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REINVENTING THE WHEEL OR CREATING A TALE'S GENEALOGY?
A COMPARISON OF TWELVE VERSIONS OF THE TALE OF MULAN

A Thesis Presented

by

JULIE ANNE LOHR

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Languages, Literatures and Cultures

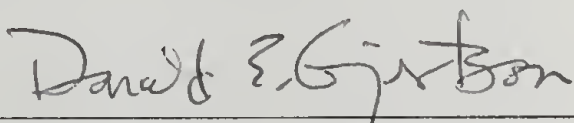
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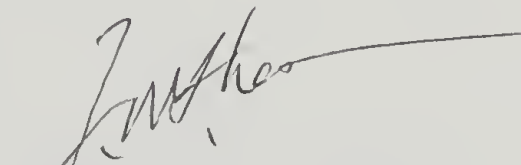
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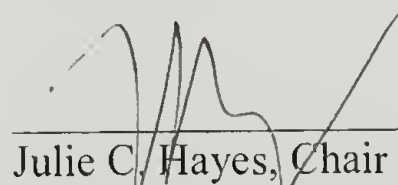
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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Introduction

The tale of Mulan was first transcribed approximately 1,500 years ago as a poem or ballad. From this point, the story of the daughter who joins the army in her father's place has been transformed into almost every literary and artistic genre, from novels to Beijing opera, poetry to painting; however recently Mulan's story is most well-known as a full-length children's movie produced by the Walt Disney Company.

Beginning in the 1950's, the tale of Mulan entered into the genre of juvenile literature.¹ Since that time, subsequent decades have witnessed a number of versions of this tale in the form of picture books, children's literature, and juvenile literature. The focus of this thesis will be on the Mulan story, introducing and analyzing twelve versions, first starting with the original poem and then moving to versions found in picture books, children's literature, and juvenile literature, as well as the Disney film. The main hypothesis of this thesis is that although the various versions of the story as found in children's and juvenile literature share many commonalities, most are all based on the original poem. Each of the authors of these versions "reinvented the wheel" when writing their versions of the Mulan story; the different versions do not create a solid textual genealogy through which the evolution of the Mulan story may be traced.

Prior to a discussion of the tale of Mulan, one must understand three key aspects: namely, the general timeline of the Mulan story in Chinese literature; the scope of female

¹ This is the earliest juvenile literature version of the Mulan tale I was able to find; however, a copy was unattainable. Additionally, there may be earlier versions of the Mulan story with children as the intended audience, but I was unable to locate them with the resources available.

martial figures in the Chinese literary tradition; and the discovery of the child and the need for literature specifically written for the child in China.

The Timeline of the Mulan Story in Chinese Literature

The story of Mulan, although it has been “stashed, and repeatedly unpacked in China’s cultural house,”² is arguably the most well-known Chinese tale involving a female martial figure. The earliest written form of the tale, *Mulan shi* 木蘭詩 (The Mulan Poem) is recorded in the *Gujin yuelu* 古今樂錄 (Collection of Old and New Music, ca 568); Zhi Jiang (dates unknown) is credited with the compilation of the *Gujin yuelu* in the Chen dynasty (557-588).³ Regardless of the exact date of composition, it is commonly believed that the tale of Mulan existed first as a folk ballad or song; there is no evidence for its existence in written form before the *Gujin yuelu* version. Prior to the tenth century, written materials were copied by hand, and therefore scarce; knowledge of reading and writing was limited to a very small group who were predominantly members of the highest social elite of hereditary “great” families, professional scribes, and government clerks.⁴

In his article on the origins of the Mulan poem, Wang Zengwen argues that because the language of the poem, although fluid and beautiful, was simple in comparison to other works of that time period, the target audience was not the educated elite, but the uneducated masses who would have been listening to the performance of the poem or tale,

² Mann, Susan, “Presidential Address: Myths of Asian Womanhood.” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59:4 (2000): 846.

³ For further discussion on the date of origin of the *Gujin Yuelu*, see Wang Yingling’s (CE 1223-1296) *Yuhai* 玉海 (Jade Sea) and Ma Guohan’s *Yuhanshan Fang Jiyishu* 玉函山房輯佚書 (Compilation of Lost Work by the Yuhanshan Family).

⁴ Idema, W.L. *Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period*. Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1974: XLVII- XLVIII.

rather than reading it. Wang Zengwen argues that, had the target audience been the educated elite, the language of the poem would have been more literary and artistic, less vivid and concise. He believed that the transcribing of the poem probably came secondary to its performance.⁵ Although this analysis is far from irrefutable, Wang Zengwen's argument does support the assertion that the poem was first an orally presented tale, and only later manually recorded.

The *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 (Outstanding Literary Works) contains the second oldest known version of the Mulan story, titled *Mulan ge* 木蘭歌 (Song of Mulan). The *Wenyuan yinghua*, compiled by Li Fang (925-996), falsely attributes the composition of the *Mulan ge* to Wei Yuanfu (d. 771) a well-known Tang official.⁶ The *Wenyuan yinghua bianzheng* 文苑英華辨證 (Verification and Correction of the Outstanding Literary Works) attributed to Peng Shuxia (fl. 1192) states that the *Mulan ge* is an anonymous 'song,' which was not composed by Wei Yuanfu.⁷ The original texts of the *Gujin yuelu* and the *Wenyuan yinghua* are no longer available; however some of their content has been collected and preserved under the same titles in collections of later dynasties.

The Tang dynasty (618-906) is considered the golden age of Chinese culture; in which music, literature, and poetry flourished. Two known Tang poems related to the tale of Mulan are Du Mu's (803-852) *Ti Mulan miao shi* 題木蘭廟詩 (Poem Regarding the Mulan Temple) and Bai Juyi's (772-846) *Xiti Mulanhua* 戲題木蘭花 (Poem Regarding

⁵ Wang, Zengwen 王增文. "<Mulan shi> de chansheng shidai, ben shi he zuozhe kaobian" <木蘭詩>的產生時代, 本事和作者考辨. *Henan jiaoyu xueyuan xuebao*, 3 (1994): 34-36.

⁶ Li Fang, comp. *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 [Outstanding Literary Works]. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982.

⁷ Peng, Shuxia. "Wenyuan yinghua bianzheng 文苑英華辨證 [Verification and Correction of the Outstanding Literary Works]." *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華. Vol. 6: 5279.

the Magnolia).⁸ Du Mu's poem emphasizes Mulan's femininity and patriotism, while Bai Juyi's poem mentions neither Mulan's heroic deeds nor the moral values reflected, although her dressing as a man is implied.⁹

The earliest known extant version of the *Mulan shi* is collected in the *Yuefu shiji* 樂府詩集 (Collection of Yuefu Poems), compiled by Guo Maoqian (fl. 1264-1269). The *Yuefu shiji* contains an entry entitled *Mulan shi ershou* 木蘭詩二首 (Two Mulan Poems); the first of these two versions is purportedly the anonymous poem from the *Gujin yuelu*, while the second verse is the imitative poem attributed to Wei Yuanfu.

During the Yuan dynasty (1260-1368), the Mulan story was presented in theater plays. The Yuan emperors were not Han Chinese, and they did not, in general, allow Han scholars to serve in the imperial court. Because of this, many Han scholars turned their attentions to literature, including the writing of drama for theater plays.¹⁰ These plays dealt with the lives of corrupt officials and courtesans, ambitious young scholars and virtuous maidens, outlaws and murders, and the glories of the past.¹¹ The tale of Mulan is included in the theatrical literature of the Yuan dynasty, such as Yang Weizhen's (1296-1370) *Mulan ci* 木蘭辭 (the Ballad of Mulan).

During the Ming dynasty (1368-1643), *zaju* theatricals enjoyed continued appeal, mainly due to imperial patronage. According to William Dolby, the Ming court desired to emulate the Yuan, and therefore adopted the Yuan form of theatrical entertainment.¹²

⁸ In Chinese *mulan* 木蘭 or *mulanhua* 木蘭花 literally translate to Magnolia. Although Bai Juyi's poem is about Mulan, the title of the poem appears to be relating to the flower, an allusion to the woman.

⁹ Dong, Lan. *Cross Cultural Palimpsest of Mulan: Iconography of the Woman Warrior from Premodern China to Asian America*. Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006: 130-131.

¹⁰ Hayward Scott, Dorothea. *Chinese Popular Literature and the Child*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1980: 17.

¹¹ Ibid. 66.

¹² Dolby, William. *A History of Chinese Drama*. London: Elek Books Limited, 1967: 86.

A *zaju* with the Mulan theme is Xu Wei's (1521-1593) *Ci Mulan tifu congjun* 雌木蘭替父從軍 (The Female Mulan Takes Her Father's Place in the Army). In Xu Wei's *zaju*, Mulan is given the surname *Hua*, and is also noted to have bound feet.¹³

The stories included within the Yuan *zaju* were also maintained during the Ming dynasty in the form of popular literature, some of which became the first full-length novels written during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries.¹⁴ Some of these novels originated from written versions of the storytellers' tales. Although not a "full-length" novel, there is a version of the Mulan tale in the late Ming dynasty among the works of popular literature. Written by Zhu Guozhen (1557-1632) and included in his *Yongchuang Xiaoshuo* 湧幢小說, this version of the Mulan tale would have appealed to what Idema calls the "urban bourgeoisie"; a semi-educated group, quite apart from the elite landholding gentry and officials.¹⁵

During the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), the ever-growing number of printing houses made literature available to a greater number of people, and there was a true explosion of vernacular fiction. The Qing dynasty witnessed a number of novels based on the tale of Mulan, the authors of which are largely unknown, or known only under a pseudonym. *Mulan qinü zhuan* 木蘭奇女傳 (The Record of the Extraordinary Woman Mulan; 1908), *Mulan conjuan* 木蘭從軍 (Mulan Joins the Army; 1903), and *Mulan congjun* 木蘭從軍 (Mulan Joins the Army; 1909) are all of unknown authorship. The original texts of these three works are no longer available; however record of their existence is recorded in *Wan*

¹³ Xu, Wei. "Ci Mulan tifu congjun 雌木蘭替父從軍 [The Female Mulan Takes Her Father's Place in the Army]." *Xu Wei Ji* 徐渭集 (Collected Works by Xu Wei). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983: 1198-1206.

¹⁴ Hayward Scott, 67.

¹⁵ Idema, XVII.

Qing xiqu xiaoshuo mu 晚清戲曲小說目 (Bibliography of Drama and Fiction of the Late Qing).¹⁶

The following is a comprehensive list of versions of the Mulan story, as found in juvenile literature, children's literature, and animated film, as recorded in library catalogues. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Entries marked with an asterisks (*) indicate versions to be discussed within this paper.

1. Dong, Qianli. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Hong Kong: Yazhou chubanshe, 1959.
2. Chen, Quifen. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Taibei, Taiwan: Dongfang chubanshe, 1965.*
3. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Gaoxiong, Taiwan: Dazhong shuju, 1978.
4. *Hua Mulan, Yue Fei* 花木蘭, 岳飛. Hong Kong: Yimei tushu gongci, 1979.
5. Lin, Shuling, Donghe Chen, Tianzi Zhang. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Tainan, Taiwan: Jin qiao chubanshe, 1984.
6. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Taibei, Taiwan: Fuyou chubanshe, 1986.
7. Zhao, Yuping, Zhongmei Yuan. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Taibei, Taiwan: Zongjing xiao yuan feng shuju, 1987.
8. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Tainan, Taiwan: Ertong jiaoyu jihui, 1988.*
9. Wang, Zhiyong. *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭. Tainan: Longmen tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 1988.

¹⁶ Dong, 140.

10. Wei, Jiang. *Hua Mulan de Gushi—Zhongguo Gudai Nüyingxiong* 花木兰的故事—中国古代女英雄 *The Legend of Mu Lan—A Heroine of Ancient China*. California: Victory Press, 1992.*
11. Chin, Charlie. *Jinguo yingxiong Hua Mulan* 巾帼英雄花木兰 *China's Bravest Girl: The Legend of Hua Mu Lan*. California: Children's Book Press, 1993.*
12. Zhuang, Chaogen. *Mulan Cong Jun* 木兰从军(Mulan Joins the Army). Tainan, Taiwan: Shiyi wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1994.*
13. Lee, Jeanne M. *Mulan Ge* 木兰歌 *The Song of Mulan*. Hong Kong: Blaze I.P.I., 1995.*
14. Wang, Jian, trans. *Hua Mulan: China's Sweetest Magnolia*. Singapore: Asiapac Comic Series, 1996.*
15. Cook, Barry, Tony Bancroft, dir. *Mulan*. Florida: The Walt Disney Company, 1998.*
16. *Disney's Mulan*. Danbury, Connecticut: Grolier Enterprises, 1998.
17. Dubowski, Cathy. *Mulan*. New York: Disney Press, 1998.
18. Marsoli, Lisa Anne, Judith Clark. *Disney's Mulan*. Burbank, California: Mouseworks, 1998.
19. San Souci, Robert D., Jean Tseng, Mou-Sien Tseng. *Fa Mulan: The Story of a Woman Warrior*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1998.*
20. *The Secret of Mulan*. South Carolina: United American Video, 1998.
21. Zhang, Songnan. *Mulan Ci* 木兰辞 *The Ballad of Mulan*. Union City, California: Pan Asian Publications, 1998.*
22. Zoehfeld, Kathleen Weidner. *Disney's Mulan*. New York: Disney Press, 1998.

23. *Hua Mulan* 花木兰. Beijing: Renmin youdian chubanshe, 1999.
24. Chen, Sufen. *Hua Mulan* 花木兰. Hong Kong: Xiaoshu miao jiaoyu chuban she, 2001.*
25. *Hua Mulan* 花木兰. Tainan, Taiwan: Shiyi wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 2002.

Although 25 versions of the Mulan tale are listed above, only eleven are discussed within this research paper, for the following reasons: for all but the Disney printed versions of the story, I was unable to obtain a copy, through the library system. The printed Disney versions were all based upon the Disney animated film, and therefore not relevant to the focus of this paper. The United American Video's animated film *The Secret of Mulan* is a poorly made, 'B' grade cartoon, with no directors or screen writers provided. As such, this version has also been excluded. I will confine my analysis to versions of the Mulan tale written in Chinese and/or English; however, other versions do exist in Spanish, French, Dutch, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese, to name a few.

The Scope of Female Martial Figures in the Chinese Literary Tradition¹⁷

In a traditional Chinese Confucian society, an ideal woman should obey first her father, then her husband, then her son. She should be beautiful, well behaved, industrious, and moral.¹⁸ Socially, a woman's role was to marry, bear sons, and maintain her father's

¹⁷ It should be noted that the purpose of this section is not to discuss the historical accuracy of the following tales, or to suggest that the roles of these women portray anything more than stereotypes of ways in which heroic women should behave in the Chinese context. However, the discussion of these women, or at least an introduction to the most readily available versions of their tales, provides a crucial background upon which the tale of Mulan may be discussed.

¹⁸ Huang, Yingjun. *Women in Transition: Female Characters in 20th Century Chinese Children's Literature*. M.A. Thesis: San Diego University, 1998: 29.

and then her husband's family.¹⁹ Liu Xiang's (BCE 77-6) *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 (*Biographies of Exemplary Women*) includes 105 biographical accounts of 'exemplary' women, which are divided into seven categories/chapters: *muyi* 母儀 (The Exemplars of Mothers), *xianming* 賢明 (The Capable and Intelligent), *renzhi* 任智 (The Benevolent and Wise), *zhenshun* 貞順 (The Determine and Obedient), *jiayi* 節義 (The Principled and Righteous), *biantong* 辯通 (Those Able in Reasoning and Communication), and *niebi* 孽嬖 (The Pernicious and Depraved).²⁰ According to Raphals, the purpose of the *lienü zhuan* was to "train females to meet the demands of motherhood and household management."²¹

Although the majority of historical and fictional upper class female figures supposedly acted within these confines, both Chinese history and Chinese literature contain stories of women who acted outside of these traditional roles, including in the role of heroic martial figures. Cass notes that, at first glance, female warriors appear to be "honorary men" rather than notable women.²² A discussion of these female heroic martial figures is essential background to the discussion of Mulan, as it sets the stage for understanding the popularity and longevity of Mulan's story. Although a substantial amount of scholarly research has been conducted on Chinese women, a relatively small amount has been conducted on female heroic martial figures, and as such, some of the following accounts are sparse in detail. These accounts shall be discussed chronologically; the information

¹⁹ Fyler, Jennifer Lynn. *Social Criticism in Traditional Legends: Supernatural Women in Chinese Zhiguai and German Sagen*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Comparative Literature: University of Massachusetts, 1993: 58.

²⁰ Mou, Sherry J. *Gentleman's Prescriptions for Women's Lives: A Thousand Years of Biographies of Chinese Women*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2002: 30. Translations are Mou's.

²¹ Raphals, Lisa. *Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1998: 3.

²² Cass, Victoria. *Dangerous Women: Warriors, Grannies, and Geisha of the Ming*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999: 65.

provided utilizes the readily available resources. Although these tales do not form a consistent time line of women who acted outside the gender 'norm,' female martial figures stand out because they are anomalous in both fiction and history. However, "as anyone who has taken a glance at Chinese popular culture knows, [female] warriors fascinate. Theater, opera, folk tales, novels, movies, televisions shows, cartoons, illustrated books, classical tales, new year's prints, paper cut outs, decks of cards, and puppet shows all depict them [warrior women]." ²³ According to Dong, the image of a woman warrior is acknowledged and praised as heroic by the 'authoritative history' because this anomalous behavior is viewed as enforcing Confucian ethics such as filial piety and loyalty, rather than challenging them. ²⁴

The earliest written record of a female heroic martial figure is of Fu Hao. Fu Hao was the wife of the Shang Dynasty (ca. BCE 1600-1046) king Wu Ding (BCE 1324-1265). Found in her tomb were four copper battle axes engraved with her name, the first indications that Fu Hao was a martial figure. ²⁵ Additionally, Fu Hao's name appears in over 250 oracle inscriptions which indicate places she conquered, as well as her military tactics. Fu Hao reportedly went on exploratory expeditions to the Qiang Kingdom, and led 13,000 troops. ²⁶

Women have appeared in the Chinese military records as early as Sun Zi (BCE 496-453). The record claims that, in order to show that discipline is the primary factor in building an effective army, King Wu's 170 palace concubines were trained to be soldiers

²³ Cass, 80.

²⁴ Dong, 33.

²⁵ Lai, Sufen Sophia. *From Cross-Dressing Daughters to Lady Knight-Errant: The Origin and Evolution of Chinese Women Warriors*. In Mou, Sherry J. ed. *Presence and Presentation: Women in the Chinese Literati Tradition*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998: 77.

²⁶ Li, Xiaolin. "Chinese Women Soldiers: A History of 5,000 Years." *Social Education* 58(2), 1994: 67.

to prove to King Wu the affect of discipline. The record does not indicate whether these palace concubines turned soldiers were actually utilized in battle, however Lai notes that this record signifies that kings and military leaders could conceptualize the idea of women as potential warriors, noting that training and discipline, not gender, are relevant to creating a skilled soldier.²⁷

Xun Guan Niang was the daughter of the Jin dynasty's Xun Song (ca. 263-329), who was an official of the Jin court. When her father was trapped in a besieged city and was running out of provisions, thirteen-year-old Xun Guan Niang led a group of warriors to break through the barricade, fought off the pursuing forces, and returned to the city with provisions and reinforcements, essentially saving both her father and the city.²⁸

Zhu Xu (d. 393) was the Regional Inspector of Liang Prefecture. During an attack, Zhu Xu's mother noticed that one corner of the city's defenses was weak, so she led 100 maids to reinforce defenses.²⁹

Mulan, dates unknown, is commonly agreed to have lived during the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-584). When her father receives a conscription notice, Mulan, dressed as a man, takes his place. After twelve years of service, Mulan appears before the Emperor who offers her rewards and a military post, however Mulan only desires to return home to her father. She is, according to the earliest version of her story (ca 568), permitted to do so; once she arrives home, Mulan changes back into her female attire, and returns to her life as a woman. According to Li, Mulan has "inspired the largest number of literary and artistic works about Chinese heroines."³⁰ Mulan is purportedly the best-known woman

²⁷ Lai, 80.

²⁸ Dong, 32.

²⁹ Dong, 35.

³⁰ Li, Xiaolin, 67.

warrior, “whose name has become synonymous with courage, determination, and selfless patriotism.”³¹

According to Mou, the *Wei shu* (compiled ca. 551-554) *lienü zhuan* contains records of two heroic women: Lady Meng and Lady Liu. When Lady Meng’s son left to fight a battle, and the second-in-command fled, Lady Meng took charge of the soldiers to defend the city. She encouraged both the military and civilians to defend the city, and meted out rewards and punishment. Lady Liu, when her husband was sick, took command of the local soldiers to protect the city. With the city besieged, and access to their water supply cut off, Lady Liu instructed the civilians to collect rainwater for drinking, and consequently saved the city.³²

Princess Ping Yang is known for participating in military affairs. When her father, Li Yuan (566-635), left the county to lead troops against the waning Sui court, Princess Ping Yuan remained alone in the county. She recruited an army to support her father’s uprising, and defend the county.³³ She was granted tributes for presiding over her 70,000 strong “female detachment.”³⁴

The *Sui shu* (completed ca. 636) contains a record of Lady Xian (d. 601). Lady Xian gave military council and advice to her husband, Feng Bao (d. 558). Upon her husband’s death, Lady Xian became commander of Feng’s troops and reportedly brought peace to the area. When the Sui dynasty (581-618) conquered the Chen dynasty (557-589), Lady

³¹ Li, Yuning Ed. *Images of Women in Chinese Literature*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994: 6.

³² Mou, 2002, 119-120.

³³ Li, Xiaolin, 67.

³⁴ Dong, 35. Dong stipulated that Princess Ping Yang’s troops are called the “female detachment” because their leader was a woman, not because she led an all woman force.

Xian pledged loyalty to the Sui ruler to preserve the peace. She was posthumously given the title *Chengjiu furen* (Lady of Sincerity and Respect).³⁵

Hongxian, who is said to have lived during the reign of *Suzong* (756-762), is a semi-mythical figure, who is attributed with magical skills, including the ability to travel at great speeds.³⁶ Hongxian protected her lord, Xue Song, and assisted him in abating conflict.

Nie Yinniang, who lived during the reign of *Dezong* (785-805), was taken away from her father, the famous Tang general Nie Fang, and trained in martial arts for five years by a nun. When she returned, Nie Fang challenged his daughter to a duel, to see whose martial skills were more refined, and much to the surprise of all, Nie Yinniang won numerous times. After this she became an assassin, killing the enemies of her family and the state.³⁷

Liang Hongyu was a courtesan who became the wife of Song general Han Shizhong (1086-1151). In 1130, when her husband was engaged in a seemingly hopeless battle, Liang Hongyu mounted the city wall and fiercely beat the battle drum, which subsequently encouraging her husband's troops to victory.³⁸

She Saihua and Mu Guiying lived during the Song dynasty (960-1279). They were members of the "Woman Warriors of the Yang Family." When all of the men of the Yang family were killed off in battles, the 100-year-old Yang Matriarch, She Saihua calls

³⁵ Mou, 2002, 126-8.

³⁶ Cai, Zhuozhi. *100 Celebrated Chinese Women*. Singapore: Asiapac Books, 1995: 127.

³⁷ Cai, 141.

³⁸ Edwards, Louise P. *Men and Women in Qing China: Gender in the Red Chamber Dream*. Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1994: 87.

the twelve Yang widows to defend the nation. Among them, Mu Guiying, not only defended her city, but also led attacks which penetrated enemy territory.³⁹

Qin Liangyu lived during the end of the Ming dynasty (1574-1629). She was skilled in military tactics and marital arts. She is well known for defending Ming territory against the Qing invaders. Even when the Qing had “won” Qin Liangyu remained on her home island of Shizhu, and until the time of her death, kept the island free from Qing rule.⁴⁰ Dong notes that Qin Liangyu received honors of the Third and Second rank, indicating that she was a high-skilled leader.⁴¹

Hong Xuanjiao was a military officer of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1850-1864). She possessed both martial arts and equestrian skills. She is also reported to be able to scale mountains with remarkable speed, indicating that Hong Xuanjiao was strong in both military and purely physical matters. Following the Jintian uprising of 1850, she became the commander of a woman’s army. Her army was unique, because all of the women were trained to use firearms. She led her troops against a Qing magistrate and was successful. Her fate after this battle, however, is unknown.⁴²

Qiu Jin (1875-1907), a self-proclaimed knight errant, was active in ethnic patriotism against the Manchu ruling elite, as well as the early Women’s Rights Movement. She was viewed as a political and social revolutionary figure, and was also skilled in sword fighting and other martial arts.⁴³ According to Martin, Qiu Jin should be viewed as both a knight errant and a woman warrior because she put her life on the line not only for her

³⁹ Edwards, 89.

⁴⁰ Cai, 181.

⁴¹ Dong, 38. Dong does not indicate from whom Qin Liangyu received these honors.

⁴² Cai, 193.

⁴³ Martin, Dorothea A.L., Ed. “Qiu Jin: A Female Knight-Errant, A True Woman Warrior”. *Chinese Studies in History*, 34.2 (Winter 2000-2001): 10-14.

country but also for the Women's Rights Movement.⁴⁴ She was caught by the Qing government and executed for her involvement in anti-Manchu organizations.

Lin Hei'er is said to be one of the founders of the Red Lanterns, a group of female warriors who joined the Boxers in their rebellion (1899-1901). According to Cai Zhouzhi, as the leader of the group, Lin Hei'er has been said to be, second to Mulan, the most well known female martial figure in China.⁴⁵ Although her group was purportedly invincible, Lin Hei'er as an individual, was not. She was eventually caught by Qing authorities and executed.

With the exception of Mulan, all of these women fight as women; they do not have the need to disguise themselves as men. The difference, of course, is that Mulan is fighting in a conscripted army. If she were found to be a woman, both she and her father would have faced serious consequences. The other women mentioned are not fighting on anyone's behalf, nor are they in a conscripted army. All of the aforementioned women, with the exception of Mulan, were all married, and once the battle was over, they returned to their traditional role as a wife, just as Mulan returns to her role as a daughter. With regard to this phenomenon, Epstein wrote, "In pre-modern China, the proper performance of a social role was considered more important to social order than ensuring the congruity of biological and social identities."⁴⁶ In other words, a woman could perform a role outside that which was traditionally accepted if no males were available to fill that role. The orthodox texts, "tolerate[d] individuals who put aside expected gender

⁴⁴ Martin, 19.

⁴⁵ Cai Zhouzhi provides no reason or supporting evidence to this claim.

⁴⁶ Epstein, Maram. *Competing Discourse: Orthodoxy, Authenticity, and Engendered Meaning in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asian Center, 2001: 29.

roles, as a temporary expediency, in order to achieve higher ritual or familiar ends.”⁴⁷ However, once those “higher ends” had been accomplished, the woman who stepped outside her traditional gender role was expected to “return to normal.” When viewed through this light, the aforementioned female heroic martial figures seem to be fulfilling the same role as their male heroic martial counterparts: the protection and preservation of the state.

The Creation and Evolution of Children’s Literature in China

China has at least 3,000 years of written records, while the written record of “children’s literature” in China has barely one hundred years of history. Although there was literature written for the education of children prior to the twentieth century, the idea of actual 兒童文學 “children’s literature” was not mentioned in China until 1918. The leading writers at the head of the May Fourth Movement of 1919, including Lu Xun (1881-1936), Ye Shengtao (1894-1988), Mao Dun (1896-1981), and Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967) to name a few, continued to use this “new” term 兒童文學(children’s literature) to represent their growing understanding of the need for new literature written expressly for children, as well as the need to better understand the meaning of ‘child’ and the nature of childhood. In a sense, these writers were seeking to discover the child and to create suitable literature with this new discovery in mind.

Prior to the May Fourth Movement of 1919, the forms of literature for children had been largely unchanged for 1,200 years. The mainstays of literature for children (to be distinguished from later “children’s literature”) until the turn of the twentieth century

⁴⁷ Ibid., 29.

were the 三字經 *Three Character Classic* (ca. 13th century), the 百家姓 *One Hundred Family Names* (ca. tenth century), and the 千字文 *Thousand Character Classic* (ca. sixth century).⁴⁸ The purpose of these three works, commonly called the “Three, One Hundred, One Thousand” (三, 百, 千), was education. In reference to these three texts, Wu Din said in 1965:

These reading materials for children were mostly for the purpose of vocabulary learning and conveying ethical norms, etiquette, and decorum . . . Therefore the materials were mostly related to daily life such as people’s names, names of objects, names of all appliances, the weather, and so forth.⁴⁹

These texts are rhymed to aid memorization, which does show an understanding that children are more able to learn basic concepts and build vocabulary when rhyme is involved; however, memorization was the emphasis of these texts. Children memorized these texts by rote long before they were able to understand their meaning. It is therefore conceivable that these works, although written with the child in mind, were only meant to educate the child. There was no concept of children reading something enjoyable; children were viewed as “incomplete adults,” therefore memorization of texts prior to comprehension was the prescribed mode of education.

Once a child was able to read and write at this beginning level, he was then ready to begin studying and memorizing the didactic texts. The ideal curriculum, starting from about 1190 was for the child to start with the ‘four books’: *the Great Learning* (大學), *Analects of Confucius* (論語), *Mencius* (孟子), and the *Doctrine of the Mean* (中庸) in

⁴⁸ Farquhar, Mary Ann. *Children’s Literature in China: From Lu Xun to Mao Zedong*. Armonk, NY: ME Sharp, Inc., 1999: 14.

⁴⁹ Wu, Din. 兒童文學研究 (Studies on Children’s Literature), quoted in Huang, Yingjun. *Women in Transition: Female Characters in Twentieth Century Chinese Children’s Literature*. M.A. Thesis, San Diego State University, 1998: 19.

this sequence; as well as the ‘five classics’: the *Book of Changes* (易經), the *Book of History* (書經), the *Book of Songs* (詩經), the *Record of Rites* (禮記), and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (春秋),⁵⁰ although only a minority of students went on to study the ‘five classics’. Prior to 1905 and the dissolution of the public examination system for qualification for government service, children’s education had a single objective: to help children pass the civil service examinations. The “Three, One Hundred, and One Thousand” were seen as stepping stones to the Confucian classics; the Confucian classics were the stepping stones for success in the civil service examinations; passing these examinations with a high enough score to be chosen for a government post was considered to be the height of success.

Included in elementary reading materials were didactic storybooks intended to be read to children. One in particular, Zhu Xi’s (1130-1200) *Daily Stories* (日記故事) was very popular for reading to children; however, the purpose of this book was still education. Children read stories about filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, truth, propriety, duty, honesty, and honor, all of which are found within the Confucian classics, and were further reinforced with the “extracurricular” reading of *Daily Stories*. The ‘approved’ reading materials for children had three aims: to introduce characters and sentence structure, to impart general knowledge, and to transmit traditional Chinese cultural values.⁵¹

These works were by no means the only literature to which children had access; they were simply the only works either read to and/or memorized by children. Because children were viewed as incomplete adults, traditional Chinese literature lacked an

⁵⁰ Hayward Scott, 54.

⁵¹ Farquhar, 16.

awareness of the particular needs of children.⁵² The first hints of actual children's literature in China can be seen in the translation of Aesop's fables, beginning in the 17th century. In Europe at that time, Aesop's fables were widely read; however, they were stories that adults read to children, rather than stories children could read to themselves. In China, these translated fables had the same "readership," namely that of adults reading stories to their children. Chinese adults appreciated the fables because they had moral endings and a strong educational value.⁵³ Also in the Qing dynasty, a scholar by the name of Zheng Fuxi (1796-1884) collected two volumes of what Hong Zhangtai entitled 'children's songs'. All together, Zheng Fuxi collected 80 of these 'children's songs'.⁵⁴ Although this is one of the earliest occurrences of children's songs collected in a separate monograph, the purpose of this collection was scholarly study, rather than providing reading material for children. Perhaps Zheng Fuxi was aware of the unique "world of children," a term Lu Xun was to coin later, but he gave no indication that this was the case.

An earlier stage of "pre"-children's literature was the work of the Ming scholar Lu Kun (1536-1618). Lu Desheng (b. 1568), Lu Kun's father, believed that contrary to popular Confucian beliefs, traditional 'children's songs' were actually an important part of childhood, and should therefore be celebrated and viewed as educational for children, not harmful. Influenced by his father's interests, Lu Kun collected 46 traditional children's songs; however he modified them, adding in commentary of a moral, or

⁵² Ibid., 18-19. Traditional China here refers to the time period prior to 1919 and the May Fourth Movement. The May Fourth Movement of 1919, both historically and culturally, is viewed as the separating division between traditional and modern China, as well as traditional and modern literature.

⁵³ Farquhar, 20.

⁵⁴ Hong, Zhangtai. *Going to the People: Chinese Intellectuals and Folk Literature 1918-1937*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985: 110.

didactic, nature. The founders of the children's literature movement, especially Zhou Zuoren, criticized Lu Kun for altering the collected songs.⁵⁵

As early as 1908, scholars who are now known as the leading figures in the discovery of the child and the need for children's literature, brothers Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren, published a collection of translated children's stories.⁵⁶ In 1909, Sun Yuxiu (1874-1915?) published a collection of translated western fairy tales.⁵⁷ However, despite these collections of translated stories, the need to write children's literature was not widely recognized until the May Fourth Movement of 1919. After this time, scholars, lead by the ideas of Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren made real progress in changing the nature of writing for children. In 1920, the term "children's literature" (兒童文學) was coined. Zhou Zuoren said,

Formerly, men did not properly understand children, if not treating them as miniature adults to be nurtured by the classics, then ignoring them as ignorant and incomplete small people. Only recently have we known that, although children are somewhat biologically and psychologically different from adults, they are still complete individuals with their own inner and outer life.⁵⁸

Thus quoted, Zhou Zuoren became one of the first people in China to introduce the notion that children were not simply little adults, *xiao da ren* 小大人 (literally little big people). He also brought to light the importance of meeting the special needs of children, the need to nurture both the unique "inner and outer life" of a child.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 111.

⁵⁶ Farquhar, 27.

⁵⁷ Hong, 108.

⁵⁸ Farquhar, 28.

Lu Xun believed that books for children should stimulate the imagination, and did not agree with the commonly accepted belief that children only needed to read books about science, math, history, and other “educational subjects.”⁵⁹ Similar to Lu Xun’s thoughts on classical education, Zheng Zhenduo (1898-1958) said that classical elementary education could only breed “obedient people, loyal officials, and filial sons,”⁶⁰ not people who could make a real contribution to society. Zhou Zuoren warned, “if a child’s imagination and curiosity were allowed to atrophy, he would become a ‘dull, dry, and materialistic man.’”⁶¹ As Hayward Scott wrote,

Writers in the new style may not immediately have followed the path which Lu Xun and his brother hoped they would in creating a true vernacular literature for children, but the translations which the brothers and other writers published did strongly influence the writing of the period.⁶²

Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren were able to diagnose the problems of children’s literature, and as such, the two made significant contributions to the cause of both children’s literature and child psychology in China.

With regard to children’s literature during the 1920’s and 1930’s, heavy didactic undertones were still present, but there was at least an attempt to write literature both for and about children, in a language children could understand and stories to which they could relate. Literature for children was no longer a string of rhymed characters that they would memorize by rote. In fact, Lu Xun stressed the importance of children learning through doing, learning through actions not through memorizing. For example, in 1923, Ye Shaojun (1894-1988) published a collection of original children’s stories called *The*

⁵⁹Farquhar, 28-30.

⁶⁰Hong, 113.

⁶¹Ibid., 122.

⁶²Hayward Scott, 124.

Scarecrow (稻草人). This collection has been called the first book in China's new children's literature.⁶³ In his stories, he analyzes society for children through the medium of fantasy tales. Ye Shaojun followed both Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren in their belief that there was a special world of children, and he believed that this world was a place of purity and innocence.⁶⁴

In one of the stories, called *The Seed*, there is a "magic" seed that will only grow for a young peasant. The wealthy, the important, and the beautiful all plant this seed to make it grow, but it will not sprout. It is only when the hard working young peasant plants it that the seed grows and makes the young peasant's hard work pay off.⁶⁵ Lu Xun said of Ye Shaojun's work, "The writer [Ye Shaojun], like the thrush, has left the golden cage of Confucian concepts and social hierarchy, and looked with new eyes at the wide world beyond."⁶⁶ The stories in *The Scarecrow* have a very strong theme about the importance of cultural change, and the need for a break with traditional Confucian beliefs. One could argue that "children's literature" has traded one set of confines for another: the first being the Confucian tradition; the second being an anti-Confucian tradition.

Ye Shaojun's second collection of original children's stories was called *The Ancient Stone Hero*. The tales in this collection are questionable as to whether they could really be considered children's literature. Ye Shaojun employs the same means of the fantasy tale to communicate to children using language and images they can understand, but the

⁶³ Farquhar, 93. Please note the use of the term 'children's literature' as opposed to the previously used term 'literature for children.'

⁶⁴ Ibid., 97.

⁶⁵ Ye, Shaotao. *Daocaoren* 稻草人(Scarecrow). Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1930.

⁶⁶ Farquhar, 100. The mention to the thrush here is a reference to another story in the collection. In this story, a talented "pet" thrush, who only sang for the enjoyment of his master, gets out of his cage and flies away to explore the world. Upon seeing the sadness and hardship of the world outside his privileged cage, the thrush decides to remain in the "outside" world to bring a little joy to the masses through his singing.

didactic message is almost overwhelming. Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren complained about the didactic nature of the Confucian literature, yet considering that they were more than supportive of revolutionary literature which had its own didactic nature, it appears that Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren did not take issue with the didactic nature of the literature as such, so much as the form of the message.

Another prominent author of children's literature at this time was Bing Xin (1900-1999). From 1923-1926 she wrote and published a series of essays called *Letters to Young Readers*. These letters might be the first true children's literature in China, because Bing Xin was writing to children and with the intention of the child as reader. The letters were mostly about women and children, not class struggle and revolution; there were undertones of tenderness, love, and nostalgia, not social injustice and morality. Love in Bing Xin's letters is not about loyalty and comradeship; it is feminine and maternal, something many modern child psychologists believe to be critical in children's literature.

By 1935 children's literature was well established within China. In Shanghai alone there were twelve magazines geared towards children under the age of fifteen. The publishing world recognized the "world of children" with the constantly growing number of books catering to the special literary needs of children.

After the 1940's, children's literature became increasingly politically biased. Farquhar believes there was an ever-present didactic nature to children's literature, from the Confucian classics to Marxist literature.

There is a clear continuity between the Confucian emphasis on education, the early May Fourth notion of 'emancipating' children through literature and the Marxist notion of 'awakening' the masses through revolutionary popular literature and art. Just as Zhu Xi

sought to mold children through the Confucian *Daily Stories* and Lu Xun sought ‘to change the spirit’ of China through ‘the best medium’, literature, so too Marxists aimed to create a mass revolutionary consciousness through art and literature.⁶⁷

Here Farquhar very clearly outlines the progression of children’s literature, or in traditional times ‘literature for children’, as a fluid and continuous progression both in form and didactic objective. The medium and message may change, as well as the understanding of the child in general, but there still remains the concept that one must teach the child today in order to gain positive benefits tomorrow.

Little to no research has been completed as to when the Mulan story entered the world of children’s literature. The earliest printed version of the Mulan story,⁶⁸ published in Hong Kong in 1959, is Dong Qianli’s *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭,⁶⁹ however, the first children’s literature version for discussion within this paper is Chen Quifen’s *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭, first published in Taipei, Taiwan in 1965. This story, unmistakably written for a younger audience (upper middle school aged children) with the inclusion of *zhuyin fuhao*⁷⁰ alongside the characters, reflects Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren’s category of children’s literature, because it does recognize the special needs of children. Also, it is an adventure story, so it fits into children’s literature in that regard.

With the understanding of requisite background information, namely that of the history of the Mulan tale, a brief explanation of female heroic marital figures, and the

⁶⁷ Farquhar, 242.

⁶⁸ It should be noted that there may be earlier versions of the Mulan tale in children’s/juvenile literature, however this was the earliest version I was able to find.

⁶⁹ Unfortunately, I have been unable to obtain a copy of this version, and therefore my discussion will begin with Chen Quifen’s 花木蘭 version, published in Taiwan in 1965.

⁷⁰ *Zhuyin fuhao* 注音符號 is the national phonetic system of the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan).

evolution of children's literature in China, we can now focus on the comparison of the twelve versions of the Mulan tale.

