FLESH AND STONE: COMPETING NARRATIVES OF FEMALE MARTYRDOM FROM LATE IMPERIAL TO CONTEMPORARY CHINA

by

XIAN WANG

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Student: Xian Wang

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This dissertation has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures by:

Maram Epstein	Chairperson
Wendy Larson	Core Member
Roy Chan	Core Member
Bryna Goodman	Institutional Representative

and

Sara D. Hodges	Interim Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Graduate School.

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Xian Wang

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My dissertation focuses on the making of Chinese female martyrs to explore how representations serve as a strategy to either justify or question the normalization of the horrors of untimely death. It examines the narratives of female martyrdom in Chinese literature from late imperial to modern China in particular, explores the shift from female chaste martyrs to revolutionary female martyrs, and considers how the advocacy of female martyrdom shapes and problematizes state ideologies. Female martyrdom has been promoted in the process of the cultivation of loyalty throughout Chinese history. The traditional chastity cult continues to shape the contemporary meanings and conceptions of martyrdom, a value that is still promoted by the Chinese state. My dissertation explores the reasons that female martyrdom has remained a constant value and discuss how the state and print culture have cultivated it and adapted it to construct notions of gender, self, and identity in different time periods.

I argue that female chaste martyrdom functions as a bonding agent that holds male community together and consolidates the patriarchal system. The literary narratives of female martyrs simultaneously grant women agency while presenting female martyrs as objects of consumption, which reveals the instability in the role of women as

agents/objects. I analyze flesh and stone as metaphors for two different discourses on female martyrdom. Flesh refers to the literary representations of flesh and blood bodies of female martyrs that work to disrupt the state discourse on martyrdom by introducing the embodied individual. From a larger socio-political perspective, the state attempts to lock in the meaning of the sacrifice as enhancing the power of the state by fixing the meaning of female martyrdom in stone monuments. The state-sponsored monuments work to erase the individual in service to an ideology of martyrdom that reduces the messiness of history to myth.

This dissertation includes previously published material.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Xian Wang

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene
Duke University, Durham
Nanjing University, Nanjing
Jianghan University, Wuhan

DEGREES AWARDED:

Doctor of Philosophy, East Asian Languages and Literatures, 2018, University of Oregon
Master of Arts, Liberal Studies, 2010, Duke University
Master of Arts, Chinese Language and Literature, 2008, Nanjing University
Bachelor of Arts, Chinese Language and Literature, 2004, Jianghan University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Modern and Contemporary Chinese Literature
Late Imperial Chinese Literature
Cultural Studies
Gender Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Assistant Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Notre Dame, 2018-

Visiting Instructor, College of East Asian Studies, Wesleyan University, 2016-2017

Graduate Teaching Fellow, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, University of Oregon, 2010-2018

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS:

Dissertation Fellowship, Oregon Humanities Center, University of Oregon, 2015

PUBLICATIONS:

Wang, Xian. “Langxian’s Dilemma over the Cult of Martyrdom and Filial Piety: A World of Emptiness in ‘The Siege of Yangzhou.’” *Ming Studies*, 72 (2015): 46-68.

Wang, Xian. “The Construction of the Image/Myth of a Martyr in the Cultural Revolution: An Interpretation/Demythicization of *The Song of Ouyang Hai*.” *Comparative Literature Studies,* 52.1 (2015): 145-159.

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INTRODUCTION: REPRODUCING GENDER IDEOLOGY UNDER REGIME CHANGES

"A history of martyrdom supported by twin pillars of memory: of tragic victimhood and of heroic resistance. But a history of martyrdom, however popular, was only made possible by ironing out histories and memories, converting them into a neatly lined history. Plural memories betray and rupture such a linear History."[1]

"The line did not run clearly between victimisers and victims. Rather, it ran through each individual."[2] ---Vaclav Havel (1936-2011)

A Confucian Martyr or a Revolutionary Martyr: The Suicide of Zhao Wuzhen 趙五貞

In November 1919, the suicide of Zhao Wuzhen (1896-1919), a 23-year old woman from Hunan, generated heated debates over the liberation of Chinese women during the New Culture Movement. Zhao's father owned a small optical shop in Changsha. Given her family's financial stability, Zhao was decently educated as a child. In the eyes of her neighbors, Zhao was a virtuous vegetarian young lady who enjoyed reading religious classics, especially Buddhist texts. She was also good at cooking,

[1] Jie-Hyun Lim and Karen Petrone, ed., *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship: Global Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 1.

[2] Ibid.

needlework and household arrangement.[3] Zhao Wuzhen was originally portrayed as an ideal traditional Chinese woman, but her image became rather ambiguous after her suicide.

At age 23, Zhao Wuzhen was betrothed to a wealthy antique merchant, Wu Fenglin 吳鳳林, who was considerably older than she was. Disappointed by the arranged marriage, Zhao hid a razor in her leg wraps. She cut her own throat in the bridal sedan chair on the way to the Wu family home. A joyful wedding suddenly turned into a scene of horror. The prosecutor Yang Shancheng 楊善稱, who was in charge of the suicide case, insisted on putting a sealed label "Surname Wu Zhao" 吳趙氏 on Zhao's coffin.

Dagong bao 大公報 (Changsha: *Dagong Newspaper*), an influential newspaper at the time, closely followed this sensational event. Initially, the newspaper journalists attempted to discover the truth behind Zhao's suicide. After a thorough investigation, they concluded that there were three possible causes that had led to her tragic death. The first possible reason was that Zhao had heard about her future mother-in-law's bad reputation and was anxious about her life with her in-laws. The second reason was that Zhao felt hopeless not only because her fiancé Wu Fenglin was said to be old and ugly, but also because a rumor had spread that Wu was once jailed in Hankou 漢口 for selling fake pearls. The third reason fits perfectly into the faithful maiden (*zhennü* 貞女) tradition.[4] According to unconfirmed sources, Zhao had an earlier fiancé who died before

[3] See Chen Qimin 陳啟明, "Zhao Wuzhen nüshi ziwen jishi" 趙五貞女士自刎紀實 [The Records of Miss Zhao Wuzhen's Suicide], in *Wusi shiqi funü wenti wenxuan* 五四時期婦女問題文選 (Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1981), 206.

[4] In her book, *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), Lu Weijing defines faithful maidens in late imperial China as those young women who committed suicide or pledged lifelong celibacy after their betrotheds died before they married.

their wedding, and her parents therefore decided to marry her to Wu. Following the faithful maiden tradition, Zhao chose to commit suicide against her parents' will.[5] There is a similar faithful maiden story in *Zui xing shi* 醉醒石, a late Ming vernacular story collection. It explains, "For the reason that her father had betrothed her before, the girl went against her mother's will. She brought a small knife with her and stabbed herself in the bridal sedan."[6]

The death of Zhao Wuzhen generated heated debates on the meaning of her suicide in the New Culture Movement intellectual circle. Some depicted Zhao as a victim of the gender-based oppression of Confucian ideology who had no agency over her own fate; some endorsed Zhao as a martyr who sacrificed herself to uphold Neo-Confucian norms by following the faithful maiden tradition; some regarded Zhao as a revolutionary martyr who committed suicide to promote women's rights and free will.[7]

After the debates on the meaning of Zhao's death, the discussion moved away from Zhao Wuzhen herself and towards the changing narratives of her death. *Dagong bao*

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[5] For details on Zhao Wuzhen's suicide, see Teng Wen 騰聞, "Zhao Wuzhen ziwen an zhi zhenxiang" 趙五貞自刎案之真相 [The Truth of Zhao Wuzhen's Suicide Case], *Changsha: Da gong bao* (November 19, 1919); Chen Qimin, "Zhao Wuzhen nüshi ziwen jishi"; Jian Gong 兼公, "Dui Zhao nüshi zisha de ganxiang" 對趙女士自殺的感想 [Some Thoughts on Zhao Wuzhen's Suicide], *Changsha: Da Gong Newspaper* (November 19, 1919); Huang Pengying 黃鵬英 "Bei jiegou he chonggou de shenhoushi" 被解構和重構的身後事 [The Death that Has Been Deconstructed and Reconstructed], *Wenshi ziliao* (August 2011), 120.

[6] Donglu gu kuangsheng 東魯古狂生, *Zui xing shi* 醉醒石 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社, 1992), 17. "女子以父許在先，不從母命，身帶小刀，刺死於迎親轎中。"

[7] Christina Gilmartin surmised that Zhao committed suicide for the sake of seeking revenge: "Miss Zhao believed that her ghost would have greater power to seek revenge both upon her parents and upon the Wu family if she ended her life while en route to her future in-laws' house rather than while still residing in her parents' home." See Christina Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical Women, Communist Politics, and Mass Movements in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 26. The vengeful female ghost was a common belief in traditional Chinese society, and it is also a motif in the stories of female chaste martyrs in Ming-Qing literature.

soon shifted its focus to the social and cultural environment that had caused Zhao's suicide. The impassioned discussions on the suicide case in *Dagong bao* attracted widespread attention.[8] According to their different views on the case, the literati who joined the discussions can be roughly divided into three groups: the meliorists, the radicals and the conservatives. The meliorists believed that Zhao was a victim of a false ideology, Neo-Confucianism; the radicals praised her for bravely fighting against an oppressive system and striving for the right to free marriage and the emancipation of Chinese women; the conservatives lauded Zhao as an exemplary woman in the discourse of Neo-Confucianism. The ambiguities of her suicide raise questions regarding Zhao Wuzhen's motivations. Should she be cast as a revolutionary martyr or a Confucian exemplary woman? Is there a clear-cut distinction between female chaste martyrdom and female revolutionary martyrdom?

After the death of Zhao Wuzhen, eulogies and tributes poured in. Most of them praised her for being a chaste woman.[9] *Dagong bao* published a poem entitled "Zhao zhennü shi" 趙貞女詩 (A Poem for Chaste Maiden Zhao). The poet complains that because of the advocacy for modern freedoms, the basic sense of honor and shame had

[8] The comments and essays published in Changsha *Dagong bao* on the suicide case and the related issues include: Mao Zedong 毛澤東, "Dui Zhao nüshi zisha de piping" 對於趙女士自殺的批評 [The Critics on the Suicide of Miss Zhao], (November 16, 1919); Jian Gong, "Dui Zhao nüshi zisha de ganxiang" 對趙女士自殺的感想; Dun 盾, "Wo ye shuoshuo Zhao nüshi zisha shijian" 我也說說趙女士自殺事件 [My Thoughts on Miss Zhao's Suicide], (November 18, 1919); Ru Lin 汝霖, "Wo dui Zhao nüshi zisha de zhuzhang" 我對趙女士自殺的主張 [My Opinions on the Suicide of Miss Zhao], (November 16, 1919); Mao Zedong, "Shehui wan'e yu Zhao nüshi" 社會萬惡與趙女士 [The Absolute Evil Society and Miss Zhao], (November 21, 1919); Mai Jun 邁君, "Wo dui Zhao nüshi zisha de ganxiang" 我對趙女士自殺的感想 [My Thoughts on the Suicide of Miss Zhao], (November 21, 1919); Pingzi 平子, "Wo bu zancheng fumu zhuhun" 我不贊成父母主婚 [I am Against Marriage Arranged by Parents], (November 22, 1919); Yu Ying 毓瑩, "Yige wenti" 一個問題 [One Problem], (November 22, 1919); Mao Zedong, "Dapo meiren zhidu" 打破媒人制度 [Breaking Down the System of Matchmakers], (November 27, 1919).

[9] See Jian Gong, "Dui Zhao nüshi zisha de ganxiang."

been lost in Chinese society, and that chaste women like Zhao Wuzhen should be rewarded with a memorial arch.[10] It appeared that the influence of Neo-Confucianism was still powerful in the May Fourth era. At the same time, another poem written by Chen Qimin on the suicide of Zhao Wuzhen portrayed Zhao as a pioneer who fought for the emancipation of Chinese women. The poem is short and powerful, "The Sacrifice! The Sacrifice!! The cost! The cost!! For freedom we shed blood!! Shedding blood to strike for freedom!! Long live Miss Zhao!! Long live the future of Chinese women!!"[11] The debate became a battle to claim the meaning of Zhao's death, and in the end, her death itself did not matter.

As one of the regular contributors to the Changsha *Dagong bao*, Mao Zedong was very vocal about this suicide case and published several essays in the newspaper commenting on it. He used Zhao's case to advocate for the idea of free marriage. Mao claimed that the social environment, Zhao's natal family and the family of her future in-laws together formed an inescapable web that strangled Zhao to death. He ferociously criticized the repressive neo-Confucian ideological control over Chinese women. The most important and controversial part of his argument concerned whether Zhao had an individual identity or agency. Mao used the word *renge* 人格 in his critical essays as the Chinese equivalent to individual identity/agency; *renge* can also be translated as "free will." In her article "The Vocational Woman and the Elusiveness of 'Personhood' in

[10] See Ling Yunlan 淩雲嵐, "Zhao Wuzhen: zhongguo nüquan shi shang de yige zhongyao xishengzhe" 趙五貞：中國女權史上的一個重要犧牲者 [Zhao Wuzhen: An Important Martyr in the History of Chinese Feminism], *Guoxue* 國學, vol.5 (2013), 77. "Zhao zhennü shi" 趙貞女詩 [A Poem for Chaste Maiden Zhao]："近今侈自由，俗教廉恥忘。雖由父母命，強迫竟罹殃。一死完清操，千載有餘芳。口告采風者，樹此貞女坊。"

[11] From Chen Qiming, "Zhao Wuzhen nüshi ziwen jishi," 205. "犧牲！犧牲！！代價！代價！！為自由而流血！！寧流血以爭自由！！趙女士萬歲！！中國女子的前途萬歲！！"

Early Republican China," Bryna Goodman insightfully points out that *renge* is a key word in the debate on this suicide case. The question of Zhao's *renge* is essential to the process of justifying her as a revolutionary martyr. Mao argues that although Zhao was devastatingly trapped in an oppressive social and family environment, at the moment of her suicide, she grasped her independence. He notes that the suicide was well planned, and therefore also revealed her free will and proved that she had *renge*.

Although the conservatives and the radicals took opposite stances on whether Zhao Wuzhen was a revolutionary or a devout Confucian, they all agreed that she was a *lienü* and valued her spirit as a female exemplar. The ambiguities surrounding Zhao's suicide indicate that there was no clear-cut distinction between the process of creating a Confucian martyr and a revolutionary martyr. As Goodman states in her article, "The creation of new women was an evolving project of Chinese modernizers. Female exemplars of the Late Imperial period were iconic figures of virtue: chastity, loyalty, and the separation of the sexes. The new woman, first evoked by late Qing reformers and revolutionaries, transposed the virtues of loyalty and service onto the new imagined nation."[12] Female martyrdom remained a powerful ideological force through different periods of time in Chinese history. In my dissertation, I intend to explore why female martyrdom had persistent value. How is the idea of sacrificing oneself presented in Chinese literature and how was it adapted to the constructions of self, identity and gender in different time periods? Research on female martyrdom from late Imperial China to modern China also provides a unique angle from which to reconsider the formation of Chinese modernity.

[12] Bryna Goodman, "The Vocational Woman and the Elusiveness of 'Personhood' in Early Republican China," in Bryna Goodman and Wendy Larson, ed., *Gender in Motion: Divisions of Labor and Cultural Change in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 265.

From Sacrificial Animals to Human Sacrifice: The Transformations of *Xisheng* 犧牲 (sacrifice) and *Lie* 烈 (martyrdom)

Before examining the transformation from *lienü* 列女 (exemplary women) to *lienü* 烈女 (heroic women) and *nülieshi* 女烈士 (female martyrs), I first want to clarify certain terminology and translation issues. I translate *lie*, a key concept in my dissertation, as martyrdom, a term which has strong religious connotations in English. The word martyr comes from the word for "witness" in ancient Greek. Martyrs are thus witnesses to faith and the truth. Jesus is considered the archetypal martyr. A martyr then refers to someone who is killed for advocating a belief. As one historian of Rome points out that there is a dilemma in interpreting the word "witness." It is unclear "whether a martyr was witnessing, and if so what or whom, or whether he was witnessed by another. If the word was to be understood as 'being witnessed' rather than 'witnessing,' then the witness could only be God Himself."[13] Here, the ambiguity resides in whether a martyr is a subject or an object. Another dilemma is that martyrs are witnesses to the truth, but who suffer death and thus have no chance to deliver the truth. The truth therefore remains abstract and unreachable. Although the Chinese term *lie* has no direct religious meaning or connotations, it resembles martyrdom in terms of its reference to spirituality and the way in which it requires ending one's physical existence. The dilemmas associated with being a martyr also play important roles in my analysis of representations of female martyrdom in China. They raise two central questions I explore in my dissertation. Do Chinese female martyrs have agency over their actions? For what do they martyr

[13] Glen Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 19.

themselves if the truth and the ideals for which they sacrifice their lives remain ambiguous and abstract?

I translate *lie* as martyrdom with full awareness of another Chinese word, *xisheng* (犧牲 sacrifice), which is also closely related to the concept of martyrdom. Although my dissertation mainly focuses on the genealogical studies of *lie*, *lie* is inextricably interwoven with the term *xisheng*. *Xisheng* has evolved drastically from its original reference to animals used as sacrificial offerings to its current meaning of sacrificing one's life for higher ideals. *Xisheng* also changed from a compound noun to a verb. According to Xu Shen's 許慎 (ca. 58-147) etymological explanations of Chinese characters in his groundbreaking dictionary *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (*Explanation of Primary Signs and Analysis of Graphs*, 121 AD), *xisheng* is the combination of *xi* which means sacrificial animals (*xi, zongmiao zhi sheng ye* 犧，宗廟之牲也), and *sheng* which refers to the entire ox used for sacrifice rituals (*sheng, niu wanquan* 牲，牛完全). *Xi* also means performance (*xi* 戲) and rareness (*xi* 稀).[14] In *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮注疏 (*Commentaries to the Rites of Zhou*), Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) explains that *xi* indicates that sacrificial animals must have pure hair colors (*xi, chunye; qu chunmao ye* 犧，純也；取純毛也).[15] The state had strict rules about selecting sacrificial animals with consideration for their purity and wholeness. *Xi* and *sheng* served as intermediaries

[14] Xu Shen 許慎, *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 2001). For detailed studies on the evolution of the meaning of *xisheng*, see Gu Yizhong, "The Myth of Voluntary Death: The Representation of Sacrifice and Martyrdom in the Maoist Films (1949-1976)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 2017), 19-32.

[15] See Zheng Xuan 鄭玄, *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮注疏. http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=180057 (accessed on December 21, 2017).

between the state and Heaven. Paying tribute to Heaven through performing sacrificial rituals was important in claiming authority and legitimizing state power.

Because the two characters *xi* and *sheng* both refer to sacrificial animals, *xisheng* was generally used as a compound noun later in ancient China. It was not until late Qing and early Republican China that the meaning of *xisheng* was transformed to suggest sacrifice.[16] Although the meaning of *xisheng* as sacrificial animals disappeared in modern Chinese, the idea of giving one's life for a higher cause still exists. Making a sacrifice is performative and quasi-ritualistic, and it has connotations of spirituality, purity and integrity. The difference is that, in the modern Chinese context, sacrificial animals are replaced by sacrificial human beings.

The act of killing people to offer to deities and burying servants alive with their dead owners as part of a funeral service were part of the ritual practice. Women were usually preferred as human sacrifice due to their subordinate social status. Offering human sacrifice was mainly for the purpose of pleasing or appeasing deities. For instance, "marrying" beautiful young women to Hebo 河伯 (the God of the Yellow River) by throwing them into the river was a common practice in ancient China because people believed that this could please the god and stop flooding. Local elders and shamans were in charge of selecting women for sacrifice. Before the sacrifice, the selected wife of Hebo needed to be purified by isolating herself, taking showers and fasting (*ximu zhi, xianju*

[16] In her analysis of the evolution of the meaning *xisheng*, a linguist Li Juan gives many examples of how *xisheng* was used as a compound noun in ancient China, and how the word was transformed to a verb in late Qing and early Republican China. See Li Juan 李娟, "Xisheng de ciyi yanbian" 犧牲的詞義演變, *Yuyan Yanjiu* 語言研究, no.2 (2016), 134-5.

zhaijie 洗沐之，閒居齋戒).[17] It is believed that this kind of ritualistic sacrifice could reduce social anxiety and enhance solidarity in the community.

Both sacrificial animals and humans were objectified for consumption without any agency. The authorities had the power to impose deaths, and the imposed sacrifice further consolidated authority. After the word *xisheng* transformed from a noun to a verb, the object turned into a subject. On the surface, the modern subject has the agency to choose whether or not to sacrifice. But the word sacrifice ignores the motivations for making sacrifices and the differences between sacrifice and being sacrificed. In pre-modern China, women sacrificed themselves to their families and husbands and men devoted their lives to the state as encoded in Confucian norms. Sacrificing was normalized to the point that there was no need for a word such as *xisheng* to describe the action. *Xisheng* was encoded and normalized as an aspect of the four core Confucian virtues: *zhong* 忠 (loyalty), *xiao* 孝 (filial piety), *jie* 節 (chastity), *yi* 義 (righteousness). With the awakening of individuality and China's march towards modernity in late Qing, the state was in need of a discourse and ideology other than Confucianism to claim the authority to encourage people to sacrifice for the state. *Xisheng* gradually took on a verbal usage which not only supported state power, but also empowered individuals. A verb highlights that the subject has agency to act. *Xisheng* as a verb gives individuals their voices, but a martyr's dilemma of being a witness or being witnessed arises again: did individuals in modern China really have agency when they sacrificed themselves? Are they sacrificing themselves or being sacrificed? After the end of the Qing dynasty, China needed an ideology that modernizes the nation but retains control over individuals.

[17] See Chu Shaosun 褚少孫, "Ximen Bao zhi Ye" 西門豹治鄴, in Guo Yuheng 郭預衡, ed., *Zhongguo lidai sanwen xuan* 中國歷代散文選 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1980), 370-71.

Xisheng as a verb indicating voluntary action creates a fantasy that there is no conflict between individual agency and the interests of the state. It also romanticizes violence. Thus, human beings became voluntary sacrificial animals. As a noun, *xisheng* 犧牲 (sacrificial animals) was replaced by the term *lieshi* 烈士. By sacrificing themselves, martyrs become both the subject and the object of the action, thus makes the meaning of their sacrifice unclear.

Martyrdom encompasses both the meanings of *lie* and *xisheng*. Martyring oneself for a virtuous cause has been promoted throughout Chinese history. From "*sha shen cheng ren"* 殺身成仁 (to kill the body for the sake of benevolence) and "*she sheng qu yi*" 舍生取義 (To die for the cause of righteousness) in *The Analects* and *The Mencius*, martyrdom first began to be conceptualized as an admirable act that generates benevolence (*ren* 仁) and righteousness (*yi* 義).[18] The argument Sima Qian made in his "Bao Ren Shaoqing shu" 報任少卿書 (Letter to Ren An) that "death is inevitable. It could be lighter than a swan goose feather, or it could be weightier than Mount Taishan 人固有一死，死或重於泰山，或輕於鴻毛" glorifies martyrdom.[19] The idea of sacrificing the physical body to uphold higher social ideals has lingered and crystallized in Chinese culture.

[18] "*Sha shen cheng ren*" 殺身成仁 (to kill the body for the sake of benevolence) is from *Lunyu* 論語, See Qian Mu 錢穆, *Lunyu xinjie* 論語新解 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2002), 402. "*she sheng qu yi*" 舍生取義 (To die for the cause of righteousness) is from *Mengzi* 孟子*,* http://ctext.org/mengzi/gaozi-i/zh (accessed on December 21, 2017).

[19] Sima Qian 司馬遷, "Bao Ren Shaoqin shu" 報任少卿書, in Ren Jiyu 任繼愈, ed., *Zhonghua chuanshi wenxuan, Guwen guanzhi, Xu guwen guanzhi, Gonggui wenxuan* 中華傳世文選：古文觀止，續古文觀止，宮閨文選 (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 1988), 108.

From the perspective of Chinese etymology, the character *lie* 烈 (martyrdom) is derived from the character *lie* 列. According to *Shuowen jiezi*, the character *lie* 列 originally included the graphic symbols for hair, body/flesh, and knife in Bronze writing (*jinwen* 金文). The writing includes six dots which represent blood droplets, the bottom of the left part represents human flesh, and the radical on the right represents a knife; it referred to the punishment of dismembering the body. In seal script writing (*zhuanwen* 篆文), the character *lie* 烈 was created by adding the symbol for fire to *lie* 列, and it indicates fierce fire or execution by fire.[20] Both of the characters emphasize severe punishments and tortuous suffering of the body. The meaning of *lie* 烈 / 列 has been incorporated into the word *lieshi* 烈士 to refer to heroic people who sacrifice themselves for their ideals.

The word *lieshi* 烈士 appears frequently in Chinese classics. "Qiushui" 秋水 (The Floods of Autumn) chapter of the Zhuangzi 莊子 states that, "when facing knives crossed in front of them, men can still view death as another form of life. That is the courage of a martyr."[21] Han Feizi 韓非子 (ca. 281-233 BC) notes in "Gui shi" 詭使 (Against the Principles) that "those who passionately pursue fame and righteousness and have no interest in governmental positions are so-called martyrs."[22] In Jia Yi's 賈誼 (200-168 BC)

[20] For information on the characters *lie* 烈 and *lie* 列, see Xu Shen 許慎, *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 2001), 248, 576.

[21] Zhuangzi 莊子, "Qiushui" 秋水 [The Floods of Autumn], in Fu Peirong 傅佩榮, *Fu Peirong jiedu Zhuangzi* 傅佩榮解讀莊子 (Taipei: Lixu wenhua shiye youxian gongsi, 2002), 283. "白刃交於前，視死若生者，烈士之勇也。"

[22] Han Feizi 韓非子, "Gui shi" 詭使 [Against the Principles], in Yu Zhihui 俞志慧, *Han Feizi zhijie* 韓非子直解 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 2000), 427. "好名義不進仕者，世謂之烈士。"

"Funiao fu" 鵩鳥賦 (The Owl), the author states that "greedy people die chasing wealth, while martyrs die pursuing fame."[23] Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) claims in his well-known poem "Gui sui shou" 龜雖壽 (Though the Tortoise Lives Long) that, "although in his later years, the heart of a hero stays as adamant as ever."[24] Even though in the contexts of Han Feizi's "Gui shi" and Jia Yi's "Funiao fu" the concept of *lieshi* does not carry entirely positive meanings, the word as used in the Chinese classics generally refers to heroic men who have the courage to sacrifice themselves in order to preserve righteousness, though they do not necessarily die for their cause.[25] The *Taiping yulan* 太平禦覽 (*Imperial Readings of the Taiping Era*), an encyclopedia compiled in Song Dynasty, has a section of *lieshi* 烈士 under the category of Biographies (*renshi bu* 人事部). It is a collection of the biographies of heroic men from the classics and history books including the *Liji* 禮記 (*The Book of Rites*), *Shiji* 史記 (*Records of the Grand Historian*), *Han shu* 漢書 (*The Book of Han*), *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (*Book of the Later Han*), *Wei zhi* 魏志(*The Gazetteer of Wei*), and *Tang shu* 唐書 (*The Book of Tang*). The so-called *lieshi* in those records either committed suicide or were killed in violent ways while upholding their ideals.[26] *Lieshi* did not specifically refer to heroic men who sacrifice their lives for

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[23] Jia Yi 賈誼, "Funiao fu" 鵩鳥賦 [The Owl], in Jiang Shuge 薑書閣, *Pianwen shilun* 駢文史論 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1986), 102. "貪夫殉財兮，烈士殉名。"

[24] Cao Cao 曹操, "Gui sui shou" 龜雖壽 [Though the Long Life of Tortoise], in Qiu Yingsheng 邱英生 and Gao Shuang 高爽, ed., *San Cao shi yishi* 三曹詩譯釋 (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1982), 37. "烈士暮年，壯心不已。"

[25] In "Gui shi," Han Feizi criticizes the so-called martyrs, who have no interest in public service, for causing damage to the stability of the social system and government management. In "Funiao fu," Jia Yi diminishes the glories of martyrs by pointing out that the martyrs die for personal fame rather than ideals.

[26] *Taiping yulan*, see http://ctext.org/taiping-yulan/438/zh (accessed on October 11, 2017).

the state until the late Qing and early Republic.[27] In the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, the term "war dead" (*zhenwang jiangshi* 陣亡將士) was used to refer to men who died while defending the state. Starting from the Sino-Japanese War, the Kuomintang government used the word *zhonglie* 忠烈 (loyal heroes) to praise the soldiers who died in the war. In April 1947, The Northeast Democratic United Army (*Dongbei minzhu lianjun* 東北民主聯軍) announced that the soldiers who died for the state were to be called *lieshi*. In June 1980, the Chinese government issued "The Regulations on Honoring Revolutionary Martyrs" (*Geming lieshi baoyang tiaoli* 革命烈士褒揚條例) which officially defined *lieshi* as "people in our country and commanders of the PLA who died in revolutionary battles, defending our country and the modernization of socialist China."[28] The meaning of *lieshi* gradually changed from referring to men who are ambitious (*you baofu de* 有抱負的) and heroic, to men who died to uphold their ideals and men who died while defending the state.

Lienü 烈女 literally means female martyr. These martyrs share the common characteristics of *lieshi*; they are heroic, righteous, and courageous. In "The Biographies of the Assassins" in *Records of the Grand Historian,* Sima Qian tells a story about the assassin Nie Zheng 聶政 and his elder sister. Nie was hired by Yan Zhongzi 嚴仲子 to assassinate Xia Lei 俠累, the prime minister of the state of Han. So that no one would recognize his corpse, after the mission was accomplished, Nie violently mutilated his face,

[27] See Li Juan 李娟, "Xisheng de ciyi yanbian," 135.

[28] You Hui 友輝, "Lieshi chenghao de youlai he yanbian" 烈士稱號的由來和演變, *Fujian dangshi* 福建黨史, vol.3 (1991), 42. "我國人民和人民解放軍指戰員，在革命鬥爭中保衛祖國和社會主義現代化建設事業中壯烈犧牲的，稱為革命烈士。"

plucked out his eyes and committed suicide by cutting open his abdomen. In addition to depicting Nie Zheng as a martyr, Sima Qian also praises Nie's elder sister Nie Rong for her enormous courage. In order to preserve Nie Zheng's honor and fame, Nie Rong risked her life to identify his corpse at the Han market place and cried herself to death. The biography reads, "Not only was Zheng capable, his elder sister was also a heroic woman."[29] In Fu Xuan's 傅玄(217-278) poem "Qin Nüxiu xing" 秦女休行 (The Poem of Qin Nüxiu), the legendary woman Pang E 龐娥 is enshrined as a female martyr. The author writes, "The Pang family has a heroic woman, her reputation for righteousness has been spreading across the states of Yong and Liang (*Pangshi you liefu, yi sheng chi Yong Liang* 龐氏有烈婦，義聲馳雍涼)."[30] In terms of their courageous and heroic acts, *lieshi* and *lienü* belong to the same group of people with the only difference being their gender, although the modes of courageous behavior would vary as well, given the strict social gender divisions. This is clear in the above example. The male hero actively murders and then violently commits suicide, while the female hero plays a relatively inactive supporting role, dying of grief for her relative. *Lienü* gradually came to refer specifically to women who died defending their chastity (*zhenjie lienü* 貞潔烈女).[31]

[29] Sima Qian, "Cike liezhuan" 刺客列傳, in *Shiji xuandu* 史記選讀 (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2008), 225. "非獨政能也，乃其姊亦烈女也。"

[30] Pang E was a well-known female martyr who lived during the Three Kingdoms Period. Her father was killed by a local tyrant Li Shou. Pang spent all her life seeking revenge for her father and finally killed Li Shou. See Chen Shou 陳壽, *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1971), 548-550.

[31] Joan Judge noted that, "By the late Ming, the more dramatic *lie* had overshadowed the more prosaic *lie* and come to signify heroic chastity martyrs." See Joan Judge, "Exemplary Time and Secular Time," in *Beyond Exemplar Tales: Women's Biography in Chinese History* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2011), 113.

Liu Xiang's 劉向 (ca. 77-6 BC) *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 (The Arrayed Biographies of Women) is considered one of the earliest books on the lives of Chinese women. It "devoted to the moral education of women."[32] Liu Xiang's *Lienü zhuan* "not only inspired generations of Chinese women to cultivate traditional virtues such as filial piety and maternal kindness but also lauded practices such as suicide and self-mutilation as means to preserve chastity."[33] The book is divided into seven sections according to different kinds of female exemplars. The Biographies of "Chaste and Obedient Women" (*zhenshun* 貞順) and the Biographies of "Virtuous and Righteous Women" (*jieyi* 節義) are two sections in the book.[34] Because the word *lie* 列 is a cognate of *lie* 烈, and they were often presented as phonetic loan characters in pre-modern Chinese literature, Liu Xiang's successors sometimes replaced the "arrayed biographies of women" tradition with the *Lienü zhuan* 烈女傳 (the biographies of chaste martyrs) tradition---especially after the canonization of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism. Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107), a leading neo-Confucian thinker, advocated that "starving to death is a small matter, but losing chastity is a great matter" (*e si shi xiao, shijie shi da* 餓死事小，失節事大).[35] In *Yuan shi* 元史(*The History of Yuan*; 1370) the *lieshi* and *lienü* traditions were popularized

[32] Anne Behnke Kinney trans, *Exemplary Women of Early China: The Lienü Zhuan of Liu Xiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), XV.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Other sections include "The Biographies of the Exemplary Mothers" (*muyi* 母儀); "The Biographies of Judicious Women" (*xianming* 賢明); "The Biographies of Benevolent and Wise Women" (*renzhi* 仁智); "The Biographies of Eloquent Women" (*biantong* 辯通), and "The Biographies of Debauched Favorites" (*niebi* 孽嬖). See Liu Xiang, *Lienü zhuan,* http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=189727 (accessed on December 22, 2017).

[35] Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 states that "the alleged *lienü* for the historians in the later dynasties were actually heroic chaste women. However, in Liu Xiang's narratives, *lie* means enumeration." See Zhang Xuecheng*, Wenshi tongyi* 文史通義 vol.4 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1988), 8.

and naturalized through statements such as "male martyrs die for the state, while female martyrs die for their husbands" (*zhangfu si guo, furen si fu* 丈夫死國，婦人死夫).[36] In the Ming and Qing dynasties, eulogies espousing martyrdom, especially female martyrdom, were countless in both literature and official historical records. The recognition of the value of female martyrdom continued into the May Fourth era and permeated Communist discourse, with its emphasis on dying for the state.

The changing meanings of *xisheng* and *lie* seem to have been the byproduct of the changing of state ideologies. The ambiguity of *xisheng* as either sacrificing or being sacrificed reveals that the lines between a subject and an object, a hero/heroine and a victim, altruism and coercion are not always clear. The state intentionally creates ambiguities and keeps the sublime value mysterious to make the sacrifice look voluntary and to uphold the hegemonic structure of power. The structure of power involves the triangular relationships among individuals, family units, and the state. As we shall see, martyrdom works as a catalyst that holds communities together. As I will show in my close readings of representations of female martyrdom, women are scapegoats who are naturalized as objects that carry the sins and tensions of the community. Celebrations of their martyrdom enabled male homosociality. Some male writers write about female martyrs for voyeuristic pleasure or to release their frustration with what they consider to be a society in moral decline.

Female Martyrdom from the Ming-Qing to Contemporary China

[36] Song Lian 宋濂, *Yuan shi* 元史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 4433.

My dissertation focuses on the discursive construction of female martyrs rather than on the female martyrs themselves. It examines the narratives and narrative models of female martyrdom in Chinese literature from late imperial to modern China in particular, explores the shift from female chaste martyrs to revolutionary female martyrs, and considers how the advocacy of martyrdom shapes and problematizes state ideologies. *Lie* is such a powerful and elastic ideological force that it has historically been use to embrace a wide range of usages and meanings. I explore the reasons that female martyrdom has remained a constant value and discuss how the state and print culture have cultivated it and adapted it to construct notions of gender, self, and identity in different time periods. My dissertation explores martyrdom as a heavily constructed signifier. Female martyrdom, in particular, reveals the instability of the women as agent/object. Despite the sublime nature of martyrdom, male-authored texts refuse to allow female martyrs to transcend the corporeal, suggesting that the process of creating female martyrs is/was much more attenuated than for creating male martyrs.

Female martyrdom has been promoted in the process of the cultivation of loyalty throughout Chinese history. The traditional chastity cult continues to shape the contemporary meanings and conceptions of martyrdom, a value that is still promoted by the Chinese state. The reception of female martyrdom is distinct from that of male martyrdom because of the way women were and are constructed as objects of consumption. Chinese male martyrs are typically granted full agency over the meaning of their act. In contrast, the literary narratives of female martyrs simultaneously grant women agency while presenting female martyrs as objects of consumption. Also, chastity

is not an issue in male martyrdom, but it is a constant concern in female martyrdom and the literary representations of female martyrs.

Female martyrdom brings up the "complex interplay among family interests, literati concerns, state agendas, and human emotions."[37] This complexity is reflected in related literary works, and the majority of the authors who write about the topic are male literati. With the exceptions of epitaphs, eulogies and exemplary biographies, writings by male literati on female martyrdom are typically metaphorical. The obvious analogies between loyalty to the husband and loyalty to the emperor, and the close linkage between family and state, make female martyrdom extremely fertile ground for politicized content. Male literati therefore use female martyrdom as a powerful narrative device to express their political views. In addition, as T'ien Ju-K'ang argues in his book *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity*, writing about female martyrdom can be therapeutic to frustrated male scholars.[38]

To date, scholarship on Chinese female martyrdom or martyrdom in general has mainly focused on non-fictional materials, such as statistics, official historical records, gazetteers, memorial essays, biographies, eulogies, et cetera. Lu Weijing's *True to Her Word* offers us a new angle from which to think about the faithful maiden tradition in late imperial China. She argues that self-sacrificing young women are not necessarily the passive victims of Neo-Confucian ideology. By examining various historical and cultural sources, Lu gives voice to the faithful maidens who committed suicide after the deaths of their fiancés. In contrast to Lu Weijing's *True to Her Word*, which pays close attention to

[37] Lu Weijing, *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 6.
[38] See T'ien Ju-K'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity: A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Qing Times* (New York: Brill Academic Publishers, 1988).

the inner worlds of the faithful maidens, T'ien Ju-K'ang's book *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity* puts a greater emphasis on the external factors rationalizing female suicide in Ming-Qing period. In reviewing quantitative assessments, anecdotes in gazetteers and biographies, T'ien identifies several reasons for the prevalence of the cult of female chastity in Ming-Qing China, including the economic environment, demographic factors, the career frustration of scholars, and religious beliefs. Among those reasons, T'ien argues that scholars' frustration is most decisive to the practice of female chastity. *Passionate Women: Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* contains four interrelated essays that attempt to demystify female suicide in late imperial China.[39] Perhaps most notably, Katherine Cartlitz argues in her essay that many male literati in the Ming Dynasty began to regard female suicide as a representation of *qing* (passion) rather than virtue. My dissertation will add another dimension to scholarly inquiry into female martyrdom in China by including an analysis of fictional texts revealing that, at least among male writers of fiction, there was a real ambivalence about the meaning and value of female martyrdom.

While there is a wealth of scholarship in the field of female martyrdom in late imperial China, only a few scholarly works have been published explicitly on female martyrdom in modern China. The studies of the heroic women of the Chinese revolution and the Communist era mainly approach this topic from a Western feminist point of view. Hu Ying's studies of Qiu Jin shed light on the controversial female martyr at the turn of the twentieth century. Hu presents three sources of discourse on the death of Qiu Jin: the late Qing literati who praised her for being a virtuous woman by emphasizing her

[39] See Paul Ropp, ed., *Passionate Women: Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002).

femininity; the revolutionaries who depict her as a devoted revolutionary who was willing to sacrifice her life to protect her comrades; and the May Fourth intellectuals who portrayed her as a model of a Chinese new woman who severed the ties with her family and died for a nationalist cause.[40] Similar to the discussions on the suicide of Zhao Wuzhen, the multiple interpretations of Qiu Jin's death also reflect the complexity of female martyrdom. Bryna Goodman's study of the Xi Shangzhen suicide case explores how female suicide became "a site for the production of moral truth"[41] in Republican China and how it was "deployed in modern press as a mirror for contemplating or condemning the morality of the New Republican order and the social and cultural changes associated with modernity."[42]

Other scholarly works---for instance, Jimmy Yu's *Sanctity and Self-Inflicted Violence in Chinese Religion, 1500-1700*; Haiyan Lee's *Revolution of the Heart*; Liu Jianmei's *Revolution Plus Love;* Wang Ban's *Sublime Figures of the History*; and Borge Bakken's *The Exemplary Society*---may not speak directly to the subject of female martyrdom, but shed light on the idea of sacrificing oneself to a higher ideal or authority.[43] I have benefitted profoundly from reading all these inspiring academic works. Because existing scholarship on female exemplars focuses more on non-fiction writings, I

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[40] See Hu Ying, "Gender and Modern Martyrology: Qiu Jin as Lienü or Nülieshi," in *Beyond Exemplar Tales: Women's Biography in Chinese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 121-136. Also See Hu Ying, *Burying Autumn: Poetry, Friendship, and Loss* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2016).

