Eating with Ally, Eating against Enemy: Eating in Shuihu Zhuan under the Frame of Relation

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Eating with Ally, Eating against Enemy: Eating in *Shuihu Zhuan* under the Frame of Relation

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Introduction

Speaking of the outlaw heroes in Shuihu Zhuan (hereafter Shuihu), I suppose many readers will have the same impression about them as I do: Eating is an essential part of their life. They love eating. They are always eating. They eat for everything. Their eating is barely an isolated activity and always involved in others, such as relating. I find relation a good frame to discuss the eating-related topics in Shuihu.

The introduction has five sections to cover five components of this thesis—literary text, research question, literature review, methodology, and structure. The first section is the literary text Shuihu. I will tell the main story, deal with the problem of the author, and explain the reason why I choose this English translation. The second section is the research question. It will unfold in three steps—what the research question indeed is, how is built on, and how it develops but differs from the previous studies. The third section is the literature review. I will list the previous studies about eating in Shuihu and other cross-cultural contexts and my response to them. The fourth section is the methodology. The research question will be unpacked with contextual and theoretical methods. The former refers to the regional and historical context of imperial China to which the subjects are put back and the close readings of the literary text itself. The latter refers to Western critical theories that abstract the subjects from their original context. The fifth section is the structure. The halved research question gives the main body of this thesis a two-chapter structure. I will summarize how many sections each chapter has, why each chapter has that many sections, and what each section is about.

Literary Text

The literary text of this thesis is Shuihu, one of the earliest and most famous Chinese novels written in vernacular Mandarin. It tells a story about how 108 outlaw heroes gather in Mount Liang and rebel against the Song government, and how the outlaw company is amnestied and gone. The development of the story is driven by two forces: The first force is the mythical setting that the outlaw heroes are heavenly stars. They are wrongly released by Marshal Hong, a minister who is active long before the story starts. The stars descend to the earth with a mission and will rise to the heaven again once the mission is accomplished. Their mission is to always perform heaven's will: "Be ever a steadfast proponent of righteousness, preserve your [their] land and people, shun evil and pursue justice (Shi 436)." The second force is the Song government, the legitimate government of the empire. The Song government often plays an evil role in the story, because most officials there abuse ordinary folks with their administrative power. The head of these officials is so-called four wicked ministers: Gao Qiu, Tong Guan, Cai Jing, and Yang Jian (hereafter the wicked ministers). The outlaw heroes rebel against the Song government to accomplish their mission.

I cannot avoid mentioning the problem of the author when it comes to Shuihu. Nothing is known about him (sadly, it is almost impossible for women to write a novel like Shuihu in imperial China) except his pen name. But it does not matter that the author is unknown. Foucault names two conditions where the author does make difference in the reading of a text, this thesis does not apply to any of which. Foucault thinks the author is important for being assumed as the source of the text. First, the

author nourishes the text with his personal life. It is inevitable to take the author's life into consideration when read a text (Foucault 1389-90). However, readings as such will be impossible if the author's life is a puzzle—nothing is known about the author of Shuihu, except his pen name. Second, if the author publishes a number of texts, other texts published under the same name will be references in the reading of this certain text. If the author happens to be a prestigious one, the author's name will function as "a mark of prestige (Foucault 1390)." Can the name Shi Nai'an function in the same way? Obviously not. Shuihu is the only text published under this name.

The English translation I choose is The Marshes of Mount Liang published by Chinese University Press in Hong Kong, 1994. I choose it for two reasons. First, like many other centuries-old texts, Shuihu has different editions, of which the number of chapters is also different. The original text of this translation is the 120-chapter one. An episode I will read in the first chapter is from the 120th chapter, a chapter that other editions do not include. Second, this translation has cannibalistic contents that are censored in some other translations, while these contents are important to this thesis. Cannibalism is a key concept of the second chapter. Without cannibalistic contents I will not be able to finish this thesis.

It does not mean that I can use this translation as it is. This translation aims for English speakers who have no specialized knowledge of Chinese, not a native Chinese speaker who uses it to conduct an academic study like me. The original text is thus translated in a more understandable but less accurate way. For example, the outlaw heroes are addressed by their nicknames in this translation. Every outlaw hero has one

real name and one nickname. The real name given by his/her parents at birth and little concerned with his/her image, while the nickname is. The real name makes little sense to the target readers, while the nickname helps them recognize and memorize. For example, Li Kui's nickname 'Iron Ox' makes it easy to imagine a strong man who has dark skin, red eyes, astonishing strength, and bad temper. I address the outlaw heroes with their real names instead.

Research Question

The exact research question of this thesis is: How do the outlaw heroes relate to their allies and enemies through eating? I will introduce how it is built, and how it develops but differs from the previous studies in this section.

The research question is built on two key words—eating and relation. Eating is an essential way for the outlaw heroes to live their life. Their eating occasions range from the execution of a government official to the reception of an imperial ambassador. Most previous studies about eating in Shuihu stick to one eating-related topic, such as characterization or cannibalism. I, however, have the impression that these topics are somehow related and can be discussed under certain frame.

Annemarie Mol sheds some light for me in terms of the aforesaid frame. Being an essential human activity itself, eating is also largely involved in other activities. Mol names the main chapters of her book Eating in Theory after four activities, because she regards these activities as the four basic ways eating involves itself in the human world. These activities are being, knowing, doing, and relating, among which relating is the

one I look for. There is a huge net where characters relate to each other in one way or another in Shuihu. This net of relations is a frame under which many eating-related topics can be discussed.

I also need a way to organize these relations and find the four-group division Li Chun-qing proposes inspirational. Li divides all the characters into four groups—the positive determinant (the outlaw heroes), the negative determinant (the Song government), the positive subordinate (the ordinary folks), and the negative subordinate (the local landlords and bureaucrats) (Li 2). To put it simply, Li places the outlaw heroes in the center of the net and takes other the rest as either their allies or enemies. I use this ally-enemy binary to organize the relations in my thesis.

The next step I take is to define and categorize ally and enemy. The outlaw heroes as the main characters and the subject of (most) eating are place in the center of the net of relations, so the first thing to clarify is all the allies and enemies are theirs. Whoever cooperate with them in a particular activity for a particular purpose can be an ally. Li Kui participates in the military operation to save Song Jiang. Song Jiang and Li Kui are allies. The outlaw company fights four wars for the Song government after the third amnesty. They are also allies—alliance in Shuihu can be built between both individuals and collectives.

Whoever fights against the outlaw heroes can be an enemy. Those I will mention in this thesis range from humans to nonhumans. The outlaw heroes fight against villains: Lu Da beats Zheng Tu who bullies Jin Cuilian. Song Jiang eats Huang Wenbing who reports him. The outlaw heroes fight against each other in their pre-Mount-Liang life.

Zhang Shun almost drowns Song Jiang in the river. Sun Erniang and Zhang qing almost make Wu Song pies.

The research question develops but differs from the previous studies about eating and relation in Shuihu in two senses. First, eating and relating are not considered as two activities that separate from, but involve in each other. Relations are read through the lens of eating. Eating-related topics are discussed under the frame of relation. Second, the frame itself is new, too.

I will not stick to one single eating-related topic in this thesis but try to include more. Not only will I respond to the two main topics of the previous studies, but also propose new ones. However, the diversity of the eating-related topics this thesis includes is not the only goal. It will not make sense if these topics are not discussed under the frame of relation. For example, I will read in Song Jiang and Li Kui's first dinner to see its effect on their sworn brotherhood, not the way it characterizes them.

I organize the relations with the ally-enemy binary, which is developed but different from Li's four-group division: First, the Song government is not (at least not always) an enemy. It builds a military alliance with the outlaw company after the third amnesty. Second, the outlaw heroes can be their own enemies. There are two episodes where they fight against each other in the second chapter. Third, the net of relations in Shuihu is expanded to nonhumans. Tigers as the best-known nonhuman enemy will be also taken into consideration.

Literature Review

The previous studies about eating in Shuihu have two main topics—characterization and cannibalism. Eating characterizes the outlaw heroes, but not all the eating-related elements do. Their food choices do. Yan Liang proposes two continuities between beef and Li Kui's defiance, fish and Song Jiang's flattery (Liang 122-5). I will question if the aforesaid food choices indeed characterize them as Yan Liang argues. Their enormous appetite also does (Hsia 86). It strengthens their physical prowess, martial skills, and courage (Huang 105-6). Levinas thinks positively of the relation between eating and other bodily activities, too. I will justify my citation of his eating theory with this shared, positive thought.

As for cannibalism in Shuihu, much attention is paid to one particular episode—Sun Erniang and Zhang qing's pie business. E.N. Anderson reads it with the conclusion that cannibalism in Shuihu is presented with "cheerful moral indifference (Anderson 266)." I will also read the same episode with the same focus on the moral messages conveyed in it. But the way cannibalism unfolds (also as a key concept) in this thesis is different. I will propose a new term—metaphorical cannibalism—to define and categorize the metaphorical manner in which the outlaw heroes eat their enemies.

I will also cite the previous studies about eating in cross-cultural contexts to make a point. I double-check Bourdieu's point Yan Liang cites that fish is unsuitable food for men (Bourdieu 190) in the first chapter. It turns out that it is the way fish is eaten that makes it feminine. I thus realize 'food choice' is too ambiguous a notion and use more specific ones in this thesis. Two cross-cultural studies inspire me in terms of the moral messages conveyed in Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing in the second

chapter: First, it is a perfect fit for revenge cannibalism, a category where the cannibalistic moves are made to seek revenge for the previous offense (Lester 52). Second, it reflects the shift of their social class, a perspective from which James White Brown observes the French Revolution. Eating can be the metaphor of the abuse of the higher classes to the lower classes before and the uprising of the lower classes against the higher classes after (Brown 5). The eater and eaten just switch sides.

Methodology

I will unpack the research question with both contextual and theoretical methods. By 'contextual' I mean the subjects will be read in the regional and historical context of imperial China. When question the continuity between beef and Li Kui's defiance, I cite the economic facts about the beef and mutton (as the substitute) consumption in the Song dynasty to prove that the food choice between beef and mutton is more of a matter of money. When read Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing, I cite the historical records that the outraged citizens ate corrupted officials in the Tang dynasty to prove that this episode does not come out of nowhere. It has a predecessor in history.

By 'contextual' I mean close reading will play an important role as well. Vibeke Bordahl reads the names, proverbs, and the way the tiger and Wu Song are described in Wu Song's tiger hunt to give tigers in Shuihu an image. I also start with the way the tigress and Li Kui are described in Li Kui's tiger hunt to enrich this image.