CHAPTER II
DISCUSSION AND BREAKDOWN OF THE TWELVE VERSIONS
OF THE MULAN TALE

The following is a list of the twelve versions of the Mulan tale to be discussed:

1. The poem
2. Mulan 1965 (Juvenile Literature, Taiwan, Chinese with *zhuyin fuhao*)
3. Mulan 1988 (Juvenile Literature, Taiwan, Chinese with *zhuyin fuhao*)
4. Mulan 1992 (Children's Literature, USA, Chinese and English)
5. Mulan 1993 (Children's Literature, USA, Chinese and English)
6. Mulan 1994 (Juvenile Literature, Taiwan, Chinese with *zhuyin fuhao*)
7. Mulan 1995 (Children's Literature, Hong Kong, Chinese and English)
8. Mulan 1996 (Juvenile Literature/ Comic Book, Singapore, English)
9. Mulan 1998 Zhang (Children's Literature, USA, Chinese and English)
10. Mulan 1998 San Souci (Children's Literature, USA, English)
11. Mulan 1998 Disney (Juvenile Film, USA, Chinese, English, among others)
12. Mulan 2001 (Juvenile Literature, Hong Kong, Chinese)

Explanation of Methodology

The analysis and collection of versions of one story is not a new undertaking.

According to Azzolina, the Grimm Brothers (Jacob Ludwig Karl Grimm, 1785-1863 and Wilhelm Karl Grimm 1786-1859) were interested in collecting and analyzing folktales, and says:

... that what seemed to be the 'same' story existed in multiple versions from different informants. Unfortunately, the Grimms were unable to resist the temptation to combine selective elements from these different versions to form one composite text of a given tale, thus producing a somewhat artificial and contrived 'literary' rewriting of what was originally a performance or product of oral tradition.⁷¹

Although the Grimm Brothers were looking at tales from different countries, it could be argued, that the multiple versions of the Mulan tale also fall into this collection of "multiple versions from different informants."

Before analysis of the poem and subsequent versions of the Mulan tale, it is important to first fully outline and explain the methodology to be used. I decided, first, to treat the tale of Mulan as a folktale, and as such, looked into folktale type- and motif-indexes to assess whether the Mulan tale fit into any existing tale type category, and found that it does not. The tale type is the primary classification unit; types are story-lines, distinct from other story-lines.⁷² The closest existing tale type into which the Mulan story could be classified by Aarne's (the proverbial father of tale types) classification system, was that of type number 875, *The Clever Peasant Girl*.⁷³ However, in the poem Mulan's family's socio-economic status is not mentioned⁷⁴ and, additionally, she is not praised for being a clever girl. In the poem, Mulan is praised by the Son of Heaven for being a good soldier, and by the voice of the narrator of the story for being a good daughter; later this interpretation changes Mulan into a filial daughter, loyal citizen, woman warrior, but never is she set aside for her "cleverness." As such, were the Mulan tale to be classified in Aarne, it would be under the (nonexistent) type of *The Good Daughter*.

⁷¹ Azzolina, David S. *Tale Type- and Motif-Indexes: An Annotated Bibliography*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987: x.

⁷² Azzolina, xii.

⁷³ Aarne, Antti and Stith Thompson. *The Types of the Folk-tale: A classification and Bibliography*. New York: Burt Franklin, 1928. Reprint New York: Lennox Hill Pub. & Dist. Co., 1971: 131.

⁷⁴ However, it must have been low enough to be liable for conscription, while not wealthy enough to hire someone to take the father's place in the army.

The secondary classification is the motif. Motifs are generally viewed as the “minimal units” or the “story radicals”; in a sense, motifs are the elements that bind the tale type together or are a sequence of smaller units.⁷⁵ Again, looking at the motif indexes, the motifs within the poem do not neatly fall into the categories provided. It should be noted that tales of war are not included in either the type- or motif-indexes as such. War is viewed as the method by which and through which characters are able to carry out their ‘notable’ tasks; however, the focus of the tale is not war, at least according to Aarne’s classification, and those that follow his methodology.

However, although the tale of Mulan does not fit neatly into the existing model of folktale classification, I will still utilize the general methods of breaking down the tale into its various, and more neatly identifiable components. My analysis of all versions of the Mulan tale will be broken down into the following three tiers: tier one, motif; tier two, sub-motif; and tier three, episodes. The “boiler plate” language consists of the following:

Type: *The Good Daughter*

Tier one: Motif: A. Daughter at home

B. Daughter away from home

C. Daughter returns home

Tier two: Sub-motifs: A1. Daughter doing traditional female things

A2. Conscription Crisis

A3. Daughter disguises as man, and takes father’s place

B1. Daughter leaves home/on the road

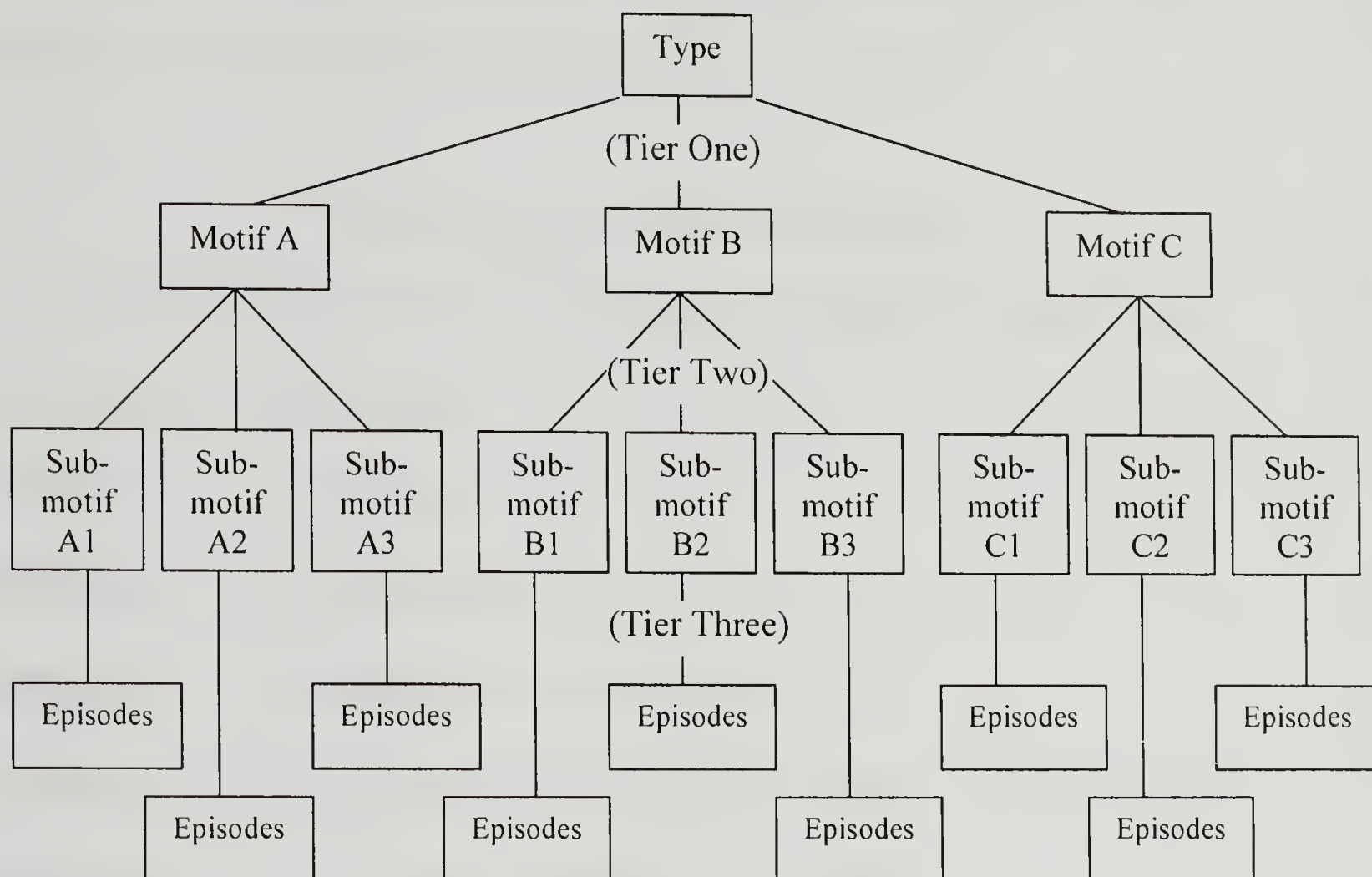
B2. Daughter at war

B3. Daughter rewarded by Son of Heaven

⁷⁵ Azzolina, xxii-xxiii.

- C1. Family prepares for daughter's return (where applicable)
- C2. Daughter returns (both home, and to female identity)
- C3. Daughter reveals identity to comrades

Tier three: Episodes: These will vary from version to version.



The above chart will be used as the analytical framework to break down all versions of the Mulan tale to be examined in this paper. In most cases, the structure of the chart will serve to simplify and clarify the divisions between motif, sub-motif, and episodes; provide a visualization of the text that will follow the chart; and provide a point of reference and comparison when looking at all versions together. The three main motifs, Daughter at home, Daughter away from home, and Daughter returns home will be the same throughout all the versions; this simplification is intentional. The general thought is that, once all versions of the tale have been broken down into their motifs, sub-motifs,

and episodes, using the above analytical scheme, they can be “laid upon each other” to determine whether the poem is, in fact, the version upon which all subsequent versions, at least versions examined in this paper, are based. In this way, sub-motifs, episodes, and sub-episodes that do not fall within the parameters of the poem will become readily apparent, as they will still be visible when all versions are “stacked up.”

Version One: *Mulan Shi* (The Mulan Poem)

The first version of the Mulan tale is the *Mulan Shi* 木蘭詩 (*The Mulan Poem*) hereafter referred to as the poem.

| | |
|-------|---|
| <木蘭詩 | The Mulan Poem> ⁷⁶ |
| 唧唧復唧唧 | <i>Jiji</i> , and again <i>jiji</i> |
| 木蘭當戶織 | Mulan weaves, facing the door. |
| 不聞機杼聲 | We cannot hear the sound of the shuttle, |
| 唯聞女嘆息 | We only hear the sound of a girl sighing. |
| 問女何所思 | We ask the girl, what is she thinking about? |
| 問女何所憶 | We ask the girl, what is she recalling? |
| 女亦無所思 | The girl is not thinking of anything. |
| 女亦無所憶 | The girl is not recalling anything. |
| 昨夜見軍帖 | “Last evening I saw military postings. |
| 可汗大點兵 | The Khan is summoning a great army. |
| 軍書十二卷 | The military register is twelve scrolls long, |

⁷⁶ This translation is mine. For a sampling of alternate translations, please see *Appendix 1*.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 卷卷有爺名 | Every scroll contains father's name. |
| 阿爺無大兒 | But Father has no grown son, |
| 木蘭無長兄 | Mulan has no elder brother. |
| 愿爲市鞍馬 | I desire to obtain a saddle and horse from the market |
| 從此替爺征 | And from this take father's place in battle." |
| 東市買駿馬 | In the east market she buys a fine horse. |
| 西市買鞍韉 | In the west market she buys a saddle and saddle blanket. |
| 南市買轡頭 | In the south market she buys a bridle. |
| 北市買長鞭 | In the north market she buys a long whip. |
| 朝辭爺娘去 | At dawn she takes leave of her father and mother, |
| 暮宿黃河邊 | At dusk she camps beside the Yellow River. |
| 不聞爺娘喚女聲 | She does not hear the voices of her father and mother calling for their daughter. |
| 但聞黃河流水鳴濺濺 | She only hears the sound of the Yellow River's flowing water, <i>jian jian.</i> |
| 旦辭黃河去 | Next dawn she sets out from the Yellow River, |
| 暮至黑山頭 | At dusk she arrives at the summit of Black Mountain. |
| 不聞爺娘喚女聲 | She does not hear the voices of her father and mother calling for their daughter. |
| 但聞燕山胡騎聲啾啾 | She only hears the sound of Northern tribe riders at <i>Yan</i> Mountain, <i>jiu jiu.</i> |

| | |
|---------|---|
| 萬里赴戎機 | Ten thousand <i>li</i> she went with the military forces. |
| 關山度若飛 | Crossing mountains and passes as if flying. |
| 朔氣傳金柝 | The northern wind carries the sound of army battles. |
| 寒光照鐵衣 | The cold light reflects off iron armor. |
| 將軍百戰死 | After a hundred battles the generals are dead. |
| 壯士十年歸 | And after ten years the robust soldiers return home. |
| 歸來見天子 | Upon returning they have audience with the Son of Heaven. |
| 天子坐明堂 | The Son of Heaven sits in the Hall of Light. |
| 策勛十二轉 | Orders of appointment and merit are bestowed at twelve grades. |
| 賞賜百千強 | Rewards are bestowed to the hundreds and thousands of strong soldiers. |
| 可汗問所欲 | The Khan asks what it is that (Mulan) desires. |
| 木蘭不用尚書郎 | Mulan has no use for the post of a high official. |
| 愿借明駝千里足 | Only wishes for a camel capable of going ten thousand <i>li</i> |
| 送兒還故鄉 | to return to the ancestral village. |
| 爺娘聞女來 | When father and mother hear of their daughter's return |
| 出郭相扶將 | They go to the outer wall of the city supporting each other. |
| 阿姊聞妹來 | When elder sister hears of younger sister's return |
| 當戶理紅妝 | She applies her rouge while facing the door. |
| 小弟聞姊來 | When little brother hears of elder sister's return, |
| 磨刀霍霍向豬羊 | He sharpens his knife, <i>huo huo</i> , and heads towards the pig and goat. |

| | |
|---------|---|
| 開我東閣門 | “I open my eastern chamber door |
| 坐我西閣床 | and I sit on my western chamber bed. |
| 脫我戰時袍 | I take off my robes of warring times |
| 著我舊時裳。 | and I put on my clothes of former times. |
| 當窗理雲鬢 | Facing the window I arrange my cloud-whirl hair. |
| 對鏡貼花黃 | Facing the mirror I attach flowering yellow. |
| 出門看火伴 | When I exit the door to attend my comrades |
| 火伴皆驚惶 | My comrades are completely shocked. |
| 同行十二年 | Together we traveled for twelve years, |
| 不知木蘭是女郎 | But they did not know that Mulan was a girl.” |
| 雄兔腳扑朔 | The male hare’s feet strike and kick. |
| 雌兔眼迷離 | The female hare’s eyes chase about. |
| 兩兔傍地走 | When we pair of hares run side by side across the ground, |
| 安能辨我是雄雌 | Who can distinguish whether I am he or she? |

The history of the poem has already been discussed in Chapter 1. For ease of discussion, I will break the poem into four or six line sections, with content of the lines indicating the breaking point. The beauty of poems is largely in the oral, rather than visual presentation; meaning that poems should be listened to, rather than read, and my analysis of the poem will largely reflect this personal preference.

唧唧復唧唧
木蘭當戶織
不聞機杼聲
唯聞女嘆息

Were the audience to be watching the scene unfolding before them, they would see Mulan, sitting at her loom, and hear both the sound of the shuttle as well as Mulan's sighing.⁷⁷ However, the narrator relates, the audience would not notice the sound of the loom in particular, but rather only that of the girl's sighs.

問女何所思
問女何所憶
女亦無所思
女亦無所憶

As Mulan is believed to be a young woman, the audience may think that she is sighing about something as pedestrian as a young man for whom she is pining, and so they (the audience) think to ask what she is thinking about or recalling. Yet, the narrator tells us, Mulan is not thinking of anything/one, and is also not recalling anything/one.

昨夜見軍帖
可汗大點兵
軍書十二卷
卷卷有爺名

Here Mulan speaks, indicating that the previous evening, she saw the conscription notices. The Khan, or Son of Heaven⁷⁸ as he is later referred to, has summoned a large army, and her father has been conscripted. The audience now realizes that it is not a pined-for young man who is the cause of Mulan's sighs, but rather her father's conscription.

阿爺無大兒
木蘭無長兄
願為市鞍馬
從此替爺征

In these four lines, the reader learns of the conflict within the story, which are also told by Mulan herself. Mulan's father does not have a son old enough to take his place.

Although not explicitly explained, Mulan has an overwhelming reason as to why her

⁷⁷ Here, *jiji* is an onomatopoeic device for both the sound of the shuttle and Mulan's sighs.

⁷⁸ I have no explanation for the interchanging usage of 可汗 and 天子. From a Chinese perspective these two terms are not interchangeable.

father should not go to war—there are no other adult males to substitute for him. Battle has never been within a ‘woman’s sphere’; therefore the audience realizes that Mulan’s father is either elderly or infirm. Mulan further informs the audience that she wants to procure that which is necessary and take her father’s place in the army.

東市買駿馬
西市買鞍韉
南市買轡頭
北市買長鞭

Mulan then goes to the various markets to procure the necessary equipment: a horse, saddle, saddle blanket, bridle, and whip. The poem does not detail efforts taken to conceal Mulan’s gender; however, the opposite (i.e., Mulan’s return to her female identity) is later described in detail.

朝辭爺娘去
暮宿黃河邊
不聞爺娘喚女聲
但聞黃河流水鳴濺濺

Mulan is now ready to leave her parent’s home, and join the army in her father’s place. She bids her parents farewell at the break of day, and by dusk has reached and camps at the banks of the Yellow River. Mulan’s parents, at the homestead, worry about their daughter, and weep for her; however Mulan, focused on her mission is not thinking about her family. She only ‘hears’ or notices the sound of the river flowing by.⁷⁹

旦辭黃河去
暮至黑山頭
不聞爺娘喚女聲
但聞燕山胡騎聲啾啾

At the break of dawn, on the second day, Mulan departs the Yellow River, and by dusk has arrived at the summit of Black Mountain. Again, the narrator returns the audience to

⁷⁹ *Jian jian* is the second onomatopoeic device used in the poem; in this instance describing the warbling sound of the flowing river.

Mulan's parents who are worried and crying for their daughter. However, Mulan, focused on her task at hand, does not think about her family, but only hears the distant sound of the Northern tribes on Yan Mountain.⁸⁰

萬里赴戎機
關山度若飛
朔氣傳金柝
寒光照鐵衣
將軍百戰死
壯士十年歸

These six lines contain the only reference to Mulan's situation within the army, with only two lines truly alluding to battle. The military forces traveled together for more than ten thousand *li*,⁸¹ crossing passes through mountain swiftly. While traveling, they (the forces of whom Mulan is a part) hear the sound of battles on the northern (southward blowing) wind—the direction from which the enemy is approaching. Battles take place even during the night hours, when a cold light reflects upon their armor. Generals (and presumably soldiers) die after a hundred battles; but after ten or more years, those who were fortunate enough to survive are able to return to the capital and thence to their homes.

歸來見天子
天子坐明堂
策勛十二轉
賞賜百千強

The soldiers return to the capital and are requested to appear before the Son of Heaven. The troops are seen by the Son of Heaven in the Hall of Light, where orders of appointment and merit, in twelve ranks are presented. Plentiful rewards are also bestowed.

⁸⁰ *Jiu jiu* is another onomatopoetic device, this time describing the whinnying sound of distant horses.

⁸¹ *Li* is a unit of measurement equivalent to approximately one third of a mile.

可汗問所欲
木蘭不用尙書郎
愿借明駝千里足
送兒還故鄉

It is unlikely that Mulan, despite her rank in the army, would be asked by the Son of Heaven what position or reward she would like.⁸² Instead, I think that these two lines should be read together, in that Mulan explains that she does not desire the post of a high official, and, because of this, when asked what she does desire, she requests a sturdy camel that will be able to swiftly carry her back to her home; with the understanding by the audience that she will also be returning to her female identity.

爺娘聞女來
出郭相扶將
阿姊聞妹來
當戶理紅妝
小弟聞姊來
磨刀霍霍⁸³向豬羊

Word reaches Mulan's family that she is on her way. Her parents go to the city's outer gate to greet her. Here, they are supporting each other, which can either be interpreted to mean that they were weak with anticipation of being reunited with their daughter, or, after twelve years, that they are simple elderly and require support in walking. When Mulan's elder sister hears of her younger sister's return, she applies makeup, such that she will be presentable. When Mulan's younger brother hears of his sister's return, he sharpens his knife to slaughter a pig and goat, with the idea that a feast shall occur in Mulan's honor.

開我東閣門
坐我西閣床
脫我戰時袍

⁸² It should be noted that no evidence is provided that the Son of Heaven is aware of Mulan's true identity. The inclusion of a gender specific pronoun only appears in the English translation for the sake of clarity.

⁸³ *Huo huó* here is another onomatopoeic device alluding to the sound of the knife being sharpened.

著我舊時裳
當窗理云鬢
對鏡貼花黃

Unlike the beginning of the poem, where Mulan's dressing up as a man is not mentioned, her return to her female identity is described in detail. Mulan, talking to the audience, first returns to her parents' home, goes into her chamber and sits on her bed, presumably happy to be home. She then takes off her battle armor and puts on her former attire. She prepares her hair and makeup, and has now fully returned to her female identity.

Interestingly, it is only after Mulan has returned home from battle that she speaks to the audience using the first person pronoun 'I' 我.

出門看火伴
火伴皆驚惶
同行十二年
不知木蘭是女郎

Upon returning to her former self, Mulan leaves her chamber to see her comrades. They are shocked and amazed that their comrade, beside whom they fought for twelve years, is actually a woman.

雄兔腳撲朔
雌兔眼迷離
兩兔傍地走
安能辨我是雄雌

These last four lines can either be interpreted as the narrator speaking to the audience to explain how it is that Mulan could fight alongside these men for twelve years without their knowing her true identity, or it could be Mulan's own explanation to her comrades. I believe that, as the first person singular pronoun 我 is used in the last line, most likely this is Mulan talking to her comrades. As they are amazed at her true identity, she compares the situation to that of the male and female hare. The male and female hare behave differently in daily practice, displaying practices that allow one to discern the

male from female. However, should the two run side by side, to an observer their appearances are the same, and therefore their gender is not easily ascertained.

Breakdown of Version One—*The Mulan Poem*⁸⁴

The poem contains 62 lines which can be broken down as follows:

A. Mulan at home—20 lines

A1. Introduction—8 lines

- a. Weaving
- b. Sighing
- c. Ponders something

A2. Conscription—8 lines

- a. Father conscripted
- b. No elder son
- c. Mulan decides to take her father's place

A3. Mulan prepares to go—4 lines

- a. Mulan buys: horse, saddle, blanket, bridle, and whip

B. Mulan takes her father's place—22 lines

B1. Mulan travels to join the army—8 lines

- a. At the Yellow River
- b. On Black Mountain

B2. Battle—6 lines

- a. Brief description of the battles
- b. Soldiers fighting, generals dying

⁸⁴ See Chart I for a breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of the poem.

B3. Sees the Son of Heaven—8 lines

a. Honors awarded

b. Mulan only wants to return home

C. Mulan returns home—20 lines

C1. Mulan's family hears of her return—6 lines

a. Mother and father wait for her at village gate

b. Elder sister applies rouge

c. Younger brother prepares to goat and pig

C2. Mulan returns to her former identity—6 lines

a. Mulan changes her clothes

b. Mulan arranges her hair

c. Mulan applies makeup

C3. Sees comrade—8

a. Comrades see Mulan

b. They are shocked after ten years

c. Comparison to rabbits

Special attention should be paid to the number of lines dedicated to the individual sub-motifs (indicated on Chart 1). From this, one can deduce the events which were meant to be the emphasized in the poem. The poem is very evenly divided between sub-motifs A1-C3. With this as our model, we can see that more emphasis is placed on the introduction to Mulan as a woman, Mulan's decision to take her father's place, Mulan's travels, Mulan seeing the Son of Heaven, and Mulan seeing her comrades once she has returned to her female identity. However, the variations in emphasis are minimal at most. In

general, it appears that the poem is almost symmetrical in the division of episodes, in which Mulan as a woman receives the most attention at the beginning and then at the end. Although the battles are described in the exact middle of the poem, and can, therefore be viewed as the pivot point of the poem, this is not the location of the weight of the poem.

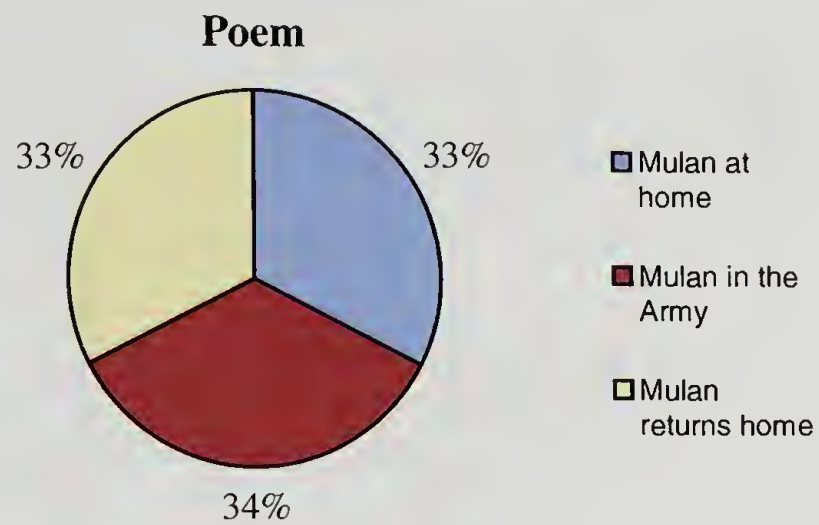
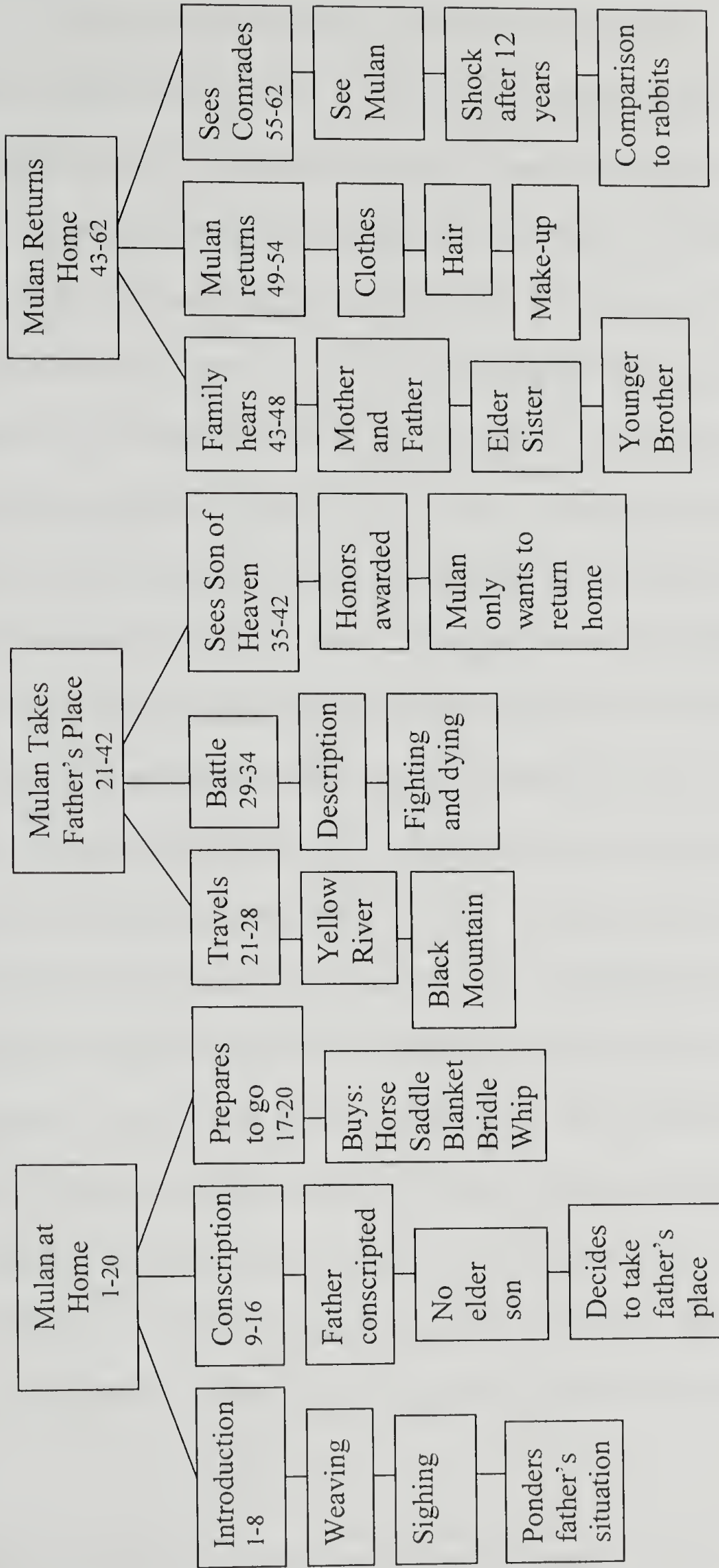


Chart 1
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of the *Mulan Poem*⁸⁵



⁸⁵ The numbers included are the lines of the *Mulan shi* that correspond to the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Version Two: *Hua Mulan*, by Chen Qiufan, Taipei, 1965

The second version of the Mulan tale is *Hua Mulan* 花木蘭 by Chen Qiufan, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1965*.⁸⁶ The story begins with the narrator's voice informing the audience that the barbarian armies have entered China's territory. We then meet Mulan, who is sitting at her loom weaving. She appears to be quiet content in her work. When she hears people's voices outside the wall of the family compound, she goes to the main gate to welcome Field Marshal He into the Hua homestead. Field Marshal He immediately asks to speak with Hua Hu, Mulan's father. Mulan says that her father is weak and ill, and that it would be best for Field Marshal He to see him in his chamber. Field Marshal He hesitatingly agrees. After exchanging pleasantries, Field Marshal He informs Hua Hu of the barbarian attack, and that under orders from the Emperor, he is conscripting a great army, and every household must contribute one man. Mulan, who is in the room serving tea, overhears this, and is immediately worried, although she does not interrupt the conversation. Field Marshal He is almost apologetic, but the reader becomes aware that there is nothing he can do; Hua Hu is presented with his conscription notice. Mulan knows that, should her father enlist, he will surely not return home alive. With great anxiety, Mulan goes to the market and buys a horse and the necessary gear. She then puts on her father's battle robes, and, with her elder sister's help, tailors them to fit her. At this time, Hua Ming, Mulan's cousin enters the Hua homestead looking for Mulan, and is shocked to find this young man in Mulan's chamber, until he realizes that it is Mulan. Mulan, who is elated that Hua Ming, her own cousin, did not recognize her at

⁸⁶ Although Mulan will be referred to as 'she' throughout this summary, she is only known to be a girl to her cousin Hua Ming.

first, decides that she will effectively be able to disguise herself as a man and take her father's place in the army.

When Mulan re-enters her father's chamber, Field Marshal He is still present; the two men had been talking about the situation at hand. Upon seeing the young "man" enter the room, Field Marshal He asks why Hua Hu's son could not take his place in the army. Hua Hu, with confusion, reminds Field Marshal He that his son is only five years old. Field Marshal He, now confused because he is looking at Mulan, laughs, thinking that Hua Hu is kidding. It is only then that Hua Hu realizes that the young man who entered the room had not accompanied Field Marshal He, and is, in fact, his daughter wearing his battle robes. Field Marshal He says to Mulan that 'he' should truly consider taking his father's place; that he personally would look after Hua Hu's son to ensure his safety.

Once Field Marshal He departs, Mulan, with the assistance of Hua Ming, convinces Hua Hu to permit her to take his conscription notice and join the army in his place. Hua Hu advises Mulan on how to behave while in the army, and says that, most importantly, she must always obey orders and never consume alcohol. The next morning, Mrs. Hua gives Mulan the food she prepared for the journey, and once Hua Ming arrives, Mulan and Hua Ming depart, with tears shed by those leaving as well as those staying behind. On the road to Dongguan, where Field Marshal He requested all conscripted men to report, Mulan becomes uneasy because there are so many young men; she has realized that she does not know how to be a young man. Hua Ming tells her to act natural. That afternoon, while stopping at a roadside stand for some food, Mulan takes out the food that her mother prepared for them, and from the adjoining table hears the laughter of young men. Mulan realizes that these young men are laughing at her food, and calling

her and Hua Ming simple country bumpkins for bringing their own food. The shopkeeper, upon seeing Mulan's frustration tells Mulan not to mind those four young men, as they are military scoundrels—men who offer to take the place of wealthy people's conscripted sons, and then desert the army as soon as they can. Mulan thinks this type of behavior to be very dishonorable.

That evening, Mulan and Hua Ming find a room at an inn along the road to Dongguan. Due to the conscription, the inn is almost full, and Mulan and Hua Ming get the last room. The innkeeper, not realizing that Mulan is a girl, think that the two young men will stay in the same room, but Hua Ming decides that he will sleep outside and give Mulan the room and the bed. Later that evening, Mulan is awakened by raucous noise outside and the sound of young men shouting. She goes to the window and sees the four military scoundrels, all drunk, asking the innkeeper for a room. When the innkeeper informs them that the inn is full, the scoundrels' leader, Chen Weihan, becomes very loud, shouting at the innkeeper that he needs to make room for them. Mulan, to avoid a scene, comes down, tells the innkeeper that she knows these men, and brings them up to her room. The four recognize Mulan from the restaurant that afternoon, and apologize for making fun of Mulan and Hua Ming, and offer to make it up to them by buying them drinks. Mulan refuses, but tells the four that they may have her room, and goes outside to sleep near Hua Ming.

The next morning, Mulan wakes Hua Ming very early and tells him they are leaving. Hua Ming wants to wait for the four young men, but Mulan is insistent that they hurry along so that they can arrive at Dongguan that afternoon. Once they arrive at the encampment at Dongguan, Mulan and Hua Ming immediately enlist. They are then told

to soon report to the main area in front of the general's tent. When the time comes, Mulan and Hua Ming anxiously arrive at the tent and are amazed by the number of brave and valiant young men present. Field Marshal He is seated on the platform, along with some other ranking military men. Mulan and Hua Ming notice one soldier who appears to be bigger than all the other men there. After a short time, silence is called for; Field Marshal He's squire announces that military assignments will be made after some martial skills practice and competitions. It is then that Mulan and Hua Ming realize that people are supposed to compete against the 'outstanding' soldier they noticed earlier.

Young men line up and volunteer to compete with this soldier; however none of them are able to beat him. This continues for a long time, until finally, Mulan gains enough courage to volunteer. After many rounds, Mulan, through a combination of her cleverness and martial skill,⁸⁷ is able to defeat the soldier, and is also victorious against 15 other men who challenge her, including Hua Ming. In the end, Mulan is exhausted and loses, however everyone is pleased with her performance. Field Marshal He himself comes to chat with Mulan, and tells her that she and Hua Ming have both been assigned to the mess tent. Mulan is highly disappointed with her position, as she thought that she should be in the front lines fighting the enemy. Hua Ming tries to encourage her by saying that Field Marshal He promised her father that he would look out for Mulan. Hua Ming also notes that the mess tent and provisions are both crucial parts of the army, and that they should be honored to have that position.

Mulan and Hua Ming arrive at the mess tent and realize that they will be busy. The tent is huge, and there are a number of young men who have already reported for duty. Mulan and Hua Ming are approached by a group of young men, led by Li Jun, who all

⁸⁷ This is the first time in the story that Mulan shows her martial skill.

saw Mulan's martial competition earlier that day, and all of them comment on how great they think Mulan is. Mulan offers to teach them all some of what she knows, and they all happily accept.

A few days later, Field Marshal He announces that the troops will be moving to Bao'an city. While on the road, the troops are ambushed by enemy troops. Mulan and Hua Ming, because they are traveling with the provisions, see what is happening. Mulan leads a number of men to the top of a hill, and begins to shoot arrows at the invading enemy troops from behind. Surprised by this ambush, the enemy troops scatter, and Mulan and Hua Ming are rewarded for their military skill and ability to rise to the challenge, and both are promoted.

Upon arrival in Bao'an city, Field Marshal He, who has been promoted to general, informs Mulan that she will be responsible for protecting Bao'an city. Mulan is very honored to be given this opportunity. General He reminds her that she is to always be careful, and never drink alcohol. That evening, Mulan and the others have a celebratory dinner, during which Li Jun and the others ask Mulan to drink with them. Mulan, feeling that she can not refuse, drinks a few cups, all the while Hua Ming is telling her not to. Shortly thereafter, Mulan asks Hua Ming to take her back to her tent. On the way there, Mulan and Hua Ming run into a young man from their village; he stops to speak with Hua Ming and asks who Mulan is. When she says her name, he is surprised, because he knows a girl from the Hua family with that name, but did not realize that the Hua family also has a son. Mulan, being drunk, laughs at this, but fortunately Hua Ming is there and explains that Mulan had been helping out at her maternal grandparent's house, and that is why the young man is not acquainted with 'him'.

The scene then changes to the ‘barbarian’ camp. Tuli Khan is formulating a plan to ensnare and defeat General He. The Khan’s plan is to attack He’s troops, and then fall back into a narrow valley. Once He’s troops are fully in the valley, Tuli Khan’s troops will ambush them from both behind and above while the “retreating” troops will turn around and attack from the front as well. In this way, Tuli Khan is certain that he will be able to defeat General He; and for the most part his plan works. General He attacks; Tuli Khan’s troops fell back; General He pursues; and they are ambushed. However, Mulan, upon learning that General He’s troops are pursuing the fleeing enemy troops after only a minor battle, is suspicious that General He is falling into a trap, and as such leads her troops to the valley. She finds General He in the midst of an ambush, and is able to fend off the barbarians and save General He.

Enraged that his plan failed, Tuli Khan and his troops retreat to Shuifang City. Tuli Khan’s advisors then provide him with another plan. They suggest that in the darkness of night they sneak into General He’s encampment, steal all of their provisions, and then attack the encampment. In the confusion, they are certain to be victorious. Tuli Khan agrees, and he and his troops set out that evening.

Back in General He’s encampment, Mulan is making her evening rounds. While checking on the outer perimeters, she notices some birds take flight into the night sky, which she thinks is strange. She immediately reports this to General He, who agrees with her judgment. He calls for all of the troops to get ready for battle. When Tuli Khan’s troops arrive for their “surprise” raid, they come face to face with Mulan leading her troops. Mulan and her troops attack the unsuspecting enemy troops, and are actually able to push them all the way back to Shuifang City, and then capture that city. Mulan is then

given command of the troops at Shuifang City. The next day, the enemy troops regroup, and attack Shuifang City. In the battle that ensues, Mulan is injured. She is taken back to General He's quarters, with Hua Ming following close behind.

General He tells Mulan that she has a serious shoulder wound, and she needs to take off her battle robe. Half dazed, Mulan hesitates; General He cannot understand why. Hua Ming steps in and says that she is in too much pain, and they should just cut off the sleeve of her robe rather than try to remove the entire garment. General He agrees. Once Mulan's wound has been treated and dressed, and she falls asleep, General He and Hua Ming return to the battle. When Mulan wakes up, she hears the battle raging outside. She tries to get up, but realizes that her injury is too severe; however she cannot bear to not be involved. As a result, Mulan climbs the watch tower, and with all her energy beats the battle drum, rallying the troops and giving them the necessary moral reinforcement for victory. Upon completion of the battle, General He, victorious, finds Mulan passed out at the base of the battle drum.

When Mulan awakes she is in a bed, and sees Li Jun and some other wounded soldiers she knows from Dongguan are there as well. They tell her that she was brought to Wulang Garrison to recover from her injury. While at Wulang Garrison, Mulan is put in charge of the administrative duties of the area. Once she, Li Jun, and the others have recuperated, Li Jun and the others are called to return to the front lines. Mulan is asked to remain in Wulang Garrison, however Hua Ming is sent to assist her. Through a series of events, Mulan learns that there are traitors in their midst, and learns that it is Chen Weihan, who has become a spy for Tuli Khan. Chen Weihan reveals that General He and his troops have been surrounded by the enemy troops, who plan to starve them into

submission. Chen Weihan is sent by Tuli Khan to Wulang Garrison to steal the provisions that are to be sent to save General He. Mulan tells Chen Weihan to return to Tuli Khan and tell him that the supplies are on their way; all the while, Mulan plans on laying a trap for the enemy. However, Chen Weihan double-crosses Mulan, and tells Tuli Khan that he has been found out, and as a result the enemy troops are able to capture the supplies.

Mulan, realizing that General He will soon be defeated if she does not arrive with supplies, concocts a plan. She will pretend to surrender to Tuli Khan, and then double-cross him, gain back the supplies, and save General He. Her efforts go according to plan, and even more so. Mulan is not only able to trick Tuli Khan into believing she has surrendered, she is then able to capture him and get him to tell his troops to surrender. The war is over; the enemy has been captured.

Once Mulan returns to Bao'an City, she is greeted by General He. General He informs Mulan that she is to accompany him with the rest of the troops, as their presence has been requested by the Emperor. General He also commends Mulan on her outstanding bravery and military skill. Mulan, thinking the general wants her to take his place, tells the general that he is still young and has many years left to fight. The general laughs, and tells Mulan that he wants her to marry his daughter. Mulan, aghast, does not know how to respond. She asks to be excused, and goes to find Hua Ming. Hua Ming, upon hearing of the proposal, suggests that Mulan inform General He that she should first return home to discuss the match with her parents, and therefore she would like to go home immediately, rather than stopping in the capital to see the Emperor. General He agrees, and also permits Hua Ming to accompany Mulan home.

