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## **The Cartography of Corruption: Spatial Politics, Institutional Gaslighting, and the Evolution of the Xianxia Sub-Genre in Chinese Danmei**

**Vidushi Parmar**

PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, OSG University, Hisar, India.

**Dr. Shalini Yadav**

Professor, Department of English, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, OSG University, Hisar, India

### **Abstract**

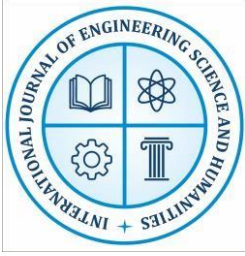
This article interrogates the structural evolution of the *Xianxia* (immortal cultivation) sub-genre within contemporary Chinese *Danmei* (Boys' Love) literature, utilizing the seminal works of Mo Xiang Tong Xiu (MXTX)—*Mo Dao Zu Shi* and *Tian Guan Ci Fu*—as primary case studies. Moving beyond analyses of character dynamics, this research investigates the macro-architectural cartography of these texts, arguing that MXTX fundamentally re-engineers the spatial and economic politics of the traditional martial arts epic. The orthodox *Xianxia* universe, historically a male-centric fantasy of individualistic power accumulation, is subverted into a high-fidelity allegory for late-stage heteropatriarchal capitalism and the panoptic authoritarian state. By examining the monopolization of "spiritual energy" as cultural capital, the deployment of institutional gaslighting to control public discourse, and the creation of abject sanctuaries (the Burial Mounds and Ghost City), this article demonstrates how the *Danmei* sub-genre serves as a profound critique of modern institutional power. Furthermore, this analysis explores the transmedia discourse surrounding these texts, evaluating how the narratives navigate real-world state censorship through cross-media adaptation. Ultimately, the article posits that the spatial restructuring of the *Xianxia* map provides the contemporary female consciousness with a vital theoretical sandbox to dissect, critique, and conceptually dismantle the interlocking systems of class, gender, and state oppression.

**Keywords:** *Danmei, Chinese literature, Xianxia, MXTX, Mo Dao Zu Shi, Tian Guan Ci Fu, Politics, Corruption*

### **1. Introduction: The Genesis of a Sub-Genre and the Crisis of Orthodoxy**

#### **1.1 The Architecture of Literary Evolution and Historical Crises**

The evolution of literary sub-genres is rarely an organic, apolitical phenomenon; rather, it is a highly reactive, often combative process. Sub-genres are forged in the crucible of historical crises, socioeconomic shifts, and the glaring inadequacies of prevailing narrative forms. When a dominant literary paradigm fails to articulate the anxieties or aspirations of a shifting demographic, that



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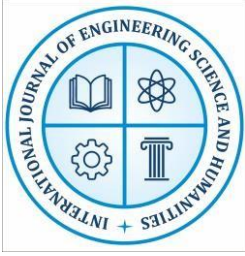
demographic must either abandon the literature or violently reconstruct it. In the context of contemporary global web literature, the rapid genesis and unparalleled dominance of the *Danmei* (Boys' Love) iteration of the *Xianxia* (immortal cultivation) genre represent a seismic shift in literary discourse. It is a profound example of how the impact of historical crises on literary expression forces the creation of new narrative architectures.

To understand the magnitude of this shift, one must first recognize that the contemporary female consciousness exists in a state of sustained socio-economic and ideological crisis. Navigating the compounding exhaustions of late-stage heteropatriarchal capitalism, rapid technological surveillance, and the rigid policing of gender roles, modern women find themselves suffocated by orthodox institutions. Traditional literary forms, heavily burdened by the historical fabric of the patriarchy, frequently fail to offer genuine emancipatory visions. Instead of providing a blueprint for liberation, they often replicate the domestic traps and coercive power dynamics that define the real world. In response to this crisis, the female author does not merely invent a new story; she orchestrates the hostile takeover of an existing one. She targets the most impenetrable fortress of male literary fantasy—the *Xianxia* epic—and methodically rewrites its genetic code.