[41] Bryna Goodman, "The New Woman Commits Suicide: The Press, Cultural Memory and the New Republic," *Journal of Asian Studies,* vol.64 (2005), 69.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Jimmy Yu, *Sanctity and Self-Inflicted Violence in Chinese Religion, 1500-1700,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Lee Haiyan, *Revolution of the Heart*; Liu Jianmei, *Revolution Plus Love* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003); Wang Ban, *Sublime Figures of the History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Borge Bakken, *The Exemplary Society: Human Improvement, Social Control, and the Dangers of Modernity in China* (Oxford [England]; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

choose to offer a new perspective by examining mostly fictional and artistic primary texts in my dissertation. The ambiguities in these aesthetic works reflect the complexities of how the motives of female martyrdom were represented and complicate the official records, traditional epitaphs, eulogies and biographies of female martyrs. In order to understand the relationship between female martyrdom and state power better, I also read monuments metaphorically in my dissertation. Memorial arches, statues, monuments, and mausoleums are usually the visual symbols of martyrdom. In contrast with the corporeal body, stone monuments are supposed to be the embodiments of eternity. In *Monumentality in Early Chinese Art and Architecture*, Wu Hung explores the aesthetic value and political connotations of monumental objects and sites in early China. He discusses the significance of the discovery of stone in Chinese monumental arts. He states:

> Stone was opposed to wood, and this opposition was understood in symbolic terms. All the natural characteristics of stone---strength, plainness, and especially endurance---became analogous to eternity or immortality…those of wood used by the living, and those of stone dedicated to the dead, the gods, and immortals.[44]

The "eternal ideals" the monuments represent vary in different time periods. From a larger state-based perspective, the state always attempts to "lock in" the meaning of the sacrifice for itself by fixing the value of female martyrdom in stone monuments. The contrast between flesh and stone generates a parallax view within my analysis in this

[44] Wu Hung, *Monumentality in Early Chinese Art and Architecture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 122.

dissertation: one line of sight to the individual, whose motivations are frequently ambiguous, and the other to the state, which cannot tolerate ambiguity. My thesis on the cultivation, consumption and changing narratives of female martyrdom contributes to our understanding of the self, gender, changes in the structure of feelings and ideological control.

My dissertation contains five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter. Chapter 2 concentrates on representations of female martyrdom in late imperial Chinese literature, looking at how female chaste martyrdom functions as a bonding agent that upholds and consolidates the patriarchal system and how certain authors questioned the meaning and value of female chaste martyrdom. In the Ming-Qing period, the mainstream ideology was Neo-Confucianism. Loyalty, filial piety, chastity, and martyrdom were the fundamental virtues promoted in the Neo-Confucian ideological system. The four virtues are intertwined and largely formed the rationale for martyring oneself. From a gendered perspective, Confucian martyrs can be divided into roughly two categories: loyal officials (*zhongchen* 忠臣) and heroic women (*lienü* 烈女). The ideal behind a martyr's sacrifice is Confucian moral obligations to the three cardinal guides and five constant virtues (*sangang wuchang* 三綱五常).[45] Martyrs to female chastity and male loyalty were widespread in late imperial China, especially during the periods of dynastic crisis. The late imperial court adopted a sophisticated reward system to honor chaste females who committed suicide to preserve their virtue. Imperial testimonials (*jingbiao* 旌表) were one way to honor female martyrs, and building memorial arches

[45] The three principles: ruler is the principle of subject; father is the principle of son; husband is the principle of wife. And the five constants: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity. For detailed explanation of *sangang wuchang*, see Ci Jiwei, *Dialectic of the Chinese Revolution: From Utopianism to Hedonism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 103-4.

was another more sensational and public way. The number of memorials to chaste martyrs increased rapidly in the Ming-Qing era.

Our view and readings of late imperial female martyrdom are largely shaped by the New Culture Movement, which fiercely criticized Confucian culture and pointed to the advocacy of female martyrdom as the major source of women's misfortunes and oppression in traditional Chinese society. The didactic stories under the view of the New Culture Movement are unquestionably solid evidence of the brutal patriarchal Confucian ideology. Although recent scholarship---such as Lu Weijing's research on faithful maidens (*zhennü* 貞女), Joan Judge's studies on Chinese exemplary women, and the special issue of *Nan Nü* that focuses on female suicide in late imperial China---has challenged our interpretations of female martyrdom in traditional China and offers us alternative views, how we should read those didactic stories on female martyrdom is still open to debate.[46] This chapter of my dissertation looks at several fictional texts, written by literati men, that throw the meaning and value of female martyrdom into question. Is the moral world that is represented in the didactic stories rock solid? Is it possible to read some of those stories ironically? This chapter first explores the moral world in the late Ming vernacular short story collection *Shi dian tou* 石點頭 (*The Rocks Nod Their Heads*) as a whole and takes one story "The Siege of Yangzhou," which portrays a female martyr Zong Erniang who sells herself to save her family, as an example to reveal the cracks in

[46] Scholars have argued that Chinese women in late imperial China may have committed suicide because of the cult of passion (*qing* 情) or for the purpose of empowering themselves. For those alternative readings of female martyrdom in traditional China, see Lu Weijing, *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Joan Judge, *The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010). The special issue on female suicide in Ming-Qing is *Nan Nü*, vol.3, no.1 (2001), which has been reprinted as a monograph Paul Ropp, Paola Zamperini, and Harriet Zurndorfer, ed., *Passionate Women: Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002).

the supposedly seamless Neo-Confucian moral world. Another literary text I analyze is Yao Maoliang's 姚茂良 (ca. 1475) *Double Loyalty* (*Shuang zhong ji* 雙忠記). The story is based on a real historical event from the siege of Suiyang during the An Lushan rebellion. When Suiyang was besieged for months and food supplies became short, the heroic city general Zhang Xun practiced loyalty to a terrifying extreme by having his concubine cooked as food for the troops and, thus, to some extent, encouraged cannibalism. The biography of Zhang Xun was included in the official historical records, *Old Book of Tang* (*Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書; 945), under the category of "loyal and upright." Zhang was later deified. But Zhang Xun's extreme practice of loyalty has been questioned, and the debate on the martyrdom of Zhang Xun was extended to female chaste martyrdom. In addition to providing a close reading of the legend, I attempt to examine the mystification of Zhang Xun and the philosophical debates over his martyrdom and the death of his concubine. From close readings of the text and analysis of the philosophical debates, we can better understand the differences between male martyrdom and female martyrdom during the mid-Ming.

In chapter 3, I focus on the transition from the cult of female chaste martyrdom to revolutionary martyrdom and the establishment of the May Fourth paradigm. The central questions in this chapter include: is there any similarity between the female martyrs in late imperial China and those in the May Fourth era? Do revolutionary female martyrs have more agency over their fate than Confucian female martyrs? How was nationalism incorporated into revolutionary martyrdom in the establishment of the May Fourth paradigm? I first examine different discourses on female chastity martyrdom in early Republican China. I analyze the Beiyang government's policies towards female chaste

martyrdom and representations of female martyrs in media to understand the mixed messages they conveyed. I explore the coexistence of the eulogies for female chaste martyrs and the advocacy of women's liberation and argue that they are two sides of one coin since they both came from the national restoration campaign. The second half of the chapter 3 focuses on the image of Qiu Jin as found in late Qing and May Fourth literature. Qiu Jin is now mainly regarded as one of the earliest female revolutionary martyrs, but the portrayals of Qiu Jin were drastically different in the works of late Qing literati, the 1911 revolutionaries, and the May Fourth scholars. I first read the changing sites of Qiu Jin's tomb metaphorically as the changing meaning of her martyrdom. I then analyze the changing literary representations of Qiu Jin from late Qing to modern China. After the death of Qiu Jin, countless literary works about her, including fiction, plays, poems, and traditional legends rapidly emerged. I concentrate on close reading of Xiaoshan Xianglingzi's 蕭山湘靈子 *zaju* drama *Xuanting yuan* 軒亭冤 (*Tragedy at Xuanting*; 1907) and Jingguanzi's 靜觀子 fiction *Liuyue shuang* 六月霜 (*Frost in June*; 1911), Lu Xun's 魯迅 short story "Yao 藥" (Medicine; 1919) and Xia Yan's 夏衍 play *Qiu Jin zhuan* 秋瑾傳 (*The Biography of Qiu Jin*; 1936). Through analysis of the construction of Qiu Jin's image in the May Fourth discourse, I argue that nationalism is a new dimension that has been added to female martyrdom in the revolutionary era. Female chaste martyrdom was therefore transformed into female revolutionary martyrdom. However, the new cult of female revolutionary martyrdom is just a new form of female chaste martyrdom which advocates female sacrifice to the modern nation.

In chapter 4, I examine the modern and contemporary sexualization and consumption of female revolutionary martyrdom. I explore how female sexuality

problematizes and questions state ideology and nationalism. The first section is a discussion of Zhang Ailing's short story "Lust, Caution" in both its Chinese and English iterations, and Ang Lee's controversial film adaption of the story. I argue that although "Lust, Caution" is not considered a typical "revolution plus romance" writing, it is an ideal text to reveal the tension between revolution and romance, public self and private self, the sublime and the mundane. I focus on materiality, performativity and sexualization of Wang Jiazhi's sacrifice in the story. The other section in this chapter analyzes different narratives of the female revolutionary martyr Liu Hulan under socialist and post-socialist ideologies. I discuss the trend of dismissing the aura of martyrdom in contemporary Chinese culture. Compared to the earlier heroic representations of Liu Hulan (1932-1947), her image in post-socialist China is overtly sexualized. I analyze some contemporary artistic works depicting Liu Hulan, including the disturbingly sexualized statue of Liu that is part of sculptor Yang Tao's series of works on Chinese martyrs. The contrast between magnificent memorial arches built for chaste women and post-modern parodies of heroic statues of female revolutionary martyrs cannot be more striking. In the epilogue, I will conclude my dissertation by analyzing the state's ongoing promotion of martyrdom and nationalism and summarize how the narratives of female martyrdom simultaneously support and question the state discourse.

CHAPTER II

CONTRADICTIONS IN LATE-IMPERIAL FEMALE CHASTE MARTYRDOM

This chapter includes previously published material: Wang, Xian. "Langxian's Dilemma over the Cult of Martyrdom and Filial Piety: A World of Emptiness in 'The Siege of Yangzhou.'" *Ming Studies*, 72 (2015): 46-68.

The historical records and fictional texts from late imperial China are filled with stories of female martyrdom. Most of the vernacular stories, novels, and plays about female martyrdom from this period of time are considered to be both entertaining and didactic, or at least one of the functions of those stories is moral education. In other words, the deaths of the heroic women in the texts have been used as a vehicle to teach moral lessons and deliver concrete moral messages related to female chastity, filial piety, and loyalty. When Chinese fiction was still in its nascent stage, writer Li Gongzuo 李公佐 (c.778-848) was already promoting the idea that stories should be didactic. He states in his Tang legend "Xie Xiao'e zhuan" 謝小娥傳 (The Legend of Xie Xiao'e) that the reason he wrote Xie Xiao'e's story of self-sacrifice is that "Xie would cause fear for those who have the intention of disturbing the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues, and she can be exemplary for the righteous men and filial women under Heaven."[47] In a later period, despite obvious awareness of the commercialization of vernacular stories, writer Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574-1646) still emphasized the didactic function of literature. In the preface to his *Jingshi Tongyan* 警世通言 (*Stories to Caution the*

[47] Li Gongzuo, "Xie Xiao'e zhuan," in Lu Xun 魯迅, ed., *Tang Song chuanqi quanyi* 唐宋傳奇全譯 [*The Complete Translations of Legends of the Tang and Song*] (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe, 2009), 123. "如小娥，足以儆天下逆道亂常之心，足以觀天下貞夫孝婦之節。"

World), Feng legitimizes the status of fiction by arguing that both classics and fiction are written for the purpose of "reforming common people to become loyal officials, filial sons, upright magistrates, good friends, righteous men, and chaste women"[48]

Beyond the moral educational content, the aesthetics of late imperial vernacular stories also facilitate didactic functions. The structure of the didactic stories of late imperial China, especially in *huaben* 話本 (short vernacular stories), is usually standard. A typical short vernacular story on female martyrdom normally contains three parts. The first part includes one or two prefatory stories of historical exemplary female characters who sacrificed themselves to uphold standards of Confucian morality; the second part, or the main body of the story, concentrates on the cause and the process of the female protagonist's heroic martyrdom; and the story usually concludes with a reference to karmic retribution. The heroic women endow their families with rewards; their family members are blessed with long lives and many offspring. Also, nearly every male heir in the family passes the imperial civil service examination easily, and has a successful career as a Confucian official in the government. In some cases, the woman herself is rewarded by being appointed as a deity by Heaven. In this way, the death/destruction of the material bodies of these heroic women actually generates the rebirth of their spiritual selves and the renaissance of their families. Within this self-contained, stable structure, the Confucian ideals of female chastity, filial piety and loyalty that are ubiquitous in late imperial Chinese vernacular short stories are typically conveyed without any ambiguity.

[48] Feng Menglong, "Jingshi tongyan xu" 警世通言敘, in Huang Lin 黃霖, ed., *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo piping shiliao huibian jiaoshi* 中國歷代小說批評史料彙編校釋 (Shanghai: Baihuazhou wenyi chubanshe, 2009), 260. "令人為忠臣、為孝子、為賢牧、為良友、為義夫、為節婦。"

Modern readings of late imperial female martyrdom are largely shaped by the New Culture Movement, which fiercely criticized Confucian culture and accused the advocates of female martyrdom of being the major source of women's misfortunes and oppression in traditional Chinese society. From the view of the New Culture Movement, didactic stories are solid evidence of the brutal patriarchal Confucian ideology. Although recent scholarship challenges our interpretations of female martyrdom in traditional China and offers us the alternative possibilities that women during this period may have committed suicide because of the cult of passion (*qing* 情) or for the purpose of empowering themselves, exactly how to interpret didactic stories of female martyrdom is still debatable and in need of further discussion.[49] Is the moral world that is represented in the didactic stories really all that rock steady? Is it possible to read some stories ironically? In this chapter, I will analyze ambiguities and contradictions in the representations of female martyrdom in two Ming didactic texts, *Double Loyalty* and "The Siege of Yangzhou." I will also discuss the philosophical debates over martyrdom in Ming-Qing China.

The Deaths of General Zhang Xun 張巡 and His Concubine in *Double Loyalty* (*Shuang zhong ji* 雙忠記)

The Tang dynasty general Zhang Xun (709-757) and his subordinate officer Xu Yuan 許遠 (709-757) were inscribed in history for their extreme loyalty to the ruling

[49] For alternative views on female martyrdom in traditional China, see Lu Weijing, *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Joan Judge, *The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); the special issue on female suicide in Ming-Qing is *Nan Nu*, vol.3, no.1 (2001), and it has been reprinted as a book Paul Ropp, Paola Zamperini, and Harriet T. Zurndorfer, ed., *Passionate Women: Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002); Janet Theiss, *Disgraceful Matters: The Politics of Chastity in Eighteenth-Century China* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2004).

emperor. They are famous for defending Suiyang 睢陽, a militarily significant city, during the An Lushan 安祿山 rebellion. After their heroic deaths, Zhang Xun and Xu Yuan were promoted and enshrined as loyalist martyrs. The Tang imperial court constructed The Twin Temple (*shuang miao* 雙廟) for official cult practices to memorialize them. A shrine dedicated to them in northeastern Henan was the location of annual sacrifices during the Ming dynasty.[50] From the Tang dynasty onwards, many local temples were voluntarily built to honor Zhang and Xu. The two martyrs were deified in the Ming dynasty. However, at the same time, Zhang Xun's extreme actions in defending the besieged city of Suiyang were unceasingly questioned.

In 757, Suiyang was besieged by the An Lushan 安祿山 rebel troops. After consuming all the food supplies they could find, the whole city, including Zhang Xun and his troops, were on the verge of starvation. Zhang Xun ordered his favorite concubine killed and eaten; in so doing, he set an example for the troops, encouraging consumption of human flesh. The controversy over Zhang Xun's virtue thereafter focused on his encouragement of cannibalism. The moralists accused him of being inhumane and suggested that Zhang Xun could have actually saved more lives by discouraging cannibalism. However, for the sake of advocating the spirit of loyalty and allegiance to the imperial state, official historical records, biographies, and literary works deliberately avoided moral assessment of the extreme measures Zhang Xun instituted in defending Suiyang. The controversy, however, was never resolved, and the image of Zhang as an exemplary martyr was always unstable. This ambiguous view of martyrdom appears in the play *Shuang zhong ji* 雙忠記 (*Double Loyalty*) written by the early Ming dynasty

[50] Roger Des Forges, *Cultural Centrality and Political Change in Chinese History: Northeast Henan in the Fall of the Ming* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 147-149.

dramatist Yao Maoliang 姚茂良 (fl. 1475) in its depictions of the deaths of both Zhang Xun and his concubine.

The story of *Double Loyalty* is based on historical records, but unlike the silent concubine in the historical records, Zhang Xun's concubine has a voice in Yao Maoliang's play. In addition to portraying Zhang Xun and his subordinate officers as heroic martyrs, the author also went to great lengths to depict Zhang Xun's concubine as an exemplary female martyr. Understanding Zhang Xun and his terrible heroism in his defense of Suiyang hinges upon the interpretation of his concubine's death.

Gruesome depictions of female martyrdom can be found in numerous historical records and literary works from the Ming dynasty. Almost all of these depictions are considered to be didactic. Specifically, in terms of the Ming dramas, "there can be no doubt that in Ming times theatrical art was considered to have a didactic function. Drama shows 'norms in action' and reinforces them."[51] Along with accounts of male political loyalty are widespread representations of female fidelity, and *Double Loyalty* contains both. Below, I examine the extent to which Ming didactic plays about female virtue deliver concrete moral messages by analyzing some important themes and motifs in *Double Loyalty* and other related stories.

The Ambiguous Representations of Zhang Xun and His Concubine in *Double Loyalty*

In most of the historical records and the literary works about Zhang Xun's defense of Suiyang, Zhang Xun is stereotyped as a determined martyr who cares little

[51] Chun-Chieh Huang and Erik Zurcher, ed., *Norms and the State in China* (Boston: Brill Academic Publication, 1993), 16.

about his concubine. But in *Double Loyalty*, rather than completely deifying Zhang Xun, Yao Maoliang humanizes him by adding details of the conjugal relationship between Zhang and his concubine Wu Aiqing 吳愛卿. Instead of "forcing her out and killing her"[52] as is described in the *Jiu Tang shu*, Zhang Xun feels an emotional bond between husband and wife (*fuqi zhiqing* 夫妻之情), and thus strategically persuades Wu Aiqing to sacrifice herself:

> I intend to cook my beloved concubine to feed the troops, but the marital bond ties me down, and I don't know how to ask her about it. If my concubine can sacrifice herself for the sake of righteousness, the morale of the troops would be boosted, and this isolated city can be saved. I'd better discuss this with her and see what she thinks.[53]

He summons Aiqing to his room, but lacks the courage to directly discuss the issue. He goes around in circles, and makes no progress in persuading Wu. Wu eventually steps up and initiates the conversation. She asks his husband if he has something to say. He opens and shuts his mouth (*yuyan buyan* 欲言不言), then sighs. After a while, he speaks haltingly, "I have one thing to say to you, but I don't know how to say it" (*Wo you yiju hua yao yu ni shuo, zhishi shuobuchulai* 我有一句話要與你說，只是說不出來). Wu replies, "We are a loving couple, just speak what is on your mind" (*fuqi zhiqing, danshuo*

[52] See Liu Xu 劉昫 (887-946), ed., *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 4900.

[53] Yao Maoliang, *Shuang zhong ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988), 75. "意欲將我愛妾烹來餉軍，夫妻之情難以啟齒。若是娘子肯舍生就義，則諸軍心威可振，孤城可保無虞。不免喚娘子與他商議，看他的意下如何。"

wufang 夫妻之情，但說無妨). Zhang Xun still hesitates and tells Wu, "It is hard to bring it up" (*qishi buhao shuode* 其實不好說得).

Here, Zhang Xun's prevarication contradicts the depictions of his personality in both the historical records and in other parts of the play. When Zhang is in command, he often shouts vigorously to raise the morale of the troops. And when he vents his rage, he has the habit of gnashing his teeth, which shows his great determination. As a decisive leader, it is rare for Zhang Xun to hesitate. Yao Maoliang presents another side to the iron-willed General Zhang, and in so doing introduces contradictions and ambiguities into the narrative.

Zhang Xun's concubine remains unnamed in all the historical books, but in *Double Loyalty*, she is given the name Wu Aiqing, which highlights her individual identity. Aiqing 愛卿 was a common way for emperors to address their ministers. The name compares the relationship between Zhang Xun and Wu Aiqing to the relationship between emperor and minister, emphasizing the play's political allegory. At the same time, Aiqing is also a pun on the word for love (*aiqing* 愛情); the full name Wu Aiqing is a homophone of "no love," adding an ironic reading to the relationship between the couple. Yao Maoliang endows the concubine with a voice and agency in ways that complicate the moral assessments of both her and Zhang Xun's martyrdom. Wu Aiqing is the one who steps forward courageously. When Zhang Xun stutters, Wu speaks out, "I get it, the old and weak in the city have all been eaten by the troops, now you want me to be cooked!"[54] And she also tries to put his mind at ease by arguing that:

[54] *Shuang zhong ji*, 75. "我曉得了，城中老弱都盡烹餉，莫非要烹賤妾！"

> Since you are willing to die righteously for the imperial family, as a concubine, I dare not turn you down. I will go wherever you want me to go, no matter whether it is heaven or earth. Since I received the favor of having you as my husband, I am determined to help you accomplish your ambition. Please do whatever you want with my body, even cook it as meat. Losing my body for the sake of my husband is nothing to be ashamed of.[55]

Wu then commits suicide by using Zhang's sword to cut her own throat. Although Wu Aiqing is labeled as a martyr, ambiguities surrounding the meaning of her death still exist within the story. In *Double Loyalty*, Zhang Xun is depicted as a loyal general and an exemplary filial son, but he is also presented as capricious and inconsistent. He writes to the emperor to appeal for a visit home immediately after the assignment of his official position, which shows a strong sense of filial piety and a sincere desire to take care of his mother. The Zhang family is presented as completely harmonious in the play: "Mother and son endeavor to follow the way of being loving and filial. Wife and concubine have no jealous heart."[56] At the final moment of his family visit, Zhang Xun insists on leaving both his wife and concubine at home to take care of his mother. His mother argues, "My son, you know that among the three things which are considered unfilial, the worst is to have no heir. If (Wu Aiqing) can produce a male heir, the Zhang family won't be cut

[55] *Shuang zhong ji*, 76. "君既為王家死義，妾身敢故推。要我上天入地，只索投去，聽其言隨所之。既受了夫恩，要成夫誌。任你將身作醢，煮肉成臡，因夫喪身何所愧。"

[56] Ibid., 1. "張巡上表歸寧，母子盡慈孝之道，溫家讓忙（註釋：疑有訛誤），妻妾無嫉妒之心。"

off."[57] On another level, Zhang Xun's mother also encourages him to transform his sense of responsibility for the family into loyalty, the responsibility for the state (*yi xiao wei zhong* 移孝為忠). As a filial son, Zhang worries about his mother and thinks about her words throughout his entire military journey. After he takes up his official position as a county magistrate in Zhenyuan 真源, he first executes the notorious landlord Hua Nanjin 華南金 who oppresses the local populace. He then rewards the filial sons, obedient grandchildren, loyal husbands and chaste women in the county. In the process of recruiting soldiers, Zhang Xun righteously declares that "the army is forbidden to rape the wives and daughters of commoners, to eat their livestock, to appropriate their wealth, or to disturb their business and daily life."[58] Even so, as soon as he hears that Linghu Chao 令狐潮, the county magistrate of Yongqiu 雍丘, had abandoned the county and surrendered to the rebels, he cruelly orders all the people and horses in the city to be killed, including Linghu's wife. His capricious and unnecessary violence toward the people dims his heroic aura.

The Vengeful Ghost

Although Wu Aiqing commits suicide and literally offers herself as meat to help her husband, the ambiguities of her martyrdom can be read between the lines. In literature, a chaste martyr is often rewarded by being deified. In *Double Loyalty*, Wu Aiqing turns into a vengeful ghost after her death. There is a thin line between ghost and deity. Ghosts and deities are the representations of two forms of afterlife. They can be considered as

[57] *Shuang zhong ji*, 12. "孩兒，你曉得不孝有三，無後為大，萬一生得個男孫，也不絕了張門宗祀也。"

[58] *Shuang zhong ji*, 37. "不許奸人妻女，食人牲口，取人財物，妨人生理。"

two types of "*qi*" 氣 that cross boundaries. According to the logic of karmic retribution, a ghost is the embodiment of unresolved "*qi*" and a way to call the attention to injustice. As Paul Ropp points out in his introduction to *Female Suicide in Late Imperial China*, "Women committed suicide because they believed in superstitious ideas about ghosts and reincarnation."[59] Ghosts, especially female ghosts, are a popular theme in Ming vernacular stories, and also appear in numerous local gazetteers from the Ming era.[60]

In *Double Loyalty*, the ghost of Wu Aiqing returns home and delivers the horrifying message to her mother-in-law and Zhang's wife Zhou Wenji 周文姬 that she was cooked by Zhang Xun as food for the troops. Instead of defending her husband for acting as a loyal official, Zhou's immediate response is to accuse him of being merciless, "My husband is so cruel that conjugal love is beyond his consideration. He cooked his concubine for no reason, so that her wrongly treated ghost turned into a monster."[61] It is worth noting that Zhang Xun's wife has no name in the historical records. The name for the wife in the play is a direct reference to the famous talented woman Cai Wenji 蔡文姬 from the Eastern Han dynasty. Another female character in the play, the old cook for the troops, also condemns Zhang Xun for having a cold heart of iron (*tieshi ban ying de xinchang* 鐵石般硬的心腸): "there exists a husband who has a heart of stone, and also a concubine who dares to die to maintain her husband's reputation."[62] Ming-Qing didactic stories typically deliver clear Neo-Confucian moral messages and promote the idea that

[59] Paul Ropp, Paola Zamperini and Harriet Zurndorfer, ed., *Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* (Boston: Brill Academic Publication, 2002), 5.

[60] For detailed studies of vengeful female ghosts, see Jimmy Yu, *Sanctity and Self-inflicted Violence in Chinese Religions, 1500-1700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 105-114.

[61] *Shuang zhong ji*, 83. "我丈夫忒毒害，不思恩愛，無端把他、把他烹作醢，致使冤魂成精怪。"

[62] Ibid., 78. "世上有這等鐵心腸的丈夫，又有這等不怕死的娘子，要成丈夫名節。"

officials should die for their emperors and concubines should die for their husbands. But in the perspective of Zhou Wenji and the old female cook, love for the state should be subordinate to conjugal love; their promotion of conjugal love complicates both Zhang Xun and Wu Aiqing's martyrdom in the context of Neo-Confucianism. It is more problematic that the outcome of the homecoming of Wu Aiqing's ghost is tragic. Upon seeing the ghost, Wu's mother-in-law is literally frightened to death, and the wife Zhou Wenji dies grieving for her mother-in-law. It is strange and ironic that the Zhang family is being haunted rather than rewarded after the so-called heroic death of Wu Aiqing.

Wu Aiqing's heroic death is also questioned in several *biji* 筆記 literary works. Since *biji* fiction often includes supernatural elements, it is an important source for the imaginative recreations of historical events. In Wang Mingqing's 王明清 (ca.1127-1202) *Zhi qing za shuo* 摭青雜說, a military officer named He Jianzi 何兼資 encounters Zhang Xun who is leading a ghost army in Liuhe county 六合縣. The officer questions Zhang's encouragement of cannibalism in Suiyang and the death of his concubine:

> He Jianzi asks, "The historical records show that over thirty thousand people were eaten during your defense of Suiyang. Is that true?"
> Zhang Xun replies, "It happened, but it is not true. The people were already dead when they were eaten. It is not that we killed them alive."
> He Jianzi then asks, "According to historical records, you killed your favorite concubine and General Xu Yuan killed his favorite attendant. Is that true?"

> Zhang Xun replies, "That was not killing. My concubine realized that the isolated city was in danger and was hard to defend. She cut her own throat because she wanted to imitate Yuji 虞姬 and Luzhu 綠珠 who committed suicide in front of their husbands. The attendant of Xu Yuan died of overwhelming anxiety. Xu then cooked him to feed the soldiers. It was a strategy to strengthen the morale of the troops."[63]

In *Zhi qing za shuo*, Zhang Xun explains his behavior in the conversation with He Jianzi. Wang Shizhen 王士禎 (1634-1711) later gives Zhang's concubine her own voice in *Chats on the North of the Pond* (*Chi bei ou tan* 池北偶談). In this *biji* he wrote a sequel to the story of Zhang's concubine:

> Xu Ai, style name Jiren, was a scholar in Kuaiji. He was diagnosed with an abdominal tumor when he was twenty-five. The pain was unbearable. After several years, the abdominal tumor could speak human language. On the verge of death, Xu Ai saw a young woman dressed in white. She said, "Do you know Zhang Xun killed his concubine to feed the troops? You were Zhang Xun in a previous life, and I was your concubine. You were a loyal officer, but what crime did I commit? Nevertheless, I was killed by you and eaten by the troops. I have been looking for you for thirteen

[63] Wang Mingqing, *Zhi qing za shuo* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 1-2. 資曰："史言大王城守，凡食三萬餘人，不知果否？"巡曰："有之，而實不然也。其所食者，皆已死之人，非殺生人也。"資又曰："史言張大王殺愛妾，許大王殺愛奴，果否？"巡曰："非殺也。妾見孤城危逼，勢不能保，欲學虞姬、綠珠之效死於吾前，故自刎。許大王奴亦以憂悸暴死。遂烹以享士，蓋用術以堅士卒之心耳。"

generations. But since you have been a famous officer in each generation, I have had no chance to retaliate. Today, I can finally get my revenge." The young woman dressed in white disappeared after finishing her words, and Xu Ai died immediately.[64]

In the story, Zhang Xun's concubine turns into a tumor that causes the death of Xu Ai, who is the reincarnation of Zhang Xun. Interestingly, the tumor remained silent during its years of residency inside Xu's body. The silent tumor finds its voice only as it kills Xu Ai/Zhang Xun and takes revenge.

Because of the contradictions in later narrative treatments of her death, Wu Aiqing's suicide deserves more deliberate discussion, and the ethical reading of her martyrdom seems superficial. The Zhang family tragedy shows the power of a vengeful ghost who aims to right wrongs and bring justice. The motif of vengeful ghosts creates an opportunity for a conversation with the past in order to further evaluate its contents. The nature of ghosts enables them to break the limits of time, physical body, and the boundary between life and death. With pent-up frustration and a lack of appropriate channels to express their authentic selves, female vengeful ghosts are transgressive and challenge Confucian norms. The study of female vengeful ghosts is a way to explore

[64] Wang Shizhen, *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 589.
"徐藹，字吉人，會稽諸生。年二十五，得瘕疾，痛不可忍，年餘，瘕能作人言。瀕死時，見一白衣少婦問曰，君識張睢陽殺妾事乎？君前生為睢陽，吾即睢陽之妾也。君為忠臣，吾 有何罪？殺之以饗士卒。吾尋君已十三世矣，君世為名臣，不能報復，今甫得雪吾恨。言訖，婦不見，藹亦隨逝。" In *Zi bu yu* 子不語, Yuan Mei refers to Wang Shizhen's writing of the concubine of Zhang Xun. He claims that because Zhang Xun has long been promoted as an exemplary martyr, his concubine patiently carried her hatred of Zhang for a thousand years to find a chance to take vengeance on him. See Yuan Mei, *Zi bu yu quanji* 子不語全集 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1987), 17.

questions regarding subjectivity and identity, since female ghosts represent self-expression and reclamation of power.

The identity of so-called exemplary female martyrs is not as fixed as the historical records states. Jimmy Yu points out that, "Local government and the literati worked together to transform the status of a deceased woman from a vengeful ghost to a martyr exemplar."[65] Imagining a dead woman as a female ghost endows individual voice and strips her down to an authentic self. To make a woman into an exemplary martyr is more about state recognition. It employs her in the service of the state and its consolidation of power. In literary works, some female martyrs are rewarded by being deified, which plays on an interesting mix of the fear of ghosts and worship of moral exemplars. The shifting identities of virtuous martyred woman indicate the tenuous status of Neo-Confucianism, the mainstream ideology in late imperial China.

Cannibalism and Bodily Suffering

Another controversial issue related to martyrdom in *Double Loyalty* is the cannibalism in Suiyang. Even though Zhang Xun had long been praised as an exemplary martyr, the debate over his virtue and extreme method of defending Suiyang has never ceased. The defenders of Zhang Xun argue that without Zhang, the Tang dynasty would have collapsed. The scholar-official Han Yu praised him, stating that, "Zhang Xun protected the Jianghuai 江淮 area and weakened the power of the rebels. He should be

[65] Jimmy Yu, *Sanctity and Self-inflicted Violence in Chinese Religions, 1500-1700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 109.

credited with having saved the state from subjugation."[66] But still, doubts about Zhang Xun's choice of cannibalistic practice remained. In the *Xin Tang shu*, although Zhang Xun is presented as a male martyr (*lie zhangfu* 烈丈夫), a brief comment also questions Zhang: "The population in Suiyang amounted to sixty thousand when Zhang Xun first began to defend the city. After the food was exhausted, Zhang was not satisfied with determining a way to survive, but chose to encourage cannibalism. Is he a perfect man?" [67] The *Zizhi tongjian* notes that, "the commentators often criticize Zhang Xun saying he would rather consume human flesh than leave Suiyang."[68] Several renowned literati, including Wang Ruoxu 王若虛 (1174-1243), Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692), and Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1797) also condemned Zhang's encouragement of cannibalism.[69]

The origin of flesh-consuming practice in China can be traced back to early Chinese literature. Records and representations of cannibalism can be seen in late

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[66] Han Yu, "Zhang zhongcheng zhuan houxu," in Luo Liantian, *Han Yu guwen jiaozhu huibian* 韓愈古文校註匯編 (Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan, 2003), 392. "巡蔽遮江淮，沮遏其勢，天下之不亡，其誰之功也！"

[67] Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, Song Qi 宋祁 ed., *Xin Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 5541. "巡始守睢陽，眾六萬，既糧盡，不持滿按隊出再生之路，與夫食人，寧若完人？"

[68] Sima Guang, *Zizhi tongjian,* in Zhang Dainian 張岱年, ed., *Chuanshi cangshu shiku: Zizhi tongjian* (Haikou: Hainan guoji xinwen chuban zhongxin, 1995), 2830. "議者或罪張巡以守睢陽不去，與其食人。"

[69] In his *Hunan yilao ji* 滹南遺老集, Wang Ruoxu claims that, "Defending the city is a small matter, but eating people is a great matter" (*shoucheng zhi shi xiao, shi ren zhi shi da* 守城之事小，食人之事大). See Tao Jinsheng 陶晉生, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong* 宋遼金史論叢 (Taipei: Lianjin chubanshe, 2013), 475. This is also a direct reference to Cheng Yi's argument that "starving to death is a small matter, but losing chastity is a great matter" (*esi shi xiao, shijie shi da* 餓死事小，失節事大). In *Du Tongjian lun* 讀通鑒論, Wang Fuzhi asserts that, "no matter whether the city can be saved or not, no matter whether people were dead or alive, it was untenable that people should eat each other." See Zhao Yuan 趙園, *Ming-Qing zhiji shidafu yanjiu* 明清之際士大夫研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), 18. Yuan Mei argues that, "Zhang Xun was loyal, but he promoted eating people in the city, including old and little, he can't be a model; also, he can't be a model since he killed his concubine" See Zhang Dainian 張岱年, ed., *Chuanshi cangshu jiku: Xiaocangshanfang wenji* 傳世藏書集庫：小倉山房文集 (Haikou: Hainan guoji xinwen chuban zhongxin, 1996), 475.

imperial local gazetteers, historical records and literary works, ranging from famine-related flesh consumption, to vengeful cannibalism, to disordered appetites, to self-sacrificial *gegu liaoqin* 割股療親 (flesh slicing practiced by filial children in order to cure their parents).[70] The practice of cannibalism is not exceptional in Chinese history, especially during wartime. For instance, Huang Chao 黃巢 (d. 884), the leader of the influential Tang dynasty rebellion, and his troops were recorded in the official historical books for their atrocious cannibalistic practices. Wartime cannibalism became more prevalent during the Ming-Qing transition.[71] It was not unprecedented for a general to kill his wife or concubine to feed the army and make a political statement. Zhang Xun made the same choice as General Zang Hong 藏洪, and Wukuli Heihan 烏庫哩黑漢 of the Jin 金 dynasty.[72] The wives and concubines were silenced in most of the historical records, and served as tools to show the heroism of their husbands. In most records, cannibalistic practices are considered to be inhumane and are condemned. Yet cannibalism performed for filial or loyal purposes is often presented in a gruesome but heroic way, which problematizes the morality of the issue and generates controversies.

Loyal cannibalism appears as a central theme in *Double Loyalty*. Although the author implies the existence of wartime cannibalism in Suiyang, there is no direct

[70] For detailed studies on cannibalism in China, see Key Ray Chong, *Cannibalism in China* (Longwood Press, 1990).

[71] For detailed studies of Ming-Qing cannibalistic practice, see Zhao Yuan, *Ming-Qing zhiji shidafu yanjiu* (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1999), 18.

[72] See "Zang Hong zhuan" 藏洪傳, in Fan Ye 範曄, *Houhan shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), 1884-6; Bi Yuan 畢沅, *Xu zizhi tongjian* 續資治通鑒 http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=614463 (accessed on December 25, 2017).

depiction of it in the play. However, according to *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (*Old Book of Tang*; 945), the cannibalistic practice in Suiyang was catastrophic:

> Zhang Xun forced his concubine out and killed her in front of the troops. He fed the soldiers her flesh, and said, "You all devote yourself to defending the city for the state wholeheartedly. Despite the shortage of food for years, you all stayed loyal and righteous. Facing this emergency, I can't cut my own flesh to feed the troops, but should I sympathize with this woman?" The soldiers were crying, and could not bear to eat. Zhang Xun then forced them to do it. Thereafter, the troops started to consume women's flesh in Suiyang. After the women were gone, old men and infants were eaten next. The number of people who were consumed amounts to twenty or thirty thousand. The troops' feeling of solidarity was unwavering.[73]

Similar accounts of the killing and eating of Zhang Xun's concubine also appear in *Xin Tang shu* and *Zizhi tongjian*. Unlike Yao's play, the historical books all mention that wartime cannibalism on a monstrous scale followed the death of the concubine. In addition, the horrifying detail that only four hundred people were left alive in the city by

[73] See Liu Xu 劉昫 (887-946), ed., *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 4900-1. "巡乃出其妾，對三軍殺之，以饗軍士。曰："諸公為國家戮力守城，一心無二，經年乏食，忠義不衰。巡不能自割肌膚，以啖將士，豈可惜此婦，坐視危迫。"將士皆泣下，不忍食，巡強令食之。乃括城中婦人；既盡，以男夫老小繼之，所食人口二三萬，人心終不離變。"

the time Suiyang fell is added to the *Xin Tang shu* and the *Zizhi tongjian* versions.[74] By deliberately obscuring the widespread practice of cannibalism in Suiyang, *Double Loyalty* avoids the controversy surrounding Zhang Xun's encouragement of this behavior, and switches the focus to Zhang as a hero and his concubine's self-sacrifice. It leaves out the depiction of widespread cannibalism in Suiyang. Since the wartime cannibalism problematizes the morality of Zhang's decisions, Yao Maoliang chose to downplay it by adding the concubine's side of the story. Unlike the formulaic accounts of virtuous female martyrs in historical records, in fiction and illustrations, "women appear simultaneously as icons of virtue and objects of sensuous connoisseurship."[75] On the one hand, cannibalism problematizes the play's moral messages, while on the other hand, the depictions of cannibalism highlight the body as a platform on which morality can be acted out.

The human body has long been ritualized and turned into a symbol. Since the microcosmic body is symbolically associated with the macrocosmic world in Chinese cosmology and medicine, cannibalism and mutilation can be read allegorically. Representations of the body appear frequently in *Double Loyalty*. In addition to the suffering of Wu Aiqing's body, Yao Maoliang also depicts the mutilation of male bodies. For example, Zhang's subordinate General Lei Wanchun has courage that cannot be

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[74] See Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, Song Qi 宋祁 ed., *Xin Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 5538. "巡出愛妾曰：'諸君經年乏食，而忠義不少衰，吾恨不割肌以啖眾，寧惜一妾而坐視士饑？'乃殺以大饗，坐者皆泣。巡強令食之...被圍久，初殺馬食，既盡，而及婦人老弱凡食三萬口。人知將死，而莫有畔者。城破，遣民止四百而已。" Sima Guang, *Zizhi tongjian*, see Li Zongtong 李宗侗, ed., *Zizhi tongjian jinzhu* 資治通鑒今注 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1966), 63. "巡出愛妾，殺以食士，遠亦殺其奴，然後括城中婦人食之，既盡，繼以男子老弱。人知必死，莫有叛者，所餘才四百人。" *Shuang zhong ji*, 84. "諸軍連日乏食而忠義不少衰，恨不得割肌以餉，肯惜一妾以坐視諸軍饑餓乎？"

[75] Katherine Carlitz, "Desire, Danger, and the Body," in Gilmartin, Christina K. *Engendering China: Women, Culture, and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 104.

quelled by even ten thousand men, and when enemy troops shoot six arrows at his face, Lei does not move his body even an inch. The enemies first think he is a wooden man, but after looking at him more carefully, they find out who he is.[76] General Nan Jiyun 南霽雲, another of Zhang Xun's subordinates, goes to Linhuai 臨懷 in hope of borrowing some soldiers from Xu Shuji and Helan Jinming 賀蘭進明. Helan refuses to lend his troops, and attempts to bribe General Nan with thousands of rolls of cloth, but Nan declines the offer and scolds him fiercely. Before leaving Linhuai, Nan cuts off one of his own fingers and shoots an arrow into the spire of a pagoda to show his determination.

Being a hero or a martyr requires the ability to endure extreme physical sufferings. The depictions of bodily sufferings in *Double Loyalty* can be justified in two ways. One is for the purpose of addressing morality. In that case, bodily suffering is closely related to the idea of transcendence. Breaking through physical limits is considered to be the path to spiritual transcendence. The experience of suffering confronts self-finiteness, and can be self-assuring, or even self-deifying. The physical body parallels literary texts as a medium to convey meanings and to reproduce moral messages and cultural values. In terms of Neo-Confucian ideology, bodily suffering as a performance of self-cultivation is usually associated with the virtues of loyalty, filial piety, and chastity, and thus, in *Double Loyalty,* Neo-Confucian virtues are promoted through depictions of bodily suffering.