On the road home, Mulan and Hua Ming are escorted part of the way by Li Jun and the other troops headed to the capital. Mulan and Li Jun have a lot to talk about. Mulan tells Li Jun of her younger sister (referring to herself) who has not married, and how she should like to introduce her to him. She tells Li Jun all about her. Li Jun is very interested, and agrees to visit the Hua homestead once they are finished in the capital.

Mulan and Hua Ming return home and are greeted by their very excited families. Mulan immediately returns to her chamber, takes off her father's battle robes, and puts on her feminine gown. Meanwhile, Li Jun and the other troops are rewarded by the Emperor, who notes Mulan's and Hua Ming's absence. Li Jun explains that Mulan is to be betrothed to General He's daughter. The Emperor is fully supportive, and sends money as a wedding gift.

When Li Jun and the others arrive at Mulan's hometown, they run into Hua Ming on the road who takes them to the Hua homestead. Mulan hears the voices of her comrades, and comes out into the courtyard and excitedly greets them. However, the troops wonder who this crazy, albeit beautiful, woman is; and they are shocked when she reveals herself to be their comrade Mulan. Hua Hu invites the men to sit down and explains the entire situation to them, and they all seem relieved, if not still shocked. Li Jun then asks Mulan about her 'little sister', and Mulan says that she has not yet married.

Breakdown of Version Two—*Mulan 1965*⁸⁸

Mulan 1965 is the first of the juvenile literature versions of the Mulan tale to be discussed in this paper. The tale contains 288 pages, 15 of which are pictures that

⁸⁸ See Chart II for the breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 1965*; and Chart IIa for a breakdown of Mulan's time in the army.

support the story, rather than add new information. The text does not include *zhuyin fuhao* as a pronunciation guide, which indicates that this version of the Mulan tale was intended for an upper middle school aged audience. *Mulan 1965* can be broken down as follows:

A. Mulan at home—51 pages

A1. Introduction—3 pages

- a. Barbarians army has attacked
- b. Mulan weaving
- c. Field Marshal He comes to Hua homestead

A2. Conscription—30 pages

- a. Field Marshal He conscripts great army
- b. Mulan's father conscripted
- c. Mulan disguises as man
- d. Hua Ming enters the story

A3. Mulan prepares to go—18 pages

- a. Mulan buys a fine horse and other needed gear
- b. No one recognizes Mulan
- c. Shedding tears, Mulan and Hua Ming bid farewell to parents

C. Mulan in the Army—213 pages

B1. Mulan travels to join the army—33 pages

- a. Mulan and Hua Ming encounter the military scoundrels
- b. Military scoundrels are drunk and disorderly
- c. Mulan and Hua Ming leave early, travel alone, and arrive at Dongguan

B2. Battle—175 pages

- a. Mulan and Hua Ming enlist
- b. First position in army
- c. First battle
- d. At Bao'an City
- e. Tuli Khan's plan
- f. Tuli Khan's second plan
- g. Mulan wounded
- h. Mulan recovers
- i. General He under siege
- j. Mulan wins the war

B3. "Honors awarded"—5 pages

- a. General He offers Mulan an imperial position
- b. General He offers Mulan his daughter as a wife
- c. Mulan requests to return home to discuss this with her parents

D. Mulan returns home—16 pages

C1. Mulan escorted part way home—9 pages

- a. Li Jun plans a send off for Mulan
- b. Li Jun escorts Mulan part way home
- c. Li Jun, et al., seen by Emperor, Emperor gives rewards and his blessing to
Mulan

C2. Mulan returns—3 pages

- a. Mulan returns home

b. Returns to female identity

C3. Sees comrade—4 pages

a. Comrades arrive

b. Mulan happily greets confused comrades

c. The truth is learned by all

d. Slight flirtations between Mulan and Li Jun

Within this version, it is very clear that Mulan's time in the army (sub-motif B2, with 174 pages) is the focus of the story. Interestingly, the ten main episodes outlined in Chart IIa are of almost equal length. The second longest section, with 33 pages, is that of sub-motif B1, during which Mulan and Hua Ming travel to Dongguan. Unlike the poem, both "the conscription" and "Mulan preparing to go" receive some attention, with 30 pages and 18 pages respectively.

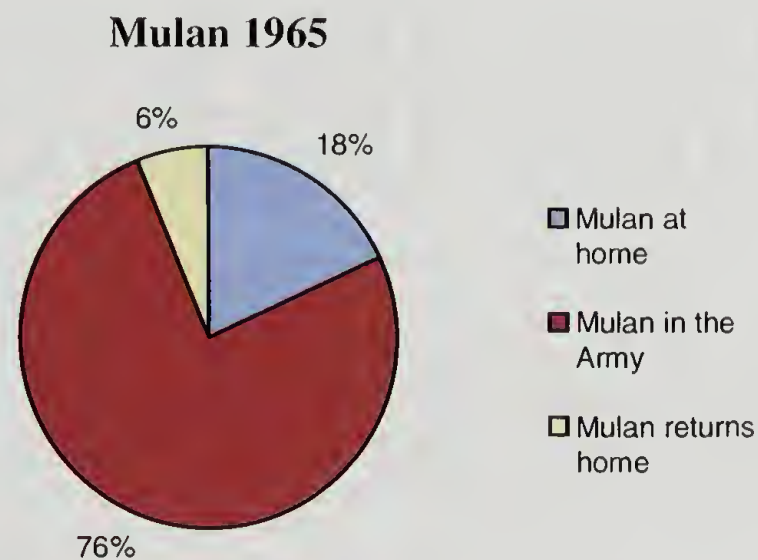
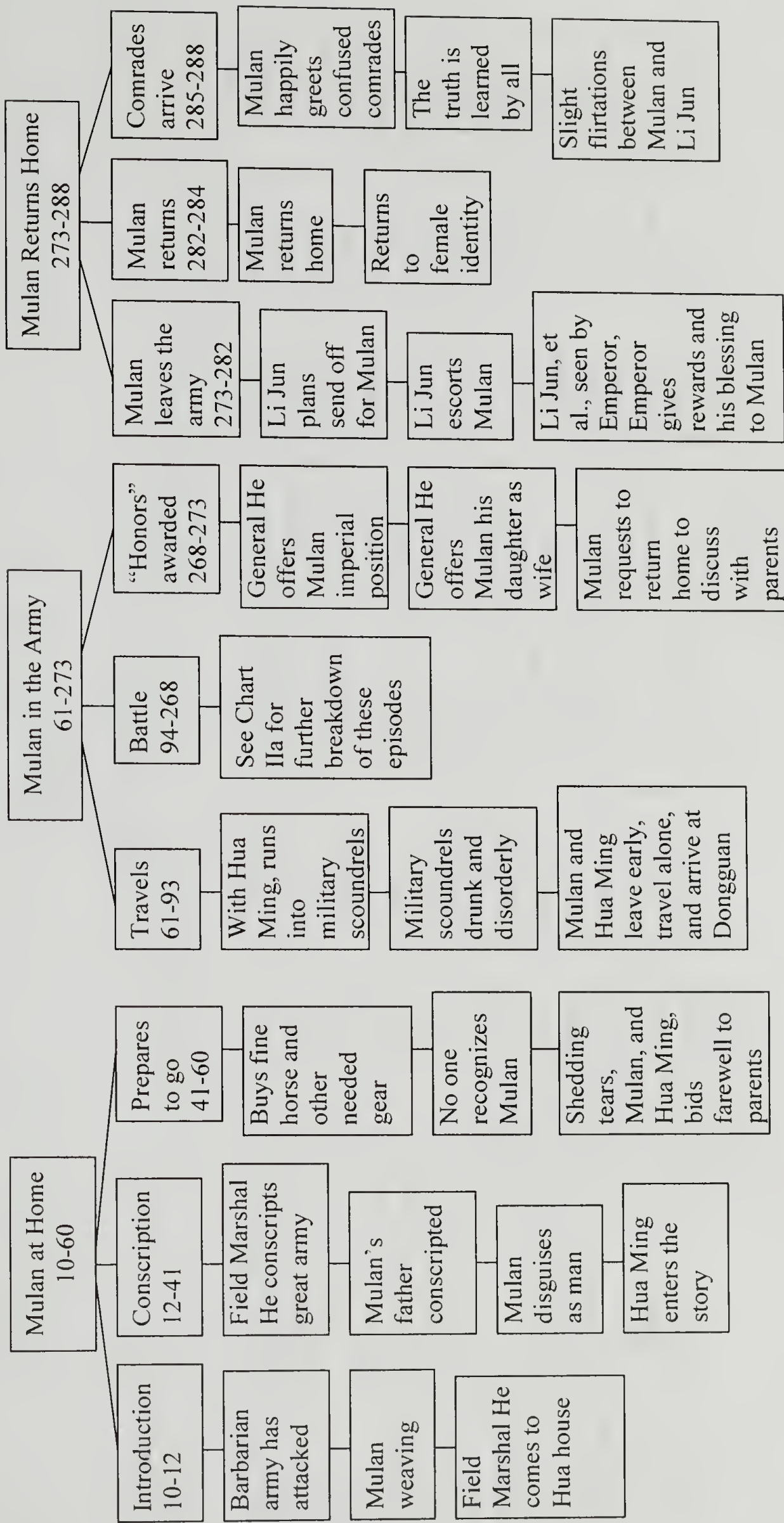
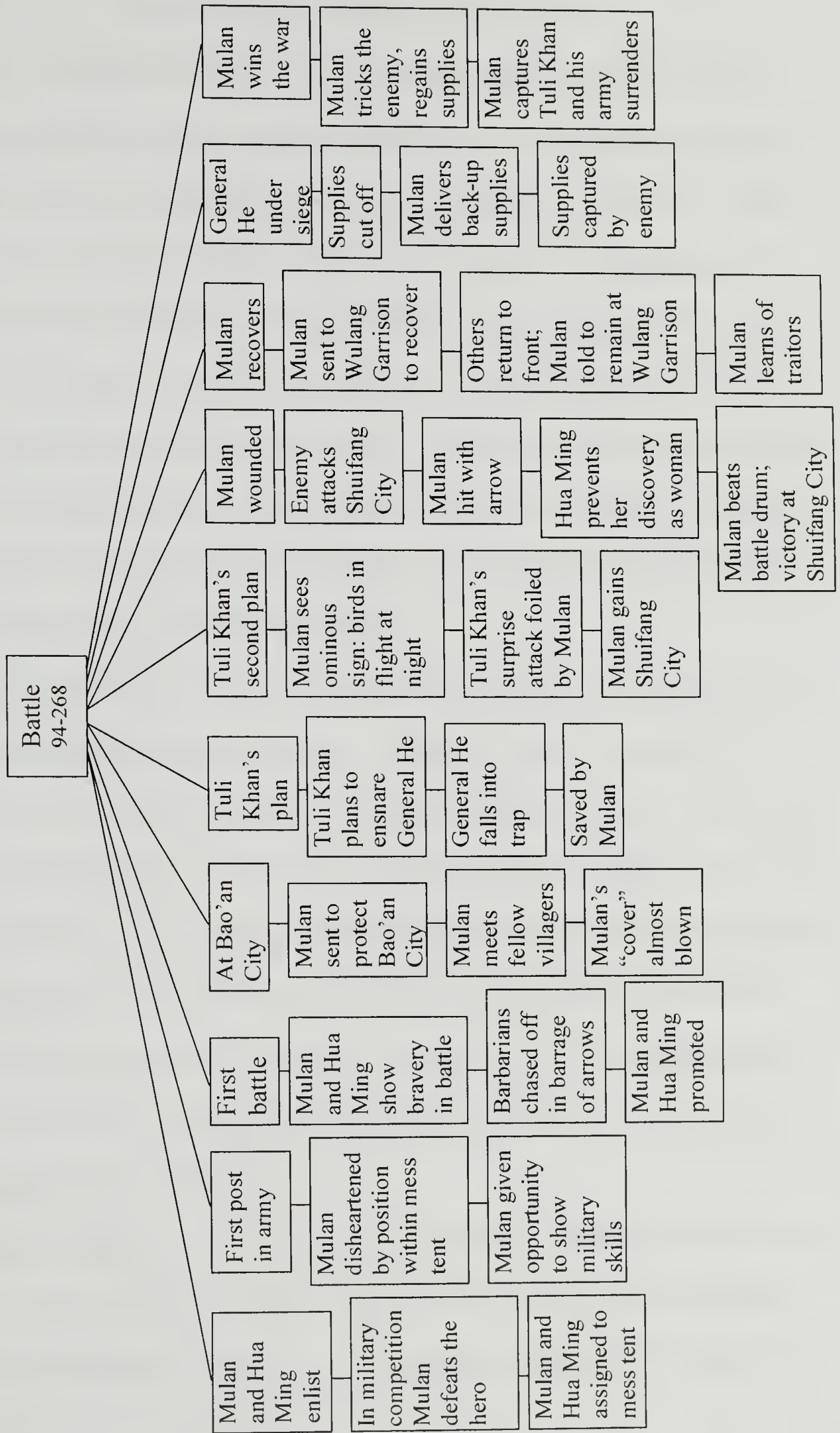


Chart 2
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1965*⁸⁹



⁸⁹ The numbers included are the pages of *Mulan 1965* that corresponded with the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Chart 2a
The Battle Episodes breakdown of *Mulan 1965*



Version Three: *Hua Mulan*, Tainan, 1988

The third version of the Mulan tale is *Hua Mulan* 花木兰, Tainan, 1988, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1988*. *Mulan 1988* begins with ten-year-old Mulan playing loudly, and being scolded by her mother for not behaving appropriately for a little girl. Mulan hears horses approaching, and realizes that it is her father returning home from war. Mulan excitedly goes out to greet her father; only then do both Mulan and her mother realize that although Hua Hu has returned from the war, he has a serious respiratory illness. Despite this, once he has settled back into his life at home, Hua Hu continues to practice his martial skills; he is concerned that the enemy was not defeated. Mulan, and her cousin Hua Ming, both watch Hua Hu practice, and eventually convince Hua Hu to teach both of them how to practice martial skills.

Six years later, Mulan, now age 16, is already skilled in martial arts, and even Hua Hu notes that her skills exceed Hua Ming's. At this time, Zhao Tong, assistant to General He arrives to speak with Hua Hu. As Hua Hu is not at home; he is meeting with the local military leader, Zhu Quan. Zhao Tong tells Mrs. Hua and Mulan that the Turkic army has invaded the frontier villages, broken through the defenses, and are fighting their way to the capital. The women learn that Hua Hu is to be conscripted, which greatly concerns the Hua family, as they all know that Hua Hu is too weak to even eat, much less go back to war. Zhao Tong then leaves to seek out Hua Hu, however Hua Hu returns home, having not met up with Zhao Tong.

Mulan goes to the sewing area, and laments her gender; she then asks her sister if she thinks that Mulan could take Hua Hu's place in war. Her sister laughs, reminding her that the battlefield is not a woman's place. Consequently, Mulan decides to dress up as a

man to see if anyone recognizes her. She puts on her father's military clothes, which, with the assistance of a sash, fit perfectly. Just then Zhao Tong returned to the Hua homestead looking for Mulan's father. Mulan answers the door, and realizes that Zhao Tong does not recognize her. Zhao Tong follows the "young man" into Hua Hu's chamber, where he realizes just how sick Hua Hu is. As a result, Zhao Tong recommends that Hua Hu permit his son to take his place in battle. Hua Hu laughs, saying that his son is too young; both men are confused, because Hua Hu is thinking of his three-year-old son, and Zhao Tong is thinking of the "young man" who greeted him at the door. Mulan then escorts Zhao Tong out, who encourages "Hua Hu's son" to consider taking "his" father's place in the army. Mulan states that she will.

Mulan then returns to her father's chamber, where he suddenly realizes that the young man in the room was not a new soldier escorting Zhao Tong, but was his own daughter. Mulan, with the assistance of her mother and Hua Ming, convinces Hua Hu to permit Mulan to take his place in the army. The next day, Mulan and Hua Ming go to Zhu Quan's office to enlist. Mulan presents Zhu Quan with a letter from her father explaining the entire situation. Zhu Quan, realizing that Mulan is Hua Hu's daughter, says that he understands the situation, and promises Mulan that he will look after her. After that, Mulan and Hua Ming go out to buy the necessary military gear, including horses, saddles, good shoes, leather helmets, and a wide-brimmed hat. When Mulan and Hua Ming return, the entire Hua family is greatly relieved, as Mulan truly looks like a brave young soldier.

That evening, the Hua family prays to their ancestors, and then sits down for one last meal together. Hua Ming and his mother join them⁹⁰ and they all enjoy themselves greatly. The next day, very early, Mulan and Hua Ming are ready to depart for Dongguan.

⁹⁰ Hua Ming's father, Hua Hu's brother, died in the previous battle.

Mrs. Hua has packed a lot of food for Mulan and Hua Ming to take on the road with them. Mulan tearfully bids farewell to her parents and siblings, realizing that she may never see them again. As they are parting, Hua Hu reminds Mulan that she must be diligent in all things, follow all orders, and never drink alcohol.

After traveling for a while, Mulan notes that the road is full of young soldiers, all of whom appear to be heading to Dongguan. Hua Ming wants to meet some, but Mulan says that she does not know how to act, so they remain distant from the others. They stop at a small roadside restaurant to eat lunch. Mulan and Hua Ming order food, and intend to supplement it with the food prepared by Mrs. Hua. At that time, at the next table are four young men who notice Mulan and Hua Ming. The four call them “country bumpkins” for bringing their own food. Mulan and Hua Ming are both angered by the comments of these young men; however the shopkeeper advises them not to do anything. He says these four men, led by Chen Weihang, are “military scoundrels.” They take the place of rich men’s sons, and then desert the army after they have enlisted.

Mulan and Hua Ming get back on the road to Dongguan. However, they ride too fast and catch up with the four scoundrels, who apologize for their earlier behavior and say they want to befriend Mulan and Hua Ming. Hua Ming is happy to chat, but Mulan is dubious. That evening they arrive at a small town, and Mulan and Hua Ming set out to find a place to stay while the four scoundrels go to drink. Mulan and Hua Ming arrange to stay in the last room available at the local inn; the room had two beds, but Hua Ming says he would rather sleep outside.

Later that evening, Mulan hears a racket outside, and recognizes the voices of the scoundrels arguing with the innkeeper. The scoundrels want a place to stay, but the

innkeeper says there is no room. Mulan immediately comes down, and offers them her room so as to avoid a scene. Mulan then goes to find Hua Ming. The scoundrels come back down, and ask Mulan and Hua Ming to drink a few rounds with them. Mulan and Hua Ming give them face, oblige a few rounds, and then go to sleep.

The next morning, Mulan wants to be on the road early so as to arrive at Dongguan soon, which they do. Upon arriving at Dongguan, Mulan and Hua Ming find a place to stay, and then report for duty. They are told to report for duty at General He's tent first thing the following morning. The following morning, Mulan and Hua Ming report for duty, and are amazed at all the brave young men who are there. Everyone is ordered to the military practice grounds, which is a very lively scene with lots of pomp and circumstance. General He announces that the military competitions are to begin. A very powerful looking young man steps forward, and many come forward to challenge him, however all, including the four scoundrels, are defeated. Then Hua Ming challenges the young man. Hua Ming and the young man go 60 rounds without a winner. General He is pleased, and tells Hua Ming to take a rest, as he has shown his skill. Mulan then steps forward, and after 20 rounds defeats the young man. Mulan then defeats 30 more young men, after which General He decides that is enough, and calls both Mulan and Hua Ming before him. He says he is pleased with their performances, and assigns both of them to the provisions and mess battalion. Mulan and Hua Ming set off for their new post; however Mulan is frustrated that she will not be in a fighting position. Hua Ming encourages her, stating that they are still essential to the army.

At the provisions tent, Mulan and Hua Ming meet Li Jun and the other young men stationed there. Mulan is immediately impressed with Li Jun and the others, and realizes

that they are nothing like the military scoundrels, which she finds encouraging. That evening the young men all share a meal and drinks together. At first Mulan will not drink, but after a while she is pressured into drinking and gets drunk, much to Hua Ming's displeasure, because not only did Hua Hu warn her about drinking, but she is supposed to be on guard duty that evening. However, Li Jun says that he will take her patrol. Hua Ming escorts the drunken Mulan back to her tent. She sleeps for a while, and then wakes up because she hears something, and leaves her tent to go on patrol. While out, she runs into Li Jun and Zhu Quan. Li Jun goes to bed and Zhu Quan comments on what a skilled and convincing young soldier Mulan has become.

The next day, General He orders the troops to move out. Mulan and the rest of the provisions battalion are to go to Nan Ping Mountain. However, on the road there, Mulan and the others encounter the troops already engaged in battle, and they are losing. Mulan leads the provisions battalion into battle, taking the Turks by surprise and causing them to flee. Mulan and the others are consequently promoted. Mulan is assigned to "desk duty" by Zhu Quan for disobeying orders when she engaged the enemy, although he is very pleased with the results. Hua Ming is concerned about their promotions, as they are assigned to Zhu Quan's division, which is largely comprised of young men from their native area. After a few days of office work, Mulan and Hua Ming go for a walk, and see a group of young men practicing archery. Hua Ming decides to teach them something; the young men bet that Hua Ming cannot shoot three arrows into the bull's-eye. Hua Ming tries, and gets two out of three; Mulan steps forward and gets all three, only then realizing that these men may recognize her. When asked, Mulan tells the young men that

she is Hua Hu's eldest son, but that from a very young age she lived with her paternal grandparents. The troops believe this, and both Mulan and Hua Ming are relieved.

Mulan then encounters Zhu Quan and asks why they are not engaging the enemy. Zhu Quan says that the Turks are currently not attacking them and that although General He knows they are planning something, he does not know what, and he does not want to make his strategy known to the enemy. Mulan suggests that they implement the "make noise to the east and attack from the west tactic" which Zhu Quan praises, and General He accepts. As a result, Zhu Quan gives Mulan 1,200 troops to lead into battle. General He gives all the leaders their orders; Mulan is to follow Zhu Quan to Bao'an City, where they are to engage the enemy troops. However, when Mulan and Zhu Quan arrive at Bao'an City, there are no enemy troops to be found, which means that the Turks not only knew their plans ahead of time, but also indicates that General He is falling into a trap. Mulan is sent out to warn him, and reaches him just in time. Tuli Khan, the Turk ruler, is just attacking General He. Mulan shoots an arrow and hits Tuli Khan in the center of his helmet, knocking him off his horse. Tuli Khan is still able to escape, but General He is safe. During the battle, Li Jun and a number of other men, including Zhao Tong, are injured and sent to Wulang Garrison to recuperate.

Mulan is also stationed at Wulang Garrison, and takes all the opportunities she can to visit the injured troops. The troops have made a local shop/inn into the infirmary; the innkeeper's sister, A Zhen, is helping to look after the injured troops. During one of Mulan's visits, Li Jun mentions that he really misses the dumplings from home. As a result, Mulan asks to be shown the kitchen, where she instructs the kitchen staff how to make dumplings like they do in her village. A Zhen enters the kitchen and is first

surprised to find a soldier, and second is shocked to learn that this soldier can make dumplings “like the women do.” During Mulan’s frequent visits, A Zhen becomes quite taken with Mulan, and the wounded troops joke with Mulan about ‘his’ new friend.

One night, after leaving the infirmary, Mulan decides to ride around the perimeter to ensure that they are secure. While out, she sees a flock of birds in flight, which she finds odd, as birds generally do not fly at night unless disturbed. Mulan immediately reports this to General He, indicating that the enemy troops must be planning a surprise attack. General He agrees, and orders the troops to prepare for battle. The battle ensues, during which Mulan and Hua Ming chase the enemy to Shuifang City. They attempt to enter the city, however they are showered with arrows. Mulan tells the troops to fell evergreen branches from the forest to use as shields. Mulan and Hua Ming are then able to enter the city, however Mulan notices one of the Turkic leaders fleeing, and she chases him. Mulan momentarily loses sight of him; when she sees him again she charges, but it was a trap. Mulan is in the midst of a shower of arrows, one of which hits her in the shoulder.

Mulan is taken back to Shuifang City where she is told by Hua Ming that she should not go back to the battle field. One of the troops suggests that Mulan beat the battle drum to encourage the troops, which she does. Mulan beats the drum with all of her energy. After defeating the enemy troops who tried to attack Wulang Garrison, General He and his troops arrive at Shuifang City. Upon hearing the arrival of the General, the enemy troops flee. General He arrives and tells the soldier beating the drum that the battle is over; then he realizes that it is Mulan. General He ascends the drum tower to find Mulan collapsed at the base of the drum, dripping blood. General He takes Mulan to the medic tent, where he requests that she take off her battle robes. Fortunately Hua Ming was

close behind, and suggests that they only cut off her sleeve. Mulan, much to her dismay, is sent back to Wulang Garrison to recuperate. Li Jun and the others are still there, and Mulan is well taken care of by A Zhen.

Three months later, Mulan's wound is much better. Orders come from General He that Li Jun is to return to the front lines, Zhao Tong is to be acting Governor of Wulang Garrison, and Mulan is to remain there as his assistant. Mulan is greatly disappointed that she was not assigned a post on the front lines. However, Mulan soon realizes that her new position will keep her amply busy, as she is in charge of collecting provisions in Wulang Garrison as well as managing all civil affairs there.

Meanwhile, the Turks devise a scheme to trick General He. Tuli Khan sends a fake surrender letter; but General He does not believe it. He accepts the surrender, but sends a letter to the Emperor telling him of this event and his mistrust of it, and requests that the capital send more provisions and troops for the battle that will mostly likely ensue. Tuli Khan and his men then mount up to attack General He; but on the road they see many sentinels, and Tuli Khan realizes that General He did not believe his surrender, and flees. General He pursues the enemy troops past the frontier towns and into Turkic territory.

Back at Wulang Garrison, the citizens are becoming very fond of the kind and benevolent Mulan, who is able to assist in the matters of both men and women. All remark that her upbringing must have been unique for her to understand such a wide variety of affairs. Li Jun arrives from the frontlines to inform Mulan and Zhao Tong that General He's troops are deep in enemy territory, and are running out of provisions. Mulan, through her good relations with the citizens of Wulang Garrison, is able to gather provisions without the requested Imperial support in just ten days. It is decided that the

provisions should be split between a group of carts and camels, such that the enemy troops will not be able to steal them all. Li Jun will lead the carts and Mulan with Hua Ming will lead the camels.

That evening, while they are having dinner together, A Zhen's presence is missed. A Zhen says she was talking with a friend of Mulan's, Chen Weihang, who was asking a lot of questions about the provisions. Mulan realizes that the military scoundrels have become spies for the enemy and tells Hua Ming and Li Jun that they must be extra careful on the road. They set out early the next morning, and travel all day without incident. However, that evening, the enemy troops, led by Tuli Khan attack, trying to steal the provisions. Tuli Khan knows that if he can steal the provisions and defeat this small army, he will starve out General He's troops and defeat all the forces. Tuli Khan is successful in stealing the camels, however Mulan is able to regain them.

The next day, Tuli Khan attacks again, but this time Mulan is ready. She tricks the enemy into thinking that she has been wounded and has fallen off her horse, then she attacks and defeats Tuli Khan, and the enemy troops surrender. General He receives word that the war is over, and all troops are ordered back to Bao'an City. General He informs Mulan that she is to accompany him with the rest of the troops, as their presence has been requested by the Emperor. General He also commends Mulan on her outstanding bravery and military skill. Mulan, thinking that the general wants her to take his place, tells the general that he is still young and has many years left to fight. The general laughs, and tells Mulan that he wants her to marry his daughter. Mulan, aghast, does not know how to respond. She asks to be excused, and goes to find Hua Ming. Hua Ming, upon hearing of the proposal, suggests that Mulan inform General He that she

should return home to discuss the matter with her parents first; as such, she would like to go home immediately, rather than accompanying the troops to the capital. General He agrees, and permits Hua Ming to accompany Mulan home.

On the road home, Mulan and Hua Ming are escorted part of the way by Li Jun and the other troops headed to the capital. Mulan and Li Jun have a lot to talk about. Mulan tells Li Jun of her younger sister (referring to herself) who has not married, and how she should like to introduce her to him. She tells Li Jun all about the younger sister; Li Jun is very interested, and agrees to visit the Hua homestead once the troops are finished in the capital. Mulan and Hua Ming return home. At the capital, Li Jun and the other troops are rewarded by the Emperor, who notes Mulan and Hua Ming's absence. Li Jun explains that Mulan is to be betrothed to General He's daughter. The Emperor is fully supportive, and sends money as a wedding gift.

When Li Jun and the others arrive in Mulan's hometown, they run into Hua Ming on the road who takes them to the Hua homestead. Mulan hears the voices of her comrades, and, wearing her female attire, comes out into the courtyard and excitedly greets them. Much to her dismay, the troops wonder who this beautiful woman is; and they are shocked when she reveals herself to be their comrade Mulan. Hua Hu invites the men to sit down, and explains the entire situation to them, and they all seem relieved, if not still shocked. Li Jun then asks Mulan about her 'little sister' and Mulan says that she has not yet married.

Breakdown of Version Three: *Mulan 1988*⁹¹

Mulan 1988 is the second juvenile literature version to be discussed. *Mulan 1988* comprises 180 pages, 30 of which are pictures. The pictures within this version complement the included text, rather than adding additional information. The language of this version would be appropriate for an early middle school student, as the language is slightly complex; however sidelined *zhuyin fuhao* is utilized to assist the intended audience. *Mulan 1988* can be broken down as follows.

A. *Mulan at home*—20 pages

A1. Introduction—4 pages

- a. 10 year old *Mulan*
- b. 16 year old *Mulan*

A2. Conscription—6 pages

- a. *Zhao Tong* to *Hua* homestead
- b. *Tuli Khan* attacked frontier
- c. *Hua Hu* conscripted
- d. *Mulan* disguises as man

A3. *Mulan* prepares to go—10 pages

- a. *Mulan* and *Hua Ming* convince *Hua Hu*
- b. *Mulan* and *Hua Ming* enlist
- e. Buys necessities
- d. Shedding tears, *Mulan*, with *Hua Ming*, bids farewell to parents

B. *Mulan in the Army*—156 pages

⁹¹ See Chart III for the breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 1988*; and Chart IIIa for a breakdown of *Mulan's* time in the army.

B1. Mulan travels to join the army—12 pages

- a. With Hua Ming, Mulan runs into the military scoundrels
- b. Military scoundrels drunk and disorderly
- e. Mulan and Hua Ming leave early, travel alone, and arrive at Dongguan

B2. Battle—141 pages

- a. At Dongguan
- b. First post in the army
- c. Mulan promoted
- d. Mulan saves General He
- e. Surprise attack
- f. Mulan fights the enemy
- g. Mulan at Wulang Garrison
- h. Tuli Khan's plan
- i. Mulan receives new post
- j. Provisions cut off
- k. Mulan wins the war

B3. "Honors awarded"—3 pages

- a. Mulan offered imperial position
- b. General He offers Mulan his daughter as a wife
- e. Mulan requests to return home to discuss this with her parents

C. Mulan returns home—4 pages

C1. Mulan escorted part way home—1 page

- a. Li Jun rides with Mulan

- b. Li Jun promises to meet Mulan's sister

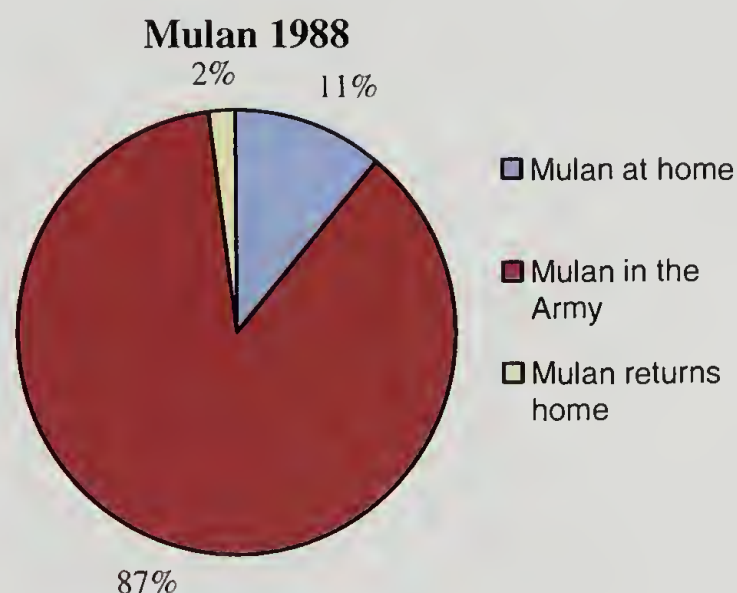
C2. Mulan returns—½ page

- a. Mulan returns home and returns to female identity
- b. Awards and rewards from Emperor to Li Jun et al.
- c. Emperor sends gifts to Mulan

C3. Sees comrade—2½ pages

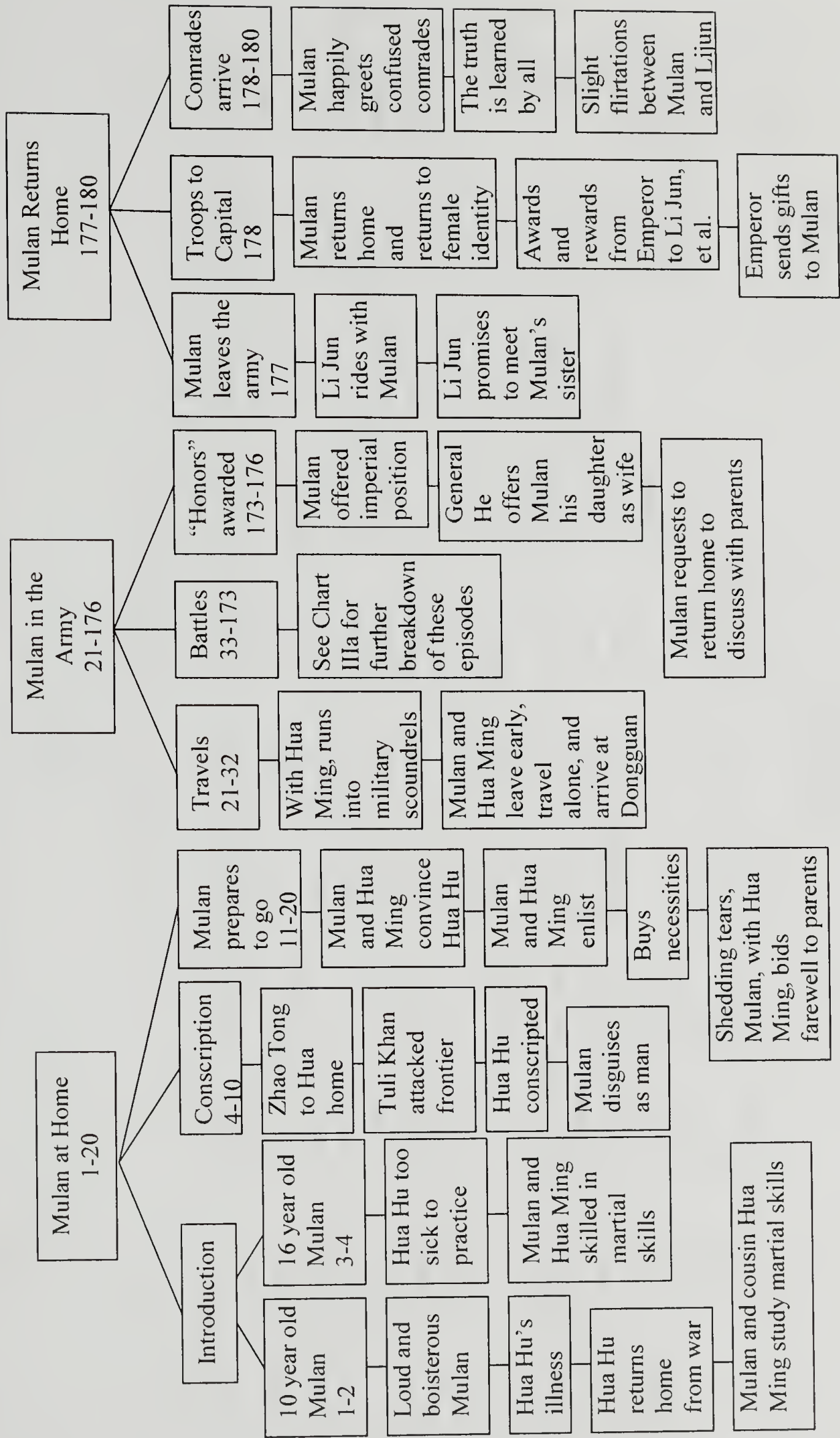
- a. Mulan happily greets confused comrades
- b. The truth is learned by all
- c. Slight flirtations between Mulan and Li Jun

Within this version, Mulan's time in the army receives the most attention, by far, with 140 pages. Within this sub-motif, the eleven episodes noted in Chart IIIa each receive approximately equal attention, with 11-12 pages each.⁹² The general introduction is given some importance with 20 pages for that motif, with sub-motif A3 receiving the most weight at 10 pages. However, only four pages conclude the story in motif C.



⁹² The breakdown of these episodes was based upon the title of the chapters.

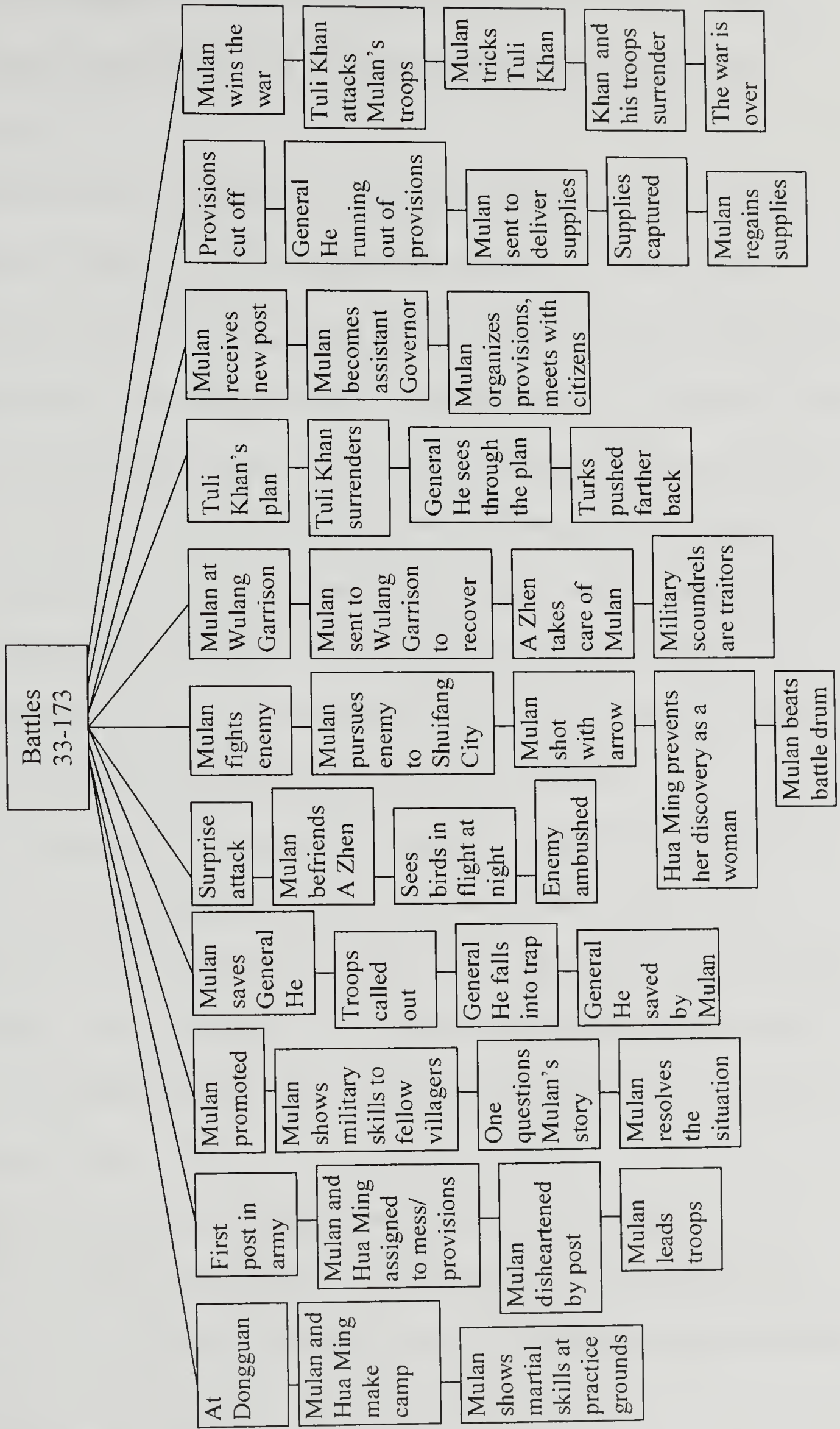
Chart 3
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1988*⁹³



⁹³ The numbers included are the pages of *Mulan 1988* that corresponded with the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Chart 3a

The Battle Episodes breakdown of *Mulan* 1988



Version Four: *Hua Mulan de Gushi—Zhongguo Gudai Nüyingxiong* 花木兰的故事—中国古代女英雄 *The Legend of Mu Lan—A Heroine of Ancient China*, by Jiang Wei, California, 1992

The fourth version of the Mulan tale is *Hua Mulan de Gushi—Zhongguo Gudai Nüyingxiong* 花木兰的故事—中国古代女英雄 *The Legend of Mu Lan—A Heroine of Ancient China*,⁹⁴ by Jiang Wei, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1992*. *Mulan 1992* begins with an introduction to the young girl Mulan. The narrator informs the readers that, from an early age, Mulan's father taught her various forms of martial arts, and she excelled in all of them. One day, a messenger comes to the Hua homestead with a conscription notice for General Hua. That evening, Mulan can not sleep, wondering what she can do about her father's situation. Mulan leaves her room, and goes to see her parents. She tells her parents not to worry, that she will take her father's place in the army. General Hua reminds Mulan that it is forbidden for a woman to join the army.

