

Article

I Am the Invincible Sword Goddess: Mediatization of Chinese Gender Ideology through Female *Kung-Fu* Practitioners in Films

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Abstract: The media are avid portrayers of gender binarism and the belief in male-female distinctions, which are mainly attributed to perceived differences of a physical nature. In this paper, we investigate representations of female *kung-fu* practitioners (*nuxia*) in films to discuss how processes of mediation and mediatization depict their femininity, so as to mitigate their appropriation of Chinese martial arts masculinity. Often, *nuxias* are portrayed as empowered women who are equipped to take control of their own lives and to courageously take on challenges from a variety of opponents. However, multimodal deconstruction of the various characteristics of *nuxias* must be placed in an Asian-specific context in order to understand the femininity specific to these characters and to move beyond Western gender ideologies displayed by the media. Perpetuating Confucian patriarchal ideals, *nuxia* roles constantly and consistently associate conformation to Confucian values with virtuousness and non-conformation with wickedness. We therefore can use the ideals of Confucianism as a more accurate foundation in deconstructing the identities of *nuxias*, which allows us to better understand the mediation and mediatization processes of ideologies associated with Chinese femininity and masculinity in martial arts films.

Keywords: Chinese femininity; Chinese masculinity; Confucian ideology; mediatization

1. Introduction

In the field of sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics, dominant ideologies on gendered cultural issues, such as masculinity and femininity, are less and less being considered a binary distinction. However, popular treatment of gender issues remains mired in common sense judgments based largely on the conventional gender binary of male-female differences. For example, essentialism based on a division-of-labor approach is widely propagated through popular media. The media tend to be avid followers of gender binarism and beliefs about male-female distinctions, which can be attributed to differences of a physical nature. As often discussed in the field of gender studies, mainstream media are a common source of dichotomous gender ideologies [1–7]. The constant reiteration of any such ideology as commonsensical and “natural” means that these hegemonic ideas about femininity and masculinity are quickly accepted within cultural and historical contexts. The acceptance of essentialist views of gender stems from a “naturalization” process [8], in which an ideology becomes so dominant that it no longer appears to be an ideology at all. Extending Gramsci’s (1971) idea of hegemony, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet argue that “the most effective form of domination is the assimilation of the wider population into one’s worldview” [8] (p. 43). The popular media have the power to “naturalize” their own conventions; this paper discusses a specific example of this process in the context of martial arts films.

In this paper, we study how popular martial arts (*kung-fu* 功夫¹) films make viewers complicit in the naturalization process of gender roles for female *kung-fu* practitioners (*nuxia* 女侠). The naturalization of gender ideologies by media can also be influenced by racial (a perceived physical or biological characteristic) and ethnic (a social category) identities. Hiramoto discusses the process through which discursive practices employed in Chinese *kung-fu* films began naturalizing a widely propagated concept of ideal Chinese masculinity rooted in Confucian ideology [9]. Traits that index such masculinity include reticence and use of formulaic or philosophical speech styles by heroic male *kung-fu* practitioners (*wuxia* 武侠). It can be observed that such masculine traits, which represent a more cerebral masculinity, in the Chinese context may seem inadequate in a cross-cultural comparison with masculine traits in the Western context, where hegemonic masculinity is projected through strength and physical prowess [2,10]. For example, as shown in Figure 1, in a fight between a tall, muscular man and a short, lean man, Western viewers may be inclined to assume that the former has the advantage.

In the Chinese context, however, such a conclusion may not necessarily be drawn, as a fighter’s physical size is not the only key to martial victory. For example, a good fighter is expected to be equipped with imperceptible masculine traits, such as mental strength (e.g., determination) and self-mastery. Since *kung-fu* has become widely recognized in the contemporary international film industry, these mediatized and racialized styles have generally been accepted by most viewers as natural characteristics of Western and Chinese men. That is, especially in action films, ideal images of masculine Westerners are understood to be large and muscular, while masculine Chinese are determined and skilled.

¹ In this paper, the simplified Chinese characters are used in discussions, except for the movie titles, as it is the orthography used by the Chinese-English bilingual author of this paper. For the movie titles, characters used in original movie posters are used, and they are largely in the traditional Chinese characters.

Figure 1. Ip Man vs. Twister.



Ip Man 2, 2010 © Mandarin Films Distribution Co Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Mandarin Films Distribution Co Ltd., 2011.

“Mediatization” is a specially formalized type of communication, which develops through institutionalized communication, including mainstream media discourse. It encompasses all representational strategies—choices made during production, such as editing of linguistic resources—in the creation of media products, yielding intertextual chains of communication, like text, images and speech [6,11–14]. “Mediation” here refers to communication processes that connect people and elements of society through the exchanges of (intertextual) meanings and ideas [11,15–17]. In fictional stories, such as popular films, naturalized elements of different people—women, men, British, Chinese, *etc.*—are heavily used in processes of mediation and mediatization in order to appeal to mass audiences. For example, stereotypical traits or desirable qualities of different people easily become representations of characters in fictional stories. Thus, this paper is interested in observing what kinds of naturalized elements are involved when mediating and mediatizing traditional *nuxia* characters in popular films. As conformance to Confucian values becomes important, naturalized elements for male fighters or *wuxias*, *nuxias*’ roles are constantly and consistently associated with their embodiment, or lack of, Confucian behaviors. This means that regardless of whether a *nuxia* follows Confucian virtues, she has a place in the mediatization and mediation of Chinese ideology in films, since it is not only the virtuous *nuxias* that represent naturalized norms of Chinese femininity. *Nuxia* characters that do not conform to the traditional and idealized norms in stories also add important elements in mediatizing naturalized ideas about how women are supposed to be. Moreover, some non-normative *nuxia* characters may even appeal to today’s audience, who live in a contemporary world, where traditional values may have different significances.

In this paper, we investigate representations of *nuxias* in films to discuss how processes of mediation and mediatization depict their femininity, so as to mitigate their appropriation of Chinese martial arts masculinity. Often, *nuxias* are seen as empowered women who are equipped, with both physical and mental prowess, to take control of their own lives and to courageously take on challenges from a variety of opponents. While some Western scholars have raised awareness of the subordination of *nuxias* in films, their arguments are mainly centered on the dominant gender ideology without reference to Chinese-specific ideology [18,19]. Multimodal deconstructions of the various characteristics of *nuxias* need to be related to Asian-specific contexts and perspectives in order to understand the femininity specific to these characters and to move beyond (Western) hegemonic naturalization of gender ideologies by media. Perpetuating Confucian patriarchal ideals, *nuxia* roles constantly and consistently associate conformance to Confucian values with virtuousness (e.g., maintaining patriarchal hierarchy) and non-conformance (e.g., rejecting one's socially expected roles) with wickedness. Thus, in contrast with hegemonic naturalization based on Western understandings, our paper will demonstrate that *nuxia* characters are used to uphold Confucian ideology and traditional female roles. As West mentions in his introductory book on martial arts films, "Confucianism is a major element in Chinese culture and is present in many kung fu movies" [20] (p. 88). We therefore can use the ideals of Confucianism as a more accurate foundation in deconstructing the identities of *nuxias*, which allows us to better understand the mediation and mediatization processes of ideologies associated with Chinese femininity and Chinese masculinity in martial arts films.

2. Confucianism and Martial Arts Practitioners

In accordance with Confucianism, women belong to an inside space (*nei* 内, the sphere of domesticity and wifely servitude), while men belong to an outside space (*wai* 外, the sphere of business and scholarly pursuits). The mediatized world of martial arts exists within the realm of *wai*, and this can be seen in the many fictitious heroic *wuxias* who project the ideal cultural and martial qualities (*wen-wu* 文武) and masculinity through the embodiment of Confucian virtues, like righteousness, self-mastery and selflessness. As Liu describes, *wuxias* in Chinese literature generally lacked much regard for the law, but "they usually acted on altruistic motives and were ready to die for their principles" [21] (pp. 1–2). These principles are closely tied to the concept of the martial arts community (*jianghu* 江湖, literally, rivers and lakes). The *jianghu* describes a world made up of the many martial artists who are grouped by clans, disciplines, sects and schools of martial arts. The martial arts principles mentioned by Liu [21] are manifested in the *jianghu* by both male and female practitioners, and indeed, it may be claimed that the *jianghu*'s *raison d'être* is that the courts of law are dysfunctional. Law and order within the *jianghu* is usually maintained by various righteous sects and heroes. All disputes and differences can only be resolved by the use of force, predicating the need for the code of heroism (*xia* 侠) and acts of chivalry. The code of *xia* includes virtues, such as loyalty (*zhong* 忠), courage/bravery (*yong* 勇) and righteousness (*yi* 义), overlapping significantly with values held in high esteem by Confucianism.

At this point, let us define the terms "heroic" and "non-heroic" when we refer to *nuxia* characters. Louie, in his study of the male hero (*yingxiong* 英雄), Guan Yu (160–221 AD), from the Han Dynasty and 'Three Kingdoms' period, mentions that while strength and martial skills index masculinity, it is

only when combined with other indicators, like self-control, acts of chivalry and Confucian values, like righteousness and loyalty, that one is truly a *yingxiong* [22]. In the literary genre of martial-arts fiction that became widespread before the film genre, Guan Yu and other male characters sharing similar heroic qualities are depicted typically as *yingxiong*. Similar to *yingxiong*, Louie also uses another term to describe a man's heroic characteristics—*haohan* (好漢) [22]. Hsia explains the *haohan* as a 'good fellow' in *The Classic Chinese Novel* [23]. An example of a *haohan* mentioned by Louie is Wu Song, a working-class *wuxia*, who is known as a tiger killer from *All Men are Brothers* (水滸傳) [22]. Hsia points out that for working-class heroes, like Wu Song, who is violent and drinks an inordinate amount of alcohol, their ability to resist sexual advances became the sole proof of their self-control [23]. In fact, in the story, Wu Song becomes famous for punishing his adulterous sister-in-law by ripping her breasts open to take her organs out. Moreover, he also beheads the two adulterers. Epstein notes that Wu Song's acts against the sister-in-law exhibit his absence of sexual interests in her, as he sees her as "no longer a woman but an emblem of the dangers associated with transgressive desire" [24] (p. 25). All in all, in the literary genre of martial-arts fiction, sexually-loose behaviors by both men and women are usually placed at the opposite end of *yingxiong* or *haohan* qualities, and this is true for the martial arts films.

