

THE HUNDRED-CHAPTER HSI-YU CHI AND ITS EARLY VERSIONS

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The main issue considered in this article¹ is the significance of two printed versions of the *Hsi-yu chi* story associated with the names Yang Chih-ho 陽至和 and Chu Ting-ch'ên 朱鼎臣. Their position in relation

¹ Based on part of the writer's doctoral dissertation, *The Hsi-yu chi: a study of antecedents and early versions* (University of Cambridge, 1967).

to the famous 100-chapter version of the sixteenth century has an important bearing on our understanding of the novel's composition. For many years this has been the most hotly debated issue in the field of *Hsi-yu chi* studies. Statements on both sides continue to appear. The present article aims, by taking into account a wider range of significant texts than has been used in any single study hitherto, to throw light on the discussion with fuller and more detailed documentation. The most important evidence is in the form of new textual discoveries and more exact information gathered from the familiar original texts.

Some of the material introduced here I have previously presented in a publication² which was designed primarily as a reply to an earlier article by Liu Ts'un-yan (1963).³ The present study is offered, however, as a distinct and more complete treatment of the group of problems as a whole. It is chiefly because further important texts have meanwhile become available – in particular the sole extant Ming edition of Yang Chih-ho's *San-tsang ch'u-shên chuan* 三藏出身傳 – that the problems can now yield clearer and more consistent solutions.

1. Classes of editions

The surviving early blockprint editions fall fairly readily into distinct classes, and to an extent can be related together. Two groups of problems remain to raise the whole question of the novel's original form. These problems will be introduced below.

Sun K'ai-ti's account of the classes of early editions remains adequate in its general lines,⁴ but a good deal of information about individual texts has been brought to light since his work was done. I have myself been able to examine, in the original or more usually on microfilm, at least one representative example of each class listed below. In the case of editions I have not seen (identified as such below) information is based on observations published by Japanese and Chinese scholars.

CLASS A – THE "HUA-YANG EDITIONS"

Three distinct versions are known.

A.1

Title-page. Entitled *K'ê kuan-pan ch'üan-hsiang Hsi-yu chi* 刻官板全像西遊記.

Chüan 卷 titles. *Hsin-k'ê ch'u-hsiang kuan-pan ta-tzu Hsi-yu chi* 新刻出像官板大字西遊記.

² An article entitled "*Hsi-yu chi* tsu-pên k'ao ti tsai shang-ch'üeh 西遊記祖本考の再商榷", *Hsin Ya hsüeh-pao* 新亞學報 6, 2 (1964), 497–519.

³ Professor Liu subsequently presented an English version of his case (1964).

⁴ Sun K'ai-ti, 1957, pp. 164–7; 1958, pp. 72–84.

Division. 20 *chüan*, 100 *hui* 回,⁵ 20 *ts'ê* 冊.

Lineation. 12 columns, 24 characters.

Illustrations. Full-page illustrations dispersed irregularly throughout the text, with usually two folios to each chapter. The whole work contains 197 such double illustrations.

Preface. Signed Ch'ên Yüan-chih 陳元之 of Mo-ling 秣陵 (*i.e.* Nanking); dated summer of the year *jên-ch'ên* 壬辰. The logic of relationship between this edition and A.2 below suggests that this year must have been 1592.⁶

Editor. The second line of each *chüan* runs – "checked (校) by Hua-yang tung-t'ien chu-jên 華陽洞天主人". This feature, common to all editions of this class (as is the Ch'ên Yüan-chih preface), furnishes the general designation above. Hua-yang tung-t'ien chu-jên has not, in spite of some speculation,⁷ been satisfactorily identified. It seems likely, in the absence of further clear evidence, that he worked in the region of Nanking.⁸

Publisher. The title-page bears the additional legend – "Checked and printed by T'ang's (唐氏) Shih-tê-t'ang 世德堂 of Chin-ling 金陵" (*i.e.* Nanking). Ch'ên in his preface says (pp. 3b–4a):

T'ang Kuang-lu 唐光祿 purchased this book and felt it to be outstanding, so for the benefit of lovers of the novel he edited and checked it, drew up a list of *chüan* and had blocks cut – in all, twenty *chüan* with fully several hundred thousand words. He entrusted the preface to me.