Another often neglected rationale for representing bodily suffering in Ming didactic stories is its entertainment value. Due to rapid economic growth, the prosperous print culture, and widespread connoisseurship, Ming dynasty writing has the tendency to

[76] See *Shuang zhong ji*, 48. "手下一員副將雷萬春，有萬夫不當之勇。他在城上被我等射了六箭，都中在他面上，身也不動。我每初然只說是個木人，後來細看是雷將軍。"

favor eccentricity and extremes. The pursuit of strangeness and the flourishing book market incited detailed depictions of the sufferings of females, description of tortured female bodies, and sensuous illustrations, all of which appealed to male readership and voyeurs.

Yao Maoliang's play shows the conflict between the objectified female body and virtuous female image. On the one hand, in Ming-Qing literature, there was a trend towards the politicization of female martyrdom; on the other hand, female martyrdom served as a titillating and entertaining trope. The ambiguities and entertainment function of the story undermine the didactic intent. Female martyrdom remains contradictory in *Double Loyalty*.

Langxian's Dilemma over the Cult of Martyrdom and Filial Piety: A World of Emptiness in "Jiangdu shi xiaofu tushen" 江都市孝婦屠身 ("The Siege of Yangzhou")

Ambiguities of Female Chaste Martyrdom in *Shi dian tou* 石點頭 (*The Rocks Nod Their Heads*)

This section explores the moral world in the late Ming vernacular short story collection *Shi dian tou* 石點頭 (*The Rocks Nod Their Heads*) as a whole, and takes one story in the collection, "The Siege of Yangzhou," as an example to examine the ironies in representations of female chaste martyrdom in late Ming.

In the preface to Langxian's 浪仙 *Shi dian tou*, Feng Menglong points out that the title *Shi dian tou* originates from a famous Buddhist story: an influential Buddhist, Zhu Daosheng 竺道生 (355-434), preached Buddhism in front of rocks, and the rocks nodded their heads in agreement. Feng further argues that by telling morally didactic stories, the

fiction writer Langxian functions as a preacher who enlightens people.[77] Patrick Hanan, one of the pioneers in studying Langxian and his works, considers the moral world in Langxian's writings to be, indeed, rock steady:

> Although Langxian spurned the theme of public morality, he did not reject with it the domestic side of Confucianism. On the contrary. Here he shows himself more orthodox than any writer of the vernacular fiction up to this time, and far more orthodox than Feng Menglong… Langxian, by contrast, plunges us into the world of Confucian moral exemplum.[78]

Hanan then lists "Jiangdu shi xiaofu tu shen" 江都市孝婦屠身 (The Siege of Yangzhou), the eleventh story in *Shi dian tou*, as one of the examples that underscores Neo-Confucian orthodoxy.[79] However, it is highly unclear whether the stories in the collection,

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[77] See Tianran chisou 天然癡叟 (another name for Langxian), *Shi dian tou* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1957), 329. There are several published versions of *Shi dian tou.* The 1957 version published by Shanghai Guji has Feng Menglong's preface, but it excludes the "Siege" story; the 1936 version published by Guoxue yanjiushe 國學研究社 has the "Siege" story but not the preface written by Feng Menglong. In this paper, I use the 1936 version to analyze the contents of the story. The identity of the author of *Shi dian tou* is a topic of debate in Ming-Qing fiction studies. Hu Shiying 胡士瑩 (1901-1979) identifies Langxian 浪仙 as the author in his *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* 話本小說概論 [Introduction to Huaben Fiction] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju,1980), 504-5; Patrick Hanan also convincingly argues that Langxian is the author in *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 120; Yang Xiaodong 楊曉東 speculates that Shi Shaoshen 施紹莘, also known as Fengmao Langxian 峰泖浪仙, a famous *sanqu* writer in the Late Ming, might be the author, see Yang Xiaodong, "Langxian gouchen" 浪仙鉤沈 [Tracing Langxian], *Xueshu yanjiu* 學術研究, vol.5 (1991), 106-110. Another conjecture is that Langxian might be a name used by Feng Menglong. No matter who the author is, it is certain the author had a close relationship with Feng Menglong. In this paper, I follow Hu Shiying and Hanan in identifying Langxian as the author of *Shi dian tou*.

[78] Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 123.

[79] Jiangdu 江都 is another name for Yangzhou that was used during the Sui Dynasty. From the Tang Dynasty, the city started to be known as Yangzhou 揚州. In Feng Menglong's version of the "Siege" story, the city is referred to as Guangling 廣陵. "Jiangdu" and "Yangzhou" are used interchangeably in the story. Through meticulous studies of the historical connotations of the different names of the city, Antonia

including “The Siege of Yangzhou,” deliver an obvious moral message because of their widespread ambiguities. For instance, in “Wang Benli tianya qiufu” 王本立天涯求父 (Wang Benli Goes to the Ends of the Earth in Search of His Father), after finding out that his real mother is not a good-looking lady, an influential eunuch hires a prostitute to act the role of his mother so that he will be able to have a suitable object for his displays of filial piety. This ironic treatment of filial piety corroborates any suspicions the reader might have about Wang Benli’s own obsession with filial piety. In “Pan Wenzi qihe yuanyang zhong” 潘文子契合鴛鴦塚 (Pan Wenzi Joins His Male Lover in a Grave of Mandarin Ducks), Pan Wenzi and Wang Zhongxian abandon their families and celebrate their same-sex union despite their parents’ ritual expectation that these two only sons should marry and provide male heirs for their lineages. In “Qu Fengnu qing qian si gai” 瞿鳳奴情愆死蓋 (Qu Fengnu’s Misdemeanor of Love is Redeemed by Her Death), the Widow Fang has an affair with Sun Sanlang. In order to have a lasting relationship with her young lover, Fang persuades her daughter Fengnu to marry Sanlang. Fengnu initially has concerns about the illicit relationship. She hesitates for a while, and says:

> “As the saying goes, whoever gets into the father’s bed becomes a mother, this person [Sun Sanglang] then became my father after having slept with my mother. It can’t be allowed.” But Fang argues, “Since things are

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Finnane argues that “the name Yangzhou perhaps most immediately suggested to literate Chinese a line from one or another well-known Tang poem, which typically referred either to erotic pleasures or to commercial activity that matched well enough newly acquired meanings from the late Ming and Qing periods… The word Jiangdu carried grander and more tragic meanings: the vanity of human ambition, the passage of time and dynasties, vicissitudes in the fortunes of empire…after 1645, any story about Yangzhou in association with being “filial” would certainly have been interpreted as a reference to Yangzhou’s resistance to the Qing.” See Antonia Finnane, “Langxian’s ‘Siege at Yangzhou’: A Post-Ming Reading,” in Wang Gungwu, eds., *Power and Identity in the Chinese World Order* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 339.

already messed up, how can you argue who is the father and who is the mother"[80]

Cynically, despite contravening the principle of the Confucian rectification of names, Widow Fang is not punished by "proper" karmic retribution in the story. Although the neighbors accuse Widow Fang of licentious behaviors, the magistrate only punishes her by revoking her right to be supported by her son. These ambiguous stories raise the question of whether Langxian indeed fully embraces Confucian virtues and whether his attempts to teach moral lessons through his stories are genuine.

Langxian wrote during a transitional period fraught with both political crises and personal moral challenges for the elite. With the rise of mercantilism and the corruption of the late Ming court, traditional mores were beginning to break down. The urge to respond to the giant gap between the corrupt reality and the ideals nurtured by their moral education motivated many literati at that time to write extremely didactic stories. Even as loyalism and filial piety are unquestionable aspects of Langxian's moral convictions, the gap between the absolute demands of his cultural ideals and the moral complexity of daily life was so large that he used his stories to illustrate the irresolvable moral choices his characters face. In this way, Langxian produced stories that are full of disquieting contradictions. The grotesque details in "Siege" show Langxian's anxiety and dilemma over the excessive aspects of the cults of martyrdom and filial piety.

[80] *Shi dian tou,* 67. "鳳姐躊躇半晌，方說道："常言踏了爹床便是娘，這個人踏了娘床便是爹，只怕使不得。"方氏道："如今只好混帳，那裏辨得甚麼爺，論得甚麼娘。"

The Evolution of the "Siege" Story

"Siege" is set during the late Tang, a period that was similar to the late Ming in terms of the chaos caused by local uprisings and the decadence of the central government. In this entropic world, Langxian replaces a heroic male protagonist with a heroine to highlight how ill-prepared male literati were to confront this historical moment. Ostensibly, "Siege" is a conventional story about a filial heroic woman who sacrifices herself to save her husband's family. But by comparing Langxian's story to previous versions of the same story by other authors, especially the version in Feng Menglong's *Qingshi leilüe* 情史類略 (*A Classified History of Passion*), we can see how Langxian highlights the dilemma of how male gentry should respond to the intertwined cults of martyrdom and filial piety.

The earliest version of the "Siege" story was recorded in the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (*Extensive Records of the Taiping Era*; 978), and it was later reprinted verbatim in the *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (*New Book of Tang*; 1060). The content is as follows:

> There was Zhou Di 周迪 and his wife, whose surname is unknown. Di was good at trading and doing business back and forth in Yangzhou. When Di and his wife encountered the Bi Shiduo 畢師鐸 upheaval in Yangzhou, starving people in the city were selling others for food. Di was on the verge of starving to death. His wife then suggested, "Now it's impossible for us to go back together. Because you still have your mother to take care of, we can't both die. I'd like to sell myself to support you so that you can go back." Di was reluctant, but his wife insisted on going to

> the market and gave Di the several thousand in cash that she had sold herself for. The guard of the city gate was suspicious when Di was about to leave the city. He went to the market with Di and saw the head of Di's wife on a scale. Di wrapped up the rest of her corpse and buried it.[81]

The story is reproduced as "The Wife of Zhou Di 周迪妻 " in *Qingshi* with Feng Menglong's comments. In the comments, Feng naturalizes and even endorses the martyrdom described in the tale as the highest expression of "the righteousness of being a wife" (*qi zhi yi* 妻之義). This version reads as follows:

> A person from Nanchang named Zhou Di travelled to Yangzhou for business, and his wife was with him. There they encountered the Bi Shiduo disturbance and could not leave. People were eating one another in the city. Di was on the brink of starvation. His wife said, "With the military situation so bad, we certainly cannot both be saved. Your mother is old and far away. It is wrong for both you and I to die. I would rather sell myself to a butcher so that you can go home safely." Di was forced to agree. With half of what she got from selling herself, he bribed a guard to let him go. The guard was suspicious, but Di insisted he was telling the truth. No one believed him, so they went with Di to the scene of the event

[81] Li Fang 李昉, ed., *Taiping guangji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), 2117-2118; Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, Song Qi 宋祁 ed., *Xin Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 5831. Also see Xu Zhiping 徐誌平, *Wanming huaben xiaoshuo Shi dian tou yanjiu* 晚明話本小說石點頭研究 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1991), 124. "周迪妻某氏。迪善賈，往來廣陵，會畢師鐸亂，人相略（掠）賣以食。迪饑將絕，妻曰："今欲歸，不兩全。君親在，不可並死。願見賣以濟君行。"迪不忍，妻固與詣肆，售得數千錢以奉迪。至城門，守者誰何，疑其詒，與迪至肆問狀，見妻首已於枡突。迪裹餘體歸葬之。"

to check. When they got there, they saw her head already on the chopping block. All who witnessed this gasped with amazement and competed to give him gold and brocade cloth. Di was thus able to retrieve the rest of her corpse and carry it home on his back. (Feng Menglong comments: For a wife to accompany her husband on business must mean the couple could not bear to be parted. But who would have known this meant their eternal separation? The point is not so much that his wife did not want to be killed, it is that it was more important to her to send her husband on his way. It is not that he found his wife's death easy to bear, but it was more important to him to help her achieve her identity as a righteous wife.)[82]

Except for Feng Menglong's comments on the story in the *Qingshi*, the versions in the *Taiping guangji, Xin Tang shu* and *Qingshi* are all quite similar. Even so, there are still some notable differences among the three versions. In contrast to the previous versions that stress Zhou Di's capability as a businessman, Feng Menglong does not mention Zhou's business aptitude. Living in the late Ming, a period of great economic development, it is odd that Feng, who was successful in the commercial printing business, omits this detail. As we shall explore, this missing piece of information foreshadows the

[82] Feng Menglong, *Qingshi* (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1986), 493. I consulted Ellen Widmer's translation and made some significant changes. See Ellen Widmer, "Tragedy or Travesty? Perspectives on Langxian's 'The Siege of Yangzhou'," in Eva Hung and Robert Hegel, ed., *Paradoxes of Traditional Chinese Literature* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1994), 195-196N. "有豫章民周迪，貨利於廣陵，其妻偕焉，遇師鐸之亂，不能去，城中人相食。迪饑將絕，妻曰："兵荒若是，必不相全，君親家老遠，不可與妾俱死。願見鬻於屠氏，則君歸裝濟矣。"迪勉從之。以所得之半賂守者求去，守者詰之，道以實對，群輩不信，遂與迪往其處驗焉。至則見其首已在肉案，聚觀者莫不嘆異，爭以金帛遺之。迪收其餘骸，負之而歸。（馮夢龍）販利而妻必與偕，蓋不忍相離也。而孰知竟作長離乎！妻非忍於身之殺，而貴於遂夫之行。迪亦非忍於妻之死，而貴於成妻之義。"

inversion of competency between Zhou Di and his wife in Langxian's adaptation. Another detail that is surprisingly different among the three versions is the bribing of the guard, which appears only in Feng's version. Langxian's version completely cuts the scene in which the husband bribes the guard down to the mere detail of the guard's suspicious response. All the barriers that hold Zhou back from returning home are removed after the story of his wife's martyrdom. Another significant detail that is changed is that in the *Taiping guangji* version, the guard sees the head of Zhou's wife on a food scale when he returns to the market with Zhou. In Feng's version, the guard and Zhou see the head on a chopping block. The emphasis here is shifted away from the economic value represented by the head to the strikingly graphic moment of the wife's martyrdom through dismemberment. In his version, Langxian keeps the detail of the head on the still bloody chopping block, but adds that "with her eyes and mouth wide open, the wife's face did not even change color on the chopping block" (*muzheng kou zhang, mianse bugai* 目睜口張，面色不改) to highlight the heroic nature of her death.[83] The changes Feng made, as well as his comments on the virtuous acts performed by both Zhou Di and his wife, focus attention on the moral aspects of the story, while the version in the *Taiping guangji* stresses the economic exchange implicit in the wife's death.

In his analysis, Hanan makes great efforts to explore the relationship between Langxian and Feng Menglong, and persuasively argues that Langxian worked closely with Feng Menglong in the editorial field.[84] It is very likely that Langxian had read the

[83] *Shi dian tou*, 197.

[84] Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story,* 120. Katherine Carlitz restates that, "Hanan adduces convincing evidence to suggest that this Langxian was an editorial associate of Feng Menglong from 1627 until at least some time in the 1630s." See her "Style and Suffering in Two Stories by 'Langxian'," in Pauline Yu, ed., *Culture and State in Chinese History: Conventions, Accommodations, and Critiques* (Stanford, Calif.:

previous versions in the *Taiping guangji* and *Xin Tang shu*, and used Feng Menglong's version as the basis for his *huaben* story. By adding some important details and intentionally leaving out others, Langxian creatively expanded a short anecdote into a complicated story, and presents us with an unstable world completely different from that in Feng Menglong's sketch.

The World of Chaos: The Inversion of Gender Roles in Langxian's "Siege" Story

In "Siege," Zhou Di's wife is transformed from an unnamed character into a heroine named Zong Erniang 宗二娘. Her surname connotes two levels of ideal values: loyalty (*zhong* 忠) and filial piety/lineage (*chuanzong jiedai* 傳宗接代).[85] Zong Erniang is presented as "the daughter of a *ru* family, who in her youth had studied the Rites and Odes"[86] Highly literate and virtuous, she marries the relatively poor merchant Zhou Di. She takes good care of his family, and practices filial piety toward her mother-in-law. Zhou Di and Zong Erniang have no children even though they are in their late thirties. And because of the constant wars, rebellions and upheavals, the business route Zhou Di usually takes from his hometown Nanchang to Xiangyang has been cut off. Unlike the peasants, the merchant Zhou Di has no farmland to rely on; the impoverished Zhou

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Stanford University Press, 1997), 217. On the relationship between Feng Menglong and Langxian, for more, also see Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸, *Xidi shuhua* 西諦書話 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1983), 190-191.

[85] Antonia Finnane argues that Zong's first name Erniang is the indication that Zong is the representation of the Southern Ming, which underlines the political significance of the story: "Second Miss Zong's name carried a further layer of meaning from 1644 onward, because after the fall of Beijing and the establishment of a rump court in Nanjing, the fact that she came 'second in the family' ceased to be an arbitrary detail and could be read as a direct reference to the Southern (or second) Ming. It is worth noting, incidentally, that Feng Menglong was a strong supporter of the Southern Ming, the subject of his last identified work." See Antonia Finnane, "Langxian's 'Siege at Yangzhou'," 345.

[86] *Shi dian tou*, 186. Translation is from Carlitz, "Style and Suffering," 227-228. "這宗氏是儒家之女，自幼讀書知禮。"

family can barely survive. Zhou Di's mother, who does not appear in previous versions of the "Siege" story, here turns out to be a crucial character, insisting that Zong Erniang accompany her husband Zhou Di on the business trip to collect debts in the hope that they can bear offspring during the trip. Concerned with her mother-in-law's fragile health, Zong Erniang proposes that she stay with her mother-in-law and take care of her while Zhou Di is away on the trip. She even suggests that Zhou Di marry a concubine to have children. This seemingly perfect solution is rejected outright by her mother-in-law, who claims that, "If my daughter-in-law stays at home, and my son marries a concubine and has offspring in another state, the concubine will benefit from the marriage while the wife will be abandoned."[87] She even threatens to commit suicide after the couple questions her advice. As a filial couple, Zhou Di and Zong Erniang eventually follow their mother's order, leaving her with a relative, and set out on the journey to disaster. Carlitz argues that, "The story has constructed a world in which one unnecessary stupidity leads to another, with no possibility of escape."[88] In other words, Carlitz assumes Zhou Di's mother speaks for her daughter-in-law, and the bad judgments she makes create a hopeless outcome for the couple. Carlitz's dismissal of the mother's bad judgment forecloses another reading of the story that I propose below. Langxian destabilizes the stereotype of the antagonistic mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship and, I argue, Zhou Di's mother treats Zong Erniang more like her own daughter instead of her daughter-in-law. But what if the mother is taking into account more than the child-bearing function of her daughter-in-law? Perhaps the mother is skeptical about her son's

[87] *Shi dian tou*, 187. "假若留下媳婦在家，兒子反在他州外府娶下偏房家小，卻不是後邊的受用，結發的倒丟過一邊。"

[88] Carlitz, "Style and Suffering," 230.

business abilities and, therefore, wants Zong Erniang to be Zhou Di's business assistant to insure her investment since she gives them all the money she had saved for her funeral. She has confidence in Zong Erniang's ability, and hopes her high-stakes gamble can bring prosperity to the Zhou family. In this way, Zong Erniang becomes a key part of her investment, a piece of property. Although it is possible that Zhou Di's mother appreciates Zong Erniang's talents, since traditional Chinese society lacked open recognition for women who might be gifted at conducting business, and since the filial duty to produce a descendant was of high importance, she may unconsciously have used child-bearing as an excuse to persuade Zong Erniang to accompany Zhou Di on the business trip. Therefore, in addition to being trapped by the dictates of filial obedience, the couple is also caught in the tradition that defines women as commodities that belong to men. If women could have been defined by their own talents, and were not kept subordinated to their husbands and families, Zong Erniang might have been very successful taking care of the business alone, and Zhou Di could have stayed at home to take care of his mother.

One of the central motifs in Langxian's rewriting of the story is the inversion of Zhou Di and Zong Erniang's gender roles. Zhou Di's abilities to take care of business in the outer (*wai* 外) sphere and provide for his family are questionable. Bringing his mother's burial savings and his wife with him, Zhou Di must succeed in both his business ventures and the procreation of an heir. He first travels with his wife to Xiangyang to collect debts and stays with a family that owes him some money. But his lack of caution costs all the money the couple has. In a conversation with the mother of the family, Zhou Di carelessly talks about the economic capital (*benqian* 本錢) they have. Although Zong reminds her husband that the son of the host family is a gambler and is not trustworthy,

the son had already overheard the conversation, and then steals the money. *Benqian* has multiple layers of meaning in Ming fiction. It literally means "seed money" which can be wisely invested to gain profit and possibly power and social status. Besides economic capital, *benqian* is also used in Ming texts to refer to a penis or sexual ability. In *Jin Ping Mei*, Ximen Qing's sexual potency (*benqian*) plays a crucial role in his seduction of Li Ping'er, and allows him to eventually possess both her sexual and economic capital. In "Qu Fengnu qing qian si gai," another story in *Shi dian tou*, when widow Fang tries to persuade her daughter Fengnu to marry Sun Sanlang, she says, "Look at Sun Sanlang, he is not only gentle and gorgeous but also has *benqian.* It will benefit you for your lifetime."[89] *Benqian* here refers to both Sun's sexual ability and money. The word "*benqian*" also appears several times in the "Siege" story. For instance, "It's hard to believe that after doing business for years, the capital (*benqian*) has been largely reduced."[90] Zong's mother-in-law says, "In my opinion, you should take my fifty taels of silver, the capital (*benqian*) I have saved for my funeral, pack your bags promptly and go to Xiangyang to collect debts."[91] In Xiangyang, Zhou Di again proves to have a lack of ability in doing business and loses all their money. Childless in his late thirties, he has neither economic capital nor sexual capital. This detail of how Zhou Di loses the family money because of his foolish and unnecessary revelation of their resources does not appear in the *Taiping guangji, Xin Tang shu* or *Qingshi* versions. Langxian intentionally adds the episode in Xiangyang to highlight the inversion of competency between Zhou Di

[89] *Shi dian tou*, 67. "今看這孫三官，又溫柔，又俏麗，又有本錢，卻不是你終身受用。"

[90] Ibid., 186. "不竟經商數載，把本錢都消折了。"

[91] Ibid. "依我起來，還是將這五十兩送終本錢，急急收拾行李，再往襄陽走走，討些賬目。"

and Zong Erniang. Fortunately, a Huizhou merchant who has a shop in Yangzhou is willing to help Zhou and Zong. He takes them with him to Yangzhou. However, this piece of good fortune soon turns into misfortune. After only a few months of peace, Yangzhou is beset by a rebellion. The couple does not manage to escape from the Bi Shiduo revolt and is trapped in the city. Zong Erniang looks far ahead, and wisely suggests that they should live in a remote place and use all their remaining money to store rice. Because of Zong's foresight, they manage to survive for a while. The siege then causes serious starvation, and cannibalism becomes widespread in Yangzhou. The business of selling human flesh soon prospers in the city. After running out of money, Zong Erniang considers selling herself or her husband to a butcher so that at least one of them can survive and go back home to take care of Zhou's mother. At this point, their financial capital has been used up, and their only remaining capital is that of their bodies and of their names. The startling difference between Langxian's version of this story and that in the *Qingshi* is that rather than offering herself in sacrifice, Zong Erniang negotiates with her husband about who should be sacrificed. Does that mean Zong Erniang is afraid of her imminent death? Zong Erniang knows her husband very well. She knows that Zhou Di does not have the courage to think about being chopped up by a butcher, to embrace suicide to save his wife and therefore also his mother. The whole process of the negotiation is more a rite that Zong Erniang holds to show the superiority of her moral capital to that of Zhou Di while he reveals himself as a useless coward. He can accomplish nothing other than crying and blaming his mother for sending them out.

The gender inversion is also highlighted in the contrast between Zhou Di's vulnerability and Zong Erniang's toughness. In contrast to Zhou Di's endless tears, Zong

Erniang presents herself with laughter throughout the story. For instance, when she attempts to persuade her mother-in-law that she should stay at home to care for her instead of accompanying her husband on the business trip, Zong giggles (*gege de xiao* 格格的笑). By doing so, she softens the tone she uses to plead with her mother-in-law so as to reduce the tension between the couple and their mother. In a society that silences the voices of young women and tells them never to speak back to their husbands or parents-in-law, Zong Erniang's laughter presents an acceptable alternative that allows women to express their opinions. Zong Erniang laughs again during the conversation with her husband when they are negotiating about whom should be sold to a butcher:

> Zong laughed coldly, "You can cry all day today, tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow, but it won't get us both home. I remember that in ancient days Zuo Botao and Yang Jiao'ai were on the point of freezing and starving to death, and in the end they sacrificed one to save the other. People are now being butchered and sold in the market---that at least would bring us a little cash. If you sell me, you can take the money for travelling expenses, and go back home to take care of your mother, or I sell you, I will take [my mother-in-law's son] to cover my travelling expenses (將兒作路費), and go back home to take care of my mother-in-law. You decide who it's to be.[92]

[92] *Shi dian tou*, 194-195. I consulted Carlitz's translation, and made some significant changes. See Carlitz, "Style and Suffering," 230. "宗二娘卻冷笑道："隨你今日哭到明日，明日哭到後日，也不能夠夫婦雙還了。我想古人左伯桃、羊角哀，到揀餓極處，畢竟死了一個，救了一個。如今市上殺人賣肉，好歹也值兩串錢。或是你賣了我，將錢作路費，歸養母親；或是我賣了你，將兒作路費，歸養婆婆。只此便從長計較，但憑你自家主張。"

By making reference to the story of Zuo Botao 左伯桃 and Yang Jiao'ai 羊角哀, Zong Erniang situates herself and her husband in a broadened moral context. The story of Zuo Botao and Yang Jiao'ai appears in Feng Menglong's *Yu shi mingyan* 喻世明言 (*Clear Words to Enlighten the World*).[93] Zuo Botao and Yang Jiao'ai are on a journey to the state of Chu in hope of serving as officials and bringing prosperity to the state. Because of the atrocious weather and the shortage of food, it becomes clear that only one can survive the journey. Zuo Botao makes the decision to sacrifice himself by giving his clothing and food to Yang Jiao'ai to support him in accomplishing their ambition. After serving as a successful official in Chu, Yang Jiao'ai resigns from his position. He returns, buries Zuo and mourns for him. Later, in order to protect the ghost of Zuo Botao from being harassed by the ghost of Jing Ke 荊軻, Yang commits suicide so that his ghost can help Zuo's vanquish the ghost of Jing Ke. Like Zuo Botao and Yang Jiao'ai, Zong Erniang and her husband are trapped on a doomed journey. In a comparative reading of those two stories, we can see how the parallel concepts of family (*jia* 家) and state (*guo* 國) are intertwined. Zong Erniang, who embodies the ideals of *ru* culture, regards Zuo Botao as her ideal model, and is willing to sacrifice herself to save her husband and the Zhou family, but Zong also hopes that her husband will live up to this same moral standard. If the model of Zuo Botao and Yang Jiao'ai foregrounds the celebration of male friendship and martyrdom, the negotiation between the spouses in "Siege" reveals their problematic conjugal relationship by highlighting the weakness of the husband, and casts

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[93] See Feng Menglong, "Yang Jiao'ai she ming quan jiao" 羊角哀捨命全交, in *Yu shi mingyan* 喻世明言 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958), 120-127.

doubts on the value of martyrdom, since Zhou Di seems incapable of recognizing its symbolic value.

In her analysis of how the Zuo Botao and Yang Jiao'ai story is incorporated into "Siege," Yenna Wu states that reference to the earlier story "signals the couple's move toward mutual dependency, showing that Zong Erniang not only internalizes such moral examples but regards herself as her husband's equal."[94] I interpret this scene differently. When Zong Erniang speaks about selling herself to the butcher, she equates herself with money, but when she speaks about selling Zhou Di to the butcher, she emphasizes the mother-son relationship to remind Zhou Di of his duty as a filial son. Since Zhou Di fails to live up to the social expectations for a son because of his failure of courage to sacrifice himself, Zong Erniang starts to sneer at her husband, a gesture that is rare in a traditional conjugal relationship in which the wife should always subordinate herself to her husband. Her cold laugh indicates that she is prepared to sacrifice herself even before the conversation has begun. This kind of laughter may be the genealogical antecedent of the cold laugh ascribed to revolutionaries when they are facing execution---their death gives them a glorified moment of superiority over those less worthy than they. As a heroic woman (*lienü* 烈女), Zong Erniang shares certain characteristics with the revolutionary martyrs (*lieshi* 烈士) of the modern era; as martyrs, they sacrifice themselves for ideal values associated with family (*xiao* 孝) or country (*zhong* 忠). Their heroic laughter is an indication of their moral triumph over their "enemy"---although their bodies can be destroyed by the "enemy", their untrammeled spirit, which is embodied in their danger-defying expression of emotion, remains. Confronting her inevitable death, Zong Erniang

[94] Yenna Wu, "Her Hide for Barter: Xi Langxian's Model of Self-Sacrifice in *The Rocks Nod Their Heads*," *Tamkang Review*, vol.27, no.2 (Winter 1996), 149.

has only the wish that her husband could show at least some willingness to take active responsibility for the family, and so she asks him to make a decision. Unfortunately, Zhou cannot muster the resolution and responsibility that Zong is asking of him:

> When Zhou Di heard her speak of selling bodies for cash, all his own flesh began to quiver and twitch. He waved his arms and cried: "It's out of the question!" Zong laughed again. "All right, we'll both starve, and someone else will get a full belly eating us!"[95]

Zong is not surprised by Zhou Di's reaction after she makes the offer to sacrifice herself. She remains disappointed by her husband's cowardice and passivity. She laughs again, this time perhaps in desperation. One of the reasons her mother-in-law gives when she first tries to persuade them to travel together is the deep love they share (*en'ai fuqi* 恩愛夫妻). But through this episode, it becomes apparent that the solidarity between the spouses is actually quite fragile. In this scenario, with a desperate smile, Zong Erniang is vengefully declaring that they then will die together---she starts to mentally torture her husband since she already knows her fate and gains moral superiority from her determination to sacrifice herself. She then asks their landlord to accompany her to the butcher where she sells herself. Before being chopped up, she returns back home briefly with four strings of cash:

[95] *Shi dian tou*, 195. Translation is from Carlitz, "Style and Suffering," 231. "周迪見說要殺身賣錢，滿身肉都跳起來，搖手道："這個使不得。"宗二娘笑道："你若不情願，只怕雙雙餓死，白白送與人飽了肚皮。"

> (She) placed them on the table, pointed to them and said to her husband: "This is your mother's money from the sale of her son. Quick, off with you to the market. I'll take the money for my traveling expenses and go home to care for her." Zhou Di's soul wouldn't stick to his body; his face was the color of ashes; he wanted to answer but the breath seemed stuck in his throat; three or four times he stretched forward his neck, but could not utter a sound. Tears the size of yellow beans pulsed from his eyes. Zong watched all this and started laughing: "Well, it looks as though we can't make this business deal. I'll go back and call the whole thing off."[96]

In this performative moment, Zong Erniang once again highlights the mother-son relationship by pointing out that the money is "your mother's money from the sale of her son". In the pre-modern era, reproductive capital was the only *benqian* that Chinese women could rely on to increase their agency. Their children, especially their sons, become their *benqian*. As his mother's *benqian*, Zhou Di fails in protecting family resources and taking care of his mother. Zong Erniang completely reveals how weak Zhou Di is---she mentally rips apart her husband before being physically chopped up herself. Her desperate laugh turns into a tranquil chuckle (*xiao yi xiao* 笑一笑). At this point, Zhou Di is dead to her. Her sacrifice is a demonstration that matters only to herself and her own legacy. Significantly, a similar performative scene also appears in the well-

[96] *Shi dian tou*, 195. Translation is from Carlitz, "Style and Suffering," 231. "宗二娘將這四貫錢回到下處，放在桌上，指著說道："這是你老娘賣兒子的錢，好歹你到市上走一遭，你便將此做了盤纏歸去，探望婆婆。"周迪此時魂不附體，臉色就如紙灰一般，欲待應答一句，怎奈喉間氣結住了，把頸伸了三四伸，卻吐不得一個字，黃豆大的淚珠流水淌出來。宗二娘看一看，又笑一笑，說："這樁買賣做不成，待我去回覆了他罷。"

known "Du Shiniang Angrily Throws Overboard Her Treasure Box" story. Disappointed by the fact that her lover Li Jia has sold her to another man, Du Shiniang pretends to accept the deal and then throws her valuable treasures into the river piece by piece to humiliate Li Jia. When finished, she laughs coldly and then drowns herself in the river.[97] Both Zong Erniang and Du Shiniang laugh coldly with resignation to protest their chilling reality. Their cold laughter serves to highlight the heat of their actions.

Langxian depicts Zong Erniang's death as an act of martyrdom. Before committing suicide, Zong Erniang insists on cleaning her body. She writes an elegy for herself and recites it publicly in an unintelligible dialect. The motif of female voice also appears in Wang Shizhen's adaptation of the story in *Double Loyalty* I discussed in the previous section. In the story, Zhang Xun's concubine turned into a silent tumor which remained in the body of Xu Ai, the reincarnation of Zhang Xun, slowly killing its host. The tumor/the concubine of Zhang Xun not only got revenge but also eventually found its voice. Rather than being silenced in the historical records, the female voice finally stands as a metaphor or indicator of female power and subjectivity. Zong Erniang's eulogy to herself is a powerful statement:

> Pitiless is Heaven to have me born under an unlucky star. Early on I married into the Zhou family and served my husband. Since my father-in-law died early, I have only had my mother-in-law to attend to. Much ashamed of [failing to] perform the duties of a daughter-in-law, I exerted

[97] "Du Shiniang nu chen baibaoxiang 杜十娘怒沈百寶箱" [Du Shiniang Sinks Her Treasure Box in Anger], Feng Menglong, *Jingshi tong yan* 警世通言 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chuban she, 1956), 474. The story also appears together with "Zhou Di Qi" 周迪妻 in Feng Menglong's *Qingshi* entitled "Du Shiniang" under the category of "Love Rivals" (*Qingchou* 情仇). See Feng Menglong, *Qingshi*, 453-457.

myself from morning until dark. Unexpectedly the world fell into disorder and weapons made trouble day by day. In the public domain, the country suffered ruin; in the private domain, families suffered destruction. Mother-in-law ordered us to travel and engage in trade, but the profit was smaller than a snail or a fly. We were sojourning here in Yangzhou when bandits besieged the city. One battle has succeeded another so that grain and millet have not been harvested. [We had to] catch sparrows and dig for rats; firewood is now as dear as cassia and rice as dear as jade. In no time, my life will come to an end anyway---why should I begrudge the sacrifice of my body now? By this, I can obtain travel funds for my husband so that he can travel the vast distance to find his mother. When he sees his mother, I will be able to rest in peace. I only entreat Heaven for protection. May the Glorious One watch over us. May my mother-in-law enjoy longevity and my husband enjoy prosperity to the full. May he marry again to that he can be blessed with a son. Alas, such is my life! Yet I have neither fear nor resentment. May Heaven inspect my heart. May weapons be put away and peace return. May all those who die in this chaotic time transcend the cycle of transmigration with me! [98]

[98] *Shi dian tou*, 196. Translation is from Wu, "Her Hide for Barter," 153-154. "惟天不吊，生我孤辰，早事夫婿，歸於周門。翁既先逝，惟姑是承。婦道孔愧，勉爾晨昏。不期世亂，幹戈日尋，外苦國壞，內苦家傾。姑命商販，利乏蝸蠅。僑寓維揚，寇兵圍城，兵火相繼，禾黍勿登。羅雀掘鼠，玉粒桂薪，殘命頃刻，何惜捐生。得資路費，千裏尋親，子既見母，媳死可瞑！惟祈天佑，赫赫照臨，姑壽無算，夫祿永臻。重諧伉麗，克生寧馨。嗚呼哀哉！吾命如斯，何恐何憎。天惟鑒此，幹戈戢寧。凡遭亂死，同超回輪。"

This is not the only time Langxian includes the writing of a female self-elegy in *Shi dian tou*. A female self-elegy also appears in "Lu Mengxian jiang shang xun qi 盧夢仙江上尋妻" (Lu Mengxian Seeks His Wife on the River), the second story in *Shi dian tou.* When Miaohui attempts to commit suicide to remain faithful to her husband, she writes herself an elegy and reads it out loud. But it is unclear whether Miaohui reads it publicly or not, and the use of an unintelligible dialect is not mentioned in that story. Miaohui writes:

> My dead husband showed his intelligence very early on in his life, and was renowned for lyric writing. As a young man he celebrated his success in the examinations and had a promising future. But his scholar-star perished one day, and his grave closed that night. Heaven has no mercy, and bore me without favor. My mother died when I was young, and my father raised me. I then married a good man, and we had a harmonious marriage. Even though the Way is everlasting, it has left me bereft. Separated as life from death, his dim voice is cut off from me. My organs feel as though they are breaking from all these sorrows. My tears fall like rain; and when my tears run dry, I cry blood. I foreswore remarriage and the enjoyment of life's pleasures, but my parents-in-law were displeased and have tried to force me to lose my virtue [by marrying another man]. My heart is like a rock; my will is fixed unto death and my grief is inscribed on my very core. Becoming a martyr, what regrets will I have at the end of time? When my soul passes over, I will be able to tell you all this directly. When we were alive, we shared the same quilt; dead, we will

share the same grave. I was born pure as ice, and will die pure as jade. I will take eternal leave of this mundane world, to roam at leisure in the underworld. Alas, only you, my dead husband, know my heart.[99]

It is rare to find two female self-elegies in a relatively short fourteen story collection. And it is worth noting that these two female self-elegies are carefully written in two different styles according to the different contexts of the stories and the different backgrounds of the two female protagonists. "Lu Mengxian" is a comedy. The female protagonist Miaohui is saved from attempting suicide and reunites with her husband at the end of the story. The story emphasizes Miaohui's educational background. She went to the Gong family school in Yangzhou and met her husband Lu Mengxian there. In her elegy, Miaohui constantly cites *The Book of Songs* (詩經) and other classics to allude to the love between her and her husband. Miaohui's elegy is a love letter to her husband and a statement of her faithfulness to him. Although Zong Erniang came from a *ru* family, and is also well educated, she has married a businessman, and mostly takes care of everyday life within the family. The language of her self-elegy is much more straightforward and easy to understand. In contrast to Miaohui's emotional and deeply personal elegy, Zong's elegy has little to do with the emotional bond between husband and wife, but instead stresses the importance of family and state. Even on the verge her death, she worries

[99] *Shi dian tou*, 24-25. "惟靈蚤慧，詞壇擅名。弱冠鵲起，秋風鹿鳴。奮翮南宮，鍛羽北溟。文星晝殞，泉臺夜扃。彼蒼胡毒，生我無祿。幼失恃屺，惟親育鞠。伉儷君子，琴瑟雍穆。中道永違，遺我煢獨。死生契闊，音容杳絕。罹此百憂，五內摧裂。涕泗滂沱，淚枯繼血。自矢柏舟，荼苦甘嚙。高堂不懌，強以失德。之死靡他，我心匪石。長恨無窮，銘腑刺骼。天地有終，捐軀何惜。英魂對越，與君陳說。生則同衾，死則同穴。來則冰清，去則玉潔。長辭塵世，倘徉泉闕。嗚呼哀哉，惟靈鑒徹。"

about the chaotic society, and hopes that the state can return to order. In this way, Langxian equates Zong Erniang with the ideal image of a male literatus.

Although the performative self-elegy highlights Zong Erniang's heroic behavior, Zong's final appearance is not glorious, since she ends up as bloody pieces of flesh for sale in the market. Langxian graphically depicts the horrifying scene of Zong Erniang's dismemberment. In addition to his possible motivation of using graphic depictions of violence to attract the attention of readers, Langxian seems to want to deconstruct Zong Erniang's sublime aura. This horrifying corporeal image deflates the grand gestures of Confucian norms and suggests that Langxian may have an ambivalent attitude towards Zong Erniang's sacrifice for the sake of martyrdom and filial piety.

The World of Emptiness: Langxian's Ironic Deflation of Martyrdom

The inversion of gender roles in "Siege" was not an unusual literary trope. By the late Ming, male Confucian literati who were experiencing career frustrations often compared themselves with beautiful and virtuous women who are determined to serve their husbands but are ultimately abandoned. These women often committed suicide to prove their virtuous character. This "fragrant grass and beauty" tradition (*xiangcao meiren chuantong* 香草美人傳統) can be traced back to Qu Yuan 屈原 (340-278 B.C.), one of the most famous and earliest political martyrs in Chinese history. Throughout Chinese literary history, the image of Qu Yuan has been adopted in numerous poems, prose works, plays, and fictions, allowing literati to present their underappreciated literary talent, lament state corruption, and show their willingness to sacrifice themselves. As Paola Zamperini puts it:

> By the late Ming, Qu Yuan had become the loyal minister and a role model for many intellectuals. What made him so valuable for martyrs who chose death with an agenda, a point to prove, was that Qu Yuan provided them with a superb example of noble suicide on which they could model their own demise.[100]

According to He Guangtao's meticulous research on the image of Qu Yuan in the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, in the Ming dynasty, at least four works, including Yuan Yuling's 袁於令 (c. 1592-1674) *Miluo Ji* 汨羅記 (The Legend of Miluo River), Lü Tiancheng's 呂天成 (1580-1618) *Nüshen* 女神 (Goddess) and *Shuang qi ji* 雙棲記 (Stay Together), and Xu Yingqian's 徐應乾 (active in the reign of Chongzhen) *Miluo* 汨羅 (Miluo River), feature Qu Yuan. Unfortunately, none of these works is extant.[101] In the Qing Dynasty, inspired by the famous Qing loyalist Fan Chengmo's 範承謨 (1624-1676) obsession with Qu Yuan and their numerous discussions on Qu Yuan's works, Fan Chengmo's assistant Ji Yongren 嵇永仁 (1637-1676) wrote a drama entitled *Xu Li sao* 續離騷 (Sequel to Li sao). Ji committed suicide by hanging himself after Fan was killed by rebels.[102] Yang Zongdai's 楊宗岱 (1731-?1796) *Li Sao ying* 離騷影 (The Shadow of Li

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[100] Paola Zamperini, "Untamed Hearts: Eros and Suicide in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction," in Paul Ropp, Paola Zamperini, and Harriet T. Zurndorfer, ed., *Passionate Women: Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), 99.

