

Reimagining Chinese Masculinities:
Ideal Manhood in the *Three Kingdoms*

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the transformation of Chinese manhood within the Three Kingdoms story cycle, primarily within the plain narrative, the *Sanguozhi pinghua* and the the *Sanguozhi tongshu yanyi*, a reconstructed novel. I argue these two versions of the Three Kingdoms story attempt to reconstruct male identities in the late imperial period. This reconstruction of manhood in the process of novelization reveals how these rewritings respond to *wen-wu* masculinities. Many characters are described differently in the two versions of the story, and these differences describe the transition of Chinese masculinity from the Yuan to the mid-Ming period.

Chapter One focuses on the changes to the warrior character Zhang Fei's defiant disposition in the plain and the reconstructed narratives examining the restraints cast on these warrior-like characters in this transition. In Chapter Two, I compare the image of Zhuge Liang in the plain narrative to the sorcerer-like Zhuge Liang in the reconstructed narrative, which presents the concept of self-invention and the shift to scholar-like identity. Chapter Three analyzes Guan Yu's character as a Chinese knight-errant. In the reconstructed narrative, Guan Yu presents a different character archetype compared to Zhang Fei's warrior-like or Zhuge Liang's scholar-like archetype.

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Introduction

Manhood in China is a growing interest in Sinology. One of the pioneers in the field of Chinese masculinity is Kam Louie, who theorizes Chinese masculinities through a dyad of *wen* 文 and *wu* 武, on which he elaborates by differentiating Chinese manhood into *wen*, the cultural attainment, and *wu*, martial valor in the twentieth century (Louie *Theorising* 4). Louie's study provides a vision of some of the major patterns in the discourse of masculinity among modern Chinese males. Starting with Louie's polarity of *wen* and *wu*, Martin Huang examines masculinities in the modern discourse, then refocuses his study to pre-modern China, specifically the political and historical consciousness of the late imperial period. Huang identifies various models of masculinity in late imperial Chinese novels and analyzes how these models negotiated manhood in relation to femininity or an ambivalent gender. Huang examines the imagery of the relationship between manhood and nationhood: the transition of manhood from man to castrato, and the feminization of men through the metaphor of the faithful wife or the treacherous whore who causes the fall of the empire. The models identified by Huang include *dazhangfu* 大丈夫, *yongshi* 勇士, *yingxiong* 英雄, *haohan* 好漢, *caizi* 才子, *wenren* 文人, *pinshi* 貧士, *junzi* 君子, and other male archetypes in late imperial China. In fact, Huang's study presents the case of feminized manhood in comparison to its male counterpart, whose inability to prevent the fall of the Ming empire contributed to the popularity of cross-dressing and novels about the domesticated household. Moreover, femininity was always held accountable for the failure of a kingdom. This theme is prevalent in my study of the novel of the Three Kingdoms and constantly contributes to the negotiation of masculine identities within the story cycle.

My investigation focuses on the transition of the male identity between the Yuan and early Ming periods within the Three Kingdoms story cycle, primarily on the barebones narrative from the Yuan period, the *Sanguozhi pinghua*, and the literati rewrite published in 1522, the

Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi. My argument attempts to identify the changes within the male identity by comparing the two texts from different time periods, in order to demonstrate that there was an effort to reconstruct male identities in the late imperial period. Although Martin Huang suggests that this self-reconstruction occurred in the eighteenth century in autobiographical novels, my research suggests this self-reconstruction of male identities occurred as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Huang *Literati* 5-14). Furthermore, I attempt to compare the same male characters narrated in these two recensions in order to identify the conflicting values of masculinity and identity signaled by these two texts. Therefore, I will compare and contrast the descriptions of specific characters, as well as the set of events that contributed to the construction of these male characters.

This study is not intended to be a chronological survey of Chinese masculinities in the early period of late imperial China, nor it is an attempt to establish a subgenre of masculinities beyond the concept of the *wen* and *wu* dyad. I intend to focus on how the literati compilers and authors attempted to reconstruct or revamp the popular images of the male archetypes from popular readings through the rearrangement of events, and the fictive implant of additional narratives. However, I would like to emphasize that this study has no intention of suggesting that the authors or compilers of these two texts of the Three Kingdoms consciously constructed or reconstructed the masculine images presented in this study. My interest in this study centers on how these two textual works revamp and reconstruct the presentation of the different images of masculinities, and how these rewritings of the story respond to late imperial Chinese society. My hope is that this study will contribute to our understanding of Chinese masculinities in the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries during the rise of *zhanghui xiaoshuo*, and the transition to the literati-ization of popular readings.

Transition from Historical Writing to Vernacular Literature

Historical writing, or *shi* 史, holds a special position compared to the other three major categories of Chinese literary tradition, which are the classics, or *jing* 經, philosophical writings known as *zi* 子, and the belles-lettres, or *ji* 集. The classics, or *jing*, mainly refer to the classical texts such as *The Book of Changes*, or *Yijing* 易經, and *The Book of Odes*, or *Shijing* 詩經. The philosophical writings, or *zi*, refer to books in the subjects of the medical field, military strategy, and even astronomy, such as *The Art of War*, or *Sunzi* 孫子兵法. Then, the belles-lettres, or *ji*, include all the prose, rhetorical writings, poetry, drama, and criticisms, like *The Collected Poems of Du Fu*, *Dugong buji* 杜工部集. In fact, historical writing, or *shi* 史, refers to the historical records either imperial sanctioned or recorded by private historiographers. Furthermore, the *shi* not only elucidates historical writings, it also refers to the political institution in ancient China, the Office of History, or the court historian known as *Shi guan* 史官, an integral part of the imperial state apparatus. There are several official positions in the Office of History, including *taishi* 太史, the grand historian, and *xiaoshi* 小史, the junior historian. They performed secretarial and literary tasks for the court, such as recording events and speeches, preserving archives and documents, and even drafting state papers and imperial edicts. Later in the Tang period (618–907 CE), these duties from the Office of History were replaced by the Hanlin Academy 翰林院, a group of elite scholars who had passed the rigorous civil service examination and acted as reserve officials for the imperial court.

Historical writings receiving special attention in Chinese literary tradition was not due to the possibility of attaining a high-level official position, such as *taishi* or becoming the Grand Secretary 內閣大學士. It is because those who compiled and wrote historical writing, especially

historical records, will be remembered in history and receive tremendous praise among the community of scholars and elites. For example, Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145–86 BCE) wrote *Shiji* 史記, or the *Records of Grand Historian*; Confucius compiled *Chunqiu* 春秋, or the *Spring and Autumn Annals*; Ban Gu 班固 (32–92 CE) wrote *Hanshu* 漢書, or *Book of Former Han*; Chen Shou 陳壽 (233–297 CE) wrote *Sanguozhi* 三國志, or *Records of the Three Kingdoms*; and Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086 CE) wrote *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, or *Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance*. In doing so, they left their names to be remembered for generations.

Furthermore, each dynasty in China would sanction historiographers to compile a collected history of the previous dynasty, in order to demonstrate its legitimacy as the inheritor from the previous imperial court. During the Ming period, historians Wang Zhu 王洙 and Ke Weiqi 柯維騏 rewrote the standard history of the Song dynasty in order to legitimize the Song apart from the nomadic dynasties of Liao and Jin (Chia 318). Beyond the aforementioned regard for historical writers, it was believed that historical writing has a unique influence on society.

According to *Mencius* 孟子, due to the copious incidents of regicides and parricides constantly occurring at the time, Confucius intended to “[strike] terror into the hearts of rebellious subjects and undutiful sons” through the composition of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (Mencius 72-73). In fact, writing history was considered as “a mirror of human affairs” that “offered patterns of success and failure and subsequently served a didactic function” to the ministers, and even to the emperor (Lu *From Historicity* 130).

On the other hand, “fiction” is a western term for *xiaoshuo* 小說, which literally translates to “small talk” or “minor discourse.” Victor Mair clarifies the difference between the two terms, which “fiction” signifies as “something made up or created by an author or writer”

(Mair 21-22). While the Chinese term *xiaoshuo* etymologically implies a type of unofficial history, or rumors and gossip of the streets (Mair 21-22). The origin of *xiaoshuo* can be traced to *bai guan* 稗官, ancient officials in the Office of History and low ranking historians whose responsibility it was to collect rumors and gossip of the people and channel it up to the court; it is a type of social reportage on people's praises or complaints of the government. They were also responsible for recording songs and chants recited or sung by the people in rural villages or in streets and alleyways. Many of these stories reported by the *bai guan* are considered as the earliest form of modern *xiaoshuo* (Lu *From Historicity* 45). *Bai* is the Chinese name for barnyard grass or cockspur, which is one of the weeds that reduces the yield of crops and acts as a host for various mosaic virus diseases; it has a similar appearance to millet or rice crops (He 2-3). Therefore, *bai guan xiaoshuo* refers to fictional writings that are worthless, trivial, and harmful to read, since it implies unreliable sources and materials. Such records of minor and popular writings continue to be recorded from ancient China to the late imperial period, and they transformed as petty officials continued to collect them. During the Six Dynasties (265–588 CE), court historian Gan Bao 干寶 (282–351 CE) compiled an anthology of the *xiaoshuo* genre *zhiguai* 志怪, called *Soushen Ji* 搜神記, the *Records of Anomalies*. The *zhiguai* narratives, or the tales of the strange, are anecdotes about supernatural and mystical events, or uncanny mores and customs of the barbaric tribes. From today's perspective, these anecdotes on strange events and uncanny mores can be considered fiction, however, the authors who recorded these strange tales believed their accounts were factual incidents, not fictional creations. Hence, since *zhiguai* narratives intend to record specific events, it tends to have fewer descriptions, and fewer words in a style similar to historical writings (Lu *From Historicity* 48-49).

Following *zhiguai* as the prototype for fictional narrative, during the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), two different types of fictional narratives were developed. *Bianwen* 變文, or transformation texts, are believed to be one of the earliest forms of fiction narrative in China. *Bianwen* originate from Buddhist doctrines, and evolved into a form of oral and visual performance, or a way for monks to preach Buddhism among the common people in rural villages and backstreets. Therefore, *bianwen* reflects a heavy use of the spoken language of its time, and folksongs in its narratives. Another fictional form developed around the same time period is the *chuanqi* 傳奇, or the transmission of the strange and marvelous. *Chuanqi* is largely influenced by the *zhiguai* corpus and has similar themes as *zhiguai*, such as mystic, strange, and marvelous tales. *Chuanqi* includes stories about love, heroism, and history, similar to the epic tales in the West. In addition, the narratives of *chuanqi* are relatively detail-oriented, compared to the *zhiguai* narratives. Around the Tang period, both *bianwen* and *chuanqi* developed short stories that resemble *xiaoshuo* from the late imperial period.

The current form of the Chinese novel, or *zhanghui xiaoshuo* 章回小說, reached its maturity during the Ming period (1368–1644 CE). *Zhanghui xiaoshuo* literally translates to “chaptered small discourse,” in which the novel divides itself into various sections, lengths, and chapters. It is based on the narrative style of *chuanqi* and *bianwen* from the Tang period, and *huaben* 話本, the promptbooks of *shuoshuren* 說書人 professional storytellers, or popular readings from the Song-Yuan period (960–1275 CE; 1279–1368 CE). These promptbooks were largely written in vernacular language, and their narrative was considerably plain and concise. Some of the stories from these written materials are only referred to in the text without detailed narration, they are “atrocious in style,” and they often use the wrong characters for names and locations. Moreover, many of these narratives also contain formulaic phrases, such as “*huashuo*

話說 (the story goes...),” or “*qieshuo* 且說 (let’s tell),” or “*yuzhi houshi ruhe qieting xiahui fenjie* 欲知後事如何且聽下回分解 (if you want to know what happened next, listen to the next chapter)” (Idema “Some Remarks” 122).

The *zhanghui xiaoshuo* are reconstructed narratives based on these three types of fictional writings, *bianwen*, *chuanqi*, *huaben*, and *zhiguai*. For example, *Journey to the West*, or *Xiyouji* 西遊記, is a retelling of the Buddhist monk Xuanzang’s 玄藏 historical traveling account, *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記, *The Grand Tang Records of the Western Regions*, compiled in conglomerate and mixed with the biography written by Xuanzang’s disciples Huili 慧立, *Daciensi San Zang fashi zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法師傳, various religious mythologies from both Buddhism and Daoism, a storyteller promptbook printed in the Song-Yuan period entitled *Datang sanzang qujing shihua* 大唐三藏取經詩話, and episodic stories from *zaju* 雜劇, or drama with the same title as the novel. In similar fashion, *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi* 三國志通俗演義, or the *Popular Exposition of the Records of the Three Kingdoms*, is also a reconstructed narrative that retells the events that occurred in the historical period known as the Three Kingdoms (184–280 CE).¹ The novel is based on the narrative from Chen Shou’s historical records *Sanguozhi*, promptbooks from storytellers such as *Sanguozhi pinghua* 三國志平話, or *Records of the Three Kingdoms in Plain Language*, *Sanfen shilüe* 三分事略, or *A Brief Account of the Tripartition*, and episodic stories from the Song-Yuan *zaju*. Therefore, in its narration, *zhanghui xiaoshuo* utilizes a mixture of both vernacular language and *wenyan wen* 文言文, or literary Chinese. Furthermore, due to the Mongolian regime’s suppression of the literati during

¹ There are two translations for *yanyi* 演義, one is “popular elaboration,” and the other is “popular exposition” (Yang 47; *Records* xvii).

the Yuan period, popular literature such as *zaju*, *Yuanqu* 元曲, storytelling, and *zhanghui xiaoshuo* became the main course of development, and orthodox scholars changed their previous perspective on *xiaoshuo* and *zaju* as something worthless and trivial (D. Liu 3:1-4). Thus, many members of the literati contributed to the creation and writing of popular literature, with limited positions in both the Yuan and Ming courts, since the literati had no other means of survival except reading and writing.

Liu Dajie's *Zhongguo wenxue fazhan shi* highlights the way in which *zhanghui xiaoshuo* of the Ming dynasty contained philosophical or moral discourse embedded within its narrative. Liu quotes the preface from *Xingshi Hengyan* 醒世恆言, or the *Stories to Awaken the World*, to support his claims about *zhanghui xiaoshuo* in the Ming period, as the popular exposition of these stories served a didactic function to the commoners, either literate or illiterate. (D. Liu 3:189). In another analysis, Chan Hok-lam suggests that during the Ming regime, *zhanghui xiaoshuo* tended to reflect certain emotional distresses, either implicitly or explicitly, such as nostalgia for the past, anger about social injustice, or the legitimacy of the emperor (Franke 200). According to Chan, the didactic intention of *xiaoshuo* in the Ming period is not only apparent in its use of vernacular language; the writers of such writings also reconfigured events, characters, and emotions that stimulated the reader to establish a personal attachment to the story, to think, and to reconsider the reader's own course of action. This is especially the case in the historical *zhanghui xiaoshuo*, written and published in the early Ming period. In his renowned work in historiography over the debate of the nature and function of historical knowledge, Hayden White states that the rearrangement of a set of historical events into "the components of a process of happening" provides "meaning" and explanations to the events, such as good over evil, of virtue over vice, and of light over darkness (White 5-8). This means that the writers' reconstruction and

narration of events in the story is affected by the writers' values and ideologies. Therefore, even within the same story, different narrations will elaborate a different set of values.

Historical Origins of the novel, *Three Kingdoms*

The Three Kingdoms period, or the *Sanguo* 三國, refers to the period of disunion during and immediately after the fall of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), between 184 and 280 CE. The period began with a massive uprising that took twenty-one years until it was fully suppressed, due to the famine and flood that caused discontent among the farmers. In addition to natural disasters, large landowners and gentry-clans continued to exploit the labor surplus in order to amass fortunes, which exacerbated the uproar from the lower class (Xie 406-408). During the time, as the central government attempted to suppress the peasant uprising, three leaders gradually emerged in the competition for power: Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220 CE), the titular founder of the Wei 魏 kingdoms, which occupied the northern part of the Han empire; Liu Bei 劉備 (161–223 CE), the founder of the Shu 蜀 kingdoms located in the southwestern part of the Han empire, mainly the modern Sichuan area; and Sun Quan 孫權 (182–252 CE), the founder of the Wu 吳 kingdoms located in the southeastern part of the Han empire, including Jiangsu, Hunan, and the Guangdong area. The standoff between the three kingdoms lasted for approximately sixty years from 220 CE, after Cao Cao's son, Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226 CE) forced Emperor Xian of Han 漢獻帝 (181–234 CE) to abdicate the throne to him, to 280 CE after the tripartite empire was temporarily reunified under Sima Yan 司馬炎 (266–290 CE), who established the Jin 晉 dynasty (266–420 CE).²

² The length of the Jin dynasty includes the Western Jin 西晉 (266–316 CE) and the Eastern Jin 東晉 (317–420 CE).

The *Records of the Three Kingdoms* is the historical chronicle commissioned by the Jin court, written and compiled by Chen Shou 陳壽. The *Records* is structured into three books: *Weishu* 魏書, or the *Records of the Wei Kingdom*, which contains 30 fascicles; *Shushu* 蜀書 or the *Records of the Shu Kingdom*, which contains fifteen fascicles; and *Wushu* 吳書, or the *Records of the Wu Kingdoms*, which contains twenty fascicles, for total of sixty-five fascicles and approximately 360,000 Chinese characters in total. In this historical record, Chen structured *Weishu* with sections for Cao Cao, Cao Pi, and Cao Rui 曹叡, entitled *ji* 紀, or annals, which are specifically labeled as the records of emperors and their families. On the other hand, for the narratives for the founders of Shu and Wu, Liu Bei and Sun Quan, Chen titled their records as *zhuan* 傳, or biographies, and referred them as *zhu* 主, or rulers, rather than *di* 帝, or emperors, which he used in the Wei annals.³ Chen's structure in his historical chronicle assumes the Wei kingdoms as the legitimate successor of the Han dynasty. Moreover, this structure also legitimizes the Jin dynasty as the legal heritor of the Wei, since the imperial court of Jin deposed the Wei by forcing the last Wei emperor to abdicate the throne to Sima Yan in similar fashion.

As he gathered his materials, Chen eliminated what he considered to be unreliable historical sources, especially for part of Chen's chronicle, the *Shushu*. Unlike the kingdoms of Wei and Wu, the kingdom of Shu didn't compile or record any official historical accounts. Therefore, Chen eliminated various materials that he considered unreliable or fabricated, such as backstreet rumors and gossip. Over a century after Chen's death, Emperor Wen of Song (Liu Yilong 劉義隆) 宋文帝 (424–453 CE) viewed Chen's historical records as brusque and curt, so he commissioned Pei Songzhi 裴松之 to make annotations to Chen's text in order to fill in the

³ Liu Bei is referred to as *Xianzhu* 先主, while Liu Bei's son Liu Shan 劉禪 is referred to as *Houzhu* 後主, and Sun Quan is referred to as *Wuzhu* 吳主.

gaps between the events that Chen had omitted (Chen *Sanguozhi* 2-3, 654; Chia 320). Pei supplemented Chen's historical records with more elaborate narratives in his annotations, which are three times the length of Chen's original works. Pei's annotations were drawn from over 240 sources, such as unofficial histories, private accounts, popular tales, and materials Chen had eliminated and considered unreliable hundreds of years prior (*Records* xv). These annotations provide detailed supplementary information about the people, places, and incidents recorded in Chen's accounts, and these annotations also provide an alternate version of Chen's records. However, most of the works utilized by Pei are no longer extant.

Nevertheless, Chen's *Records of the Three Kingdoms* still received a tremendous amount of criticism for centuries due to Chen's treatment of *zhengtong* 正統, or the legitimate successor of the Han court. As mentioned above, Chen referred to the biographies of the three emperors from the Wei kingdom as *ji*, instead of *zhuan* like the other three emperors' biographies from the Shu and Wu kingdoms. These explicit references assert the Wei kingdom as the legitimate successor to the Han dynasty. Xi Zuochi 習鑿齒 (316–384 CE) was one of the first historians to make an alternate judgment and to take the iconoclastic step of delegitimizing the Wei kingdom, theorizing that the ritual abdication was not enough to establish Wei as a legitimate successor of the Han dynasty (Jao 89-91). However, Xi's judgment was not widely accepted until later during and after the Song period (960–1279 CE) due to the rise of sinocentrism (Ge *Zhai* 41-44).⁴ In Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian*, in the sixty-ninth fascicle, the *Weiji* 魏紀, or annals of the Wei, Sima Guang explicitly notes that his use of the Wei annals is for the sake of convenience, not because he accepts the idea that the kingdom of Wei was the legitimate successor to the Han

⁴ The length of the Song dynasty includes the Northern Song 北宋 (960–1127 CE) and the Southern Song 南宋 (1127–1279 CE).

dynasty (Jao 130-132). And this ideological sentiment that refused Wei as the legitimate successor of the Han continued into the Southern Song dynasty, as neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200 CE) considered Liu Bei and his kingdom of Shu to be the morally legitimate successor in his work, *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 資治通鑑綱目, or *Outline and Digest of the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*, which is based upon Sima Guang's historical work with didactic criticisms and ideological rhetoric.

Furthermore, the first known printed edition of Chen's *Records* dates as early as 1003, which is a collation revised and printed by the *Guozhi jian* 國子監, the Directorate of Education of the Song dynasty. This governmental promotion and scholars' ideological debate over the historiography of the legitimate successor of the Three Kingdoms suggested not only the popularity of the Three Kingdoms story at the time, but also the tumultuous diplomatic turmoil during the Song period. During the Song period, the political situation between the Song court and the world was different than any other period from the past. At the time of the Northern Song, the Khitan 契丹, a nomadic tribe from the Eurasian Steppe, established the Liao 遼 dynasty (916–1125 CE) and occupied the present-day Manchuria, Mongolia, and northeast China, which posed a military threat to the Song court. Later, the Liao dynasty was vanquished and driven to the eastern-most portion of Central Asia by the Jin 金 dynasty (1115–1234 CE), which was a state established by another nomadic tribe from the Eurasian Steppe, the Jurchen 女真. The Jin also invaded the northern part of China, forcing the Song dynasty to settle south of Yangzi River 揚子江. Military and political threats from these two "alien dynasties" contributed to a phenomenon of rewriting the history of the Three Kingdoms, as a means to reflect the sentimental awareness of the legitimacy of the Song dynasty (Chia 319). Furthermore, the

increased use of printing technology and the commercialization of books facilitated and shaped this awareness of legitimacy on the interpretation, writing, and reception of historical narratives at the time. This gave rise to the popularization of the Three Kingdoms stories among the backstreets and alleyways in rural villages and urban areas during the Song-Yuan and Ming periods.

Sanguozhi pinghua, or the *Records of the Three Kingdoms in Plain Language* (hereinafter referred to as *pinghua*), is one of the five plain language tales collected in a set of promptbooks with the title *Quanxiang pinghua wuzhong* 全相平話五種, *Five Completely Illustrated Plain Tales*, which is currently preserved in the *Naikaku bunko* 內閣文庫 in Tokyo, Japan.⁵ Its colophon notes that it was printed by the Yu family in Jian'an area 建安虞氏, and was published during the Zhizi reign 至治 (1321–1323 CE). The Zhizi reign was an era name used by Mongolian emperor Gegeen Khan 碩德八剌, also known by his temple name, Emperor Yingzong of Yuan 元英宗 (1302–1323 CE).⁶ It is also printed as *xinkan* 新刊, which means newly-printed, therefore suggesting there were possibly other printed versions before this Zhizi edition.

Pinghua consists of three fascicles, 138 pages long, with roughly 55,000 characters in total. Each page is divided into two sections. The top, about one-third of the page, is an illustration of the event narrated on that particular page, for a total of sixty-nine illustrations in all three fascicles. The bottom two-thirds of the page is the narrative, which consists of twenty columns of twenty characters each. It is about four hundred characters in total, except for the

⁵ In this research, I utilized the high-definition photographic reproduction from the *Naikaku bunko*.

⁶ Yuan 元 is the dynasty name for the Mongolian regime established by Kublai Khan 忽必烈 after he conquered China.

beginning and ending pages of each fascicle, in which a line is used to indicate the beginning, ending, and title of the fascicle.

Pinghua opens with an account of an underworld trial of the Han dynasty's founding emperor, Liu Bang 劉邦 (256–195 BCE) and his wife Empress Lü 呂后 as defendants against accusations by the three meritorious generals, Han Xin 韓信 (d. 196 BCE), Ying Bu 英布 (d. 195 BCE), and Peng Yue 彭越 (d. 196 BCE). This opening scene is a prologue, which affirms that the purpose and theme of the Three Kingdoms story in *pinghua* is retribution. The judge Sima Zhongxiang 司馬仲相, Liu Bang, and the three meritorious generals are sentenced by the Jade Emperor of Heaven to be reincarnated at the fall of the Han dynasty, which will divide the empire into three parts, and will eventually be reunited by Sima Zhongxiang's reincarnation as Sima Yi 司馬懿 (179–251 CE), grandfather of Sima Yan. The story ends as Liu Yuan 劉淵 (251–310 CE) reestablishes the Kingdom of Han Zhao 漢趙 (304–319 CE) and drives off the Jin dynasty that had been established by Sima Yi after he reunited the tripartite empire.

The narratives in *pinghua* are short and concise, and most of the time, they consist of a brief summary of the events in quick succession, one after another. Such a raw and short narrative in *pinghua*, without much literary embellishment, contributes to the speculation that *pinghua* is a promptbook for the use of professional storytellers (D. Liu 190-191). Since each storyteller will improvise their own version of the events in their oral performance in public locations, and each storyteller had their own repertoire of performance, the gap between events provides an opportunity for the storytellers to fill in the gap (Yoo 36-38). Therefore, the written text served as a barebones promptbook for the storyteller to retell their version of the stories. On the other hand, there is another paradigm, including that of Wilt Idema, which suggests *pinghua* was popular reading material designed for the general audience (Idema "Some Remarks" 135-

141). Idema's claim that *pinghua* was popular reading material is based on its abrupt and often-jerky usage of vernacular language and its embellishment with classical prose, poetry, and documentary pieces within the narrative, which suggests to him that *pinghua* was written for the general reading audience, as opposed to a textual script for oral performance only. However, neither paradigm denies *pinghua*'s incorporation of folklores and popular beliefs. The popular sentiment is reflected in various events recorded in *pinghua*, such as the karmic retribution of the underground trial in the opening scene, the oath of brotherhood, the exaggeration of the martial prowess of warrior generals, and the wizardry of immortal powers, all of which reflect the popular beliefs derived from folk tales (Besio *Disposition* 10-12). Furthermore, ten out of forty *mu* 目, or title headings, inserted between events are known titles from Yuan *zaju*, and the others are abbreviations of *Sanguo* plays (Plaks 383). These titles further suggest that *pinghua* reflects plain narrative origins and influence from popular sources.

On the other hand, *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi*, or the *Popular Exposition of the Records of the Three Kingdoms* (hereinafter referred to as *tongsu yanyi*, which only refers to the Jiajing recension; for any other recension I will mention its full title), is one of the earliest printed versions of the *Three Kingdoms*. It was published in 1522, the first year of the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign, according to one of the two prefaces written by Zhang Shangde 張尚德 under the pseudonym Xiu Ranzi 修髯子. But another preface included in this print is dated to the seventh year of the Hongzhi 弘治 reign (1494), which suggests the novel may have circulated before the listed date, as Jiang Daqi 蔣大器 (also known by the pseudonym Yong Yuzi 庸愚子) noted in his preface, which mentions that “gentlemen and scholars with a keen interest competed in transcribing copies” of the text (Luo 937). Judging by the testimony of Zhang Shangde, Andrew Plaks believes that the 1494 Hongzhi recension was a hand-copied manuscript, and the 1522 Jiajing

recension was a printed text (Plaks 362). Moreover, the two prefaces in *tongsu yanyi* suggest there was possibly a less-than-satisfactory version than the Jiaping recension, as Zhang Shangde admits in his preface that he made several minor embellishments in the novel (Plaks 369).

In addition to the problematic issue of the date of its circulation, the question of authorship contributes to another controversy among the novelized Three Kingdoms stories. Most scholars attribute the authorship of *tongsu yanyi* to Luo Guanzhong 羅貫中. Luo's given name is Ben 本 and Guanzhong is his courtesy name, with the pseudonym of *Huhai Sanren* 湖海散人. He was a playwright who lived sometime between 1315 and 1400 CE, during the late Yuan and early Ming periods. He was known as a vagrant traveler among the "brotherhood of river and lakes,"⁷ for compiling historical plays, and for being the author of *tongsu yanyi* and other vernacular novels attributed to or related to him, such as *Cantang wudai shiyanyi zhuan* 殘唐五代史演義傳, *Suitang zhizhuan* 隋唐志傳, and even *Zhongyi shuihu quanzhuan* 忠義水滸全傳, for which he is credited as the joint author along with Shi Nai'an 施耐庵 (Liu *Zhongguo* 191-192). The beginning of *tongsu yanyi* attributes authorship to Chen Shou, and Luo is credited as *bianci* 編次, or one who made editorial arrangements to the book, which suggests there is possibly an earlier recension written prior to this version of *tongsu yanyi*. However, this issue cannot be resolved unless a recension with an earlier date is discovered.

Tongsu yanyi contains twenty-four fascicles, and each fascicle has ten chapters, for a total of 240 chapters. It contains approximately 800,000 Chinese characters in total, and mentions over one thousand major and minor characters by name. Each chapter has a single seven-syllable line as its title, usually identifying the chapter's central figure and event. For example, the ninth

⁷ I adopted John Milford's translation of the term *Jianghu* 江湖 to signify the brotherhood interest, which is from Milford's translated work of Louis Cha's *The Deer and the Cauldron* 鹿鼎記 (Cha *The Deer* xxv).

chapter of the first volume is titled “Cao Cao Rallies an Army Against Dong Zhuo,” or *Caocao qibing fa Dong Zhuo* 曹操起兵伐董卓, and the ninth chapter of the fifth volume is titled “Zhang Liao Coaxes Guan Yunchang with Justifications,” or *Zhang Liao yishuo Guan Yunchang* 張遼義說關雲長. The literati-ized *tongsu yanyi* opens the story with the death of Emperor Huan of Han 漢桓帝, and Emperor Ling of Han 漢靈帝 taking over the throne at the age of twelve. *Tongsu yanyi* ends with one of the Jin generals, Wang Jun 王濬, capturing the Stone City, or *Shitou cheng* 石頭城, the modern day city of Nanking, thereby annihilating the kingdom of Wu and contributing to Sima Yan’s unification of all three kingdoms into one unified dynasty in May of 280 CE, the first year of Taikang 太康.

Tongsu yanyi is one of the most widely-read Chinese novels in East Asia, and has been rewritten and reconstructed into various recensions, including *Li Zhuowu xiansheng piping Sanguozhi* 李卓吾先生批評三國志, *Xinke anjian quanxiang piping Sanguozhi zhuan* 新刻按鑑全像批評三國志傳 in the Ming period, Mao Zonggang’s *Sida qishu diyizhong* 四大奇書第一種 at the beginning of eighteenth century, and Shen Bojun’s *Xiaoli ben Sanguo yanyi* 校理本三國演義 in the twentieth century. *Tongsu yanyi* is known for its linguistic mixtures of classical and vernacular language in its narratives, and for its use of historical materials from both official and unofficial narratives. In addition, it removed some of the irrational and spiritual elements of the novel, such as the Karmic dream of the underworld trial from *pinghua*. These elements indicate a significant level of authorial elaboration of the historical narrative in the barebones popular readings, such as *pinghua*. I utilize these two reading materials, the literati-ized *tongsu yanyi* and the plain narrative *pinghua*, to present my supposition on the changing reconstructed image of Chinese masculinities in the late imperial period.

Historical Context of Masculinity

I analyze Chinese masculinities in the late imperial period, mainly through analyzing fictional narratives written between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. My assumption is that in the early-to-mid Ming period, novels such as *tongsu yanyi* attempt to rectify and reconstruct Chinese masculine identities, including the warrior and scholar archetypes. In the early Ming period, these masculine identities were different from the fictional depicted masculine images during and after the seventeenth century. However, this project only presents a small glimpse of the whole picture, by identifying certain changes that took place between the Yuan and mid-Ming periods, which act as a starting point to compare the subsequent transition from historical or politically-related novels to novels about the fragile scholar and beauty, or *caizi jiaren* 才子佳人, and topics related to the domesticated household, such as *Jin ping mei* 金瓶梅, or *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, and *Yu jiaoli* 玉嬌梨, or *The Two Fair Cousins*. These novels typically narrate a story about either the domestic affairs within a household, which reflects the collusion of power and money in a society dominated by merchant-gentry, about a fragile scholar having a romantic struggle with one or more fair ladies, or a story with the motif of cross-dressing.

My work focuses on identifying the collective masculine identities in both plain and reconstructed narratives. The terms “literati-ized” and “literati-ization” refer to the “process in which literati became more directly involved with the production and consumption of the novel,” and is a translation of the Chinese terminology *wenren hua* 文人化 (Huang *Literati* 15). *Pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* reflect the collective images of Chinese men during the Yuan to mid-Ming periods. My study attempts to contribute to the study of masculinities in the late imperial period and poses a comparison between the image of man from *pinghua* (plain narrative) and from

tongsu yanyi (reconstructed narrative).⁸ During the Ming period, the literati became more directly involved with the production and consumption of the novel, as they often derived their materials from folk traditions, then translated them into sophisticated literature (Huang *Literati* 15). I intend to shed light on the subject of Chinese masculinities, in which popular culture, such as folklore and folk belief, affected the reconstruction of masculinity in the late imperial period. Since scholars of the Three Kingdoms believe *tongsu yanyi* was based on the barebones-structured promptbook of *pinghua*, the various images of masculinity depicted in *pinghua* should have affected the characters' development in *tongsu yanyi*, either through combining the characters or through the editorial arrangement of history, in order to explain the "meaning" embedded in the historical romance. Hence, the author or compiler had a self-conscious obligation to "combine a certain amount of 'data,'" along with concepts to explain this data, and to present the story in a specific narrative structure, the historical romance (White xxix-xxx).

As previously mentioned, Chan Hok-lam explained how *xiaoshuo* during the Ming period tends to reflect certain emotional distresses by the literati writers, especially the regime of the Jianwen Emperor 建文帝, Zhu Yunwen 朱允炆 and his ministers after Zhu Di 朱棣 usurped his throne in 1402 (Franke 200). My study is based on this presumption of historical romance, and how the authors of the literati-ized recension of the Three Kingdoms story, *tongsu yanyi*, rearranged the story to remake the male identities from the popular images presented in the plain narrative, *pinghua*.

I will start with the discussion of the *wu* masculinities. In this part of the study, the main focus is on the warrior Zhang Fei. Kimberly Besio claims Zhang Fei is a rude character with a

⁸ The consideration of *pinghua* as plain narrative and *tongsu yanyi* as literati narrative is suggested in Wang Lijuan's work of *Sanguo gushi yanbian zhong de wenren xushi yu minjian xushi* 三國故事演變中的文人敘事與民間敘事.

defiant disposition that contributes to a kind of comical effect throughout the Three Kingdoms story cycle, especially in *zaju* (Besio *Disposition* iv). In fact, Zhang Fei's rudeness and his impromptu emotion are the salient characteristics of the *wu* male identities, in addition to their transcendental martial skills and valor in combat. Zhang Fei is the leading character in *pinghua*, as the narratives revolve around him in all three fascicles, except the prologue of the underworld trail which involves the karmic dream, and the rest of the story after Zhang's death, which is less than half of the third fascicle. In both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang is depicted as a typical *haohan* 好漢, having a coarse and innate intuition, or a good-fellow archetype that had inspired later writers. In *pinghua*, Zhang Fei is not subject to anyone's control, while in *tongsu yanyi*, he is reined in from his spontaneous behaviors by the scholarly characters, such as Liu Bei, Zhuge Liang, and Sun Qian 孫乾. Furthermore, this reining in of Zhang Fei and the *wu* masculinities is not the only example in *tongsu yanyi*. There are various warrior-like characters being restrained by the scholarly, or *wen* characters throughout the novel. Although Zhang Fei is treated differently in the two recensions, his character remains. This chapter will explain the changes of the *wu* masculinities in the early Ming period, and will illustrate the images of the *wu* characters from the folk and literati narratives of the same story.

In contrast to *wu*, the second of part of this study discusses the reconstruction of the *wen* masculinities in the Three Kingdoms story. One of the leading figures in the story, Zhuge Liang, is one of the essential representations of scholarly figures in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman suggests Zhuge Liang was not a popular figure until the mid-Tang period, when he became more popular due to several poems written by Du Fu during and after his stay in Sichuan province. Zhuge Liang's image changes in the two narratives from a feminine immortal to a wizard-like scholar-official, is unlike Zhang Fei, as Zhang remains consistent in

both narratives (Tillman *Reassessing* 296-298). The reconstruction of Zhuge Liang not only implies a rebuke to past regimes, such as the Mongol occupation, but also looks askance at the first two reigns of the early Ming period, Hongwu 洪武 and Yongle 永樂, and sets a defiant tone against the pedantic and servile scholar identity. During the Mongol occupation of China, the ideal man in China had become scholars that lacked masculine aggression. This continued after the Mongol was driven back to the northern steppe and the establishment of the Ming dynasty, followed by several political and military crises, as the images of a pedantic and servile scholar had become the dominant identity in the popular work (Louie *Changing* 16). Therefore, the figure of Zhuge Liang in the popular rewrite of the Three Kingdoms story is a self-invention intended to reconstruct the scholar identity in the mid-Ming era, following the loss of their dignity due to the disastrous social and political identity crises that took place in the early Ming period. This chapter addresses the reconstruction of the scholarly *wen* identities depicted in *tongsu yanyi* and compares it to the plain narrative illustrated in *pinghua*.

One of the salient themes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle is the concept of *zhongyi* 忠義, or loyalty and righteousness. Among the thousands of characters in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Guan Yu is highly praised for his loyalty and righteousness from past to present. In fact, due to Guan's marvelous achievements and his moral fiber, he was apotheosized as a divine protector, and later received the imperial title of *di* 帝, which translates to "emperor" or "supreme ruler." In the final part of the study, I investigate the image and reconstruction of another typical folk hero archetype, *xia* 俠, through examining and comparing the reconstruction of Lord Guan between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. The concept of *xia*, or the knight-errant, defines a specific temperament that a character will live and behave according to these moral standards, regardless of whether they're a scholar or warrior. The *xia* archetype is different from

the *wen* and the *wu* masculinities described previously, but it is an essential element in the reconstruction of Chinese masculinities in late imperial China. The growth of travel and the increasing number of journeys during the Ming period required a series of moral rules in order to regulate travelers and vagabonds. Hence, the concept of *xia* acted as moral regulations for travelers, and for those who roamed among the brotherhood of rivers and lakes.

Chapter One

Zhang Fei: Brawl of the Martial Warriors

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the *haohan* 好漢 archetype from the Three Kingdoms story cycle. A *haohan* is usually translated either as “good-fellow” or “ruffian” in English, and these *haohan* characters typically exhibit invincible martial skills either on the battlefield or in a fight scene. Such *haohan* characters conspicuously represent martial prowess—*wu* 武—a term Kam Louie uses in his dyad model of Chinese masculinity. The term *wu* implies the character tends to use violence and force to solve their problems, either with or without legitimate reason, and has a tendency toward the excessive use of violence, such as Lü Bu 呂布 in the Three Kingdoms or Li Yuanba 李元霸 in *Shuo Tang* 說唐. *Haohan* is different from other *wu* masculine archetypes like *yingxiong* 英雄. In Liu Shao’s 劉劭 *Renwu shi* 人物志, he describes *yingxiong* as someone who not only possesses military merits and an invincible martial prowess, but also substantial achievements in both literacy and governance (Liu *Renwuzhi* Vol. 8). Since *haohan* is a character who at best has martial prowess, with little-to-no expertise in cultural attainment, it distinguishes *haohan* from other *wu* masculine archetypes.

Zhang Fei, the Invincible *haohan* 好漢

Within the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Zhang Fei 張飛 is one of the most iconic figures that represent the *haohan* archetype. Nevertheless, he is one of the more popular characters and cultural icons among folk traditions and popular culture. The poem written by the Late Tang poet Li Shangyin 李商隱 (813-858 AD), “Jiao’er Shi 驕兒詩” or “Poem for my Little Boy,” mentioned how Li’s son was entertained by listening to the story of the Three Kingdoms, especially once the storyteller spoke to the part of “aping Zhang Fei’s outlandish countenance (Zhangfei hu 張飛胡)” or “making fun of Deng Ai’s stutter (Dengai chi 鄧艾吃)” (Zhu Huibian

79).⁹ Another poem written by another Late Tang poet, Yin Yaofan 殷堯藩 (780-855 AD), “Zhang Fei miao 張飛廟,” praises Zhang Fei’s military and physical prowess as the most prominent of the time, and applauds Zhang’s military achievements during the dawn of the Han Empire (Zhu *Huibian* 76). Both Li’s and Yin’s poems demonstrate that both popular and literati audiences in the Tang period were delighted by Zhang Fei’s physique and his military prowess.

Scholarly attention on Zhang Fei has primarily involved the comparative study of Liu Bei, Guan Yu, or Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 as a tool for comparing and contrasting Zhang Fei with other characters. The focus of scholarly reviews has been on describing how Zhang Fei is one of the earliest archetypes of a coarse, rude, and often vulgar character who will only solve his problems through superior martial arts skills and vengeance. For example, Zhou Siyuan 周思源 examines and scrutinizes Zhang Fei by comparing and contrasting him with other characters, such as the warrior general Guan Yu, and another coarse archetypal character, Li Kui 李逵 from *Shuihu chuan* 水滸傳 (Zhou 81-91). Kimberly Besio examines the changes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle in *zaju* 雜劇 during the Yuan and Ming periods, and concludes that Zhang Fei is used as an aid to remold Zhuge Liang’s character, and also to provide a comical effect in theater performances (Besio *Three Kingdoms* 82). Besio also conducts a comparative investigation of Zhang Fei by focusing on the process of transmutation from *pinghua* to *zaju* in her work “Disposition of Defiance,” by examining Zhang Fei’s comical effect in Yuan *zaju*. While many scholars have assessed Zhang Fei in distinct ways, they have not analyzed his transmutation within the Three Kingdoms story cycle, particularly his development in the printed texts of *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. Therefore, in this this chapter, I attempt to reveal these

⁹ The translated excerpt of the “Jiaoer Shi” is from Kimberly Besio’s “Disposition of Defiance,” which she had modified from Burton Watson’s translation (Besio “Disposition” 1).

particular differences within the character Zhang Fei that took place between the plain narrative, *pinghua*, and reconstructed narrative, *tongsu yanyi*, and analyze these changes within the context of Chinese masculinities in the late imperial period.¹⁰

The appearance and image of Zhang Fei is one of the most consistent figures in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. Zhang Fei is always described as someone who has dark skin, a face whiskered like a tiger, and a pair of big, round eyes. According to Kim Moonkyong 金文京's *Sanguo yanyi de shijie* 三國演義的世界, this image of Zhang Fei may have originated from popular storytelling and theater art, following the color in Beijing opera face painting, since the official historiography, *Sanguozhi* 三國志, did not provide any facial description of Zhang Fei (Kim 143-147). On the other hand, Wang Qiancheng 王前程 suggests that Zhang Fei's dark skin and full beard may have originated from storytellers during the Tang period. Li Shangyin's "Jiao'er Shi" uses the word *hu* 胡 to describe Zhang Fei; Wang claims that even though the character *hu* can refer to Zhang's barbaric features, it can also mean dark skin, or full beard (Wang *chuantong* 129). Zhang Fei's physical appearance did not change in *pinghua* or *tongsu yanyi*, and even remained constant in later recensions, such as the Mao recension. In *pinghua*, Zhang Fei is described as someone who:

...had the head of a panther and round eyes, the jowls of a swallow, and the whiskers of a tiger; his body was more than nine feet tall, and his voice resounded like a huge bell.

(*Records* 14)

¹⁰ The consideration of *pinghua* as plain narrative and *tongsu yanyi* as literati narrative is suggested in Wang Lijuan's work of *Sanguo gushi yanbian zhong de wenren xushi yu minjian xushi* 三國故事演變中的文人敘事與民間敘事 and Boris Riftin's *Sanguo yanyi yu minjian wenxue chuantong* <三國演義>與民間文學傳統. In addition, Wilt Idema and Stephen West's introduction in *Records of the Three Kingdoms in Plain Language* suggests that *pinghua* derived from oral tradition of some sort, while *tongsu yanyi* contains direct detail borrowing from canonical historiography.

生得豹頭環眼，燕頤虎鬚，身長九尺餘，聲若巨鐘。¹¹

Tongsu yanyi delivers an almost exact description of his physical appearance, in which the literati-ized Zhang Fei is described as:

a man that was eight spans tall, with a blunt head like a panther's, huge round eyes, a swallow's heavy jowls, a tiger's whiskers, a thunderous voice, and a stance like a dashing horse.