The next morning, Mulan comes into the common area dressed as a young, male soldier and tells her parents that she will join the war in her father's place. Mulan's parents tearfully accept Mulan's proposal; Mulan's father advises her to be careful while in battle, because battle is not a game. Mulan tells her younger brother to look after her parents in her absence, and then departs. When Mulan joins the army, she says that she is her father's son, Mu Li.

Mulan and her comrades travel for days on end until they reached the northern territories. Mulan's skill in martial arts is a great asset to her. Mulan is successful in many battles and is eventually promoted to general. One day the troops approach Mount

⁹⁴ This is the bilingual title of the story.

Motian, but the enemy occupied the cliffs, and the troops did not know how to attack them from below. That evening Mulan thinks about the situation; she realizes that she has been away from home for ten years, and all she wants is to return home. Mulan looks up at the enemy encampment when she is startled by a loud noise. Looking over, she sees a herd of mountain goats, and knows how she will defeat the enemy. The next day Mulan sends out the troops to buy as many goats as they can find, and orders craftsmen to make paper lanterns. With the assistance of the locals, she finds a small path leading up the mountain.

That evening, Mulan orders the lanterns to be hung on the goats' horns, and drives the goats up the mountain. When the enemy troops see the lanterns coming, they think they are under attack. They throw boulders down the mountain, which the goats dodge and jump over. Seeing this, the enemy troops think that the attacking troops are soldiers from heaven. Mulan then attacks the enemy and forces them to surrender. Mulan then leads her troops to the capital. Mulan is offered high posts, but she refuses them, asking only to be sent home.

Mulan returns home, and hands her military uniform to her former comrades. They are shocked to learn that Mulan is really a woman. The story ends with the narrator stating that because of this, Mulan's story spread throughout China.

Breakdown of *Mulan 1992*⁹⁵

Mulan 1992 is a bilingual Chinese/English children's picture book. The book has a total of 29 pages, with each page containing the Chinese text in simplified characters, the

⁹⁵ See Chart IV for the breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 1992*.

English translation and full-color pictures; however the pictures serve to enhance, rather than augment, the story. The text of *Mulan 1992* can be broken down as follows.

A. Mulan at home—8 pages

A1. Introduction—2 pages

- a. Mulan is very skilled at martial arts

A2. Conscription—3 pages

- a. Northern territory is invaded
- b. General Hua receives the conscription notice
- c. Mulan is very restless, thinking about her father's situation

A3. Mulan decided to take her father's place—3 pages

- a. Mulan decides to take her father's place
- b. Mulan dresses as a young soldier
- c. Mulan convinces her parents to let her go

B. Mulan takes her father's place—20 pages

B1. Mulan travels to join the army—2 pages

- a. Mulan says she is Mu Li

B2. Battle—17 pages

- a. Mulan's martial skills are an asset
- b. At Mount Motian, Mulan uses mountain goats to trick and defeat the enemy
- c. Mulan and the troops are victorious

B3. Mulan and the others go to the capital—1 page

- a. Honors awarded to Mulan and the troops

- b. Mulan only wants to return home
- C. Mulan returns home—1 page
- C1. Mulan returns—1/2 page
 - a. Mulan changes clothes
 - C2. Sees comrade—1/2 page
 - a. Mulan gives her comrades her old uniform
 - b. They are shocked after ten years
 - c. The story of Mulan is well known throughout China

Although the motifs of *Mulan 1992* are the same as that of the previous versions, the emphasis of this story has shifted. The greatest attention is paid to Mulan's clever plan at Mount Motian, with some attention given to Mulan taking her father's place. However, Mulan traveling to join the army, Mulan at the capital, and Mulan's return home are barely touched upon.

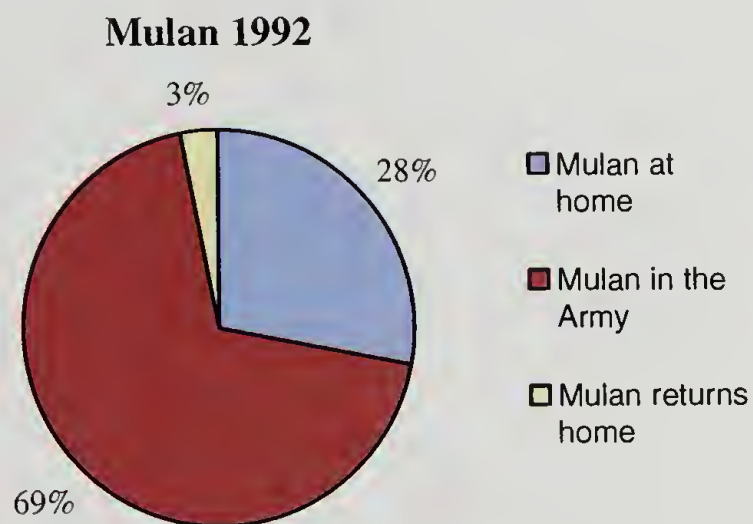
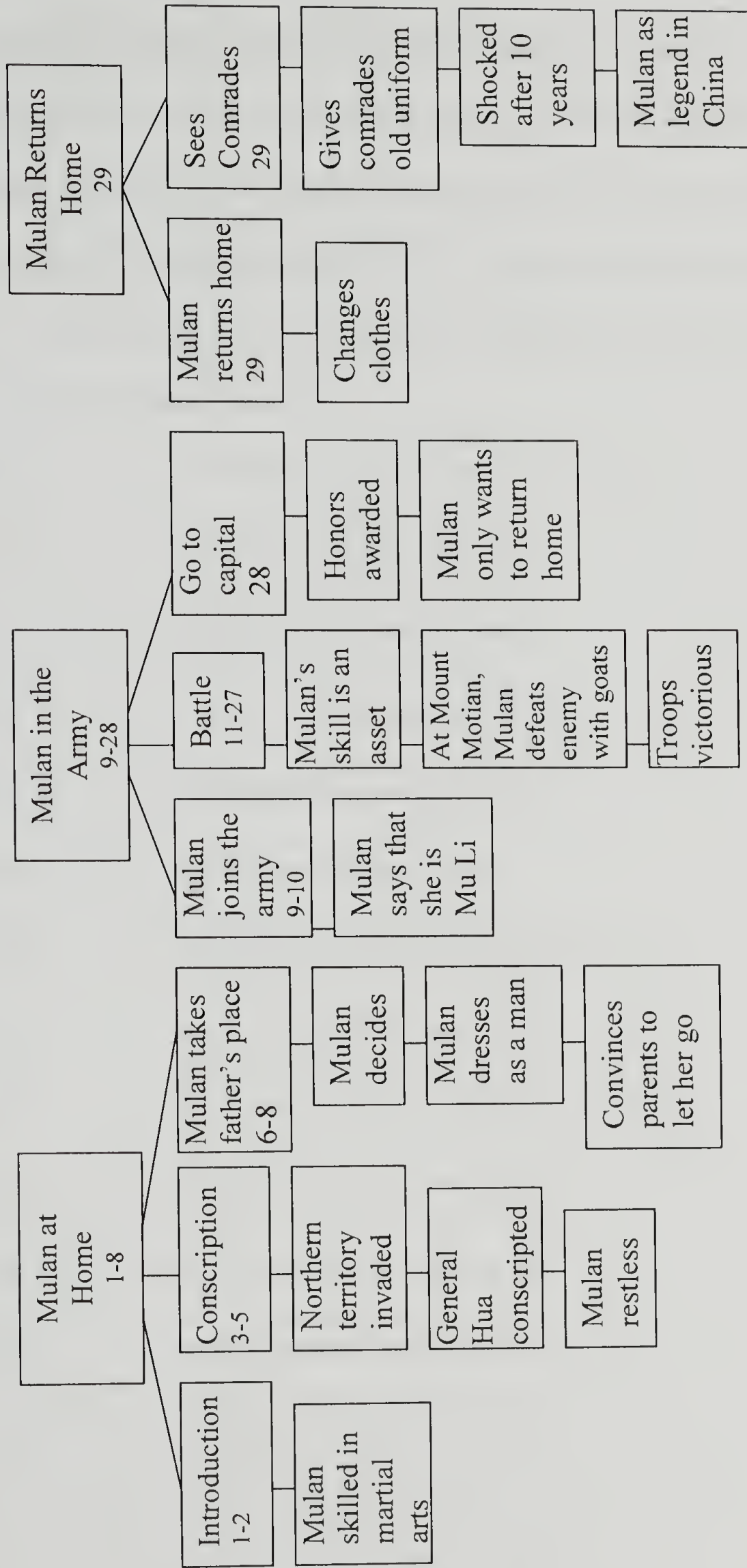


Chart 4
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1992*⁹⁶



⁹⁶ The numbers included are the page numbers of *Mulan 1992* that correspond to the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Version Five: *Jinguo yingxiong Hua Mulan* 巾幗英雄花木蘭 (The Heroine Hua Mulan),

China's Bravest Girl: The Legend of Hua Mu Lan, by Charlie Chin, California, 1993

The following is the text of *Jinguo yingxiong Hua Mulan* 巾幗英雄花木蘭 (The Heroine Hua Mulan), *China's Bravest Girl: The Legend of Hua Mu Lan*, the fifth version of the Mulan tale, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1993*. As the text is relatively short, it will be included in full. The text was originally written in English by Charlie Chin, and translated into Chinese by Wang Xing Chu.

| | |
|----------|---|
| 帝王令招琵琶師， | The Emperor called for the Pipa player. |
| 進宮彈唱共欣賞。 | “Have him sing a song of old. |
| 願賜官位和戒子， | I will give him a seat of honor |
| 以表君主寵恩降。 | And a ring of hammered gold.” |
| 高歌一曲神奇事， | The Pipa player took his place |
| 琵琶聲聲訴哀腸； | and he sang an ancient story, |
| 巾幗英雄花木蘭， | the legend of young Hua Mu Lan |
| 贏得萬古美名揚。 | the girl who won fame and glory. |
| 喀喳喀喳喀喳響 | The sound is click, and again, click click, |
| 手指飛舞梭來往， | young Hua Mu Lan at the loom. |
| 妙齡女子花木蘭， | Her fingers fly, the shuttle darts, |
| 織布機旁紡織忙。 | as she weaves inside her room. |
| 一邊織來一邊想， | Last night she saw the notice. |
| 張張軍書貼牆上； | It was posted on the wall. |

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 老父姓名列其中， | On it was her father's name. |
| 皇帝征兵令難當， | He must answer the Emperor's call. |
| 敵軍入侵我中華， | The enemy has invaded China. |
| 奮勇抗敵保邊疆！ | Our army must prepare to fight. |
| 千家萬戶苦相送， | One man from every household |
| 壯士明朝上戰場．．． | must be ready by morning light. |
| 可憐爸爸衰而老， | Her father is old and tired. |
| 鬢髮斑白照燭光， | His hair is turning white. |
| 木蘭心中暗思量， | She tells him of her plan |
| 且把忠言對父講： | as they talk by candlelight. |
| “阿巴膝下無兒郎， | “I am young and healthy, |
| 小女年轻身体壯， | and you have no eldest son. |
| 如令皇上欲征兵， | If the Emperor needs a soldier, |
| 我願代父上前方！” | then I must be the one.” |
| 父女情深深似海， | For love of her elderly father |
| 替父穿上勇士裝， | she will dress in warrior's clothes, |
| 像个堂堂男子汉， | walking and talking like a man, |
| 無人知曉是女妝． | so no one ever knows. |
| 木蘭出征準備忙， | She travels in the four directions, |
| 东南西北走四方， | preparing for the trip. |
| 買了駿馬買馬鞍， | She will buy in different towns |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 馬鞭一甩啪啪響！ | the saddle, horse and whip. |
| 月牙長槍手中握， | The crescent moon spear in her hand, |
| 柳葉大刀掛腰旁， | the willow leaf sword by her side, |
| 緊身盛甲好威武， | her armor is laced and tightened |
| 戰馬長嘶鬥志昂。 | her war horse is saddled to ride. |
| 中華女郎英姿爽， | The bravest girl in China |
| 隨將香梳懷中藏。 | puts away the perfumed comb. |
| 報答父恩從軍去， | To repay her father's kindness |
| 橫槍躍馬別爹娘。 | she will ride away from home. |
| 黃河岸边行軍難， | The banks of the Yellow River |
| 驚濤駭浪震心房， | echo the sound of flowing water. |
| 似聽慈父叮嚀聲， | In her heart she hears her father's words, |
| “別了！祝你打勝仗！” | “Farewell, my faithful daughter.” |
| 冰天雪地征衣寒， | She joins ten thousand soldiers |
| 千軍萬馬氣勢壯， | camped in the moon-lit snow. |
| 野營帳篷燈一片， | Their tents shine like lanterns |
| 篝火熊熊映月光。 | lit by the campfire glow. |
| 旭日東昇號角亮， | The morning light brings the battle. |
| 漫山遍野敵兵狂， | The invaders take the field. |
| 萬箭齊發如驟雨， | Enemy arrows find their mark. |
| 我軍潰退難抵擋。 | China's line begins to yield. |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| “中華好漢跟我來！” | When all seems lost a shout is heard, |
| 忽聽一聲驚雷響· | “Brave sons of China follow me!” |
| 木蘭號召眾弟兄， | Warriors wheel and turn about |
| 衝鋒陷陣敵膽喪· · · | like the waves of an angry sea. |
| 敵軍兵敗如山倒， | Cheering troops rally around her. |
| 戰士奮勇舉刀槍； | The enemy line breaks in fear. |
| 緊緊跟著花統帥， | Hua Mu Lan’s courage wins the day |
| 贏得勝利把敵降！ | as she fights with her sword and spear. |
| 光陰似箭十年過， | She wins in a hundred battles. |
| 身經百戰凱歌唱， | Ten years like arrows fly by. |
| 山歡水笑迎將軍， | She gains the rank of General. |
| 豐功偉績永留芳· · · | Her legend will never die. |
| 皇上酬謝大功臣， | The Emperor summons his “hero” |
| 親自封地又封王； | to receive from the royal hand |
| 榮華富貴享不盡， | a minister’s post and the title |
| 木蘭開口表心腸： | to a nobleman’s house and land. |
| “世上萬物我不愛， | “There is nothing that I desire, |
| 不求高官不求賞， | neither wealth nor minister’s post. |
| 但願回家陪阿爸， | My duty is to my father. |
| 老人最需兒瞻養·” | In old age, he needs me most.” |
| “願得一匹壯駱駝， | “Give me only a strong camel |

自由馳騁返故鄉，
日以繼夜奔南國，
歸心似箭蹄聲揚．．．
喜訊傳到木蘭家，
張燈結彩喜洋洋；
預備家宴慶團聚，
迎接英雄回故鄉。
英姿颯爽將軍樣，
喜煞父老和爹娘，
熱淚盈眶問侯華，
木蘭轉身進閨房。
十年闊別今日返，
獨坐邊邊巧梳妝，
摘下沉沉鐵頭盔，
戴上黃花滿樓香．．．
海洋會是珠貝家，
珠貝會把珍珠藏；
渾身盔甲鱗光閃，
會把巾幗英雄藏！
婷婷玉女現庭院，
戰友驚訝細端詳：

and my freedom then to roam.

I will ride the southern road

that leads back to my home.”

The news is heard at her father’s gate

where colorful lanterns burn.

Her family prepares a feast

to celebrate her return.

She enters as a general.

Her father watches with pride.

She greets her father and mother,

then turns to go inside.

Alone in her room at last,

she sits on her childhood bed.

She takes off the iron helmet

and places flowers on her head.

The ocean hides the oyster.

The oyster hides a pearl.

Bright armor and heavy helmet

hid China’s bravest girl.

As she steps into the courtyard,

her comrade says in surprise,

“將軍原是女兒身，
不敢相信我眼光。

“我們曾經肩並肩，
緊握刀槍打豺狼，
頂天立地逞英豪，
你最勇敢最剛強！”

“共度多少險和苦，
救命之恩永難忘；
朝夕相處情誼深，
你我何不配成雙？”

“如果要我嫁給你，
從此關係不尋常，
做爲朋友你尊重，
待妻能否一個樣？”

“如果我倆結連理，
夫妻恩愛勝鴛鴦！
今日且把婚期定，
宴請鄉親共舉觴。”

五彩繽紛旌旗飄，
親朋好友聚一堂，
木蘭披紗又戴玉，

“My general has become a woman.
I can't believe my eyes!

“We fought shoulder to shoulder.
Our hands gripped sword and spear.
I knew you as a warrior
who was strong and without fear.

“How many times in danger
did you turn to save my life?
We were always the best of friends.
Why not become husband and wife?”

“If I become your wife,” she says,
“we will play a different game.
You treat your friends with honor.
Can your wife expect the same?”

“Yes, I will honor you,” he says,
“in all I do and say.
Now let's invite the villagers
and set the wedding day.”

Red and gold banners adorn the house.
A banquet is prepared for all.
She wears the finest jade and silk

| | |
|------------|--|
| 英雄美人世無雙... | for the wedding in her husband's hall. |
| 帝王聽罷琵琶曲， | The Pipa player sang the last verse |
| 履行允諾給重賞； | His rewards had been foretold: |
| 賜給樂師金戒子， | for his skill a seat of honor; |
| 封官進爵享榮光。 | for his song a ring of gold. |
| 巾幗英雄花木蘭， | The legend of young Hua Mu Lan |
| 代父從軍保邊疆！ | whose bravery saved her nation |
| 爲國爲民人人愛， | is loved by the Chinese people |
| 萬代千秋美名揚... | and retold each generation. |

Breakdown of *Mulan 1993*⁹⁷

Mulan 1993 is a bilingual children's picture book with 30 pages, 8 pages of which contain Chinese and English text. The pictures serve to enhance, rather than augment, the story. The text itself contains 128 lines, broken down as follows.

A. Emperor calls for a song—8 lines

(no sub-motifs)

a. Pipa player promised reward

b. Pipa player sings tale of Mulan

B. Mulan at home—36 lines

B1. Introduction—8 lines

a. Mulan weaving

⁹⁷ See Chart V for a breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 1993*.

b. Military conscription notice posted

B2. Conscription—16 lines

a. Enemy invades

b. Mulan's father is old and tired

c. Mulan decides to take her father's place

B3. Mulan prepares to go—12 lines

a. Mulan buys: horse, saddle, and whip

b. Mulan armed and ready to go

c. Mulan leaves behind her former 'things', including her clothes and her identity as a woman

C. Mulan takes her father's place—36 lines

C1. Mulan travels to join the army—8 lines

a. Mulan at the Yellow River

b. Mulan joins up with the other soldiers

C2. The battles—16 lines

a. Description of the army and battles

b. Hope is almost lost

c. Mulan saves the day

C3. Mulan and the soldiers see the Emperor—12 lines

a. Honors are awarded

b. Mulan indicates that she does not desire a post or rewards

c. Mulan only wants a camel to return her home

D. Mulan returns home—40 lines

D1. Mulan's family hears of her return—8 lines

- a. Prepare a feast
- b. Mulan's parents are proud of her

D2. Mulan returns to her former identity—8 lines

- a. Mulan replaces her helmet with a flower
- b. Pearl hidden in oyster's shell compared to Mulan hidden in man's identity

D3. Sees comrade—24 lines

- a. Mulan's comrade is astounded
- b. Comrade suggests they marry, since they were great friends as soldiers
- c. Mulan insists he treat her in accordance with their friendship while in battle;
then agrees
- d. They marry

E. Pipa player finishes the song—8 lines

(no sub-motifs)

- a. Emperor rewards the Pipa player
- b. Mulan is a legend in China

Mulan 1993 is organized very similarly to the poem, in which Mulan's time at home, her time in the army, and her time returning home are given almost equal attention. The first and last eight lines of the tale seek to create a narrative context, and also present the concept of the tale in the form of a song.

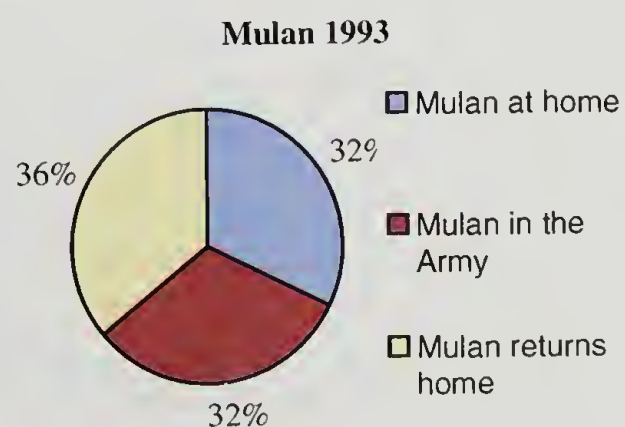
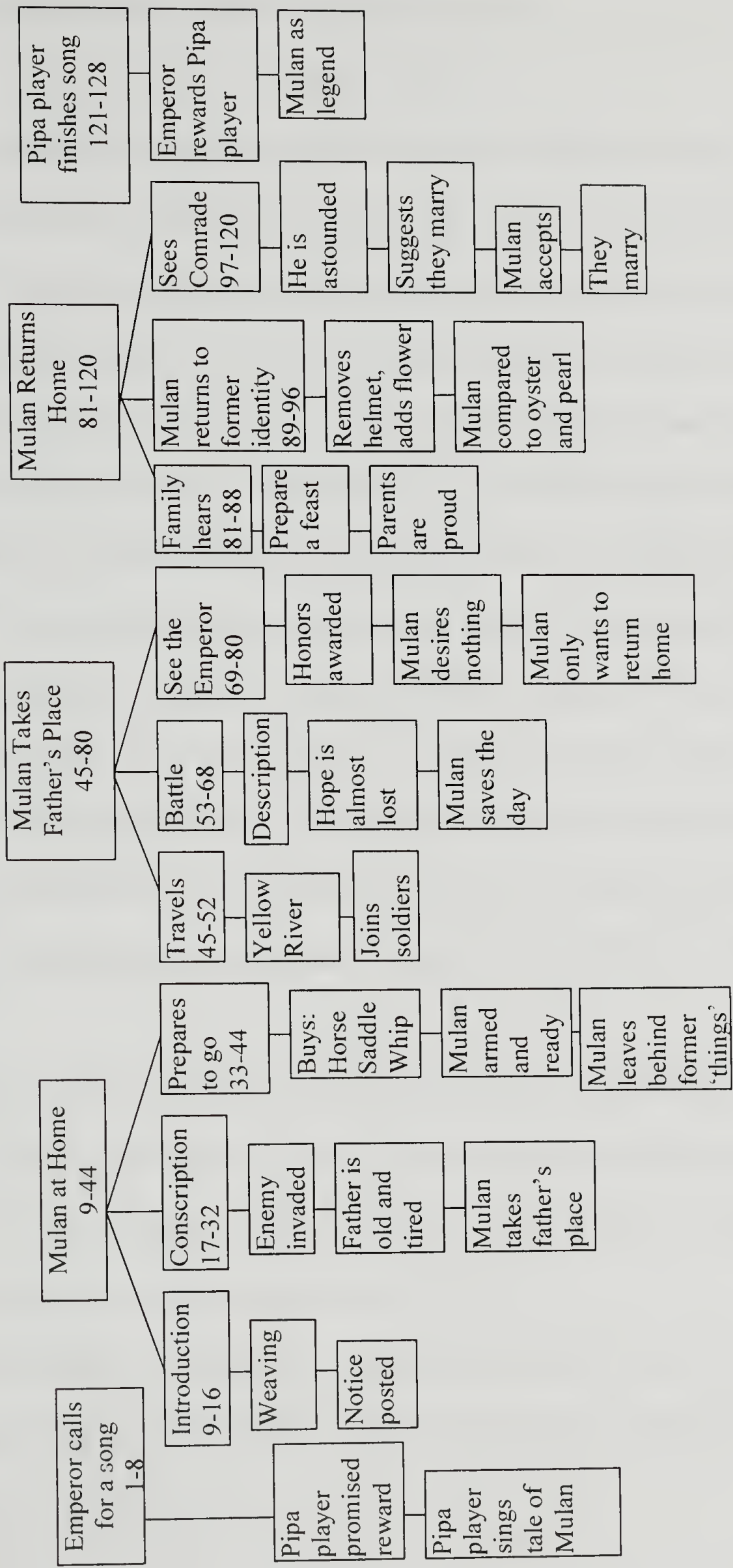


Chart 5
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1993*⁹⁸



⁹⁸ The numbers included are the lines of *Mulan 1993* that correspond to the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Version Six: *Mulan Cong Jun* 木蘭從軍(Mulan Joins the Army), by Zhuang Chaogen,

Taiwan, 1994

The sixth version of the Mulan tale is *Mulan Cong Jun* 木蘭從軍 by Zhuang Chaogen, hereafter to be referred to as *Mulan 1994*. *Mulan 1994* begins with some background information. During the time of the North-South dynasties, an officer with the surname of Hua was aging, and therefore left the army, and with his family went to live in a small village. Mr. Hua was almost 60 years-old, and although he was tall, he was unable to stand straight due to an illness in his abdomen. Mr. Hua's wife, surname Mu, gave Mr. Hua three children: two girls, MUYING and MULAN, and one son, the youngest, MUKANG.

One day, twelve-year-old Mukang is reading a book, when he hears people at the gate to the family homestead. He goes to the gate and finds the village official and a provincial official, who ask to speak with Mr. Hua. Mukang invites the men in, and escorts them to see his father. The two men inform Mr. Hua that the enemy army has attacked, and therefore he has been conscripted. To this, Mr. Hua bitterly laughed, as he knows that he is already old and ailing, and that going back into the army would mean his death.

The village official suggests that he pay for someone else to take his place, but Mr. Hua points out that his family of five is living on his meager military earnings, plus the money made from his daughters' weaving, but that it is barely enough. The officials tell Mr. Hua to think it over, and are escorted out by Mr. Hua.

When Mr. Hua returns, he finds his wife silently shedding tears, as she had overheard the conversation, and knowing that her husband will not disobey the conscription order, knows that she will be losing him.

At that time, Mr. Hua's second child, Mulan returns to the homestead leading her fine white horse. Mukang loudly announces her arrival. Mulan has just returned from hunting animals for the family to eat. Mukang is very impressed with his sister's ability, but Mulan tells him that all skilled archers can hunt. She indicates that hunting is the only purpose for knowing this skill. Mukang says that he wants to accompany Mulan when she goes hunting tomorrow, but Mulan tells him that he is too young.

Just then, Muying, the eldest sister comes out of the house, saying that the village and provincial officials had just left, and tells Mulan that their father has been conscripted. Mulan immediately understands the implications of this as well. After thinking for a few moments, Mulan asks Mukang to help Muying put the slain animals into the kitchen. Mulan then enters the homestead and goes directly to see her parents. She tells them not to worry, that she will take her father's place in battle, as she is already gowned and possesses the requisite skills. Mrs. Mu tells Mulan that she is crazy, however Mulan disagrees. She points out that for two years she has hunted by herself, killing not only foxes and geese, but also wild boars and wolves. Mrs. Mu continues in her objection, but Mulan eventually persuades her to agree. Mr. Hua, however, tells Mulan that although he agrees that she is skilled, war is not the same as hunting. Mulan says that she frequently regrets that she is not a boy, because she wants to do the things that boys are allowed to do. Again, Mr. Hua understands, but he says that women are not permitted to join the army.

Mulan alleviates her parent's concerns when she tells them that she will disguise herself in her father's armor and pretend to be a man while in the army. Her parents are still a little concerned, but in the end, they concede, and Mulan dons her father's military

armor. When she returns to the room, both of her parents are amazed that they are looking at their second daughter, as she appears to be a brave young (male) soldier. Muying and Mukang enter the room, and Mulan instructs Muying to take care of their parents, and instructs Mukang to be diligent in his studies. Mulan then kowtows to her parents, and leaves the homestead. Mounting her fine white horse she bids farewell to her family, and leaves, as Mrs. Mu sheds concerned, but proud tears.

Mulan, fighting her tears, left the village and could not look back. She knows that she made the right decision, but she is worried and sad about the potential of fighting in the war. Suddenly, coming from behind, Mulan hears the sound of a rushing horse. She slows and looks back and there appears a young man waving to her. When he nears Mulan, he slows and says that he is Liugang and he is joining the army in his father's place. Mulan immediately notices how handsome Liugang is. She introduces herself as Mukang, and says that she is also joining the army for her father. Liugang realizes that he is from Mulan's village, but does not recognize Mulan, and the two agree to watch out for each other.

After two weeks, Liugang and Mulan go into battle. Mulan is very brave, with great martial skill, but also very clever. Mulan has superior abilities in archery and shoots many of the enemy, including some ranking officers. She becomes well known within her unit.

Months and years pass like flowing water, and ten years pass. Stability returns to the area, and Mulan, Liugang, and the other troops are summoned to the capital. The Emperor receives these troops, and upon review of their military records, offers each of the leaders an imperial post if they so desire. Most of the men are honored, and readily

accept their positions, including Liugang. When the Emperor comes to Mulan, she tells him that she would really like to be provided a fine horse and be permitted to return home so that she can take care of her aging parents. The Emperor praises Mulan for her filial request, and immediately provides her with a horse, and permits her to return home. Liugang and the other soldiers, realizing that their time with Mulan was soon to end, decide that they will all escort Mulan home before their imperial posts begin.

The happy news of Mulan's return soon reaches the Hua homestead, and although Mr. Hua is already 70 years-old, he requests that his wife lead him to the village gate every day to await his daughter's return. Mulan's elder sister Muying is already married, and she and her husband live with her elderly parents. In order to prepare for Mulan's return, Muying arranges her hair in her old style, and puts on the dress that she frequently wore. Mukang is already a healthy and robust lad, and he slaughters a goat and pig so that they could celebrate well when Mulan returns.

Mulan then arrives at the village she left behind ten years ago. Mulan enters the village gate and sees her proud parents. She immediately dismounts and bows deeply to them. Liugang and the others then enter the village and all the villagers come to welcome Mulan home and welcome the new guests. Mulan and the soldiers are led to the Hua homestead. When Mulan enters her room, she is amazed to see everything exactly as she had left it. She quickly removes her helmet and battle armor and happily puts on her old dress. She puts her hair up into her former style and applies blush to her cheeks. Mulan smiles at the female face looking at her in the mirror.

Muying enters the room, and sees her sister sitting before the mirror and elaps in happiness. Mulan then goes to greet her comrades. She bows deeply to them and thanks

them for their ten years of friendship and companionship. Liugang at first wonders who this girl is, but then realizes that it is his comrade 'Mukang'. Mr. Hua explains that Mulan is his daughter, her younger brother is Mukang. Mulan borrowed his name, but she is the soldier with whom they fought side-by-side for ten years. The troops are all amazed. Liugang then proposes a toast to Mulan, the woman who risked her life for her father.

Breakdown of *Mulan 1994*⁹⁹

Mulan 1994 is juvenile literature, with *zhuyin fuaho* alongside each character for reading assistance; the intended audience is most likely lower middle school-aged children. The book contains 54 pages, with 22 pages of story-related text (even-numbered pages), and 22 pages of story-related pictures (odd-numbered pages); however the pictures serve to enhance, rather than augment, the story. The first ten pages of this version are background information about the tale of Mulan. The 22 pages of text can be broken down as follows.

A. Mulan at home—11.5 pages of text

A1. Introduction—1.5 pages

- a. Elderly, ailing father
- b. Elder sister
- c. Younger brother

A2. Conscription—5 pages of text

- a. Father conscripted
- b. Mulan returns home from hunting, and learns of the news

⁹⁹ See Chart VI for a breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes in *Mulan 1994*.

- A3. Mulan decided to take her father's place—5 pages of text
 - a. Mulan tells her parents of her plan
 - b. Mulan convinces her parents to permit her to go
 - c. Mulan departs from father and tearful mother, and sheds tears herself
- E. Mulan takes her father's place—5.5 pages of text
 - B1. Mulan travels to join the army—1 pages of text
 - a. Mulan cannot look back
 - b. Mulan meets Liugang
 - B2. Battle—3 pages of text
 - a. Mulan described as a skilled archery
 - b. Ten years pass
 - B3. Mulan and the others summoned to the capital—1.5 pages of text
 - a. Honors awarded to Mulan and the troops
 - b. Mulan only wants to return home
 - c. Liugang and the other soldiers decide to escort Mulan home
- F. Mulan returns home—7 pages of text
 - C1. Mulan's family hears of her return—1.5 pages of text
 - a. Mother and father wait for her at village gate
 - b. Muying puts on her old dress and arranges her hair in old style
 - c. Mukang slaughters a goat and pig for the feast
 - C2. Mulan returns to her former identity—2 pages of text
 - a. Mulan changes her clothes
 - b. Mulan arranges her hair

- c. Mulan applies makeup
- C3. Sees comrade—3.5 pages of text
- a. Comrades see Mulan
 - b. They are shocked after ten years
 - c. Liugang suggests a toast to Mulan, the woman who risked her life for her father

The arrangement of *Mulan 1994* is similar to that of the poem, however even less attention is given to Mulan's time in the army. The sub-motifs receiving the most attention are A2 the conscription, in which the readers learn of Mulan's tomboy-like skill, and A3 Mulan deciding to take her father's place in the army, and revealing to her parents that she often wished she were a man so that she could fulfill traditional male roles.

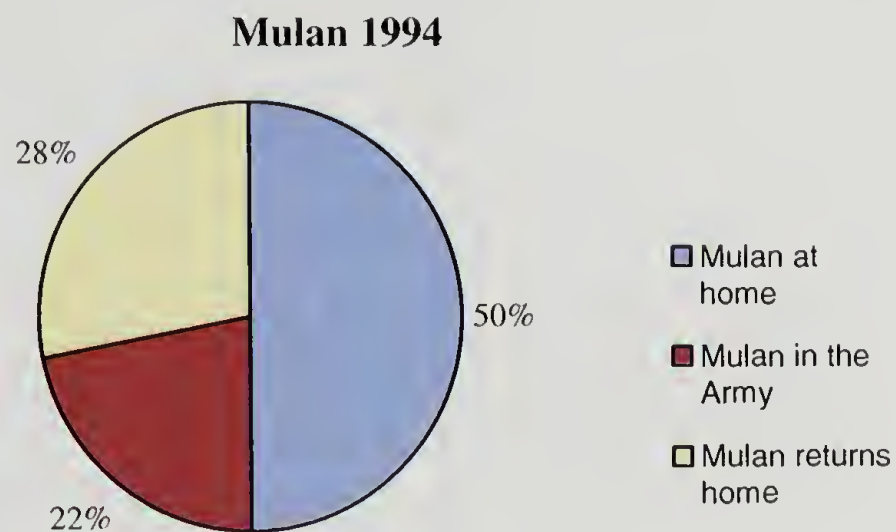
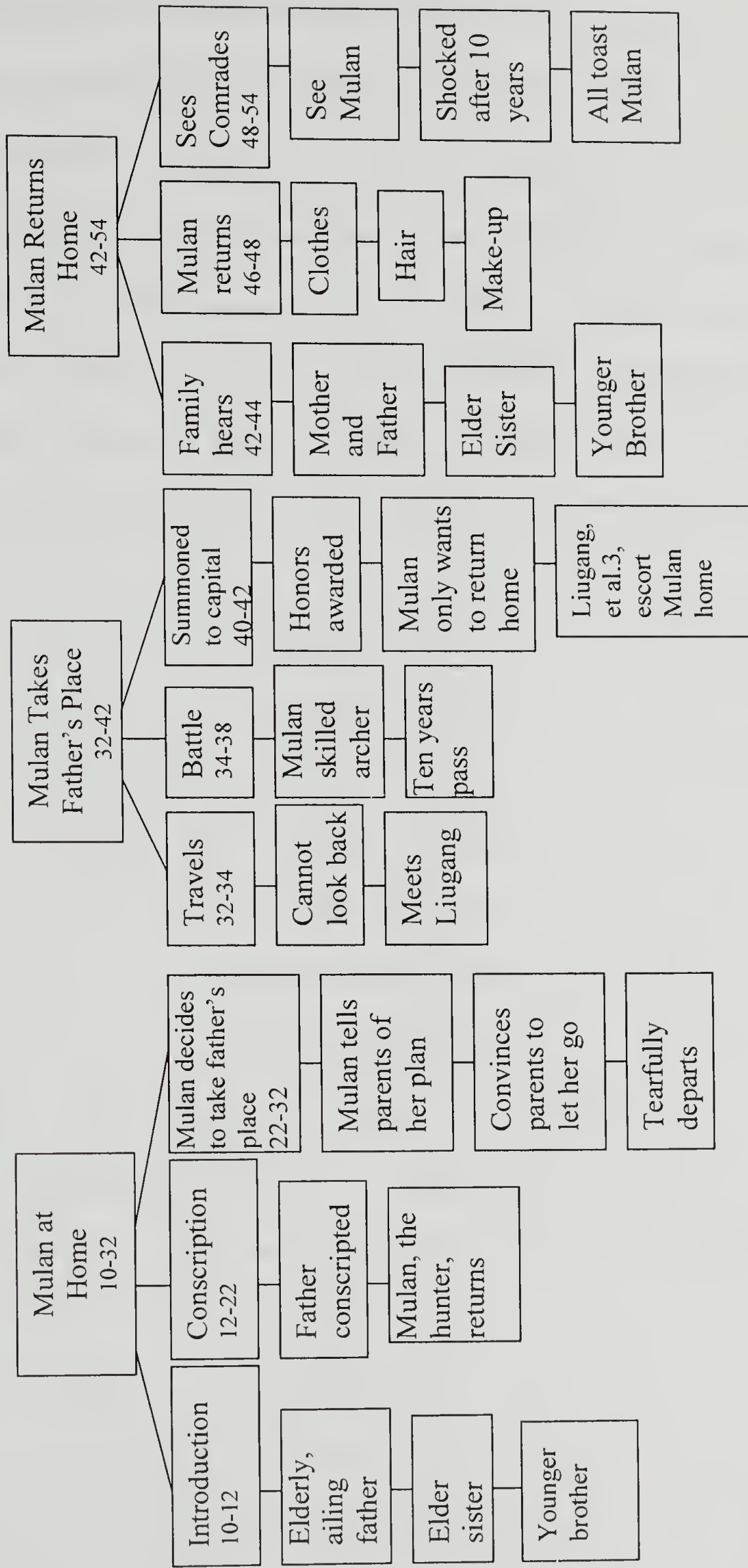


Chart 6
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1994*¹⁰⁰



¹⁰⁰ The numbers included are the page numbers of *Mulan 1994* that correspond to the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

The seventh version of the Mulan Jeanne M. Lee's *The Song of Mulan* or *Mulan Ge* 木兰歌, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1995*. *Mulan 1995* contains the Chinese poem, with an English interpretation. As the Chinese poem is already included in this paper, I will only include the English interpretation here. Text in *italics* indicates the pictures that correspond to the English and Chinese text. Unlike the previously discussed versions of the Mulan story, the pictures in *Mulan 1995* add content to the story, so that even though the text closely follows the poem, there are still variations in the story provided by the pictures.

The Song of Mulan

Click, eliek. Click, cliek.

Mu Lan is at her loom.

We no longer hear her weave.

Now we only hear her sigh.

Why does Mu Lan sigh?

Why is Mu Lan sad?

Mulan's father will not drink tea, nor will Mulan.

Mulan's mother and elder sister disapprove of their behaviors.

Mulan's younger brother is very small; he is curious to know what is wrong with sister and father.

"I do not sigh.

I am not sad.

Last night I heard the call to arms:

The Emperor is raising an army.

Twelve times I heard the call to arms,

And each time, my father's name."

Proud men on horse back have come with gong and scroll, to raise the Emperor's army.

Brave men from each family come forward to do their duty.

The women stand back, saddened, watching.