In our paper, we are expanding the definition of heroism, *yingxiong* in particular, to encompass heroic *nuxia* characters, while all other *nuxia* characters that fall outside of this definition are considered as "non-heroic". Thus, it should be noted that our use of the term "heroic" does not refer to the "hero" or "heroine" in their conventional usage of describing the leading character in a film. For example, the leading female character played by Michelle Yeoh in *Wing Chun* 詠春 (1994)², Yim Wing Chun, is classified as a heroic *nuxia* for her mediatized exemplary traits and not for being the protagonist. Similarly, one of the leading characters in *Dragon Inn* 新龍門客棧 (1992), played by Maggie Cheung, Jade (aka Gam Seung Yuk), is not a heroic *nuxia*, but a villainous *nuxia*. An example of an ambiguous *nuxia* in the leading role is Mei, played by Zhang Ziyi in *House of Flying Daggers* 十面埋伏 (2004). Despite being the main character of the story, she is not heroic, due to her mediatized characteristics of inconsistent conformity to Chinese ideals.

In addition to, and overlapping with, the definition of being a true *yingxiong*, heroic *nuxias* who transgress the boundary of *nei* and *wai* are aware of their position as women and often participate in martial arts activities in order to fulfill their duties as daughter, wife or mother according to the Confucian doctrine of three obediences and four virtues (*san cong si de* 三从四德). *San cong si de*, which details the relationship between Confucianism and women's conduct, can be traced back to an Eastern Han dynasty book, "Admonitions for Women" (*Nu Jie*), written by an elite female scholar of the time, Ban Zhao (A.D. 45–116) [25,26]. *San cong* states that as women are bound to the realm of *nei*, they "must depend on their fathers, husbands and sons at different stages of their lives" [27] (p. 89). A woman is expected to obey her father before marriage, her husband when married and her sons in widowhood; these are the three obediences. Additionally, because the premise of martial arts films includes teacher-student relationships analogous to parent-child bonds, obedience towards

² Chinese movie titles are introduced with English titles when they are mentioned for the first time. There are a number of similar film titles in English; by providing the original Chinese titles, we hope to avoid any confusion that might otherwise occur.

teachers by martial arts practitioners is considered to fall within the *san cong* ideology in this paper. Along with this idea of women's obedience to the patriarchal code at their different life stages, Ban Zhao described four areas of conduct that must be observed by a virtuous woman. They consist of: (1) upholding moral integrity and chastity for husband and family (*fu de* 妇德); (2) using appropriate speech, which includes abstaining from vulgarity, interruption, hurtful words or incessant talking/gossiping (*fu yan* 妇言); (3) behaving in a modest manner, with a neat and demure appearance and without sloppiness or seductiveness (*fu rong* 妇容); and (4) working diligently for husband and family by fulfilling domestic duties (*fu gong* 妇功).

All in all, for *nuxias*, being part of *jianghu* can mean that they are abiding by both *wen-wu* philosophy and *san cong si de*, as these respective male and female ideals rooted in Confucian ideology have overlapping qualities. In a recent publication, Dong explores the Chinese female heroic tradition represented by women who served in military capacities in connection to the story of a famous female warrior, Hua Mulan [28]. Dong claims that the heroism demonstrated by these women is well marked by Confucian principles, as their conduct unwaveringly adheres to fundamental principles, like loyalty and/or filial piety. She argues that obedience to the Confucian doctrine makes it “possible for a woman to disrupt social norms by crossing the boundaries defining gender roles without incurring severe punishment” [28] (p. 13). She also notes that fictional heroic *nuxias* are “carefully characterized without either challenging or threatening the dominant male-centered rule” [28] (p. 13). Being a set of Confucian values, *san cong si de* works as an important factor in the mediatization of prototypical characteristics of Chinese women. That is, this set of idealized traditional gender beliefs can be manipulated and appropriated as part of the gendered practices of the *nuxia* characters in martial arts films. Thus, in order to further understand how *nuxias* negotiate their femininity and heroism in naturalized contexts of the Confucian patriarchal hierarchy within martial arts films, we have to be able to identify the subtleties of transgressing Chinese gender propriety as based on/against Confucian ideals and values.

3. Data and Methodology

With this relationship between Chinese women and Confucian philosophy in mind, we examine how *nuxia* characters in popular *kung-fu* films perform femininity through the way they relate to *san cong si de* and the *wen-wu* philosophy. We will focus on behavior that both conforms to and deviates from *san cong si de* and *wen-wu* ideology to highlight various representations of Chinese femininity in an otherwise masculine domain and will compare the performance of Chinese femininity and masculinity by heroic and non-heroic *nuxia* characters. In addition to the ideal feminine traits of *san cong si de*, as described in the previous section, another noticeable element in the mediatization of *nuxia* characters in popular *kung-fu* films is their physical and emotional vulnerability. Despite both heroic and non-heroic *nuxias*' remarkable strengths, plotlines across these films often place them in a position where they require protection by others—usually male martial artists. As we discuss representations of *nuxia* characters, we will consider this element, as well.

The data for this paper come from a larger project on martial arts films in which over 160 films have been examined³. For this paper, we focus on 72 films featuring Chinese female martial artists that were released between 1966 and 2013. The number of films and *nuxia* characters in the data for this paper are categorized by time period (the film's year of release) in Table 1.

Table 1. Numbers of films and *nuxia* characters in different decades.

| Time Period | Number of Films | Number of <i>Nuxias</i> |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1966–1969 | 4 | 4 |
| 1970s | 24 | 45 |
| 1980s | 17 | 29 |
| 1990s | 9 | 21 |
| 2000s | 10 | 20 |
| 2010–2013 | 8 | 16 |
| Total | 72 | 135 |

The highest numbers of films are those released in the 1970s, because this was the peak decade for martial arts films in the global market, coinciding with the appearance and subsequent death of Bruce Lee. In Hong Kong and Taiwan, over 1200 martial arts movies were made during that decade [29] (p. 11). All of the films used for this paper are *kung-fu* “martial arts” movies that include at least one *nuxia* character who demonstrates her martial arts skills. *Nuxias* who are considered extras, cameos or similar minimal or unnamed roles are excluded, as they do not contribute to the in-depth analysis⁴. While no distinctions are made between *nuxias* who fight with or without weapons, *nuxias* equipped with magical powers are excluded from the data, as their physical prowess is not achieved by martial arts training⁵. In the entire corpus of the films observed, there are only a few male-to-female transgender/transsexual characters, and they are also excluded from the analysis of this paper, as they are not representative *nuxias*⁶.

³ Older movies include *Come Drink with Me* 大醉俠 (1966), *Golden Swallow* 金燕子 (1968), *Swords Women Three* 江湖三女俠 (1970) and *Winged Tiger* 插翅虎 (1970). The most recent ones are *My Kingdom* 大武生 (2011), *Painted Skin: The Resurrection* 畫皮2 (2012) and *The Grand Master* 一代宗師 (2013).

⁴ For example, characters like the fighter who appears only in the opening scene in *Disciples of the 36th Chamber* 霹靂十傑 (1985), or one of the southern masters who has a short sparring match with the protagonist in *The Grand Master* (2013) are not included in the data. Furthermore, insignificant characters that represent one of the many members of a group, e.g., female troop fighters from *Come Drink with Me*, 1966, *Duel to the Death* 生死決, 1983, *Legendary Amazons* 楊門女將, 2011, are excluded from the data.

⁵ For example, Lien Ni Chang (*The Bride with White Hair* 白髮魔女傳, 1993) is included in the data, but the same character from the sequel, *The Bride with White Hair 2* 白髮魔女2 (1993) is excluded, as she fights with supernatural powers rather than *kung-fu* skills in the latter. For the same reason, the demoness characters from films, such as *Painted Skin* 畫皮 (2008) and *Painted Skin: The Resurrection* 畫皮2 (2012) are also excluded.

⁶ Di, a transvestite prostitute (*Kung Fu vs. Yoga* 老鼠拉龜, 1979) and Dong Fang Bu Bai, a fighter who castrated himself to gain more strength after studying a secret *kung-fu* manual (*Swordsman II* 笑傲江湖 II 東方不敗, 1992), are the only two male-to-female transgender characters among over 140 films observed for the larger project. There also are some explicit and implicit homosexual characters in the films, e.g., Madam Chun (*Intimate Confessions of a Chinese Courtesan* 愛奴, 1972) and Suku (*Dirty Ho* 爛頭何, 1979).

As with *wuxia* characters in popular *kung-fu* films, the *nuxias* in our data have different characteristics. While some characters embody the honorable and valiant Chinese conduct expected in traditional ideologies, such as *wen-wu* or *san cong si de*, there are others who do not conform to the Confucian ideals. In order to investigate the detailed mediatization strategies of different *nuxia* characters, we categorize them as the following three types: heroic, villainous or ambiguous, as expressed through filmmakers' mediation of both verbal and non-verbal communications. Heroic *nuxias* are often one of the main heroes in their films, and they negotiate and balance between masculine and feminine qualities to demonstrate their mental nimbleness and resourcefulness based on the *san cong si de* traits and the *wen-wu* philosophy. Villainous *nuxias* are often one of the main villains in a story. Their mediatized characteristics are also built around Chinese traditional ideals, although in their case, their breaching some of the *san cong si de* and *wen-wu* qualities highlights the characters' villainous natures. Ambiguous *nuxia* characters fall into a category between the heroic and villainous ones, and they are somewhere between 'good' and 'bad', as far as their roles are concerned. They tend to have great difficulty in dealing with their emotional vulnerability, and it prevents them from following the behaviors expected for heroic *nuxias*. The overall numbers for each *nuxia* character types included in this study are presented in Table 2. Percentages given in parenthesis indicate a percentage of all the *nuxia* characters in the data.

