WHETHER the story about the Ch'en Kuang-jui, the father of Tripitaka, belongs to the “original” version of the Hsi-yu chi (chapter 9 in modern editions of the novel) is a problem which has occupied the attention of scholars and editors for at least two and a half centuries. If we accept the conclusions of Professor Glen Dudbridge, who has done in recent years the most intensive and impressive examination of the novel’s textual history, it would appear that the best textual support is lacking for this segment of the Hsi-yu chi to be considered authentic, as it is not found in the earliest known version of the hundred-chapter novel: the edition published by Shih-tê-t'ang of Chin-ling in 1592. The numerous clashes of details between this version and later ones, most notably the glaring inconsistency found in the later editions which put Ch'en Kuang-jui’s assumption of his public career in the thirteenth year of the reign of the T'ang Emperor, T'ai-tsung, the same year when Ch'en’s son, Hsuan-tsang, was to have been commissioned to begin his westward journey, further evidence editorial changes and faulty re-arrangements. In the judgment of Dudbridge, chapter nine of the novel may well have been introduced by the late Ming compiler from Canton, Chu Ting-ch'ên.

On the other hand, whether this portion of the novel is, as Dudbridge claims, “alien to the novel in terms both of structure and of dramatic force” seems still a debatable question. Huang Su-ch'iu, a critic on the mainland of China, had presented some formidable pieces of evidence in an earlier essay, and Dudbridge’s dismissal of them seems a bit too intent to be wholly convincing. It is my intention here to look more closely at the issues involved, to point out certain minor albeit significant details not mentioned by Huang, and to explore the structural significance of this episode. For the discussion, I shall use the standard edition published by the Tsochia ch'u-pan-shè (Peking, 1954), and where necessary, I shall refer to the version by Shih-tê-t'ang. These two editions will be cited hereafter as HYC and STT respectively; all translations are my own.

Anthony C. Yu is Associate Professor of Religion and Literature at the University of Chicago.

* This essay is an expanded version of a paper presented at the Princeton Conference on Chinese Narrative, January 20–22, 1974.


2 Dudbridge, “Early Versions,” 184.

II

Of the nine places in the novel identified by Huang which make reference to the Ch'ên Kuang-jui episode, the first is, of course, the rhymed verse which introduces Tripitaka, after he has been selected officially as the chief celebrant of the Grand Mass of Land and Water given by the T'ang Emperor in chapter 12 (chapter 11 in the STT). This poem reads as follows:

Gold Cicada was his former name divine.
As heedless he was of the Buddha's talk,
He had to suffer in this world of dust,
To fall in the Net by being born a man.
He met misfortune as he came to earth,
And evildoers even before his birth.
His father: Ch'en, a chuang-yüan, from Hai Chou.
His mother's sire: chief of this dynasty's Court.
Fated to fall in the streams by his natal star,
He followed tide and current, chased by mighty waves.
At Gold Mountain, the island, he had great luck;
For the abbot, Ch'ien-an, raised him up.
He met his true mother at age eighteen
And called on her father at the Capital.
A great army was sent by Chief K'ai-shan
To stamp out at Hung Chou its vicious crew.
The chuang-yüan, Kuang-jui, escaped his doom:
Son united with sire, how worthy of praise!
They saw the King his favor to receive—
Their fame resounded in Ling-yen Tower.
Declining office, he wished to be a monk,
To seek at Hung-fu Temple the Way of Truth.
A former child of Buddha, nicknamed River Float—
His religious name was Ch'en Hsiuan-tsang.

Like some other scholars, Dudbridge is not inclined to attach too great importance to such narrative verse, but it should be remembered that these verses, particularly as they are designed to relate the personal histories of the central characters in the novel, are seldom gratuitously set forth either by the characters themselves or by the narrator. If one were to scrutinize carefully the verses which rehearse the origins of Sun Wu-k'ung (HYC, chapter 17; cf. also chapters 52, 63, and 71), of Chu Pa-chieh (chapter 19), and Sha Wu-ching (chapter 22), and I intend to do so briefly at the close of this essay, one may indeed discover added details, but the basic pattern of incidents is firmly established by previous narration. It is important, therefore, to note that this passage in chapter 12, which introduces Tripitaka to the reader, has, with the exception of one major discrepancy (i.e. the name of the monk who took in the river-borne orphan), all the crucial elements constitutive of the Ch'ên Kuang-jui story: the chuang-yüan from Hai Chou; the maternal grandfather, K'ai-shan by name, who was a prominent court official; the abandonment of the child to the river upon his birth; the rescue by the abbot of Gold Mountain; the monk nicknamed River Float; the reunion with the real mother at age eighteen; and the final captiv-

\(^4\) The name of the monk is Ch'ien-an in this poem, whereas the monk of chapter 9 has the name Fa-ming.\(^b\)
ity of the bandits by imperial troops. Even the identification of Hsüan-tsang as the pre-existent Gold Cicada, with which the poem begins, is not quite so “unaccounted for in the formal narrative” as Dudbridge seems to think. For it is not the final tally of hardships foreordained supposedly for the pilgrim and the allusions to them in chapter 99 which provide the only source of explanation for this title. As early as chapter 8, when the Bodhisattva Kuan-yin volunteered to go to the East in quest of a scripture-pilgrim, the narrator has prepared us explicitly for the climactic result of her journey by the statement:

Lo, this one journey will result in
A son of Buddha returning to fulfil his former vow.
The Gold Cicada Elder will clasp the Candana.