其人身長八尺，豹頭環眼，燕頤虎鬚，聲若巨雷，勢如奔馬。(Luo *wenshi* 5)¹²

A comparison of these two quotes suggests that the only change that took place in Zhang's appearance was his height, from nine feet to eight, as none of his other physical attributes were noticeably altered from the two narratives.

Wang also suggests that Zhang Fei's appearance signifies a standard of aesthetic appreciation that specifically appeals to the lower, vulgar populace that have either a minimal knowledge of Confucianism, or no knowledge at all. Wang compares Zhang Fei's appearance with that of Zhuge Liang, the master strategist of the Shu Han kingdoms in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, who has “a face like [a] gleaming jade 面如冠玉” with “the buoyant air of spiritual transcendence 頭戴綸巾，身披鶴氅，眉聚江山之秀” (Wang *chuantong* 130). In *pinghua*, Zhuge's face “seemed freshly powdered and [had] lips as if painted red 面如傅粉，唇似塗朱,” which suggests that it is likely either an imagined image, or an actual reflection of how the

¹¹ All translation of *pinghua* is from Wilt Idema's and Stephen West's *Records of the Three Kingdoms in Plain Language* printed in 2016. The Chinese quotation of *pinghua* is from the digital archive from the National Archives of Japan titled *Sji shinkan sensoheiwa sangokushi*, the same source Wilt Idema and Stephen West used for their translation. This applies to all *pinghua* quotations in this project.

¹² This quote is cited from a newly published *Jiajing* edition of *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi* printed in 2013, edited by Zhou Wenye and published by Zhongzhou guji chubanshe. This applies to all *tongsu yanyi* quotations in this project.

general audience perceived the literati and scholar-official classes looked at the time (*Records* 34).

Wang believes this differentiation of aesthetic appreciation for these two types of male characters illustrates two different standards of aesthetic appreciation for male characters. One is the archetype similar to Zhang Fei's character, with dominant strength and a boorish physique, along with a hot-tempered and straightforward personality. Wang refers to this archetype as *yanggang* 陽剛, or the macho-masculine standard associated with a figure having martial or military prowess. Zhuge Liang's physical appearance illustrates the *yinrou* 陰柔 standard, which is associated with a delicate and fragile physique, and with being deeply cultivated by scholastic trainings. These standards appealed to various classes of audience, including the lower-class populace and the cultured elites, each with their own preferences, according to Wang. In fact, these two different standards of aesthetic appreciation conform to Kam Louie's theory on the Chinese masculinity dyad, despite Kam's model using Guan Yu as the image of his *wu* masculinity or martial prowess ideal, instead of Zhang Fei or Li Kui. As illustrated in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei's characteristics are more aligned with the *wu* masculinity that Kam Louie suggested in his theory.

Furthermore, the pleasing effect that Zhang Fei offers is not only due to his physical appearance, but also his class origin, his personality, and his disposition as depicted in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. No historical accounts provide any evidence of Zhang Fei's family genealogy, as Chen Shou's *Sanguozhi* simply states that Zhang was from Zhuo County 涿郡 and joined Liu Bei and Guan Yu at a young age (Chen *Sanguo* 425). However, *pinghua* describes Zhang Fei as coming from "a very rich family 家豪大富" (*Records* 14). In *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei and his family have lived in the Zhuo County for generations, and they make their living

though “farming our piece of land, selling wine, and slaughtering pigs 世居涿郡，頗有莊田，賣酒屠豬” (Luo *wenshi* 5). This modification lowers Zhang Fei’s familial background from a wealthy family, to a family that owns their own land and slaughters pigs for a living, which transformed Zhang Fei’s character to be similar to the audience, since the merchant class had the lowest social status in the Chinese tradition of organizing the four classes of the social hierarchy caste system in descending order: *shi* 士 (gentry), *nong* 農 (farmers), *gong* 工 (artisans), and *shang* 商 (merchants).

In fact, the description of “a very rich family” differs from that of the elite or gentry class, given that being from rich family does not necessarily mean that Zhang comes from the gentry class or has high social status. Wang examines the familial background of Zhang Fei in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, and determined that “a very rich family” is considered to be of humble origin, compared to the notable and influential clans 世家 (Wang 128). Zhang Fei’s humble origin resembles the familial background of the lower-class audience that cultivates not only a sense of belonging, but also a conscious recognition of personal experience that Zhang Fei’s story circulates. This sentiment can also be seen from Cao Xuequan’s 曹學佺 poetic couplet written in the Ming dynasty, which said “Dog-butchers from the lower class are likely [to] uphold justice / yet scholars from the elite are usually ungrateful 仗義半從屠狗輩 / 負心多是讀書人.”¹³ In addition to Wang’s investigation of this sentimental affinity towards the commoners’ origin, Kim Moonkyong proposes this may be an attempt similar to the Yuan *zaju*

¹³ This couplet is from Cao Xuequan’s “Saw a couplet hanged at the house of Butcher Xu Wu 至屠夫徐五家見懸上聯” and I take the opportunity to translate the second couplet to coordinate the theme and focus on the sentimental attachment to the commoners’ lifestyle. The whole poem is written as “蠅營狗苟貪妄欲，人猿如何再作揖？仗義半從屠狗輩，負心多是讀書人。”

元雜劇, *Ren Fengzi* 任風子, which has a theme of redemption and enlightenment, as butchering was considered a sinful occupation. Kim compares this occupation of Zhang Fei with those of Lu Zhishen 魯智深 from *Shui huchuan* 水滸傳,¹⁴ and Sun Wukong 孫悟空 from *Xi yuji* 西游記,¹⁵ as these characters have a similar sentimental affinity for commoners of a lower class origin, and later redeem themselves as they become enlightened as monks, or fulfill their goal in search of their own self-identity through a long journey (Kim 143-144). It is an attempt to portray an idealized aspect of human experience with the general audience.

However, Wilt Idema speculates that the Three Kingdoms story novelized in the Yuan period was aimed towards “the upper strata of the Mongols,” especially the printed text of *pinghua*, where the intended audience was comprised of “their officials and their military officers and families, and many Central Asians that followed in their wake, the Chinese military officials and the like” (Idema “Some Remarks” 93). According to Idema, Zhang Fei’s martial prowess, his personality, and his physical appearance may have resulted from an attempt to attract potential buyers and readers from the upper strata of the Mongol court, instead of aiming at buyers and readers from the culturally cultivated audience, and exhibiting a sentimental affinity for the commoner and empathy towards the human experience. In addition, Idema also suspects that *pinghua* was popular reading material for the general audience, not only for the Mongols, which still suggests that it was not intended for the literati (Idema “Some Remarks” 135-141).

¹⁴ Lu Zhishen is a garrison major, a low-ranking military officer. He becomes a fugitive after he killed Butcher Zheng for the sake of Jin Cuilian and her father, and he later becomes a monk.

¹⁵ Sun Wukong is the protagonist in *Xi yuji*. Born from a mystical rock atop of Mountain Flower and Fruit, he later becomes a low-ranking position in the Heaven, the Protector of the Horses. Therefore, he creates havoc in the heaven. Later on, after being imprisoned by Shakyamuni Buddha, he becomes one of the disciples under Tang Sanzang (唐三藏).

Regardless of whether Zhang Fei has reflected an archetype in attracting the lower classes or was aimed at the potential markets from the Mongolian upper strata, Zhang Fei's physical appearance and his characteristics provoked aesthetic appreciation from a variety of readerships. This is especially important to note, as the focus of *pinghua* from the Yuan period mainly revolves around Zhang Fei, unlike *tongsu yanyi* published in 1522, in which the first one-third of the novel primarily focuses on the two elder brothers from the Peach Garden fraternity, Liu Bei and Guan Yu. In fact, in *pinghua*, the focus on Zhang Fei is not simply on a character who is a physically mesomorphic constitution, avenging social injustice with his martial skills, defiant towards authority, and described as having an “anxiety over the loss of their [Han] identity,” but also on his retribution and vengeance, which is immediately posed at the beginning of the plain narrative (Louie *Changing* 16). Furthermore, several scenes display how Zhang Fei reflects the desire for a physically masculine character to refute the oppression emerging from the political chaos. In a scene during the campaign against the rebellion of the Yellow Scarves 平黃巾, Zhang Fei single-handedly annihilated the Yellow Scarves troops who were quartered in the Apricot-Forest Village 杏林莊, as Zhang received the proclamation of pardon from Huangfu Song 皇甫嵩 issued by the imperial court, to invite the Yellow Scarves to surrender. According to the text from *pinghua*:

When he [Zhang Fei] reached Apricot-Forest Village, soldiers guarding the gate tried, but were unable, to block his way and he proceeded straight to the commander's tent in the middle of the army, where he halted his horse and rested his lance across his saddle...

When Zhang Biao heard this, he was furious and ordered his underling to immediately set to... and they all came forward at once to try and stab Zhang Fei. He paid them no heed but firmly closed his fingers on the end of his eighteen-foot lance and twirled it in a circle

so none of these troops could approach him... On his single horse, Zhang Fei moved at liberty through the bandit army and not a single one dared oppose him.

張飛一人一騎，便出至杏林莊上。有把門軍卒遮當不住，直至中軍帳下，立馬橫槍。……張表聞言大怒，呼左右即下手。眾軍們齊向前來刺張飛。張飛不望，用丈八長槍撮梢兒把定輪轉動。眾軍不能向前。打折賊軍槍桿，勿知其數。寨中賊兵發喊驚恐自開。張飛一騎馬，於賊軍中縱橫來往，無人敢當。賊軍自聞鑼鼓之聲。

(Records 19-20)

In this scenario, Zhang Fei demonstrates his physical ability and his martial skills in combat at the enemy camp. The narrator depicts him as a figure who “moved at liberty through the bandit army and not a single one dared oppose him,” which illustrates Zhang’s salient qualities and skills in combat within the *pinghua* narrative. However, this scene at the Apricot-Forest Village is eliminated and abandoned in *tongsu yanyi*.

Bret Hinsch believes that the “literati enjoyed this [martial prowess] sort of literature, as it provided an escape from the pretense and affectation of upper-class life” (Hinsch 118). It is unclear if the “upper-class” Hinsch mentions refers to the literati circle or the gentry class who were bestowed as noble due to their ancestors, or their own military merits. On the other hand, Martin Huang argues that “appealing to the literati readers of that time was not due to their potential for ironic readings, but because of their symbolic power as the ‘genuine’ and the ‘primitive,’ concepts that many literati, tired of the refined sophistication of their own culture, found unexpectedly refreshing” in the Ming period (Huang *Negotiating* 111).¹⁶ This typical

¹⁶ Bret Hinsch’s study particularly examines *Shuihu chuan*. However, Martin Huang is interested in the violent and robust *haohan* and *yingxiong* in both *Sanguo yanyi* and *Shuihu chuan*.

desire of physically strong, masculine male depiction in literature may result from years of contact conveyed by the nomadic steppe societies coming from northern China.

Harriet Zurndorfer suggests that this contact with the nomadic steppe societies has generated “two important consequences” for Han-Chinese culture and traditions (Louie *Changing* 16). First, their encounter with these highly “militarized” and “barbaric steppe societies,” especially the Mongols, had persuaded the Han-Chinese to pursue their superiority with their “cultured manhood, or the *wen*” instead of with “martial activeness, or the *wu*” mentalities (Louie *Changing* 16). The impact of this encounter with the nomadic steppe societies contributed to the decline of martial prowess—the *wu*—that the Han Chinese had previously possessed. Moreover, this decline of martial prowess contributed to a rapid development of the *wen* masculinity in the post-Mongolian period, a pursuit of culture to redeem their own sense of superiority over the nomadic steppe. Second, this interaction with the nomadic and barbaric tribes also contributed to the “social fluidity of Chinese society,” which was due to the disruptions emerging from the nomadic tribes’ conquest and occupation of China, including the Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongols that caused a transformation of the domestic familial structure in Chinese society, as the son of the official wife and other secondary spouses had the same obligation, which ushered a greater appreciation of patriarchal authority, and established more restrictive female fidelity requirements (Louie *Changing* 16).¹⁷

In fact, Zurndorfer’s conjecture on the Mongolian occupation pinpoints the cause to a rapid development of the *wen* masculinity model among the elite class. This development of the

¹⁷ Before the Song dynasty, sons of the official wife and sons of other secondary spouses were entitled to different inheritances from their father. Mainly, the sons of the official wife would inherit the legal title and all assets from the father. In contrast, the other sons would not be considered unless no male decedents from the official wife were available. See Du Fangqin and Zheng Xinrong’s *Women’s Studies in China: Mapping the Social, Economic and Policy Changes in Chinese Women’s Lives*, published in 2005 by Ewha Womans University Press.

wen masculinity also contributed to a fascination with the envisioned archetype of a physically powerful hero, such as *haohan* and *yingxiong*. In fact, in his book, *Masculinities in Chinese History*, Bret Hinsch says that such a physically dominant archetype had created “codes of masculine behavior,” which was conveyed in popular literature as a “hegemonic masculinity accessible to the average man.” In his book *Qianggu wenren xiake meng* 千古文人俠客夢, Chen Pingyuan also suggests that the chivalric and *haohan* images depicted in literature reflect a psychological projection from the author, which echoes Hinsch’s speculation that the popularity of the *haohan* archetype provides the readers an escape from reality, and fulfills the masculine desire that cannot be experienced or fulfilled in reality (Chen *Qianggu* 9).

Considering Zhang Fei’s biological background and physique illustrated in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei can be categorized as a *haohan*. In *Manhua sanguo* 漫話三國, Shi Zhiyu 史之余 claims Zhang is the “number one *haohan* under the heaven 天下第一好漢” (Shi 75). According to Bret Hinsch, the *haohan* archetype possesses four different elements: First, the *haohan* originates from the plebeian class. Second, the *haohan* demonstrates his loyalty towards a tightly connected group of male comrades. Third, the *haohan* celebrates vengeance, and finally, the *haohan* is valiant and has a mesomorphic physique (Hinsch 111). More or less, many *haohan* characters have or have had a bandit vocation either outside or within the spectrum of the narrative. Hinsch’s *haohan* elements indeed parallel Shelley Chang’s five common attributes of popular warriors from Chang’s book, *History and Legend: Ideas and Images in the Ming Historical Novels*, as Chang categorizes Zhang Fei as one of the popular images of warriors with specific common stereotypes, such as the unusual physical strength, incomparable martial prowess, fearlessness, power of endurance, selflessness, and various blunt behaviors; however, these common attributes are not limited to those of plebeian origin (Chang 81-85).

In fact, in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei's character not only displayed each of Hinsch's four elements of the *haohan* archetype, but also performed as a bandit in two particular episodes from *pinghua*, "Lord Guan Travels Alone for a Thousand Li 千里走單騎," and the "Gathering in the Old City 古城會." Zhang Fei does not come from a family of the literati or the gentry class, but as mentioned above, a family that is more likely considered to be local merchants who sell meats and wine in the county. Furthermore, he is well-known for his association and loyalty to the Peach Garden fraternity and has an extraordinary physique that illustrates his physical toughness, all of which aligns with the characteristics of Hinsch's *haohan* archetype. Throughout the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Zhang Fei is one of the few characters that are known for glorifying their vengeful achievements. Therefore, on several occasions, Zhang Fei is suggested to have contributed to the base archetype of Li Kui, a character in *Shuihu zhuan*, who is considered to be the model of this particular *haohan* archetype—an individual who is unruly and has a defiant disposition. Zhang Fei's celebration of his vengeance can be seen in several incidents within the Three Kingdoms story cycle, such as when he assassinates the county prefect, bastinades the Inspector General, and attempts to kill Pang Tang in Liyang 歷陽, all of which are recorded in *pinghua*. In fact, a few of these incidents from *pinghua* have been adapted and reconstructed in *tongsu yanyi* with only a slight alteration or re-modification of the scenarios. Overall, these unruly and defiant behaviors collectively contribute to several disastrous results for the fraternity, and the building of the Shu Han kingdoms.

Hinsch alleges that the *haohan* archetype originated from the virtuous outlaw, the knight-errant, or *xiake* 俠客, that initially roamed the land during the Eastern Zhou 東周 period, approximately between 770 BC and 256 AD (Hinsch 114). A *xiake* is usually depicted as someone who attempts to right the wrong committed by the elite, or avenge injustice against the

lower class, and behaves according to a set of moral principles. In *Zhongguo wuxia shi* 中國武俠史, Chen Shan 陳山 examines the development of the community of the wandering knight-errant, which is commonly referred to as the *jianghu* 江湖, or the brotherhood of rivers and lakes, throughout Chinese history. The *jianghu* is theoretically different from the literati society that is heavily sanctioned by the imperial court and the court ministers. Chen claims the popularization of the martial culture occurred during the Song and post-Song periods. During this time, the martial culture assimilated various notions from Neo-Confucianism that formulated a set of codes in order to regulate individual behaviors and actions of those belonging to the brotherhood of rivers and lakes (Chen 159-171). Hinsch's and Chen's research on the development of the *haohan* archetype and the wandering knight-errant society between the Song and Ming periods, demonstrates that such martial prowess of masculinities and the *haohan* archetype have progressively transformed from somewhat of "a loose cannon" into "a reined beast," through Neo-Confucian moral ideology and "the imposition of a higher authority" (Besio *Three Kingdoms* 92). In addition, Chen Pingyuan's *Qianggu wenren xiake meng* also suggests a similar transition from the Tang and Song *chuanqi* 唐宋傳奇 to the Qing *xiayi* novels 清代俠義小說 (Chen *Qianggu* 44-61). The imposed higher authority over the character with mesomorphic physical appearance of the *wu*, such as imposing a rein on the "loose cannon" beast like Zhang Fei, illustrates distinct "competing models of masculinity," as Martin Huang suggests in his book, *Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China* (Huang *Negotiating* 6). While Huang assesses the process of negotiating masculine identities by exploring the role of women in a patriarchal society, his work also identifies a set of transformations within masculinities that took place during the process of the compiling and rewriting *zhanghui xiaoshuo* in the sixteenth

century, and especially during the process of rewriting and reconstructing the Three Kingdoms story cycle.

Rein in Zhang Fei

In the following section, I compare and contrast the textual narratives between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* in order to demonstrate the *haohan* archetype Zhang Fei transmuted from “a loose cannon” to a reined character in the reconstructed narrative, wherein the reining in of a *wu* masculine archetype is an attempt to reconstruct the archetype as inferior to the *wen* masculinity in the process of literati-izing the Three Kingdoms story. Zhang Fei’s martial archetype is similar to what Chen Shan describes as the delimitation of the brotherhood of rivers and lakes, or the demarcation of the so-called *wu* masculinity in the Ming novels. Throughout *pinghua*, Zhang Fei “is a central figure,” while in *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang’s character is rewritten as someone having a mesomorphic physical appearance that acts with violent and disastrous behaviors, and yet he is constantly controlled and checked throughout the narrative. In *pinghua*, Zhang Fei is depicted as an untamed beast, and his impulsive behaviors are believed to supersede the rational dispositions Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang represent. In fact, this rein in process in the literati-ized historical narratives does not emerge only in the rewriting of the Three Kingdoms story cycle. Therefore, the term “rein” is used as a metaphor in comparing the process of restraining the rash behaviors of the *wu* archetype to the taming of a wild horse. It is a cultural phenomenon that emerged in the development of retelling, rewriting, and reconstructing historical narratives in the Ming-Qing period. Examining this shift between the *wen* and *wu* dyad within the Three Kingdoms story cycle provides a glimpse into the negotiation of masculinity between the *wen* and the *wu* from late fourteenth century to early sixteenth century China, especially the transition from *pinghua* to

the Jiajing rendition of *tongsu yanyi*. Furthermore, the examination of the negotiation of masculinity between the *wen* and *wu* dyad within the Three Kingdoms story cycle also reflects the negotiation and amalgamation of the cultural values between the literati, the gentry, and the plebian classes.

Robert Hegel's *The Novel in Seventeenth Century China* specifically investigates the transformation of Qin Shubao 秦叔寶, also known as Qin Qiong 秦瓊, in Yuan Yuling's 袁於令 *Suishu yiwén* 隋史遺文. Hegel claims the Qin Qiong is a *haohan* archetype that transformed from a ruffian into a self-conscious warrior general, who aims to fulfill a man's social responsibilities in the building of the Tang Dynasty (Hegel *17th Century* 105-139). Martin Huang follows Hegel's discussion when examining Qin Shubao within three various Sui-Tang *zhanghui xiaoshuo* in the Ming period. Huang sees that Qin Shubao demonstrated the reconstruction, or the taming of the wild *haohan* in seventeenth century China (Huang *Negotiating* 113). In addition to Hegel's and Huang's studies on the process of reining the marginalized *wu* figures, Zhou Siyuan also points out that the *wu* masculinity in particular, the valiant element within each character, dramatically diminished in order to refine and improve the salient characteristics of the *wen* characters (Zhou 6-8).

The main features of Zhang Fei are his martial prowess, extraordinary mesomorphic physique, and his impulsive reactions to unjust events. His ill temper accounts for Zhang's uncontrollable wave of social-political desire to right the wrong, and to be recognized by his peers. Martin Huang points out that the desire within Zhang Fei is not of a sexual nature, but rather a naïve intuition that derives from one's innate passion, or one's inner heart. According to Huang, this desire is similar to the depiction of the concept of *shuaixing* 隨性, which translates to "to follow our nature is called the way" (Huang *Desire* 42). Martin Huang indicates that the

English words “intuition,” “emotion,” and “desire” are not descriptive enough to demonstrate the distinction between the Chinese *xing* 性, *qing* 情, and *yu* 欲 (Huang *Desire* 1-4). According to Zhu Xi’s elaboration, *xing* is the “tranquility of still water 性猶水之靜,” while *qing* is the “flow of water 情則水之流,” and *yu* is the “wave of water 欲則水之波瀾” (Chan *Source* 631). That being said, *qing* and *yu* are neither good nor bad. However, Zhu claims that the excessive use of *qing* or *yu* contributes to the contamination of the disposition of a man’s natural intuition, which is the *xing*. At one point, Zhang Fei captures the reader’s fascination for his physical and masculine features. On the other hand, Zhang himself signifies the *xing* in his characteristic, more likely as a disposition. In his book, *Sanguo yanyi yu chuantong wenhua*, Wang Qiancheng specifies that Zhang Fei signifies an innate intuition reflected in Li Zhi’s 李贄 Child-Heart Mind theory 童心說 as discussed in *A Book to Burn* 焚書, and argues that Zhang Fei is similar to any *haohan* depicted in *Shuihu zhuan* as the *zhenren* 真人, or the “true man” (Wang *Sanguoyanyi* 131). Martin Huang adds to this definition of a “true man” in accordance to Mencius, stating it is “a man’s ability or determination to stand up for the sake of righteousness, or *yi* 義, because, unlike a woman, a true man did not bow to the powerful” figures, either political or physical (Huang *Negotiating* 17). Throughout the Three Kingdoms story, Zhang’s actions symbolize such “true man” behavior, by behaving in accordance with his own nature.

Although the characteristics of Zhang Fei and his disposition are highly praised in the early rewritings of the plain narrative, as Wang suggests, Zhang is reluctantly reined in the later literati-ized recensions. These shifts and the rein in of Zhang can be attributed to Zhu Xi’s 朱熹 idea on suppressing human desire, or *mierenyu* 滅人欲, a popular Neo-Confucian concept during Ming period. In this case, Zhu and the Neo-Confucian thinkers that followed perceived that

subduing the *qing* and *yu* maintains rationale, logic, and pureness of the *xing*, or the nature of a man. Hence, the rein in of Zhang Fei in *tongsu yanyi* suggests a process of subduing the *qing* and *yu* signified in the *wu* masculine characters in the Ming novels.

Zhang Fei's disposition of impulsive and unruly behavior is illustrated in both narratives. Zhang's spontaneous reactions supersede any of his rationality, which can be seen immediately in the initial narrative within the Peach Garden Oath scene from *pinghua*:

The story goes that there was a man named Zhang Fei, also known as Yide, who hailed from Fanyang in Zhuo Commandery, in the principality of Yan. From birth, he had the head of a panther and round eyes, the jowls of a swallow, and the whiskers of a tiger; his body was more than nine feet tall, and his voice resounded like a huge bell. He came from a very rich family. Because he was idly standing outside, he saw Lord Guan pass through the streets: his physique was extraordinary, but his clothes were in tatters—he was not a local man. So, he stepped forward and greeted Lord Guan with a bow, which the latter returned.

卻說有一人，姓張名飛，字翼德，乃燕邦涿郡范陽人也；生得豹頭環眼，燕頷虎鬚，身長九尺餘，聲若巨鐘。家豪大富。因在門首閒立，見關公街前過，生得狀貌非俗，衣服藍縷，非是本處人。縱步向前，見關公施禮。關公還禮。(Records 14)

The narrative above illustrates Zhang Fei's familial biography and his mesomorphic physical appearances. Furthermore, this narrative also depicts the initiation of the Peach Garden fraternity due to Zhang's spontaneous reaction on fixing his male gaze upon Guan Yu as he steps forward to approach Guan, when Guan was passing through. This happens before Liu Bei is introduced into the story and becomes the leader of this homo-social fraternity. It is Zhang's intuition that constitutes his impromptu behavior in fixing a gaze and greeting Guan, who is just randomly

passing by on the street. Guan Yu returns Zhang's gaze as he "[sees] that Fei [is] a serious person 公見飛非草次之人" (*Records* 14). While they are having a conversation in the wine shop, this exchange of male gazes illustrates a shared attraction, which according to the homo-social convention, derived from such gazing (*Records* 14). Zhang's spontaneity in fixing his gaze on Guan Yu, Guan's returning gaze, and Guan's spontaneous invitation to Liu Bei after "Guan and Zhang [see] the extraordinary physique of Lord Liu, and his thousand kinds of indescribable blessings 關，張二人見德公生得狀貌非俗，有千般說不盡底福氣" illustrate that Zhang is the one who dominates the rational disposition Liu Bei represents in this encounter (*Records* 15). In particular, Zhang and Guan's feasting in the wine shop displays the convention of "generosity and passion prompted by a like-minded nature with each other." In Chinese, this is called *yiqi xiangtou* 意氣相投, or "a homo-social enactment," which Martin Huang suggests is an internal intuition for male bonding (Huang *Negotiating* 2). The initial interaction and exchange of male gazes between Zhang and Guan, and between Zhang, Guan, and Liu, both demonstrate such outcomes of male attractions. Both invitations are due to the extraordinary physiques and male gazes as illustrated in the narratives, both of which demonstrate that their bonding is not associated with any external influence, but instead reflect the concept of *shuaixing*, or an internal intuition "to follow our nature" (Huang *Desire* 42).

Moreover, the male gazes between Zhang, Guan, and Liu have attracted individual attention to each other, promoting the formulation of a closely-knit male band, in which extraordinary physique becomes the only factor in attracting the attention and affirmation from other male peers. In *The Fragile Scholars: Power and Masculinity in China*, Song Geng 宋耕 claims attracting the gaze and notice of male peers often validate one's identity and his social worth among his homo-social companions (Song 173). This exchange of gazes and mutual

approval between Liu, Guan, and Zhang in *pinghua* demonstrates how the bonding within the Peach Garden fraternity occurs through a simple affirmation of each other's social position, and the so-called "like-minded nature" within this male fraternity. This interpretation resonates with Zurndorfer's aforementioned description of masculinity in pre-modern China, which she defines as trying to prove oneself and being accepted by the other male peers within a group (Louie *Changing* 28).

In *tongsu yanyi*, the mutual affection between Zhang, Guan, and Liu takes a different twist from that of *pinghua*, which is mainly through the display of a similar homo-social affirmation and their extraordinary physiques as depicted in the narratives. Along with an attempt to pacify social tumult, the ideologies of legitimacy and the thought of restoring the imperial kingdom become their only aspiration and reasoning in their "like-minded nature," instead of the mutual devotion to their manhood, and the following of their own innate affection as described in *pinghua*. In the first chapter of the first volume in *tongsu yanyi*, the meeting between Liu and Zhang occurs as follows:

It is the first year of the reign of Zhong Ping, the Zhou county posted a call for volunteers. At the time, Xuande was twenty-eight years old. He stood below the notice in the Zhuo that day, after a long sigh, he turned away from it. Someone behind him asked brusquely, "A real man should be serving his emperor in the hour of the peril, why such long sighs?" Xuande turned around, and saw a man that was eight spans tall, with a blunt head like a panther's, with huge round eyes, a swallow's heavy jowls, a tiger's whiskers, a thunderous voice, and a stance like a dashing horse. Xuande noticed his extraordinary appearance and followed him into the village. Xuande asked his name. The man replied, "My surname is Zhang; given name, Fei; style, Yide. We've lived in this county for

generations, farming our piece of land, selling wine, and slaughtering pigs. I seek to befriend men with valor; when I saw you studying the recruitment call, is there a reason for such a long sigh?”

中平元年，涿郡招軍。此時玄德年二十八歲，立於榜下，長歎一聲而回。隨後一人厲聲言曰：「大丈夫不與國家出力，何苦長歎？」玄德回顧，見其人身長八尺，豹頭環眼，燕頤虎鬚，聲若巨雷，勢如奔馬。玄德見此人形貌異常，遂與同入村中，問其姓名。其人曰：「某姓張，名飛，字益德。世居涿郡，頗有莊田，賣酒屠豬，專好結交天下壯士。卻才見公看榜，緣何長歎？」(Luo *wenshi* 5)¹⁸

In the meeting between Liu Bei and Zhang Fei as quoted from *tongsu yanyi*, the main initiation of the engagement between Liu and Zhang occurs alongside a call for volunteers against the Yellow Turbans.¹⁹ When Zhang Fei asks Liu Bei as he reads the post, he sighs, focusing on “a real man should be serving his emperor 大丈夫不與國家出力.” Zhang’s questioning, as both Liu’s and Zhang’s initial impression shows, is not derived from each other’s extraordinary physical appearance, the innate passion, or the exchange of their male gazes that is emphasized in *pinghua*, but instead from their anxiety and worry due to the commotion of the tumultuous empire instigated by the Yellow Turbans Rebellion. Although the male gazes still exist within the conversation between Liu and Zhang, the discussion transforms from a homo-social appreciation and an affirmation for mutual approval in male bonding, to an intent to heal the mutual anxiety and concern for the greater good, which is known as *dayi* 大義.

¹⁸ I took the opportunity to translate a part of *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi*. I consulted Moss Robert’s translation on Mao’s recension of *Sanguo yanyi*, and the translation that he worked on from the Jiajing recension, which was included in his appendix.

¹⁹ Yellow Turbans is the same as the Yellow Scarves in *pinghua*.

This affection and association with the mandate of heaven is further demonstrated in their oaths to be sworn into brotherhood. In their oath at the Peach Garden, Liu, Guan, and Zhang vowed:

“We three, though of separate ancestry, join in brotherhood here, combining strength and purpose, to relieve the present crisis. We will perform our duty to the imperial empire and protect the common folk of the land. We dare not hope to be together always and only hereby vow to die the selfsame day. Let shining Heaven above and the fruitful land below bear witness to our resolve. May Heaven and man scourge whosoever fails this vow.”

「念劉備、關羽、張飛，雖然異姓，結為兄弟，同心協力，救困扶危；上報國家，下安黎庶，不求同年同月同日生，只願同年同月同日死。皇天后土，實鑒此心。背義忘恩，天人共戮！」 (Luo *wenshi* 5)

This pledge concretely emphasizes that the purpose of the Peach Garden fraternity brotherhood is to “relieve the present crisis 救困扶危” and to serve the imperial empire. The oath taken in the Peach Garden as quoted from *tongsu yanyi* not only refutes *pinghua*’s homo-social affirmation, it also reins and delimits the *haohan* Zhang Fei of any spontaneous and unruly behaviors. The oath provokes the expectation for Zhang Fei to carry out his duty for the imperial empire despite the fact that Zhang still acts recklessly, according to the reconstructed narratives. On one hand, the oath in *tongsu yanyi* serves as a form of a mutual socio-political affirmation between the three sworn brothers, whereas on the other hand, the oath also implicates Neo-Confucian virtues, such as the “unconditional loyalty or obedience” similar to female virtues in fidelity to one’s male counterpart, as illustrated in Huang’s book, *Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China* (Huang *Negotiating* 6). As Neo-Confucian virtues and fidelity are absent from Zhang Fei’s *xing*,

the oath creates something similar to *Journey to the West* 西遊記, a Tight-Fillet Spell 緊箍咒 for Zhang Fei.²⁰

This lack of virtue and fidelity in Zhang Fei's *xing* can be traced by comparing several scenes between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. The transformation and rewriting that occurred in the process of literati-ization leads to a depiction of a castrated Zhang Fei, portraying him as deprived of his main temperament: autonomy of his own innate intuition, such that he can wreak havoc like the Monkey King in the heaven. In fact, his representation in these two textual works differs from the reprocessed historical image in the rewritten historical narrative. The scene at the Apricot-Forest Village from *pinghua*, which further emphasizes and elaborates upon Zhang Fei's astonishing physical strength and ability, is entirely absent from the narrative in *tongsu yanyi*. By removing the Apricot-Forest Village scene in *tongsu yanyi*, it reduces Zhang's *xing* and minimizes the images of his masculine physical strength, his martial prowess, his invincibility, and his own autonomy in the literati-ized recension.

Moreover, several scenes in *pinghua* demonstrate that Zhang Fei's unruly behaviors and his innate intuition are also effaced from the Ming-Qing literati-ized recension. For example, in Chang'an 長安, Zhang Fei punches Duan Gui 段珪, one of the Ten Constant Attendants 十常侍 and a eunuch who serves the Emperor. After Duan fails to obtain bribes from the brothers, he accuses the fraternity brother of looting the peasants during their campaign against the Yellow Scarves, and:

²⁰ The Tang Monk learns the Tight-Fillet Spell from Bodhisattva Guanyin in order to control and tame the Monkey from leaving the missionary journey (Wu *Journey* 317). As a matter of fact, the Monkey is read as a pun of the mental desire, or *xinyuan* 心願. Therefore, the Tight-Fillet Spell is a symbol for controlling and harnessing the mind and desire (Wu *Journey* 73).

Zhang Fei was enraged, and with flailing fists he stepped right up to Duan Gui, and before Liu Bei and Lord Guan could pull him back by his clothes, his fist hit Duan full on his lips. His back teeth fell out of his mouth and two front teeth were also knocked out. His mouth was filled with blood. Duan Gui went back with his hand covering his mouth. And Liu Bei said to Zhang Fei, “You’ve caused trouble for our men!”

張飛大怒，揮拳直至段珪根前。劉備，關公二人扯拽不住，拳中唇齒綻落，打下牙兩個，滿口流血。段珪掩口而歸。劉備道：「你帶累軍卒也！」(Records 25)

In this scene, Liu Bei and Guan Yu cannot prevent Zhang Fei’s anger and his brutal reaction to Duan’s avaricious bribery request while witnessing Zhang Fei fiercely punch him in the face. The removal of Zhang’s attack on Duan Gui in *tongsu yanyi* is an example of a continual effort to restrict and delimit Zhang Fei’s impetuous action, since Liu’s and Guan’s inability to interdict Zhang’s unruly and irrational behaviors demonstrates a failure at reining the *wu* character. Furthermore, this scene also illustrates how the popular image of the *wu* character refuses and resists the enslaved and feminized masculine identity and political disorders, as suggested by Martin Huang in his analysis of the Three Kingdoms story cycle in *Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China*. Huang asserts that the political disorder that existed in the late Han Empire symbolized a gender disorder (Huang *Negotiating* 91). Liu Bei’s reluctant, unenthusiastic remarks on Zhang’s action depict Liu’s ineffectual rejection of the socio-political disorder caused by the interference of eunuchs and women in the imperial court. Liu’s semi-compromising attitude toward Duan Gui also signifies that Liu had been emasculated by his ineffectuality in resisting the gendered socio-political disorder. Removing this scene in the later literati-ized renditions not only minimizes Zhang’s physical strength and reduces his unruly innate behaviors, it also reshapes Liu Bei’s inability to resist the gendered political turmoil and

his ineptitude in controlling Zhang Fei's behavior. Therefore, Zhang's resistance and defiance against Duan is a metaphorical refusal of feminized masculinity, as well as a refusal of the gendered political crisis and identity disorder depicted in *pinghua*.

Another scene, "Three Heroes Battle with Lü Bu at the Tigerkeep Pass 虎牢關前三英戰呂布," has been transcribed into various versions of *zaju*, theatrical performance, and folk stories. According to the annotations that were originally recorded in Wang Can's 王粲 *Yingxiongji* 英雄記, then later compiled by Pei Songzhi into Chen's historical works of the Three Kingdoms, at the time, Lü Bu was in battle with Sun Jian 孫堅 at Yangren 陽人 (Chen *Sanguo* 491). From this specific annotation, it is clear that the story of Lü Bu and the three fraternity brothers battling at the Tigerkeep Pass was not a historical fact. Therefore, this scene had been fabricated and circulated through folklore during the Song and Yuan periods. This scene was adopted into *pinghua*, then later reconstructed into *tongsu yanyi*. In spite of the lack of authenticity of this scene in the historical records, it is one of the best-known scenes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. This scene serves as a transition point where the focus of the plot shifts from socio-political turbulence to a lengthy period of chaotic civil wars between various warlords.

The scene of the "Three Heroes battling with Lü Bu at the Tigerkeep Pass" begins as Cao Cao "assembles all of the liege lords in the empire 會天下諸侯" to annihilate the usurper Dong Zhuo, who controlled Luoyang, following a secret edict from the emperor. In *pinghua*, Cao Cao receives the emperor's decree to assemble all liege lords and rescues the emperor from being held hostage (*Records* 34). However, Cao Cao did not receive the emperor's decree in gathering liege lords to confront Dong Zhuo in *tongsu yanyi*. In *pinghua*, Liu, Guan, and Zhang joined the other liege lords in battle with Dong Zhuo's army after receiving Cao Cao's invitation. Due to

his personal affection towards Liu Bei, Cao Cao invited Liu to the assembly when he passed by Pingyuan county 平原縣. In *pinghua*, Zhang Fei and Lü Bu fight more than once at the Tigerkeep Pass. In their first duel, Zhang Fei and Lü Bu battle each other without a clear result. Later, Guan Yu and Liu Bei join Zhang Fei's breathtaking confrontation with Lü Bu, and Lü Bu defeats the three brothers, then flees. The next day, Lü Bu comes out of the gate and challenges Zhang Fei to another one-on-one duel:

The next day Lü Bu came down out of the pass and shouted, "Send out the big-eyed fellow!" Zhang Fei, greatly enraged, came out on his horse, holding his divine eighteen-foot spear, and with round eyes glaring went straight away to seize Lü Bu. The two horses met for more than thirty rounds, but there was no clear winner. Zhang Fei had always loved battle and he smashed into his opponent and battled him for thirty more rounds, and in that fight one of Lü Bu's battle flags wrapped around his face. Zhang Fei was like a god and Lü Bu quailed in his heart, and spurred his horse back up into the pass, closed it tightly, and did not come out again.

次日，呂布下關，叫曰：「大眼漢出馬！」張飛大怒，出馬，手持丈八神矛，睜雙圓眼，直取呂布。二馬相交，三十合，不分勝敗。張飛平生好廝殺，撞著對手，又戰三十合，殺呂布綰旗掩面。張飛如神，呂布心怯，拔馬上關，堅閉不出。

(*Records* 38)

In the second duel between Zhang and Lü, Lü loses his ground after thirty bouts, and is intimidated by Zhang's mighty prowess and martial skills. Lü's defeat emphasizes Zhang's invincibility. The portrayal creates an astonishingly formidable image of a macho-masculine man. In fact, this victory of Zhang over Lü Bu implies a confrontation between two models of martial masculinity within the Three Kingdoms story. Huang remarks that Lü Bu is a hero who is

so captivating that he becomes vulnerable to his own sexual desire, or *qing*, in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* (Huang *Negotiating* 93-94). Huang claims that unlike Zhang Fei, Lü Bu is not categorized as either *yingxiong* 英雄 or *haohan* due to his sexual desire and his refusal to adopt the insightful scheme advised by his strategist Chen Gong 陳宮. In both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, Lü only listens to his wife for any military and political advice, or to Diao Chan in *pinghua*, or Yanshi 顏氏 in *tongsu yanyi*. This is a recurring motif, as political affairs have become sexualized and Lü's story is part of the metaphor for this gendered disorder. Therefore, Lü fails the *yingxiong* model, and hence is not considered a *haohan* in Martin Huang's analysis.

In contrast, Zhang Fei's victory over Lü Bu illustrates not only his formidability, but also the victory of the *haohan* archetype over the distorted *wu* model that Lü Bu embodies, as Lü's masculine image fails due to his sexual distraction and desire for beauty 英雄難過美人關. In fact, Zhang Fei's capture of Lü Bu after the fall of Xiapi 下邳之戰 later in the story signifies Zhang's invincibility and his gendered victory over the distorted masculinity that Lü Bu portrays. However, Zhang's victory is eliminated and removed in *tongsu yanyi*. *Tongsu yanyi* expunges the one-on-one duel between Zhang and Lü at the Tigerkeep Pass, as well as Zhang's capture of Lü after the fall of Xiapi, which conceals Zhang's formidable image in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. The removals also effectively tame Zhang's incandescent disposition. Instead of depicting an indecisive victory of twenty bouts with Lü at the Tigerkeep Pass as done in *pinghua*, *tongsu yanyi* weakens and attenuates Zhang's invincibility through a set of narrations that relay Zhang's ineptitude and failure to confront Lü Bu. In the same scene at Tigerkeep Pass in *tongsu yanyi*:

Zhang Fei's mighty spirit flashed at this welcome chance. The two crossed and tangled to their heart's content. The eight lords saw Zhang Fei's spear gradually lost his ground, and Lü Bu became better and better.

飛抖搜神威，酣戰呂布。八路諸侯見張飛漸漸槍法散亂，呂布越添精神。(Luo *wenshi* 47)

This reconstructed narrative managed to restrain Zhang Fei's *wu*-masculinity by obliterating his martial skills, which further weakens Zhang's superiority over other warrior characters, and forces him to become a controllable object by "those whose wisdom is outstanding," such as Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang (Huang *Negotiating* 89).

In the process of rewriting *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei's physical appearance and his martial superiority constantly compete for a preeminent position with other characters (both *wen* and *wu*). In *pinghua*, Zhang Fei is constantly challenging the characters whose masculine model is prevalently aligned with outstanding wisdom. On the other hand, Zhang's *haohan* model is constantly kept in check and interrogated by other characters who mostly resemble the *wen* masculine characters. These *wen* characters act as a restraint on the *xing* disrupted by the *qing* or *yu* in those *wu* characters. Zhang's spontaneous and unruly behavior reflects such disruption by his *qing* and *yu*, since his actions are mostly instigated by external events and his urge to avenge social injustice. Zhang's abstention resembles the Monkey King's Tight-Fillet in *Journey to the West*, in which Anthony Yu claims that "the Heart-and-Mind must be consulted and utilized thus dialectically needs also to be controlled or harnessed, as every reader who encounters the Tight-Fillet episodes would realize" (Yu 73). Therefore, the different inhibitions and commands of Liu Bei in halting Zhang Fei's impromptu behaviors in *tongsu yanyi* demonstrate a similar effect of constraint for Zhang, as does the Tang Monk's recital of the

Tight-Fillet Spell in order to tame the Monkey. In *tongsu yanyi*, Liu Bei's commands act as the Tight-Fillet for Zhang, given that in various characteristics, Liu resembles the Tang Monk 唐僧 in *Journey to the West*.

On the other hand, *pinghua* depicts Liu Bei's inability to control Zhang's impulsive and unruly behavior. For example, in the Triple Visit 三顧茅廬 from *pinghua*, Liu Bei attempts to invite Zhuge Liang, the reclusive strategist living in the Recumbent Dragon Ridge 臥龍崗, to join his camp as his adviser, but when Liu Bei and his officers return to Xinye 新野 after failing to meet Zhuge Liang:

Zhang Fei shouted out, "Elder brother, you are wrong! I remember Tigerkeep Pass and how I thrice fought my way out of Xiapi and how my elder brother Lord Guan skewered Yan Liang, pursued Wen Chou, beheaded Cai Yang, and surprised Che Zhou. In those days, we had no 'master!' With a hundred-pound blade I can dispute with this master." The Imperial Uncle simply did not answer.

張飛高叫言：「哥哥錯矣！記得虎關並三出小沛，俺兄關公刺顏良，追文丑，斬蔡陽，襲車胄，當時也無先生來。我與一百斤大刀，卻與那先生論麼！」皇叔不答。

(*Records 75*)

When Zhang Fei shouts out Guan Yu's military merits, Liu Bei fails to repudiate Zhang's shout. Liu's failure to respond signifies Zhang's predominance within this homo-social fraternity. And yet, it also denotes the powerlessness of the *wen* masculinities that associates with the image of scholars, which competes with Zhang's *wu*-masculine model.