By 'theoretical' I mean I will engage Western critical theories that abstract the subjects from their original context to read Shuihu. Here list four theorists whose

theories either inspire me to develop the research question or facilitate me in the reading of some specific episodes—Annemarie Mol, Emmanuel Levinas, Hans Jonas, and Jacques Derrida. Mol's attention to the involvement of eating in other activities is a source of inspiration of the research question. She proposes four activities as the four basic ways eating involves itself in the human world, among which I pick up relating to frame the eating-related topics in this thesis.

Levinas and the outlaw heroes share one positive thought that eating contributes to other bodily activities, which justifies my citation. Two notions from his eating theories will facilitate me to read Song Jiang and Li Kui's sworn brotherhood. One is 'feeding the other.' Levinas stresses the sense of responsibility one feels when feed the other (Goldstein). The other is alterity. Levinas describes it as the state of being different and unattainable (Levinas 33-4). Jonas builds a hierarchy where humans distinguish from animals with their exclusive pursuit of moral rightness, while Eating is considered as an animal-level activity and thus not directly engaged in this pursuit (Jonas 105). It is a criticism I will refute if there is any moral message conveyed in cannibalism in Shuihu.

Derrida is the only one whose theory is not eating-related among the four theorists. I will cite his point about the animal world to read tigers in Shuihu: The animal world is heterogenous and does not mirror the human world (Derrida 1652). It inspires me to get access to the tiger world in Shuihu in the opposite way—I think the tiger world is intended to mirror the human world and can be understood with human organizations and ethics.

Structure

The ally-enemy binary halves the research question and gives the main body of the thesis a two-chapter structure. I will address how the outlaw heroes relate to their allies in the first chapter, and how they relate to enemies in the second chapter. Eating is, of course, the lens through which I observe these relations.

How do the outlaw heroes relate to their allies through eating? This is the question I will address in the first chapter. This chapter has three sections. The first section is not about any of the specific alliances but characterization. I start the first chapter with such a section for two reasons. First. Alliance is made of people. People are affected by their eating. Eating involves itself in alliance with its effect on people. It affects people mainly on two aspects—individual characters and interpersonal interactions. Since the rest two sections focus more on the interpersonal interactions inside two specific alliances, it will be better if there is also a section to mention characterization. Second, it is one of the two main topics of the previous studies about eating in Shuihu, so this section can also be regarded as my response to these studies. I will question if Song Jiang's and Li Kui's food choices do characterize them as Yan Liang argues and problematize the ambiguous notion of 'food choice' in this section.

I will then move onto interpersonal interactions in the rest two sections. I pick up two specific alliances, one individual and one collective. The individual one is Song Jiang and Li Kui's sworn brotherhood. Sworn brotherhood is an important sort of alliance. Song Jiang and Li Kui are leading characters. Their sworn brotherhood is full

well presented and eating-related. Song Jiang holds a changeable attitude towards Li Kui's eating. I wonder if it has any effect on their sworn brotherhood, such as to establish or disband it.

The collective one is the military alliance between the outlaw company and the Song government. The Song government amnesties the outlaw company in its third attempt, since which the outlaw company fights for the Song government as its official troop. Eating-related interactions read in this section are about a particular sort of food—the imperial wine. It is given as the emperor's gift twice, first to the whole outlaw company and then to Song Jiang alone. Do these interactions reflect the power disparity and dynamic of this alliance? How is power distributed between the two allies? Does the power dynamic have any tendency? If so, what is the result of this tendency?

How do the outlaw heroes relate to their enemies through eating? This is the question I will address in the second chapter. Whoever the outlaw heroes fight against are their enemies, while they fight against both humans and nonhumans. This chapter thus has two sections to cover both. Cannibalism is the key concept of the first section, because the outlaw heroes eat their human enemies. Sometimes they eat in a metaphorical sense, making money of the enemies to support themselves. Sometimes they eat in the most literal sense, roasting the legs and making the heart and livers soup. I name these two sorts of cannibalistic moves as metaphorical and literal cannibalism and read the two categories with respective focuses—the cannibalistic vibe produced in metaphorical cannibalism and the moral message conveyed in literal cannibalism. I will cite two pre-existing criticisms when discuss the second category. Both claim there

is no moral message conveyed in cannibalism in Shuihu.

Tigers are the best-known nonhuman enemy. I pick up Li Kui's tiger hunt among the three tiger-hunting episodes. It tells a story that four tigers eat Li Kui's mother, so Li Kui kills them all to revenge her. It is the only episode where the tiger hunt is an ethical move, rather than a showcase of the outlaw hero's physical strength. This section will unfold in two steps. I will first provide a reading of the tiger world in this episode and then show how the image of the tigress adds to the dual image Bordahl thinks tigers in Shuihu have. My way to get access to the tiger world is a so-called mirror structure. In short, I think the tiger world in this episode is intended to mirror the human world, so human organizations and ethics can be used to understand the four tigers.

Eating with Ally: Individual Sworn Brotherhood and Collective Military Alliance

I will answer the first half of the research question in this chapter: How do the outlaw heroes relate to their allies through eating? My answer unfolds with first the definition of ally and alliance: Allies cooperate in a particular activity for a particular purpose, during which they build an alliance. Among all sorts of alliance in Shuihu, I pick up two to read in this chapter: One is Song Jiang and Li Kui's sworn brotherhood. The other is the military one between the outlaw company and the Song government.

Sworn brotherhood in Shuihu has one subject (the outlaw heroes) and two forms— pre-Mount-Liang sworn brotherhood and the Mount-Liang outlaw company. Are they forms of alliance, too? The outlaw company obviously is. The 108 outlaw heroes gather in Mount Liang, rebelling against the Song government to perform

heaven's will. Pre-Mount-Liang sworn brotherhood is also a form of alliance, for it often results in or from military operations that the outlaw heroes conduct to revenge or rescue their sworn brothers. For example, shortly after Song Jiang and Li Kui become sworn brothers, Song Jiang is sentenced to death. Li Kui participates in the military operation to save him.

This chapter have three sections: The first one is about characterization. I will question if beef and fish characterize Li Kui and Song Jiang in the same way as Yan Liang argues. I will also problematize the ambiguous notion 'food choice'—eating-related elements like material and the way of cooking should be separated from it when it comes to characterization.

The second one is about Song Jiang and Li Kui's sworn brotherhood, which I choose two reasons: First, their sworn brotherhood lasts throughout the story and is full well presented. Song Jiang and Li Kui are leading characters and outlive many of their fellow heroes who die earlier in the story. Second, most important occasions of this sworn brotherhood are eating-related: their first and last meeting, the execution of Huang Wenbing right after the aforesaid military operation to save Song Jiang, and the first amnesty that Song Jiang craves but Li Kui ruins.

The third one is about the military alliance between the outlaw company and the Song government—a collective one that I cannot avoid mentioning. A particular sort of food, the imperial wine, is found appearing twice as the emperor's gift to first the whole company and then Song Jiang alone. Behind the eating-related interactions about the imperial wine is a display of power disparity and dynamic in this alliance.

Characterization: Continuity between Food Choice and Character

Song Jiang and Li Kui have dinner together when they meet each other for the first time. Song Jiang, a prisoner banished to Jiangzhou, meets his superintendent Dai Zong in the Jiangzhou prison. Dai Zong knows Song Jiang's good reputation and craves for a meeting for long, so he invites Song Jiang to a riverside restaurant for dinner. When they are sitting upstairs and having dinner, Dai Zong is troubled to deal with Li Kui, a prison warder who is making a fuss downstairs because he loses a gamble game. Dai Zong lets him join the dinner. Song Jiang lends Li Kui ten taels of sliver to gamble and orders a big piece of mutton for him. Li Kui honors Song Jiang as a great man and wants to thank him with some fresh fish that he likes. Li Kui then has a fight with Zhang Shun, the factor who controls the fish sale in Jiangzhou. Song Jiang stops the fight with a letter that Zhang Shun's brother Zhang Heng writes to him, in which Zhang Heng also honors Song Jiang as a great man. Zhang Shun then gives Song Jiang the fresh fish as his gift and joins the dinner, too.

I am not the first person to study the interplay between Song Jiang's and Li Kui's food choices and characters in this episode. Yan Liang has a close reading already. She thinks there is a continuity between beef and Li Kui's defiance, fish and Song Jiang's flattery: First, Li Kui's craving for beef refers to his defiance. He poses a threat to the social order (Liang 123). Liang makes this point by put beef back to the regional and historical context of imperial China. She finds the popularity and availability of beef constantly limited by various moral, religious and legal proscription (Liang 122-

3). Second, Song Jiang's love for fish refers to his flattery. Liang cites Bourdieu's point to argue that fish as food is feminine and thus related to the feminine character flattery. (Liang 124-5).

I find both continuities Liang proposes problematic. I will cite the economic facts about beef consumption in the Song dynasty in Issac Yue's study and double check Bourdieu's point to problematize them. I also find 'food choice' too ambiguous a notion to discuss the way eating characterizes the outlaw heroes. More specific eating-related elements, such as material and the way of cooking should be separated from it.

Coincidental Continuity: Beef and Li Kui's Defiance

Song Jiang detects that Li Kui is still hungry after the first round of eating and drinking and decides to order "a big piece of meat (Shi 343)" for him. He does not specify what sort of meat he wants, so the waiter reminds him that the restaurant sells mutton, not beef, "I am afraid we only have mutton, we've no beef. We could give you some good fat mutton, if you like, but that's all there is (343)."

Li Kui gets irritated and pours the remaining hot fish soup in the waiter's face. He then defends his offensive behavior with the following reason, "I won't stand for it. The bugger wants to suggest I only eat beef, to avoid selling me any mutton (343)."

Why does this restaurant sell mutton but no beef? What does the waiter suggest by assuming Li Kui as a beef eater? Liang looks for the answers in imperial China when the popularity and availability of beef was limited for various moral, religious, and legal reasons: First, it was an agricultural society to which cattle were indispensable. One

would feel a sense of shame if one ate animals that spend a lifetime assisting humans in farming. Second, Buddhism with its Indian-originated respect for cattle, and Taoism with its cult that beef was unclean, reinforced the beef eating taboo on religious terms. Third, the prohibition of cattle slaughter and beef sale had been established as a state law since the Han dynasty (Liang 122-3).

Here is Liang's reading of the conversation between Li Kui and the waiter based on the aforesaid limitations: First, in Shuihu beef is available to serve "mostly at roadside inns in remote areas where government control and law enforcement are weak (Liang 123)." The restaurant where Song Jiang and Li Kui are having dinner is inside the Jiangzhou city. Cattle slaughter and beef sale must be strictly banned there. Second, in a society where beef eating is discouraged, one's persistent craving for beef can be understood as a threat to the social order (Liang 123). According to what Li Kui does before the conversation, it is not an assumption, but a fact that Li Kui poses a threat to the social order: The dinner is disturbed several times, all because Li Kui gets himself into trouble. The waiter who witnesses everything naturally assumes Li Kui as a beef lover.

