Abstract

Bao Zheng, a real historic figure of the Song dynasty, often appears as the leading role in Chinese fiction. He was well respected for his upright and impartial character hence was brought into much courtcase fiction and drama as the prosecutor and the judge. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, courtcase fiction often rose to great heights, yet their contributions were normally neglected by the society.

Courtcase fiction reflects the concept of justice in the society, which embodies the ethical norms and the crimes committed at that point of time. In my thesis, I aim to introduce two interesting works of courtcase fiction namely Baijia gongan and Sanxia wuyi. Both works included Bao Zheng in an important role of the story, and were representative of the Ming and Qing dynasty respectively. With the study of these two works, I hope to be able to observe and compare the role played by Bao Zheng and the differences in the concept of justice in the two dynasties.

I begin with the introduction of the image of Bao Zheng and the different courtcases involved in the respective works. Then, observation and comparison demonstrate how the image of Bao Zheng had changed
and how it may have an effect on the enforcement of the different concepts of justice touched on in the two dynasties. Next, I try to deduce how the change in Bao Zheng and the concept of justice are actually reflective of the Ming and Qing dynasties.

This thesis hopes to be of some contribution to enhance future studies on the relationship of court case fiction and Ming-Qing society.