







both “mythic and real,” generating a publishing industry that is as concerned with philosophical questions (the phantasmatic “something *more*” of Eastern fighting arts) as the no-nonsense efficacy of Jeet Kune Do, and Bowman provides an original and provocative reading of his legacy.

The mythic—in this case, the existential identity of the pre-modern Martial Arts hero(ine)—also figures in Sinkwan Cheng’s essay. Both a comparative study and a welcome response to the lack of literary *wuxia* studies, Cheng’s study provides a vivid and persuasive account of the historical basis for the heroism and social protest of the genre. There are two important issues of translation at stake. Firstly, Cheng argues, *xia* tends to be mistranslated as “knight” or “knight-errant,” a seemingly innocent analogy that inadvertently obscures some significant cultural and philosophical differences. The knight inhabits a rank bestowed by the nobility and is inextricably linked to the preservation of social order, while the *xia* is defined by his or her predisposition to “justice” and antipathy towards institutions and hierarchies. Seemingly united as heroic archetypes, the knight and the *xia* demonstrate that such attributes as honour, loyalty and chivalry cannot transcend their cultural and historical contexts. Secondly, what constitutes “history” may encounter problems of translation, too—as Cheng explains, pre-modern Chinese culture did not make rigid distinctions between literature, history and philosophy, as evidenced by the seeming introjections made by writers such as Sima Qian into the subjectivities of heroes of antiquity. The relationship between “history” and “myth” might in itself make for a particularly interesting cross-cultural debate, but the historical *xia* clearly cast a lasting spell over the popular (fictional) genre that would emerge later.

If “Martial Arthouse” has provided a significant impetus for the blossoming of writing about the *wuxia pian*, another factor has been the greater availability of classic films in remastered prints. The release of Shaw Brothers’ studio’s back catalogue on has int6(h)-4(er)-2(())3(



acknowledges) that all *wuxia*

economic currency in the games market as a marker of authenticity and cultural difference.