It appears then that this Shih-tê-t'ang edition was that for which Ch'ên's preface was originally composed. This, ostensibly in the year 1592,⁹ represents the earliest explicit information we have on the 100-chapter work. The phrase *kuan-pan* in its title is intended to distinguish the edition from frankly popular publications.

Four *chüan* (9, 10, 19, 20) have the name Jung-shou-t'ang 榮壽堂 in place of Shih-tê-t'ang in their third line. The lineation, style of illustration and printing all remain uniform with the other *chüan*. In the case of *chüan* 16 the third line reads – "recut (重鑄) by the publisher Hsiung Yün-pin 熊雲濱": again, a feature apparently common

⁵ Hereafter: "chapter".

⁶ Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 74.

⁷ Cf. Su Hsing 蘇興, "Kuan-yü Hsi-yu chi ti chi-ké wên-t'i 關於西遊記的幾個問題", reprinted in *Wên-hsüeh i-ch'an tsêng-k'an* 文學遺產增刊, 10 (Peking, 1962), pp. 145–6.

⁸ Sun K'ai-ti, *loc. cit.*

⁹ In an edition such as A.2, described below, it came about that this same preface was signed with a later date. Logically the *jên-ch'ên* date in A.1, although the earliest known to us, may also represent not that originally inscribed by the preface-writer, but one similarly revised.

to all surviving exemplars of the edition.¹⁰ The *chüan* remains uniform with the rest of the book.

Exemplars. (a) Originally in the Rare Book Collection of the Peking National Library (at present in Taiwan), with brief gaps in chapters 14, 44, 65, 87. Microfilm apparently of this copy was used as the basis of the recent reprint by the Tso-chia ch'u-pan-shê 作家出版社 (Peking 1954),¹¹ reissued Hong Kong 1961. Microfilm: Library of Congress.

(b) Tenri Central Library,¹² with gaps of one or two pages in *chüan* 2, 3, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20.

(c) Jigendō 慈眼堂 at Nikkō.

(d) Asano 淺野 Library at Hiroshima, with only ten *ts'ê* containing the final fifty chapters.¹³

A.2

Title-page. Entitled *Hsin-chüan ch'üan-hsiang Hsi-yu chi chuan* 新鐫全像西遊記傳.

Chüan titles. *Ting-ch'ieh Ching-pên ch'üan-hsiang T'ang-sêng ch'ü-ching Hsi-yu chi* 鼎鐫京本全像唐僧取經西遊記 (but with much variation in the choice of individual words).

Division. 20 *chüan*, 100 chapters, 10 *ts'ê*.

Lineation. 15 columns, 27 characters.

Preface. The preface by Ch'ên Yüan-chih, here dated *kuei-mao* 癸卯, which can be inferred, from what is known about the publisher, to represent 1603. The text of the preface is in disorder: sections of equal length have been displaced so that the consecutive sense is lost. This is evidently the result of deriving the text from some faulty copy of A.1 in which the order of pages had been reversed by the binder (the sections of text in fact correspond to page-divisions in A.1).¹⁴

Editor. Named as in A.1.

¹⁰ A puzzling exception should be noted here. A fragmentary edition was reported to be in the possession of A-ying 阿英 (pseudonym of Ch'ien Hsing-ts'un 錢杏邨) by Huang Su-ch'iu (p. 172). It was said to contain chapters 81-5 (thus corresponding to *chüan* 17) and to include eight illustrations. The opening six pages were missing. Without stating his evidence, Huang identified this as printed by Hsiung Yün-pin, although none of the extant A.1 editions bears this name in *chüan* 17. (Cf. Torii Hisayasu 1958, p. 11.) Hsiung Yün-pin was a publisher active late in the sixteenth century. Not enough is known of his connexions with the Nanking trade to make it possible to reconstruct exactly what happened to the original and "recut" blocks of *chüan* 16 in relation to the edition as a whole. The question must for the time being remain open.