## 1.2 The Traditional *Xianxia* Paradigm: A Hegemonic Male Power Fantasy

To fully appreciate the subversive brilliance of this literary evolution, it is necessary to rigorously deconstruct the orthodox foundations of the genre being hijacked. Historically, the *Wuxia* (martial arts) and its high-fantasy derivative, *Xianxia* (immortal cultivation), functioned as the ultimate, unadulterated male power fantasies. Rooted deeply in Chinese literary tradition, these narratives were governed by a strict, linear, and inherently patriarchal progression of power.

In the orthodox *Xianxia* universe, the traditional male protagonist navigates a world where martial prowess and the accumulation of spiritual energy (*Qi*) dictate absolute moral authority. The narrative arc is aggressively individualistic and hyper-competitive. The hero begins as an underdog, discovers a secret martial arts manual or a magical artifact, and embarks on a relentless campaign of conquest. He defeats rival sects, hoards ancient weaponry, and typically acquires a harem of devoted, subservient women who function as living trophies of his expanding hegemony. Within this traditional framework, the spatial and economic politics are fiercely conservative. The orthodox sects that govern these fictional universes operate as unquestioned moral arbiters. Power is equated with righteousness; the strong dominate the weak, and this domination is framed not as tyranny, but as the natural, cosmological order of the heavens. The female characters within these spaces are relegated to the periphery—they are damsels requiring rescue, political pawns to be traded between sects, or secondary healers who support the male protagonist's ascent. For the modern female reader, this orthodox narrative offers absolutely no emancipation. It is a literary simulation of the exact systems of oppression—systemic misogyny, elite gatekeeping, and the hoarding of capital—that marginalize her in the real world. The traditional *Xianxia* epic is a monument to the patriarchal status quo.



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## 1.3 The Exhaustion of the Female Consciousness and the Demand for Subversion

The crisis of orthodoxy occurs when this traditional hegemonic fantasy collides with a highly educated, economically active, and digitally connected female readership. In the post-socialist reality of modern China, and increasingly across the global capitalist landscape, women are subjected to a dizzying paradox. They are expected to participate fiercely in the hyper-competitive economic market, yet they are simultaneously pressured by conservative societal structures to conform to traditional, submissive domestic roles.

This friction generates a profound exhaustion. The female consciousness becomes acutely aware of the mechanisms of institutional control: how wealth is hoarded by a privileged elite, how state apparatuses utilize surveillance to maintain order, and how public discourse is manipulated to silence dissent. When this exhausted, highly aware demographic turns to speculative fiction, they do not seek a reaffirmation of the oppressor's logic. They demand a literature that acknowledges the corruption of the orthodox world and provides a theoretical sandbox for dismantling it.

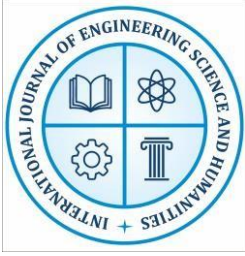
The genesis of the *Danmei Xianxia* sub-genre is the direct result of this demand. The female author recognizes that she cannot simply insert a female protagonist into the traditional *Xianxia* power structure. If a woman attempts to hoard power, conquer sects, and assert absolute dominance, the patriarchal narrative immune system pathologizes her ambition as hysteria or demonic corruption. Therefore, the female author engages in an act of supreme textual poaching. She retains the aesthetic trappings of the genre—the flying swords, the flowing robes, the majestic mountain sects—but entirely hollows out the ideological core. She replaces the heterosexual male conqueror with the queer male proxy, utilizing this avatar to bypass the patriarchal defenses and launch a devastating critique from within the walls of the orthodox citadel.

## 1.4 The Hijacking of Orthodoxy: MXTX and the Architectural Pivot

Mo Xiang Tong Xiu (MXTX) stands as the vanguard of this sub-genre evolution. In her monumental works, *Mo Dao Zu Shi* (MDZS) and *Tian Guan Ci Fu* (TGCF), MXTX executes this hijacking not merely by introducing a male-male romance into a martial arts setting, but by fundamentally restructuring the spatial, economic, and epistemological cartography of the universe.

