



# Chinese Martial Arts Cinema: The Wuxia Tradition (Traditions in World Cinema)

*Stephen Teo*

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The traditional martial arts genre known as wuxia (literally "martial chivalry") became popular the world over through the phenomenal hit *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000). This book unveils the rich layers of the wuxia tradition as it developed in the early Shanghai cinema of the late 1920s and in the Hong Kong and Taiwan film industries of the 1950s and beyond. Stephen Teo follows the tradition from its beginnings in Shanghai cinema to its rise as a serialized form in silent cinema and its prohibition in 1931. He shares the fantastic characteristics of the genre, their relationship to folklore, myth, and religion, and their similarities and differences with the kung fu sub-genre of martial arts cinema. He maps the protagonists and heroes of the genre, in particular the figure of the lady knight-errant, and its chief personalities and masterpieces. Directors covered include King Hu, Chu Yuan, Zhang Che, Ang Lee, and Zhang Yimou, and films discussed are *Come Drink With Me* (1966), *The One-Armed Swordsman* (1967), *A Touch of Zen* (1970-71), *Hero* (2002), *House of Flying Daggers* (2004), *The Promise* (2005), *The Banquet* (2006), and *Curse of the Golden Flower* (2006).



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