Min also has the ambition to accomplish her dream of great political achievement. She directly expresses this desire to everyone else in the beginning,

When I am older, I will kill a lot of people. My ancestors are Genghis Khan the Great Emperor, Tuolei, Badou, Xuliewu, Khubilai, those heroes. I regret that I was born female. If I were a man, hey, hey, I would certainly accomplish great undertakings.²⁷⁶

The great undertakings she wishes to fulfill are to eliminate other sects in Zhongyuan and destroy the Ming Cult to expand the Yuan Empire. She succeeds in messing up *wulin* with her strategies; however, most her strategies and methods are worked in unfair and unjust ways. For examples, she lures and poisons important figures of the Ming Cult in Green Willow Manor (Luliu zhuang 綠柳莊), or has her man disguised as Shaolin monk Kongxing 空相 to attack Zhang Sanfeng to ruin the relationship between the two sects. Stratagems or assassinations are common in political struggles of ancient China; however, Zhao Min's motivation is not for the greater good of the people, but for her own desire of expanding the empire.

Through Zhao Min's ambition, it further reveals her determination and persistence in pursuing her goals. This is shown with her decision between her career and love. In the beginning, she is focused on fulfilling her goal of expanding the Yuan Empire with all her heart;

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 1081.

but, later on, she gives up her ambition and power completely for Zhang Wuji, who she has fallen in love with. Zhao Min stays focused on one goal at one time, so that she is not being half-hearted on her decision. This further suggests that a *nüxia* can have several meaningful achievements in her life, which make her an ordinary woman with career ambition.

4.3. Huang Rong's Leadership

Huang Rong portrays a role of an influential leader in her middle-age that presents her leadership and concerns for the people. She is responsible for the Beggar's Sect by being Chief Huang (Huang Bangzhu 黃幫主). Together with Guo Jing, they are the commanders in chief leading the front lines against the Mongolian troops. Her social role breaks the convention of women who stay at home dealing with their household after marriage.²⁷⁷ At home, Huang Rong is a mother of three children; but in public, she is a well-respected figure with a high social status. Her outstanding leadership skills is also well presented through her role as the chief of the sect. She lets Lu Youjiao 魯有腳 to assist her with some of the sect's matters by giving him the authority on decision making; however, she does draw a clear line on the duties of the chief and a chief assistant. After she appointed Lu Youjiao as the next chief, she then stays out of the chief's business to show him respect and allow him to have authority. When they are fighting with Jinlun Fawang for the title of the *Wulin* Master on the Hero's Feast, Huang Rong knows Lu Youjiao has not yet fully captured the essence of "Dog Beating Stick Techniques" and that he will not win the competition against Huo Dou 霍都, Jinlun Fawang's disciple. She is secretly anxious, but thinks that,

²⁷⁷ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 117-118.

Lu Youjiao is the newly appointed chief; since he has made the challenge she cannot stop him. Otherwise she will question Lu Youjiao's clout and show that her power is above the chief's; she has to allow him to fight for a while and then decide what to do afterwards.

She has faith in the people she chose and is fully respectful of them, although they may be less experienced than her. Moreover, she has experience with people and is able to place them in the right position. Using that skill, she is able to solve a complicated group problem within the Beggar's Sect, which Hong Qigong has not been able to deal with.²⁷⁸

4.4. A Transformable *Nüxia* —Huang Rong

Jin Yong has presented Huang Rong's entire life to the readers from *the Eagle-Shooting Heroes to the Giant Eagle and its Companion*. The swords made by her and Guo Jing have affected all of the *wulin* in *the Heavenly Sword and the Dragon Sabre*. For some readers, the transformation of her image in stories is a huge jump from one *nüxia* to another. Huang Rong, in *the Eagle-Shooting Heroes* is brilliantly smart, but in *the Giant Eagle*, her intelligence seems to be limited, and she admits she cannot understand Yang Guo and his attitudes. Some of the readers cannot accept her transformation.²⁷⁹ Jin Yong presents Huang Rong, in her emerging adulthood, as a smart girl, who dares to do things without considering the consequence. Two

²⁷⁸ Before Huang Rong has the full control of the Beggar's Sect, the sect is divided into several groups including the two major groups: "dirty clothing" section 污衣派 and "clean clothing" section 淨衣派. The "dirty clothing" is dominated by beggars and the other is made up of non-beggars.

