Nationalism, Feminism, and Martial Valor: Rewriting Biographies of Women in *Nüzi shijie* (1904-1907)

Eavan Cully
Department of East Asian Studies
McGill University, Montreal
November 2008

A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts.

Acknowledgements

This thesis could not have been completed without the encouragement and helpful criticism of a number of people. I would like to thank my colleagues at McGill University, including Rongdao Lai, Afra Tucker, Ana Selles, Fiona Lau, Lin Fan and Chris Byrne for their constant encouragement and support. I especially would like to thank Fiona Lau and Afra Tucker: Fiona for her considerable help in translating these biographies and Afra for translating my abstract into French. Special thanks are owed to my advisor, Professor Grace Fong, for her useful suggestions and critiques over the numerous drafts of this thesis that she has been generous enough to read. Finally, however small an impact this thesis might have on the larger scholarship of late Qing feminisms, it has taken over a good part of my life for the past two years, and by unfortunate extension, it has also claimed much of the time and attention of my partner, Gregory Scott. To him I owe untold thanks for his incredible patience, endless cheer, and insightful criticisms. Although separated by uncompromising geography, he has been at my side for every step of this project. Although this thesis has benefited from the comments of many, I remain solely responsible for any lasting errors or inconsistencies.

Nationalism, Feminism and Martial Valor in *Nüzi shijie* 女子世界 (1904-1907)

This thesis examines images of martial women as they were produced in the biography column of the late Qing journal *Nüzi shijie* (NZSJ; 1904-1907). By examining the historiographic implications of revised women's biographies, I will show the extent to which martial women were written as ideal citizens at the dawn of the twentieth-century. In the first chapter I place NZSJ in its historical context by examining the journal's goals as seen in two editorials from the inaugural issue. The second and third chapters focus on biographies of individual women warriors which will be read against their original stories in verse and prose. Through these comparisons, I aim to demonstrate how these "transgressive women" were written as normative ideals of martial citizens that would appeal to men and women alike.

Cette thèse examine les images de femmes martiales reproduites dans la rubrique biographique du journal *Nüzi shijie* (NZSJ; 1904-1907) publiée à la fin de la dynastie Qing. En examinant les implications historiographiques des biographies révisées des femmes, j'essai de démontrer l'importance de la façon dont les femmes martiales étaient décrites come citoyennes idéales à l'aube du vingtième siècle. A travers une exploration des objectifs posés par le journal et mis en évidence dans deux éditoriaux extraits du premier numéro du journal, mon premier chapitre essaie de placer le NZSJ dans sa propre contexte historique. Le deuxième et le troisième chapitres se concentrent sur les biographies individuelles des femmes guerrières, lesquelles sont juxtaposés aux histories originales écrites sous forme de vers et prose. A travers ces juxtapositions, mon projet démontre la façon dont ces "femmes transgressives" illustraient l'idéal normatif du citoyen martiale, lequel attirait les hommes ainsi que les femmes.

Table of Contents

Introduction

An army that encourages military spirit, and those with qualifications as citizens are the essential elements in creating strong power. What is more, nationalism is indeed the mother of imperialism. My sisters and aunts, why would we not pay special attention to this point? How could the coming of an army of women or a city of women onto the stage of a new China in the twentieth century be left to the responsibility of strangers?

夫尙武精神軍國民資格者。製造強權之要素。而民族主義者。又帝國主義之母也。我諸姑伯姊。曷加意於此點矣。娘子軍夫人城之出現於二十世紀新中國之舞台者 豈異人任耶。

--Liu Yazi [Ya Lu][1]

Today we plan for China: apart from revitalizing women's learning and promoting women's rights, what other means is there? Why not call China's world in the twentieth century women's world!

今日爲中國計。舍振興女學。提倡女權之外。其何以哉。謂二十世紀中國之世界。女子之世界亦何不可。

-- Jin Tianhe [Jin Yi][2]

Nüzi shijie 女子世界 (Women's World; hereafter NZSJ), one of the earliest women's journals in China, was first published in 1904 during the last years of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). The late Qing era (roughly 1895-1911) is

1 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞爐], "Zhongguo di yi nü haojie nü junren jia Hua Mulan zhuan 中國第一女豪傑女軍人家花木蘭" *Nüzi shijie* no. 3 (1904): 364.

2 Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一], "Nüzi shijie fakanci 女子世界發刊詞 " no. 1: 2.

now coming to be understood as a dynamic period of instability and openness, in which multiple influences from home and abroad merged to affect both political thought and the popular imagination. A few years after the publication of NZSJ, He Zhen 何震 would establish *Tianyi bao* 天義報 (Natural Justice), espousing her interest in anarcho-feminism.[3] It was in this atmosphere of intense political exploration that NZSJ was published – the opening of political thought at the end of the Qing dynasty fed into the women's movement, and NZSJ could itself be seen as a product of the continued efforts towards the liberation of women.

While previous work on revolutionary China has mainly focused on the May Fourth Movement and early Republican government, recent studies have shown the political vibrancy and urgency in the late Qing period.[4] Significant among these works has been the focus on the subject of women as it emerged as a rallying point for both female and male Chinese nationalists of the era. As reformers and radicals sought to transform the weakened Qing dynasty into an effective empire or a revamped nation-state, they promoted a wide variety of images of "womanhood" which would match their disparate conceptions of China's needs for the twentieth-century.[5]

Focusing on women as a changing subject of history, scholars have unveiled an early twentieth-century China that both decried and extolled the

3 Peter Zarrow, "He Zhen and Anarcho-Feminism in China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 47, no. 4 (1988).

4 Joan Judge and Xia Xiaohong comment on this trend in twentieth century historiography. Joan Judge, *The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 232. Xia Xiaohong, *Wan Qing Nüxing Yu Jindai Zhongguo* 晚清女性與近代中國 (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 2004), 1-6.

5 Both Joan Judge and Louise Edwards provide detailed discussions on women's roles regarding the political imperatives of late-Qing China. Judge 2008. Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics and Democracy: Women's Suffrage in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

history of Chinese women. Far from the image of women as common victims of Chinese patriarchy, studies on women's history in late imperial China reveal the complex position of women in Chinese society.[6] Of late Qing China, we have learned that women themselves were participating in debates on women's future position in society. As citizens or mothers-of-citizens, they would hold a key role in the shaping of twentieth-century China.[7] At this juncture, women were being re-imagined in a wide variety of roles, all geared towards strengthening the nation. Rather than being "passive" receivers of male patriarchal power,[8] women were being encouraged to take their future into their own hands; and this future was intended to play a critical role in the shaping of China's twentieth century.

In NZSJ and other turn-of-the-century publications, the opportunity to define a new era became marked by the simultaneous shift in centuries. For the nationalist-feminists active in the late Qing, visions of China's twentieth century implicated corresponding images of womanhood that would underline the potential for self-strengthening that lay in the nation itself. Joan Judge highlights the significance of the twentieth century to these late Qing theorists in her recent

---

6 Dorothy Ko's path breaking work, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers* examined how women's agency in Ming China could be studied through women's writings. Susan Mann's *Precious Records* shows a similar inquiry into women's lives in the high-Qing era. These works and others have shown that women's position in late imperial China cannot be simply classified as "subordinate" or "victimized," as they were in writings influenced by the May Fourth debate on women, which had played a large role in informing earlier works on Chinese women's histories. Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

7 Joan Judge, "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens?," in *Changing Meanings of Citizenship* ed. Merle Goldman and Elizabeth J. Perry (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2002). It is important to note, however, that not all feminisms of the time were written with these two nodes in mind – Peter Zarrow's work on He Zhen reveals that the "anarcho-feminism" of the late Qing era was also concerned with women's liberation for its own sake, although itself complicated by a twin need to liberate all sectors of society. See Zarrow.

8 Zarrow: 809.

work on late Qing women. Categorizing politicized histories in terms of "chronotypes" (historiographies characterized by historical revision in the service of contemporary political aspirations), she delineates four unique trends in nationalist-feminisms of the era. These chronotypes were not accepted schools of thought during the time period, but are rather trends she has identified which reflect various interpretations of women, the nation, and a concomitant understanding of history and time. They are: *eternalist*, characterized by a preference for ancient models of feminine virtue; *meliorist*, which followed the eternalist promotion of traditional virtues (yet critiquing the cult of feminine chastity as it evolved in the Ming and Qing dynasties), but also advocated women's education as it was advanced in the late nineteenth century; *archeo-modernist*, which similarly highlighted virtuous women of China's past, but entered foreign women into their canon of female exemplars while denouncing the achievements of literary women as trivial; and finally *presentist*, the most radical of chronotypes, which would include the authors of NZSJ.[9]

Presentist authors valorized female heroism above female virtue or talent. The model heroines they preferred exhibited martial valor, yet these authors questioned and criticized how these model heroines have been represented in Chinese historiography – as potentially "transgressive and atypical" females. Rather than see these heroines as exceptional in the history of women, these presentist authors questioned instead the historiographical tradition associated with such women warriors. In this way they normalized their subjects by writing new histories of Chinese heroines which emphasized how eminently realistic their

9 Judge, *Precious Raft*, 12-16.

lives were. By focusing on the writings exemplifying this most radical chronotype in the articles of NZSJ, we can clearly see the authorial hand in the revised versions of women's life stories, as well as the author's political conviction in finding a new place for women in China - and in turn China's place in the international order of nation-states.

The tie between feminism and nationalism at the turn of the century can be seen as a new entry into a long tradition of relating women's virtue to state governance. Since Mark Elvin's seminal work on the subject,[10] other studies have been produced that show the effects of state interest in promoting certain models of femininity. Lisa Raphals, for example has shown the roots of this connection in her work on Liu Xiang's 劉向 (79-8 B.C.E.) *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 (Biographies of Exemplary Women). In it she contrasts the original *Biographies* against those found in popular versions of the same texts reproduced in Ming dynasty editions, noting that while the Ming texts were for mass consumption (and were thus highly dramatized), the original Han versions of the stories were meant to give moral guidance to the emperor in deciding on state policy.[11] In these first biographies of women, moral didacticism was the base upon which stories of women's lives would be valued.

As women's biography and biography in general were in the Chinese tradition meant to teach by example, they provide an excellent lens through which

10 Mark Elvin, "Female Virtue and the State in China," *Past and present* 104 (1984): 115-18. Elvin discusses the reliance on mysticism and superstition of early Chinese governance, and how women's virtue at large was seen as signifying the righteousness of the state.

11 Lisa Ann Raphals, *Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), especially chapter five, “Talents Transformed in Ming Editions.”

we can see specific lessons intended by the biographers for the reader.[12] Katherine Carlitz has shown the extent to which the Ming commercialization of books provided a market for widespread consumption of biographies of women, most of which were based on Liu Xiang's earlier didactic text. Their authors repeatedly enjoined women to emulate the virtues displayed in the texts and become themselves paragons of virtue; illustrations were used to attract readers to the drama of the tales, as well as to provide clear images of female sacrifice in order to more easily educate women readers.[13] Susan Mann has argued that during the high Qing, biographies of women selected for the *lienü zhuan* section of local gazetteers imply a Qing dynasty preference for a "more compliant model" of women's virtue:[14] as the Qing emphasized loyalty and stability over loyalty and passion, images of female suicide were downplayed in these gazetteers, as the ideal of the chaste widow took supremacy.[15]

---

12 The origins of Chinese biography are generally attributed to Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145-86 B.C.E.), and his *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian). Sima Qian was known to include dubious information in his biographies in order to highlight the virtues of his subjects. See D.C. Twitchett, "Chinese Biographical Writing," in *Historians of China and Japan* ed. W.G Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 95-99.

13 Katherine Carlitz, "The Social Uses of Female Virtue in Late Ming Editions of *Lienü zhuan*," *Late Imperial China* 12, no. 2 (1991).

14 In the Ming dynasty, female suicides at the death of their husbands or betrothed were highly publicized phenomenon. Tien Ju-k'ang describes several public suicides by women during the Ming, which attracted wide audiences; he links the growing praise of female suicides to the contemporaneous failure of a large number of male literati taking the civil service examination. See T'ien Ju-k'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity: A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Ch'ing Times* (Leiden: Brill, 1988). Katherine Carlitz also provides a detailed examination of the phenomenon of female suicide, how it was praised in biography and eulogy, and its relation to late Ming governance in, "Desire, Danger, and the Body: Stories of Women's Virtue in Late Ming China," in *Engendering China: Women, Culture and the State*, ed. Gail Hershatter Christina Gilmartin, Lisa Rofel and Tyrene White (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1994).

15 Susan Mann, "Historical Change in Female Biography from Song to Qing Times," *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan* 30 (1985): 77. The chaste widow differs from the female suicide in that she follows a life-long service to her marital family, and more strictly obeys the Confucian hierarchy because of it. The controversy of the female suicide's virtue and morality (as well as that of the "faithful maiden" - women

The biographies of women found in the late Qing once again connected women's virtue to the state, but they were now printed not only in official histories and local gazetteers, but were also in women's magazines and new textbooks as well, written by reformers and radicals who made use of new print media to disseminate their views on the future of women and the nation to a new readership. In the presentist journal *Nüzi shijie*, the urgent need for revolution was made manifest through images of martial women who used their education and natural abilities to fight on behalf of their compatriots. The biography column of the journal contained expanded and revised stories of such heroines, both historical and fictional, while also including a number of foreign women's biographies (See Appendix I).

In NZSJ, martial women comprise the majority of the biographies included in the journal. The model of Chinese heroines that were depicted in these biographies were revised images of their historical prototypes who were previously known for their filiality, chastity, familial loyalty, self-sacrifice, or – in the case of the *nüxia* 女俠 (female knights-errant) – supernatural abilities. Like previous biographies of women, these biographies were written with a didactic purpose, aiming to influence contemporary readers into emulating the valor of these forebears. Yet, these revised histories make use of what Joan Judge has labeled "parabiographical elements," which include changes in genre, appended commentaries, and additional illustrations.[16] In NZSJ, these elements (specifically

---

who maintained a life of celibacy after the death of their betrothed) forms the basis of Weijing Lu's recent study. Weijing Lu, *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

16 Judge, *Precious Raft*, 11.

the former two) can often be seen to implicitly alter the didactic value of the biographies, as we shall see in detail in chapters 2 and 3.

The focus on martial heroines in NZSJ is especially striking. Throughout the journal there is a strong emphasis on physical education and martial valor, but it is in the biography column that this is perhaps most apparent. Of the eighteen distinct biographies included in the journal, at least nine are of martial women.[17] This promotion of martial heroines is not unique to NSZJ; indeed, the late Qing period witnessed a strong interest in the *nüxia*, an image that was even brought to life by the revolutionary Qiu Jin 秋瑾 (1875-1907), who took as her cognomen "Female Knight-errant of Jian Lake" (*Jianhu nüxia* 鍵湖女俠). Both men and women alike advocated the physical and mental strength of soldiers and knights-errant as qualities to be nurtured in Chinese women, which would in turn strengthen the nation itself. I would argue that in this context of feminism being advocated through a larger nationalism, the promotion of the martial ideal shifted the transgressive nature of heroic women into a normative position, making these women worthy of emulation by men as well as women. That NZSJ was staffed predominantly by men helps to illustrate that the "woman question" was of central importance to both genders in their vision of a future China.

17 Here I am not counting the biography of Florence Nightingale (although the title emphasizes her place as a nurse "on the battlefield") nor the biographies of the Russian "Qialetun" (whom I have not been able to identify) or the "female souls" who were the subjects of the last biographies in the journal. However, it should be noted that of the total number of biographical entries included in the journal, several were serialized. Taken by issue, counting the serializations as separate entries, there were twenty-three, and of these, thirteen were of martial women, excluding the biographies noted above. Every issue of NZSJ contained at least one biography, several had two (although these were at times continuations from previous issues), making this column a regular feature of the journal throughout its run. For a list of the biographies, please see Appendix 1.

Women warriors had traditionally been regarded as anomalies within Chinese literature and popular culture. Louise Edwards has discussed this depiction of martial women in the high Qing novels *Hong lou meng* 紅樓夢 (Dream of the Red Chamber) and *Jing hua yuan* 鏡花緣 (Flowers in the Mirror).[18] She describes how the threat that these women pose to the Confucian order (by moving freely in the male realm) is neutralized by their overall treatment in the stories.[19] Unlike their male counterparts, the *xia* 俠 (knights-errant), these women generally serve at the bottom of a power hierarchy rather than through the horizontal and egalitarian bonds that characterize the *xia*. Through lavish descriptions of their clothing and bodies, their depictions are sexualized as well, exciting the reading audience by giving them glimpses of virtuous women's bodies that would otherwise be hidden from view. And in the end, these erstwhile warriors typically end up either married or dead, confirming that their seemingly empowering behavior was only temporary, and not a realistic option for any woman to adopt permanently.

This treatment of women warriors was not unique to the high Qing era; Rong Cai sees similar depictions in twentieth-century *wuxia pian* 武俠片 (martial arts films).[20] Yet in the volatile transition period of the late Qing, the history of women warriors was reclaimed by presentist authors and rewritten as an attainable

18 See Louise Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China: Gender in the Red Chamber Dream* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), chapter six: "Domesticating the Woman Warrior: Comparisons with *Jinghua yuan*".

19 The trends she describes fit other warrior women in Chinese literature in history as well – she notes similarities between the heroines in *Hong lou meng* and *Jing hua yuan* with Mulan, Hongxian, and Nie Yinniang. See Ibid., 87-89.

20 Rong Cai, "Gender Imaginations in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and the *Wuxia* World," *positions: east asia cultures critique* 13, no. 2 (2005).

norm to which contemporary women and men could aspire. While society in the high Qing, and, arguably later twentieth-century China, sought ideals that would promote social stability, the tide of change that swept radicals in the late Qing period required not temporary and trivialized women warriors, but rather role models that could inspire a transformation of the populace – from subjects of the Qing empire into citizens of a new republic. The traits that these women possessed – loyalty, courage, and above all patriotism – could be had by all once full education became commonplace. And the successes of these women, who were responsible for repeatedly saving country and kingdom, could be an inspiration to subjects of a twentieth-century China that was then beset by international crisis.

With its unique status as the most successful of the women's journals that appeared before the 1911 revolution, NZSJ is a valuable source for the study of feminism and nationalism at the close of the Qing dynasty. From the opening editorials, we can see that the journal was concerned with forming an image of Chinese women that could stand shoulder to shoulder with the courageous foreign exemplars who had proved so popular in the Chinese press through translations.[21] Rather than denigrating the history of Chinese women, as had so often been done

21 Several recent works comment on the popularity of foreign exemplars in the Chinese popular imagination. The most thorough of these is Hu Ying, *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1898-1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000). Joan Judge and Nanxiu Qian also discuss the entry of foreign women exemplars into the Chinese canon, and how their images were adapted to suit the moral imperatives of their translators. Joan Judge, "Blended Wish Images: Chinese and Western Exemplary Women at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," *Nan Nü: Men, Women and Gender in Early and Imperial China* 6, no. 1 (2004). and Qian Nanxiu, "'Borrowing Foreign Mirrors and Candles to Illuminate Chinese Civilization': Xue Shaohui's (1866-1911) Moral Vision in the Biographies of Foreign Women," *Nan Nü: Men, Women and Gender in Early and Imperial China* 6, no. 1 (2004).

when faced with foreign comparisons,[22] the authors involved with NZSJ instead complained of the historiography associated with Chinese women; without the oppressive opinions of centuries of Confucian historians, the true meanings of women's life stories could be seen as full of feminist and patriotic values. In their presentist rewritings of these women's biographies the contributors to NZSJ reveal an urgent desire to reestablish Chinese history as a glorious tradition, well-fitted to the needs of the twentieth century, and its crisis with modernity and foreign aggression.

In examining this change in women's roles and stature in early twentieth-century Chinese society, Tani Barlow has used the idea of women as a "catachresis" in order to show the gap between women's lived experiences and the politics of their representation in the media. She writes that distinct ideals of womanhood were portrayed by the terms *nüxing* 女性, *nüzi* 女子, and *funü* 婦女 (all translatable as "woman" or "women"), but that these ideals could never be mirrored in an actual living woman, as much as women themselves might adopt the discourse and try to emulate it.[23] Through the concept of "women" as a catachresis, Barlow demonstrates how we can see this subject-position as one that is in constant flux, ever changing according to the intentions of its authors and the understanding of its audience; it becomes an entry-point through which we can study the discourse on women and feminism of this era. In this way we can also treat the representation of martial women in NZSJ, variously conceptualized as *nü*

22 Hu Ying deals with the image of women in China as conceived of as "backwards" by foreign and domestic nationals in relation to her counterpart in the west. See Hu Ying, especially "Introduction".

23 Tani E. Barlow, *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004), 33.

junren 女軍人 (female soldiers) or *nüxia*, as representations of changing ideals. Some martial women depicted in NZSJ were based on historical figures whose stories were modified to fit the ideals of the authors. Other female subjects of the biographies were wholly fictitious, yet the authors laid claim to their "having-been" in order to construct a "real" story of their lives, and thus present viable models of courage, patriotism and fortitude that could inspire their readers.

The first biographies presented in NZSJ were those of Shen Yunying 沈雲英 (1624-1660) and Qin Liangyu 秦良玉 (1574-1648), two well-known historical female generals. In the third issue, NZSJ began to publish stories of women with more dubious historicity. The subject of the third biography, Mulan 木蘭, is introduced with other historical female soldiers in the first issue's "Fakanci" 發刊詞 (inaugural editorial) and "Songci" 頌詞 (commendatory words), where these female soldiers are lauded as *ganji* 幹濟 (capable and effective) and *yongwu* 勇武 (martial) respectively.[24] In the following issues, other fictitious martial heroines of Chinese literature receive their own revisions – the biographies of Hongxian 紅線 and Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘 are printed in the fourth, fifth, and seventh issues of the journal. While the first three figures represent the soldier aspect of martial valor, the latter two represent the other strain – that is, the righteousness of the knight-errant.

The three biographies which I will examine here are of the female soldier, Hua Mulan, and the female knights-errant, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang. Among

24 Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一], "Nüzi shijie fakanci 女子世界發刊詞 " *Nüzi shijie*, no. 1 (1904): 2. and Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我], "Nüzi shijie songci 女子世界頌詞," *Nüzi shijie* no. 1 (1904): 6.

the biographies in NZSJ, these three are based on fictional characters from Chinese literature with little discernable basis in fact. The origins for these women's stories are found in verse for Mulan, and in prose for the latter two. I believe that this change in genre – from fiction to historical biography – is significant and indicative of the historiographical revolution that was gaining way in the late Qing period.[25] These three biographies also all share the same author: the adolescent Liu Yazi 柳亞子 (1887-1958). In later years he would mature into "the last outstanding poet of the traditional school,"[26] but in his late teens, he enlisted in several revolutionary schools, and became one of the more radical of the contributors to NZSJ.[27] Liu Yazi contributed more biographies to NZSJ than any other single author, allowing us to see his writings in this column to be somewhat representative. Liu Yazi's contributions to the journal remained more or less constant; his articles in this and other columns nearly span the duration of NZSJ's three year run.

My thesis will examine how Liu Yazi's biographies of Mulan, Hongxian, and Nie Yinniang belong to two distinct models of martial valor that were being discussed at the turn of the century, each representing qualities desired in the theorized female citizenry. In the first chapter, I will examine the "Fakanci"and the "Songci" in the inaugural issue to see what the stated goals of the journal were, and what they prescribed in terms of women's education. In chapters 2 and 3, I will examine how these views were articulated in the biographies of Mulan,

25 Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago and London: the University of Chicago Press, 1995), 27-50.

26 Howard Boorman, Richard Howard, and Joseph Cheng, eds., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press,1967-79), 421.