Except Mulan; she watches with her bow and bag of arrows at the ready.

Father has no elder son.

Mu Lan has no older brother.

"I wish I were on horseback.

I would ride in Father's place."

Mulan's little brother infers that he will go in his father's place,

But both his family all know that he is too small.

Mulan suggests that she go in her father's place.

Her sister is aghast,

However, her father gives her his sword.

East to buy a horse.

West to buy a saddle.

South to buy a harness.

North to buy a whip.

The market place is lively.

Mulan selects a fiery white horse.

She puts on battle robes.

Her sister helps her tie up her hair.

“At dawn I leave my home.

That night I sleep by the Yellow River.

I hear my father’s voice no more,

Only the rush of the river.

Mulan bids farewell to her proud father and mother.

Brave men gather at the encampment.

“At dawn I leave the Yellow River.

That night I reach the black hills.

I hear my mother’s voice no more,

Only the enemy’s horses neighing.

Brave troops travel far,

Crossing river and climbing mountains.

“Ten thousand miles to the border.

I cross high mountains as if on wings.”

War drums ring in the brittle air.

The cold moon shines on steel.

The troops are stationed on a precipice, overlooking the valley.

Geese are taking flight as the sun sets.

In the distance, the enemy troops approach.

The battle drums begin to sound.

Great generals of a hundred battles perish.

But foot soldiers go on ten long years.

Mulan leads the assault bravely on her white horse.

The enemy troops, with their black flags retreat.

“I live to greet the Son of Heaven,

The Son of Heaven in the Imperial Court.

He gives me twelve medals of honor

And a thousand strings of gold.”

Mulan, leading the troops on her white horse, approaches the capital.

The troops victoriously carry their red flags.

The Emperor sits in the palace, fanned by a palace woman.

What do you wish? asks the Son of Heaven.

“I do not want honors or gold,

But strong camels to carry me

Many miles, back to my village.”

Mulan prostrates herself before the Emperor.

The other troops follow suite.

The Emperor wearing yellow robes, with purple sash, bids her to rise.

The court attendants are all impressed by Mulan's request.

Father! Mother! Hear your daughter return.

Come, hold on to each other.

Elder Sister! Hear Younger Sister return.

Dress to welcome her home.

Younger Brother! Hear Second Sister return.

Sharpen a knife to slaughter a pig and a lamb.

Mulan dismounts her camel, and runs to her elderly parent's embrace.

Elder Sister is within the walls and Younger Brother attends to the pig.

Mulan's comrades wait outside with the horses and camels.

"I enter the east gate,

Then sit on the bed in my room.

First I take off my armor,

Then put on an old dress.

I comb my hair at the window

And pin on a yellow flower.

Mulan's sister helps her change back to her former self.

Mulan pins the yellow flower into her hair.

Her wartime robes, boots, and sword have been discarded on the floor.

"I go to meet my comrades.

Together for twelve years,

My comrades will be startled.

They do not know I am a woman."

Mulan enters the room in all her female regalia.

Her comrades gape with mouths open.

Mulan's family all look on approvingly.

A male rabbit is fast and agile,

A female rabbit has bright eyes.

When the two rabbits run together,

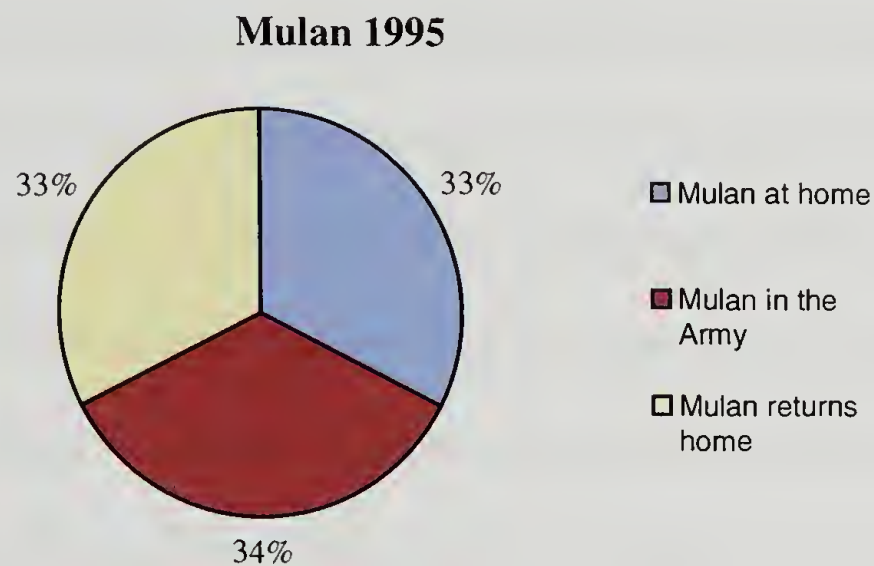
No one can tell which is male, which is female.

Mulan's elderly father sits, looking at the rabbits.

Mulan, with her mother and sister dye cloth, while her brother makes the color.

Breakdown Version Seven: *Mulan 1995*

The breakdown of this version is the same as the poem, and therefore will not be discussed here.



Version Eight: *Hua Mulan: China's Sweetest Magnolia*, translated by Wang Jian,

Singapore, 1996¹⁰¹

The eighth version of the Mulan tale is the comic book, *Hua Mulan: China's Sweetest Magnolia*, translated by Wang Jian, hereafter to be referred to as *Mulan 1996*. *Mulan 1996* begins with the introduction of a General named Hua Hu, who loves to read and was greatly skilled at martial arts. Hua Hu's first wife dies of an illness, but left him no children; he then remarries a woman surnamed Yuan. Yuan gave birth to their first child, a daughter whom they named Mulan. Mulan, from an early age, shows great proficiency in reading and writing, as well as martial arts and military tactics. By the time Mulan is

¹⁰¹ This version of the Mulan story most likely appeared first in Chinese, however I was unable to obtain a copy of the Chinese version. The English version only contains the name of the translator, nothing about the original author.

15, she is the 'king of the kids.' At 17-years-old, Mulan begins learning to do housework, and the villagers comment on how Mulan will soon get married.

One day a messenger comes to the door, delivering a conscription notice for General Hua. The messenger informs Mulan that the Rouran Kehan Tu Lizi has attacked, and that the men are all being conscripted, and are scheduled to depart the next day. Mulan, knowing that her father is too old to go back into battle, decides to dress as a man. Just then, her mother comes into the room, but does not recognize Mulan. From this, Mulan decides that she will take her father's place in the army. Her father admits that she looks like a young soldier, but that she is a girl, and is not permitted to join the army.

Mulan suggests that she fight her father: if she wins, she may go to war; if she loses she will stay. Mulan swiftly defeats her father, who concedes and permits Mulan to take his place in the army. Hua Hu teaches Mulan how to greet the Marshal and gives her some other advice. Then Mulan departs.

On the road to join the army, Mulan meets Li Yuan and Wang Fu, who are also from her hometown. Mulan says her name is Muli, which is actually her younger brother's name. They only recognize Mulan's 'name', Muli, as Hua Hu's son. Mulan notices that Wang Fu is hesitant to depart. Wang Fu expresses that it is unfair that men must go to battle while women stay at home. Mulan comments that women do a lot of work to support men, and also fight as heroines to protect the country. The 'men' then set off. While on the road, they hear a battle ahead, and come across troops engaging the enemy. Mulan and the others begin firing arrows at the enemy, who eventually retreats. The new soldiers return back to camp with the existing soldiers. Once in the camp, Marshal He issues an edict indicating that any new soldier who can defeat his peers will be rewarded

with a ranking post. Mulan steps up, and although she is smaller than the man she challenges, she defeats him in numerous competitions, and is awarded with a ranking post.

Shortly thereafter, the troops go into battle. Mulan devises a plan in which they will set fire to the enemy camp and force them to come out, which is successful. In the battle that ensues, Mulan kills many enemy troops, and even the enemy's chieftain. A few days later, Mulan and her troops arrive at Motian Mountain. The enemy is on the top of the mountain, and Mulan's troops had no way of mounting a surprise attack. Mulan then notices some mountain goats, and orders her men to buy as many goats and paper lanterns as they can. That night, with the help of a local guide, Mulan and her troops, after tying the lanterns to the goats' horns, herd the goats up the mountain. When the enemy troops see the approaching lights, they throw rocks and trees down, but the goats jump over them. While the enemy troops are occupied with this, Mulan and her men attack the enemy from behind, killing many and causing the others to flee.

Between battles, there is an inn that Mulan and the others frequently visit; the inn is run by a mother and her daughter. Eventually, the young daughter becomes taken with Mulan, and Mulan decides that she can no longer go to the inn. One evening while the other soldiers go to the inn, Mulan inspects the camp. While out, she sees and catches a young man trying to hide from her; it is an enemy spy. Mulan reports back to General Lu, who immediately sets out, against Mulan's recommendations. Once General Lu and his men leave the gate, the enemy troops flee, and General Lu pursues; but it is a trap, and the general is struck by many arrows. When the general does not return, Mulan realizes

that her concern is correct, and she and her troops head out to attack the enemy. They attack the enemy and the enemy retreats. Mulan and her troops return to the city.

One evening, while Mulan is out inspecting the sentries, she sees birds at flight at night. She reports back to General Lu that she believes the enemy is staging a surprise attack. The general agrees, and orders Mulan to tell all troops to leave the camp. When the enemy troops arrive, they are ambushed by Mulan and her troops. In the confusion, Tu Lizi Khan tries to flee, but Mulan pursues. Mulan is stuck by two enemy arrows, but this does not slow her down. She continues to lead her troops in pursuit of Tu Lizi Khan. Mulan soon catches up with and attacks the enemy chieftain. After fighting many rounds, Mulan is able to throw Tu Lizi from his horse, and they capture the chieftain alive. He surrenders, his entire army follows suit, and the war is over.

Mulan and her troops all celebrate. Marshal He comes to congratulate the troops, and also to offer Mulan his daughter as a wife. Mulan thanks the marshal, but tells him her injury is really hurting her, and that she would like to return home. Marshal He agrees to permit Mulan to return home early, and asks about this daughter again. Mulan, again, says that her injury is hurting and leaves the tent. Mulan orders her men to pack her things, and tells them that she will be returning home when they go to see the Emperor. The troops are surprised. Mulan says that in her village there is a Buddha warrior statue, and that every day, when the sun shines upon the statue, it changes into the Goddess of the moon. Mulan invites her comrades to come see this statue. Mulan then gets on her horse to return home.

Once Mulan enters her home village, she drinks some water from a familiar stream, and then sees her parents. She dismounts, and runs into their open arms. Mulan then goes to her room, changes her clothes, applies make-up, and returns to her former life.

Some time later, Marshal He arrives with Mulan's comrades. He enters the Hua homestead and congratulates General Hua for his brave and honorable son, Muli. The marshal asks to see Muli, and Mulan's brother comes forward. The marshal is confused; Mulan's father then tells Mulan to come forward. Marshal He is angered at this 'game', indicating that he came to see General Hua Muli. Mulan apologizes to Marshal He, who recognizes her voice as that of General Hua Muli. Mulan explains the situation to the marshal and her comrades, and then they all drink a toast to the heroine Mulan.

Breakdown *Mulan 1996*¹⁰²

Mulan 1996 is an English comic book. The book contains 120 pages, most of which contain multiple frames with pictures and text. In this version, the pictures add as much content to the story as the text. Therefore, in the summary as well as the breakdown, information from both the pictures and text will be included with equal weight. *Mulan 1996* can be broken down as follows.

A. Mulan at home—27 pages (two blank pages)

A1. Introduction—11 pages

- a. General Hua Hu
- b. His wife, Yuan
- c. His first daughter, Mulan, who from a young age excels in martial arts and military tactics

¹⁰² See Chart VII for a breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 1996*.

A2. Conscription—4 pages

- a. Rouran Kehan Tu Lizi attacks
- b. General Hua Hu receives conscription notice
- c. Mulan disguises as man, mother does not recognize her

A3. Mulan takes her father's place—9 pages

- a. Mulan decides to go to war in her father's place
- b. Mulan defeats her father in a martial skills competition
- c. Mulan receives advice from her father and departs

B. Mulan in the army—76 pages (2 blank pages)

B1. Mulan travels to join the army—15 pages

- a. Mulan meets fellow villagers
- b. While on the road, they encounter a battle in progress; they join in and assist in the success of the battle
- c. Mulan defeats her peer in a martial skills competition, and receives promotion

B2. Battles—50 pages

- a. Mulan plan at Motian mountain
- b. Mulan visits the Inn
- c. Mulan catches a spy
- d. Birds at flight at night, means the enemy is attempting an ambush
- e. Mulan pursues the fleeing Tu Lizi
- f. Tu Lizi surrenders, and the war is over

B3. "Honors" awarded—9 pages

- a. Mulan and the troops celebrate
- b. Marshal He offers Mulan his daughter as a wife
- c. Mulan indicates that she would like to return home

C. Mulan returns home—17 pages

C1. Mulan arrives at her village—2 pages

- a. Mulan sees familiar sights
- b. Mulan drinks familiar water
- c. Mulan embraces her parents

C2. Mulan returns to her female identity—3 pages

- a. Mulan changes her clothes, hair, and make-up
- b. Mulan resumes her former duties

C3. Comrades arrive—12 pages

- a. Marshal He seeks Mulan
- b. Mulan reveals her female identity
- c. All toast the heroine Mulan

Mulan 1996 provides the reader with more background information/introduction than previous versions, with 12 pages dedicated to the introduction of the Hua family. The greatest importance is placed on Mulan's time in the army, with 50 pages dedicated to Mulan's successes. However, Mulan's return home is also given a fair amount of importance, especially considering that Mulan not only returns to her former appearance, but also to her former duties.

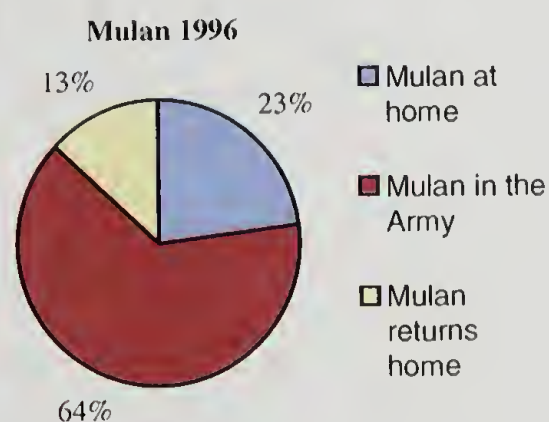
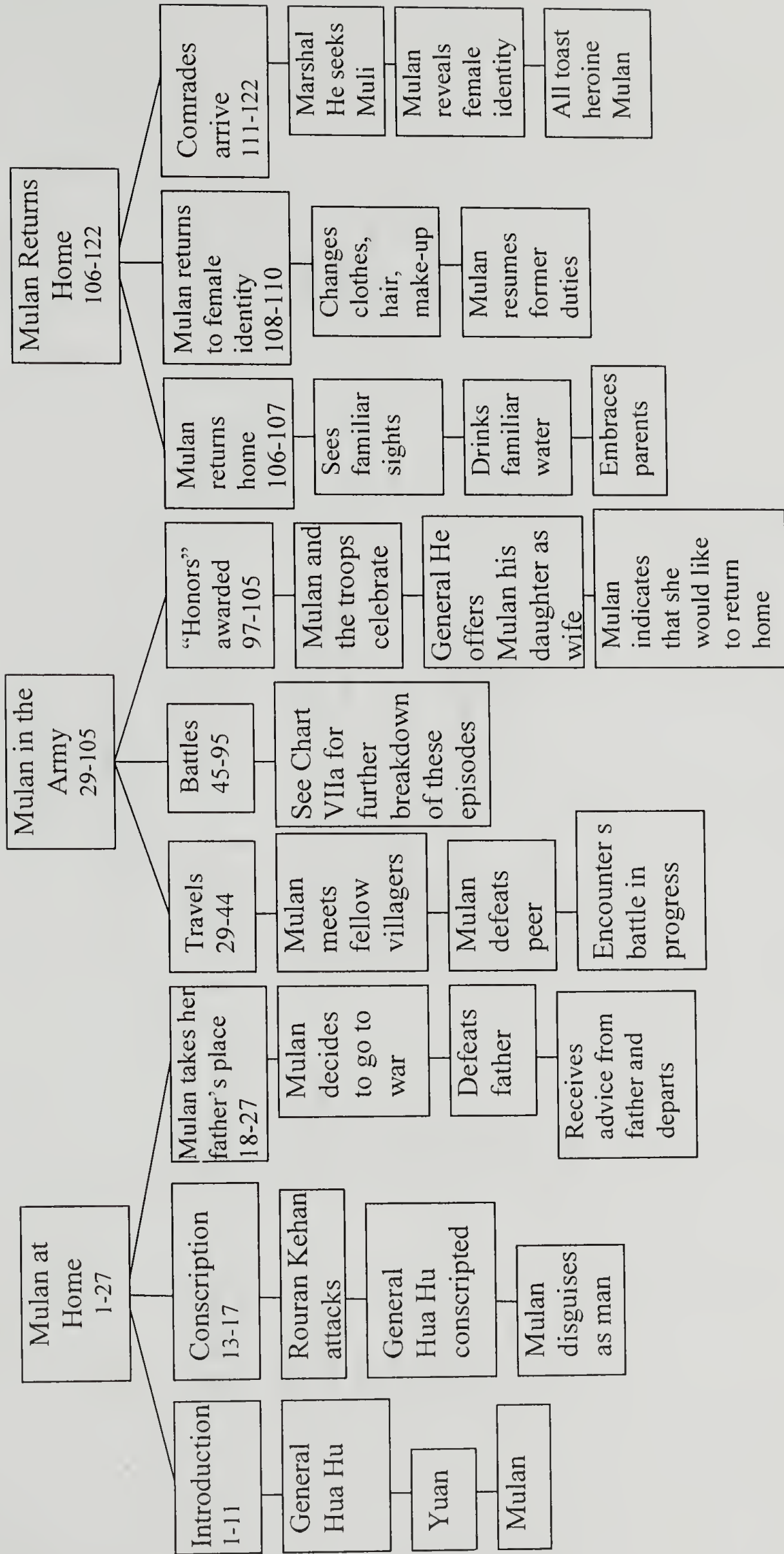
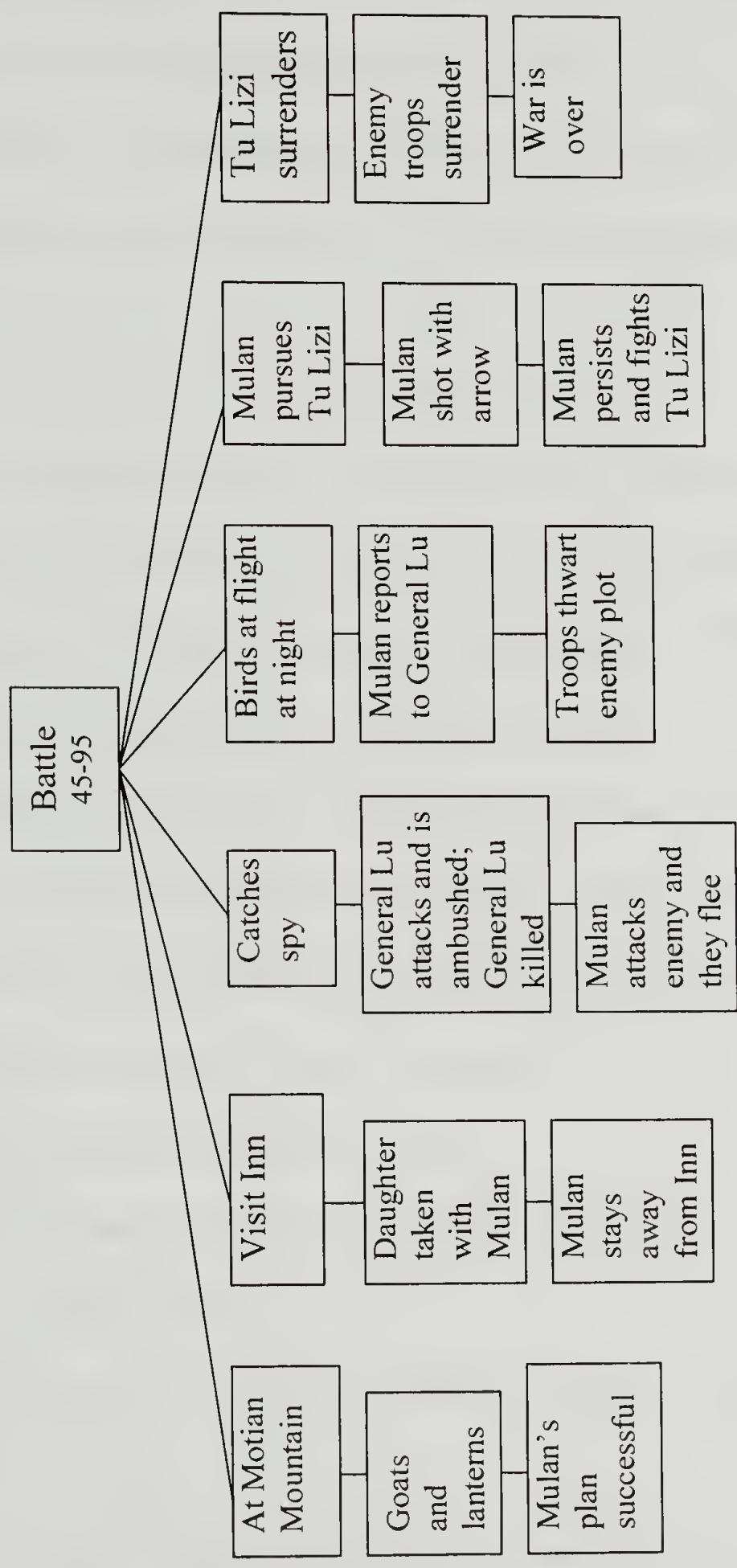


Chart 7
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1996*¹⁰³



¹⁰³ The numbers included are the pages of *Mulan 1996* that corresponded with the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Chart 7a
The Battle Episodes breakdown of *Mulan* 1996



Version Nine: *The Ballad of Mulan*, by Song Nan Zhang, California, 1998

The ninth version of the Mulan tale is Song Nan Zhang's *The Ballad of Mulan*, hereafter to be referred to as *Mulan 1998 Zhang*. *Mulan 1998 Zhang* contains the text of the Chinese poem, with English interpretation, as follows. Some of the pictures in *Mulan 1998 Zhang* serve to augment the story, while others only support the text. In cases where the pictures augment the story, text will appear in *italics* in parenthesis.

The Ballad of Mulan

Long ago, in a village in northern China, there lived a girl named Mulan. One day, she sat at her loom weaving cloth. *Click-clack! Click-clack!* went the loom.

Suddenly, the sound of weaving changed to sorrowful signs. "What troubles you?" her mother asked. "Nothing, Mother," Mulan softly replied.

Her mother asked again and again, until Mulan finally said, "There is news of war."

"Invaders are attacking. The emperor is calling for troops. Last night, I saw the draft posted and twelve scrolls of names in the market. Father's name is on every one."

(The marketplace was a lively scene. Scores of men lined up to see if their names appeared on the scrolls posted on the wall.)

"But Father is old and frail," Mulan sighed. "How can he fight? He has no grown son and I have no elder brother."

"I will go to the markets. I shall buy a saddle and a horse. I must fight in Father's place."

(Mulan and her sister sadly present their father with his battle robes, helmet and sword.

Mulan's younger brother looks on attentively.)

From the eastern market Mulan bought a horse, and from the western market, a saddle.

From the southern market she bought a bridle, and from the northern market, a whip.

At dawn Mulan dressed in her armor and bid a sad farewell to her father, mother, sister, and brother. Then she mounted her horse and rode off with the soldiers.

(Mulan, dressed as a man looks identical to the other troops waiting for her to depart.)

By nightfall she was camped by the bank of the Yellow River. She thought she heard her mother calling her name. But it was only the sound of the river crying.

(The river bank is expansive. Scores of troops are camped there, some are practicing maneuvers, and others are on horse-back.)

At sunrise Mulan took leave of the Yellow River. At dusk she reached the peak of Black Mountain.

In the darkness she longed to hear her father's voice but heard only the neighing of enemy horses far away.

(The troops are on the move, mounted on horse-back, traveling through mountain passes.)

Mulan rode ten thousand miles to fight in a hundred battles. She crossed peaks and passes like a bird in flight.

Nights at the camp were harsh and cold, but Mulan endured every hardship. Knowing her father was safe warmed her heart.

The war dragged on. Fierce battles ravaged the land. One after another, noble generals lost their lives.

Mulan's skill and courage won her respect and rank. After ten years, she returned as a great general, triumphant and victorious!

The Emperor summoned Mulan to the High Palace. He praised her for her bravery and leadership in battle.

The Court would bestow many great titles upon her. Mulan would be showered with gifts of gold.

(The palace girls entertained with dancing and music while the soldiers bowed to the Emperor.)

“Worthy General, you may have your heart’s desire,” the Emperor said. “I have no need for honors or gold,” Mulan replied.

“All I ask for is a swift camel to take me back home.” The Emperor sent a troop to escort Mulan on her trip.

In town, the news of Mulan’s return created great excitement. Holding each other, her proud parents walked to the village gate to welcome her.

Waiting at home, Mulan’s sister beautified herself. Her brother sharpened his knife to prepare a pig and sheep for the feast in Mulan’s honor.

Home at last! Mulan threw open her bedroom door and smiled. She removed her armor and changed into one of her favorite dresses.

She brushed out her shiny black hair and pasted a yellow flower on her face. She looked into the mirror and smiled again, happy to be home.

What a surprise it was when Mulan appeared at the door! Her comrades were astonished and amazed. “How is this possible?” they asked.

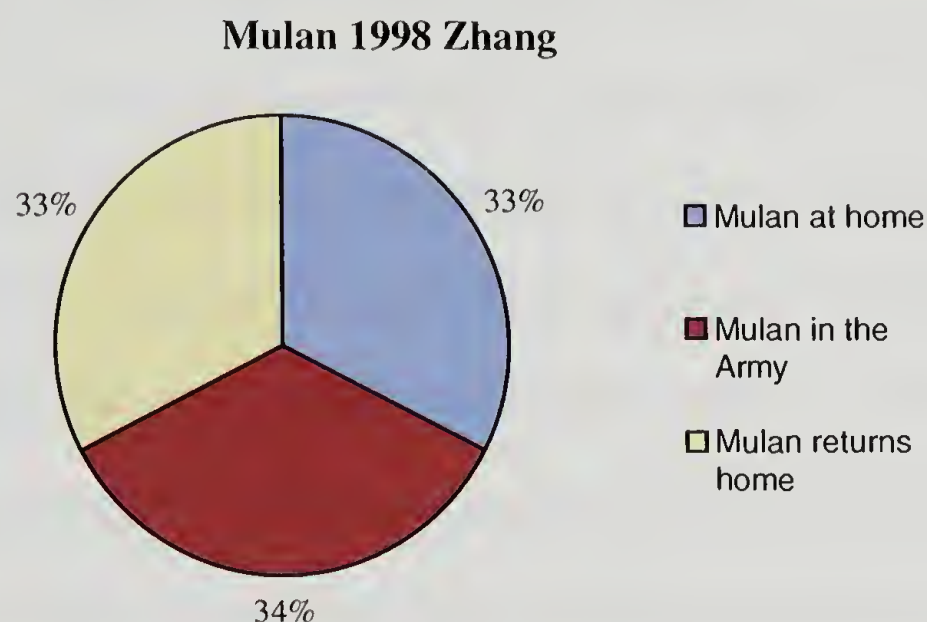
“How could we have fought side by side with you for ten years and not have known you were a woman!”

Mulan replied, “They say the male rabbit likes to hop and leap, while the female rabbit prefers to sit still. But in times of danger, when the two rabbits scurry by, who can tell male from female?”

Mulan’s glory spread through the land. And to this day, we sing of this brave woman who loved her family and served her country, asking for nothing in return.

Breakdown Version Nine: *Mulan 1998 Zhang*

The breakdown of this version is the same as the poem, and therefore will not be discussed here.



Version Ten: *Fa Mulan: The Story of a Woman Warrior*, by Robert San Souci, New York, 1998

The tenth version of the Mulan tale is Robert San Souci’s *Fa Mulan: The Story of a Woman Warrior*, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1998 San Souci*. *Mulan 1998 San Souci* begins with Fa Mulan being scolded by her sister for acting like a boy. Mulan is carrying a stick pretending it’s a sword. While her elder sister shops, Mulan notices a large crowd.

She approaches and sees that they are all looking at twelve scrolls posted on a wall. Mulan learns that the names listed are men who must serve in the army, and sees her father's name. Mulan learns further that any listed man who does not serve will be punished, along with his family.

The next day, Mulan, while sitting at her loom, thinks about her father's situation. She knows that her younger brother is too young to go to war, but thinks that, since she is strong and she acts like a man, perhaps she should take her father's place. She proposes this idea to her parents, who at first protest, but then her father concedes. Mulan goes out and buys a horse, saddle, bridle, and long whip. The next morning, she cuts her long hair, puts on her father's armor, and bidding her parents farewell, departs.

Mulan heads to the Yellow River, where the Khan's army is camped.¹⁰⁴ When Mulan arrives at the camp, she enlists, and thinks to herself that she will be like the Maiden of Yueh, the great swordswoman. The next morning the troops head out to Black Mountain, where they could only hear the cry of bird and the whinnying of horses. However, as they move northward, they begin to hear the sounds of the Tartar armies. Then they see the Tartars, and both sides pause for a moment. The sound of battle drums fills the air, and Mulan urges her horse forward. Mulan fights, thinking of the Maiden of Yueh, and helps drive the enemy forces back. Mulan is praised by one of her comrades for fighting with a balance of male and female energies.

Although successful in battle, Mulan misses her family, and is additionally lonely because she must remain distant from her comrades so as to keep her true identity a secret. Battle after battle, Mulan is always in the midst of the fighting, and gains the command of a battalion. Mulan meets with other generals and her battle plans are always accepted.

¹⁰⁴ Khan here refers to Mulan's ruler.

The Khan's generals decide that the army shall be split in two. Mulan orders her troops to walk massed together as a crowd, rather than in columns so that they do not look like a real army. The Tartar troops think they will have an easy time defeating this group, but once they sound the battle drums, Mulan's troops form straight lines and the Tartars are swiftly defeated.

During the victory celebrations, a messenger arrives, telling Mulan that she must appear before the Khan. Mulan fears that her secret has been discovered. However, upon her arrival in the capital, Mulan is taken to see the Khan who immediately praises Mulan for her skills and remarks upon the honors she deserves. Mulan states that, as the kingdom is safe, she only wishes to return home. A group of Mulan's comrades escort her home.

Mulan's family all await her arrival and meet her with tear-filled eyes. Mulan enters her room and changes her clothes, applies makeup and arranges her hair. She then enters the courtyard where her comrades are waiting. They see Mulan and immediately realize that their general is a woman. One of Mulan's comrades remarks that male and female rabbits cannot be told apart when they run side by side, only the rabbits themselves know which is the husband and which is the wife. From his words, Mulan realizes that they may continue to be together. Mulan's father says that his daughter fought bravely like the Maiden of Yueh, but remarks that Mulan's name will receive far more fame.

Breakdown of *Mulan 1998 San Souci*¹⁰⁵

Mulan 1998 San Souci is an English children's book, containing 21 pages, 19 of which contain the text of the story, the remaining two an author's note about the origin of

¹⁰⁵ See Chart VIII for a breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs and episodes of *Mulan 1998 San Souci*.

the story. All 19 pages containing text are also fully illustrated; however the illustrations serve to reinforce, rather than augment, the story. *Mulan 1998 San Souci* can be broken down as follows.

A. Mulan at home—5 pages

A1. Introduction—1.5 pages

- a. Mulan behaving like a man
- b. Mulan being scolded by her sister for these actions

A2. Conscription—1 page

- a. Mulan sees the conscription notices posted on the wall
- b. Mulan learns of the ramifications of not obeying the orders
- c. Mulan thinks of the solution to this problem while weaving

A3. Mulan prepares to go—2.5 pages

- a. Mulan's parents agree to her plan
- b. Mulan buys a horse, bridle, saddle, and whip
- c. Mulan cuts her hair, dons her father's battle armor, and bids farewell to her parents

D. Mulan in the army—12 pages

B1. Mulan travels—2.5 pages

- a. Mulan travels to the Yellow River where she enlists
- b. Mulan and the troops travel to Black Mountain

B2. Battle—7.5 pages

- a. Mulan helps push back the Tartar troops
- b. Mulan leads her own troops

c. Mulan tricks the Tartar forces

d. The enemy is defeated

B3. Mulan sees the Khan—2 pages

a. Mulan fears her secret is known

b. The Khan is impressed with Mulan's skill, and honors are awarded

c. Mulan only wants to return home

E. Mulan returns home—3 pages

C1. Mulan returns home—1/2 page

a. Mulan is escorted by her comrades

b. Mulan's family greets her tearfully

C2. Mulan returns to her female identity—1/2 page

a. Mulan changes her clothes

b. Applies make up

c. Arranges her hair

C3. Mulan sees her comrades—2 pages

a. Comrades recognize female Mulan as their general

b. One comrade makes the comparison with rabbits, within which is the implication of a marriage

c. Mulan's father predicts the fame of Mulan's story

In his two page author's note, San Souci notes that his version of the story is based upon the poem, although in this "retelling" of the story, he takes liberties to include some details not included in the poem. San Souci further notes that the ideas behind the added battles are inspired by Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*; and that it is likely that Mulan (the real

person) was inspired by the Maiden of Yueh. As his version is an interpretation of the poem rather than a translation, the emphasis given to the motifs and sub-motifs greatly differs from the poem, as can be seen in the pie chart below.

Mulan 1998 San Souci

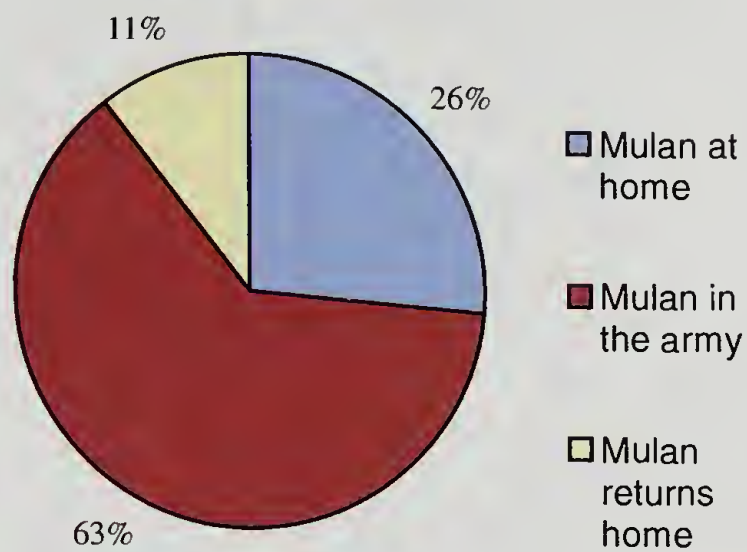
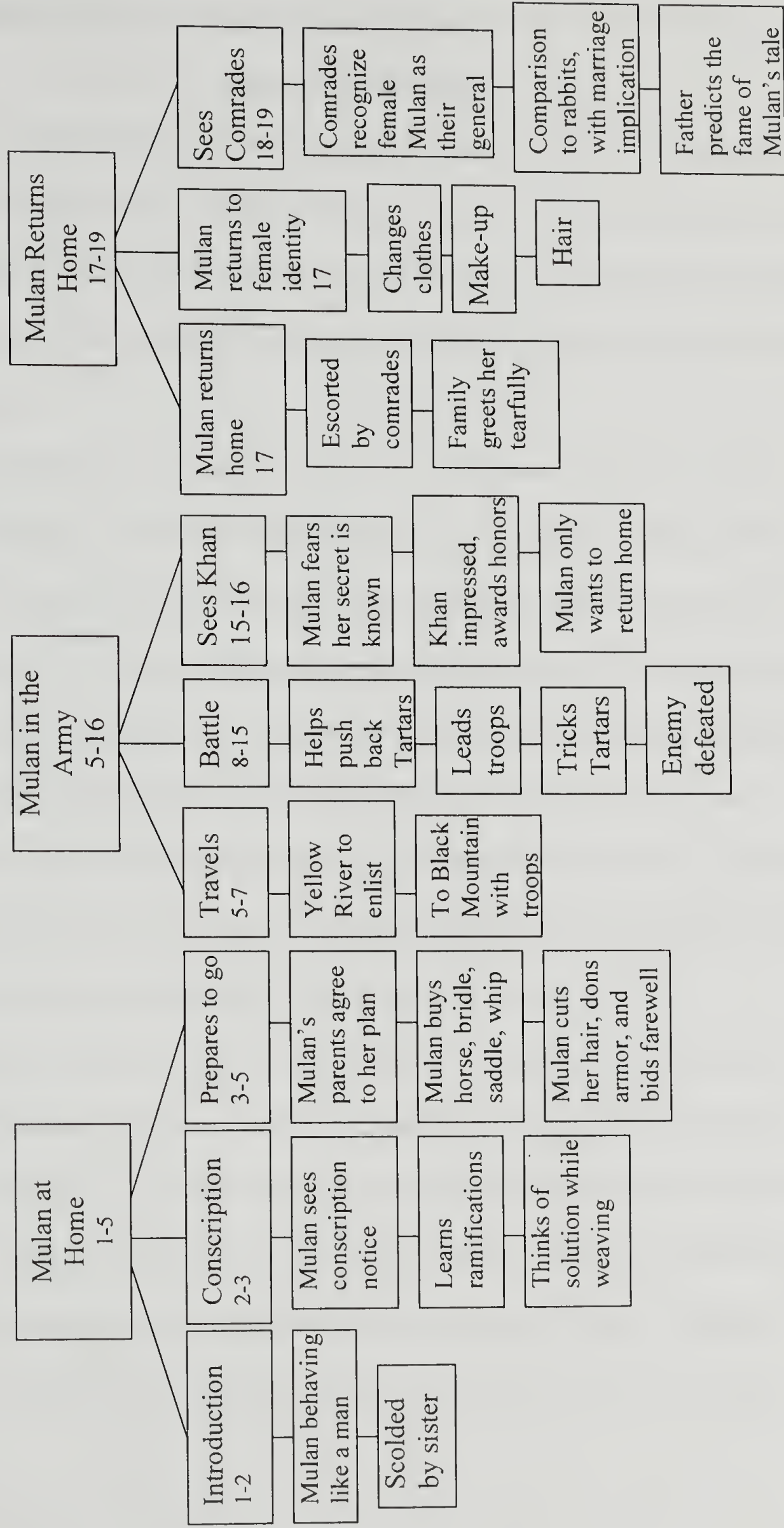


Chart 8

The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1998 San Souci*¹⁰⁶



¹⁰⁶ The numbers included are the pages of *Mulan 1998 San Souci* that correspond to the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Version Eleven: *Mulan*, Walt Disney Productions, Tony Bancroft and Barry Cook
directors, Florida, 1998

The eleventh version of the Mulan tale is Walt Disney Productions' animated film *Mulan*, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 1998 Disney*. *Mulan 1998 Disney* begins with the enemy attacking a sentry stationed on the Great Wall. The guard runs to light the signal fire, making the empire aware that the enemy has attacked, which seems to please Shan Yu, their leader.

At the Imperial Palace, the lead general informs the Emperor that the enemy has attacked. The Emperor commands Qifu, his secretary, to deliver conscription notices throughout the empire; the Emperor wants every family to send one man to war. The lead general says his troops can handle the war, to which emperor replies, "a single grain of rice can tip the scale. One man can make the difference between victory and defeat."

In the country, Mulan is sitting in her room, still in her bedclothes eating rice, practicing a recitation while she writes the text of the recitation on her arm. A rooster crows and Mulan realizes she is late. Meanwhile, Mulan's father is in the family shrine, praying to his ancestors to help Mulan impress the matchmaker.

In town, Fa Li, Mulan's mother is waiting anxiously. Mulan arrives on horseback with straw in her hair. She tries to talk, but her mother only tells her to go get cleaned up. The ladies who are helping start to sing about how bad Mulan looks, but are certain they can make her look like a beautiful girl. The song indicates how Mulan is going to bring honor to everyone by becoming the perfect bride; the most important of which is that she bears sons. Mulan leaves the preparation room, praying to her ancestors to help her.

Mulan's meeting with the matchmaker starts roughly, and ends with the matchmaker kicking Mulan out and telling her that she will never bring honor to her family.

Mulan leaves, downtrodden. She begins to sing about how she will never be a perfect bride or a perfect daughter. She goes to sit in the garden and her father approaches. Mulan hides her face. While her father is trying to console Mulan, drums are heard in the background. The drums announce the arrival of Qifu with the edicts. Mulan's father goes outside his homestead gate, as other men gather outside. Qifu proclaims that one man from every family is to serve in the imperial army. The "Fa" family is called and Mulan's father walks up to accept the scroll. Mulan runs out in protest; Qifu tells her father that he should teach her how to act in front of men; Mulan's father says she dishonors him.