In the exact same scene in *tongsu yanyi*, the narrative presents a different result. The situation is similar to the scene in *pinghua*, where Liu Bei returns to Xinye after his second unsuccessful visit in search of the reclusive Zhuge Liang, and he prepares a third visit. This

scene is followed by Guan Yu's and Zhang Fei's failure to remonstrate against Liu Bei's third visit to the Sleeping Dragon Ridge:

“Dear brother,” Zhang Fei declared, “we three brothers had maneuvered among the heaven below, and who dares to challenge us on our martial skills? What makes you think this village bumpkin so wise and worthy? Spare yourself the trip. If he refuses to come, it will only take a bit of rope to bring him here!” Liu Bei scolded Zhang Fei.

張飛曰：「哥哥差矣。俺兄弟三人縱橫天下，論武藝不如誰？何故將這村夫以為大賢僻之？僻之甚矣！今番不須哥哥去罷。他如不來，我只用一條麻繩就縛將來！」

玄德叱之。(Luo *wenshi* 283)

Instead of shouting out their military merits that contributes to Liu Bei's political and military ascension in *pinghua*, Zhang Fei “declares” their martial skills to be formidable and unchallengeable by any others, and claims he can bring Zhuge Liang, a village bumpkin, to Xingye with “a bit of rope” (Luo *wenshi* 283). Immediately, “Liu Bei scolded Zhang Fei” for his improper and violent words, and if Zhang Fei insisted on joining Liu's third visit to the Sleeping Dragon Ridge, he ordered Zhang not to show any signs of impertinence during their visit. Liu Bei's scolding and command of Zhang Fei highlights how Liu Bei takes control of Zhang's impulsive behavior by emphasizing Zhang's need to control his behaviors with proper rites. This command to Zhang Fei acts with humility and aligns with the Confucian ideology of controlling one's emotions and behaviors through the demonstration of proper rite. As stated by Taibo 泰伯 in the *Analects*, “If you are courageous but lack ritual you will become unruly 勇而無禮則亂” (*Analects* 78) and as Yanyuan 顏淵 says, “Restraining yourself and returning to the rites constitutes Goodness 克己復禮為仁” (*Analects* 125). Furthermore, encompassing Zhang with

propriety and rites emphasizes the collaboration with other Confucian virtues of filial piety and loyalty, taming and reining the impulsive and innate nature within Zhang's crude character.

The reining in of Zhang Fei is conducted through the process of reconstructing a series of events within the Three Kingdoms story cycle. One of the scenes, which is included in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, takes place after the “Battle of the Red Cliff 赤壁之戰” and the death of Zhou Yu. Pang Tong 龐統, whose sobriquet is Phoenix Fledgling 鳳雛, is another *wen*-dominated character similar to Zhuge Liang. At the beginning of this scene, Liu Bei appoints Pang Tong as the district magistrate of Liyang 歷陽. In *pinghua*, Liu Bei's appointment foils Pang Tong, and Pang purposely “does a bad job 錯斷了公事,” causing the furious townspeople to complain to their liege lord, Liu Bei. Liu Bei immediately sends his trusted brother, the impulsive and uncontrollable Zhang Fei, to Liyang without any orders and commands that he needs to control his composure. Zhang replies immediately that he will “drag that fellow 拖出那漢”:

The next day Zhang Fei led dozens of men and when he reached Liyang, he dismounted in front of the yamen. To a person, all the common people and the clerks complained about Pang Tong's lack of humanity. With sword in hand, Zhang Fei went into the yamen. When evening fell, he heard a thunderous snore, and when he slashed a number of times with his sword, blood spurted out like a gushing fountain. He lifted the blanket, and it turned out to be a dog.

來日，張飛引數十人，至歷陽衙前下馬。有百姓，官吏皆言龐統不仁。張飛持劍入衙。至天晚，聽得鼻氣若雷。張飛連砍數劍，血如湧泉。揭起被服，卻是一犬。

(Records 114)

There are scenes in *pinghua* that demonstrate Zhang Fei's unruly response to the injustice and repression that the people have endured. With regards to Pang Tong, the scene quoted above reflects Zhang Fei's impulsive manner towards any similar situation of injustice, as he strives to avenge the injustice through blood and violence without any attempt to investigate the situation.

However, in the correlating scene in *tongsu yanyi*, Liu Bei designates Pang Tong as the Prefect of Leiyang 耒陽 county, and Pang purposely neglects his duties and intoxicates himself every day with wine. The people relay Pang's behaviors to Liu Bei, who then summons Zhang Fei to conduct an investigation at Leiyang county. However, Liu Bei insists upon having one of his secondary advisers and diplomats known for his literary scholarship, Sun Qian 孫乾, accompany Zhang Fei during this investigation. Liu especially orders Zhang to consult with Sun Qian on all occasions. Zhang's investigation is presented differently than in *pinghua*, as quoted below:

As assigned, Zhang Fei went with Sun Qian to Leiyang county. They met the local civil and military officials in front of the city walls. Pang Tong, however, was not to be seen. "Where is the prefect?" Zhang Fei asked. His staff officers replied, "Prefect Pang, from the moment he took office nearly one hundred days ago, has totally neglected county affairs. Every day he drinks wine, dallying in the land of the intoxicated from morning to night. Right now he is still sleeping off last night's binge." Zhang Fei was outraged and wanted to arrest him. But Sun Qian said, "Pang Tong is a high-minded man. Before we condemn him, let's go to his office and ask some questions. There will be time enough to take measures if he can't justify himself."

張飛領了言語，與孫乾前至耒陽縣。軍民官吏皆出廓迎接，獨不見縣令。飛問曰：

「縣令何在？」同僚復曰：「龐縣令自到任及今，將百餘日，縣中之事，並不理

問，每日飲酒，自旦及夜，只在醉鄉。今日宿酒未醒，猶臥不起。」張飛大怒，欲擒之。孫乾曰：「龐士元乃高明之人，且未可輕忽。到縣問之，如果於理不當，治罪未晚。」 (Luo *wenshi* 404)

In *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei does not recklessly “drag the fellow” to present Pang Tong in front of Liu Bei. Instead, Liu Bei takes the initiative to command Zhang to be an inspector and investigate if the alleged atrocities or misdeeds actually occurred, and requires that Zhang Fei consult with Sun Qian before he proceeds with any action. With the inclusion of Sun Qian and Liu Bei’s predetermination, Zhang Fei is restrained from his unruly behavior. Furthermore, this is a castration of Zhang Fei’s masculinity, by removing his own autonomy through Liu’s advance precautions and Sun Qian’s advice. Zhang Fei’s spontaneous and disruptive conduct originates from his intuition: *xing*. In *A Book to Burn*, Li Zhi describes this as a “Child-Hearted Mind” reflection (Li *A Book* 103-113). Sun Qian’s and Liu Bei’s restraint emerges from the *wen*-masculinity model and restrains Zhang’s impromptu behaviors. In Martin Huang’s terms, Zhang Fei transforms from a “True Man to Castrato,” a phrase Huang derives from Sima Qian’s claim that removing one’s physical manhood could enhance his psychological manhood (Huang *Negotiating* 23). It is questionable if Zhang Fei’s *wu*-masculinity is enhanced in the process of this emasculation, although external constraints throughout the reconstruction of the Three Kingdoms story cycle restrain Zhang Fei’s *wu*-masculinity, his disposition, and his autonomy.

In fact, Zhang Fei’s defiant behavior depicted in *pinghua* has been heavily modified and altered in *tongsu yanyi*. For example, after Cao Cao defeats the three brothers in Xuzhou 徐州, Zhang Fei separates from his brothers. Zhang later stations himself in a small city called Old City 古城 and gathers a group of brigands under his rule. The following quote from *pinghua*

narrates Zhang Fei's disobedience and defiant behaviors when a third-person Gong Gu 鞏固 tells Liu Bei and Zhao Yun 趙雲 on their way to Jingzhou 荊州:

Gong Gu replied, "...recently, someone else with ten riders came here and defeated me, so I have to pay a monthly offering. He is in an old city south of the mountains; he calls himself 'The Grand and Nameless King,' he has built a palace in the city, called Prime Musical Mode, and has instituted a reign title named 'A Bang-up Time.' He uses a magic spear eighteen feet long that ten thousand men cannot match." When the First Ruler heard this, he thought to himself, 'Must be Zhang Fei!' ...Zhang Fei was sitting in his palace in Old City...

鞏固曰：「終前山中。則說小人獨鎮中原，近有一人引十疋馬來，殺敗小人。每月要進奉。在於山南一古城，自號『無姓大王』。古城內建一宮，名曰黃鐘宮，立年號是快活年。使一條槍丈八神矛，萬人難敵。」先主聽說畢，暗想：「莫是張飛？」...卻說張飛在古城宮內... (*Records* 67-68)

The self-proclaimed title of "The Grand and Nameless King 無姓大王," the building of his own palace, and the implementation of a reign title "A Bang-up Time 快活年" portrays Zhang Fei as a lawless brigand and dauntless ruffian, since having a reign title and building a palace reveals Zhang's ruling in the Old City as an independent and illegitimate regime. Therefore, again within this scene in *pinghua*, Zhang Fei expresses his defiant temperament in an explicit manner.

Assuredly, Zhang Fei's behaviors in the Old City, or Gucheng 古城, does not suit the Confucian ideology, such as loyalty to the liege lord, restraint of desires, and practices of proper propriety. Hence, in the same scene in *tongsu yanyi*, Zhang Fei simply overthrows the county officer and reestablishes himself as the new local governor without the proclamation of any rebellious titles

or setting a reign title, which forestalls any accusation of deposing the legitimate authority, such as the Han emperor or Liu Bei, to whom he swore his allegiance (Luo *wenshi* 213).

There are scenes transcribed from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi* that reveal the suppression of Zhang Fei's martial prowess. For example, Zhang Fei makes an uproar at Steep-slope Bridge 長阪橋, repelling Cao Cao's incursion. In *pinghua*, the Steep-slope Bridge collapsed due to Zhang's thundering shout. However, in *tongsu yanyi*, this scene is rewritten after Zhang Fei repelled Cao Cao's ample army, and Zhang Fei and his men purposely tear down the bridge. Liu Bei criticizes Zhang Fei's "lack of tactics" on his return. Liu tells Zhang Fei that with Cao Cao's suspicious nature, he would not cross the bridge in fear of an ambush if Zhang did not destroy it, which would have delayed his expedition to the south. Such critique from Liu Bei is indeed a demonstration of another attempt to suppress the salient characteristic of Zhang Fei in the novel. Furthermore, this critique from Liu Bei downplays Zhang's *haohan* model to a lesser status in competition with other *wen*-dominated characters that possess literary prowess in the Three Kingdoms story cycle.

Zhang Fei's character underwent a noticeable change between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. Zhang's transformation is a compromise between the image of *wu*-masculine from the plain narrative and the literati-ized concept of containment of his innate desires and emotions. As a typical *haohan* archetype in *pinghua*, Zhang Fei is a defiant fellow who resolves his problems and emotional distress through physical performance, which is clearly illustrated by him punching Duan Gui, and his impulsive maneuver during the investigation in Leiyang. Zhang Fei gained enormous popularity among the audience with such uncontrollable impromptu feats and a disposition of defiance. In fact, this demonstrates that in *pinghua*, Zhang Fei reflects a common expectation of the *haohan* image that resembles the characteristics of a masculine warrior from

popular culture. On the contrary, in *tongsu yanyi*, the character Zhang Fei does not present much change or transformation from that of *pinghua*; he is still ferocious and violent. However, Liu Bei and other *wen*-dominated masculine characters restrain and rein Zhang Fei through the invocation of *dayi* 大義, which is to serve social justice for the greater good, rather than for personal interests. In *tongsu yanyi*, each time Zhang Fei attempts to resolve a problem with his physicality, Liu Bei or another *wen*-masculine character presents himself to halt him from his action. When juxtaposing the two Zhang Fei characters, *tongsu yanyi* presents a *wu*-masculine model that is tamed from his disposition of defiance. As a matter of fact, the reconstructed narrative reflects a compromised model of the *wu*, in order to portray the *wen* as hegemonic.

Failed *haohan* Lü Bu and the “Double Snare”²¹

In this part of the chapter, I examine the series of events entitled the “Double Snare 貂蟬連環計,” also known as “The Beauty Trap 美人計” in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. The juxtaposition of two versions of the same scene illustrates the transformation of a different type of *wu*-masculinity from the plain narrative to the reconstructed narrative, which will also demonstrate the transformation of the *wu*-dominated and desire-driven masculine model represented by Lü Bu between the Yuan and mid-Ming periods. These two versions of the “Double Snare” ruse involve a different *haohan* character modeled by Lü Bu, a *wen* character Wang Yun 王允, the beauty Diao Chan 貂蟬, and Dong Zhuo 董卓.

As mentioned previously, in my perspective, Lü Bu is not a typical *haohan* model like Zhang Fei in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. Lü Bu possesses supreme military prowess similar

²¹ The translated title “Double Snare” is from Moss Roberts’ *Three Kingdoms*. Hu Ying translates it as “double intrigue” instead. Wilt Idema and Stephen West title the related scenario in *pinghua* as “Diao Chan.”

to Zhang Fei, yet as Huang notes, he fails to display some of the common positive attributes of a typical *haohan*. Moreover, Lü Bu also lacks several of the common attributes of the typical popular warrior archetypes that Shelley Chang lists in her book *History and Legend* (Chang 81). From Hinsch's *haohan* elements, as depicted in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, Lü Bu does not demonstrate his loyalty towards a specific homo-social group, as he is known for killing two of his foster fathers or liege lords, Ding Yuan 丁原 and Dong Zhuo 董卓. At the same time, Lü Bu fails to meet two of the five common warrior attributes Chang describes. In contrast to Zhang Fei's triumph, Lü Bu's failure resembles that of Xiang Yu 項羽, the Hegemon-King of the Western Chu (232–202 BCE) and Li Yuanba in *Shuo Tang*. Lü Bu is not presented as a villain in either *pinghua* or *tongsu yanyi*. Wang Qiancheng considers Lü Bu as a warrior with ordinary and mediocre talent, capable of despicable conduct, and he sees Lü's failure in the tumultuous period as due to his fondness for beauty and his own selfishness (Wang *Sanguoyanyi* 52-67). Martin Huang agrees with Wang's view of Lü Bu's failure in competing for power with Cao Cao and Liu Bei (Huang *Negotiating* 92-95). His failure is attributed to his inability to resist his own sexual desire, unlike Zhang Fei, who shows little-to-no affection for sex in either *pinghua* or *tongsu yanyi*.

The "Double Snare" ruse scenario is one of the well-known episodes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. It may be based on actual historical events, but there is not enough factual evidence to determine if this actually took place as presented in the narratives, especially the existence of the historical figure Diao Chan, for whom Hu Ying claims "a flimsy existence" (Hu 102). One of the main components in the "Double Snare" scenario is recorded in the Biographies of Lü Bu 呂布傳 from Chen Shou's records, which included Lü Bu having a clandestine love affair with one of Dong Zhuo's serving maids, after which Lü Bu kills Dong Zhuo, and also

specifies Wang Yun's involvement in this series of events (Chen *Sanguozhi* 100-101). However, the name Diao Chan was not mentioned in Chen's historical record. The name Diao Chan 貂蟬 may have originated from a misinterpretation or a misreading of the Chinese characters for "serving maid 侍婢" in Chen's *Sanguozhi* (Wang *Sanguo gushi* 63-65). The investigation of this set of events becomes much more complicated due to the circulation and popularity of the various versions of the story, including *pinghua*, *tongsu yanyi*, the Ming period *chuanqi* 明傳奇, *Lianhuan Ji* 連環記, and various *zaju* 雜劇 texts from the Song, Jing, Yuan, and mid-Ming periods (Wang *Sanguo gushi* 69-70).

The "Double Snare" ruse begins after Cao Cao "assembles all of the liege lords in the empire 會天下諸侯," after Dong Zhuo moves to Chang'an 長安 in order to flee from the joint coalition of the liege lords. It concludes with Lü Bu fleeing from Chang'an as Dong Zhuo's minions attempt to avenge Dong's death. In *pinghua*, the "Double Snare" scenario can be differentiated into nine individual scenes. On the other hand, in *tongsu yanyi*, the entire scenario can be divided into twenty-seven unitary scenes. Wang Lijuan identifies seven essential scenes in this scenario, while the additional units, two in *pinghua*, and twenty in *tongsu yanyi*, can be considered satellites (Wang *Sanguo gushi* 125-129).²² Other than such significant differences in the narrative structure of the same scenario, the changes within the individual units of these scenes transform the meaning and the social values depicted.

In *pinghua*, the "Double Snare" scene begins when Wang Yun returns to his residence after Dong Zhuo's banquets. *Pinghua* narrates Dong Zhuo's lascivious and flirtatious behavior with the imperial concubines 妃 during this imperial banquet. On the other hand, *tongsu yanyi*

²² Wang borrows Roland Barthes' terms "kernel" and "satellites" in her discussion.

reconstructs the description of Dong Zhuo's behavior, in which Dong Zhuo orders Lü Bu to execute the Grand Minister of Public Works 司徒, Zhang Wen 張溫, as he accuses Zhang Wen of conspiring a plot against him with one of the liege lords, Yuan Shu 袁術. This specific variation between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* establishes a different tone and justification for the process of annihilating Dong Zhuo from power. The narrative in *pinghua* sets Dong Zhuo as an image of a lascivious and barbaric leader who is unable to control his sexual desires and interest in women. Therefore, Lü's slaughter of Dong is purely personal vengeance. On the other hand, in *tongsu yanyi*, the narration depicts Dong Zhuo as a tyrant who behaves with a cruel rationale and a suspicious nature, which recasts Lü's and Wang's ruse as an attempt to reestablish the Han imperial power and redirect the political disorder back to its right course of action. With this specific difference, the annihilation of Dong Zhuo reflects two distinct types of reasoning behind Wang Yun's ruse with Lü Bu. In *pinghua*, the removal of Dong Zhuo reflects how the political disorder in the Han regime is due to the gender disorder (Huang *Negotiating* 91). This interpretation resonates with Sima Zhongxiang's Karmic Dream at the beginning of the story, as Dong Zhuo sexually and verbally harasses the imperial consorts, and therefore Dong's death is punishment for his lascivious behavior (*Records* 38). However, *tongsu yanyi* illustrates Dong Zhuo's hegemonic power and his militant tyrannical government, which reveals an anxiety and worry about the ideological harmonious regime between the ruler and ministers that is based on a nostalgic sentiment from the Song dynasty of an idealized Mencian utopia of "the Emperor and scholar-gentry [governing] the realm under the heaven together 與士大夫共治天下" (Li *Xu* Vol. 221). Since Dong Zhuo's ascension to power also reflects how a *wu* character corrupted this Mencian political ideology, Dong is annihilated by a ruse plotted by a *wen* character, Wang Yun, in order to demonstrate the superiority and domination of the *wen* over the *wu* characters.

This transformation within the “Double Snare” ruse puts a rein on Lü Bu, as Lü Bu is initially depicted as an invincible warrior in *tongsu yanyi*, but Diao Chan then redirects Lü Bu from a villainous beast into a tamed human being. In *pinghua*, Lü kills Dong because of a personal insult, as Dong snatches Diao Chan for his sexual desire, which humiliates Lü Bu. This is because in *pinghua*, Diao Chan is Lü Bu’s legal wife, and they had been apart for three years due to Ding Yuan’s 丁原 military uprising in Lintao 臨洮 county:

Wang Yun went back to his residence and dismounted and sat glumly in a small courtyard. He told himself that Emperor Xian was weak and powerless; now that Dong Zhuo had grasped power, the empire was in deep peril. Suddenly he saw a woman burning incense, remarking that she would not be able to return home and see her patriarch again. She burned incense and made two bows. Wang Yun said to himself, “I am troubled by state affairs, but what’s this woman praying for?” He had no other recourse but to go and ask her, “Why are you burning incense? Tell me the truth.” He scared Diao Chan so much that she fell quickly to her knees, daring not to hide anything. She truthfully revealed her feeling, “This humble concubine was originally surnamed Ren, and my child name was Diao Chan. My patriarch was Lü Bu, but we were separated at Lintao and haven’t seen each other since. This is why I’m burning incense.” The prime minister was overjoyed, “This woman is the one who will bring peace to the Han empire.” He returned to a hall and summoned Diao Chan, “I will look upon you and treat you as my own child.” He then gave her gold, pearls, and bolts of silk and sent her on her way.²³

²³ In Wilt Idema’s and Stephen West’s translation, they use the word “master” instead of “patriarch.” I reworded the term to “patriarch,” which I find more appropriate than simply “master.” Furthermore, in Hu Ying’s article, *Angling with Beauty: Two Stories of Women as Narrative Bait in Sanguozhi yanyi*, she labels Lü Bu as Diao Chan’s husband. Therefore, compromising between the two, I used “patriarch” instead.

王允歸宅下馬，信步到後花園內，小庭悶坐。獨言獻帝懦弱，董卓弄權，天下危矣。忽見一婦人燒香，自言不得歸鄉，故家長不能見面。焚香再拜。王允自言，吾憂國事，此婦人因甚禱祝？王允不免出庭問曰：「你為甚燒香？對我實說。」唬得貂蟬連忙跪下，不敢抵諱，實訴其由：「賤妾本姓任，小字貂蟬，家長是呂布，自臨洮府相失，至今不曾見面，因此燒香。」丞相大喜：「安漢天下，此婦人也！」丞相歸堂，叫貂蟬：「吾看你如親女一般看待。」即將金珠緞疋與貂蟬，謝而去之。(Records 38-39)

This scene is set in Wang Yun's residence, and Diao Chan recounts her past. This scene also illustrates the strong motivation and enthusiasm Diao Chan experiences when reuniting with her patriarch and husband, Lü Bu. In Hu Ying's article *Angling with Beauty: Two Stories of Women as Narrative Bait in Sanguozhi yanyi*, she analyzes Diao Chan's detailed background in *pinghua* and contrasts it with several other Yuan *zaju*, which results in an ambiguity in the relationships between Diao Chan, Lü Bu, and Wang Yun in their effort to annihilate Dong (Hu 102-103). In ancient China, a woman's sexuality and chastity, or *jie* 節, was as important as the Mencian ideal of righteousness, or *yi* 義. Hu claims that the value of a woman's chastity and a man's righteousness reflects an investment of valuable time and effort, in order to sustain spotless fame among their peers and in the eyes of the public (Hu 102-103). In fact, in *pinghua*, Diao Chan demonstrates her enthusiasm for reuniting with her husband as a way to maintain her reputation, and her *yi*. Diao Chan clearly demonstrates her initiative to maintain her chastity through her motivation and prayer, as she desires to be reunited with her husband, Lü Bu. Wang Yun does not appear to reveal his plan to Diao Chan, even though the text indicates that the "prime minister [Wang Yun] was overjoyed, 'This woman [Diao Chan] is the one who will bring peace

to the Han empire 安漢天下，此婦人也。” Nowhere does the text explicitly mention that Wang Yun verbalized his feelings or thoughts out loud. Yet, as a member of an elite class and a scholar, Wang Yun exploits and imposes the innocent Diao Chan into his scheme to fulfill his own ambition of saving the imperial empire of Han, which is an unrighteous behavior. The Mencian concept of righteousness rejects destroying the chastity and fidelity of an individual, as Wang’s behavior in *pinghua* illustrates the popular perception of the *wen*-masculinity that is different from the literati self-identification as a righteous man.

Furthermore, Diao Chan’s background in *pinghua* provides a legitimate and justifiable reason for Lü Bu to slay Dong Zhuo. As mentioned earlier, a man is required to preserve his own fame to be as spotless as possible in order to demonstrate his masculinity and power among his male peers. According to Bret Hinsch, this practice of avenging humiliation emerged in antiquity, and has been apparent in a character obsessed with vengeance in the patriarchal society (Hinsch 32-34). In particular, taking revenge for personal disgrace and shame was highly glorified, and men in early periods usually avenged the death of their kin or the shame on their chastity with the most violent acts possible. Stories of vengeance were popularly narrated in various works of Ming-Qing *zhanghui xiaoshuo*, such as *Shuihu chuan* and *Jin pingmei*, in which Wu Song 武松 kills Pan Jinlian 潘金蓮 and Ximen Qing 西門慶 (in both *Shuihu zhuan* and *Jin ping mei*) to avenge his brother, who was murdered by Pan and Ximen. Avenging personal or familial death or shame through violence became an act to cleanse one’s reputation in the imperial period (Hinsch 36).

In order for Lü Bu to avenge his disgrace, Wang Yun plots his “Double Snare” ruse by presenting Diao Chan to the lascivious Dong Zhuo as a way to shame Lü Bu. This is depicted in the following:

Later that night, Dong Zhuo and Diao Chan drank together. Now Dong Zhuo was a lecher and a drunk. About two days later, when Lü Bu returned from the Serpentine, he dismounted at the front of the residence, and his eight strong generals all scattered. Later that night, the Marquis of Wen heard the sounds of music tinkling and ringing in the residence, and he asked his attendants why it was happening. All of them explained, “He’s got a woman from the prime minister; it’s that Diao Chan!” Lü Bu was greatly shaken and walked to a place underneath the gallery corridor, but there was no way he could see inside. Suddenly he saw Diao Chan push aside the curtain and come out. Lü Bu was incensed and asked, “Where is that miscreant?” “He’s already drunk,” replied Diao Chan. Lü Bu raised his sword and went into the hall, where he saw Dong Zhuo snoring like thunder, lying there like a mountain of flesh, and cursed him, “You, miscreant, you have no morals!” A single swipe of the sword cut his neck, and the fresh blood spurted out. He stabbed Dong Zhuo, who then died.

當夜天晚，董卓與貂蟬飲酒。董卓是一酒色之徒。前後二日，呂布因自曲江回來，到宅前下馬，有八健將皆散。當夜天晚，溫侯聽宅中有樂音嘹亮，遂問左右人為何。眾人具說：「丞相一婦人，乃貂蟬也！」呂布大驚，行至廊下，無由得見。猛然見貂蟬推衣而出。呂布大怒：「逆賊在於何處？」貂蟬曰：「已醉矣。」呂布提劍入堂，見董卓鼻氣如雷，臥如肉山，罵：「老賊無道！」一劍斷其頸，鮮血湧流。刺董卓身死。(Records 40)

In this scene, Lü Bu discovers that Diao Chan is in Dong Zhuo’s chamber. He immediately avenges his shame in force without any hesitation. Lü Bu’s hasty reaction reflects his naïve intuition that derives from innate passion, or the inner heart, which is similar to Zhang Fei as mentioned in the previous discussion on the concept of *shuaixing*, or Li Zhi’s “Child-Hearted

Mind” theory. In fact, Lü Bu’s murder of Dong Zhuo signifies his *qing*, or his anger that had taken control of his composure. Furthermore, his slaughter of Dong Zhuo is foreshadowed in Lü’s first appearance in *pinghua*, when Lü Bu is captured by hundreds of soldiers as he attempts to run away after killing the Prime Minister, Ding Yuan. One of the servants from Ding’s household claims Lü killed Ding Yuan in order to take possession of the Red Harrier 赤兔馬.

However, Lü denies this claim:

“I did not kill my master because of the horse.” Bu went on, “Over a long period of time my master [Ding Yuan] constantly shamed me. That’s why I killed Prime Minister Ding.”

呂布言曰：「非為馬殺主公。」布曰：「屢長主公常辱我，以此殺了丁丞相是實。」 (Records 31)

Lü’s murders of Dong Zhuo and Ding Yuan in *pinghua* are to avenge his personal shame, which demonstrates a disposition similar to Zhang Fei’s masculine identity and *haohan* character.

However, the literati-ized “Double Snare” reconstructs Lü Bu’s and Diao Chan’s relationship, and their motives are different from those in *pinghua*. In *tongsu yanyi*, the slaughter of Dong Zhuo is due to the wrath of a warrior attempting to restore authority to the emperor, and for the greater good, instead of any personal interests. First, it begins with Dong Zhuo’s tyrannical behavior during the banquet before Wang Yun overheard Diao Chan’s “moan and sigh” in the garden. In *pinghua*, Dong Zhuo acts flirtatiously with the imperial consorts during the banquet the night prior. However, *tongsu yanyi* omits Dong’s lascivious behavior with the imperial consorts. The narrative redefines Dong as a brutal tyrant with a suspicious nature, who executes Zhang Wen and his family because of a suspicion that Zhang is conspiring against him:

Few days ago, the Grand Astrologer reported to Dong Zhuo, “Darkness covers the sky, calamity upon the ministers.” Dong Zhuo convened the officials in front of the ceremonial platform. The assembly was seated in two long rows according to rank. As the wine was going round, Lü Bu stepped over to Dong Zhuo and whispered a few words. “So that’s how it is!” said Dong Zhuo, smiling, and he had Lü Bu haul out the minister of public works, Zhang Wen by the head. The other officials paled. Zhuo said, “Yesterday, the Grand Astrologer said there is calamity upon the ministers, so the prediction falls on him.” After a few moments a servant came back in, carrying Zhang Wen’s head on a red platter. Dong Zhuo commanded Lü Bu for a round of wine, with Zhang Wen’s head circulated in the faces of the officials. The officials were frightened into docility. Dong Zhuo laughed at the terrified assembly, saying, “Nothing to fear, my lords. My son Fengxian [Lü Bu], came upon a letter Yuan Shu had written to Zhang Wen. The two were conspiring against me. Therefore, he was executed and exterminated his families. As long as you all serve me well, I won’t annihilate them. I, blessed by heaven, those attempt to do me wrong will fail.” The officials chimed obsequiously. With that, the banquet ended.

數日前，太史院稟卓曰：「黑氣沖天，大臣有災。」卓於省台大會百官，列坐兩行。酒至數巡，呂布徑入，耳邊言不數句，卓笑曰：「原來如此。」命呂布於筵上腦揪司空張溫下堂。百官失色。卓曰：「太史昨言大臣有災，原來應在此人身上。」不多時，侍從將一紅盤托張溫頭入獻。卓令呂布勸酒，每人面前將頭呈過。百官魂不附體，皆面不相顧。卓笑曰：「諸公勿驚。張溫結連袁術，欲圖害我，因使人寄書來，錯下在吾兒奉先處。故斬之，以夷其三族。汝等於吾孝順，吾不害之。吾天佑之人，害吾者必敗。」眾官唯唯而已。當晚皆散。(Luo wenshi 63)

Dong Zhuo's claim to be "blessed by the heaven 吾天佑之人" repositions Dong Zhuo from a miscreant in *pinghua* to a tyrant and a usurper who threatens the throne of the Han house. Later on, Dong Zhuo is lured into leaving his safehouse, the castle of Meiwu 郿塢, under the pretense that the Emperor Xian of Han intends to abdicate the throne and pass it on to him. Therefore, the tone of the narrative switches from a personal feud between a miscreant and a *wu* character, to a grandiose ruse to save the legitimacy and autonomy of the imperial court.

The concern for legitimacy is constantly restated throughout the scenario, in which slaughtering Dong Zhuo is the only way to preserve the legitimacy and lineage of the Han house. In the following scene, when Wang Yun eavesdrops on Diao Chan's "moan and sigh," the theme of saving the Han house is reinstated:

Minister of the Interior Wang Yun returned home despondent over the day's events. He was strolling in his garden and gazed at the sky. His eyes filled with tears as he stopped by a rose trellis. In the silence, he heard moans and sighs near the Peony Pavilion. Moving over in stealth, he discovered the singing girl Diao Chan, a child he had taken into his residence when she was young. Yun deemed she is a smart one, therefore trained her in the arts of dance and song, string and pipe instruments, and she learned all forms of arts among the three teachings and the nine strata. She was now eighteen and possessed unearthly beauty and skills. Wang Yun regarded her as his own daughter. On this very night, after listening a good while, Wang Yun called her to him. "Wretched girl, is there someone you pine for?" he asked sharply. Diao Chan dropped to her knees in front of Yun and replied in a serious tone, "Would this humble maid dare?" "Then why," Wang Yun continued, "are you sighing here deep into the night?" "Allow me to open my

innermost thoughts to you,” the girl replied. “Keep nothing back,” Wang Yun said. “Tell me the whole truth.”

“My lord,” Diao Chan began, “I am obliged to you for your unstinting, for having me instructed in the arts of music and dancing, raising me when I was a child, never treating me like a servant or a maid, and for treating me with the utmost kindness and generosity. No sacrifice on my part could repay even one ten-thousandth of what I owe you. Recently you have been looking terribly sad, as if burdened by some great affair of state, but how could I inquire into such matters? This evening again I saw you pacing uneasily, and it brought a sigh to my lips. I never thought my lord would take notice. But if there is any way I can serve you, I would welcome death ten thousand times before declining.”

At these words, Wang Yun struck the ground with his walking stick and cried out, “It never occurred to me that you could be the one to save the Han! Come with me to the gallery of murals.” Diao Chan followed Wang Yun to the room. Impatiently, he dismissed the waiting maids and servants and conducted Diao Chan to a seat in the middle. Then he touched his head and hands to the floor in front of her. At once, Diao Chan prostrated herself in astonishment. “My lord,” she said, “what is the meaning of this?” “Having pity,” said Wang Yun pleaded, weeping openly, “on those who live under the Han!” “I can only repeat what I have just said,” the girl replied. “Ten thousand deaths would not deter me from doing whatever it is you wish me to do.” “The common folk,” Wang Yun went on, still kneeling, “are in dire peril. The sovereign and his officials are balanced on the edge of disaster. You may be the only one who can save us. Here is how matters stand: the traitor Dong Zhuo is preparing to seize the throne, and our civil and military officials have no means to prevent him. Now then, Dong Zhuo has an adopted

son, Lü Bu, a man of extraordinary courage and might, but, like his stepfather, a slave to his passions. I would like to catch them in a double snare by first promising you in marriage to Lü Bu and then offering you to Dong Zhuo, this putting you in a perfect position to turn them against one another. Drive Lü Bu to kill Dong Zhuo, and you will have eliminated a great evil, stabilized the dynastic shrines, and restored our ruling house. It lies in your power. But are you willing?"

"I have already agreed to serve," said Diao Chan. "I am eager to be presented to them. Leave all the rest to me." "If this gets out," Wang Yun cautioned her, "my house will be destroyed." "Have no fear, my lord," she said. "No worry, if I cannot live up to my duty, may I die by ten thousand cuts, and wouldn't live as a human through all my reincarnated life." Wang Yun saluted her in gratitude.

司徒王允歸到府中，尋思今日席間之事，坐不安席，策杖步出後園，仰天垂淚，沉吟於立於荼蘼架側。忽聞有人在牡丹亭畔長吁短歎，允潛步窺之，乃府中歌舞美人貂蟬女也。其女自幼選入府中充樂女，允見其聰明，教以歌舞吹彈，一通百達，九流三教，無所不知。顏色傾城，年當十八，允以親女待之。是夜，允聽良久，喝曰：「賤人將有私情耶？」貂蟬正色跪於允前，答曰：「賤妾安敢有慕私情！」允曰：「汝不有所私，何夜深於此長歎？」貂蟬曰：「容妾伸肺腑之言。」允曰：「汝勿隱匿，當實告我。」

貂蟬曰：「妾之賤軀，自幼蒙大人恩養，訓習歌舞，未嘗以婢妾相待，作親女視之。妾雖粉骨碎身，莫報大人之萬一。妾見大人兩眉愁鎖，必有國家大事，妾不敢問，解大人之憂。今晚又見大人行坐不安，因此長歎，不想大人窺見。倘有用妾之處，萬死不辭。」允以杖擊地曰：「誰想漢天下卻在汝手中耶！隨我到畫閣中

來。」貂蟬跟允到閣中，允盡叱出婦妾。允教貂蟬於中端坐，允叩頭便拜。貂蟬驚倒，伏地曰：「大人何故下拜賤妾？」允曰：「汝可憐漢天下生靈！」言訖，淚如湧泉。貂蟬曰：「適間賤妾曾言，但有使令，萬死不辭。」允跪而言曰：「百姓有倒懸之危，君臣有壘卵之難，非汝不能救也！」貂蟬再三拜問，允曰：「賊臣董卓將欲篡位，朝中文武無計可施。董卓有一義兒，姓呂，名布，有萬夫不當之勇。我觀二人皆溺於酒色之徒，今欲用連環之計，先將汝許嫁呂布，然後獻與董卓。汝於中取便，諜間他父子分顏，令布殺卓，以絕大惡。重扶宗廟，再立江山，皆汝之力也。不知汝意若何？」貂蟬曰：「妾許大人萬死不辭，望獻出。到他處，妾自有道理。」允曰：「事若洩漏，我當滅門矣！」貂蟬曰：「大人勿憂。妾若不報大義，死於萬刃之下，世世不復人身。」允拜謝而密之。(Luo *wenshi* 63-64).

In this scene, there are two major changes from *pinghua*. First, Diao Chan's biography is reconstructed from Lü Bu's missing wife to Wang Yun's "singing girl," whom Wang treats like his own daughter. This altered form of Diao Chan's biography eliminates Lü Bu's rage for personal vengeance, which contradicts the scene in *pinghua* where Dong Zhuo takes possession of his wife. Secondly, Diao Chan reemphasizes her acknowledgement of Wang Yun's scheme. Her recognition of the ruse demonstrates her attempt to sacrifice her own chastity for the sake of a noble cause. Hu Ying suggests this behavior reveals her moral ambiguity in this specific scene, since female chastity is often compared to the male ideal behavior of righteousness, or *yi*, as losing her chastity is often compared to the loss of one's life (Hu *Angling* 102). In fact, Diao Chan's acknowledgement and her compromise with Wang Yun's ruse reshapes the plot from a man avenging the shame of his personal disgrace, as illustrated in *pinghua* when Dong Zhuo flirts with the imperial consort, to one intended to reestablish the Han authority by eliminating

the usurper. However, it is unclear whether Diao Chan's acknowledgement of Wang's scheme to both Lü and Dong in *pinghua*, and Diao Chan's status as a singing girl, both delegitimize Lü Bu's killing of Dong. Hence, Diao Chan acts as bait for both Dong and Lü in Wang Yun's ruse, whereas in the course of the "Double Snare," Diao Chan becomes Lü Bu's restrainer, as Lü comes under the influence of both Diao Chan and Wang Yun.

Lü Bu's emotion, or *qing*, is constantly contained throughout the course of the "Double Snare" scenario in *tongsu yanyi*, in which both Wang Yun and Diao Chan act as the restraint on Lü Bu's autonomy. Martin Huang believes that the novelist who compiled *tongsu yanyi* emphasized Lü Bu's vulnerability to *nuse* 女色, or "beauty and sex," which caused his downfall (Huang *Negotiating* 93). Huang's claim illustrates how Wang Yun and Diao Chan serve as an important element in re-reining and delimiting Lü's aggression and volcanic temper, which resembles how Liu Bei reins Zhang Fei, as Lü Bu changes from the free-reined disposition in *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi*'s contained composure. In *tongsu yanyi*, after Lü Bu discovers that Diao Chan became Dong Zhuo's mistress, Lü Bu does not behave as he does in *pinghua*. However, he cautiously communicates with Diao Chan, and Diao Chan purposely worships Lü Bu as a *yingxiong*, or a hero. Lü Bu replies to Diao Chan's claim of *yingxiong* and tells her that he will save Diao Chan from Dong Zhuo, the tyrannical ruler and villain. When Dong Zhuo sees Lü Bu and Diao Chan cuddling in the garden at the Phoenix Pavilion 鳳儀亭, a brawl erupts between Lü Bu and Dong Zhuo. Instead of acting in rage, Lü Bu flees from Dong Zhuo. In this particular scene at the Phoenix Pavilion, Huang considers Diao Chan's and Lü Bu's claim that Lü is a *yingxiong* "is discredited precisely because of his insistence that being able to get the woman he loves is a hallmark of manhood." In other words, Huang claims Lü Bu discredited the term *yingxiong* when he states that "being able to get the woman he loves" disregards the concerns of

the honor culture system (Huang *Negotiating* 94). However, Hinsch's and Cheng's investigation of the *haohan*²⁴ and the attributes of popular warriors accords with Wang Yun's conversation later in the scenario, in which Lü Bu does not attempt to claim to be a *yingxiong* simply for being able to get the woman he loves, saving the helpless Diao Chan, as she is being captured by the evil tyrant. In this scenario, Lü Bu attempts to refute and cleanse his disgrace that he incurred at the moment, since Wang Yun gifts Diao Chan to him in the first place. From Hinsch's depiction of the Chinese honor culture, despite being considered a masculine warrior, Lü Bu lacked the power to protect his own possession, which became a disgrace to his manhood (Hinsch 34-38). Therefore, Lü Bu's slaughtering of Dong Zhuo to repossess Diao Chan is a process to cleanse his disgrace as a *yingxiong*.

Lü's hesitance in his encounter with Dong Zhuo in the Phoenix Pavilion signifies that part of his *wu*-masculinity is emasculated in this reconstructed narrative. This interpretation contrasts with the scene from *pinghua* in which Lü Bu acts without any reluctance in expressing his own rage and immediately decapitates Dong. Following the scene at the Phoenix Pavilion, one of Dong Zhuo's sons-in-law and his main adviser, Li Ru 李儒, proposes to present Diao Chan to Lü Bu in order to retain Lü Bu in Dong Zhuo's camp.²⁵ However, Dong refuses this idea and brings Diao Chan with him to his newly built castle, Meiwu. Later, after Lü watches Diao Chan and Dong Zhuo go off to the capital city Chang'an on their way to Meiwu, Wang Yun meets Lü Bu on the street. The following scene depicts their conversation:

Lü Bu returned with Wang Yun, who ushered him into a private room. Given wine and treated cordially, Lü Bu's anger turned to rage. "Then the preceptor has violated my

²⁴ This investigation is mentioned previously in the discussion of Zhang Fei.

²⁵ There are no historical records that confirm Li Ru is Dong Zhuo's son-in-law. Most of the scholars believe the novelist fabricates this relationship in order to demonstrate Li Ru and Dong Zhuo have a closer-than-normal relationship.

daughter!” responded Wang Yun, “and snatched your wife. We stand shamed and mocked before the world. He is not mocked—only you and I. I am nothing but a useless old man, and I suppose I will have to swallow the insult. What a pity, though, for you, General—for a hero, head and shoulders above them all, to suffer such disgrace!” Lü Bu’s anger could have lifted him to the heavens, as he fell to the ground. Yun hastily succored the fainted general. “I should never have said what I did,” Wang Yun said immediately. “Please compose yourself.” “The villain’s life will clear my name,” Lü Bu shouted. “Do not say so, General,” Wang Yun admonished, hastily touching Lü Bu’s mouth. “I’m afraid I shall be implicated.” “As a man of honor standing before Heaven and earth,” Lü Bu went on, “I will not be his underling forever.”

“A man with your abilities,” Wang Yun agreed, “should not be subject to the authority of someone like Preceptor Dong.” “I would love to be rid of the old villain,” confided Lü Bu, “but history would brand me an unfilial son.” Smiling faintly, Wang Yun said, “You are a Lü. He is a Dong. Where was his fatherly feeling when he threw that halberd?” Lü Bu’s temper flared again. “I nearly overlooked that!” he cried. “Thank you for reminding me.” As his suggestions took hold, Wang Yun continued working on Lü Bu: “Your service to the Han will secure your reputation for loyalty, and historians will preserve your good name for posterity. But support for Dong Zhuo is disloyal and will earn you an eternity of condemnation.” Lü Bu shifted off his seat bowed to the ground to show his respect. “My mind is made up,” said Lü Bu. “Do not doubt it.” “But failure means disaster,” Wang Yun cautioned. With his knife, Bu pricked blood from his arm to seal his pledge. In response Wang Yun dropped to his knees and said, “Your gracious favor enables the temple services for the four hundred years of Han to continue. The Emperor

already had an edict, General, you should possess it, and you must disclose nothing. A plan of action will be ready in due time, and you will be informed.” Lü Bu assented and took his leave.

布隨入城，到允宅前下馬，入密室。允置酒款待布。布怒氣轉添，王允曰：「太師淫吾之女，奪將軍之妻，誠可為天下之笑端。非笑太師，笑允與將軍耳！允老羸無能之輩，不足為道；可憐將軍半世之英雄耳！」布就氣倒於地上。允慌急救之，曰：「老夫語失，將軍息怒。」布曰：「誓當殺此老賊，以雪吾恥！」允急掩其口：「將軍勿言，恐累及老夫，允族皆死！」布曰：「大丈夫生居天地之間，豈能鬱鬱久居人之手下乎！」允曰：「以將軍之才，過於韓信百輩；信尚為王，將軍豈可久做溫侯乎？」布曰：「吾殺老賊，奈是父子之道，恐惹後人議論。」

允大笑曰：「將軍自姓呂，卓自姓董。擲戟之時，彼豈有父子情耶？」布奮然大怒曰：「非司徒之良言，則布亦為老賊之害矣！」允曰：「將軍若扶漢室，乃忠臣也。青史留名，萬古不朽；將軍若扶董卓，乃反臣也，史官下筆，罵名萬代。」布隨下拜曰：「布意已決，司徒勿疑。」允曰：「但恐事又不成，反招大禍。」布拔帶刀，刺臂出血為誓。允跪謝曰：「漢天下四百餘年，皆出將軍之賜也！天子已有密詔，將軍宜懷之，切勿洩漏。臨期有計，自當相報。」布慨然領諾而起。(Luo *wenshi* 68-69).