[101] See He Guangtao 何光濤, "Mingdai Qu Yuan xi lunkao" 明代屈原戲論考, *Sichuan shifan daxue xuebao*, vol.39, no.2 (2012), 105.

[102] For detailed discussion on Ji and Fan's obsession with Qu Yuan, See Frederic Wakeman Jr, *The Great Enterprise* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 1113-1114. "Fan Chengmo wrote in charcoal of the loyalists Tian Heng and Su Wu; and of the great Qu Yuan, whose poem 'Li sao' he now read and re-read…he again and again discussed the suicide of Qu Yuan with one of his secretaries, Ji Yongren, who stimulated his fascination for that haunting southern poet-statesman."

sao) tells the story of a heroic woman who is captured in a shabby temple by some bandits during uprisings caused by famine in the Hunan region. After she finds out that the temple is dedicated to Qu Yuan (*San lü ci* 三閭祠), she becomes determined to follow the model of Qu Yuan's suicide. She writes a suicide poem with blood from her finger on a piece of cloth, and drowns herself in the Xiang River (Miluo is a branch of the Xiang River) holding the poem in her hand. Qu Yuan, as a deity, helps build the tomb of this heroic woman after hearing her story.[103] The heroic woman in *Li sao ying* was not the only talented and virtuous female inspired by Qu Yuan. A girl from Hunan region named Du Xiaoying 杜小英 (1638-1654), who was captured by a general, also drowned herself and wrote ten suicide poems including one recalling her pleasure studying *Chuci* 楚辭 as a child.[104] A famous female writer in Qing Dynasty, Wu Zao 吳藻 (1799-1862) celebrates the spirit of Qu Yuan in her play entitled *Yinjiu du sao tu* 飲酒讀騷圖 (*Drinking Wine and Reading Li Sao*).

Significantly, "Siege" has a number of references to Qu Yuan. When Zhou Di is on his way back home, he rests in a small temple dedicated to Qu Yuan. It is very likely that Langxian was influenced by the "fragrant grass and beauty" tradition, intentionally adopting it to frame the story and to identify himself with Zong Erniang as an incarnation of Qu Yuan. But does Langxian unequivocally celebrate the martyrdoms of Qu Yuan and Zong Erniang in this text?

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[103] For detailed discussions on *Li sao ying,* see He Guangtao, "Yuan Ming Qing Qu Yuan xi kaolun" 元明清屈原戲考論 (Ph.D. diss., Sichuan shifan daxue, 2012), 141-153.

[104] Du Xiaoying also appears in *Gu wang yan* 姑妄言, a famous erotic novel written in Qing Dynasty. Grace Fong discussed Du in her article "Signifying Bodies: The Cultural Significance of Suicide Writings by Women in Ming-Qing China" in *Passionate Women*, 116-121.

One of the two prefatory stories attached to "Siege" is about the filial daughter Cao E 曹娥, who is also associated with the image of Qu Yuan in terms of the origin of the Duanwu Festival and their shared virtue as filial children. My reading of Langxian's treatment of Zong Erniang's martyrdom as ironic is influenced by the way he rewrites the story of Cao E in the prefatory section of "Siege." As originally recorded in *The History of the Late Han*, Cao E's biography reads:

> The filial daughter Cao E came from Shangyu in Kuaiji. Her father Cao Xu was a shaman, good at playing instruments. The second year of Han'an (漢安二年 143AD), during the Duanwu Festival, Cao Xu drowned in Shangyu river while performing rituals, dancing in a boat to welcome spirits[105], and his body was nowhere to be found. Cao E was fourteen years old. She cried for her father along the river day and night for seven days and then threw herself into the river after fruitlessly searching for his body. During the first year of Yuanjia reign period (元嘉元年), the magistrate Du Shang changed her burial place to the southern river bank and established a monument there to commemorate her.[106]

[105] It refers to Wu Zixu 伍子胥.

[106] Fan Ye 範曄, *Hou hanshu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), 364. "孝女曹娥者，會稽上虞人也。父盱，能弦歌，為巫祝。漢安二年五月五日，於縣江溯濤婆娑迎神，溺死，不得屍骸。娥年十四，乃沿江號哭，晝夜不絕聲，旬有七日，遂投江而死。至元嘉元年，縣長度尚改葬娥於江南道傍，為立碑焉。"

The Duanwu Festival on the fifth day of the fifth month is associated with Qu Yuan, Wu Zixu and Cao E. The festival commemorates Qu Yuan and Wu Zixu for their political loyalty, and Cao E for her filial piety. Langxian makes slight but significant changes to the story of Cao E in "Siege." In this version, Cao Xu, Cao E's father, does not die performing religious rites. Instead, he is frivolous and likes to chase waves: "According to the custom in the Qiantang area, every Duanwu festival, libertines would amuse themselves in the waves while welcoming the deity Wu Zixu. Cao Xu cheerfully jumped into the river and drowned."[107] Langxian's version of the tale of Cao E is thus about a child who sacrifices herself to an undeserving father. The "Jie nongchao wen" 戒弄潮文 (Warning against playing in Qiantang tidal bore) Langxian cites in the prefatory story was written by Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012-1067), a Northern Song scholar who once was the magistrate of Hangzhou. The essay strongly admonishes those who recklessly surf the Qiantang tidal bore and criticizes them for being unfilial and irresponsible:

> Some who are good at swimming play in the tide. They throw the bodies given by their parents into an immeasurable abyss and then brag about it. If one drowns, his soul sinks into the underworld, and his wife and children weep for him along the Qiantang River. Life is limited and should end accord to Heaven's fate. To die in such a way that one cannot be mourned is a double affront to human relationships.[108]

[107] *Shi dian tou*, 184. "原來錢塘江上風俗，每年端午，輕薄弟子都去習水弄潮，迎伍子胥神道。那曹旰乘興跳入江心，一時潮湧身沒。"

[108] Tian Rucheng 田汝成, *Xihu youlan zhi* 西湖遊覽誌 [West Lake Traveling Journal], (Hangzhou: Zhenjiang renmin chuban she, 1980), 254. " 厥有善泅之徒，竟作弄潮之戲，以父母所生之遺體，投魚

If Langxian fully approved of the image of Cao E as a filial daughter, why did he choose to rewrite her story as it appears in the *Hou Hanshu* and further add Cai Xiang's critical essay in the prefatory story?

By deflating the canonical image of Cao E in the prefatory story, Langxian forces readers to question the meaning of her martyrdom. The sacrifice to an undeserving father introduces Langxian's anxiety over the cult of martyrdom and filial piety. In the main story, the virtuous Confucian woman Zong Erniang sacrifices herself to save her mother-in-law and her undeserving husband. Failing to bridge the gap between his Confucian beliefs and the corrupt reality, Langxian creates a world of chaos in which traditional gestures of martyrdom become empty.

Indeed, there are a number of places in "Siege" in which Langxian creates puzzling narrative gaps that seem to undermine the sublime logic of Zong's martyrdom. In a sense, his protagonists are constantly being rejected. Zong Erniang and Zhou Di have been literally "pushed away" from home by their mother to collect long-overdue debts. Later they are thrown out of their temporary shelter by their landlady. When they attempt to stay in the house that the merchant Wang Fengchao left behind in Yangzhou after they fail to escape the city, the only thing they find is a lock and seal on the door. There is nowhere for them to stay. Another important piece of this puzzling narrative is the

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龍不測之深淵。自為矜誇，時或沈溺，妻孥望哭於水濱。生也有涯，盍終於天命，死而不吊，重棄於人倫。" The related mourning rites: see James Legge Trans., Li chi: *Book of Rites* Part 1 (Whitefish, Mt: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), 131. "There are three deaths on which no condolence should be offered: from cowardice; from being crushed (through heedlessness); and from drowning" 死而不吊者三：畏、厭、溺. Also the *Xiao jing* 孝經 [The *Classic of Filial Piety*] begins, "Our bodies, including the hair and skin, are received from our parents. We must not harm them, this is the start of practicing filial piety" 身體發膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷，孝之始也. See Chen Zhu 陳柱, *Xiao jing yao yi* 孝經要義 [The Main Ideas of the Classic of Filial Piety], (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936), 15.

treatment of the Bi Shiduo 畢師鐸 (d. 888) revolt. Langxian spends a third of the text detailing the Bi Shiduo revolt as the historical background of the story. Not only does the chaos and cruelty of the revolt serve as a foil to Zong Erniang's virtues, but the historical background itself also becomes a representation of emptiness and meaninglessness---no one is morally appropriate during the revolt. One of General Gao Pian's 高駢 (821-887) disciples, Yang Xingmi 楊行密 (852-905) betrays him by holding Yangzhou under siege. After hearing of Gao Pian's death, Yang Xingmi commands his army to mourn for Gao Pian for three days to show his loyalty, but does not break the siege. Ironically, the troops' loyalty to their general here is no more than a meaningless gesture. Another clear indication of the moral void is the spread of cannibalism among the military troops and populace. People gather together like flies at the counter where human flesh is sold, gossip about the stories behind the sales, and then disperse without visible emotion. The emptiness also appears in Zong Erniang's heroic sacrifice. All that remains after Zong's martyrdom is her incomprehensible sacrificial speech. In *Qingshi*, Zhou Di spends half of the money from her sale to bribe the guard to let him go, and spends the rest travelling back to his hometown. But in the *Shi dian tou* version, the four strings of cash, the price for Zong Erniang's body, simply disappear from the narrative after Zong Erniang's death. Not only is Zhou Di's rent waived, but he also is able to escape from the city without any problem. He is then assisted by the divine power of Qu Yuan's descendant, who offers him a magic horse that takes him back home within minutes. Langxian indicates that Zong Erniang's sacrifice may have been unnecessary. If it is easy to escape from the city, and food is accessible outside of Yangzhou, then why did Zong Erniang have to die? If the waiver of the rent, the effortless escape from the city, and the travel on a magic horse

could be considered Heaven's reward for Zong Erniang's filial piety, how can we explain the later "punishments" directed at Zhou Di and his mother? On the surface, Zhou Di and his mother are rewarded with long lives, but that could also be considered a punishment requiring them to live endlessly in a state of regret for Zong Erniang's tragic death. In addition, the Zhou family does not profit from Zong's virtue as does the family in the Cui Niangzi 崔娘子 story, offered by Langxian as one of the prefatory stories.[109] In this story, Cui's mother-in-law is old and has no teeth. Her health is deteriorating because she can only consume liquids. In order to give her enough nutrition, Cui starts to breastfeed her. Because of Cui's practices of filial piety, not only does the mother-in-law live a long life (over a hundred years), but the descendants of the family also prosper and become successful officials. In contrast to the Cui story, there is no happy ending concluding the "Siege" story.

In order to disperse the sense of a void that is created by the widespread collapse of Confucian norms, Langxian throws open the story to Buddhist and Daoist meanings at its end. At this point in the story, Zhou Di's mother is dreaming about her dead daughter-in-law Zong Erniang who appears to propose the following enigma:

> Mother, I am back. Your son has married a second wife---not too tall, not too short, not coarse, not fine, with broken bones and body, in other words, myself. Your son now has produced a grandson---not large, not small, not

[109] The story originally appears in *Ershisi xiao* 二十四孝 [Twenty-Four Examples of Filial Conduct], See Guo Jujing 郭居敬, ed., *Ershisi xiao tuwen jiedu* 二十四孝圖文解讀 [Twenty-Four Examples of Filial Conduct with illustrations] (Xi'an: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 2007), 43.

> true, not false, with disheveled hair and dirty face, none other than your old son Zhou Di.[110]

By addressing the contradictory features of an illusory concubine and grandson, Zong Erniang presents an unsolvable riddle. Meanwhile, this passage problematizes the meaning of Zong Erniang's self-sacrifice. This dream seems to suggest emptiness or nothingness, and echoes the language of Buddhism and Daoist gnomic verse. For example, "The Vajasaneyins, in the chapter recording the questions asked by Gargi, read as follows: 'He said, O Gargi, the Brahmanas call that the Imperishable. It is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, it is not red, not fluid, it is without a shadow.'"[111] The Daoist classic *Neiguan jing* 內觀經 says:

> Spirit is neither red nor yellow, neither big nor small, neither short nor long, neither crooked nor straight, neither soft nor hard, neither thick nor thin, neither round nor square. It goes on changing and transforming without measure, merges with yin and yang, greatly encompasses heaven and earth, subtly enters the tiniest blade of grass.[112]

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[110] *Shi dian tou*, 199. Translation is from Widmer, "Tragedy or Travesty? Perspectives on Langxian's 'The Siege of Yangzhou'," 190. "婆婆，媳婦歸來了。你兒子娶了一個不長不短，不粗不細，粉骨碎身的偏房，只是原來的子舍。你兒子生了一個孩子，又大又小，又真又假，蓬頭垢面，更不異去日的周郎。"

[111] George Thibaut, *The Vadanta Sutras with the Commentary by Ramanuja* (Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 184.

[112] Translation is from Livia Kohn, *Chuang-tzu: The Tao of Perfect Happiness-Selections Annotated and Explained* (Skylight Paths, 2011), 120. "其神也，非青非黃，非大非小，非短非長，非曲非直，非柔非剛，非厚非薄，非圓非方。變化莫測，混合陰陽。大包天地，細入毫芒。"

One might conclude that Langxian regarded himself as a Buddhist preacher. If this is the case, one could state that by telling the stories, Langxian hoped that readers would gain insight into Buddhist ideas. Since the late Ming saw the flourishing of Buddhism, Daoism and Confucian synactic thought, it is quite likely that Langxian, whose very name, Free-spirited Immortal 浪仙, reveals an interest in Buddhist and Daoist values, reframes Confucian ideals to support Buddhist or a Daoist discourse in his story collection.[113] Reaching the ultimate "emptiness" is one of the common goals of Buddhism and Daoism. In "Siege," filial martyrdom elevates Zong Erniang to her highest Self, or highest spirit, but what is left of reality is destruction and worthlessness. The verse at the end of the story best demonstrates the emptiness and the contradictions with which the story concludes: "Filial piety is the first priority, the filial daughter-in-law's name will be remembered. But as for her mother-in-law, her tears will not run dry even if they flow into the Yellow River."[114] Even as Langxian stresses the importance of filial piety, it seems that Zong Erniang's heroic martyrdom is reduced by her family's meaningless tragedy. Even the image of Qu Yuan, the perfect embodiment of the spirit of martyrdom in ancient China, can only appear in an ironic, even deconstructed reincarnation, as Zong Erniang in Langxian's tale. Indeed, the moral world that Langxian creates is not rock steady as Patrick Hanan states, but is in fact subjected to earth-shaking challenges.

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[113] A clue about the relationship between the name Langxian and Buddhist and Daoist values comes from the famous Tang poet Jia Dao 賈島 (779-843). Jia Dao dedicated himself to Buddhism, used Langxian 浪仙 as his style name; Yang Xiaodong 楊曉東 speculates that Shi Shaoshen, also known as Fengmao Langxian 施紹莘,峰泖浪仙, a famous *sanqu* writer in the late Ming, might be the author of *Shi dian tou*, see Yang Xiaodong, "Langxian gouchen," 106-110. Interestingly, Shi Shaoshen's works, especially the collection of his writings of lyrics and *sanqu* in *Qiu shui an hua ying ji* 秋水庵花影集 were deeply influenced by Daoism.

[114] *Shi dian tou*, 1936, 201. "孝道曾聞百行先，孝姑千古更名傳。若還看得周家婦，瀉倒黃河淚未幹。"

How Should We Read Langxian's Didactic Stories?

As an important late Ming vernacular short story collection, Langxian's *Shi dian tou* is still understudied. Relatively speaking, the "Siege" story in the collection draws special attention for its grotesque content and narrative skill. Through analyzing the story, a number of scholars have explored the world of late Ming literati from different angles.[115] The arguments that Ellen Widmer and Katherine Carlitz made in their essays are similar to T'ien Ju-K'ang's argument that in Ming-Qing China, male scholars' frustration is decisive to the practice of female chastity.[116] Both Widmer and Carlitz point out pervasive ambiguities in the story, and they read the ambiguities as the symptoms of male literati's anxiety. Instead of reading the story as an allegory of the struggles of late Ming literati, Yenna Wu regards the tale's ambiguities as the effect of the mixture of tragic and comic elements in the story, which she argues demonstrate Langxian's sophisticated narrative techniques. Finnane emphasizes the story's political significance within the Qing context.

Although the previous scholarly works on the "Siege," including Hanan's pioneering study of the whole *Shi dian tou* collection, shed light on how to read the story from different perspectives, all emphasize the moral message it delivers, and read it as a celebration of Zong Erniang's martyrdom. However, as I have argued, the ruptures and narrative discontinuities in the story and the uncertainty and irony they introduce into the source texts ultimately destabilize the neo-Confucian moral messages and undermine the sublimity of Zong Erniang's martyrdom. Once we recognize how this same pattern of an

[115] For Finnane, the story also helps us to understand the world of Qing literati.

[116] See T'ien Ju-K'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity: A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Qing Times* (New York: Brill Academic Publishers, 1988).

ironic exploding of the surface meaning occurs in other stories in the collection, we encounter the question of how to read Langxian's stories, as well as other didactic fiction.

Ming-Qing didactic stories, especially the stories of extreme female chastity and filial piety, were ferociously criticized during the New Culture Movement. Although some of the May Fourth critics appreciated the aesthetic beauty of traditional Chinese vernacular stories, most of them attacked the didactic content as excessive. In his *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe* 中國小說史略 (*A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*), Lu Xun claims that "the Ming *huaben* stories are fraught with admonishments and warnings that overshadow the main story"[117] In his view, the Ming-Qing didactic stories are a byproduct of repressive Confucian ideology. However, recent scholarship that rethinks the meaning of female martyrdom, filial piety and loyalty within the late imperial ideological context suggests that it is also time to re-evaluate Langxian's didactic stories. These didactic stories are intended to deliver clear moral messages, but ambiguities and contradictions appear in them. How should we approach these tales? Are they written purely for the purpose of upholding Confucian virtues? To what extent should readers accept the moral messages the stories supposedly deliver?

We may never know how contemporary late Ming and Qing readers responded to these stories, but through a close reading of the ambiguities in the "Siege" story and other stories in the *Shi dian tou* collection, I argue that the motivations behind the writings of didactic stories in Ming and Qing China are much more than simple promotion of Confucian ideology. As the title of the Qing vernacular story collection *Yumu xingxin bian* 娛目醒心編 (*Stories to Delight the Eyes and Awaken the Heart*) suggests,

[117] Lu Xun, *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998), 143. "明人擬作末流，乃誥誡連篇，喧而奪主。"

vernacular stories are both entertaining and educational. The tension between self-expression (*yanzhi* 言誌) and the call to deliver moral messages (*zaidao* 載道), between encouraging good deeds (*quanshan* 勸善) and satirizing a corrupted society (*fengshi* 諷世), and between delighting the eyes (*yumu* 娛目) and awaking the heart (*xingxin* 醒心) is a notable a quality of Ming-Qing vernacular fiction. In other words, Ming-Qing authors and editors did not intentionally overshadow aesthetics in their stories by emphasizing moral education.

Commentators and scholars are anxious to find a way to redeem the violence and martyrdom in "Siege" as serving a higher ideological purpose. What happens if the violence in the story has no sanctified value, and just accompanies the unfortunate end to Zong Erniang's life? The normalization of violence is not unusual in Chinese narrative. *Shuihu zhuan* and *Jin Ping Mei* sometimes deploy violence to grab readers' attention. In *Obscene Things: Sexual Politics in Jin Ping Mei*, Ding Naifei argues that although Zhang Zhupo's commentary offers an ethical reading to purify the obscenity in *Jin Ping Mei*, the fiction still inured readers to acts of sexualized violence directed at women.[118] The unstable moral world in Langxian's "Siege" story and *Shi dian tou* should make us rethink the representation of female martyrdom.

Conclusion: Negotiating Confucian Female Martyrdom in Late Imperial China

The two stories on Confucian female martyrdom I analyzed in this chapter share similar themes and motifs, including female sacrifice, sieges, cannibalism, and vengeful

[118] See Ding Naifei, *Obscene Things: Sexual Politics in Jin Ping Mei* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). Also, in *Regarding the Pain of Others* (Picador, 2004), Susan Sontag argues that the repetition of visual images of violence in wars do not necessarily generate people's compassion; on the contrary, it enhances their tolerance towards brutality.

ghosts. Unlike the exemplary women in official historical records, neither heroine chooses to practice Confucian female martyrdom wholeheartedly. They initially resist their fate and negotiate with their husbands. Negotiation appears as a major theme in both of the stories. It indicates that there is a space between the idealistic Confucian female norms and the Confucian female norms in practice. It creates ambiguities, contradictions and emptiness within Confucian female martyrdom. The contradictions and instability are even more obvious in the evolution and changing narratives of the stories. I analyzed different versions of the two stories to reveal that, by adding or leaving out some significant details from the original stories of female exemplary martyrs, the adaptations modify Confucian orthodoxies.

Because of its transgressive ideas and gruesome depictions, *Shi dian tou* was on the list of banned books in the Qing dynasty under the category of obscene fictions (*yin ci xiaoshuo* 淫詞小說) despite the fact that the stories were presented in a didactic way. The intentional or unintentional deviation from Confucian orthodoxies may offer us an alternative way to imagine the moral environment of late imperial China. On the surface, ideological control was tightened with the rise of Neo-Confucianism and the imperial award (*Jingbiao* 旌表) system, but resistance existed within in the changing narratives of the fictional treatments of exemplary women.

The changing narratives point out some instances of questionable Confucian female martyrdom, but they do not go as far as to truly subvert Confucian gender norms. In the next chapter, I will examine the process of the deconstruction of the cult of female chaste martyrdom and the establishment of the cult of female revolutionary martyrdom in late Qing and early Republican China.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MAY FOURTH PARADIGM: FROM DYING FOR A HUSBAND TO DYING FOR THE NATION

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty, female chaste martyrdom was condemned alongside Confucian values. Confucian values were the main targets during the New Culture Movement, which promoted individual freedom and national modernization. In this chapter, I want to first trace the transition from traditional images of Confucian female martyrdom to the May Fourth discourse on women's liberation, and then examine how female revolutionary martyrdom was woven into the discourse of women's liberation and national salvation. I will do close readings of narratives of female chaste martyrdom in late Qing and early Republican Chinese media to map out the changing politics of chastity and the evolving meanings of female sacrifice. I will then examine the case of Qiu Jin to see how revolutionary discourse appropriated chaste martyrdom discourse.

In late Qing and early Republican Chinese society, national salvation was the primary concern. Women's issues became a focal point in the debates about the processes of enlightenment and the creation of new citizens. Male intellectuals such as Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) and Jin Tianhe 金天翮 (1873-1947) began to associate the development of modern Chinese women with nation building. Starting in 1902, Liang Qichao introduced stories of exemplary Western heroines in *Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報

in order to present templates of modern womanhood to Chinese women.[119] He wrote an influential essay titled "Luolan furen zhuan" 羅蘭夫人傳 (The Biography of Madame Roland; 1902) which introduces Madame Roland (1754-1793) as the "Mother of the French Revolution" (*Luolan furen wei faguo da geming zhimu* 羅蘭夫人為法國大革命之母). In the essay, he further explains that "every great figure in nineteenth-century Europe has to take Madame Roland as his mother; every civilization of nineteenth-century Europe has to take Madame Roland as its mother. Why? Because the French Revolution is the mother of nineteenth-century Europe and Madame Roland is the mother of the French Revolution."[120] It is worth noting that Liang Qichao praised Madame Roland as the mother of the revolution, not as a heroine. As Hu Di argued, by doing so, Liang Qichao emphasized women's identities as mothers, nurturing figures toiling in the background to ensure the success of their male counterparts, and thus avoided raising the concern that women could potentially usurp the dominant position of male heroes.[121] More importantly, during the New Culture Movement, women were mystified as abstract symbols of revolution.[122] In 1903, Jin Tianhe coined the term "the mother of the nation" (*guomin zhimu* 國民之母) in his writing: "Women are the mothers of the nation. If we want to rejuvenate China, we need to first rejuvenate women; if we want to fortify China,

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[119] See Hu Di 胡笛, "Wan Qing guomin zhimu huayu jiqi nüxing xiangxiang" 晚清國民之母話語及其女性想像, *Hunan daxue xuebao*, vol.28, no.4 (2014), 94.

[120] See Liang Qichao, "Luolan furen zhuan," in Xia Xiaohong, ed., *Liang Qichao wenxuan* 梁啟超文選 (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1992), 346-62. Translation is from Liu Jianmei, "Nation, Women, and Gender in the Late Qing," in Yang Xiaobin and Rosemary Roberts ed., *Chinese Revolution and Chinese Literature* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 71.

[121] See Hu Di, "Wan Qing guomin zhimu huayu jiqi nüxing xiangxiang," 95.

[122] For further discussion on women as a sign of the nation in late Qing writings, see Liu Jianmei, "Nation, Women, and Gender in the Late Qing," 73-7.

we need to first fortify women…if we want to save China, we need to first save women."[123] Through constructing women as the mothers of the revolution and the nation, male writers turned the female body into a site of production of a new China and modern Chinese citizens. Chinese women thus began to be incorporated into the national politics and narratives. Once Chinese women were encouraged to be involved in nation-building, to "serve as members of production force or even as exemplary revolutionary heroines who are expected to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the nations' advancement."[124] Sacrificing for the nation thus became a new form of chaste martyrdom for Chinese women.

Ostensibly, the denunciation of traditional female chaste martyrdom among May Fourth intellectuals and the continuing promotion of female chaste martyrdom in the late Qing and early Republican journals and newspapers are contradictory, but as I will discuss in this chapter, both intellectual trends aimed at saving the nation. Wang Zheng summarizes the motivations of male intellectuals advocating women's liberation in the May Fourth era, stating that "a nationalistic concern, an attack on Confucianism, a trust in evolutionism, a faith in liberal humanism, and a belief in universalism combined to facilitate those men's ready acceptance of feminism."[125] Thus, most of the motivations were not directly related to concerns about Chinese women's living conditions or social and political status, but rather, to national salvation. Meanwhile, the more conservative

[123] Jin Tianhe, "Nüzi shijie fakan ci" 《女子世界》發刊詞, *Nüzi shijie*, no.1 (1904). Translation is from Liu Jianmei, "Nation, Women, and Gender in the Late Qing," 71-72.

[124] Ying-Ying Chien, "Feminism and China's New 'Nora': Ibsen, Hu Shi, and Lu Xun," The *Comparatist*, vol.19 (May 1995), 107.

[125] Wang Zheng, Women in the Chinese Enlightenment (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 54.

promotion of female chaste martyrdom echoed the saying that "female chaste martyrdom saves the nation" (*jielie jiushi shuo* 節烈救世說).[126] In other words, whether or not writers of the period ascribed to the concept of women's liberation, they almost universally equated the quality of the female character with the strength of the Chinese nation.

When discussing the introduction of realism in Chinese literature in late Qing and early Republican China, Marston Anderson argues that "Chinese intellectuals endorsed the call for a new literature, not for intrinsic aesthetic reasons, but because of the larger social and cultural benefits literary innovation seemed to promise."[127] Similarly, the writings on female chaste martyrdom in late Qing and early Republican China were for the purpose of targeting or supporting Confucian values rather than for exploring literary aesthetics. I want to add a note that, accordingly my close readings in this chapter focus on intellectual history, specifically the change of ideology and the transition from *lienü* 烈女 to *lieshi* 烈士.

Co-existence of Two Different Discourses on Female Chaste Martyrdom in the Late Qing and Early Republican Era

The Politics of Chastity in the Early Republican Era

During the New Culture Movement, *Xin qingnian* 新青年 (*New Youth*) magazine (1915-1922), the leading magazine advocating social and cultural reform, paid special

[126] See Lu Xun, "Wo zhi jielie guan," *Xin qingnian*, vol. 5 no. 2 (1918), 8-17.

[127] Marston Anderson, *The Limits of Realism: Chinese Fiction in the Revolutionary Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 25.

attention to women's emancipation. Starting from volume 2, number 6 in 1917, the magazine contained a column known as "nüzi wenzi" 女子問題 (women's issues), which promoted women's education, political rights, gender equality, free love, and the abolishment of foot-binding practices. The column was originally designed as a public site to encourage female writers to express their opinions on women's liberation.[128] In 1916, *New Youth* published the "Xin qingnian jizhe qishi" 新青年記者啟事 (Announcement to The New Youth Journalists), which conveyed the concern that the discussants of women's issues were mostly male literati. It called on women to write on topics such as women's suffrage, education, career paths, marriage, divorce, and celibacy in *New Youth*.[129] Unfortunately, female writers were so rare that the column was discontinued in 1918, after only a few publications.[130] However, the column did manage to raise the profile of women's issues and encouraged more intellectuals to participate in the discussion.

At the time, female chastity was one of the central topics in the discussion on women's issues. It is critical for us to understand the transition from female chaste martyrdom to female revolutionary martyrdom, since it relates to gender equality, the construction of citizenship, women's agency and liberation, and national salvation. In 1918, Zhou Zuoren 周作人 (1885-1967) published his translation of the Japanese poet

[128] See Chen Fangjing 陳方競, "Xin qingnian nüzi wenti taolun de yibosanzhe" 《新青年》女子問題討論的一波三折, *Fujian luntan*, no.7 (2011), 99.

[129] See *Xin qingnian* 新青年 (*New Youth*), vol.2, no.1 (1916), back cover.

[130] Wang Guimei 王桂妹, "Xin qingnian zhong de nüxing huayu kongbai" 《新青年》中的女性話語空白, *Wenxue pinglun*, no.1 (2014), 25.

and feminist Akiko Yosano's "Zhencao lun" 貞操論 (On Chastity) in *New Youth*.[131] In translating the essay, Zhou Zuoren spread the idea that chastity should be considered an individual choice which is not directly related to moral integrity. In "On Chastity," Akiko Yosano argues that "chastity cannot be viewed as morality. Chastity is a taste, a belief, an obsession with the notion of cleanliness. It should not be obligatory. My love of my chastity is the same love of the beauty of art and the truthfulness of knowledge. I regard chastity as a noble and beautiful thing higher than morality."[132] Through his translation, Zhou Zuoren delivered the message that the practice of chastity should not be imposed upon people. He later made a similar statement that nationalism should not be manipulated by the government to promote martyrdom and therefore severed his ties with other May Fourth intellectuals who were fiercely nationalistic.[133]

After the publication of Zhou Zuoren's translation of "On Chastity," *New Youth* became an arena for discussions on female chastity and related issues. Other essays

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[131] Akiko Yosano, "Zhencao lun" 貞操論, translated by Zhou Zuoren, *Xin Qingnian*, vol.4, no.5, (1918), 386-394.

[132] Ibid., 394. "對於貞操，不當他是道德；只是一種趣味，一種信仰，一種潔癖。既然是趣味、信仰、潔癖，所以沒有強迫他人的性質。我所以絕對的愛重我的貞操，便是同愛藝術的美、愛學問的真一樣，當作一種道德以上的高尚優美的物事看待。"

[133] Zhou Zuoren's attitude towards nationalism was greatly influenced by the tragedy of March 18 三一八慘案. On March 18, 1926, Li Dazhao 李大釗 led an anti-warlord and anti-imperialist demonstration in Beijing. The majority of the demonstrators were students. The Beiyang government sent armed polices to confront the protesters and killed 47 of them. Zhou Zuoren was traumatized by the massacre and argued that the sacrifice was unnecessary. The way he was questioning nationalism made him a highly controversial intellectual in modern China. For his comments on the March 18th massacre and nationalism, see Zhou Zuoren "Guanyu sanyue shiba ri de sizhe" 關於三月十八日的死者 (On the Dead of March Eighteenth), *Zhongguo xiandai sanwen xuan* 中國現代散文選, *1918-1949* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan, 1982), 322-24. Zhou Zuoren also argues, "If, in the name of some causes or other, people were forced to sacrifice their individuality in the service of an obtuse society---or, in prettified language, if people were forced to meet society's expectations---that would be quite as unreasonable as enforcing loyalty to a ruler in the name of the Confucian prescribed relationships or forcing people to go to war in the name of the nation." From Susan Daruvala, *Zhou Zuoren and an Alternative Chinese Response to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), 55.

published in *New Youth* on this topic include Hu Shi's "Zhencao wenti" 貞操問題 (The Question of Chastity), Lu Xun's "Wo zhi jielie guan" 我之節烈觀 (My Views on Chastity) an Chen Qixiu's 陳啟修 "Makesi de weiwu shiguan yu zhencao wenti" 馬克思的唯物史觀與貞操問題 (Marxist Materialism and the Issue of Chastity).[134] In "The Question of Chastity," Hu Shi fiercely criticized the Beiyang government's regulations honoring chaste martyrdom. He pointed out that the emphasis on female chastity reveals different sexual standards for men and women. Lu Xun argued that if chastity is considered a virtue, it should be universally applied to both men and women. He explained that the notion of female chastity comes from treating women as men's property in a hierarchical Confucian society. He ridiculed the argument which links female chastity with national salvation. Applying Marxist materialism, Chen Qixiu argued that the notion of female chastity cannot be viewed as a consistent principle since it changes constantly according to the economic situation. Li Dazhao 李大釗 (1889-1927), another important leader of the New Culture Movement, made a very similar argument about female chastity in his "Wuzhi biandong yu daode biandong" 物質變動與道德變動 (Materialistic Change and Moral Change).[135] Although those May Fourth scholars attacked the cult of female chastity from different angles, they all related the issue to individual freedom. For them, chastity was not only a point of discussion related to women's liberation, but was also about individuality and free will. In *New Youth*, the

[134] Hu Shi, "Zhencao wenti" 貞操問題 [The Question of Chastity], in *Xin qingnian*, vol.5, no.1 (1918), 5-14; Lu Xun, "Wo zhi jielie guan" 我之節烈觀 [My Views on Chastity], in *Xin qingnian*, vol.5, no.2 (1918), 92-101; Chen Qixiu 陳啟修 "Makesi de weiwu shiguan yu zhencao wenti" 馬克思的唯物史觀與貞操問題, in *Xin qingnian*, vol.6, no.5 (1919), 56-61.

[135] Li Dazhao, "Wuzhi biandong yu daode biandong" 物質變動與道德變動, *Xin chao* 新潮 (*New Wave*), vol.2, no.2 (1919), 207-24.

discussion on female chastity involved establishing a new ideology. It was a direct response to the Beiyang government's "The Regulations on Honoring Exemplars" ("Baoyang tiaoli" 褒揚條例; 1914), which was aimed at reviving Confucian values. The competing discourses on female chaste martyrdom thus epitomized the ideological battles in early Republican China.

"The Regulations on Honoring Exemplars" and the Restoration of Confucian Norms

On March 11, 1914, Yuan Shikai 袁世凱, the first president of the Republic of China issued the "The Regulations on Honoring Exemplars" ("Baoyang tiaoli" 褒揚條例) to promulgate the chastity cult and other Confucian norms. It was not so different from the late imperial *jingbiao* 旌表 awards system which honored moral exemplars, including chaste women. On November 20, 1917, "Baoyang tiaoli" was slightly revised by President Feng Guozhang 馮國璋 (1859-1919). In the 1914 version of "The Regulations of Honoring Exemplars," widows who preserved their chastity for six years before their death were to be recognized. The 1917 version raised this requirement to ten years. It also added that any woman who committed suicide after her husband's death should be honored.[136] The "Baoyang tiaoli" also specified the standard procedure for memorializing

[136] See Li Ruirui 李瑞瑞, "Shilun Beiyang zhengfu dui xunfu de baoyang" 試論北洋政府對殉夫的褒揚, *Heilongjiang shizhi*, no.11 (2015), 183. Also see Gu Yinbo 谷銀波 and Zheng Shiqu 鄭師渠, "Beiyang zhengfu yu xinwenhua yundong" 北洋政府與新文化運動, *Zhongzhou xuekan*, vol.3 (2006), 177. After Yuan Shikai issued "Baoyang tiaoli" in March 1914, he issued "Shishi xize" 實施細則 [The Rules of Implementation] in June, 1914 detailing the criteria for honoring exemplars. The criteria for being a chaste woman was specified as follows: a chaste woman was widowed before she was 30 years old and maintained her chastity until she was 50 years old or after. If she died before age 50, she would still obtain the title if she had preserved her chastity for at least 6 years; chaste martyrs are women who died fighting off violent attacks, committed suicide out of feelings of shame after humiliations, or committed suicide immediately after the death of their husbands; a faithful maiden referred to a woman who preserved her

chaste martyrs: relatives of chaste women would also be given a plaque with inscriptions written by the president. The rewarded families were authorized to establish memorial arches for display at their own expense, which included the cost of an investigative procedure.[137] According to the regulations, "The honored woman would be given a gold or silver badge. The color of the ribbon was designated as yellow (changed to white in 1917)."[138]

The background of the establishment of "Baoyang tiaoli" was the crisis after the end of imperial China and the legitimization of the newly founded Beiyang government. Unification of China was the main goal after the fall of the Qing dynasty and the abdication of the last emperor. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of China's republican revolution, gave up his presidency to Yuan Shikai in hopes of unifying China without further bloodshed. National unification required geographical, political and ideological unification. Geographical and political unification were dependent upon ideological unification. Although the New Culture Movement was in full swing, the odds that Yuan Shikai would collaborate with the movement and choose the new culture as the guiding ideology were slim. First of all, the movement would not support Yuan's aspiration to

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chastity for her fiancé. The regulations for the length of time for preserving chastity as faithful maidens are the same as the requirements for chaste women. "節婦，其守節年限自三十歲以前守節至五十歲以後者。但年未五十而身故，其守節已及六年者同； 烈婦烈女，凡遇強暴不從致死，或羞忿自盡，及夫亡殉節者，屬之；貞女，守貞年限與節婦同。其在夫家守貞身故，及未符年例而身故者，亦屬之。" See Hu Shi, "Zhencao wenti," in *Xin qingnian*, vol.5, no.1 (1918), 9.

[137] See Li Ruirui, "Shilun Beiyang zhengfu dui xunfu de baoyang," 183. Hu Shi quoted a document submitted by the magistrate of Shanghai county to the governor of the Jiangsu Province regarding a case of honoring a chaste woman. On the document, it says that there is a six silver dollar application fee for obtaining the title of a chaste woman. A certificate and a plaque with "chastity that can be exemplified" (*Zhenlie kefeng* 貞烈可風) written on it will be issued by the government. See Hu Shi, "The Question of Chastity," 8.

[138] Lu Weijing, *True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 253.

pursue emperorship and his political vision of establishing a Chinese constitutional monarchy. Secondly, the New Culture Movement was influential among intellectuals, but not necessary among the grassroots. Reviving Confucian norms therefore was more tempting for the sake of the ideological unification. Promoting the Confucian virtues of *zhong* 忠 (loyalty), *xiao* 孝 (filial piety), *jie* 節 (chastity), and *lie* 烈 (martyrdom) was essential for the Beiyang government to revive Confucian values. Government representatives argued that the New Culture Movement caused moral chaos and confusion in Chinese society, and promoting female chastity could play an important role in preventing moral decline.[139] Theirs was also a strategy designed to snuff out the New Culture Movement and the early feminist movement which advocated for women's liberation and individuality.

The belief crisis in early Republican China was epitomized by the conflict between the New Culture Movement, which condemned Confucianism, and the newly founded Beiyang government (1912-1928), which advocated for restoring Confucian traditions. At the beginning of 1912, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940), one of the prominent leaders of the New Culture Movement and the Minister of Education declared that the ceremony of Confucius should no longer be performed in schools. However, Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859-1916) immediately restored the tradition of worshipping Confucius after he became the president of the Republic of China in March 1912. Cai Yuanpei later resigned from his Minister of Education position.[140] On June 22, 1913,

[139] See Li Ruirui 李瑞瑞, "Shilun Beiyang zhengfu dui xunfu de baoyang" 試論北洋政府對殉夫的褒揚, *Heilongjiang shizhi*, no.11 (2015), 183.

[140] See Zuo Yuhe 左玉河, "Minguo chunian de xinyang weiji yu zun Kong sichao" 民國初年的信仰危機與尊孔思潮, *Zhengzhou daxue xuebao*, vol.45, no.1 (2012), 128-9.

Yuan Shikai issued the "Honoring Confucius Decree" ("Zunchong Kong sheng ling" 尊崇孔聖令). On February 7, 1914, he announced the "Order of Resuming the Ceremony Honoring Confucius" ("Guifu ji Kong ling" 規複祭孔令). The restoration of Confucianism reached its climax at the official ceremony honoring Confucius held by Yuan in September 1914.[141] With the official promotion of Confucianism, there was a nationwide revival of the Confucius Study Community (*Kong she* 孔社), temples dedicated to Confucius and local Confucian ceremonies. The movement was supported by a group of scholars including Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) and his student Chen Huanzhang 陳煥章 (1880-1933). They argued that the Xinhai Revolution destroyed the foundations of Chinese society and caused moral chaos. Therefore, they asserted that republicanism could not be successful in the Chinese context. They founded the Confucian Society (*Kong jiao hui* 孔教會) and attempted to establish Confucianism as a national religion to unify the whole nation.[142] This idea was also supported by foreign missionary groups. Gilbert Reid (1857-1927), an active missionary in China at the time and one of the founders of the Confucian Society, supported the movement and claimed that Confucianism was the foundation of Chinese society. For him, promoting Confucianism was also a way to ease the tension between Christianity and Confucianism

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[141] Lu Xun, "Zai xiandai Zhongguo de Kongfuzi" 在現代中國的孔夫子, in *Lu Xun wenxuan* 魯迅文選 (Chengdu: Sichuan wenyi chubanshe, 1991), 127. Lu Xun was a strong voice condemning Confucianism during the New Culture Movement. Later in his essay "My Views on Chastity," he criticized the trend towards restoring Confucian rituals.