27 Xia Xiaohong, *Wan Qing nüxing*, 72-73. and 85-87.

Hongxian, and Nie Yinniang by closely reading these texts, and locating specific changes in their stories that were unique to NZSJ. I believe that studying the changes that were made to these women's stories, from their original texts to their late Qing incarnations, will reveal the extent to which the catachreses of *nü junren* and *nüxia* emerged as a rallying point for the joint projects of developing women, citizens, and the nation at the turn of the last century. The portrayals of these women by their male author allows us to examine a specific negotiation between feminism, nationalism, and the concept of *guomin* 國民 (citizen) as it emerged in this pre-revolutionary moment.

Chapter One

Contested Images of Modern Women:

Nüzi shijie's "Inaugural Editorial" and "Commendatory Words"

> How strong the soldier's world of the twentieth-century is! How brave the knight-errant's world of the twentieth-century is! How beautiful the world of literature and art of the twentieth-century is! I love today's worlds. And even more I love and feel for the flower-like and brocade-like women's world of the twentieth-century.[1]
>
> 壯健哉二十世紀之軍人世界。沈湧哉二十世紀之游俠世界。美麗哉二十世紀之文學美術世界。吾愛今世界。吾又愛又惜今二十世紀如花如錦之女子世界。

With these words, the editor of *Nüzi shijie*, Ding Chuwo 丁初我 (1871-1930) began the "Songci" 頌詞 (Commendatory Words), his first article for the journal. For roughly the first year and a half, Ding Chuwo would serve as chief editor of NZSJ, as well as its most prolific contributor. The tone he set in his "Songci" was reflected in the topics and rhetoric of most of the articles in the journal throughout his tenure as editor. The three themes of his first editorial were made to be the cornerstone of his publication, the message of which was that China's twentieth-century could be saved by promoting the strength and courage

1 Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我]: 5.

possessed by soldiers, the bravery of the knight-errant, and by including a literary education for all of its citizens – including women. By possessing these three attributes, women in the twentieth-century could revitalize China, and help to see it through the crises it faced at the end of the Qing.

One of the first tasks facing Ding in his mission to educate his readership was to find and build an audience. To this end he raised the capital for the first issues, and asked many of his own acquaintances to contribute articles to the journal. A former classmate of his, Jin Tianhe 金天翮 (1874-1947) had recently published the groundbreaking and popular tract *Nüjie zhong* 女界鐘 (A Tocsin for Women).[2] Praised as "the Chinese Rousseau,"[3] Jin became associated with a new line of nationalist-feminists, who demanded women's education and equal rights on behalf of the future of modern China. Ding Chuwo sought to use the celebrated voice of "Jin Yi" to bolster the credentials of his journal, and capture the radical audience of *Nüjie zhong.* The "Fakanci" 發刊詞 (Inaugural Editorial) written by Jin Tianhe opened the first issue of NZSJ, and connected it to the revolutionary women's movement advocated in *Nüjie zhong.*[4]

With Ding's own "Songci" that followed, these two editorials responded to many of the then-current debates and discussions on the position of China and women in the twentieth-century, and in the process defined the journal's position on topics such as Chinese women's history, foreign role models, and its

2 This tract was published under the pen name *Ai ziyou zhe Jin Yi* 愛自由者金一 (Jin Yi who loves liberty). For NZSJ, he used only Jin Yi 金一.

3 Ono Kazuko, *Chinese Women in a Century of Revolution 1850-1950* trans. Joshua Fogel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 59.

4 Xia Xiaohong, 71.

prescriptions for the future. In this chapter, I will perform close readings of both texts to see how NZSJ framed the late Qing debate on women, and its own solution to the "women question." I will begin by focusing on the perceived relation between women's subordination and the feared collapse of China, as this connection between nationalism and feminism defined the discourse on women in the era. Both authors contend that as long as women are neglected, so too follows the fate of the nation; this relationship is crucial to understanding the focus on women during these years. Women's education is also foregrounded in both these pieces; here I will investigate what this education entailed in NZSJ, and the focus on martial education as described in these texts. Following the structure of the "Fakanci," I will then map out the position that NZSJ took on what role foreign exemplars should play in shaping the expectations for Chinese women. While Jin Yi first praised the influence of foreign women in his *Nüjie zhong*, the views expressed in the "Fakanci" are less welcoming. Finally I will examine Ding Chuwo and Jin Tianhe's treatment of the history of Chinese women, to see how they contrast it to the new biographies of foreign exemplars, and how they rely upon this historiographic tradition to shape the women's world of the twentieth-century.

Women and National Salvation

> Twentieth century China has the flowers of civilization. Their luster is beautiful, their scent is fragrant, their quality is remarkable, and their hearts are lovely. The wind from Europe

blows on them, but they do not fall. The rain from America pelts down on them, but they do not scatter. The waves from the Pacific Ocean irrigate them and imbue them with nourishment that aids their development. The lotuses from Jade Well look towards them, and their hearts break. The plum blossoms from Luofu face them and lose their color. The cherry blossoms on Mt. Fuji see them and die in embarrassment. However, these flowers don't know their own beauty, and so they close up their colorful petals, hide their fragrance, and break off their own buds. And so I burn incense and take up my pen. I seek the spirit of the flowers, I pray for the souls of these flowers. I want for these flowers to be always well so that they become the female citizens of the twentieth-century.[5]

二十世紀之中國。有文明之花也。嬋媛其姿。芬芳其味。瑰瑋其質。美妙其心。歐風吹之而不落。美雨襲之而不零。太平洋之潮流漫淫灌溉而適以涵濡滋潤助其發達也。玉井之蓮。望之而心折。羅浮之梅。對之而色變。富士山之櫻。見之而將羞死也。然而花不自知其美。乃閉其彩。幽其芬催折其蓓蕾。而吾乃焚香縹筆。問花之神。祝花之魂。願花常好。以爲二十世紀女國民。

Jin Yi's introduction to his editorial is not as strident in tone as Ding Chuwo's passage, quoted at the start of this chapter. Using the familiar trope of

[5] Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一], "Nüzi shijie fakanci 女子世界發刊詞 " *Nüzi shijie*, no. 1 (1904): 1.

women-as-flowers, Jin makes the most of this imagery to sketch the outlines of women's position in the twentieth-century. Common terms for foreign influence, "European wind and American rain" (*Oufeng Meiyu* 歐風美雨), seen in a negative light, are employed here to show the strength of these "flowers of civilization." They resist the battering forces of the storm, but are able to capitalize upon the nourishment that is coming from the Pacific Ocean (Japan) to grow more beautiful. Other, more common types of flowers from both home and abroad (Jade Well and its lotuses sit atop Huashan 華山, the mountain associated with Daoism in Shanxi province, while the cherry blossoms of Mt. Fuji symbolize Japan) pale in comparison to these buds of civilization that are sprouting in China. But, ignorant of their own splendor, these flowers become self-destructive and do not blossom.

This description covers, in broad strokes, the landscape of the woman question as it had developed by 1904. By the time of NZSJ's first issue, this debate had already been raging for a number of years. From a brief start just before the 1898 reform movement and taking hold in the first few years of the twentieth-century, the women's press was created to give a dedicated space to gendered questions of citizenship and participation within the framework of nationalism.[6] Women themselves participated in the debates on women's roles and

6 The first two dedicated women's journals were both titled *Nüxue bao* 女學報 (Journal of Women's Learning), the first appearing in 1898 with the English title "Chinese Girls Progress." Qian Nanxiu has worked to recover this journal, as part of her studies on one of the leading contributors, Xue Shaohui. For an introduction to Xue and the first *Nüxue bao* see Qian Nanxiu. The second *Nüxue bao* was long thought to be the first women's journal, and possibly laid the foundation for the later, more radical journals. It was first published as a special entry in its parent paper *Subao* 蘇報 in 1902, and was then published on its own in 1903. Charlotte Beahan, "Feminism and Nationalism in the Chinese Women's Press, 1902-1911," *Modern*

rights within a modernizing China. The authors behind the columns in these periodicals were often themselves the same people writing the new textbooks of the era, spreading their message of women's education through the popular press and providing the necessary tools for women's progress in the classroom.[7] As the number of women's publications grew before the 1911 Xinhai Revolution (and exploded afterwards), their voices multiplied into a great variety of positions and prescriptions. NZSJ enjoyed a relatively long-term success as a collection of like-minded people sharing their radical opinions during an era of drastic transformation.

The late Qing political climate was greatly influenced by the spreading popularity of print media. Where politics had previously been largely in the hands of the bureaucrats, the new foreign-style press allowed readers and contributors to take part in discussions on state matters.[8] As the popularity of newspapers and journals grew, especially in wealthy Shanghai, elites outside the government could now be in a position that would allow them to actively voice their ideas and solutions to the crisis of the state. The editors and participants in the Chinese print revolution were thus able to define the terms of the nationalist discourse, and direct the readers accordingly.[9] Open to all who could raise the capital to publish, the popular press became a powerful forum to discuss the burgeoning women's

---

China 1, no. 4 (1975): 389.

7 Joan Judge, for example, notes that the introduction to Yang Qianli's 楊千里 textbook for girls, *The New Reader for Girls and Women* (*Nüzi xin duben* 女子新讀本) was included in the eighth issue of NZSJ. See Judge, *Precious Raft*, 24.

8 The foreign style press was itself a blend of external and internal styles, coming from the two distinct traditions of foreign newspaper reporting as well as the Chinese *Jingbao* 京報 (Court Gazette). Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China?: Power, Identity and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872-1912* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), chapter one.

9 Joan Judge, "Public Opinion and the New Politics of Contestation in the Late Qing, 1904-1911," *Modern China* 20, no. 1 (1994): 67.

movement, and how educated and liberated women could contribute to the future of China.

As women were traditionally defined by their role within the family, the more radical writers of the women's press attempted to contribute to the project of releasing them from the home and allowing them to participate actively in society. To do this, they needed to create a definition of women that did not relate only to kinship ties, but connected women directly to the nation. Women were written as sisters across traditional family lines, bound together as a group with similar interests, and particularly united in their patriotism. In NZSJ, practically all traditional familial ties for women are completely ignored, save two. Addressed constantly as sister compatriots, women's roles as mothers is also repeatedly brought to bear on the discussion, as evidenced by Jin Yi's justification for the women's movement:

> However, twentieth-century China is lost and weak, and half the men are seemingly asleep, drunk, or dead, what can we expect from women? It should not be like this. Women are the mothers of citizens. If a new China is desired, we must rejuvenate women; if a strong China is desired, then we must strengthen women; if a civilized China is desired, then we must first civilize our women; if we want to save China, we must first save our women. There is no doubt about this.[10]

10 Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一]: 1.

雖然二十世紀之中國。亡矣弱矣。半部分之男子。如眠如醉又如死矣。吾何望女子哉。是不然。女子者。國民之母也。欲新中國。必新女子。欲強中國。必強女子。欲文明中國。必先文明我女子。欲普救中國。必先普救我女子。無可疑也。

Although the mother-of-citizens trope was quite revolutionary in its own right, it did not inherently advocate women having an equal status with their male compatriots. For some radicals and reformers, theorizing women as full and equal citizens was predicated upon women's access to a complete education. In the case of mothers-of-citizens, it was stressed that women should be educated so that they could give their sons – the future citizens of China – an adequate education. However, many of the nationalist-feminists of the era felt that without basic education, women should not be allowed to participate in government. Some who promoted women as mothers-of-citizens compared the expectations for Chinese women to that of their foreign contemporaries: women abroad were only able to make the gains they had (in terms of political freedoms) because of their basic level of education. Until Chinese women were educated to the same level, they should not be granted political equality, lest their ignorance be given free rein to harm society.[11]

In her work on late Qing women, and on NZSJ in particular, Xia Xiaohong writes on the debate over women's education that was prevalent in this nationalist-feminist movement. Education was of course critical to the concerns of

11 Judge, "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens?," 28-9.

the NZSJ writers, however she notices that for some theorists, it was the single most important issue facing women's liberation. Would women be allowed to participate in government (*canzheng* 參政) due to their natural rights, or should women only be allowed in once they are able to contribute to governance – that is, once they have been educated?[12] The debate continued on throughout the run of the journal, and although all of the radicals and reformers associated with NZSJ were committed to women's liberation for the sake of the nation, the question of rights versus education could be largely ignored until after the revolution. According to Louise Edwards, however, the neglect in firmly prioritizing women's rights helped to exclude women from governance for decades.[13]

These writers stressed women's education as a foundational need if China was to revive, yet it was only in the late nineteenth century that broadly available opportunities for women's schooling began to emerge in China. Missionaries from the West were some of the first to take up the mantle of women's education; however, before 1907, full education for women was still not given public support by government.[14] Educating women would be a major task of the reform movement, that much was certain. No matter their role, as mothers or as active participants themselves, the expectation was that women would contribute to the strength of the nation. Although the question of women's rights was as yet unclear, the importance of women's education was evident to all involved in the

12 Xia Xiaohong, 83-92. See also Edwards, *Gender, Politics and Democracy*, 23-27. *Gender, Politics and Democracy*, 52-57. Edwards notes that the phrase *canzheng* 參政 literally translates into "participate in government" but often refers to suffrage on its own. *Gender, Politics and Democracy*, 17-18.

13 Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China*, 126-30.

14 For women's education before and during the 1898 reform period, see Qian Nanxiu, "Revitalizing the *Xianyuan* (Worthy Ladies) Tradition: Women in the 1898 Reforms," *Modern China* 29, no. 4 (2003).

movement. China needed to strengthen itself quickly, and make best use of the new knowledge and sciences from abroad. The question then became, how could China most effectively educate its women, so that they could quickly grow into useful members of society.

Training Women to Save the Nation

For Ding Chuwo, women's education would respond to the needs of China in the twentieth century:

> Our country is on the verge of destruction. The extinction of our race is almost upon us. If we do not immediately save it, then its vital spirit will be extinguished. Alas. My most beloved and intimate two hundred million female compatriots, if trained will become women soldiers, women knights-errant, and women scholars. With one breath they will fight for survival in the twentieth century.[15]
>
> 亡國燃眉。滅種臨睫。不救須臾。生氣滅絕。嗚呼。吾最密切之二萬萬女同胞。其共養成女軍人女游俠女文學士。以一息爭存於二十紀中。

Here women are seen as full of potential and able to fill effective positions on the front lines of China's crisis. As these nationalists sought swift and radical changes for China, women's education would also reflect the urgency and thoroughness of their vision, as it promoted change for women at such a fundamental level.

15 Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我]: 7-8.

The perception of China's immanent downfall provided a desperate impetus to bring women out of the home and into full view in society. Indeed, feminism's subordination to nationalism during these years limited women's liberation to its utility for the nation. As such, it was in the service of the nation that women's roles and education would be defined. By adopting a radical agenda such as women's (eventual) social and political equality, the expectations for women's future could be as unbounded as that of men within the framework of nationalism. As they were envisioning this future equality, the authors of NZSJ were able to address the specific weaknesses perceived in the current "women's world" while writing a future for them that would suit both women and men alike. In planning for this future, these authors would make use of women's full unbridled potential as future – equal – citizens in order to map out the path of their education. Yet these authors hoped to contain this potential and funnel it into specific channels, at the top of which was national self-strengthening, in order to effect the most positive change possible in China's current situation:

> The physique of the soldier is the principle for curing weakness and fragility. The spirit of the knight-errant is the proper medicine for cowardice. Developing literature and art is the only treatment for opening up unenlightened minds. With these three treatments, the old nature is discarded and new spirits are molded. Only then will two hundred million women be able to come out into a soldier's world, a knight-errant's world, and the world of learning

and art, which will contain everything and protect all of my compatriots.[16]

軍人之體格。實救療脆弱病之方針。游俠之意氣實施治恇怯病之良藥。文學美術之發育。實開通暗昧病不二之治法。合此三者。去舊質。鑄新魂。而後二萬萬女子。乃得出入於軍人世界。游俠世界。學術世界。包含夫萬有。覆育我同胞。

Here Ding Chuwo incorporates three remedies into his ideal for the future of women, starting with the most "modern." Although soldiers were obviously not unknown in Chinese history, to become a soldier was rarely a voluntary choice. Rather, during wartime soldiers were conscripted from working families, depriving these families of a laborer.[17] Becoming a soldier was perceived as wasting a man's life: while otherwise he could have been productive and aided his family, instead he was taken to be used as cannon fodder on the frontlines. The modern military, as it existed in Europe, was dramatically different from these traditional conscription armies. Military life could be a career in the West, and the position earned respect from the countrymen whom soldiers protected. Of most concern to Ding Chuwo, perhaps, is less the idea that women would themselves enlist in the army (a modern army was still far from reality for China in 1904),[18] but that women (and men as well) would benefit from imitating the ideal characteristics of a soldier's bravery, dedication, and loyalty to the state. They were loyal, strong, patriotic, and obedient. For a modern nation, these traits,

16 Ibid.: 8.
17 Henrietta Harrison, "Martyrs and Militarism in Early Republican China," *Twentieth-Century China* 23, no. 2 (1998): 44-5.
18 Ibid.: 43-4.

multiplied on the grand scale of "four hundred million compatriots,"[19] could create a citizenry that could stand and fight for China, whenever called upon to do so.

Second in Ding's prescription for women is that they should adopt the boundless courage of the knight-errant. Reliant on a martial sensibility in roughly the same sense as the soldier, the Chinese knight-errant also embodied a sense of independence tempered by a fierce loyalty to one who would recognize his worth.[20] For citizens in twentieth-century China, who would themselves comprise the core of the nation, the horizontal loyalties common to the *xia* 俠 (knights-errant) would help foster a sense of mutual obligation and love throughout the country. The *xia* fight on behalf of their brothers, and would do anything for them: "Without thinking of themselves they hasten to the side of those who are in trouble, whether it means survival or destruction, life or death."[21] They exemplify bravery and righteousness. If the future citizens of China could be imbued with these *xia* characteristics, and trained with the capabilities of the soldier, then China could never fall.

Finally, Ding Chuwo emphasizes education in literature and art. Providing basic education to women would allow them to become active participants in society. Women were not to be simply defenders of the nation, but also people

19 400,000,000 同胞, a phrase used frequently and beseechingly in these texts, contrasts with the 200,000,000 女同胞 that addressed only women.

20 On the Chinese knight-errant see James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant* (London: Routledge and Keagan Paul, 1967). and Chen Pingyuan, *Qiangu wenren xiake meng: wuxia xiaoshuo leixing yanjiu* 千古文人俠客夢：武俠小說類型研究 (2002).

21 These lines are from the introductory passage in Sima Qian's 司馬遷 "Youxia liezhuan" 遊俠列傳 (Biographies of Wandering Nights) from the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian). Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, trans. Burton Watson, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 453.

who could plan for its future. By helping to develop their critical faculties, education could make women valued members of society for generations to come. Although Ding never mentions women's participation in politics in his “Songci,” we can see that he clearly intended for women to strengthen themselves through their education. Women's education was not conceived of as a singular “modern” goal – rather, combined with physical training and patriotic motivation, an education could help women better understand their place in Chinese history, and the value of Chinese traditions. A modern education could teach the fundamentals of Chinese nationalist pride, and convince women that the Chinese nation, to which they all belonged, was an entity worth defending.

Picking up on the theme of female citizens as flowers that began Jin Tianhe's “Fakanci,” Ding Chuwo revels in the dream of the women's world becoming awakened:

> The new world [of women] has the famous flowers of freedom within it. These flowers breathe with spirits of soldiers; in unison, they interact with the souls of knights-errant; and the spirits of art and literature reflect each other and become multi-colored. How luxuriant and brilliant they are! How flourishing are their buds! How beautiful are their roots! The clusters of pretty fruit waiting to ripen – for them I pour a libation of fine wine, and pluck my plain zither. I raise the flag of independence, and bang on the drum to hasten spring. At dawn the first bell sounds; the myriad flowers thrive. I clasp my hands together and kneel before the flowers,

begging for the order: “Only when the women's world has emerged will the four hundred million souls of the country awaken!”[22]

新世界有自由之名花焉。軍人之魂。相與呼吸。游俠之魂。相與往來。文學美術之魂。相與掩映而濱紛。葳蕤而爛漫。美哉其胚胎。秀哉其根荄。麗哉其纍纍待實之美果。吾爲之酹芳醑。引素琴。揚獨立之旖。擊催春之鼓。曉鐘初鳴。萬卉昭茁。合掌長跽花下而請命曰。女子世界出現。而吾四萬萬國魂乃有昭蘇之一日。

Ding believes that when women are inspired to follow the example of soldiers, knights-errant, and educated scholars, they would have everything they need to become full members of society. Inspired himself, but unable to do much more than “pluck a plain zither,” Ding hopes to advance the cause of women's revolution. With the publishing of NZSJ he begins his call for revolution, and he beseeches women and men to answer it. Only when they come to their rightful place will the two hundred million souls of the women's world reverse the plight of the four hundred million future citizens of China.

Finding Pride in Chinese Traditions

The crisis then facing China was complex, with pressures from both home and abroad ever weakening the decadent and unpopular Qing court. Although the Manchu throne had ruled China for over two hundred and fifty years, ethnic tensions were revived during its last century, and Han nationalism began to find

22 Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我]: 6.

its voice.[23] NZSJ was not immune to these influences, and it certainly published anti-Qing sentiments.[24] Being published in Shanghai, rather than abroad, any open hostility to the Qing court would have jeopardized the journal and those associated with it, yet in many columns the authors praised the Han and flaunted their ethno-nationalism.[25] This view of Han superiority was also, and perhaps more commonly, expressed in the criticism they reserved for the Western powers that forced their way into China in the aftermath of the Opium Wars (1839-1842 and 1856-1860) and the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901).

The incursions of the West into China brought with them the language of modernity and republicanism that so greatly influenced the women's press of the late Qing. Biographies of foreign women that were translated into Chinese (often from prior Japanese translations of Western language texts) became extremely popular. Seen not merely as exotic and shocking, these foreign women presented new possibilities to their male and female readership. In his *Nüjie zhong*, Jin Tianhe had praised the strength of the foreign exemplars, and held them up as ideals that Chinese women should emulate. Yet in the pages of NZSJ, he expressed a different position.[26] In his "Fakanci" he openly questions the adulation that the Chinese public seems to be paying to the foreign women. Throughout the journal, foreign women are at certain times praised and at others

23 For a detailed look at the various pressures on China at the end of the Qing, see Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution 1895-1949* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 30-52.

24 Beahan: 395-98.

25 The first biography to appear in the journal, that of the Ming female general Shen Yunying 沈雲英 (1624-1660), is replete with this language. The biography of Mulan, to be read in the next chapter, also finds its heroine identified as Han, and fighting for the sake of her race. For Shen Yunying, see Zhi Gong 職公, "Nü junren zhuan yi: Shen Yunying 女軍人傳一：沈雲英," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 1 (1904).

26 See below, note 34.

disparaged, but the crucial question moved from asking how much of the "foreign" should be appropriated, to asking instead what became of Chinese role models for women. In both the "Fakanci" and Songci" of NZSJ, recovering Chinese traditions became key to answering the challenges of the twentieth-century.