Table 2. Number of *nuxia* characters in each category.

| | Main Character | Non-Main Character | Total |
|------------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| Heroic | 45 (33.3%) | 36 (26.7%) | 81 (60.0%) |
| Villainous | 12 (8.9%) | 23 (17.0%) | 35 (25.9%) |
| Ambiguous | 11 (8.3%) | 8 (5.9%) | 19 (14.1%) |
| Total | 68 (53.2%) | 67 (46.8%) | 135 |

In what follows, we will discuss the characteristics of the three different types of *nuxia* according to their roles and behaviors in the films. *Nuxias* within the same categories show similar attributes regardless of whether they are main or minor characters in a story; thus, we will conduct our quantitative analysis based on the total number of *nuxias* in each category.

4. Analysis

In this section, we discuss our findings pertaining to the mediatization of *nuxias* in popular *kung-fu* films. As seen in Table 1, the total number of *nuxia* characters in each classification varies significantly: 81 heroic, 35 villainous and 19 ambiguous or neutral. In order to investigate patterns within these three categories, various characteristics of the female characters or their roles were quantified. As the number of characters for each type varies significantly, we have weighted the percentages in each category, *i.e.*, we have divided each percentage by the total number of heroic, villainous or ambiguous characters as appropriate ⁷. Percentages were then normalized to the "heroic"

⁷ The weighted figures were calculated by multiplying the raw number of quantified tokens by the total number of *nuxias* (135) and dividing the result by the total number of *nuxias* in each category. Normalized index numbers for comparison of each category were then calculated by dividing the weighted number by the corresponding weighted "heroic" number (*i.e.*, normalizing to the "heroic" category, yielding 1.00 or 100% for each "heroic" normalized index).

category for comparison. This means that normalized numbers treat the “heroic” category as the default, yielding 1.00% or 100% for each “heroic” normalized index.

We refer to such weighted, normalized numbers as the “normalized index” in this paper, and subsequent tables show the normalized index with raw values in parentheses. In what follows, we will discuss the traits of *nuxias* that are relevant to their Chinese martial arts film roles.

4.1. *Nuxias as Fighters*

Let us begin by examining the roles of the *nuxia* characters in terms of their fighting abilities (Table 3).

Table 3. Normalized index of the *nuxia* characters’ fighting qualities.

| | Heroic | Villainous | Ambiguous | Total Raw No. |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Defeats the main enemy | 1.00 (12) | 0.39 (2) | 0.36 (1) | (15) |
| Assists in defeating the main enemy | 1.00 (63) | 1.07 (29) | 0.34 (5) | (97) |
| | (75) | (31) | (6) | (112) |
| Fights for reasons other than the Confucian values | 1.00 (8) | 7.23 (25) | 6.39 (12) | (45) |

The first two rows compare the effectiveness of *nuxia* characters’ martial abilities as compared to that of *wuxia* characters. Out of 135 *nuxia* characters in 72 films, only 15 defeat the main enemy in combat, while 97 assist in defeating the main enemy. This means that the most common role for the *nuxias* in the films is to assist other fighters—typically *wuxias* regardless of the alignment—rather than to achieve the defeat themselves. When *nuxias* do defeat the main enemy, the heroic ones are nearly three times as likely as the non-heroic ones to do so (heroic normalized index of 1.00 compared to 0.39 for villains and 0.36 for ambiguous characters). Compared to the heroic and villainous *nuxias*, the ambiguous ones are least likely to assist in defeating the main enemy. This could be attributed to their tendencies to fight independently while other *nuxias* commonly fight as part of a team. For the purpose of comparison and to highlight the different degrees of adoption of Confucian ideals, the shaded column shows *nuxias*’ reasons for fighting linked to Confucian values.

Rather than honoring the *jianghu*’s code of *xia*, the ambiguous *nuxias* were almost six times as likely to fight for reasons such as personal material gain, uncontrollable emotion or ego than their heroic counterparts. For example, the bandits from *The Flying Swords of Dragon Gate* 龍門飛甲 (2011), Gu Shaotang and Burudu, fight for treasure (Figure 2), while Yumiko (*Heroes of the East* 中華丈夫, 1978), Miu Tsui Fa (*The Legend: Fong Sai Yuk* 方世玉, 1993) and Jen Yu (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* 臥虎藏龍, 2000)⁸ fight to satisfy their egos.

⁸ As much as possible, the examples of *nuxias* provided to illustrate our points are taken from different time periods to show that the representations of *nuxias* have not changed since the 1960s. We thank one of the reviewers for highlighting this point.

Figure 2. Originally rivals, Gu Shaotang and Burudu decide to steal the hidden gold together.



Flying Swords of Dragon Gate, 2011 © Distribution Workshop (HK). All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Distribution Workshop (HK), 2013.

The following example illustrates how Jen Yu, who has run away from her wedding, makes egotistic statements at a restaurant in a different town⁹. She has stolen a distinguished sword from a heroic *wuxia* and uses it to show off her swordsmanship to a group of local martial artists.

Example 1. Jen Yu speaking impertinently towards one of the local *wuxias*, Monk Jing, while vandalizing a restaurant (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, 2000)

1. Jing: Hold it, don't you know Monk Jing?
2. Jen: A monk eating meat and not reading scriptures? You need a lesson, too!
3. Jing: Who the hell are you?
4. Jen: I am, I am the Invincible Sword Goddess, with the Green Destiny that has no
5. equal! Be it Li or Southern Eagle, lower your head and ask for mercy!
6. I am the dragon from the desert with no trace to be discovered in my wake.
7. Today, I fly over Eh-Mei Mountain. Tomorrow, I'll uproot the last dregs of Wudang!

⁹ The excerpts of this paper are taken from English subtitles of the official films, followed by the transcriptions of the original language (Mandarin) in Romanization. We chose to keep the characters' names as appearing in the English subtitles in the Chinese transcriptions, so that readers do not get confused with the Chinese names of the same characters.

1. Jing: *Ni ke ren de jiangnan Jingxuan chanshi?*
2. Jen: *Heshang bu nianjing, pao dao zheli kaihun ye gai jiaoxun.*
3. Jing: *Ni daodi shi heren?*
4. Jen: *Wo ya...wo naishi...wo naishi xiaosa renjian yijianxian. Qingming baojian sheng*
5. *longquan. Renping Li yu Jiangnan He. Dou yao ditou qiu wo lian.*
6. *Shamo fei lai yi tiao long. Shen lai wu ying qu wu zong.*
7. *Jin zhao tapo Emei dine. Mingri baqu Wudang feng.*

The English translation does not quite capture the full essence of Jen Yu's utterance in Lines 4–7. In Mandarin, she identified herself with a gender neutral “one-sworded immortal” (*yijianxian*) rather than the feminine “invincible sword goddess”. Together with her description of trampling both Eh-Mei and Wudang—female and male martial arts clans, respectively (Line 7)—we observe Jen Yu's desire to be recognized as a good fighter in her own right and not a good female fighter associated with any clan. Further, her perversion of the *wen-wu* quality with conceitedness in her poetic expression (Lines 4–7) reveals an anti-Confucian attitude. Jen Yu, who is the daughter of an aristocratic family, has been brought up with Confucian teaching and is well aware of the behavior expected of women. However, she rejects being part of any (Confucian) structure throughout the film; she runs away from her wedding and escapes her family, as well as her general disregard for and refusal to submit to authority ultimately led her to choose death over becoming a student of Wudang. Other than ego, there is another factor that leads to “fighting for reasons other than the Confucian values” for the ambiguous *nuxia* characters—fighting for their loved ones due to their uncontrollable emotions. We will come back to this point in the next section.

The normalized index of the villainous *nuxias* who “fight for reasons other than the Confucian values” is 7.23 (meaning more than seven times as likely to do so than their heroic counterparts), and in our observation, their fights are most often motivated by selfish and egoistic reasons related to personal gain, such as money, power and rewards. Unlike the ambiguous or heroic *nuxias*, the villainous *nuxias* do not risk their lives for their loved ones with only two exceptions (White Tiger's wife, *Dreadnought* 勇者無懼, 1981) and Su Huirong (*The Flying Swords of Dragon Gate*, 2012). For example, characters like Madam Chun (*Intimate Confessions of a Chinese Courtesan* 愛奴, 1972), Xiao Qiang and Shuang Shuang (*Life Gamble* 生死鬥, 1979), Jade Fox (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, 2000) and Turquoise (*Reign of Assassins* 劍雨, 2010) all fight to satisfy their personal desires, including lust and greed for money and power. Such desires are considered vices in Confucianism, and the villainous *nuxias*' willingness to fight for these reasons contrasts with the heroic *nuxia* characters' typical reasons for fighting—altruism, loyalty and righteousness.

4.2. How Nuxias Die

Nuxias often suffer emotional damage as a result of having strong feelings for or attachments to their loved ones, most typically their romantic interests. Out of 135 *nuxia* characters, a total of 56 die in the films. Table 4 shows the reasons for *nuxias*' deaths in the films.