[142] See Zuo Yuhe, "Minguo chunian de xinyang weiji yu zun Kong sichao," 128. For a further study on the restoration of Confucian norms in early Republican China, see Zhang Weibo 張衛波, *Minguo chuqi zunkong sichao yanjiu* 民國初期尊孔思潮研究 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2006).

in China.[143] Nagao Ariga 有賀長雄 (1860-1921), Yuan Shikai's Japanese legal advisor, proposed writing the worship of Confucius into constitutional law.[144] Commenting on the revival of Confucianism, Lu Xun once joked that, "Confucius had been having bad luck since the beginning of the 20th century, but he was remembered again after Yuan Shikai was in power."[145]

Although Yuan Shikai is now portrayed as a reactionary who advocated for Confucianism for his own benefits, his vigorous promotion of Confucianism was more complex than the restoration of the old order. It was derived from Yuan's political vision of changing China into a Constitutional monarchy. His political ideal was a fusion of modern and traditional, Chinese and western ideas. For instance, during his tenure, a western style national flag and anthem were invented, but his government also paid tribute to Confucius and the Heavens. Yuan Shikai took constitutional law and Christianity as governmental models and attempted to establish constitutional law with Confucianism as a model for China.[146] In other words, Yuan's ideal political model was a Chinese imperial regime with Western characteristics. This was a result of negotiations of different ideas about China's future after the fall of the Qing dynasty. The negotiations and competitions between different discourses were also visible in media representations of female chaste martyrs.

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[143] See Zuo Yuhe, "Minguo chunian de xinyang weiji yu zun Kong sichao," 132.

[144] Ibid., 128.

[145] Lu Xun, "Zai xiandai Zhongguo de Kong fuzi," 127. "從二十世紀的開始以來，孔夫子的運氣是很壞的，但到袁世凱時代，卻又重新被記得。"

[146] See Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China*, 1911-1929 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 20-21.

Harmonious Contradictions: Narratives of Female Chaste Martyrdom in Early Republican Media

In the early years of Republican China, the media was full of sensational reports of female chaste martyrdom. Hu Shi recorded some newspaper reports of extreme female chaste martyrdom in his "The Question of Chastity," including Zhu Ermai's 朱爾邁 "Hui zang Tang liefu ji" 會葬唐烈婦記 which praises a determined widow who spent 98 days trying every possible way to commit suicide, while questioning another woman who fasted for 7 days after the death of her fiancé, but was dissuaded by her parents and started to eat again. Zhu expresses doubts that the latter would ever become a faithful maiden. Hu Shi also mentioned another story from a Shanghai newspaper in 1917 about Chen Wanzhen 陳宛真, a woman in Shanghai who poisoned herself to death after she learned about her fiancé's death. The magistrate presented the case to the governor of Jiangsu Province for an official reward.[147]

Reports on female suicides were partly encouraged by the official recognition of chaste women. After he became president, Yuan Shikai tightened media control. He issued "The Regulations for Newspapers" (*Baozhi tiaoli* 報紙條例), and "Publication Law" (*Chuban fa* 出版法) in 1914. All Chinese publications were under scrutiny and were required to be registered with local police departments. Police departments had the right to shut down any publication business.[148] At the end of 1914, Yuan Shikai issued "The Draft Proposal of Rectifying Education" (*zhengdun jiaoyu fang'an cao'an* 整頓教

[147] See Hu Shi, "Zhencao wenti," 8.

[148] Tian Shuang 田雙, "Cong Xin qingnian de chuangban kan Beiyang zhengfu de xinwen chuban zhengce" 從《新青年》的創辦看北洋政府的新聞出版政策, *Fujian luntan*, special issue no.1 (2012), 108.

育方案草案). It states that the goal of women's education is to train women to become good wives and kind mothers (*xianqi liangmu* 賢妻良母).[149] By promoting Confucian female virtues (*nüxue* 女學), the proposal was also a document that struggled against the women's rights (*nüquan* 女權) movement. Almost at the same time as the publication of the Proposal in December 1914, a women's monthly *Nüzi shijie* 女子世界 (Women's World; 1914-1915) was founded by Chen Diexian 陳蝶仙 (1879-1940), a famous Mandarin Duck and Butterfly writer in modern China. There were two women's monthlies entitled *Nüzi shijie* (*Women's World*) published in late Qing and early Republican China. The earlier one (1904-1907) was edited by Ding Chuwo 丁初我 (1871-1930). It aimed at creating a utopian space for Chinese women to develop themselves into new female citizens. By contrast, the *Women's World* edited by Chen Diexian intentionally distanced itself from political debates and concentrated on creating a world of beautiful, talented and virtuous women.[150] The journal introduced new fashion trends and elements of popular culture, but it did not exclude the promotion of traditional female virtues.

In Chen Diexian's *Women's World*, there were essays advocating female chastity. For example, in "Peng Jiazhen lieshi zhi weihunqi" 彭家珍 (1888-1912) 烈士之未婚妻 (The Fiancée of the Martyr Peng Jiazhen), the author celebrates Peng Jiazhen's fiancée

[149] See Xie Li 謝麗, "Fan chuantong yu bei chuantong: cong liangfen *nüzi shijie* kan jindai nüzi shijie de jiannan jiangou" 反傳統與被傳統：從兩份《女子世界》看近代女子世界的艱難建構, *Shixue yuekan*, no. 9 (2014), 110. In the article, Xie Li also noted that there were two views on women's education in early Republican China. One argues that education should shape women into understanding wives and loving mothers so that they can nurture the citizens and instruct their children and husbands. The other opinion is that education should shape women into independent New Women who discard the norms of being an understanding wife and a loving mother. See Xie Li, "Fan chuantong yu bei chuantong," 108.

[150] Ibid., 108-111.

Wang Qingzhen's decision to practice the chaste woman tradition after the death of her fiancé.[151] Peng is known as the assassin who triggered the fall of the Qing dynasty. He was a member of the *Tongmeng hui* 同盟會 (Chinese Alliance Association) led by Sun Yat-sen. He actively participated in several assassinations. He died during the assassination of Liangbi 良弼 (1877-1912), an important leader of the *Zong she dang* 宗社黨 (Party of the Royalists of the Qing Empire). Without the support of the *Zong she dang*, the last Qing emperor was forced to abdicate shortly after. Peng Jiazhen was therefore recognized as a revolutionary hero. His fiancée insisted on moving in with Peng's family as a chaste maiden.[152] In this case, revolutionary ideas and traditional thoughts were presented in a harmonious way.

The co-existence of revolutionary and Confucian discourses was also presented in other women's journals. *Funü shibao* (Women's Times 婦女時報; 1911-1917) is the earliest commercialized women's journal. The journal published lots of eulogies and biographies of female chaste martyrs. In one of the articles, the author celebrates a chaste martyr from Changshu 常熟 for fasting to death within a hundred days after her husband died. Towards the end of the eulogy, the author relates chaste martyrdom to the idea of being new citizens and states, "female virtue (*nüxue* 女學) not only requires women to be talented, but also requires them to dedicate themselves to the state and the citizens."[153]

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[151] "Peng Jiazhen lieshi zhi weihunqi" 彭家珍 (1888-1912) 烈士之未婚妻, *Nüzi shijie*, no.6 (1915), 1. Also see Xie Li, 111.

[152] See Shen Gan 沈淦, "Gei Qing wangchao zuihou yiji de Peng Jiazhen" 給清王朝最後一擊的彭家珍, *Wenshi tiandi*, no.6 (2012), 13-6.

[153] Yushan Sun Jingxun 虞山孫敬薰, "Changshu Mao zhenlie fu zhuan" 常熟毛貞烈婦傳, *Funü shibao*, issue 3 (1911), 49-51. "女學非專求女子有才，求其為國民。"

The author argues that, "Lady Mao's fasting to death was also because she saw that the state was in danger, such that she did not want to live in the world anymore."[154] In another article, Zhu Youyun 朱友雲, a well-educated college graduate, married her sick fiancé because of the superstitious belief that a wedding can drive out bad luck from a family. Her husband died shortly after, and Zhu Youyun then committed suicide by swallowing gold. The author Chenzuo Mingying 陳左明瑛 commented on the case, saying that "the chaste martyr Zhu's death is not only an honor for Xiaogan 孝感 County, and an honor for the women in our nation, but is also the glory of our ancient Chinese civilization to the whole world."[155] A typical argument during dynastic and social crisis was that virtuous women could save the world from moral decline. Although publishing the eulogies for female chaste martyrs, *Funü shibao* also made important contributions in advocating women's education, women's suffrage, and women's militarization. For instance, in the same issue which includes the eulogy for chaste martyr Zhu from Xiaogan, there was also an essay encouraging women to practice their rights to vote.[156] Other topics in *Funü shibao* are mostly related to women's everyday lives, including travel, marriage, fashion, child rearing, food culture, tailoring, and foreign cultures. In her thorough study of *Funü shibao*, Joan Judge noted that "views expressed in the journal on the Revolution and its aftermath were varied and oscillating, reflecting the instability of

[154] Ibid. "毛氏絕粒死，殆矣觀國勢危殆，並不願偷息於塵世乎。"

[155] Chenzuo Mingying 陳左明瑛, "Xiaogan Zhu lienü," *Funü shibao*, issue 19, (1916), 76-8. "朱烈女君之死…非我孝感一邑之光榮也，亦非我全國女學界之光榮也，是我中華古國對於世界上之光榮也。"

[156] Qiuwu Fengying 邱吳鳳英, "Ruhe er shou canzhengquan" 如何而受參政權, *Funü shibao*, issue 19, (1916), 75-6.

the situation on the ground."[157] She took Bao Tianxiao's writings on women's suffrage as an example to explain that the views on women and women's revolution may vary in different periods of time and under different editors. Although the views on female chaste martyrdom may be different, the point I want to make here is that the writings of female chaste martyrdom were consistently associated with national salvation in *Funü shibao*.

Other women's journals and newspapers at the time conveyed similar mixed messages on female chaste martyrdom. They were revolutionary or even radical in their promotion of women's education and political rights, but the moral expectations for women still followed the traditional Confucian norms. For instance, another politically liberal women's magazine *Funü zazhi* 婦女雜誌 (Women's Magazine; 1915-1935) was constantly advocating female chaste martyrdom. In "Shaoxing Chen lienü wanshi" 紹興陳烈女挽詩 (An Elegy for Chaste Martyr Chen from Shaoxing), the author praises the chaste martyr Chen Wanzhen for poisoning herself to death within three hours of hearing of her fiancé's death. The author states that the significance of chaste martyrdom is that it "keeps the national virtue, and does not hurt the system of the state."[158] In the same issue, there is another essay that criticizes the custom of burying women alive with the dead.[159] As in *Funü shibao*, the advocacy of women's education and liberation and the promotion of female chaste martyrdom co-existed in *Funü zazhi*.

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[157] Joan Judge, *Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality, and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2015), 36.

[158] Xu Ke 徐珂, "Shaoxing Chen lienü wanshi" 紹興陳烈女挽詩, *Funü zazhi,* no.9 (1918), 5-6. "國粹賴以存，亦未傷國體。"

[159] Sun Lijue 孫禮玨, "Lun xuanzang zhi fei" 論殉葬之非, *Funü zazhi,* no.9 (1918), 1-2.

The poems and biographies of female chaste martyrs in late Qing and early Republican media are similar to the eulogies of late imperial China. However, they attempted to associate female chaste martyrdom with national salvation, the crucial topic of the time. While the narratives of female chaste martyrdom in late Qing and early Republican China ostensibly clash with the concept of women's liberation, both women's issues were used to address concerns about China's political future. The ideological situation is now usually generalized as a battle between Confucian ideology and May Fourth revolutionary ideology. However, as I have revealed, in the media representations of female chastity martyrdom, two contradictory discourses co-existed in some women's journals, and they were not necessarily seen as being in contention.

These simultaneous and overlapping discourses, female chaste martyrdom and female revolutionary martyrdom, both encourage women to sacrifice themselves for the sake of larger patriarchal ideologies. Chaste martyrdom was repurposed as revolutionary ideology in the name of nationalism. In the next section, I will examine the case of Qiu Jin to trace the process of establishing a "new chastity" that involves dying for the nation.

The Establishment of the New Discourse: Making Qiu Jin 秋瑾 a Revolutionary Martyr

After the 1911 revolution and China was exploring its new future, different voices were competing with each other. Back at the beginning of my dissertation, I discussed different discourses on Zhao Wuzhen's death to show how female martyrdom became a political topic in late Qing and early Republican China. In this section, I will examine various discourses on Qiu Jin's death which also reflect the constantly shifting social environment during the Qing-Republican transition. The reason I choose Qiu Jin as a case

study here is that she was not only an object of sacrifice but also a subject who voiced her opinions through her writings. The case of Qiu Jin reveals unstable relationships among self, family and the nation in the process of state building and Chinese modernization. I argue that nationalism emerged as a new dimension of female martyrdom during the Qing-Republican transition. The state transformed Qiu Jin's death into a national symbol to form collective memory and a new national ideology. Instances of female martyrdom transformed from individual, locally defining ritual deaths to nationally-recognized deaths.

Qiu Jin (1875-1907), a Shaoxing native who sought to overthrow the Qing government, has long been inscribed as an iconic revolutionary female martyr in modern Chinese history, but the symbolic meanings of Qiu Jin's death keep shifting along with the constant moving of her tomb. Qiu Jin has been buried and reburied at least nine times in different places under different regimes since her execution on July 15, 1907. Fearing persecution from the Qing government, Qiu's family initially did not conduct a proper funeral for her. Following her execution, her body was roughly wrapped in a blanket and hastily buried by a charity organization, the Tongshan tang 同善堂, at the foot of Fushan 府山. Later, in October of that year, Qiu Jin's brother Qiu Yuzhang 秋譽章 retrieved her remains and buried her temporarily at Yanjia tan 嚴家潭. Qiu Jin once asked her close friend Xu Zihua 徐自華 (1873-1935) to bury her next to the tomb of the admired Song dynasty national hero Yue Fei 嶽飛 (1103-1141) at West Lake if the uprising failed. Thus, to fulfill Qiu Jin's request, Xu Zihua and Wu Zhiying 吳芝瑛 (1868-1934), another friend of Qiu Jin, risked arrest by the Qing government and transferred her coffin to West Lake in February 1908. However, this tomb was destroyed by the local government

shortly after, and Qiu's coffin was taken back to Yanjia tan by her family. In 1909, Qiu's husband Wang Tingjun 王廷鈞 (1879-1909), a native of Hunan, died at the age of 30. Wang's family made a request to bury the couple together in one grave, and so Qiu Jin's coffin traveled a thousand miles to rest in Hunan. After the overthrow of the Qing government in 1912, Qiu Jin's tomb was moved again, this time to Yuelu Mountain (Yuelu shan 嶽麓山) to commemorate her as a pioneer and a revolutionary martyr of the Xinhai Revolution. Then, in 1913, as advocated by Xu Zihua, the new Republican government relocated Qiu's tomb to West Lake. Needing to forge a new national discourse, Sun Yat-sen, the founder of Republican China, held a grand funeral that officially canonized Qiu Jin. However, even after her sanctification, Qiu Jin did not rest in peace. Under the communist regime, Qiu Jin was disrespectfully exhumed several times during periods of political turmoil, including the Four Clean-Ups Campaign and the Cultural Revolution. Only in 1981 were the remains of Qiu Jin finally recovered and restored to West Lake.[160]

Through the decades-long process of moving her tomb, the commemoration of Qiu Jin gained political meaning. And in the process, Qiu Jin has been de-gendered, or even made into a stone block to be used in the construction of national history. As the iconic Chinese male martyr and the role model for Qiu Jin, Yue Fei has been consistently depicted as a hero throughout history. In contrast, the image of Qiu Jin is blurred under the vague title of female revolutionary martyr. Different political groups identified her with contested labels for the purpose of power struggles. She was variously depicted as a

[160] For detailed discussion of relocations of Qiu Jin's tomb, see Hu Ying, "Qiu Jin's Nine Burials: The Making of Historical Monuments and Public Memory," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture,* 19.1 (2007), 138-91. Also see, Shen Huijin 瀋惠金, "Qiu Jin zhi mu fengyu jiu qian" 秋瑾之墓風雨九遷, *Wenshi jinghua*, no.1 (2005), 12-7.

traditional ill-treated woman like Dou E 竇娥, a *xianü* 俠女 (woman warrior), a feminist, a radical anarchist or a nationalist. So who exactly are we talking about when we talk about Qiu Jin?

The Images of Qiu Jin in Late Qing Media

Unlike the stereotyped fearless revolutionary martyrs, in late Qing narratives, Qiu Jin is depicted as a wrongfully treated woman who was a weak victim of the corrupt Qing government. The story of Qiu Jin was first interpreted by the mainstream media as a perfect re-enactment of Guan Hanqing's 關漢卿 (c. 1241-1320) *Dou E yuan* 竇娥冤 (*The Injustice to Dou E*), which depicts a helpless woman who is wrongfully convicted by a corrupt official.

It was common among late Qing officials to arbitrarily accuse someone of being a member of the revolutionary party 革命黨 so that they could take credit for cracking down on anti-Manchu forces and obtain a promotion. However, following the theme of injustice in the Dou E story, Guifu 貴福, the magistrate of Shaoxing 紹興 who sentenced Qiu Jin to death, was portrayed as a corrupt official. In October 1912, at Qiu Jin's memorial service at the Shaoxing Guild in Shanghai, local people made a paste turtle with Guifu's name on it to humiliate him.[161] Meanwhile, traditional gender norms made people believe that, as a woman who is born weak, Qiu Jin could not have been a revolutionary. The media unanimously set the tone and portrayed Qiu Jin as a modern-day Dou E.

[161] See Qu Jun 瞿駿, "Xinhai geming yu chengshi kongjian" 辛亥革命與城市空間 (Ph.D. diss., Huadong shifan daxue, 2007), 42.

The death of Qiu Jin was a heated topic in major newspapers in late Qing. Although they held somewhat different positions, the newspapers all claimed that the case was unjust.[162] For instance, the *Shi bao* 時報, which campaigned for constitutionalism, criticized the officials in Zhejiang province for processing the case unlawfully, and wrote that "local governors instructed someone to collect letters written by Qiu Jin, and then forged documents of Qiu's collaboration with revolutionaries by imitating her handwriting."[163] *Shen bao* 申報 published a series of articles and essays on Qiu Jin's case, including one entitled "Lun Shaoxing yuanyu" (Discourse on the Unjust Verdict in Shaoxing). Also in *Shen bao*, in the editorial comments on Qiu Jin's essay "Jinggao zimeimen" 敬告姊妹們 (A Warning to Our Sisters), an author argues that "Qiu Jin's idea of revolution is the promotion of feminism, which encourages female independence…it is wrongful to execute Qiu Jin in the name of race revolution, that is the reason why commentators see the case as unjust."[164]

The media at first perceived the injustice in Qiu Jin's case as a reflection of the corrupt Qing government. They depicted Qiu Jin as a victim of the defective legal system. Some also recognized her as an advocate of gender equality. In general, in late Qing, Qiu Jin was by no means known as the revolutionary martyr that she later became. Qiu Jin's

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[162] As main channels to deliver public opinions, *Shi bao* 時報 and *Da gong bao* 大公報 (Tianjin) campaigned for constitutionalism; *Shenzhou Daily* 神州日報 propagated revolutionary ideas; *Shen bao* 申報 was more business oriented, and held a neutral political position. For more discussion on the media environment in late Qing, see Xia Xiaohong, "Cong Qiu Jin zhisi kan wanqing minjian shehui de zhengyi liliang" 從秋瑾之死看晚清民間社會的正義力量, *Huanghuagang zazhi* 黃花崗雜誌, vol.22 (2007), 4-18.

[163] See Zhou Feitang 周芾棠, ed., *Qiu Jin shi liao* 秋瑾史料 (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1981), 103.

[164] Qiu Jin, "Jinggao zimei men" 敬告姊妹們, *Zhongguo nübao* (January 1, 1907), with comments on *Shen bao* (July 22, 1907). Also see Xia Xiaohong, "Qiu Jin zhisi yu wanqing de Qiu Jin wenxue" 秋瑾之死與晚清的秋瑾文學, *Shanxi daxue xuebao* 山西大學學報, vol.27, no.2 (2004), 2.

weak portrayal was undeniably a necessary strategy for the media to avoid political censorship and protect Qiu Jin's family, but it also indicated the collision and fusion of disparate ideas in late Qing and early Republican China.

The layout of graves and monuments at West Lake in the early Republican China also reveals the instability of the image of Qiu Jin. Around the lake shores, in addition to Qiu Jin's tomb, there are tombs of the filial daughter Zheng; Monk Songfeng; Yue Fei, the famous anti-Jurchen general of the Song dynasty; and Su Xiaoxiao, a courtesan of the Southern and Northern dynasties who attracted tributes from numerous renowned literati.[165] New tombs of revolutionary martyrs were added to this culturally charged landscape after the Xinhai Revolution.[166] West Lake therefore became a contested arena for generating new public memories and identities. For the purpose of establishing new collective memories and national identity, "many of the buildings initially associated with Qing officials were renamed to honor Ming loyalists who had anti-Qing reputations."[167] The West Lake Exposition (1929) consisted of a grand Revolution Memorial Hall (*Xihu guohuo bolanhui geming jinian guan* 西湖國貨博覽會革命紀念館) in which symbolic items such as letters, documents and bloodied clothing left behind by revolutionary

[165] See Zhaozhao zhouzi 招招周子, "Wen Su Xiaoxiao, Zheng xiaonü, Qiu Jin, Songfeng heshang, heyi tongzangyu xileng qiao" 問蘇小小、鄭孝女、秋瑾、松風和尚，何以同葬于西冷橋？ http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=745713&remap=gb#p28 (accessed on December 22, 2017).

[166] Those include the shrine of Tao Chengzhang 陶成章 (1878-1912) and the monument of martyrs who died in Nanjing. See Eugene Wang, "Perceptions of Change, Changes in Perception---West Lake as Contested Site/Sight in the Wake of the 1911 Revolution," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture,* 12.2 (2000), 101.

[167] Ibid., 109.

martyrs were exhibited.[168] To some extent, the Revolution Memorial Hall at West Lake marked a temporary victory in forming a new Republican identity.

Before the complete formation of Qiu Jin's image as a revolutionary martyr, her identity was variously associated with Dou E, the female knight errant Nie Yinniang 聶隱娘 of the Tang dynasty, Yue Fei, and Qiu's Russian counterpart Sophia Perovskaia (1853-1881), all representing different value systems from the East to the West, from pre-modern to modern.[169] Through his analysis of the physical landscape of Qiu Jin's tomb at West Lake, Eugene Wang argues that the cultural significance of Qiu Jin was particularly unstable during the Qing-Republican transition:

> A photograph shows the pavilion to be a wooden-pillar-supported structure on a hexagonal stone foundation, largely a Chinese design with some European stylistic flavor. In contrast, Qiu's tomb was made of stone in a predominantly Western style, as shown in Huang Yanpei's photograph. The two structures thus form a sharp contrast in design and solicit divergent perceptual responses: the slender wooden pavilion has a feminine feel, whereas the stout and sturdy stone tomb has a robust air. The pavilion evokes the dolefulness and pathos of the woman poet's tragic

[168] See Chen Yunqian 陳蘊茜, "Difang zhanlan yu xinhai geming jiyi suzao (1927-1949)" 地方展覽與辛亥革命記憶塑造(1927-1949), *Jianghai xuekan*, no.4 (2011), 155-165.

[169] See Hu Ying, *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1899-1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 107.

death, the tomb the unyielding and austere heroism of her sacrifice for the revolution.[170]

Figure 1: Pavilion of Wind and Rain, established in 1908, with Qiu Jin's old tomb inside (source: Eugene Wang, 101)

[170] Eugene Wang, "Perceptions of Change, Changes in Perception---West Lake as Contested Site/Sight in the Wake of the 1911 Revolution," 101-2.

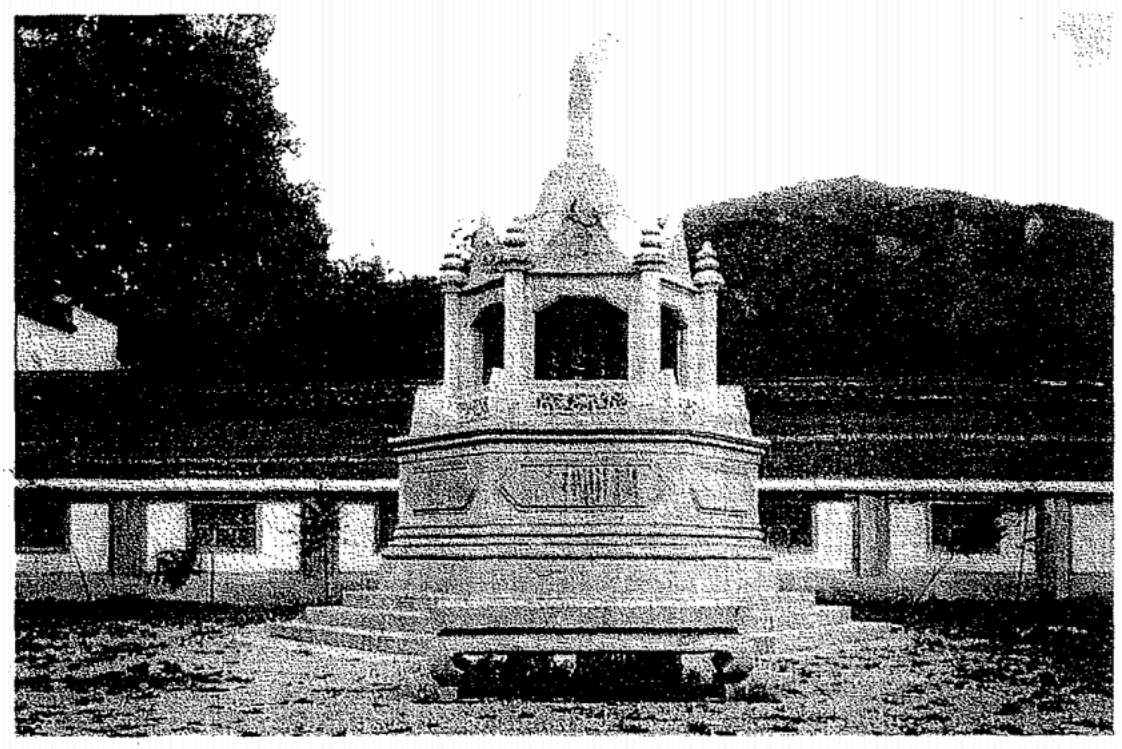

Figure 2: The tomb of Qiu Jin, established in 1913 (source: Eugene Wang, 100)

The process of transforming Qiu Jin from a modern Dou E to a revolutionary martyr under the frame of new Republican China was a long one. Wu Zhiying's writings on Qiu Jin epitomize the changes to the image of Qiu Jin, and the construction of the meaning of Qiu's death. Shortly after the execution of Qiu Jin, Wu Zhiying wrote several essays memorializing her friend, including "Biography of Lady Qiu" (*Qiu nüshi zhuan* 秋女士傳, July 21, 1907), "Memoir of Qiu the Female Knight-Errant" (*Ji Qiu nüxia yishi* 紀秋女俠遺事, July 25, 1907), and "Elegy to Lady Qiu" (*Ji Qiu nüshi wen* 祭秋女士文, August 15, 1907).[171] Those essays concentrate on the theme of injustice. Wu Zhiying did not identify Qiu Jin as a revolutionary, and she was rather cautious and ambiguous when

[171] For detailed discussion of Wu Zhiying's publications on Qiu Jin, see Guo Changhai 郭長海, "Wu Zhiying zang Qiu Jin shiwen" 吳芝瑛葬秋瑾詩文, *Jianghuai wenshi*, 2(2007), 93-100.

talking about Qiu's ideas regarding revolution. In "Ji Qiu nüxia yishi" 紀秋女俠遺事, Wu recalls a conversation she had with Qiu Jin:

> From time to time, I [Wu] would caution her, saying: "Your words are too shocking. Please be more circumspect. . . Should a border official mistake you for a woman revolutionary, what then?" She [Qiu] laughed, 'There is a difference between revolutionary and revolution. Of course you of all people know that I'm not the sort of New Youth revolutionary.[172]

Wu attempted to deliver the message that Qiu Jin drew a clear line between the New Youth revolution that was advocated by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 and her version of revolution. Even so, in the conversation, Qiu Jin's idea of revolution is unclear. Wu noted earlier in the essay that Qiu Jin once showed aversion to frequent references to the word "revolution," and argued that the so-called revolution should start from family and gender equality.[173] Wu intended to differentiate Qiu from revolutionaries with grand and radical agendas, like Xu Xilin and the New Youth.

Instead of identifying Qiu Jin as a revolutionary, Wu Zhiying resorted to appealing to traditional values and attempted to legitimize Qiu's "transgressive" behaviors by adopting the Chinese classics, such as the *Shiji* and *Yijing*, as an interpretive framework. Hu Ying argues that, "her (Wu Zhiying's) reworking of the classics indicates that radical political and social ideas could be framed without recourse to imported

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[172] Wu Zhiying, "Ji Qiu nüxia yishi," in *Qiu Jin ji* 秋瑾集 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), 190. Translated by Hu Ying, "Writing Qiu Jin's Life: Wu Zhiying and Her Family Learning," *Late Imperial China* 25.2 (2004), 120.

[173] Wu Zhiying, "Ji Qiu nüxia yishi," 189-90. "今新少年動曰"革命，革命"，吾謂革命當自家庭始，所謂男女平權是也。"

vocabularies of nationalism and women's rights."[174] But Wu's approach can be also understood as showing a lack of new vocabulary for portraying Qiu Jin.

Before the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, Wu Zhiying and Xu Zihua promoted Qiu Jin by integrating her into different time-honored value systems and discourses. They constructed Qiu Jin's tomb next to the tombs of Su Xiaoxiao and Zheng the chaste woman. Although Qiu Jin shares no commonalities with her two neighbor ghosts, Xu Zihua praised the arrangement as "a triangular balance of the power of a beauty, a virtuous woman and a female knight errant, which adds luster to the scene of thousand-year-old West Lake."[175]

In "Lian furen Wu Zhiying zhuan" 廉夫人吳芝瑛傳 (The Biography of Lady Wu Zhiying) Yan Fu records a story of Wu Zhiying promoting filial piety---a core Confucian principle which soon became a target and was vehemently criticized in the May Fourth Movement:

> After her father's death, Zhao Ling, a woman in Hangzhou, lived in a lodge next to her father's grave, and refused marriage. Wu Zhiying came across her, and was moved by her story. She financially supported Zhao's renovation of her father's grave. And she handwrote the donation

[174] For detailed discussion on how Wu Zhiying applied *Shiji* and *Yijing* tradition to interpret Qiu Jin, see Hu Ying, "Writing Qiu Jin's Life: Wu Zhiying and Her Family Learning," *Late Imperial China,* 25.2 (2004), 119-60.

[175] Xu Zihua, "Wei Qiu Jin ying zang shi zhi Wu Zhiying nüshi shu," in Guo Yanli 郭延禮, *Qiu Jin yanjiu ziliao* 秋瑾研究資料, (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 1987), 595. "美人、節婦、俠女，三墳鼎足，真令千古西湖生色。"

announcement to raise money for Zhao to buy farmland, food and cloth.[176] The donations amounted to two thousand cash.[177]

For Wu Zhiying and Xu Zihua, there was no conflict between traditional ideas and revolutionary ideas. Wu Zhiying was arranging the burial of Qiu Jin while campaigning for donations for the filial daughter Zhao Ling. She wrote "Wei wen xiaonü muhua qi" 為文孝女募化啟, which was published in *Huixing nü xuebao* 惠興女學報.[178] Xu once claimed that, "Although she (Qiu Jin) loved freedom, in matters concerning propriety, she never transgressed."[179]

But Wu Zhiying's writings of Qiu Jin changed drastically after the overthrow of the Qing government in 1911. At first, the inscription on Qiu Jin's stele written by Wu simply said, "Alas, the tomb of Qiu Jin, a woman from Shanyin" (*wuhu Shanyin nü zi Qiu Jin zhi mu* 嗚呼山陰女子秋瑾之墓, January 26, 1908). Days after the revolution, it was changed to "Alas, the tomb of Qiu Jin, the female knight errant of Jianhu" (*wuhu jianhu nü xia Qiu Jin zhi mubei* 嗚呼鑒湖女俠秋瑾之墓碑, twenty-fourth of the first lunar month of the year 1908).[180] She transformed Qiu Jin's identity from that of an ordinary young woman to that of a heroine. After 1911, in one of the letters Wu Zhiying

[176] Since Wu Zhiying was a well-known calligrapher, her handwriting was valuable.

[177] Yan Fu, "Lian furen Wu Zhiying zhuan" 廉夫人吳芝瑛傳 [The Biography of Lady Wu Zhiying], *Da gong bao* (December 1, 1908).

[178] Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹, "Qiu Jin yu Gui Lin" 秋瑾與貴林, *Dushu*, 9 (2007), 65.

[179] Hu Ying, "Writing Qiu Jin's Life: Wu Zhiying and Her Family Learning," 130.

[180] See Sun Jun 孫俊, "Jianhu nüxia Qiu Jin shiliao" 鑒湖女俠秋瑾史料, *Wenjin liushang*, 文津流觴, vol.35, (2011), 47.

wrote to Xu Zihua, Wu proposed that the inscription on Qiu Jin's memorial stele should be "the tomb of the first female revolutionary Qiu Jin," and the characters *ge ming* 革命 (revolution) should be highlighted. Furthermore, she argued that the date on the tomb should be changed to March 13, 1912, for the purpose of tying Qiu Jin's death to the abdication of the last Emperor Xuantong on March 12, 1912.[181]

In "Qiu Jin yizhu xu" 秋瑾遺著序 (Preface to the Posthumous Works of Qiu Jin; 1911), Wu Zhiying explicitly identifies Qiu Jin as a pioneer of the Xinhai Revolution: "These days, the Wuhan Uprising gathered all the talented heroes and their followers to fight against the Emperor…it's unfortunate that Qiu Jin died without fulfilling her will and witnessing the revolution. Qiu Jin would not be so sad if she knew that her dying wish would be accomplished."[182]

At the time, the new Republican government needed to establish new collective memories and legitimize its rule. Qiu Jin was therefore conveniently presented by the government as "a model of citizenship to the people. This presentation of the revolutionary dead as models for the living was new to the republican state."[183] After 1911, Qiu Jin finally started to be recognized as a female martyr who sacrificed herself for the nationalist cause.

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[181] See Qu Jun 瞿駿, "Xinhai geming yu chengshi kongjian" 辛亥革命與城市空間, (Ph.D. diss., Huadong shifan daxue, 2007), 44.

[182] From Xia Xiaohong, "Minchu xiju zhong de Qiu Jin xingxiang" 民初戲劇中的秋瑾形象, 9 (2005), 17. "今武漢起義，天下豪傑之士，雲合景從，討伐其君。秋瑾不幸齎志以死，不及於身親見之；庶獲有償遺志之一日，於秋瑾亦複何悲！"

[183] Henrietta Harrison, "Martyrs and Militarism in Early Republican China," *Twentieth-Century China* 23.2 (1998), 41.

Apparel and Tears: Imagining Qiu Jin in Late Qing Literature

The transformation of Qiu Jin's image was largely carried out through literary representations of this female martyr. Like the suicide case of Zhao Wuzhen, the case of Qiu Jin was presented sensationally in the media. In order to generate people's sympathy towards Qiu Jin, the media either consciously or unconsciously highlighted the terms "female" and "blood," two significant and lurid selling points of the story. Accompanying the media rush, numerous literary works on Qiu Jin appeared within the first couple of years after her death; most were popular literature. In other words, at the early stage of establishing Qiu Jin's fame as a female martyr, commercial consumption was one of the priorities. Qiu Jin's death was also manipulated, used as a tool to attack the corrupt Qing government. Meanwhile, her agency and uniqueness fell into the background.

Most of the literary works on Qiu Jin from the late Qing and early Republican periods were written poorly and in haste.[184] Among the numerous literary representations of Qiu Jin in the first couple of years after her death, the most well-crafted are Xiaoshan Xianglingzi's 蕭山湘靈子 *zaju* drama *Xuanting yuan* 軒亭冤 (Tragedy at Xuanting; 1907) and Jingguanzi's 靜觀子 short story *Liuyue shuang* 六月霜 (Frost in June; 1911).

There are some similarities between *Xuanting yuan* and *Liuyue shuang*. Both works depict Qiu Jin as a victim who harmlessly advocates "family revolution" (*jiating geming* 家庭革命) instead of radical racial and ethnic (anti-Manchu) revolution (*zhongzu geming* 種族革命). These fictional Qiu Jins repeatedly differentiate themselves from

[184] For a summary of all the literary representations of Qiu Jin in late Qing and early Republican China, see Xia Xiaohong, "Qiu Jin zhisi yu wan Qing de Qiu Jin wenxue" 秋瑾之死與晚清的秋瑾文學, vol.27, no.2 (2004), 1-8.

revolutionaries (*geming dang* 革命黨) by emphasizing an interpretation of revolution centering on gender equality. For instance, in *Liuyue shuang*, facing interrogation from Shanyin county officials, Qiu Jin defends herself and clearly argues that, "my version of revolution is family revolution, not racial revolution."[185] In *Xuanting yuan*, Qiu Jin refuses to identify herself as a revolutionary, and curses the official directly, "Fool official! You dare to mistake me as a revolutionary."[186]

The portrayals of Qiu Jin in *Xuanting yuan* and *Liuyue shuang* feature the traits of stereotyped wrongly accused women in premodern Chinese society. The divorce initiated by Qiu Jin for the purpose of pursuing her own life goals, an event which highlights her agency and independence, is presented vaguely in both of the works. In addition, eschewing her well-known real-life identity as the *Jianhu nüxia* 鑒湖女俠 (The Knight Errant of Jianhu) and the images of her cross-dressing as a man or holding an unsheathed knife, Qiu Jin was presented as feminine and mostly adherent to traditional gender roles of the late Qing period.

Liuyue shuang introduces Qiu Jin "wearing a snow green silk gauze, inside of which is a short pink muslin gown on top, and on the bottom, a black close-woven pleated skirt, black socks and a pair of damask rush shoes. Her raspberry pink muslin pants show a little in the breeze. She ties her hair into a fashionable bun, as usual."[187] These detailed descriptions of Qiu Jin's exquisite feminine attire follow the traditional

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[185] Jingguanzi, *Liu Yue Shuang* (Shanghai: Shanghai wenhua chubanshe, 1958), 31.

[186] Xiaoshan Xianglingzi, *Xuanting yuan*, in Aying 阿英, *Wan Qing wenxue congchao chuanqi zaju juan.* 晚清文學叢鈔傳奇雜劇卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 137. "狗官，竟把我認作革命黨了。"

[187] Jingguanzi, *Liu Yue Shuang*, 7. "秋先生身穿一件雪青官紗罩衫，裡襯一件粉紅洋紗的短衫。下束一條元色實地紗百折湘裙。元色洋襪，蒲鞋面緞子繡花的鞋子。微風飄動，露出那點梅本色洋紗褲子。頭挽時新髻，宛然如舊。"

gender norms and indicate her genteel family background. It is worth noting that colors (*se* 色) play a significant role in depicting Qiu Jin's outfits; this emphasis on her clothing encourages readers to consume her as a traditional beauty in a way that distracts attention from her heroic agency.

Instead of the common central motif of "shedding blood" found in the narratives of revolutionary martyrdom, "shedding tears" serves as the most important motif in *Xuanting yuan* and *Liuyue shuang*. In *Liuyue shuang*, Qiu Jin appears to be too weak to resist when being arrested: "Some soldiers raked through a house in the back, and saw a woman [Qiu Jin] crouching in a corner. They rushed forward, some were pulling, and some were shoving. And they then dragged her out. The poor woman remained silent. With tears in her eyes, she followed the soldiers to the front."[188] In *Xuanting yuan*, Qiu Jin cries constantly after her arrest: "with her hair disheveled, she goes on stage while weeping (*dan pipa huilei shang* 旦披髮揮淚上)"; "she is crying while walking, and then lies prostrate on the ground (*dan yilu ku jie, fudi qi jie* 旦一路哭介，伏地泣介)"; she cries out, "the injustice is hard to be heard, this makes me lament to heaven and knock my head to earth, my tears drop like beads (*yuan nan jiao, zhen jiao wo hutianqiangdi leiruzhudiao* 冤難叫，真教我呼天搶地淚如珠掉)"; "(she) hides her tears and exits the stage (*yanlei xia* 掩淚下)."[189]

Qiu Jin's torrential tears also appear in an elaborately depicted scene---her

[188] Jingguanzi, *Liu Yue Shuang*, 24-5. "有幾個兵丁搜到了後面空屋子裡，卻見有一個女子拳伏在那邊牆角裡。便都一擁上前，拉的拉，推的推，牽牽扯扯的把那女子拖了出來。可憐那個女子不言不語，只有眼中流淚，隨了幾個兵丁來到前頭。"

[189] Xiaoshan Xianglingzi, *Xuanting yuan*, 135-137.

mourning for her mother--in both of the works. In *Xuting yuan*, saddened by her mother's death, Qiu Jin cries so hard that she "alternately sheds blood and tears (*xue lei jiao liu* 血泪交流)."[190] This image portrayals Qiu Jin as a filial daughter who mourns her mother properly. It is also part of a long Confucian literary tradition of describing mourning filial children as crying tears of blood. The scene also makes *Xuting yuan*, as a *chuanqi* play, more dramatic.

The novel *Liuyue shuang* incorporates more details of the mother-daughter relationship in its description of Qiu Jin's mourning for her mother. Qiu Jin's mother is depicted as open-minded rather than traditional. She tacitly consents to Qiu Jin's divorce, and her attitude towards Qiu's pursuit of overseas education is relatively positive. In one scene, realizing that Qiu Jin's journey to Japan is about to begin, and their date of reunion is uncertain, her mother bursts into tears. Seeing her mother crying, Qiu Jin starts to weep. Through these scenes, Jingguanzi attempts to portray Qiu Jin as a virtuous mother who cares deeply about her own children. He writes, "As Qiu Jin looked up and saw her children, she felt sad and tears suddenly came to her eyes" and "[Qiu Jin] turned back and saw her two small children. She couldn't help but feel grief, and shed some tears."[191] Another tearful scene depicts Qiu Jin's mourning for her mother:

> The day when she arrived in Shaoxing, Qiu Jin disembarked and asked a porter to carry her luggage. After she got back home, Qiu Jin saw that the doors are wide open and the air was filled with the sound of wailing.