In these new conceptualizations of Chinese women as national and modern subjects, they were compared directly to their foreign counterparts. As potential citizens, their very definition was predicated upon a notion of correspondence to the foreign models.[27] As Joan Judge observed, the West was a necessary field of comparison for citizens, and thus also women-as-citizens or mothers-of-citizens, but some of the first questions regarding these new role models dealt with the extent that the foreign female models could and should be adopted by Chinese women. Because it would challenge their Chinese identity, wholesale appropriation could never succeed; however, as examples of possibilities, foreign women did present alternatives to late Qing radicals and reformers.[28] Hu Ying has shown that in the context of the late Qing, where the woman question became such a focal point for so many nationalist thinkers, the challenges posed by tales of foreign women were in part answered by the changes made to their stories in being translated for their Chinese audiences.[29] Although their lives and experiences were kept in a foreign context, Hu writes that their motivations and ethical standards (as they were coded in their Chinese

27 "Women in Chinese feminism, no matter which subject we examine – *funüjie, funü* or *nüxing*, is constitutionally, in a naively literal sense, always already an internationalized subject." Judge, "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens?," 23.
28 Beahan: 413.
29 Hu Ying, "Introduction".

translations) were meant to be read with "always the subtext of the reconceptualization of the Chinese woman."[30]

Through these processes, tales of foreign women could be read as tales of virtue and sacrifice tailor-made to suit their Chinese audience. However the inherent interest in their tales was their foreign grounding. Tales of Western women assassins or courtesans inspired new interest in *Lienü zhuan* 烈女傳 (Biographies of Exemplary Women), and traditional and widely known tales of Chinese women seemed to suffer by comparison. After praising the qualities of a repertory of well-known historical Chinese women, Jin laments:

> [Yet men …] do not admire these [women] and on the contrary speak daily of Madame Roland, Joan of Arc, Sofia [Perovskaia] and [Florence] Nightingale. They then mistakenly think they are unreachable and unattainable. This is like saying the nation has a Master Yan,[31] but does not know it. They can look a thousand *li* but do not see their own eyelashes.[32]
>
> 不此之崇拜。而顧日言羅蘭若安蘇菲亞娜玎格爾。以爲不可及。不可及。所謂國有顏子而不知。目見千里而不自見其睫也。

In Jin Tianhe's *Nüjie zhong*, released just a year previously, he himself had held these foreign exemplars up as potential role models for Chinese women.[33]

---

30 Ibid., 108.

31 Yanzi refers to Yan Hui 顏回, the favorite disciple of Confucius.

32 Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一]: 2.

33 Judge, *Precious Raft*, 144-5. Judge specifically mentions Joan of Arc, Sofia Perovskaia, and Florence Nightingale as women that Jin had praised in *Nü jiezhong* – they receive the opposite

This change in attitude could be attributed to his falling in line with the preferences of the journal, or to a change in his own disposition towards foreign exemplars.[34] In 1903, Jin was excited by the possibilities for Chinese women that the foreign women exemplified. To Jin, it seemed that at their base Chinese and foreign women were equals – it was only in their education and loyalties that the women differed. And while Chinese women were taught to obey their fathers, husbands and sons, foreign women were seen to strike out to pursue a greater calling – their patriotic duty to their nation and their compatriots.

Yet by 1904, Jin turned to focus on accomplished women in the Chinese tradition who had been obscured by the popularity of foreign exemplars. Here Jin mourns the proud traditions of Chinese women that had fallen by the wayside.[35] In addition, he and Ding Chuwo see the reason that foreign women had so captivated the popular imagination as resulting from the praise lavished upon them by Chinese men (*xumei* 鬚眉 "beards and eyebrows"). Rather than commending the remarkable tradition of their own valiant and martial women, Chinese men had focused on the revolutionaries and assassins among the foreign

---

treatment here in NZSJ.

34 Joan Judge writes that there are two possibilities for Jin's change of tone regarding foreign women as heroic exemplars: the first that the influx of writings on foreign women had increased dramatically during the time between his *Nüjie zhong* and the *Nüzi shijie* editorial, and so his writing reflects his own emphasis on returning to Chinese exemplars. The second possibility she lists is that Ding Chuwo, the editor of *Nüzi shijie*, may have asked Jin Tianhe to adopt this position in order to reflect the goals of the journal (Ibid., 145 n.9.)However, in the twelfth issue (April 1905) Ding Chuwo himself wrote a biography of a foreign woman (Margaret Roper, the daughter of Sir Thomas Moore) for the journal. (Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我], "Furen jie zhi shuangbi: kanchang zhi bai jin 婦人界之雙壁：刊場之白堇," *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 12 (1905).) In this light, I think there can be an argument made for the move away from foreign exemplars in the inaugural editorial of NZSJ as reflecting Jin Tianhe's own opinions.

35 Jin Tianhe could be reacting to the denigration of the *cainü* 才女 (woman of talent) by such prominent thinkers as Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929). See Hu Ying, 7.

exemplars. What is worse, they then lament that in the history of Chinese women, there is nothing to match these pinnacles of bravery.

Ding Chuwo takes this line of reasoning one step further. In his enthusiasm for the dawn of the women's world, he enumerates examples of indigenous women's bravery and ability, and then shames the world of men:

> What are the boundaries of the women's world? I do not list European influences; instead I hold up our national essence. I unroll our three thousand years of history:
>
> Feng Liao,[36] Mulan,[37] Liang Furen[38] and Qin Liangyu's[39] martial valor shakes heaven and makes earth tremble. Are these not superior to those who wait helplessly for death?
>
> Ti Ying,[40] Nie zi,[41] Pang E[42] and Hongxian's[43] knight-errantry has a lofty righteousness that reaches the clouds. Are they not superior

36 Feng Liao 馮嫽 (fl. 60 BCE). An envoy between the Han and the Wusun 烏孫 tribe, she brokered peace agreements between the two. Yuan Shaoying 袁韶瑩 and Yang Guizhen 楊瑰珍, eds., *Zhongguo funü mingren cidian* 中國婦女名人辭典 (Changchun: Beifang funü ertong chubanshe,1989), 101-2.

37 Mulan 木欄 – In their 1989 biographical dictionary, Yuan and Yang identify her as being a female general of the Sui dynasty; this is most likely based on changes to her biography occuring in the Qing dynasty. Her biographies will be examined in the next chapter. Ibid., 21.

38 Liang Furen 梁夫人, most likely Liang Hongyu 梁紅玉 (d. 1135). She participated in battles along with her husband, often as a combat drummer. She was known as a loyal wife to her husband, as well as a courageous soldier. Sherry J. Mou, ed. *Biographical Sketches*, 2 ed., vol. 35, Chinese Studies in History (2001-2), 50-52.

39 Qin Liangyu 秦良玉 (1574-1648). A Female general from Sichuan, accomplished in both literary and military matters. After her husband was killed in battle, she rose to take his place in command of the army and led them to victory. Yuan and Yang, eds., 456.

40 Ti Ying 緹縈 (fl. 167 BCE). Petitioned the government on her father's behalf, and is famous for the clarity of her arguments. Judge, "Blended Wish Images," 122-4.

41 Nie zi 聶姊 (also known as Nie Rong 聶榮). The sister of the assassin Nie Zheng 聶政, whose biography can be found in Sima Qian's *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian). After her brother's self-disfigurement and suicide for attempting to murder a prime minister, Nie Rong went to claim the body despite the certain punishment for this act that awaited her. She died on her brother's corpse with implications of suicide, and became a model for courage and righteousness. William H. Nienhauser, ed. *The Grand Scribe's Records*, vol. 2 (Bloomington:

to those countrymen whether in the north or south who play with power?

Ban Zhao,[44] Zuo Fen,[45] Wei Heng[46] and Ruo Lan's[47] literature and art shine from antiquity to the present-day. Are they not superior to those who read texts their whole lives to pass the civil-service exam?[48]

女子世界知範圍合似乎。吾勿表歐風。吾且揚國粹。披吾國三千年之歷史。馮嫽木蘭梁夫人秦良玉之勇武。轟天烈地。勝於奄奄一息束手待斃者何如。緹縈聶姊龐娥紅線之游俠。高義雲天。勝於同胞胡越翻雲覆雨者何如。班昭左芬衛恆若蘭之文學美術。照耀古今。勝於咕嗶終身溺心科舉者何如。

Indiana University Press,1994), 323-5.

42 Pang E 龐娥 (also known as Pang Eqin 龐娥親, Zhao Eqin 趙娥親 or Zhao E 趙娥). Her story appeared in the initial "Lienü zhuan" section of the *Han shu*. She avenges her father's death after the deaths of her three younger brothers. In the biography, she is characterized as a filial daughter. Sherry J. Mou, *Gentlemen's Prescriptions for Women's Lives: A Thousand Years of Biographies of Chinese Women* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 90-91.

43 Hongxian 紅線. One of the subjects of chapter 3 of this thesis.

44 Ban Zhao 班昭 (c. 49- c. 120 CE). Historian of the Han dynasty. She completed the *Han shu* 漢書 (Standard History of the Han dynasty) after her brother Ban Gu 班固 died. She also wrote *Nü jie* 女戒 (Admonitions for Women). Yuan and Yang, eds., 408-9.

45 Zuo Fen 左芬 (?-300 CE). Author from the Western Jin, later a concubine of emperor Wu of the Jin, famous for her literary accomplishments. Ibid., 74-5.

46 Wei Heng 衛恆 (252-291). A Famous calligrapher from the Eastern Jin. His daughter was Wei Shuo 衛鑠 (272-349), a famous calligrapher in her own right, and an early teacher of Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361). Marsha Weidner et al., eds., *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists 1300-1912* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art,1988), 20-21. It is most likely Wei Shuo whom Ding Chuwo intended to commend here (*Note: In Jin Tianhe's "Fakanci" the characters for Wei Heng are also used*).

47 Ruo Lan 若蘭 (also known as Su Hui 蘇蕙). Appears in the *Lienü zhuan* section of the *Jin shu* 晉書 (History of the Jin). She is famous for weaving a long poem of 840 characters into a piece of cloth, and she is known as a "woman of letters." Mou, *Gentlemen's Prescriptions*, 99 & 244.

48 Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我]: 6.

Here Ding lists famous Chinese women whose talents lay in the three fields he outlined as necessary for Chinese women's advancement. Here are examples of martial women who fought valiantly in battle, women with the bravery of knights-errant,[49] and talented authors and artists who created masterpieces for the sake of aesthetic beauty. Ding disparages the male counterparts of these women: male fighters who surrender awaiting their death; male knights-errant who act only in isolation rather than with an irreproachable moral compass; and finally male scholars, who study endlessly but only with the ambition of passing the civil-service exam.

With the new focus on women, honorable traditions in China's past became recoded in NZSJ as the gifts of women's virtue and sacrifice. Jin Tianhe writes:

> To those listening – do you indeed know the reason why China's forefathers were strong? When you count them on your fingers ,and investigate the records, those gods, sages, emperors, heroes and knights all had wise mothers and wives to assist them. Among them there were the outstanding and unmatched writings of Ban Zhao, the daughter of Fu,[50] Zuo Fen, and Xie [Dao]yun;[51] the

49 Joan Judge notes that Ti Ying has been reclassified in NZSJ as a knight-errant. In earlier periods she was known for her filiality or her intelligence. It seems that it is only in the early twentieth-century that her bravery became recognized as her dominant virtue. Judge, *Precious Raft*, 146-8.

50 Fu nü 伏女 (also known as Fu Shou 伏壽, Fu Huanghou 伏皇后, Empress Fu; fl. 195 C.E.). Wife of emperor Xian of the Han, she wrote a letter to her father Fu Wan 伏完 urging him to assassinate Cao Cao 曹操 (c. 155-220). After her letter was found, Cao ordered her husband the emperor to depose her. Yuan and Yang, eds., 108.

51 Xie Yun 謝韞 (also known as Xie Daoyun 謝道韞; fl. 376 C.E.). A famous poet of the Eastern Jin Ibid., 559-60.

refinement of Wei Heng, Ruo Lan, Xue Yuan,[52] Cai Yan;[53] the righteousness of Ti Ying, Nie Zi, Pang E, and Hong Xian; and the abilities of Feng Liao, Mulan, Xun Guan,[54] Liang Furen and Qin Liangyu. These are worthy to have their names displayed in the ancient tomes, and to have their glory spread in the history of women.[55]

聞者亦知中國前者之所以強乎。屈指而數。案籍而稽。彼聖賢帝王。英雄俠義。皆有賢母賢妻以爲左右也。其憂特立獨行。則班昭伏女左芬謝韞之文章。衛恆若蘭薛媛蔡琰之靈秀。緹縈聶姊龐娥紅線之義俠。馮嫽木蘭荀瓘梁夫人秦良玉之幹濟。此足表馨逸於陳編。播榮譽於彤史。

China's past was being rewritten to foreground the virtuous history of women. Although the stories of women's lives were often written with the biographer's own interpretation of their virtue in mind, the stories of Chinese women in the late Qing differed as they were being used to justify the history of China's strength. Whereas before they stood as exemplars for women alone to emulate, now their good deeds were shown to have actual benefit for all of Chinese society, and as

52 Xue Yuan 薛媛 A painter and poet of the Tang dynasty Ibid., 603-4.

53 Cai Yan 蔡琰 (c. 178-239). A writer from the Eastern Han she was married three times, the second time to a Xiongnu chieftan. Cao Cao arranged for her return from the Xiongnu. From memory she recorded over 400 of her father's poems, long after his death. She was also a famous poet in her own right. Ibid., 580-81.

54 Xun Guan 荀瓘 (also known as Xun Guanniang 荀瓘娘, fl. 317 C.E.). A female soldier from the Eastern Jin. When she was 13 years old, her father, a general was fighting off a siege at Wanxian. Xun Guan volunteered to lead a squad through the siege and seek help outside. She was successful, and the siege was soon broken after reinforcements arrived. Mou, ed. *Biographical Sketches*, 19-20.

55 Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一]: 1-2.

such they became pillars in the project of reviving China's historical tradition so that the nation could stand on par with the West in the challenge of modernity.

As China fought back against the economic and military superiority of the West, Chinese traditions came under fire as being obstacles to the new spirit of scientific advancement. In a state of denying that China should completely reject its past – but aware of the need for drastic changes – authors struggled to define a place for China in the new international system of nation-states and opened up history for reinterpretation. Prasenjit Duara, writing on May Fourth literary trends as exemplified by Lu Xun, notes that the position of women came to encompass the spirit of the nation itself. Duara sees this construction of history as a causal link to the future of the nation, which needs a tradition of valor, virtue and nationalism with which the contemporary citizenry could empathize, and from which they could draw spiritual camaraderie. From their historically subordinate position within the patriarchy, Duara writes, women could be seen as examples of genuine or uncorrupted virtue.[56]

The history of virtuous women as disenfranchised subjects, when reconsidered, becomes an intangible site of "authentic" suffering and virtue. Female exemplars work only with purity of purpose, and as such can be seen as models for the Chinese nation, which was seen as suffering the same disenfranchisement. With their original function of educating and encouraging virtuous female behavior expanded, women exemplars were being transformed into sites of patriotism that could be projected back through Chinese history.

---

56 Prasenjit Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China," *History and Theory* 37, no. 3 (1998): 290.

Duara writes that this backward projection created women as a "timeless" subject of history. Uniting various and diverse aspects of the past to become a cohesive narrative of linear progression, the past becomes refigured by the present, as the theorized future is also implicated in this history-making project. The aporia of time becomes bridged by such subjects in order to unify the present under a banner of the worthy "authentic."[57] In the process, the spirit of the Chinese nation is read in the purity of women's lives, and becomes itself unassailable in the process.

In contrast to the self-serving "virtues" of men, the women exemplars praised in NZSJ stand as paragons of righteousness. The purity of their ambition is matched by the greatness of their success. It is only due to men's hold on history that women had been so demoted.

> Why does women's world begin today? China before the twentieth century was fundamentally a men's world. Why is it that when there is a men's world it is a world of slaves? Men were the first type of slaves in the world, and women were the second. The seeds of slavery transmitted one another. The winds of slavery fanned one another. The roots of slavery were never extracted. Consequently, today this has made a dark women's world. The clouds of Asia are black as ink, the Han River is stagnant and wilted flowers are weeping and scattering their petals.[58]

57 Ibid.: 293-5.
58 Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我]: 5.

> 女子世界奚自今日始。二十紀前之中國。固男子世界也。惡有男子世界。固奴隸世界也。男子爲世界第一重奴隸。女子爲世界第二重奴隸。奴種相傳。奴風相煽。奴根永永不一拔。遂造成今日亞雲如墨漢水不波憔悴名花啼紅泣雨之黑闇女世界。

When men held control, the world descended into subjugation upon subjugation. All were beholden to Confucian bureaucracy and hierarchies, and none had the freedom to expose the system and the stranglehold it had on China's progress. The crisis facing the country was brought about because of this weakness; only a desperate and decisive move to uproot the foundations of slavery would strengthen the nation. Without the full elevation of women's rights, Ding argues, China would continue to suffer as a nation of slaves.

Conclusion

The authors of these two editorials for NZSJ stressed that women's education should be focused on creating a viable citizenry for the twentieth-century. As China was beset by international and domestic crises during the last years of the Qing dynasty, these nationalist-feminists posited women as role models that could help strengthen the nation from within, in order to help raise the prestige of China abroad. In choosing these role models, presentist authors such as those behind NZSJ emphasized the courage and daring of martial women, as soldiers and knights-errant. Louise Edwards described such women as "social mirrors" for society, whose resurgence in literature often accompanied a decline in

government and societal stability. She also writes that the appearance of these women warriors at such times is meant to "shame" a male audience into action – if women were capable of restoring order and fighting for justice then men should have been even more so. [59]

The women praised in these opening editorials were praised by male authors, writing for an audience of both men and women.[60] They were exemplars that were seen to be even more virtuous, honorable and capable than their male counterparts. The women of NZSJ were constructed to be model citizens for both genders, as their traits and characteristics can be seen as exclusive to neither sex. Educated in literature and arts, they could nurture the critical faculties necessary to participate in government. Trained to be capable soldiers, they could work together and promote unity for all citizens of China. And by emulating the valiant knights-errant, citizens would find the loyalty and patriotism necessary to fight on behalf of the nation. Through their education, women would be inspired by Chinese history, and they would be trained to fight with their brothers for the glory of the nation.

Forming ideals of femininity whose roots extend back centuries, history was rewritten to produce models of virtue that reflected contemporary needs. For the nationalist-feminists of NZSJ, the national crisis provided the impetus for invigorating women's learning and praising women's history. Finding a Chinese tradition worthy of praise in the biographies of Chinese women the NZSJ editors linked the goals of national salvation to the battles of valiant heroines throughout

59 Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China*, 103-07.

60 Jin Tianhe addresses both women and men in his opening editorial. Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一]: 2.

China's past. As female biography has throughout its history in China presented a "timeless" quality that was designed to educate present women through their gendered ties to past exemplars, it is in this genre where we can perhaps best see the goals of the presentist nationalist-feminists writing for NZSJ. It is the historian's prerogative, through the authority embedded in biographical writing, to conceptualize historical fact as malleable to the author's moral imperatives.

Many of the historical women written about at the turn of the twentieth-century had their life stories altered in significant ways;[61] however in the biographies which I will examine, we will see how fictional women were also included in this historiographic transformation. Mulan was first written about in a ballad, and Hongxian and Nie Yinniang first seen in the Tang *chuanqi* 傳奇 (Strange tales). Their author, Liu Yazi, who would become a well-known Republican-era intellectual and poet, writing under pseudonyms, credits himself with restoring these women's stories to the Chinese historical record. In the next chapters, I will compare the NZSJ biographies of these three women to past versions of their stories. I will attempt to show the specific changes brought into their stories by Liu, and what these changes imply in terms of the idealized female citizen of twentieth-century China.

---

61 There are many recent studies that address these changes in women's biographies during many different historical moments. Josephine Chiu-Duke, for example, covers the changes in female epithets and biographies between the early to mid and late Tang dynasties; and Lisa Raphals and Katherine Carlitz discuss the changes between female biographies from Liu Xiang's *Lienü zhuan* to its reproductions in the Ming dynasty. For the late Qing, the tales of foreign women were also subject to these revisions, as we see in the works of Joan Judge, Qian Nanxiu, and Hu Ying. Josephine Chiu-Duke, "The Role of Confucian Revivalists in the Confucianization of T'ang Women," *Asia Major* 3, no. 8 (1995). Raphals. Carlitz, "The Social Uses of Female Virtue." Judge, "Blended Wish Images." *Precious Raft*. Qian Nanxiu, "'Borrowing Foreign Mirrors'." Hu Ying.

Chapter Two

Constructing the Ideal Soldier-Citizen:

"The Biography of China's First Heroine and First Female Soldier, Hua Mulan"

The *Mulan ci* 木蘭辭, or the "Ballad of Mulan," written by an unknown author in or before the fifth century C.E.,[1] tells the story of a filial daughter who dresses as a man and goes to war in her father's place. Although she meets with great success during her campaigns, after the fighting is over she refuses the court's reward of an official appointment in order to return home and resume her old life. This poem is a scant three hundred and fifty characters, and yet it has produced numerous retellings in various genres that range from poems of a few lines to larger plays, biographies, and, in the twentieth century, feature films. As the first in a line of women warriors, Mulan has evolved into a familiar face for many audiences who have been exposed to her through these various genres. Although the basic outline in these retellings remains the same, the details vary through time, giving her story a constant and ever-renewing appeal for contemporary audiences.

Conveniently for future revisions, the details of the first Mulan tale are vague. Being a ballad and not a prose work or formal biography, it has been

---

1 William Hung writes "Since the ballad was mentioned in Monk Chi-chiang's *Record of Ancient and Modern Songs*, compiled in 568, it is permissible to suppose that the story originated in the northeastern corner of the then divided China sometime between 317 and 568." William Hung, "The Last Four Lines of the *Mu-Lan Ballad*," in *Studia Asiatica: Essays in Asian Studies in Felicitation of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of Professor Ch'en Shou-Yi* ed. Laurence G. Thompson (San Francisco: Chinese Materials, Inc., 1975), 357. For the Chinese text, see Anonymous, "Mulan Ci 木蘭詞," in *Yuefu Shiji* 樂府詩集 Vol. 2, ed. Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju: Yinhua shudian Beijing faxing suo, 1979), 373-75.

argued that it perhaps lacks the specificity of language necessary to convey the exceptional woman warrior at its heart,[2] and as a result might lend itself more easily to varying interpretations.[3] The ballad is the earliest recorded version of the story, marking itself, for the purposes of this study, as the original telling. Lacking detailed characterization or context, the interest in the Mulan story lies primarily within the brief plot outlined in the ballad; namely in the narrative of a daughter so filial that she would put her own life through the perils of long campaigns abroad and live amongst men for years in order to save her father from the trials of war. The ballad maintained its popularity in later generations, and the story became the basis for the trope of the woman warrior, a trope that often varied from the theme of the filial daughter that originally defined Mulan's actions.[4] Her morality and virtue became necessary components to her legend as they become the primary defense for her iconic, but potentially subversive, status.[5]

The attraction and ambiguity Mulan and other women warriors have in Chinese literature lies in their straddling the duality between virtuous role model and sexualized object. Their "disruptive potential" is mitigated by their strict adherence to the patriarchal Confucian virtue of the author's choice.[6] They are

---

2 Joseph Allen, "Dressing and Undressing the Chinese Woman Warrior," *positions: east asia cultures critique* 4, no. 2 (1996): 353.

3 For example, Sophia Lai argues that the ballad expresses Mulan's dissatisfaction with the expectations for women. Sufen Sophia Lai, "From Cross-Dressing Daughter to Lady Knight-Errant: The Origin and Evolution of Chinese Women Warriors," in *Presence and Presentation: Women in the Chinese Literati Tradition* ed. Sherry J. Mou (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 77-107.

4 Ma Qian, *Women in Traditional Chinese Theater: The Heroine's Play* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2005), 38. For a comparison on the differences between Mulan and several *nüxia*, see Lai.

5 Lai, 94. For a look at virtue as a defense for aberrant behavior, see Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China*, 87-112.