¹¹ The editing carried out in this reprint and the authorities for it are described in the Publisher's Note (pp. 1-7).

¹² Described in detail by Torii Hisayasu (1958).

¹³ For details of these last two exemplars, neither of which I have seen, see Toyoda Minoru, p. 12 and Tanaka Iwao 1957, p. 33 seq.

¹⁴ It was this disarranged preface that was quoted by Sun K'ai-ti (1958, pp. 75-6). The authentic preface is quoted by Torii Hisayasu (1958, pp. 8-10).

Publisher. The title-page has the legend "Printed and published by the publisher Yang Min-chai 楊閩齋". From headings to the different *chüan*¹⁵ we learn that the publishing house was named Ch'ing-po-t'ang 清白堂,¹⁶ a Fukien establishment. The handling of the preface and the words *Ching-pên* in the *chüan* titles¹⁷ make it seem likely that this was simply a Fukien version of the A.1 text. There are certain textual abridgements.¹⁸

Illustrations. Small illustrations, each flanked by two four-word captions, occupy the top part of each page - a characteristic of Fukien published books of this period.

Exemplars. (a) Naikaku Bunko. Microfilm: Guggenheim Collection.

(b) In the possession of Okuno Shintarō 奥野信太郎.¹⁹

A.3²⁰

Title. *Êrh-k'ê kuan-pan T'ang San-tsang Hsi-yu chi* 二刻官版唐三藏西遊記.

Lineation. 12 columns, 24 characters.

Preface. Ch'ên Yüan-chih.

Editor. Named as in A.1.

Publisher. Named as Chu Chi-yüan 朱繼源.

This is an abridged text, its dimensions estimated at about two thirds of the A.1 edition. This is comparable to those of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century editions listed below in Class C. Sun K'ai-ti saw and reported an incomplete copy (the preface, chapters 1-5 and 56-60 were missing and had been supplied by hand).²¹ In 1959 Nagasawa Kikuya 長澤規矩也 discovered the full text, and it was exhibited in Tokyo.

Exemplars. (a) Ueno branch of the Japanese National Diet Library (the incomplete text).

(b) Jigendō, Nikkō.

The Ch'ên Yüan-chih preface is common to all these editions, and, since it was avowedly written for the T'ang family's publishing house

¹⁵ Correctly reported by Sun K'ai-ti (1958, p. 72).

¹⁶ Other early seventeenth-century publications by Yang and associated publishers are cited by Sun K'ai-ti (1958, p. 73).

¹⁷ The phrase seems to have been used by Fukien publishers at this period to claim some "metropolitan" provenance for certain texts. Cf. Cheng Chên-to, 1931, p. 377.

¹⁸ See, for instance, below, in the section "The Chu version and its sources".

¹⁹ See Torii Hisayasu, September 1959, p. 2.

²⁰ I have not seen this edition. Details here are derived from Ōta and Torii, pp. 363-4.

²¹ Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 74; 1957, p. 165. According to Tanaka Iwao (1957, p. 35) and Torii Hisayasu (September 1959, p. 2) the missing chapters were supplied according to an edition of the Class B type.

(Shih-tê-t'ang), the edition A.1 must be regarded as the earliest and probably the closest to the anterior novel among those known to us. Specific references in the discussion below are to this edition.

A characteristic of these editions is the very small quantity of commentary set in double columns in the text and the complete absence of other annotation. The laconic observations, including phonetic glosses, found at rare points in the text, are usually carried over into the edition described in Class B, below.²² In A.1 the double-column device is used also for *ch'ên-tzū* 襯字 in verse passages or for the brief formulas with which verses are occasionally introduced. This is reflected in the "Chu version" discussed below.