Issac Yue questions this continuity when read the same episode with the same focus on this continuity. He points out that the meat supply of the restaurant should be considered as a reflection of the beef and mutton supply on the market first (Mutton is mentioned as the substitute of beef in the conversation): On the one hand, mutton was popular as "the only legally available read meat on the market (Yue 351)" in the Song dynasty. On the other hand, the shortage of pastures resulted in its short supply and high

price.

Here is Yue's re-reading of the same conversation based on the aforesaid economic facts: Most outlaw heroes are the lower classes (including Li Kui) whose income is low. As a result, it is very likely that he cannot afford the pricey mutton. Li Kui feels offended not because the waiter regards him as a troublemaker, but because the waiter suggests that he is too poor to afford mutton (Yue 351-2). Yue takes the continuity between Li Kui's craving for beef and his defiance as just a coincidence, a conclusion I find more convincing and cite here (Yue 362).

Disturbed Continuity: Fish and Song Jiang's Flattery

The other continuity Liang proposes is between fish and Song Jiang's flattery. The intermediate feature Liang finds to bond them is femininity. There can be a continuity between fish and Song Jiang's flattery If both are proven feminine.

Liang cites a point Bourdieu makes when argue fish as food is feminine. I double check this point and find it does not work in the dinner where Li Kui also has fish. Bourdieu does claim that food is unsuitable food for men in Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste. However, it is the way fish is eaten, not the material that makes Bourdieu think fish as food is feminine. People tend to eat fish in a slow and careful manner, such as nibbling and picking. Otherwise the numerous, tiny, and sharp fish bones will hurt them. Bourdieu regards this slow and careful manner as feminine: "Fish has to be eaten in a way which totally contradicts the masculine way of eating…the whole masculine identity (Bourdieu 190)."

This is not the case in this episode. Later in this dinner, Li Kui also eats fish: He gives up utensils, eating with bare hands. He does not nibble the meat or pick the bones but chews up and swallows everything. In other words, he eats fish in the most masculine way ever. If one shares Song Jiang's love for fish but eats fish in the same way as Li Kui, does one's fish eating still have a feminine feature and bond with one's other feminine characters? I am afraid not.

Indulgence and Tolerance: Leg Roast and Hear-liver Soup

This previous discussion makes me realize that 'food choice' is too ambiguous in the discussion about the way eating characterizes the outlaw heroes. More specific eating-related elements like material and the way of cooking should be separated from it, which is something Liang does not but I will do in the following discussion. Song Jiang in this episode wants to drink hot fish soup, because he needs it to clear his head after so much wine. I take this detail as a cue and start questioning if two different ways of cooking in this episode—soup and (meat) roast—symbolize different states of his mind.

Song Jiang has too much fish in that dinner and catches diarrhea afterwards. Later when he dines alone at another restaurant, he does not order hot fish soup as always. Without hot fish soup clearing his head, Song Jiang gets so drunk and writes a poem about the injustice he has gone through on the wall. The poem is later reported as an expression of his rebellious intention and almost kills him. It is also one of the very few times Song Jiang cannot hold himself in public throughout the story. In other words,

Song Jiang holds himself with the help of soup. Soup symbolizes tolerance.

Liang insists that it is still a matter of material: “The sudden change of Song Jiang’s appetite from fish to meat (Liang 125)” symbolizes the change of his state of mind. As the meat (instead of fish) takes up Song Jiang’s stomach, defiance takes up his head and tempts him to do the dangerous, revealing thing he is least likely to do. I insist that it is the way of cooking that makes difference, because in another episode Song Jiang’s state of mind changes with the way of cooking, while the material keeps the same.

This episode is the execution of Huang Wenbing. Huang is a government official in the Jiangzhou government and looks for promotion. He happens to read Song Jiang’s poem on the wall, senses a rebellious intension, and reports it to the Governor Cai Jiu as evidence of treason. Song Jiang is arrested and sentenced to death. The outlaw heroes conduct a military operation to save Song Jiang on his way to the execution ground. The operation is at first conducted just to save Song Jiang, but later upgraded to an uprising in Jiangzhou and its adjacent city Wuweijun. The outlaw heroes capture Huang Wenbing in the process. It takes the outlaw heroes a while to decide who and how to do this job when discuss how to execute Huang Wenbing. Li Kui volunteers to be the executor, “I’ll do it for you. I’ll settle this villain. He’s good and fat, I see, he’ll make good eating when he’s roasted (Shi 414).”

Li Kui’s execution is cannibalistic. He first roast big pieces cut from the legs and then make heart and livers taken out of the chest soup. The transition is worth attention, because there comes along the transition of Song Jiang’s states of minds. The

whole episode is accordingly divided into two scenes: In the first scene he eats leg roasts, indulging in the pleasure of revenge. In the second scene he drinks the heart-liver soup, worrying about the serious outcome of the uprising.

In the first scene, Song Jiang "could scarcely contain his joy (Shi 414)" when the outlaw heroes capture Huang Wenbing. The outlaw heroes share his joy by eating roasted cuts of Huang Wenbing's legs together. The celebrative atmosphere in the first scene does not extend to the second scene, because Song Jiang drinks the heart-liver soup and has his head cleared. Soup made from different material functions in the same way. It wakes Song Jiang up from the pleasure of revenge. He suddenly kneels on the ground, pleading the other outlaw heroes to be aware of the serious outcome of the uprising: The uprising as a great crime must have been brought to the emperor's attention. They will be not able to resist if the emperor sends more troops, so they have to withdraw now. Song Jiang regains his tolerance with the help of the heart-liver soup.

Material and the way of cooking should be considered separately in the discussion about the way eating characterizes the outlaw heroes. The previous reading of the execution of Huang Wenbing is a sound example, in which leg roast and heart-liver soup are found Song Jiang's two states of mind—indulgence and tolerance.

Sworn Brotherhood: Establishment and Disbandment

The establishment and disbandment of sworn brotherhood in Shuihu is mostly marked with performative speeches and acts, such as certain announcements they make or certain rituals they perform. For example, when the 108 outlaw heroes finally gather

in Mount Liang, Song Jiang thinks the gathering is a reason to rejoice and proposes to "hold a thanksgiving service in which we may express our gratitude to the powers of heaven and earth for their great benevolence toward us (Shi 159)." The thanksgiving service is such a performative act.

Song Jiang and Li Kui are leading characters and do not die until the end of the story. Their sworn brotherhood is full well presented, in which I see both establishment and disbandment. There are not many performative speeches or acts but eating-related interactions in their sworn brotherhood. Do they establish and disband their sworn brotherhood through eating? If so, how? I will provide my observations and thoughts in the reading of three episodes

Establishment: Meeting Personal Need

The establishment of Song Jiang and Li Kui's sworn brotherhood is fast and firm. Soon after their first meeting, a series of misfortunes happen to Song Jiang (being arrested, sentenced to death, and almost executed). Li Kui accompanies him all the time. Li Kui attends Song Jiang who awaits the execution, participates in the military operation to save him, and follows him to join the outlaw company. In short, Li Kui already treats Song Jiang as his sworn brother. The establishment of their sworn brotherhood must be dated back to their first meeting where there is no explicit performative speech or act, but a dinner where there are lots of eating-related interactions. Song Jiang and Li Kui feed each other. Song Jiang orders a big piece of mutton for Li Kui. Li Kui gets Song Jiang some fresh fish. I will read Song Jiang's

feeding Li Kui with a big piece of mutton, because it significantly changes the way Li Kui treats Song Jiang—he starts honoring Song Jiang as a great man from then on.

I will cite Emmanuel Levinas's eating theory to read Song Jiang's feeding Li Kui, of which enjoyment is the key concept. Enjoyment is a physical and mental sense of fulfillment that one feels when one eats for one's hunger. Levinas thinks positively of the relation between eating and other bodily activities. If one wants to perform well in other bodily activities, one better eat well and do these activities with enjoyment (Goldstein 36).

Eating for hunger is thought to hinder those activities in the Western philosophical traditions. When one is hungry, one stops whatever one is doing to eat. Otherwise one would be dedicated to one's business nonstop (Goldstein 36). Levinas's point breaks from those traditions but is shared by the outlaw heroes in Shuihu. They believe to eat better is to fight better. For example, Wu Song has a theory that his performance in a fight depends very much on the wine he drinks before the fight. Before he sets off to do Shi En a favor to challenge Jiang Menshen, he particularly asks how many inns he will pass by on the way to make sure he will not miss any. Shi En is afraid that he will be too drunk to fight. But Wu Song explains that he needs alcohol to unleash himself. I justify my citation of Levinas's eating theory with this shared, positive thought.

The first notion I will cite is 'feeding the other.' According to Levinas, eating for hunger is not a self-sufficient loop. It will be interactive once one recognizes the other's hunger and feeds the other. It is also a performance of responsibility. One does

not ignore the other's hunger but takes care of it instead. It bridges the gap between the old one who is absorbed in one's own enjoyment and the new one who feels responsible about and takes actions for the other's enjoyment (Goldstein 37). Song Jiang's feeding Li Kui is a performance as such. This sense of responsibility Song Jiang feels about Li Kui implicitly marks the establishment of their sworn brotherhood, for sworn brotherhood is not as natural a bond as kinship. Sworn brothers are tightly bonded with responsibility.

Feeding Li Kui is not an easy task. The waiter who offends him in the same dinner ends up with hot fish soup in his face. But Song Jiang manages to feed Li Kui. How does Song Jiang manage to feed Li Kui? Or, generally speaking, how does one manage to feed the other?

One feeds the other by respecting and celebrating the other's alterity. Alterity is the state of being different and unattainable. It is the central character of the other, with which the other cannot be reduced to a general term and attained (Levinas 33-4). Li Kui's alterity is his carefree nature and presented through his eating in this episode. When it comes to eating, he cares nothing but to enjoy to the fullest. Table manners never bother him. He prefers large portions, eats with bare hands, and even asks for other people's leftover if hungry, all of which are considered as misbehaviors in formal occasions.

Song Jiang orders a big piece of mutton for him, meeting Li Kui's personal need in every sense with full respect of Li Kui's alterity. Li Kui enjoys it very much: "He grabbed the meat with both hands and commenced to stuff himself. It was all gone in a

flash (Shi 344)."

Not only is Song Jiang able to respect, but also to celebrate Li Kui's alterity. He enjoys watching Li Kui eating and admires the nature Li Kui presents through eating, "Heavens, what a fellow you are!" Song Jiang exclaimed (Shi 344).