(STT, chüan 2, p. 28b, cols. 2–3)

When Hsüan-tsang gave his public exposition of the faith during the Mass in chapter 12, he was specifically named Chin-ch’an (Gold Cicada) by the narrator’s testimonial poem ( . . . By grace decreed to meet at this temple grand,/Gold Cicada cast his shell, changed by the bountiful West./He spread wide the good works to save the damned,/And held fast his faith to preach the Three Modes of Life.), then by Kuan-yin, then by the narrator in one lü-shih poem of chapter 15 (HYC, p. 170) and again in another of chapter 16 (HYC, p. 189), by the Chên-yüan Great Immortal in chapter 24 (HYC, p. 271), by the Cadaver Monster in chapter 27 (HYC, p. 305), and he was so referred to again in chapter 81 (HYC, p. 923) by Wu-k’ung when he explained to Pa-chieh why their master was afflicted by an illness lasting three days.

In addition to the introductory poem of chapter 11 in the STT (chapter 12 in the HYC), there are also noteworthy allusions to the pedigree of Hsüan-tsang in the prose narration of the immediately following episode. The description of the monk after the poem repeats the standard genealogy (STT, chüan 3, p. 13a, cols. 1-3), while a few moments later (cols. 6-7), this is the scene of his audience with the Emperor:

After hearing his name, T’ai-tsung thought silently for a long time before saying, “Are you Hsüan-tsang, son of the Grand Secretary, Chên Kuang-jui?” Child River Float kowtowed and replied, “Your subject is indeed this person.”

In the following chapter (still part of chapter 12 in later editions) and during the episode of the Grand Mass and the epiphany of Kuan-yin, there is an even more impressive allusion which is overlooked by both Huang and Dudbridge, though it has been mentioned in passing by Sun K’ai-ti. Of Kuan-yin who was searching for the scripture-pilgrim, the narrator says:

When she discovered, moreover, that the chief priest and celebrant was the monk, Child River Float, who was a child of Buddha born from paradise, and who happened also to be the very elder whom she sent to this incarnation, the Bodhisattva was highly pleased.

(STT, chüan 3, p. 17b, cols. 4–5)

__5__ Dudbridge, _loc. cit._

__6__ jih-pên Tung-ching so-chien hiao-shuo shu-mu

The significant aspect of this passage is the identification of Kuan-yin as the one responsible for Hsuan-tsang's immediate parentage, which is directly in harmony with the Ch'ên Kuang-jui story included in all the Ch'ing editions of the novel with the exception of the Hsi-yu Chêng-tao Shu⁷ edited by Wang Tan-i and dated by Dudbridge to be sometime in the sixth decade of the seventeenth century. In the Ch'ing versions, when Wên-chiao, the captive mother of Hsüan-tsang, fainted in the garden of her captor and gave birth to a son, she was told by the Spirit of the South Pole Star that her child was sent to her by the explicit order of the Bodhisattva Kuan-yin. In the earlier version of the story by Chu Ting-ch'ên, however, it was the Gold Star Venus who said that he came by the decree of the Jade Emperor⁸ (chüan 4, p. 11a, cols. 3-4). That Chu Ting-ch'ên was both imitated and altered by subsequent editors of the novel is at once apparent to anyone who has made a comparative study of the T'ang San-tsang Hsi-yu shih-ni (=O) chuan with such later Ch'ing editions as the Hsi-yu chêng-ch'üan compiled by Ch'ên Shih-pin (Preface dated 1694), and the unabridged Hsin-shuo Hsi-yu Chi edited by Chang Shu-shên (Preface dated 1749). What is interesting here is that, whereas all these editors follow Chu Ting-ch'ên to the extent of committing the error of repeating the date of the thirteenth year of the Cheng-kuan period, both Ch'ên Shih-pin and Chang Shu-shên “correct” this point in the Chu version and render the annunciation reference to Kuan-yin consistent with the 1592 edition. This small alteration raises the question of whether it is indicative of the sharp eyes of two editors almost half a century apart, and if so, it seems rather incredible that they who have such meticulous concern for details should miss the far more obvious inconsistency of the double date. Or, does this lend some credence, however slight, to the claim for an “old version,” a claim made by both Wang Tan-i and Chang Shu-shên and implied by Ch'ên Shih-pin in his commentary following chapter 9, in which the Ch'ên Kuang-jui story is in some ways different from that of Chu Ting-ch'ên?

It may be argued, of course, that even in such a “corrected version,” there is still the clash of details in that the divine messenger of the Chu version happens to be Venus, whereas in the later editions the annunciation is made by the South Pole Star. In my judgment, however, this discrepancy is far outweighed by the significance of the “alteration” where Kuan-yin, and not the Jade Emperor, is said to be responsible for Hsüan-tsang’s birth. The change may have been motivated in part by the simple fact that Kuan-yin in popular Chinese religious beliefs is the giver of sons par excellence. On the other hand, the emphasis in the episode of Kuan-yin’s epiphany in the novel clearly falls on the special relationship which exists between the Bodhisattva and the incarnate disciple of Buddha (i.e. Gold Cicade as the priest, Hsüan-tsang). Their intimacy is founded not merely on their presumed acquaintance with each other in Hsüan-tsang’s previous existence, but also on the more particular circumstance when Kuan-yin assumes the direct responsibility of sending him to be the son of Wên-chiao. It is only with this background in mind that one can fully comprehend the force of the narrator’s comment in the recogni-

⁷ Dudbridge, “Early Versions,” 151.
tion scene when he introduces the Bodhisattva’s entrance into the temple where the Grand Mass is being celebrated:

... so it is that
Having affinity, one will old acquaintances meet,
As Perfection returns to this holy site.

(STT, chüan 3, p. 20b, cols. 9–10; HYC, p. 138)

and again in the following lines of the lü-shih poem:

Since of this sanctuary she (i.e. Kuan-yin) made a tour,
She met a friend unlike all other men.
They spoke of the present and of countless things—
Of merit and trial in this world of dust. . . .