[190] Ibid., 131.

[191] Jingguanzi, *Liu Yue Shuang*, 51. "秋女士抬頭見了他的子女，不覺一陣心酸，掉下淚來。" "回頭看看兩個小孩，也不覺一陣心酸，落了幾點眼淚。"

> Although Qiu Jin had a heroic heart, she couldn't help but cry. She was too distressed to care that all the relatives were there. Qiu Jin started crying from outside the door, all the way to the inside of the house. She kneeled in front of her mother's memorial tablet and cried her heart out. All the relatives and family friends shed tears for her when they saw her crying. Hearing the sound of her sister, Qiu Jin's brother Qiu Yuzhang came out of the mourning hall and helped her up. The brother and sister reunited and had a good cry together […] [Qiu Jin] wept in spite of herself […] [Qiu Jin] wailed again […] Before her brother finished his words, Qiu Jin was unrecognizable because she had cried so hard. Seeing their mother like that, her children started to sob. The sound of crying shook the earth and could wake the dead.[192]

The depictions of Qiu Jin's mourning for her mother are rather formulaic, and similar to most of the mourning stories we can find in the biographies of filial daughters in premodern China.

Although the ideals that Qiu Jin upheld were new at the time, in late Qing literary imagination, Qiu Jin is still a virtuous woman, a combination of a filial daughter and a female knight errant. The late Qing writings of Qiu Jin incorporated various traditional

[192] Jingguanzi, *Liu Yue Shuang*, 63. "這日到了紹興，秋女士上了岸，叫腳夫挑了行李，一徑來到家中。只見牆門大開，裡邊哭聲震耳。秋女士雖是英雄心腸，到此不免也要苦噎咽喉，大哭起來。也不顧親朋戚族都在這裡，他便從大門外頭哭起，直哭到裡邊，跪在靈前，號啕大慟。眾親友見了，也都替他落下淚來。他的哥哥秋裕章，在孝闈裡頭聽見了他妹子的聲音，便出來把秋女士攙起，兄妹見面，又大哭了一場。。。(秋瑾) 不覺又嗚咽起來。。。（秋瑾）又大哭起來。。。他哥哥尚未說完，已經把個秋女士哭得不像人了。女士的子女，見他母親這般光景，也嗚嗚咽咽的哭起來。一時哭聲震地，把個死人幾乎要哭醒呢。"

values and literary conventions. For instance, in another literary representation of Qiu Jin, a *chuanqi* drama also entitled *Liuyue shuang* (1907), Guyue yingzong jinü 古越贏宗季女 deploys a common literary trope of traditional Chinese drama and portrays Qiu Jin as a goddess who is sent down to earth to save people from torments.

The motif of Qiu Jin's tears not only functions to evoke sympathy among readers, but also paves the way for the contradictory portrayals of Qiu Jin as both a heroine of family revolution and as a traditional virtuous woman. It corresponds to Xu Zihua's argument that Qiu Jin was not transgressive. However, leaving her family behind in order to pursue her education in Japan could by no means be considered traditional at that time. The conflict between her role as a feminist activist and as following traditional gender roles is ignored in *Liuyue shuang* and *Xuanting yuan*; this leaves an unbridgeable gap that problematizes Qiu Jin's mode of heroism.

Female Martyrdom in Question: Lu Xun's "Medicine" and Xia Yan's *Biography of Qiu Jin*

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty, nationalism was woven into the discourse on Qiu Jin in order to consolidate the identity of the newly established Republican regime. Qiu Jin was no longer represented as a wrongly accused victim, but was instead publicly presented as an adamant revolutionary martyr. In his "Nala de da'an" 娜拉的答案 (Nala's answer; 1942), Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978) overtly claimed that, "The pioneer martyrs Qiu Jin and Xu Xilin were working together. This is an undeniable fact…sacrificing themselves for the revolution was an action of asking for benevolence

and receiving benevolence (*qiuren deren* 求仁得仁). Why was the sacrifice considered unjust and pitiful?"[193]

Lu Xun's short story "Yao" 藥 **(**Medicine; 1919) is based on the martyrdom of Qiu Jin.[194] The story takes place in Shaoxing, the hometown of Qiu Jin, Lu Xun and Xu Xilin. The offstage male protagonist, Xia Yu 夏瑜, a revolutionary martyr, is a reference to Qiu Jin. Their names have parallel meanings: "Summer" (*xia* 夏) corresponds to "Autumn" (*qiu* 秋); and "yu" and "jin" are both types of jade. In the story, Xia Yu was executed near Xuanting kou 軒亭口, where the execution of Qiu Jin took place. Lu Xun deliberately chose *Hua* 華 and *Xia* 夏 as the surnames of the two families in this tragic story to refer to the fate of China and the Chinese revolution.

In **"**Medicine," Lu Xun tells a story about how the Hua family buys a steamed bun, *mantou*, which is soaked in the blood of the revolutionary martyr Xia Yu, to feed their son in the hope of curing his tuberculosis. The revolutionary Xia Yu is not directly presented as a hero in the story. For the most of the story, he is invisible. He appears only in villagers' gossip after his death. Although Xia Yu is a clear reference to Qiu Jin, Lu Xun changed the gender of the revolutionary in the story. Hu Ying agrees with Eileen Chow that "Lu Xun made the change in order to eschew the spectacle and the potentially alluring effect of a woman executed in public."[195] However, the story suggests that Lu

[193]Guo Yanli, *Qiu Jin yanjiu ziliao*, 470. "秋先烈和徐先烈錫麟通謀是事實…為革命而死乃是求仁得仁，何"冤"之有，亦何"惜"之有？"

[194] Lu Xun, "Yao," in *Na Han* 吶喊 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2000), 19-28.

[195] Hu Ying, "Gender and Modern Martyrology," in Joan Judge, Hu Ying, ed., *Beyond Exemplar Tales: Women's Biography in Chinese History* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California, 2011), 130.

Xun's attitude towards revolutionary terrorism and Qiu Jin's martyrdom is uneasy rather than admiring.

Lu Xun and Qiu Jin had their differences over the Japanese government's policies against Chinese students' anti-Qing activities while they were studying in Japan. Qiu Jin was among the radical students who protested the Japanese government by calling on all Chinese students to return to China. Lu Xun, in contrast, argued that the first priority of a patriotic student is to study. At the funeral of Chen Tianhua 陳天華, a Chinese student in Japan who committed suicide to protest the "the order to outlaw Chinese students" (*qudi Qing guo liuxuesheng guize* 取締清國留學生規則), Qiu Jin performatively sentenced the students who opposed the idea of going back to China, including Lu Xun, to death. She took out her Japanese knife and shouted, "those who surrender to the Manchus, betray friends for personal interests, and oppress Han people, take this stab of my knife."[196]

After the execution of Qiu Jin, Lu Xun made the famous claim that, "she was clapped to death." Lu Xun raised the issue that the concept of martyrdom was being manipulated by "clappers."[197] He hinted that Qiu's seemingly voluntary martyrdom may have been the result of the clappers' instigation. In his essay "Wo zhi jielie guan" (My Views on Female Chastity; 1918), Lu Xun explicitly condemned the encouragement of women's chaste martyrdom. Furthermore, he pointed out the absurdity of linking female chastity and national salvation. For Lu Xun, Qiu Jin's death and female chaste martyrdom were in vain. The urgent question for Lu Xun was similar to the question he

[196] Ni Moyan 倪墨炎, *Lu Xun de shehui huodong* 魯迅的社會活動 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006), 43. "投降滿虜，賣友求榮。欺壓漢人，吃我一刀。"

[197] Hu Ying argues that, "The target of attack is very large indeed, for not just the soulless crowd, but every historian, every writer, every commemorator, and every biographer is potentially a 'clapper.'" See "Gender and Modern Martyrology" in *Beyond Exemplar Tales*, 130.

asked in "Nala zouhou zenyang" 娜拉走後怎樣 (What happens after Nora leaves home; 1923): What happens after martyrdom? Lu Xun answered this question in his essay "Lun fei e po lai yinggai huanxing" 論費厄潑賴應該緩行 (On Deferring Fair Play; 1925), writing "just after the revolution she [Qiu Jin] was called a heroine (*nüxia* 女俠), but this term is rarely heard now […] Qiu Jin's native place has remained unchanged from year to year, and made no progress at all."[198] This bleak assessment corresponds to the end of the story **"**Medicine" in which it becomes clear that Xia Yu's death was a senseless waste of life. The villagers have not been enlightened, Hua Xiaoshuan has not been cured by the bloody *mantou*, and the future of Chinese revolution is as evanescent as the flowers that Mama Hua and Mama Xia see on Xia Yu's tomb.

Xia Yan's play *Qiu Jin zhuan* 秋瑾傳 (Biography of Qiu Jin; 1936) was written against the background of the booming "literature of the anti-Japanese national salvation movement" (*kangRi jiuwang wenxue yundong* 抗日救亡文學運動). During this apogee of nationalism, Xia Yan constructed Qiu Jin as a nationalist hero. His heroine regards revolution as a career and considers it to be more important than her family. Xia Yan also presents Qiu Jin as a transgressive female character who "dresses like a man and rides a horse everyday"[199] Unlike the fragile, flowery permutations of Qiu Jin in late Qing works, Xia Yan's Qiu Jin is de-sexualized so that she can be recognized as a revolutionary hero. And unlike the crying Dou E character in late Qing portrayals of Qiu Jin, when facing imminent death, Xia Yan's Qiu Jin is a fearless martyr. It is also worth noting that the

[198] Translation is from Peter Zarrow, *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 87.

[199] Xia Yan, *Qiu Jin zhuan* 秋瑾傳 (Beijing: Kaiming shudian, 1951), 81. "秋瑾日常男裝騎馬。"

popular mourning scene of the late Qing Qiu Jin stories, which illustrates the traditional virtue of filial piety, is completely eliminated from Xia Yan's *Biography of Qiu Jin*. Apparently for Xia Yan, filial piety, as a core value of Confucian ideology which has been vehemently attacked in the New Culture Movement, is not appropriate to associate with a revolutionary hero.

Xia Yan's *Biography of Qiu Jin* describes a scene in which "the prison guards march Qiu Jin onto the stage. Qiu Jin's hair is disheveled and her hands are bound behind her back. She wears heavy shackles on her feet, but she refuses to kneel, and stands with great aplomb."[200] Stony-faced, she then gives this final speech before her execution: "You can chop off my head, but you cannot change my mind […] 'It is our duty as revolutionaries to die for benevolence and righteousness.'"[201] This speech later becomes a cliché that is repeated in many of the writings about revolutionary martyrs in socialist China, and Xia Yan's Qiu Jin becomes an established model for how literary revolutionary martyrs should face death. For example, Xia Yan's influence is seen in the novel *Red Crag* (*Hongyan* 紅岩; 1961) in which the character Jiang Jie shows no fear when she is executed. The most famous line in *Hongyan* is from Jiangjie's speech: "If we need to sacrifice for the Communist ideal, we all could and should sacrifice ourselves without our expressions changing or our hearts pounding."[202]

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[200] Xia Yan, *Qiu Jin zhuan*, 77. "秋瑾被獄卒押著登場，頭髮散亂，兩手反縛，腳上戴著重鐐，但是態度自若，站立不跪。"

[201] Ibid., 82. "你可以砍我的頭，你不能變我的志。秋（不動聲色）：成仁取義，這是我們革命黨份內的事情。"

[202] Luo Guangbin 羅廣斌, *Yang Yiyan* 楊益言, *Hongyan* 紅岩 (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1989), 524. "如果需要為共產主義的理想犧牲，我們每一個人都應該也可以做到臉不改色，心不跳。"

Although Xia Yan portrays Qiu Jin as a nationalist heroine in his play, he also casts doubt on Qiu Jin's sacrifice. He put words into her comrade Wang Jinfa's mouth to criticize Qiu's unnecessary martyrdom. At a critical point, knowing that she could be arrested, Qiu Jin still refuses to flee. Wang Jinfa sneers at her, saying, "You have been ruined by reading those old books which promote the five cardinal virtues."[203] Qiu Jin insists on staying, and Wang says: "You go ahead (and die) as a saint, and I will live on as a bandit."[204]

In his essay memorializing Qiu Jin, Xia Yan explained his motivation for indirectly criticizing her. Xia Yan points out that Qiu Jin's sacrifice could have been avoided because after the death of Xu Xilin, Qiu Jin still had five or six days to escape. He admits that Wang Jinfa's words undermine Qiu Jin's heroic act. His writing was fiercely criticized by Guo Moruo and Tian Han for pursuing realism, since Guo Moruo and Tian Han advocated the glorification and romantic representation of heroes. Guo argued that the real Qiu Jin was executed, but had met her death with great composure.[205] Guo is also critical of the depiction of an argument between the heroic revolutionary Cheng Yi 程毅, a fictional character, and Qiu Jin in the play.

In Xia Yan's play, Cheng Yi also tries to convince Qiu Jin to leave: "Being fully aware of danger but refusing to escape, this is not good for the revolution." Qiu Jin replies: "Are the lives of revolutionaries that precious?" Cheng Yi responds:

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[203] Xia Yan, *Qiu Jin zhuan*, 67. "你從前的那些仁義禮智信的舊書念壞了。"

[204] Ibid., 68. "你做你的聖人，我做我的強盜。"

[205] See Guo Yanli, *Qiu Jin yanjiu ziliao*. 510.

"Revolutionaries don't sacrifice themselves for nothing."[206] As one of Qiu Jin's most loyal comrades, Cheng Yi is not trying to convince her to leave out of fear. Xia Yan portrays Cheng Yi as a more mature revolutionary who attempts to avoid unnecessary death in order to preserve revolutionary forces.

In comparison to the portrayals of Qiu Jin in Lu Xun and Xia Yan's writings, that which appears in the female writer Lu Yin's 廬隱 (1898-1934) short story "Qiufeng qiuyu chou sha ren"秋風秋雨愁煞人 (The Sorrow of Autumn Wind and Autumn Rain Kills; 1927) imbues Qiu with more humanity. The title of the story is adopted from the famous line said to be Qiu Jin's departing words before her execution. This signature poetic line brings out another side of Qiu Jin's life as a sentimental poet. In "Qiufeng," Lu Yin tells the story of Qiu Jin through her cousin Ling Feng's memories of her. Lu Yin is known for the melancholic tone of her writings. She details the natural surroundings in order to create a melodramatic atmosphere in which Ling Feng mourns her cousin Qiu Jin. All the efforts Qiu Jin made for the revolution, such as studying in Japan, founding newspapers, and establishing schools, are surprisingly erased from the story. Contrary to the historical records and other literary representations of Qiu Jin, the Qiu Jin of "Qiufeng," attempts to flee during the Qing government manhunt. Lu Yin details the flight scene, downgrading Qiu Jin from an invulnerable revolutionary heroine to an ordinary person. In the story, Qiu Jin initially "not only does not fear death, but looks forward to her upcoming death" (*budan bupa si, qie pan siqi de lailin* 不但不怕死，且盼死期的來臨), but during her escape, she "appears rather disconcerted" (*shense luzhe zhanghuang* 神色露著張惶). Then, when facing imminent death, Qiu Jin does not act

[206] Xia Yan, *Qiu Jin zhuan*, 59.

like a heroic revolutionary. The day before her execution, "Qiu Jin's face turned green and yellow, her eyeballs were protruding, looking frightening and brutal […] the blood from her eyes was dripping on her face, she smiled wanly, and shook her head […] her heart was shattered into pieces, and she fainted on the ground."[207]

In Lu Yin's short story, instead of leaving her family, Qiu Jin has a very close connection with her uncle's family since her parents died when she was a child. While fleeing during the manhunt, she writes a letter to her uncle articulating her willingness to die and her love for her family. This is problematic from the perspective of the New Culture Movement which advocated breaking the shackles of traditional family ties, and it is far from Qiu Jin's real life experience. Meanwhile, the theme of revolution, which is supposed to be Qiu Jin's priority, is almost invisible in the story. Revolution becomes a hollow signifier in Lu Yin's story.

It is unclear whether the historical Qiu Jin was drawn by revolution or the idea of being a heroic martyr, but at the end of Qiu Jin's life, martyrdom clearly transcended revolution. We can better understand this through her *tanci* fiction *Jingwei shi* 精衛石 (*Stones of Jingwei*).

To Write and Be Written: Qiu Jin and her Tanci Fiction *Jingwei shi* 精衛石 (*Stones of Jingwei*)

During the Republican era, Qiu Jin was overwhelmingly and invariably portrayed as a revolutionary, far from the victim role she inhabited in late Qing China. But in the writings of Lu Xun, Xia Yan and Lu Yin, the concepts of martyrdom and revolution are

[207] See Lu Yin, "Qiufeng qiuyu chou sha ren," in *Lu Yin xuanji* 盧隱選集 (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 1983), 205. "秋瑾這時臉色已變得青黃，兩隻眼球突出，十分慘厲可怕…眼睛裡的血，一行行流在兩頰上，她慘笑，她搖頭…她的心已碎了，她暈然地倒在地下。"

both haunted by a sense of emptiness. Qiu Jin's semi-biographical *tanci* fiction *Jingwei shi* (1905-1907) provides us another angle from which to examine her martyrdom through her self-presentation.

Tanci was originally an oral performance genre from southern China which was popular with female audiences. In late imperial China, especially during the late Qing, women from gentry families participated in writing prosimetric *tanci* novels. These novels often incorporate motifs such as women dressing as men and "women as saviors of the world."[208] According to Wang Shize 王時澤, Qiu Jin's friend and colleague in Japan, *tanci* was not Qiu Jin's first choice as a literary genre for writing *Jingwei shi*.[209] Qiu Jin eventually chose *tanci* to reach out to a largely illiterate female audience. In her preface to *Jingwei shi*, Qiu Jin states, "Women suffer from ignorance and limited experience, and thus no matter how many books they may have in their possession, they have a hard time understanding what they mean. For this reason, I have composed this *tanci* in plain language, hoping that all women will comprehend its content."[210] In this case, *tanci* was meant to function as a medium of enlightenment.

Jingwei shi is a six-chapter unfinished work with the complete titles of 20 intended chapters. It tells a story of five female friends who escape from their repressive families to study abroad in Japan for the sake of liberating Chinese women and China.

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[208] For further discussions on *tanci* writing and early feminism in China, see Bao Zhenpei 鮑震培, "Guizhong wu jingnü---wanqing nüzuojia tanci yu zhenxing nüquan" 閨中無靜女---晚清女作家彈詞與振興女權, *Huadong shifan daxue xuebao*, (4)2004, 41-48.

[209] See Wang Shize 王時澤, "Huiyi Qiu Jin" 回憶秋瑾 [Commemorating Qiu Jin], in Guo Yanli, *Qiu Jin yanjiu ziliao,* 205-6.

[210] Qiu Jin, *Qiu Jin ji* 秋瑾集 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju shanghai bianji suo, 1965), 122. Translation is from Amy Dooling, Kristina Torgeson, ed., *Writing Women in Modern China: An Anthology of Women's Literature from the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 44. "（女子）見聞未廣，雖有各種書籍，苦文字不能索解者多。故餘也譜以彈詞，寫以俗語，欲使人人能解。"

Neither the literary genre nor the content of the story are new. The common *tanci* motifs of cross-dressing and female friendship appear in *Jingwei shi*. The call for gender equality, female independence, modern education for women, and the abandonment of foot binding had already been voiced in other essays and literary works including Liang Qichao's "Lun nüxue" 論女學 (On Education for Women; 1897), Jin Tianhe's 金天翮 "Nüjie zhong" 女界鐘 (Women's Bell; 1903), and Haishang duxiaozi's 海上獨嘯子 novel *Nüwa shi* 女媧石 (*The Stone of Goddess Nüwa*; 1905). The unique feature of *Jingwei shi* is the writing itself. Qiu Jin's semi-autobiographical mode of writing allowed her to weave herself into the fictional narrative in *Jingwei shi*. In other words, her martyrdom is foregrounded by her writings of martyrdom.

From the six finished chapters and the titles of the unwritten chapters, it is obvious that Qiu Jin was dedicated to both family revolution and racial revolution.[211] The title of the *tanci* work refers to the classic ancient Chinese myth "Jingwei tianhai" 精衛填海 (Jingwei Bird Fills the Sea). The myth tells of how Jingwei, the daughter of God Yandi, drowned in the eastern Sea. She was reincarnated as a bird, and was determined to fill up the sea with pebbles and branches. The myth connotes the meaning of tireless dedication to a hopeless cause. The unfinished status of *Jingwei shi* accidentally resembles the open-ended nature of the myth of Jingwei. The mythical bird Jingwei also

[211] The titles of the chapters in *Jingwei shi* include: chapter 3: Parents force a marriage; Deprived of rights, brother and sister fight (*shi yazhi hunyin you fumu, xue pingquan xiongmei qi qifei* 施壓制婚姻由父母，削平權兄妹起萋菲), translation is from Amy Dooling, Kristina Torgeson, ed., *Writing Women in Modern China: An Anthology of Women's Literature from the Early Twentieth Century*, 57; chapter 20: Clapping hands and singing songs of victory to celebrate the recovery; reforming corrupted policies and constructing republican China with one heart (*paishou kaige zhong gongxin guangfu, tongxin ge bizheng dajian gonghe* 拍手凱歌中共欣光復，同心革弊政大建共和).

appears in other writings by Qiu Jin, including her poems, essays and letters.[212] Qiu Jin used the Jingwei bird as a romantic symbol that encouraged her to dedicate herself to changing the world despite insurmountable obstacles. It is also possible that Qiu Jin was inspired by her reading of Haitian duxiaozi's novel *Nüwa shi* which also advocated female emancipation and adopted an ancient Chinese myth "Nüwa butian" 女媧補天 (the Goddess Nüwa mends the heaven) as the framework for its narrative.[213] The two myths are both about the power and tireless efforts of women. Qiu Jin internalized and romanticized the "heroine complex" in her readings and writings of female sacrifice which stimulated her chosen death. Therefore, Qiu Jin's self-image mirrors her readings and writings of heroic female characters.

In *Jingwei shi*, Qiu Jin advocated family revolution and encouraged women to leave the confines of the family home. In the story, Qiu Jin depicts five women who cross dress to go study abroad in Japan for the sake of saving the nation. She states in *Jingwei shi* that "Chinese women will throw off their shackles and stand up with passion; they will all become heroines. They will ascend the stage of the new world, where the heavens have mandated that they reconsolidate the nation."[214] Qiu Jin argues that women should dedicate themselves to the nation. In *Jingwei shi*, she constantly draws connections between gender equality, women's education and liberation, and nation building. The female protagonist Huang Jurui 黃鞠瑞 claims that "men and women should be equal,

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[212] For discussion of the mythical bird in Qiu Jin's writings, see Yan Haiping, *Chinese Women Writers and the Feminist Imagination, 1905-1948* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), 65-6.

[213] Xu Zihua and Qiu Jin once read Haitian duxiaozi's novel *Nüwa shi* together, and Xu Zihua joked about how Qiu Jin resembles one of the heroines Qiongxian in the novel. See Guo Yanli, *Qiu Jin yanjiu ziliao,* 64. *Also* see Tang Xiaobing*, Chinese Modern: The Heroic and the Quotidian* (Durham: Duke University Press), 20.

[214] Qiu Jin, *Qiu Jin ji*, 122. Translation is from Amy Dooling, Kristina Torgeson, ed., *Writing Women in Modern China,* 45.

which also means that they should take the same responsibilities to wake up the sleeping nation."[215] According to Xia Xiaohong's research, Qiu Jin wrote Huang Jurui as an incarnation of herself.[216] Thus, Qiu Jin's advocacy of women's liberation and gender equality is ultimately not merely for individual freedom, but still a way to construct new female citizens and the new nation. It seems that women's sacrifice and women's liberation are seen as meaningless without the attending discourse of nationalism in late Qing and early Republican China.

Conclusion: Forging a New Female Chastity: The Rise of Nationalism and Female Revolutionary Martyrdom

This chapter examines the transformation of Confucian female chaste martyrdom into female revolutionary martyrdom. The May Fourth Movement is undeniably an ideological turning point. Since our contemporary view is largely shaped by May Fourth discourse, we tend to automatically consider New Culture as the winning or dominant ideology in early Republican China. In his *Repressed Modernity of Late Qing Fiction*, David Der-wei Wang's argument against May Fourth ideological dominance in mainstream society emphasizes the continuity between the late Qing and early Republican China.[217] Following this logic, I have examined the continuities between the narratives of female chaste martyrdom and female revolutionary martyrdom, and have traced how changes occurred in the narratives.

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[215] Qiu Jin, *Qiu Jin ji*, 130.

[216] Xia Xiaohong, "Wan Qing nübao zhong de guozu lunshu yu nüxing yishi" 晚清女報中的國族論述與女性意識, *Beijing daxue xuebao*, vol.51, no.4 (2014), 119.

[217] See David Der-wei Wang, *Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction, 1849-1911* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

In order to trace the trajectory of the changing narratives of female martyrdom from late Qing to early Republican China, I have examined the politics of female chaste martyrdom in early Republican China, including the Beiyang government's efforts to restore Confucian values and Confucian female chaste martyrdom, the discussions on female chastity in *Xin qingnian*, and the contradictions in representing female martyrs in early Republican media. I take the case of Qiu Jin as an example to explain the process through which narratives of female martyrdom evolved. Based on my textual research, I argue that ultimately, the discussions on female chaste martyrdom in early Republican China are more about ideological transformation than about any individual's actual act of killing herself for a cause.

I use Qiu Jin's story to explain the process of establishing the discourse of female revolutionary martyrdom and explore how the dimension of nationalism was added to the construction of this revolutionary discourse. As Hu Ying pointed out, the case of Qiu Jin is deeply connected to the tradition of female chaste martyrdom. At the beginning, "Qiu Jin was still a close kin to the *lienü*, perhaps unconventional in her dedication to a cause, but conventionally feminine in her morality and frailty. Once exalted onto the altar of nationalism, the constraints of morality appeared even more stringent, and the nü of nülieshi devoid of any physical specificity or subversive potential, there for color and variety only."[218] I read the changing sites of Qiu Jin's tomb under different regimes metaphorically as the changing meanings of Qiu Jin's martyrdom. Qiu Jin was originally depicted as a modern day Dou E and a traditional virtuous woman in late Qing literature. It was not until the success of the Xinhai Revolution that Qiu Jin was transformed into a

[218] Hu Ying, "Gender and Modern Martyrology: Qiu Jin as Lienü or Nülieshi," in *Beyond Exemplar Tales: Women's Biography in Chinese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 135.

revolutionary martyr. The image of Qiu Jin as a revolutionary martyr was used to legitimize the newly established Republican government. From then on, Qiu Jin was considered a revolutionary martyr, but the meaning of her martyrdom kept changing, as seen in Lu Xun's "Medicine" and Xia Yan's "Biography of Qiu Jin." I devoted one section to analyzing Qiu Jin's unfinished semi-autobiographical *tanci* fiction *Stones of Jingwei* to look into Qiu Jin's own views on the relationship between women's liberation and national salvation.

After the establishment of female revolutionary martyrdom through the addition of nationalism as a new dimension, revolutionary ideology was challenged by the conflict between official discourse and grassroots resistance. In the next chapter, I will explore the consumption of female revolutionary martyrdom and how female bodies and physical suffering are presented in the deflation of the revolutionary discourse.

CHAPTER IV

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY DEFLATION OF FEMALE REVOLUTIONARY MARTYRDOM

After the state-sponsored establishment of the cult of female revolutionary martyrdom, individual artists constantly used flesh---female sexuality and material bodies---to complicate and ultimately explode the stone discourse. As I argued in the previous chapter, female revolutionary martyrdom can be considered a new form of female chaste martyrdom. This explains why chastity remains a constant point of anxiety in the narratives of female revolutionary martyrdom. Prasenjit Duara points out the importance of "the representation of woman---in body and spirit---as a very significant site upon which regimes and elites in China responsible for charting the destiny of the nation have sought to locate the unchanging essence and moral purity of that nation."[219]

In this chapter, I will show the thin line between an angel and a prostitute, a heroine and a victim in the narratives of female revolutionary martyrdom, and how the materiality of the female body demystifies the cult of female revolutionary martyrdom. In Ding Ling's "Wo zai Xiacun de shihou" 我在霞村的時候 (When I was in Xia Village; 1941), Eileen Chang's "Se, jie" 色戒 (Lust, Caution; 1978) and Ang Lee's film adaptation of Chang's story, rape and prostitution are important motifs which problematize the "purity" of revolutionary martyrdom. The two female protagonists Zhenzhen and Wang Jiazhi in the respective stories are still seen as polluted objects even

[219] Prasenjit Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China," *History and Theory* 37, no. 3 (1998), 296.

though they sacrifice themselves for the nation. Despite the modern setting, this situation recalls the Ming law that stipulated that "if raped, a female victim could not be canonized as a chaste martyr even if she had resisted."[220] Chastity/purity remains a central concern in the state-sanctioned narratives of revolutionary martyr Liu Hulan, but as I will examine here, by presenting the materiality of the female revolutionary body, contemporary artists show their resistance to the stone discourse.

The Materiality of Female Martyrdom in *Lust, Caution* 色戒

The Rewriting of the Revolution Plus Romance Formula

From 1911 onward, Chinese society changed drastically. As I discussed in the last chapter, nationalism was incorporated in constructing and advocating revolutionary martyrdom. Lee Haiyan argues, "Nationalism insisted on a higher, or heroic, mode of activity---national liberation, resistance, revolution---that transcended and subordinated the everyday, and articulated the tension between the heroic and the everyday as the conflict between patriotic love and romantic love."[221]

The expression "Revolution plus romance," a major theme of Chinese literature in the 1920s and 1930s, best represents the tension between nationalism and individual pursuits or desires, the great self (*dawo* 大我) and the small self (*xiaowo* 小我), sublimation and the mundane. The theme raises some important questions regarding the relationship between individualism and nationalism, and whether the gap between personal love and collective revolution could be bridged. It has a significant impact on

[220] See Matthew Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 69-84.

[221] Lee Haiyan, *Revolution of the Heart: A Genealogy of Love in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 10.

our understanding of both modern Chinese literature and Chinese history from the May Fourth era onward. Variations of this theme have been carried on into modern and contemporary Chinese literature.

Chinese literati and scholars are interested in this topic because the theme is closely related to the formation of modern Chinese subjectivity and emotions. After China was forced to open itself to the world following the Opium War, Chinese literati attempted to define an essential Chineseness or Chinese subjectivity. They had to determine whether they defined themselves by expressing private emotions and individual interests, or through sharing common interests as citizens in what Benedict Anderson has called an imagined community. The quest to determine the essential nature of the modern Chinese citizen accompanied the constant revolutions and political movements that arose throughout the twentieth century.

In *Revolution Plus Love: Literary History, Women's Bodies, and Thematic Repetition in Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction*, Liu Jianmei explores the theme "revolution plus love" and its variations from the 1930s to the contemporary period. As the book title indicates, Liu chooses a unique gendered perspective to examine the tension between revolution and love. She identifies three different voices in the writings of "revolution plus love" during the revolutionary era. The so-called neo-sensualist writers such as Shi Zhecun 施蟄存 (1905-2003), Liu Na'ou 劉吶歐 (1905-1940), and Mu Shiying 穆時英 (1912-1940) used the "revolution plus love" formula as a device to explore Chinese modernity. The second and most enthusiastic voice was that of male leftist writers, such as Jiang Guangci 蔣光慈 (1901-1931), Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981), Hong Lingfei 洪靈菲 (1902-1934) and Hua Han 華漢 (1902-1993); and the third is that

of female writers, such as Ding Ling 丁玲 (1904-1986), Lu Yin 廬隱 (1898-1934), and Bai Wei 白薇 (1894-1987). For Jiang Guangci, one of the pioneers of this literary theme, the female body is merely a device used to deliver revolutionary messages. In his writings, the New Women sacrifice themselves without any struggles or feelings of pain. They adhere to the cultural cliché that love stories should serve only as a selling point for revolutionary ideas in the "revolution plus love" formula.[222] According to Mao Dun, romance and revolution work together harmoniously through three phases in the formulaic "revolution plus romance" literature: at the first stage, the conflict between revolution and romance is solved by the revolutionaries' absolute sacrifice of romance to revolution, and revolution seizes the dominant place while serving as the motivation for romance; in the second stage, the relationship between revolution and romance becomes reciprocal, as romantic love derives from the mutual revolutionary goals between the revolutionaries and revolution reinforces their romantic feelings; at the third stage, the conflict between revolution and romance is completely dissolved, revolution is equal to love, and love is revolution.[223]

In contrast to male leftist writers' conventional approach and relative lack of concern for the New Women's inner struggles, female writers' literary adaptions of the "revolution plus love" formula reveal problems in the relationship between revolution and love from a gendered perspective. Exemplary works include Eileen Chang's "Se, jie" 色戒 (Lust, Caution; 1978) and Ding Ling's "Wo zai Xiacun de shihou" 我在霞村的時

[222] Liu Jianmei, *Revolution Plus Love: Literary History, Women's Bodies, and Thematic Repetition in Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 75-80.

[223] See Mao Dun, "Geming yu lian'ai de gongshi" 革命與戀愛的公式 [The Formula of Revolution plus Romance], in *Mao Dun quanji* 茅盾全集, vol.20 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1990), 337-53.

候 (When I was in Xia Village; 1941); both texts shed light on the challenges women faced in the revolutionary era. Specifically, in their respective works, Eileen Chang and Ding Ling problematize the supposedly harmonious relationship between revolution and romance through depictions of suffering female bodies.

Ding Ling's "When I was in Xia Village" tells the story of a Chinese village girl named Zhenzhen 貞貞 who is raped by Japanese soldiers during the Sino-Japanese war and becomes a spy for the Communist Party. In order to collect intelligence, she serves as a prostitute in the Japanese army and endures tremendous physical and mental torments. Zhenzhen, whose name ironically means "chastity," suffers from venereal disease. The villagers, with the exception of Zhenzhen's first love Xia Dabao, stigmatize her and intentionally distance themselves. Despite Zhenzhen's troubling past, Xia Dabao still cherishes her. However, Zhenzhen has no intention of maintaining a romantic relationship with Xia partly because she feels ashamed and claims that she is not clean (*bu ganjing* 不乾淨). Rather than pursuing romance, she chooses to devote herself to revolution, a higher cause. She believes and expects that the Chinese Communist Party can help cure her disease. The story ends on a rather formulaic and empty note, with the platitude "I (the narrator) seem to see a bright future in front of Zhenzhen."[224] Will Zhenzhen be cured physically and mentally? Will the CCP accept her "disgraceful" past? Ding Ling received ferocious criticism from fellow Yan'an leftist writers because of her ambiguous attitude towards revolution as shown in her writing.

[224] Ding Ling, "When I was in Xia Village," in Tani Barlow ed., *I Myself Am a Woman: Selected Writings of Ding Ling* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), 315. Also see Ding Ling, "Wo zai Xiacun de shihou," in *Wo zai Xiacun de shihou* (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1950), 13-41.

Although overall, Ding Ling deflates the grand revolutionary narrative through her story, the revolutionary spirit holds transcendent power over Zhenzhen throughout the narrative. Within the logic of romance plus revolution, the passion for individual love, or sexual desire, eventually needs to be disciplined in the name of revolution. Individual desires need to be sacrificed for the sake of sublimated personal ideals as well as the promised future for the nation. Eileen Chang's "Lust, Caution" and Ang Lee's filmic adaptation of it also tell a story of a female spy and concentrate on female bodily suffering, romance, and revolutionary ideals. They are even more subversive than Ding Ling's "When I was in Xia Village" and reveal the absurdity of both revolutionary ideals and the ideal of love. In the following section, I will present a close reading of Eileen Chang's original English version of "Lust, Caution"---"The Spyring," the Chinese version, and Ang Lee's film adaptation to show how the story, in its many forms, effectively deflates the mystique of female martyrdom.

The Performativity of Being a Revolutionary Martyr

Although Eileen Chang's "Lust, Caution" is not considered a typical "revolution plus romance" writing, it is an ideal text to reveal the tension between revolution and romance, public self and private self, sublimation and the mundane. Of all the pieces of fiction written by Eileen Chang, the short story "Lust, Caution" is among the least popular because of its controversial themes and puzzling content. Even so, the story inspired the director Ang Lee to adapt it into the sensational movie *Lust, Caution* in 2007.[225] The story is set in China during the second Sino-Japanese War. The heroine

[225] *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Universal City: Universal, 2008), DVD.

Wang Jiazhi 王佳芝, a former college student and actress in the University theater troupe, seduces a pro-Japanese collaborator Mr. Yi 易先生 in order to assassinate him, but ends up falling in love with him. By warning him of the imminent assassination planned for him, Wang Jiazhi essentially sacrifices herself to help Mr. Yi escape from danger. Although Wang Jiazhi saves him, Mr. Yi still has her and her colleagues all executed.

Eileen Chang was a popular writer in China in the 1940s, especially among Shanghai and Hong Kong readers. She mostly devoted herself to writing about trivial aspects of everyday life, and was therefore fiercely criticized by her literary contemporaries for showing insufficient interest in national salvation. Thus "Lust, Caution" is something of an anomaly within Chang's oeuvre, as it incorporates most of the mainstream themes of revolutionary literature such as the tension between nation and individual, love and betrayal, and political upheavals. The ambiguity of the story partly resides in Chang's complicated attitude towards revolution. It is also worth noting that although Eileen Chang finished the story in the 1950s, it took her until 1978, over two decades, to revise it and get it published in *China Times* (*Zhongguo shibao* 中國時報).[226] It is rare for a writer to spend that much time on a short story like "Lust, Caution." To some extent, the time-consuming writing process is an indication of the complexity of the story.

The complexity of "Lust, Caution" is demonstrated in both the short story and in Ang Lee's film. There has been speculation that "Lust, Caution" is based on Chang's own problematic romantic relationship with a pro-Japanese collaborator Hu Lancheng 胡

[226] See Yan Jihua 嚴紀華, *Cenci duizhao Zhang Ailing* 參差對照張愛玲 (Taipei: Showwe Information, 2007), 100.

蘭成 (1906-1981) and a real historical event involving a KMT secret agent. Hu Lancheng is likely one of the prototypes for the male protagonist Mr. Yi in the story. Since Hu served in the Propaganda Ministry of the Wang Jingwei 汪精衛 (1883-1944) puppet regime, he was very likely the one who told Chang the inside story of how, during the Japanese occupation of Shanghai, a young and beautiful KMT secret agent named Zheng Pingru 鄭蘋如 (1918-1940) attempted to seduce and assassinate Ding Mocun 丁默村 (1901-1947), a prominent intelligence official who served in the Wang Jingwei puppet regime. Zheng Pingru was determined to sacrifice herself for her revolutionary ideals. She was executed after failing her mission and was recognized as a national martyr.[227] Eileen Chang and Ang Lee added a subversive twist in their adaptions of Zheng Pingru's story by transforming the martyr into a traitor, and this change complicates the grand historical narrative.[228] Ang Lee added a biographical reading to Chang's story by adding a subplot about the relationship between Wang Jiazhi and her father in his movie, which corresponds to Chang's own troubled family relationships.[229] In addition, rather than depicting Mr. Yi as a mysterious character with only a surname, Lee deliberately made up the name Yi Mocheng 易默成 in order to draw a clear parallel between the narrative and the real situation that inspired it. In his analysis of the movie, Ding Shaoyan points out that "Yi Mocheng, (is) a combination of the names of the two pro-Japanese figures:

[227] For details of Zheng Pingru's story and its relationship with Eileen Chang's story, see Lee Haiyan, "Enemy under My Skin: Eileen Chang's *Lust, Caution* and the Politics of Transcendence," *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 125.3 (2010), 650.

[228] After the debut of Ang Lee's film, Zheng Pingru's sister Zheng Jingzhi criticized the film for its disturbing depictions of the revolutionary martyr as a seductress. See http://www.china.org.cn/english/entertainment/224552.htm (accessed on December 24, 2017).

[229] For detailed depictions of Eileen Chang's relationship with her family members, especially her father, see Shao Yingjian 邵迎建, *Zhang Ailing de chuanqi wenxue yu liuyan rensheng* 張愛玲的傳奇文學與流言人生 (Taipei: Showwe Information, 2012), 49-79.

Ding Mocun and Hu Lancheng."[230] Therefore, within the filmic adaptation of "Lust, Caution," Chang's personal experiences, the historical event, and the fictional interpretation are intricately intertwined.

The complexity of the story can be summed up in one question: why does Wang Jiazhi choose to let Mr. Yi go? This question reveals the tension between the nation and the individual, as Wang Jiazhi faces the choice between sacrificing herself for the revolution or for her lover and chooses the latter. In one of her essays, Eileen Chang confessed that "I am fond of making up names for people (*wo xihuan tiren qu mingzi* 我喜歡替人取名字)."[231] It is reasonable to argue that she may have intentionally named the heroine of "Lust, Caution" Jiazhi, a homophone of the word "value" (*jiazhi* 價值) in Chinese. The value systems that Chang attempts to explore in the story are both material and spiritual in nature, and are related to both revolution and romance. The central question probes Wang Jiazhi's motivations: is she lured by the revolutionary ideal, the idea of love, or the luxury diamond ring that Mr. Yi buys for her?

Unlike Zheng Pingru, the prototype for the Eileen Chang's female protagonist, Wang Jiazhi does not volunteer herself as a revolutionary martyr. She is put under the spotlight by a university drama troupe leader, a passionate and patriotic student named Kuang Yumin 鄺裕民. Eileen Chang depicts Wang Jiazhi as an experienced collegiate actress. When studying at a university in Guangzhou, Wang Jiazhi plays leading roles in several patriotic plays. She meets Kuang Yumin after her university relocates to Hong

[230] Ding Shaoyan, "Beyond Language: The Postmodern Poetics of Ang Lee's Adaptation of Lust/Caution," *Critical Arts*, vol.25, no.1(2011), 96-97.

[231] Zhang Ailing, *Zhang Ailing sanwen quanbian* 張愛玲散文全編 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang xinhua shudian, 1992), 42.