CLASS B – THE "LI CHO-WU EDITIONS"

A number of extant editions are known. It is sufficient here to describe one, generally available on microfilm, as representative of the class.

Table of contents. Entitled *Li Cho-wu hsien-shêng p'i-p'ing Hsi-yu chi mu-lu* 李卓吾先生批評西遊記目錄.

Division. (No *chüan*), 100 chapters, 10 *ts'ê*.

Lineation. 10 columns, 22 characters.

Illustrations. 100 double-page illustrations appear in the first *ts'ê*, after the table of contents which follows the *Fan-li* 凡例. Within certain of these the names of four engravers have been discovered – one, Liu Chün-yü 劉君裕, known to have been active in the 1620's.²³ Sun K'ai-ti suggests that this was a Soochow edition.²⁴

Preface. There is an "inscription" (題辭) signed Man-t'ing kuo-k'o 幔亭過客 and marked with two seals (reading *Po-pin* 白賓 and *tsü Ling-chao* 字令昭). They are names of Yüan Chin 袁晉, a poet and dramatist of the mid-seventeenth century.²⁵

Commentary. Li Chih's 李贄 (1527–1602) fame was at its height in the early seventeenth century, and the *Hsi-yu chi* is only one of several works with which his name became associated.²⁶ It is unlikely that he was in fact responsible for the commentary in these editions.

General critical principles are set out in a *Fan-li*, which follows the opening "inscription". It enumerates a number of headings: "points to scrutinize" (批着眼處), "points on the monkey" (批猴處), "points of interest" (批趣處), "points of general comment" (總評處), "points of miscellaneous comment" (碎評處). Notes falling

within the first few categories are subsequently set in the upper margin of the text, general comment at the end of each chapter.

Exemplar. Naikaku Bunko. Microfilm: Guggenheim Collection.

Six further virtually complete editions of the "Li Cho-wu" version are reported and described by Tanaka Iwao (1957, pp. 35–43). They are partly in private hands (Okuno Shintarō, Tanaka Kenji 田中謙二); partly in Hiroshima libraries; in one case in the Shoryōbu 書陵部 of the Japanese Imperial Household Agency. I have not examined them personally and refrain from transcribing in full what Tanaka has already published. Two features are worth remarking. Only one of these editions, in the possession of Okuno Shintarō, is divided into 20 *chüan*, and it happens also to be the only one printed in the characteristic Fukien format, with a captioned illustration occupying the upper part of each page in the text. From legends found in various parts of the edition it emerges that the publisher was Yang Chü-ch'ien 楊居謙 of the Fukien Min-chai 閩齋; and that the date was 1631. It seems probable that this was a popular Fukien reprint of the "Li Cho-wu" version, analogous to A.2 and deriving from a publisher who perhaps had a family connexion with the publisher of A.2. Also worthy of note is a distinct preface, signed "T'u-lao 禿老" (i.e. Li Cho-wu), which in three of these further editions, including the Fukien one just described, takes the place of Yüan Chin's inscription, and in a fourth follows it.²⁷

Two incomplete editions are held in European libraries. Sketchy information on one, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, is supplied by M. Courant²⁸ and Cheng Chên-to.²⁹ It is described as an illustrated reprint, by the Ta-yeh-t'ang 大業堂 of Nanking, of Ming date. A fragment of a 20-*chüan* edition, of which only *chüan* 3, 5, 8, and 13 remain, is in the British Museum (15271. c.13). Two facing full-page illustrations are included in each chapter. They are not related to those in the Naikaku Bunko edition described above, but the upper-marginal comments and concluding general comments in each chapter are those of the Li Cho-wu version. The text proper likewise conforms essentially to that in the Naikaku Bunko edition.