(STT, chüan 3, p. 21a, cols. 4–5; HYC, p. 138)

Few readers of the Hsi-yu Chi can fail to notice the special eminence of Kuan-yin in the narrative, an honor not entirely attributable merely to her general popularity in Chinese Buddhism after the spread of the Pure Land School in the sixth century. Her peculiar importance in this work of fiction lies rather in the fact that every member of the pilgrimage to the Western Heaven for Scriptures has been chosen and converted by her, and their success or failure thus also arouses her special concern. When in the course of the Celestial Assembly Buddha announces his intention to impart the Tripitaka to the inhabitants of the East, it is Kuan-yin who volunteers a trip to China to find a suitable scripture-pilgrim (HYC, ch. 8). In what may be regarded as a miniature journey to the West but with the order of events and the geographical direction in reverse, the author in chapter 8 artfully prepares for subsequent developments of the narrative by presenting successive encounters of Kuan-yin and the future disciples of Hsüan-tsang: Sha Wu-ching (Sandy), Chu Wu-neng (Pigsy), the Dragon-prince (later, the white horse), and finally Sun Wu-k’ung (Monkey). It is she who succeeds in persuading every one of these condemned celestial delinquents to embrace the Buddhist faith by promising to accompany the scripture-pilgrim on his journey to the West, so that the merit thus achieved would atone for the person’s previous transgressions. This pattern of banishment, wandering, and return embodied in the experience of the disciples of Hsüan-tsang has been compared, in fact, by Okuno Shintarō with the typical structure of those tales which exploit the theme of the nobles in exile (kishu ryūritan). What Okuno fails to perceive, however, is that this pattern is discernible not only in the lives of the disciples, but supremely in that of the Master-pilgrim as well, since the Hsüan-tsang of the narrative is none other than the second disciple of Buddha, Gold Cicada. Because he was inattentive to the discourse of Buddha and thereby slighted the Law, he was fated to face tremendous ordeals in the human world. Insofar as Kuan-yin is the one who mediates, as it were, “the grace of forgiveness” and the possibility to atone for one’s sins through merit-making, her relation to the disciples should take up more systematically the religious themes of the Hsi-yu chi.

8 See “Mizu to honoo no denshō; Saiyūki seiritsu no ichi sokumen,” Nihon Chūgoku gakkai ho, XVIII (1966), 225–26. In a forthcoming essay, I shall take up more systematically the religious themes of the Hsi-yu chi.
and to Hsüan-tsang himself is exactly the same. It is she who superintends the precarious entrance of Hsüan-tsang into human life which eventuates in his reunion with Buddhism almost immediately after his birth when he is rescued by the Abbot of Gold Mountain, and it is she who enlightens him to seek the Mahāyāna Scriptures later during the Mass. For this reason, the narrator can make this comment with the lü-shih poem in chapter 15:

Buddha proclaimed the Tripitaka Supreme,
Which the Goddess (literally, the Bodhisattva) declared throughout Ch'ang-an.
Those great, wondrous truths could reach Heavn and Earth;
Those wise, true words could save the spirits damned.
They caused Gold Cicada to cast again his shell;
They moved Hsüan-tsang to mend anew his ways....

(STT, chüan 3, p. 55a, cols. 11-12; HYC, p. 170)

Most probably, it is the narrator's intention to remind his readers of Kuan-yin's double acts of kindness to Hsüan-tsang, at his birth and during the Grand Mass, that he chooses to employ in these last two lines the peculiar rhetoric of repetition (again, anew).w

Turning now to the rest of the evidence presented by Huang Su-ch'iu, we find that there are eight more places in the narrative where, according to him, further allusions are made to the prior history of Tripitaka. And on these allusions, this is the comment we have from Professor Dudbridge:

In two of these examples [i.e. HYC, ch. 47, p. 546 and ch. 48, p. 561] the allusion goes no further than to remark that Tripitaka's secular surname was Ch'en. In another there is the further detail of his family's village [i.e. ch. 14]. Two examples (again within a few pages of one another) allude only to the manner of his mother's wooing—the tossing of an embroidered ball from our upper floor [i.e. ch. 93, p. 1956 and ch. 94, p. 1962]. Three examples refer to the theme of disaster on the river [i.e. ch. 37, p. 424; ch. 49, p. 564; and ch. 64, p. 734]. The remaining one is the "List of Hardships" in chapter 99, with its four opening items.

Essentially, therefore, the distinct allusions are fewer than a numerical list suggests. In just two cases—the family village and the embroidered ball—they refer to parts of the story not covered in the verses of chapter 11. The argument for a lost chapter goes so far. It would be persuasive indeed if the author of the 100-chapter Hsi-yu chi were known to have avoided casual references to legends outside the scope of his story, or again if he had given a full narrative account of every detail in the background of his other central characters. But in fact the novel alludes copiously to established legends at every point: in chapter 6 there is a rapid series of references to several Erh-lang legends; chapter 66 opens with a similar cluster of stories about the Warrior of the North; a brief paragraph in chapter 83 covers the whole story of Nata and Li T'ien-wang. Again the origins of such central figures as Chu Pa-chieh and Sha Ho-shang are presented only in allusion or otherwise indirectly, in moments of retrospect.10

I quote the full length of Professor Dudbridge's argument not only because

9 I realize that Kuan-yin (Avalokitesvara) was in all probability a male deity originally, but the figure in the novel is unambiguously feminine.

10 Dudbridge, "Early Versions," 183-84.
of its importance and ostensible cogency, but also because the nature of his argument at this point of his essay has shifted from criticism of textual history to literary criticism proper—to speculations about the narrative practice of the author of the hundred-chapter novel. And it is in the light of his argument that I would like to advance some observations of my own.