While Mulan watches from behind a screen, Mulan's father takes out his sword and practices a bit, then falls, exhausted. At tea, Mulan tries to be quiet but explodes, saying that he shouldn't have to go. Her father says it's an honor to protect his country and family. Mulan says he will die for honor; he says he will die doing what's right, that he knows his place, and that it's time Mulan learned hers. Crying, Mulan runs out into the rain. Mulan sits, crying in the rain, when she is "struck" with what to do.

She goes to the family shrine, lights an incense stick; goes to her parent's room, replaces the written proclamation on father's bedside table with her hair comb; goes to the armor room, takes out the sword, cuts her hair off, puts on the armor; goes to the stables, gets a horse and sneaks out of the compound. Shortly thereafter, Mulan's grandmother wakes up, saying Mulan is gone. Her father finds his armor missing.

Mulan's mother says they must go after her, but her father says if they go after her and the army finds out she is a woman, she will be killed anyway, so they have to let her go.

In the ancestral shrine, things come to life. The head ancestor calls for Mushu, a very small dragon, to awaken. Mushu awakens and is told to summon the ancestors. The ancestors awaken and talk about Mulan's situation. They argue for a while about Mulan's motives, some saying she's being a good daughter, others calling her a "cross dresser", but in the end, they decide that they must send a family guardian to protect her. They decide to send the great stone dragon, but Mushu pretends to be him, and goes in his place, bringing the cricket (Cri-kee) with him.

The scene changes to a mountain pass in flames. Shan Yu's hawk is flying through while Shan Yu and his troops are riding hard. They stop short, two of Shan Yu's men dismount, and find two imperial scouts. Shan Yu congratulates them on finding his Hun army. One scout says the Emperor will stop Shan Yu. Shan Yu says that by building the wall and questioning his strength, the Emperor asked for a war. Shan Yu sets one scout free to tell the Emperor to send his strongest armies and has the other killed.

Meanwhile, Mulan is by the river, practicing acting like a man. She looks down at the encampment, and thinks there is no way she will pass as a man. Just then the fiery image of Mushu appears and encourages Mulan. Mulan enters the camp, and almost immediately gets in a fight with her fellow soldiers. Mulan meets Yao, the main aggressor; Ling, the skinny sidekick; and Jian Pou, the giant Buddhist. In the general's tent, the general is talking about the war situation with his son Li Shang. The general decides to attack Shan Yu, and Shang will remain in the camp as captain to train the new

troops. The men leave the tent to find the camp in chaos, all “caused” by Mulan. Shang asks Mulan who she is, and Mulan says her name is Ping.

The next day, training begins. All of the troops are in bad shape, but Mulan is by far the worst. Shang tells her that she will not make it, and to go home; spurred by this, Mulan completes the challenge made to all of them on the first day of training. From then on, the troops’ performance during the training improves; Yao, Ling, Jian Pou and Mulan becoming top soldiers of the group.

Meanwhile, because the imperial army is blocking the Deng Shao pass, Shan Yu, decides to attack them, because traveling through the pass is the fastest way to the emperor.

Back in camp, Mulan is with Mushu, her horse, and Cri-kee. She has decided to bathe. Mushu is still worried and Mulan tells him to stand watch. Just then Ling, Yao, and Jian Pou rush into the river. Mulan tries to hide, but they see her. Mushu saves the day by biting Ling and making them think there’s something in the water.

On her way back to her tent, Mulan overhears Shang and Qifu talking. Qifu says that Shang and his troops will never see battle because they will never be ready. Mulan runs into Shang as he is leaving Qifu’s tent. She tries to console him, to no avail. As Shang walks away, Mulan’s look softens; it becomes apparent that she likes Shang as more than a captain.

Mushu overhears Qifu telling Shang that they will not be going to battle and decides to change matters. Mushu needs Mulan to go to war and win some kind of medal so he can win back favor with the ancestors. He and Cri-kee write a fake message from the general, saying that he needs Shang and his troops at the front. Mushu disguises himself

as a messenger, and gives the scroll to Qifu, who proclaims that Shang and the troops are to set out.

While marching, the troops sing about the pains of marching. As they are singing they come to the charred remains of a frontier town. Shang tells them to look for survivors. He is confused, because his father should have been there, but then they all look over the ridge, and see there was a battle; the imperial troops have lost, Shang's father is dead.

While the troops continue to march, Mushu accidentally fires a rocket, letting the Hun troops know their location, and the Huns start to attack. Shang's troops fire all but one cannon into the mountains. Then Shan Yu appears on the ridge, and Shang's troops realize that they are horribly outnumbered. Shang tells them to fight and die with honor, telling Yao to fire the last cannon at Shan Yu. Mulan takes the cannon from Yao, runs towards the oncoming Hun troops, and just as Shan Yu is upon her, fires the cannon into a snowdrift, causing a huge avalanche, burying the Hun troops.

Mulan and Shang get caught in the avalanche; while on her horse, Mulan pulls Shang out of the snow; her horse is swept over a cliff, but the others save them. They praise Mulan as the bravest of them all, but she has been injured and passes out. Mulan is taken to the medic's tent. Yao, Ling, Jian Pou, and Shang are all greatly worried. The doctor comes out and calls Shang. He says something, which the audience knows must be the news that Mulan is a woman. Shang enters the tent and Mulan sits up, revealing her bandaged chest; it is apparent that she is a woman. Qifu enters the tent, and pulls her outside into the snow. He calls her a traitorous snake, and tells Shang that he knows the law. First Mulan's horse tries to save her, then her comrades, but they are all stopped.

Shang walks up, sword drawn, but throws the sword at her feet, saying a life for a life.

Shang then orders the troops on, and Mulan is left alone in the snow.

Mulan and Mushu sit in the snow feeling sorry for themselves, and they decide to go home; but then Mulan hears something on the other side of the ridge. Shan Yu and his strongest men survived the avalanche, and are determined to attack the capital. Mulan and Mushu mount her horse and speed off to the capital.

In the capital a great celebration has begun, welcoming Shang and his troops. Mulan confronts Shang, telling him that Shan Yu has survived and is in the capital, but Shang will not listen. Mulan tries to tell others, but she has returned to her female identity, and no one will listen to her. Shang arrives before the Emperor and hands him Shan Yu's sword. Just at that moment, Shan Yu's men jump out, grab the Emperor, drag him into the palace, and bar the doors. Shang and his men try to break down the door, to no avail. Mulan appears with a plan, and they all climb up the support beams. Then Ling, Jian Pou and Yao all dress as women to distract Shan Yu's guards, while Shang goes to save the Emperor.

Shan Yu has taken the Emperor to a high balcony overlooking the throngs of panicked citizens. Shan Yu tells the Emperor to bow to him, but the Emperor refuses. Just then, Shang enters and fights Shan Yu. Jian Pou apologetically picks the Emperor up, and takes him to safety. Ling and Yao follow, while Shang fights Shan Yu. Mulan is about to follow when Shan Yu hits Shang, and he is knocked unconscious. Mulan then attracts Shan Yu's attention by revealing that she was the one who caused the avalanche. Shan Yu, enraged, leaves Shang and chases Mulan. Through a combination of wits and skill, Mulan leads Shan Yu onto the rooftop and into her trap. Mushu fires a large exploding

fire cracker which hits Shan Yu in the stomach, and he is carried away. Mulan then makes her way down to the group, landing on Shang who is running out of the palace. Qifu comes down scolding Shang for protecting Mulan, saying that she will never be worth anything.

The Emperor appears before them, saying that Mulan impersonated a soldier and destroyed his palace, but saved them all (from Shan Yu). He offers Mulan an imperial position, but Mulan says that she only wants to return home. He gives Mulan his crest and Shan Yu's sword; in return, Mulan hugs the Emperor, and heads home. The Emperor tells Shang that he ought to follow her, as she is a rare woman.

Mulan returns home and presents her father with the Emperor's crest and Shan Yu's sword. Mulan's father throws both on the ground to embrace his daughter. Shang arrives and asks Mulan's grandmother if Mulan is home. He is led to Mulan and her father, greets Mulan's father, and gives Mulan her helmet. Mulan asks him to stay for dinner and the two go off. In the ancestral temple, a party is taking place, during which Mushu learns that he has regained the favor of the ancestors.

Breakdown of *Mulan 1998 Disney*¹⁰⁷

Mulan 1988 Disney is an American-made, full-length, animated film, which is 81 minutes, 21 seconds long. *Mulan 1998 Disney* can be broken down as follows.

A. Mulan at home—25 minutes, 28 seconds

A1. Introduction—14 minutes, 10 seconds

a. The Huns attack China

b. Mulan is seen in various scenes acting in non-traditional female ways

¹⁰⁷ See Chart IX for a breakdown of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 1998 Disney*.

- c. Mulan is a disgrace with and to the matchmaker
- d. Mulan's father consoles her

A2. Conscription—4 minutes, 12 seconds

- a. Qifu arrives
- b. Mulan speaks out about her father having to join the army
- c. Mulan's father criticizes her for speaking out
- d. Mulan sees that her father is too old and injured to join the army
- e. Mulan thinks of a solution

A3. Mulan prepares to go—7 minutes, 5 seconds

- a. Mulan takes the edict from her father's bed-side table
- b. Mulan cuts her hair
- c. Puts on her father's armor
- d. Departs secretly
- e. The ancestors are awakened, and Mushu departs to protect Mulan

C. Mulan in the army—53 minutes, 19 seconds

B1. Mulan travels—3 minutes, 51 seconds

- a. Shan Yu kills the scout
- b. Mulan, outside the camp, is practicing to act like a man
- c. Mulan meets Mushu

B2. Mulan in the army—35 minutes, 14 seconds

- a. Mulan 'meets' her comrades
- b. Mulan and her comrades go through rounds of training
- c. Mulan's secret is almost discovered while she is bathing

- d. The troops move out, and find the other troops and Shang's father dead
 - e. The Huns attack, Mulan's plan makes Shang successful
 - f. Mulan is injured and her secret is discovered
- B3. The troops go to the capital—14 minutes, 22 seconds
- a. Mulan sees that Shan Yu is alive
 - b. Mulan tries to warn Shang
 - c. The Emperor is kidnapped by the Hun troops
 - d. Mulan has a plan, which is successful
 - e. The Emperor is safe, and wants to reward Mulan
 - f. Mulan only wants to return home
- D. Mulan returns home—2 minutes, 32 seconds
- C1. Mulan returns home—1 minute, 8 seconds
- a. Mulan presents her father with the Emperor's gifts
 - b. Mulan's father only wants to hug Mulan
- C2. Mulan sees Shang—1 minute, 24 seconds
- a. Shang arrives
 - b. Mulan asks Shang to stay for dinner
 - c. In the ancestral temple, Mushu is forgiven

Although the producers of *Mulan 1998 Disney* indicate that the poem was the source of inspiration for the movie, the writers and producers took significant liberties in changing the story.

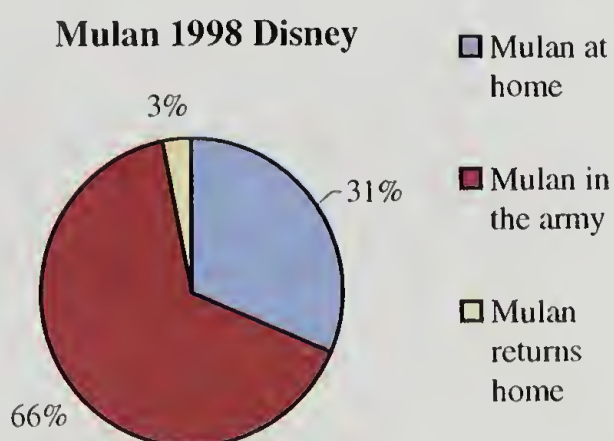
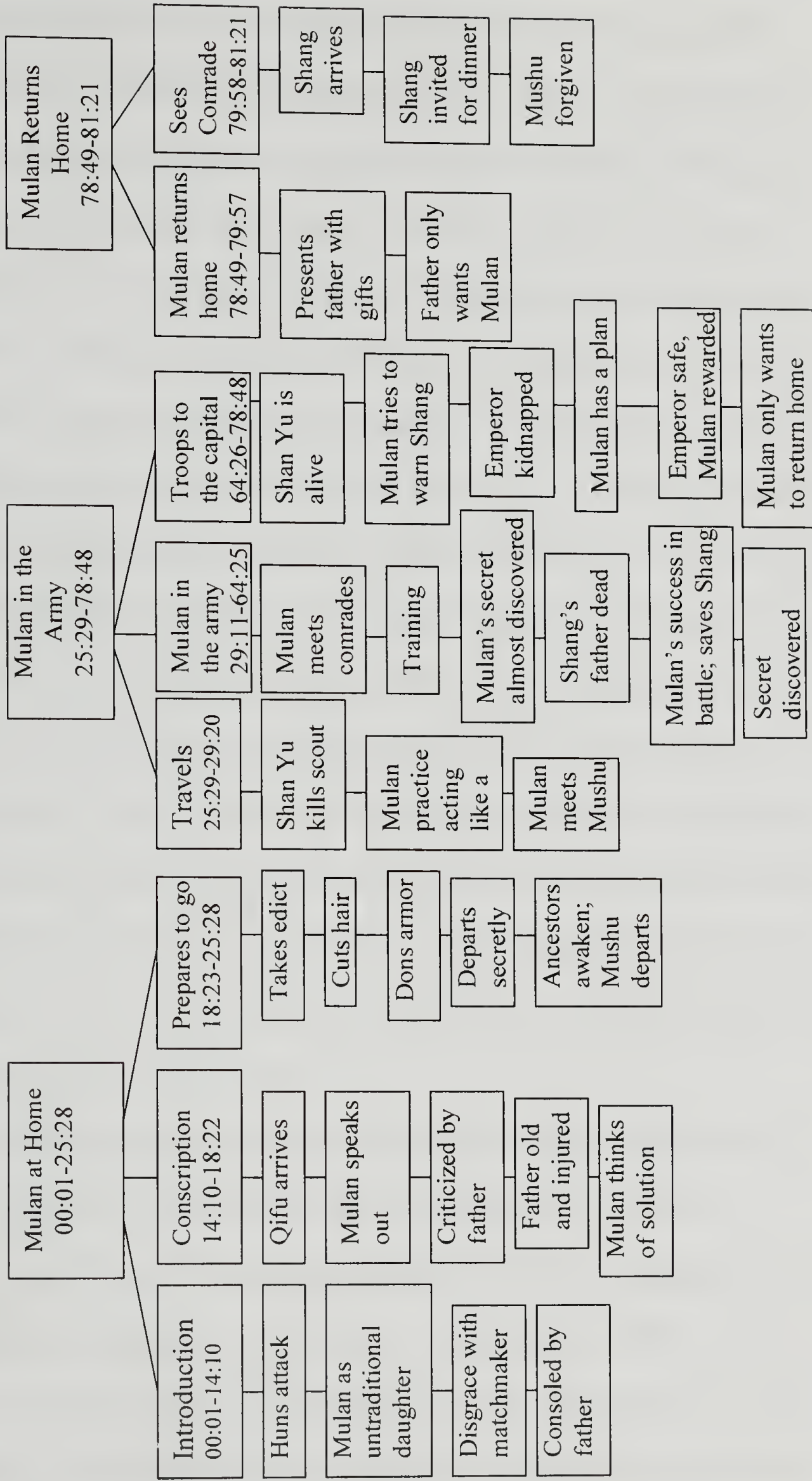


Chart 9
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 1998 Disney*¹⁰⁸



¹⁰⁸ The numbers included are the minutes of *Mulan 1998 Disney* that correspond to the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

The twelfth and final version of the Mulan tale is Chen Sufen's *Hua Mulan* 花木兰, hereafter referred to as *Mulan 2001*. *Mulan 2001* begins with background to the story. In the Gaozu reign period of the Tang dynasty, all people are at peace. In a village in Shanxi province there is a 51-year-old man named Hua Hu, who was a soldier of the Emperor. He is a brave man, and has received many honors. Hua Hu has a wife, Mrs. Yang, and three children: his daughters Hua Muhui, 18, and Hua Mulan, 15, and his son Hua Mudi, age 3. Although Hua Hu is a farmer and no longer in the army, his name is still listed in the prefectural army. One day, a military official, Zhao Tong, comes to the Hua homestead looking for Hua Hu. However, upon his arrival, Mrs. Yang informs him that Hua Hu is at the village leader Zhu Quan's home. Zhao Tong leaves, escorted by Hua Ming, Hua Hu's nephew, in search of Hua Hu. While on the road, Zhao Tong tells Hua Ming that the Turks have attacked the frontier, and the Emperor has called for the conscription of a great army. Hua Ming says that Hua Hu is ill, and cannot go back into battle, but Zhao Tong says there is no other way. Upon arriving at Zhu Quan's home, the two learn that Hua Hu has already departed. Zhao Tong asks Hua Ming to inform Hua Hu that he will return the following day.

Hua Ming returns to the Hua homestead to find Hua Hu and Mrs. Yang having a serious conversation; Hua Ming realizes that Hua Hu already knows about the conscription. Mrs. Yang calls her daughter Muhui into the room, saying that they need to make a waistcoat for Hua Hu, as he will soon be going back into the army. Mrs. Yang inquires as to the whereabouts of her other daughter Mulan, but Muhui did not know. From a young age, Hua Hu taught Hua Ming martial arts, and Mulan often practiced

along with them. Over time, Mulan's skill surpassed Hua Ming's. Mrs. Yang, thinking about this, wished that Mulan was a boy.

Although Mulan is supposed to be weaving, she is actually practicing martial arts. When Mulan returns to the weaving room, all she can think about is further practice. Mulan has heard about the conscription, and is concerned because her father is aging and has an upper respiratory illness. Suddenly, Mulan thinks of a solution. She will take her father's place in battle. She goes to her father's chamber to discuss this with him, but he will not consider the idea. Mulan's mother enters the room and Hua Hu tells her of Mulan's idea, and she also refuses to even consider the idea.

The next day, while it was still dark out, Mulan sneaks into her father's armor room, and puts on his armor. She then hears a voice at the gate. She thinks it is Hua Ming, so she opens the gate, and is very surprised to find Zhao Tong looking for her father. Mulan escorts Zhao Tong to see her father. Her father sits up once he sees his guest, but does not recognize Mulan. Zhao Tong tries to persuade Hua Hu into letting his "son" (Mulan) go to war for him, but Hua Hu, thinking of Hua Mudi says that his son is too young. Zhao Tong leaves, and on his way out, encourages Mulan to persuade her father into letting her take his place.

As Zhao Tong is leaving the Hua homestead, Hua Ming arrives. He walks right past Mulan, and she makes fun of him for not recognizing her. Hua Ming is amazed when he hears Mulan's voice coming out of this fine soldier. Mulan and Hua Ming walk into the homestead. When Mrs. Yang sees Hua Ming, she asks who his soldier friend is. Mulan, encouraged that even her mother does not recognize her, identifies herself to her mother, and she and Hua Ming convince her mother to allow her to go to war in her father's place.

The three of them go to see Hua Hu, and after some conversation, Hua Hu concedes.

Hua Hu then begins to teach Mulan about being in the army. Hua Hu tells Mulan that the most important things to remember are that she must always follow her orders and never drink alcohol.

Hua Hu then gives Mulan and Hua Ming some money and tells them to go buy horses. He also gives Mulan a letter addressed to Zhu Quan, and tells Mulan to present that letter to Zhu Quan when she goes to enlist. Mulan and Hua Ming first go to Zhu Quan's office. Mulan says that she is Hua Hu's son, but Zhu Quan is a close friend of Hua Hu, and immediately realizes that it is Mulan standing in front of him. She then hands Zhu Quan the letter written by Hua Hu. Zhu Quan reads, says that all is okay, and tells Mulan and Hua Ming that they must be on the road the following morning. Mulan thanks Zhu Quan, and she and Hua Ming leave. They go to buy horses; Mulan buys a pure white horse and names it Little White Dragon.

That evening they all dine together one last time. In the morning, Mulan and Hua Ming prepare to depart. Muhui agrees to take care of the household and their parents. Hua Ming promises Mrs. Yang that he will look after Mulan, and the two depart. While on the road, they meet up with some other young men from their town. Hua Ming wants to be friendly with them, but Mulan finds them offensive. They only want to talk about girls, and what they have to say was not polite. Mulan is offended, and rides ahead. Hua Ming catches up with her just as she is entering a town, and together they find a place to stay for the evening. They part for the evening, each to get some rest.

Mulan is awakened by shouting from the road. The four young men they met on the road are shouting at the inn keeper because there are no rooms available, and are making

quite a scene. Mulan goes down and offers the four her room, and leaves to find Hua Ming in his room. Once she is inside, there is a knock on the door; the four want to treat the “brothers Hua” to a drink. Mulan realizes that they cannot refuse, and so she humors them. At first, Hua Ming drinks for Mulan, but the four pressure her into drinking. After a few glasses, the four are drunk, and talk about girls again, and Mulan leaves.

The next morning, Mulan wants to be on the road early. Upon arriving at Dongguan, Mulan and Hua Ming find a place to stay, and then report for duty. They are told to report for duty at General He’s tent first thing the following morning. The following morning, Mulan and Hua Ming report for duty, and are amazed at all the brave young men who are there. Everyone is ordered to the military practice grounds, which is a very lively scene with lots of pomp and circumstance. General He announces that the military competitions are to begin. A very powerful looking young man steps forward, and many come forward to challenge him, however all are defeated. Mulan then steps forward, and after 20 rounds defeats the young man. Mulan then defeats 30 more young men, after which General He decides that is enough. General He says he is pleased with their performances, and assigns both of them to the provisions and mess battalion. Mulan and Hua Ming set off for their new post; however Mulan is frustrated that she will not be in a fighting position. Hua Ming encourages her, stating that they are still essential to the army.

At the provisions tent, Mulan and Hua Ming meet Li Jun and the other young men stationed there. Mulan is immediately impressed with Li Jun and the others. That evening the young men all share a meal and drinks together. At first Mulan would not drink, but after a while she is pressured into drinking and gets drunk, much to Hua

Ming's displeasure, because not only did Hua Hu warn her about drinking, but she was supposed to be on guard duty that evening. Hua Ming realizes that Mulan is drunk and takes her back to her tent, telling her to sleep for a while. Once Hua Ming is gone, Mulan leaves her tent. She is only pretending to be drunk so that she can be alert for duty.

While out, she runs into Li Jun who is amazed to see her looking so alert; Li Jun realizes that she was not really drunk and the two laugh together.

The next day, General He orders the troops to move out. Mulan and the rest of the provisions battalion are to go to Nan Ping Mountain. However, on the road, Mulan and the others encounter the troops already engaged in battle, and they are losing. Mulan leads the provisions battalion into battle, taking the Turks by surprise and causing them to flee. Mulan and the others are consequently promoted. Mulan is made Zhu Quan's assistant, and she follows him and learns a great deal. After a while, she is given 1,200 men of her own to lead. These soldiers are all from Mulan's home town; however none of them recognize her.

That evening, they hear a loud horn sound, and they all know that it is the enemy troops. Mulan's troops prepare for battle. Mulan's troops are ordered to capture Wulang Garrison while Zhu Quan leads his troops to capture Bao'an City. After Mulan and her troops successfully capture Wulang Garrison, she received news that General He was besieged by Turk forces.

When Zhu Quan goes to Bao'an City and Mulan goes to Wulang Garrison, General He engages the Turk troops, led by Tuli Khan, in battle. The Turks appear to be defeated and flee, so General He follows. However, this is Tuli Khan's plan. He leads General He into a narrow valley, and is planning on turning around and attacking. However, just

at that time, Mulan and her troops are standing on a high cliff and they all shoot arrows at the enemy troops, causing the enemy to flee. In this battle, General He is shaken, and Li Jun is injured. After a few days, General He receives a full report from his officers. He is very pleased with both Mulan and Zhu Quan, and both are promoted and stationed in Wulang Garrison.

The army has set up a temporary infirmary in a shop in Wulang Garrison, and Mulan frequently goes there to visit Li Jun. While there, she meets the shop owner's sister, A Zhen, who becomes quite taken with Mulan. All of the soldiers joke that Mulan should take A Zhen as a wife, which, of course, makes Mulan very uncomfortable.

Late one evening, as Mulan is making rounds, she sees two shadows sneaking off. Then she notices a large flock of birds in the night sky. Realizing that something is afoot, she goes to report to General He. General He agrees with Mulan, and calls for the troops to prepare themselves. General He's men will fight the Turks, while Mulan is to lead her troops against the Turk stronghold of Shuifang City. Mulan arrives at Shuifang City to find the gates locked tight. She orders her men to pile branches at the door, and is able to smoke out the Turk troops, killing them as they come rushing out of the gate. Mulan and her troops then capture Shuifang City. Mulan orders Hua Ming to remain and protect Shuifang City, while she goes out to kill the enemy. While fighting, Mulan is struck by an arrow, and is brought within the city walls. Hua Ming wants Mulan to rest, however Mulan refuses, and instead climbs the guard tower and begins pounding on the battle drum. Mulan's troops are inspired by her bravery, and fight even harder.

By this time, General He and the main army have defeated the Turk army and caused them to flee. General He chases them to Shuifang City, and, finding their stronghold

captured, they scatter into the night. General He enters the city and tells the drummer to stop drumming, only then realizing it is Mulan. Because of her injury, Mulan is weak, and General He orders Hua Ming to take Mulan back to Wulang Garrison to recuperate.

It takes one year until Mulan is fully recuperated. During this time, A Zhen takes very good care of Mulan, and the two become very close. As such, even the locals think that Mulan should take A Zhen as a wife.

Although the Turks had not defeated the Tang army, the Emperor still worries; and as a result, he orders General He to defeat, once and for all, the Turk army such that they will never pose a threat to the empire again. General He launches many attacks against the Turks, pushing them farther and farther back. Everyone is pleased with this, except for Mulan, who truly wants to return to the front lines. Li Jun arrives from the frontlines to inform Mulan that General He's troops are deep in enemy territory, and are running out of provisions. It is decided that the provisions should be split into two groups of carts and camels, such that the enemy troops will not be able to steal them all. Li Jun will lead the carts, and Mulan with Hua Ming will lead the camels.

That evening, Mulan and Hua Ming prepare a meal and alcohol for Li Jun. Mulan goes looking for A Zhen and sees her talking with a soldier that she does not recognize. However, A Zhen says it was nothing, and Mulan lets it go. The next day, Mulan and the others leave Wulang Garrison to deliver supplies to General He. That evening, while some of the troops make camp, Mulan and Hua Ming continue on with the camels to deliver some provisions to General He. While crossing the river, they are attacked by Turk soldiers. Some of Mulan's soldiers are captured, while Hua Ming, in an attempt to protect Mulan, is knocked off his horse and trampled. By the time Li Jun arrives to help,

the battle and the provisions have already been lost. However, all Mulan notices is that her dear cousin, Hua Ming, died defending her. Mulan is enraged and vows to kill all of the enemy.

Mulan goes back to the camp with Li Jun. Upon her arrival, she is told that two Turk spies have been caught sneaking around. Mulan goes to confront them, and realizes that they are two of the four men she and Hua Ming met while they were traveling to join the army. She convinces these young men to trust her, and they tell her that she should surrender to Tuli Khan, and he will certainly spare their lives. Mulan discusses this with Li Jun, knowing that this may be the only way they can cross the river and bring supplies to General He. Li Jun agrees and writes a letter of surrender for Mulan.

Mulan arrives at the Turk camp with the letter, and is taken to see Tuli Khan. Tuli Khan is pleased, and says that his army will cross the river the following morning to take all of the provisions intended for General He. The next day, while the Turks are crossing the river, Mulan's troops, led by Li Jun, attack the Turks. Tuli Khan is surrounded, forced from his horse, and consequently forced to surrender. The war is over. Some provisions are delivered to General He. All troops return to Wulang Garrison. The troops are then summoned to the capital to have an audience with the Emperor. Mulan's presence is requested, as she is to receive many rewards and positions for her bravery in service, but Mulan says that she only wants to return home, which she is permitted to do.

The next day, many people from Wulang Garrison, as well as some soldiers see Mulan off. Li Jun and Mulan ride together and talk for a long time, especially about qualities in a partner. Mulan says that marriage should be based upon friendship and respect, but Li Jun does not believe that there is a woman who could be his equal in all things. Mulan

says that there is a woman in her village that fits this description, and invites Li Jun to come meet her. Li Jun misunderstands, thinking that Mulan is talking about her own sweetheart. When they arrive at Hua Ming's grave, Mulan dismounts, and cannot help but cry. Li Jun allows Mulan some time, and then says that they must go their separate ways.

Mulan then returns home after 12 years. Her sister is already married with four children, and her younger brother is 15 years old. Meanwhile, General He and the other troops go to the capital to have an audience with the Emperor. The Emperor is grateful to all the troops, and provides with all with riches and imperial positions. Li Jun and some others then go to visit Mulan to tell her about her rewards. Upon arriving in Mulan's hometown, they ask a young man where Mulan's home is. The young man happens to be Hua Mudi; he asks if they have come to see his sister. Li Jun is confused, and says that they have come to see Hua Mulan, the soldier. Hua Mudi says that yes, Hua Mulan is his second sister, who took her father's place in battle. Li Jun and the others cannot believe it.

They arrive at the Hua homestead, and are greeted by a beautiful woman, whom they soon realize is Mulan, their comrade. Mulan realizes why her comrades are confused, and is suddenly embarrassed. Her mother asks her to come to the kitchen to prepare some food, while Hua Hu explains the situation to them. When Mulan returns, everyone is relaxed and enjoys a nice meal together. They all eat and drink together. Li Jun tells Mulan that he would like to return to the capital, resign from his imperial post, and return to her village to become a farmer. He says that he knows nothing about farming, and that she will have to teach him, but he promises to work diligently. Mulan happily agrees.

Breakdown of *Mulan 2001*¹⁰⁹

Mulan 2001 is a juvenile literature version, with a total of 132 pages. Although the language is simpler than that of the previous two juvenile literature versions (*Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*), there is no *pinyin* to assist in pronunciation. *Mulan 2001* is fully illustrated, in a style very similar to Japanese animation; the illustrations serve to reinforce, rather than augment the story. *Mulan 2001* can be broken down as follows.

A. *Mulan at home*—40 pages

A1. Introduction—9 pages

- a. Hua Hu
- b. *Mulan and Hua Ming*

A2. Conscription—16 pages

- a. Hua Hu learns of the conscription
- b. *Mulan* suggests that she take her father's place in war, but is refused
- c. *Mulan* disguises herself as a man, wearing her father's armor
- d. Zhao Tong and Hua Ming fail to recognize *Mulan*
- e. Hua Hu and Mrs. Yang agree to *Mulan's* plan

A3. *Mulan* prepares to go—15 pages

- a. Hua Hu trains *Mulan* in the ways of the army
- b. Zhu Quan is told of *Mulan's* secret in Hua Hu's letter
- c. *Mulan* buys a horse
- d. The family has one last meal together
- e. *Mulan* and Hua Ming depart

¹⁰⁹ See Chart X for a breakdown of motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of *Mulan 2001*; and chart Xa for a breakdown of the battle episodes.

B. Mulan in the army—76 pages

B1. Mulan travels—10 pages

- a. Mulan and Hua Ming meet four fellow villagers
- b. These fellow villagers cause a scene at the inn
- c. Mulan and Hua Ming arrive at Dongguan

B2. Mulan in the army—58 pages

- a. At Dongguan
- b. Mulan's first post in the army
- c. Mulan's first battle
- d. Mulan saves General He
- e. Surprise attack
- f. Mulan fights the enemy
- g. Mulan at Wulang Garrison
- h. The Emperor orders Turk army defeated
- i. General He's provisions are cut off
- j. Mulan wins the war

B3. Mulan departs—8 pages

- a. The war is over
- b. The troops are summoned to the capital to receive rewards
- c. Mulan only wants to return home

C. Mulan returns home—16 pages

C1. Mulan returns home/ Troops go to capital—2 pages

- a. Mulan and Li Jun travel

- b. Mulan visits Hua Ming's tomb
- c. Troops have an audience with the Emperor, and all are rewarded with imperial posts

C2. Li Jun arrives at Mulan's village—3 pages

- a. Li Jun et al. arrive at Mulan's village
- b. Learn from Hua Mudi that Mulan is a woman

C3. Mulan sees her comrades—11 pages

- a. Hua Hu explains the situation to Li Jun et al.
- b. Li Jun indicates that he wishes to return to Mulan's home to work as a farmer

As with the previous juvenile literature versions, the emphasis of *Mulan 2001* is Mulan's time in the army, and specifically her time at war, as can be seen in the chart below.

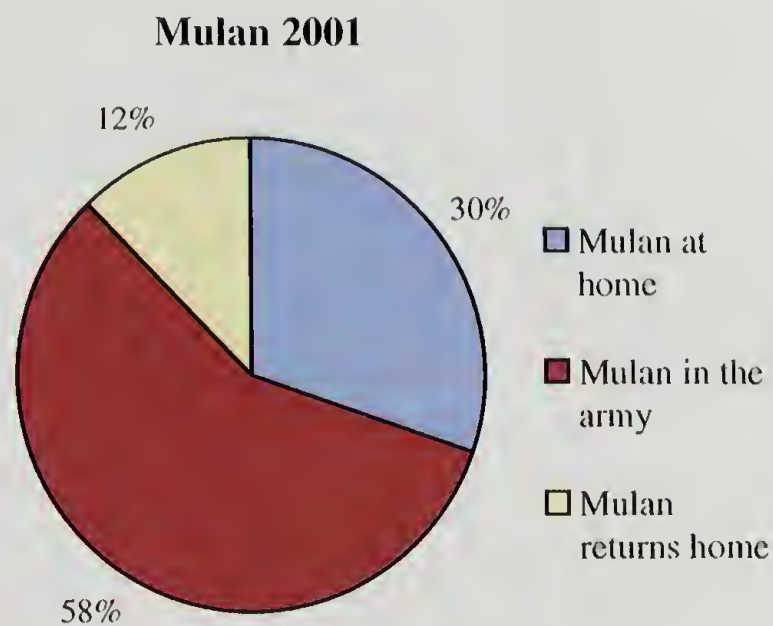
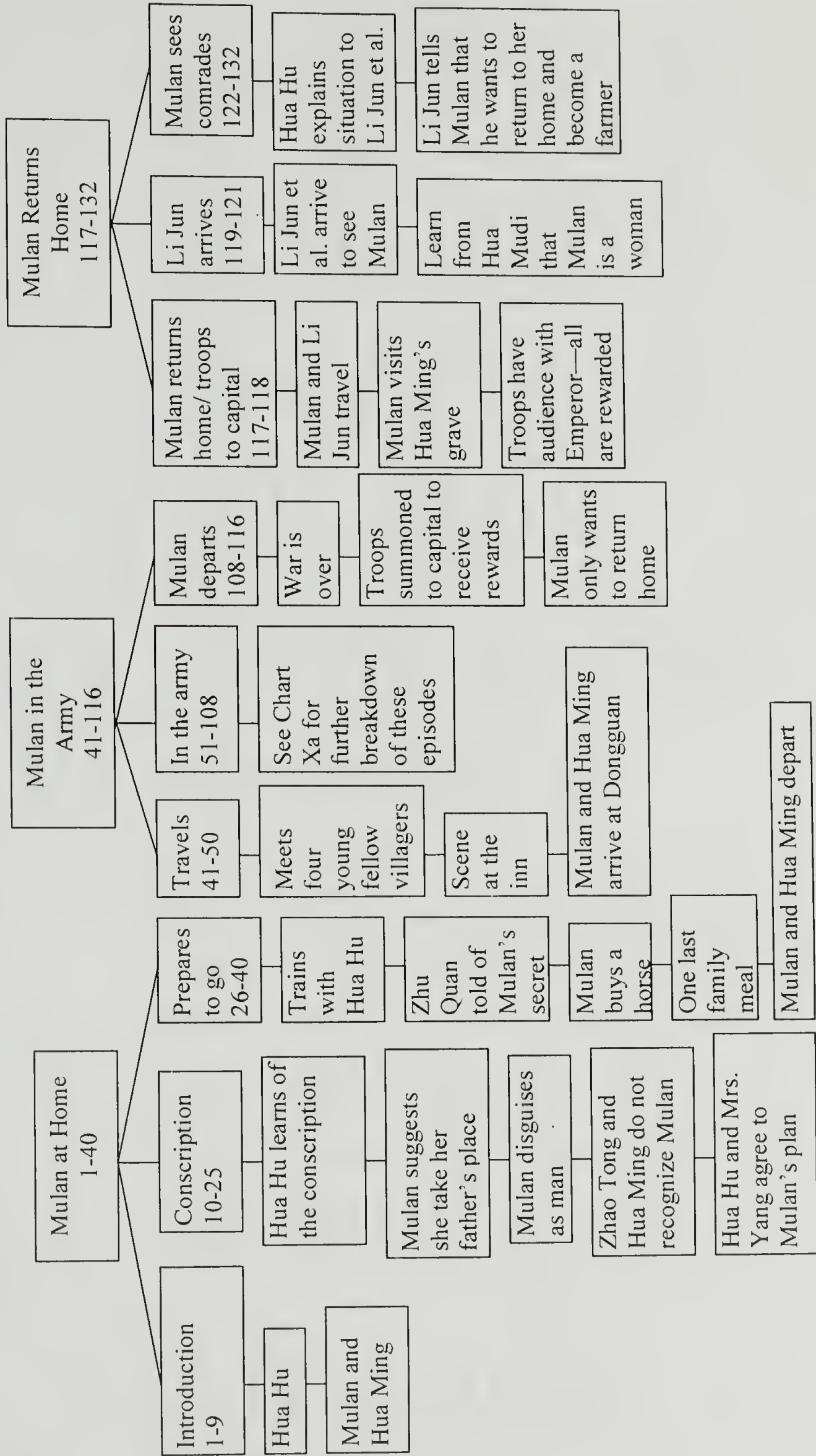
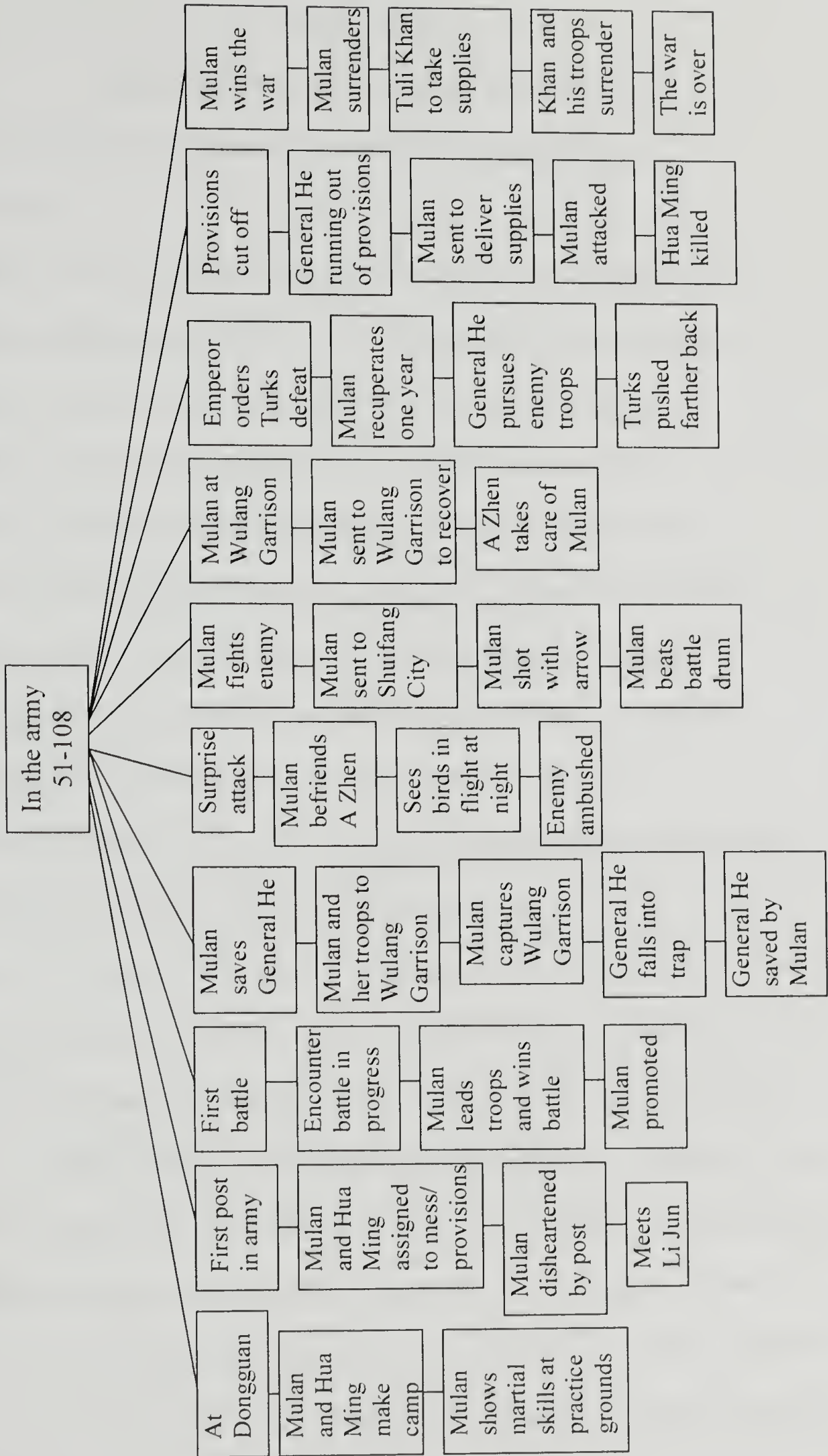


Chart 10
The Main Motifs, Sub-motifs, and Episodes of *Mulan 2001*¹¹⁰



¹¹⁰ The numbers included are the pages of *Mulan 2001* that corresponded with the listed motifs and sub-motifs.