Table 4. The normalized index indicating the reasons for *nuxia* characters' deaths.

| | Heroic | Villainous | Ambiguous | Total Raw No. |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| Dying for honor or loyalty to clan/school | 1.00 (18) | 0.26 (2) | 0.24 (1) | (21) |
| Dying for love | 1.00 (6) | 0.77 (2) | 2.84 (4) | (12) |
| Dying due to dishonorable or unvirtuous behaviors | 1.00 (1) | 43.97 (19) | 12.79 (3) | (23) |
| Total | (25) | (23) | (8) | (56) |

“Dying for honor or loyalty to clan/school” includes those who defend their own or their clan/school’s integrity and righteousness to the last. Unsurprisingly, the heroic *nuxias* show the highest tendency to die for this reason, according to the cross-categorical comparison of the normalized index. Characters like Su Lin (*Enter the Dragon* 龍爭虎鬥, 1973), Chan Mei-Hua and Lau Wai-Ling (*Flying Guillotine, Part II* 清宮大刺殺, 1978) and Little Melon (*Tai-chi Master* 太極張三豐, 1993) are adamant about not being sexually taken advantage of by lustful, overpowering *wuxias*. As a result, they resist the men’s sexual advances with their lives in order to keep their chastity and defend their honor. This is an extreme representation of the virtue of upholding moral integrity and chastity for husband and family (*fu de*)—one of the *si de* ideals. Heroic *nuxia* characters that die to demonstrate their loyalty to their clan/school include Chan Tsuei Hung (*Mad Monkey Kung-fu* 瘋猴, 1979), who dies to rescue her older brother, and Fang Hong (*Bodyguards and Assassins* 十月圍城, 2009), who dies to facilitate her father’s mission. There are others who die to save their sworn brothers from the same clan/school, such as Wu Siu Ching (*Fist of the White Lotus* 洪文定三破白蓮教, 1981) and Moon (*The Bride with White Hair2* 白髮魔女2, 1993).

“Dying for love” describes the deaths of *nuxias* who sacrifice their lives to save their love interests. Heroic *nuxias* such as Yin Cai Fa (*The Winged Tiger*, 1970), Tien Gi Gi (*Shaolin Mantis* 螳螂, 1978), and Yan Ling (*Shaolin and Wu Tang* 少林與武當, 1983) are examples of those who selflessly sacrifice their lives for the men they love. All three are caught between loyalty to their families’ schools and their love interests who are from different schools. Yin Cai Fa falls in love with her brother’s enemy, whom she tries to help behind her brother’s back. When this plan fails, she gets killed by her brother to protect her lover. Tien Gi Gi marries a man from another school despite her grandfather’s opposition and, like Yin Cai Fa, ends up dying while protecting her husband from her male family members. Yan Ling’s love interest is her brother’s rival. Both he and her brother are attacked by a common enemy, and she sacrifices her life to save her love from the enemy. Although Yin Cai fa, Tien Gi Gi and Yan Ling do not side with their original *jianghu* family members when they die, their acts still embody the *yi* ‘righteousness’ principle of Confucian virtue, as they stand by those to whom they feel obliged. Sacrificing one’s life for others, e.g., *ren* ‘altruism’ and *zhong* ‘loyalty’, are also valued by Confucianism. These qualities are also apparent in male warriors; however, the difference in the mediatization of male and female warriors lies in the way such selflessness is represented. While men die for their schools or clans, women are more frequently shown to die for their love interests. Choosing to die for love does not lend much agency to the women in the sense that abiding by the Confucian ethos means being very conscious of the importance of self-sacrifice. In fact, it is when one is not prepared to sacrifice her life that she would be considered a deviant from Confucian teachings. Tien Gi Gi’s mother and aunt also die for love, in this case, their

love towards Gi Gi. When Gi Gi is attacked by the male members of the family, her mother and aunt fought against the men to support Gi Gi out of love and obligation for the only daughter of the family. Nonetheless, these *nuxias*' obligations are motivated by their loving feelings and not so much by their *jianghu* obligations, as evident by the fact that they are opposing other members of the *jianghu*.

Zeng Jing (*Reign of Assassins*, 2010) also decides to save her husband, Ah-Sheng, by sacrificing herself to complete his revenge mission on his behalf despite being heartbroken when she learns that her husband was only using her for revenge.

Example 2. Zeng Jing speaking to her immobilized husband, Ah-Sheng, before leaving to take revenge on his behalf (*Reign of Assassins*, 2010)

1. Ah-Sheng, this is tortoise powder. Within a few hours, your heart and breath will stop
2. and you will appear to be dead. When the Wheel King sees you,
3. he will think you're dead. I will make sure your father's death is avenged.
4. I changed all of my money into gold and paved it on the floor of our house.
5. After I die, take the money and leave the Capital. Get married
6. and raise a family.

1. *A Sheng, zhe yao shi gui xi dan. Ji ge shichen zinei, ni de qixi xintiao juwu,*
2. *Zhuanlunwang jian dao ni*
3. *hui yi wei ni si le. Ni de chou wo hui gei ni yi ge jiaodai.*
4. *Wo suoyou de qiancai dou huacheng huangjin, pu zai women jia dixia.*
5. *Wo si le yihou, ni dai zhe qian likai Jingcheng, qu ge laopo*
6. *rang ta bang ni sheng ge erzi.*

Although, at the end of the film, Zeng Jing is not shown to have succumbed to her severe wounds, this example illustrates very clearly heroic *nuxias*' conscious decision and determination in sacrificing themselves should they decide that their love interests would come in harm's way. We can observe Zeng Jing's intention/decision to sacrifice her life through her statement of "after I die" (*Wo si le yihou*) and not the conditional "if I die" in Line 5. Taken in the context of Lines 4–6, she sacrifices in order for her husband to have a better life. This is yet another remarkable representation from the *si de* doctrine including *fu de* "upholding moral integrity to husband and family" (Lines 3–4), *fu gong* "diligent work for husband" (Lines 4–5) and *fu yan* "appropriate speech, such as absence from hurtful words" (Lines 1–6). In contrast with these ideals, of course, are *nuxias*' deaths that are caused by their dishonorable or unvirtuous behavior. This often takes place as a result of selfishness and disrespect by the standards of *wen-wu* philosophy and *san cong si de*. That is, the majority of heroic or ambiguous *nuxias* who die in the films choose to die selflessly for honor/loyalty or loved ones (in Table 4, 19 out of 25 for the heroic and five out of eight for the ambiguous *nuxias*), whereas villainous *nuxias* do not fight to the death for others, but only for private reward. Typical examples of such "dishonorable or unvirtuous behavior" can be seen in ruthless robber characters, like San Niang (*Black Tavern* 黑店, 1972), Xiao Qiang, Shuang Shuang and Zhen Liu-Xiang (*Life Gamble*, 1979) and Kualo (*Seven Swords* 七劍, 2005), who face dishonorable deaths. The villainous characters typically lack self-control and behave against the *san cong si de* ideal. A demonstrative example can be seen in the general comportment of San Niang, a spoiled daughter of a regional robber who runs an inn. The

family robs their clients and serves buns made of their victims¹⁰. In this scene, San Niang orders an inn employee to bring hot water for cleaning by throwing a bucket to him. He complains about her bossy way, and then she throws a dirty rug on his face. The employee smells the rug and chokes.

Example 3. San Niang's father confronts his daughter after she bullies an employee (*Black Tavern*, 1972)

1. San: Skunk, let me give you something smelly! Hahaha!
2. Dad: You're teasing him again?
3. San: He started it.
4. Dad: Are you sure, with the way you look?
5. San: Go to Hell!
6. Dad: Hahahaha...

1. San: *Bu gan bu jing, gei ni dian muxuxiang wenwen!*
2. Dad: *Ni zheme you na zhe ta kaixin le a?*
3. San: *Shui jiao ta dou wo?*
4. Dad: *Ni zhe fu chixiang, hai gan dou ni?*
5. San: *Qu ni de.*
6. Dad: *Hahahaha...*

Whether joking or not, saying “go to Hell” (*Qu ni de*) to one's father is certainly not acceptable for a normative daughter. Shortly after this scene, this arrogant and cheeky attitude led her to assume that she can defeat the main villain of the film, the Whip Master. Thus, she interrupts his fight with her father and is beheaded by the Whip Master. A more virtuous *nuxia* would have deferred to her father and allowed him to finish the fight uninterrupted or demonstrate her support for him by taking on the Whip Master's apprentices.

Ambiguous *nuxias* can be emotion-driven, too, as can be observed through three characters who suffer from their own vulnerability. They have difficulty controlling themselves and end up making unwise decisions that go against the *wen-wu* philosophy and *san cong si de* ideal, and this behavior results in their deaths. The following example shows how an ambiguous *nuxia* character, Jiang Shi (*Curse of the Golden Flower* 滿城盡帶黃金甲, 2006), is brimming with resentment against the man (the Emperor) who tried to kill her and her family.

Example 4. Jiang Shi vents her anger at the Emperor after she and one daughter escape his assassins. (*Curse of the Golden Flower*, 2006)

1. Your Majesty, I have come to you still alive. It was beneath contempt to attack
2. us under the cloak of darkness. Once again you have deceived me. You coward
3. and hypocrite! My daughter and I stand before you. Go ahead, kill us!

¹⁰ Serving buns with human flesh fillings is mentioned in the novel *All Men are Brothers* (also known as *Water Margin*) set in Song Dynasty. The character, Wu Song, mentioned in Section 2 from this story, meets with a female Tavern owner, Sun Erniang, who drugs and robs unwary customers. She also made buns with human flesh fillings from their victims and served them to other customers. We thank one of the reviewers for bringing this to our attention. Other than *Black Tavern* (1972), a villainous *nuxia*, Gam Seung Yuk, serves human flesh buns in *Dragon Inn* (1992) in our data.

1. *Dawang wo huo zhe huilai le. Ni jingran ruci wuchi.*
2. *Toutou momo de sha women quanjia. Ni you yici qipian le wo. Ni jiu shi yige*
3. *xuwei de xiaoren. Wo gen wo nver jiu zai ni mian qian. Ni sha ba!*

Jiang Shi's long-term grudge against the Emperor is implied in Line 2 "Once again you have deceived me" (*Ni you yici qipian le wo*). Jiang Shi's emotionally-driven behavior aggravates the Emperor and his family. Consequently, rather than taking advantage of their initial escape, she ends up inviting death for both her daughter and herself. As can be observed, the difference between the heroic and non-heroic *nuxias* is their reaction towards being hurt. The heroic characters accept their vulnerability/suffering and acquiesce to their loved ones, while the villainous or ambiguous *nuxias*, as in Example 4 above, react against the person who hurt them or placed them in the vulnerable position.