²⁷⁹ Ni Kuang argues Huang Rong manipulates her husband for not letting Yang Guo to have too much contact with her family. Huang Rong is being suspicious towards Yang Guo. When deal with matters relates to Yang Guo, she becomes dull and close-minded. Zeng Zhaoxu points out Huang Rong makes many mistakes because of her selfishness of protecting her children. Ni Kuang 倪匡, *Si kan Jin Yong xiaoshuo* 四看金庸小說 (*Read Jin Yong's Novel for the Forth Time*). (Chongqing Shi: Chongqing daxue chubanshe, 2009), 132-148. Feng Qiyong 馮其庸, and Sanmao 三毛, *Zhuzi baijia kan Jin Yong I* 諸子百家看金庸 I (*Hundred Schools of Thought Read Jing Yong I*). (Chongqing Shi: Chongqing daxue chubanshe, 2009), 31-32.

examples are when she decides to run away from home and when she is in Prince Zhao's mansion. She never thinks about the danger she might face in the unknown world outside of Peach Blossom Island. The island is under the protection of her father, but the outside world is not. Similar to that, the incident that happens in the Prince Zhao's mansion is thrilling, as she challenges six skillful martial arts experts by herself. If she did not have so many little tricks, she might not have been able to see her father again. Nevertheless, what readers like to see is how she plays her tricks on those powerful figures to shame them. In contrast, the most significant presentations that make readers feel unpleasant are her mean and unfriendly attitude towards Yang Guo and her being over-protective towards her daughter in *the Giant Eagle*. Huang Rong's transformation contributes to the development of *nüxia*'s image in the literary history of *nüxia* and that Jin Yong creates the first *nüxia* who breaks the rule of a *nüxia* having a specific character without changing it throughout the story.²⁸⁰

Through the transformation, Jin Yong has made Huang Rong a fully delineated character and made her seem like a real person. Readers see an energetic and arbitrary young lady who likes adventures, seeing and learning all kinds of things in *Jianghu*. After her marriage in *the Giant Eagle*, Jin Yong portrays the motherhood of a *nüxia* who has concerns about her family. In many cases, Huang Rong goes against with Yang Guo are for her family. For instance, Guo Fu and Wu brothers bully Yang Guo, but she blames on Yang Guo's fault because he uses the "Toad Skill" ("Hama gong" 蛤蟆功) to fight back.²⁸¹ How she treats Yang Guo is driven by her concerns towards her family so that she does not take any risk. By that, the portrayal of her

²⁸⁰ Chen Mo 陳墨, *Xingxiang Jin Yong 形象金庸 (Form of Jin Yong)*. (Beijing: Haitun chuban, 2015), 82.

²⁸¹ "Toad Skill" is Ouyang Feng's 歐陽鋒 signature martial arts technique, which is considered evil to Huang Rong and Guo Jing. One of reasons is Ouyang Feng is responsible for the death of Guo Jing's masters, five masters of the Seven Freaks.

unfriendly attitude towards Yang Guo is disliked by readers; nonetheless, Huang Rong's inconsistent attitude may be used to suggest that she is a *nüxia* and as well as an ordinary person who has weakness.²⁸² She goes against Yang Guo and pushes him away to protect her family because she worries he may hurt them to avenge his father. From this point, we can see that Jin Yong has further revealed a *nüxia* has become a domestic woman who pays attentions only to her family. By the transformation of Huang Rong's characteristics, Jin Yong successfully creates a *nüxia* that is both heroic and domestic. Unlike Shisanmei in *the Tales of Lovers and Heroes* who slowly forgets her martial arts skills and knight-errantry after marriage, family affairs did not set Huang Rong apart from the knightly world; she is still active outside the inner quarters protecting the country and spreading the knight-errantry.