6 Louise Edwards, "Women Warriors and Amazons of the Mid Qing Texts Jinghua Yuan and Honglou Meng," *Modern Asian Studies* 29, no. 2 (1995): 231.

thus free to leave their station temporarily and "misbehave," asserting whatever ability they might wish in achieving their ambition. However, their "misbehaving" rarely crosses into lewd or improper conduct; the reasons for their actions always rely on a firm ethical code. What this entails, however, varies from author to author, often in tune with the expectations and desires of the contemporary society.

As her virtues morph depending upon the social context of the respective reworkings of her story, it is the authors and their individual priorities that write themselves into the Mulan narrative. By utilizing the framework of a tantalizing tale about a virtuous woman warrior, they are free to revise the narrative to provide details more suited to their particular cultural climate. On the similar treatment that the Wang Zhaojun 王昭君 (fl. 40 B.C.E.) legend has received, Kimberly Besio writes that the legend "held a specific cultural meaning as a site upon which succeeding generations could inscribe ideals about female virtue and Han cultural identity."[7] Through the changes in the versions of Mulan's tale, we can see these same characteristics emerge in each treatment.

For Joseph Allen, the variations in the Mulan story, no matter how "recent" and "culturally divergent," all seek to neutralize the woman warrior's transgressions by reinforcing her position within the home. He argues that as the ballad ends not with Mulan's victory in battle, but rather with her resuming her

7 Kimberly Besio, "Gender, Loyalty, and the Reproduction of the Wang Zhaojun Legend: Some Social Ramifications of Drama in the Late Ming," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40, no. 2 (1997): 256. Wang Zhaojun was one of the four beauties of ancient China. Ignored in the imperial harem, she was either ordered to or herself volunteered to be married off to a Xiongnu chieftan. For more on Wang Zhaojun, see Eugene Eoyang, "The Wang Chao-Chün Legend: Configurations of the Classic," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 4, no. 1 (1982).

life as a daughter, that the central conflict of the story is Mulan's cross-dressing and not the conscription and war that prompted it.[8] All versions of her story that I have seen include Mulan's final redressing as a woman, yet the variations here are also notable. In *lienü zhuan* 烈女傳 (biographies of exemplary women) versions from the high Qing (which sets her biography during the last years of the Sui dynasty 581-618) for example, at the point when her true sex is discovered, she is ordered to enter into her sovereign's harem. Dramatically, rather than obey, she chooses to slit her own throat. In continuing the narrative past her redressing, these versions make Mulan's chastity the focus of her story. *Lienü zhuan* such as these were written to promote certain virtues as worthy of emulation among female readers. These biographies were designed to inspire women to emulate the illustrations of exceptional female virtues within their pages. Katherine Carlitz writes that biographies of exemplary women were employed by men "for a variety of social purposes," but understood by women to be descriptions of what the female reader "might have to live."[9]

However, in the late Qing *zhuanji* 傳記 (historical biography) in *Nüzi shijie*, this same didacticism, inherent to biographies of women, is used to promote not just morality, but ability. Although the narration of Mulan's life in NZSJ ends with her changing back into her woman's garb, as will be shown below, the telling of the story from beginning to end questions the part that clothing plays in determining gender roles; by the end of the story, it is obvious that Mulan remains the same, whether fighting or at home, whether dressed as a

8 Allen: 346-7.
9 Carlitz, "The Social Uses of Female Virtue," 124.

man or as a woman. I argue that in this case, Mulan's return home functions as a final destabilization of traditional gender roles rather than a confirmation of them. She is shown repeatedly to be neither conventionally female nor outwardly male - as she successfully moves in both worlds and is praised for her action, she forces the readers to question their own assumptions about the definitiveness of gender-lines.

This chapter will follow the structure of the Mulan biography published in the third issue of NZSJ. The author Liu Yazi 柳亞子 (1887-1958), writing under the pseudonym Ya Lu 亞盧,[10] begins by examining the history of soldiers and women in China: comparing the Chinese tradition to that in the West, he disparages the traditional Chinese prejudices against soldiers, while arguing against the legacy of *lienü* 列女 (exemplary women) and *jienü* 節女 (chaste women).[11] In the first section of this chapter, I will examine biographies of Mulan from the *lienü* sections of gazetteers from the high-Qing which emphasize her chastity in order to show the constraints and implications of the *lienü zhuan* genre. These biographies of Mulan provide a dramatic counterpoint to Liu Yazi's, and reveal to what extent both the *lienü zhuan* genre, as well as Liu Yazi's own rewriting, have altered the gendered implications of the Mulan ballad. In the next

10 As noted in chapter 1, Jin Yi was referred to as "the Rousseau of China." It is interesting to note that Liu Yazi, a student of Jin Tianhe (Xia Xiaohong, 72) used the penname "Ya Lu" 亞盧 for many pieces in NZSJ, including the Mulan biography examined here. Xia Xiaohong writes that the second character in this pseudonym, Lu, is short for Lusuo 盧梭, or Rousseau (Ibid. 86). The Ya 亞 is presumably from Yazhou 亞洲, Asia, making Liu Yazi's penname the "Asian Rousseau." The choice of this penname is indicative of either Liu Yazi's admiration of Jin Yi, or the popularity of Rousseau among the radical authors writing for NZSJ.

11 According to Joan Judge, presentist authors such as those behind NZSJ were "disdainful" of the nineteenth-century and the "regime of feminine virtue" that stressed women's morality and virtue. Judge, *Precious Raft*, 13-14.

section of this chapter, I will investigate how Liu Yazi opens up the body of the Mulan ballad with his own interpretation of Mulan's story. Contrasting the lines in the ballad to the expanded version in the NZSJ biography, I will explore the changes Liu made to the story, and how they correspond to the ideals put forth in the "Fakanci" and "Songci" examined in the previous chapter.

Chinese Historiography and the Mulan Narrative

The NZSJ Mulan biography begins by framing the narrative within the contemporary political crisis facing China. Liu Yazi first recalls a dream he had in which he floated past the Pacific Ocean to the nations of America and Europe. There he saw cultures that defined themselves based on their military prowess. While he disliked the threat coming from these places, he admired their unity and focus. As he awoke, he recalled the plight of China:

> It is sunk so deep, as if dead. I read Du Fu's "Ballad of the Army Carts," and chant aloud Wang Han's "Song of Liangzhou." They criticize excessive militarism as a loss of virtue. Wearing armor and resisting with weapons are seen as ways to consign pain - the traditions of carriage bells and chariot horses have long been lost.[12] If men are like this, what can we say about women? Alas! Weak worms, weak worms![13]

12 The meaning of these lines (擐甲禦戎。引爲寄痛。蓋車鈴馳鐵之風淪胥也久矣) is somewhat unclear; I believe that Liu Yazi's overall intention is to show that respect for the military has withered over time.

13 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 25. The two poems Liu Yazi cites here are famous in the Chinese literary tradition for expressing anti-military sentiment. Du Fu's 杜甫(712–770) ballad

沈沈若死。讀杜老兵車之行。吟王瀚涼州之曲。黷武窮兵。訾爲失德。擐甲禦戎。引爲寄痛。蓋車鈴駟鐵之風淪胥也久矣。鬚眉如此。遑論巾幗。嗚呼弱蟲弱蟲。

To Liu Yazi, while the situation in China is dire, in the West it seems to be just the opposite. Ignoring all male Western generals or heroes, he writes only of the military exploits of women in Western history. Spartan mothers demanded victory or death for their soldier-sons, and women like Joan of Arc and Anita Garibaldi threw themselves into battle in order to save their countries.[14] When Liu searches for similar heroines in the annals of Chinese history, however, he returns empty-handed. Instead it is in the songs and ballads of the lower classes (下級) that he sees traces of heroism, and it is here where the story of Mulan appears.

This presents a dilemma for Liu Yazi. While women in the West are celebrated in history and are popular subjects of Chinese translations, tales of heroic Chinese women and true heroes are virtually absent from the official

---

laments the destruction that constant conscription wreaks on the countryside and the families that live there. Wang Han's 王瀚 (687-726) quatrain is similarly critical of warfare, as evinced by its sympathetic portrayal of weary soldiers: "'Tis night: the grape-juice mantles high in cups of gold galore/ We set to drink – but now the bugle sounds to horse once more/ Oh marvel not if drunken we lie strewed about the plain / How few of all who see the fight shall e'er come back again!" (葡萄美酒夜光杯, 欲饮琵琶马上催. 醉卧沙场君莫笑,古来征战几人回.) Translated by Herbert Giles, in John Minford and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds., *Classical Chinese Literature: An Anthology of Translations. Volume 1: From Antiquity to the Tang Dynasty* vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 823. Du Fu and Wang Han both comment on the futility of the soldier's life as they are called into service and rarely return home. Du Fu concludes his by sighing that it is perhaps better to have a girl than a boy: daughters can work at home, but sons are sent off to die at the frontiers. A translation by Arthur Cooper can be found in Minford and Lau, eds., 803-4.

14 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 25-6. Liu Yazi describes the fortitude of Spartan mothers, for example, who told their sons to "either come back with your shield or on it." Joan of Arc's story, once translated into Chinese, became popular as an example of a heroic female general fighting for independence. Judge, *Precious Raft*, 165-8. Anita Garibaldi (1821-1849) was the wife of an Italian revolutionary, and participated in several wars of independence in South America before traveling to Italy with her husband. She fought and died in the Italian Revolutionary movement. *Precious Raft*, 173.

histories. While he resents the poor reputation of militarism as seen in these poems from Du Fu and Wang Han, he himself agrees with their criticisms of China's military traditions. He writes that many heroes in the Chinese annals are themselves unworthy of their praise, and that their names were only recorded by corrupt historians hoping to secure their own fortunes on the backs of these tyrants. He laments that "for those who are talented and worthy, they are treated only with indifference" (於英才俊彥。反漠然置之矣).[15] What Liu seeks is restitution for these forgotten heroes and heroines. In so doing, he will argue that Chinese history is full of heroes that can inspire men and women to honor the military spirit.

But his main concern here is with the future of Chinese women. From the "evil tradition of elevating men and looking down on women" (煬於重男輕女之惡俗), ignorant historians have only produced biographies of exemplary women and chaste women. Liu sees these women as "feeble and without life," (皆奄奄無生氣) while "the great persons of the women's realm are barely perceived as a group" (女界偉人乃群在若明若昧之間矣).[16] Those recorded in the annals of history are unworthy to be there, while those who are worthy are ignored and not given biographies. But the "most unfortunate" (最不幸者) for Liu was Hua Mulan:

> Going through the records of the twenty-four families, there was no mention of her surname. If you go through the records of over

15 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 26.
16 Ibid.

two thousand years, you will not find a trace of her deeds. Even this extraordinary woman who could shake heaven and earth doesn't merit a glance from the blind historians, or make a mark on the corner of a single page of history.[17]

讀盡二十四姓之家譜。不聞其姓氏。繙遍二千餘年之相所書。不見其事跡。以震天撼地之奇女子。若不足以當盲史家之一盼。而污歷史之紙角者。

Perhaps unbeknownst to Liu Yazi, biographies of Mulan had been recorded in gazetteers and an anthology of women's poetry during the Qing dynasty, yet the differences in these records and in his own are so vast that he might not have recognized her. Casting her as a *lienü*, the type of woman that Liu here derides as "feeble and without life," the authors of these biographies glossed over Mulan's military victories and focused instead on new revelations of her extreme chastity. At the end of these Qing dynasty biographies, the brave and righteous Mulan cuts her own throat in order to retain her virtue in the face of a lascivious emperor. Though Mulan survived countless trials in battle, it is the threat to her chastity that finally brings about her demise in these *lienü zhuan* versions. While Liu Yazi criticizes *jiefu* in the late Qing, earlier in the dynasty chastity was one of the most important of women's virtues. These versions of the Mulan tale merit a closer look, as they embody the historiographic tradition that Liu hoped to transform, at the same time that they reveal how biographies of exemplary women reflect the values and concerns of their society.

17 Ibid.: 27.

Mulan as an Exemplary Woman

The versions of the narrative found earlier in the Qing dynasty begin by following the same basic outline as the ballad while producing a dramatically new telling of the Mulan story. Two of these biographies are entries in Qing dynasty gazetteers and the third biography is from a collection of brief biographies of women by Yun Zhu 惲珠 (1771-1833).[18] These versions present the Mulan tale as history in the mode of *lienü zhuan* (Biographies of Exemplary Women). In this way, the Mulan narratives were meant to emphasize that her virtue is worthy of emulation, as it is this which forms the crux of *lienü* biographies.[19] As *lienü zhuan*, these mid-Qing versions rewrite the story of the ballad to include chaste martyrdom for Mulan, a martyrdom that is rewarded in the Ming/Qing tradition with a shrine in her honor.[20]

Despite the brevity of these biographies, they include information that was not in the ballad. In the millennium or more between the ballad's publication and that of these biographies, there were several other treatments of the Mulan story in Chinese literature. Notably, the poet, artist and playwright Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521—1593) had written *Ci Mulan* 雌木蘭 (The Woman Mulan) in his collection of

18 The gazetteers are the Bozhou gazetteer 亳州誌, from 1825, in Bo county in present day Anhui province and the Shangqiu gazetteer 商邱志 (originally printed in 1681, reprinted in 1923) from Shangqiu county, in present day Henan province. The other biography is in Yun Zhu's *Lan gui bao lu* 蘭閨寶錄 (Precious Records from the Orchid Boudoir), 1831. Transcriptions of these three biographies can be found in Appendix 2. For more on Yun Zhu, see Mann, *Precious Records*, 94-117.

19 Mou, *Gentlemen's Prescriptions*, 17. See Katherine Carlitz, "Shrines, Governing-Class Identity, and the Cult of Widow Fidelity in Mid-Ming Jiangnan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 56, no. 3 (1997): 612-40 for a discussion of *lienü* in the Ming dynasty.

20 Carlitz, "Shrines, Governing-Class Identity."

plays *Si sheng yuan* 四聲猿 (Four Shrieks of the Gibbon). Mulan also appeared in Chu Renhuo's 褚人获 (c.1630-c.1705) novel, *Sui Tang yanyi* 隋唐演義 (Romance of the Sui and the Tang, c. 1675). Robert Hegel credits Chu with most of the changes to the Mulan story which are seen in the later *lienü* biographies. Although he makes no mention of the biographies themselves, the similarities between them and the one in the Chu novel are unmistakable. The setting of the Mulan story is now in the Sui dynasty (a Chinese period), the Khan (significantly for Hegel's interpretation, a non-Chinese emperor) now seeks to install Mulan in his harem, and Mulan commits suicide at her father's grave. There are details that were not included in the short *lienü zhuan*, such as her father's death from shame at her actions, and her mother's remarriage. Hegel sees the nefarious role of the khan as a device to criticize the foreign Manchu dynasty then in control of China.[21]

The transition from the novel to these biographies seems to have been somewhat gradual; whereas the Shangqiu gazetteer, printed just a few years after the novel *Sui Tang yanyi*, also has Mulan conscripted by the khan; the later biographies from the nineteenth century give this role to the Sui emperor, Sui Gong di 隋恭帝 (r. 617-8).[22] Although these biographies are merely brief sketches

21 Robert Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 205-6. This version of the story seems to have been quite popular; in Yuan and Yang's 1989 *Zhongguo funü mingren cidian* 中國婦女名人辭典 (Biographical Dictionary of Famous Chinese Women) the entry for Mulan follows the same narrative route as the *lienü zhuan* from the high Qing, including Mulan's suicide to protect her chastity. See Yuan and Yang, eds., 21

22 The Sinicization of Mulan is complex, and beyond the scope of this paper. In Xu Wei's play, from the Ming dynasty, Mulan is clearly a Chinese girl. At the start of the play her feet are bound, and she carefully unbinds them before going into battle as part of her disguise. For an English translation, see Ma Qian, 129-51. For an account of Mulan's Sinicization that corresponds to Maxine Hong Kingston's appropriation of the Mulan narrative for her novel *The*

of Mulan's life, they include enough relevant information from the ballad to identify it as the story of Mulan. She is forced to fight, as in the ballad, because of the conscription that threatens to take her elderly father. Because she has no elder brother, she is left with little option but her own cross-dressing deception in order to take her father's place in battle. As in most accounts, it is stated that "no one knew she was a woman" (人不知其爲女子/人不知其女子也).[23] Unlike Xu Wei's dramatic version where Mulan's martial abilities take center stage, the *lienü* biographies make little mention of her prowess in the campaigns. Indeed, in Yun Zhu's account, the twelve years on the battlefield is glossed over completely. All that is heard about her time on the field is gathered by the fact that she "returned triumphantly" (*kaixuan* 凱旋).[24]

It is at this point of the narrative that the greatest variances in the tellings of her story present themselves. In the ending of the original ballad, examined by Joseph Allen, the equilibrium of the story is restored by Mulan's active acceptance of her female position, and thus her recognition of the proper place for a woman in society. In these Qing versions, however, she is not able to reclaim her former life so easily. Instead, after she returns home, the soldiers with whom she traveled for such a long time find out that she is a woman, and immediately spread the word to court. There, rather than being astounded at her achievements, the first thoughts of the monarch are to bring Mulan back to the palace, to be installed within his harem. Upon discovering Mulan's true sex, he has moved from his

---

Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts, see Lan Feng, "The Female Individual and the Empire: A Historicist Approach to Mulan and Kingston's Woman Warrior," *Comparative Literature* 55, no. 3 (2003).

23 The description is somewhat briefer in the Shangqiu gazetteer: "No one knew." (人莫識)

24 Yun Zhu 惲珠, "Mulan," in *Lan Gui Bao Lu* 蘭閨寶錄 ed. Yun Zhu 惲珠 (1831), 1.7b.

initial offers of ministerial positions to the decision – no longer hers – to force her into sexual servitude.

While Xu Wei had incorporated sexual tension into his play *Ci Mulan*, his Mulan character still manages to find a happy ending in marriage to her childhood fiancé. However, in each of the early and mid Qing tellings, Mulan is not as successful in returning to her old role as she was in adopting her male guise. When the sovereign's men come to force her into his harem, she slits her own throat to maintain her chastity. Despite her desire to return home and again fulfill the role of filial daughter as in the previous versions, the society in which her narrative is now located will not let her go in peace. The Shangqiu and Bozhou gazetteer accounts both maintain that she had personally participated in 80% of the battles during the campaign (閱十有八戰),[25] yet this fearless warrior is undone by this threat to her virtue. In this strain of the Mulan story, nothing matters more to the heroine than her responsibilities as a female - as a daughter she fights for her father, and as a woman she dies to protect her chastity.

Although her chastity was not doubted openly in these brief biographies, it is obvious that female chastity – especially in the case of unmarried girls – was a primary concern for Qing society. Qing laws were composed to highlight the importance of women's chastity in determining the guilt of rape cases, and were codified to such an extent that the rigor involved in judging such cases shows the primacy that determining and controlling women's chastity had for the Qing government.[26] What becomes apparent is that in Qing times, virtue in females

25 This might also be read as "about eighteen battles."
26 Matthew Sommer shows the relationship between perceived chastity and the guilt of the

came to be synonymous with chastity.[27] Mulan, stepping out of her father's home, and into the view of men for twelve years, although in disguise, might presumably have some effect upon how her virtue was read.[28]

Transforming the Ballad of Mulan into a *lienü zhuan*, these authors stripped Mulan of her subversive potential and made her instead a paragon of chastity. As the Qing dynasty struggled to promote the status quo in face of foreign aggression and domestic turmoil, images of chaste women were praised for their sacrifice during crisis, their extreme loyalty, and their adherence to moral conventions.[29] Even though Mulan's story is extraordinary, as a *lienü* tale it conformed beautifully to mid-Qing standards of virtue. *Lienü zhuan* were not written to celebrate diversity, but to teach conventions of morality to the next generation.[30]

By the end of the dynasty, however, nationalist-feminists were actively trying to dismantle these same conventions. New histories of women would be

---

attacker in rape cases quite clearly: "To sum up, the penalty for rape in Ming-Qing law was determined in proportion to the standard of chastity that had been violated." Matthew Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 75.

27 T'ien, 5.

28 Womanly propriety during the Qing depended upon her remaining inside the walls of her father's home until her marriage. Sommer notes that of 49 cases of alleged rape in the Yongzheng, Qianlong and Jiaqing reigns that were central cases and where the attacker was formally convicted, all of the women involved (if they lived through the ordeal) defended their honor by claiming to have remained solely within their father's home. "They could not be blamed for provoking rape through some questionable activity of their own." However, as concerns the 49 cases studied by Sommer, a full two-thirds of the women who were over the age of consent either died or received severe wounds during their ordeal. The strength of a woman's virtue could be proved through the physical forms of her struggle; voluntary death was often sure evidence of a woman's steadfast desire to remain chaste. Their purity, thus displayed by their sacrifice, could allow them to be "celebrated as martyrs who have perfected their virtue in death." Sommer, 103-4.

29 Lu, 68-73.

30 It was perhaps not always this way; Sherry Mou shows that in the evolution of *Lienü zhuan* from Liu Xiang's original to the versions in the two Tang histories women's biographies became increasingly narrow and didactic. See Mou, *Gentlemen's Prescriptions*, Especially chapter five, "Writing Virtues with Their Bodies: Xin Tang shu and Jiu Tang shu."

written to oppose the *lienü* tradition; Chinese historiography would move from the hands of self-serving Confucianists to the idealistic revolutionaries. Liu Yazi's criticism of the *lienü* and *jienü* histories of women symbolized a decisive break from China's recent past - China needed to modernize quickly, and this meant reinventing the identities of Chinese women. From hidden inside their parents' home they would emerge to fight in the nation's battles. Chastity would be replaced by bravery, ignorance by education, and submission by self-determination.

From Ballad to Biography

Biographies in NZSJ were more than the anecdotal "life stories" that had characterized the original *Lienü zhuan*.[31] Bearing more of a resemblance to the *liezhuan* 列傳 of Sima Qian, they provide in-depth character studies of their subjects.[32] These biographies did not simply rewrite women's stories, they renegotiated the terms under which women's stories would be written. The NZSJ biography of Mulan is radically different from those appearing in the Qing; she is given a voice, an ambition, and a new legacy. Mulan is now a dynamic heroine, with a personality that matches her great achievements. Throughout the story her patriotism, bravery, and ability are emphasized as the foundations for her remarkable success. Whereas her military career had been largely glossed over in earlier accounts, here Mulan is shown fighting in battle, cutting down her

31 Raphals, 6.

32 Joseph Allen describes the individualization in *Shiji* biographies. Joseph Allen, "An Introductory Study of Narrative Structure in the *Shi Ji*," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 3, no. 1 (1981): 35.

enemies, and defending her actions by claiming them as her duty as a *guomin* 國民 (citizen).[33] In the *lienü* accounts Mulan spoke only to humble herself before the emperor before her suicide; in the revised NZSJ *zhuanji* 傳記 (biography), she gives inspiring speeches that reveal the depths of her patriotic ambition and outrage.[34]

The version of the Mulan story written by Liu Yazi in NZSJ is in a sense a revisionist interpretation of the Mulan ballad, rather than a recasting of the plot as in the Qing *lienü zhuan*. Here Liu Yazi follows the outlines of the ballad, often repeating the same language and motifs, but expanding on the sparse details of the original in order to emphasize the qualities of dependability, bravery, aptitude and patriotism that were praised in NZSJ's "Fakanci" and "Songci." From a ballad of less than three hundred characters, Liu composed a biography that fills seven pages in the publication; the depiction takes its cues from the action of the ballad, but fills it out considerably with descriptions of her courage and patriotic motivations. To show the extent of his authorial hand, in this section I will contrast specific examples from the original poem to the biography written by Liu. We will see how Liu Yazi injected a modern sensibility into the familiar ballad, questioned traditional interpretations of the ballad and in the process undermined conventions on gendered expectations.