4.3. *Nuxias as Jianghu Members*

The martial artists' world of *jianghu* can be a world of vagrants. This means that *jianghu* can be fluid, with members who come and go; they can be thieves, travelling entertainers, knights-errant, assassins, bodyguards, and so on [19]. However, there is one inflexible principle. As mentioned earlier, the *jianghu* world is heavily influenced by Confucianism, and the members abide by a fundamental respect for their masters, fathers, seniors and the hierarchical order of their schools or disciplines. While martial artists may live a mobile life, once they are accepted as a member of a specific school/discipline, their obligations to it officially continue forever, unless there is a clear ending. Because it is usually a man's domain, the *jianghu* world is considered *wai* "outside" and not widely accessible to women. Thus, the recognition of a *nuxia* often revolves around male endorsement, especially for those who belong to a relatively dominant clan/school in *jianghu*. In the following example, an ambiguous *nuxia* character named Lun Wan Er (*Bastard Swordsman* 天蠶變, 1983), who belongs to her father's *kung-fu* clan, exchanges words with an unknown *wuxia* who is trying to force himself into her school.

Example 5. Kung Suen Wang is fighting the guards at the entrance when Lun Wan Er (the chief's daughter) comes out of the school (*Bastard Swordsman*, 1983)

1. Lun: Stop!
 2. Kung: Who are you?
 3. Lun: Wudang student.
 4. Kung: I heard there's only one female student in Wudang. You are Lun Wan Er.
 5. Lun: That's correct. And you?
 6. Kung: Kung Suen Wang of Invincible Clan.
-
1. Lun: *Zushou!*
 2. Kung: *Ni shi shui?*
 3. Lun: *Wudang dizi.*
 4. Kung: *Tingshuo Wudangpai zhiyou yige nvdizi. Lun Wan Er jiushi ni.*
 5. Lun: *Buchuo. Gexia shi...*
 6. Kung: *Wudimen Gong Sun Hong.*

In Example 1, the *nuxia* Jen Yu (*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, 2000), who does not belong to any clan/school, calls herself “the invincible sword goddess” when asked her identity (Line 2). Lun Wan Er in Example 5, on the other hand, humbly answers that she is a student of Wudang (*Wudang dizi*) in Line 3 rather than the chief’s daughter or a distinguished *nuxia*. This demonstrates Lun Wan Er’s regard for her clan’s hierarchical order, as well as the code of *xia*. However, the unknown *wuxia*, Kung Suen Wang, immediately recognizes her, since it is well known that the only female student in her clan is the chief’s daughter. In fact, in his own clan led by Chief Dugu Wu Di, there are only a few female members, and the chief’s daughter, Dugu Fang Er (a heroic *nuxia* character), is one of them. Characters, like Lun Wan Er and Dugu Fang Er, remind viewers that *nuxias’ jianghu* membership is commonly endorsed by a powerful *wuxia* character, whether they are heroic, villainous or ambiguous.

Table 5 shows the data of *nuxia* characters whose *jianghu* membership is endorsed by male characters. Column (A) contains the normalized index and raw numbers; Column (B) shows the distribution of the endorsers in raw numbers. Additionally, for the purpose of comparison and to highlight the overall male dominance observed in the data, the shaded Column (C) shows the normalized index and raw numbers of *nuxias’ jianghu* endorsement by other female characters. Female endorsements are significantly fewer (a total of nine) than male endorsements (a total of 96). All endorsers in (C) played the role of the *nuxias’* teacher/mentor.

Table 5. (A) The normalized index indicating the *nuxia* characters’ male endorsement; (B) details of the endorsers; and (C) female endorsement.

| | (A) | (B) | | | | (C) |
|------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| | <i>Nuxias</i> endorsed by male | Older kinfolds (father, brother, grandfather) | Mate (husband, boyfriend) | Teacher | Others (boss, friend) | <i>Nuxias</i> endorsed by female |
| Heroic | 1 (66) | 46 | 12 | 4 | 4 | 1 (7) |
| Villainous | 0.67 (19) | 6 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 0.33 (1) |
| Ambiguous | 0.71 (11) | 8 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0.61 (1) |
| Total | 96 | 60 | 17 | 8 | 10 | 9 |

In the table, for those whose personal associations are revealed, their endorsement is referred to specifically (endorsement by, e.g., family members or by their husband), whereas for those whose relationships are not disclosed, their endorsement is assumed to be by their teachers, as, at the very least, this relationship is always present for *nuxias* belonging to *jianghu*. In the films, some characters’ current affiliations, as well as personal relationships with their clans/schools are explicitly mentioned. For the others, it is made clear either that they belong to a specific clan/school or that they are independent and work alone. This latter category of unattached *nuxias* is not examined in this paper, because information about their *jianghu* membership is unknown. The data show that, overall, *nuxias’ jianghu* membership largely depends on male characters, especially family members.

Our data also supports Chen’s Chinese *kung-fu* film study of martial arts masters, that a number of female masters appear as cross-dressed men in cinematic representations of *jianghu* [30] (p. 8). Figure 3 shows an example of cross-dressing by heroic *nuxia* Ling Yanqiu (*Flying Swords of Dragon Gate*, 2011). While this is appropriate for *nuxias* when they are fulfilling their roles as *jianghu* members, cross-dressing is considered inappropriate in the domestic realm. For example, although no

one comments on the masculine dressing of Yim Wing Chun (*Kung Fu Wing Chun 功夫詠春*, 2010) when she aids her teacher, there are characters that make disparaging remarks about her cross-dressing when she is helping her father out in his shop. This also supports Dong's point that *nuxias* are seen as a "courageous hero or a dutiful service 'man' rather than as an extraordinary woman" when they transgress the boundary of *nei* and *wai* [28] (p. 48).

Figure 3. Ling Yanqiu dressed in masculine attire.



Flying Swords of Dragon Gate, 2011 © Distribution Workshop (HK). All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Distribution Workshop (HK), 2013.

Chen further argues that the female martial arts masters' cross-dressing represents "the impossibility for women to function openly as women, and thus as equals" and that, typically, "women's martial arts skills are diminished after men have discovered their true gender" [30]. Louie also points out the nature of historical female heroes, such as Zhu Yingtai (who tried to gain recognition for *wen* accomplishments by taking the civil service examinations) and Hua Mulan (a female warrior), and states that their talents were acknowledged only when they were pretending to be men; once their female identities were revealed, "all their *wen-wu* attributes disappear" [31] (p. 4). Mediatized representations of women being weaker when dressed femininely are realized in *kung-fu* films by attributing cross-dressed *nuxias* with the capabilities and strength to fight their battles alone and possibly win (but not necessarily against the main enemy). Examples of such strong lone *nuxias* include Golden Swallow (*Come Drink with Me*, 1966), Li Bao Zhu (*Young Avenger 小毒龍*, 1972), Fang Shau-Ching (*Legendary Weapons of China 十八般武藝*, 1982) and Jen Yu (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, 2000). The opposite is true of femininely-dressed *nuxias*, who are portrayed to fight in groups with others (*i.e.*, they do not have the strength to defeat their enemies alone). Examples include the Han sisters (*Swordswomen Three*, 1970), the Valley Wives (*Lady of the Law 女捕快*, 1975) and Bao Na-Lan and her Flying Guillotine Unit (*Flying Guillotine, Part II*, 1978). In addition,

femininely-dressed *nuxias* are often part of a group or paired up with *wuxias*, e.g., Hsu Feng paired with General Shih (*A Touch of Zen* 俠女, 1971), Jing Dai-Nan grouped with her in-laws (*My Young Auntie* 長輩, 1981), Miss Orchid paired with Dr. Yang (*Iron Monkey* 少年黃飛鴻之鐵馬騮, 1993) and Wu Yuanying grouped with the Seven Swords Unit (*Seven Swords* 七劍, 2005), to name a few.

The data show that *nuxias* usually do not defeat the main enemy; however, regardless of dressing, when they are able to deal the finishing blow, the opponent is already seriously injured, usually due to a prior fight with a *wuxia*. These examples include Kao Yu Ying (*Hapkido* 合氣道, 1972), Rong Qiu Yan (*The Vengeful Beauty* 血芙蓉, 1978), Leng Feng (*Kid with the Golden Arm* 金臂童, 1979) and Ling Yanqiu (*The Flying Swords of Dragon Gate*, 2011). As *nuxias*' defeat of the main enemies hinges on more than just their dressing manners, we will come back to this point in the next section.

In our data, *nuxia* characters, whether heroic or non-heroic, and whether they are considered masters or not, are almost always more vulnerable than the main *wuxia* characters, both physically and mentally. However, the heroic ones who belong to a clan/school never fail to give their all when they are fighting the clan/school's enemies, even when their chance of victory is small. Thus, they show their adherence to the code of *xia*, because heroic deaths are considered more honorable than giving up the fight. However, in the films we observed, heroic *nuxia* characters are often helped by other *jianghu* members—typically by heroic *wuxias*, who come to the rescue during a close call in battle. We will discuss this further in the next section.

The mediatization of non-heroic *nuxia* characteristics also involves the concept of male endorsement. The normalized index indicating male endorsement and raw numbers for the villainous and ambiguous *nuxia* characters are 0.67 (19) and 0.71 (11), respectively, as compared to those of the heroic *nuxias*: 1 (66). These numbers reflect the non-heroic characters' non-conformance to the *wen-wu* philosophy or Confucian social order, since the concept of clans/schools is so highly regarded in the naturalized representations of *jianghu* in popular *kung-fu* films¹¹. That is, in the hegemonic view, those characters that do not belong to a specific clan/school are “unnatural”. Therefore, the *nuxia* characters without any clan/school affiliation can be seen as characters with minimal obligations under Confucian ideology, and thus, they can also be easily represented as non-normative, fulfilling non-heroic roles.