Chart 10a
The Battle Episodes breakdown of *Mulan* 2001



CHAPTER III

COMPARISON OF THE TWELVE VERSIONS

In summary, the twelve versions of the Mulan story are as follows:

1. The poem
2. Mulan 1965 (Juvenile Literature, Taiwan, Chinese with *zhuyin fuhao*)
3. Mulan 1988 (Juvenile Literature, Taiwan, Chinese with *zhuyin fuhao*)
4. Mulan 1992 (Children's Literature, USA, Chinese and English)
5. Mulan 1993 (Children's Literature, USA, Chinese and English)
6. Mulan 1994 (Juvenile Literature, Taiwan, Chinese with *zhuyin fuhao*)
7. Mulan 1995 (Children's Literature, Hong Kong, Chinese and English)
8. Mulan 1996 (Juvenile Literature/ Comic Book, Singapore, English)
9. Mulan 1998 Zhang (Children's Literature, USA, Chinese and English)
10. Mulan 1998 San Souci (Children's Literature, USA, English)
11. Mulan 1998 Disney (Juvenile Film, USA, Chinese, English, among others)
12. Mulan 2001 (Juvenile Literature, Hong Kong, Chinese)

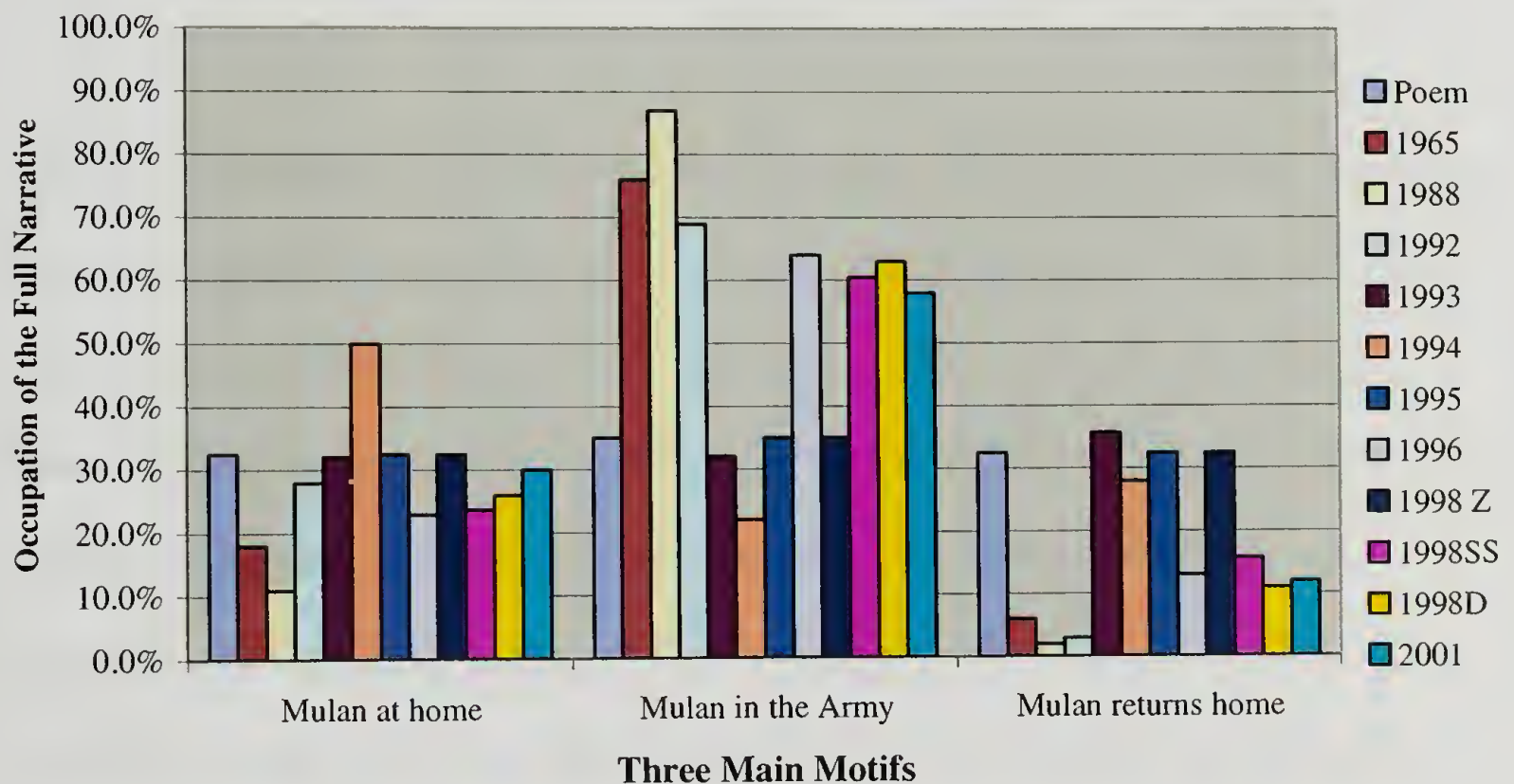
These twelve versions will be examined and compared in three main ways. First, all twelve will be compared through the length (number of lines, pages, or minutes) of the motifs and the sub-motifs, all of which will be provided as a percentage of the total length of the version. Second, the cast of characters and their roles within the story will be analyzed. Third, the juvenile literature versions and the children's literature versions will be split into separate groups, and the episodes within each version in these two groups will be discussed and compared. Variations within the sub-motifs will also be discussed in these sections. The juvenile literature versions and the children's literature

versions shall be distinguished in order to enable a more accurate comparison of the versions. Although there are similarities between all versions, the versions most similar to one another are the ones within the same literary genre. Upon completion of this analysis, the main hypothesis of this research paper, that the versions of the Mulan tale examined do not form a concise genealogy of the Mulan tale, but rather indicate that the authors mostly “reinvented the wheel” by returning to the poem, the “source” of the story rather than relying on previous versions of the story for inspiration.

Comparison of Motifs

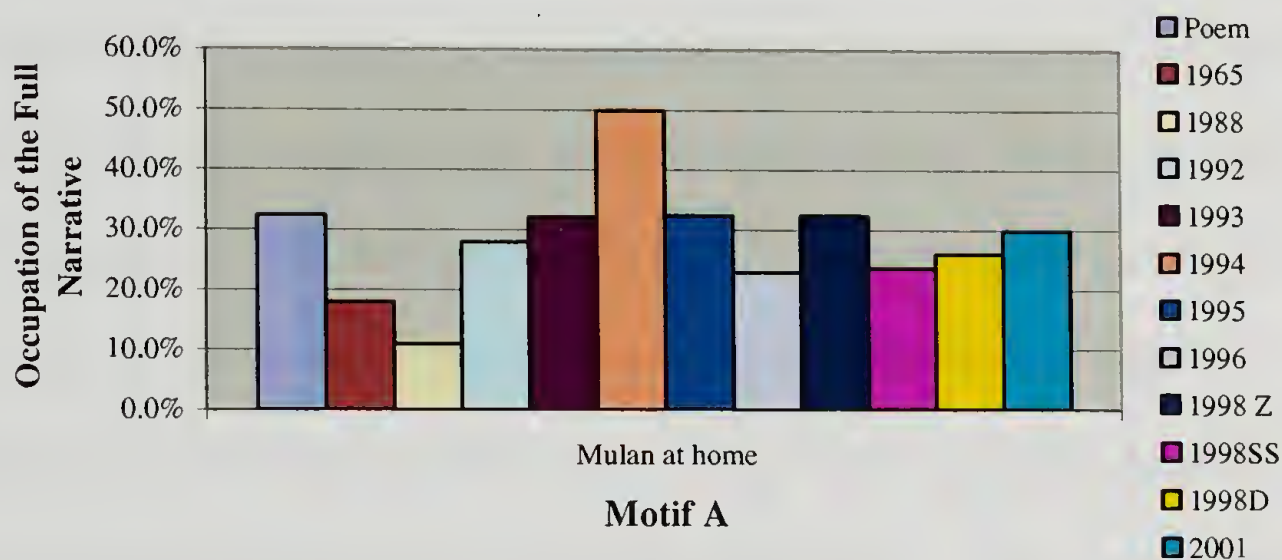
Chart 11 below provides an overview of the length of the three motifs in all twelve versions.

Chart 11
Comparison of the Three Main Motifs



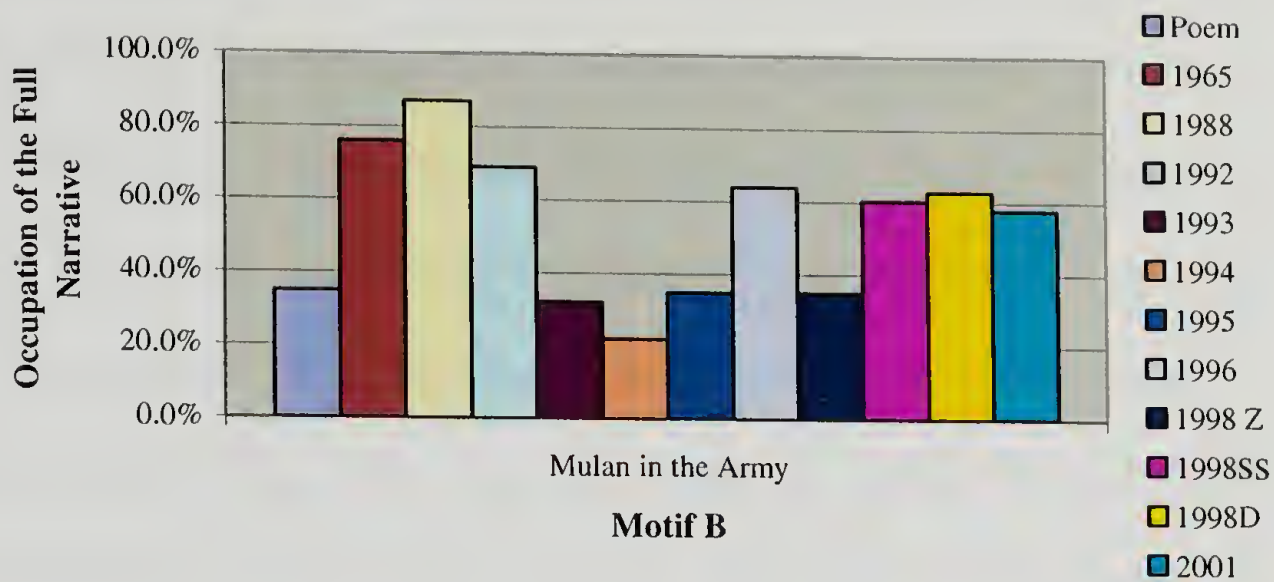
Regarding motif A Mulan at home, the versions that most closely follow the poem are: *Mulan 1992*, *Mulan 1993*, *Mulan 1995*, *Mulan 1998 Zhang*, *Mulan 1998 Disney*, and *Mulan 2001*. In other words, seven of the version (the poem included) devote between 25 and 35 percent of the story to Mulan's time at home. *Mulan 1994* devotes half of the entire story to Mulan's time at home, while *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988* devote 18 and 11 percent, and both *Mulan 1996* and *Mulan 1998 San Souci* devote 23 percent.

Chart 12
Comparison of Motif A



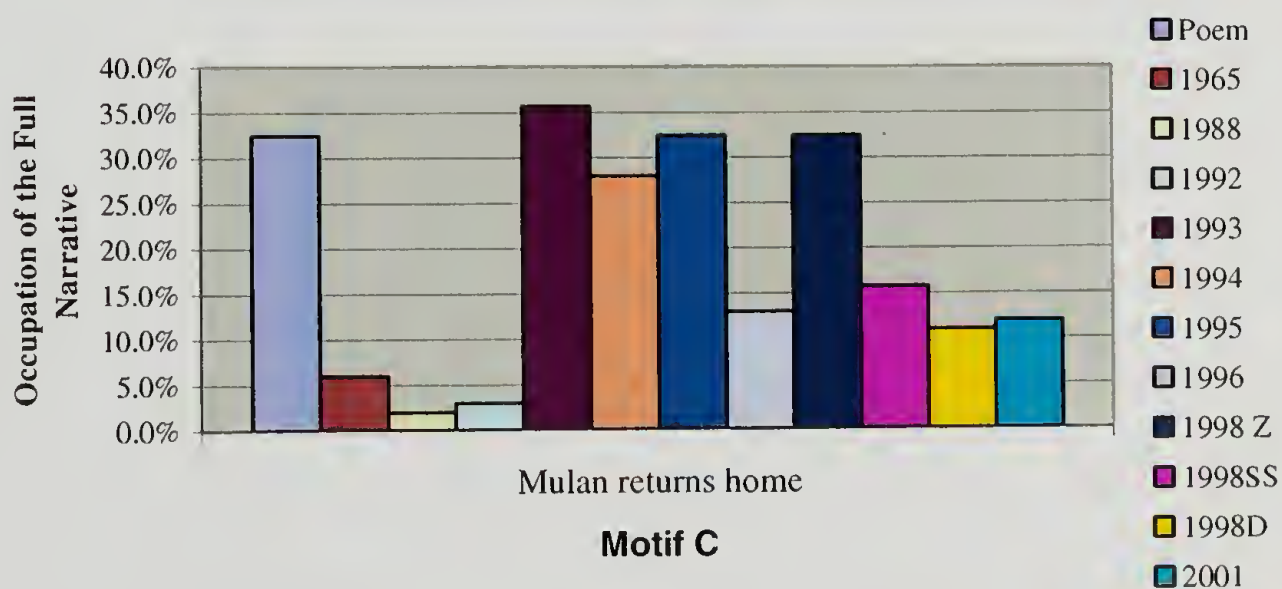
However, regarding motif B Mulan takes her father's place (also referred to as Mulan in the army, depending upon the focus of the story), only three versions are similar to the poem, with 30 to 35 percent of the story dedicated to Mulan's time away from home: *Mulan 1993*, *Mulan 1995*, and *Mulan 1998 Zhang*. *Mulan 1994* is the only version which devotes less attention to Mulan's time away from home, with only 22 percent. The versions in which the motif is labeled Mulan in the Army, rather than Mulan Takes Father's Place, give much more attention to Mulan's time in the army, ranging from *Mulan 2001* devoting 58 percent to *Mulan 1988* devoting 87 percent of the total story.

Chart 13
Comparison of Motif B



Only three versions are similar to the poem, with 25-35 percent of the story dedicated to motif C Mulan returning home: *Mulan 1994*, *Mulan 1995*, and *Mulan 1998 Zhang*. It should be noted that *Mulan 1995* and *Mulan 1998 Zhang* are two bilingual children's literature versions, in which the poem is included in Chinese with an English interpretation. *Mulan 1993* is also similar to the four versions mentioned above, in that 36 percent of the story is dedicated to Mulan's returning home. This is the most time devoted to this aspect of the story of all the twelve versions.

Chart 14
Comparison of Motif C



Through a comparison of only the three motifs of the Mulan tale, it appears that *Mulan 1993* and *Mulan 1994* most closely follow the poem. *Mulan 1995* and *Mulan 1998 Zhang* naturally follow the outline of the poem, as they are both interpretations of the poem. Interestingly, *Mulan 1998 San Souci* and *Mulan 1998 Disney* both claim to use the poem as inspiration for their versions; however, the inspiration of the poem appears to be quite minute in a comparison with their own creative contributions. Although *Mulan 1994* strays from the poem in length, in that Mulan's time at home occupies half of the story, this version stays true to the framework of the poem. Creative license is taken in providing a setting to the story; however the emphasis of the story is still on Mulan's time as a woman, with her time in the army receiving only minimal attention. Seven versions of the Mulan tale, *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1988*, *Mulan 1992*, *Mulan 1996*, *Mulan 1998 San Souci*, *Mulan 1998 Disney*, and *Mulan 2001*, take a considerable amount of creative license in motif B, Mulan's time in the army.

Comparison of Sub-motifs

Chart 15

Percentages of Sub-Motifs Within the Motif

| | A | | | B | | | C | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 | C1 | C2 | C3 |
| <i>Poem</i> | 32.5% | | | 35.0% | | | 32.5% | | |
| | 40.0% | 40.0% | 20.0% | 36.0% | 28.0% | 36.0% | 30.0% | 30.0% | 40.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1965</i> | 18.0% | | | 76.0% | | | 6.0% | | |
| | 4.9% | 58.8% | 36.3% | 15.6% | 82.3% | 2.1% | 56.3% | 18.8% | 25.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1988</i> | 11.0% | | | 87.0% | | | 6.0% | | |
| | 17.5% | 32.5% | 50.0% | 7.7% | 90.1% | 2.2% | 25.0% | 12.5% | 62.5% |
| <i>Mulan 1992</i> | 28.0% | | | 69.0% | | | 3.0% | | |
| | 25.0% | 37.5% | 37.5% | 10.0% | 85.0% | 5.0% | 50.0% | | 50.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1993</i> | 32.0% | | | 32.0% | | | 36.0% | | |
| | 22.2% | 44.4% | 33.3% | 22.2% | 44.4% | 33.3% | 20.0% | 20.0% | 60.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1994</i> | 50.0% | | | 22.0% | | | 28.0% | | |
| | 11.1% | 44.4% | 44.4% | 22.2% | 50.0% | 27.8% | 21.7% | 21.7% | 56.5% |
| <i>Mulan 1995</i> | 32.5% | | | 35.0% | | | 32.5% | | |
| | 40.0% | 40.0% | 20.0% | 36.0% | 28.0% | 36.0% | 30.0% | 30.0% | 40.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1996</i> | 23.0% | | | 64.0% | | | 13.0% | | |
| | 42.3% | 19.2% | 38.5% | 21.1% | 67.1% | 11.8% | 11.8% | 17.6% | 70.6% |
| <i>Mulan 1998 Zhang</i> | 32.5% | | | 35.0% | | | 32.5% | | |
| | 40.0% | 40.0% | 20.0% | 36.0% | 28.0% | 36.0% | 30.0% | 30.0% | 40.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1998 San Souci</i> | 24.0% | | | 61.0% | | | 16.0% | | |
| | 33.3% | 22.2% | 44.4% | 21.7% | 65.2% | 13.0% | 16.7% | 16.7% | 66.7% |
| <i>Mulan 1998 Disney</i> | 26.0% | | | 63.0% | | | 11.0% | | |
| | 55.6% | 16.5% | 27.8% | 7.2% | 66.0% | 26.9% | 44.7% | | 55.3% |
| <i>Mulan 2001</i> | 30.0% | | | 58.0% | | | 12.0% | | |
| | 22.5% | 40.0% | 37.5% | 11.8% | 76.3% | 11.8% | 12.5% | 18.8% | 68.8% |

Chart 15 provides a breakdown of the length of each sub-motif within the motifs. The percentages shown in the macro-cells are of the motif; the percentages shown in the divided cells are the percentages of each sub-motif within the motif, not within the entire story. For example, in the poem, motif A comprises 32.5 percent of the entire poem, motif B comprises 35 percent, and motif C comprises 32.5 percent. Within motif A, sub-motif A1 comprises 40 percent, sub-motif A2 comprises 40 percent and sub-motif A3

comprises 20 percent. These three sub-motifs together comprise motif A, or 32.5 percent of the poem. The same breakdown is true for motifs B and C.

Chart 16
Excerpt Example of Chart 15

| | A | | | B | | | C | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 | C1 | C2 | C3 |
| <i>Poem</i> | 32.5% | | | 35.0% | | | 32.5% | | |
| | 40.0% | 40.0% | 20.0% | 36.0% | 28.0% | 36.0% | 30.0% | 30.0% | 40.0% |

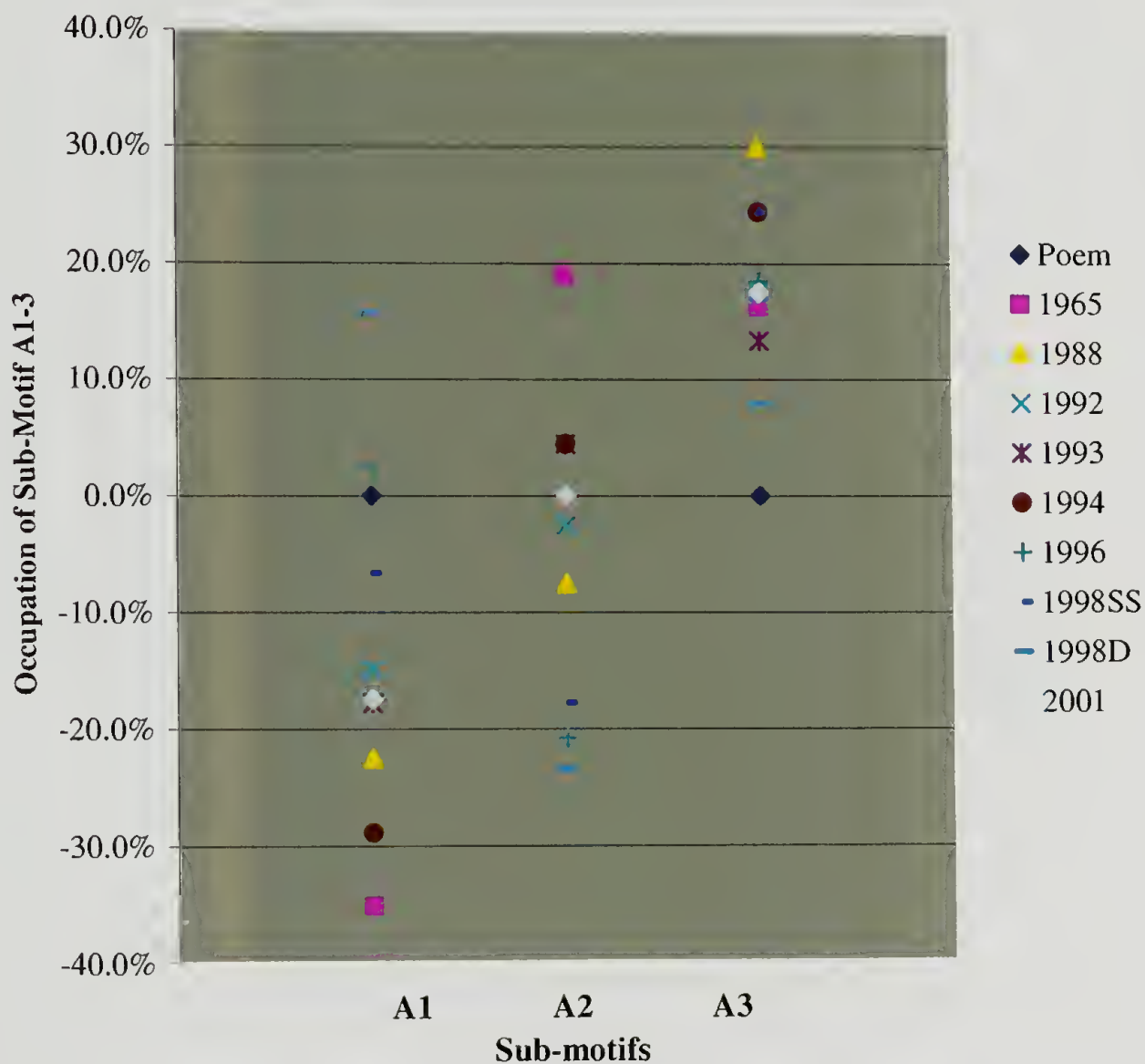
The main reason for breaking down the versions in this manner is to examine whether the proportion of a sub-motif within the corresponding motif is similar to the equivalent proportion of that sub-motif in the poem. For example, if sub-motif A1 of the poem, Introduction, is 40 percent of motif A, will this sub-motif also constitute 40 within other versions, even if the motif constitutes a greater or lesser proportion of the individual story as a whole? As such, the magnitude of sub-motif breakdown of each version is compared with analogous sub-motifs of the poem through a scatter chart. The following is the data used to make the scatter charts.

Chart 17
Data for Scatter Charts

| | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 | C1 | C2 | C3 |
|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <i>Poem</i> | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1965</i> | -35.1% | 18.8% | 16.3% | -20.4% | 54.3% | -33.9% | 26.3% | -11.3% | -15.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1988</i> | -22.5% | -7.5% | 30.0% | -28.3% | 62.1% | -33.8% | -5.0% | -17.5% | 22.5% |
| <i>Mulan 1992</i> | -15.0% | -2.5% | 17.5% | -26.0% | 57.0% | -31.0% | 20.0% | | 10.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1993</i> | -17.8% | 4.4% | 13.3% | -13.8% | 16.4% | -2.7% | -10.0% | -10.0% | 20.0% |
| <i>Mulan 1994</i> | -28.9% | 4.4% | 24.4% | -13.8% | 22.0% | -8.2% | -8.3% | -8.3% | 16.5% |
| <i>Mulan 1996</i> | 2.3% | -20.8% | 18.5% | -14.9% | 39.1% | -24.2% | -18.2% | -12.4% | 30.6% |
| <i>Mulan 1998</i> | -6.7% | -17.8% | 24.4% | -14.3% | 37.2% | -23.0% | -13.3% | -13.3% | 26.7% |
| <i>San Souci</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Mulan 1998</i> | 15.6% | -23.5% | 7.8% | -28.8% | 38.0% | -9.1% | 14.7% | | 15.3% |
| <i>Disney</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Mulan 2001</i> | -17.5% | 0.0% | 17.5% | -24.2% | 48.3% | -24.2% | -17.5% | -11.3% | 28.8% |

In these charts, the poem is given the value zero percent; from this all sub-motifs are given a positive or negative value, as determined by whether the sub-motif contained a greater or lesser proportion of the motif within one version. In all three scatter charts, *Mulan 1995* and *Mulan 1998 Zhang* are left out, as they both contain the Chinese poem with English interpretation, and as such contain equal proportions to the poem, and do not constitute remarkable data.

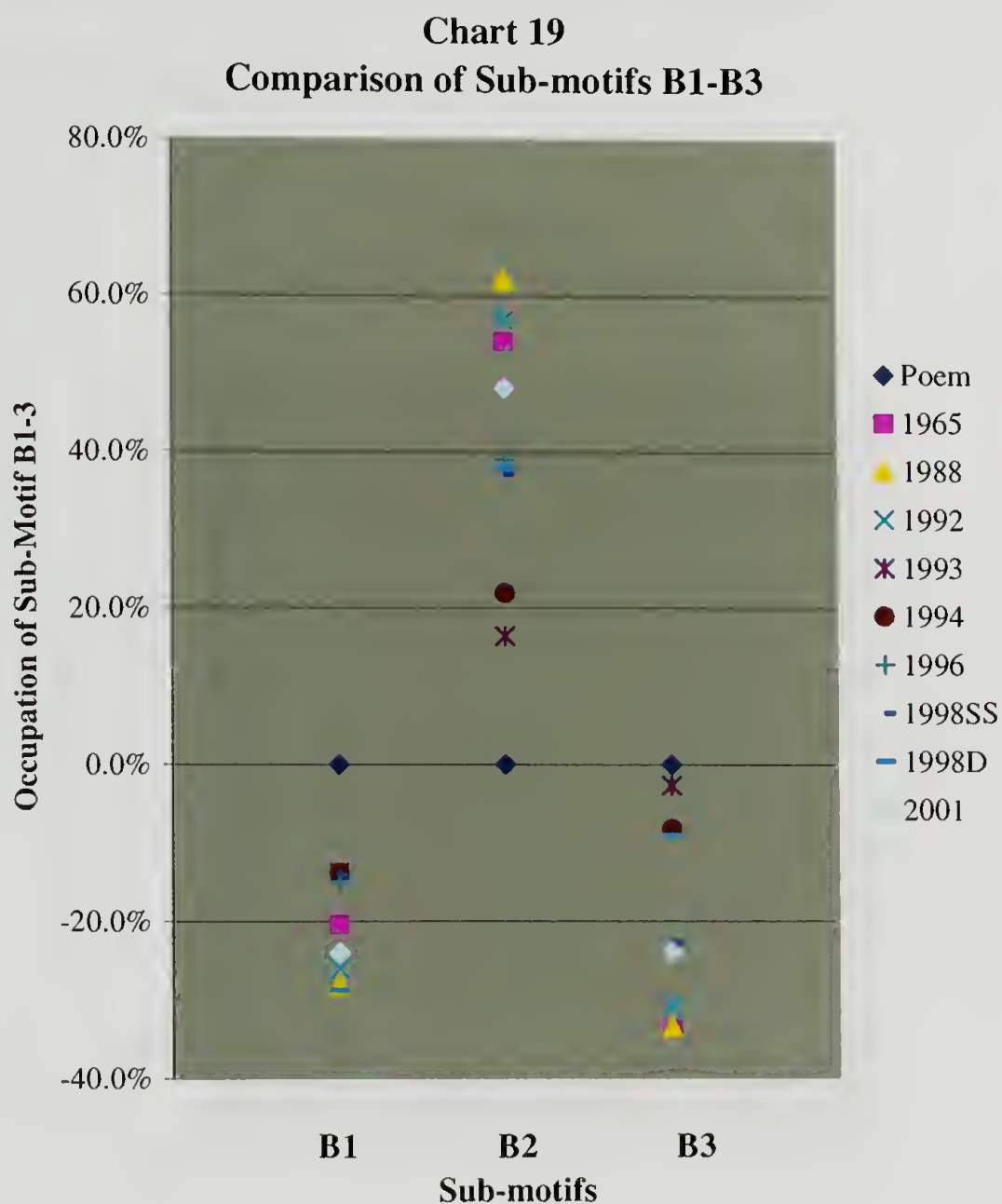
Chart 18
Comparison of Sub-motifs A1-A3



As can be seen from this chart, with regards to sub-motif A1, introduction, only *Mulan 1996* and *Mulan 1998 San Souci* devote less than plus or minus ten percent variation from the proportion of the introduction in the poem. All remaining versions, regardless of the weight of this motif within the total version, devote at least a 15 percent variance

from the poem. With regards to sub-motif A2, the conscription, *Mulan 2001* devotes the exact same proportion to this motif as the poem; *Mulan 1988*, *Mulan 1992*, *Mulan 1993*, and *Mulan 1994* all devote less than plus or minus ten percent variation from the poem.

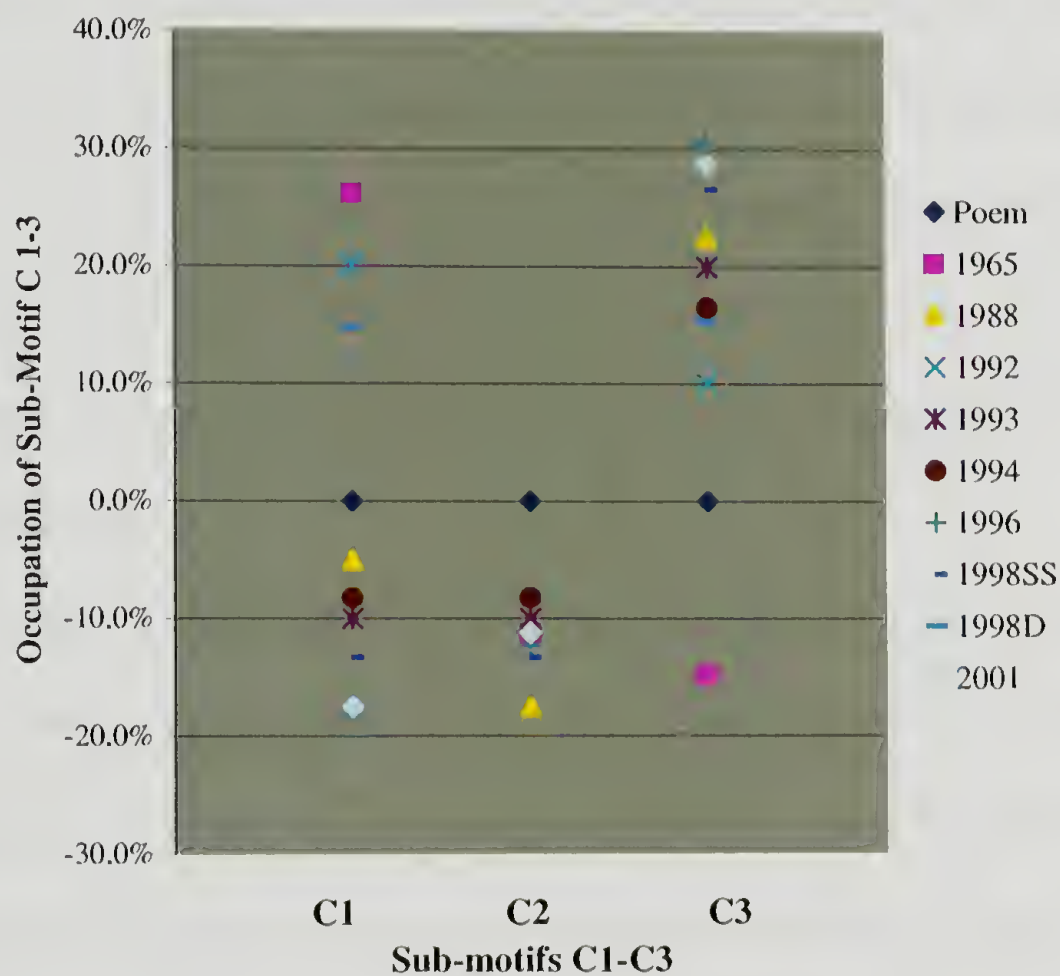
However, interestingly, for sub-motif A3, all versions of the story examined devote a greater proportion to preparing to go/taking her father's place than the poem, with a range of 7.8 percent for *Mulan 1998 Disney* to 30 percent for *Mulan 1988*.



The scatter chart for sub-motifs B1-B3 indicate a remarkable occurrence, in that all versions devote a lesser proportion for sub-motif B1, Mulan's travels, and sub-motif B3, Mulan sees the Son of Heaven or "honors" awarded, while all devote a greater proportion for sub-motif B2, the battles. None of the versions closely follow the poem in this regard;

especially considering that all devote a greater proportion of attention to Mulan's time in the army fighting, even the children's literature/ picture books. Variance is also greater, with the ranges as follows: 13.8 percent for *Mulan 1993* and *Mulan 1994* to 28.8 percent in *Mulan 1998 Disney* for B1; 16.4 percent in *Mulan 1993* to 62.1 percent for *Mulan 1998* for B2; and 2.7 percent for *Disney 1993* to 33.9 percent in *Mulan 1965* for B3. Interestingly, *Mulan 1993* and *Mulan 1994* contain the smallest variant for these three sub-motifs, while *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988* contain the greatest, closely followed by *Mulan 1998 Disney* and *Mulan 2001*.

Chart 20
Comparison of Sub-motifs C1-C3



With regards to sub-motif C1, eight of the versions devote lesser proportions to Mulan's family hearing of her return or Mulan's returning home/ leaving the army, ranging from 5

percent in *Mulan 1988* to 18.2 percent in *Mulan 1996*. Three versions, *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1992*, and *Mulan 1998 Disney* devote greater proportions of this sub-motif; however, it should be noted that motif C within these three versions comprises dramatically less of the entire story than the other versions. *Mulan 1988* devotes the smallest proportion to this motif than all other version, and yet even less attention is devoted to sub-motif C1 within motif C. Two versions of the story, *Mulan 1992* and *Mulan 1998 Disney* do not contain sub-motif C2; this does not mean that Mulan does not return to her female identity, simply that in *Mulan 1992* no description is provided, and in *Mulan 1998 Disney*, Mulan's identity is discovered in motif B. The remaining nine versions all devote lesser proportions to Mulan's returning to her female identity than the poem, ranging from 8.3 percent in *Mulan 1994* to 17.5 percent in *Mulan 1988*. With the exception of *Mulan 1965* which has a negative 15 percent variation from the poem, all versions devote a greater proportion to sub-motif C3, Mulan seeing her comrade/s. In the three versions which devote the greatest length to this motif, *Mulan 1996*, *Mulan 1998 San Souci*, and *Mulan 2001*, romance between Mulan and one of her comrades is either hinted at, or stated outright.

Through this analysis, it appears that, with the exception of *Mulan 1995* and *Mulan 1998 Zhang*, none of the versions follow the structural pattern of the poem, although of all the versions, *Mulan 1993* most closely parallels the poem. Due to the symmetry of the poem, it is conceivable that this structure was not accidental. However, it appears from the above comparison that to a modern author, and more importantly to a modern audience, Mulan's time as a woman (sub-motifs A1 and A2) is not the emphasis they seek, nor is Mulan traveling (B1), Mulan seeing the Emperor (B3), or Mulan's family

hearing of her return/Mulan's leaving the army/returning home (C1). For the modern audience, it is apparently assumed that even children are most interested in war (B2) and the possibility of love (C3).

Comparison of the Cast of Main Characters

Chart 21
Cast of Main Characters

| | Poem | 1965 | 1988 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1998Z | 1998SS | 1998D | 2001 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|--------|-------|------|
| Father | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Mother | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Elder sister | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ | √ | | √ | √ | | √ |
| Younger brother | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| Emperor | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Hua Ming | | √ | √ | | | | | | | | | √ |
| Li Jun/ Li Shang | | √ | √ | | | | | | | | √ | √ |
| General He | | √ | √ | | | | | √ | | | | √ |
| Tuli Khan/ Shan Yu | | √ | √ | | | | | √ | | | √ | √ |
| Military scoundrels | | √ | √ | | | | | | | | | √ |
| Zhu Quan | | √ | √ | | | | | | | | | √ |
| Zhao Tong | | √ | √ | | | | | | | | | √ |
| A Zhen | | √ | √ | | | | | √ | | | | √ |
| Pipa Player | | | | | √ | | | | | | | |
| Emperor (No. 2) | | | | | √ | | | | | | | |
| Unnamed comrade to marry | | | | | √ | | | | | | | |
| Unnamed village official | | | | | | √ | | | | | | |
| Named fellow villagers | | | | | | √ | | √ | | | | |
| Grandma | | | | | | | | | | | √ | |
| Mushu | | | | | | | | | | | √ | |
| Named comrades | | | | | | | | | | | √ | |

In the poem, only four people, besides Mulan are individually identified: Mulan's father, mother, elder sister, and younger brother. The juvenile literature and children's literature versions that follow contain a wide variety of characters. As can be seen in the chart

above, four versions have the exact same cast of main characters as the poem: *Mulan 1992*, *Mulan 1995*, *Mulan 1998 Zhang*, and *Mulan 1998 San Souci*. *Mulan 1994* also includes an unnamed village official and named fellow villagers, however these characters do not alter the storyline, and therefore, *Mulan 1994* can also be included in the versions that parallel the poem. Interestingly, four of these five versions are children's literature versions, and *Mulan 1994*, which varies the most within this group, is juvenile literature. The remaining versions, *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1988*, *Mulan 1996*, *Mulan 1998 Disney*, and *Mulan 2001* are all juvenile literature versions. The additional characters of Li Jun, Mulan's comrade and potential love interest; General He, the highest commanding officer; Tuli Khan, the enemy leader; Zhu Quan, a village official who also goes to war and works closely with Mulan; Zhao Tong, assistant to General He; and A Zhen, the young woman who becomes smitten with Mulan, are all main characters in *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1988*, and *Mulan 2001*, indicating that the authors of the latter two versions most likely knew of, and perhaps borrowed from, at least one of the previous versions. Both *Mulan 1996* and *Mulan 2001* include characters which are unique to those versions; however they serve the same purposes as characters in other versions. For example, in *Mulan 1996* the inn keeper's daughter is not named, however she becomes smitten with Mulan, and therefore plays a similar role as A Zhen. Mushu, in *Mulan 1998 Disney*, is a dragon that is sent by the ancestors to protect Mulan, much like Hua Ming, Mulan's cousin who accompanies Mulan, and in *Mulan 2001*, dies protecting her. *Mulan 1993* is the only version with seemingly unrelated characters, in that this story begins with the Emperor calling for the pipa player to sing him a story. Also in this version is an unnamed comrade who, after some bargaining, Mulan agrees to marry. Unlike *Mulan*

2001 where we know that Mulan's suitor is Li Jun, or *Mulan 1998 Disney* in which it is strongly hinted that Mulan and Li Shang shall remain together, Mulan in *Mulan 1993* agrees to wed the unnamed comrade. Interestingly, the analysis of sub-motifs indicated that *Mulan 1993* most closely followed the poem with proportions of attention paid to each sub-motif within the individual motifs.