It should be pointed out first of all that as far as Ch'en being the secular surname of Hsüan-tsang is concerned, the list of Huang Su-ch'iü is by no means exhaustive. To his examples must be added the following instances when Ch'en is indeed identified as the familial name of the pilgrim-monk (HYC, ch. 13, p. 144; ch. 14, p. 154; ch. 29, p. 330; ch. 54, p. 629; ch. 57, p. 661; ch. 62, p. 717; ch. 91, p. 1035). These allusions are obviously not within a few pages of one another; they are sufficiently widespread throughout the novel to indicate consistency of usage on the part of the author. Since, however, Ch'en is in fact the surname of the historical Hsüan-tsang, these references certainly have little significance for establishing the independent existence of the Ch'en Kuang-jui story as a probable structural unit.

With the reference to Hai Chou as the seat of his family village such as the one made by Tripitaka in chapter 14, we have a small but interesting deviation from historical tradition that deserves some attention. The biography of Hsüan-tsang by his disciples locates a place in Honan as his birthplace, but the Hai Chou in the Hsi-yu chi, as far as I can determine, belongs to the province of Kiangsu. How Hsüan-tsang came to be associated with this latter district is a problem for another investigation; what is relevant for our discussion here is the fact that even the author of the earliest known version of the work, and not just Chu Ting-ch'en or Wang Tan-i has picked up this strand of what probably is part of a popular tradition. That the author of the hundred-chapter novel is familiar at least with some parts of the life of the historical Tripitaka may be seen in his near verbatim quotation of the Heart Sutra translated by the monk himself, and in his use of the Great Preface on Sacred Teachings (Shêng-chiao Hsü) which the Emperor T'ai-tsung was said to have composed in gratitude for the historical Hsüan-tsang. On the other hand, the conscious appropriation of popular tradition, which may or may not testify to the existence in textual form of the Ch'en Kuang-jui story, is apparent in even a passing remark of the fictive Hsüan-tsang, who said in chapter 80 (HYC, p. 915) that he had been a monk the moment he left his mother's belly, an assertion which surely contradicts the biographical account of his becoming a monk only at age thirteen.

The emphasis of Tripitaka's early entrance into religious life is heard again in chapter 91 (HYC, p. 1035), which is itself an important omission by Huang Su-ch'iü. When Tripitaka was questioned by one of the Rhinoceros Monsters who had captured him, he said:

The secular name of your poor monk is Ch'en Hsüan-tsang, who since childhood had been a monk at Gold Mountain. Later, I was appointed a monk-official by the T'ang Emperor at the Hung-fu Monastery of Ch'ang-an. Because of the execution of the Old Dragon of the Ching River by Prime Minister Wei Chêng in his dream, the T'ang Emperor had to make a visit to the underworld before returning to the world of light, where he gave a Grand Mass of Land and Water for the salvation of lost souls. I was indebted to the Emperor again for his appointment of me as the high priest for that occasion. . . .

The noteworthy elements in this speech by Tripitaka are the explicit naming of the Gold Mountain of his childhood and the residency at Hung-fu Monastery by imperial appointment, both places prominently displayed in the Ch'ên Kuang-jüi chapter and in the verse introducing Tripitaka in chapter 11 (ch. 12 in the HYC). Though this sketch of his past life is brief, it is nonetheless significant that such a cursory statement alludes to incidents in Tripitaka's youth and those surrounding the T'ang Emperor's journey to the underworld in such a manner that they form a continuous complex of events.

The reference to Gold Mountain brings into view once more the theme of disaster on the river, and apart from the three examples cited by Huang Su-ch'iu (i.e. chs. 48, 49, and 64), it should be added that the name, River Float, also appears in the title of chapter 29 (Free of his peril, River Float came to the Kingdom; Receiving grace, Pa-chieh invaded the mountain forest), and in at least four other instances again overlooked by Huang.

In chapter 20, when Tripitaka was taken captive by a Tiger Monster, the narrator has the comment:

O, pity that Tripitaka,
The River Float fated to suffer oft!
It's hard to make merit in Buddha's gate

(STT, chian 4, p. 60a, cols. 9–10; HYC, p. 229)

A few moments later when Tripitaka was ordered to be bound by the Master of the Yellow Wind Cave, the pathetic reaction of the priest was thus depicted:

This is how that
Ill fated River Float on Pilgrim broods;
The god-monk in pain calls Wu-nêng to mind.

"Disciples," he said, "I don't know in what mountain you are catching monsters, or in what region you are subduing goblins. But I have been captured by this demon, from whom I have to suffer such injury. When will we see each other again? O, what misery! If you two can come here quickly, you may be able to save my life. But if you tarry any longer, it will never be preserved! As he lamented and sighed, tears fell like rain.

(STT, chian 4, p. 61a; cols. 5–8; HYC, p. 230)

When Tripitaka near the end of his journey was carried away by the Leopard Monster in chapter 85, the narrator comments:

This is why it's hard for
Zen-nature plagued by demons to reach Right Fruit.
River Float meets again his Ill-luck Star

(HYC, p. 974)

And when Monkey returns to find his master gone but not knowing even where to begin to look for him, the narrator once more closes the chapter with the observation:

Alas! this is how
Woe-beset River Float keeps meeting more woes!
The demon-routing Great Sage is by demons met

(HYC, p. 975)
From the foregoing examples, we may conclude that the name, River Float, is peculiarly associated with the suffering Tripitaka, the pilgrim who must endure certain afflictions ordained for him in the human world. That this is a constant theme in the narrative may be seen once more in the seven-syllabic lü-shih which forms the soliloquy of Tripitaka in chapter 49 (HYC, p. 564). After having been captured by the Gold Fish Monster, the confined Tripitaka gives vent to his solitary anguish by the following poem:

I loathe River Float, a life plagued by woes!
How many water perils bound me at birth!
I left my mom's womb to be tossed by waves;
I plumb the deep, seeking Buddha in the West.
I met disaster at Black River before.
Now in this ice-break, my life will expire.
I know not if my pupils can come here,
Or if with True Scriptures I can go home.