Under MXTX's authorship, the pursuit of immortality and spiritual ascension is violently stripped of its romanticized, righteous veneer. The glittering sects and the Heavenly Capital are no longer portrayed as the pinnacles of moral achievement; instead, they are exposed as corrupt, exclusionary bureaucracies. MXTX pivots the narrative focus away from the triumphant accumulation of power and directs it toward the traumatic cost of institutional corruption. The heroes of her epics—Wei Wuxian and Xie Lian—do not ultimately seek to conquer the orthodox world; they seek to survive it, expose it, and ultimately dismantle its underlying logic.

This architectural pivot transforms the *Xianxia* genre from a simplistic fantasy of individual might into a highly sophisticated sociological critique. The narrative ceases to be about how a man



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becomes a god, and instead becomes an interrogation of why the gods are inherently tyrannical. By utilizing the queer proxy, MXTX is able to explore the vulnerability of the marginalized subject against the crushing weight of the state. The queer romance itself becomes an act of political treason—a rejection of the patriarchal homosocial bonds that require men to prioritize institutional loyalty over radical, empathetic devotion to the "other."

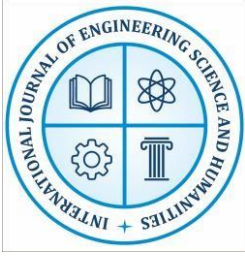
## **1.5 Theoretical Frameworks: Mapping the Cartography of Corruption**

To rigorously analyze how MXTX re-engineers the spatial and economic politics of the traditional epic, this article will deploy a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework, mapping the mechanics of real-world sociological phenomena onto the magical topography of the text.

First, the analysis will utilize Pierre Bourdieu's theories of capital. Bourdieu posits that social hierarchies are maintained not just through financial wealth, but through the monopolization of "cultural capital"—specialized knowledge, elite education, and institutional validation (Bourdieu 47). This article will argue that in MDZS, "spiritual energy" and the "Golden Core" are deliberately architected as allegories for patriarchal capital. The orthodox sects operate as hyper-capitalist monopolies, restricting access to magical education and utilizing their hoarded resources to crush democratized, unorthodox competition. The genesis of "Demonic Cultivation" is thus analyzed not as a moral failing, but as an economic rebellion by the disenfranchised.

Second, the article will draw heavily upon Michel Foucault's theories of surveillance and epistemological control. Foucault's application of the Panopticon illustrates how institutions maintain power by creating an architecture of constant, internalized observation (Foucault 201). This framework is essential for decoding the Heavenly Capital in TGCF, which operates as a flawless allegory for the modern surveillance state. The gods are controlled through a digital-esque communication array and a manufactured economy of "merits," revealing how authoritarian regimes simulate meritocracy to demand absolute obedience. Furthermore, Foucault's assertion that institutions manufacture "truth" to serve their own hegemony will be used to dissect the weaponization of media discourse in both texts. The tragedies of the protagonists are driven by institutional gaslighting—the coordinated manipulation of public perception to frame political dissidents as horrific monsters.

Finally, the analysis will integrate contemporary theories of the gaze to understand how spatial orthodoxy dictates who is allowed to look and who is heavily surveilled. The article posits that the female reader, utilizing the queer text, adopts a "faceless visual aesthetic." She operates as an unseen, omnipotent spectator, navigating the corrupt political spaces of the narrative without being subjected to the gendered surveillance that the patriarchal institutions within the text deploy against female bodies. This faceless spectator model is a crucial mechanism of the sub-genre, allowing the female consciousness to safely dissect the anatomy of the oppressor.



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## 1.6 The Trajectory of the Article

Through these theoretical lenses, this article will demonstrate that the *Danmei* sub-genre serves as a profound, architectural critique of modern institutional power.

The subsequent section, "Hoarding the Heavens: Spiritual Energy as Patriarchal Capital," will meticulously examine the political economy of the orthodox sects, establishing how the hoarding of magical resources mirrors late-stage capitalism and class warfare. Following this, "The Panopticon of the Heavens: State Surveillance and the Illusion of Meritocracy" will analyze the authoritarian structure of the Heavenly Capital, exploring how the state manufactures crises to justify its own absolute authority.

The article will then transition to the psychological violence of these institutions in "Epistemological Warfare: Institutional Gaslighting and the Control of Discourse," detailing how the orthodox powers manipulate history and media to destroy dissenters. Crucially, the analysis will map the alternative topographies of resistance in "Architecting the Abject: The Burial Mounds and Ghost City as Sites of Resistance," relying on Julia Kristeva's theories of abjection to explain why the most grotesque, discarded spaces on the map become the only genuine sanctuaries for egalitarian community.