In this scene, Wang Yun reiterates the *yingxiong* concept once again with Lü Bu, which resonates with Diao Chan's message at the Phoenix Pavilion. Wang claims Dong's violation and possession of Diao Chan have shamed both Wang's and Lü's reputation. The shame on Wang, who he claims "will have to swallow the insult" on his own, and "for a hero [*yingxiong*], head and shoulders above them all" will have to "suffer such disgrace," reflects how his honor will be

defiled upon this disgrace. Wang Yun uses the honor culture as a tool to abduct Lü Bu as his ally to annihilate Dong Zhuo with a legitimate reason behind it: not the woman to whom he is sexually attracted, but the legitimacy of the Han throne. In fact, as Wang Yun points out within this conversation, the historian will preserve his fame and honor for posterity. Therefore, the motive behind Lü Bu's elimination of Dong Zhuo is not simply to preserve Lü's *yingxiong* identity, but is also an aspiration to retrieve his honor and affirmation among the homo-social convention previously mentioned in the discussion about masculine peer appreciation, both in history and society.

Juxtaposing Lü Bu from *pinghua* with Lü Bu from *tongsu yanyi*, his *haohan* image is reconstructed in *tongsu yanyi* to portray an image of a tragic warrior who fails his career due to his sexual vulnerability. This reconstruction of Lü Bu's image in *tongsu yanyi* within the "Double Snare" scenario emasculates Lü Bu from the martial prowess and volcanic temper qualities of a typical *haohan* character, into a vile and heel-dragging *wu* character. This emasculation mirrors the reconstruction of Zhang Fei in *tongsu yanyi*, where a suppression of his martial prowess and an attempt to restrain—and even to tame—the *wu* model are evident. In fact, as mentioned previously, the *wu* masculinity is mainly related to martial characters. *Pinghua* depicts Lü Bu's characteristics and attributes as similar to those of Zhang Fei. They both have similar volcanic tempers that manifest as they tend to behave violently. In *pinghua*, Zhang Fei acts immediately to avenge his sworn brother, Liu Bei, as he punches Duan Gui, assassinates the county prefect, and bastinadoes the Inspector General. Also in *pinghua*, Lü Bu illustrates a similar reaction to Zhang Fei's, when he acts to sustain his own honor and fame. He kills his previous superior Ding Yuan because Ding shames Lü, and similarly, he kills Dong because Dong snatched his wife, Diao Chan. In *tongsu yanyi*, Lü Bu's temper and disposition are tamed

and contained, just like Zhang Fei's. Liu Bei and the mutual concern for societal justice for the greater good reins Zhang Fei in *tongsu yanyi*, whereas Lü Bu's character is reconstructed as someone without any sense of moral fiber, who will kill for his own personal desire or *yu*, such as his desire for climbing the social ladder, wealth, and beauty, all of which emasculate Lü's manhood in the popular reading of *pinghua*. Furthermore, Lü's hesitance in *tongsu yanyi* exposes his reconstructed character to manipulation from others, such as Li Su and Wang Yun, both of whom are *wen* characters who act as an amplifier of Lü. Overall, the juxtaposition between Lü Bu in *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* reveals the process of reconstructing and combining the *wu*-masculine image from the plain narratives and literati-ized novels in the Ming period, as the literati took an important position in rewriting and retelling the history in the form of *zhanghui xiaoshuo*.

Some remarks on Liu Bei

The typical image of Liu Bei is that of an idealized ruler and a benevolent leader in the feudal society, who possesses a status similar to the legendary sage-kings from the Chinese antiquity, such as Yao 堯, Shun 舜, and Yu 禹. In Huang Jun's 黃鈞 and Jiang Weiming 蔣維明's articles collected in *Sanguo yanyi yanjiu ji* 三國演義研究集, both note Liu Bei's "Mencian idea of [a] benevolent ruler" and personalities who win approbation from a wide range of audiences, from the elite classes and aristocrats, the literati community and the gentry class, and from the popular culture who learned about Liu Bei from storytellers and theater performances (*yanjiu ji* 35-38, 194-196). In fact, the romanticizing image of Liu Bei and his kingdom took place as early as the fourth century, resulting from the fall of the newly established dynasty, the Western Jin 西晉, after the unification of the Three Kingdoms and at the beginning of the

Uprising of the Five Barbarians 五胡亂華 (Shen 30). Simon Shen believes the romanticized and transfigured images of Liu Bei and his regime were mixtures of interpretations from the high culture and the popular culture, both of which contributed to a fantasy and desire for national unity (Shen 29). This sensation of mixed representations from high and popular cultures also contributes to the romanticization of Liu Bei and his kingdom, and coordinates with Shelley Cheng's conclusion that the "writers of historical novels acted as mediators between the elite and the popular cultures," which "[opened] the door to the influence of the folk stream in literature" (Cheng 181). This means the image of Liu Bei and his subordinates in *tongsu yanyi* represents an amalgamated imagination of the ideal leader and his idealized ministers who will lead them out of their suffering, which may contribute to a nostalgic sentiment for the Song dynasty as an idealized Mencian utopia in the post-Yuan period after the early Ming manipulation of Confucian curriculum. This concept is discussed in a forthcoming section.

In this section, I discuss the transformation of Liu Bei, from a skillful warrior to an incompetent leader, whom Kim Moonkyong and Shen Bojun 沈伯俊 label in terms of someone who only knows how to flee 逃 and weep 哭 (Kim 89, 140-141; Shen 51-53). Kim and Shen's labels of Liu Bei reflect an emasculation that took place while textualizing the story in *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. *Sanguo* scholars, such as Shen Bojun, Kim Moonkyong, and Zhou Siyuan, show their deep interest in Liu Bei's weeping. For example, the image of Liu Bei crying in various scenes from dramas to novels is considered an essential character of Liu Bei to ascend from a vagrant, then later become one of the three political leaders at the end of the tumultuous Han period. The depiction of Liu's weeping molds him into a character that is always compassionate toward others, especially for his followers, which is a symbolic reference for a benevolent ruler, an idealized ruler in Mencian ideology. These qualities of weeping and

compassion become an integral element of a leader in a homo-social group within the Ming-Qing *zhanghui xiaoshuo*; in similarity, Song Jiang 宋江 weeps in *Shuihu chuan* and Xuanzang 玄奘, or the Tang Monk weeps in *Xiyouji*. The weeping affect emasculates Liu Bei, who surrounds himself with a group of characters who are mesomorphs with expertise in martial prowess, such as Zhang Fei, Guan Yu, and Zhao Yun. Kim Moonkyong claims that if Liu Bei was illustrated as physically strong and skillful like Zhang Fei and Guan Yu, then Liu Bei would not be as distinctive as he is in the Three Kingdoms story (Kim 140-141). Moreover, Liu Bei's weeping also reflects his incompetence in martial skills and cultural attainment, which not only signifies his emasculation, but also reflects how this emasculated quality is essential in taming and containing the masculine and defiant beast, such as Zhang Fei. This can be seen in *Xiyouji* and *Shuihu zhuan*, in which Xuanzang and Song Jiang are able to contain and manage their inferior mesomorphic and martial prowess. In fact, throughout the story cycle, Liu Bei rarely draws his weapon in the battlefield. Therefore, the emasculation of Liu Bei reflects a Yuan-Ming period fantasy that a fragile leader who is incompetent in martial skills holds a superior and dominant position over those that are physically strong characters.

As a ruler and an elder brother among the Peach Garden fraternity, Liu Bei indeed possesses a salient characteristic, with his weeping affect and his incompetence. Aesthetically, Liu Bei's weeping contributes to the more prominent *wu* characters in the story, such as Zhang Fei and Guan Yu. Furthermore, Liu Bei's incompetence in military skills or governance attracts those who are competent and willing to serve under him for a chance to fulfill their ambition, such as Zhuge Liang and Pang Tong. This interpretation derives from the *yin-yang* 陰陽 concept from the *Book of Changes* 易經, which reads, "When all the lines are nines, it means there appears a flight of dragons without heads." This suggests that their leader hides his superior

strength in order to lead others into the changing process, which transforms from the *Qian* 乾 hexagram into the *Kun* 坤 hexagram (Wilhelm 10). It is the *yin*, or the *Kun*, that leads a fleet of *yang*, or the *Qian* hexagram. The *yin* refers to the feminine power or negative, while the *yang* means positive or the masculine power. As a matter of fact, Hu Shi 胡適 believes the term of Confucianism, or *ru* 儒, tends to reflect the soft and feminine, as the character for *ru* was interchangeable with the Chinese character for *nuo* 懦 (timid) or *ruan* 軟 (soft) at the emergence of Confucianism during the Spring and Autumn period, which was from approximately 771 to 476 BCE. Following Hu Shi's thoughts, Martin Huang asserts that this notion of newly materialized manhood at the time de-emphasizes martial prowess in the macho manhood, into a mild gentleman who emphasizes the cultivation of culture (Huang *Negotiating* 18).

However, the reduction of manliness does not make Liu Bei less manly in contrast with others. In fact, following Sima Qian's 司馬遷 claim, Huang indicates that even with the physical mutilation of a man, the manliness of his character would still manifest (Huang *Negotiating* 21-23). Huang demonstrates his theory through Sima Qian's writings, as Sima compared his own experience as a castrato with Confucius's traumatic setbacks. Confucius failed to persuade any ruler to engage his services as a result of masculine dysfunction, which is recorded in Sima Qian's letter to his friend Ren An 任安, known as "Bao Ren Shaoqin shu 報任少卿書," as well as in Sima Qian's historical work *Shiji* 史記, or *The Grand Historian*. Sima Qian implies that he himself was in the same situation as Confucius, and describes that when he was physically mutilated, he expunged this shame through writings and used them as an attempt to restore his manliness, which resulted in becoming even more masculine than before (Huang *Negotiating* 22-23). Therefore, in theory, Liu Bei's emasculation in the novel does not reduce his manliness, and

yet the emasculation validates his masculinity to compete with other ruler models within the Three Kingdoms story cycle. Liu Bei's androgyny helps him gain the services of the various models of character with competent abilities throughout the story, especially in *tongsu yanyi*.

The image of an androgynous Liu Bei undergoes several changes between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. Liu Bei's changes take place due to his ambition and his attitude towards his relationship with his followers. For example, after Cao Cao captures Xuzhou from Liu Bei in *pinghua*, he cries and weeps due to Zhang Fei's and Guan Yu's betrayal of their oath, as Guan offers his services to Cao Cao with Liu Bei's family under his guardianship (Idema *Records* 60). His weeping in sorrow illustrates an emotional setback to his alliance and his sentimental attachment to his sworn brothers. On the other hand, Liu Bei does not weep after Cao Cao's army seizes Xiapi and Xuzhou in *tongsu yanyi*. In fact, Liu Bei cries in anxiety after he receives the disappointing news from Sun Qian that Yuan Shao has refused to send any soldiers to aid Liu Bei in defending against Cao Cao's massive army. As depicted in *tongsu yanyi*, this cry signifies Liu Bei's anxiety and worry about the fall of his merit and his failure to save the people from the villainous Chancellor Cao Cao, instead of the loss of his sworn brothers. Therefore, in accordance with Sima Qian's theory, Liu Bei's weeping in *tongsu yanyi* legitimizes his ambition and compassion for the people, which helps re-establish his manhood through minimizing his manliness to stand out among the macho characters.

Conclusion

The process of rewriting official history into a *zhanghui xiaoshuo* involves a gradual process of remolding and reconstructing the collective models of masculinity in late imperial China. In this chapter, the investigation and examination of the *wu*-dominated *haohan* figures

that possess ultimate martial skills in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* reveals a gradual shift and compromise in these martial characters from the folk narrative to the reconstructed narratives. Juxtaposing both textual works with one another illuminates the restraining of Zhang Fei, Lü Bu, and other similar characters to become docile warriors with a tamed temperament.

The shift of Zhang Fei from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi* signifies an abstention that was promoted by the literati circle. This shift also reflects the de-masculinization and suppression of the *wu*-mentality, which includes military skill sets and individual physical strength. As mentioned in the beginning of this section, the character Zhang Fei reflects the base of the typical *haohan* character. With Zhang's background from a class lower than the gentry, he possesses incredible physical strength, demonstrates loyalty to his fraternity, and glorifies vengeance, which allows Zhang's story to resonate with the general audience. Furthermore, Zhang demonstrates impulsive and unruly behavior that reflects a child-like mentality, and a disposition of defiance without a sense of self-restraint. As depicted in the plain narrative, each of his behaviors and qualities reflect the expected attributes of the collective image of *wu*-masculine warriors in the folk culture. In fact, Zhang's unruly behaviors and defiant disposition in *pinghua*, which were highly praised by the general audience at the time, were either eliminated or reconstructed in the literati-ized *tongsu yanyi*. The elimination of Zhang Fei's impromptu and unmanageable temperament in *tongsu yanyi* not only de-masculinizes Zhang Fei, but also de-masculinizes the *haohan* archetype and other *wu* masculine characters the *zhanghui xiaoshuo*. Deleting Zhang Fei's punch of Duan Gui removes the impromptu uses of violence against social injustice and political disorders, and it also reconstructs Zhang Fei's image from an impulsive "loose cannon" to a martial character with a controllable mode. Furthermore, these impromptu behaviors also emasculate Liu Bei as a competent and masculine leader, due to his

inability to subdue Zhang's military power, and contribute to Liu Bei being identified as a powerless but ambitious political symbol. In fact, removing certain scenes and details in *tongsu yanyi* that originated in *pinghua*, such as Zhang Fei's spontaneous and boisterous behaviors, was not the only approach intended to limit the *haohan* archetype's martial prowess and the *wu*-dominated masculine models.

In *tongsu yanyi*, "reins," or external restraints, are imposed on Zhang Fei by altering the certain scenes in order to contain the *haohan* character of uninhibited masculinity. Zhang Fei's *haohan* character falls victim to its social position in competition with other masculine characters in the literati-ized Three Kingdoms story. Besides, Zhang Fei's physical strength and impulsiveness in *tongsu yanyi* are an embodiment of the Neo-Confucian concept of man's innate desire, *shuaixing*, *yu*, and *qing*. Moreover, *wen*-masculine characters such as Sun Qian, Zhuge Liang, and Wang Yun, who are scholars and advisers, act as a restraint to tame the man's innate desire. This metaphor suggests the need to restrain those "who had [freely abused their power] in flagrant disregard of the Confucian sense of social responsibility" (Hegel *17th Century* 105). Therefore, Zhang Fei in *pinghua* is transformed from the astonishing, rein-free warrior character, or the "true man" according to Martin Huang, to a tamed warrior in *tongsu yanyi*. As exemplified by Zhang Fei's case, this process of reining in the innate desire signifies an attempt to restrain Zhang Fei's defiant disposition in the reconstructed narratives, since these behaviors had mainly derived from the popular *pinghua*.

Zhang Fei is not the only *wu* character who is reconstructed to restrain his masculine characteristics. Lü Bu is also reconstructed into an invincible warrior, such that even Zhang Fei cannot overpower him without the assistance of his two sworn brothers. Lü becomes a desire-driven beast without any moral fiber, who only considers his own personal interests and is unable

to control himself. Lü Bu's alteration, however, is different from Zhang's, since Zhang Fei is controlled and reined in by Liu Bei and Liu's advisers. Lü Bu is instead amplified and manipulated by the gentry-officials, such as Li Su and Wang Yun, who alter Lü Bu's character from a typical warrior character trying to cleanse his disgraces as depicted in *pinghua*, to a vile character who is completely driven by his own desire. In *tongsu yanyi*, when compared with Zhang Fei, Lü Bu is an anti-*haohan* character, since he lacks proper restraints and is constantly driven by his desire for wealth, social recognition, and sex. This reconstruction of Lü Bu's character suggests what Robert Hegel determined when he said "novelists used their writing brushes to castigate" those who abused power and neglected their Confucian social responsibility (Hegel *17th Century* 105). After all, the dissimilarities in the two narratives reflect the compromise and integration of the *wu*-masculinities in the literary culture with folk traditions.

Chapter Two

Zhuge Liang: Reconstruction of the Scholar Image

The Boulders of Eight-Array Formation

His accomplishments shined across the tripartite kingdom.

His stature fully grown from the design of the Eight-Array Formation;

The ruined boulders still stand in the unceasing flow of the river.

His eternal grief deviates after the failure in the conquest of Wu.

- Du Fu²⁶

八陣圖

功蓋三分國，名成八陣圖。

江流石不轉，遺恨失吞吳。

- 杜甫

The poem “The Boulders of Eight-Array Formation 八陣圖” was written by Du Fu 杜甫 while he was observing piles of boulders that were standing in the Yangzi River 揚子江, after he moved to Kuizhou 夔州 during the summer in the first year of Dali 大曆 (766 AD).²⁷ According to legends, these ruined boulders were the remains of the Eight-Unit Formation that were constructed by the legendary strategist and the Chancellor of Shu 蜀相 during the period of the Three Kingdoms. In this poem, Du Fu lauds and praises the accomplishments of Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮. Zhuge was a talented, renowned strategist, and the Chancellor of Shu during the Three Kingdoms period. Du Fu commends Zhuge Liang, not only in this poem, but also in his

²⁶ I have taken the opportunity to retranslate Du Fu’s poem, “*Bazhentu*.” There are several English translations, including those by A.R. Davis and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman. I specifically believe that Zhuge Liang is not only grieving the loss of the battle of Yiling 夷陵之戰, he also grieves his inability to stop Liu Bei’s attempt to conquer Wu, his failure in halting Guan Yu’s military operation in Jingzhou 荊州, and Zhuge’s long-term strategy to restore the House of Han. Furthermore, Zhuge Liang’s grief also echoes that of Du Fu, due to failing to persuade the Tang Emperor to focus on government issues and restore the power of the central government. The last sentence coordinates two sorrows from various time periods. I have therefore chosen the word “eternal” instead of “testament of grief” from Tillman’s translation.

²⁷ Kuizhou 夔州 went by the name of Baidicheng 白帝城 during the Tang Dynasty. According to *Sanguozhi*, or the *Records of the Three Kingdoms*, the First Emperor of Shu-Han Kingdom, Liu Bei, died here (Chen *Sanguozhi* 403).

numerous literary works. In fact, this trend of praising Zhuge's competency in governance, his nearly impeccable military operations, and his loyalty to the Imperial House of Han, continued from the late Tang period into the Song-Yuan period, and into the modern period. The image of the Chancellor of Shu was highly praised in the late imperial period as a result of Du Fu's poetry in the High Tang period. However, this conventional image of Zhuge Liang, portrayed as a loyalist, a literary hero, and a scholar-general, was not widely recognized until the Song Dynasty. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman believes that this trend of praising Zhuge only happened during the late Tang period, presuming Zhuge Liang was not an idealized hero in China before or during the Tang period (Tillman *Reassessing* 297-298). Tillman's investigation and study of Zhuge Liang suggests that the literati narrative and depiction of Zhuge did not take shape until Du Fu's references during the High Tang period, and was later reshaped in the Ming vernacular literature.

Zhuce Liang is a renowned and cherished scholar character in Chinese history and literature. His competency in governance and military brilliance, however, were not the only attributes that determined his fame. Zhuce Liang's loyalty to his lord and his undeterred will in the attempt to fulfill his goal, despite the awareness he would not be able to accomplish it, inspired audiences. These specific characteristics are the essential elements that contributed to Zhuce Liang's popularity and admiration by scholars and literati writers throughout late imperial China.

The focus of this chapter is not on Zhuce Liang's accomplishments in history and the fictional narratives, but on the background, the ideological culture, and how the identity of the literati writers affected the reconstruction of Zhuce Liang's image during the Ming period. In fact, Zhuce Liang's evolution reflects the evolution of the image of *wen* masculinity from the Yuan to Ming periods. In this chapter, I examine the evolution of the scholarly image, or the *wen*

male characters, by comparing the changes and transformation from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi*.

The juxtaposition of the Zhuge Liang in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* coherently demonstrates the evolution and combination of the plebian image of scholar, and the image of the *wen*-masculine model reconstructed by the literati writer.

Zhuge Liang, the Scholarly *haohan*

Among the heroes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Zhuge Liang is constantly praised and admired for his virtues, merits, and sagacity. Furthermore, Zhuge is commended for his wisdom and scholarly knowledge of the civil ministry. Kam Louie sees him as an exemplar of the *wen* ideals in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, which oppose the *wu* character images represented by martial heroes and warriors (Louie *Theorising* 14-15). In particular, Zhuge's sagacity received notable comments and criticism from modern scholars. For example, Lu Xun 鲁迅 claims that he appears to be more like a sorcerer than the culturally accomplished scholar-general and civil minister depicted within the novel (Lu Xun *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* 120).

However, these high praises of Zhuge's merit in literary works came primarily from literati scholars' historic accounts of Zhuge Liang, whereas the critics' claim that he acted like a sorcerer is based on the image recreated and reconstructed in fiction, such as *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. In fact, many scholarly studies on the fictional Zhuge Liang mainly focus on his sorcerer-like intelligence and his sagacity. For example, as Zhou Siyuan 周思源 points out, there are two reasons Zhuge Liang is the most noticeable character in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*: Zhuge's sorcerer-like intuition, and his devoted loyalty to the Shu-Han Kingdom and Liu Bei (Zhou 31-44). On one hand, Gu Xuejie 顧學頤 investigates how Zhuge's sagacious intelligence

and oversight of the overall situation contribute to his reign over his inferiors, especially the warriors who possessed invulnerable martial skills and physical powers (*Sanguo ji* 150-154). In fact, many readers are delighted and deeply affected by Zhuge Liang due to these characteristics, and share his lifelong sorrow due to his inability to fulfill his own ambition in restoring the Han court. Even though Zhuge is praised as a scholar who represents the *wen* ideal, his image in *pinghua* is a semi-*haohan* character, as opposed to a scholar.

In the previous chapter, the discussion of *wu* masculinity in the Three Kingdoms story cycle focuses on Zhang Fei 張飛 as a character with martial prowess, a mesomorphic appearance, and impulsive behavior, all of which are attributes of a *haohan*. Zhuge Liang, on the other hand, portrays an idealized *wen* character in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, and acts differently from Zhang Fei, the *wu* character. However, Zhuge Liang also possesses several of the common attributes of a *haohan*, but in *pinghua*, he is without some of the salient characteristics, such as a volcanic temper, excessive eating or drinking habits, incomparable martial skills, and an uncontrollable desire. Zhuge Liang's ectomorphic appearance, expertise in literary works, and his repressed desires contradict the general *haohan* model, such as Wu Song 武松 or Lu Zhishen 魯智深 from *Shuihu huan*, Li Yuanba 李元霸 from *Shuotang*, or Zhang Fei in the Three Kingdoms. Even though Zhuge may not be fully categorized as a typical *haohan*, he still possesses a few essential *haohan* elements that blurred the lines between a typical highborn scholar-general and an honor-driven martial warrior in the plain narrative. His loyalty to his homo-social faction, altruism, and his lack of interest in women all illustrate a degree of similarity between Zhuge Liang and the *wu* masculine *haohan*, or warrior-like characters.

Zhuce Liang's physical appearance is distinctly different from Zhang Fei's dark skin, his face with whiskers like a tiger, and his big, round eyes. These descriptions of Zhang remain

constant from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi*. On the other hand, Zhuge's physical appearance lacks any similarity to that of a martial character such as Zhang Fei or Lü Bu 呂布, who had "a massive presence and a pair of vivifying eyes 身長一丈，腰大十圍……眉目清秀" (Luo *wenshi* 27). Zhuge's physical appearance transforms over a period of time and continues to be reworked through a series of texts. Zhuge's appearance in *pinghua* is described below.

We must backtrack to explain that Master Zhuge was seated inside his hermitage with his hands on his knees. A face that seemed freshly powdered and lips as if painted red—he was not yet thirty and he read his books every day.

卻說諸葛先生，庵中按膝而坐，面如傅粉，唇似塗朱，年未三旬，每日看書。

(*Records* 74)

Another description of Zhuge's appearance emerges when Zhuge and Lu Su 魯肅 attempt to persuade Zhou Yu 周瑜 to take the commanding general position in the joint alliance during the Battle of Chibi 赤壁:

Let's talk for the moment about Zhuge. He was nine feet, two inches tall and just had reached thirty. His beard was raven-black and his nails were three inches long. He was as handsome as could be!

卻說諸葛身長九尺二寸，年始三旬，髯如烏鴉，指甲三寸，美若良夫。

(*Records* 90)

In these two descriptions, Zhuge Liang's physical appearance reflects a "powdered" face,²⁸ red painted lips, and three-inch long fingernails, all of which are feminine features, in contrast to the

²⁸ The phrase "powdered face 面如傅粉" originates from *Shishuo xinyu*, or *A New Account of the Tales of the World* 世說新語 14.2, which relates He Yan's 何晏 fair skin is as white as being powdered. However, in Ming Drama, "powdered face" was explicitly used to signify a feminine behavior, such as in the seventeenth scene in *The Records of Qin-heart* or *Qinxinji* 琴心記, which said "man cooks and woman powders 你看我男子燒湯女傅粉."

dark-skinned, massive, muscular bodies Zhang Fei and Lü Bu possess. Wang Qiancheng 王前程 considers how this aesthetic difference between these two type of male characters, Zhang Fei and Zhuge Liang, illustrated two different standards of aesthetic appreciation for masculine subjects (Wang 130). One typical appreciation, which Wang calls *yanggang* 陽剛, describes the macho-masculine standard that tends to be associated with a figure having martial or military prowess and a mesomorphic appearance. On the other hand, the physical appearance of Zhuge Liang illustrates a *yinrou* 陰柔 standard according to Wang, which is associated with a figure having a ectomorphic physique, and being deeply cultivated by scholastic and cultural trainings. Therefore, Zhuge Liang's ectomorphic appearance in *pinghua* reflects an imagined image of the elite scholars or literati based on the imagined perspective from the plain narrative and the lower-class population, since Wilt Idema speculates that *pinghua* originated from common folklore and popular culture (Idema "Some Remarks" 93).

This late imperial ectomorphic scholarly depiction of Zhuge Liang in *pinghua* can be viewed as a reflection of the literati's and scholars' submissive and passive attitude towards the nomadic reigns during and after the fall of the Song Dynasty. As Harriet Zurndorfer comments, "the ideal man had become [a] 'fragile scholar'" under their subjugators (Louie *Changing* 16). Furthermore, the feminized image of the sorcerer-like Zhuge Liang echoes the prologue narration in Sima Zhongxiang's Karmic Dream 司馬仲相斷陰陽, in which Sima Zhongxiang is a scholarly-like 'student' who carries books, a sword, and wine, and who later dreamed of becoming the Lord of the Underworld in the Palace for Avenging Wrongs. According to this scene described in *pinghua*, Zhuge Liang is the reincarnation of Kuai Che 蒯徹, also known as Kuai Wentong 蒯文通, a supporter of Empress Lü 呂后. Within this episodic prologue of the Karmic Dream, Empress Lü is accused of killing the three meritorious generals who helped

found the Han dynasty. Within this scene, Kuai Che presents an alibi in front of Sima Zhongxiang, arguing that the three lords Han Xin 韓信, Peng Yue 彭越, and Ying Bu 英布 made no attempt to rebel against the Han. In fact, this scheme was plotted by Liu Bang 劉邦, instead of Empress Lü. At the end of the prologue, the edict of the Jade Emperor appoints the three lords to divide the Han Empire, and assigns Kuai Che to be reincarnated as Zhuge Liang to assist Liu Bei, the reincarnation of Peng Yue. Therefore, Kuai Che's siding with Empress Lü in denouncing Liu Bang's accusation contributes to Kuai's reincarnation of Zhuge Liang, who as a result became part of the feminine character that attempts to confront and alter the other characters, such as one that is associated with the martial-dominated, masculine archetypes represented by Han Xin, Peng Yue, and Ying Bu.

Furthermore, the historical Kuai Che also contributes to the feminized image of Zhuge Liang in *pinghua*. According to *Hanshu* 漢書, or the Book of Han, the biographies of Kuai, Wu, Jiang, Xi, and Fu 蒯伍江息夫傳 record that Kuai Che failed to persuade Han Xin to uphold the land of Qi 齊 in the North as part of the tripartite alliance against the Chu 楚 and the Han 漢 in the South. This scheme resembles Zhuge Liang's Strategy in Tripartite 三分天下之計, or the Plan of Longzhong 隆中對 (*Hanshu* Kuai). In addition to Kuai's attempt to persuade Han Xin, after Han Xin was under house arrest decreed by Liu Bang and Empress Lü, Han Xin betrays Kuai Che's trust, by revealing to Liu Bang and Empress Lü that Kuai attempted to persuade him to revolt against the House of Han when Liu Bang was defeated by Xiang Yu 項羽 in Rongyang 滎陽. However, Kuai was excused from decapitation as he claimed that when he was inferior to Han, it was his duty to propose the appropriate strategy for his superior. Kuai Che submitted to and served Liu Bang, and he later served under Cao Cao 曹參, as Cao became the Chancellor of

Qi. The image of Zhuge Liang and Kuai Che is blurred into one identity, especially with the direct link from the reincarnation appointment and the edict in the scene of the Karmic Dream. In fact, this merged identity reflects a popular belief of how scholars and literati should be as though they were from the plebian classes. According to Martin Huang, an individual who is culturally accomplished will reluctantly become a prostitute, a figurative speech referring to the submission to the autocratic power. Basing his ideas on Huang Zongxi's 黃宗羲 political treatise *Mingyi daifang lu* 明夷待訪錄, Martin Huang theorized that male masculinity transforms between early Ming and the fall of Ming, from a faithful wife to a reluctant prostitute that cannot withstand the threat from those in power (Huang *Negotiating* 33-52).²⁹ Even though these theories from Martin Huang and Huang Zongxi only investigate the phenomena during the Ming period, they also suggest this particular image of a reluctant prostitute and feminized masculine identity existed in an earlier period. A close examination of Kuai Che in *pinghua* suggests that during the Song-Yuan 宋元 period, this image of a weak and submissive literati was popular within the plain narrative, as the vast majority of scholar-gentry served under the non-Han ethnic power during a time when China was under nomadic occupation and harsh cruelty rules.

Kuai Che's submission and his involvement in the decapitation of three generals in *pinghua* illustrate the popular perspective on the image of scholars. This negative image of scholars in popular culture originated from the complex political situation during the Song-Yuan period, as various scholars were in the peace faction at the Song court, countering the war hawk-like warriors and generals that took an aggressive stand against the nomadic states in northern

²⁹ In the chapter "From Faithful Wife to Whore," Martin Huang regurgitates Huang Zongxi's treatise, "When a minister decided to abandon his Confucian duty of serving all under Heaven and chose instead to serve the ruler like a slave or concubine, he began to take on the political gender identity of the feminine" (Huang *Negotiating* 36). M. Huang later argues the service for how "officialdom became a business of double deception: being an official meant having to fake obedience to one's superiors, and at the same time one had to pretend that he liked the business of faking" and this is when the term "'prostitute' came to replace 'concubine'" in writings (Huang *Negotiating* 51).

China, such as the Khitans 契丹, Tangut 黨項, Jurchens 女真, and the Mongols 蒙古. Kuai Che's submissive image reflects a link to the pacifists' political position in dealing with the northern nomadic states through compromises that resulted from a tremendous amount of annual tributes. Kuai Che's submissive image resembles one of the most notorious pacifists of the Song period, the chancellor of the Song court, Qin Hui 秦檜, who was known for his pacifist strategy. Qin Hui was also known as the one who ordered the execution of the revanchist war hawk warrior-general Yue Fei 岳飛 in order to compromise with the Jurchen state that occupied the northern half of China. Qin Hui's conflict with Yue Fei is similar to the relationship between Kuai Che and the three generals in the Karmic Dream. The image of a submissive scholar is presented in coordination with the perspective that culturally accomplished scholars tend to be fawning and servile. An example of this belief is evident when Qin Hui executes Yue Fei in order to covenant a peace treaty between the Song and the Jurchen, while Kuai Che accommodates Empress Lü in order to avoid execution. The fawning and servile image of the scholar in the past history therefore became part of popular culture and is reflected in the plain narrative.

However, the rectification of Zhuge Liang's feminine scholar image with a submissive attribute from his previous identity, Kuai Che, disappears in *tongsu yanyi*. His image transforms from a feminine appearance in *pinghua* into a fragile scholar with a Daoist sorcery, or an immortal appearance in *tongsu yanyi*. In the fifth chapter of volume eight of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled "Zhuge Liang determines the realm's division and leaves his hermitage 定三分亮出茅廬," Zhuge Liang appears:

To Xuande, Kongming appeared to be eight feet in height, with a face like a gleaming jade, and a plaited silken band around his head. Cloaked in crane down, his pair of

eyebrows assembles all the elegance of the River and Mountain. He has a determination and an ability to encompass the realm, and with a buoyant air of a transcendent immortal. 玄德見孔明身長八尺，面如冠玉，頭戴綸巾，身披鶴氅，眉聚江山之秀，胸藏天地之機，飄飄然當世之神仙也。(Luo *wenshi* 282)³⁰

Zhuge Liang's appearance in *tongsu yanyi* diverges from that of his powdered face, long fingernails, and rouged lips, and is remade into a sorcerer-like appearance. Furthermore, Zhuge is someone who sits in his own hermitage reading books every day in *pinghua*, and this description is removed in *tongsu yanyi*, in which Zhuge Liang travels among the mountains and rivers during Liu Bei's first two visits. These changes within Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi* suggest a transformation of the scholar identity between the Yuan and Ming periods, which resonates Hoyt Cleveland Tillman's suggestion that there was a transformation of the scholar identity during that period (Tillman *Ho* 79).

With the removal of the prologue from *pinghua*, *tongsu yanyi* reconstructs the image of Zhuge Liang from a feminine hermit scholar into a sorcerer-like scholar. In fact, the removal of the prologue and the connection between Kuai Che and Zhuge Liang provide an opportunity to reconstruct and renovate Zhuge's image. As a result, Lu Xun claims that these changes shaped Zhuge Liang's wits and wisdom to be more like a sorcerer than a scholar (Lu Xun *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* 120).³¹ *Tongsu yanyi*'s description of Zhuge's sorcerer-like appearance could have originated from a particular narrative in *pinghua*, in which Sima Yi 司馬

³⁰ Part of the translation incorporated Moss Roberts' *Three Kingdoms*; however, Roberts' translation is of Mao's recension of *Sanguo yanyi*, which is different from Jiajing's recension of *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi*. Therefore, I revised Roberts' translation to make it appropriate for the Jiajing recension.

³¹ Lu Xun's *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* focuses mainly on the Ming-Qing period's recensions of *Sanguo yanyi*, instead of comparing it with the Song-Yuan period of *pinghua*.

懿, with a courtesy name of Sima Zhongda 司馬仲達, comments on his life-long nemesis Zhuge

Liang:

Zhuge was originally a divine immortal who had studied his craft from his early youth.

Now that he had reached middle age, there was no book he had not read; he understood the mysteries of Heaven and Earth and the inscrutable will of gods and ghosts; he could call up the wind and command the rain, create soldiers by scattering beans, and create rivers by waving his sword. Sima Zhongda once remarked, “Advancing, he cannot be stopped; departing, he cannot be held back; and even when in dire straits he cannot be captured—I do not know whether he is a man, a god, or a ghost!”

諸葛本是一神仙，自小學業，時至中年，無書不覽，達天地之機，神鬼難度之志；呼風喚雨，撒豆成兵，揮劍成河。司馬仲達曾道：「來不可當，攻不可守，困不可圍，未知是人也，神也，仙也？」(Records 76)

This depiction of Zhuge Liang reflects the image of a well-educated scholar with a mystical identity. This suggests that the folk origin viewed the literati like a living immortal. In addition, this narrative also illustrates the resemblance between a divine immortal and a culturally accomplished scholar at the time in the eyes of the commoners. Influenced by *pinghua*, the description of Zhuge Liang's appearance in *tongsu yanyi* combines these immortal and sorcerer-like images in forming a new contradictory identity of Zhuge Liang, and the scholar.

As mentioned previously, *pinghua*'s image of Zhuge is heavily influenced by the image of Kuai Che from the prologue and popular culture. Therefore, by removing the image of Kuai Che, Zhuge Liang's character is reconstructed and reformulated with a new identity without any preceding restriction. Kuai Che's image in *pinghua* is a restraint in remolding the physical appearance of Zhuge Liang in *pinghua*, as Zhuge Liang formulates with an ectomorphic

appearance with scholarly characters, in an attempt to rectify itself from the servile and unassertive strategist in the Karmic Dream. However, in *tongsu yanyi*, this ectomorphic physical appearance transforms into a sorcerer-like image, which incorporates several immortal abilities as narrated in *tongsu yanyi*. He is depicted as someone with an immortal aura presented in this image, his appearances—a gleaming jade, eyebrows that “assemble all the elegance of the River and Mountain,” and “a buoyant air of a transcendent immortal,”—all incorporate a sense of distinction from a mortal human being. In contrast, his physical appearance in *pinghua*, such as his powdered face, rouged lips, and long fingernails, suggests that Zhuge is a mortal.

Other than the changes in his appearance, Zhuge Liang’s background also takes a different twist between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. On various occasions, *pinghua* presents Zhuge Liang as a humble farmer without any training in rites, while *tongsu yanyi* depicts Zhuge as someone from a gentry family. In *pinghua*, the social identity of Zhuge Liang is presented in dialogues between different characters. After Zhuge Liang leaves his hermitage after Liu Bei’s Three Visits 三顧茅廬:

When [Zhuge] went to Xinye, he was treated each day to a banquet. One day the Imperial Uncle [Liu Bei] suddenly asked the field marshal to train the troops. Zhuge opined, “In training the army, whoever disobeys my commands will be beheaded!” Now Zhang Fei had long wanted to get the best of Kongming, so he loudly shouted in front of the hall, “Imperial Uncle, that’s impossible! How can a hick cowherd give orders to the troops?”

諸葛出庵前往新野，每日筵會。忽一日，皇叔請教軍。諸葛言：「教軍若違令者斬！」張飛素有欺孔明之心，於階下大叫：「皇叔不可！牧牛村夫豈能為軍令！」

(Records 78)

In this passage, Zhang Fei ruthlessly rejects Liu Bei's decision to appoint Zhuge Liang in training the troops, as he despises Zhuge with the innuendo "a hick cowherd." This innuendo from Zhang Fei suggests his contempt for Zhuge Liang's origin as a cowherd, and how Zhuge's abilities haven't yet been recognized by Liu Bei's followers. Furthermore, this conflict between Zhang and Zhuge reflects the struggle and competition between the *wen* and *wu* masculine characters.

The relationship between Zhang Fei and Zhuge Liang in the Three Kingdoms story cycle is a typical example of the struggle between the *wen* and *wu* identities. As previously mentioned, Zhang Fei represents the ideal *wu*-dominated masculine models of martial prowess with a volcanic temper. On the other hand, Zhuge Liang represents the *wen* masculinity, since Zhuge's scholarly attributes and sorcerer abilities manifest the model of the *wen* identity through his mastery of books and wits. This confrontation between the *wen* and *wu* demonstrates the struggle between two models of masculinities in the Song-Yuan period. Furthermore, this struggle between different types of masculinities also reflects another question that contributes to the categorization of Zhuge Liang in *pinghua*, since Zhuge not only acts like an immortal and a scholar, he sometimes also behaves like a *haohan*, and he also acts altruistically like a *yingxiong*. Bret Hinsch categorizes *haohan* with four different characteristics: First, the *haohan* mainly originates from the plebeian class. Second, the *haohan* demonstrates his loyalty toward a group of male comrades. Third, the *haohan* celebrates vengeance through violence, and finally, the *haohan* has valor and a mesomorphic physique (Hinsch 117). In addition to these elements, the sub-attributes from Shelley Chang's common attributes associated with popular images of warriors with specific stereotypes—such as the unusual physical strength and incomparable martial prowess, fearlessness, power of endurance, selflessness, and ability to control desires,

especially sexual desire—provide a detailed description of the *haohan* archetype (Chang, 81-85). Zhuge Liang therefore possesses quite a few of these *haohan* characteristics in *pinghua*.

When Zhang Fei labels Zhuge Liang as “a hick cowherd” in *pinghua*, this insult reveals Zhuge Liang is from a plebeian class family, and this is not the only occasion Zhuge Liang is referred to as “a hick,” or from a plebeian family. For example, when Xiahou Dun 夏侯惇 returns to Xu Chang 許昌 after his defeat in Xinye, per Cao Cao’s 曹操 order to attack Liu Bei in Xinye, Xiahou Dun replies to Cao Cao’s question about the details of his defeat:

Xiahou Dun went on, “A hundred thousand troops beheaded by five generals! Immolated by fire, drowned by a flood, ambushed again and again! And eventually I was bitterly defeated by that Zhang Fei! It was all the scheme of the country hick Zhuge!”

夏侯惇又說：「十萬軍斬五員將，火燒水滄，累次埋伏，後逢張飛，痛死敗矣。皆是村夫諸葛之計。」(Records 80)

On another occasion, in a meeting between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu 周瑜:

After Zhou Yu had treated Zhuge to wine, the servants presented oranges in a golden bowl. Zhuge pushed back his sleeves, held an orange in his left hand, and with his right hand raised a knife, Lu Su said, “Martial Marquis, you offend against propriety.” But Zhou Yu said with a smile, “I’ve been told that Zhuge is from a lowly background. He’s just a peasant and simply not used to this.” He then divided his orange into three equal parts.

周瑜待諸葛酒畢，左右人進棖橘，托一金甌。諸葛推衣起，用左手捧一棖，右手捨其刀。魯肅曰：「武侯失尊重之禮。」周瑜笑曰：「我聞諸葛出身低微，元是莊農，不慣。」遂自分其棖為三段。(Records 90)

The two narratives above from *pinghua* suggest Zhuge Liang comes from the lower class and is “a peasant” with “a lowly background.” Xiahou Dun echoes Zhang Fei’s name-calling, labeling Zhuge Liang as “the country hick Zhuge,” which suggests Zhuge Liang has *haohan* characteristics. And Zhou Yu’s and Lu Su’s remark continues to present Zhuge Liang’s peasantry background in *pinghua*. These remarks suggest that the Zhuge Liang in *pinghua* fits into one of the characteristics of a *haohan*.

Aside from sharing the plebian origin like the other *haohan* characters, Zhuge Liang also possesses another characteristic from the *haohan* model. It is Zhuge Liang's loyalty towards the Kingdom of Shu, which creates an ideal personality that has been lauded by the readers for generations. In one scene from *pinghua*, Liu Bei sends Zhuge Liang as an envoy to Jiang Dong 江東, where the Kingdom of Wu resides. Sun Quan then receives a message delivered by Cao Cao’s envoy, which is a threat from Cao Cao. Sun Quan hesitates, wondering if he should halt his alliance with Liu Bei, who is Cao Cao’s main target, and:

This scared Zhuge so much that he was stupefied, “If you don’t dispatch troops, my lord in Xiakou is doomed!” As soon as he finished speaking, he knotted up his robe, pulled back his sleeves, raised his sword, and killed that envoy right in front of the steps!

唬諸葛大驚：倘若不起軍，夏口主公休矣！言盡，結袍挽衣，提劍就階，殺了來使。(Records 89)

In this scene, Zhuge Liang refutes the traditional image of a scholar, who tends to resolve his problems through his wits and eloquent speeches. Zhuge Liang refuses to solve this immediate threat conveyed by Cao Cao’s envoy through words or plots, but instead he sorts out the situation with a quick slash of blood in front of all the ministers of the Kingdom of Wu. Zhuge Liang’s violent reaction differs from Zhang Fei’s impromptu and volcanic temper, as Zhuge acts with a

careful calculation of Sun Quan's and his ministers' reactions toward the death of Cao Cao's envoy. In fact, this not only demonstrates Zhuge Liang's loyalty and his attachment to the Kingdom of Shu, but it also illustrates another *haohan* characteristic of Zhuge Liang: his expertise in martial skills.

In another scene, during Zhuge's expedition to the south, a military activity to suppress the revolt of southern barbarians 南蠻, Zhuge shouts thrice in the frontline to crush the revolt army, just like Zhang Fei in Dangyang 當陽 in front of Cao Cao's massive army. In this scene, "The field marshal [Zhuge Liang] rode out and gave three shouts, and in the southern battle line, the king of the southern barbarians dismounted 軍師出喝三聲，南陣上蠻王下馬" (*Records* 152). This description of Zhuge Liang reflects the behavior of a martial warrior rather than a scholar character. Furthermore, Zhuge's behaviors in *pinghua* suggest and reaffirm that the *pinghua* Zhuge closer resembles the *haohan* archetype than a typical *wen* character.