The importance of this poem lies in its representation of a moment of truth, of self-reckoning for the pilgrim-monk of the story, who is, as has been observed by many readers, rather muddle-headed and imperceptive most of the time. Indeed, throughout the novel, Tripitaka is usually able to gain a measure of insight only at moments of extreme danger. Thus in chapter 65 (HYC, p. 747), it was only when master, disciples, and even certain celestial warriors who came to the rescue, had been completely taken captive by the spurious Buddha that Tripitaka was seen to acknowledge in tearful penitence his own folly and the truthfulness of Wu-k'ung's warning:

I loathe myself for not heeding you then,
Thus bringing this day such woe on my head!
Now you are hurt in the cymbals of gold.
Which person knows I'm bound here with ropes?
Fate, most bitter, caused what we four had met,
And merits, three thousand, are all o'erthrown.
What will free us from this painful restraint,
That we may reach smoothly the West and leave?

It should be obvious that these two poems spoken by Tripitaka are quite similar in tone, rhetoric (both beginning even with the phrase, "I loathe"), and intended effect, for both soliloquies, not unlike some of those heard on the Elizabethan stage, are revelatory of the speaker's sudden vision of himself in a certain light. To be sure, the speeches of Tripitaka have neither the complexity nor the tragic intensity comparable to those of a Faustus, a Hamlet, or a Vittoria, and the knowledge he acquires at the moment is short-lived. Consistent with the comic design and the author's highly ironic view of his character, the knowledge which he gained is hardly retained to make any change of consequence in his action. But the function of self-dramatization is nonetheless analogous to Renaissance dramatic techniques, and it is hardly accidental that the present peril of water (cf. the title of chapter 49: Tripitaka meets disaster and sinks to a watery home) should induce Tripitaka to recall past woes of a similar kind. This narrative feature again does not "prove" the existence, or even the necessity, of a "lost chapter," but it does demonstrate, I
believe, the author’s artful use of the Ch'ën Kuang-jui legend to be more than per-
functory. The small but purposeful drama of this episode enhances the importance
of the subsequent poem when in a less threatening situation, Tripitaka answers the
question of several arboreal immortals about his age by reciting the following:

Forty years ago I left my mother’s womb—
My life was disaster e’en before my birth!
Fleeing for life, I rolled with wave and tide.
By luck I met Gold Mountain and cast my shell (literally, original body).11
Myself I trained and sutras read with zeal.
In true worship of Buddha I dared not slack.
Now my King sends me to go to the West.
I thank you divines for love on the way.

(HYC, ch. 64, p. 734)

Along with this poem, which rehearses again his youthful career and the theme
of disaster on water, and the prefatory verse of chapter ii (ch. 12 of the HYC), the
poem in chapter 49 thus serves also to provide the kind of background details with-
out which the full force of Pa-chieh’s pun on Tripitaka’s name cannot be felt (ch.
48, HYC, p. 56i: The Master’s surname is Ch’en [homonymous with the word,
ch’ën, to sink], and his name is, to-the-bottom).11

There is, moreover, a highly suggestive phrase in the poem of chapter 64 (HYC,
p. 734) which invites our attention. This is the line: By luck I met Gold Mountain
and cast my shell. Within the immediate context of the poem, this line refers un-
doubtedly to the abbot of Gold Mountain who came to the rescue of the abandoned
child. But in terms of the total economy of the narrative so thoroughly infused by
the salvational ideologies of Mahāyāna Buddhism, this occasion also marks the
formal entrance of Tripitaka into religious life. It is appropriate, therefore, for
Hsüan-tsang of this poem to transform that event into a symbol of redemption, of
emancipation from the body. As such, the very poetic metaphor anticipates the
events of chapter 98 (HYC, p. 1105; the chapter is also suggestively titled: Only
when horse and monkey are tame will the shell be cast; With merit and work
perfected they see the Real [i.e. Bhūtatathatā]),18 when the pilgrims were ferried
across a river in a bottomless boat by the Buddha of the Light of Ratnadhvaja.11 In
midstream, they saw floating by the boat a corpse which was first interpreted by
Wu-k‘ung to be Tripitaka himself (Master, it’s you!),18 and in turn by each of the
disciples as being the other person. After they reached the shores of paradise, they
were congratulated by both the boatman and the narrator for finally attaining salva-
tion through liberation from the body. From the way the river has been treated
in the narrative, we may conclude that it has such particular significance as that
noted by James Fu in a perceptive essay on the Hsi-yu chi,18 for it is both a soteria
and a destructive symbol in the life of its protagonist. There can be little doubt that
in the mind of this fictive Hsüan-tsang, the entire experience of the river—pre-natal
disaster met by his parents, abandonment, and rescue—forms a veritable part of
his life history.