Mulan is first described as a child of a happy home, endowed with chivalric righteousness and heroic ability from the time she was born. This sets a scene of domestic bliss and rural tranquility, yet it also contains a foreshadowing

33 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 28.
34 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 28; 30-31.

of Mulan's exceptional actions and personality. She is described as content to do the things that most cultivated daughters do, including embroidering by her window and fixing her appearance in the mirror (刺繡窗前，整妝鏡裡). These lines bring to mind the beginning and end of the ballad, where she is first seen sighing at her loom, and last seen applying her old powders to her face. From the opening of the Liu biography, this scene of ordinary girlhood is contrasted to descriptions of her hidden ability:

> Although hers was the ordinary lot of boys and girls, her extraordinary vitality grasped the clouds, her earnest heart melted the snow. Among the ranks of women she was like a suckling tiger with a powerful growl. She had indeed sharpened the blade to wait for the time to come.
>
> Heroes produce their times, and the times produce their heroes. Born a remarkable girl, how could she be made to dwell forever confined , burying her heroic talent in the women's quarters?[35]
>
> 猶是世閒兒女之普通遭際。而奇氣拏雲。熱腸爍雪。裙釵隊裏。乳虎長鳴。果已磨刀霍霍以待日月之至矣。
>
> 英雄造時勢。時勢亦造英雄。天生奇女子。豈令其鬱鬱久居。以金閨繡閣。埋沒英才哉。

The phrase *modao huohuo* (the sound of a blade being sharpened) comes from the last stanza of the original ballad, when her brother sharpens his knife to prepare for the banquet on her return. In the first paragraph of the biography, Liu has

35 Ibid.: 28.

incorporated elements from the end of the ballad to give them another layer of meaning. The end is tied to the beginning, and the sharpened knife which had previously been in her brother's hand becomes a metaphor for Mulan. She might behave no differently from other girls, but this does not deny her incredible ability. The text suggests that ordinary girls everywhere in the reader's own time might be hiding the same talents under their innocuous demeanor.

The rumination on Mulan's happy life is cut short, however, due to the wanton aggression of foreign powers. Drawing parallels between Mulan's story and the time in which he wrote it, the author describes a disaster perpetuated at the hands of foreign armies:

> As it happened, a storm began to rise in the north of China... The Huns were lawless. Leading their masses with drawn bows and whistling arrows, they swiftly moved south. They grazed their horses between Dai and Yan. From Ganquan came the beacon fires ; bearing down on everyone were the calls for military conscription. Disorder was everywhere; like asteroids and meteors, they fell in chaos on all of China. And the old man from this peaceful household was among those who had to sign his name and set off.[36]
>
> 果也而中國北部之風潮起矣。...而匈奴不道。帥其控弦鳴鏑之衆。長驅南下。牧馬代燕之間。甘泉烽火。咄咄逼人徵兵之

36 Ibid.

詔。旁午四馳。如大星小星。亂墜於中國全部。而此和平門戶之一老人。亦在簽名出發之中。

Departing from the narrative structure of the original ballad, Liu Yazi foregrounds the crisis facing China as the impetus for Mulan's actions. The happiness of her home is broken by the attacks on the country, and the nation's problems become the problems of ordinary citizens. Mulan's father had to sign his own name to the conscription call.

In contrast, the ballad begins after the conscription has already been called. It starts with Mulan weaving at her loom, sighing over her father's fate:

唧唧復唧唧　　A sad and mournful sound comes from within
木蘭當戶織　　The open door where Mulan sits and weaves
不聞機杼聲　　It is not the sound of the girl's shuttle you hear
唯聞女嘆息　　But rather her lonely sighs[37]

But the description of her weaving in the NZSJ biography takes a bolder stance. Rather than sitting at her loom, her sense of injustice comes to the forefront. She cannot sit idly by while her father, an old man, goes to the front. Her worry here, however, is not that her father would be lost to the campaign, but that he would not be able to do enough for their country before his death:

> Mulan was weaving by the door, immersed in deep thoughts [of her father's conscription]. She threw away her weaving shuttle and rose, saying: "Taking arms to defend society is the duty of all

37 Translations of the ballad are from Allen, "Dressing and Undressing," 344-46.

citizens. Given today's situation, how could one set this aside? Yet my father is old, how can he ride out to the border regions, struggle against the fierce barbarians and have the strength to die for his countrymen? My little brother is still young, and I lack an elder one. Who can replace my father in the campaigns? Although I am a girl, I am still a citizen. I will set out in his place! Even so, I have heard the common, vile saying that a woman in the army will prevent victory. These monsters spout nonsense. To whose who insult us women by their corrupt, evil reputation, I swear I will sweep out this shame! I will go straight to ask my parents, change into man's dress, and go off to the campaign."[38]

木蘭方當戶而織。沈沈以思。直投梭起曰。執干戈以衛社稷。國民之義務也。今日之勢。其何敢辭。雖然。我父老矣。安能馳驅塞外。與強胡角逐。爲同胞出死力。我弟方幼。我又無長兄。誰代我父行者。我雖女子。亦國民一分子也。我其往哉。且我聞俚俗之惡諺矣。曰婦人在軍中則兵氣不揚。咄咄妖孽。誰以腐敗之惡名譽。污辱我女界者。我 其誓雪此恥哉。直請於父母。易男子妝以行。

Her actions and their results are the same as in the ballad, but her patriotic motivation is made much clearer. Here she dramatically throws away her weaving shuttle, casting aside the role that had heretofore defined her. Unable to sit back at her loom and work, she is at once incensed by the injustice done to her nation as

38 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 28.

well as to her sex. For this Mulan, as for the nationalists-feminists at the end of the Qing, outrage was directed at both the weakness of the nation as well as the continued denigration of women.

It is obvious in this interpretation that Mulan's first priority is to her nation, and not her family. Although written as a historical figure, Mulan epitomizes many of the ideals of twentieth century presentist authors. Women were being asked by these presentist authors to leave the security and isolation of their familial home and work on behalf of the nation. Tani Barlow writes that in the early years of the twentieth century "nation rose up to peripheralize Father" in terms of women's primary loyalties.[39] Whereas in interpretations of the original ballad, Mulan's filial sacrifice is praised as her clearest virtue, in the twentieth century her loyalties had clearly shifted from her father to her nation.

Liu Yazi takes advantage of the ballad's brevity to expand on its foundations. Where the original makes no mention of her motivations - it is only inferred that she acted in order to save her father's life - the biography offers explicit reasons for her decision. She replaces her father in battle in order to fulfill the responsibility of a citizen to augment the military and save the nation. She dresses as a man only because of the sexism of her time, which led many to refuse to believe women were capable of fighting.

Her male dress received no description in the first half of the ballad,[40] but is described in loving detail in the biography:

---

39 Barlow, 52.

40 Allen, "Dressing and Undressing," 350-51. Allen notes that it is only explicitly mentioned in the last stanza, where she takes off her armor to redress in her woman's clothing. It seems that in this passage Liu Yazi is adapting the second stanza of the ballad where she outfits only her

She put away the attitude of an ordinary child, preparing for her actions as a soldier. Her face powder was replaced by a black helmet and her undergarments by iron breastplates. Instead of silk she wore armor, her handsome steed equipped with a silver saddle, a jade bridle, and silk stirrups. Her shadow fluttered behind her. Such an heroic bearing - in the midst of millions of fierce troops, she lent her support and moved on.[41]

逐收尋常兒女之態度。整刷其軍人之運動。易粉黛而兜鍪。代綺羅以甲冑。銀鞍駿馬。玉勒鞭絲。顧影翩翩。英姿颯爽。於貔貅百萬之中。擁護而行。

Her appearance as a soldier is striking. Unlike the sad picture of doomed soldiers in Wang Han's poem, or the impoverished sons reluctantly being sent off to war in Du Fu's ballad, Mulan sits proudly on horseback, and cuts an awe-inspiring figure. Hers is a position to emulate, and not to fear or slander. Behind the glittering armor is a woman's body, but no one would ever know - she leaps into battle without any concern for her own propriety or future. Such is the ideal female soldier for NZSJ.

Mulan's transformation from a daughter to a soldier is captured within these very lines. Through a simple, superficial act of cross-dressing, Mulan is able to enter into the world of men. Liu explains that it is because Mulan's passion was so extraordinary that her patriotism had reached a fever-pitch (如焚如裂之愛國心), leading to this unprecedented feat. Yet the act in itself was simple. Through a

horse for battle; Liu simply includes Mulan's dress as well.

41 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 29.

change of dress and a steeling of her demeanor, Mulan is able to convincingly pass as a man for twelve years. Marjorie Garber, discussing the persona of the transvestite as opposed to the cross-dressing subject (in this case, the male identity assumed by Mulan and her companions, as compared to the female identity to which the reader is privy) notes that passing transvestites are able to undermine the boundaries between the sexes as they themselves, through the contrivance of clothing, are taken for the other sex. They at once define the boundary between the sexes in the ways in which they adopt their new roles, at the same time as their act effectively questions and negates this same boundary.[42] In all of the Mulan narratives, Mulan's subversion lies in the fact that she so easily and successfully adopts a male life. Mulan herself, as a passing transvestite, occupies a space where gender distinctions are transferrable and malleable. This is the inherent danger in her story; earlier in the Qing dynasty, when Mulan was a *lienü* subject, the threats posed by her transgressions were only neutralized by her suicide. In the Liu Yazi biography, however, her cross-dressing is treated less as a dangerous transgression, and more as a simple contrivance to further the plot. In this biography, Mulan's transvestism is laid bare to show the falseness of the separate expectations for men and women.

For Mulan, crossing included fighting alongside her battalion, and engaging in martial combat, from which women were typically excluded. The

42 Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 9-13. From a position of being the "third sex," neither distinctly female nor male, Garber writes, transvestites describe a "space of possibility," that bypasses traditional gendered expectations. Garber explains the position of the "third" as a device brought on to emphasize its distance from the first two, as it were. In the case of transvestites, they unbalance the symmetry of male/female, and thus provide a space to question the legitimacy of the binary.

narration of her fighting in the ballad is not dwelt upon at length, taking up only a few lines:

萬里赴戎機	For ten thousand leagues she is at the center of fighting
關山度若飛	They cross mountains as if flying
朔氣傳金柝	The northern air is heavy with the sound of drums
寒光照鐵衣	The cold light glints off their armor[43]

Yet in NZSJ, her successful adoption of characteristically male talents is made explicit:

> The killing vapours gathered like clouds: one battle led to another and fearful blades cut away violently. On horse back she slaughtered the bandits, dismounting she recorded her victories. She was utmost in bravery – the crowning glory of the entire army. This woman of bright talent and agile ability was a manly woman. Of course this was the way things were. Those barbarian idle talkers heedlessly define women's character with the bad name of being passive and dependent. These are but frogs at the bottom of a well and crows on trees - how can they talk about the eastern ocean?[44]
>
> 殺氣雲屯。一戰再戰。兇鋒大挫。上馬殺賊。下馬策勳。激烈奮勇。爲全軍冠。嗚呼。明才敏腕之女丈夫。果如是如是。彼

43 Allen, "Dressing and Undressing," 345.
44 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞盧]: 29.

島夷談士。妄以受動賴他之惡名詞。定女子之品性者。井底之蛙。木烏足以語東海也。

Passing as a man for over a decade, Mulan lives in a gray zone between traditional gender models. Mulan is never doubted as a man. As far as her companions are concerned, that is her identity. Liu writes, “Of course this was the way things were” (果如是如是). Significantly, in this biography of Mulan, her “true” sex is never revealed to her fellow soldiers, nor to the emperor. The acts which we know to be committed by a female, her companions assumed were those of a male. She crossed into the male realm seamlessly.

Liu Yazi is implicitly asking if the same might not be true for all women. If for Mulan, whom we saw fixing her hair and embroidering by the window – no different from other children – it was like this, then why would it be different for other girls? The assumptions the reader might have about women as passive or dependent were, according to the author, themselves the products of ignorance. This biography asks the reader to rethink the ability of all women. Mulan had done nothing more than cross-dress before she revealed herself to be men's equal. Indeed, in this biography, she was more than their equal. Mulan herself, however, never changed – cross-dressing was only a superficial contrivance that allowed her to fulfill her potential in a man’s world. Due to the patriotic passion which prompted her actions, her goal was noble and pure. Although others might denigrate women or keep their virtues to those praised in *lienü zhuan*, Liu Yazi – echoing the sentiment expressed by Ding Chuwo in his “Songci” – praises

women's abilities, and questions the moral authority that men have held in Chinese history.

After the soldiers return from the front, but before their appearance at the imperial court, Liu Yazi attempts to put Mulan's actions into historical context. He questions whether or not China had ever had a "nationalistic war" (*minzu zhi zhanzheng* 民族之戰爭), before coming to the conclusion that almost no men in Chinese history had ever fought, single-mindedly, for the cause of their brethren:

> To come up with a plan to die a thousand deaths without regard for one's life is difficult for people's capacity. If one does not have an ounce of nationalist thought, then the matter in the lines "Zhang Hongfan carved his success [against the Song] on a stele/ Yet he was not a barbarian, but a Han man" is indeed easy to do. Our Mulan was aware of this.[45]
>
> 夫出萬死不顧一生之計。人之所難能。而無一毫民族思想廁其間也。則彼。『鐫功奇石張宏範。不是胡兒是漢兒。』者亦一反手耳。我木蘭其知此矣。

Liu Yazi is quoting a poem by the Ming dynasty scholar Zhao Yao 趙瑤 carved at the location where Zhang Hongfan, a Yuan general of Han ethnicity, had marked his victory against the Song. This victory in the Battle of Yamen led to the Song dynasty's final defeat, and Zhang Hongfan has since been traditionally viewed as a traitor to the Han race.[46] At the same place where Zhang had proudly inscribed,

45 Ibid.: 30.

46 Jennifer W. Jay, "Memoirs and Official Accounts: The Historiography of Song Loyalists," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50, no. 2 (1990): 592-4.

“in pacifying the country the great general Zhang Hongfan wiped out the Song at this place” (鎮國大將軍張弘範滅宋於此), Zhao wrote his poem which highlighted Zhang's treachery.[47] The shame of Zhang Hongfan's betrayal acts as a dramatic counterpoint to Mulan's clear patriotism.

As Mulan's story progresses, she arrives to meet the emperor and is rewarded with offers of riches and power. As in every version of her story, she refuses them. For the ballad, as well as the Qing gazetteer biographies, her desire to return home is explicit. In these versions, this stated desire can be seen to neutralize the threat posed to conventions on gender - Mulan herself knows her proper place is in the home, and is eager to return to it.[48]

可汗問所欲	The Khan asks what it is that each desires
木蘭不用尚書郎	But Mulan has no use for a government post
愿借明駝千里足	She wants only a fine camel that can run a thousand leagues
送兒還故鄉	To carry this daughter back to her old hometown[49]

Mulan's desire to return home in the ballad casts her experiences at the front in a negative light. We know, as she did from her first mournful sighs, that her trip was a necessary evil that would not have been taken up if it was not absolutely critical. Liu Yazi changes this in his biography. Following his disappointment

47 Jiangmen Xinhui qu renmin zhengfu 中共江门市新会区委、江门市新会区人民政府 Zhonggong Jiangmen shi Xinhui qu wei, "Di qi zhang: lüyou 第十七章 旅游" <http://www.xinhui.gov.cn/export/xhsz/sz/sz04-17.htm>. The original inscription by Zhang was destroyed in the Ming, a few years before Zhao carved his poem, which is also no longer extant.

48 “The 'need' to return Mulan to her female identity would have been a clear message to the female reader: a woman might temporarily accept the male role (especially to protect her father) and her performance in that role might be equal to or better than that of a man, but in the end she must return to her gender.” Allen, "Dressing and Undressing," 377. fn 20

49 Ibid.: 345.

with male generals like Zhang Hongfan, the nobility of Mulan's actions is highlighted in her speech refusing the emperor's rewards:

> The emperor was visibly moved [by reports of her victory] and summoned Mulan to the front palace. He gave her the largest credit for the victory, offered her millions of strings of cash, and was about to appoint her as a high official. Mulan would not consider it. At once she contentedly replied: “Your servant is not skilled in speech. The reason I stayed among the troops these twelve years was because I wanted to give my life in order to repay my country. How can I take this as a price of riches and honor?” [50]
>
> 天子動容。召木蘭於前殿。論功第一。賜縑百千。將授以尚書郎之職。木蘭不屑也。直怡然對曰。某不佞。所以居留戎馬之間一十二年者。欲犧牲一身以報我民族耳。豈以是爲功名富貴之代價哉。

She asks for no camel to take her home, and does nothing to deny her achievements on the battlefield. This Mulan makes no apology for her actions, except that they were not enough. She returns home only when there is nothing left to do for her country.

There is no neutralization of Mulan's position here - indeed, Liu Yazi mocks those who see her as nothing more than a daughter. Upon her return home, he writes:

50 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞爐]: 30.

> Mulan discarded her battle armor and rearranged her tresses. She threw off her false exterior and returned to the demeanor she had twelve years ago. Alas. Who has called her an earth-shaking hero? She is only a young and fragile incomparable girl. A great person! A great person! Is she a phoenix in the morning sun, or a crane among the clouds, or the one among divine dragons who arrive, and then depart without a trace.[51]
>
> 木蘭乃易其戰袍。理其雲鬢。直擺脫假面以還復十二年前之態度。嗚呼。孰謂掀天揭地之英雄。乃一妙齡弱質之絕代女子也。偉人偉人。朝陽鳳耶。雲中鶴耶。其諸神龍之見首不見尾者耶。

Her return to her position as a daughter in her household does not diminish her ability or achievements. Although she appears "young and weak" (妙齡弱質), as she did at the beginning of this biography, this does not speak to her inner potential. The difference between Mulan on horseback and Mulan in a silk dress is presented as nothing more than a difference of clothing and perception. The implication made here is that all that is required to release women from their history of denigration is to realize that even though women may appear only "young and weak," their ability is no less than – indeed, often superior to – that of men. If this much is changed, then, in Liu Yazi's view, ordinary women can begin to have productive lives outside the home, where they can fight for their country, and help to strengthen it from within, by actively participating in their society.

51 Ibid.: 30-31.

Given the thorough revisions that Liu Yazi's biography of Mulan has made over the course of the text, the final four lines of the ballad can be seen in a revolutionary light. The original text has confounded literary historians for centuries:[52]

雄兔腳扑朔	The feet of the male rabbit flutter and fly
雌兔眼迷離	And the eyes of the female flicker and flash
兩兔傍地走	But when we go running off side by side
安能辨我是雄雌	How can you tell boy from girl as we dash?[53]

Replacing the rabbits in the coda of the Mulan poem, Liu Yazi sees Mulan and her ilk as phoenixes, cranes and dragons, who disappear into the horizon after performing great deeds. She is a savior for her country, yet not given credit for it for centuries. As corrupt historians focused on tales of chaste women, the warrior Mulan, who was so successful in her disguise, passed unnoticed in the official histories. Her fellow soldiers never came to know the truth about her sex, so focused were they all on victory in battle. Although she was unrecognized as a woman, her abilities brought victory to the empire. She embodies the traits that Ding Chuwo and Jin Tianhe praised in their editorials for soldiers and knights-errant - she is extremely capable, brave, and patriotic. This is precisely the

52 Hung, 362. William Hung briefly describes various translations and interpretations of these four lines before stating his own opinion – he believes that the lines symbolize a flirtation between Mulan and the soldier accompanying her home. Hung reads 皆 in the seventh to last line as *shi3* "for the first time" rather than *jie1* "all," leading to his conclusion that only one soldier returned with Mulan.

53 Allen, "Dressing and Undressing," 346.

soldier-citizen that they spoke of as being able to save China in the twentieth-century.

Conclusion

Mulan and other women warriors were exciting subjects to write about in part because of their seemingly immodest behavior, as virtuous women were ideally located in the inner space of the home. The woman warrior literary tradition is in part known for characterizing these heroines as sexual objects, as they temporarily discard conventions of feminine propriety.[54] In the High Qing versions, once her "true" gender is revealed, Mulan becomes a sexualized object for the soldier's gaze, as well as for the emperor to whom they make their report. The agency in Mulan's biography moves temporarily to the male actors in it, who, confounded by the thought of a woman who had been hidden amongst them for years, report her to their sovereign, who immediately sees her as little more than a female play-thing.

Liu Yazi's contribution to the Mulan legend perhaps lies in the fact that it is the only one which makes no reference at all to sexual tension. He ignores one of the story's main attractions to construct a picture of a woman warrior who was in no way markedly female. She never reveals her sex to her companions, even at the end of the biography, and no one is left to be amazed at her achievements. The role of sex in this tale seems to be aimed more at forcing the reader to question her own assumptions about women's ability and talents. Emphasized instead are

54 Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China*, 107.

the characteristics of bravery and patriotism that defined the aims of the journal. Mulan's return to female dress does not neutralize her transgressions, but rather reveals how superficial gendered boundaries are. Mulan's actions are not excused, her achievements are not trivialized, and she is finally returned to a pantheon of female heroes that the author hopes will provide inspiration for his sister compatriots. Mulan is recast as a military heroine for the contemporary generation to emulate – a dramatic departure from her being praised as a filial daughter or chaste martyr. Through his expansions on the original ballad, Liu Yazi has described a heroine that inspires change and revolution, not maintenance of the status quo. Although she returns home, she has shown that a woman's outward appearance, "young and weak" as it may be, has little bearing on her inner potential.

Liu closes his biography as he began it, with a reminder of the current crisis then facing China:

> Now these groups [of imperialist nations] have used the power of dominance and terror, along with imperialism, and have pointed their collective arrows at China. Our China accepts easily to be bound and surrender. And then we become slaves, no better than beasts of burden. Once we give up, the myriad calamities from which we will not revive will begin here. Those who do not wish for this have no choice but to seek strategies of resistance. An army that encourages military spirit, and those with qualifications as citizens are the essential elements in creating strong power. What

is more, nationalism is indeed the mother of imperialism. My sisters and aunts, why would we not pay special attention to this point? How could the coming of an army of women or a city of women onto the stage of a new China in the twentieth century be left to the responsibility of strangers?[55]

強國十數。方群以其最跋扈最恐怖之強權與帝國主義。集矢於我中國。我中國而拱手受戍面縛出降也。則奴隸牛馬。萬劫不復。從此始矣。非然者。則必不可不求所以抵禦之策。夫尚武精神軍國民資格者。製造強權之要素。而民族主義者。又帝國主義之母也。我諸姑伯姊。曷加意於此點矣。娘子軍夫人城之出現於二十世紀新中國之舞台者。豈異人任耶。

Mulan's biography in NZSJ is an example of a successful Chinese military struggle. Channeling her outrage at the insult to her nation and her race, Liu's heroine has gone on to bring victory to China, without any regard for the transmission of her own name in the annals of history. She has sacrificed self for nation, and in so doing, saved China from the evils of imperialism. We see in this version of the Mulan tale an echo of the themes promoted in NZSJ's "Songci" and "Fakanci." Here, Mulan is strong, selfless and patriotic. Through the simple ruse of transvestism she unleashes her true nature; it is only the reader who is surprised by her being a woman; not Mulan herself, nor her biographer.

55 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞爐]: 31-2.

In the next chapter, I will examine the NZSJ biographies of the knights-errant Hongxian and Nie Yinniang. They were also written by Liu Yazi (under a new, female pen-name), and began in the issue immediately following his biography of Mulan. Here Liu Yazi once again combs through China's literature to find examples of fearless women warriors. We will see how the knight-errant ideal differed from that of the soldier Mulan represented, as well as how Liu Yazi's feminine persona, Lady Pan Xiaohuang of Songling, contributed to the discourse on female education and changes in Chinese historiography.

