

In Search of The Poetic Justice in Chivalrous and Court-Case Fictions of Qing Dynasty

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Abstract

Chivalrous and court-case fiction is an important part of late-Qing fictions. As a popular genre, numerous sequences are published and read in late-Qing period. Unlike the court-case fictions before Qing period, the authors and publishers combined two kinds of traditional tales: court-case and chivalrous genre. In these fictions, Knights-errant entered the administration of justice to help the judge for detection of crime and apprehension of gangsters. Knights-errant, the illegal team before, turned to be legal. From middle-Qing to late-Qing period, the situation which going downhill also affected the description of chivalrous and court-case fictions. In these fictions, the authors gave praise to the honest and upright officials and brilliant emperors apparently to avoid the prohibition against fictions, for another, they ridiculed the way how justice could be realized. This paper attempts to compare the judgement in these fictions with the judicial practice in Late-Qing period. The goal of this present paper is to discover, among the Qing government, knights-errant, the judges, and the authors of Chivalrous and Court-Case fictions, whose justice could be realized.

Keywords : Court-case fiction, Knight-errant, Late-Qing fiction,
Law of Qing dynasty, San-xia wu-yi, Poetic justice