From some readers' perspectives, Huang Rong is not as adorable in *the Giant Eagle* as she used to be in *the Eagle-Shooting Heroes* because she treats Yang Guo differently.²⁸³ Through the changes, despite the contrastive changes of her characteristics, Jin Yong seems to portray the growth of a *nüxia* who becomes a mature adult and learns introspection. Huang Rong blames herself for not trusting others every time she is paranoid, especially when she has contact with Yang Guo. For example, when she thinks about how Yang Guo has fought Jinlun Fawang to protect Guo Xiang, she blames herself, thinking,

Guo'er has saved Jing Ge Ge 靖哥哥. He has saved me. He has saved Fu'er. And this time he has saved Xiang'er... First impressions always stuck in my heart. I thought about his terribly evil father and then concluded that the son had to be like the father. I've never trusted him... Occasionally I treated him nicely and then I'd suspect him of doing something again. Rong'er... Rong'er... You've prided yourself on being intelligent.

²⁸² Chen, *Renlun Jin Yong*, 82.

²⁸³ For example, Huang Rong disagrees with Guo Jing is plan to teach Yang Guo Martial arts skills, but is unwilling to teach him by herself, either. Moreover, she wants Yang Guo to be send away to the Quanzhen Sect because he cannot get along well with her daughter and others. The truth is that Huang Rong's daughter and Wu brothers bully Yang Guo, but Huang Rong is being unjust about it.

You've spoken of confidentiality and righteousness. You are really nothing like Jing Ge Ge.²⁸⁴

In the above statement, Jin Yong shows the realization of a *nüxia* who admits that she is wrong about Yang Guo's quality and reflects right away. This self-reflecting quality is not found on Huang Rong in her emerging adulthood. This illustrates she has become a thoughtful person, which is unlike her being arbitrary in the past.

Different from the *nüxia* in the classical literature, Jin Yong enriches and innovates *nüxia*'s features of *xia* other than seeking revenge. His *nüxia* Zhou Zhirou, Zhao Min, and Huang Rong are free, and they have ambition and high social status, which is respected by others. Their involvement in the political affairs opens up a new perspective of *nüxia*; that they are powerful enough to influence the *wulin* either in a good or bad way.

Conclusion

Jin Yong *nüxia*'s beautiful appearances, *xia* behaviors, and good martial arts skills are all parts of *nüxia*'s conventional images. However, Jin Yong develops them further in a more extended aspect. The *nüxia*'s beauty is incomparable to anything in the world; the *nüxia*'s spirit of *xia* exists in both good and bad nature;²⁸⁵ the *nüxia*'s martial arts skills fits her femininity and intelligence. Furthermore, they seek to achieve their goals and ambition other than seeking

²⁸⁴ *The Giant Eagle and Its Companion*, 1153-1154.

²⁸⁵ *Nüxia* like Li Mochou and Mei Chaofeng all contain bad nature of killing people, but they both have a clear goal that drives them to do it. They are not just randomly killing people; they aim to revenge and achieve justice. Their goals fulfill the *xia* characters that make them *nüxia* but not killers. In another word, women that have some important or special features of knight-errantry, thus can be regarded as *nüxia*.

revenge. In comparison to the previous literary works, Jin Yong's *nüxia*'s are vivid with emotion and independence that can compete with the *nanxia* in the *wuxia* world.

Conclusion

The genre of *xia* is an important part of Chinese literature and continues to develop now. Especially, the portrayal of *nüxia* stands out and becomes a specific feature in *xia* culture. Literary *nüxia*'s history begins in the poetry of Six dynasties by giving an image—avenging the family—that is distinct from the traditional male *xia*. Later, several *xia* images such as practicing the martial arts skill and returning a debt are shown through *nüxia*'s portrayals. Through that, a set of *nüxia*'s images are developed in both fiction and poetry from the *nüxia*'s martial arts depiction like magical skill to the internal description like intelligence.