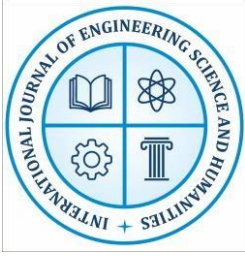
Finally, "Transmedia Discourse: State Censorship and the Mutability of the Text" will bridge the gap between the fictional universe and the real world, evaluating how the narratives and their fandoms navigate the very real, panoptic state censorship of the Chinese media industry through cross-media adaptation and queer-coding.

Ultimately, this article posits that the genesis of the *Danmei Xianxia* sub-genre is one of the most vital literary evolutions of the twenty-first century. By utterly restructuring the spatial, economic, and moral map of the orthodox epic, Mo Xiang Tong Xiu provides the contemporary female consciousness with an indispensable theoretical sandbox. Within this digital cartography, the intersecting systems of class, gender, and state oppression can be safely dissected, ruthlessly critiqued, and conceptually dismantled. The crisis of orthodoxy has birthed a literature of architectural rebellion, proving that the female imagination refuses to be confined to the margins of a world built by men.

## 2. Hoarding the Heavens: Spiritual Energy as Patriarchal Capital

To comprehend the radical nature of MXTX's world-building, one must first analyze the political economy of the orthodox cultivation sects in *Mo Dao Zu Shi*. In the traditional *Xianxia* paradigm, "spiritual energy" (*Qi*) is treated as a naturally occurring, universally accessible resource. MXTX, however, re-architects spiritual energy into an allegory for generational wealth and capitalist hoarding.

Drawing upon Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural and economic capital, the orthodox sects (the Jin, Lan, Jiang, and Nie) function as hyper-capitalist monopolies (Bourdieu 47). They do not simply practice cultivation; they privatize it. The sects hoard the geographic locations with the



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highest concentration of spiritual energy, monopolize the transmission of martial knowledge (secret manuals and musical scores), and strictly regulate access to the tools of power (spiritual swords).

The ultimate manifestation of this exclusionary economy is the "Golden Core" (*Jindan*). In MDZS, the Golden Core is the biological battery required to practice high-level cultivation. While framed as a product of individual merit and discipline, the narrative reveals that the formation of a Golden Core is overwhelmingly dependent on lineage, access to elite sect resources, and aristocratic bloodlines. It is the ultimate marker of class privilege.

When Wei Wuxian physically sacrifices his Golden Core to save Jiang Cheng, he is entirely expelled from the orthodox economy. Stripped of his capital, he is forced to invent "Demonic Cultivation" (*Guidao*)—a democratized, unorthodox methodology that relies on the "resentful energy" of the dead, which is abundant, free, and completely unregulated by the elite sects. The orthodox cultivation world's subsequent terror of Wei Wuxian is not rooted in morality; it is rooted in economic panic. Wei Wuxian has bypassed their monopoly. He has proven that the marginalized do not need the master's tools, nor the master's capital, to wield world-altering power. The Lanling Jin sect's desperate, violent campaign to acquire Wei Wuxian's "Stygian Tiger Amulet" perfectly mimics the behavior of a corporate monopoly attempting to violently acquire, suppress, or steal a disruptive, democratized technology that threatens its market dominance.

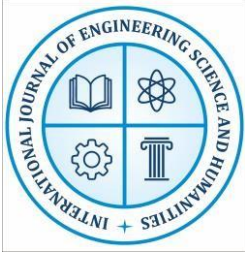
By mapping the mechanics of late-stage capitalism onto the magical topography of ancient China, the sub-genre evolves from a fantasy of individual conquest into a devastating critique of institutional greed and class warfare.

### 3. The Panopticon of the Heavens: State Surveillance and the Illusion of Meritocracy

If *Mo Dao Zu Shi* critiques patriarchal capitalism, *Tian Guan Ci Fu* elevates the critique to the level of the authoritarian state. The Heavenly Capital, ruled by the Emperor Jun Wu, is architected as an absolute, panoptic bureaucracy.