It is challenging to respect and celebrate Li Kui's alterity as Song Jiang does. Dai Zong, the outlaw hero who introduces Li Kui to Song Jiang in this dinner, fails in practice. He is the superintendent of the Jiangzhou prison and directly supervises Li Kui at work. Dai Zong and Li Kui get along. Otherwise he would not be known as "the only one who can deal with him [Li Kui] (Shi 334)" and introduces Li Kui as a "honest and big-hearted (Shi 338)" man to Song Jiang. But Dai Zong fails to respect and celebrate Li Kui's alterity and keeps judging Li Kui's table manners. He feels that Li Kui is embarrassing both of them with his misbehaviors in front of the great Song Jiang. So he blames Li Kui and apologizes to Song Jiang several times in this dinner.

Dai Zong is similar to Song Jiang in many senses. They are two of the few men who can deal with Li Kui. It seems greater for Song Jiang to respect and celebrate Li Kui's alterity with Dai Zong as his counterpart. Song Jiang's respect and celebration earns Li Kui's approval of him in return. Li Kui exclaims when he hears what Song Jiang orders for him, "What a great man this Song Jiang is," said Iron Ox [Li Kui]. "How he understands my tastes, damn it. Meat is better to eat than fish any day (Shi 344)."

This is the sheer moment when Li Kui starts honoring Song Jiang as "a great man (Shi 344)," which consolidates the establishment of their sworn brotherhood.

Honest and big-hearted as Dai Zong introduces, Li Kui's approval is serious. Soon after this dinner he makes the lifelong decision of following Song Jiang to join the outlaw company in Mount Liang.

Disbandment: Achieving Communal Goal

Song Jiang's respect and celebration to Li Kui's alterity does not last. Song Jiang starts manipulating Li Kui's wine drinking after they join the outlaw company and Song Jiang becomes a leader. Song Jiang puts tight restrictions on Li Kui's wine drinking. Li Kui is not allowed to drink outside Mount Liang. He has to leave his weapons there when out for non-military affairs, and team with a higher-ranking outlaw hero (to stay under watch) when out for military operations.

Why does Song Jiang change the way he deals with Li Kui's wine drinking? It is because Song Jiang decides to sacrifice Li Kui's personal interest to achieve the communal goal of the outlaw company when the two are in conflict.

Their sworn brotherhood changes as they join the outlaw company. It now functions as a basic unit of the company. The outlaw heroes fight not only for their personal interest but also for the communal goal of the company. For most outlaw heroes the two are not in radical conflict. But for Li Kui things are different. His personal interest is to live a carefree life with his fellow heroes in Mount Liang, while the communal goal the company thrives to achieve is to be amnestied by the Song government, fight as its troop, and earn itself a loyal reputation.

The way Song Jiang deals with this sworn brotherhood and the outlaw company

are guided by two different Confucian ideals—righteousness and loyalty. Righteousness guides the way he treats his sworn brother Li Kui, while loyalty guides the way he leads the whole outlaw company. Yenna Wu points out and I agree that Song Jiang has a mindset that loyalty is prior to righteousness.

Wu makes her point with the reading of Song Jiang's dream of the Mystic Lady of the Nineth Heaven (hereafter the goddess) in the war against the Liao Tartars. When the goddess bids Song Jiang farewell, she reminds Song Jiang to return soon and not to detain for long. The goddess's reminder has two meanings: First, as a human Song Jiang should return soon to the earth. She cannot detain Song Jiang in the heaven too long. Second, as a heavenly star Song Jiang should return soon to the heaven once his mission on the earth is accomplished. He cannot be detained on the earth for long (Wu 54-6). Song Jiang does not catch the second meaning. He detains himself on the earth for a position in the Song government instead after he accomplishes his mission. His passion about public service is rooted in the aforesaid mindset. To serve in the Song government is to be loyal.

Now that loyalty is proven as the top priority in Song Jiang's mind, it is not surprising that Song Jiang makes such a decision. From the very start of their sworn brotherhoods, Song Jiang knows that wine unleashes Li Kui's carefree nature, which will make the tension between Li Kui's personal interest and the communal goal of the outlaw company high on certain occasions. Song Jiang fails to achieve the communal goal but later manages to maintain it in the following episodes. Li Kui's wine drinking plays a decisive role in both results.

The first episode is the first amnesty (there are three in total). The emperor gifts the outlaw company ten bottles of imperial wine. However, on the way to the Ceremonial Hall that the sailors who ship the wine cannot help tasting it and end up finishing all the ten bottles. They refill the bottles with ordinary country wine. The outlaw heroes are requested to drink 'the imperial wine' to show their acceptance of the amnesty later during the reception hosted in the Ceremonial Hall. The mediocre taste of the wine irritates Li Kui. He grabs and lifts the imperial ambassador in the air with one single hand. If Song Jiang did not stop him, he would tear the imperial ambassador apart for sure. The imperial ambassador is terrified. The first amnesty fails. Song Jiang blames Li Kui for ruining the amnesty and insists that it would succeed if Li Kui could hold himself.

Li Kui's reaction to the wine again reflects his carefree nature. First, he takes the wine seriously. Most outlaw heroes know that the wine plays a ritualistic role and has no expectation on the taste. But Li Kui is not one of them. Second, at heart he is unwilling to accept this amnesty. He cares little about politics (otherwise when yelling at the imperial ambassador he would not mistake the dynasty name Song as the emperor's last name). He joins the outlaw company, because he wants to follow his great sworn brother Song Jiang. He settles down there, because he likes his new lifestyle and his fellow heroes. The outlaw hero Li Kui would become the amnestied soldier Li Kui and have no fun if the amnesty succeeded. 'The imperial wine' is a signal, warning that he will lose what he already has if he becomes an amnestied soldier of the condescending Song government.

The second episode is the last dinner Song Jiang and Li Kui have together, in which the dying Song Jiang poisons Li Kui with wine. The wicked ministers are jealous of Song Jiang and plot to kill him. They first suggest the emperor gift Song Jiang some imperial wine, and then secretly add some slow poison to it. Song Jiang drinks it and dies days later. Song Jiang kills Li Kui in the same way in the last few days of his life, because he decides to maintain the loyal reputation that outlaw company sacrifices too much to earn, but would be ruined if Li Kui rebelled again after his death,

> "Brother, forgive me. The emperor's envoy has already been here and given me the wine. Sooner or later I will die. All my life I have cared for just one thing: honor and loyalty. I would never allow anything to sully my reputation. Now I am condemned to die, though innocent, by the emperor. The emperor may let me down but I shall not let the emperor down. I was afraid that after my death you would start a rebellion and ruin the reputation we had in the marshes of Mount Liang for loyalty and for doing heaven's will. That's why I ask you here, I wanted to see you. Yesterday I put a slow poison in your wine. When you get back to Runzhou you will die (Shi 497)."

Li Kui forgives Song Jiang. He even believes that their sworn brotherhood will extend to his afterlife and that he will become a little ghost under Song Jiang's orders. But it does not mean that there is no tendency of disbandment in this everlasting sworn brotherhood. It starts with Song Jiang's full respect and celebration to Li Kui's alterity but develops and ends up with the increasingly tight restrictions he puts on it. Li Kui's wine drinking starts as an activity in which Song Jiang and Li Kui admire each other as

great individuals but ends up as an activity with which Song Jiang manipulates Li Kui for a collective purpose.

Imperial Wine: Power Disparity and Dynamic

The imperial wine is an important clue of the last two episodes. It results the failure of the first amnesty in the first episode and the death of Song Jiang in the second episode. Is there something behind it? I think it is the power disparity and dynamic of another alliance.

The aforesaid alliance is the military one between the outlaw company and the Song government. Three amnesties and two wars take place between them, all of which are attempts to build this alliance. The third amnesty marks the birth of it. Allies cooperate in a particular activity for a particular purpose. What are the activity and purpose of this alliance them? Since the third amnesty the outlaw company fights in four wars to defend the empire from external invasions and internal rebellions. Both benefit from this alliance: The Song government's rule of the empire is consolidated with the outlaw company's victory, while the outlaw company earns itself a loyal reputation with the Song government's recognition and reward of their victory.

It is hard to keep power equally and stably distributed in any alliance. There are often disparity and dynamic. So is this one. The Song government is obviously more powerful than the outlaw company. The former remains the legitimate government of the whole empire throughout the story, while the latter's rule never extends outside Mount Liang and nearby regions. Power inside flows in one direction—from the outlaw

company to the Song government.

Power Play: Confronting the Song Government

The power disparity is not as distinct in the first episode. The Song government is weak in, while the outlaw company is famous for militancy. It amnesties the outlaw company for two reasons: First, the outlaw company is a formidable troop, with which it will be easier for the Song government to defend the empire from external invasions and internal rebellions. Second, the Song government cannot defeat the outlaw company in war. It declares two wars after the first two amnesties but ends up losing both. It has no choice but to amnesty.

The outlaw heroes know that amnesty is a decision made for these reasons. They are confident in their military strength and not afraid if the first amnesty will fail and result in a war. They confront the Song government in the first amnesty in an equal manner. The eating-related interactions about the imperial wine reflect this manner.

As the gift given by the emperor himself, the imperial wine should be carefully shipped and, of course, keep sealed until the reception. However, on the way to the Ceremonial Hall the sailors who ship the imperial wine do not take it seriously and even dare to prank with it. What happens to the imperial wine is a power play. The imperial wine is exclusively served in the court. Lower-class outlaw heroes (like the sailors) would never interfere with it if there was no amnesty. However, the sailors are given a chance to prank with it due to the amnesty.

This power play continues and evolves to a second stage during the reception.

The imperial wine plays a ritualistic role. The outlaw heroes must drink it to show their acceptance of the amnesty. The taste does not matter. But Li Kui is still so maddened by the mediocre taste of it that he yells at the imperial ambassador. One sentence in his words is worth extra attention, because it discloses the truth of this power play in Li Kui's blunt language:

"That emperor of yours obviously doesn't know us. If he wants to give us a pardon, he'd better make us feel good (Shi 256)!"

There is a leap from the sailors' prank to Li Kui's request in terms of the aforesaid equal manner. Not only do the outlaw heroes dare to prank on the Song government that the ordinary folks so revere, but also to request the Song government to please them.

Power Loss: Poisoning Song Jiang

If power keeps flowing from the outlaw company to the Song government, the outlaw heroes will find themselves constantly losing power and falling into a dilemma and cannot refuse any of the offers from the Song government.

The Song government manages to amnesty the outlaw heroes in its third attempt. The outlaw heroes start losing power from the moment the alliance is built. Their military strength is being weakened for two reasons: First, the Song government takes over the command. The outlaw heroes now fight for the Song government as its amnestied soldiers. They fight whenever, wherever the Song government sends them to. They are sent to cover the front of four wars in total. Most of them are dead or

disabled in the process. Second, when they as a troop is too weak to fight anymore after all these wars, the Song government dismisses the survivors by rewarding them with either a position in a regional government (to keep them away from the capital and each other) or a retirement. The organization is gone, too.