Comparison of Children's Literature Versions¹¹¹

Because both *Mulan 1995* and *Mulan 1998 Zhang* include the text of the poem in Chinese, they shall not be discussed in this section. Granted, these versions add a façade of authenticity to the tale of Mulan, in that the English included with the stories is either an interpretation or a story based on a theme, rather than a translation; moreover, the illustrations in these versions serve to augment the story. However, for the purposes of this research paper, and the hypothesis therein, discussion and analysis of the versions is only relevant to indicate whether the versions use the poem as or another version as the inspiration for that version. Similarly, *Mulan 1998 San Souci* will also not be included, as in the author's note following the story, he states that his idea for his Mulan story came from the poem. He further notes that additions to the story are his own, and come from a certain amount of creative license. These three versions all include some of the particular features of the poem, for example, the use of the rabbits at the end of the story, as well as the details that Mulan travels to both the Yellow River and Black Mountain while she is traveling to join the army (sub-motif B1). With these details in mind, it is clear enough, even without the text of the Chinese poem, or the author's admission, that these three

¹¹¹ Both *Mulan 1995* and *Mulan 1998 Zhang* are intended to be read to the child by an adult, because children mostly likely cannot read the poem.

versions all returned to the poem for their source of the story. Thus, *Mulan 1992* and *Mulan 1993* shall be discussed in this section, as they relate to one another and the poem.

Of the children's literature versions, *Mulan 1992* varies the most from other versions in this genre as well as from the poem. To begin with, the introduction to the story does not introduce Mulan doing traditionally feminine things, but rather introduces her as skilled in martial arts (sub-motif A1). Little attention is paid to what Mulan procures to prepare to join the army. Instead, the focus of the story is on Mulan's decision to join the army, and her dressing as a man, something which the poem only implies (sub-motif A3). Once Mulan leaves her home, she catches up with other men, and says that she is Muli, her brother, however, no other details of her travels are provided (sub-motif B1). The most attention is paid to Mulan's time in the army, as both her martial skills and her wit are a valuable asset (sub-motif B2). The episode with the mountain goats and the lanterns at Mount Motian is a key example of this. This episode occurs in *Mulan 1996*, and shall be further discussed in the comparison of that version. However, towards the end of the story, *Mulan 1992* parallels the poem, although sub-motifs C1 and C2 are combined, in that Mulan returns home and changes her clothes, and that is the entirety of her returning home and returning to her former self. Another episode unique in this version is that when Mulan sees her comrades after she has changed into her female attire, she presents them with her old uniform. This is not included in any of the other eleven versions. Although it cannot be stated with certainty that *Mulan 1992* drew upon the poem for its source of the story, it is quite clear that it did not use any other predecessor, as the episodes that stray from the poem are not included in any previous versions.

Mulan 1993 also contains unique features, in that the first and last eight lines of the story contain a narrative framework through which the story of Mulan is presented. The most notable similarities between Mulan and the poem are that Mulan is introduced weaving (sub-motif A1); she procures a horse, saddle, and whip prior to joining the army (sub-motif A3); she travels to the Yellow River (sub-motif B1); when honors are awarded Mulan desires nothing (sub-motif B3); and that most episodes from “Mulan’s return home” (motif C) included in the poem are included in this version. The additions to this version fall well within the confines of poetic license. For example, while the poem only details objects Mulan procures that relate to her horse, *Mulan 1993* includes the weapons Mulan takes with her. In the battle sub-motif, Mulan must save the day when hope is almost lost. Upon returning home, Mulan sees a single comrade with whom she has traveled and fought so closely, and he suggests, given their history, that they marry. Mulan indicates that she will only agree if their union as husband and wife is as equitable as their comradeship in battle. Her comrade agrees, and they wed. Although there is no hint of love between Mulan and her comrade in the poem, this episode occurs in many of the versions, and it is reasonable to assume that the author of *Mulan 1993* drew upon his own creativity for this episode, rather than looking to a previous version. Given the similarities between *Mulan 1993* and the poem, the poem was most likely the source of inspiration for this version.

In summary, all five children’s literature versions of the Mulan tale, *Mulan 1992*, *Mulan 1993*, *Mulan 1995*, *Mulan 1998 Zhang*, and *Mulan 1998 San Souci* most likely utilized the content, if not the length, of the motifs, sub-motifs, and episodes of the poem.

Comparison of the Juvenile Literature/Film Versions

The remaining versions to be discussed are *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1988*, *Mulan 1994*, *Mulan 1996*, *Mulan 1998 Disney*, and *Mulan 2001*. Within this group of six, *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1988*, and *Mulan 2001* are the most similar. Some of these similarities are due to their length; however, the similarities also occur in their focus, as well as sub-motifs and episodes. As such, these three versions shall be discussed in relation to one another first.

None of these three versions contain the 12 conscription notices, and all three begin in different ways (motif A). In *Mulan 1965*, Mulan is weaving when Field Marshal He comes to the Hua household to tell Hua Hu that he has been conscripted (sub-motif A1). In *Mulan 1988*, Mulan is first introduced as a boisterous ten year old girl, who is permitted to study martial arts with her cousin Hua Ming (sub-motif A1). After six years, Mulan's skill surpasses Hua Ming's, and Zhao Tong, General He's assistant, arrives at the Hua homestead to inform Hua Hu that he has been conscripted (sub-motif A1). In *Mulan 2001*, Hua Hu is introduced, then Hua Ming enters the story (sub-motif A1) and meets Zhao Tong who comes to the Hua homestead to tell Hua Hu that he has been conscripted (sub-motif A2). However, all three versions have that one point in common: someone arrives at the Hua homestead to inform Hua Hu that he has been conscripted. In all three versions, Hua Hu is not at home; when the person arrives, it is Mulan, dressed as a soldier who greets the person carrying the conscription notice, and it is through this interaction in all three versions that Mulan realizes that she will be able to successfully disguise herself as a man and take her father's place in the army (sub-motif A2). In all three versions, Mulan procures that which is necessary for her to go to war, she has one

last meal with her family, and is advised by her father not to drink alcohol and to always follow orders (sub-motif A3).

Mulan's time in the army (motif B) in these three versions, although not exactly the same in detail, are notably similar. For example, in all three versions, Mulan and Hua Ming run into four young men; in *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988* these men are introduced as military scoundrels; in *Mulan 2001* this explanation is not provided. In all cases, Mulan finds them equally off-putting, and does not want to be around them; additionally, she offers her room to the four in all three versions (sub-motif B1).

Mulan and Hua Ming arrive at Dongguan, and in all three versions they first participate in a show of military skill, in which Mulan defeats the man no one else was able to defeat, and both she and Hua Ming are praised by General (or Field Marshal) He, and assigned to the mess/provisions battalion (sub-motif B2). Although the exact details within the next few episodes differ slightly, the main emphasis of the episodes is the same: Mulan and Hua Ming report to the mess/provisions battalion, where they meet Li Jun and the others. General/ Field Marshal He calls out the troops, and Mulan and Hua Ming fight in their first battle. In all of these first battles, Mulan leads the troops in the battalion, and they are the main reason for the victory. In both *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 2001*, Mulan and Hua Ming are both immediately promoted after this first battle. In *Mulan 1988*, Mulan is promoted, however she is also punished with "desk duty" for disobeying her orders.

In the next battle scene, General He (now a general in all three versions) falls into Tuli Khan's trap, and it is Mulan who saves him in all three versions. As a result of this battle, Li Jun and some others are injured, and taken to Wulang Garrison, where they are taken

care of by a woman named A Zhen, who becomes smitten with Mulan. The relationship between Mulan and A Zhen grows in different ways, but all three versions mention that Mulan and A Zhen become close, almost like sisters, although A Zhen never has any suspicion that Mulan is a woman, even in *Mulan 1988* when A Zhen finds Mulan in the kitchen teaching the kitchen staff how to make dumplings.

The next marked similarity between the three versions is Tuli Khan's subsequent strategies, in which he plans to sneak up on General He's troops at night. However, Mulan notices birds in flight at night, and thinking it odd and suspecting something afoot, she reports immediately to General He. He agrees with Mulan's suspicion, and they set up an ambush for the enemy troops. The enemy troops fall right into the trap, chaos for Tuli Khan's troops ensues. In *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, Mulan pursues the enemy to Shuifang City, which she is able to capture. In *Mulan 2001*, Mulan is sent to Shuifang City to capture it, which she does. In all three versions, the enemy attacks the city, and Mulan, while defending it, is struck with an arrow. In *Mulan 1965*, General He is on the scene, and he insists on dressing Mulan's wound, and requests that she take off her battle robe (which Hua Ming deflects), which would reveal her female identity. In the other two versions, General He is elsewhere, and it is Hua Ming who takes care of Mulan. In all three versions, Mulan, unable to rest, mounts the guard tower and beats the battle drum, which rallies the troops to victory. Mulan, after loosing a lot of blood, is sent back to Wulang Garrison to recover, where she is placed in the able hands of A Zhen.

The next episodes differ among the three versions. In *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, after Mulan has recuperated, she is told to remain in Wulang Garrison in an administrative position, through which she gains the trust of all the citizens. In *Mulan*

2001, Mulan spends a year in Wulang Garrison to recuperate. In all three versions, Li Jun returns to Wulang Garrison to report that General He is running out of provisions and is in dire need of reinforcements. Mulan is able to collect the necessary provisions, and she, Hua Ming, and Li Jun plan to deliver them to General He. In *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, Mulan's troops are attacked, and the enemy captures the provisions. However, Mulan is able to regain the supplies and, through trickery, defeats Tuli Khan, and his troops surrender. In *Mulan 2001*, Tuli Khan's troops attack Mulan, and in the battle that ensues, Hua Ming is killed while defending Mulan. Mulan pretends to surrender, and is able to trick Tuli Khan and makes him surrender, which in turn causes his troops to surrender. The war is over.

In *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, General He offers Mulan his daughter to be her wife, and in both versions, Mulan indicates that she needs to return home to talk with her parents about this situation (sub-motif B3). In *Mulan 2001*, Mulan's presence is requested at the capital, however she indicates that she only wants to return home, and is granted that request. In all three versions, Li Jun and the other soldiers escort Mulan and Hua Ming (or just Mulan in *Mulan 2001*), and Mulan and Li Jun talk about Mulan's fictive sister who seems to be the perfect woman (sub-motif C1). The audience, in all cases, knows that Mulan is talking about herself, which Li Jun is to later learn. Mulan heads home while the rest of the troops go to the capital to have an audience with the Emperor. In all versions, the Emperor notices Mulan's absence, and sends her comrades to her village to present her with rewards and announce her imperial post.

Meanwhile, Mulan has returned to her female identity (sub-motif C2). When Li Jun and the others arrive at the Hua homestead, in *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, they are

shocked to learn that their comrade is actually a woman. Mulan and Li Jun flirt about Mulan's "sister", and whether she has yet married (sub-motif C3). In *Mulan 2001*, Li Jun and the others meet Hua Mudi, Mulan's younger brother, and he tells them that their comrade is really his sister Mulan. When her comrades arrive at the Hua homestead, they are still shocked by the reality, but not as much so. Li Jun tells Mulan that he wants to return to the capital, resign from his post, and return to her village to become a farmer with her.

Although these three versions have their differences, their similarities, and therefore their relationship, is apparent. *Mulan 1988*, without a doubt, is heavily based upon *Mulan 1965*, and is essentially a pared down version (*Mulan 1988* is approximately 100 pages shorter than *Mulan 1965*) with some added humor and episodes for a more "modern" flare, since this story was written more than 30 years after its predecessor. Most likely, the author of *Mulan 2001* knew of either one or both of these earlier versions, and used ideas from the story, while adding in new episodes. *Mulan 1965*, although expanding upon the poem greatly, has some noteworthy similarities to the poem, including: Mulan is introduced while she is weaving; Mulan procures the same equipment; and once home, Mulan immediately returns to her female identity and shocks her comrades.

Of the juvenile literature versions, *Mulan 1994* most closely parallels the poem. In the introduction, Mulan's elderly father is noted, as well as her elder sister and younger brother (sub-motif A1). Mulan learns of her father's conscription (sub-motif A2), and Mulan, who is a skilled archer, tells her parents that she will go in her father's place, and convinces her parents to permit her to go (sub-motif A3). Although Mulan does not

travel to the Yellow River or Black Mountain, she does travel, and meets up with another soldier (sub-motif B1). Mulan is in the army for ten years, at which point the battle is over, and she and her troops are summoned to the capital (sub-motif B2). Honors are awarded, however Mulan only wants to return home (sub-motif B3). The actions of Mulan's entire family are noted (sub-motif C1), as is her careful return to her former identity (sub-motif C2); all of which parallel the poem. Mulan's comrades arrive, and see their former comrade as a woman, and are shocked (sub-motif C3); but they all toast her. Although *Mulan 1994* contains episodes that are not in the poem, including details of Mulan's time in the army, the emphasis of this version, as with the poem, is Mulan's time at home before leaving, and her time at home upon her return. *Mulan 1994* devotes less attention to Mulan's time in the army than the poem. As such, it seems that the author of this version drew upon the poem, rather than a previous version, as all versions preceding *Mulan 1994* devote of the story to Mulan's time in the army.

Mulan 1996 seems to be a melding of many previous versions of the Mulan tale. Mulan's time at home does not contain any noteworthy episodes. However, while Mulan is on the road, she encounters a fellow villager, as she does in *Mulan 1994* (sub-motif B1). As in *Mulan 1992*, Mulan utilizes mountain goats and paper lanterns to scare the enemy troops while they are strategically located on the top of a mountain pass (sub-motif B2). A young woman becomes smitten with Mulan, quite similar to A Zhen in *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, although in *Mulan 1996*, Mulan realizes this, and intentionally stays away from the young woman. Mulan's general is attacked in an ambush, as in *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*, and Mulan is shot with an arrow, as in *Mulan 1965* and *Mulan 1988*. Lastly, Kehan Tu Lizi (Tuli Khan) is defeated, and surrenders, and his troops all

follow and surrender. This version differs the most from previous versions in “Mulan’s return home” (motif C). First, she is very nostalgic about her return home, remarking on the familiar landscape and drinking the familiar water (sub-motif C1). She returns to her female identity (sub-motif C2), and it is General He who comes looking for Mulan, not Mulan’s potential love interest (sub-motif C3). In this version, the general is quite insistent about seeing Muli, the name Mulan had given when she joined the army, and it was not until Mulan’s father explained the situation that General He accepted the explanation provided. Given all of the similarities between this version and the preceding versions, it is most likely that the author used only the previous versions of the story, and perhaps was not aware of the poem.

The last version is *Mulan 1998 Disney*. The producer and directors of this movie all indicate in the special features section of the DVD that although they tried to change the Mulan story in many ways, in the end, they decided that the original, the poem, was better than any story they could create. However, *Mulan 1998 Disney* varies the most from all previous versions. For example, this version is the only one in which Mulan sneaks off to join the army (sub-motif A3); in all other versions, Mulan receives her father’s permission to join the army. When Mulan first joins the army she has no martial skill, and is actually told by her ranking officer to quit. In all other versions, Mulan either possessed martial skills to begin with, or acquired them rapidly, as she has success in battle early on. Mulan’s secret is discovered while she is still in the army (sub-motif B2), before enemy troops have been defeated. Instead, the enemy is able to enter the capital and kidnap the Emperor. Once the enemy is defeated, Mulan is presented with honors, which she accepts (sub-motif B3), and then returns home (sub-motif C1). Upon her

return home, it is Mulan's father who turns down the honors, stating that he only wants his daughter, and gives her a hug (sub-motif C1). Li Shang arrives to see Mulan, already knowing that she is a woman (sub-motif C2).

Many explanations exist to explain these variations. To begin with, most Disney movies follow a certain script: the unhappy girl does something to change her situation, she struggles through many challenges, she has a main enemy, and in the end is successful in her endeavors, and wins the heart of the man. *Mulan 1998 Disney* does follow this pattern; however, in contrast with other Disney films, the enemy in the movie is an enemy to China, not to Mulan individually, and although she does win the heart of the man in the end, her main goal throughout the film is not to win his love, but rather to bring honor to her family. Another explanation is that, with the exception of Robert San Souci, who is credited with providing the Disney team with the Mulan story, all remaining ten versions of the story have people with Chinese names (who are most likely to be native Chinese speakers) as the authors, and as such, they would have a similar impression about the ways in which Chinese girls are supposed to act, and the struggles they may endure. However, *Mulan 1998 Disney* was largely written by Americans, and Mulan in this version is more a Chinese-looking girl who acts more like an American girl.

The only juvenile literature version most likely not directly influenced by the poem is *Mulan 1996*. *Mulan 1988* is heavily influenced by *Mulan 1965*, and it is unclear whether this version was influenced by the poem. The remaining four juvenile literature versions, *Mulan 1965*, *Mulan 1994*, *Mulan 1998 Disney*, and *Mulan 2001* are all, most likely, influenced by the poem to one degree or another.

Conclusion

After a thorough analysis of the individual versions, as well as comparisons of the versions for motif and sub-motif duration and context; cast of main characters; and similarities between juvenile literature versions and children's literature versions, it appears that only one version was not influenced by the poem. The authors of the remaining ten versions most likely utilized *some* version of the poem as the starting point for their elaborated versions of the Mulan tale. However, from this starting point, all versions, even those which included the text of the poem with or without translation, take varying and even vast amounts of poetic license with the tale of Mulan in order to appeal to their target audience.

The battle scenes provide the most obvious sub-motif in which to take this poetic license. As previously noted, war in folk tales was not the main point of the story, but rather the means through which the hero is able to set him/herself apart. In the Mulan tale, the additional episodes in the battle scene are the background upon which Mulan utilizes and develops not only her martial skill, but also her cunning, self-sacrificing, and noble qualities. In addition character development, the battle scenes also add significant entertainment value. The readers—whether adults reading to children, young children learning to read for themselves, or juvenile reading a more detailed story—would all enjoy a tale with detailed battle scenes simply because they are exciting and allow the readers to become emotionally involved in the story.

Another variation included in a number of versions that allows readers to become emotionally involved is the addition of Mulan's romantic interest. When Mulan joins the army in her father's place, she is almost at the marrying age. In two of the version, it is

even commented upon. However, instead of marrying at the acceptable age, Mulan joins the army and is away from home for ten to twelve years, and lived as an equal to men for the duration. By the time she returns home, she would have been far too old to be a conventional marriage partner. The audience cheered Mulan on in battle and was delighted when Mulan refuses an imperial position because she wants to return home. However, the audience would be dismayed by the fact that Mulan would return home under circumstances that would not present a real prospect for marriage. For a man to want to marry Mulan he would have to want a wife who was strong, independent, and thought herself an equal to men; and the audience would know that this type of man was certainly not to be found in the “boy next door.” Fortunately, some of the authors provided relief for their audiences’ potential discomfort. One of Mulan’s comrades, upon seeing the female Mulan, decides to remain as her husband (either explicitly stated or merely implied). This comrade would already be familiar with Mulan’s unconventional martial and leadership qualities, and would be strong enough and equally unconventional, such that this match would be both believable and acceptable to the audience.

The inclusion of abovementioned variations, as well as all other variations noted in the version of the Mulan tale, raises the following questions: did the potential target audience truly affect the quantity of poetic license? Were the audiences different enough to warrant the wide variations between versions? For example, the versions from the US were most likely written for either an American, or American-born-Chinese audience. This audience would have looked at the story from a different perspective than a native Chinese audience. However, the types of variations in the different versions do not neatly fall into groupings when divided by the nationality of the intended audience. The

types of variations in the different versions, likewise, do not neatly fall into groupings when divided by the decade in which the version was published. There are some similarities between three of the juvenile literature versions; however, this is more readily explained in the borrowing of episodes from one version to the next, rather than the influence of the intended audience. What, then, actually motivated the variations? The variations most likely originate from the authors' attempts to explain, rationalize, and make tolerable Mulan's extreme behavior. All of Mulan's behavior strongly touts conventional beliefs, from the Northern Wei in which the original poem was written, to the twentieth century. A girl, almost at marrying age, disguising herself as a boy to take her father's place in the army is strikingly contrary to cultural norms about female roles. In all versions of the tale, Mulan's circumstances are happenstance: Mulan's father is too old/weak/ill to join the army, Mulan's brother is too young, and the family is too poor to pay someone to take the father's place. In the poem, Mulan has no choice but to take her father's place. In later versions, this is expanded upon such that Mulan has no choice—as a good daughter, as a loyal patriot, as a staunch feminist, as a skilled martial artist—but to join the army in her father's, with or without his consent. Through these additional, the authors rationalize Mulan's behavior, and as such, the potential audience is better able to understand and accept Mulan's astonishing behavior.

APPENDIX

ALTERNATE TRANSLATIONS OF THE *MULAN SHI*

From Budd, Charles, trans. *Chinese Poems*. London: Oxford University Press, 1912, 124-129.

Muh-lan

Muh-lan's swift fingers flying to and fro
Crossed warp with woof in deft and even row,
As by the side of spinning-wheel and loom
She sat at work without the women's room.
But tho' her hand the shuttle swiftly plies
The whir cannot be heard for Muh-lan's sighs;
When neighbors asked what ills such mood has wrought,
And why she worked in all-absorbing thought;
She answered not, for in her ears did ring
The summons of last evening from the King,
Calling to arms more warriors for the west,
The name of Muh-lan's father heading all the rest.
But he was ill—no son to take his place,
Excuses meant suspicion and disgrace;
Her father's honour must not be in doubt;
Nor friend, nor foe, his stainless name shall flout;
She would herself his duty undertake
And fight the Northern foe for honour's sake.
Her purpose fixed, the plan was soon evolved,
But none should know it, this she was resolved;
Alone, unknown, she would the danger face,
Relying on the prowess of her race.
A charger here, a saddle there, she bought,
And next a bridle and a whip she sought;
With these equipped she donned the soldier's gear,
Arming herself with bow and glittering spear.
And then before the sun began his journey steep
She kissed her parents in their troubled sleep,
Caressing them with fingers soft and light,
She quietly passed from their unconscious sight;
And mounting horse she with her comrades rode
Into the night to meet what fate forebode;
And as her secret not a comrade knew,
Her fears soon vanished as the morning dew.
That day they galloped westward fast and far,
Nor paused until they saw the evening star;
Then by the Yellow River's rushing flood

The stopped to rest and cool their fevered blood.
 The turbid stream swept on with swirl and foam
 Dispelling Muh-lan's dreams of friends and home;
 Muh-lan! Muh-lan! she heard her mother cry—
 The waters roared and thundered in reply!
 Muh-lan! Muh-lan! she heard her father sigh—
 The river surged in angry billows by!
 The second night they reach the River Black,
 And on the range which feeds it, bivouac;
 Muh-lan! Muh-lan! she hears her father pray—
 While on the ridge the Tartar's horses neigh;
 Muh-lan! Muh-lan! her mother's lips let fall!
 The Tartar's camp sends forth a bugle call!
 The morning dawns on men in armed array
 Aware that death may meet them on that day;
 The winter sun sends forth a pallid light
 Through frosty air on knights in armour bright;
 While bows strung tight, and spear in glittering rows,
 Forebode the struggle of contending foes.
 And soon the trumpets blare—the fight's begun;
 The deadly *mêlée*—and the Pass is won!
 The war went on, and many a battle-field
 Revealed Muh-lan both bow and spear could wield;
 Her skill and courage won her widespread fame,
 And comrades praised, and leaders of great name.
 Then after several years of march and strife,
 Muh-lan and others, who had 'scaped with life
 From fields of victory drenched with patriots' blood,
 Returned again to see the land they loved.
 And when at last the Capital was reached,
 The warriors, who so many forts had breached,
 Were summoned to the presence of the King,
 And courtiers many did their praises sing;
 Money and presents on them, too, were showered,
 And some with rank and office were empowered;
 While Muh-lan, singled out from all the rest,
 Was offered fief and guerdon of the best.
 But gifts and honours she would gladly lose
 If she might only be allowed to choose
 Some courier camels, strong and fleet of pace,
 To bear her swiftly to her native place.

 And now, at last, the journey nears the end,
 And father's, mother's voices quickly blend
 In—'Muh-lan, Muh-lan! welcome, welcome, dear!'
 And this time there was naught but joy to fear.

Her younger sisters decked the house with flowers,
And loving words fell sweet as summer showers;
Her little brother shouted Muh-lan's praise,
For many proud and happy boastful days!
The greetings o'er, she slipped into her room—
Radiant with country flowers in fragrant bloom—
And changed her soldier's garb for woman's dress:
Her head adorned with simple maiden's tress—
A single flower enriched her lustrous hair—
And forth she came, fresh, maidenly, and fair!
Some comrades in the war had now come in,
Who durst not mingle in the happy din;
But there in awe and admiration stood,
As brave men do before true womanhood;
For not the boldest there had ever dreamed,
On toilsome march, or when swords flashed and gleamed
In marshaled battle, or on sudden raid,
That their brave comrade was a beauteous maid.

From Frodsham, J.D., Trans. *An Anthology of Chinese Verse: Han Wei Chin and the Northern and Southern Dynasties*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967, 104-106.

The Ballad of Mu-lan

Heaving a sigh and then another sigh,
Mu-lan was sitting weaving at her door.
You could not hear the noise of loom and shuttle,
But only the sound of the girl lamenting.
'O lady, are you thinking of your love?
O lady, are you brooding on your love?'
'Indeed, I have no love at all to think of,
Indeed I have no love at all to brood on.
But then last night I read the battle-roll,
The Khan is calling up a might levy.
The battle roll was written on twelve scrolls,
And every scroll carried my father's name.
My father has no grown-up son at all,
And I myself have got no elder brother.
I want to buy a saddle and a horse,
To take my father's place in the expedition.'
In the eastern market she bought a noble horse,
In the western market bought a blanket and saddle.
In the southern market bought a bridle and reins,
In the northern market bought a long whip.
At break of day she took leave of her father and mother,
At evening camped on the banks of the Yellow River.
She did not hear her father and mother calling for their daughter,
She only heard the Yellow River's flowing waters murmuring.
At break of day she left the Yellow River,
At dusk she came to the edge of the Black Hills.
She did not hear her father and mother calling for their daughter,
She only heard the nomad horses whinnying on the hills of Yen.
Ten thousand leagues she rode on missions of war,
Passes and mountains she crossed like a bird on the wing.
On the northern wind came the sound of the sentry's drum.
The wintry light glinted upon her armour.
After a hundred battles the general was killed,
Ten years passed by and the warriors could go home.
When she came back she was summoned by the Son of Heaven,
The Son of Heaven was seated in the Hall of Light.
For her brave deeds she was raised up full twelve ranks,
And given rewards of one hundred thousand cash.
The Khan asked her to state just what she wanted.
'Oh, I do not want to be a court official.
But lend me a camel that will go a thousand leagues a day.'

To take me back to my old home.'
When her father and mother heard their daughter was back,
Leaning on the other, then went out of the suburb gates.
When the elder sister heard her little sister had come,
She went to the door and put rouge on her face.
When her little brother heard his elder sister had come,
He whetted his knife and darted light lightning
Towards pigs and goats.
'I opened the gates that led to the eastern apartments,
I sat down on my bed in the western apartments.
Then I took off my soldier's robes
And put on the dress that I was wont to wear.
I stood at the window and put on my yellow make-up.
I went out of the gates and saw my mess-mates,
And what a shock they got on seeing me!
'Oh we were living with you for full twelve years,
Yet never knew that Mu-lan was a girl!'
For the male hare tucks its feet in when it sits,
And the female hare is known by her bleary eye.
But when two hares are bounding side by side,
How can you then tell female from male?

From Nienhauser, William H. trans. "The Ballad of Mulan." *Sunflower Splendor: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Poetry*. Eds. Wuehi Liu and Irving Yucheng Lo. Father's
Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975, 77-79.

The Ballad of Mulan

A sigh sounds and a sough replies,
Mulan must be at the window weaving.
You can't tell the sound of the loom
From the sighs of the girl.
Ask her whom she's longing for!
Ask her whom she's thinking of!
She's longing for no one at all,
She's thinking of no one special:
"Last night I saw the draft list—
The Khan's mustering a great army;

The armies' rosters ran many rolls,
Roll after roll held my father's name!
And Father has no grown-up son,
And I've no elder brother!
So I offered to buy a saddle and horse
And campaign from now on for Father."

In the eastern market she bought a steed,
At the western market a saddle and cloth;
In the southern market she bought a bridle,
At the northern a long whip;
At sunrise she bade her parents farewell,
At sunset she camped by the Yellow River;
She couldn't hear her parents calling her,
She only heard the Yellow River's flow surge and splash.

Dawn she took leave of Yellow River,
Evening she was atop the Black Mountains;
She couldn't hear her parents calling her,
She heard only the Tartar horse on Swallow Mountain whinny and blow.

Hastening thousands of miles to decisive battles,
Crossing mountains and passes as if flying!
The northern air carries the sentry's drum,
A wintry sun glints off her coat of mail.

After a hundred battles the generals are dead,
Ten years now, and the brave soldiers returning!

Returning to audience with the Son of Heaven,
The Son of Heaven, sitting in his Luminous Hall.
Their merits quickly move them up the ranks,
And rewards, more than a hundred thousand cash!
Then the Khan asked what Mulan desired:
“I have no use for a minister’s post,
Just lend me a famous fleet-footed camel
To send me back to my village.”

“When my parents heard I was coming,
They helped each other to the edge of town.
When my big sister heard I was coming,
She stood at the door, putting on her face.
When my little brother heard I was coming,
He ground his knife in a flash and went for a pig and a sheep.

I opened myself the east chamber door,
And sat myself down on the west chamber bed;
Took off my wartime cloaks,
And draped myself in my robes of old.
At the window I put up my cloudy black tresses,
Before the mirror I powdered my face,
Came out the door to see my camp mates,
My camp mates so shocked at first!
They’d traveled together for many a year
Without knowing Mulan was a girl!”

The hare draws in his feet to sit,
His mate has eyes that gleam,
But when the two run side by side,
How much alike they seem!

From Frankel, Hans H. *The Flowering Plum and the Palace Lady: Interpretations of Chinese Poetry*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976, 68-70.

Mu-lan

Tsiek tsiek and again *tsiek tsiek*,
Mu-lan weaved, facing the door.
You don't hear the shuttle's sound,
You only hear Daughter's sighs.
They ask Daughter who's in her heart,
They ask Daughter who's on her mind.
"No one is in Daughter's heart,
No one is on Daughter's mind.
Last night I saw the draft posters,
The Khan is calling many troops,
The army lists in twelve scrolls,
On every scroll there's Father's name.
Father has no grown-up son,
Mu-lan has no elder brother.
I want to buy a saddle and horse,
And serve in the army in Father's place."

In the East Market she buys a spirited horse,
In the West Market she buys a saddle,
In the South Market she buys a bridle,
In the North Market she buys a long whip.
At dawn she takes leave of Father and Mother,
In the evening camps on the Yellow River's bank.
She doesn't hear the sound of Father and Mother calling,
She only hears the Yellow River's flowing water cry *tsien tsien*.

At dawn she takes leave of the Yellow River,
In the evening she arrives at Black Mountain.
She doesn't hear the sound of Father and Mother calling,
She only hears Mount Yen's nomad horses cry *tsiu tsiu*.
She goes ten thousand miles on the business of war,
She crosses passes and mountains like flying.
Northern gusts carry the rattle of army pots,
Chilly light shines on iron armor.
Generals die in a hundred battles,
Stout soldiers return after ten years.

On her return she sees the Son of Heaven,
The Son of Heaven sits in the Splendid Hall.
He Gives out promotions in twelve ranks
And prizes of a hundred thousand more.

The Khan asks her what she desires.
“Mu-lan has no use for a minister’s post.
I wish to ride a swift mount
To take me back to my home.”

When Father and Mother hear Daughter is coming
The go outside the wall to meet her, leaning on each other.
When Elder Sister hears Younger Sister is coming
She fixes her rouge, facing the door.
When Little Brother hears Elder Sister is coming
He whets the knife, quick quick, for pig and sheep.
“I open the door to my east chamber,
I sit on my couch in the west room,
I take off my wartime gown
And put on my old-time clothes.”
Facing the window she fixes her cloudlike hair,
Hanging up a mirror she dabs on yellow flower-powder.
She goes out the door and sees her comrades.
Her comrades are all amazed and perplexed.
Traveling together for twelve years
They didn’t know Mu-lan was a girl.
“The he-hare’s feet go hop and skip,
The she-hare’s eyes are muddled and fuddled.
Two hares running side by side close to the ground,
How can I tell if I am he or she?”

From Chin, Frank. "Come All Ye Asian Writers Real and Fake." *The Big Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Chinese American and Japanese American Literature*. Eds. Jeffery Paul Chan, Frank Chin, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Wong. New York: Meridan, 1991, 5-6.

The Ballad of Mulan
Anonymous

Sniffle sniffle, sigh sniffle sniffle.
Fa Mulan sniffles like her loom.
Do not ask how the shuttle shifts.
Do ask why a girl cries herself sick.
Ask her: does she pine.
Ask her: does she yearn.
No, this girl does not pine.
No, this girl does not yearn.
Last night I saw the battle rolls.
For the Khan's great army.
The Roll Book runs twelve rolls.
Roll after roll lists my father's name.
Father has no grown sons.
Mulan has no older brother.
So, I'll buy a horse and saddle
And ride for the family in father's place.
East Market: buy a good horse.
West Market: buy a saddle and blanket.
South Market: buy bridles and reins.
North Market: buy a long whip.

Dawn: So long Dad and Mom.
Sundown: Camp by the Yellow River.
Don't ask this girl to hear Dad and Mom calling her name.
Do ask her to hear the coursing Yellow River gush and tinkle.
Dawn: Leave the Yellow River.
Sunset: The peaks of the Black Mountains.
Don't ask her to hear her parents wailing her name.
Do ask her to hear the Tartar horses whinny.
On Swallow Mountain and blow chuff chuff.
Thousands of miles of war; battles all the way.
Over borders and mountains like birds we fly.
Tight northern air drums the watch.
The gaze of winter dawn flashes on chain mail.
My generals of a hundred battles: dead.
My soldiers, after ten years of war, hit the road home.
On the road home: An audience with the Emperor.
The Son of Heaven sits in his Hall of Light.

“Your valor fills twelve books.
Your reward amounts to a hundred thousand cash.
Now what does a girl want for herself?”
“Muklan has no use for any high court post.
Loan me the famous Thousand Li Camel to carry me home.”
Dad and Mom hear I’m coming.
The meet me outside the walls and escort me onto our estate.
Big Sister hears I’m coming.
By the door, she rouges her face.
Big Little Brother hears I’m home.
He grinds his knife sharp sharp to go for a pig and a sheep.
Open my east chamber door.
Sit on my west chamber bed.
Off with the battledress of recent times.
On with the gowns of old times.
By the window fix my hair in “cloudy tresses.”
Gaze in the mirror and fix the combs.
Outside there’s my ally in battle.
My ally is agog.
Shoulder to shoulder through twelve years of war ...
He never knew I was a girl.
The he rabbit tucks his feet under to sit.
The she rabbit dims her shiny eyes.
Two rabbits running side by side.
Who can see which is the he and which is the she?

From Waley, Arthur, trans. "The Ballad of Mulan." *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature*. Ed. Victor H. Mair. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, 474-476.

The Ballad of Mulan

Click, click, forever, click, click;
Mulan sits at the door and weaves.
Listen, and you will not hear the shuttle's sound,
But only hear a girl's sob and sighs.
"Oh tell me, lady, are you thinking of your love,
Oh tell me, lady, are you longing for your dear?"
"Oh no, oh no, I am not longing for my dear.
But last night I read the battle-roll;
The Kehan has ordered a great levy of men.
The battle-roll was written in twelve books,
And on each book stood my father's name.
My father's sons are not grown men,
And of all my brothers, none is older than I.
Oh let me go to the market to buy a saddle and horse,
And ride with the soldiers to take my father's place."
In the eastern market she bought a gallant horse,
In the western market she bought a saddle and cloth.
In the southern market she bought a snaffle and reins,
In the northern market she bought a tall whip.
In the morning she stole from her father's and mother's house;
At night she was camping by the Yellow River's side.
She could not hear her father and mother calling to her by her name,
But only the song of the Yellow River as its hurrying
Water hissed and swirled through the night.
At dawn they left the River and went their way;
At dusk they came to the Black Water's side.
She could not hear her father and mother calling to her by her name,
She could only hear the muffled voices of Scythian horsemen riding on the hills of Yen.
A thousand leagues she tramped on the errands of war,
Frontiers and hills she crossed like a bird in flight.
Through the northern air echoed the watchman's tap;
The wintry light gleamed on coats of mail.
The captain had fought a hundred fights, and died;
The warriors in ten years had won their rest.
They went home; they saw the Emperor's face;
The Son of Heaven was seated in the Hall of Light.
To the strong in battle lordships and lands he gave;
And of prize money a hundred thousand strings.
Then spoke the Kehan and asked her what she would take.
"Oh, Mulan asks not to be made
A Counselor at the Kehan's court;

She only begs for a camel that can march
A thousand leagues a day,
To take her back to her home.”

When her father and mother heard that she had come,
They went out to the wall and led her back to the house.
When her little sister heard that she had come,
She went to the door and rouged her face afresh.
When her little brother heard that his sister had come,
He sharpened his knife and darted like a flash
Towards the pigs and sheep.

She opened the gate that leads to the eastern tower,
She sat on her bed that stood in the western tower,
She cast aside her heavy soldier's cloak,
And wore again her old-time dress.
She stood at the window and bound her cloudy hair;
She went to the mirror and fastened her yellow combs.
She left the home and met her messmates in the road;
Her messmates were startled out of their wits.
They had marched with her for twelve years of war
And never known that Mulan was a girl.
For the male hare has a lilt, lolling gait,
And the female hare has a wild and roving eye;
But set them both scampering side by side,
And who so wise could tell you “This is he”?

From Dong, Lan. *Cross Cultural Palimpsest of Mulan: Iconography of the Woman Warrior from Premodern China to Asian America*." Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006, 59-61.

Ballad of Mulan

Jiji, sigh! Jiji, sigh!
Mulan was weaving facing the door.
The sound of the loom couldn't be heard.
There was only the sigh from her.

What was she thinking of?
What was she recalling?
She had nothing to think of.
She had nothing to recall.

Last night she saw the military conscription.
Khan was drafting soldiers.
There were twelve military rolls.
Her father's name was listed in each of them.

Her father had no first-born son.
Mulan had no elder brother.
She would like to purchase horse and saddle
And starting now take her father's place to go on a military expedition.

At the eastern market she bought a fine horse,
At the western market she bought a saddle,
At the southern market she bought a bridle,
And at the northern market she bought a long horsewhip.

At daybreak she bid farewell to her parents.
At dawn she camped at the side of the Yellow River.
She couldn't hear her parents' voices calling their daughter.
The only sound in her ears was the water of the Yellow River flowing.
At daybreak she left the Yellow River.
At dawn she arrived at the Black Mountain.
She couldn't hear her parents' voice calling their daughter.
The only sound in her ears was the barbarian horse neighing at the Yan Mountain.

They ran thousands of miles to cast hundreds into battle.
They crossed mountain passes as if they were flying.
The northern air sent forth the sound of the watchman's metal clapper.
The chilly light shone on their metal armor.
The general died after a hundred battles.
And the warriors returned home after ten years.

Mulan was presented in front of the Emperor after coming back from the battlefield.
The Emperor sat in the imperial court.
She was honored with a dozen meritorious contributions
And was bestowed riches abundant.

Khan asked for her wishes.
Mulan said: "I have no need for the position of *Shangshulang*,
And would like to ride the fastest camel
That could take me back to my hometown."

When her parents heard of their daughter's coming back,
They set out along the city walls supporting each other.
When her elder sister heard of the sister's coming back,
She hurriedly tidied her clothes and put on makeup in front of the door.
When her younger brother heard of the sister's coming back,
He sharpened his knife quickly, and turned towards their pigs and goats.

"I opened the door of my boudoir to the east,
Sat on my bed in the room to the west,
Took off my battle robe,
Put on my old dress,
Facing the window I combed my hair into the cloud hairstyle,
And hanging up my mirror, applied makeup to my face."

Mulan went out to see her fellow soldiers.
They were all astonished.
"We spent twelve years fighting together,
But didn't know that Mulan was a woman."

The feet of a male rabbit were leaping.
The eyes of a female rabbit were bleary.
When the two talk side by side,
How can you tell the one from the other!

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