Zhuce Liang's loyalty and his martial-like behaviors prompts his *haohan* characteristics. The bond between Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang in *pinghua* is mainly formed during the scene in the Three Visits. This bond with Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang develops differently from the three sworn brothers, which is generated through the initiation of gazes and the extraordinary mesomorphic appearance. Appearance is still an essential contributor to building the relationship between Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang. The social bonding between Lui and Zhuge is first affected by Xu Shu's last advice before his departure from Xinye. Xu Shu's final advice to Liu Bei implements an image that is distinguishable from Guan Yu's and Zhang Fei's martial prowess, as Xu notes:

"In the south there is Recumbent Dragon, and in the north there is Phoenix Fledgling. Phoenix Fledgling is Pang and Recumbent Dragon is Zhuge, who at present has built himself a thatched cottage on Recumbent Dragon Ridge in Nanyang. His name is Zhuge

Liang, and he is also known as Kongming. He employs his troops like a god, and his machinations are unfathomable, even to gods and ghosts. He can be your field marshal.”

徐庶曰：「南有臥龍，北有鳳雛，鳳雛者是龐統也；臥龍者諸葛也，見在南陽臥龍岡蓋一茅廬，複姓諸葛，名亮，字孔明，行兵如神，動止有神鬼不解之機，可為軍師。」 (Records 73)

Xu Shu’s advice forms Liu Bei’s first impression about Zhuge Liang prior to their meeting. In addition, Zhuge’s appearance of immortality is implied, which further strengthens Zhuge Liang’s transcendent image in Liu Bei’s mind. Therefore, Xu Shu’s words and advice evolve into an initiation of a male bond between Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang; however, they are also an extension and continuation of Xu Shu’s bonding with Liu Bei after his departure to the north.

The homo-social engagement between Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang is a two-directional effect in the Three Visits. In one way, Zhuge Liang is deeply impressed by Liu Bei’s ambitions and his sincerity. On the other hand, Liu Bei is also in awe of Zhuge’s knowledge and his strategic talent. In this particular scene, Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang establish their bond not only due to Zhuge’s extraordinary appearance, but also his desire for merit. However, the storyline of the Triple Visits in *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* develops differently, despite both narrations resulting in the same relationship between Liu and Zhuge. In *pinghua*, Zhuge Liang hides himself from Liu Bei during the three visits, and contemplates if he should leave his cottage to serve Liu Bei:

But now let us backtrack to discuss Zhuge, who said to himself, “Who am I that I make the prefect return repeatedly to pay his respects? I observe that the Imperial Uncle has the features of a king or emperor; his earlobes hang down on his shoulders and his hands hang below his knees. Moreover, I have looked at the poems he wrote on the western

wall; he is someone who has great ambition.” Day in day out the master thought about the last two visits. And then, right when he was sunk in pondering about it, his acolyte reported, “The Imperial Uncle is back again!”

卻說諸葛自言：「我乃何人，使太守幾回來謁？我觀皇叔是帝王之像，兩耳垂肩，手垂過膝，又看西牆上寫詩，有志之輩。」先生日日常思，前復兩遍，今正慮間，道童報曰：「皇叔又來也。」(Records 76)

Liu Bei’s ambition is expressed through a poem that he writes on the western wall in Zhuge’s cottage. Within this poem, Liu expresses his sincerity, his ambition, and his affect, which convinces Zhuge to join and serve Liu Bei. The exchange of ambition contributes to Zhuge Liang’s approval and validation of Liu Bei as his liege lord. In addition to Liu’s poem, Zhuge is also impressed by Liu’s extraordinary physical appearance and believes Liu has “features of a king or emperor,” which is essential in their exchanges of gazes and mutual approval, even though Liu Bei already accepted Zhuge Liang because of Xu Shu’s advice.

Hinsch’s *haohan* characterizations suggest that a *haohan* character usually seeks vengeance and has a tough physique. However, Zhuge Liang does not demonstrate these characteristics in *pinghua*; Zhuge does not have a tough or a mesomorphic physique. Nevertheless, his tendency to resolve problems through violence is noteworthy. Zhuge Liang’s slaughter of Cao Cao’s envoy in order to affirm Sun Quan’s determination to form an alliance with Liu Bei can be interpreted as Zhuge demonstrating his problem-solving skills with the use of violence. This use of violence does not determine whether Zhuge possesses the same *haohan* mentality in the process of negotiating and challenging the martial prowess masculinity. In *Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳, the 108 *haohan* characters who live in Mountain Liang in Shandong 山東梁山 are widely considered as *haohan*. However, these men did not all have the mesomorphic

appearance detailed by Hinsch. An example is Wu Yong 吳用, who presents a physical characteristic that resembles Zhuge Liang in *pinghua*, a fragile scholar-like appearance. In fact, in *Shuihu zhuan*, Wu Yong appears as follows:

The man had the appearance of a scholar. He wore a cylindrical-shaped hat that came down almost to his eyebrows, and a wide flaxen gown with a black border that was gathered at the waist by a tea-colored sash. His feet were clad in white socks and silk shoes. His handsome and refined face was adorned with a long beard. This was Wu Yong, the Wizard. He was also known as the Pedant. His Taoist appellation was Master Increasing Light. Since the earliest times his family had resided in this neighborhood (Shi *Outlaws* 162).

那人時，似秀才打扮，戴一頂桶子樣抹眉梁頭巾，穿一領皂沿邊麻布寬衫，腰繫一條茶褐鑾帶；下面絲鞋淨襪，生得眉清目秀，面白鬚長。這人乃是「智多星」吳用，表字學究，道號加亮先生，祖貫本鄉人氏。(Shi *Shui* 168)

In this depiction, Wu Yong's appearance has a refined look and a scholar-like appearance. Wu Yong is the Director General, military advisor, or *junshi* 軍師, the same position as Zhuge Liang in Liu Bei's organization. Furthermore, Wu Yong is not the only one to be considered as a *haohan* without the mesomorphic appearance. In *Shuihu zhuan*, Xiao Rang 蕭讓 and Jin Dajian 金大堅, who were members of the 108 *haohan* in Mountain Liang, also do not portray the same valor, tough physique, and martial prowess characteristics as the other warrior-like characters, but they are still considered *haohan*. Therefore, physical appearance may not be an essential factor in determining the *haohan* paradigm.

In fact, scholars such as Hu Shi 胡適 and Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸 claim that in many instances, the portrayal of Zhuge Liang is within the mold of a *Shuihu zhuan* style of the military advisor; even though their claims are mainly based on Mao's recension, they are applicable to an earlier collective popular image of Zhuge Liang in *pinghua* (Plaks 441). Furthermore, Zhuge Liang also demonstrates a perplexing image of a scholar in competition with other masculine characters within the narrative. In fact, the description of Zhuge Liang demonstrates a character that is in the form of a scholar but acts like a *haohan* in *pinghua*. The character of *pinghua* Zhuge Liang swings in various directions without a unified or a solid determination of his own identity. Since he has an ectomorphic appearance, he proclaims himself a "Daoist-sorcerer," and possesses supernatural power like that of a wizard, which demonstrate features of a *wen* character. On the other hand, *pinghua* Zhuge Liang also behaves in a way only a *haohan* would, as he possesses certain *haohan* qualities such as solving problems through violence and acting like a warrior-general on the battlefield. In comparing the Zhuge Liang character in *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, the image of Zhuge Liang was transformed and reconstructed towards a synthesis between scholarly and wizardry identities by removing the *haohan* aspects. As mentioned above, Zhuge's physical appearance in *tongsu yanyi* blends the sorcerer-like power and the scholarly features into one. Through Liu Bei's eyes, readers are able to see Zhuge Liang with "a face like a gleaming jade," elegantly dressed, with a pair of eyebrows that are distinguished beyond words. Therefore, in Liu Bei's perspective, Zhuge Liang is a savior, or even a *Shenxian* 神仙, who comes to his aid to revive his ambition and career in taking over the world. *Tongsu yanyi* debunks the "divine immortal" identity in *pinghua*, but revamps his features and behaviors into the ideal character of a true scholar who can act as Liu Bei's savior.

Tongsu yanyi also reshapes Zhuge Liang's origin and background, not only by removing the innuendos of "a humble country hick" and a "lowly background" in *pinghua*, but also by re-incorporating Zhuge's historical biography into the narrative. Xu Shu presents Zhuge Liang's familial background, after Xu Shu decided to leave Xinye while parting Liu Bei and his fellows, because Cao Cao abducted Xu Shu's mother. Therefore, in order to save his mother, Xu Shu needs to leave Xinye. Similar to the scene in *pinghua* mentioned above, before his departure, Xu Shu gives his final advice to Liu Bei to seek service from Zhuge Liang, who resides in Longzhong 隆中. In this scene, Xu Shu introduces Zhuge Liang to Liu Bei, as well as to the readers:

He is from Yangdu in Langye, and he is a descendant of Zhuge Feng, former commander of the Capital Districts. His father's name is [Zhuge] Gui with style name Zigong, and he was a governor's deputy in Taishan district. Zhuge Gui died young, leaving his sons under the care of his younger brother Xuan. At the time, Yuan Shu appointed Zhuge Xuan as the Administrator of Yuzhang Commandery. Later, the Han imperial court appointed Zhu Hao as the new administrator of Yuzhang Commandery. Then they made their home in Jingzhou under Liu Biao's protection, since Xuan was a long-standing friend of Liu Biao, the protector of Jingzhou. After Zhuge Xuan died, Liang and his younger brother Jun farm a piece of land in Nanyang. He enjoyed chanting the Liangfu elegies. He bears the double surname Zhuge. His given name is Liang. And his style is Kongming. Where they lived there was a stretch of hills known as Recumbent Dragon Ridge; therefore, he took the sobriquet 'Master Recumbent Dragon' from that. His talents are indeed transcendent. Your Lordship, ignore his low estate and visit him—the sooner

the better, for if he is willing to assist you, you need to have no fear in the stability of the empire.”

庶曰：「此人乃瑯琊陽都人也，漢司隸校尉諸葛豐之後。其父名珪，字子貢，為泰山郡縣丞，早卒。時從叔父玄為袁術所署豫章太守，後漢朝選朱皓代玄。玄素與荊州牧劉景升有舊，往依之。不幸玄卒。其人與弟均躬耕於南陽，好為《梁父吟》。複姓諸葛，名亮，字孔明。所居之地有一崗，名臥龍崗，故自號『臥龍先生』。此人乃當世之大賢也，使君急宜枉駕見之。若此人肯相輔佐，何慮天下不定乎！」

(Luo *wenshi* 275- 276)

This biography in *tongsu yanyi* omits Zhuge Liang's lower-class origin mentioned in *pinghua*. This narrative in *tongsu yanyi* asserts that Zhuge Liang is high-born and provides a detailed genealogy of officials and ministers from his family. This detailed biography of Zhuge Liang is not fabricated; it recapitulates the one in Chen Shou's *Sanguozhi*, the *Record of the Three Kingdoms*. In this version, Zhuge Liang farms in Nanyang with his younger brother. He is a hermit waiting for the right ruler to seek his service and advice, an embodiment of the Mencian ideology of “in obscurity a man makes perfect his own person, but in prominence he makes perfect the whole Empire as well 窮則獨善其身/達則兼濟天下” (Mencius 147). This reconstruction of Zhuge Liang's genealogy not only demystifies Zhuge's identity from a mystical *Shenxian*, or an immortal-like character in *pinghua*, but also reasserts the *wen* features in the character of Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi*, which details his highborn identity, and an expertise with a wide range of knowledge in governance and other scholarly merits.

Reconstructing the scholar identity in *tongsu yanyi*

The reinstatement of Zhuge Liang's scholarly image and identity in *tongsu yanyi* reflects the changes in the literati identity in late imperial China. Martin Huang claims that the literati, the critical social component in imperial Chinese society, were experiencing a profound identity crisis (Huang *Literati* 26). Even though Huang mainly focused his investigation of the literati and its image in eighteenth century Chinese literature, his argument portrays the identity crisis as influenced by a series of historic events, including the Mongol rulers' restriction of the literati's involvement in politics (as the literati ranked at the bottom of the Mongol social class), the intense competition for officialdom in the Ming period, and the rise of the merchant-gentry class since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Huang *Literati* 29-31). In addition, Ge Liangyan's *The Scholar and the State* states that the status of the literati scholars had been steadily declining since the establishment of the Qin Dynasty 秦, the first unified and centralized Chinese dynasty. This decline in status was due to the rise of centralized imperial power and the shift in the relationship between rulers and literati scholars. In the pre-Qin period, the relationships between the state rulers and scholar-ministers were similar to that of mentors and friends. However, this relationship changed over time; as the centralization of the imperial power increased, the literati scholars became "merely servants" to the rulers of the imperial courts (Ge *Scholars* 20-21).

This relationship worsens as the imperial courts continued its centralization process. During the Ming and Qing periods, officials were required to grovel to the ground and bow to the emperor in imperial court meetings. Furthermore, Ming emperors were also known for their notorious violent behavior in executing their officials and administering cruel penalties, such as flogging at court (Ge *Scholars* 22). In contrast, during the Song period, officials were required to stand in front of the seated emperor, while the top officials in the Tang period were given chairs

to be seated in front of the emperor (Wu *Zhu* 160-61). These treatments of scholar-officials in the different time periods suggested the changes of social identity and status of literati scholars in imperial China. Furthermore, in late imperial China, especially in the Ming court, the institution of the civil service examination system as the dominant means of official selection contributed to a large population of unemployed scholars. There were not enough official positions for these individuals to be placed after they had passed the rigorous civil service exams. This caused a large quantity of literati scholars to divert their attention from officialdom, and to refocus themselves separate from state affairs, and into other literary related affairs, as the utilitarian intention in scholarly study corrupted the ethical nature of being a scholar (Ge *Scholars* 26-32). Moreover, Ge claims that the literati reconstruction of the Three Kingdoms story cycle into a novel, reflected an attempt to “negotiate with the political power” and even to “regain some of their lost dignity” that was suppressed and vanished by the emperors’ cruel treatment of scholar-officials in the early Ming period (Ge *Scholars* 66). Throughout this time, the renditions of the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, including *tongsu yanyi*, were rewritten to compensate for the early Ming political situation that contributed to the loss of literati dignity, the suppression of Mencius ideology, and the changing relationship between the emperor and the scholar-officials (Ge *Scholars* 65).

One of the main focuses in *tongsu yanyi* is the harmonious relationship between Zhuge Liang and his liege lord, Liu Bei. Liu Bei’s image as a benevolent ruler and king mocks the cruel and harsh ruling of the Ming emperors. On the other hand, the scholarly compiler reconstructs Zhuge’s image as a competent administrator, a scholar-official who wins the staunch support and trust from the ruler he serves. The relationship between Zhuge Liang and Liu Bei is beyond the normal bonds between a superior and his inferior. This type of harmonious ruler-minister

relationship in *tongsu yanyi* depicts the ideal relationship advocated in the *Mencius* that earned great wrath from the emperors in the early Ming period who removed it from imperial examination (Huang *Literati* 26). Therefore, the reconstruction of Zhuge Liang not only restores some of the historical sense in the fictional character Zhuge Liang by refuting the mystical and wizard-like perplexing image from *pinghua*, it also reinstates and advocates the Mencian view and the literati's political perspective in the late imperial period.

The reconstruction of Zhuge Liang in the reconstructed narrative is a means of self-expression from the author, or the compiler. According to Martin Huang's scrutiny of the vernacular novel in the Ming dynasty, especially in the late Ming period, writing fiction became an autobiographical adventure for literati authors, through the means of applying a metaphor of oneself as other, or "self-othering," or "self-invention," in order to express their political perspectives, their frustrations, and even anger (Huang *Literati* 11, 18). In fact, Huang's study focuses only on the eighteenth-century vernacular novel, but his analysis of the author's creative effort is based on Li Zhi's 李贄 preface to *Shuihu chuan*, which invoked the canonical idea *fafen zhushu* 發憤著書 from Sima Qian 司馬遷 to interpret the author's motivation as a way to express one's anger and one's ambition (Huang *Literati* 17-18). According to Huang, the strategy of using "others" as a metaphor for oneself in fiction enables the author to explore and self-consciously dramatize their paradoxical nature of writing, and some even turned into a virtue of self-othering or self-invention (Huang *Literati* 11). Moreover, "the literati became the object of their own observation and scrutiny" within the novel (Huang *Literati* 22). Of course, this writing strategy can be derived from the collective creation and reconstruction of Zhuge Liang in which the rewriting and the reimaging of Zhuge Liang expresses the reinvention of the collective identity of scholars in the mid-Ming period. Even though *tongsu yanyi* was attributed to an

individual author, Luo Guanzhong, there is not an existent copy that was dated to pinpoint the authorship of *tongsu yanyi*. Instead, the surviving recension of *tongsu yanyi* was dated around 1522 AD, during the mid-Ming period. Therefore, I argue that the Zhuge Liang depicted in *tongsu yanyi* can be meaningfully contextualized in a collective process of the reconstruction and self-invention of the scholarly identity between the beginning and middle of the Ming period.

This self-reconstruction and self-invention in *tongsu yanyi* reveals Zhuge Liang's hegemony and overpowering of the other characters with martial prowess, which illustrates a collective rejection of the martial prowess identity, or the *wu* identity in the literati community in the Ming-Qing period. This is from the perspective of the scholar-literati class, with Zhang Fei possessing a collective image of martial prowess, and consistently being reined in by a scholar-like character or a minister. Zhuge Liang is one of the main characters who constantly reins in the martial-related and mesomorphic characters throughout the story cycle. This is evident through the juxtaposition of several incidents depicted in both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. For example, chapter eight of volume eight of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled “Zhuge Liang incinerates the encampment in Bowang 諸葛亮博望燒屯,” narrates Zhuge Liang's debut of his talent in military tactics. Zhuge Liang exterminates the 100,000 of Cao Cao's infantry led by general Xiahou Dun 夏侯惇. When Liu Bei first receives this news that Cao's men are approaching Xinye 新野, Liu immediately summons Guan Yu and Zhang Fei for their military advice. Yet, with a sarcastic tone, Zhang Fei replies to Liu Bei that Liu should send Zhuge Liang to repel Cao Cao's force. Later, Zhuge arranges a set of tactics that lures Xiahou Dun into a trap. At first, Zhang Fei and Guan Yu are reluctant to follow, but once they comply with Zhuge's instruction under Liu Bei's command, they easily eliminate the 100,000 infantry en route to attack Xinye. The end of the chapter reads as follows:

Kongming [Zhuge Liang] recalled all units. Guan Yu and Zhang Fei said to one another, “He is a true hero, a champion!” The brothers had ridden only a short distance when they saw Mi Zhu and Mi Fang leading a party of soldiers. In their midst was a small carriage. A man, perfectly poised, sat inside. Guan Yu and Zhang Fei dismounted and bowed low before the carriage in acknowledgement of the director general’s [Zhuge Liang’s] ability. 說孔明收軍，關、張二將上馬說：「孔明真英傑也！」行不數里，見一輛車，糜竺、糜芳兩邊簇擁，約有五百軍，視之，乃孔明也。二將下馬，拜伏於車前。(Luo *wenshi* 299)

The bowing of Guan Yu and Zhang Fei at the end of the chapter in *tongsu yanyi* illustrates the submission of the martial prowess character to the literary-scholar character. It also demonstrates an initial attempt from Zhuge Liang to hold the martial heroes in a dependent position, from Andrew Plaks’ analysis of the Three Kingdoms (Plaks 443). In contrast with the same Bowang scene in *pinghua*, Zhang Fei verbally praises Zhuge Liang by saying, “[the] field marshal truly is smart 軍師真個強人,” without the submissive bow movement in *tongsu yanyi* (*Records* 80). And this is not the only incident in which Zhuge Liang tames and represses the martial heroes in *tongsu yanyi*.

In addition, Zhuge Liang not only suppresses the martial characters by exhibiting his strategic ability that causes the martial characters submit to him, he also manipulates the arrogant martial warriors to carry out his plan, which reflects the *wen* character overpowering the martial characters. In chapter nine of volume thirteen of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled “At Jiameng Pass Zhang Fei duels Ma Chao 葭萌張飛戰馬超,” Ma Chao 馬超 leads an army that attacks Liu Bei’s army stationed in the Jiameng Pass. At the time, Liu Bei, Zhuge Liang, and Zhang Fei are at Mianzhu

Pass 綿竹關 and are planning their campaign targeting the city of Chengdu 成都, the capital of the Shu province. Then an urgent message arrives:

“The pass guardians, Meng Da and Huo Jun, are hard-pressed, as Zhang Lu of Eastern-Chuan has sent Ma Chao against Jiameng Pass. The pass will fall unless we help now.” Xuande [Liu Bei] was alarmed. “Only Zhang Fei and Zhao Yun can deal with this,” Kongming [Zhuge Liang] said. Someone report this to Zhang Fei, and he is in excitement outside of the camp. “Your Lordship say nothing to him,” Kongming responded. “Let Liang goads him to do his best.” Zhang Fei went inside the camp, cried loudly, “I come to say farewell and off to fight Ma Chao.” Pretending not to hear, Kongming turned to Xuande and said, “Ma Chao is attacking the pass, but we have no one to match his strength – unless we call Guan Yunchang [Yu] from Jingzhou.” “Director General,” said Zhang Fei, “do I rank so low with you? If once I held Cao Cao’s million-man army in check, one miserable lout like Ma Chao won’t bother me!” To this Kongming replied, “General Zhang, when you held the river and cut the bridge, Cao Cao’s ignorance of the art of deception saved you. In this case, Ma Chao’s bravery is comparable to Han Xin and Ying Bu, known to all under the heaven. In six battles around the River Wei, Cao Cao had to cut his beard and nearly lost his life then. Ma Chao is no ordinary warrior, and I’m not even sure if your brother Yunchang himself could defeat him.” “I’m set,” Zhang Fei responded. “If I fail, let martial law apply.”

忽流星馬急報，言：「孟達、霍峻守葭萌關，今被東川張魯遣馬超引兵攻打甚急，救遲則關隘休矣。」玄德大驚。孔明曰：「須是張、趙二將，方可與敵。」有人報張飛，飛在外大喜。孔明曰：「主公且勿言，容亮激之。」張飛從外大叫而入曰：「辭了哥哥，便去戰馬超也！」孔明故意佯不覩聽，對玄德曰：「今馬超侵犯關

隘，無人可敵；除非往荊州取關雲長來，方可與敵。」張飛曰：「軍師何故小覷吾！吾曾獨拒曹操百萬之兵，豈愁馬超一匹夫耳！」孔明曰：「張將軍據水斷橋，此是曹操不知虛實也。若知虛實，將軍豈得無事乎？況馬超有信、布之勇，天下皆知，渭橋六戰，殺得曹操劍割髭鬚，幾乎喪命，非等閒之比。汝兄雲長，未必可勝。」飛曰：「我只今便去，如勝不得馬超，甘當軍令！」(Luo *wenshi* 458-459)

In this scene, Zhuge Liang incites Zhang Fei by claiming Zhang is not comparable to Ma Chao and Guan Yu. This triggers Zhang's emulative mentality to surpass Ma Chao in order to demonstrate his martial prowess, and moreover, his *wu* masculinity over other warrior-like characters. This scene also illustrates how a scholar will be able to manipulate and control other characters with martial prowess through the use of words, which parallels the literati authors presuming their *wen* identity supersedes the *wu* masculinity in this self-invented scene. On the other hand, this specific scene is not in *pinghua*, and it is also not in Chen Shou's official records of history. Therefore, this specific scene is another fabricated event that appears in the literatized *tongsu yanyi* in order to illustrate the superiority of the scholar-general or literati in warfare and introduces Ma Chao into Liu Bei's camp. The insertion of this fabricated scene potentially institutes and reaffirms the hierarchical position and relationships between the scholar-minister, ruler, and warriors within the hierarchical organization. The bowing of the warrior characters and easily manipulated generals signify the superiority of the literary scholar. It asserts the rejection of martial characters through the establishment of a powerful, manipulative, scholarly and *wen*-dominated masculine character.

Zhang Fei is not the only *wu* character being manipulated by Zhuge Liang. Zhuge also goaded and manipulated Huang Zhong, Zhao Yun, and Wei Yan at his convenience throughout the story. These repetitive motifs and tricks, Plaks asserts, "brings out the psychological tug-of-

war between Zhuge Liang and his own men” (Plaks 445). Through the examination of the repetitive motifs of Zhuge Liang (who represents the image of a scholar character, or the *wen* identity), the tug-of-war between the warrior characters demonstrates the competition and negotiation between the two types of masculine identities over the dominating position in the *wen* and *wu* dyad. By reinstating Zhuge’s superiority among these male warriors, it reflects the recovery of the scholar dignity after the early Ming imperial suppression and the devastation of the scholar in popular culture. This coordinates with Ge’s idea that this typical reconstruction reflected an attempt to “regain some of [the literati’s] lost dignity” that was lost and faded away from the maltreatment of scholar-officials and literati in the early Ming period (Ge *Scholars* 66). Moreover, the strange passion for manipulation is an “awareness of the ambiguities of the self and the simultaneous cynical delight in manipulating personae and masks and in impersonating others to find an outlet for these identity-related anxieties,” according to Martin Huang, and it is through this type of “masking and impersonating” in writing and reading novels that presents opportunities for the “deeply repressed literati” to express their stressors by “role switching and self-healing” (Huang *Literati* 39).

The scholars’ suppression and manipulation of the warrior-like characters is not the only means of re-establishing the status and social dignity of scholars in the literati-ization of the Three Kingdoms story. *Tongsu yanyi* depicts various battle scenes in which intellectual strategies prevail over the formidable martial warriors in these grand battles. Among all, Zhuge Liang is the most prominent throughout *tongsu yanyi*. Ever since Zhuge accepted the position of Director General, or the field commander for Liu Bei, his military talent, and his acumen are exhibited in various scenes. These depictions of his strategic talents, wits, and sorcerer-like foresights reflects the self-invention of a specific scholar image from the scholar communities. This was an attempt

to reconstruct and re-justify its own superiority and talent above all other featured characters, in order to redeem the dignity of a scholar class that had been sabotaged by the earlier Ming imperial court, as mentioned previously. In the previously mentioned chapter eight of volume eight in *tongsu yanyi*, “Zhuge Liang Incinerates the Encampment in Bowang 諸葛亮博望燒屯,” besides Zhuge Liang receiving the recognition and acknowledgement from his warrior comrades, it also delineates a detailed description of the battle, and the wonderful foresight of Zhuge’s tactics in military command, which reverts the scholar image that usually involves literary and administrative-related skills only. In fact, there is a tremendous amount of narratives on the grandiose battles within *tongsu yanyi* that aim to reiterate Zhuge Liang’s outstanding military merits and accomplishments, and his administrative ability in governance, including the acquisition of the Southern Jingzhou 荊南四郡, Northern expedition 北伐 and Southern campaign 南征.

In order to re-establish the ideal *wen* image of the scholar, *tongsu yanyi* not only portrays the superiority of Zhuge Liang over the *wu* characters, but it also presents Zhuge Liang as a well-rounded character. In chapter nine of volume nine of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled “Zhou Yu and Cao Cao Battle at Three Rivers 周瑜三江戰曹操,” Zhou Yu schemes to murder Zhuge Liang, since Zhou sees Zhuge as a threat to the Kingdoms of Wu. Therefore, Zhou asks Zhuge to ambush Cao Cao’s supply line with his men, since Cao is known as a formidable commander in attacking his opponents’ supply line, which means Cao will guard and cautiously secure his own supply. As a friend of Zhuge Liang, Lu Su asks what his chances are in accomplishing this impossible mission. Zhuge replies:

“I have mastered the fine points of every form of warfare: naval, foot, horse, and chariot. I fear no failure—unlike Southland leaders like you, sir, or Zhou Yu, who have only one specialty.”

「吾水戰步戰、馬戰車戰，各盡其妙，何愁功績不成？非比江東諸公、周郎，盡一能耳。」 (Luo *wenshi* 334)

Zhuge's reply affirms that a scholar should also be well trained in all types of military strategy and warfare; in folk literature, this typically correlates to the image of the warrior-general instead of a scholar. In addition, in chapter one of volume ten of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled “Zhou Yu Submits to Zhuge Liang's Scheme 諸葛亮計伏周瑜,” Zhou Yu attempts another scheme to kill Zhuge Liang, after Zhuge had seen through his plot. Zhou assigns Zhuge a new task, in which he orders Zhuge to produce 100,000 arrows within three days. If Zhuge fails to do so, he would be punished under martial law by decapitation, and Zhou did not provide any of the supplies or enough workforce for Zhuge to complete this task. Instead of gathering workers for production, Zhuge Liang leads a troop of sailors with 1,000 scarecrows on boats en route to Cao Cao's nearby encampment on the river delta. When Zhuge and his men come close to Cao Cao's camps, a dense fog appears. Cao orders his troops to fire randomly at the enemy boats and restricts his troops from leaving their camps. Cao's arrows subsequently stick into the scarecrows on Zhuge Liang's boats, and Zhuge uses these arrows to fulfill Zhou Yu's assignment. On his return trip, Lu Su asks Zhuge how he knew there would be fog in the middle of the night, and Zhuge explains:

“...a military commander is a mediocrity, unless he is versed in the patterns of the heavens, recognizes the advantages of the terrain, knows the interaction of prognostic

signs, understands the changes in weather, examines the maps of deployment, and is clear about the balance of forces.”

凡為將者，不通天文，不識地理，不知軍情，不曉陰陽，不看陣圖，不明兵勢，乃庸才也。 (Luo *wenshi* 341)

Zhuge Liang’s explanation suggests several elements that are different from the image of the martial-skilled warrior general, as they generally lead their troops and rush into their opponents for close combat. This explanation from Zhuge Liang reflects his continuous explanation on the requirement for a well-competent general, especially for scholar-general, of which the expertise of subject matters not only consists of reading and writing, but also in the proficiency of military strategies and tactics. This image and idea of a true scholar-general is not an abrupt transition that originated in the Ming period, rather, it is an idea and thought that evolved during the Song period between the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman claims this idea of a true scholar-general decayed later in the Ming period, though in perspective, the reinstatement of the scholar-general described in *tongsu yanyi* was an attempt to revitalize the ideology of a scholar-general in the Ming period. Moreover, it also reconstructs and reboots the dignity of scholar culture through this self-portraying and self-healing process (Tillman *Ho* 79). It is a process of self-objectifying, in exchange for an idealized scholarly image, especially for certain literary scholars who were marginalized from the officialdom “since there were always more literati than official positions,” and they were “unable to find employment in the government,” which contributed to the disappointment among the scholars and the frustration of the general society (Huang *Literati* 27). The scholar writers redeemed themselves and relieved their disappointments through reconstructing and recreating historical events as a method of expressing their social frustrations, and Zhuge Liang is one of these historical characters that

scholar writers reconstructed as an ideal persona that responds to their social frustrations and anxieties these scholars experienced in their careers. When considering the above-mentioned events in *tongsu yanyi*, which are either omitted or conducted by a different person in *pinghua*, it validates the possibility that the reconstructed narrative attempts to reconstruct and rebuke the image of a fragile scholar from the folk culture.

Besides redefining and acknowledging the aspects of a true scholar general, Zhuge Liang's character in *tongsu yanyi* also remolds the aspects of a true literary scholar. In Zhuge's perspective, a true scholar-general needs to acquire a wide-range of knowledge, not only to exercise military strategy, but also to administer the state. Zhuge Liang expresses this ideal perspective of a scholar to his contenders in a logomachy, a ministers of the Wu, in the fifth chapter of volume nine, entitled "Zhuge Liang in a War of Words with the Southern Ministers 諸葛亮舌戰群儒," on the theme of what a noble literary scholar, or a *junzi zhiru* 君子之儒, should be:

Kongming [Zhuge Liang] answered the man so: "There are scholars of noble character and scholars with petty interests. Those scholars of noble character are those that contain benevolence and righteousness in their heart; show filial affection toward their parents and devoted to their sovereign; above one can look upon the pattern of the sky, below one can bend down to scrutinize the geography, and in the middle one's graces can reach to many people—governing the world to be as peaceful like a solid rock, making their names known to later ages, and this is the noble character of scholars. But those of scholars with petty interests bend their efforts to polishing empty rhymes, knowing no skill but that to trivial composition and calligraphy. Authors of grandiose odes in their youth, by old age they've digested the classics. In one sitting a thousand words may flow

from their pens, but inside of them not a single useful idea is to be found. Take the scholar Yang Xiong who made a great reputation in his time only to disgrace himself by serving Wang Mang—for which he jumped to his death from the upper story of a building. He is an example of the petty scholar. Let him produce a ten-thousand-word rhapsody every day. What value does it have?”

孔明曰：「有君子之儒，有小人之儒。夫君子之儒，心存仁義，德處溫良；孝於父母，尊於君王；上可仰瞻於天文，下可俯察於地理，中可流澤於萬民；治天下如盤石之安，立功名於青史之內，此君子之儒也。夫小人之儒，性務吟詩，空書翰墨；青春作賦，皓首窮經；筆下雖有千言，胸中實無一物。且如漢揚雄，以文章為狀元，而屈身仕莽，不免投閣而死，此乃小人之儒也；雖日賦萬言，何足道哉！」

(Luo *wenshi* 325)

The quote above is part of the conversation within the logomachy, after Zhuge Liang travels to the Kingdom of Wu in the Jiang-dong 江東 area, as Liu Bei's envoy to conduct an alliance with Sun Quan 孫權, in order to defend against Cao Cao's southern expedition and his massive military force of one million troops. Before Zhuge Liang's arrival, the ministers of the Wu are polarized, they debate whether to surrender to Cao Cao or stand against it. As the representative of Liu Bei, who seeks a military alliance against Cao Cao, Zhuge Liang becomes the ministers' target in an argument of words as a way to persuade Sun Quan to evade Wu's military involvement against Cao Cao.

This argument of words begins with the ministers' attacks on Zhuge Liang to subdue his morale before his private audience with the lord Sun Quan. The quotation above is Zhuge Liang's reply to Cheng Bing 程秉, who questions his answer to the question asked by Yan Jun

嚴峻 “on which classical works Zhuge Liang had mastered 治何經典.” Zhuge’s reply to Yan Jun denounces the usual habits of pedantic practices by many scholars, such as “[spending] their days confined between the pen and the ink stone like schoolmen arguing over texts, flourishing words, wielding brushes, and playing with words into a logomachy 豈效書生區區為筆硯之間，論黃數黑，舞文弄筆，而玩唇舌乎” (Luo *wenshi* 325). His rejection of “mastering the classics” is a rejection of the civil service examinations that were based on mastering the sanctioned classics and the examinations were merely an elegantly regurgitated writings in the eight-legged essay format. Furthermore, his answer to Cheng Bing is a supplemental explanation to this denunciation on the Ming literati objective to obtain an administrative position within the civilian officialdom. Ge Liangyan characterizes the Ming period as one of the periods which blatantly manipulated and appropriated Confucians’ texts in order to strengthen the power of the state authority and the imperial court through the manipulation of civil service examinations (Ge *Sanguo* 157-193). In such, especially in the argument of words with Wu ministers, Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi* is therefore reinstating the Mencian standard of a true scholar that coordinates with the Mencian proverb, “there are affairs of great men, and there are affairs of small men 有大人之事有小人之事,” which classifies men into various categories through their responsibilities and contributions to society (*Mencius* 5:4). Zhuge Liang’s distinction in scholarly character is evidence of the categorization in differences between scholars that concentrate on how academia is distinguished—a petty and pedantic scholar, and those scholars that “make perfect the whole Empire as well 兼善天下” (*Mencius* 13:9). In addition, Zhuge Liang’s exclamation refuting the pedantry scholarship reiterates another Mencius ideology that claims “if one believed everything in the *Book of History*, it would have been better for the *Book of History* not to have existed at all 盡信書則不如無書” (*Mencius* 14:3). Therefore, the argument of words

between Zhuge Liang and the Wu ministers illustrates a rectification, or redefinition, of certain aspects of the conventional scholar characteristics and their social responsibilities in late imperial China after the manipulation of the Confucian curriculum by the first two Ming dynasty emperors, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 and Zhu Di 朱棣.

There is another well-known scene in *tongsu yanyi* that further rectifies this symbolization and reconstruction of Zhuge Liang's character as a righteous and noble scholar-minister. In chapter eight of volume nineteen of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled "Kongming [Zhuge Liang] Defeats Cao Zhen in Qi Mountain 孔明祁山破曹真," Zhuge launches his first expedition against the kingdom of Wei with a series of military campaigns in an attempt to reestablish the legitimacy of the Han kingdom. This scene refutes the belief that scholars should lower their dignity and serve their unrighteous rulers with subservience. In this scene, Zhuge Liang leads a vast number of soldiers from the Hanzhong province, and seizes three major cities in the northwestern area that are close to Changan 長安 (currently Xi'an). At the time, the kingdom of Wei is under the reign of Cao Cao's grandson, Cao Rui 曹叡, who has just inherited the throne from his father Cao Pi, the first emperor of Wei. Cao Rui appoints Cao Zhen as the field marshal 大都督 and Wang Lang 王朗 as the director general 軍師, with a force of 200,000 men under their command. As they arrive at Qi Mountain, Wang Lang rides forward and requests a parley, in which Wang Lang attempts to convince Zhuge Liang to submit to the kingdom of Wei by presenting the legitimacy of the kingdom of Wei. Since Wang believes the founding father Cao Pi received the throne from the abdicated Emperor Xian of Han, he argues the kingdom of Wei is the legitimate heritor of the Han kingdom. Zhuge replies to Wang Lang's argument:

"I would have expected a loftier argument from a venerable minister of the Han court, not these words. I have one thing to say to all officers and men. Hear me in silence. Back in

the day, during the period of Emperors Huan and Ling, the succession of the royal house fell into disorder and the evils wrought that resulted in widespread disaster.

Misgovernment of the royal house and successive years of famine engulfed the four corners of the realm in turmoil. The eunuch Duan Gui was just executed in Pingjin (this refers to *xiao pingjin*, it was a military garrison close by Luoyang 洛陽), then followed by the rise of Dong Zhuo in the imperial court; after the heaven exterminated Dong Zhuo, then the rise of the four bandits (Dong Zhuo's generals including Li Jue and Guo Si).

They kidnapped the Emperor among the commoner, and plundered the people within the gully and ravine. It is because the corrupt officials served in the royal household, wild beasts in the imperial court. Men of wolfish heart and violent conduct controlled the way of the righteousness, while craven, servile sorts held every kind of administrative office.

The sacred shrines stand now in ruin, the common people in extremity. I have long known the record of your conduct: after dwelling by the shore of the eastern sea, you first entered office by election for filial devotion and personal integrity. It is unthinkable that you—you whose proper function was to shield your sovereign and uphold his house, to secure the Han and help the Liu to thrive—should have turned and aided renegades and rebels, plotting with them the usurpation of the dynasty! Heaven will not countenance such sins. Nothing but the taste of your flesh will satisfy the people's claim against you! Fortunately, Heaven yet decided to continue the fire-signed Han dynasty. Today I bear the imperial order of his legitimate heir to field an army and chastise the rebels. There is nothing for groveling vassals like you but to get back out of sight and to see if you can somehow salvage your own miserable means of sustenance. How dare you step before the army lines to rant about 'changes in Heaven's ordained periods?' White-haired old

fool! Grey-bearded villain! When you go home to the netherworld—any day now—how will you face the twenty-four sovereigns of the Han? Back, old villain, and have the turncoats settle the score with me.” At Kongming’s denunciation Wang Lang’s chest heaved with rage. A loud cry broke from him, and he fell dead from his horse.

吾以汝為漢朝大老元臣，必有高論，豈期出此言也！吾有一言，諸軍靜聽：昔日桓、靈微弱，漢統陵替，國亂歲凶，四方擾攘。段珪才斬於平津，董卓又生於朝野；天方剿戮，四寇又興，遷劫漢帝於閭閻之間，殘暴生民於溝壑之內。因廟堂之上，朽木為官；殿陛之間，禽獸食祿！狼心狗幸之輩，滾滾當道；奴顏婢膝之徒，紛紛秉政！以致社稷丘墟，生靈塗炭。吾素知汝所行，世居東海之濱，初舉孝廉入仕，理合匡君輔國，安漢興劉，何期反助逆賊，同情篡位！罪惡深重，天地不容！傾國之人，欲食其肉！今日幸吾尚在，乃天意不絕炎漢也！吾奉詔討賊，仗義興師。汝既為諂諛之臣，只可潛身縮首，苟圖衣食，安敢在於軍伍之前，妄稱天數耶？皓首匹夫！蒼髯老賊！當咫尺歸於九泉之下，有何面目而見二十四帝乎？老賊速退！可教反臣與吾決勝負！」王朗聽罷，大叫一聲，氣死於馬下。(Luo *wenshi* 664)

At first sight, Zhuge Liang’s response to Wang Lang is part of the discussion related to the succession and legitimacy of the state. Wang Lang proclaims Cao Cao was the hero who entered at a tumultuous time and “cleared all corners of the realm 掃清六合，席捲八荒” (Luo *wenshi* 664), while his son Cao Pi undertook the succession from the Han House and presided over northern China, which made the Cao family the legitimate heir to the Han state. However, through a thorough examination of this response from Zhuge Liang, Wang Lang’s argument is deeply rooted with angst and irritation with the corrupted officials, and those “craven, servile

sorts [that] held every kind of administrative office,” especially towards Wang Lang, who had served the Han court, then later submitted to the usurper state (Luo *wenshi* 664). In fact, this rejection of the scholar-officials’ subservient attitude is a reference to those scholars who had submitted to the Mongol jurisdiction after the fall of the Song dynasty. Furthermore, this rejection of the subservient attitude of scholar is also a rejection of those scholar-officials’ servile flattery and submission to the third Ming emperor, Zhu Di 朱棣, who reigned between 1403 and 1425 AD, approximately one hundred years before the circulation of *tongsu yanyi* around 1522 AD.

Zhu Di was known for his usurpation of the throne from his nephew Zhu Yunwen 朱允炆, the grandson of the founding father of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang. After Zhu Yuanzhang’s first successor passed away at the age of thirty-six, he enthroned his grandson Zhu Yunwen as the second emperor of the Ming court after his death. In fact, as Zhu Yunwen became emperor, he attempted to restrain and unseat his uncles from the political and militarily-powerful feudal positions, which led to the resistance from these powerful princes that contributed to a statewide tumult known as the Jingnan Rebellion 靖難之變. The resistance was led by the Prince of Yan 燕王, Zhu Di, who proclaimed to overthrow the evil, corrupt officials that manipulated and controlled his nephew as a puppet emperor. Unfortunately, by the time Zhu Di and his troops arrived at the Ming capital of Nanjing 南京, in great despair, Zhu Yunwen committed suicide and set the palace on fire. After the fire was extinguished, Zhu Yunwen had vanished, and his body was never found. Rumors and folktales allege that Zhu Yunwen escaped from the imperial palace through a secret underground tunnel and concealed himself from Zhu Di’s searches. Chan Hok-lam believes that this particular event in the early Ming period became a popular subject

matter in sixteenth century vernacular literature, which portrays Zhu Yunwen as a tragic hero who was a diligent and benevolent emperor throughout his reign (Franke *Cambridge* 200).

Furthermore, scholar-ministers who were executed for resisting Zhu Di's rule, such as Qi Tai 齊泰, Huang Zicheng 黃子澄, and Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺, were highly praised for their loyalty and defiance against Zhu Di's usurpation of the throne. Chan claims this type of fiction in retelling the alleged tales of Zhu Yunwen suggests sympathy for these historical figures, reflecting the emotional distress and anger towards Zhu Di's tyrannical governance, his suppression of the scholars, his manipulation of Mencius, and the legitimacy of his throne. Therefore, Zhuge Liang's invective that kills Wang Lang in *tongsu yanyi* is an attempt to berate the subservient and servile attitude of the top civil officials who quickly switch their allegiance to the usurper, Zhu Di. In fact, by refuting the submissive and obedient images of the scholar in this scene, Zhuge Liang's condemnation of Wang Lang is another sequence that rectifies the image of the idealized true scholar, a righteous and moralized *wen*-masculine character.