The outlaw leader Song Jiang's death epitomizes the aforesaid dilemma which the outlaw heroes fall into. He survives from all these wars and serves as a government official in Chuzhou afterwards. Though he ends up being of low rank in a remote region, the wicked ministers are still jealous of his good reputation there and do not stop plotting against him. They first suggest the emperor gift him with some imperial wine, and then secretly add some slow poison to it. Song Jiang now as a governmental official himself has no choice but to drink the wine. He dies from the poison days after.

Does Song Jiang ever suspect if it is a plot? Yes, he does. The wicked ministers bribe the imperial envoy who delivers the wine to be able to add the poison. So when Song Jiang invites the envoy to drink together, the envoy who knows everything claims that he never drinks wine. Song Jiang senses a plot against him from the envoy's reaction and secretly investigates him. He is then told that the envoy is spotted drinking on the way back to the capital and is suffering from a severe stomachache due to the slow poison. There indeed is a plot against him.

Does Song Jiang do anything to revenge since he still has a few more days to live while his sworn brother Li Kui proposes to rebel again? No, he does not. He is neither willing nor able to revenge. He is not willing to revenge. To revenge is to rebel again and to ruin the loyal reputation that his fellow heroes sacrifice so much to earn.

He will defend it at all costs, including his own life. He is not able to revenge, because he is no longer the outlaw leader who has a formidable troop in command. Most of his fellow heroes are dead or disabled. The rest leave him for either a retirement or a position in a regional government as he does. It is hard to reach out to them, let alone to rebel with them.

Eating against Enemy: New Categorization of Cannibalism and New Perspective of Tiger Hunting

I will answer the second half of the research question in this chapter: How do the outlaw heroes relate to their enemies through eating? Once again, I will start with the definition and categorization of enemy. Whoever fights against an outlaw hero can be defined as an enemy. Even the outlaw heroes can sometimes be their own enemies. Examples as such will follow.

I categorize those who fight against the outlaw heroes as either human or nonhuman enemies. The outlaw heroes eat their human enemies and make cannibalistic moves since both the eater and eaten are human. Sometimes they eat in the most literal sense, roasting the legs and making the heart and livers soup. Sometimes they eat in a metaphorical sense, making money of the enemies to support themselves.

Their best-known nonhuman enemy is tigers. Episodes where the outlaw heroes hunt tigers with their remarkable physical prowess and martial skills are so well written and spread. The tiger hunt in the episode I will read is triggered by the death of an ordinary folk—the tigers eat Li Kui's mother, so Li Kui kills the tigers to revenge her.

Human Enemy: Metaphorical and Literal Cannibalism

I use metaphorical-literal cannibalism to categorize the episodes in this section. It is easy to understand that the outlaw heroes eat their enemies' bodies in the category. But what does metaphorical cannibalism mean? It is a new term I propose. The word 'metaphorical' has two meanings. First, it refers to the very metaphor that enemy is food, which the outlaw heroes often implicitly suggest and explicitly tell their enemies before the fights. Second, it refers to the metaphorical way the outlaw heroes eat their enemies. They do eat the enemies, just not their bodies.

I will read different categories with different focuses. For metaphorical cannibalism, I will present how the outlaw heroes implicitly suggest or explicitly tell their enemies that they are going to eat them, with which they produce a cannibalistic vibe. For literal cannibalism, I will read these episodes to see if there is any moral message conveyed and refute two pre-existing criticisms with the messages if there is any.

Metaphorical Cannibalism: Cannibalistic Vibe Produced

I will read Lu Da's beating Zheng Tu to specify this category. Lu Da is a commandant under the young General Zhong's command. His enemy Zheng Tu is a butcher. Lu Dai meets Zheng Tu's concubine Jin Cuilian in a restaurant and is told about her misfortune. She is first forced to marry Zheng Tu and then bullied by his jealous wife. When Jin Cuilian tries to leave Zheng Tu's family, Zheng Tu does not let her. He

claims that Jin Cuilian owes him a large amount of money. She has to perform in the restaurant to pay off the debt. Lu Da decides to help Jin Cuilian, doing her justice with his fists. He first escorts Jin Cuilin to secretly get out of Zheng Tu's league and then go to Zheng Tu's meat shop to confront him.

Lu Da lies that he is there for a mission from the young General Zhong. He first orders ten pounds of minced lean meat. He tells Zheng Tu that if he wants to pay some respect to the general, he better mince the meat himself instead of passing the job onto an apprentice. He then orders another ten ponds of fat and asks Zheng Tu for the same thing. Zheng Tu questions the use of fat. He warns Zheng Tu that it since the mission is confidential, he better shut up and focus on his job. At last, he orders ten pounds of minced gristle. By then Zheng Tu is quite sure that there is no confidential mission at all. Lu Da is just making fun of him. They then have a fight in front of the meat shop. Zheng Tu dies from three punches in his face.

The pre-fight conversation between Lu Da and Zheng Tu about this nonexistent mission is a so-called 'table-setting' one. The outlaw hero has a conversation with the enemy before the fight, in which he/she compares the enemy as food. Once the enemy makes sense of this food metaphor, he/she realizes a fight is inevitable. A conversation as such is a 'table-setting' one, because it is like the table-setting process before a formal meal.

The disclosure of Lu Da's real intension is presented through the three types of meat he orders. It is increasingly clear that Lu Da is making a scene as the meat he orders is increasingly useless in traditional Chinese cooking. The minced lean meat can

be used to make various dishes. The minced fat is rarely used to make a dish, but an essential ingredient—oil. But the gristle is useless in both dish-making and ingredient-making processes.

But Zheng Tu and food are not bonded yet in the aforesaid conversation. More details are found in this episode to make this bond clear and thus produce a cannibalistic vibe: First, there emerges a spatial metaphor: The shop is a cutting board on which Lu Da is going to mince Zheng Tu. Since the scary-looking Lu Da is staying at the meat shop all the morning, no one dares to approach the shop but only to watch them from a distance. The crowd from a distance creates a space for them. Second, it is stressed that the fight takes place at lunch time: "it had taken him [Zheng Tu] the whole morning and now it was already lunch time (Shi 75)." Lu Da spends the whole morning setting his lunch table and is about to eat Zheng Tu as his lunch. Third, Zheng Tu and the minced meat is physically mixed during the fight. Lu Da's first attack against Zheng Tu is to hurl two packs of minced meat in Zheng Tu's face. Zheng Tu is being showered in "a veritable rain of meat (Shi 76)." The enemy is showered in food. The enemy is food. At last, this metaphor will still make sense even if the two switch their sides, because they way Zheng Tu attacks Lu Da is also eating-related—the same as the way he deals with pigs. He seizes "the sharp boning knife on the meat counter (Shi 78)" as his weapon.

The second episode from this category is Zhang Heng's (failed) killing Song Jiang. Zhang Heng is the outlaw hero. Song Jiang is his enemy. Soon after this episode, both of them join the outlaw company. Zhang Heng becomes one of the outlaw heroes

Song Jiang leads. But it does not change the hostility between them in this episode. This is one of the examples where the outlaw heroes can be their own enemies.

Song Jiang passes by Jieyang on his way to Jiangzhou as a banished prisoner. He offends the local rich landlords Mu Chun and Mu Hong. The Mu brothers want to kill him are chasing after him to the riverside. Song Jiang has no choice but to jump onto the only boat on the river, of which Zhang Heng is the boatman. When the boat floats in the middle of the river, Zhang Heng asks Song Jiang if he would like to be served with knife noodles or wonton soup. (Boatmen in imperial China are not only responsible to ship passengers but also to take care of their life on board, including cooking for them.) When Song Jiang says he is not in the mood for food, Zhang Heng tells him what 'knife noodles' and 'wonton soup' really stand for—two alternative ways to die: If passengers prefer knife noodles, they will be chopped off; if passengers prefer wonton soup, they will be stripped off and thrown into the river. Their conversation about knife noodles and wonton soup is also a table-setting one.

Putting aside their cruel nature, the two metaphors are of artistic value: Knife oodles are sliced from a dough. Wontons are small dumplings stuffed with various ingredients (but mostly meat) and wrapped with thin sheets of dough. Both are boiled in water. The chopped-off passengers are compared with the sliced dough. The stripped-off passengers are compared with the meat stuff inside wontons. The boat on the river is also a metaphorical space—Zhang Heng uses a river of water to boil his passengers as either knife noodles or wontons.

The cannibalistic vibe in this episode is more explicit, because Zhang Heng

makes it clear in his own words that the passengers are his food. When the Mu brothers arrive at the riverside and ask Zhang Heng to hand Song Jiang over, this is how Zhang Heng refuses, “My passengers are my relatives, my meat and drink, my all. I’ve invited them on board for a bowl of knife noodles (Shi 318).” “You think I’m going to hand over my meat and drink? That’s a laugh (Shi 318)!”

Song Jiang quietly hides at the bottom of the boat and hears how Zhang Heng refuses the Mu brothers but fails to catch the real meaning. He still believes that Zhang Heng is saving his life out of kindness. Is Song Jiang too naïve to see through Zhang Heng’s bad intention? Of course not. It is because Song Jiang understands this metaphor in a neutral sense. It also applies to those who run a legal shipping business and support themselves with the payments.

The aforesaid metaphor leads to the second meaning of the word ‘metaphorical’ in the term ‘metaphorical cannibalism’—the metaphorical way the outlaw hero eats the enemy. What Zhang Heng want to consume in this episode is Song Jiang’s money, not his body. He forces Song Jiang to leave all his personal belongings on board before they jump into the river, so he can possess them afterwards.

Literal Cannibalism: Moral Message Conveyed

A case will be categorized as such if the outlaw heroes do eat their enemies’ bodies. I will read three episodes from this category and focus on the moral messages conveyed in these episodes. I will present what specific messages are conveyed in each episode and discuss how these messages contradict two pre-existing criticisms.

The first episode I will read is the fight between Wu Song, Sun Erniang and Zhang Qing. This is another example where the outlaw heroes fight against each other in their pre-Mount-Liang life. Sun Erniang and Zhang Qing are the outlaw heroes. Wu Song is their enemy. Sun Erniang and her husband Zhang Qing run a seemingly ordinary roadside restaurant at Crossways Rise near Mengzhou. Sun Erniang takes care of daily business at the restaurant, while Zhang Qing sells food and drinks to nearby villages and is often absent. The restaurant is not ordinary as it seems, because the pies sold there are stuffed with the bodies of their customers. When the customers ask for wine, Sun Erniang will drug them with the wine, kill them, and chop off their bodies to stuff pies. Wu Song, however, survives with his remarkable wit and martial skills. The three even swear to become brothers and sisters in the end.