Michel Foucault's application of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon is vital here. Foucault posits that modern institutional power is maintained not through constant physical violence, but through the pervasive architecture of surveillance, where the subjects internalize the gaze of the state and regulate their own behavior (Foucault 201). The Heavenly Capital operates on this exact panoptic principle. The gods are constantly monitored via the "Spiritual Communication Array"—a magical telepathic network that functions identically to a heavily surveilled, state-run social media platform. Within this array, discourse is heavily policed, dissent is immediately identified, and the hierarchy of the gods is ruthlessly enforced through a currency of "merits" (prayers and offerings from mortal worshippers).

The evolution of the *Xianxia* sub-genre is evident in how MXTX demystifies divinity. The gods of TGCF are not enlightened, omnibenevolent beings; they are exhausted, paranoid bureaucrats



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trapped in a vicious popularity contest. Their primary concern is not the welfare of humanity, but the maintenance of their own temples, the acquisition of merits, and the appeasement of Jun Wu. Jun Wu himself represents the ultimate illusion of meritocratic state power. He presents himself as the flawless, paternalistic savior of the universe. However, the narrative ultimately reveals that he is the architect of the very calamities he claims to protect the world from. He creates crises to justify his own absolute authority, ensuring that the gods and mortals remain in a state of perpetual dependency. By establishing the Heavenly Capital as a corrupt, surveilled bureaucracy, the female consciousness utilizes the speculative genre to articulate a profound suspicion of centralized state power, questioning the legitimacy of institutions that demand absolute obedience in exchange for manufactured security.

#### **4. Epistemological Warfare: Institutional Gaslighting and the Control of Discourse**

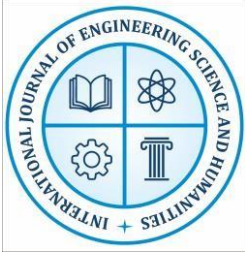
A central theme connecting both epics is the weaponization of media discourse. MXTX keenly understands that institutional power is not maintained solely through martial force; it is maintained through epistemological dominance—the control of what society believes to be true. In both novels, the true violence of the patriarchy is enacted through institutional gaslighting and character assassination.

In MDZS, the tragedy of Wei Wuxian is fundamentally a tragedy of manipulated public discourse. Following the Sunshot Campaign, the Lanling Jin sect recognizes that Wei Wuxian is too powerful to be controlled and too independent to be bought. To destroy him, they launch a coordinated campaign of epistemological warfare. They spread rumors, manipulate public testimonies, and utilize their vast cultural capital to re-brand a war hero as a psychotic, bloodthirsty demon.

This manipulation echoes Foucault's assertion that "truth" is an instrument of power, produced and sustained by the institutions that benefit from it (Foucault 131). The orthodox cultivation world does not care about the objective truth of Wei Wuxian's actions (such as his protection of the innocent Wen remnants); they only care about the *narrative* of his villainy, which they require to justify their own consolidation of power. Wei Wuxian is driven to madness and death not by physical defeat on the battlefield, but by the relentless, suffocating weight of an entire society collectively agreeing to a lie.

Similarly, in TGCF, the history of Xie Lian is subjected to violent historical revisionism. After his first banishment, the Heavenly Capital systematically destroys his temples, burns his statues, and rewrites the history books to frame him as the "God of Misfortune." The state utilizes its monopoly on media and historical records to completely erase his sacrifices.

By highlighting the terrifying efficacy of institutional gaslighting, the *Danmei* sub-genre speaks directly to the contemporary anxieties of the digital age. It reflects the concerns of a female readership highly attuned to the ways in which state-run media, internet mobs, and corporate algorithms can manufacture consent, rewrite history, and utterly destroy individuals who challenge the hegemonic narrative.



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## 5. Architecting the Abject: The Burial Mounds and Ghost City as Sites of Resistance

If the orthodox spaces (Koi Tower, the Heavenly Capital) represent the corrupt, panoptic centers of patriarchal capitalism, the sub-genre must provide alternative topographies for survival and resistance. In MXTX's cartography, these sanctuaries are located entirely within the spaces of the "abject."