CHAPTER NINE IN THE HSI-YU CHI

To look at Tripitaka's self-consciousness this way may help to illumine further another allusion to the Ch'en Kuang-jui story, which also discloses yet another aspect of the author's narrative subtlety. For the attentive reader of the novel is likely to notice that on numerous occasions, Tripitaka, true to the experience of many travellers in foreign lands, is said to be filled with nostalgic thoughts for his homeland. As he draws near to his distant goal, there is perceptibly an increasing emphasis by the narrator on his feelings of longing for the mother country, commingled with the fear of not fulfilling the Emperor's command and impatience with the remaining distance (See HYC, ch. 8o, p. vii; ch. 8i, pp. 922-23; ch. 85, p. 966 and p. 975; ch. 86, pp. 986-87; ch. 87, p. 988; ch. 88, p. 1000; ch. 91, p. 1029; ch. 92, p. 1039; ch. 93, p. 1050). There are also exclamations about the length of the journey they have undertaken (ch. 88, p. 1000; ch. 93, p. 1055). In this state of heightened hope and anxiety, the pilgrims approach the T'ien-chu nation (India), and the psychological condition of Tripitaka is cunningly underscored by the narrator with repeated comparisons of the Land of the West with T'ang territory (cf. HYC, ch. 88, p. 999; ch. 92, p. 1039) that occur in the mind of the scripture-pilgrim. It is in such a state of agitated memory that Tripitaka makes the following statement in ch. 93 (HYC, p. 1056):

The people of this place—their clothing, their buildings, their utensils, their manner of speech and behavior—are all the same as our great T'ang nation. I'm thinking about the deceased mother of my secular home who, by throwing an embroidered ball, met someone she was destined to marry and they became man and wife. To think that they should have this custom here also!

Once again, a seemingly trivial element in the Ch'en Kuang-jui story is developed by the author into something of much greater appeal and significance. For what most impresses Tripitaka about the fictive India is, as he says, its cultural resemblance to his own land—down to the very custom which brought about the chance meeting of his own parents. That he makes this observation with a good deal of sentiment is probably what induces the mild teasing of Sun Wu-k'ung moments later (ch. 94, p. 1062: The Master's statement that his deceased mother, who also met her fate acquaintance by the throwing of an embroidered ball, and thereupon they became man and wife, seems to indicate a longing for the past). As the story unfolds, Tripitaka, of course, displays none of that longing for the past intimated by his disciple, for he retains what may be his most solid and, perhaps, solitary virtue: a dogged resistance to the most winsome form of sexual and courtly allurement, which wins for him even the praise of Wu-k'ung himself (ch. 95, p. 1095).

This entire episode of the novel, however, which tells of Tripitaka being hit also by an embroidered ball and that he would thus have been forced to marry the king's daughter had not Wu-k'ung exposed her to be the Jade Hare of the Lunar Palace, also becomes in the narrative an echo as well as a parody of the Ch'en Kuang-jui story. Unlike his father, who gained a beautiful and loyal wife on a similar occasion, Tripitaka's threatened matrimony constitutes but another trial in a series to which he must be subjected in his journey. Like his father, however, his being struck by the ball is verily a prelude to a string of disasters to come.
I think that the foregoing analysis, admittedly brief, is sufficient to show the significance, if not the indispensability, of the Ch'en Kuang-jui episode in the narrative, though as I have remarked earlier, these later allusions certainly cannot be construed as incontrovertible proofs for a "lost chapter." The existence of such a chapter has to be established by further discovery of textual materials hitherto unknown, if such discovery is indeed still possible. It may be safely asserted, however, that the author of the hundred-chapter novel, Wu-Ch'eng-en or whoever he might be, is thoroughly familiar with the tradition of the birth and adventures of the infant Hsüan-tsang popularized in the dramas of Yüan and Ming China, and that he has consciously and skillfully exploited this tradition in his narrative. In this sense, I can hardly agree with Dudbridge's statement that "of all the diverse blocks of narrative which fill the first 12 chapters, this episode [i.e. ch. 9] alone contributes nothing to the progress of the plot as a whole." The argument here, I suppose, turns on what one means by "progress." If one insists on the principle of plot development something as rigorously defined as the Aristotelian law of probability and necessity, one may be duly disappointed by the entire work of the Hsi-yu chi.

At one point in his study of the Hsi-yu chi manuscripts, Professor Dudbridge cites with approval the negative criticism of Wang Tan-i on one element of chapter 9 (How could the murderer of Ch'en Kuang-jui live as governor for eighteen years without being detected?), and he further mentions the "formidable list" of "absurdities" in the chapter drawn up by Ch'en Shih-pin (Wu-i-tzu) in his commentary at the end of chapter nine. The objections of Ch'en, written with some of the most contrived "four-six" constructions in parallel prose, are as follows:

1. The incidents are full of paradoxes and contradict popular customs. Since what is commonly accepted as proper marriage etiquette does not record anything about the practice of selecting a son-in-law by throwing an embroidered ball from a festooned tower, this incident is not to be believed.
2. How can a chuang-yüan's mother live all by herself in a strange place?
3. How can a prime minister's daughter go with her spouse to his post without the accompaniment of guards?
4. How can the wife of a governor walk unseen to the bank of a river?
5. How can a raft made of a single board be considered an adequate life-saver for a child?
6. How can one lose contact completely with one's beloved daughter with no questions asked?
7. How can the mother of an official be reduced to pauperism after separation?
8. How can there be no investigation after eighteen years of silence on the part of the daughter?
9. How can someone enter directly into the inner chamber of a governor's mansion to look for his own mother? How can such a huge mansion exist without the presence of guards or maids?