Pies are snacks, not main dishes. Customers will order pies only when they have extra money or appetite. Unlike good wine and meat, pies are not the favorite food of an outlaw hero like Wu Song. Sun Erniang tries hard to tempt Wu Song to order them.

She first recommends pies as the signature food of the restaurant when introducing the menu, “We’ve good wine and good meat here, and good pies too if you’ve fancy for them (Shi 115).” She recommends the pies again when finding Wu Song shows no interest in them, “We’ve also got some lovely pies (Shi 115).” Wu Song orders some as she wishes. He starts doubting if there is anything wrong with pies from the suspicious taste and look of them after it is served. He thus asks Sun Erniang about the meat stuffing, “What’s in them, hostess? Human flesh or dog meat or what (Shi 115)?”

It is unusual for Wu Song to put human flesh on top of the list. But his suspicion has solid reasons. Wu Song refutes Sun Erniang with two reasons when she insists that their pies “have always been made with good buffalo meat (Shi 116)”: First, Wu Song knows a rumor about this restaurant: The fat travelers are chopped off to stuff pies, while the thins ones are drowned in the river. Second, hairs found in the meat look like pubic hairs.

Wu Song pretends to lose his consciousness and gives Sun Erniang a sneak attack when she is about to chop off him. Her husband Zhang Qing comes back to the restaurant, only to find that Wu Song is stepping on her on the ground. He begs Wu Song to forgive her and blames Sun Erniang for targeting someone who should not have been their target. He further explains to Wu Song that why it is a mistake for Sun Erning to target Wu Song at the first place: Wu Song belongs to the three sorts of travelers that this couple agree not to touch—monks, young performing women, and banished prisoners. First, monks are believed to have already renounced the world. Second, it is tough for young performing women to wander around to make a living. This couple empathize with them. Moreover, once these women are ever badly treated in this restaurant, they will widespread their experiences in their performances. Being well known as coldhearted devils is what this couple least expected. Third, good fellows are highly likely to commit crimes and be banished as prisoners. This couple do not want to harm them, either.

Here thus follows the second episode where the outlaw hero eats his enemy’s body. The outlaw hero is Li Kui. The enemy is his imposter Li Gui. Li Kui misses his

mother who struggles with poverty in his hometown and askes Song Jiang if he can serve his mother in Mount Liang. With Song Jiang's permission, Li Kui sets out to bring her back. On his way home, Li Kui meets a man who commits robbery in his name, since he already makes himself famous as a devil with his performance in the previous military operation. The imposter's name is Li Gui. Li Kui effortlessly defeats the imposter with one stab in his leg. When Li Kui is about to kill him, the imposter kneels and begs. He tells Li Kui that killing him amounts to killing his mother. He commits robbery only because he needs money to support his mother who can rely on no one else but him. Moved by Li Gui's filial piety, Li Kui lets go of him and even gives him ten taels of sliver to support his mother.

Li Kui is starving afterwards and looking for somewhere to eat. Without any restaurant nearby, he turns to a woman in a village hut nearby. The woman agrees to cook for Li Kui but reminds that the dinner will not be satisfying, because no wine or meat can be found to serve him in this remote countryside. Li Kui accepts a dinner without wine or meat, but asserts he is "bloody starving (Shi 455)" and needs plenty of rice. The main conflict between Li Kui's enormous appetite and an unsatisfying dinner emerges and is progressively reinforced in Li Kui and the woman's interactions. At first the woman proposes to steam only a liter of rice, but Li Kui bargains to three. But still, there is no meat or wine.

Li Kui ends up satisfying himself with Li Gui's body. When the woman gets out of the kitchen to the hill for vegetables, her husband arrives home. Her husband is Li Gui, Li Kui's imposter. Li Gui tells his wife that Li Kui is so naïve that he believes the

story he makes up about his nonexistent mother. When realizing that Li Kui probably much money with him (from the ten taels of money he gives Li Gui), they even decide to plot against him for money, with which they can start a new life in the nearby city. This couple are whispering outside the hut and do not notice that Li Kui is eavesdropping all the time. He is irritated for being fooled and plotted against. Li Kui kills Li Gui. The woman flees over the hill.

Li Kui's attention is drew back to his dinner when the rice in the pot is about to be done. His unsatisfied appetite drives him to search the hut for anything he can eat as a dish. Otherwise his dinner will be nothing but plain rice. He laughs when he sees Li Gui's body he puts aside,

> "I'm an idiot! There's good meat staring me in the face but I didn't think of eating it!" He took out his knife and went and carved two good hunks of meat from Li Gui's leg, washed them in water, put some more charcoal in stove and proceeded to roast them, thus cooking and eating as he went along, he ate till he was full (Shi 456).

The third and last episode I cannot avoid reading from this category is Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing. The story is told in detail in the first chapter. There is no need to repeat. Here I will tackle the cannibalistic nature and historical context of this move instead.

Revenge cannibalism is one of the categories David Lester proposes in Eating People, Understanding People. It describes the cannibalistic moves that are made to "seek revenge for something that has previously happened to the offender (Lester 52)."

Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing is obviously a move as such. It is to seek revenge for Huang Wenbing's report that makes Song Jiang sentenced to death for treason and almost being executed.

Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing is of course fictional. But is it possible for Song Jiang to have a predecessor in history, since Shuihu is a realistic novel and famous for the description of the real life in imperial China? Yes, it is. Edward H. Schafer confirms that historical records that the outraged citizens chopped up corrupted officials and ate their bodies could be dated back to the Tang dynasty (Schafer 135), a dynasty that existed earlier than the ones when the story is set (Song) and the novel was compiled (Ming).

My following reading of the moral messages conveyed in these episodes contradict two pre-existing criticisms. One is contextual. It provides a reading of the same episode in Shuihu with the conclusion that cannibalism here is presented with "cheerful moral difference (Anderson 266)." The other is theoretical. It claims that eating is not directly engaged in the human pursuit of moral rightness in a more general, abstract sense.

E.N. Anderson criticizes Shuihu for being astonishingly unconcerned about bloodshed crimes, such as Sun Erniang and Zhang Qing's pie business. According to Anderson, it is acceptable to tell a story that someone makes money in this dubious way, but not with the "cheerful moral indifference (Anderson 266)" he claims to find in this episode. I, however, find that the couple's pie business is presented with deep moral concern. All the three sorts of travelers that this couple agree not to touch are from the

lower classes. So are the couple as innkeepers in the countryside. As part of the lower classes, the couple know that these people must struggle very hard to make a living and thus decide not to make them pies.

The moral messages conveyed in Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing can be read from the aforesaid cannibalistic nature and historical context of this move. According to the definition of revenge cannibalism, the offender eats the offended for something has happened between them. In other words, the offended is the original offender. The previous offense of the eaten is the moral reason of the cannibalistic moves from this category. These moves are made "to rid the world of a particular type of person that the subject feels has wronged or disgraced the world (Lester 52)." It is Huang Wenbing who offends Song Jiang with his report first, which gives Song Jiang's eating a moral reason.

Song Jiang's predecessor in history is the outraged citizens who chopped off and ate corrupted officials. Huang Wenbing is a corrupted official. He reports Song Jiang not for justice, but for his own promotion, which also gives Song Jiang's (as both the victim of his report and a citizen) eating him a moral reason.

The moral messages conveyed in this move can be read from the perspective of social class, too. James White Brown observes a shift of the eater-eaten relationship that results from the shift of the social structure in the French Revolution. The abuse of the higher classes to the lower classes under the old regime was metaphorically presented as an eater-eaten relationship—the higher classes eat the lower classes. The lower classes uprose against the higher classes in the French Revolution, which

produced a shift in this relationship (Brown 5). The eater and eaten switch their sides.

This shift can also be observed in Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing. At first, Huang Wenbing as a government official is a higher-class eater, while Song Jiang as a banished prisoner is the lower-class eaten. The higher-class Huang Wenbing eats the lower-class Song Jiang, reporting Song Jiang for his own promotion. The uprising produces a shift in their status—Huang Wenbing becomes Song Jiang's prisoner. It is presented as a not metaphorical, but literal eater-eaten relationship with Song Jiang's literal eating Huang Wenbing.

Sun Erniang and Zhang Qing's pie business and Song Jiang's revenge in fact have the same moral motivation. They all uprise against the abuse of the higher classes to the lower classes in their own ways. The couple do not touch monks, young performing women, and banished prisoners, because they do not think their lower-class fellows deserve more abuse to make their life harder. Song Jiang eats the higher-class Huang Wenbing, because he thinks the higher-class, abusive Huang Wenbing deserves the most torturous way to die.

Now I will move onto the second criticism my reading of these episodes contradicts—eating is not directly engaged in the pursuit of moral rightness. It is proposed by Hans Jonas and cited by Annamarie Mol in Eating in Theory. It comes from Jonas's hierarchy of plants, animals, and humans. Animals distinguish from plants with their exclusive characteristics of motility, perception, and emotion. Humans distinguish from animals with their exclusive pursuit of moral rightness (Jonas 105). Humans "have to do with right and wrong (Mol 95)."

Eating is considered as an animal-level activity in this hierarchy, during which all the aforesaid characteristics are embodied in one way or another. Mol thinks that eating is not directly engaged in the pursuit of moral rightness. The contribution of eating to the moral pursuit must be transformed via "vital goodness (Mol 96)." Vital goodness is an intermediate status where humans are making best of their animal characteristics. It marks the transition from animals to humans. I understand it as health in the context of eating. Health is the vital goodness that humans eat well to achieve and with which humans pursue moral rightness.

However, Li Kui's eating his imposter Li Gui is an episode where Li Kui pursues moral rightness directly by eating and thus contradicts the aforesaid criticism. If filial piety, one of the most basic Confucian ideals and moral principles in imperial China, is taken into consideration, it will be the motivation that well explains everything Li Kui does in this episode. He is a strong defender of filial piety. Not only does he attentively serve his own mother, but also helps Li Gui who has a nonexistent 'mother' to serve. The story Li Gui makes up about his mother is an undoubted violation of filial piety. Li Kui as a strong defender of it eats the person who violates it, by which eating is directly engaged in his moral pursuit.

Nonhuman Enemy: Mirror Structure and Dual Image

Tigers are the best-known nonhuman enemy. Tiger-hunting episodes are well written and spread. Both the heroes and stories get popular, such as Wu Song and his tiger hunt. But it does not mean that tigers already have enough attention as they deserve.

Vibeke Bordahl points out this research gap first in her article The Man-Hunting Tiger (Bordahl 141). In this section, I will narrow it down with my reading of Li Kui's tiger hunt. There is of course an eater-eaten relationship central to this episode: The tigers eat Li Kui's mother. She is just an ordinary folk, but the way she dies triggers the tiger hunt of her son, the outlaw hero Li Kui.