The evidence is not clear enough to allow a confident estimate of the likely original date, or the order of appearance, of the "Li Cho-wu" version and its various surviving editions. Nothing suggests that any of these B editions antedated A.1. On the other hand the apparent *terminus* provided by Yang Chü-ch'ien's edition seems to guarantee an early seventeenth-century date.

The A and B classes between them account for all extant editions of

²² Cf. also Torii Hisayasu, 1958, pp. 12–13; March 1959, p. 57.

²³ See Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 77. For other names, see Tanaka Iwao, 1957, p. 36.

²⁴ Sun K'ai-ti, 1957, p. 165.

²⁵ Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 77, also 1957, p. 44.

²⁶ For a brief account of Li's career and influence, see Irwin, pp. 76–9; for other titles which acquired commentaries allegedly by Li, cf. *ibid.*, p. 106 (n. 26).

²⁷ The full text of this preface is quoted by Tanaka, 1957, pp. 38–9.

²⁸ M. Courant, *Catalogue des livres chinois, coréens, japonais, etc.*, fasc. 3, Paris, 1902, p. 401.

²⁹ Cheng Chên-to, *Chung-kuo wên-hsüeh yen-chiu*, Vol. 3, p. 1287.

the 100-chapter novel dating from the Ming period. With the exception of the abridged A.2 and A.3 they are distinct from one another essentially only in terms of annotations, prefaces, illustrations and the names associated with editing and reprinting the text of the novel. Textual comparison reveals a close correspondence between A and B editions: it has already emerged that certain fine points of textual detail are common to editions of both classes. It is likely that the two systems were based, if not one upon another, at least upon similar original versions. In the broader discussion below they will serve as a single body of textual authority. Particular references will be to the A.1 edition, taken as representative, with, for the sake of convenience, added page-references to the 1954 reprint, distinguished by the abbreviation *HYC*.

CLASS C - THE ABRIDGED CH'ING EDITIONS

C.1

Table of contents. Entitled *Hsin-ch'uan ch'u-hsiang ku-pên Hsi-yu chêng-tao shu mu-lu* 新鐫出像古本西遊證道書目錄.

Division. (No *ch'uan*), 100 chapters.

Lineation. 9 columns, 26 characters.

Illustrations. Sixteen³⁰ full-page illustrations with facing verses at the beginning of the first volume. The artist was Hu Nien-i 胡念翼.³¹

Preface. An "original preface" (原序), signed "Yü Chi (Shao-an) of Lin-ch'uan, Han-lin academician" (翰林學士臨川邵庵虞集). The date given (天曆己巳) corresponds to 1329.³²

The noted scholar Yü Chi (1272-1348) served under the Yüan dynasty. The preface here attributed to him purports to discuss a *Hsi-yu chi* by the Taoist Ch'iu Ch'u-chi 邱處機 (1148-1227), whose journey made at the summons of Genghis Khan is treated in a book of the same title (in two *ch'uan*) by his disciple Li Chih-ch'ang 李志常 (1193-1256).³³ But the preface compromises itself at once by announcing the work's theme as the journey of Tripitaka (三藏) and going on to speak of a monkey king who "knows no bounds in reckless transformation". It interprets the whole as an allegory of mental discipline in

which the monkey represents the human mind.³⁴ The book is described as "several hundreds of thousands of words" in length, which are the dimensions of this C.1 edition. The author of the preface had evidently not read the *Hsi-yu chi* associated with Ch'iu Ch'u-chi³⁵ and was writing about a lengthy work of fiction which could hardly have existed in the early fourteenth century. In spite of the accurate personal details attributed to Yü Chi, including the date, this preface can only be regarded as a forgery.³⁶ The editors of the present text possibly intended it to give weight both to their own allegorical interpretation and to their claim to be working from an "old text".