The manipulation and hegemonizing of martial warriors demonstrate an attempt to delimit and restrain their achievement, and by controlling and reining martial warriors in *tongsu yanyi*, it thereby aggrandizes the status of scholarly character and the social status of literati in reality. Furthermore, the rectification of the scholar's image and their social responsibilities reflects a desire for rejuvenation of the idealized Mencian ruler and ministers relationship that Wen Yanbo 文彥博, a Song period scholar-official, summarized this association as “the Emperor and scholar-gentry govern the realm under the heaven together 與士大夫共治天下” (Li *Xu* Vol. 221). This is a nostalgic sentiment to the Song period, implying that the Emperor intended to govern the state in cooperation with scholar-officials in the post-Yuan period after the early Ming manipulation of Confucian curriculum. Ge Liangye believes the 1522 rendition of *tongsu*

yanyi contains the Mencian perspective of political sovereignty, and within his analysis, Ge claims that Liu Bei is depicted as a “Mencian idea of benevolent ruler,” while Zhuge Liang is categorized as a Mencian ideal of competent and talented minister, as their harmonious relationship portrays this particular ruler and scholar-official association that echoes Wen Yanbo’s summarization (Ge *Scholar* 34–66). Ge specifically pinpoints the Three Visits, in which Liu Bei’s three humble visits to Zhuge Liang’s hermitage “may be considered an effort to restore some of the dignity of the literati that had been debased and disgraced by the imperial state (Ge *Scholar* 59).” Moreover, this specific incident, combined with the aforementioned scenes, presents a clear picture that the rewriting of the Three Kingdoms story cycle in *tongsu yanyi* is an attempt to restore, or even reconstruct, a new calibrated aspect of the scholar identity that resonates the nostalgic sentiment to the harmonious ruler-minister relationship of the Song period. This is reflected when Zhuge Liang acquires the complete authority of the Shu kingdom, and later presides over the Shu-Han Kingdom after Liu Bei’s death. Therefore, the rewriting of *tongsu yanyi* in the Ming period illustrates the refurbishment of Zhuge Liang’s image of a true scholar identity from the divine immortal-like character in *pinghua*.

In fact, the reconstruction and rectification of a true scholar identity through the rewriting of Zhuge Liang in the literati-ization of *tongsu yanyi* further illustrates the “authors’” attempt to perform a series of self-healing and self-cultivation after they faced traumatic suffering and frustration in life, or in their pursuit for a position in officialdom. Martin Huang claims the motivation for writing a novel “must have been something other than commercial concerns, especially since it was the publisher rather than the author who reaped the profits for publishing a best-seller in an age without copyright laws” (Huang *Literati* 24). Therefore, scholar-writers were reluctant to associate their names with a vernacular novel in the early Ming period, since

the vernacular novel was considered vulgar and was not “admitted to the pantheon of high literati literature until the 16th century of late imperial China” (Huang *Literati* 18). The rigorous rewriting and publishing of the Three Kingdoms story was a way to express the social anxieties and frustrations that the authors and scholars had experienced in their personal past. As a result, other than writing for money, the rewriting of the Three Kingdoms into literati literature is likely related to self-cultivating and self-healing, in order to soothe the frustration and suffering in the lives or careers of frustrated scholars. From the aforementioned examples, the rewriting and recompilation of the story is considered an endeavor to revisit the social responsibilities of a scholar or a literati at the time it was circulated in the late imperial period, as the Confucian curriculum was manipulated in order to suit the emperors’ ambition to establish centralized control of state power, and to deviate from the past governmental structure in which the emperor shared the state power with the scholar-ministers. Hence, the reconstruction and reimagining of Zhuge Liang, and the shift in focus from Liu Bei to Zhuge Liang in the latter half of *tongsu yanyi*, contribute to the postulation that there was an effort to self-reconstruct and self-invent a true scholar identity in the mid-Ming period, and moreover refutes the semi-*haohan* identity constructed from *pinghua*, or *Shuihu chuan*.

Cao Cao, the Inverse Example

The harmonious relationship between Zhuge Liang and Liu Bei in *tongsu yanyi* illustrates the literati writers’ attempt to revive the ideal Mencian ideology on ruler-minister relationships and its concept of the benevolent governance. This is one of the primary reasons the Kingdom of Shu and Liu Bei are depicted as the legitimate regime in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. On the other hand, the Kingdom of Wei 魏 is portrayed as the main opposition to the Kingdom of Shu,

therefore Cao Cao symbolizes the villain in *tongsu yanyi*. As a result, on various occasions, Cao Cao is depicted as cruel and suspicious, a villainous ruler, and he is constantly compared and contrasted with the benevolent ruler Liu Bei throughout the text. Su Shi 蘇軾 had recorded a commentary from one of his clerks, Wang Peng 王彭, which mentions that when children listen to the storytellers' performance about the Three Kingdoms, they cry when they hear of Liu Bei's defeats, but they are delighted when Cao Cao is defeated, which illustrates a lengthy tradition of denouncing Cao and his notorious image among the folktales (Zhu Huibian 123).³² In fact, Cheng Yizhong 程一中 believes the critiques of Cao Cao as a villainous tyrant in *tongsu yanyi* and other versions of the Three Kingdoms story cycle is the author's attempt to disparage Cao Cao and distort the history in order to propagandize the legitimacy sanctioned by the imperial court (*lunwenji* 153). The focus of this part of the chapter is to investigate the character Cao Cao as an inverse character of the idealized benevolent ruler Liu Bei, and his minister, Zhuge Liang. Liu's and Zhuge's ruler-minister relationship reflects an idealized association, a harmonious relationship between its superior and inferior. On the other hand, the relationship between Cao Cao and his ministers reflects a tyrant that sabotages the Mencian concept of a harmonious ruler-minister relationship, which is an inverse example of the harmonious relationship portrayed by Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang. Furthermore, Cao Cao's relationship with his ministers can be interpreted as the writers' expression and reflection of the oppressive suppression of the literati ministers in the first three reigns of the Ming period, particularly the first emperor Zhu Yuanzhang, who was known for his cruelty and suspicious governance over the scholar ministers

³² The original entry is recorded within the *Dongpo Zhilin*: 「塗巷小兒聽說三國語」:「王彭嘗云:「塗巷中小兒薄劣,其家所厭苦,輒與錢,令聚坐聽說古話。至說三國事,聞劉玄德敗,顰蹙有出涕者;聞曹操敗,即喜唱快。以是知君子小人之澤,百世不斬。」彭,愷之子,為武吏,頗知文章,餘嘗為作哀辭,字大年。」

in his court. The third emperor of Ming, Zhu Di, was also known as the usurper of the throne, and similarly, Cao Cao is also known as the usurper in the literati-ized *tongsu yanyi*.

This part of the chapter focuses on the fictional character Cao Cao in *tongsu yanyi*, since *pinghua* rarely depicts any specific details other than recognizing Cao Cao as Liu Bei's nemesis. In fact, Cao Cao is one of the most complicated and contradicted characters in the novel. In the beginning of the novel, when he is first introduced, Cao Cao is described as one of the distinctly recognized patriotic officers by the noble and the literati social circle, such as Qiao Xuan 喬玄, who is a highly respected official in the late Han period. Qiao Xuan believes Cao Cao is a savior of the tumultuous period. Qiao once told Cao, "The empire is near ruin and can be saved only by a man capable of dominating the age," and "you could be the one 天下將亂，非命世之才不能濟也。能安之者，其在君乎" (Luo *wenshi* 9). Furthermore, Xu Shao 許劭, another character who is a renowned evaluator at the end of the Han period tells Cao Cao that he "could be an able statesman in a time of peace or a treacherous villain at the time of chaos 子治世之能臣，亂世之奸雄也" (Luo *wenshi* 9).³³

These quotations illustrate that in the beginning of the novel, Cao Cao is an ambitious young man, and he is recognized as the savior of the falling kingdom. However, later in the novel, Cao is considered a treacherous villain when he escapes from Luoyang after failing to assassinate Dong Zhuo. While en route to the prefecture of Chen Liu 陳留, Cao Cao and Chen Gong mistakenly killed the family of Lü Boshe 呂伯奢, a friend of Cao's father. After Chen Gong asserts Cao's wrongdoing in killing the innocent man, Cao Cao remarks "[it is] better to

³³ According to *Shishuo Xinyu* 世說新語 or *A New Account of the Tales of the World* compiled by Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, this evaluation of Cao Cao is given by Qiao Xuan instead of Xu Shao, and it is flipped from the quote in *tongsu yanyi*, in which Qiao told Cao that he is "a capable hero at the time of chaos or a treacherous statesman in a time of chaos 亂世之英雄，治世之奸賊" (Liu *New Account* 152).

wrong the world than have it wrong me 寧使我負天下人，休教天下人負我，” which reveals his villainous nature (Luo *wenshi* 36). This quote is typically compared and contrasted by readers with another statement from Liu Bei, “I treat men with humanity and honor, if he doesn’t return, he will have betrayed his own heart 吾以仁義相待，如其不來，是彼之心不實也” (Luo *wenshi* 443). Andrew Plaks notes the echo between the two quotes from Cao Cao and Liu Bei, believing these quotes provide a sharp distinction between their perspectives in moral scruples and self-interest—one is compassionate, the other is egocentric (Plaks 467). In addition, the quote from Cao Cao is followed by a comment from the Jin Dynasty 晉 general Huan Wen 桓溫 (312-373 AD) in *tongsu yanyi*, which said “these two quotes from Cao Cao will be condemned by countless generations 兩句言語，叫萬代人罵道” (Luo *wenshi* 36). Zhou Siyuan’s criticism of Cao Cao’s murder of Lü Boshe’s family reveals the nature of Cao Cao as a villainous and self-centered character (Zhou 154-155). On the other hand, Mao Zhonggang 毛宗崗 believes that Cao Cao’s remark signifies his excellence over the other hypocritical so-called virtuous Confucian scholars, as Cao Cao “said what was in his heart,” and does not disguise himself like the other hypocrites (Roberts *Three* 1008).

In fact, this remark complicates the characteristics of Cao Cao throughout *tongsu yanyi*, which makes it difficult to determine if he is neither a treacherous villain nor an ambitious hero, since he did not actually usurp the Han throne; rather, his son Cao Pi is the one who actually usurped the throne from the Han house. However, Cao Cao’s coercive ruling over the northern region reflects tyrannical control and a reign of dictatorship, as the mass execution and extermination of his political enemies shown in *tongsu yanyi* echoes the same type of execution to scholar-officials in the Ming court. There are multiple scenarios in *tongsu yanyi* that illustrate Cao Cao’s cruelty and his defiant disposition against the Han house. The first scene is in the

seventh chapter of volume five, entitled “Cao Cao Strangles the Consort Dong to Death 曹操勒死董貴人.” In this scene, Cao Cao discovers a secret decree to plot for his life, therefore Cao exterminates the imperial brother-in-law. Cao Cao orders the execution of Dong Cheng 董承, as well as Dong’s fellow conspirators and their entire households, adults and children alike (Luo *wenshi* 189). *Tongsu yanyi* narrates over seven hundred people died in this execution, including one of Emperor Xian’s concubines, Consort Dong, since she is the sister of Dong Cheng and advises Emperor Xian to issue a secret decree. Cao Cao leads his men into the imperial palace to detain and execute the last of the Dong clan, and at the time, Consort Dong is five months pregnant. *Tongsu yanyi* describes how Emperor Xian begged Cao Cao to spare the unborn child and Consort Dong, to which Cao Cao replies:

“And spare the rebel seed to avenge the mother?” Cao Cao retorted. The Emperor begged, “Please leave her corpse intact – and no exposure.” Cao Cao had the white cord shown to her. The Emperor wept, saying to his consort [Dong], “In the netherworld below the Nine Springs, Beloved, hold no grievance against us.” His tears poured forth. “Still these carryings on!” Cao cried. At his curt command the soldiers bore the consort off and strangled her outside the palace gate. Cao Cao commanded the palace security officer, “Hereafter no kin or member of the imperial clan by marriage may enter without my decree. Execute anyone attempting or permitting entry.” Those who had contacted with Dong Cheng before were dismissed; those who had violations were categorized as treason, which is in countless numbers. From then on, no matter high ranking officials or low-ranking officials within the city of Xu, no one dares to converse with one another. Cao Cao also assigned three thousand trusted followers to fill the ranks of the Royal Guard and then placed it in Cao Hong’s charge.

操曰：「汝欲留此逆種與母報仇？」帝泣告曰：「乞全屍而死，勿令彰露。」操教取白練於面前。帝曰：「卿於九泉之下，勿怨朕躬！」言訖，淚下如雨。操怒曰：「猶作兒女之嬌態！」速令武士推出，勒死於宮門外。操隨喚監官囑曰：「但有外戚內族，不曾稟奉於吾，輒入宮門者，腰斬之。守禦不嚴者，罪同。」曾與董承來往者黜退，重者類入逆黨論。似此不可勝數，皆被其害。自此，許都內外大小官員人等莫敢交頭接耳。曹公撥心腹人三千充御林軍，令曹洪總領之。(Luo wenshi 190)

In this scene, Cao Cao not only executes those who are involved in the scheme against him, he also executes their relatives, including those by marriage and those who had contacted the Dongs, past and present.

On one hand, Cao Cao's execution of the imperial consorts and their relatives echoes the theme carried over from *pinghua*, which determines that the decline of the imperial court is due to the intervention of politics and governance by the eunuchs and imperial relatives that caused the tumultuous period of the Yellow Scarves Rebellion, Dong Zhuo, and the rise of the regional warlords. Moreover, Cao Cao's execution of the imperial Consort Dong is perceived as an attempt to restrict a feminine influence on imperial politics, potentially causing another political crisis and a gender disorder after it was restored by Cao Cao's military merits. Martin Huang determines that the symbolism within Dong Cheng's and Consort Dong's attempt to revolt against Cao Cao suggests there is another gendered political disorder, despite Dong Cheng's and Consort Dong's intention being to restore the political authority of Emperor Xian of Han (Huang *Negotiating* 91). This mass execution of the Dongs reinstates the masculinity of imperial politics and rebukes the traditional assumption of femininity disorders in politics. Furthermore, Cao Cao's elimination of the imperial relatives is similar to Zhu Di's Jingnan Rebellion, in

which Zhu claimed his coup d'état was not usurpation, but rather the extermination of the corrupted officers that had a negative influence on the young emperor. Both Zhu Di's and Cao Cao's executions of the emperor's close advisers and relatives are not purely a termination of the gender disorder that Martin Huang suggests, rather it is the struggle between the *wen* and *wu* dyad that reflects this struggle between the two political factors. Zhu Di's coercive use of military power to subdue the scholar-ministers and imperial relatives in order to usurp the throne is a significant event to the history of China, according to Chan Hok-lam (Chan *Cambridge* 199). During the Jingnan Rebellion, the scholar-ministers attempted to suppress the military power of the feudal princes, who were mainly stationed in the north and associated with the military power. Therefore, the military faction, or the *wu* power, must dominate the power of the scholar-ministers, or the *wen*, in order to maintain their own political interests. In which, Cao Cao's military advancement towards the Han Emperor and the imperial relatives signifies this political struggle with the use of the *wu* power, over the scholar's *wen* power that dominates the political system.

“Cao Cao Strangles the Consort Dong to Death” is not the only event in *tongsu yanyi* that reflects Cao Cao's cruel governance and his harsh treatment of the scholar-ministers. Chapter eight of volume fourteen, “Geng Ji and Wei Huang Revolt Against Cao Cao 耿紀韋晃討曹操,” illustrates another rebellion against Cao Cao after Cao had brutally beaten Empress Fu to death, as she is condemned for a plot to revolt against Cao's tyrannical control and dictatorship over the Han court, which is narrated in chapter two of the same volume. Geng Ji and Wei Huang are wholeheartedly displeased at the deterioration of the Han court, as Cao is granted the title of King of Wei 魏王, and his hegemonic control of the court arises to its peak during the spring of the twenty-third year of the Jian'an 建安 reign (218 AD). Geng Ji and Wei Huang see Cao Cao is

bent on usurpation in the near future, therefore they gathered three other comrades and their household servants in an attempt to ignite chaos in the capital with fire. Their objective is to liberate the Emperor from Cao Cao's control, since Cao is in the prefecture of Ye 鄴.

Unfortunately, Cao Xiu 曹休 and Xiahou Dun 夏侯惇 are stationed nearby the capital and crush the revolt. In fact, after Cao Cao is informed of the events, he immediately orders the executions of Geng Ji, Wei Huang, and the other three members, as well as their clans. Furthermore, he orders that every court and palace official in the capital—regardless of their rank—be brought to the Ye prefecture for his decision, where:

...on the training field, Cao Cao set up two flags—red on the left, white on the right—and issued a noble order: “Last night when Geng Ji, Wei Huang, and other rebels burned the capital. Some of you came to put out the fire, and some of you stayed indoors and did nothing about it. Those of you who came to put out the fires, stand by the red flag; those who stayed indoors and did not try to help, stand by the white flag.” The officials supposed that those who tried to put out the fire would be exonerated and thronged around the red flag. Only a third of the officials stood by the white flag. But Cao Cao ordered the arrest of everyone standing by the red flag. When the officials protested their innocence, Cao said, “At the time you were not thinking of helping to fight the fires but of aiding the nation in killing my clansmen.” Cao Cao had over three hundred officials executed on the bank of the River Zhang. Those standing under the white flag were rewarded and sent back to the capital.

曹操於教場立紅旗於左、白旗於右，乃降王旨曰：「昨夜耿紀、韋晃等造反，放火焚許都，汝等多有出救火者，亦有閉門不出者。如曾救火者，可立於紅旗下；如不曾救火者，立於白旗之下。」眾官自思救火者必無罪，於是多奔紅旗之下。三停內

有一停立白旗下。操教盡拿立於紅旗下者。眾官各言無罪，操曰：「汝當時之心，非是救火，實為助國殺害吾宗族。」盡命牽出漳河邊斬之，死者三百餘員。其立於白旗下者，盡皆賞之，仍令還許都。(Luo wenshi 497-498)

The aftermath of Geng Ji's and Wei Huang's rebellion is not in Chen Shou's official historiography. However, it is in the *Records of the Duke of Shanyang*, or *Shanyang Gong Zaiji* 山陽公載記, compiled by Yue Zi 樂資 during the Jin Dynasty, and later cited by Pei Songzhi in his annotation.³⁴

Even though this incident is not completely fabricated, the details were not found in the historical records. In fact, the exaggerated details of the collective punishment in the aftermath of Geng Ji's and Wei Huang's revolt is an attempt to illustrate the cruelty and disharmony of Cao Cao's ruling, and contrasts with the benevolent and harmonious governance of Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang in the kingdom of Shu. It is a contrast and comparison that accentuates the idealized benevolent ruling from Liu Bei, as well as Zhuge Liang's harmonious relationship with his liege lord. Furthermore, Cao Cao's obsession with collective punishment not only demonstrates his cruelty towards those who attempt to revoke his political position or halt his ambition, it also reflects and resonates with several of the treason charges against officials during the reign of the Hongwu 洪武 period, which was under the rule of the founder and the first Ming emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang. An example is the treason of Hu Weiyong 胡惟庸案, who allegedly attempted usurpation in Zhu Yuanzhang's late reign. In Hu's case, Zhu ordered the execution of

³⁴ *Shanyang Gong Zaiji* said, "The king [Cao Cao] was furious after he heard the death of Wang Bi. The king summoned all official to Ye. The king ordered those who came to put out the fire stand in the left, and those who did not came out to put out the fire stand in the right. The officials supposed that those who tried to put out the fire would be exonerated and thronged to the left. However, the king deemed 'those who did not came out were the one not aiding the rebels. Those who came out to put out the fire were rebels.' Therefore, the king executed those who stand in the left." 山陽公載記曰：「王聞王必死，盛怒，召漢百官詣鄴，令救火者左，不救火者右。眾人以為救火者必無罪，皆附左；王以為『不救火者非助亂，救火乃實賊也』。皆殺之。」(Chen Sanguozhi 23)

Hu and his entire family, along with more than thirty thousand people since the exposition of Hu's case from the thirteenth through twenty-fifth years of Hongwu reign (1380-1392 AD) (*Mingshi* 21; *Lai Xishou* 111-118). However, its influence continued to spread and later entangled itself with the treason case of General Lan Yu 藍玉案, which was exposed in the twenty-sixth year of Hongwu reign (1393 AD) following the case of Hu, and an additional fifteen thousand people were executed (*Cambridge* 165-168). In fact, the resemblances between the collective punishments of those that were not related to the usurpers' plots against Zhu and Cao reinforce the harsh, cruel relationships between the militant emperor and his scholarly ministers. In his discussion of Ming history, Chan Hok-lam notes it was such brutal and cruel suppressions of the ministers and literati in the early Ming period that contributed to the sixteenth century vernacular literature popular subject matter of refuting and reinstating the Mencian ideology and images of a benevolent ruler through such a metaphorical narrative (*Chan Cambridge* 200).

Cao Cao is a complicated, complex character throughout the narrative of *tongsu yanyi*. He is an ambitious hero who is determined to make the world at peace, and in order to fulfill his ambition, Cao Cao ascends to the top of state politics and in the army, regardless of receiving countless curses upon himself. In *tongsu yanyi*, in the process of climbing to the top, the two aforementioned forceful revolts against Cao are not the only events included in the novel, such as Cao's savage murder of Empress Fu 曹操杖殺伏皇后 after Cao's ministers proposed to honor him with the title of King of Wei. Therefore, the historical events, or details of the events interwove with the storyline of Cao Cao and the kingdom of Wei in *tongsu yanyi*, and it is used in comparison and contrast to the harmonious, benevolent ruling and governance of Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang from the kingdom of Shu. In fact, this comparison and contrast intensifies the

prevalence and necessity of the Mencian ideology in benevolent governance, and also for the scholar-ministers within the political structure, in order for the realm of China to reside in a peaceful, harmonious, utopian society.

Conclusion

The rewriting and reconstruction of the novelized Three Kingdoms story involved the assembly of a series of actual and fabricated historical events into a narrative that presents specific perspectives of the models of masculine images in late imperial China. The investigation and analysis in this chapter specifically focuses on the Shu-Han chancellor and commander-in-chief Zhuge Liang, a scholarly character and a primary focal point in the Three Kingdoms story. In which, the transformation of Zhuge Liang from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi* depicts a refutation of the confusing and conflicted identity presumed by popular culture. Furthermore, in *tongsu yanyi*, Zhuge Liang restores and reconstructs the scholar and *wen* masculine identities in the process. In fact, as demonstrated by Zhuge's transformation, the concept of a true scholar should be the same as Zhuge Liang narrates in *tongsu yanyi*. This image of Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi* also illustrates the rejection and displeasure towards the political crisis that occurred during the early Ming period. Moreover, the narration of Cao Cao and his relationships with his ministers corroborates the antagonistic perspectives from the narrators. The comparison and contrast between Liu Bei and Cao Cao are one of the primary themes in the novel, and effectively illustrates the fantasized *wen*-dominated idealized imperial court.

The transformation of Zhuge Liang from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi* is blatantly depicted within their narratives. In *pinghua*, Zhuge Liang constantly reminds the reader that he is not a scholar, but rather an immortal with arcane abilities and an androgynous appearance. These

depictions of Zhuge Liang reflect the fantasized image of a scholar in the plain narratives. Furthermore, Zhuge's hack-and-slash behaviors in *pinghua* reveal that the imagined image of a scholar does not have much distinction from the *haohan* characters. In fact, the image of Zhuge Liang in *pinghua* cannot be identified as a true scholar, since the image of Zhuge contains various elements including mystical elements derived from both Daoism and Buddhism that vary from a Confucian scholar. In *tongsu yanyi*, Zhuge Liang transforms from an androgynous appearance with a queer façade, into a moderately fragile and ectomorphic appearance. His mysterious, arcane abilities are revamped into a carefully plotted illusion, and yet, Zhuge rarely draws his blade to hack-and-slash in general. The transformation of Zhuge Liang in the novel is unquestionably reconstructed and remolded by the scholar identity in the mid-Ming era, following the loss of their dignity due to the disastrous social identity crisis at the beginning of the Ming period known as the Jingnan Rebellion.

The images and actions of Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi* can be considered a part of the attempt to rebuke the coercive revolt of the Jingnan Rebellion, which destroyed the authoritative structure of the scholar-gentry through military power. As mentioned in the discussion above about the Jingnan Rebellion and the disappearance of the Jianwen Emperor 建文帝 Zhu Yunwen, Chan Hok-lam determines that some of the vernacular fiction in the sixteenth century, especially the genre of the popular elaboration, or the *yanyi* 演義, highly praises the scholarly loyalists who were executed and killed in the rebellion (*Cambridge* 200). Furthermore, Martin Huang considers the literati-ization of Chinese novels a self-healing process in shifting their frustrations and aspirations into the main narrative focus (Huang *Literati* 21). Such claims from Chan and Huang support the rewriting and remolding of Zhuge Liang and possess the idea of rebuking past political situations through the use of historical romance. In fact, the reconstruction

of Zhuge Liang not only rebukes the oppressive government in prior history, it also sets a defiant tone against the pedantic scholar or the literati identity in the officialdom. Zhuge Liang's character presents the image of a true scholar, who has a wide range of knowledge, not only in literacy, but also in military strategy, and has a righteous mentality in refuting the servile submission to the unjust and cruel ruler. Zhuge Liang's image in *tongsu yanyi* is a self-invention to restore the true scholar identity from the dignity that had been lost at the time of the oppressive governance from the tyrannical oppression in the past. In contrast, the villainous, cruel oppression of Cao Cao's reign in *tongsu yanyi* illustrates the tyrannical and suppressive ruling of the Zhu emperors in the early Ming period. Therefore, the *wen* image of Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi* not only reconstructs the *wen* masculinity and the scholar identity, but also reinforces the Mencian concept of benevolent governance and harmonious minister-ruler relationships.

Chapter Three

Guan Yu: Recognition of the Knight-errant

The concept of *yingxiong* 英雄, or the idea of the “hero,” is a recurring theme in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. According to Martin Huang, despite translating to “hero” in English, this translation is unable to adequately explicate the theoretical concept of what constitutes as *yingxiong* in Chinese (Huang *Negotiating* 89). The concept of *yingxiong* is different from *haohan*. The ideology of *haohan* is someone who possesses martial prowess and other contrasting factors that include self-refraining from sexual desires and excessive eating or drinking habits. Liu Shao’s *Renwuzhi* 人物志, which translates to “A Study of Human Abilities,” defines *yingxiong* as follows:

The best among the trees and plants is called *ying*, and the animals that stand out from their groups are called *xiong*. Therefore, men who have extraordinary civil and military abilities are called *yingxiong*. Consequently, those whose wisdoms is outstanding are considered *ying*, and those whose strength and courage are superior are regarded as *xiong*.³⁵

夫草之精秀者為英，獸之特群者為雄；故人之文武茂異，取名於此。是故，聰明秀出，謂之英；膽力過人，謂之雄。(Liu *Renwuzhi* Vol. 8)

From Liu Shao’s discussion of *yingxiong*, the conceptual idea of *yingxiong* has different complexions and dispositions from *haohan*, which is primarily a typical warrior-like fellow. Liu Shao suggests a *yingxiong* is someone who not only possesses military merits and an invincible martial prowess, similar to Zhang Fei in *pinghua* or *tongsu yanyi*, but also procures substantial achievements in both literacy and governance similar to Zhuge Liang. Chen Ying claims that there is another type of *yingxiong* that is above and beyond the standard archetype of Chinese

³⁵ This English translation is from Martin Huang’s *Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China*.

heroes, which is an emperor 帝王 or a commander-in-chief 統帥 type of *yingxiong*, separate from the martial prowess of *wu yingxiong* and the literacy of *wen yingxiong* (Chen *Zhongguo* 137-138). This leadership type of *yingxiong* may not necessarily possess superior martial skills, nor have the most prominent wisdom, but in Chen's view, this type of *yingxiong* is able to gather a group of *wen-wu* comrades in order to become a contender to pursue *tianxia* 天下, or the land under heaven (Chen *Zhongguo* 138). In which, Liu Bei, Cao Cao, and Sun Quan represent this typical type of *yingxiong* in the Three Kingdoms story cycle.

The aforementioned concept of *yingxiong* from Liu Shao's *Renwuzhi* consists of a combination of both *wen* and *wu* characteristics, with both attributes being exceptionally beyond its peers of its generation. In fact, this concept of *yingxiong* continues to shift and transform. Through a set of evaluations of Guan Yu in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Kam Louie claims the idealized *yingxiong* is illustrated through a set of rigid rules, and even meticulous self-containment from personal desire (Louie "Sexuality" 858-859). However, in "A Meeting to Evaluate Heroes 論英會," a well-known scene in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Cao Cao expresses his opinion on the concept of *yingxiong* in a conversation with Liu Bei, which refutes Kam's claim that Guan Yu is a *yingxiong*. This particular scene is briefly mentioned and deprived of any details from the narration in *pinghua*. In which, Cao Cao proclaims there are only two figures that can be claimed as *yingxiong* at the time, at which point he asserts Liu Bei and himself as the only two *yingxiong*. In *tongsu yanyi*, Cao Cao expounds and contends his understanding of the concept of *yingxiong* with an analogy of a dragon:

Cao turned to Xuande and asked, "Does my worthy brother understand the dragon's multiform manifestations?" "Not to my knowledge," Xuande replied. "The dragon," Cao continued, "can enlarge and diminish itself, surge aloft or lie beneath the surface of the

water. Enlarged, it spews mist and creates clouds, causes gigantic momentums in river and sea. Diminished, it can veil its scaly form from view, immerses his head and claws. Aloft, it prances triumphant in the upper realm of space. Under the surface, it lurks among the surging breakers. This is how the dragon manifests itself. Now in the fullness of spring it mounts the season, dragon got its time and will surge aloft it flies above the skies. It is just like men, who would fulfill an ambition to dominate the length and breadth of the land. In this respect, the dragon can well be compared to the heroes of the age...” “Now,” Cao Cao went on, “what defines a hero is this: a determination to conquer, a mine of marvelous schemes, an ability to encompass the realm, and the will to make it his, which that can be claimed as a hero.

操曰：「賢弟知龍變化否？」玄德曰：「未知也。」操曰：「龍能大能小，能升能隱：大則吐霧興雲，翻江攪海；小則埋頭伏爪，隱介藏身；升則飛騰於宇宙之間，隱則潛伏於秋波之內。此龍陽物也，隨時變化。方今春深，龍得其時，與人相比，發則飛升九天，得志則縱橫四海。龍乃可比世之英雄……」……操曰：「夫英雄者，胸懷大志，腹隱良謀，有包藏宇宙之機，吐沖天地之志，方可為英雄也。」

(Luo *wenshi* 170)

Cao Cao's explication of *yingxiong* is different from that of Liu Shao or Chen Ying. His elaboration on *yingxiong* has one particular element, which is the definite ambition to conquer. And without a strong and determined mind to fulfill such an ambition to conquer, an individual cannot be claimed as a *yingxiong*. Cao Cao claims that he and Liu Bei are the only two individuals who possess the determination and the necessary ambitious qualities to be *yingxiong*. In fact, Cao Cao's explication can be viewed as a widespread perspective in defining a *yingxiong*, or a hero, in the late Chinese imperial period. And yet, this notion on the concept of

yingxiong refutes Chen Ying's or Kam Louie's consideration of the warrior-like or scholarly-like figures in the Three Kingdoms story cycle as *yingxiong*, since many of these characters were not encompassed with a strong ambition to conquer, like Cao Cao, Liu Bei and Sun Quan.

In reference to the English term "hero," according to Sidney Hook, "the material for interest in heroes is the indispensability of leadership in social life, and in every major form of social organization," and he also defines "whoever saves us [as] a hero" (Hook 3, 12). Sidney Hook's definition of a hero is similar to Cao Cao's explication of *yingxiong* in *tongsu yanyi*. There are many characters who have traditionally been coined as a *yingxiong* in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, such as Cao Cao, Liu Bei, Lü Bu, Dong Zhuo, Yuan Shao, and Sun Jian, though they are mainly considered a leading figure of a faction, or a self-proclaimed savior in the tumultuous era. The narrator specifically uses the term *yingxiong* when introducing these characters in the literati-ized novel, in order to convey their importance and characteristics in the text. Furthermore, the image of *yingxiong* transforms from the historical record to a collective identity that has been hybridized between the *wen* and *wu* elements, which in Liu Shao's definition, is a *yingxiong*. Therefore, other than Cao Cao, Liu Bei, and Sun Quan, any other characters in *tongsu yanyi* cannot be recognized or categorized as a *yingxiong*, since the narrator refutes any other types of *yingxiong* and determines a particular attribute of a true *yingxiong* in nature. However, the nature of this study does not examine the discussion of the transformation of the *yingxiong* from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi*.

This chapter intends to examine the transformation and the reconstruction of another typical Chinese masculine archetype, the *xia* 俠, or the knight-errant in the Three Kingdoms story cycle. The *xia* is continuously regarded as a *yingxiong* in various scholarly studies as mentioned above, especially in the investigation and examination that focuses on Guan Yu in the

Three Kingdoms story cycle. In fact, Guan Yu is continuously considered a representation of *yingxiong*, or the Chinese hero, by scholars such as Kam Louie and Chen Ying, who proclaim Guan Yu as a typical *yingxiong* archetype. Kam Louie asserts Guan Yu as a hero due to his loyalty and his obligations to Liu Bei, and also for his contempt towards sexual desires (Louie “Sexuality” 846-852). Chen Ying has a similar judgment of Guan Yu, though instead of noting his loyalty and his obligations to his brotherhood, Chen argues that Guan’s moral fiber and his abstention from any sexual desire contributed to Guan’s heroic characteristics and his apotheosis (Chen *Zhongguo* 142-145). In a way, these judgments about Guan Yu can be applied to the assumption that Guan Yu is a character with chivalric bones, and his behaviors as a *xiake* 俠客 instead plainly brands him as a *yingxiong*.

The concept and the archetype of *xia*, or *xiake*, is probably better described in relation to the various warrior-type characters that are depicted in the Three Kingdoms story cycle, as opposed to the *haohan* archetype. *Xia*, or *xiake*, is a term that traditionally refers to those who violate the law and defy the order of the authorities in order to right the unjust among the human society. In fact, the definition of *xia* and *xiake* has altered over time, similar to *yingxiong* as mentioned above. *Hanfeizi* 韓非子, a classic legalist text written in mid-third century China by legalist philosopher Hanfeizi, specifically views the *xia*, or the *xiake*, as an element that would disrupt the social order of a state, as *Hanfeizi* claims that “The Confucians [literary scholars] with their learning bring confusion to the law; the knights [*xia*] with their military prowess violate the prohibitions. Yet the ruler treats both groups with respect, and so we have disorder 儒以文亂法，俠以武犯禁，而人主兼禮之，此所以亂也。” (Hanfeizi *Hanfeizi* 106). The quote from *Hanfeizi* suggests both the literati and the *xia* were an origin for disorders within a state, in which the *xia* is likely to violate the interdictions instituted by the state through the use of their

martial power, and proceed with violence in order to retaliate against the social unjust that the state laws can't vindicate.

According to Burton Watson's translation, later in the Han Dynasty, in a chapter from *Records of the Grand Historian*, the *Biographies of the Wandering Knight*, or *youxia liechuan* 遊俠列傳, Sima Qian commentates in regards to the *xiake*, or the wandering knights:³⁶

As for the wandering knights, though their actions may not conform to perfect righteousness, yet they are always true to their words. What they undertake they invariably fulfill; what they have promised they invariably carry out. Without thinking of themselves they hasten to the side of those who are in trouble, whether it means survival or destruction, life or death. Yet they never boast their accomplishments but rather consider it a disgrace to brag of what they have done for the others. So there is much about them which is worthy of admiration, particularly when trouble is something that comes to almost everyone some time.

今游俠，其行雖不軌於正義，然其言必信，其行必果，已諾必誠，不愛其軀，赴士之隕困，既已存亡死生矣，而不矜其能，羞伐其德，蓋亦有足多者焉。(Sima *Records: Han 2:410*)

In this passage, Sima Qian defines the *xia*, or the wandering knights, as altruistic vagrants who wield their power and strength, roaming the society to avenge for those who suffer from harm and social unjust. From Hanfeizi's and Sima Qian's descriptions, the *xia* have similar attributes to the *haohan* archetype, in that they significantly consider their honor and fame, and usually

³⁶ The English translation of *xia* is generally translated as "knight" or "knight-errant," which James Liu specifically mentioned in his book. This translation is "a matter of convenience, for this is literally close enough to the original" and to him, it is "by far the least misleading of several possible translations," which include cavalier, adventurer, soldier of fortune, and underworld stalwarts (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* xii).

resolve their problems through the use of violence. Sima Qian perceives that their action did not “conform” to perfection in terms of righteousness, but their martyrdom is highly praised and admired by the people in the time of trouble. However, the term “righteousness,” or *zhengyi* 正義, may not actually refer to the commonly accepted definition of social justice.

In Wang Li’s article, “Western Knights and China’s Swordsmen: Towards the Universal Theme of Justice in Chinese and Western Literature,” he claims that the *zhengyi* within the Chinese chivalric deed, or *xia*, refers to private justice instead of social justice (Wang “Western” 91-92). Wang claims justice is related to the ancient Chinese tradition developed in proximity to familial relationship and filial piety, therefore justice, or *zhengyi*, superseded laws and related to private vengeance. This definition from Wang justifies the reason why Sima Qian determines how the *xia*’s chivalric acts were not conforming to the perfect righteousness, since Sima’s perspective of *zhengyi* is more-or-less related to social justice, in contrast to private justice. In addition to the *xia*’s conformity to their belief of righteousness, another significant characteristic of *xia* is that they are “true to their word,” as Sima Qian believes the *xia* will honor their word in any situation once they’re pledged to actualize it. The actualization of a promise becomes one of the essential qualities of *xia*, other than “conforming” to the righteousness. In fact, the description from Sima Qian actually affirms and reconstructs the *xia*’s chivalric acts and reformulates the *xia* with a new positive image and identity separate from what *Hanfeizi* opposes and considers as part of the root of disruption to the stability of a state.

This contrast between Sima Qian’s perspective and *Hanfeizi* indicates the transformation of the *xia*’s social status between the Warring State to the Han period, which exhibits the changes that took place at the time—from a negative perspective to a positive attitude, more or less. Sima Qian’s generalization of *xia* provides a historical perspective of an early portrayal. On

the other hand, James Liu's investigation of the Chinese knight-errant, or *xia*, concludes that *xia* cannot be considered as a vocation, a career, nor a social class, since many *xiake* did not make their living being a *xiake*, or provide their services in exchange for a living (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 4). According to Liu, a *xiake* is "simply [a man] of strongly individualistic temperament, who behaved in a certain way based on certain ideals," which is clearly depicted in Sima Qian's records and commentaries about the *xia* of the past (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 4). The essential element in Liu's analysis of the *xia* ideal, or the Chinese knight-errant, suggests that once the *xiake* recognizes their own individualistic and chivalric temperament, and lives under their own principles of moral standard, each individual *xia* will strictly comply with these standards for life. This means a *xia* can be any typical man who had pursued any type of career or vocation.

James Liu suggests various historical characters that he considers a *xiake*, including Lu Su 魯肅 (172-217 CE) during the Three Kingdoms, poet Li Bai 李白 (701-762 CE) from the Tang Dynasty, and a physician Wang Keming 王克明 (1069-1135 CE) in the Song Dynasty. In fact, Liu claims the principle standard of *xia* consists of eight different principles that contribute to the basic behaviors of a *xiake* in China. These principles are comprised of altruism, justice, individual freedom, personal loyalty, courage, truthfulness and mutual faith, honor and fame, and lastly, generosity and contempt for wealth (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 4-6). However, there are differences between Sima Qian's description of a *xiake* and Liu's summarized behaviors of the Chinese knight-errant. For example, one of the eight principles that guide the behavior of the *xiake* is personal loyalty, though it is not one of the characteristics depicted in Sima Qian's biographies. According to Liu, personal loyalty is "more important than loyalty to one's sovereign or parents," and this personal loyalty towards the man who "appreciates him," or the *zhiji* 知己 (a bosom friend), is a personal indebtedness due to the "bosom friend's" past personal

generosities (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 5; Huang *Desire* 71). In Liu's depiction, the loyalty principle of a *xiake* refutes the conventional ideology of the loyalty, or the *zhong* 忠, which is traditionally viewed as a sense of sentimental commitment to one's sovereign, or the superior in a vertical relationship between the ruler and subject (Kam "Sexuality" 849).

Furthermore, the personal loyalty principle is highly regarded as one of the essential elements of the *xia*. James Liu considers how the mentality of *xia* can be explicated by how a *xia* will repay his *zhiji* either through death or various types of self-scarification, such as his own fame and honor, or even his own morality. As a matter of fact, these ideal principles of *xia* differentiates a *xiake*, or a knight-errant, from the *haohan* archetype, the scholar archetype style of masculine character, or the archetype of a *yingxiong*. In the Three Kingdoms story cycle, Guan Yu illustrates the characteristics of the *xia* archetype instead of the *haohan* archetype, or the traditional perspective of a *yingxiong*. There are several scenes in *tongsu yanyi* that depict Guan Yu more or less acting in accordance to the chivalric temperament and principles of the *xia* summarized by James Liu. In the following passage, I examine and analyze the differences between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*, and these comparisons will demonstrate an attempt by the literati to reconstruct an ideal masculine *xia* archetype.

Guan Yu, the wanderer from *Jianghu*

Both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* introduce Guan Yu with a similar background as a wanderer, vagrant, or with a rogue-like style that roams from place to place without a permanent home or income. Guan Yu is unlike his sworn-brothers Zhang Fei and Liu Bei, both of whom are locals and grew up in Zhuo County 涿郡. The narrator in *pinghua* introduces Guan Yu into the scene as he is passing by Zhang Fei's front door:

The story goes that there was a man named Guan Yu, also known as Yunchang. He hailed from Xieliang in Puzhou in Pingyang. From birth, he had the eyebrows of a god and the eyes of a phoenix, a curly beard and face like purple jade; he was nine feet, two inches tall and loved to read the *Spring and Autumns* and *Zuo's Commentary*. When he studied the biographies of the rebellious vassals and evil sons, he was filled with a furious hatred. He killed a district magistrate because the latter coveted wealth and loved kickbacks and greatly harmed the common people. Fleeing for his life he became a fugitive and went to Zhuo Commandery... Fei [Zhang Fei] asked him, "Sir, where are you going? And where are you from?" As Lord Guan was being questioned by Fei, he saw that Fei too had an exceptional physique, and said, "I hail from Xiezhou in Hedong. Because the local magistrate treated the people most cruelly, I killed him. Not daring to stay in my village, I came to this place to seek safety." When Fei heard this tale, he realized that Lord Guan had the ambition to a true man, and invited him to a wine shop. Fei ordered up some wine, "Bring us two hundred coins worth of wine." The owner brought it promptly. Lord Guan saw that Fei was a serious person. As they were talking and speaking, they were in complete harmony. When the wine was finished, Lord Guan wanted to buy the next round, but he had no money with him and looked uncomfortable about it. Fei said, "How could that be?" And he ordered the owner to bring more wine. The two of them toasted each other, and as they were talking found themselves in such harmony that they resembled old friends.

話說一人，姓關名羽，字雲長，乃平陽蒲州解良人也，生得神眉鳳目，虬髯，面如紫玉，身長九尺二寸，喜看「春秋左傳」。觀亂臣賊子傳，便生怒惡。因本縣官員貪財好賄，酷害黎民，將縣令殺了，亡命逃遁，前往涿郡……飛問曰：「君子何

往？甚州人氏？」關公見飛問，觀飛貌亦非凡；言曰：「念某河東解州人氏，因本縣官虐民不公，吾殺之。不敢鄉中住，故來此處避難。」飛見關公話畢，乃大丈夫之志。遂邀關公於酒肆中。飛叫量酒，將二百錢酒來。主人應聲而至。關公見飛非草次之人，說話言談，便氣和酒盡。關公欲待還杯，乃身邊無錢，有艱難之意。飛曰：「豈有是理！」再叫主人將酒來。二人把盞相勸，言語相投，有如契舊。

(Records 14)

On the other hand, *tongsu yanyi* introduces Guan Yu's biography and history in his own self-introduction, as he introduces himself to Liu Bei and Zhang Fei while they are drinking in a tavern, after Zhang Fei invited Liu Bei to the tavern to discuss each other's ambitions and goals:

As they drank, they watched a strapping fellow pushing a wheelbarrow stop at the tavern entrance. "Some wine, and quickly—I'm off to the city to volunteer," the stranger said as he entered and took a seat on the mulberry wood stool. Xuande [Liu Bei] observed him: a man of enormous height, nine feet and three inches tall, with a one foot and eight inches long beard flowing from his rich, ruddy cheeks. He had glistening lips, eyes sweeping sharply back like those of the crimson-faced phoenix, and brows like nestling silkworms. His stature was imposing, his bearing awesome. Xuande invited him to share their table and asked for his name. "My surname is Guan," the man replied. "My given name is Yu; my style, Changsheng, was later changed to Yunchang. I am from Jieliang in Hedong, but I had to leave there after killing a local bully who was persecuting his neighbors and have been on the move among the brotherhood of river and lake in these five or six years.³⁷ As

³⁷ I adopted John Milford's translation of the term *Jianghu* 江湖 to signify the brotherhood interest, which is from Milford's translated work of Louis Cha's *The Deer and the Cauldron* 鹿鼎記 (Cha *The Deer* xxv).

soon as I heard about the recruitment, I came to sign up.” Xuande then told of his own ambitions.