Li Kui and his mother come across tigers on their way to Mount Liang. As is mentioned in the previous section, Li Kui wants to serve his mother in Mount Liang and goes home to bring her back. Since she is old and blind, Li Kui carries her on back. Li Kui's mother asks Li Kui for some water when she is being carried to climb over a mountain. Li Kui knows that it is dangerous to leave her alone halfway, so he tells her to wait until they arrive at the top. However, his mother is terribly thirsty and constantly asks for water. Li Kui, too, is exhausted after a day of climbing with his mother on back and finally agrees to stop and find water. He sets down his mother on a stone and leaves for water. However, his mother is gone when his comes back with water. A trail of blood leads him to a cave where two tiger cubs are eating a human leg that obviously belongs to his mother. There are four tigers habituating in this cave: one tiger, one tigress, and two cubs. Li Kui kills them all to revenge his mother.

The following section consists of two discussions. I will provide a reading of the tiger world in the aforesaid episode in the first discussion. My access to the tiger world is a so-called mirror structure. That being said, the tiger world mirrors the human world in this episode. Human organizations and ethics can be used to understand the tigers. I start the second discussion with the dual image of tigers in Shuihu Bordahl

proposes with her reading of Wu Song's tiger hunt and enrich it with the image of the tigress in my reading of Li Kui's tiger hunt.

Mirror Structure: Access to the Tiger World

The eater-eaten relationship central to this episode is a special one. The normal eater-eaten relationship where humans eat, and nonhuman animals are eaten is reversed. For the first time, nonhuman animals eat a human. Reading it is not easy. Bordahl in her article points out the reason why tigers in Shuihu are neglected: It is technically difficult to get access to their world. Tigers can only be described from a distance, with only sounds and actions, but no thoughts or feelings (Bordahl 151-2). Jacques Derrida has the same concern about this technical difficulty in The Animal That There I Am. Humans and animals have their own worlds. The animal world does not mirror the human world. It is "a heterogenous multiplicity of organizations of relations (Derrida 1652)" instead. For example, humans have names, but animals have not. Even if an animal is given one, it will not respond to the name if it does not receive any special training (Derrida 1652-3).

But my way to get access to the tiger world is opposite. I will understand the four tigers with human organizations and ethics and consider them as a family. Every tiger has its role to play in this family. The tiger is the father, the tigress is the mother, and the two tiger cubs are their children. The mirror structure of the two worlds is criticized as assumptive and humancentric in Derrida's theory, which seems to invalidate my use of human organizations and ethics. But in fact the two ideas do not

contradict. First, the animal world on which Derrida's criticism is based is the real one, while the tiger world in Shuihu—no matter to what extent does it resemble the real one—is fictional. It is thus totally possible for the four tigers to reflect some human organizations and ethics. The human and tiger worlds mirror each other, with mother-child relationship as the same major organization and feeding/eating as the same major interaction between them—Li Kui feeds his mother with water. The tigress feeds its children with Li Kui's mother's body.

Second, Derrida warns his readers of the negative consequence of his theory: It might discourage humans to sympathize with animals. The fact that animals cannot be simply understood with human organizations and ethics is wrongly cited to violate not only their life, but also the sense of compassion humans feel about them (Derrida 1650). He tries to solve this problem with a question to which the answer is a definite yes: Can animals suffer? Humans will not be exempted from sympathizing with animals if animals suffer, while they really do (Derrida 1650). The mirror structure of the two worlds that I propose is intended to call for more attention to it. The tigress's suffering in this episode is obvious but neglected.

The two worlds start crossing when the tigress kills Li Kui's mother, the direct result of which in the human world is Li Kui's tiger hunt. Liangyan Ge reads Li Kui's tiger hunt from an ethical perspective. Li Kui is a strong defender of filial piety. His defense of this moral principle can be traced back to his eating Li Gui, an episode I read in the previous section. Ge considers Li Kui's tiger hunt as a defense of filial piety, too (Ge 42). The timing of this tragic event is a reminder. It happens "right in the middle of

the son's [Li Kui] performance of filial duties (Ge 42)." The tigress manages to kill Li Kui's mother, because she is old, blind, and most importantly, left alone in the deep mountains. She is halfway in the deep mountains, because Li Kui wants to bring her back to Mount Liang and serve her there. She is left alone, because Li Kui leaves for water to feed her. Now that she is dead, both this certain performance and the prospectus of more performances of filial duties in Mount Liang are gone. His tiger hunt is thus an ultimate expression and reaffirmation of filial piety (Ge 42).

The aforesaid mirror structure and Ge's article together facilitate me to re-read this episode and focus more on the tigress. The mirror structure validates me to use human organizations and ethics, while Ge's attention to the ethicalness of Li Kui's tiger hunt inspires me to read it from the same perspective.

The tigress's human hunt is an ethical move in both theoretical and contextual senses. First, this move is a performance of responsibility, no matter whether or how the tigers are related. It fits the 'feeding the other' notion Levinas proposes in his eating theory and I cite in the first chapter, since the tigress does not (at least not only) hunt to feed itself but (also) the two tiger cubs. The tigress recognizes their hunger and takes care of it. Second, this move is an expression of maternal nature. I understand the tigress with its role of a humanlike mother. So does Li Kui. He assumes that the tigress is the monster that kills his mother once he runs into it, because he sees the two tiger cubs eating her leg. He believes that it must be their mother, the tigress, that kills Li Kui's mother to feed them, because it is the mother's job to feed the children in the human world.

The tigress suffers from a slow and painful death for an ethical reason, too. The tigress kills Li Kui's mother. It is a tragic event, since it results in the death of the whole tiger family. The tragicness of this event is reinforced by the extra suffering of the dying tigress: Assumed as the monster that kills Li Kui's mother, it is killed in an especially brutal, torturous way the rest of the tiger family is not. It is first stabbed from the backside, then maddened by the unbearable pain, and ends up "crashing down the rocky incline (Shi 461)."

This episode stands out among all the three tiger-hunting episodes for its ethicalness. Tigers in the other two episodes are described as monsters that will attack humans once they see any. The tiger-hunting heroes are Wu Song and the Xie brothers. Wu Song kills the tiger, because otherwise the tiger would kill him. The Xie brothers as the local hunters are obliged to clear up all the tigers in the nearby mountains. Otherwise the local government would arrest them. In short, tigers and tiger-hunting heroes in the other two episodes hunt each other for themselves, while the tigress and Li Kui in this episode hunt each other for their children or mother. The ethicalness of Li Kui's tiger hunt is well read in Ge's article, while its counterpart remains neglected. My reading will shed some light on it.

Dangerous yet Majestic: Dual Image of Tiger

Bordahl points out that tigers in Shuihu do not have a clear image and gives them one with her reading of Wu Song's tiger hunt: Tigers in Shuihu have a dual image. They are dangerous yet majestic. Bordahl's way to get access to the tiger world is

linguistic. She focuses on various names tigers are given, proverbs about the superpower tigers are believed to have, and the way to describe their fights against tiger-hunting heroes. I agree with Bordahl about the dual image that she thinks tigers in Shuihu have and will enrich it with the image of the tigress.

Tigers are dangerous. They are given various names in Shuihu and mainly addressed as hu (tiger) or dachong (big beast). hu is simply a neutral term that names this specific species, while dachong describes tigers as "a dangerous creature, a threat and a disaster to people of the area (Bordahl 147-8)." They hunt travelers that pass by the mountains where they habituate and make their habitant a dangerous area. Bordahl calculates the frequency and finds out that dachong is much more frequently used, which means that tigers are first and foremost regarded as dangerous creatures in Shuihu.

Tigers are majestic. Every time tigers appear in Shuihu, there follow proverbs about the supernatural power tigers are believed to have, which leads to their majestic image. For example, the following quote is a proverb about clouds and winds that is quoted twice in both Wu Song and Li Kui's tiger hunts, "Clouds originate with dragons, and wind is produced [by] tigers (Shi 462)."

According to this proverb, dragons and tigers are able to produce clouds and wind. The real-life, dangerous tigers have the same supernatural power as the mythical, superior dragons do.

Apart from names and proverbs, there is one more thing about the majestic image of tigers that Bordahl mentions in her article—their fights against tiger-hunting

heroes. Both the tiger and Wu Song in Wu Song's tiger hunt are described from a distance, with only sounds and actions, but no thoughts or feelings (Bordahl 151-2). To describe them in the same way is to make them "stand out as equally formidable and awe-inspiring (Bordahl)." Tiger-hunting heroes are so admired that only they can hunt tigers. Tigers are so majestic that they can only be hunted by tiger-hunting heroes.

Bordahl's attention to the same way to describe tigers and tiger-hunting heroes echoes the mirror structure I propose in the reading of Li Kui's tiger hunt. The tigress's human hunt and Li Kui's tiger hunt are described in the same way, too. Both are a performance of responsibility and an expression of maternal/childish nature.

Tigers and tiger-hunting heroes in the other two episodes are honored, mostly for their physical strength. Tiger-hunting heroes are admired for their physical prowess, martial skills, and courage, while tigers are majestic for their giant figure, deafening roars, and sharp teeth and nails. The tigress and Li Kui in this episode are also honorable, but for the ethical motivation of their hunts. The image of the tigress in my reading echoes the dual one Bordahl proposes from an ethical perspective. It is dangerous. Not only does it take human lives, but also bring great pain to those who are closely related to the dead. Li Kui feels traumatic about the death of his mother throughout the rest of his life. The tigress is majestic. It is a worthy opponent to the tiger-hunting hero Li Kui in every sense. They have the same ethical reason and pay the same high price for their hunts—the death of Li Kui's mother haunts him throughout the rest of his life, while the tigress suffers from an extra slow and painful death.

Conclusion

This conclusion has three sections. The first section is the key points, in which I will review the conclusions I draw in each section and chapter. I bring them together so the conclusion of the whole thesis will emerge. The second section is the contribution. This thesis contributes to eating studies with its attempt to discuss the eating-related topics under the frame of relation and to Shuihu studies with its theoretical method, cross-cultural citations, and ethical attitude to the subjects. The third section is the limitations and suggestions. I point out the insufficient citation of the previous studies about relation in Shuihu and the descriptive manner in which the third section of the first chapter should not have unfolded and provide the solutions to these problems.