Kong to avoid the Japanese occupation of Guangzhou. Wang Jiazhi enjoys and even obsesses with performing. After a very successful public performance, she is described as:

> Overexcited, unable to wind down after the curtain had fallen, she had gone out for a bite to eat with the rest of the cast. But even after almost everyone else had dispersed, she still hadn't wanted to go home. Instead, she and two female classmates had ridden through the city on the deserted upper deck of a tram as it swayed and trundled down the middle of the Hong Kong streets, the neon advertisements glowing in the darkness outside the windows.[232]

It is neither the role nor the content of the play she performs that excites her; Wang Jiazhi just wants to hang on to the delusional feelings the play constructs and bring the imaginative reality into her real life. She indulges herself in the glowing neon lights which, like stage lights, blur the boundary between performance and reality. As Lee Haiyan notes, "[Wang Jiazhi's] membership in the student drama club and her subsequent role in the assassination plot are motivated primarily by a romantic disposition and a taste for the intoxication of the stage."[233]

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[232] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒 (Shijiazhuang: Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 1994), 273. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story* (London: Penguin, 2007), 13-4. "下了台她興奮得鬆弛不下來，大家吃了宵夜才散，她還不肯回去，與兩個女同學乘雙層電車游車河。樓上乘客稀少，車身搖搖晃晃在寬闊的街心走，窗外黑暗中霓虹燈的廣告，像酒後的涼風一樣醉人。"

[233] Lee Haiyan, "Enemy under My Skin: Eileen Chang's *Lust, Caution* and the Politics of Trancendence," *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 125.3 (2010), 644.

A similar scene reappears in the story after Wang Jiazhi successfully plays the role of Mrs. Mai, gains the trust of Mrs. Yi and makes her first move to seduce Mr. Yi:

> That evening a light drizzle had been falling. Huang Lei drove her back home and they went back into the house together, where everybody was nervously waiting for news of the evening's triumph. Resplendent in the high-society costume in which she had performed so supremely, she wanted everyone to stay on to celebrate with her, to carouse with her until morning.[234]

The rainy night and celebratory drinks create an intoxicating, dreamy atmosphere. Wang Jiazhi wishes that the night could last forever. Rather than considering the assassination to be a dangerous task undertaken for the sake of revolution, Wang thinks of it as a stage show. As Eileen Chang puts, "She [Wang Jiazhi] had, in a past life, been an actress; and here she was, still playing a part, but in a drama too secret to make her famous."[235] Wang has the tendency to romanticize revolution and martyrdom, which raises questions about her motivations in sacrificing herself for the revolutionary cause.

In his provocative interpretation of Eileen Chang's short story, Ang Lee fleshes out the characterization of Wang Jiazhi and her motivations by adding some personal details about her in his film. In the film, Wang Jiazhi is depicted as a movie fanatic. The

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[234] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 274. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 16. "那天晚上微雨，黃磊開車接她回來，一同上樓，大家都在等信。一次空前成功的演出，下了台還沒下裝，自己都覺得顧盼間光豔照人。她捨不得他們走，恨不得再到哪裡去。"

[235] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 273. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 13. "她倒是演過戲，現在也還是在臺上賣命，不過沒人知道，出不了名。"

movies she watches include *Intermezzo* (1939), which features Ingrid Bergman, and *Penny Serenade* (1941) starring Cary Grant. One scene shows the romantic story in *Intermezzo* moving Wang Jiazhi to tears. Later, Wang moves from Hong Kong to Shanghai, where she becomes financially dependent on her aunt. Despite living in poverty, she still puts aside some money to watch movies, particularly romances. Although she performs in political plays, Wang Jiazhi's personal taste for so-called bourgeois romance remains unchanged. Her tendency to romanticize theatrical performance and her obsession with romantic movies complicate her motivations for devoting herself to the revolution. One of the scriptwriters of the movie, James Schamus, states that the central question in the story is: "Why did she do it?"[236] This question can be extended to "why did she choose to accept the assassination mission?" and my central question, "why did she abandon the mission and let her target go?"

Eileen Chang's story suggests that Wang Jiazhi has romantic feelings for Kuang Yumin, and Ang Lee further elaborates upon their romantic relationship as a subplot in his film. In a typical "revolution plus romance" writing, passion for romantic love is often suppressed or channeled into a collective passion for revolution. For example, in Yang Mo's 楊沫 (1914-1996) *Qingchun zhi ge* 青春之歌 (*The Song of Youth*; 1958), the female protagonist Lin Daojing 林道靜 channels her romantic love for Lu Jiachuan 盧嘉川 into her passion for revolution, thereby transforming herself from a petite bourgeois woman into an adamant revolutionary.[237] In Ang Lee's film, the initial motivation for Wang Jiazhi to join the revolution and accept the assassination mission is her admiration

[236] See James Schamus, "Why did She do it?" in *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay, and the Making of the Film* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2007), 63-8.

[237] See Yang Mo, *Qingchun zhi ge* 青春之歌 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2005).

for Kuang Yumin. Ang Lee depicts Kuang as a patriotic college student who organizes the university troupe to perform revolutionary plays. His passion for revolution has deep roots. In addition to his anxiety about the future of China, he has personal reasons to throw himself into the revolutionary drama, as his brother died fighting against the Japanese. Afraid of losing another child, Kuang's parents forbade him from joining the army, so he initially chooses to express his patriotism through the theatrical arts. In the patriotic play he performs, Kuang Yumin plays a soldier in the New Fourth Army who is injured and saved by a village girl acted by Wang Jiazhi. The play achieves tremendous success. It partially fulfills Kuang's dream of participating in the revolution, but ultimately he is not satisfied with just acting out his passions on stage and he attempts to transplant the play into reality. Kuang organizes a radical student group composed of actors and actresses in the university troupe. Most of the students, including Wang Jiazhi, join the group without a clear sense of what to expect; they are just dazzled by Kuang's charisma and contagious passion. Revolution for Kuang Yumin and his fellows is merely performative. It is especially problematic for Wang Jiazhi since she cannot differentiate between romantic love and love for the nation.

The group of students decides to put on a show in the real world. They come up with a "beauty stratagem" to assassinate Mr. Yi. The plan requires Wang Jiazhi to perform as the beauty and seduce Mr. Yi. As an amateur revolutionary, Wang Jiazhi is not fully aware of the danger of the task; she thinks of it as a real-time performance and puts her faith in her director, Kuang Yumin. As with any other show, the actors first rehearse. In order to prepare the virginal Wang Jiazhi for the "beauty stratagem," Wang's fellow group members reach a consensus that Liang Runsheng 梁潤生, a member who

has experience with prostitutes, should be Wang's sexual mentor. Wang accepts Liang Runsheng since she is still indulging herself in the glowing moment of her successful performance at Yi's house. She considers her relationship with Liang to be part of the show:

> Given that she had already determined to make a sacrifice of herself, she couldn't very well resent him for being the only candidate for the job. And that evening, while she basked in the heady afterglow of her success, even Liang Runsheng didn't seem quite as repellent as usual. One by one, the others saw the way the thing would go; one by one they slipped away, until two of them were left alone. And so that show went on.[238]

After sacrificing her virginity to Liang Ruisheng, Wang Jiazhi's admiration for Kuang Yumin starts to fade away: "For a time, she had thought she might be falling for Kuang Yumin, but she ended up hating him---for turning out just like the others."[239] Although it is later confirmed in the film that the romantic feeling between Wang Jiazhi and Kuang Yumin is mutual, one cannot deny that Kuang uses Wang as a tool to achieve his revolutionary dreams. When Kuang finally reveals his feelings for Wang Jiazhi and kisses her, Wang Jiazhi responds, "It's too late." After being treated like a sexual object in Kuang's show, Wang Jiazhi's sense of self and her identity are plunged into crisis. In

[238] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 274. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 16-7. "既然有犧牲的决心，就不能說不甘心便宜了他。今天晚上，浴在舞臺照明的餘輝裡，連梁潤生都不十分討厭了。大家仿佛看出來，一個個都溜了，就剩下梁潤生。於是戲繼續演下去。"

[239] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 282. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 28. "有一陣子她以為她可能會喜歡鄺裕民，結果後來恨他，恨他跟那些別人一樣。"

his film, Ang Lee adds a plot about Wang Jiazhi's relationship with her father, another significant man in her life. Wang Jiazhi keeps writing to her father in hope of reuniting with him in the UK, but her father remarries and makes all kinds of excuses to distance himself from her. Since Wang Jiazhi is abandoned by one man and manipulated by another, she desperately holds onto the belief that her sacrifice is for a transcendent cause. However, Mr. Yi and his family suddenly decide to move back to Shanghai, rendering Wang Jiazhi's assassination plan impossible. The absurdity of Wang's sacrifice and the idea of sacrifice for the revolution emerges at this point in the narrative. Wang Jiazhi's situation turns out to be just like that of Zhenzhen in Ding Ling's story. Her friends start to distance themselves from her. Lee Haiyan points out that, "undercover activism turns on a sexist logic of instrumentalism: once the goal is lost, the (feminine) instrument is deemed not only useless but also worthless for having been defiled."[240] Even Wang Jiazhi begins to consider herself an unclean object, and "for a long time, she agonized over whether she had caught something from Liang Runsheng."[241] In order to purify herself, she chooses to accept the assassination task again when Kuang Yumin reconnects with her in Shanghai two years later. At that point, for Wang Jiazhi, participating in revolution is no longer about Kuang Yumin or putting on a show, it is a form of catharsis. This partly explains her masochistic relationship with Mr. Yi, as "in truth, every time she was with Yi she felt cleansed, as if by a scalding hot bath; for now everything she did was for

[240] Lee Haiyan, "Enemy under My Skin," 651.

[241] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 275. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 18. "有很久她都不確定有沒有染上什麼髒病。"

the cause."[242] The motif of purification reappears throughout the story, and Wang's bodily suffering becomes a form of purification that allows her to achieve transcendence. The grand narrative of revolution has been transformed into an exercise in self-redemption. The core question then shifts to whether Wang Jiazhi's sacrifice for love is meaningful.

The Materiality and Animality of Love

Spiritual transcendence requires the overcoming of materiality, including the materiality of the body. Eileen Chang's short story is fraught with excessive depictions of material things. At the beginning of the story, Chang depicts the details of clothing and house decorations at great length. The story starts with Wang Jiazhi playing mahjong with Mrs. Yi and her female friends at the Yi family house. Wang's "sleeveless cheongsam of electric blue moire satin reached to the knees, its shallow, rounded collar standing only half an inch tall, in the Western style. A brooch fixed to the collar matched her diamond-studded sapphire button earrings."[243] Two ladies sitting next to Wang Jiazhi "were both wearing black wool capes, each held fast at the neck by a heavy double gold chain that snaked out from beneath the cloak's turned-down collar."[244] The extravagance is repeated in the room decorations: "yellowish-brown wool curtains printed with a brick-

[242] Ibid. "事實是，每次跟老易在一起都像洗了個熱水澡，把積鬱都沖掉了，因為一切都有了個目的。"

[243] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 266. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 3. "(佳芝) 光著手臂，電藍水漬紋緞齊膝旗袍，小圓角衣領只半寸高，像洋服一樣。領口一隻別針，與碎鑽鑲藍寶石的紐扣耳環成套。"

[244] Ibid. "左右首兩個太太穿著黑呢斗篷，翻領下露出一根沉重的金鏈條。"

red phoenix-tail fern design, each blade almost six feet long. Zhou Fohai, Wang Jingwei's second in-command, had a pair; and so, therefore, did they. False French windows, and enormous drapes to cover them, were all the rage just then."[245] Luxury goods, especially diamonds, are central topics for the ladies during the mahjong game. Considering the shortage of material goods during wartime, their lifestyle is outrageous. In the title of the story, "lust" is an allusion to desire for materiality, including both goods and sex. The entire title *Lust*⎪*Caution* alludes to the Mirror of Lust (*fengyue baojian* 風月寶鑒) in *Honglou meng*.[246] The mirror has two sides; on one side is an attractive beauty, and on the other side is a scary skeleton. This double-sided mirror is a perfect illustration of how lust and caution represent two approaches to viewing the same situation. The title of the story also refers to the warning against excessive desire in Buddhism; "*jie*" 戒 is the Buddhist term used for the principle of abstaining from sensual indulgence. In addition, "*jie*" 戒 (caution) is a homophone of the word for "ring," perhaps a reference to the diamond ring (*jiezhi* 戒指) that functions as a central motif in the story.

Eileen Chang initially wrote an English version of the story, entitled "The Spyring, or *Ch'ing Ke, Ch'ing Ke.*" This story draft was first discovered and published in *Muse*, a

[245] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 268. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 6. "房間那頭一面牆上都掛著土黃厚呢窗簾，上面印有特大的磚紅鳳尾草圖案，一根根橫斜著也有一人高。周佛海家裡有，所以他們也有。西方最近興出來的假落地大窗的窗簾，在戰時上海因為舶來品窗簾料子缺貨，這樣整大匹用上去，又還要對花，確是豪舉。"

[246] In the process of writing the story, Eileen Chang discussed the storyline and title of "Lust, Caution" in comparison to *Honglou meng* with Song Qi 宋淇 (1919-1996), a renowned Redologist, through numerous letters. See Hu Xin 胡辛, *Zhang Ailing zhuan* 張愛玲傳 (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 1996), 365. Eileen Chang wrote a book on *Hong lou meng* when she was in the United States in the 1960s and 70s, see Zhang Ailing, *Honglou mengyan* 紅樓夢魘 (Beijing: Beijing shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 2007).

Hong Kong magazine, in 2008.[247] In the title, "Ring" here refers to both the circle of spies and the diamond ring. "*Ch'ing Ke, Ch'ing Ke*" 請客 (to act as host and treat others) refers to eating out---another aspect of the materiality of everyday life. Eating or being eaten indicates the power relationship between the food and the consumer(s). Acting as host, or being treated, also illustrates the power dynamics implicit in the two roles. In "Lust, Caution," the Chinese version of the story, Eileen Chang kept the main storyline of "The Spyring," but made a substantial change to the female protagonist's identity. In "The Spyring," Li Shalu, the prototype for Wang Jiazhi, is a sophisticated spy. Unlike Wang Jiazhi, Li does not have an identity crisis. Li believes that Mr. Tai, the prototype for Mr. Yi, truly loves her because he buys her a luxury diamond ring. She is greatly moved and decides to help Mr. Tai escape an ambush. The two versions of the story both address the important role of materiality in each female protagonist's choice between revolution and romance. Although they choose romance over assassination, the absurdity of the romance backfires and causes their deaths.

Another aspect of materiality is the representation of material bodies in Ang Lee's movie. Lee highlights suffering bodies by adding some details to Chang's story. One scene focuses on the brutal murder of Lao Cao and the explicit presentation of his bodily suffering. In order to eventually assassinate Mr. Yi, the inexperienced students are eager to find a target on whom to practice their skills. Lao Cao is Kuang Yumin's fellow villager and Mr. Yi's deputy who introduces Wang Jiazhi and Kuang to Mr. and Mrs. Yi.

[247] At the beginning of the PDF version of "The Spyring, or *Ch'ing Ke, Ch'ing Ke*" that is available online, it says the story "was published with permission of Roland Soong in the 14th issue of *Muse* in March 2008." For the source of the English version of Eileen Chang's "Lust, caution," see Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution* and Its Reception," *Boundary 2*, no.3 (2008), 232n. "The English version was first titled *Ch'ing Ke, Ch'ing Ke* (literally, "Treat, Treat"), with a hand written title "Spyring" inscribed below it in the original typed version, which was made available on the Web by the son of Stephen Soong, who was Chang's close friend in Hong Kong and entrusted executor of her works."

Lao Cao becomes suspicious about the students shortly after talking with them. After the Yi family leaves Hong Kong for Shanghai, Lao Cao threatens to report them to Mr. Yi. In order to keep their revolutionary mission a secret, Kuang and his fellows brutally murder Lao Cao. The horrifying scene is presented with disturbing vividness in the film. At the beginning, Kuang Yumin hesitantly stabs a knife into Lao Cao's belly. He is terrified by his own violent act, but he immediately convinces himself and his fellows that since Lao Cao works for Mr. Yi and can be considered a traitor, the murder is for a good cause. The students therefore muster the courage to stab Lao Cao repeatedly. Kuang makes the final move to strangle him to death. Lao Cao's suffering body is objectified as a tool for the students to practice and verify their revolutionary belief. It is worth noting that Wang Jiazhi is the only one who acts as a spectator and does not actively participate in the murder of Lao Cao. Her indifference to their revolutionary enthusiasm indicates her disappointment in both her fellow comrades and their revolutionary ideals. It also foreshadows her inability to follow through with her own assassination mission.

To avoid the feeling of emptiness that derives from the meaningless sacrifice of her virginity, Wang Jiazhi agrees to continue to pursue her assassination mission in Shanghai. She devotes herself to the task and becomes Mr. Yi's secret lover. Her relationship with Mr. Yi is extremely corporeal. The sex scenes in Lee's film are explicit and sadomasochistic, and they generated fierce controversy in the film's reception. In the film, neither sex nor mahjong games are about enjoyment, but about power struggles. Although objectified by Mr. Yi in their sexual relationship most of the time, Wang Jiazhi does not give up her agency entirely. One sex scene shows how Wang Jiazhi covers Mr. Yi's face with a pillow and glances at a gun that hangs on the wall. She has a rare

opportunity to assassinate Mr. Yi, but after her moment of hesitation, Mr. Yi takes back control.

In addition to the explicit sex scenes, Wang Jiazhi and Mr. Yi's relationship is also presented allegorically through the references to animals in the film. The film starts with a disturbing close-up shot of a German shepherd guard dog in front of the terrifying place where Mr. Yi interrogates prisoners. This ferocious looking creature appears again after a violent sex scene. The guard dog alludes to a warning, which can be interpreted as *jie* 戒 in Chinese. Another breed of dog, a Great Pyrenees, appears as a pet in Mr. Yi's house. In contrast to the German shepherd guard dog, the Great Pyrenees is sweet, gentle, and usually greets the masters in an obsequious manner. Dogs in the film can also be read metaphorically, since a traitor like Mr. Yi is often called a "running dog" (*zougou* 走狗) in Chinese. One scene depicts Wang Jiazhi and Mr. Yi drinking in a Japanese bar, where Mr. Yi claims that Japanese soldiers in China are "homeless dogs" (*sangjia zhi quan* 喪家之犬). Meanwhile, both Wang and the audience know that Mr. Yi is a running dog for the Japanese. Another prominent animal metaphor appears in both the story and the film. Mr. Yi describes his relationship with Wang Jiazhi as the relationship between a hunter and his prey, a tiger and its *chang* 倀. "Chang" is a person who turns into a ghost after being eaten by a tiger. According to folk tales, "chang" work for tigers as their running dogs. They seduce people into becoming food for their masters. Mr. Yi claims absolute possession of Wang Jiazhi:

> He could feel her shadow forever near him, comforting him. Even though she had hated him at the end, she had at least felt something. And now he

possessed her utterly, primitively---as a hunter does his quarry, a tiger his kill. Alive, her body belonged to him; dead, she was his ghost.[248]

Notably, "chang" 倀 and "whore" (*chang* 娼) are homophones in Chinese. In the Japanese bar, Wang Jiazhi volunteers to sing "The Wandering Singing Girl." Mr. Yi is moved to tears while she is singing, but he tells her that the song is meant to be sung by a prostitute. Wang Jiazhi replies, "I am your whore." Mr. Yi responds, "I know how to be a whore better than you." Although Mr. Yi seems to have full control over Wang Jiazhi, to some extent, they are in similar situations. No matter which government, organization or ideology they support, they cannot escape the fate of being used by others as a tool. The boundary between a traitor and a patriot is blurred.

Materiality, bestiality, and objectification are presented as barriers on the way to transcendence. Mr. Yi has no intention to reach transcendence, he only wants to vent his frustrations and find solace in Wang Jiazhi. In order to distract herself after her first empty sacrifice, Wang Jiazhi determines to find meaning in her life. As redemption, she wants to confirm Mr. Yi's love for her. However, parallel to her ambiguous attitude towards revolutionary ideals, the idea of love is not clear to her: "Surely she hadn't fallen in love with Yi? Despite her fierce skepticism towards the idea, she found herself unable to refute the notion entirely; since she had never been in love, she had no idea what it

[248] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 287. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 35. "他覺得她的影子會永遠依傍他，安慰他。雖然她恨他，她最後對他的感情強烈到是什麼感情都不想幹了，只是有感情。他們是原始的獵人與獵物的關係，虎與倀的關係，最終極的佔有。她這才生是他的人，死是他的鬼。"

might feel like."[249] The moment she confirms Mr. Yi's love for her is very similar to a moment of enlightenment.[250] When they are at the jewelry shop picking up the diamond ring that Mr. Yi has chosen for Wang Jiazhi as a gift, she notices "his downcast eyelashes tinged the dull cream of moths' wings as they rested on his gaunt cheeks. He really loves me, she thought. Inside, she felt a raw tremor of shock---then a vague sense of loss."[251] This moment of intimacy enlightens her and she determines to martyr herself for love. She informs Mr. Yi of the imminent assassination attempt. Even so, after escaping with Wang's help, Mr. Yi orders her immediate execution along with her fellow comrades. The absurdity of her sacrifice for love quickly emerges.

"Lust, Caution" subverts the "revolution plus romance" writing conventions. It reveals that the act of sacrificing oneself, whether for revolution or for romance, is patently delusional. The story blurs the boundary between traitors and patriots, performance and reality. The moment of martyrdom and enlightenment is like the fleeting gleam of the diamond ring: "it must all be a dream…she registered a twinge of regret that it (the diamond ring) was to be no more than a prop in the short, penultimate scene of the drama unfolding around it."[252]

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[249] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 282. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 28. "那，難道她有點愛上了老易？她不信，但是也無法斬釘截鐵的說不是，因為沒戀愛過，不知道怎麼樣就算是愛上了。"

[250] Leo Ou-fan Lee relates this moment of enlightenment to James Joyce's concept of epiphany. "*Se*｜*Jie*: cong xiaoshuo dao dianying" 《色｜戒》：從小說到電影 [Lust/Caution: from the Story to the Film], *Shucheng*, vol.12 (2007), 58.

[251] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 283. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 30. "他的側影迎著檯燈，目光下視，睫毛像米色的蛾翅，歇落在瘦瘦的面頰上，在她看來是一種溫柔憐惜的神氣。"

[252] Zhang Ailing, *Se, jie* 色·戒, 281. Translated by Julia Lovell, *Lust, Caution: The Story*, 26. "是天方夜譚裡的市場…(那粉紅鑽戒)可惜不過是舞臺上的小道具，而且只用這麼一會工夫，使人感到惆悵。"

Problems with Wang Jiazhi's Martyrdom

In "The Use Value of D. A. F. de Sade," Georges Bataille states that revolution has two phases: "the first phase of a revolution is separation, in other words, a process leading to the position of two groups of forces, each one characterized by the necessity of excluding the other. The second phase is the violent expulsion of the group that has possessed power by the revolutionary group."[253] He therefore relates the *jouissance* of revolution to the pleasure of excretion and the enjoyment of loss. Participating in revolution requires the awareness of clear boundaries and ruthless exclusion. But in both Eileen Chang and Ang Lee's versions of "Lust, Caution" boundaries are blurred. Wang Jiazhi is constantly confused by her fragmental identity, and fails to exclude Mr. Yi as the Other.

Suffering is a necessity in the process of sacrifice, and it is also the path to transcendence. Transcendence is dependent upon going beyond boundaries, and suffering is a way of testing limits. Suffering and sacrifice are rationalized as paths that lead human beings to self-betterment or to eternal peace. But the absurdity of transcendental martyrdom is that the sacrifice requires pure consumption, which requires the obliteration of self. The expectation of the transcendent meaning of martyrdom is therefore destined to fail because only the martyr recognizes the true value of the sacrifice. At best, Wang Jiazhi's martyrdom is problematic, since she betrays her original revolutionary task and instigates unnecessary deaths for the sake of her notion of love. At worst, it is meaningless because it goes unrecognized and uncelebrated. Her assassination plan presumably remains unknown to the larger revolutionary movement. Kuang and her other

[253] Georges Bataille, "The Use Value of D. A. F. de Sade," from *Visions of Excess* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 100.

associates are executed, unable to speak for her because of her indiscretions. Most notably, the object of her romantic gesture fails to appreciate her sacrifice and even precipitates her downfall. Thus, Wang Jiazhi's sacrifice is more like a ceremonious display of self-immolation than an act of patriotic heroism. As tragic as Wang Jiazhi's tale may be, an anonymous, inglorious death is not the only affront that a martyr can face. As we will see in the next section, the reputations of certain female martyrs are subject to the vicissitudes of history and public opinion.

If *Lust, Caution* "shows how easily women's space of action can be annulled when violence and aggression have displaced genuine politics"[254] as Lee Haiyan has argued, the case of narrative changes in the story of an officially recognized female revolutionary martyr, Liu Hulan, brings the deflation of female martyrdom to another level. Again, in the case of Liu Hulan, the mode of deflating female martyrdom is through exaggerating female sexuality and the material body.

Reintroducing the Flesh: Changing Narratives of a Female Revolutionary Martyr Liu Hulan

Liu Hulan 劉胡蘭 (1932-1947) was a young female revolutionary during the Chinese Civil War between the Chinese Nationalists and the Chinese Communists. She was born in Wenshui County, Shanxi province, which was a crucial military area during the Chinese Civil War. Liu Hulan joined the Communist Children's Group at 10, and then joined the Communist Women's Association at 13. At the age of 14, she was recognized as a candidate member of the Chinese Communist Party. She was actively

[254] Lee Haiyan, "Enemy under My Skin," 652.

involved in supporting the CCP and the Red Army. On January 12th, 1947, Nationalist Troops occupied Liu Hulan's village and ransacked the village in search of communist sympathizers. Betrayed by one of her fellow communist comrades, Liu Hulan was arrested and beheaded when she was just a little over 14 years old. Mao Zedong wrote the famous line, "sheng de weida, si de guangrong" 生的偉大，死的光榮 (Great Life, Glorious Death) to commemorate Liu Hulan as the youngest female martyr of the Chinese revolution.[255] Liu Hulan has been a household name in China ever since.

Following Mao's praise for Liu Hulan, the CCP launched a series of campaigns promoting Liu. Numerous propaganda posters, paintings, biographies, operas, films and comic books (*lianhuan hua/xiaoren shu* 連環畫／小人書) were produced to promote the story of Liu's heroic martyrdom. In 1956, the Liu Hulan Memorial Hall was established in Liu's hometown. With the rise of popular culture and social media in contemporary China, the official discourse of Liu Hulan has been challenged. There are widespread artistic and parodical recreations of the revolutionary heroes. The image of Liu Hulan has changed drastically from that of a sublime revolutionary martyr to that of a fallible corporeal female. In this section, I will examine both the official and the artistic reproductions of the iconic female revolutionary Liu Hulan to explore the contradictions in the official representations of her and to show how recent artistic reproductions deflate the meaning of her martyrdom.

Official Narratives of Liu Hulan

[255] For more detailed information about Liu Hulan, see Ma Feng 馬烽, *Liu Hulan zhuan* 劉胡蘭傳 (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 2008).

Liu Hulan is the only revolutionary martyr who was praised by three generations of leaders in China through inscriptions by Mao Zedong (1893-1976), Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997) and Jiang Zemin (1926-).[256] With their different emphasis, these inscriptions are perfect evidence of the unstable meanings and narratives of Liu Hulan's martyrdom. Mao Zedong's inscription (1947), "Great Life, Glorious Death" emphasizes Liu Hulan's worthy death.[257] China had just ended the anti-Japanese War in 1945, and the Chinese Civil War between the CCP and the KMT broke out in 1946. In the historical context in which the inscription was produced, the CCP was in need of military forces. Female soldiers and martyrs were and still are particularly effective in propaganda designed to soften people's views on militarization. These images normalize and naturalize the masculinity-oriented aspects of war, and create an emotional hook for military campaigns. In wartime, the CCP had high demands regarding militarization of civilians. As an ordinary country girl who sacrificed herself in a time of war, Liu Hulan was perfect for a propaganda campaign promoting militarization.[258] She played a crucial role in promoting the People's Militia (*minbing* 民兵) in the late 1950s. In 1958, concerned about the growing possibility of war with the U.S. after the Taiwan Straits Crisis, Mao Zedong started the "make everyone a soldier" (*quanmin jiebing* 全民皆兵) campaign. The

[256] The details of the CCP leaders' memorial words of Liu Hulan appear in Wang Xueli's 王學禮 article, "Deng Xiaoping wei Liu Hulan tici shimo," 鄧小平為劉胡蘭題詞始末 [The Full Story of Deng Xiaoping's Inscription for Liu Hulan], *Dangshi wenhui*, 9(2013), 35-36.

[257] Mao Zedong wrote the memorial words in 1947 after hearing about the story of Liu Hulan. But the original inscription was lost in the wartime. For the tenth anniversary of Liu Hulan's death, Mao rewrote the same words in 1957. Mao's two inscriptions indicate the importance of promoting Liu Hulan at the beginning stage of the PRC. See Lei Yunfeng 雷雲峰, "Mao zhuxi wei Liu Hulan lieshi tici jingguo" 毛主席為劉胡蘭烈士題詞經過, *Renwen zazhi*, no.6 (1983), 100.

[258] Louise Edwards offered a deliberate analysis on how the CCP manipulated the story of Liu Hulan to militarize rural China. See Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 175-178.

campaign promoted the concept of a "people's war" (*renmin zhanzheng* 人民戰爭) which called for everyone to be militarily trained. The CCP therefore established a solid people's militia system. A people's militia refers to any group of civilians that has received basic military training and is mobilized during wartime. Liu Hulan appeared as a model soldier during this campaign.[259]

Deng Xiaoping wrote his inscription in 1962, stating: "With her noble character and her spirit, Liu Hulan is forever an exemplar for Chinese youths and teenagers" (*Liu Hulan de gaogui pinzhi, ta de jingshen mianmao, yongyuan shi Zhongguo qingnian he shaonian xuexi de bangyang* 劉胡蘭的高貴品質，她的精神面貌，永遠是中國青年和少年學習的榜樣).[260] His inscription emphasizes moral education for the Chinese youth. This inscription appeared at the time when the first generation of Chinese youths born after the establishment of the PRC were coming of age, and the newly established socialist China needed role models, ideal socialist citizens to instruct the new youth. Jiang Zemin wrote his inscription in 1994, well after the 1978 economic reforms; here, he shifts emphasis towards Chinese modernization. It encourages citizens to "carry on the spirit of Liu Hulan, dedicating oneself to the realization of the Four Modernizations" (*fayang Hulan jingshen, xianshen sihua daye* 發揚胡蘭精神，獻身四化大業).[261] Unlike Mao's inscription, Deng and Jiang eliminated the idea of sacrificing one's life. Both Deng and Jiang incorporated the word *jingshen* 精神 (spirit) in their inscriptions, but their explanations of the spirit of Liu Hulan are obscure.

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[259] See Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China,* 175-8.

[260] See Wang Xueli, "Deng Xiaoping wei Liu Hulan tici shimo," 35.

[261] Ibid.

All these inscriptions are now exhibited in the Memorial Hall of Liu Hulan in Shanxi. It is worth noting that another important political leader, Lin Biao 林彪 (1907-1971), who was once considered the successor of Mao Zedong, also wrote an inscription honoring the sacrifice of Liu Hulan. However, because of his political failure, his words were expunged from the Memorial Hall.[262] The meaning and the narratives of Liu Hulan's death are constantly changing along with changes in political power.

These changes were also presented in literary representations of this young female martyr. After Liu Hulan's death, her story was adapted into numerous fictional works, plays, operas and films. The image of Liu Hulan as a heroic female martyr was first established in a four-act spoken drama (*huaju* 話劇) *Liu Hulan* in 1947. It is based on the author Wei Feng's interviews with Liu Hulan's family and local villagers in Wenshui County. During an interview, Liu Hulan's step-mother, Hu Wenxiu told Wei Feng, a member of He Long's Combat Dramatic Society (He Long zhandou jushe 賀龍戰鬥劇社), that Liu Hulan gave three significant items, including an Essential Balm box, a handkerchief, and a silver ring, to her at the place of execution.[263] In the performance of the spoken drama, the troupe used the objects left behind by Liu Hulan as props to recreate original scenes in Liu's life. The play strictly followed the principles of socialist realism advocated in Mao Zedong's "Zai Yan'an wenyi zuotanhui shang de jianghua" 在延安文藝座談會上的講話 (Speech at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art; 1942).

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[262] See Wang Xueli, "Deng Xiaoping wei Liu Hulan tici shimo," 36.

[263] See Wei Feng 魏風, "Liu Hulan juben xiezuo qianhou" 《劉胡蘭》劇本寫作前後, *Dangshi tiandi*, vol.1 (1997), 31. The Essential Balm box was said to be a token of Liu's admission to the CCP; the silver ring was an heirloom from Liu's grandmother; the handkerchief was allegedly a pledge of the romantic relationship between Liu and a CCP cadre Wang Bengu.

The play is so realistic that it blurs the boundary between the performance and reality. Wei Feng states:

> In every performance, when the scene of Liu Hulan's heroic death appears, all the audience members cried uncontrollably. The sound of crying was even louder than the performers' voices. Some soldiers threw stones at the actors who act as enemies on stage, some attempted to rush onto the stage with loaded guns to kill "Big Beard" [Zhang Quanbao], the one who ordered Liu Hulan's execution."[264]

The play successfully generated public sympathy for Liu Hulan and encouraged violence towards the enemies of the CCP. It was an effective way to promote militarization during the Chinese Civil War. After watching the play, some soldiers organized "learn from Liu Hulan groups" (*xuexi Liu Hulan ban* 學習劉胡蘭班) and some civilians organized "get revenge for Liu Hulan groups" (*wei Liu Hulan baochou xiaozu* 為劉胡蘭報仇小組). In the battle for liberating Wenshui County, it is said that the slogan "seeking revenge for Liu Hulan" inspired the commandos to push forward and achieve victory.[265]

In the play, Liu Hulan's story emphasizes the importance of getting revenge. Liu Hulan is both a heroine and a victim. Revenge narratives were a dominant theme in 1950s Chinese socialist literature. According to Mao's Yan'an talk on arts, portrayals of heroes and enemies should be black and white with no room for ambiguity. This principle

[264] Ibid., 32. "每次演出，當看到劉胡蘭英勇就義的場面時，滿場觀眾失聲痛哭，哭聲壓過了臺上演員的聲音。有的戰士用石頭去砸臺上的 '敵人'，有的人甚至推上子彈，要衝上舞臺，槍斃大鬍子。"

[265] See ibid., 32.

worked effectively during the brutal wartime and the Land Reform Movement for targeting enemies of the CCP. It corresponded to the "speaking bitterness and seeking revenge" (*buwang jieji ku, laoji xuelie chou* 不忘階級苦，牢記血淚仇) campaign.[266] It advocated that people should seek retribution and embrace violence to fight against enemies.

After the success of the spoken drama *Liu Hulan*, Wei Feng 魏風 and Liu Lianchi 劉蓮池 adapted Liu's tale into an opera. The revenge narrative continues in the opera *Liu Hulan*. The opera created a sensation in liberated areas (*jiefang qu* 解放區). People were determined to arrest and punish the executioners of Liu Hulan. In 1950, the opera was performed and gained huge popularity in Yuncheng County, Shanxi Province. Zhang Quanbao 張全寶, also known as Big Beard, one of the executioners, had gone into hiding in Yuncheng. Fearing that he might be recognized, he went to watch the opera in disguise. The hatred the audience showed towards the actor of Big Beard defeated Zhang Quanbao psychologically. He was later arrested in 1951, and was publicly put on trial and executed.[267] In the same year, Liu Hulan's stepmother Hu Wenxiu sent her two daughters and two sons to join the army to resist the U.S. and aid Korea. She wrote an open letter to all mothers in China to encourage them to send their sons and daughters to fight in the Korean War. In the letter, she reaffirmed the revenge narrative and called upon mothers, "to please remember the blood debts from the imperialists and the counter-revolutionaries. For the sake of our children who were killed, for the sake of preventing our children from

[266] See Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies*, 181.

[267] See Cheng Shigang 程世剛, "Shahai Liu Hulan xiongshou de xiachang" 殺害劉胡蘭兇手的下場, *Dangshi bocai*, no.6 (2007), 36.

being harmed, please vote and sign the Declaration on Defending World Peace enthusiastically, please participate in the Korean War actively."[268] After the letter's contents were broadcast by Xinhua News, a nationwide movement supporting Hu Wenxiu arose. The early stage of creating the image of Liu Hulan mostly involved using her as a victim to promote hatred of the CCP's enemies rather than establishing her as a heroine. In this revenge narrative, the audience members are manipulated by the propaganda, and her extraordinary martyrdom and the extreme violence of her death are normalized.

After the establishment of the PRC, the CCP leaders considered film to be the most effective way to educate the masses. The central propaganda department produced many films to criticize the old society, to celebrate the national liberation, and most importantly, to promote heroic figures. The movie *Liu Hulan* (dir. Feng Bailu; 1950) is representative of this era in film.[269] Needing to promote the newly constructed socialist ideology and create a new socialist persona (*shehui zhuyi xinren* 社會主義新人), the CCP launched several "learn from the exemplars of the socialist new China" campaigns, including the "learn from Liu Hulan campaign." As in the film *Liu Hulan*, revenge is no longer the central theme. The emphasis of the propaganda of this period shifted from generating hatred towards the CCP's enemies to establishing individuals like Liu Hulan

[268] See Ma Ming 馬明, "Wei minzu jiefang benbo, wei guojia duli juanqu" 為民族解放奔波，為國家獨立捐軀, *Dangshi wenhui*, 1(2007), 10. "請你們清楚地記下帝國主義和國內反動派欠下我們的血債吧！為了我們被殺害的子女，為了我們的子女不再受到殘害，請你們踴躍地在保衛世界和平公約的宣言上簽字和投票，積極參加抗美援朝運動吧！" Also see Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China*, 193-4.

[269] *Liu Hulan*, directed by Feng Bailu 馮白魯 (1950; Shenyang: Bandao yinxiang chubanshe, 2005), DVD. For detailed discussions on films in the early stage the PRC, see Liu Jianxun 劉建勳, "Jianguo chuqi dianying wenxue de lishi huigu" 建國初期電影文學的歷史回顧, *Xibei daxue xuebao*, no.4 (1984), 33-8.

as heroic role models for socialist citizens. But the image of Liu Hulan as a role model was exceedingly flexible, and as Louise Edwards noted in her book, "She (Liu Hulan) is regularly described as a labor hero and model worker […while] the girl martyr/woman martyr was also used to retrain sex workers."[270]

Although the 1950 version of the film covers the Anti-Japanese War and the War of Liberation, there is no direct depiction of the conflicts or wartime battles between the CCP and its rivals. Liu's efforts in enabling the execution of Shi Peihuai 石佩懷, the village head who was close to the KMT, are carefully depicted in the film. By portraying Liu as a female spy who only collects information, the film avoids any portrayal of Liu's violence towards Shi. Depictions of violence perpetrated by political allies are always conveniently deleted by the victors who write the history. By contrast, the violence of the rivals is always emphasized. In the film, Liu Hulan is mainly described as a model worker who tirelessly performs domestic tasks. She organizes female villagers to sew shoes and prepare food for the Eighth Route Army. Her role as a socialist model also fits with traditional gender expectations.

Chastity was still a major concern in making a socialist heroine. In the film, because the quality of the shoes that widow Duan'er 段二寡婦 turns in to support the CCP troops is not good enough, Liu Hulan severely criticizes her. Shi Wuze 石五則, the secretary of the Peasants' Union, attempts to cover up for the widow Duan, but also receives Liu's criticism. Because of this conflict between Liu and Shi, Shi becomes a traitor and informs the KMT of Liu's support for the CCP. In the film, there are indications that the widow Duan has an intimate relationship with Shi Wuze, which is

[270] Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 192.

why Shi protects her. This stereotype of widows as backward elements (*luohou feizi* 落後分子) commonly appears in socialist narratives. Compared to the widow Duan, Liu is heroic and virtuous.

Socialist exemplars, especially female martyrs who are seen as upholders of female chastity, should have no private life. The early socialist heroes share one striking thing in common: they all died at a very young age. Not only do their images stay permanently young and robust, but they are also protected against any potential besmirching narratives related to romantic relationships. In the 1950 version of *Liu Hulan*, there is no description of Liu's romantic relationships. However, in 1996, the CCP propaganda department produced a new version of the film *Liu Hulan*, and in it, Liu's romantic relationship with another communist party member is presented explicitly in an effort to speak to younger generations.[271]

Comparisons between the two mainstream versions of the Liu Hulan films show the ambiguities and the changes in representations of this young female martyr. As seen in the posters for the films, the 1950 version presented Liu Hulan as the typical robust female revolutionary depicted in most of the propaganda posters from the 1950s and 1960s in China. The poster portrays the moment before Liu Hulan's execution. With her signature unadorned style and a decisive facial expression meant to show her willingness to sacrifice herself, Liu Hulan is depicted no differently from male revolutionary martyrs. Her body is highly disciplined. Her simple and practical hair style, which reduces femininity and is appropriate with a military uniform, became popular nationwide in the 1950s and 60s and was called the "Liu Hulan hairstyle." Liu Hulan in the other poster for

[271] *Liu Hulan*, directed by Shen Yaoting 沈耀庭 (1996; Taiyuan: Shanxi dianying zhipian chang).

the 1996 version looks more feminine. This poster does not highlight the moment of her death or even the moment before her death. Instead, it portrays Liu as a modern-day fashionable female spy in a beret, peeping and eavesdropping. She looks cunning rather than heroic. Despite their differences, the two posters share one thing in common: it is hard to tell whether Liu Hulan is a 15 year old or a 35 year old.

Figure 3: Liu Hulan, 1950, dir. Feng Bailu[272]

[272] See https://v.qq.com/x/cover/3251a6rg7l9j5uz/s00157u8xd0.html (accessed on December 26, 2017).

Figure 4: Liu Hulan, 1996, dir. Shen Yaoting[273]

[273] See http://v.qq.com/detail/v/vs5ogiw8k180jvz.html (accessed on December 26, 2017).