Chapter Three

Independent Heroines as Role Models:

"Biographies of the Chinese Female Knights-Errant Hongxian and Nie Yinniang"

In the "Fakanci" and "Songci" examined in chapter one, we saw that the capability of the soldier was one of three desired characteristics for the female citizen of twentieth-century China; the other two being the bravery of the *xia* 俠 (knights-errant) and the benefit of a literary and physical education. As we saw, bravery was not exclusive to the *xia* themselves, as Mulan exhibited exceptional and admirable daring in her biography. As a soldier, however, Mulan followed orders more than she gave them, and her actions are described as arising more from her righteous patriotism than from her capacity to decide the next course of action herself. The biographies of female knights-errant, beginning in the fourth issue of *Nüzi shijie* and continuing over three issues, focus on a different type of heroine – one who had received an education that improved her natural abilities, to the extent that she could act independently for a righteous cause. They thus present a different but related figure to that of the female solider, one that would be mobilized to present a new set of virtues.

The only biographies of female knights-errant to be included in NZSJ were of the Tang dynasty heroines Hongxian 紅線 and Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘. Originally found in the Tang dynasty (618-907) *chuanqi* 傳奇 (Strange Tales),[1]

1 Yuan Jiao 袁郊, "Hongxian 紅線," in *Tang Wudai chuanqi ji* 唐五代傳奇集, ed. Li Gefei 李格非 and Wu Zhida 吳志達 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1997). Bei Xing, "Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘," in *Tang Wudai chuanqi ji* 唐五代傳奇集, ed. Li Gefei 李格非 and Wu

their historicity is questionable, and their stories (as presented in these tales) are utterly impossible. Yet in NZSJ these two women became the subjects of the only biographies devoted to female knights-errant, despite this martial trope having been so praised in the inaugural editorials. This is not to say, however, that the attention paid to these knights-errant is slight. On the contrary, the biographies of these two women were spread out over three non-consecutive issues, with the last installment being a commentary by the author.[2]

The biographies of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang were, like that of Mulan, also written by Liu Yazi, although here he writes under the new pen-name of Songling *nüzi* Pan Xiaohuang 松陵女子潘小璜 (Pan Xiaohuang, the Woman of Songling).[3] Writing in this guise, Liu Yazi creates a female authority figure – an educated woman historian. Liu's female author persona, Pan Xiaohuang, made other notable appearances in NZSJ: apart from several biographies,[4] she also contributed a poem in the section for female authors in the *Wenyi* 文藝 (Literature and Arts) column in the second year of NZSJ's publication.[5] In these biographies the author-character of Pan Xiaohuang projects an image of a woman who had enjoyed a good education, and who draws from it in her writing to restore the true

---

Zhida 吴志達 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1997).

2 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia Hongxian Nie Yinniang zhuan 中國女劍俠紅線聶隱娘傳 " *Nüzi shijie*, nos. 4, 5, and 7 (1904).

3 Xia Xiaohong, 73.

4 In addition to the biographies of these female knights-errant, Pan Xiaohuang is credited with the biography of Liang Hongyu 梁紅玉 in the seventh issue, and those of the unknown martyred heroines of the eleventh issue.

5 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Kutao yahun 哭陶亞魂" *Nüzi shijie*, no. 15 (1905): 56. NZSJ had a dedicated column for literature as it did for biographies. For the first half of its run this was titled *Wenyuan* 文苑 (Literary Garden); in the first issue of the second year the name was changed to *Wenyi*. Poems in this column are grouped according to the sex of the author – men were grouped under *Gong yu ji* 攻玉集 (Smashing Jade Collection) and women under *Yin hua ji* 因花集 (Collections from Flowers) – the poem by Pan Xiaohuang is found in this latter collection.

character of these two Chinese female knights-errant. Inserting her own voice into the biographies, she tells the reader repeatedly that previous versions of these women's stories contained erroneous information, meant to deceive future generations and hide the revolutionary truth about these remarkable heroines. Using her own skills as a historian, Pan Xiaohuang's role was to rehabilitate these women's stories, thus showing her readers what extraordinary potential any woman could have. Liu himself clearly meant these stories to be read as coming from a woman's pen, and therefore in this chapter, I will treat Liu Yazi's created author Pan Xiaohuang as the author of the biographies, as her position as a female historian has an important bearing on how these women's life stories can be read.

In this chapter my analysis will follow the structure of these serialized NZSJ biographies. In the first section I begin with their first installment and the author's preface to these biographies. Pan Xiaohuang begins by setting the context for her revisions. As she briefly introduces the history of *xia* as well as their treatment in works of history and literature, I will show which values of the *xia* were emphasized, and to what extent they match the virtues desired of twentieth-century Chinese citizens of both genders. In the second section, by comparing the NZSJ versions of these stories to the originals found in the Tang dynasty *chuanqi*, my reading aims to show how Pan Xiaohuang challenged the traditional trope of *nüxia* 女侠 (female knights-errant). The changes are at times more nuanced than those found in the Mulan biography, as the author quotes extensively from the original stories, especially in the Hongxian biography. What changes there are, however, significantly alter the reading of the story and emphasize the very same

virtues that were set out in the opening editorials of NZSJ. Finally, in the last section, I will briefly investigate the persona of the credited author, Pan Xiaohuang, to see how she transformed traditional historiography through her own writing of history during the revolutionary moment of the late Qing dynasty.

Introducing Knights-Errant

The NZSJ biographies begin with a recounting of the history of *xia*. Pan Xiaohuang asks a series of rhetorical questions about the identity of well-known Chinese and Western heroines who had currency in the new print media at that time and who would have been familiar to readers of the journal. Her list begins with several Chinese women of exceptional courage: the Woman of Yue, a skilful swordswoman from the state of Yue during the Spring and Autumn period;[6] Pang E;[7] the sister of the famous assassin Nie Zheng recorded in the *Shiji*;[8] and Mother Lü of Haiqu.[9] It then turns to a list of Western heroines: Joan of Arc, Louise Michel,[10] Weilu,[11] and Sofia Perovskaia.[12] A passage of wonderment at their fantastic deeds follows:

6 "Yuenü 越女," in *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 (Shanghai: Hanyu da cidian chubanshe, 2000), vol. 9: 1110.

7 See note 42, p. 35.

8 See note 41, p. 35.

9 Mother Lü of Haiqu 海曲呂母 (c. 14-17 C.E.). After her son was sentenced to death by the district magistrate of Haiqu, she organized a group of young men to avenge her son. After a number of years, they succeeded in beheading the district magistrate. Mou, ed. *Biographical Sketches*, 13.

10 Louise Michel 美世兒 (1820-1905) A French anarchist active during the late nineteenth-century, she was a popular figure in the Chinese press during the late Qing. Judge, *Precious Raft*, 175-6.

11 Weilu 韋露. I have not been able to identify this person.

12 Sofia Perovskaia 蘇菲亞 (1854-1881). “An aristocratic young woman known for the assassination of Tsar Alexander II.” Hu Ying, 111.

> Decapitated heads can be found in their bags. They could kill people in marketplaces and perform miraculous transformations. They are unfathomable. Not quite ghosts nor deities, neither do they seem to be spirits or immortals. They are not spirits or immortals. They are called "knights-errant."[13]
>
> 探頭於囊。殺人於市。神奇變化。不可思議。疑鬼疑佛。疑神疑仙。非神非仙。是名曰俠。

Pan Xiaohuang appears entranced by these women warriors. Their actions are shrouded in mystery, but are all the more compelling for it. In her treatment of such "unfathomable" (不可思議) women, she straddles the line between following their exciting and fantastic adventures, and the need to create a more credible narrative. Yet the traits that defined these female knights-errant, like their male counterparts, remained largely intact: they accomplished amazing feats almost single-handedly.

Knights-errant differ from soldiers in this key regard. Whereas soldiers follow orders and work as a unit, knights-errant are largely individual actors who follow their own code of conduct to address wrongs. Their morality is crucial to their heroism, and it becomes the basis for their praise. Pan Xiaohuang is obviously captivated by both their fortitude as well as their generosity:

> Pan Xiaohuang says: Two thousand years ago, China was a country of knights-errant. Two thousand years ago, the people of China were chivalrous people. Knights-errant were the next best

13 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 21.

> after the sages, the opposite of the Confucians, and the enemy of kings, dukes, and ministers. They honored their words, but cared little about dying. They spent money like profligates to bond with others and would also walk on boiling water and tread on burning coals, generously giving their lives to one who understood them. Once on a mission, they would never retreat. Once faced with death, they never looked away.[14]
>
> 潘小璜曰。吾二千年前之中國。俠國也。吾二千年前中國之民。俠民也。俠者聖之亞也。儒之反也。王公卿相之敵也。重然諾。經生死。煇金結客。履湯蹈火。慨然以身許知己。而一往不返。一瞑不視。

Pan Xiaohuang looks to the *xia* in ancient history in order to define the qualities that she admires. In her telling, two thousand years ago, in the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE), China was a country of heroes. Second only to the sages, knights-errant fought for the common people, and acted with an individual code of ethics that kept their conduct righteous. This environment is what the author hopes to recapture in the twentieth century: with the ideals of the *xia*, the people would rise to create a nation that could once again become a beacon of honor for later generations to admire and emulate.

In his defense for including the *youxia* 游俠 (wandering knights-errant) biographies in the *Shiji*, Sima Qian outlined their virtues as a response to counter the infamous reputation that the *xia* had acquired. In his opinion, these men had

14 Ibid.

been erroneously grouped with "cruel and arrogant men" (*baohao* 暴豪) that prey on the weak.[15] The history of the *xia* had been controversial because of their non-conformity to the Confucian ideals of morality and order – rather than work within the hierarchical relations that structured society, the *xia* existed on the margins of traditional China, ready to be of use to men who recognized their worth. James Liu in his classic study characterized them as "knights of the common people... who are praised for their righteousness a thousand miles around." They fight for justice and never go back on their word, whether it leads to "survival or destruction, life or death." *Xia* relied more upon their own summation of the virtues of others rather than their position in a hierarchical relationship. Respecting horizontal bonds of loyalty between one another, they practiced a universality that "went beyond the call of duty" for Confucian thinkers.[16]

The emphasis on building a strong citizenry in the late Qing lay in building a sense of common patriotism amongst all members of society. Parallels existed with the characterization of the *xia*, as their strength and power were independent of the state apparatus and civil bureaucracy. Knights-errant instead lived and fought amongst the common people, finding virtuous brethren amongst those whom the government ignored. The appeal to the nationalist-revolutionaries at the end of the Qing seems clear: here was a pattern for self-cultivated virtue, honor, and strength that could summon a power independent of the failing Qing dynasty. Should their individualistic ambitions be tempered with national pride,

15 Sima Qian, in Watson, trans., 453-5.
16 James J.Y. Liu, 7.

and a loyalty to their country and countrymen, knights-errant could be inspirations for model citizens, women as well as men. As they follow horizontal codes of loyalty, tying brother to sister, citizens would be united with one another and build a new nation with these non-hierarchical bonds. Found among the "lanes and byways" of ordinary towns,[17] *xia* themselves were indistinguishable from the outcasts and commoners among whom they lived.

Yet Pan Xiaohuang is forced to look back over two thousand years in order to find a society where the *xia* were appreciated and praised. Although the *youxia* comprised a number of biographies in Sima Qian's *Shiji* from the Han dynasty, this would be their last appearance in the official histories.[18] In the ensuing two thousand years, it would seem, the legacy of the knights-errant had been corrupted in their move from historical biography to historical fiction:

> But writers littered their texts with exaggerations and fabrications. This has made later generations both incredulous and fearful of what they read. Those who worship the knights-errant admire them if not for their acrobatic skills, then for their lives as wanderers and hunters; if not for their free-spirited singing and hunting, then for the fiends with faces masked in black kerchiefs and holding red lanterns. Indeed, I am both doubtful and fearful of them.[19]

17 Sima Qian, in Watson, trans., 455.
18 Robert Ruhlmann, "Traditional Heroes in Chinese Popular Fiction," in *The Confucian Persuasion* ed. Arthur F. Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 172.
19 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 21.

而文者靈誕恍惚其文章。使後之人疑且懼焉。而崇拜之者。不爲都盧尋橦之技術。則爲鳴鏑晌馬之生涯。不爲徵歌射雉之風流。則爲紅燈黑帕之妖孽。吾亦疑且懼焉。

In writing the *xia* as fiction, these authors (themselves a part of the literate class) embellished the stories of their quick-tempered heroes, as can be seen in the Tang tales. Not seeking to address their historicity, instead the works were sometimes exercises in creative writing, and show an active literary imagination.[20] The appeal of the hero as a locus of discontent with the times is long established in Chinese history. Hu Ying writes that the character of the outlaw, being itself outside of accepted virtue, "provides ready-made authority to inscribe transgressive behavior that would have been otherwise unrepresentable."[21] Authors then can use these characters to voice dissent and alternatives to the prevailing order. Robert Ruhlmann suggests that, while not necessarily didactic, the traits of the *xia* and conditions of their environment can be read as a creation of a model type that exists within less than ideal times.[22] According to Liu and Ruhlmann, the stories that had started off with personalities and deeds became fantastic over time, and writing their histories became a past-time for well-positioned authors who were discontented and looking for escape,[23] or who hoped to recognize a bit of themselves in their renegade characters.[24]

20 James J.Y. Liu, 90.
21 Hu Ying, "Writing Qiu Jin's Life: Wu Zhiying and Her Family Learning," *Late Imperial China* 25, no. 2 (2004): 132-3.
22 Ruhlmann, 146.
23 James J.Y. Liu, 86.
24 Ruhlmann, 146.

Yet these stories, based as they were in such flights of fancy, were remade into historical biographies. Writing in the late Qing dynasty, Pan Xiaohuang made the *nüxia* into more inimitable heroines. No longer simply impossible incarnations of their author's desires, these women were now more like the *youxia* praised in the biography section of the *Shiji*. Their character was just as prized as their activities, and their legends were legitimized by Pan Xiaohuang as she recoded them as *zhuanji*. Hongxian and Nie Yinniang were originally written as supernatural heroines, gifted with extraordinary skills and abilities that defied believability. For Pan Xiaohuang to rewrite these fictional women as historical women, she would have to excise the supernatural elements that had earlier defined them.

And so for Pan Xiaohuang, the challenge was to find examples of female knights-errant from Chinese history that could realistically embody this spirit of individualism at the same time as it encouraged nationalist pride. She describes how Hongfu 紅撫, another *chuanqi* heroine, helped others to overthrow the corrupt Sui dynasty and bring peace to the central plains.[25] But she adds that this story is not strange enough to correct, and instead introduces the twin subjects of her reconstructed biographies, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang:

> I will narrate the strangest of all, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang.
>
> Alas. As I narrate them they are without strangeness. Will my

25 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 22. Hong fu and Qiuran ke (the curly-bearded stranger) who work together to overthrow the Sui, appear in a different Tang *chuanqi.* For a translation of the short story, see Cyril Birch, ed. *Anthology of Chinese Literature: From the Earliest Times to the Fourteenth Century* (New York: Grove Press,1994), 314-22.

female compatriots indeed hear this, and rise in excitement?[26]

而述最奇之紅線聶隱娘。嗚呼。吾述之而無奇也。吾女同胞其亦聞而興起乎。

Pan Xiaohuang rewrites the stories of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang to show exactly how possible and believable their stories are. Yet the feats that they achieve are still remarkable, and dependent upon their amazing abilities. She emphasizes that in the author's understanding, these tales are all eminently possible. In her telling, the supernatural elements that characterized their narratives in the Tang will be either excised or explained by emphasizing instead the education and unrecognized potential of the female knight-errant.

Rewriting the Female Knight-Errant

1. The Biography of Hongxian

The first of the biographies of female knights-errant to be published in NZSJ was that of Hongxian. The versions of her story from the Tang *chuanqi* and NZSJ follow the same plot structure, aside from their widely different endings. When we first meet Hongxian she is a servant in the provincial governor's home in Luzhou 潞洲, where she excels in her studies and becomes his private secretary. In the beginnings of these stories, in an episode unconnected to the main plot, she shows remarkable talent in being able to identify different musical instruments used in an orchestra when listening to a performance. Later on, after the

26 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 22.

unprovoked aggressions of a neighboring governor (a relative by marriage to the Luzhou governor), she counsels her lord and then volunteers her services as a knight-errant to secure peace between their two lands. Dressed in black, she enters the villain's bed chamber, steals a gold box from his bedside, and returns to Luzhou. Later still, she returns the box to the villain to demonstrate her lord's magnanimity as well as her foe's impotence and selfishness. Soon, peace is restored to the provinces because of her interventions.

The plot line is the same in both versions of her story. Embedded in the NZSJ telling, however, are various changes that address Hongxian's abilities, education, and aptitude. At times, Pan Xiaohuang quotes verbatim from her source material, but with subtle injections from her own pen that alter the implications in her version. She introduces three major and distinct changes: in addition to her more detailed characterization of Hongxian, she also lingers on the depiction of the villain, Tian Chengsi 田承嗣, and his selfish desire to intrude on his relative's land for petty personal gain. The third major alteration to the story involves the ending – Pan Xiaohuang closes her version after Hongxian's victory against Tian Chengsi, without repeating the supernatural explanation for Hongxian's abilities found in the first version. In so doing, she casts aside the supernatural origins of the heroine's abilities, negating their influence over her actions.

At the beginning of the story, as noted, Hongxian is credited with having an amazing gift for music. The Tang version is characteristically terse. After

providing a brief setting of the story, it shows Hongxian's talents in a small episode which has no bearing on the main plot of the story:

> One evening at a military banquet Hung-hsien [Hongxian] remarked to Sung [Xue Song 薛嵩, the provincial governor of Luzhou], "The deerskin drum sounds so sorrowful – the drummer must have something on his mind." Sung, who had a keen sensibility for music, replied, "It seems that you are right." He summoned the drummer and asked him what the matter was. "My wife died last night," the drummer said. "But I dare not ask for leave." Sung at once gave him permission to go home.[27]

Hongxian is represented as an advisor to her similarly capable lord. Xue Song has come to agree with her even before summoning the drummer – once she brings his attention to the sound of the drum, he immediately recognizes her observation as correct, and responds accordingly by summoning the drummer and sending him home to grieve.

In the NZSJ biography, Pan Xiaohuang rewrites Hongxian as a servant girl without any spectacular inborn talent. When she is introduced in the biography, it is explained that as a servant in Xue Song's household, she was privileged to receive a good education, "to the point where she developed a marvelous understanding of musical tones and a profound knowledge of the classics and histories" (甚至妙解音律深通經史).[28] Whereas in the original story her musical

27,Translated by Cordell D.K Yee in *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and the Fantastic*, ed. Karl S.Y. Kao (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 363-70.

28 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 22.

skill was not explained, but was given as evidence of Hongxian's innate, almost supernatural, talent, here it becomes the product of a careful education. Her education is also given more "modern" implications, as the term the author uses for education is *jiaoyu* 教育, a neologism in the late Qing which Lydia Liu describes as a "return graphic loan," that is, a term that was adopted in Japan using Chinese characters to translate modern European terms, and then imported into China.[29] In this biography, *jiaoyu* encompasses historical, musical, and martial-arts training.

Bérénice Reynaud, writing on *nüxia* in the *wuxia pian* 武俠片 (martial arts films) of the twentieth-century, notes that these women's skills seem preternatural. Unlike male heroes, who are often seen undergoing a thorough training regimen, it remains a mystery as to where the women warriors acquire their skill in martial arts.[30] Women warriors can be seen as "aberrations" in this light, as they are thus more distanced from reality. But in Pan Xiaohuang's biography of Hongxian, the reader is made aware of her training as a child. In the passage highlighted here, specific mention was made to the fact that Hongxian had learned how to understand the subtleties in music. As a direct result of this, she is able to hear the emotion in the drummer's playing, which is imperceptible to Xue Song. Traditionally women warriors seemed to be supernaturally

29 Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture and Translated Modernity -- China, 1900-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 302. The term "*jiaoyu*" appears on page 315.

30 Bérénice Reynaud, "The Book, the Goddess and the Hero: Sexual Politics in the Chinese Martial Arts Film," *Senses of Cinema*, no. 26 (2003), sensesofcinema.com.

talented,[31] but in this case the author supplies an explanation for her skill in the narrative to render her character more “realistic” and less “fantastic.”

This is not to say that Hongxian was entirely without supernatural talents. Indeed, the action of the plot necessitates some incredible ability on the part of the heroine. In order to travel to and return from Tian Chengsi's territory, a combined distance of over seven hundred *li* over the course of a single evening, she must be endowed with extraordinary speed. In the midst of a passage laden with verbatim sentences from the original, however, Pan Xiaohuang inserts an explanation for her skills by having Hongxian say to Xue Song: “When I was younger, I had learned the technique of flying” (妾少嘗學飛行術).[32] There seems to be a contradiction here in Pan's styling of the modern heroine. The interest in the narrative depends upon Hongxian's accomplishing impressive feats, and so perhaps to make them entirely realistic would diminish their attraction to the reader. Yet, however improbable it is that Hongxian could move with such alacrity across vast expanses, at least it is explained as an acquired skill in Pan Xiaohuang’s telling. Pan thus elaborated on Hongxian’s background to make her more “realistic” as the subject of a biography rather than a fictional character in a *chuanqi* tale.

After this episode, the NZSJ narrative proceeds to paint a picture of the political disorder at the end of the Tang dynasty, when the military governors and their followers looked only for personal gain. In stark contrast to this trend is Xue Song, whom we are told advanced to his position by virtue of his meritorious

31 Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China*, 109.

32 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 23.

conduct. In order to promote peace in his territory, he married off his children to the families of the neighboring provincial governors, which was carried out according to the emperor's command. Despite these marital bonds, however, the villain, Tian Chengsi seeks to acquire Xue Song's territory in order to gain access to the fresh sea air for the benefit of his health. In the original, this desire provides the catalyst that drives the story's plot, and is described briefly:

> T'ien Ch'eng-ssu [Tian Chengsi] suffered from pulmonary emphysema. It was so unbearable during the summer heat that he often said, "If I could move my garrison to Shan-tung [Shandong] and breathe the cool air there, I would live several years longer."[33]

In the NZSJ version, Tian Chengsi is introduced explicitly as a plotting "careerist:"

> But Tian Chengsi was the worst of the careerists. *He suffered from pulmonary emphysema*. *It was so unbearable during the heat* that he considered moving to Shandong to breathe the sea air. Day and night he schemed for a way to encroach on Song's territory.[34]
>
> 田承嗣者。野心家之尤也。常患肺氣。遇熱增劇。因思移鎮山東。呼吸海氣。日夜謀所以襲嵩之舉。

Pan Xiaohuang's narrative implies that Xue Song's trust in his neighbor and his bold decision to join their families together through marriage were misplaced. Tian is especially reviled for his boundless greed, and he is described later as "the

33 Yuan Jiao, in Yee, trans, 364.

34 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo Nü Jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 24. Yuan Jiao 袁郊, in Yee, trans., 364. Passages in italics indicate that they were taken verbatim from the original Tang tale.

world's foremost man of overweening ambition" (世界第一之野心家).[35] Disrupting civilian households in both Xue Song's as well as his own territory, he ignores the livelihood of others and focuses only on his own gain.