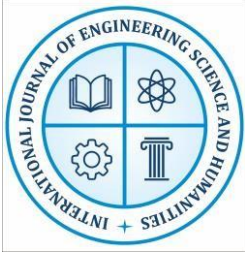
Feminist philosopher Julia Kristeva defines the abject as that which inherently disturbs identity, system, and order—the discarded, the grotesque, the dead, and the horrific that society must violently expel to maintain its own borders of purity (Kristeva 4). MXTX actively reclaims the abject, transforming the most horrific spaces on the map into the only genuine sites of community and egalitarianism.

In MDZS, Wei Wuxian creates his sanctuary in the Burial Mounds in Yiling—a literal mass grave overflowing with resentful energy. The orthodox world views this space with absolute revulsion. Yet, within this landscape of death, Wei Wuxian builds a farming commune for the discarded Wen remnants. It is a space devoid of class hierarchy, where the disabled, the elderly, and the politically exiled cultivate radishes instead of political power. The Burial Mounds, despite their horrific aesthetic, are functionally the most moral and egalitarian geographic location in the entire novel. In TGCF, the abject space is Ghost City, ruled by Hua Cheng. The Heavenly Gods view Ghost City as a den of absolute depravity and chaos. However, when Xie Lian visits, he discovers a vibrant, brutally honest, and fiercely loyal community. Unlike the Heavenly Capital, where the gods mask their treachery behind serene smiles and strict etiquette, the ghosts do not pretend to be righteous. Their monstrosity is entirely superficial. Ghost City operates as a carnivalesque sanctuary where those rejected by the brutal meritocracy of the Heavens can exist without pretense. By placing the romantic and communal utopias within the Burial Mounds and Ghost City, the *Danmei* narrative executes a profound spatial subversion. It asserts that true safety and genuine moral integrity cannot be found within the pristine halls of orthodox power. The female consciousness dictates that to find true solidarity, one must entirely abandon the center and embrace the absolute margins.

## 6. Transmedia Discourse: State Censorship and the Mutability of the Text

To fully comprehend the impact of the *Danmei* sub-genre on contemporary media discourse, the analysis must extend beyond the written word to encompass its explosive transmedia adaptations. The transition of texts like MDZS and TGCF into live-action television (*The Untamed*), animation (*Donghua*), audio dramas, and comic serializations (*Manhua*) provides a real-world parallel to the epistemological warfare depicted within the novels themselves.

The adaptation of *Danmei* in China occurs under the intense, panoptic gaze of the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA). Because the state officially censors explicit depictions of homosexuality on screen, the transmedia adaptation of these texts becomes a complex exercise in



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linguistic and visual cryptography. The central queer romance must be visually "de-queered" and repackaged to the state as "socialist brotherhood" (*Zhi Ji*) or intense platonic soulmates.

This censorship creates a fascinating, bifurcated media discourse. The creators of the adaptations engage in a high-stakes game of "queer coding"—utilizing lingering glances, specific musical cues, symbolic costuming, and highly contextual dialogue (such as referencing classical poems known for their homoerotic undertones) to communicate the romance to the initiated audience while maintaining plausible deniability to the censors.

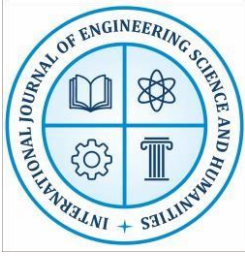
This phenomenon mirrors the textual poaching theories of Henry Jenkins (Jenkins 24). However, in this instance, the fans are not poaching a heterosexual text to make it queer; the creators are temporarily masking a queer text in heteronormative or homosocial aesthetics to ensure its survival, relying on the fandom to actively decode the true narrative intent.

The transmedia discourse of *Danmei* thus highlights the mutability of the digital text and the resilience of the female readership. The fandom operates as a collective intelligence network, analyzing every frame of an adaptation to piece together the censored romance. This dynamic transforms the act of media consumption into an act of political resistance. The female audience is acutely aware that the state is attempting to gaslight them—attempting to erase the queer reality of the text just as the Jin Sect attempted to erase the truth of Wei Wuxian. By refusing to accept the censored, orthodox narrative, the global fandom engages in the exact type of epistemological rebellion championed by the novels themselves.