4.4. Examples of Heroic *Nuxias*' Commitment to Their Clans/Schools

Figures 3 to 5 show scenes of heroic *nuxias* displaying their commitment to their clans/schools by fighting against their enemies under unfavorable conditions. In all of these examples, the *nuxias* are fighting for their loved ones who are in the same clan/school—Ling Yanqiu, *Flying Swords of Dragon Gate*, 2011, fighting for her lover (Figure 3), Leng Feng, *Kid with the Golden Arm*, 1979, avenging her fiancé against the main villain, Golden Arm (Figure 4), and Eighth Sister Yang, *Eight Diagram Pole Fighter* 五郎八卦棍, 1984, trying to avenge her father and brothers (Figure 5).

¹¹ Due to the concept of clans/schools inherent to *jianghu*, this term is used outside martial arts to refer to the Chinese and Taiwanese underworld in modern contexts (see Boretz, 2011, for more discussion on this [32]). The authors thank one of the reviewers for bringing this point to our attention.

Figure 4. Leng Feng defeating Golden Arm.



Stills from *Kid with the Golden Arm*, 1979 © Celestial Pictures Ltd. All rights reserved. Courtesy of Celestial Pictures Ltd., 2013.

Figure 5. Eighth Yang Sister captured by her enemies after a battle.



Stills from *Eight Diagram Pole Fighter*, 1984 © Celestial Pictures Ltd. All rights reserved. Courtesy of Celestial Pictures Ltd., 2013.

Ling Yanqiu (Figure 3) and Leng Feng (Figure 4) are two of the few characters who manage to defeat a main villain (out of a total of 81 heroic *nuxias*, 12 defeat the main villains, while 63 assist in defeating the main villains; see Tables 2 and 3). Although they ultimately kill the villains, this is only possible after the villains are badly injured by heroic *wuxia* characters who come to the aid of the *nuxias*, as briefly mentioned in the previous section. In the case of Leng Feng, the villain Golden Arm (also in Figure 4, stabbed in the stomach from the back) has been blinded and injured before she kills

him. After this scene, Leng Feng manages to escape the danger and save herself from the villain's sword. For Ling Yanqiu, the heroic *wuxia* was part of her team, fighting against the enemy side-by-side with her. The heroic *wuxias* set the stage for the *nuxia* characters to defeat the enemy.

Unlike Ling Yanqiu (Figure 3) and Leng Feng (Figure 4), Eighth Sister Yang (Figure 5) does not defeat the main enemy, but assists her brother in doing so. In the beginning of the film, her father and brothers are killed as a result of a former clan member's betrayal. Eighth Sister Yang challenges the family's enemies single-handedly but is outnumbered and easily caught to be used as bait to lure her remaining brother out of hiding. After her brother and his new clan members rescue her, Eighth Sister Yang assists her brother in avenging the deaths of their family members. These examples demonstrate that on top of *jianghu* endorsement, physical assistance in battles by important male characters is also a significant factor in *nuxias*' positions in the martial arts world. Although both Eighth Sister and Ling Yanqiu are dressed as men in these scenes, their female identities have been revealed, and thus, all three of the *nuxia* characters are participating in the fights as women. All in all, in the mediatized representation of *jianghu*, even the strongest and most determined and loyal *nuxia* character is hardly able to defeat a main villain without the help of *wuxia* characters, with only a few notable exceptions in our data (e.g., Yim Wing Chun from *Wing Chun*, 1993, and *Kung Fu Wing Chun*, 2010; Gong Er from *The Grand Master*, 2013).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

We have shown how *nuxias*' characteristics of inherent femininity are projected simultaneously with negotiation strategies to take part in a predominantly masculine society in *kung-fu* films through mediation and mediatization. Based on Western understandings, *nuxias* are typically seen as empowered women who have the agency to take control of their own lives and are capable of fearlessly challenging their enemies when they have to. Our analyses, largely based on Confucian perspectives in Chinese martial arts culture, demonstrate a multimodal deconstruction of various naturalized features of the different types of *nuxias*. Patriarchy is perpetuated through the constant and consistent recontextualization of *nuxias* in film that associates those who conform to Confucian values, such as the *wen-wu* philosophy and *san cong si de*, with virtuousness (maintaining patriarchal hierarchy, *jianghu* obligations, etc.) and those who do not conform (disregarding orders, not respecting the *jianghu*'s code of *xia*) with wickedness. This pattern holds true for *kung-fu* films across time (since the 1960s) and space, i.e., transnational films, like *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, which are written for the international (Western) market. As noted by Teo, despite having to "translate" the Chinese culture for a Western audience, Chinese filmmakers are consciously "self-orientalizing" and exploiting the attributes of "Chineseness" [33]. It is unsurprising then that even in transnational films, only heroic *nuxias* who conform to Confucian have a tendency to survive, while non-heroic *nuxias* tend to die and/or be sidelined. By using Confucian ideals, represented by the *wen-wu* philosophy and *san cong si de*, as a foundation to analyze the characteristics of mediatizations of *nuxias*, we thus provide a greater understanding of gender ideologies represented in Chinese martial arts films' portrayal of femininity and masculinity.

The *wen-wu* philosophy is recognized as a respectable measure for martial arts practitioners in general, including *nuxias*. The well-balanced management of personal strengths in both cultural (*wen*)

and martial (*wu*) refinements is required for the ideal manifestations of the *jianghu*'s code of *xia*. The films we observed present a pattern in the construction of mediatized features for *nuxia* characters. That is, while the *wen-wu* philosophy and its related ideals are considered to belong predominantly in a male (*wai* "outside") domain, their application extends to *nuxias* whose *jianghu* memberships are endorsed by *wuxias*. *Nuxias*' command of *wen-wu*, as evidenced by their self-control, use of philosophical sayings and respect for the *jianghu*'s code of *xia*, can then be used as the basis for their characteristics, which is reflected, for example, in the ways they die (Table 4). The heroic characters are ideal martial arts practitioners, even in death, which they generally meet for honor or commitment to the *jianghu*'s code of *xia*, in contrast to the villains and the ambiguous characters. Meanwhile, the deaths of the villainous *nuxias* show their lack of respect for the Confucian order, as they mainly die as a result of their selfish and emotional behavior.

The data also show the contrast between the constructions of different characters according to the Confucian ideals specific to women, namely *san cong si de*. Heroic characters tend to abide by *san cong si de*, while non-heroic *nuxias* diverge from these ideals. A representative illustration can be seen in Example 6, which shows an exchange between a heroic character, Yu Shu Lien, and an ambiguous character, Jen Yu (*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, 2000). In this scene, Jen Yu tells Yu Shu Lien about her unhappiness with the marriage her parents arranged for her. Jen Yu says, "Marriage is a good thing if only I could be free to live my own life, to choose who I love and love him in my own way." In response, Yu Shu Lien talks about her late fiancé, Meng Si Zhao, who was a sworn brother of the film's heroic *wuxia*, Li Mu Bai.

Example 6. Yu Shu Lien tells Jen Yu a story about Li Mu Bai and Meng Si Zhao (*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, 2000)

1. Yu: One day, while defending Li Mu Bai in battle, he [Meng Si Zhao] was killed by
2. another man's sword. After Meng's sacrifice, Li and I went through a lot
3. together. Our feelings for each other grew stronger. But we decided to honor
4. my engagement to Meng. The freedom you talk about, I too desire it. But I
5. have never tasted it.
6. Jen: It's not your fault, or Li Mu Bai's. Too bad for Meng,
7. but that's just the way things turn out.
8. Yu: As a woman, I still must abide by tradition, even if I'm not an aristocrat like you.
1. Yu: *You yi hui, zai yi chang dadou li, Meng Si Zhao wei le jiu Li Mubai, si zai*
2. *duishou de dao xia. Zhe zhihou, wo men suiran you gongtong jingli le xuduo shi,*
3. *ganqing ye rijian shenhou, keshi wo men dou jianding yao dui de qi*
4. *Sizhao he na yi zhi hunyue. Ni shuo de ziyou zizai, wo ye kewang. Dan wo*
5. *conglai meiyong chang guo.*
6. Jen: *Keshi ni he Li Mu Bai shui ye meiyong cuo a. Zi guai na wei Meng daxia fubao,*
7. *ai jiu ai le bei.*
8. Yu: *Wo suiran bushi chushen yu ni men zheyang de guanjuan renjia, keshi yi ge nvren*
9. *yisheng gai fucong de daode he lijiao bing bu shaoyu ni men.*

In this example, the heroic *nuxia* is represented as a woman who honors her fiancé's memory by maintaining her chastity rather than to "choose who she loves" after her fiancé's unexpected death.

Jen, who rejects the Confucian reason for suppressing one's feelings, told Yu in Mandarin “*ai jiu ai le bei*” in Line 7. Its meaning is more accurately translated as “since you are in love, you should just go ahead and love”, rather than the official English translation of “but that's just the way things turn out”. This earned Jen an admonition from Yu in Lines 8–9 about abiding by “tradition”, or more accurately in Mandarin “Confucian ethical code” (*daode he lijiao*). Submission to such an ethical code is expected of women in this society—a world honoring Confucian ideologies that confines women to the domain of *nei* (inside) and leaves them with few choices. An ideal woman does not go beyond the boundaries of *nei* or against the patriarchal order unless endorsed. A *nuxia*, therefore, is required to balance *nei* and *wai* boundaries, as well as *san cong si de* and *wen-wu* philosophies, exemplifying female obedience and submission and being careful not to challenge male dominance. As an ideal example of a heroic *nuxia* character, Yu Shu Lien abides by Confucian ideology.