Key Point

Eating affects the way the outlaw heroes relate to their allies. Before I get down to eating-related interactions in two specific alliances, I first respond to some previous studies where eating is said to characterize the outlaw heroes with the conclusion that eating does characterize the outlaw heroes, yet not in the way these studies claim. The two continuities that Yan Liang proposes between beef and Li Kui's defiance, fish and Song Jiang's flattery are wrong. The former is coincidental. Li Kui loses his temper, just because the waiter suggests that he is too poor to afford the substitute mutton. The latter is disturbed. Bourdieu thinks fish as food is feminine, just because it is often eaten in a slow and careful manner. Li Kui eats fish in a fast, carefree, and accordingly masculine way in the same episode. 'Food choice' is too ambiguous a notion and needs

further clarification. It includes so many eating-related elements that the one really matters is sometimes missing, such as the way of cooking. During Song Jiang's eating Huang Wenbing, two different ways of cooking symbolizes two different states of his mind. To eat leg roast is to shortly indulge in the joy of revenge. To drink heart-liver soup is to tolerate for long-term survival.

Sworn brotherhood is justified as a form of alliance in Shuihu. Sworn brothers are also allies. Eating affects the way the outlaw heroes relate to their sworn brothers. Song Jiang and Li Kui establish and disband their sworn brotherhood through eating. The milestone of the establishment is Song Jiang's feeding Li Kui with a big piece of mutton in their first meeting. I cite Levinas's 'feeding the other' and alterity to disclose how their sworn brotherhood is established in this move. By recognizing and taking care of Li Kui's hunger, Song Jiang shows a sense of responsibility that bonds them. By ordering a dish that meets Li Kui's personal need and admiring Li Kui's eating, Song Jiang shows his respect and celebration to Li Kui's alterity that bonds them as well.

This sworn brotherhood tends to disband when Song Jiang manipulates Li Kui's wine drinking. When Li Kui gets irritated by 'the imperial wine' that the emperor gifts them, he blames Li Kui for ruining the amnesty. When Li Kui wants to rebel again to revenge him, he poisons Li Kui poisoned wine in case Li Kui ruins the loyal reputation of the outlaw company after his death. Song Jiang sacrifices Li Kui's personal interest for the communal goal of the outlaw company when the tension between the two gets high. Loyalty is proven as the top priority in his mind. It guides Song Jiang to achieve

and maintain the communal goal of the outlaw company first.

Eating affects the way the outlaw heroes relate to the Song government that starts being their ally after the third amnesty. The power distribution in this alliance is never equal and stable. Eating-related interactions about imperial wine reflects its disparity and dynamic. The outlaw heroes form an independent, formidable troop before they ally with the Song government. Their military strength enables them to confront the Song government in a more equal manner. They replace the gifted imperial wine and complain the mediocre tasted of it in the first amnesty, which is a power play. The outlaw heroes start fighting for the Song government since the alliance is built in the third amnesty. From then they are losing power as their military strength is being weakened. The Song government takes over the command and sends them to fight four wars in total. Most of them are dead or injured. The survivors are dismissed. The outlaw leader Song Jiang's death epitomizes the result of this power loss. He dies from the slow poison the wicked ministers add to the gifted imperial wine in the end of the story. He does nothing to revenge in the last few days of his life, because he is neither willing nor able to. He has no formidable troop in command, but only a loyal reputation to maintain.

Not only do the outlaw heroes fight against humans, but also nonhuman species like tigers. Eating affects the way they relate to their human enemies. The outlaw heroes eat them in an either metaphorical or literal manner. I propose metaphorical and literal cannibalism to define and categorize these moves.

The outlaw heroes compare their enemies as food in the pre-fight conversations.

Lu Da implicitly suggests Zheng Tu that he will be minced like meat, while Zhang Heng explicitly tells Song Jiang that his passengers are his meat and drink. I propose two more metaphors to specify this category. The very metaphor that enemy is food turns the pre-fight conversations 'table-setting conversations,' and the spaces where the events take place into kitchens. All these metaphors produce a cannibalistic vibe. The way the outlaw heroes eat their enemies is also metaphorical. Zhang Heng robs Song Jiang before kills him to make money of him. It is more of a metaphor when the outlaw heroes do eat the bodies. Moral messages are found conveyed in every cannibalistic move from this category: Sun Erniang and Zhang Qing never stuff pies with lower-class people with whom they empathize. Song Jiang eats the higher-class Huang Wenbing who abuses him. Li Kui eats Li Gui who makes up a story about his nonexistent mother to defend filial piety. Cannibalism in Shuihu is not presented with moral indifference. The outlaw heroes eat their human enemies to pursue moral rightness.

Eating affects the way the outlaw heroes relate to their best-known enemy tigers. The tiger and human worlds cross, because a tigress kills Li Kui's mother to feed its children when Li Kui leaves her alone for water to feed her. The two worlds in this episode are intended to mirror each other and can both be understood with human organizations and ethics: The tigress's human hunt and Li Kui's tiger hunt are described in the same way—as a performance of responsibility and an expression of maternal/childish nature. The tigress and Li Kui are worthy opponents to each other. They have the same ethical reason and pay the same high price for their hunts. This

episode stands out among all the three tiger-hunting episodes for and enriches the dangerous yet majestic image of tigers in Shuihu with ethicalness.

Contribution

I will start this section with one of the two key words of the research question—eating. This thesis contributes to the previous eating studies in the following senses: First, though it is Mol who first brings up relating as a basic way eating involves itself in the human world, her thought does not extend to the field of literary studies (and the subfield of Shuihu studies) yet. I take the first step by discussing the eating-related topics in Shuihu under the frame of relation in this thesis.

Second, characterization and cannibalism as the two main topics are well responded and developed. They are no longer isolated from but related to each other under the frame of relation in this thesis. More specific eating-related elements, such as material and the way of cooking, are separated from the ambiguous 'food choice' to better discuss the way eating characterizes the outlaw heroes. Metaphorical cannibalism (with one central, two peripheral metaphors) is proposed to define and categorize the metaphorical manner in which the outlaw heroes eat their human enemies.

Third, under the frame of relation the range of eating in this thesis is getting extensive. Some eating-related events and elements are ignored in the previous studies, but now function as starting point in this thesis. For example, I start the second section of the second chapter with the event the four tigers eat Li Kui's mother. This event shows the dangerous image of tigers and gives Li Kui's tiger hunt an ethical reason but

is never considered as eating-related for not having as active a subject as the outlaw heroes, and as detailed a description as Song Jiang and Li Kui's first dinner. However, in this thesis it is specified—according to what Li Kui witnesses and assumes it should be the tigress that kills Li Kui's mother to feed its children. The specified event makes it clear that the tigress's human hunt and the Li Kui's tiger hunt, the tigress and Li Kui mirror each other. In other words, all the conclusions I draw in this section come from the re-reading of this event.

This thesis contributes to the previous Shuihu studies with its theoretical method and cross-cultural citations. The theoretical method is one of the two methods in this thesis. The other is contextual, including the regional and historical context of imperial China to which the subjects are put back and the close reading of the literary text itself. Most previous Shuihu studies are conducted with this method. The scholars have done such a good job that I spare no effort on the first-hand historical records but just refer to the second-hand studies that cite these records to make a point.

There is not much I can do with the contextual method. The originality and significance of the methodology in this thesis lies more in the Western critical theories and cross-cultural citations, which enables me to think out of the box. For example, when read the moral messages conveyed in literal cannibalism, I take the social class of the eater and eaten into consideration, a perspective from which James White Brown observes the eating-related metaphor in the French Revolution. When argue that Song Jiang makes Li Kui his sworn brother by feeding him, I do not turn to the historical records for the direct relation between feeding and sworn brotherhood, but Levinas's

eating theory for the sense of responsibility one feels when feeds the other in general.

Western critical theories and cross-cultural citations make the conclusion of this thesis valid in a more general sense, while conclusion enriches them in return. For example, I refute Jonas's criticism that eating is not directly engaged in the human pursuit of moral rightness (Jonas 105) with the moral messages conveyed in liberal cannibalism. The position of eating in the hierarchy of plants, animals, and humans then needs to be re-considered since the previous one (as an animal-level activity) is proven wrong. The heterogenous animal world that does not mirror the human world that Derrida describes is the real one. It does not contradict if a fictional one is intended to mirror the human world, and the animals there can be understood with human organizations and ethics. It will be less possible to deny or neglect their suffering if animals are better understood.

This thesis contributes to the previous Shuihu studies with the ethical attitude it holds to the subjects. This attitude is getting obvious on the following occasions: First, the subjects are still worth living but die as the victims of power. Li Kui dies, for he poses a threat to the loyal reputation of the outlaw company with his proposal to rebel again. Song Jiang dies, for the wicked ministers are jealous of his good reputation. The tigress dies, for the human it kills to feed its children happens to be Li Kui's mother. Second, the subjects defend moral principles in the way that seems morally unacceptable, which refers to the four outlaw heroes from literal cannibalism. Sun Erniang and Zhang Qing do not make the lower-class travelers pies, while Song Jiang eat a higher-class government official. They all empathize with the abused lower classes

and uprise against the abusive higher classes. Li Kui eats Li Gui who makes up a story about his nonexistent mother, for he is such a strong defender of filial piety that he tolerates not even a single lie about it.

Limitation and Suggestion

I will start this section with the other key word of the research question—relation. The citation of the previous studies about relations in Shuihu is insufficient—there are only two. One is Li's four-group division that inspires me to organize the relations with the ally-enemy binary. The other is Bordahl's attention to the same way to describe tigers and tiger-hunting heroes that that makes them worthy opponents to each other. No other citations focus on relations, especially the specific relations in Shuihu, such as the one between tigers and tiger-hunting heroes.

It is not surprising to find few studies meet the standard if the range of the previous studies is wrongly limited to those that have relation as a key word. Those that have not might provide some observations and reflections of a relation as well. For example, Bordahl's main goal is to give tigers a clear image, while by noticing tigers and tiger-hunting heroes are described in the same way she also tackles the relation between them—they are worthy opponents to each other.

The way to cite more observations and reflections of a specific relation is to turn to the studies that have both sides of the relation as the subject. For example, it is frequently asked and answered, discussed and debated if Song Jiang betrays Li Kui by killing him. The studies that are conducted for this question must provide the

observations and reflections of their sworn brotherhood.

The third section of the first chapter does not unfold in a satisfactory manner, either. It looks too descriptive since I do not unpack it with multiple, diverse methods as I do elsewhere in this thesis but just close-read everything. The topic of that section is the power disparity and dynamic of the military alliance between the outlaw company and the Song government, while the starting point is the eating-related interactions about the imperial wine in the first amnesty and Song Jiang's death.

I examine the two methods I use in the rest of this thesis to see which one will be a better solution to the aforesaid problem. First, nothing has to be put back to the regional and historical context of imperial China to understand, so it is not a good idea to spare much effort on the historical records. Second, close reading will be proven as a good method only if the reading of those two episodes is more of a description. I try to abstract and theorize my reading, but still it falls descriptive. Third, there must be plenty of power theories since power is a key word of the twentieth-century Western critical theories. It will not be too hard to find a suitable one for this topic.

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