酒間，見一大漢推一輛小車，到店門外歇下車子，人來飲酒，坐在桑木凳上，喚酒保：「即釀酒來，我待趕入城去充軍，怕遲了！」玄德看其人，身長九尺三寸，髯長一尺八寸，面如重棗，唇若抹朱；丹鳳眼，臥蠶眉，相貌堂堂，威風凜凜。玄德就邀同坐，問及姓名。其人言曰：「吾姓關，名羽，字長生，其後改為雲長，乃河東解良人也。因本處豪霸倚勢欺人，關某殺之，逃難江湖五六年矣。今聞招募義士破黃巾賊，欲往應募。」玄德遂以己志告之。(Luo *wenshi* 5)

By comparing the two narratives that introduce Guan Yu, both specifically suggest he become a fugitive after he righted the wrongs done to his hometown by killing a local villain, though one is a local magistrate, and the other claims the villain to be a local bully. This specification first illustrates that Guan Yu roams off from his homeland in order to avoid being captured by the authority. Secondly, these two narratives also suggest Guan Yu had performed a case of a chivalric deed with violence for the justice of his hometown, which is an altruistic act in order to fulfill the social justice that cannot be actualized through laws and orders. Furthermore, in order to avoid capture and imprisonment, he chooses to leave his hometown and family behind him. These claims from Guan’s introduction qualify three of the eight principles of *xia* according to James Liu, which are altruism, justice, and personal freedom.

It is particularly interesting that in *tongsu yanyi*, Guan Yu claims to have been roaming among the “brotherhood of river and lake,” or *jianghu* 江湖, for several years before he met with Liu and Zhang. The term *jianghu* refers to a specific sub-society that mainly includes merchants, craftsmen, beggars, vagabonds, fugitives, hooligans, and outlaws, according to Chen Pingyuan in his study of Chinese *xiake* mentality (Chen *Qiang* 139-140). Chen indicates that in the Pre-Qin

period, the term *jianghu* refers to the *shi* class, who live a lifestyle that distances themselves from the circles of political powers. In imperial China, however, *jianghu* generally references the sub-society that distances themselves from the state authority and mainstream society. According to Patricia Ebrey and Chen Shen, the *shi* is the origin of the *xiake*, though usually refers to the aristocratic class in ancient China. Then, due to the eclipse of chariot warfare, the *shi* transformed into scholar-officials and *wu*-dominated warrior-classes, which eventually evolved into *xiake* in the imperial period (Ebrey 29-39; Chen *Zhongguo* 10-28). Therefore, Guan Yu's introduction in *tongsu yanyi* proclaiming himself as having been living among the "brotherhood of river and lake" for a couple years signifies his involvement with the *xiake* community. It also hints that Guan identifies himself as a *xiake* in the beginning of the novel.

In fact, Guan Yu's introduction in *pinghua* restates his detestation and hostility towards the "rebellious vassals," "evil sons," and corrupted magistrates. This specific assertion of Guan Yu restated not only the obvious, but also asserts Guan Yu's hatred and murder of the corrupt magistrate in his local district. This characterizes Guan as a virtuous castigator of the society, as Guan acts like the "Sword of Damocles" for the government officials.³⁸ Unlike Guan Yu from *pinghua*, Guan Yu in *tongsu yanyi* fled his hometown due to his slaughter of a local bully who persecuted the villagers in his hometown. From Sima Qian's perspective, Guan's action in *tongsu yanyi* cannot be considered "perfect righteousness," as his slaying of the local bully only reflects his exercise for the private justice. The *pinghua* narrative suggests Guan Yu acted as a righteous and virtuous chivalric warrior who performs acts for social justice against the corrupted officials for those who have been oppressed and persecuted. On the other hand, the

³⁸ The "Sword of Damocles" refers to the legendary courtier who extravagantly praised the happiness of Dionysius I, ruler of Syracuse. To show him how precarious this happiness was, Dionysius seated him at a banquet with a sword hung by a single hair over his head. Therefore, the "Sword of Damocles" is used to refer to a precarious situation.

reconstructed narrative describes Guan Yu as a *wu*-dominated *xiake* who castigates the bullies and persecutors within his own familial proximity, a practice of private justice. Therefore, Guan Yu transforms from a social savior in the *pinghua* narrative, into a private avenger in *tongsu yanyi*.

Interplay of *xiaqi* and Guan's dilemma

Guan Yu's depiction as a *xiake* continues throughout *tongsu yanyi*, which specifically focuses on Guan's martial skills and *xia* temperament, or *xiaqi* 俠氣. Guan Yu's attitude towards the man who "appreciates him," his bosom friend, or his *zhiji* 知己, is especially complicated. It is even more intricate to analyze as the complication arises in Guan's relationship with his bosom friend, Cao Cao. In the sworn brotherhood of Liu, Guan, and Zhang, their social enactment is displayed through their male gazes and their bidirectional attraction to their extraordinary physique. This enactment between the three brothers may seem superficial at first, but as the story progresses, their homo-social bonding, or what Kam Louie believes to be a certain type of implicit sexual attachment, continues to evolve as the story progress (Louie "Sexuality" 848-859). However, this brotherhood doesn't signify that Liu Bei and Zhang Fei are Guan's *zhiji*. Therefore, Cao Cao is the only character who can be considered as Guan's *zhiji*.

There are specific scenes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle that contribute to Guan's and Cao's complicated *zhiji* relationship, and significantly illuminate Guan's *xiake* identity. Some of these scenes are not adequately depicted in *pinghua*, or they are altered and modified in *tongsu yanyi*. I will first examine Guan's and Cao's first meeting and the development of their *zhiji* relationship, which is in the ninth chapter of the first volume of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled "Cao Cao Rallies an Army Against Dong Zhuo 曹操起兵伐董卓." In this chapter, after Cao Cao

evaded the pursuit from Dong Zhuo and his minions, Cao returns to his hometown, the city of Chenliu 陳留, and rallies seventeen military townships with a forged decree for a coup d'état against Dong Zhuo's tyrannical dictatorship in order to save the Han emperor from Dong's usurpation. On their expedition against Dong Zhuo, the alliance is halted by the Si River Pass 汜水關, and Dong's general, Hua Xiong 華雄, is assigned to guard the pass against the military alliance. After several battles, Hua Xiong defeats the alliance and remains invincible on the battlefield. Not one general or warrior is able to defeat him. When the battle becomes a stalemate, Guan Yu nominates himself to a duel against Hua Xiong, in which Cao Cao provides the first opportunity for Guan Yu to shine in the Three Kingdoms story cycle:

At that, a voice from the back boomed, "I offer to present Hua Xiong's head to you personally." The assembled lords turned to the speaker, a man with nine feet and five inches span, with a beard of a foot and eight inches long, flowing from his rich ruddy cheeks. His eyes were like those of the crimson-faced phoenix, his brows like nestling silkworms, his voice like a tolling bell. He fixed his eyes directly on the audience. "Who is this man?" demanded [Yuan] Shao. "He is Guan, sworn brother of Xuande," answered Gongsun Zan. "His position?" asked Shao. "Mounted archer under Xuande," was the reply. At that, Yuan Shao's brother, Yuan Shu, burst out, "Are you trying to insult us? A mere archer! Have we no more commanders? What nonsense! Get him out of here!" But Cao Cao checked Yuan Shu: "Pray, hold your temper. This man has made his boast. He can't be a coward. Now let him make it good. You'll have plenty of time to condemn him if he fails." "But to send out an archer!" Yuan Shao said. "Hua Xiong will laugh in his sleeve!" "He doesn't look like an ordinary soldier," Cao Cao replied. "How is Hua Xiong going to know?" Finally, Lord Guan spoke: "If I fail, my head is yours." Cao Cao had a

draft of wine heated for Lord Guan before he mounted. “Pour it,” said the warrior, “and set it aside for me. I’ll be back shortly.” He leaped to his horse, gripped his weapon, and was gone. The assembly of lords heard the rolling of drums and the clamor of voices outside the pass, and it seemed as if the heavens would split open and the earth buckle, as if the hills were shaking and the mountains moving. The terror-struck assembly was about to make inquiry when the jingling of bridle bells announced Lord Guan’s return. Yunchang entered the tent and tossed Hua Xiong’s head, freshly severed, on the ground. His wine was still warm.

階下一人大呼出曰：「小將願往，斬華雄頭獻於帳下！」眾視之，見其人身長九尺五寸，髯長一尺八寸，丹鳳眼，臥蠶眉，面如重棗，聲似巨鍾，立於帳前。紹問何人，公孫瓚曰：「此劉玄德之弟關某也。」紹問見居何職，瓚曰：「跟隨玄德充馬弓手。」帳上袁術大喝曰：「汝欺吾眾諸侯無大將耶？量一弓手，安敢亂言，與我亂棒打出！」曹操急止之，曰：「公路息怒，此人既出大言，必有廣學。試教出馬，如其不勝，誅亦未遲。」袁紹曰：「不然。使一弓手出戰，必被華雄恥笑。吾等如何見人？」曹操曰：「據此人儀表非俗，華雄安知他是弓手？」關某曰：「如不勝，請斬我頭。」操教釀熱酒一杯，與關某飲了上馬。關某曰：「酒且斟下，某去便來。」出帳提刀，飛身上馬。眾諸侯聽得寨外鼓聲大振，喊聲大舉，如天摧地塌，岳撼山崩。眾皆失驚，正欲探聽，鸞鈴響處，馬到中軍，雲長提華雄之頭，擲於地上。其酒尚溫。(Luo wenshi 45)

In this scene, Guan Yu is introduced as an arrogant warrior, who irritates some of the military townships. When the military townships despise Guan Yu because of his low social status, Cao Cao is the only one who comes forward with high regards. This also provides an opportunity for

Guan Yu to exhibit his martial prowess to all others, in which he decapitates Hua Xiong in an instantaneous moment. Cao Cao's approval and consideration for Guan Yu instigates a complicated relationship developed between Cao and Guan throughout the narrative. Interestingly enough, this specific incident, known as "Lord Guan Decapitates Hua Xiong 關公斬華雄" is one of the fabricated events compiled in *tongsu yanyi* that is not included in *pinghua*, nor in Chen Shuo's historical record. It is this relationship between Cao and Guan that contributes to Guan's dramatic struggles, which is an important element that changes Guan from a pure martial prowess character in *pinghua* to a chivalric *xia* in *tongsu yanyi*.

The intricate relationship between Guan Yu and Cao Cao develops with a series of conflicts and coincidental disputes within the narration of the Three Kingdoms story cycle. As mentioned above, the scene "Lord Guan Decapitates Hua Xiong" not only illustrates Guan Yu's martial prowess, it also sets Cao Cao's appreciation of Guan Yu in motion at the beginning of the novel. In the first part of the novel, however, the affection from Cao Cao is unidirectional. Guan Yu did not constitute a bidirectional engagement with Cao Cao until later on, in the ninth chapter of the fourth volume, entitled "Cao Cao Shoots a Stag During the Grand Hunt at Xutian 曹孟德許田射鹿." The story begins as Liu Bei and his two brothers lost the province of Xuzhou 徐州, fled from Lü Bu and Yuan Shu, then sought shelter under Cao Cao. At the time, Cao Cao controls the Northeastern sector of the Central Plain, including the Xuzhou province that is previously owned by Liu Bei, and he "uses his hold on the Emperor to make the feudal barons do his bidding 挾天子以令諸侯" (Luo *wenshi* 283). Cao Cao moves the imperial court and the Emperor from the ruins of Luoyang 洛陽 and Chang'an 長安 to the city of Xuchang 許昌, after the chaos and military coup d'état of Dong Zhao's 董卓 dictatorship. Therefore, Guan Yu and his brothers also stay at Xuchang, while the Emperor appointed Liu Bei as the General of the

Left 左將軍 and the Precinct Master of Yi 宜城亭侯. This chapter depicts Cao Cao inviting the Emperor and ministers to a grand hunt to see the reactions of the ministers and generals, in order to determine who submits to Cao Cao's power, and who are in his opposition. The scene is narrated as follows:

The procession turned and was crossing a low hill when a stag charged from the wood. The Emperor shot three arrows but missed. "Try for it, my lord," the Emperor gazed at Cao Cao and said. Impudently, Cao asked for Emperor's jeweled bow and gold-tipped arrows. Drawing the bow to full, he released an arrow that pierced the deer's back; the animal toppled in the grass.

The crowd of ministers and generals, seeing the imperial arrow, assumed that the Emperor had scored the hit and surged forward to congratulate him, crying, "Long life to the Emperor!" But it was Cao Cao, guiding his horse ahead of the Son of Heaven, who acknowledged the cheers. All who saw it blanched. Behind Xuande [Liu Bei], Yunchang [Guan Yu] seethed. Brows arching, eyes glaring, he raised his sword and rode forward attempting to cut Cao Cao down. Sensing Guan's intent, a sharp look with a motion of his head from Xuande, which halted Guan. Guan is a man of loyalty and righteousness, as he saw his brother's eyesight, he changed his mind, and reined in without hesitation.

Cao Cao solely gazed at Xuande. Xuande is in panic, and bowed to Cao Cao to congratulate him: "Your Excellency shoots with more than human skill. Few in this age can equal you." "It was the largess of the Emperor, really," Cao replied, laughing as he rode his horse round to express his compliments to the sovereign. But instead of returning the jeweled bow, he simply hung it at his side. All the ministers and generals in seniority

lamented in suspiration. When the hunt was over, the multitude feasted in Xutian. Afterward the Emperor led the procession back to the capital Xu, and it dispersed. Later Xuande spoke to Yunchang, “Why are you so agitated today?” “Cao Cao persecutes and hoodwinks the Emperor,” Yunchang replied, “I can’t tolerate such act! Why did you stop me? I could have rid the dynasty of a traitor at whose hands the Emperor suffers personally.” “‘If you aim for the mouse,’ Xuande warned, ‘don’t bring down the house!’ Cao plotted this scheme since his memorial submission to the Emperor for the grand hunt. Cao rode along the Emperor and keep the Emperor under his surveillance; his lieutenants were thick around him, which didn’t you notice it? Why did I stop you cutting Cao? Dear brother, don’t you see the outnumbered minions of Cao, had you accidentally injured the Emperor in a moment of foolish wrath, we would be the ones accused of the very crimes you denounce.” “Spared the villainess traitor Cao Cao today—it will be a plague for tomorrow,” Lord Guan retorted. “Say no more,” said Xuande. “We cannot speak freely.”

轉過土坡，忽見荊棘叢中趕出一隻大鹿，正衝而來。帝連射三箭不中。帝觀操曰：「卿射之。」操就討天子雕弓、金鈚箭，扣滿，正中鹿背，倒於草中。眾群臣將校，皆謂天子射中，踴躍而來，同呼「萬歲」。曹操縱馬而來，遮於天子之前，以迎當之。眾皆失色。玄德背後雲長大怒，剔起臥蠶眉，睜環丹鳳眼，提刀拍馬便出，要斬曹操。玄德會其意，搖首送目，不肯令出。關公乃仁義之人，見兄如此，便不敢動。操獨視玄德。玄德慌，欠身稱曰：「丞相神射，世所罕及！」操笑曰：「是天子洪福耳！」馬上與天子賀罷，不還雕弓，就懸帶之。老臣無不嗟呀。圍場已罷，宴於許田。天子促歸，於是駕回許都，各自歸歇。玄德與雲長曰：「汝今日

何躁暴也？」雲長曰：「欺君罔上之賊，某實難容耳！欲與國家除害，兄何止之？」玄德曰：「『投鼠忌器』耳。操起奸計，自奏天子出許都圍獵，將帝時時窺視，與帝相離一馬之地；其他心腹之人，周回遠近圍侍，爾豈不知也？吾觀弟怒急止之，何也？乃見操心腹之賊，牙爪數多，倘失大事，而未成功，有傷天子，罪反作我等也。吾故止之。」雲長曰：「今日不殺奸雄操賊，大哥你看，後必有禍矣！」玄德曰：「慎宜秘之。」(Luo *wenshi* 164)

This narrative explicitly details Guan Yu's hostility towards Cao Cao, and his intent to "cut" him after seeing Cao Cao stand in for the Emperor, after acknowledging the cheers and praises from the ministers. Guan Yu's attempt to "cut" Cao Cao illustrates Guan's repugnance for Cao. This specific scene demonstrates how the "appreciation" from Cao Cao is a unidirectional development at the beginning of the novel in one respect. On the other hand, Guan formulates a love-hate relationship with Cao Cao.

Furthermore, this scene also exhibits Guan Yu's righteousness, or the *zhengyi* that Sima Qian attempts to portray in his endnote commentary in the *Biographies of the Assassins*, which contributes to Guan's personal repugnance and loathing towards Cao Cao. Guan's repugnance towards Cao Cao is neither due to personal sentimental reasons nor seeing Cao as a villain. Rather, it is due to Cao Cao having committed an unaccepted ritual: an act against the emperor. This induces Guan Yu's loathing of Cao Cao. This scene is remarkably interesting and worthy of discussion, as it not only depicts Guan Yu's *xiaqi* temperament for righteousness and his strong attitude of moral fiber, but it also reflects the treacherous character of Cao Cao and his status as the de facto ruler of the imperial court. Guan Yu's and Cao Cao's noticeable characteristics of being virtuous and treacherous reflect their love-hate relationship throughout the novel.

This scene of the grand hunt is not included in *pinghua*, which suggests this passage is a new addition in the process of literati-ization. In fact, this particular episode is briefly mentioned in Pei Songzhi's annotations in the "Biographies of Guan Yu," which is derived from the *Records of the Shu Kingdoms* or *Shuji* 蜀記. Pei Songzhi briefly mentions that when:

Liu Bei and Cao Cao hunt near Xuchang, as Cao's men were scattered for game, Guan Yu attempted to persuade Liu Bei to annihilate Cao when he was alone, but Liu rejected his proposal...

劉備在許，與曹公共獵。獵中，衆散，羽勸備殺公，備不從 (Chen *Records* 424)

...without any details in similarity to the narrative depicted in *tongsu yanyi*. However, the historical records did not suggest whether Cao Cao conducted any act in against the emperor, nor do they illustrate any hostility towards Liu Bei and his men. The formulation and compilation of the hunt in Xu into *tongsu yanyi* have some traces of—and similarities to—the historical event of Zhao Gao 趙高 denoting a deer as a horse 指鹿為馬, which is recorded in the "Annals of the First Emperor" in the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Sima *The First* 90).³⁹ The adaptation of this scene into *tongsu yanyi* not only illustrates the political struggle between Cao Cao and Liu Bei, but it also draws attention to Guan Yu's hatred for Cao Cao.

The two scenes, "Guan Yu Decapitates Hua Xiong" and the "Grand Hunt at Xutian" only suggest the unidirectional feelings from Cao Cao to Guan Yu. However, the convoluted and complicated relationship between Cao Cao and Guan Yu did not flourish until one-tenth of the story had passed in *tongsu yanyi*. The narrator in *tongsu yanyi* spent approximately eight

³⁹ "In the eighth month on jihai, Zhao Gao wanted to bring about a rebellion, but was afraid that the officials would not pay heed, so he first of all arranged a test. He took a deer and presented it to Second Generation and said: 'It is a horse.' Second Generation smiled and said: 'Have you not got it wrong, Chief Minister? You said a deer was a horse.' He asked the courtiers, and some of them remained silent, while others said it was a horse in order to curry favor with Zhao Gao, and others said it was a deer. So Zhao Gao secretly had the law on all who said it was a deer. Afterwards the officials were all afraid of Gao" (Sima *The First* 90).

chapters recounting the grand scenario of “Guan Yunchang Rides Alone a Thousand *li* 關雲長千里走單騎,” which includes a total of nine smaller episodic units: “Lord Guan Submits to Cao Cao 關公降曹,” “Skewers Yan Liang 刺顏良,” “Punishes Wen Chou at Yanjin 延津誅文醜,” “Lord Guan Returns His Official Seal 封金掛印,” “Lord Guan Plucks the Robe with His Blade 挑袍,” “Rides Alone a Thousand *li* 千里獨行,” “Lord Guan Slays Generals and Breaches Five Passes 五關斬將,” “Slays Cai Yang 斬蔡陽,” and finally, the “Reunion at Gucheng 古城會” (Wang *Sanguo gushi* 261). This grand scenario focuses on Guan Yu, as the narrator in *tongsu yanyi* showcases the complicated relationship between Guan Yu and Cao Cao in details. This is mainly derived from Cao Cao’s appreciation for Guan Yu’s extraordinary skills exhibited in the scene “Decapitates Hua Xiong,” and contributes to a sentimental dilemma for Guan Yu, since Cao Cao “bind[s] his love 施厚恩以結其心 with unusual generosity” (Luo *wenshi* 194). Cao’s attempts to “bind his love,” unfortunately, did not succeed in elongating Guan Yu’s sojourn. Guan Yu returns to Liu Bei with Liu’s wives that were entrusted to him, and the complicated relationship between Guan and Cao did not find a resolution within this grand scenario.

Guan Yu requites Cao’s debt of gratitude of the unusual generousities and gifts through solving several military obstacles Cao Cao faces. For example, in order to repay Cao’s appreciation, Guan “Skewers Yan Liang” in the outpost of Baima 白馬, and “Punishes Wen Chou at Yanjin,” a river ford west of Baima. Even though Cao Cao is unsuccessful in sustaining Guan Yu’s sojourn in his camp, he extends Guan Yu’s feeling of debt from his past gratitude, or *en* 恩, as Guan slays Cao’s generals en route to Gucheng. Kam Louie believes the relationship between Guan Yu and Cao Cao is a unidirectional desire from Cao, and that Guan does not form any emotional tie, or *qing* 情, with any characters except Liu Bei and Zhang Fei (Kam *Sexuality*

856). In fact, Kam's analysis of Guan demonstrates the chastity of Guan Yu towards his sovereign, Liu Bei, through a sexualized interpretation from this grand scenario. Kam's reading, however, fails to contextualize the hatred and loathing of Guan built from the "Hunt in Xu," and furthermore, Guan Yu's love and hate emotions towards Cao Cao illustrates a form of affectional ties between the two men in this scenario focused on Guan Yu after being submitted to a sojourn service in Cao's camp.

Unlike Guan's affectional ties with Zhang Fei and Liu Bei, the sentimental attachment between Guan Yu and Cao Cao is not simply attributed to the homo-social enactment. Guan and Cao's emotional tie, or *qing*, is associated with the concept of *enqing* 恩情, which is a type of sentimental attachment developed through a series of acts of generous gratitude or appreciation from one character to another. The concept of *qing* evolved in the late Ming period and became widely discussed within fictions. A significant number of these late Ming fictions about *enqing* were closely associated with the concept of *yu*, or a desire that especially insinuated licentious behaviors. However, the *enqing* embedded in the Three Kingdoms story cycle explicitly references the homo-social enactment between various masculine archetypes, instead of sexual desire. Martin Huang considers how the literati-ized form of the Three Kingdoms story cycle represents a particular stage in the development of the traditional Chinese novel that mainly focuses on the public ramifications of desire. Huang also determines that in the later period, Chinese novel development shifted their focus from public domain to the consequences of licentious desire within the private domains (Huang *Desire* 57-58). Therefore, the *enqing* embedded in the brotherhood, and the complexity in Guan Yu's dilemma with Cao Cao in *tongsu yanyi*, reflect an indication of this particular stage of novel development in late imperial China—the transition of focus from the pure public domain into the individual and the private sphere.

This transition is supported in the different narrations between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* at the scene of Huarong Pass 華容道, at the end of the grand scenario in the Battle of Red Cliff 赤壁之戰. In which, Guan Yu and his followers are assigned the task to guard and block off the escape route of Cao Cao after the battle in the Red Cliff:

So Minister Cao proceeded along the Huarong road, but before he had gone twenty *li* he saw five hundred swordsmen: General Guan was blocking his way! Minister Cao addressed Yunchang [Guan Yu] with flattering words, “Marquis of Shouting, please consider that I treated you well.” But Lord Guan replied, “I am under strict orders of the field marshal.” Lord Cao crashed through his lines, but we have to tell that as they were talking they were enveloped by dust and mist, and this enabled Lord Cao to escape. Lord Guan pursued him for a number of *li* and then turned back.

曹公尋華容路去行，無二十里，見五百校刀手，關將攔住。曹相用美言告雲長：

「看操，與壽亭侯有恩。」關公曰：「軍師嚴令。」曹公撞陣。卻說話間，面生塵霧，使曹公得脫。關公趕數里，復回。(Records 97)

The description from *pinghua* illustrates how Cao Cao attempts to persuade Guan Yu to let him and his men pass the blockade by addressing his past gratitude when Guan served in his camp. And yet, Guan Yu refuses to repay Cao Cao’s gratitude from the past. Despite this, Cao and his retainers are able to escape from Guan, but it is due to mystical dust and mist.

On the other hand, in the same scene from *tongsu yanyi*, when Cao Cao and his men meet Guan Yu’s blockade at Huarong Pass:

Five hundred expert swordsmen flanked the road. At their head, raising his blade Green Dragon, sitting astride Red Hare, the great general Lord Guan Yunchang checked Cao’s advance. Cao’s men felt their souls desert them, their courage die. They looked at one

another helplessly without a word... “Lord Guan,” said Cheng Yu, “is known to disdain the high and mighty but to bear with the humble. He gives the strong short shrift but never persecutes the weak. He will save those who are at risk, and he has ever demonstrated good faith and honor that is known under the heaven. In times past, Your Excellency showed him great kindness; now, on your personal appeal to him, we might be spared.”

Cao Cao approved and guided his horse forward. Bowing, he addressed Lord Guan: “You have been well, I trust, General, since we parted?” Lord Guan bowed in return and said, “I bear orders from the director general and have been awaiting Your Excellency for some time.” “My army is defeated and my situation critical,” Cao Cao said. “At this point I have no way out. But I trust, General, you will give due weight to our old friendship.” “Though I benefited from your ample kindness,” Lord Guan replied, “I fulfilled the debt when I relieved the siege at Baima. In the present situation, I cannot set aside public duty for personal considerations.” “You still recall, do you not,” Cao went on, “how you slew my commanders at five passes when you left my service? A man worthy of the name gives the greatest weight to good faith and honor. With your profound understanding of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, you must be familiar with the story of Yugongzhisi who pursued Zizhuoruzi.” Lord Guan bowed his head without a word after he heard Cao Cao’s word.

In the Spring and Autumn period Yugongzhisi was dispatched by the kingdom of Wei to pursue and attack Zizhuoruzi. Both men were expert marksmen... Yugongzhisi said to him, “Yingongzhituo was my archery instructor, and you were his instructor. I don’t have the heart to kill you with the skills that you yourself have passed on to us. However,

today is the affair of the state, I dare not to abandon my mission.” So saying, he knocked the heads off his arrows, shot four shafts in each direction, and left. Therefore, Zizhuorui stays alive and return to the state of Zheng. This incident is recorded in the book of *Mencius*.

In the meantime, Cao Cao brought this up before the conversation ends. And Lord Guan, whose sense of honor was solid as a mountain, could not put Cao Cao’s many obliging kindnesses or the thought of the slain commanders from his mind... and Lord Guan was reminded of their old friendship. With a long sigh, he let all the remaining troops pass.

兩邊五百校刀手擺列，當中關雲長提青龍刀，跨赤兔馬，截住去路。操軍見了，亡魂喪膽，面面相覷，皆不能言……程昱曰：「某知雲長傲上而不忍下，欺強而不凌弱；人有患難，必須救之，仁義播於天下。況丞相舊日有恩在彼處，何不親自告之，必脫此難矣。」操從其說，即時縱馬向前，欠身與雲長曰：「將軍別來無恙？」雲長亦欠身答曰：「關某奉軍師將令，等候丞相多時。」操曰：「曹操兵敗勢危，到此無路，望將軍以昔日之言為重。」雲長答曰：「昔日關某雖蒙丞相厚恩，某曾解白馬之危以報之。今日奉命，豈敢為私乎？」操曰：「五關斬將之時，還能記否？古之人，大丈夫處世必以信義為重。將軍深明《春秋》，豈不知庾公之斯追子濯孺子者乎？」雲長聞之，低首良久不語。昔日，春秋之時，鄭國有一賢大夫，名子濯孺子，深精弓矢之藝。鄭使子濯孺子領兵侵衛，衛使庾公之斯迎之。鄭兵大敗，衛使庾公之斯追之……庾公之斯曰：「我昔日學射於尹公之他，尹公之他學射於夫子，我不忍以夫子之藝反害於夫子。雖然如此，今日之事乃君之事，我不敢廢之。」遂抽矢去其箭頭，發四矢而回焉。於是子濯孺子得命而還鄭。天下稱

義。出《孟子》。當時曹操引這件事。說猶未了，雲長是個義重如山之人，又見曹軍惶惶，皆欲垂淚；雲長思起五關斬將放他之恩，如何不動心？……雲長見了，亦動故舊之心，長歎一聲，並皆放之。(Luo *wenshi* 362)

In contrast with *pinghua*, *tongsu yanyi* specifies that Guan Yu voluntarily makes way for Cao Cao and his men to pass his blockade, and the narrative specifically manifests Guan's voluntarily act due to the past gratitude and kindness from Cao Cao, when Guan was sojourning in the Cao camp. This difference between the narration from *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* suggests a shift in emphasis from pure public agenda to the concern of private and internal ramification in an emotional tie. In fact, *enqing* becomes an essential element of Guan Yu's dilemma in *tongsu yanyi*. The complexity of Guan Yu's character is embedded within his dilemma between *en* 恩 and *yi* 義. The theme of *en* and *yi* is constantly reiterated in various Ming-Qing novels, such as *Shuihu chuan* 水滸傳, *Yesou puyan* 野叟曝言, *Suitang yanyi* 隋唐演義, *Shuotang quanzhuan* 說唐全傳, and *Jin Ping Mei* 金瓶梅 (an inverse example). *En* translates to kindness, or generosity from a particular person to another. The concept of *en* is also reflected in various stories that narrate a process of martial prowess characters receiving unusual generosity and gifts from a patron who appreciates the character's supreme ability. Several narratives recorded in *Records of the Grand Historian* focus on the concept of *baoen* 報恩, or repaying the debt. In the "Biographies of Assassins," Cao Mo 曹沫, Zhuan Zhu 專諸, Yu Rang 豫讓, Nie Zheng 聶政, and Jing Ke 荊軻, five martial prowess assassins repay, or *bao*, the unusual generosity and personal indebtedness they received from their patrons or their appreciating superior, through their own sacrifices, either successfully or not in achieving their deeds. The theme of *bao*, or repaying the debt either for past gratitude or vengeance, is an essential concept in Chinese human

relationships. For example, in the *Book of Odes*, or the *Shijing* 詩經, the ode of Yi 抑, which is collected in the section of the Greater Odes of the Kingdom 大雅, the concept of *baoen* 報恩 is perceived as “When one throws to me a peach, I return to him a plum 投我以桃/報之以李” (*Odes* 515-516). Or, in the Lessons of the State 國風 the song of Papaya 木瓜 depicts the concept of *bao* in the exchange of friendship: “There was a presented to me a papaya / And I returned for it a beautiful Ju-gem / Not as a return for it / But that our friendship might be lasting 投我以木瓜/報之以瓊琚/匪報也/永以為好也” (*Odes* 107). These two verses suggest the concept of repaying the debt is an antiquity practice in building a relationship with one another.

In fact, the theme of repaying the debt of gratitude is also coalesced with the concept of vengeance, or *baochou* 報仇, along with the stories of *xia* throughout various classical narratives. This theme of *baoen* and *baochou* evolves to become an essential part of the human relationship in imperial China (Chen *Qiang* 120-121). This specific ideology of vengeance and repayment, or *bao* in collective terms, eventually becomes part of the *xia* temperament in reflecting *xiake* principles. In which, *Hongxian* 紅線, *Kunlun nu* 崑崙奴, *Nie wenniang* 聶穩娘, and *Gu yaya* 古押衙 from the Tang dynasty fictions of *zhiguai* 志怪 and *chuanqi* 傳奇 reflect this specific concept, which is an act categorized as a chivalric errand. Specifically, both *Nie wenniang* and *Gu yaya* commit their *xia* errands as compensation to the patron, or the one who has appreciated their ability, *zhiyu zhien* 知遇之恩. In poetry, poets yearn for a chance to compensate the patrons who have appreciated their ability, or offered generous gifts during their downtime, such as Yao Guangkao’s 姚廣考 “Humming on Strongman” or “Zhuangshi yin 壯士吟,” which praises the “bearing debt for a meal / not determined by the depth of the wine cup 懷恩在一飯/不用酒杯深” (Chen *Qiang* 121). Yao’s poem succinctly addresses how the factor in repaying the debt he

owed to the patron is neither determined by the value of the debt, nor by the depth of his emotional ties with his patron. The line “the depth of the wine cup” is a reference to the depth of friendship, since friendship is always determined by the consumption of wine with friends during banquets. An example of such an emotional tie through drinking wine is depicted at the beginning of the Three Kingdoms story cycle, when Zhang Fei, Guan Yu, and Liu Bei meet in the wine shop, they drank to their hearts’ content, and their friendship lasted for life. In fact, the act of Guan Yu at Huarong Pass in *tongsu yanyi* explicates the *xia* principle of *baoen* that is embedded in literati literature such as *The Book of Odes*, Sima Qian’s *The Record of the Grand Historian*, and various Tang fictions, such as the aforementioned *zhiguai* and *chuanqi* (Chen *Qiang* 120-121).

The Altruistic Principle

In fact, besides depicting Guan Yu’s repayment of his debt from his past gratitude in order to demonstrate his *xia* ordinances, *tongsu yanyi* also illustrates Guan’s altruistic behavior, which is another element that coordinates with *xia* principles. This altruistic behavior is depicted in the same scenario of “Guan Yunchang Rides Alone a Thousand *li*,” in the episode of “Lord Guan Submits to Cao Cao.” Both *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* present the scene where Guan Yu sacrifices his own fame and honor in exchange for the preservation of Liu Bei’s families. Fame and honor are ideals of *xia* that are listed in James Liu’s discussion about the Chinese-errant, which Liu quotes Sima Qian and Han Feizi as saying that the *xia* attempts to distinguish their name through a series of altruistic actions (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 4-6). This means the behavior of a *xia* is mainly motivated by their “desire for fame.” James Liu labels altruism, or altruistic behaviors as the most remarkable characteristics of the *xia* ordinances (Liu *Chinese*

Knight-errant 4). In fact, the *xia* is habitual in helping the poor and the distressed, even to the point of risking their own life in order to save the others. Liu claims this habitual behavior is associated with the term *yi* 義, which translates to “righteousness.” Liu expands his definition by citing Feng Youlan 馮友蘭, noting that *yi* “means doing more than what is required by common standards of morality.” Liu and Feng also use the word “super-moral” in defining *yi*. Within the common understanding of moral standards, a person will be rewarded for his or her altruistic act. On the other hand, a person with “super-morality” will reject such materialistic rewards after he or she has accomplished their act (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 4). The complexity of a *xia*’s ideals relies on contradictions and conflicts between each ideal, specifically at the time when the *xia* character is in need of choosing his action. In the prelude to the grand scenario of “Guan Yunchang Rides Alone a Thousand *li*,” the episode of “Lord Guan Submits to Cao Cao” illustrates such conflicts and complexity in Guan Yu’s choice.

The ninth chapter of the fifth volume of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled “Zhang Liao Coaxes Guan Yunchang With Justifications 張遼義說關雲長,” is the beginning of the “Lord Guan Rides Alone a Thousand *li*” scenario. At the beginning of this scene, both Liu Bei and Zhang Fei are in Xiaopei 小沛, while Guan Yu is stationed in Xiapi 下邳 guarding Liu Bei’s families. Nevertheless, Cao Cao leads his massive infantries and defeats Liu Bei and Zhang Fei in Xiaopei. After the defeat of Liu and Zhang, Cao Cao expresses his appreciation of Guan Yu to his advisers, “I have always admired Lord Guan’s personal ability and his martial art is peerless in the army and would be delighted to have him in my service...could someone persuade him to submit to us” 吾素愛關公人才武藝勇冠三軍，吾欲得之以為己用 (Luo *wenshi* 191). Cheng Yu 程昱, one of Cao’s advisers, suggests a tricky scheme in order to persuade Guan Yu to serve Cao Cao. Cheng Yu’s scheme lures Guan Yu out of Xiapi and then sieges him on a hilltop

surrounded by Cao's massive infantries, then attempts to persuade Guan for his submission. Cao sends Zhang Liao to induce Guan Yu to surrender, which Guan Yu refuses to do. Zhang Liao then pinpoints the conflict within Guan Yu's belief in his *xia* ideals:

Zhang Liao laughed loudly and said, "Brother, do you want to be the laughingstock for generation after generation?" "I will die," Lord Guan said, "devoted to my duty. I don't think the people in the later ages will take it as a joke." "Dying here," Zhang Liao said, "you commit three offenses. Wouldn't these offenses as your disgraces to be laughed at in the later ages?" "Well then," Lord Guan replied, "what are they?"

"In the beginning," Zhang Liao said, "when you, brother, and Protector Liu [Liu Bei] bound yourselves in fraternal allegiance, you swore to share life or death. Now your brother has been defeated in Xiaopei, you and your brothers should work together to uphold the house of Han, dies in the battlefield heroically, and gain the honor for eternal ages. And, brother, Protector Liu shouldn't flee. But who wouldn't welcome his arrival? And you are about to die in combat. If Xuande [Liu Bei] survives and seeks your aid in vain, won't you have betrayed your lord and the oath you made in the past? That is your first offense as you misconstrue your master and died in battle. Protector Liu's immediate family was placed in your care for the sake of safety. If you die now, his two wives will have no one to defend them. As they wish to preserve their chastity, the only result is their death. If they deemed to preserve their life, then they belong to someone else. And you, brother, will have betrayed Protector Liu's trust. That is your second offense, as you didn't carry out your promise. And thirdly, not only is your martial skill comparable, you are learned in the classics and the histories. You joined with the protector to uphold the house of Han, and the deliverance for the people. If you lapse in your determination and

achieve a fool's valor instead by vainly rushing to certain death, which is a disgrace to your ancestors, and insults to your master. And how have you fulfilled your 'duty?' This is the statement, brother, I felt obliged to make.”

Lord Guan pondered. “Well,” he said at last, “you have explained the three offenses. What would you have me do?” “Lord Cao's troops,” Zhang Liao replied, “are on four sides. If you refuse to submit, you will die. To die in vain avails nothing. It makes more sense to submit, for now, while you seek news of the protector. When you learn where he is, you may go to him immediately. That way you will ensure the safety of the two ladies, you will remain true to the peach garden oath, and you will preserve your own most useful life. These, brother, are the advantages for you to weigh.”

張遼大笑曰：「兄出此言，豈不為萬世之恥笑乎？」公曰：「吾仗忠義而死，安得為萬世恥笑？」遼曰：「兄今盡死，其罪有三，豈不為萬世恥笑乎？」公曰：「汝且說我哪三罪？」遼曰：「當初劉使君與兄結義之時，誓同生死。近使君敗於小沛，當戮力同心，死戰沙場，其名萬古不朽，不合逃遁而去。腳到之處，誰不相容？兄今欲死於此地，倘使君復出，專望於兄，兄豈不是負卻孤主，而背當年之誓乎？誤主喪身，誠為不美。其罪一也。昔者劉使君以家眷重托於兄，以為萬全之計。兄今戰死，二夫人無所依托，若能守節，一死無疑；若不守節，又屬他人。此是兄負卻使君倚托之重，實為不義。其罪二也。兄武藝超群，更兼深通經史，不思期共使君，匡扶漢室，拯救生靈；徒欲赴湯蹈火，以成匹夫之勇，上負祖宗，下辱其主，安為義？其罪三也。兄有此三罪，弟不得不告之。」公沉吟曰：「汝說我有三罪，欲我何如？」遼曰：「今四面皆曹公之兵，兄若不降，必用一死；不若且降

曹公，卻打聽使君音信，如知何處，卻往投之。一者，可以保二夫人；二者，可以全其義；三者，可以保其身。有此三便，兄宜詳之。」 (Luo *wenshi* 193)

In this conversation between Zhang Liao and Guan Yu, Zhang Liao begins by sneering at Guan Yu, saying he would die in disgrace instead of being respected and historically solidified as a martyr who was devoted to his duty. One of the themes in the Three Kingdoms story cycle is the concept of *zhongyi* 忠義, which translates as “loyalty and righteousness.” In *tongsu yanyi*, *zhongyi* also refers to “devoted to duty,” which originates from Soothill’s translation of *yi*, or “recognized duty” (Liu *Chinese Knight-errant* 209). Guan struggles with his debate over the fame and honor of a heroic death, which would result in a martyr status to be recorded in history. On the other hand, since Liu Bei entrusted Guan with his immediate family, it is Guan’s duty to protect them from harm. Zhang Liao’s persuasion focuses on how Guan Yu needs to make a choice, either to sacrifice his fame and honor to accomplish his mission in protecting Liu’s family, or to sacrifice Liu’s family and his own life in order to contribute to his martyr status in history.

Zhang’s argument presents a dilemma for Guan in his principle to act with a *xia*’s ideal behaviors, which is similar to Sima Qian’s 司馬遷 canonical ideas of *fafen zhushu* 發憤著書 and *renru fuzhong* 忍辱負重 that interpret the author’s motivation as a way to express one’s anger and ambition. This concept is derived from the time of Sima Qian’s castration, in which Sima has the choice to either commit suicide or endure the pain and agony from society, in order to fulfill his ambition in completing the *Grand Historian* (Huang *Literati* 17-18). As a warrior general, the idea of *fafen zhushu* may not apply to Guan Yu’s situation, however, the concept of *renru fuzhong*, or enduring self-humiliation to fulfill his assigned task, contributes to Guan Yu’s decision to sojourn in the Cao camp. At the end of the scene, Guan chooses to sacrifice his own

martyr status and condemns himself in order to fulfill the assigned task of protecting Liu Bei's families from harm. According to Cao Junhan's interpretation, Guan's self-condemnation of his personal merit and his war-crime behavior of pretending to surrender are justified by these three righteous excuses, or "yiqi 義氣," as advocated by Zhang Liao (Lu *Guan* 56). The first is the homo-social enactment between his fraternal brothers; the second is the devoted duty in taking care of Liu Bei's families; and third of all, his vow along with his fraternal brothers in the Peach Garden to "protect the common folk of the land 下安黎庶" and "relieve the present crisis 救困扶危" (Luo *wenshi* 5).

In contrast, *pinghua* presents the same scene differently. The background of the scenario in *pinghua* is similar to *tongsu yanyi*, however, the persuasion and speech between Zhang Liao and Guan Yu in *pinghua* illustrates a different vibe when comparing to the main point in Zhang Liao's argument from *tongsu yanyi*:

When Zhang Liao arrived at the front of the hall, the Lord of the Beautiful Beard [Guan Yu] asked him, "Has Xuzhou been lost? Do you know the fate of the Imperial Uncle [Liu Bei] and Zhang Fei?" Zhang Liao replied, "They were killed in the melee." The Lord of the Beautiful Beard wept and said, "I am not afraid of dying. You must have come here to persuade me."

Zhang Liao replied, "Not at all. Now the Imperial Uncle and Zhang Fei have been killed by mutinous troops, you don't know how to deal with the family, and should Cao Cao's army arrive below the walls, wouldn't you be at a double loss? Lord Guan, you have studied books since your youth and read the *Springs and Autumns with the Commentary of Mr. Zuo*, how it promotes the wise and good—so how could you not understand our meaning? Cao Cao deeply loves you."

Lord Guan said, “But how would Cao Cao treat me were I to join him?” Zhang Liao replied, “He will appoint you to the high rank of general, with a monthly salary of four hundred strings and four hundred stoneweight.” Lord Guan then said, “I will submit if he follows my three conditions.” “General, just tell them to me,” Zhang Liang replied. “Her Ladyship will have one house divided into two courtyards. If I learn any information about the Imperial Uncle, I will visit him. And I submit to the Han but not to Cao Cao. Later I will establish great merit for the prime minister. If he will accept these three conditions, I will immediately submit. If he will not accept them, I would rather fight to death.” Zhang Liao laughed and said, “These three conditions are all minor matters.” Zhang Liao then returned and saw Lord Cao, to whom he told the whole story.