There is another, more subtle change in the NZSJ biography that highlights the distinction between the educated and brave Hongxian and the selfish and vain Tian Chengsi. In a significant passage in the original tale, Hongxian carefully dresses herself before setting out to Tian's camp. In lines of parallel prose (which were abbreviated and simplified in NZSJ) she carefully puts on several layers of dark clothing and gold jewelry. In the original tale, however, the passage ends with her writing the name of a god on her forehead as a talisman. This act, suggestive of the belief in the supernatural, is removed from the biography by Pan Xiaohuang, which has our intelligent heroine acting without this spiritual protection. The villain of the story, however, has his superstitions left intact, as narrated by Hongxian to Xue Song upon her return:

> *"In front of his pillow there was a sword engraved with the seven stars of the Northern Dipper and in front of the sword there was an open gold box. Tian's own birth date and the names of the gods of the Northern Dipper were written inside it. Spread out around it were fragrant incense and beautiful jewels.* [36] What monstrous things!"[37]

35 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo Nü Jianxia," *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 4 (1904): 24.
36 Ibid. Yuan Jiao in Yee, trans, 366.
37 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 25.

枕前露七星劍。劍前開一金合。合內書生辰甲子與北斗神名。復以名香美珠。鎮壓其上。咄咄妖孽。

Whereas in the original tale, Hongxian at this moment ruminates on the vulnerability of Tian Chengsi, who might easily have died by her hand, the new Hongxian only mocks his opulence and superstition by enumerating them. In Pan Xiaohong's rewriting, this heroine is severed from the original's supernatural roots. Instead, she scorns Tian's mantic paraphernalia and relies on her own intelligence and cunning to save the day.

Indeed, it is Tian's utter dependence on these superstitions that leads to his downfall. When his horoscope is stolen by Hongxian, his camp is thrown into complete panic. The return of the gold box, itself nothing more than a meaningless object, ensures Tian's compliance with whatever Xue Song demands. This enemy is hollow and without virtue. As strong as his forces may have been, they provide no defense against the clever maneuvers of the female knight-errant. As a spy in Tian Chengsi's territory, Hongxian passes undetected through the boundaries of the female quarters to the male realm of war and battles, just as Mulan did. Our heroine acts quietly and unobtrusively in order to stabilize peace in the region. Tian Chengsi might never know the agent behind his misfortune, as the armies in Mulan's narrative never knew the capable soldier was a woman, but the reader is made aware of the outstanding potential of such women through the intervention of the female historian persona Pan Xiaohuang.

Although these changes to the narrative are indeed significant, the largest break with the Tang version comes at the end. In NZSJ, after peace is restored to

the country and Tian Chengsi realizes the error of his ways, the story comes to an abrupt halt. The author Pan Xiaohuang writes a quick evaluation of Hongxian's life and impact:

> Alas. Hongxian was indeed just a woman. With one sword she met victory, and enabled the two territories to keep their cities, ten thousand people to preserve their lives, and let disorderly ministers know fear, and heroic men plan for peace. She was more courageous than a general of three armies, and wiser than ten thousand teachers. She was a female spy and a wandering female knight-errant. How could she not be said to be marvelous?[38]
>
> 嗚呼。紅線者。亦女子耳。一劍功成。而使兩地保其城池。萬人全其生命。亂臣知懼。列士謀安。勇於三軍將。賢於十萬師。爲女偵探爲女遊俠。可不謂奇哉。

This ending is an obvious contrast to her fate in the original. The statement "Hongxian was indeed just a woman" (紅線者。亦女子耳) stands in opposition to her "male roots" in the Tang tale, where it is revealed at the end that in her past life she was a man, who was born as a girl by way of punishment from the gods. In NZSJ, there is no such revelation. Instead of having a mystical origin story, this Hongxian accomplished all with just her sword (一劍功成), besting the abilities of all men, whether ministers, generals or teachers.

Rong Cai writes that the image of Hongxian in the original Tang ending is now "[m]asculinized and consequently legitimized," and that "the woman's

38 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 4 (1904): 25.

outstanding ability, though miraculous, upsets none of the gender distinctions that stabilize the traditional social system."[39] This "masculinized" ending is completely excised in NZSJ, and Hongxian's achievements are credited as those of a woman. She is not written as a fantastical figure without any relation to the real world; instead what we see is a woman whose achievements are explained as grounded in her early childhood education. Although the author Pan Xiaohuang is often at pains to reconcile the action of the story with reality, she makes do by constantly referring to the strength of Hongxian's training and the fact that Hongxian was nothing more than a woman.

2. The Biography of Nie Yinniang

Much of the biography of Nie Yinniang in NZSJ mirrors the changes seen in the Hongxian narrative. However, it is only about half the length of the Hongxian biography. In it, the reader encounters by now familiar themes: Nie Yinniang's extensive early martial-arts training leads to her later success; the characterization of the villain is once again much more developed than in the original tale; and once again the more incredible aspects of her story are excised, including the miraculous feats she accomplishes at the end of the tale. There are a few key passages that I will highlight in order to examine further what influence the crisis of the early twentieth century had on these stories. In the Nie Yinniang biography, much more than in Hongxian's, the way in which Yinniang makes her decisions is described in detail, allowing the reader access to her thought processes and motivations. In this sense it resembles the Mulan biography, where these

39 Cai, 446.

revelations from the heroine in the narrative give a fuller characterization of the heroine, and make her more realistic in the process.

Pan Xiaohuang's biography of Nie Yinniang follows the plot line of the original tale (as did her biographies of Hongxian and Mulan): When Yinniang is ten years old, a nun sees her and decides to abduct her in order to teach her martial arts. The young girl is taken to a mountainside cave, where she is instructed for a period of five years, culminating in the assassination of a villain at the nun's orders. On Yinniang's return home, her father distances himself from her, and she chooses to marry a mirror-grinder who happened to come by her home. On her father's death she enters the service of a military governor, but while on a mission to kill the governor's foe, she changes allegiances instead. The abandoned governor sends skilled assassins after her, but she bests them with skill and intellect, ensuring the safety of her chosen lord.

What such a brief summary leaves out is the fantastic and supernatural details that characterize the *chuanqi* tale of the Tang period. In that telling, Yinniang learns to fly while at her mountainside retreat, and gives over a head of her victim to the nun, who promptly dissolves it into water by use of an unknown medicine. The nun places a dagger into Yinniang's skull for the sake of convenience, and Yinniang at one point turns into a gnat to hide inside her lord's belly while he sleeps. Indeed, there were so many impossible details to the Nie Yinniang tale that the NZSJ version can barely quote from it as it does in the Hongxian biography. Instead, Pan Xiaohuang completely rewrites the tale into the biography, which contains extensive changes from the original.

From the beginning of the NZSJ biography, Yinniang is described as a remarkable girl (*yingyi* 穎異) with the inner strength of a knight-errant that immediately draws others to her. Soon after she turns ten, a nun passes by and recognizes her ability. She asks the father to give Yinniang to her so that she may teach her, but the father loudly and angrily refuses. The nun chastises him, as in the original tale, saying that even if he kept her locked in a fortress, still she would not be safe. The biography of Hongxian makes the point that even an ordinary girl, a servant no less, when educated in the household, could master the ability to perform remarkable deeds. In the case of Nie Yinniang, the father was fortunate to have an exceptional girl born to his family, but he rejects offers to have her educated.[40] The next day he awakes to find that Nie Yinniang has vanished without a trace, abducted by the nun.

The nun whisks Yinniang off to a cave in the mountains, where she meets another impressive young girl like herself. There she undergoes a strict and detailed training regimen with these female instructors. After repeated successes, she is sent back home to rest. The Yinniang in the NZSJ biography is dismayed by this change in her life. Her father, Nie Feng 聶鋒 – who had searched for her for ten days after her disappearance – now resents his daughter and becomes frightened of her. Yinniang is left without a purpose in life; although she steals out of her home every night, she becomes listless and dejected. That is, until her father dies:

40 It is not surprising that fathers/parents would refuse to let a nun teach their daughters. In the Ming and Qing, nuns were regarded as among six categories of old/dangerous women ("grannies") who could mislead women of good families if they were allowed into the household. Victoria Cass, *Dangerous Women : Warriors, Grannies, and Geishas of the Ming* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 65-86.

> Although Yinniang lived at home, she did not even for one day abandon her fervent heart. Every night she went out, and every dawn she returned. No one knew where she went. Her father did not dare scold her. His heart saw nothing good in her. ... Several years later, Nie Feng died from illness. Tian [the military governor of Weibo] knew something of Yinniang and her husband's remarkable feats, and with great ceremony he asked for their services. They were enlisted as his retainers, and Yinniang was as excited as a soaring dragon or a prancing tiger. The curtains on this real-life drama that startles spirits and makes ghosts weep were about to be drawn open slowly.[41]
>
> 隱娘雖家居。而熱心猶未肯一日棄置。每夜出晨返。不知所往。父不敢窮詰。心顧勿善也。 ... 數年後。聶鋒遘疾終。田氏知隱娘夫婦奇事。以禮羅致之。署爲左右吏。而隱娘龍騰虎躍。驚神泣鬼之活劇。乃漸近開幕時矣。

In this passage the reader is shown Yinniang's quiet determination to do something purposeful even as she is prevented from pursuing it, and her transformation into an earnest retainer ready to put her service to her lord when the opportunity presented itself. The biography announces this moment as the beginning of a “real-life drama.”

Unfortunately for Yinniang, the governor Tian turns out to be unworthy of her loyalty. When he sends her on a mission to assassinate his enemy Liu Wu 劉

41 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 5 (1904): 16.

悟, Yinniang and her husband are filled with doubts, but still leave to carry out their duty. His adversary Liu Wu was wise enough to expect such an assault, and by virtue of his wisdom and benevolence he persuades the young couple to serve him instead. The author defends Yinniang's shifting loyalties by explaining her dilemma in terms of the two men's worthiness:

> Tian controlled Yinniang, making her his own assistant. Several years passed. He thought that he had not been able to get even the slightest result. Although Liu Wu was detested [by Tian] as an enemy, he was magnanimous in nature and treated others with utmost sincerity. Even a righteous knight-errant like Yinniang would change her loyalty and put herself down to serve him. What sincerity! Heroes recognize heroes; their feelings were profound. Isn't this what is called "inspiration?"[42]
>
> 田氏籠絡隱娘。使爲已助。既數年矣。顧不能得豪末之效用。劉悟以仇敵之嫌。而豁達大度。推心置腹。義俠如隱娘。亦折節事之。誠哉。英雄識英雄。其感情之櫑郁。殆所謂煙士披里純者非歟。

Yinniang, a talented young woman, is left impotent when she is sequestered in her father's home. Even after she is recruited to serve Tian, he does not recognize her ability, and instead, like her father, leaves her to languish inside his camp. Only when Yinniang meets someone who is open-minded enough to believe in her skills is she able to rise up and prove herself. We can see how this new

42 Ibid. The Chinese used for "inspiration" reads *yanshipelichun*. It is a transliteration of the English term. See Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice*, 363.

interpretation of Yinniang's life reflects the emerging feminist sentiments at the end of the Qing dynasty. Sequestering women leaves them unproductive. When they are recognized as productive and meaningful members of society, women can be inspired to serve their country.

As in the original tale, Tian then sends assassins to take care of both Yinniang and Liu Wu. In the Tang version, the assassins, like Nie Yinniang herself, possess supernatural powers that pose a serious threat to Liu. In the late-Qing biography, however, they are presented as extremely skillful. An encounter that is described in the Tang *chuanqi* tersely as a flicker of lights and an invisible decapitation appears in this biography as a daring sword fight, one that Yinniang soundly wins. After she cleverly dispatches the second assassin, she leaves, knowing that Liu Wu would not be safe with her around to attract his enemy's ire. In the Tang version Yinniang leaves her husband to Liu's care, and disappears into the mountains. In the biography, she leaves together with her husband, and the image is of an affectionate pair of birds, flying off with wings touching.[43]

When writing on the treatment of "woman warriors" in late imperial fiction, Louise Edwards has shown how their aberrant behavior stems from, and ironically helps maintain, Confucian patriarchy.[44] Yet certain aspects of the "amazon woman" she speaks of in late imperial fiction are absent or reformed in these late Qing models. Hongxian and Nie Yinniang here are loyal only to virtuous leaders, and in the way that these lords reciprocate their respect, this loyalty presents a subtle flattening of hierarchies. While social bonds are still

43 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 5 (1904): 18.

44 Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China*, 97-102.

present, Hongxian and Yinniang have the power to choose their behavior within them, and they base it upon a reciprocal understanding between ruler and servant.

Joan Judge sees other examples of woman warriors in the late Qing in a similar way to Louise Edwards, as reinforcing "normative notions of femininity" based on either their male dress (in cross-dressing heroines, such as Mulan) or "deed," as when they return to domestic life after their period of heroism.[45] Yet in our specific cases, neither Hongxian nor Nie Yinniang is "normalized" at the end of their stories, and certainly not put back into a traditional domestic space. Hongxian's *chuanqi* tale ends with a supernatural resolution to her story, but in this late Qing rewrite, she neither announces her masculine roots nor disappears into the mountains. Nie Yinniang's femininity is reasserted with her affectionate marriage – rather than have her renounce any traditional roles and thus defeminize her (as Rong Cai sees as the fate of her Tang predecessor, who became an outcast),[46] Yinniang is instead shown to continue her married life, and presumably her *xia* one as well.

Role of the Historian

In the third and final installment of these biographies, in the seventh issue of NZSJ, Pan Xiaohuang offers a conclusion to her revisions. She reports how she herself was moved by her investigations into the lives of these women, and how they surpass their male counterparts – a theme we have seen in the "Fakanci," the "Songci," and repeated in the biography of Mulan. She recites a list of male

45 Judge, "Blended Wish Images," 128.
46 Cai: 447.

knights-errant – Qiuran ke 虯髯客,[47] Nie Zheng 聶政,[48] Jing Ke 荊軻,[49] and Zhang Wenxiang 張汶祥[50] – and laments that they wasted their talents by dying. She asks:

> Oh, in what way would our women not match such men? We women have strived for this. Pan Xiaohuang also says: The legends of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang passed down in the world are filled with such wild, unbelievable things. By erasing these outrageous things, the true features of these two people are revealed. Fencing and martial arts can be studied and become a talent. In Japan they are still regarded highly, but in China, they are only preserved precariously among acrobat types among the common people and are despised by the upper classes. Now I ask: Those in schools for men and women in the nation who eagerly seek to practice physical education – what do they do?[51]
>
> 嗟吾巾幗何遽不若鬚眉。吾女子其勉之哉。潘小璜又曰。世傳紅線聶隱娘。其言多怪誕不可信。去其怪誕。則二人之真

47 Qiuran ke is the "Curly-bearded Stranger," the hero in a Tang tale who fought to topple the Sui dynasty and helped to establish the Tang and peace in the central plains. His story is also referenced in the preface to the biographies of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang. See note number 27, pg. 85.

48 After assassinating a prime minister who was the enemy of his lord, Nie Zheng disfigured himself so that he would not be recognized and thus implicate his lord. For an English translation of his biography in the *Shiji*, see Nienhauser, ed., 323-25.

49 Jing Ke famously attempted to assassinate the first Emperor of the Qin dynasty, but was killed himself in the process. For an English translation of his *Shiji* biography, see Ibid., 325-33.

50 Zhang Wenxiang was the hero of the late Qing dynasty opera, *Zhang Wenxiang ci Ma* 張汶祥刺馬 (Zhang Wenxiang's Assassination of Ma Xinyi), where he assassinates a governor in order to avenge his sworn brother. See Meng Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 107-9.

51 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 7 (1904): 17-18.

面目見矣。劍訣與柔術。蓋可學而能也。日本尙矣。若吾中國。於此道蓋不絕如線存者。乃在江湖技師之流。爲上流社會所深恥。今試問全國男女學校汲汲焉習體育者何爲乎。

Pan Xiaohuang has taken the old tales of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang, passed down through centuries, and remolded them to fit with what she believes is a more likely and instructive narrative. She also supports traditional Chinese martial arts as a subject of study. Rather than remaining only as a sport among the lower classes, she wishes that this training, so praised in Japan, would once again become respected and valued in China. Through her intervention she is giving new meaning to the stories of these martial women, and this is what she promotes to her own generation as worthy of emulation and honor. By changing their legends into biographies she has exerted her own authority as a historian in being able to evaluate what she sees as the true course of history leading to the future.

Unlike their counterparts in the Tang tales, the *youxia* presented by Sima Qian in the *Shiji* are credible historical figures. Sima Qian was writing to reclaim the valor and honor of the *youxia* and assassin-retainers in order to preserve – and promote – their names in the annals of history.[52] By writing their life stories as history, Sima Qian endowed the low-class and sometimes disreputable characters of his biographies with fame and immortality by his authority as historian. The *Shiji* was written in part as didactic literature. Not only a record of historical facts, it also imparted certain values which Sima Qian deemed important. Chief among

52 Sima Qian, in Watson trans., 452-5.

these was the ability to recognize a man of worth.[53] Stephen Durrant writes that in this mode of recognition, Sima Qian himself can be seen as identifying with his characters.[54] By recording their names for posterity, Sima Qian uses his moral authority to negotiate virtue for his subjects. However, in his biographies (as well as his history in general), it has been shown that Sima Qian was not averse to fabricating events for his moral purposes; and as his works were the foundation for later biographies, the genre was effectively used afterwards for similar purposes, though altered for specific historical moments.[55]

Re-inscribing the past so that it can hold the answer to present concerns, presentist authors unapologetically reconstructed well-known narratives of heroic women's lives with historical anachronisms and impossible details. We have seen these heroines' stories transferred in genre from myth or fiction to biographies. Like Sima Qian's liberties in writing the biographies in the *Shiji*, Pan Xiaohuang/Liu Yazi's biographies tested historical credulity but were emphatic as to the worthiness of their subject's significance and ability. These heroines were cast as historical subjects; their historicity becomes proof of women's potential for physical power, hidden underneath a seemingly weak exterior. On Sima Qian's historical writing, Wai-yee Li observes that " the historian's authority is based on his understanding of what is humanly possible in history, and of the human condition as being caught between past and future, as remembrance of the past

53 Wai-yee Li, "The Idea of Authority in Records of the Historian," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54, no. 2 (1994): 366.
54 Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writings of Sima Qian* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 99-122.
55 Twitchett, 95-115.

throws an uncertain light upon the future."[56] These (newly) historical woman warriors came to stand for both the potentiality and strength of contemporary women, as well as of the Chinese nation.

By making the identity of the author/historian female, Liu Yazi connected Pan Xiaohuang to the legacy of male historians such as Confucius and Sima Qian. As a woman, Pan Xiaohuang has a deeper connection to her female subjects, as she herself would know the female experience through first-hand knowledge. She has privileged access to a plane of virtue that translates through history in the form of a "timeless" subjectivity.[57] She can take on the role of an author with a "moral vision" that is connected to her own experience as a woman,[58] and thus give her characters the didactic value that biography entails. It is an empowering position. Like Sima Qian rescuing the *youxia* from obscurity, in writing the "truth" of these female knights-errant, Pan Xiaohuang "preserves their names for posterity, and in the process transmits [her] own."[59]

In this way not only are Hongxian and Nie Yinniang examples of powerful women, but the fabricated author herself is able to transgress history to create her own position of authority. Pan Xiaohuang, as she was written, stood as a living embodiment of the virtues she was professing through the female knights-errant. Not as a militant, but as a revolutionary author she was able to show the possibilities for women in the late Qing. Obviously highly educated, in her position as historian, she was able to connect her own story, and those of

56 Li: 364.
57 Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity."
58 Li: 363.
59 Ibid.: 382. The original reads "... and in the process transmits his own."

Hongxian and Nie Yinniang, to the *youxia* and to Sima Qian who had worked to uncover their past and reincorporate them into history. Pan Xiaohuang could be seen to claim this legacy for herself, as a woman, in rewriting the histories of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang.

Conclusion

The figure of the *nüxia* had always been represented as highly moral. Able to fight for familial obligations, a valiant lord, or as seen in the early twentieth-century, the national cause, the defining characteristics of the female knight-errant have always been her loyalty and courage. All *xia*, whether female or male, succeed in living at the periphery due to a strict code of ethics that makes them appealing to the common people. Reflecting the needs of the society they live in, they emerge at times of dynastic decay to aid the people when the government is unresponsive. At the end of the Qing, with the threat of foreign incursion on Chinese sovereignty, and the subordinate position of China in the international system, the figure of the female knight-errant was remade to address the failures of government as well as present options for society's advance.

The biographies of Hongxian and Nie Yinniang are the only biographies explicitly about female knights-errant that appear in NZSJ. Other martial women are seen throughout, and occasional mentions of female knights-errant are made in other columns, but this would be the first and last study of "historical" Chinese female knights-errant that would be published. From their introduction in the "Fakanci" and "Songci" of the first issue, we were told of their bravery and

intelligence – in these biographies, both are evident. These biographies show how these independent women warriors earn the respect of worthy lords, and fight for what they themselves choose to support. In the end, as biographies, they represent by example what is possible for modern women citizens to become: independent. The created author-persona Pan Xiaohuang imagines a utopia of women warriors that transcend temporal boundaries:

> I close my eyes and envision women in red dresses carrying swords. They are standing in front of me. Is this not the spirit of the Spartan women? Alas – They go to meet Hongxian and Nie Yinniang beyond the highest heaven. Beyond the farthest horizon they lock arms and enter the woods.[60]
>
> 吾合目而思見有紅妝佩劍之女子。立於吾前。夫非斯巴達女子之魂耶。嗚呼。使與紅聶相見於九天之上。九地之下把臂而入林矣。

60 Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜], "Zhongguo nü jianxia," *Nüzi shijie*, no. 7 (1904): 18.

Conclusion

Nüzi shijie was the product of an extraordinary time period. As the Qing dynasty spiraled into collapse, educated men and women began to formulate new paths for the government and society to follow – paths that were designed to reassert China's dominance in the twentieth century. For many, the changes sought were drastic, and necessitated an overhaul of societal organization. For the male and female radicals who contributed to NZSJ and other like-minded publications,[1] Chinese renewal in the twentieth-century depended upon the liberation and education of Chinese women.

The models of femininity that were advanced by the authors of NZSJ were by and large those of educated, martial women who exhibited laudatory nationalist pride. The ideals of the soldier and knight-errant, advanced in NZSJ's opening editorials, both suited the image of a strong and capable female citizen who would be able to answer her nation's call for help. Apart from the physical training needed to mold such warriors, these biographies also encouraged their readers to see themselves as valuable members of society, and defenders of the nation. Mulan, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang took the fate of their kingdoms as their own personal responsibility, and fought valiantly on its behalf. These were role models for a patriotic citizenry that could revive China in the twentieth century.

The women selected for praise in NZSJ could be role models for both women and men. We have seen how these radical presentist authors continually

1 Charlotte Beahan provides descriptions for many of the nationalist-feminists publications in this era. Beahan, *passim.*

compared these women's achievements to men's, with women consistently being praised as more valiant, righteous and selfless than their counterparts. It would seem as though male heroes had no place in the pantheon of role models created in this transitional period. Instead, these educated, independent and righteous women warriors were exemplars for both sexes as they promoted horizontal bonds of loyalty that unified ordinary citizens of the nation under a single banner of nationalist pride.

Yet the role models for this new citizenry were not always strictly based in historical fact. As I have shown in this thesis, there were stories of women taken from Chinese literature rewritten into the historical genre of biography. By authorizing these stories as authentic and true, Liu Yazi, both as Ya Lu and as Pan Xiaohuang, imbued these stories with the power of history, inserting them into a Chinese tradition that would be strengthened by their inclusion.