There follows a brief biography of Ch'iu, attributed to *Kuang Lieh-hsien chuan* 廣列仙傳 and *Tao-shu ch'üan-chi* 道書全集; then a passage entitled *Hsüan-tsang ch'ü ching shih-chi* 奘取經事蹟, recounting old traditions about the legendary pilgrimage.³⁷

Editors. At the head of the table of contents stand the names Huang T'ai-hung 黃太鴻 (Hsiao-ts'ang-tzū 笑蒼子), of Chung-shan 鍾山, and Wang Hsiang-hsü 汪象旭 (Tan-i-tzū 憺漪子) of Hsi-ling 西陵. They may be regarded as co-editors.³⁸ Wang revised (重訂) another novel of which the first edition is extant, dating from 1662.³⁹ This C.1 edition, which appears to initiate several features common to seventeenth and eighteenth-century versions of *Hsi-yu chi*, probably dates from a comparable period. Its closing words name the year *ch'an-o* 單閼 (representing the cyclical sign *mao* 卯),⁴⁰ which recurred in varying combinations every twelve years, and which here might represent any year from the series 1651-1663-1675- etc. The edition would in any case appear to belong to the second half of the seventeenth century.

³⁴ The growth of this symbol in relation to the *Hsi-yu chi* story is a subject which I hope to discuss in a forthcoming publication.

³⁵ But his preface does mention a Taoist work by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材 (1189-1243), the *Hsüan-feng ch'ing-hui lu* 玄風慶會錄 in the preface to which there is a reference to Ch'iu and the (two-*ch'uan*) *Hsi-yu chi* (*Tao-tsang*, ts'ê 76, *chih* 致, 11). This reference may have encouraged the mistake.

³⁶ The fact that it does not treat the authentic *Hsi-yu chi* by Li Chih-ch'ang shows that it cannot have been an original preface intended for that work and simply transferred to the novel, as Torii Hisayasu (October 1959, p. 4) suggests. I have found no comparable preface in Yü Chi's collected works (*Tao-yüan hsüeh-ku lu* 道園學古錄, in *Szü-pu ts'ung-k'an*, First Series), in such other supplementary collections as I have been able to examine, or in extant editions of Li Chih-ch'ang's *Hsi-yu chi*.

³⁷ Attributed to *T'an-pin lu* 譚賓錄 and *Liang-ching chi* 兩京記. It seems likely that these titles were mistakenly copied from the *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi* 太平廣記 (cf. Peking, 1961, reprint, *ch'uan* 92, p. 607), where they are given as joint sources for a passage about the monk Wan-hui 萬遍, immediately following the passage on Hsüan-tsang that is in fact quoted here.

³⁸ Passages relevant to their work are quoted below, in the section "Wang Tan-i and the ninth chapter".

³⁹ Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1957, p. 89, under *Lü-tsu ch'üan-chuan* 呂祖全傳.

⁴⁰ See passage quoted in note 122 below.

³⁰ Contrast Sun K'ai-ti (1958, p. 78). Cf. Tanaka Iwao, 1957, p. 60.

³¹ Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, *loc. cit.*

³² These are basically plausible historical details. Yü Chi's father had settled in Ch'ung-jên 崇仁, near Lin-ch'uan 臨川 in Kiangsi, after the fall of the Sung: cf. *Yüan shih* 元史 (*Po-na* ed.), 181:4a. Shao-an was a studio name by which Yü was popularly known, and it appears, similarly used, as part of the signature to his 1336 preface to *Huang Yüan feng ya* 皇元風雅 (*Szü-pu ts'ung-k'an*, First Series). In 1329 his main official designation was 翰林直學士 (*Yüan shih*, 181:7b).

³³ See *Tao-tsang* 道藏 (photolithographic reprint, Shanghai, 1924-6), ts'ê 1056, *ch'ün* 9. Translated, with introduction, by A. D. Waley in *The Travels of an Alchemist* (London, 1931).