Even though a set of *xia* images are illustrated through *nüxia*, she is often described as a male *xia* covers a female identity lacking feminine features. The depiction of *nüxia*'s femininity is an important part that remains to be reinforced in literature to strengthen *nüxia*'s female identity. This is able to be achieved by the portrayal of *nüxia* in Jin Yong's fiction. Jin Yong pays attention to describe the outer appearance, making *nüxia* more charming than the past. The detailed descriptions skin condition and facial features are written in comparison with fine objects such as the jade and snow. Through that, Jin Yong is able to show different types of beauties embodying each *nüxia*'s unique image. The subdivisions specify each *nüxia*, and that *nüxia*'s outlook can no longer be concluded in a simple word. Furthermore, feminine features that express delicacy and elegance of the woman are stressed by Jin Yong's *nüxia*'s martial arts skill. Not only that, Jin Yong further emphasizes depicting *nüxia*'s internal skills to highlight the woman's physical advantage.

Jin Yong has not only made significant progress in emphasizing the femininity of *nüxia*'s outer appearance but also made contributions in enriching *nüxia*'s "*xia*" images. The most

striking part is *nüxia*'s vengeance tradition is enhanced with the personal desire turning a moral *xia* act into a private affair, which seems to be unjust going against the *xia* spirit. In addition to that, the personal emotion becomes one of the motives for *nüxia* to perform the *xia* acts in Jin Yong's fiction. By portraying personal desire and emotion of the *nüxia*, Jin Yong has depicted the feminine sense of being irrational, and that, she is no longer to be manipulated by the "traditional" moral concepts, like righteousness, embody in the *xia* spirit. Through that, he gives *nüxia* an even more humanized image that she is able to have both the *xia* and female identities.

While Jin Yong is emphasizing *nüxia*'s femininity and female identity, he further places his *nüxia* in an equal position to the male *xia*, which resolves the male-dominated situation in the *wuxia* fiction. She becomes leaders and involves in the political and country's affairs that the revenge task has turned to be one of many achievements in *nüxia*'s life.

For the future studies, there are still more can be done in studying Jin Yong's *nüxia*. This thesis focused analyzing the three out of 15 fictional works, which means there are other Jin Yong's *nüxia* waiting to be discovered. I do believe that Jin Yong has made even more contributions in creating *nüxia*'s new images in his later works, such as *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer* (*Xiaoao jianghu* 笑傲江湖) and *Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils* (*Tianlong babu* 天龍八部). In order to avoid repeating presentations, Jin Yong must open up a new perspective every time he starts to write a new fictional series. Therefore, he would have changed or given new features to make a new *nüxia* different from the past. This possible research topic leads to another research direction that could be a comparative study between Jin Yong's early and later creation of the *nüxia*. This thesis, therefore, can serve as a basis of research for future research on the comparative study of *nüxia* images between Jin's early and later works. An author's work can be influenced by various factors: personal experience, political situation, reader's response

and so on. Throughout the time of Jin Yong's writing career, he must have come out with different understandings and changed his perspectives, and the changes could be shown in his fiction. It would be worth to see the changes in Jin Yong's interpretation of the *nüxia* to see whether this could reflect another golden period for the development of the literary *nüxia*.

Another future research could be a comparative study between Jin Yong's *nüxia* to other *wuxia* fictional writers'. Among the *nüxia*-related literature in the modern period, Jin Yong is the most influential one, but there are also some other writers of *wuxia* fiction making their *nüxia* around the same period.²⁸⁶ Their presentations of *nüxia* are portrayed in different perspectives; therefore, doing a comparative study between Jin Yong's *nüxia* and the others could be another worth studying topic to see whether there are similarities or differences between them. Perhaps this would also show how recent literary *nüxia* has developed and achieved. I believe every future study regarding Jin Yong's *nüxia* will contribute this field since this topic seems to be a new perspective in studying Jin Yong. I hope my thesis will be a useful source for those who are interested in Jin Yong's fiction and *nüxia*, and perhaps, to attract attention to explore and expand this field.

²⁸⁶ Liang Yusheng 梁羽生 and Gu Long 古龍 are two other leading writhers of the *wuxia* fiction around the same period as Jin Yong.

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