## 7. Conclusion: The Sub-Genre as a Socio-Political Weapon

The spatial and cartographic deconstruction of Mo Xiang Tong Xiu's literature reveals that Chinese *Danmei* is fundamentally a literature of architectural warfare. This article has demonstrated that the evolution of the *Xianxia* sub-genre, driven by the modern female consciousness, represents a radical, calculated departure from traditional male power fantasies. Historically, the martial arts epic was structured as a linear ascent toward a hegemonic center—a narrative where the protagonist accumulates power, conquers territories, and ultimately occupies the apex of the orthodox hierarchy. MXTX entirely upends this spatial trajectory. By transforming the pursuit of spiritual ascension into a devastating critique of patriarchal capitalism, state surveillance, and institutional gaslighting, the author provides a vital theoretical framework for dissecting the interlocking systems of real-world oppression.

The genius of *Mo Dao Zu Shi* (MDZS) and *Tian Guan Ci Fu* (TGCF) lies in their uncompromising exposure of orthodox hypocrisy and the spatialization of that corruption. Through the monopolization of the Golden Core and the panoptic tyranny of the Heavenly Capital, the narratives prove that institutional power is inherently self-serving, entirely reliant on the continuous subjugation of the marginalized and the absolute control of geographic and economic resources. The cartography of these texts acts as a mirror to modern late-stage capitalism and authoritarian governance. Koi Tower and the Heavenly Capital are not presented as aspirational



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destinations; they are exposed as gilded cages, built upon a foundation of systemic exploitation and exclusionary politics. The traditional "hero's journey" to the center is therefore recast not as a triumph, but as an assimilation into a corrupt, heteropatriarchal machine. By reversing the desirable trajectory from the center to the margins, the sub-genre demands a complete re-evaluation of what constitutes victory, power, and moral integrity in speculative fiction.

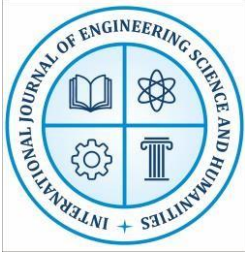
Furthermore, the conclusion of these epics illustrates the inevitable collapse of panoptic authoritarianism when confronted with radical, queer divestment. As Michel Foucault articulated, the Panopticon functions only so long as the subjects participate in their own surveillance, valuing the currency and validation of the institution that monitors them (Foucault 201). The orthodox cultivation sects and the Heavenly Emperor Jun Wu maintain their grip on the universe precisely because their subjects endlessly covet spiritual energy, political prestige, and divine "merits."

The protagonists, Wei Wuxian and Xie Lian, effectively dismantle this architecture not through brute conquest, but through total economic and epistemological divestment. Wei Wuxian physically sacrifices his Golden Core, voluntarily permanently excluding himself from the bourgeois economy of the elite sects. By inventing Demonic Cultivation, he taps into an infinite, democratized resource—the resentful energy of the dead—proving that Pierre Bourdieu's concept of hoarded cultural capital can be bypassed entirely by the marginalized (Bourdieu 47). Similarly, Xie Lian spends eight hundred years utterly divested from the Heavenly Capital's economy of merits, collecting scrap and embracing poverty.

This rejection of patriarchal capital is the ultimate socio-political weapon. It strips the orthodox institutions of their leverage. The tragedies inflicted upon Wei Wuxian and Xie Lian serve as profound warnings regarding the violence of the state and the terrifying efficacy of manufactured truth; however, their ultimate survival and triumph prove that the state's power is finite. When the marginalized refuse to play by the economic and spatial rules of the oppressor—when they cease to desire the Golden Core or the Heavenly throne—the panoptic architecture crumbles. The female consciousness, utilizing these queer male avatars, articulates a deeply radical political philosophy: true emancipation requires the total abandonment of the oppressor's currency.

The implications of this spatial and economic subversion extend far beyond the margins of the original texts, profoundly impacting contemporary transmedia discourse. As this research has explored, the transition of *Danmei* into highly surveilled, state-censored visual media creates a fascinating meta-narrative of epistemological warfare. The Chinese media apparatus, functioning as a real-world iteration of the orthodox sects, attempts to exert panoptic control over the narrative, demanding the erasure of queer romance and its replacement with state-sanctioned "socialist brotherhood."