Commentary. Each chapter is headed by an introductory note, or series of notes, introduced with the words *Tan-i-tzū yüeh* 憺猗子曰... Occasional comments, often little more than frivolous remarks, are set in double columns in the text.

Exemplars. (a) Naikaku Bunko.

(b) Research Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto. My studies are based primarily upon this copy, but with the exception of the preface, which is incompletely preserved in it and which I have studied from the Naikaku Bunko copy.⁴¹

In this C.1 edition the narrative becomes more economical by virtue of lacking most of the verse passages and much of the circumstantial detail that we find in the A-B texts. The result is a mere two-thirds or less of, say, the A.1 text in length. In spite of its rarity now, the edition was very influential. It initiated a number of new features of editorial policy: the allegorical force given to the title; the severe abridgement of the text;⁴² the ascription to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi; most significantly, the inclusion of a chapter telling the famous story of Ch'ên Kuang-jui 陳光蕊, with the birth and early career of the young Hsüan-tsang,⁴³ which now came to stand as chapter 9. The text of chapters 9-12 as they stand in the A and B editions is here divided so as to fill only chapters 10-12, and the chapter-headings are in many cases different. Wang Tan-i's authority for including this material, and its relationship with earlier versions, constitute one of the problems to be discussed below.

C.2

Title. *Hsi-yu chên-ch'üan* 西遊真詮.

Illustrations. There is some variation among the different editions of this work. Chêng Chên-to describes the 200 illustrations in one early example as belonging rather to some edition which lacked the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" chapter;⁴⁴ Torii Hisayasu mentions an edition without

⁴¹ A further exemplar apparently of the original edition is listed among Chêng Chên-to's personal collection of books: see Chêng, 1963, *chi-pu* 彙部, *chung* 中, p. 66a. It will now be in the possession of the Peking National Library.

⁴² Until more can be ascertained about the edition A.3 I do not include it in the scope of this observation. But Ōta and Torii (pp. 363-4) suggest that A.3 served as the basis for subsequent abridgements.

⁴³ In brief, the story tells how a Palace graduate, Ch'ên Kuang-jui, while on the way to take up office is murdered, and his pregnant wife abducted, by a ferryman named Liu Hung 劉洪. Liu takes Ch'ên's place in office and has evil designs on the baby son who is subsequently born to the wife. She places the child on a plank of wood, with tokens of identity, and floats it down the Yangtze River. It reaches the island monastery Chin-shan-szô 金山寺, where a monk finds and raises the boy as a Buddhist novice. At the age of eighteen the young Hsüan-tsang (for it is he) seeks out his mother, and they eventually contrive revenge.

⁴⁴ Chêng Chên-to, 1933, p. 267.

illustrations;⁴⁵ many relatively late editions have a series of twenty illustrations faced with verses.

Preface. By Yu T'ung 尤侗 (1618-1704), dated 1696. The preface refers to the editor Ch'ên Shih-pin 陳士斌, and also subscribes to the tradition of Ch'iu Ch'u-chi's authorship. An edition of this book is reported⁴⁶ in which there is an additional preface by Ch'ên himself, this dated 1694. Ch'ên's *hao* was Wu-i-tzū 悟一子.

Commentary. In the form of notes at the end of each chapter, introduced by the words *Wu-i-tzū yüeh* 悟一子曰... The notes interpret the story in terms of Taoist and syncretist ideas.

Text. Heavily abridged, and similar to that of C.1. The "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" chapter 9 is included.

Exemplars. This is virtually a sub-class of editions: Ch'ên Shih-pin's version came to be one of the most commonly reprinted. Annotation apparently under the influence of his interpretation appeared in many other popular editions.

C.3

Title. *Hsi-yu yüan-chih* 西遊原旨.

Division. 24 *chüan*, 100 chapters.

Lineation. 10 columns, 24 characters.

Editor. Liu I-ming 劉一明 of Kansu. His interpretative notes at the close of each chapter amount usually to an essay of three or four thousand words, ending with a *chüeh-chü* 絕句 poem.