The villainous *nuxia* characters, on the other hand, all violate Confucian ideology. We have already described their lack of respect for the fundamental codes of martial artists, such as commitment to a clan or school. Here, we focus on the way the villainous *nuxias* in our data transgress against *san cong si de* ideals. First, the majority of villainous characters do not believe in obeying the men in their family in accordance with the patriarchal order. They consistently do not observe the three obediences (*san cong*), to father, husband or sons. Second, the villainous *nuxias* violate the four virtues (*si de*). A number of the villainous *nuxias* seduce men as a ploy for personal gain, rather than maintaining moral integrity and chastity (*fu de*). This point is related to a violation of another *si de* principle—modest manner and demure appearance (*fu rong*), as they manipulate their looks and behavior to take advantage of situations. Their ways of speaking reflect their emotional instability and immaturity (and thus, their lack of *wen*), as they often employ obnoxious or vulgar speech, rather than “appropriate speech” (*fu yan*). Additionally, the villainous *nuxias*, lacking family attachments as they do, clearly do not engage in diligent domestic work for husband and family (*fu gong*). Out of the 31 villainous *nuxias* in our data, the only one that actually engages in active domestic work for family on screen is San Niang from *Black Tavern* (1972), as shown in Example 3, where she is cleaning a guest room at the family inn¹². Technically, San Niang is not performing domestic work for her own family, but she is still offering her labor for her family business; however, that business in itself is not virtuous, as it involves robbing and killing the inn's guests. On the other hand, there are a number of heroic *nuxia* characters who demonstrate their good qualities as wives and mothers by engaging in routine domestic work in the inside (*nei*) sphere.

The films we chose to examine exhibit an appropriation of Chinese martial arts masculinity by female characters. Those whose mediatized appropriation of *wen-wu* philosophy is balanced by adherence to *san cong si de* ideals are the heroic characters. The representation of these virtuous *nuxias* shows how they negotiate belonging to both *nei* and *wai* domains, so as to maintain their *jianghu* membership within the expected hierarchical order. The ultimate goals of the heroic *nuxias* are

¹² There are two other villainous *nuxia* characters whose behavior suggests the possibility that they have domestic skills. Dingding Dangdang (*Ode to Gallantry* 俠客行, 1982) serves a meal to her grandfather and another man. However, the film only shows her escorting the men to the table, and there is no knowing whether she actually prepared it herself. The other character is Jade Fox (*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, 2000), who works as a servant for a wealthy family. In her case, she is not engaged in domestic work for her own family.

typically to maintain peace and order in their clan/school by following the code of *xia* and demonstrating their capability and selflessness. Those *nuxias* who do not mitigate their prowess by displaying adherence to *san cong si de* ideals are villains.

Following the *wen-wu* philosophy, martial artists are obliged to give the highest priority to publicly honoring their schools, teachers, fellow martial artists and disciples, while deprioritizing their loved ones, who belong to the *nei* ‘private’ realm. Following the *san cong si de* ideals, women are expected to remain in the *nei* domain and obey the men in their lives who represent the family in the *wai* domain. On the surface, many films appear to portray *nuxias* as empowered women whose skills and intelligence allow them to control their own lives. All in all, however, the films we investigated reinforce the traditional Confucian gender ideology that women’s role is to support their men by keeping their chastity and modesty, withholding their speech and working hard for their husbands and family, whether they are martial artists or not.

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Author Contributions

Mie Hiramoto designed the study and gathered the data. She also conducted the quantitative analysis as well as part of the qualitative analysis of the data. Cherise Teo performed part of the qualitative analysis. She also checked the English translations (from Mandarin) of the films we included in the analysis in this paper. Both authors drafted the manuscript together. Both authors have contributed to interpretation of findings, commented on drafts produced, read and approved the final manuscript.

Appendix ¹³

1. Baker, R.W., Director. *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* (七金屍); Don, H., Screenplay; Tong, G., Liu, Ch.-L., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1974.
2. Chan, Fa-K.F., Director. *The Legendary Amazons* (楊門女將); Chan, Fa-K.F., Liu, H., Screenplay; Fung, Ha-O., Zhang, H., Chan, Fa-K.F., Ng, B., Action Directors; Shanghai Film Group, Feng Huang Motion Pictures and Beijing Century Culture Communication Co.: China, 2011.

¹³ All of the movie titles and the released years are taken from “Hong Kong Movie Database” website 香港影庫 HKMDB [34].

3. Chan, Ho.-S.P., Director. *Wu Xia (武俠)*; Lam, Oi-W.A., Chan, Ka-Y.J., Screenplay; Yen, Ji-D.D., Yan, H., Tanigaki, K., Action Directors; We Pictures, Yunnan Film Group, Stellar Mega Films and Dingsheng Cultural Industry Investment and JSBC Eudemonia Blue Ocean TV & Movie Group: Hong Kong, 2011.
4. Chan, Ka-S.G., Chin, Wi.-K.A., Go, La.-P.D., Directors. *Painted Skin (畫皮)*; Chan, Ka-S.G., Kwong, Ma-W.A., Lau, Ho-L., Screenplay; Tung, W.S., Action Director; Golden Sun Film, MediaCorp Raintree Pictures, Shanghai Film Group, Ning Xia Film Studio, Dinglongda (Beijing) International Culture Media Co., Golden Sun Films Holdings, Eastern Mordor Film, Wuhan Huaqi Movies & TV Production, Beijing New Film Association: China, 2008.
5. Chang, C., Director. *The One-Armed Swordsman (獨臂刀)*; Chang, C., Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tong, G., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1967.
6. Chang, C., Director. *Golden Swallow (金燕子)*; Chang, C., Tu, Yu-C., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tong, G., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1968.
7. Chang, C., Director. *Return of the One-armed Swordsman (獨臂刀王)*; Chang, C., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tong, G., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1969.
8. Chang, C., Director. *The Brave Archer (射鵬英雄傳)*; Ni, K., Screenplay; Lee, Ka-T., Tai, Ch.-H.R., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1977.
9. Chang, C., Director. *The Brave Archer Part II (射鵬英雄傳續集)*; Ni, K., Screenplay; Lu, F., Tai, Ch.-H.R., Leung, T., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1978.
10. Chang, C., Director. *Life Gamble (生死鬥)*; Chang, C., Ni, K., Screenplay; Leung, T., Lu, F., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1979.
11. Chang, C., Director. *The Kid with the Golden Arm (金臂童)*; Ni, K., Chang, C., Screenplay; Chiang, S., Lu, F., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1979.
12. Chang, C., Director. *Two Champions of Shaolin (少林與武當)*; Chang, C., Ni, K., Screenplay; Chiang, S., Lu, F., Kwok, Ch.-F. P., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1980.
13. Chang, C., Director. *The Brave Archer Part III (射鵬英雄傳第三集)*; Ni, K., Chang, C., Screenplay; Kwok, Ch.-F.P., Chiang, S., Lu, F., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1981.
14. Chang, C., Director. *Ode to Gallantry (俠客行)*; Chang, C., Ni, K., Screenplay; Kwok, Ch.-F.P., Chiang, S., Lu, F., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1982.
15. Chang, C., Director. *The Brave Archer and his Mate (神鵬俠侶)*; Ni, K., Chang, C., Screenplay; Kwok, Ch.-F.P., Lu, F., Chiang, S., Chu, K., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1982.
16. Chang, C., Wu, M., Pao, Hs.-L., Directors. *The Water Margin (水滸傳)*; Chang, C., Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tong, G., Lau, Ka.-W., Chan, C., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1972.
17. Chen, Ta.-S.T., Director. *Bodyguards and Assassins (十月圍城)*; Chun, Ti.-N., Yuen, Sa.-S.J., Chan, W., Guo, Ju-L., Wu, B., Chan, Ka-Y.J., Screenplay; Tung, W.S., Lee, Ta-C., Action Directors; Beijing Polybona film Publishing and Cinema Popular Film: Hong Kong, 2009.
18. Cheung, Tu.-C. J., Director. *Kung Fu Wing Chun (功夫詠春)*; Cheung, Tu.-C. J., Ho, Ma.-L., Screenplay; Lai, Yi.-C.G., Kong, To-H.B., Tung, W.S., Action Directors; Seasonal Film Corporation: Hong Kong, 2010.
19. Ching, G., Hua, S., Directors. *Flying Guillotine, Part II (清宮大刺殺)*; Ni, K., Ching, G., Lee, Wi.-C., Screenplay; Tong, G., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1978.