張遼在於廳下，美髯公問曰：「徐州是失？皇叔，張飛不知存亡？」張遼曰：「亂軍所殺也。」美髯公哭曰：「吾死不懼。爾來莫非說我乎？」遼曰：「不然。雖皇叔，張飛為亂軍所殺，公將家屬不知何處，倘若曹兵至城下，豈不事有兩難？關公自小讀書，看『春秋左氏傳』，曾應賢良舉，豈不解其意？曹操深愛。」關公曰：「我若投曹如何？」遼曰：「便加將軍重職，每月四百貫，四百石。」關公曰：「若依我三件便降。」張遼曰：「將軍言。」「我與夫人，一宅分兩院。如知皇叔信，便往相訪。降漢不降曹。後與丞相建立大功。此三件事依，即納降；若不依，能死戰。」張遼笑曰：「此事小可。」張遼回見曹公，具說此事。(Records 58-59)

Zhang Liao did not contempt Guan Yu's willingness to die, but instead immediately brings two points in his argument. First, Zhang immediately questions Guan Yu's ability to “deal with [Liu Bei's] family,” but then he presents Cao Cao's “love” of Guan Yu by using the story from *Spring*

and *Autumns with the Commentary of Mr. Zuo* 春秋左氏傳 as his reasoning to persuade Guan should choose a lord who is competent for his talents.⁴⁰ With regards to the *Spring and Autumns with the Commentary of Mr. Zuo*, Zhang Liao's words refer to the minister in the Spring and Autumns period of ancient China, in which they choose a competent lord who can wisely utilize the minister's talent. It is a reference to the metaphor, "a good bird chooses his own branch to perch 良禽擇木而棲," which originates from a quote from Confucius in the Annals of Duke Ai of Lu, the 11th year 魯哀公十一年 in the *Spring and Autumn with the Commentary of Mr. Zuo* (*Zuo Chunqiu* Book XII). In which, Zhang's argument reflects a different vibe while persuading Guan to submit to Cao Cao in *pinghua*, deriving from the perspective that a talented minister or general should consider a competent liege lord.

Zhang's argument focuses on Guan's ability to deal with Liu Bei's families, then focuses on serving under a competent leader in *pinghua*. In fact, choosing a competent leader or superior is a key concept within the Three Kingdoms story cycle. This is comparable to an earlier scene in *pinghua*, in which Zhang Liao surrenders to Cao Cao, after his lord Lü Bu falls to the hand of Cao. On the other hand, Chen Gong 陳宮 chose death over serving Cao Cao after the fall of Lü Bu. Xu Huang 徐晃 also submitted to Cao Cao, and Lü Bu's submission to Dong Zhao suggests that the relationship of a competent lord and his talented subjects is bi-directional, and that the talented minister has the freedom of choosing his lord to serve at will, or he may leave his lord if he thinks of him as incompetent. This means having loyalty to serve only one lord was not the only option depicted in *pinghua*.

⁴⁰ *Spring and Autumns with the Commentary of Mr. Zuo* is an ancient Chinese narrative history that is traditionally regarded as a commentary on the ancient Chinese chronicle of Spring and Autumn Annals, or *Chunqiu* 春秋.

In addition to the changes of theme within this conversation, the narrative in *pinghua* is somewhat contradictory. At the beginning of the conversation, Zhang Liao mentions that the mutinous troops killed both Liu Bei and Zhang Fei in the melee, and yet, Guan Yu's three conditions contradict the narrative by remaining adamant that Liu Bei is still alive. In fact, if Liu Bei and Zhang Fei were killed in the melee, Guan Yu's submission to Cao Cao would be justified by Zhang Liao's suggestion of serving a competent sovereign. However, the three conditions Guan requested in exchange for his surrender suggest that Guan knows Liu Bei is still alive, his service to Cao Cao is only temporary, and claim that he will leave Cao's camp once he finds Liu Bei and will repay Cao's generosity by establishing several merits for Cao. In fact, Guan's three conditions are the same in both *pinghua* and in *tongsu yanyi*, however, the order of the three conditions is ranked differently. In *tongsu yanyi*, the three conditions have "submit to Han, but not to Cao Cao" ranked before the other two conditions. On the other hand, *pinghua* prioritizes protecting Liu Bei's families. This arrangement in *tongsu yanyi* rectifies and legitimizes Guan's sojourn in the Cao camp from the private sphere in *pinghua* and converts it into a public and moral action. Despite both narratives depicting a similar *xia* temperance of Guan, who altruistically sacrifices his personal honor and fame in order to fulfill the task of protecting Liu Bei's families entrusted to him, pretending to surrender is considered a disgrace for any martial warrior. Therefore, the reconstruction in *tongsu yanyi* legitimizes Guan's sojourn to the villain, or the opposing political power, as a form of redemption that showcases his loyalty and righteousness in completing the task with which he had been entrusted by Liu Bei. In which, Sun Yongjin sees this transition between *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi* in the episode of "Lord Guan Submits to Cao Cao" as an essential part of reconstructing the image of Guan Yu in the Three Kingdoms story cycle (Sun *Sanguo* 31). Sun's analysis compares the fictional

character of Guan Yu and the Guan Yu from the historical records, noting that Guan's temporary submission to Cao Cao is not due to inducing capitulation, but rather how Guan was caught in the battlefield and then surrendered to Cao Cao. Zhang Liao's attempts to induce capitulation didn't occur in the historical record.

When Cao Cao and his men surround him, Guan Yu is left with no other choice but to submit to the Cao camp in order to protect Liu Bei's families, which contributes to the legacy of his altruistic behavior, sacrificing his own fame to honor his duty. In fact, the comparison of this specific submission to Cao and his last battle (as reiterated in the second chapter of volume sixteen of *tongsu yanyi*) illustrates a similar situation in which the army from the Kingdom of Wu 吳國 besieged Guan Yu. At the time, the Kingdom of Wu sends Zhuge Jin 諸葛謹 as an envoy to induce Guan Yu to capitulate. However, Guan Yu refuses to submit to the Kingdom of Wu and dies in Maicheng 麥城. Guan Yu's reply to Zhuge Jin is as follows:

Suddenly a man appeared at the town wall; he called out. "Hold your arrow! I come and seek an audience with your lord." Lord Guan ordered the gates opened, and asked entry. It was Zhuge Jin. The formalities concluded, and Zhuge Jin began, "At the command of my lord, Sun Quan, I come to appeal to your reason. Whoever lives among man, must recognize the exigencies of the occasion. At this point of time, the nine districts of Jingzhou used belong to you, are now in the hands of Wu and Wei. You are reduced to this single paltry town, bereft of resources within and assistance without. If you do not fall in the morning, you will in the evening. Therefore, take this advice: give your allegiance to the lord of the Southland, and he will restore your position as guardian of Jing and Xiang [current Hubei area], and preserve your family, honor to your ancestors. Favor this suggestion, my lord, with your fullest consideration."

His expression all rectitude, Lord Guan replied, “I am but a warrior from Jieliang. By my lord’s favor he treats me like a brother. I cannot betray my honor and throw in my lot with the thief and enemy. If this town falls, what is left to me is death. A son will die for his filial piety to his parent; a subject will die for his loyalty to his lord. Death will return to the eternality, how dare I be frightened! Jade may break, but its whiteness will never change. Bamboo may burn, but its joints will always remain. The man may fall, but his name will come down through history. You may say no more. Be pleased to withdraw. I wish to decide all with Sun Quan in a fight to the finish.”

忽報城下一人叫，言：「休放箭，有話來見君侯。」公令放入問之，乃諸葛瑾也。禮畢，瑾曰：「今奉吳侯命，特來勸諭將軍：『凡居人世，須識時務。』今以勢言之，將軍所統漢上九郡，皆已屬吳、魏矣；止有孤城一區，內無糧草，外無救軍，危在旦夕。將軍何不從某之言，歸順吳侯，復鎮荊、襄，可以保全家眷，光顯祖宗。願將軍熟思之。」關公正色而言曰：「吾乃解良一武夫，蒙吾主以手足待之，安肯背義投敵賊乎？城雖破，但有死而已！為子死孝，為臣死忠。死歸冥路，吾何懼哉！玉可碎而不可改其白，竹可焚而不可改其節。大丈夫身可殞，名可垂於竹帛也。汝勿復言，速請出城，吾欲與孫權決一死戰也！」(Luo wenshi 546)

Guan Yu specifically says that his ambition is not based upon conquering or winning a battle, but rather to leave his legacy and his name in the historical records. Guan Yu’s word echoes James Liu’s explanation of the ideal principles of the *xiake* regarding honor and fame, personal loyalty, and their contempt for wealth and power. When comparing his reply in Maicheng with his reply in Xiapi, it is apparent that both cases are similar in that a large army sieged Guan Yu in a city,

he lacks resources, and has no reinforcements. In Xiapi, Guan Yu submits to serve in the Cao camp in order to fulfill the task entrusted by Liu Bei to take care of Liu's family. However, in Maicheng, his duty is to defend Jingzhou 荊州 province from the Kingdoms of Wei and Wu. When Guan Yu lost possession of Jingzhou, it signifies that he failed his duty. Therefore, without burden, as a *xiake*, Guan Yu chooses to fulfill his ideal principles of personal loyalty, honor and fame.

This comparison of the two similar situations reaffirms that Guan Yu's submission to Cao Cao in Xiapi is due to his assigned task, and in order to fulfill this task, he sacrifices his own honor and fame in an altruistic virtue. Along with the literati writers, Guan Yu's reply to Zhuge Jin also remolds *xia* behaviors and principles by promoting loyalist ideology in refuting the illegitimate political power. The principle of refuting the illegitimate political entity expresses itself in Guan's reply to Zhuge Jin, "Jade may break, but its whiteness will never change," and "Bamboo may burn, but its joints will always remain," which illustrates his determined will for an honorable death after he failed his mission (Luo *wenshi* 546). Such an idealistic reply echoes the constant reiteration of the rejection of the subservient attitude to the usurper state. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Chan Hok-lam considers how this particular event in the early Ming period became a popular theme in sixteenth century vernacular literature. For example, Zhu Yunwen 朱允炆 and his ministers were portrayed as tragic heroes while resisting the usurper Zhu Di 朱棣 (Mote *Cambridge* 200). In addition, these two metaphors in Guan's reply remind readers how Guan does not consider his submission to Cao Cao as a disgrace to his merit, because it is his method for fulfilling his personal loyalty and the task assigned by his lord.

The Defender of the Nation

Guan Yu was well apotheosized as a god and a protector of monasteries and temples by Buddhists in the ninth century, then further established as a god symbol by the Daoists during the Song period (960–1279 AD), and later spread beyond the confines of sectarian religions after the fall of the Song dynasty (Duara “Superscribing” 781). Henceforth, as a deity, Guan Yu’s image cannot and should not contain any type of disgrace or shame. According to Sun Yongjin, in order to cleanse Guan Yu’s disgrace, it became necessary to legitimize his submission to Cao Cao, and the episode of “Lord Guan Submits to Cao Cao” successfully redeems Guan’s disgrace through entrusting him with the task of protecting Liu Bei’s families (Sun *Sanguo* 32-33). Such a transition illustrates Guan Yu’s altruistic behavior of sacrificing his own honor and fame in order to fulfill his task, as well as assisting those who are in trouble. In Duara’s article on the transition of myths and symbols upon the apotheosized Guan Yu, he mentions Guan has various god identities, including the god of war, god of loyalty, god of wealth, and god of literature, among many others. Out of all these deity titles, he is also known as the protector and the defender, which is a symbol of guardianship (Duara “Superscribing” 781-782). In fact, Guan Yu is the symbol of guardianship and the protector of the state, which can partially be seen in reference to the altruistic behavior and his *xia* mentality of assisting the weak. The behavior of acting as a guardian for the weak is a principle embedded within the altruistic ideals obeyed by the *xiake*. In examining Sima Qian’s aforementioned quote...

“Without thinking of themselves, they hasten to the side of those who are in trouble, whether it means survival or destruction, life or death. Yet they never boast of their accomplishments but rather consider it a disgrace to brag of what they have done for the

others. So there is much about them in which is worthy of admiration, particularly when trouble is something that comes to almost everyone some time.”

赴士之阨困，既已存亡死生矣，而不矜其能，羞伐其德，蓋亦有足多者焉 (Watson *Records: Han 2:410*)

...Sima notes that a *xia* will “hasten to the side of those who are in trouble,” which marks the ‘guardian of the weak’ mentality within *xiake* principles.

Within the Three Kingdoms story cycle, quite a few sections glorify and praise Guan Yu’s mentality as the guardian of the weak. First, it is derived from the episodes of “Lord Guan Returns His Official Seal,” “Lord Guan Plucks the Robe with His Blade,” “Rides Alone a Thousand *li*,” and “Lord Guan Slays Generals and Breaches Five Passes.” These episodes occur after Guan Yu repays his debt to Cao Cao by “[Skewering] Yan Liang” and “[Punishing] Wen Chou at Yanjin” when Guan ends his sojourn in Cao’s camp and escorts Liu Bei’s families to Liu Bei’s new settlement. In Zhang Liao’s persuasion, he considers Liu Bei’s two wives “those who are in trouble,” as he said they “will have no one to defend them,” and “as they wish to preserve their chastity,” it will result in death, and “if they deemed to preserve their life, then they belong to someone else” (Luo *wenshi* 193-194). Guan Yu accepts Zhang’s labeling of Liu Bei’s wives as those who are in trouble, therefore he feels obligated to protect them, not simply because of his duty, but also due to the principles he lives upon, which legitimatizes his behavior to capitulate to the opposite camp. However, it is always fascinating how Liu Bei seems not to actually care if Cao Cao captured his wives and families. In chapter three of volume nine of *tongsu yanyi*, entitled “Zhang Fei Guards the Water and Pulls Down the Bridge 張益德據水斷橋,” Liu Bei flings his infantile son Ah Dou 阿斗 to the ground after Zhao Yun 趙雲 saves Ah Dou among the enemies, because Liu almost lost a warrior general, Zhao Yun, in the battlefield

trying to save his son (Luo *wenshi* 316). Conversely, such a connotation of Guan's attitude as a guardian is not depicted in the *pinghua* narrative. In the previous discussion of Zhang Liao's inducement on Guan Yu from *pinghua*, Zhang didn't proclaim Liu Bei's wives as weak and in need of Guan's assistance. Hence, by considering Liu Bei's wives as "those who are in trouble" and emphasizing Guan Yu's dishonor of himself in his capitulation to Cao, *tongsu yanyi* reconstructs Guan Yu's moral standard as a *xia*, and accentuates the process of apotheosizing Guan Yu as a deity and the guardian of the weak.

In addition to the aforementioned scenario, in chapter ten of volume ten in *tongsu yanyi*, the episode of "Lord Guan Releases, and Obligates, Cao Cao 關雲長義釋曹操" also illustrates Guan Yu's moral virtue towards those of who are in trouble. As mentioned above, Cao Cao is defeated in the Battle of Red Cliff as he is on his way to Nanjun 南郡, which is still controlled by Cao's army. However, Zhuge Liang assigns Guan Yu to guard and block off Cao Cao's escape route in Huarong Pass. At the end of the episode, Guan Yu releases Cao Cao and all of his soldiers, partially due to the past personal debt he owed Cao Cao, obliging his kindness. Another reason is due to his moral virtue of benevolence, as he can't endure to "persecute the weak 不凌弱" (Luo *wenshi* 362). The narrator explicitly addresses Guan Yu's psychological movement as he looks at Cao Cao's army, noting that he is "moved, despite himself, at the sight of Cao's men distracted and on the verge of tears... Lord Guan softened 又見曹軍惶惶，皆欲垂淚……如何不動心." Moreover, "Lord Guan's sense of pity seemed to grow on him, and he hesitated 雲長不忍殺之," then "with a long sigh, [Guan] let all the remaining troops pass 長歎一聲，並皆放之" (Luo *wenshi* 362). The emotional changes within Guan Yu once again signify his struggle with the basic *xia* principles he lived upon, mainly the truthfulness to his word and duty, his emotional attachment towards Cao Cao, or the one "who appreciates" him, and his conflicting self-pity, as

he is supposed to be the one who protects “those who are in trouble,” and he is now assigned a task to “persecute the weak.” In contrast, this emotional obligation as a protector of the weak is not depicted in *pinghua*. Rather, *pinghua* describes Cao Cao’s escape as due to faith, and caused by the “dust and mist 塵霧” (*Records* 97). This sentiment illustrated in *tongsu yanyi* remolds Guan Yu as a guardian, defender, and protector of the weak.

Besides the aforementioned episodes in *tongsu yanyi* which implicitly construct Guan Yu as the protector of the weak, there is another episode intertwined within Liu Bei’s campaign to take over the Yi province 益州之戰, which covers the present-day area of Sichuan 四川 and Chongqing 重慶. In the early stage of this campaign, Liu Bei lost one of his main advisors, director general Pang Tong 龐統, in the siege of Luo County 雒縣. Thus, Liu Bei calls for reinforcements from his home base in the Jingzhou 荊州, which is under the command of Liu Bei’s chief advisor, Zhuge Liang. In chapter six of volume thirteen, entitled “Zhang Yide Obliging Releases Yan Yan” 張益德義釋嚴顏, a passage narrates as follows:

Showing Xuande’s [Liu Bei’s] letter to the officials, Kongming [Zhuge Liang] said, “Our lord has placed the responsibility for Jingzhou upon me, with instructions to appoint whomsoever I deem fit. Nonetheless, today Guan Ping is here with a letter whose intent is that Lord Guan assume this heavy task. Yunchang, be ever mindful of the honor-binding oath in the peach garden and do your utmost to defend this province. So weighty a task will require the utmost diligence.” Lord Guan, without pausing to make the ritual refusal, readily accepted. At a magnificent feast Kongming proffered the seal and cord of authority, which Lord Guan extended both hands to receive. “Everything now depends on you,” Kongming said, holding forth the seal. “An honorable man,” Lord Guan responded, “perseveres until death.”

卻說孔明將玄德書對眾官曰：「主公書中把荊州托在我身上，教我自量才委用。雖是如此，今教關平齎書前來，其意欲雲長公當此重任。雲長想桃園結義之情，竭力守之。據此之地，北當曹操，東敵孫權，非小可之事也。公宜勉之。」雲長更不推辭，慨然領諾。孔明設一宴，交割印綬。雲長雙手來接。孔明擎著印：「這干係都在將軍身上。」雲長曰：「大丈夫既領重任，除死方休。」(Luo *wenshi* 448)

In this dialogue, Guan Yu is appointed as the defender of Jingzhou, which is the main territory of Liu Bei's Kingdom. As Guan Yu assumes the position as the grand administrator of Jingzhou, Zhuge Liang reminds him of his duty to defend the province from Cao Cao in the north, and in order to do so, he needs to keep their alliance with the Wu Kingdoms in the east. The essential part in this dialogue is not Guan's response to Zhuge of being prepared to defend the Jingzhou until death, but rather how this dialogue and Guan's position echo the historical generals who were assigned to defend the same region by repelling the nomadic tribes from the northern steppe. In Zhuge Liang's well-known Longzhong Plan 隆中對, Jingzhou is considered the most essential part of this grandiose strategy, due to its strategic location and its access to an abundance of resources (Chen *Sanguozhi* 411; Luo *wenshi* 283). Also, the Jingzhou is located between the northern Han River 漢水 and the southern Yangtze River 揚子江, which was considered an advantage, as it could easily repel any threats coming from the north through strategic use of the complex geography in the area. A slightly more complicated interpretation would be that the Jingzhou was constantly considered to be the natural frontline for the southern dynasties in repelling foreign invasions from the north. The following are examples of generals garrisoned in the Jingzhou:

- During the Eastern Jin 東晉 dynasty, Zhu Xu 朱序 against the Fu Pi 苻丕 of the Former Qin 前秦 (Fang *Jinshu* Vol. 9).
- During the Northern Song 北宋 period, Yue Fei 岳飛 repelled the Jurchen that had conquered northern China (Cambridge 5:674).
- During the Southern Song 南宋 period, Lü Wende 呂文德 and Lü Wenhuan 呂文煥 repelled Kublai Khan 忽必烈 and the Mongolian forces for sixteen years (Toqto'a *Songshi* Vol. 46, 47, 48; Cambridge 5:920-921; Cambridge 6:433).

The implication of defending the Jingzhou is not simply the symbol of being a protector, but also a symbol of the iconic deity as the protector of the legitimacy of the Chinese empire. The symbolic referral of the protector of the Chinese empire and the legitimacy of the Chinese throne is a political referral initiated in the Song period, which later continued into the Ming period and spanned over hundreds of years of international political conflicts between the nomadic tribes from the Eurasian Steppe and the agrarian-based Chinese empire in the south. Emperor Huizong of Song was actively involved in conveying Guan Yu's protector symbolism to the general public, as the emperor believed Guan's super-morality and courage would encourage his people to unite in order to repel the northern threat of the Jurchen kingdoms (Lei *Manhua* 70; Lu *Guan* 82).

In fact, the politically infused identity within the symbolism of Guan Yu's protector status is not the only element embedded in the narrative of *tongsu yanyi*. There are also a few episodes in which Guan Yu's spirit reappears to care for those in trouble after his death in Maicheng. Two of Guan Yu's divine manifestations in *tongsu yanyi* signify two important elements that differentiate *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. First of all, it is the apotheosis of Guan Yu from a man to a deity in the mid-Ming period, and *pinghua* doesn't contain any scenarios that

depict Guan Yu as an immortal warrior, nor does he reappear after his death. Second, this divine manifestation signifies how Guan's protector identity continues to illustrate Guan Yu's *xia* characteristics of assisting those who are in trouble. Chapter three of volume sixteen of *tongsu yanyi* depicts Guan's first divine manifestation after his death. A specific quote in this chapter reads as follows:

In a flash, Lord Guan realized Pujing's word, and entered the temple in quest for Buddha's law of Karma. Later, he became an apprentice of Pujing the monk. Thereafter, he frequently manifested himself in divine form on Jade-Springs Hill. And the local dwellers showed their gratitude by building a temple on the summit, where they made offerings each season.

公遂從其言，入庵講佛法，即拜普淨禪師為師。後往往顯聖，鄉人累感其應，因此就於山頂上建廟，四時致祭。(Luo *wenshi* 549)

In this passage, Guan Yu manifests himself in the Jade-Springs Hill after Pujing 普淨 converts him to Buddhism. Guan Yu also continues to manifest himself in the surrounding area for an extensive period and contributes to the local dwellers who have expressed their gratitude through offerings and a temple, which reflects the ideology of how his manifestations are considered to be a protector of the local dwellers. In addition, another passage in chapter five of volume seventeen of *tongsu yanyi* features an old man expressing to Guan Yu's son, Guan Xing 關興, why the local dwellers are making offerings to Guan Yu: "His spirit is most revered in these parts 此間皆是尊神地方" and "every family revered him when he lived, and all the more so now that he is gone 在生之日，家家侍奉，何況今日為神乎" (Luo *wenshi* 593). This quote from an anonymous elderly man expresses the apotheosized identity of Guan Yu as a protector that echoes his first manifestation at the Jade-Springs Hill.

These features of Guan Yu's image as a divine protector appraise the *xia* principles of protection and loyalty. And yet, his loyalty isn't intently expressed as loyalty to one particular lord or ruler, but rather for a nation's communities that Guan Yu—as an apotheosized *xia*—is determined to protect. As mentioned above, one of the specific elements of the *xia* principles is the mentality of aiding those who are in trouble, which is mentioned in Sima Qian's historical records, and is highly praised in his commentaries. In fact, this attribute becomes an essential part of the *xia* temperament. Furthermore, the *tongsu yanyi* depiction of Guan Yu's *xiake* temperance serves to reconstruct and coordinate the *xia* principles with Confucianism. In fact, Chen Shan's *Zhongguo wuxia shi* 中國武俠史 suggests that in the Song and post-Song periods, a set of codes were formulated in order to regulate the individual behaviors and actions of those belonging to the brotherhood of river and lake community (Chen Shan 159-171). Therefore, *tongsu yanyi*'s constant praises of Guan Yu, exalting him as a divine protector, can be seen as an attempt by the literati writers to regulate the wandering population, and to encourage vagabonds to live by the *xia* principles promoted by the image of Guan Yu.

Conclusion

One of the primary themes in the fictional story of the Three Kingdoms is the *yingxiong* concept, which translates to the concept of a “hero” in English. The English term “hero” cannot fully explicate *yingxiong* as constituted within its definition. The concept of *yingxiong* is redefined in the rewriting and remolding of the Three Kingdoms story, especially in the recension of *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi*, which determines that a *yingxiong* should be someone with an ambition to “conquer” the realm and take it into his own possession. Considering this concept, Guan Yu is praised and considered a *yingxiong*, but ultimately cannot satisfy this defined

concept of *yingxiong* in reference to *tongsu yanyi*. Guan Yu doesn't have any ambition to conquer the realm and make it his own, which therefore disqualifies him from fulfilling the categories of a hero illustrated in *tongsu yanyi* or as defined in the *renwuzhi*. Even though scholars such as Kam Louie consider Guan Yu to be a hero due to his contempt of both sex and money, it is mainly his personal loyalty and the truthfulness to his word that contributes to Louie's consideration. The image of Guan Yu from *Sanguozhi pinghua* illustrates a *wu*-masculinity, and a skillful warrior that merely competes with Zhang Fei and Lü Bu. However, the character of Guan Yu in *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi* explicates how Guan is utterly different from that of *pinghua* and other martial warriors in the story. Guan is simply not a martial warrior.

Guan Yu's transition from *pinghua* to *tongsu yanyi* aims to reconstruct and reshape Guan Yu with a sense of deity. Moreover, this change also infused a sense of the *xia* mentality into the image of Guan Yu that transformed Guan Yu from a warrior to a knight-errant. As mentioned previously, a *xia* is not a vocation like the European counterpart, or an identity like a scholar, a minister, a vagabond, or a warrior general, nor a *wu*- or a *wen*-dominated masculine image. A *xia* can be anyone, with any vocation. A *xia* is a person who acts and behaves based on a set of ideals or principles. James Liu explains how *xia* is a mentality and a standard of living (Liu *Knight-errant* 4-6). The *xia* standards typically refer to the rules that belong to vagabonds, or those who roam among the brotherhood of river and lake, also known as the *jianghu*. There are several scenes that depict Guan Yu as a *xiake*, instead of the commonly acknowledged warrior figure. In Guan's self-introduction in *tongsu yanyi*, he proclaims himself as an individual who wanders among the brotherhood of river and lake, and kills a local bully for righteousness. It is unlike Guan's introduction in *pinghua*, which declares himself a fugitive after killing a local

official. Furthermore, Guan's truthfulness to his word, and his altruistic mentality to assist those who are in trouble, explicate Guan Yu as more of a *xiake* archetype, than a pure *wen-* or *wu-* dominated archetype, like Zhang Fei and Zhuge Liang.

In fact, Guan Yu's reconstructed image in *tongsu yanyi* was part of the process to redefine the principles of the wandering population in the Ming period. In fifteenth and sixteenth century China, the rise of the merchant class, and the elevation of their social status, not only reflected the merchant class challenging traditional social hierarchy, but it also reflected a high volume of traveling at the time (Huang *Literati* 31). Furthermore, the circulation of printed texts, particularly route books and merchant manuals, such as *Yitong lucheng tuji* 一統路程圖記 (Illustrated Route Book of the Unified Empire), *Shi shang lei yao* 士商類要, and other subdivisions of route maps that were included in other various encyclopedias, reveals that the market demanded these types of books due to the volume of traveling (He *Home* 104-122). Therefore, a set of standards by which those travelers, vagabonds, and bandits were to abide became necessary (Wang *Guangong* 346). Hence, Guan Yu's *xia* temperance and behaviors communicate a standard of living among the audience in the retelling of the Three Kingdoms story cycle, especially the close identity connection between Guan and the brotherhood of river and lake, and how his righteous behaviors receive popular admiration for centuries.

Final Comments

In the preceding readings, I have attempted to demonstrate the incorporation of popular and literary traditions in the rewriting of the historical Three Kingdoms story cycle in the early Ming period. The retelling of the story mediates between the two classes of culture, the folk and the literati, which presents the archetypal models of Chinese masculinity that emerged between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Wilt Idema's remarks on *pinghua* suggest that it was a popular reading for the general population during the Yuan period, and this claim generally reflects an assumption that the story recorded in *pinghua* may have derived from folklores. Moreover, the Three Kingdoms narrative reconstructed in *tongsu yanyi* suggests there was a cultural mediation between images and ideas of the world perceived by the literati and the folk. After the establishment of the Ming imperial court, China attained a series of economic prosperity, urbanization, and the rise of internal commerce. This particular economic affluence and growth of urban culture gave rise to the development of literary culture, and *tongsu yanyi* was disseminated in the form of manuscripts and then published in printed form in 1522.

Throughout my study, I examined three categories of Chinese masculine images within the Three Kingdoms story, *pinghua* and *tongsu yanyi*. The first category is the *wu*-identity, which is represented by the characters that are martial experts, possess valor, and are mighty warriors. Most of these warrior characters act with unruly behaviors, and always present themselves with an uncontrollable temper when facing other characters in the story. In Chapter One, the exposition of Zhang Fei reveals one of the typical *wu* masculine identities, the *haohan*, or the good-fellow archetype. The *haohan* archetype is a persona that tends to explicitly express their own inner intuition and immediate feelings through their volcanic behaviors, such as bloodshed, physical attacks, and roars. This means these archetypal characters are easily manipulated and instigated by other characters or figures. These characters, especially Zhang

Fei, act as an element to reject the gendered political disorder, and to refute the social injustice caused by corruption within the plain narrative reading of *pinghua*.

However, these depositions of defiance within the *wu* masculine *haohan* archetypes are oppressed in *tongsu yanyi*. In *tongsu yanyi*, these *haohan* characters still respond with their natural disposition and behave with their volcanic and brutal actions, but their actions and behaviors are substantially contained by other external factors. I pinpointed a few examples in my investigation of Zhang Fei and Lü Bu: Zhang Fei's unruly behaviors are contained by the literati compilers through the removal of several significant scenes, such as Zhang's assault on Duan Gui. Furthermore, Zhang Fei is also tamed through a series of commands from Liu Bei. For example, the scenario of the Three Visits and the investigation of Liyang, which depicts Liu Bei's commands in controlling Zhang Fei's defiant disposition and his *wu* masculine characters. The removal of Zhang Fei's defiant behaviors predominantly minimizes Zhang Fei's persona of a volcanic temper and his uncontrollable behaviors, which inspire both the Mencian idealized lordship and the *wen* masculine characters to "tame the beast."

On the other hand, Lü Bu may not necessarily be a good example of a typical *haohan* character in the Three Kingdoms story, but he is a significant character to demonstrate the brawls between the *wu*-masculinities within the same novel. The *haohan* archetype is not the only typical persona within the *wu*-masculinities. Lü Bu has a *wu*-masculine persona but cannot be considered a *haohan*. Rather, Lü Bu is an anti-*haohan* or an anti-hero. Lü Bu has almost all the similar qualities as a typical *haohan* character: extraordinary appearance, proficiency in martial skills, and unruly behavior, just like Zhang Fei. However, he is also a character that performs actions based on his self-interests, which means Lü is a character that will compromise his behaviors for his own interests. Therefore, he cannot be considered a typical *haohan*, but an anti-

haohan, still within the *wu*-dominated masculine persona. In *pinghua*, Lü Bu is depicted as someone who will wave his blade when he believes it is necessary to defend his manhood, such as in the “Double Snare,” where Lü decapitates Dong Zhuo in order to uphold the purity of his manhood. However, in the literati-ized *tongsu yanyi*, Lü compromises his own interests, and is contained by a series of Mencian moral virtues instigated by Wang Yun and Diao Chan. Lü kills Dong Zhuo, as he did in *pinghua*, however he did not slaughter Dong in an impromptu action as depicted in *pinghua*. Rather, he waited and joined an alliance with Dong’s political enemy before he acts. Just like Zhang Fei, Lü is controlled and suppressed by external factors, whereas instead of being tamed like Zhang, Lü compromises his innate behavior for his own interests in *tongsu yanyi*, therefore illustrating his *wu*-masculine differences from the *haohan* archetype.

The second type of masculinity lies within those that are *wen* dominated characters. These types of characters are typically culturally refined, well-versed, and abstain from desires. They are generally presented as calm and witty, and they mainly act as the mastermind for the military township, or the leader of the ruling power. Furthermore, these figures tend to be the most complicated, in contrast with the *wu* masculine characters. In Chapter Two, my discussion begins with the physical appearance and identity of the mastermind and the chancellor of the Shu kingdoms, Zhuge Liang. In which, *pinghua* presents Zhuge Liang as a divine immortal with fingernails that are three inches long and lips as if painted red. The *pinghua* Zhuge reflects a collective image speculated amongst the folk from villages and streets. This image of Zhuge Liang signifies how the common people see scholars or the elite as those who possess mystical power, such as casting magic on wind and fire, and they also see scholars as having *haohan*-like skills, such as a roar and skills in hack-and-slash.

On the other hand, *tongsu yanyi* presents a different image of the *wen* masculine character from *pinghua*. In fact, the image of Zhuge Liang as a divine immortal with a queer physical appearance is dismissed in *tongsu yanyi*, and Zhuge's image is reconstructed as a gleaming jade with a temperament like an immortal. Such a dismissal of Zhuge Liang's divine immortal appearance refutes the popular image that the *wen* character are immortals, or the divine who can resolve all the problems in the world. This perspective can be seen in an intertextual reference to the prologue of *Shuihu chuan*, in which Bao Zheng 包拯 is a divine immortal of *wenquxing* 文曲星, or the star of wisdom, who comes to assist the Emperor Ren of Song 宋仁宗 in governing China. In addition to the changes in Zhuge Liang's physical appearance, which refute the popular image of the divine immortal, Zhuge also refutes the traditional images of pedantic scholars on several occasions throughout *tongsu yanyi*. In the novel, Zhuge Liang is involved in several arguments with other scholarly archetypes in the chapter entitled "Zhuge Liang in a War of Words with the Southern Ministers," in which Zhuge Liang criticizes and denounces the pedantic images of a scholar, as someone who only knows working on literacy texts and acts in pedantic practices, without actualizing any achievements in governance or assisting their ruler and the people.

Moreover, in another argument of words with Wang Lang, known as "Kongming Defeats Cao Zhen in Qi Mountain," Zhuge Liang disproves the subservient attributes of scholar-officials since the Mongolian regime. This type of negation of the pedantic scholar practices and subservient attributes of scholars in *tongsu yanyi* can be interpreted as an attempt to reconstruct the images of scholar identities. Furthermore, it can also be viewed as a nostalgic sentiment of the past regimes that encompasses the Mencian concept of ruler-minister harmony. The nostalgic sentiment and the Mencian concept depicted in *tongsu yanyi* are not only illustrated through the

reconstruction of Zhuge Liang, but are also demonstrated by the re-insertion of historical events with fabricated details in the reconstructed narratives. Not only is Cao Cao portrayed as the villain, he is also depicted similarly to the Hongwu Emperor and Yongle Emperor of the Ming. At one point, the villain depiction of Cao Cao amplifies the salient characteristics of Liu Bei as an ideal ruler in Mencian ideology. On the other hand, Cao Cao's massacres of scholar-officials in his realm reminds the audience of the massacres of officials early in the Hongwu and Yongle regimes. In which, Chan Hok-lam believes the vernacular literature in Ming period at some point not only reminded the audience of the suppression of officials in the early Ming period, it was also a reinstatement of the Mencian ideology in the harmonious ruling of cooperation between the ruler and the scholar-officials.

In fact, the reconstruction of the *wen*-masculine characters in *tongsu yanyi* not only rectifies the collective images of the scholar identity in both popular culture and literati circles, it also performs a domination of the *wen* characters against other models of masculinity, especially in competition with the *wu* masculine archetypes, such as Zhang Fei and Lü Bu. In several factual or fabricated events in *tongsu yanyi*, Zhuge Liang goads and manipulates the *wu* masculine characters. Andrew Plaks suggests these events evoke the competition between Zhuge Liang and his own men. However, these events not only illustrate the tug-of-war within the political faction, they also demonstrate the competition between the *wen-wu* dyad, a contention in which Zhuge Liang triumphs. The triumph of Zhuge reinstates the superiority of the literati over martial warriors, and it is a reflection of the *wen*-masculine characters regaining its dignity lost from the subservient behaviors during the Mongolian and early Ming regimes. The reconstruction of Zhuge Liang is therefore not as simple as it looks; it intends to rectify the identity of the literati from the popular perspective within the early Ming period.

The third type of Chinese masculinity discussed in this project is the *xia* archetype, or the Chinese knight-errant. *Xia* and *xiake* are rarely discussed in the study of Chinese masculinities. In fact, *xia* always refers to a specific group of characters depicted in Chinese novels. James Liu considers several historical figures to be *xia*, such as the Tang poet Li Bai, and Lu Su from the Three Kingdoms period. I believe *xia* is a hybrid archetype associated with both *wen* and *wu* characters. Unlike the other *wen* and *wu* figures, where *wen* or *wu* is the predominate attribute of the character, *xia* doesn't have a quantitative measurement, such as a requirement for the character to meet a certain percentage of *wen* or *wu*. By definition, *xia* is a figure who behaves through a set of rigorous moral principles in administering their actions and behaviors.

Guan Yu is traditionally considered a *yingxiong* who possessed outstanding abilities in both literacy and martial valor within the Three Kingdoms story cycle. However, through thorough research and by contrast, the term *yingxiong* is not as widely applicable as it is in reference to Guan. According to *Renwuzhi*, Guan is a *xiong*, who is superior in strength and courage, though he cannot be considered a *ying* since Guan does not display any outstanding wisdom or scholarship elements in the fictional character. According to the discussion on *yingxiong* between Cao Cao and Liu Bei in *tongsu yanyi*, Guan doesn't have an ambition or a determination to make the realm for his own rule, and it is therefore difficult to consider Guan a *yingxiong*. On the other hand, Guan is different from Zhang Fei's *haohan* archetype, even though Guan's figure contains factors similar to the *haohan*. In spite of the similarity, Guan is self-constrained from some of the common attributes of *wu* masculine warriors, such as a volcanic temper, a habit of unrestrained drinking, yielding to sexual desire, or acting spontaneously, like Zhang Fei.

When examining Guan in *tongsu yanyi*, it becomes clear that he is depicted as a *xiake*. Guan's self-introduction signifies his identity as a wanderer who had roamed for several years among the *jianghu*, or the brotherhood of river and lake. Guan also expresses his altruistic attitude in becoming a fugitive after he avenged the social injustice in his hometown. This reconstructed background of Guan refines him as a righteous warrior similar to Zhang Fei, but the emphasis of his wandering experience in *jianghu* is what designates Guan's behavior as within the moral principles of the *xia*. As mentioned previously, throughout *tongsu yanyi*, Guan Yu acts in accordance to a *xiake* more than a warrior; for example, a warrior like Zhang Fei will not spare Cao Cao at Huarong Pass simply because Cao appreciates him. This difference denotes a *haohan* from *xia*, and this difference also defines two different types of loyalty embedded within the *xia* principles: the devotion to their sovereign, known as *zhong*, and a personal loyalty referred to as *yi*, due to the concept of *en*, or personal indebtedness. The situation at Huarong Pass conditions the conflicts and the struggle between the two types of loyalty, the *zhong*, and the *yi* and *en*. Guan's choice of *en* and *yi* over *zhong* dictates that he is different from Zhang Fei's *haohan* character, or Zhuge Liang's *wen* scholar character in *tongsu yanyi*.

The question of Guan's identity persists in my investigation, as Guan is not only a historical figure or a semi-fictional character in a historical romance; since the Song dynasty, he has also been apotheosized as a divine immortal. My investigation reveals that Guan's apotheosis is related to the foreign affairs during the Song period, as the legitimacy of the court was threatened by external political power, such as the nomadic kingdoms established by the Khitan, Manchu, Tangut, and the Mongols in the north. This is based on Guan's status as a protector in religious sects, since the Daoists and Buddhists considered Guan the protector of the temples and monasteries. Also, in both history and romance, Guan Yu is appointed as the protector of the

Jingzhou, which further contributes to his status as the protector, since the Jingzhou was an essential military barricade against the military intrusion from the powers established by the nomadic tribes of the Eurasian Steppe. In addition, Guan is the protector of the weak in *tongsu yanyi*, similar to the *xiake* who will sacrifice oneself to protect those who are in need, as presented in the episode of “Rides Alone a Thousand *li*” and in the Huarong Pass. Therefore, Guan’s apotheosis is based on this protector status from his own historical identity, and is later dramatized by storytellers and dramatists, then reconstructed into the literati-ized character that is unparalleled by any other characters in the novel.

In fact, Guan Yu’s complicated masculine identity implies that the current categorization of masculinities through the *wen-wu* dyad is not enough. The factors of determining a character as a *wen* or *wu* masculine character do not provide an accurate representation of the figure depicted in literature. For example, Zhang Fei can be considered a character purely distinguished by his *wu* masculinity, but Lü Bu, Zhao Yun, and Zhang Liao cannot be categorized in such character, nor they can be considered pure models of *wen* masculinities, since they are mainly thought of as warrior generals. Similarly, Guan Yu cannot be considered purely as a *wu*-dominated or *wen*-dominated character. In *tongsu yanyi*, Guan is presented as a *xiake*-like figure, and his masculine temperament doesn’t embody either a *wen* or *wu* identity. As Guan’s *xia* figure also presents a new temperament in regulating the concept and persona of *xia* in the late imperial period, it reconstructs Sima Qian’s and Han Feizi’s perspective of the *xia* from a wandering chivalric figure to a nationalist. Therefore, in *tongsu yanyi*, Guan Yu is being *xiake*-ized into an archetypical *xia* figure.⁴¹ Quoting the epitome from Louis Cha’s modern martial art fiction, Guan Yu’s figure in *tongsu yanyi* reflects a *xiake*-ized morality of “*weiguo weimin*

⁴¹ *Xiake*-ization, or *xiake hua* 俠客化 is a process in which the figure becomes more directly involved in or behaves in accordance with Chinese chivalric principles.

xiazhidazhe 為國為民俠之大者,” which translates to “chivalry is service to the nation and the people” (Jin 2:826; Hamm 108).

In general, my study on the Chinese masculinities within the Three Kingdoms story cycle intends to demonstrate the process of literati self-reconstruction in Chinese novels. When analyzing the differences between the plain narrative *pinghua* and literati-ized *tongsu yanyi*, it becomes clear that there are significant changes and reconstruction that took place within certain Chinese masculine models. For example, the depiction of the reined warrior, righteous scholar, and loyalist *xia* all took place in the literati-ized *tongsu yanyi*. Moreover, the righteous Zhuge Liang in *tongsu yanyi* reflects such a self-reconstruction in the literati-ization of the Three Kingdoms story and the flexing of dominance of the scholar images throughout the novel itself. Therefore, the literati had begun reconstructing Chinese masculinities as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in order to redeem its lost dignity.

To further examine my questions about Chinese masculinities, especially surrounding the various archetypal models in the genre of *xiaoshuo*, either imperial or modern, I question how this reconstruction and merging between the folk reading and literati-ized literature affects Chinese culture and tradition, or furthermore, how this revamp of masculine archetypal models affects Chinese culture (and manhood) from the Ming period and thereafter. This is particularly interesting, since the literati-ized form of *xiaoshuo* has predominated over the plain narratives since the Ming period. In the late imperial period, *xiaoshuo* was a leading influential factor in Chinese culture, which has influenced ideas, governmental institutions, and the general population. In Gramsci’s terminology, *xiaoshuo* were hegemonic in the late imperial period, which is also fairly interesting, since the folk class influenced the general population and the ideas through their imagined images of the elite classes in popular culture throughout a

tumultuous period of time (*pinghua* – Yuan). On the other hand, the literary class attempted to reconstruct their self-images and ideas through popular readings in a prosperous and civil society (*tongsu yanyi* – mid-Ming). This lingering question on the topic of Chinese masculinities will require further study in the future, since it is beyond the scope of my investigation.

In fact, as one of the earlier stories to be literati-ized, the Three Kingdoms story cycle set a standard for a specific model of masculinities, which is relevant in examining characters from novels in the later period. For example, in *Xiyouji*, Sun Wukong is a similar model to the restrained *haohan* Zhang Fei in the literati-ized *tongsu yanyi*. *Huangming yinglie chuan*, Liu Bowen is illustrated akin to Zhuge Liang in the Ming period. In another of the four masterworks of Ming novels, *Jin ping mei*, Ximen Qing has similar characteristics to the failed-*haohan*, Lü Bu. As mentioned, in Louis Cha's modern fiction, readers can immediately identify the character Guo Jing as similar to Guan Yu. These masculine models took shape and developed over a period of time, from *pinghua*'s impromptu *haohan* to a reined masculine model, or from *pinghua*'s nobody to a chivalric *xia*. Some of these masculine models reflect the consciousness in reconstructing its own identity through rewriting and retelling popular stories, which is not limited to the traditional form of *xiaoshuo*, but also appears in fan production on the internet in the Information Age. My future study attempts to dissect the reconstruction of masculine models in Ming *xiaoshuo*, such as the comparisons between Sun Wukong and Zhang Fei, and the Tang Monk and Liu Bei, and also questions the *xia* masculine models in early *xiashuo*. In addition, I raise questions about the *xiake*-ization of the popular novels in the later imperial period, such as how Guan's *xia* behaviors affects the *xia* figures in the later period, like the Qing novels *sanxia wuyi* 三俠五義 and *wannianqing* 萬年青, and the Ming novel, *chanzhen yishi* 禪真逸史.

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