



## Mulan: Five Versions of a Classic Chinese Legend, with Related Texts

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The legend of Mulan--the daughter who disguises herself as a man, dons her father's armor, and heads off to war in his place--remains one of the most popular Chinese folktales despite (or because of) its lack of supernatural demonstrations or interventions.

This volume offers lively translations of the earliest recorded version of the legend and several later iterations of the tale (including the screenplay of the hugely successful 1939 Chinese film *Mulan Joins the Army*), *illustrating the many ways that reinterpretations of this basic story reflect centuries of changes in Chinese cultural, political, and sexual attitudes.*

An Introduction traces the evolution of the Mulan legend and its significance in the history of Chinese popular culture. Annotation explaining terms and references unfamiliar to Western readers, a glossary, and a comprehensive bibliography further enhance the value of this volume for both scholars and students.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

Idema's scholarship . . . [and his] ability to translate popular texts into comparably idiomatic English are outstanding achievements.--Hugh R. Clark, Ursinus College

The plots and the elaborations of the Mulan narratives reproduced (and summarized) here demonstrate the many ways in which the Mulan figure has spoken to succeeding generations with differing heroic characteristics and in the idiom that each audience understood; they offer excellent texts for a deep background for any consideration of Mulan in contemporary culture. For scholars of European fairy tales, the narratives offer striking points of comparison with European crossdressing heroines of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.--Ruth B. Bottigheimer, Stony Brook University

#### **About the Author**

Shiamin Kwa received her Ph.D. in East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University.

Wilt L. Idema is Professor of Chinese Literature, Harvard University.

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