Yet, the global female readership's response to this censorship proves that the lessons of the texts have been thoroughly internalized. The fandom operates as a decentralized, transmedia vanguard. They refuse to accept the institutional gaslighting of the censors, just as Wei Wuxian refused to



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accept the Jin sect's historical revisionism. Through meticulous decoding, textual poaching, and the preservation of the uncensored narrative within international digital archives, the fandom actively resists the state's attempt to rewrite their texts (Jenkins 24).

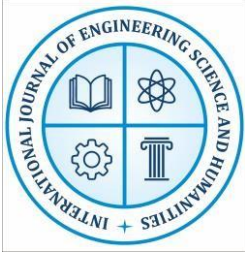
This dynamic transforms the act of media consumption into an ongoing, kinetic act of political resistance. The female audience utilizes the *Danmei* sub-genre as a training ground for identifying, critiquing, and subverting institutional manipulation. They understand that the control of discourse is the ultimate battleground. By maintaining the integrity of the queer romance and the subversive cartography of the universe across international borders, the global readership proves that the state's monopoly on truth is as fragile and illusory as the Heavenly Emperor's benevolence. The literature, therefore, functions not merely as fiction, but as an active socio-political weapon deployed by women across the globe to combat heteronormative hegemony and state-sponsored erasure.

Amidst this bleak, uncompromising assessment of orthodox power, the sub-genre's most enduring legacy is its revolutionary blueprint for survival and community. By deliberately reclaiming the spaces of the abject—building utopian communes in mass graves and finding profound humanity within the grotesque borders of Ghost City—the narrative insists that emancipation can only be found in the absolute margins.

Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection posits that the horrific, the discarded, and the dead are expelled by society to maintain a false sense of systemic purity (Kristeva 4). MXTX takes this expelled matter and uses it as the foundational mortar for a new societal architecture. The Burial Mounds and Ghost City are not presented as temporary hiding places; they are the ultimate destinations. They are the only spaces on the map where radical empathy, unapologetic queer devotion, and uncompromising truth can flourish, precisely because they exist outside the surveillance and economic control of the orthodox state.

In these abject sanctuaries, the rigid hierarchies of class and gender are dissolved. The disabled, the elderly, the politically exiled, and the monstrous find a parity that is structurally impossible within the gilded halls of Koi Tower. By locating the romantic and communal utopias within these spaces, the female author dictates a new spatial morality: to remain in the center is to remain complicit in the violence of the patriarchy; to embrace the margins is the only path to genuine moral integrity. This spatial subversion offers a profound comfort to the marginalized reader, validating the feeling of exclusion by framing it not as a failure to assimilate, but as a triumphant escape from a corrupt machine.

Ultimately, the spatial politics, economic subversions, and transmedia discourse of *Mo Dao Zu Shi* and *Tian Guan Ci Fu* prove that the female voice has successfully weaponized the speculative fiction genre. She has taken the traditional male power fantasy, hollowed it out, and rewritten the map.



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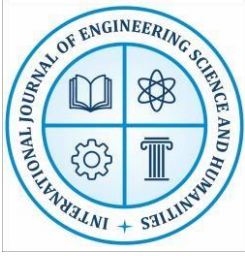
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The center is irrevocably exposed as a rotting, capitalist panopticon, reliant on gaslighting and the hoarding of systemic privilege. The periphery, conversely, is illuminated as the only true sanctuary for intersectional solidarity. The *Danmei* sub-genre has evolved far past its origins as a niche internet romance; it has become a sprawling, architectural manifesto. It provides the modern female consciousness with a vital theoretical sandbox to dissect and conceptually dismantle the interlocking systems of class, gender, and authoritarian oppression that govern her real-world existence.

As the *Danmei* phenomenon continues to reshape global media, publishing paradigms, and feminist discourse, it stands as a monumental testament to the capacity of marginalized demographics to utilize literature not merely as a temporary escape from the world, but as a detailed, architectural blueprint for tearing it down. Through the cartography of corruption, the female author has charted a permanent course out of the heteropatriarchal labyrinth, proving that the graveyard of the oppressor is the most fertile ground for building a better, radically egalitarian world in its place.

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