20. Ching, Si.-T.T., Director. *Duel to the Death* (生死決); Ching, Si.-T.T., Dai, Da.-W.D., Wong, Ma.-C.M., Screenplay; Ching, Si.-T.T., Lau, Ch.-H., Action Directors; Paragon Films: Hong Kong, 1983.
21. Ching, Si.-T.T., Director. *Swordsman 2* (笑傲江湖II 東方不敗); Tsui, H., Tang, Bi.-Y.E., Chan, Ti.-S., Screenplay; Ching, Si.-T.T., Yuen, B., Cheung, Yi.-S., Ma, Yu.-S., Action Directors; Long Shong Pictures and Golden Princess Film Production: Hong Kong, 1992.
22. Chor, Y., Director. *Intimate Confessions of a Chinese Courtesan* (愛奴); Yau-Daai, On-P., Screenplay; Chui, Ye.-A. S., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1972.
23. Chow, Si.-C.S., Director. *Shaolin Soccer* (少林足球); Chow, Si.-C.S., Screenplay; Tsang, Ka.-C., Fung, Mi.-H.S., Fung, Ch.-C.A., Lo, M., Ching, Si.-T.T., Action Director; The Star Overseas and Universe Entertainment: Hong Kong, 2001.
24. Chow, Si.-C.S., Director. *Kung Fu Hustle* (功夫); Tsang, Ka.-C., Chan, Ma.-K., Chow, Si.-C.S., Huo, X.L., Screenplay; Yuen, Wo-P., Hung, Ka.-B.S., Action Directors: The Star Overseas and Universe Entertainment: Hong Kong, 2004.
25. Clouse, R., Director. *Enter the Dragon* (龍爭虎鬥); Hoh, Se.-L., Allin, M., Screenplay; Lee, Si.-L.B., Action Director; Golden Harvest and Concord Productions: Hong Kong, 1973.
26. Gao, Xi.-S., Director. *My Kingdom* (大武生); Zou, Ji.-Z., Gao, Xi.-S., Screenplay; Hung, Ka.-B.S., Chin, Ka.-L., Action Directors; Celestial Pictures: China, 2011.
27. Ho, Me.-H., Director. *Lady Hermit* (鍾馗娘子); Yip, Ya.-F., Screenplay; Leung, Si.-C., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1971.
28. Ho, Me.-H., Director. *The Vengeful Beauty* (血芙蓉); Sze-To, O., Screenplay; Tong, G., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1978.
29. Hu, K., Director. *Come Drink with Me* (大醉俠); Hu, K., Cheung, Y., Screenplay; Han, Yi.-C., Hung, Ka.-B.S., Action Directors: Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1966.
30. Hu, K., Director. *A Touch of Zen* (俠女), Hu, K., Screenplay; Han, Yi.-C., Poon, Yi.-K., Action Directors; Union Film: Taiwan, 1971.
31. Kong, To.-H.B., Director. *Twins Mission* (雙子神偷); Tsui, Si.-M., Fong, Sa.-K., Screenplay; Kong, To.-H.B., Tsui Si.-M., Action Directors; Emperor Motion Pictures, Emperor Classic Films, Beijing Silver Dream Film & TV Art Co. and Sundream Motion Pictures: Hong Kong, 2007.
32. Kuo, Na.-H.J., Director. *Born Invincible* (太極氣功); Yiu, Hi.-H., Screenplay; Yuen, Wo-P., Action Director: Hong Hwa International Films: Hong Kong, 1978.
33. Lee, A., Director. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (臥虎藏龍); Schamus, J., Wang, Hu.-L., Tsai, Ku.-J., Screenplay; Yuen, Wo-P., Action Director; Columbia Pictures: Taiwan, 2000.
34. Lee, Wa.-M.R., Director. *Dragon Inn* (新龍門客棧); Tsui, H., Tan, C., Screenplay; Ching, Si.-T.T., Yuen, B., Cheung, Yi.-S., Action Directors; Seasonal Film: Hong Kong, 1992.
35. Liu, Ch.-H.G., Director. *Shaolin and Wu Tang* (少林與武當); Wong, Ba.-G., Screenplay; Liu Ch.-L., Action Director; Hing Fut Film Company: Hong Kong, 1983.
36. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Executioners from Shaolin* (洪熙官); Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu Ch.-L., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1977.
37. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Heroes of the East* (中華丈夫); Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu Ch.-L., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1978.

38. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Shaolin Mantis* (螳螂); Sze-To, O., Screenplay; Tong, Wa.-S.W., Liu, Ch.-L., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1978.
39. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Mad Monkey Kung Fu* (瘋猴); Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1979.
40. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Martial Club* (武館); Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., King, L.Ki.-C., Hsiao, H., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1981.
41. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *My Young Auntie* (長輩); Liu, Ch.-L., Lee, Ta.-H., Screenplay; King, L.Ki.-C., Hsiao, H., Liu, Ch.-L., Action Directors: Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1981.
42. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Cat vs. Rat* (御貓三戲錦毛鼠); Ni, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., King, L.Ki.-C., Hsiao, H., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1982.
43. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Legendary Weapons of China* (十八般武藝); Liu, Ch.-L., Lee, Ta.-H., Screenplay; Liu Ch.-L., Hsiao, H., King, L.Ki.-C., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1982.
44. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *The 8 Diagram Pole Fighter* (五郎八卦棍); Ni, K., Liu, Ch.-L., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Hsiao, H., King, L.Ki.-C., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1984.
45. Liu, Ch.-L., Director. *Disciples of the 36th Chamber* (霹靂十傑); Ni, K., Liu, Ch.-L., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., King, L.Ki.-C., Hsiao, H., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1985.
46. Liu, Ju.-G. T., Director. *Bastard Swordsman* (天蠶變); Liu, Ju.-G.T., Screenplay; Yuen, T., Liu, Ju.-G.T., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1983.
47. Lo, L., Director. *Clan of the White Lotus* (洪文定三破白蓮教); Huang, T., Screenplay; Liu Ch.-L., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1980.
48. Lo, W., Director. *The Shadow Whip* (影子神鞭); Ni, K., Lo, W., Screenplay; Chui, Ye.-A.S., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1970.
49. Ng, Mi.-K., Director. *Deadful Melody* (六指琴魔); Chan, Ma.-K., Lee, Gw.-G.J., Lee, Ma.-C., Screenplay; Mang, H., King, L.Ki.-C., Action Directors; Super Class Production and Film City Distribution: Hong Kong, 1994.
50. San, K., Siu, W.S., Directors. *Lady of the Law* (女捕快); San, K., Screenplay; Leung, Si.-C., Ching, Si-T.T., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1975.
51. San, K., Director. *Swordswomen Three* (江湖三女俠); San, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tong, G., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1970.
52. San, K., Director. *The Winged Tiger* (插翅虎); San, K., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tong, G., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1970.
53. Su, Ch.-B., Director. *Reign of Assassins* (劍雨); Su, Ch.-B., Screenplay; Tung, W.S., Action Director; Lion Rock Productions: China, 2010.
54. Tong, G., Director. *Shaolin Intruders* (三闖少林); Ni, K., Hung, H., Ling, Y., Yip, Ka.-H.R., Screenplay; Tong, G., Wong, Pa.-G, Yuen, B., Yuen, W., Lee, Ho.-S., Kong, C., Action Directors: Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1983.
55. Tsui, H., Director. *Seven Swords* (七劍); Tsui, H., Cheung, Ch.-S., Chun, Ti.-N., Screenplay; Liu, Ch.-L., Tung, W.S., Xiong, Xi.-X., Lau, Ka.-W., Action Directors; Film Workshop: Hong Kong, 2005.

56. Tsui, H., Director. *Flying Swords of Dragon Gate* (龍門飛甲); Tsui, H., Screenplay; Yuen, B., Lan, Ha.-H.A., Sun, Ji-K., Action Directors; China film Group, Shanghai Media Group, Bona International Film and Liangzi Group, Shineshow: China, 2011.
57. Wong, F., Director. *Hapkido* (合氣道); Ho, J., Screenplay; Hung, Ka.-B.S., Action Director; Golden Harvest: Hong Kong, 1972.
58. Wong, J., Director. *Kung Fu Cult Master* (倚天屠龍記之魔教教主); Wong, J., Screenplay; Hung, Ka.-B.S., Action Director; Win's Movie Production: Hong Kong, 1993.
59. Wong, Ka.-W., Director. *The Grandmaster* (一代宗師); Wong, Ka.-W., Zou, Ji-Z., Xu, H., Screenplay; Yuen, Wo-P., Yuen, Sh.-Y., Ling, Ch.-W.T., Yuen, Ch.-Y., Action Directors; Block 2 Pictures, Jet Tone Films, Sil-Metropole Organisation and Bona International Film Group: Hong Kong, 2013.
60. Wu, Da.-W.D., Director. *The Bride with White Hair 2* (白髮魔女傳 2); To, Kw.-W.R., Wu, Da.-W.D., Yu, Ya.-Ta.R., Screenplay; Kwok, Ch.-F.P., Action Director; Mandarin Films Singapore: Hong Kong, 1993.
61. Wu, E.S., Director. *Painted Skin: The Resurrection* (畫皮 2); Ran, P., Ran, Ji.-N., Screenplay; Tung, W.S., Li, C., Action Directors; Ningxia Film Studio, Dinglongda (Beijing) International Culture Media Co, Huay Brothers, Qi Lin Ying Ye: China, 2012.
62. Yip, Wi.-C.T., Director. *The Black Tavern* (黑店); Yip, Ya.-F., Screenplay; Chui, Ye.-A.S., Chiu, Ch.-H., Action Directors; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1972.
63. Yu, Ya.-T.R., Director. *The Bride with White Hair* (白髮魔女傳); Tang, Bi.-Y.E., Lamk Ke.-T., Wu, Da.-W.D., Yu, Ya.-Ta.R., Screenplay; Kwok, Ch.-F.P., Action Director; Mandarin Films Singapore: Hong Kong, 1993.
64. Yueh, F.G., Director. *The Young Avenger* (小毒龍); Hu, P., Ko, Ju.-F., Screenplay; Chui, Ye.-A.S., Action Director; Shaw Brothers: Hong Kong, 1972.
65. Yuen, K.C., Director. *Fong Sai Yuk* (方世玉); Chan, Ki.-C.J., Tsai, Ko.-Y.K., Lau, Ch.-W.J., Screenplay; Yuen, T., Yuen, K.C., Action Directors; Eastern Production: Hong Kong, 1993.
66. Yuen, Wo-P., Director. *Dreadnought* (勇者無懼); Peace Group, Screenplay; Yuen, Wo-P., Chiu, Ch.-H., Yuen, Ch.-Y., Yuen, Ja.-Y.B., Yuen, Ya.-C., Yuen, Sh.-Y., Action Directors; Golden Harvest: Hong Kong, 1981.
67. Yuen, Wo-P., Director. *Iron Monkey* (少年黃飛鴻之鐵馬騮); Tang, Bi.-Y.E., Lau, Da.-M., Tsui, H., Screenplay; Yuen, Ch.-Y., Guk, Hi.-C., Yuen, Sh.-Y., Action Directors; Golden Harvest, Long Shong Pictures and Paragon Films: Hong Kong, 1993.
68. Yuen, Wo-P., Director. *The Tai-Chi Master* (太極張三豐); Yip, Kw.-K., Screenplay; Yuen, Wo-P., Yuen, Ch.-Y., Guk, Hi.-C., Action Directors; Eastern Production: Hong Kong, 1993.
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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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