Her age is an issue in representations of Liu Hulan. Although biological age should be a historically verifiable fact, there have been constant disagreements on Liu Hulan's age. Liu Hulan's girlhood and her youth at the time of her sacrifice at first generated widespread sympathy since it highlighted the brutality of the communists' enemy.[274] In the 1950 version of the film, although the actress does not look like a 14 or 15 year old girl, Liu Hulan's age is explicitly stated as 14. With the promotion of the idea of a protected childhood that emerged after 1978, Liu Hulan's age at her time of death became problematic.[275] In response to this urge to protect children's sensibilities, in the 1996 version of the film, Liu Hulan appears to be a mature 20-something communist party member, and her age is never mentioned. Liu Hulan's story appeared in all major history textbooks, and almost every child who grew up in post-Mao China learned about her. Recently, a parent expressed her concerns, arguing that it is inappropriate to teach young children about Liu Hulan's death and encourage them to sacrifice themselves. Her statement generated heated debates. In response to the debates, People's Daily (*Renmin ribao* 人民日報) published an article stating that it is necessary for children to have revolutionary martyrs as their models, but the article avoided the sensitive topic of Liu Hulan's age.[276]

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[274] See Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 178. Louise Edwards includes a detailed discussion on contradictory records of Liu Hulan's age in official narratives.

[275] Ibid. Louise Edwards noted that "It is only with the post-1978 retreat from radical revolutionary Maoism, complete with its promotion of family sanctity, that we see the celebration of 'childhood' as a period of innocence in which individuals ought to be protected from politics, war and harm."

[276] Zhou Renjie 周人傑, "Rang yingxiong zhiguang zhaoliang haizimen de xingkong" 讓英雄之光照亮孩子們的星空, *Renmin ribao* (June 1, 2017). See http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2017-06/01/nw.D110000renmrb_20170601_3-04.htm

The two Liu Hulan films were both sanctioned by the CCP, and aimed at promoting nationalism in different periods of time. However, the discrepancies and inconstancies are obvious. The official narratives of Liu Hulan are constantly changing, showing that the original narratives of Liu Hulan the socialist hero are neither stable nor authentic.

Modern and Contemporary Reproductions of Liu Hulan

Because of her high visibility in CCP propaganda, Liu Hulan is one of the most popular targets of rewritings and parody of socialist history among netizens, intellectuals and contemporary Chinese artists. On the more serious side, in 2009, Zhou Yijun 周憶軍, a professor from China's renowned Peking University, claimed that, according to interviews with locals, Liu Hulan was executed by her fellow villagers instead of the KMT. He was later condemned by the CCP for distorting historical facts. On the lighter side are the numerous anonymous online jokes that deflate the heroic image of Liu Hulan, such as the following: "the KMT gathered the villagers together and asked the CCP members to step forward, and all the villagers stepped back except Liu Hulan. After the execution of Liu Hulan, the villagers said that Liu was a good girl but her reaction was too slow." Similar jokes about other communist heroes such as Dong Cunrui, Qiu Shaoyun and Huang Jiguang also circulate in cyberspace.[277]

Even Mao's famous lines "Great Life, Glorious Death" that commemorated Liu Hulan have been parodied for the purpose of promoting a commercial popular music

[277] See Yin Shaoyun 印少雲, "Lun lishi xuwu zhuyi dui hongse ziyuan de qianghai---yi Liu Hulan beihei shijian wei li" 論歷史虛無主義對紅色資源的戕害——以"劉胡蘭被黑"事件為例, *Dangshi wenhui*, no.7 (2017), 41-4.

concert. The poster for a 2008 concert performed by the popular Taiwanese singer Jay Chou features the slogan “chang de weida ku de guangrong” 唱的偉大，酷的光榮 (singing is great, and being cool is glorious). From these two slogans, it becomes clear that sacrificing oneself to the state is no longer a core value. Instead, being oneself and expressing individuality is encouraged and glorified. The poster for Chou’s concert resembles a poster of Mao Zedong from the Cultural Revolution. Red is the dominant color in both of the posters, but the symbolic meaning of the color red has been changed from socialism to a passion for pop music. Jay Chou and Mao Zedong are at the center in the respective posters, and they are both presented as the Sun/Savior which emits lights to enlighten the world. Thus, the revolutionary hero is replaced by a pop star.

Figure 5: Poster for Jay Chou's concert in Guangzhou, 2008[278]

[278] See http://ent.qq.com/a/20071224/000257.htm (accessed on March 11, 2017).

Figure 6: Following Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Line in Art and Literature and Moving Towards Victory, 1968[279]

There are also other more high-brow parodic artistic works featuring communist heroes, including Liu Hulan. After Liu's death, numerous statues of Liu Hulan were erected, and the most famous one was created by Wang Zhaowen 王朝聞 (1909-2004) in 1951 for The National Museum of China. The statue was recognized as Wang's masterpiece and became the official image of Liu Hulan. In this statue, Liu Hulan is presented in an almost sexless manner. With her signature short hair, clenched fists and an angry facial expression, Liu is depicted as no different from male revolutionaries. Again, she does not look like a teenage girl, and her age is indeterminate. Initially, the first draft of Wang Zhaowen's sculpture of Liu Hulan captured the iconic moment when she was tied up before the execution, but after some consideration, Wang decided not to

[279] See http://projects.zo.uni-heidelberg.de/continuousrevolution/main.php?part=i&chapter=&img=9 (accessed on March 11, 2017)

show Liu's bound body. This change was praised by art critics in the 1960s as "unbinding the hero" (*gei yingxiong songbang* 給英雄鬆綁).[280] Instead of freezing Liu in the heroic moment before her death, Wang broke the limits of time and presented her as a heroic character in a timeless space. Wang's sculpture of Liu Hulan, with its clean lines and solid structure, presents a sublime image of Liu. Yet, with the statue's simple hairstyle and clothing, Liu Hulan is presented as approachable to new socialist citizens in China.

In 2004, a young contemporary Chinese artist Yang Tao 楊韜 recreated Wang Zhaowen's sculpture of Liu Hulan as a part of his Revolutionary Hero sculpture series which was shown in his "Pre-socialism Exhibition" at Beijing in 2006. It generated intense online debate over the mockery of revolutionary martyrs in China. In his sculpture of Liu Hulan, Yang Tao portrayed Liu's body tied up before her execution. The presentation of her bound body evokes sadistic bondage fashion, making it is drastically different from socialist orthodox representations of Liu's body. In the film poster of *Liu Hulan* (1950), Liu's bound body is an indication of her heroism. Following this tradition, as well as the traditions and styles of Socialist Realist masters such as Kukryniksy, Liu's bound body became a symbol of her heroic death in Feng Fasi's 馮法祀 (1914-2009) classical painting of this female martyr.[281] However, Liu is overtly sexualized and objectified in Yang Tao's sculpture. Compared to the clean lines and solid structure in Wang Zhaowen's sculpture of Liu Hulan, Yang's version exaggerates Liu Hulan's feminine features. Yang intentionally designed the head and body of the sculpture to

[280] See Liang Zhaotang 梁照堂, "Wang Zhaowen" 王朝聞, *Xin kuaibao*, (August 14, 2016).

[281] For discussions on Feng Fasi's painting style, see Yin Dingwei 尹鼎為, "Xin Zhongguo chengli chuqi de Liu Hulan re ji Liu Hulan shijue xingxiang de suzao" 新中國成立初期的劉胡蘭熱及劉胡蘭視覺形象的塑造, *Beifang meishu*, no.9 (2015), 82-5.

make the heroine look ridiculous. He also deconstructed the solid structure of Wang's version. In Yang's version, Liu's overly fat body indicates that she is not the typical disciplined revolutionary. "With her breast clearly singled out, her pouting mouth, prominent cheeks, and protruding breasts,"[282] the sublime image of Liu Hulan disappears, and she is no more than a sexual object. Although Liu Hulan is oversexualized in Yang's version, the overall image is disturbing rather than sexually attractive. Through emphasizing the materiality of the female body, Yang Tao reduces the spirituality of Liu Hulan as a female martyr.

[282] See Huang Xin, "From 'Hyper-feminine' to Androgyny: Changing Notions of Femininity in Contemporary China," in Lorna Fitzsimmons, ed., *Asian Popular Culture in Transition* (London; New York: Routledge, 2013), 137.

Figure 7: The Statue of Liu Hulan, Wang Zhaowen, 1951[283]

[283] From *Zhongguo meishu bao* 中國美術報 http://www.zgmsbweb.com/Home/artist/figure/artistId/373 (accessed on December 27, 2017).

Figure 8: *The Statue of Liu Hulan*, Yang Tao, 2004[284]

[284] See Yang Tao's website, http://www.artnow.com.cn/Artist/Artists.aspx?ChannelId=274&ArtistId=2215 (accessed on December 27, 2017).

Figure 9: Feng Fasi, The Heroic Death of Liu Hulan, 1957[285]

Figure 10: Kukryniksy, The Feat of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, 1942-1947[286]

[285] From National Art Museum of China (*Zhongguo meishu guan* 中國美術館). See http://www.namoc.org/cbjy/msbk/mszp/201307/t20130702_255350.htm (accessed on December 26, 2017).

Yang Tao clearly makes an anti-socialist-hero statement in his Revolutionary Heroes series. Similar to his sculpture of Liu Hulan, his representations of the socialist heroes Qiu Shaoyun and Huang Jiguang all have disproportionate heads and bodies.[287] Their prototypes can be easily found in the official discourse. It is worth noting that, as the only female martyr in the series, Liu Hulan is the only one whom the artist sexualized.

[286] Kukryniksy is a collective pen name of three artists in the USSR. The painting is *The Feat of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya*, see https://www.wikiart.org/en/kukryniksy/tania-the-feat-of-zoya-kosmodemyanskaya-1947 (accessed on November 5, 2016). In the 1950s and 1960s, Chinese arts were largely influenced by Socialist Realism from the Soviet Union. The color and composition of Feng's painting of Liu Hulan is a clear imitation of *The Feat of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya*.

[287] Qiu Shaoyun 邱少雲 (1926-1952) was a soldier in the Chinese Volunteer Army in the Korean War. He burned to death from a firebomb on a battlefield. Qiu chose to burn to death in order to not expose other comrades. Huang Jiguang 黃繼光 (1930-1952) was also a soldier in the Chinese Volunteer Army in the Korean War. He used his body to block machine gun bullets in order to allow his comrades to move forward.

Figure 11: *Hero Qiu Shaoyun,* 1973[288]

[288] The poster is from IISH/Stefan R. Landsberger Collections, available at ChinesePosters.net. see https://chineseposters.net/themes/qiushaoyun.php (accessed on January 3, 2018).

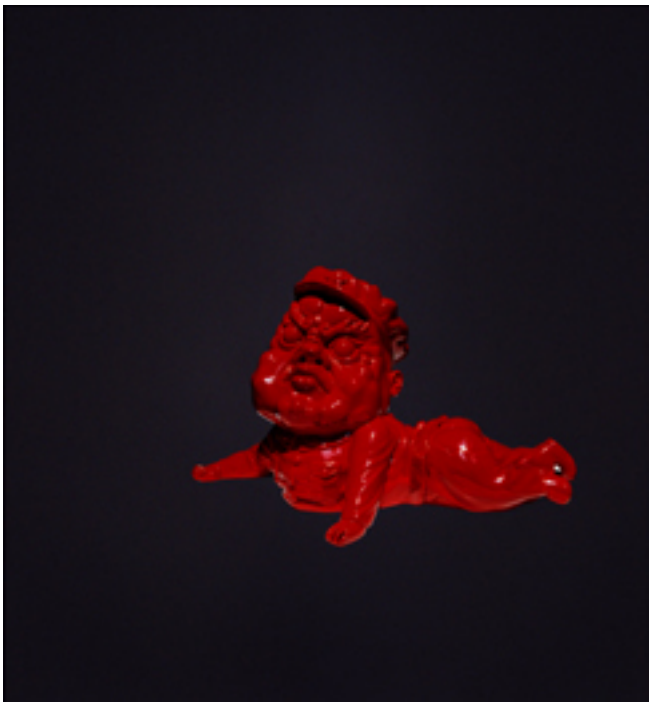

Figure 12: *The Statue of Qiu Shaoyun*, Yang Tao, 2004[289]

[289] From Yang Tao's website, http://www.artnow.com.cn/Artist/Artists.aspx?ChannelId=274&ArtistId=2215 (accessed on December 27, 2017).

Figure 13: *Hero Huang Jiguang,* 1964[290]

[290] The poster is from IISH/Stefan R. Landsberger Collections, available at ChinesePosters.net. See https://chineseposters.net/themes/huangjiguang.php (accessed on January 3, 2018).

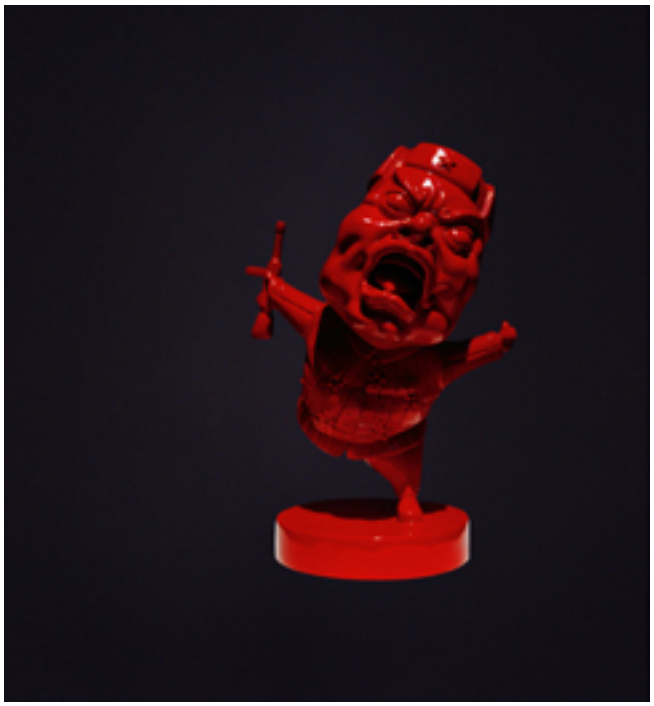

Figure 14: *The Statue of Huang Jiguang*, Yang Tao, 2004[291]

Two contemporary Chinese artists, Li Zhanyang 李占洋 and Yu Fan 於凡, have also reinterpreted and appropriated the image of Liu Hulan. Li Zhanyang graduated from Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts, the birthplace of Chinese socialist realism. Wang Zhaowen, the creator of the original sculpture of Liu Hulan was a faculty member at the institute. Li, however, did not follow Wang Zhaowen's iconographic tradition. Li and Yu started to question the principles of socialist realism and explore the questions of what constitutes the truth, what constitutes real, and what defines realism.

Both Li and Yu chose to represent the moment of Liu Hulan's death in their sculptures. Unlike most artists who choose to portray the moment before execution of heroic characters to avoid presenting a gruesome image, Li Zhanyang reduces Liu's

[291] From Yang Tao's website, http://www.artnow.com.cn/Artist/Artists.aspx?ChannelId=274&ArtistId=2215 (accessed on December 27, 2017).

heroic martyrdom to a horrible murder scene. In the classic representations of Liu Hulan, Liu always holds her head up high to show her fearless spirit, but Li's sculpture shows Liu with her head chopped off. Although the title of the sculpture is Liu Hulan, Li's work diminishes the heroine in this large piece of work. Liu Hulan is still at the center of the work, but she is reduced to meat, a material body on the chopping block. She is overshadowed by the crowd of people who surround her from every possible angle to scrutinize her slaughter. In the sculpture, crowded houses occupy most of the space and generate an oppressive atmosphere. The dominant color of the sculpture is grey, emphasizing the gloomy and depressing environment, and making the red color of Liu's blood stand out in the work. Li Zhanyang adopts an omniscient but non-judgmental point of view. The sublimity of Liu Hulan's death has been erased.

In a conversation between Li Zhanyang and Dai Zhuoqun, Li related his image of Liu's martyrdom to his childhood experience witnessing a public execution of a criminal. In terms of their shocking effects, the two events are indistinguishable for Li. The deaths were bloody and terrifying, no matter whether they involved a revolutionary hero or a criminal. Growing up watching films and plays about Liu Hulan, Li never thought that the representations of Liu's martyrdom were realistic enough. This concern was the impetus for his artwork.[292]

The artist Yu Fan used fiberglass as the material for his work. The material typically used to represent a martyr is stone, especially marble, or bronze. This creates a sense of permanence and solidity of history. Such statues symbolize the eternity of the martyr's spirit and the state's remembrance. Yu Fan's choice of fiberglass is unique in

[292] See "The Conversation between Li Zhanyang and Dai Zhuoqun 李占洋、戴卓群的對話." http://lizhanyang.artron.net/news_detail_290342 (accessed on November 10, 2016).

comparison to the heaviness of stone or bronze, as fiberglass is much lighter and has a more sensual feel. The use of fiberglass also eliminates the evocation of history and monumentality. These modernizations of the classic topic of the socialist martyr makes the heroine more approachable; in Yu Fan's work, Liu Hulan has stepped down from her pedestal to become an ordinary and highly vulnerable woman. There is a contrast between the clean, bright, flawless surface of the fiberglass and the horror of Liu Hulan's bloody death. Two major themes in Yu Fan's sculpture of Liu Hulan are sex and violence. In this work, Liu Hulan lies in a pool of blood with a shoe off to the side. The deep cut in her throat is in shocking contrast to her beauty. The exposure of a woman's foot has strong sexual overtones in Chinese culture. Liu Hulan is presented not as a willing martyr but as an attractive and vulnerable woman who was brutally murdered. In an interview with the writer Zhu Qi, Yu Fan explained the reason behind his unique creation of Liu Hulan: "There are countless sculptures of Liu Hulan made after the establishment of the PRC, many artists of the old generation made statues of Liu Hulan and created the classical image of her clenching her fists and holding her head up high. I think that kind of sculpture can't represent the reality. I was very interested in 'reality.' Why do we want to avoid reality? Why can't we represent reality?...*The Sacrifice of Liu Hulan* targeted socialist realism. What is the truth? What is the reality? What is (socialist) realism?"[293]

While both Li Zhanyang and Yu Fan broke the rules of socialist realism in order to represent the brutal moment of a woman's death, the artist Zhang Xin 張新 completely deconstructed the official discourse of Liu Hulan in her installation art work "Climate No.6" (*qihou* 氣候). Zhang Xin has been exploring the theme of climate for years in her

[293] See "An Interview with Yu Fan 於凡訪談." http://www.cafa.com.cn/info/?NIT=54&N=4120 (accessed on November 7, 2016).

artwork as a metaphor for the effects of global warming and the changing political winds. "Climate No. 6" has two parts, one is a projection of a marble statue of Liu Hulan, and the other is an identical sculpture of Liu Hulan made of ice which is in the process of melting into a water dispenser. Ironically, the original marble sculpture of Liu Hulan is absent, seemingly indicating the emptiness of official discourse. The two images of Liu Hulan in the art installation are ephemeral; the projected image is an illusion and the ice sculpture cannot last. Together they question the concept of eternity implicit in the traditional statues of Liu Hulan as a revolutionary heroine. The label on the water dispenser contains an introduction to Liu Hulan in both Chinese and English, an image of the marble statue of Liu Hulan, and the fictional brand name "Spirit." The ice sculpture melts into bottles that look like those of the well-known commercial bottled water Wahaha 哇哈哈, which employs images of the popular singer Leehom Wang to represent the brand. The Spirit bottled water captures the transformation of revolutionary discourse into consumer culture: in contemporary China, revolutionary "spirit" can be commodified and instantly consumed.

Figure 15: *Liu Hulan*, Li Zhanyang, 2008[294]

Figure 16: Detail of *Liu Hulan*, Bronze sculpture, Li Zhanyang, 2008[295]

[294] See http://lizhanyang.artron.net/works_detail_brt000796800076 (accessed on December 26, 2017).

[295] Ibid.

Figure 17: *Liu Hulan's Sacrifice*, fiberglass, Yu Fan, 2009[296]

[296] See http://www.cafa.com.cn/c/?t=834121 (accessed on December 26, 2017).

Figure 18: *Climate No.6*, Sculpture and video installation, Zhang Xin, 2000[297]

[297] See http://zhangxinstudio.com/?p=271 (accessed on November 14, 2016).
Lisa Bloom provides an excellent reading of the installation piece in her "Creating Transnational Women's Art Networks," in Amelia Jones, ed., *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), 19.

Figure 19: The label of Wahaha purified water with images of the popular singer Leehom Wang

The representations of Liu Hulan's martyrdom in official narratives and artistic reproductions show the instability of the meaning of Liu's martyrdom. The popular narratives of Liu Hulan reflect the ruptures and absurdities in official narratives. In the end, "fact" or "authenticity" does not really matter. All that matters is who holds the authority to determine the fact. The two kinds of narratives reveal the tension between the ideological control of the CCP and the ideological vacuum in the grassroots. Liu Hulan in media recreations shows the resistance of mainstream ideologies.

Conclusion: The Undisciplined Female Revolutionary Martyr's Body

As I examined in the previous chapter, the female body can be symbolized and deployed as a site of production for the nation. The bodies of revolutionary women are usually presented in a highly disciplined manner so as to embody the purity of the nation. Louis Edwards has argued that in socialist China, "female chastity became a synecdoche for good governance---social stability had a sexed nature. The CCP emerges as a defender of female chastity and purity of patriotic intent."[298] Thus, to resist the dominant ideology, post-Socialist artists have chosen to present sensuous and grotesque bodies in the Bahktinian mode, in which "the artistic logic of the grotesque image ignores the closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface of the body and retains only its excrescences and orifices, only that which leads beyond the body's limited space or into the body's depths."[299] In its rejection of iconic representations of national martyrs, this boundless and transgressive grotesque body becomes a physical site of resistance to official discourses. The representations of female bodies in the controversial scenes in the movie *Lust, Caution* and Yang Tao's contemporary sculpture of Liu Hulan are intended to be disturbing and to disrupt the myth of the grand narrative.

In her analysis of Lun Xun's writings on women, Carolyn Brown points out that "the physical body---the signifier---the female---had become the repository of a meaning---the signified----that in fact it did not rightfully bear."[300] She further suggested that "in rejecting the conventional literary tropes for configuring women and adopting the

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[298] Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China*, 165.

[299] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1984), 317-8.

[300] Carolyn Brown, "Woman as Trope: Gender and Power in Lu Xun's 'Soap'," *Modern Chinese Literature* 4, no. 1/2 (1988), 68.

technique of realist representation to make explicit his critique, Lu Xun demystified the unspoken tenets of the culture order."[301] The disciplined female revolutionary martyr's body instantiates the state discourse, and that conversely the Bahktinian sensuous and grotesque body works against the social and patriarchal order. However, at the same time, the undisciplined female revolutionary martyr's body nonetheless reconfirms that women's bodies are used to receive and produce meanings.

[301] Ibid.

CHAPTER V

EPILOGUE: MARTYRDOM, GENDER AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Martyrdom and Collective Memory

In recent years, the Chinese government has sought to tighten ideological control and rebuild the legitimacy of the communist regime. In 2014, China created a new holiday, Martyrs' Day (*lieshi jinian ri* 烈士紀念日), in order to promote feelings of nationalism and political support for the ruling Communist Party. This annual holiday on September 30 was approved by The National People's Congress and was written into law to commemorate the heroes who lost their lives defending China. September 30 was selected because it is not only the eve before China's National Day, but also the construction of the iconic Monument to the People's Heroes in Tiananmen Square began on that date in 1949.[302] Since 2014, national ceremonies have been held annually on September 30 at the Monument to the People's Heroes the heart of Tiananmen Square, by the core members of the Chinese government to honor martyrs for China. In analyzing the planning, the construction and the aesthetics of the Monument to the People's Heroes, art historian Wu Hung points out that:

[302] See Ian Johnson, "In Creating 'Martyrs' Day,' China Promotes a Vision of the Past," *New York Times*, (September 29, 2014). Also see "*Jiedu quanguo shouge lieshi jinianri*" 解讀全國首個烈士紀念日 http://www.mca.gov.cn/article/mxht/mtgz/201409/20140900708426.shtml (accessed on December 13, 2017).

> [the] Monument is dedicated to the deceased heroes, but these heroes remain impersonal and conceptual. The monotonous inscriptions and reliefs do not bear people's living memories, and no veteran of the revolution has ever dedicated a wreath to the Monument in the memory of his dead comrade-in-arms. If the Monument has any commemorative value, the subject of commemoration is the founding of Mao's China.[303]

The establishment of the Monument to the People's Heroes was for the purpose of creating a new history of the socialist China by providing a new collective memory. Wu Hung argues that, in 1949, the Chinese government used the abstract monument to erase the individual martyrs. The stone monument as a physical site memorializing national martyrs works to legitimize the new regime. In his study on the relationship between monuments and national memories, James Young also draws a connection between the commemoration of martyrs and the birth of a nation:

> By themselves, monuments are of little value, mere stones in the landscape. But as part of a nation's rites or the objects of a people's national pilgrimage, they are invested with national soul and memory. For traditionally, the state-sponsored memory of a national past aims to affirm the righteousness of a nation's birth.[304]

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[303] Wu Hung, "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," *Representations*, no. 35 (1991), 101.

[304] James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 2.

The creation of this new holiday, Martyrs' Day, actually had little to do with commemorating martyrs. The historical background was the tension and disputes between China and Japan over the Senkaku islands. Martyrs' Day therefore serves as a reminder/reconfirmation of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) contributions fighting against foreign powers and establishing the People's Republic of China. Celebrating the holiday calls for people's loyalty to the Party. The official document "The Decision on Establishing Martyrs' Day" (*guanyu sheding lieshi jinianri de jueding* 關於設立烈士紀念日的決定) states that the holiday aims at "cultivating patriotism, collectivism and socialist moralities so as to consolidate the Chinese nation's cohesiveness."[305]

It is also worth noting that the holiday is specifically named Martyrs' Day, not Memorial Day or Veteran's Day. Kirk Denton points out that "to use that term martyr is a politicized way of looking at death."[306] In the process of creating national memory, the CCP holds the power to define martyrs and decide the way in which the martyrs should be memorialized. As I discussed in my case study of Liu Hulan, the CCP manipulated official narratives of the female revolutionary martyr to suit national needs in different periods of time. Although collective memory is shaped by the ruling government through the process of ideological maneuvering, it is also reinterpreted in literature, media and art. The tension between national memory and individual representations is the embodiment of my articulation of "flesh" and "stone" as indexing two discourses of Chinese female martyrdom. It also speaks to James Young's argument that:

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[305] Ian Johnson, "In Creating 'Martyrs' Day,' China Promotes a Vision of the Past." Also see "*Jiuyue sanshi ri sheding wei lieshi jinian ri*" 9 月 30 日設為烈士紀念日, *Renmin ribao* 人民日報, (September 1, 2014).

[306] See the quote from Ian Johnson, "In Creating 'Martyrs' Day,' China Promotes a Vision of the Past."

> The relationship between a state and its memorials is not one-sided, however. On the one hand, official agencies are in position to shape memory explicitly as they see fit, memory that best serves a national interest. On the other hand, once created, memorials take on lives of their own, often stubbornly resistant to the state's original intentions.[307]

The competition or conversation between those two discourses still exists and largely shapes the understanding of martyrdom and the state ideological maneuvering in contemporary China. An illustrative situation arose in 2013 in relation to *Yanhuang chunqiu* (*China Through the Ages* 炎黃春秋), a controversial monthly journal which claims to rediscover historical facts. As a liberal historical journal, *Yanhuang chunqiu* publishes largely on sensitive political issues, and is constantly criticized for advocating historical nihilism (*lishi xuwuzhuyi* 歷史虛無主義).[308] In one of its 2013 issues, the journal published an article questioning the veracity of the official narratives of the five

[307] James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, p. 3. Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz summaries James Young's view on the formation of a memorial "as part of a seamless process that begins with the genesis of the memorial idea, advances through its physical creation, and continues throughout the metaphysical interaction between the memorial and its viewers." See Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, "The Iconography of Gendered Sacrifice," in *The Actuality of Sacrifice* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014), 401.

[308] "Historical nihilism" is a term coined by the CCP to criticize the denunciation of the past, especially the official narratives of the CCP's history. It is contrary to the CCP's dominant ideological concept, historical materialism. The term historical nihilism was first used to criticize the highly controversial documentary *Heshang* (*River Elegy* 河殤, 1988), which portrayed traditional Chinese culture negatively. In recent years, scholars such as Liang Zhu 樑柱 have published numerous articles, essays and books targeting historical nihilism as a trend of rewriting history and mocking revolutionary martyrs.

heroes of Langya mountain (*Langya shan wu zhuangshi* 狼牙山五壯士).[309] The descendants of the Langya heroes filed a lawsuit against Hong Zhenkuai 洪振快, who was the executive editor of *Yanhuang chunqiu* at the time, alleging defamation. In 2016, the court in Beijing ordered Hong to apologize publicly for distorting historical facts and mocking revolutionary martyrs.[310] In July 2016, the entire editorial team of *Yanhuang chunqiu* resigned, and the journal was shut down under pressure from the Chinese government.

In the same year, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China distributed a document entitled "Concerning the Situation in the Ideological Sphere" (*Guanyu dangqian yishixingtai lingyu qingkuang de tongbao* 關於當前意識形態領域情況的通報), famously known as Document No. 9 (*Jiuhao wenjian* 九號文件) among CCP members.[311] The document pointed out that historical nihilism, which rejects and rewrites the canonized narratives of communist revolution and martyrs, is one of the seven dangers the CCP encounters in its efforts to maintain ideological control.[312] And thus, the CCP called for a war against historical nihilism. In 2017, the Chinese government drafted rules for punishing people who mock the image of revolutionary martyrs. Specifically,

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[309] Hong Zhenkuai 洪振快, "*Langya shan wu zhuangshi de xijie fenqi*" 狼牙山五壯士的細節分歧, *Yanhuang chunqiu*, (2013, 11), 46-52.

[310] See Josh Chin, "Lost Appeal: Court Orders a Writer to Apologize over Wartime Story," *The Wall Street Journal*, (August 16, 2016).

[311] In August 2013, *Mingjing yuekan* 明鏡月刊 (vol. 43) published "*Jiuhao wenjian*" 九號文件, but the source of the confidential document has not been confirmed. The *New York Times* published two critical essays and released some of the content of the document. See Chris Buckley, "China Warns Officials Against 'Dangerous' Western Values," *New York Times*, (May 13, 2013); Chris Buckley, "China Takes Aim at Western Ideas," *New York Times*, (August 19, 2013).

[312] In addition to historical nihilism, the other six dangers in the ideological sphere include the idea of constitutional democracy from the West, universal values, civil society, Neo-liberalism, westernized media freedom, and questioning the Open Door policy. The seven dangers were also recognized as seven unmentionables (*qi bu jiang* 七不講) on the internet, and were later censored by the CCP.

"anyone who slanders or otherwise harms the image of Communist Party heroes and revolutionary martyrs could face legal liability under a clause lawmakers added to draft rules for China's first unified code of civil law."[313] Changing narratives and the prohibition of changing narratives of martyrs provide a dynamic view on how the state attempts to control and produce national collective memory.

Gendered Martyrdom

The discussion on martyrdom and collective memory reveals that martyrdom is a constructed narrative and a form of sanctioned violence. My dissertation examines how gender and sexuality support or problematize state-sponsored ideology. It focuses on the making of Chinese female martyrs to explore how representations serve as a strategy to either justify or question the normalization of the horrors of untimely death. Throughout Chinese history, female martyrdom has been promoted in order to cultivate loyalty to patriarchal family and the state. The traditional chastity cult continues to form and shape the contemporary meanings and conceptions of martyrdom, a value that is still promoted by the Chinese state. My dissertation connects the modern promotion of revolutionary female martyrs to the obsession with female chaste suicide in late imperial China. From examining fictional and historical records, stone monuments and artistic representations of female martyrs, I analyze flesh and stone as metaphors for two different discourses on female martyrdom. Flesh refers to the literary representations of flesh and blood bodies of female martyrs that work to disrupt the state discourse on martyrdom by introducing the

[313] "China Set to Tweak Civil Code to Punish Revisions of Martyr Lore," *The Wall Street Journal*, (March 13, 2017). Also see, "*Tuijin jiaqiang yingxiong lieshi baohu lifa gongzuo*" 推進加強英雄烈士保護立法工作, http://sn.people.com.cn/n2/2017/0817/c186331-30619373.html (accessed on December 14, 2017).

embodied individual. From a larger socio-political perspective, the state attempts to lock in the meaning of the sacrifice as enhancing the power of the state by fixing the meaning of female martyrdom in stone monuments. The state-sponsored monuments work to erase the individual in service to an ideology of martyrdom that reduces the messiness of history to myth. Carolyn Brown notes in her analysis of the construction of gender in May Fourth writings of women that "one function of myth is to make what is a social construct appear to be the natural order."[314]

Through analyzing representations of female chaste martyrdom in "The Siege of Yangzhou" and *Double Loyalty*, I argue that female chaste martyrdom functions as a bonding agent that holds male homosocial community together and consolidates the patriarchal system. Male homosociality is a term used by feminist scholar Eve Sedgwick to explain the interchangeability of women as sexed objects or property which strengthen male bonding through shared desires. She argues that consumption of women among male communities is social rather than sexual in nature.[315]

Female chaste martyrdom can be consumed by a local community as a social event. In *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity*, T'ien Ju-K'ang analyses "the erecting of platforms" (*ta t'ai* 搭台), a ritual of female chaste martyrdom which was practiced in Fukien province in Ming-Qing China. These organized community events provided witness to childless widows who committed suicide by hanging themselves in public.

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[314] Carolyn Brown, "Woman as Trope: Gender and Power in Lu Xun's 'Soap'," *Modern Chinese Literature* 4, no. 1/2 (1988), 68.

[315] See Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 53-4. Sophie Volpp borrows the term "male homosocial desire" to explain the circulation of actors among the elite in seventeenth century China. See Sophie Volpp, "The Literary Circulation of Actors in Seventeenth Century China," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 61, no. 3 (2002), 949-84.

Relatives and local community leaders first consulted with the would-be martyr about the date of her suicide, and then set up a platform/stage in the center of the community for her public death:

> When the widow ascends the platform, her relatives and clan members fall down on their knees and bow to her in respect. Then she scatters some grain around the platform and lets herself be supported by others for hanging. When all is finished, the spectators cheer uproariously in praise of her virtuous deed. The corpse is then taken home, paraded through the streets with music.[316]

This *ta t'ai* ritual was highly performative. Female chaste martyrs who performed this ritual could ask female audience members who had remarried to leave the communal gathering.[317] The suicides were melodramatic and romanticized, but ultimately, it was essentially a public execution. The gatherings for witnessing female chaste suicides also contributed to the formation of collective memory for the local community.

In *Double Loyalty*, Wu Aiqing, the concubine of General Zhang Xu commits suicide to be served as meat to feed the soldiers. The female martyr is consumed in order to boost the morale of the troops. In "The Siege of Yangzhou," Zong Erniang is reduced to meat on the chopping block in order to preserve her husband's family line. Ironically, at the end of the story, her martyrdom is rewarded with her husband dying childless.

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[316] T'ien Ju-K'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity: A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Qing Times*, p. 48. For detailed discussion on *ta t'ai*, see T'ien's *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity*, 48-56.

[317] Ibid., 49.

In both of the texts, the female protagonists are literally eaten and are presented as food. Female chaste martyrs Zong Erniang and Wu Aiqing are objectified as sacrificial animals---the original meaning of *xisheng* 犧牲. This objectification of female chaste martyrs underscores how women are ultimately reduced to the materiality of their female bodies. This proves to be the key obstacle that prevents women from achieving spiritual transcendence. The male homosocial community and the patriarchal system are consolidated through female chaste martyrdom. Female martyrs are used as scapegoats in ways that reproduce the concept that of any category of human women make the most natural sacrifice to uphold hegemonic structures of power. In the stories and the adaptations of the stories, female chaste martyrs Zong Erniang and Wu Aiqing overcome their corporeality by transforming into a deity and a ghost. The adaptions of the two stories function as ironic response to female chaste martyrdom erode an easy faith in Confucian values.

Although female chaste martyrdom functions as a bonding agent for homosocial community and the patriline under the Confucian value system, it is not directly related to national collective memory. As Lee Haiyan argues, "Women's access to the nation, however, is invariably mediated through the family or the romantic nexus."[318] In chapter 3, I explore how nationalism was woven into female martyrdom in the early Republican and May Fourth periods. I examine the coexistence of the promotion of female chaste martyrdom and the advocacy of women's liberation in early Republican China, the denunciation of female chaste martyrdom as a way to target Confucian values for May

[318] Lee Haiyan, *Revolution of the Heart*, 91.

Fourth intellectuals, and the establishment of female revolutionary martyrdom into the national collective memory.

On the surface, the eulogies for female chaste martyrs in early Republican media and the advocacy of women's liberation are contradictory, but they both came from and addressed the primary concern about saving the nation in early Republican China. In 1914, Yuan Shikai issued "The Regulations on Honoring Exemplars" to promote the chastity cult in order to restore Confucian values and save the nation from moral decline. Lu Xun summaries this trend as "female chaste martyrdom saves the nation" (*jielie jiushi shuo* 節烈救世說).[319] In response to the "Regulations" and widespread eulogies for female chaste martyrs in newspapers and magazines, May Fourth figures, including Lu Xun, Hu Shi and Guai'an criticized the cult of female chaste martyrdom through their writings to promote women's liberation. However, as Chien Ying-Ying argues in her analysis of Hu Shi's view on female chastity, "the advocacy of women's liberation and education is not an end in itself, but a means serving the patriarchal purpose of ultimately producing a strong, modern China."[320] In other words, the liberation of women and the promotion of female revolutionary martyrdom are two sides of one coin. The new cult of female revolutionary martyrdom thus became reconfigured as a "new chastity---moving away from the traditional duty of women serving men to a new one in which women serve the party or the nation as a whole."[321] This "new chastity" pressured Chinese

[319] See Lu Xun, "Wo zhi jielie guan," *Xin qingnian*, vol. 5 no. 2 (1918), 8-17.

[320] Chien Ying-Ying, "Feminism and China's New "Nora": Ibsen, Hu Shi, and Lu Xun," *The Comparatist* 19, no. 1 (1995), 104.

[321] Ibid., 99.

women to sacrifice themselves to both traditional ideological values and the modern nation, another form of community.

Female chastity continued to be a constant concern even in the cult of female revolutionary martyrdom. In chapter 4, I examine how modern and contemporary writings and rewritings of female revolutionary martyrdom flesh out national myths to question state ideology and nationalism. Prasenjit Duara examines the anxiety over female chastity in early twentieth-century China and points out that "In China, the representation of woman as the essence of national virtue was dramatized most clearly during wartime when the imagery of the raped woman came to represent the defiled purity of the invaded nation."[322] He then refers to Lydia Liu's close reading of rape as a motif in Xiao Hong's 蕭紅 (1911-1942) *Shengsi chang* (*Field of Life and Death* 生死場, 1935) and Xiao Jun's 蕭軍 (1907-1988) *Bayue de xiangcun* (*Village in August* 八月的鄉村, 1935). In *Village in August*, the rape of female villager Li Qisao 李七嫂 by a Japanese soldier symbolizes the invasion of China by foreign powers. In *Field of Life and Death*, Xiao Hong describes a Chinese woman Jin Zhi 金枝 who was raped by a Chinese man. Lydia Liu argues that in Xiao Jun's writing "the female body is ultimately displaced by nationalism, whose discourse denies the specificity of female experience by giving larger symbolic meanings to the signifier of rape."[323] She further points out that revolution and the concept of China as a nation are coded as masculine. Xiao Hong's writing on the rape of a Chinese woman by a Chinese man rather than a Japanese puts

[322] Prasenjit Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China," *History and Theory* 37, no. 3 (1998), 297.

[323] Lydia Liu, "The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: Manchuria in Xiao Hong's Field of Life and Death," in Zito, Angela., and Barlow, Tani E. *Body, Subject & Power in China*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 161.

emphasis on Chinese women's oppression from a feminist view that challenges Xiao Jun's approach of using the female body as a symbol to generate nationalist discourse.[324]

Rape is also a major motif in Eileen Chang's *Lust, Caution* and Ding Ling's short story "When I was in Xia Village." The motif problematizes the heroic image of female revolutionary martyrdom because of how it blurs the boundary between martyrdom and victimization. Zhenzhen and Wang Jiazhi, the female protagonists in the two respective stories, are both simultaneously presented as prostitutes and revolutionary martyrs. As we can see, even after the establishment of the heroic paradigm of female revolutionary martyrdom paradigm, writers called these values into question by projecting the sin of being a polluted object onto female characters. Ding Ling indicates in the story "When I was in Xia Village" that even after making enormous physical and emotional sacrifices to the Party, Zhenzhen has no hope of being included in the revolutionary discourse because she is "polluted."

In the case of Liu Hulan, the official narratives also reveal a concern about her purity. Early official narratives excluded any possibility that she may have had a romantic relationship. But, by the 1990s, the official narratives of Liu Hulan shifted to openly discussing her romantic relationship in order to speak to younger generations. However, the CCP promotes the idea that the man Liu dated was a Party cadre who later became a revolutionary martyr himself.[325] Yang Tao's contemporary appropriation of the image of Liu Hulan in the form of sculpture questions the official narratives by oversexualizing the female martyr. Since martyrdom contributes to national collective memory and the

[324] See ibid., 162.

[325] See *Liu Hulan*, directed by Feng Bailu 馮白魯 (1950; Shenyang: Bandao yinxiang chubanshe, 2005), DVD.

legitimation of regimes, the modern and contemporary appropriations of female martyrdom, many of which feature female sexuality, problematize the moral legitimacy of the ruling government and its deployment of nationalism.

The narrative changing of concepts of female martyrdom is a symptom of the changing of ideologies and also a form of resistance against mainstream ideology. Writings about female martyrs are more about the making of the female martyrs than about the female martyrs themselves. From the analysis of representations of female martyrdom in Chinese literature and culture discussed in this dissertation, we can better understand how gender dynamics affect the construction and consumption of female martyrs, how the dominant ideology tries to control the production of the narratives, and how changing narratives produce new ideologies.

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