Drawing on this "rediscovered" past, he reveals through his writing the path which he hopes China can adopt for the future. These past exemplars lay a blueprint for the future *guomin* of China. After the initial successes of the Xinhai revolution, however, many of the ideals promoted in NZSJ became absent from the new political discourse. As late Qing feminism was linked to nationalism, many of the goals of the feminist movement were ignored as the nationalist revolution succeeded and then dissolved into chaos.[2] Henrietta Harrison has also shown how the ideal of the soldier-citizen suffered in the aftermath of the

2 Edwards, *Gender, Politics and Democracy*, 65-102.

revolution, as shrines meant to commemorate the sacrifices of thousands of soldiers repeatedly failed to materialize.[3]

Yet these ideals of *nüxia*, *nü junren* and *nü guomin* are still significant catachreses that exemplify the hopes and projections of this popular journal during the late Qing dynasty as their impact extended beyond the pages of NZSJ. These tropes were praised in other presentist journals, but their actual impact in terms of inspiring women to action is hard to judge. In closing my thesis, I would like to turn to the example of the real-life woman warrior Qiu Jin 秋瑾 (1875-1907) who adopted this late Qing version of female heroism as a revolutionary persona, along with the corresponding sobriquet *Jianhu nüxia* 鑑湖女俠 (the female knight-errant of Mirror lake)

Born into a scholar-gentry home, Qiu Jin married a man whom she did not respect as her equal. When he was appointed to a post in Beijing, she became distraught by the destruction wreaked by the foreign powers in the wake of the Boxer Rebellion. It was during this time that she began to cross-dress, initially by wearing a Western man's suit, but later she would be photographed in Japanese robes holding a dagger, and in traditional Chinese male clothing. Incensed, she railed against China's plight in her poems, and then boarded a ship to Japan, unbound her feet, and enrolled in school abroad. During her stay in Japan, she also joined many revolutionary societies and studied bomb-making. When she returned home in 1905, she founded a short-lived women's journal and became head of a school in Shaoxing, where she trained her students for a military

3 Harrison: 51-65.

uprising. After her co-conspirators were caught in an aborted attempt to start the revolution, Qiu Jin herself became a target of the government which had hoped to wipe out such militant radicals. Rather than escape from the school, she stayed to be arrested, and later beheaded. She died a martyr for the revolutionary cause.[4]

This real-life heroine exhorted her sisters to take up arms and fight to restore China's international strength. As a martyr she would attract thousands of admirers,[5] and as a poet she would provide the voice for a frustrated and galvanized feminist-revolutionary movement. Qiu Jin embodied many of the same characteristics that were praised in *nüxia* and *nü junren* like Hongxian, Nie Yinniang and Mulan; and she, like her sister historian and poet Pan Xiaohuang, also stressed the responsibility that ordinary people owe their country:

A Fighting Song for Women's Rights

We women love our freedom,
So let's raise our glasses to freedom!
The equality of men and women is bestowed by Nature,
So how can we accept discrimination?
Let us exert ourselves and free ourselves,
And cleanse ourselves once and for all of our shameful past.
Joan of Arc will fight on our side,
As we restore these rivers and mountains with our bare hands!
The old traditions are extremely shameful:

4 For a more complete biography of Qiu Jin, see Mary Rankin, "The Emergence of Women at the End of the Ch'ing: The Case of Ch'iu Chin," in *Women in Chinese Society*, ed. Margery Wolf and Roxane Witke (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975).

5 Harrison: 46-8.

Women treated as if they were no different from cattle!

The light of dawn now brings the tide of civilization,

We'll take the lead in independence.

Let's eradicate our slavery,

Become proficient in knowledge and learning.

We'll shoulder responsibility,

We women heroes of our nation will never betray its trust![6]

Mulan, Hongxian, Nie Yinniang and Pan Xiaohuang are all examples of fabricated women who were composed to suit their author's desires for twentieth-century Chinese women. Qiu Jin, on the other hand, actually sought to live the life of a martial, patriotic educator and revolutionary. Through her words and deeds she advocated the same ideals as these idealized tropes, engaging in a dialogue on modernity, nationalism and feminism that found a forum in the pages of NZSJ and beyond. Qiu Jin's legacy is a confirmation of the representative power behind these ideals of feminism, nationalism and martial valor. During the chaotic, revolutionary last years of the Qing dynasty, Qiu Jin would become a legend of the nationalist movement for her embodiment of these radical ideals.

The story of the nationalist-feminist Qiu Jin is only one example of the real-world effects of journals and other publications like NZSJ. Their approach was to see China's standing at the start of the twentieth century as weak to the point of crisis. In order to save the nation, all subjects of the Qing dynasty would

6 Qiu Jin 秋瑾, "A Fighting Song for Women's Rights." Translated by Wilt Idema, in *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China*, edited by Wilt Idema and Beatta Grant. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004, 799.

have to be transformed into responsible citizens who would themselves defend the nation. The nation would be founded upon an insoluble and reciprocal bond between men and women, as newly minted citizens. Once ordinary men and women had replaced their complacency or dismay with faith and pride in the national spirit, they would be inspired to rise up and push the country forward into the competitive world of the twentieth century.

The catachreses of *nü junren* and *nüxia* – as they were seen in the pages of NZSJ and in other publications of the era – exemplified the concept of hidden strength that, once brought to the surface, held the potential of saving China. These remarkable women could at times appear as weak young girls, yet they held within them the strength to fight against insurmountable odds, and an intractable loyalty that guided their every decision. In the biography column of NZSJ, these incredible women were written to be imitable and desirable role models for women of that era. In the past, women who adopted the role of soldiers or knights-errant had been seen as only temporarily inhabiting a male space – often in the service of the male patriarchy. In the biographies from NZSJ, however, we see models of Chinese heroines who always have the potential for greatness inside of them, despite their outward demeanor. In a time of national crisis, such heroism was required of ordinary men and women to save China's sovereignty. In the pages of NZSJ, the paths to creating such citizens, both men and women, were written based upon traditional Chinese figures who exemplified service to one's country and exceptional power.

Appendix 1: Biographies Printed in *Nüzi shijie*

**Author names are listed as: Author Name [Pen Name] as known.*[1]

Issue	Date	No.	Title	Author
1.1	Jan 1904	1	First Biography of Female Soldiers: Shen Yunying 女軍人傳一：沈雲英	? [Zhi Gong 職公]
1.2	Feb 1904	2a	Second Biography of Female Soldiers: Qin Liangyu 女軍人傳二：秦良玉	[Zhi Gong]
1.3	Mar 1904	3	A Biography of China's First Female Hero and Female Soldier, Hua Mulan 中國第一女豪傑女軍人家花木蘭傳	Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Ya Lu 亞盧]
		2b	Biography of Female Soldiers: Qin Liangyu 女軍人傳：秦良玉	[Zhi Gong]
1.4	Apr 1904	4a	Biographies of Chinese Female Knights-errant, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang 中國女劍俠紅線聶隱娘傳	Liu Yazi [Pan Xiaohuang, the Woman of Songling 松陵女子潘小黃]
1.5	May 1904	4b	Biographies of Chinese Female Knights-errant, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang	Liu Yazi [Pan Xiaohuang, the Woman of Songling]
		5	A Nurse on the Battlefield: A Biography of Florence Nightingale 軍陣看護婦南的猜爾傳	? [Gu An 觚庵]
1.6	June 1904	6	A Biography of the Great English Philanthropist, Mary Carpenter 英國大慈善家美利加阿賓他	(Xu Nianci 徐念慈 [Jue Wo 覺我])
		7	Remembering the Japanese Prostitute "Anteng Yaoshi" 記日本娼婦安藤夭史傳	Jiang Weiqiao 蔣維喬 [Zhu Zhuang 竹莊]
1.7	July 1904	4c	Biographies of Chinese Female Knights-errant, Hongxian and Nie Yinniang	Liu Yazi [Pan Xiaohuang, the Woman of Songling]
		8	A Biography of the Chinese Nationalist Liang Hongyu 中國民族主義梁紅玉傳	Liu Yazi [Pan Xiaohuang, the Woman of Songling]
1.8	Aug	9	A Biography of the Great English	Xu Nianci [Jue Wo]

1 Authors names are found in Xia Xiaohong, 71-74.

	1904		Philanthropist, Mary Carpenter 英國大慈善家美利加阿賓他傳	
1.9	Sept 1904	10a	Discussing Traces of Female Heroes 女雄談屑	Liu Yazi [Ya Lu]
1.10	Dec 1904-Jan 1905	10b	Discussing Traces of Female Heroes	Liu Yazi [Ya Lu]
		11	Remembering the Russian Woman "Qialetun" 記俄女恰勒吞傳	Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chu Wo 初我]
1.11	After Jan 1905	12	Biographies of Unknown Female Heroes who Shed Blood for Their Compatriots 爲民族流血無名之女傑傳	Liu Yazi [Pan Xiaohuang, the Woman of Songling]
1.12	Apr 1905	13	The Twin Jades of the Woman's World: The White Flowers of the Execution Field (Margaret More) 婦人界之雙璧：刊場之白堇	Ding Chuwo [Chu Wo]
2.1	Before Oct 1905	14	A Biography of the Great Female Author Harriet Beecher Stowe 女文豪海麗愛德斐曲士傳	Ding Chuwo [Chu Wo]
2.2	Before Oct 1905	15	The Female Assassin, Charlotte Corday 女刺客沙魯土格兒垔	? [Da Xia 大俠]
2.3	Before Jan 1906	16	Revolutionary Women 革命婦人	Chen Zhiqun 陳志群 [Da Wo 大我]
2.4/5	After Jan 1906	17	Biographies of Femme Fatales 女禍傳	Zhou Zuoren 周作人 [Bing Yun 病雲]
		18a	Female Souls (Li Suzhen, Li Jiemei, Lü nü, Qin Xiaoluo)女魂(李素貞、李杰妹、呂女、秦小羅)	Lü Yunqing 呂筠青 [Lady Scholar Lü Yichu of Shimen 石門呂逸初女士] Chen Zhiqun [Da Wo]
2.6	After Jan 1907	18b	Female Souls (Zhao Xuehua, Song Huishuang, Xu □□) 女魂 (趙雪華、宋蕙湘、徐□□)	Chen Zhiqun [Da Wo]

Appendix 2: Transcriptions of *Lienü zhuan* from High Qing

Appendix 2a
Mulan 木蘭 in the Shangqiu xian zhi 商邱縣志 [Gazetteer of Shangqiu County] (Henan Privince, Huabei region, no. 98) in *Zhongguo fangzhi* congshu 中國方志叢書, comp. Liu Dechang, lithographed in 1932 (Reprinted by Taibei: Chengwen Chubanshe, 1968), Vol. 2, pp. 672-3.

列女；高行；隋
木蘭姓魏。氏本處子也。世傳可汗募兵。木蘭之父耄羸。弟妹皆稚騃。慨然代行。服甲冒韃橐操戈。躍馬而往歷年一紀。閱十有八戰。人莫識之。後凱還天子。嘉其功。除尚書。不受。懇奏者視及還家。擇其戎服。衣其舊裳。同行者駭之。遂以事聞于朝。召復赴闕。欲納諸宮中。木蘭曰。臣無媿君之禮。以死誓拒之。迫之不從。遂自盡。帝驚憫。追贈將軍謚孝烈。今商丘營郭鎮有廟存蓋其故家云

Appendix 2b
Mulan 木蘭 in the *Bozhou zhi* 亳州誌 (The gazetteer of Bozhou), comp. Ren Shoushi 任壽世 in 1825 (Reprinted in *Zhonghua fangzhi congshu* 中國 方志 叢書, vol. 664. Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe 臺北市 : 成文出版社, Minguo 74 [1985]), ch. 33, p. 38.

木蘭一名花弧姓魏。氏亳州東魏村人。隋恭帝時募兵戍北方。木蘭父當往而老。弟妹俱幼。木蘭乃請於父代行。歷十二年身接十有八陣樹殊勳。人不知其女子也。後奏凱還天子。嘉其功。除尙書。不受。懇奏省親。乃命軍士衛至其家。釋戎服而服巾幗。同來者皆大驚駭。軍士還奏帝。召赴闕欲納之宮。對曰臣無娩君之禮。以死拒之。帝驚憫。贈將軍謚孝烈。鄉人爲立祠歲以四月八日致祭蓋其生辰云。

Appendix 2c:
Mulan 木蘭 by Yun Zhu 惲珠 (from 蘭閨寶錄 *Lan gui bao lu* Precious Records of the Orchid Boudoir 1831. page 1.7b).
木蘭
木蘭譙郡人，姓魏。隋恭帝時募兵禦戎。木蘭以父當往而老羸，弟妹俱稚，乃市鞍馬請於父代戍。歷十二年人不知其爲女子。凱旋以功除尙書。即不受。懇省親。比還家釋服易裝。事聞於朝，欲納入宮。木蘭不從。強之遂。自剄。唐封孝烈將軍立廟祀之。珠謹按廟在今河南歸德府。城南營郭鎭其故里也。又直隸保定府完縣東亦有祠相傳爲戍所云。

Bibliography

Allen, Joseph. "An Introductory Study of Narrative Structure in the *Shi Ji*." *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 3, no. 1 (1981): 31-66.

———. "Dressing and Undressing the Chinese Woman Warrior." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 4, no. 2 (1996): 343-79.

Anonymous. "Mulan Ci 木蘭詞." In *Yuefu shiji* 樂府詩集, edited by Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩, 373-74. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju: Yinhua shudian Beijing faxing suo, 1979.

Barlow, Tani E. *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004.

Beahan, Charlotte. "Feminism and Nationalism in the Chinese Women's Press, 1902-1911." *Modern China* 1, no. 4 (1975): 379-416.

Bei, Xing. "Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘." In *Tang Wudai chuanqi ji* 唐五代傳奇集, edited by Li Gefei 李格非 and Wu Zhida 吳志達, 646-9. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1997.

Besio, Kimberly. "Gender, Loyalty, and the Reproduction of the Wang Zhaojun Legend: Some Social Ramifications of Drama in the Late Ming." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40, no. 2 (1997): 251-82.

Birch, Cyril, ed. *Anthology of Chinese Literature: From the Earliest Times to the Fourteenth Century*. New York: Grove Press, 1994.

Boorman, Howard, Richard Howard, and Joseph Cheng, eds. *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*. Vol. 2. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-79.

Cai, Rong. "Gender Imaginations in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and the *Wuxia* World." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 13, no. 2 (2005): 441-71.

Carlitz, Katherine. "The Social Uses of Female Virtue in Late Ming Editions of *Lienü zhuan*." *Late Imperial China* 12, no. 2 (1991): 117-48.

———. "Desire, Danger, and the Body: Stories of Women's Virtue in Late Ming China." In *Engendering China: Women, Culture and the State*, edited by Gail Hershatter Christina Gilmartin, Lisa Rofel and Tyrene White, 101-24. Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1994.

———. "Shrines, Governing-Class Identity, and the Cult of Widow Fidelity in Mid-Ming Jiangnan." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 56, no. 3 (1997): 612-40.

Cass, Victoria. *Dangerous Women : Warriors, Grannies, and Geishas of the Ming*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999.

Chen Pingyuan. *Qiangu wenren xiake meng: wuxia xiaoshuo leixing yanjiu* 千古文人俠客夢:武俠小說類型研究. Beijing: Xinshijie chubanshe, 2002.

Chiu-Duke, Josephine. "The Role of Confucian Revivalists in the Confucianization of T'ang Women." *Asia Major* 3, no. 8 (1995): 51-93.

Ding Chuwo 丁初我 [Chuwo 初我]. "Nüzi shijie songci 女子世界頌詞." *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 1 (1904): 5-8.

———. "Furen Jie Zhi Shuangbi: Kanchang Zhi Bai Jin 婦人界之雙璧：刊場之白堇." *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 12 (1905): 15-28.

Duara, Prasenjit. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago and London: the University of Chicago Press, 1995.

———. "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China." *History and Theory* 37, no. 3 (1998): 287-308.

Durrant, Stephen. *The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writings of Sima Qian*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.

Edwards, Louise. *Men and Women in Qing China: Gender in the Red Chamber Dream*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994.

———. "Women Warriors and Amazons of the Mid Qing Texts Jinghua Yuan and Honglou Meng." *Modern Asian Studies* 29, no. 2 (1995): 225-55.

———. *Gender, Politics and Democracy: Women's Suffrage in China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.

Elvin, Mark. "Female Virtue and the State in China." *Past and present* 104, (1984).

Eoyang, Eugene. "The Wang Chao-Chün Legend: Configurations of the Classic." *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 4, no. 1 (1982): 3-22.

Feng, Lan. "The Female Individual and the Empire: A Historicist Approach to Mulan and Kingston's Woman Warrior." *Comparative Literature* 55, no. 3 (2003): 229-43.

Garber, Marjorie. *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩. *Yuefu shiji* 樂府詩集, Vol. 2, *juan* 25. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju: Yinhua shudian Beijing faxing suo, 1979.

Harrison, Henrietta. "Martyrs and Militarism in Early Republican China." *Twentieth-Century China* 23, no. 2 (1998): 41-70.

Hegel, Robert. *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981.

Hu Ying. *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1898-1918*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

———. "Writing Qiu Jin's Life: Wu Zhiying and Her Family Learning." *Late Imperial China* 25, no. 2 (2004).

Hung, William. "The Last Four Lines of the *Mu-Lan Ballad*." In *Studia Asiatica: Essays in Asian Studies in Felicitation of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of Professor Ch'en Shou-Yi* edited by Laurence G. Thompson, 357-62. San Francisco: Chinese Materials, Inc., 1975.

Idema, Wilt, and Beatta Grant, eds. *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Jay, Jennifer W. "Memoirs and Official Accounts: The Historiography of Song Loyalists." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50, no. 2 (1990): 589-612.

Jin Tianhe 金天翮 [Jin Yi 金一]. "Nüzi shijie fakanci 女子世界發刊詞 " *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 1 (1904): 1-3.

Judge, Joan. "Public Opinion and the New Politics of Contestation in the Late Qing, 1904-1911." *Modern China* 20, no. 1 (1994): 64-91.

———. "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens?" In *Changing Meanings of Citizenship* edited by Merle Goldman and Elizabeth J. Perry, 23-43. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2002.

———. "Blended Wish Images: Chinese and Western Exemplary Women at the Turn of the Twentieth Century." *Nan Nü: Men, Women and Gender in Early and Imperial China* 6, no. 1 (2004): 102-35.

———. *The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

Ko, Dorothy. *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

Lai, Sufen Sophia. "From Cross-Dressing Daughter to Lady Knight-Errant: The Origin and Evolution of Chinese Women Warriors." In *Presence and Presentation: Women in the Chinese Literati Tradition* edited by Sherry J. Mou, 77-107. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Li, Wai-yee. "The Idea of Authority in Records of the Historian." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54, no. 2 (1994): 345-505.

Liu, James J.Y. *The Chinese Knight-Errant*. London: Routledge and Keagan Paul, 1967.

Liu, Lydia. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture and Translated Modernity -- China, 1900-1937*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Pan Xiaohuang 潘小璜]. "Zhongguo nü jianxia Hongxian Nie Yinniang zhuan 中國女劍俠紅線聶隱娘傳." *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 4 (1904): 21-26.

———. "Zhongguo nü jianxia Hongxian Nie Yinniang zhuan 中國女劍俠紅線聶隱娘傳." *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 7 (1904): 17-18.

———. "Zhongguo nü jianxia Hongxian Nie Yinniang zhuan 中國女劍俠紅線聶隱娘傳." *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 5 (1904): 15-18.

———. “Kutao yahun 哭陶亞魂” *Nüzi shijie* 2, no. 3 (1905): 56.

Liu Yazi 柳亞子 [Yalu 亞爐]. "Zhongguo di yi nü haojie nü junren jia Hua Mulan zhuan 中國第一女豪傑女軍人家花木蘭 " *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 3 (1904): 25-32.

Lu, Weijing. *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

Luo Zhufeng 儸竹風. "Yuenü 越女." In *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典, edited by Luo Zhufeng 儸竹風, 1110-11. Shanghai: Hanyu da cidian chubanshe, 2000.

Ma Qian. *Women in Traditional Chinese Theater: The Heroine's Play* Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2005.

Mann, Susan. "Historical Change in Female Biography from Song to Qing Times." *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan* 30, (1985): 65-77.

———. *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.

Minford, John , and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds. *Classical Chinese Literature: An Anthology of Translations. Volume 1: From Antiquity to the Tang Dynasty* Vol. 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Mittler, Barbara. *A Newspaper for China?: Power, Identity and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872-1912* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Mou, Sherry J., ed. *Biographical Sketches*. 2 ed. Vol. 35, Chinese Studies in History, 2001-2.

———. *Gentlemen's Prescriptions for Women's Lives: A Thousand Years of Biographies of Chinese Women*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004.

Nienhauser, William H., ed. *The Grand Scribe's Records*. Vol. 2. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Ono Kazuko. *Chinese Women in a Century of Revolution 1850-1950.* Translated by Joshua Fogel. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989.

Qian Nanxiu. "Revitalizing the *Xianyuan* (Worthy Ladies) Tradition: Women in the 1898 Reforms." *Modern China* 29, no. 4 (2003): 399-454.

———. "'Borrowing Foreign Mirrors and Candles to Illuminate Chinese Civilization': Xue Shaohui's (1866-1911) Moral Vision in the Biographies of Foreign Women." *Nan Nü: Men, Women and Gender in Early and Imperial China* 6, no. 1 (2004): 60-101.

Qiu Jin 秋瑾, "A Fighting Song for Women's Rights." Translated by Wilt Idema. In *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China*, edited by Wilt Idema and Beatta Grant, 799. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Rankin, Mary. "The Emergence of Women at the End of the Ch'ing: The Case of Ch'iu Chin." In *Women in Chinese Society*, edited by Margery Wolf and Roxane Witke. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975.

Raphals, Lisa Ann. *Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.

Reynaud, Bérénice. "The Book, the Goddess and the Hero: Sexual Politics in the Chinese Martial Arts Film." *Senses of Cinema*,no. 26 (2003), sensesofcinema.com.

Ruhlmann, Robert. "Traditional Heroes in Chinese Popular Fiction." In *The Confucian Persuasion* edited by Arthur F. Wright, 141-76. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian of China*. Translated by Burton Watson. Vol. 2. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.

Sommer, Matthew. *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

T'ien Ju-k'ang. *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity: A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Ch'ing Times* Leiden: Brill, 1988.

Twitchett, D.C. "Chinese Biographical Writing." In *Historians of China and Japan* edited by W.G Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank. London: Oxford University Press, 1961.

Weidner, Marsha , Ellen Johnston Laing, Irving Yucheng Lo, Christina Chu, and James Robinson, eds. *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists 1300-1912* Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988.

Xia Xiaohong. *Wan Qing nüxing yu jindai Zhongguo* 晚清女性與近代中國 Beijing: Beijing University Press, 2004.

Yuan Jiao 袁郊. "Hung-Hsien." Translated by Cordell D.K. Yee. In *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and the Fantastic*, edited by Karl S.Y. Kao, 363-70. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Yuan Shaoying 袁韶瑩, and Yang Guizhen 楊瑰珍, eds. *Zhongguo funü mingren cidian* 中國婦女名人辭典. Changchun: Beifang funü ertong chubanshe, 1989.

Yue, Meng. *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

Yun Zhu 惲珠. "Mulan." In *Lan gui bao lu* 蘭閨寶錄 edited by Yun Zhu 惲珠, 1.7b, 1831.

Zarrow, Peter. "He Zhen and Anarcho-Feminism in China." *Journal of Asian Studies* 47, no. 4 (1988): 796-813.

———. *China in War and Revolution 1895-1949* London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

Zhi Gong 職公. "Nü junren zhuan yi: Shen Yunying 女軍人傳一：沈雲英." *Nüzi shijie* 1, no. 1 (1904): 15--23.

Zhonggong Jiangmen shi Xinhui qu wei, Jiangmen Xinhui qu renmin zhengfu 中共江门市新会区委、江门市新会区人民政府. "Di qi zhang: lüyou 第十七章 旅游 " <http://www.xinhui.gov.cn/export/xhsz/sz/sz04-17.htm>.