16 Ibd., 172-73.
CHAPTER NINE IN THE HSI-YU CHI

10. How can we believe that sixty-thousand troops are needed to capture the bandits at the end?\(^{17}\)

Even allowing for a measure of cogency in Ch'ên's arguments, it should be obvious that his kind of misguided skepticism cannot be applied to the reading of a work like the *Hsi-yu chi* without disastrous consequences. If one were to follow the example of this early Ch'ing editor, one might well question not simply those incidents in the disputed chapter nine, but countless others throughout the narrative which are likely to strain a normal reader's credulity. One might ask, for instance, how it was possible for the high priests of the entire empire to reach the capital for the Grand Mass with less than a month's notice (ch. 10, HYC, p. 130); or how could the Black Bear Monster be motivated to invite the Elder of the Golden Pool to attend a Festival of Buddha-Robe, when it was the Monster himself who stole the robe from the residence of the Elder moments before (ch. 17, HYC, p. 195); or whether it was likely that monks living near India would say that their entire hope in reading and reciting Scriptures was to achieve sufficient merit so that they would be born in China at their next incarnations (ch. 91, HYC, pp. 1028-29)!

If, however, one accepts the sort of poetic *karma*\(^{18}\) as an organizing principle which the author seems to share with many traditional story-tellers of China, then the Ch'ên Kuang-jui episode may not seem so out of place after all in the structure of the narrative. For the essential features of the story do not simply account for the familial origin of the pilgrim-monk, much less does the story exist, as Dudbridge thinks, "as a self-contained action concentrating [on] the strong emotive values of family loyalty."\(^{18}\) Consistent with certain traditions of folk-lore and folk religions, the story rather focuses our attention on the special status of a particular hero by dwelling on his supernatural birth, miraculous deliverance, and the peculiar afflictions ordained for his mundane existence. So regarded, the theme of the river and its attendant perils utilized by the author of the hundred-chapter novel reinforces the theme of Tripitaka's this-worldly identity as the incarnation of the banished Gold Cicada. Both themes in turn support the threefold aetiology developed in the narrative for explicating the meaning of Tripitaka's ordeals:\(^{17}\) as a form of chatisement for his preexistent transgression, as a test of endurance for the earthly pilgrim, and as an *exemplum* of the high cost of obtaining sacred writings from the West.

Compared with other authors of the classic Chinese novel, the author of the *Hsi-yu chi* is remarkable for his eye for details and for the care in their treatment in the course of a work of such length and scope. A seemingly random remark of Tripitaka, his vow to sweep every pagoda he meets on his way in chapter 13 (HYC p. 144), is transformed into the causal motif for an entire episode in chapter 62, and is picked up again in chapter 91 (HYC, p. 1031). The diamond snare\(^{18}\) of Lao Tzu, which knocked down the former celestial delinquent in chapter 6, is recalled by Wu-k'ung to that effect when he has to borrow it in chapter 52 (HYC, p. 606). Five hundred years later and seventy-nine chapters after the incident, Li Ching still chafes at his defeat by the Great Sage, Equal to Heaven (cf. HYC, ch. 4 and ch. 83, p. 947). To be sure, the author shows no hesitancy in introducing all kinds of new and unrelated traditions in myth or history along the way, as Dudbridge has pointed out,

\(^{17}\) Chuian 2, p. 12b. I use a 1924 edition of the *Hsi-yu chên chiian* published in Shanghai.

\(^{18}\) Dudbridge, "Early Versions," 184.
but the presentation of things, events, and places related to the central characters is astonishing for the meticulous planning and execution. In the passage which I cited earlier in this essay, Professor Dudbridge has declared that Huang Su-ch'iu's argument for a lost chapter "would be persuasive indeed if the author of the 100-chapter Hsi-yu chi were known to have avoided casual references to legends outside the scope of his story, or again if he had given a full narrative account of every detail in the background of his other central characters." Dudbridge further maintains that "the origins of such central figures as Chu Pa-chieh and Sha Ho-shang are presented only in allusion or otherwise indirectly, in moments of retrospect." The question that must be asked at this point is whether these assertions can be supported by the text itself.

In the first place, we need to determine who are the central characters of the narrative. Dudbridge in the same passage speaks of the "copious" allusions of the novel at every point to "established legends," and he mentions the figures of Erh-lang (ch. 6), the Warrior of the North (ch. 66), Nata, and Li Ching, all of whom, so the argument goes, appear in the novel without any background details presented by the author. But the question which immediately arises is whether these persons can be considered the central figures of the narrative, and the answer cannot be more apparent. By no stretch of the imagination can these deities, and for that matter we may include Kuan-yin, Lao Tzu, the Gold Star Venus, and Moksa, who appear with even greater frequency, be identified as the central characters. That distinction surely must be reserved only for the five fellow-pilgrims who have undertaken the journey to the West. It is they who engage our constant and undivided attention; the vicissitudes of their journey, the jocular forms of their action, and the lively varieties of their speech are what causes our amazement and delight, our laughter and sympathy. Vast as the pantheons of Heaven and Hell, of Buddhism and Taoism may be, they form only the supportive cast.

If we indeed acknowledge the pilgrims to be the central characters, we must still decide whether it is true that the origins of someone like Chu Pa-chieh "are presented only with allusion or otherwise indirectly, in moments of retrospect." To do so, I propose to quote in full the lengthy p'ai-lü spoken by Pa-chieh (Pigsy) when he was first questioned by Sun Wu-k'ung in chapter 19:

> My mind was dim since the time of my youth;
> Always I loved my indolence and sloth.
> I trained not my nature nor practic'd Truth:
> I passed my days deluded and confused.
> I met suddenly an Immortal True,
> Who sat and spoke to me of Heat and Cold.
> "Repent," he said, "and cease your worldly ways,
> For taking life will bring you endless pain.
> One day when you reach the end of your life,
> For Eight Woes and Three Ways you'll grieve too late!"
> I listened and turned my will to mend my ways,
> By luck my Teacher he at once became,
> Telling me the secrets of Heav'n and Earth.
> I was given the Great Pills of Nine Turns.
> My work incessant went on night and day:
It reached the Mud-pill Chamber of my crown,
And the Rushing-spring Points beneath my feet.
Into the Bright Pool kidney-water freely flowed;
My Cinnabar Field was thus warmly fed.
Baby and Fair Girl mated as Yin and Yang;
Lead and Mercury mixed as Sun and Moon.
In concord Li-dragon and K’an-tiger used,
The Spirit Turtle sucked dry the Gold Crow’s blood.
Three Flowers joined and took roots at the top;
Five Forces combined, to perfection mixed.
My work finished I ascended on high,
Met by pairs of Immortals from the sky.
Brightly pink clouds arose beneath my feet;
With light, healthy frame I saw the Golden Arch.
A banquet for gods gave the Jade Emperor:
They sat in rows according to their ranks.
Made a marshal of the River of Heav’n,
Of the naval forces I took command.
Because Wang-mu gave the Peaches Banquet,
When she met her guests at the Jasper Pool,
My mind became hazy for I was drunk;
A shameless rowdy, I reeled left and right.
Boldly I invaded the Lunar Palace,
Where I was by the Charming Lady met.
When I saw her lovely, soul-snatching face,
My carnal itch of old could not be stopped!
Without regard for manners or for rank,
I grabbed Miss Ch’ang-o, asking her to bed.
For three or four times she rejected me,
Hiding here and there and with mounting rage,
I roared with passion boundless as the sky,
Almost shaking loose the Heavenly Arch.
The Inspector Gen’ral the Jade Ruler told;
I was destined that day to meet my fate.
The Lunar Palace completely enclosed
Left me no way to run or to escape.
Then I was caught by the various gods,
Still undaunted, for wine was in my heart.
Bound and taken to see the Jade Emperor,
I should by law have been executed.
It was Venus, the Gold Star, Mr. Li,
Who left the ranks and knelt to beg for me.
My punishment changed to two thousand blows,
My flesh was torn; my bones did almost crack.
Alive! I was banished from Heaven’s Gate
To make my home beneath the Fu-ling Mount.
My sins led me to an erroneous womb:
My common name is thus called Chu Kang-lieh!

(HYC, pp. 212–13)

This is indeed the moment of retrospect, when Pa-chieh recounts his past history to his opponent before a fight. Except for the extensive use of alchemical and yin-
yang rhetoric to describe the process of his first becoming an immortal, however, every essential detail of his past life has been established by prior narration in the novel. The rank of Marshal of Heavenly Weeds, the affront to Ch’ang-o as a result of getting drunk, the divine chastisement of two thousand blows by the bludgeon, the exile to earth, the wrong turn on the way to the next incarnation, and the settlement on Fu-ling Mountain—all of these events have been introduced in the all important chapter 8. They form, in fact, the constitutive elements of Pa-chieh’s life history which are faithfully repeated in every subsequent autobiographical account (e.g. ch. 85, HYC, pp. 969–70; ch. 94, HYC, p. 1061).

Though space does not permit me to discuss the other disciples of Tripitaka, I should like to point out that the way Pa-chieh has been presented in the narrative is exactly the same as Wu-k’ung and Wu-ching. If we study chapter 8 and subsequent episodes (e.g. chs. 22 and 94), we shall see again that there is a basic core of incidents in the life of Sha Ho-shang which is first introduced by narration, and which will be repeated without deviation. Needless to say, the obvious importance of Monkey as a central character necessitates a much more dramatic and elaborate introduction (chs. 1–7), and throughout the narrative, he is given many more opportunities for self-disclosure (e.g. HYC, chs. 17, pp. 192–3; ch. 52, pp. 600–601; ch. 63, p. 721; ch. 70, pp. 795–6; ch. 71; pp. 811–12; ch. 86, p. 980; ch. 94, pp. 1060–61). But in all these instances, the consistency between what has been established in the first seven chapters and subsequent rehearsals is remarkable. In the absence of chapter 9, Tripitaka is the only member of the pilgrimage, in fact, whose origins are presented in the manner which Dudbridge ascribes to the disciples: in allusion or indirectly, in moments of retrospect. The early editors of the Hsi-yu chi, therefore, were not wholly unjustified in their protest that a theme of such significance as the Ch’ên Kuang-jui story had not been more fully accounted for by antecedent narrative.

As we have it today, the Ch’ên Kuang-jui chapter may well have been the work of Chu-Ting-ch’ên with further modifications by the Ch’ing editors. Style alone should make us question the chapter’s authenticity: in a work which is estimated to contain some seventeen hundred poems in the other ninety-nine chapters, this chapter alone does not have a single independent verse. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that the work of the later editors has brought numerous inconsistencies into the text. But by preserving the essential features of a well known and popular legend directly germane to the entire narrative, the chapter harmonizes rather than intrudes; and perhaps in this sense, the early editors and compilers may have shown better judgment than what is accorded them by modern scholarship.
世德堂
金陵
朱鼎臣
黄甫秋
顯語
水陸大会
遠安
法明
澳洲
外山
金山
全輝
江流兒
西遊記遺書
吾奉玉帝金旨
唐三藏西遊記(西遊)傳
西遊真诠
新説西游記
有緣
相知
賞種流離謠
重，再
御
方真武
那叱
李天王
沙和尚

Glossary

鵲的人
我出娘胎就做和尚
脫離江流東天後來八戒轉山林
可憐那三藏啊！
江流註定多磨折
家成門中功行難
這的是苦命江流眾行者
遇難神僧怒怪龍
自恨
諛
師父姓陳名到觀了
猿猴馬劉方悟殺/功成行滿見異為
空懸觀玉佛
師父是條
先母
遇舊姻緣
婚禮
前因後果
難
金剛琢
可憐！這正是
縛性逢魔難正果
江流又遇苦災星
咦！正是那
有難的江流眾遇難
降魔的大聖亦造魔