Preface. Liu's own original preface bears the date 1758. His second preface describes how publication was delayed for many ("more than thirty") years before funds were forthcoming. It in fact bears the date 1810. The exemplars known to me (see below) belong not to this first edition but to a reprint whose preface, by Ch'ü Chia-ao 瞿家葵, is dated 1819. There are earlier prefaces (dated 1798, 1799, 1801) by other hands; also a biographical note on the alleged author Ch'iu Ch'u-chi; a "Guide to reading (讀法) the *Hsi-yu chi*"; an extended poem (歌) on the westward journey; a table of contents; eight full-page illustrations faced with verses.

Text. Shares the main characteristics of the Ch'ing abridged editions.

Exemplars. (a) British Museum (15331. f.1).

(b) Research Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto.

An early edition, dated 1810 and published by the Hu-kuo-an 護國菴, is listed in the Publisher's Note to the 1954 reprint of *Hsi-yu chi* (p. 1). Details of other later editions are given by Sun K'ai-ti (1957, p. 167).

⁴⁵ Torii Hisayasu, November 1959, p. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

C.47

Title. *Hsi-yu chi p'ing-chu* 西遊記評註.

Commentator. Styled Han-ching-tzū 含晶子.⁴⁸ His preface is dated 1891.

The commentary is apparently a reduced version of that by Wu-i-tzū.

The text appears also to derive from the C.2 edition.

Exemplar. Okuno Shintarō.

There remains a group of eclectic editions, many bearing the title *Hsi-yu chêng-tao shu* and also under the influence of *Hsi-yu chên-ch'üan*, with various commentaries.

CLASS D - AN UNABRIDGED CH'ING EDITION

Title. *Hsin shuo Hsi-yu chi* 新說西遊記.

Division. 100 chapters, 20 ts'ê.

Lineation. 10 columns, 24 characters.

Editor. Chang Shu-shên 張書紳. His preface is dated 1748. The commentary dwells on Neo-Confucian ideas.

Publication. Two distinct versions are extant, each originally bearing the date 1749:

(a) naming the publisher as Shu-yeh-kung 書業公;⁴⁹

(b) naming the publisher as Ch'i-yu-t'ang 其有堂.⁵⁰

A work with the title *Hsi-yu chêng-chih* 正旨 was used by the Ya-tung t'u-shu-kuan 亞東圖書館 as the basis for its reprint of 1921.⁵¹ It appears to have shared the characteristics of (a) above and probably represents essentially the same edition.⁵²

A version under the slightly fuller title *T'ung-I* 通易 *Hsi-yu chêng-chih*, edited by Chang Han-chang 張含章, published by the Tê-hsin-t'ang 德馨堂, and dated 1839 is reported by Sun K'ai-ti (1957, p. 167). He gives no details about the text, and it is not clear how distinct this work is textually from the above.

Of these various editions I have been able to examine only the "Shu-yeh-kung" version: but this is in fact the text in which the "unabridged" characteristics of this category are most in evidence, and it is valuable in

precisely this respect. The novel is suddenly restored to the fullness of the Ming editions. Many passages of verse and circumstantial narrative reappear. But the ninth chapter and the subsequent division of chapters 10-12 remain as in the C editions. One particular passage which opens chapter 9 in all editions is here repeated at the opening of chapter 10. This is the feature which must be discussed in more detail below.

Two more distinct versions must be introduced:

The "Yang version".

Chüan-title. *Hsin-ch'ieh San-tsang ch'u-shên ch'üan-chuan* 新鐫三藏出身全傳 (later abbreviated to *Hsi-yu chi chuan* 傳).

Division. 4 chüan. The text is divided into 40 chapter-like units, but they are not styled *hui*.

Lineation. 10 columns, 19 characters.

Illustrations. At the head of each page, flanked by captions; signed "P'êng-shih 彭氏" beside the illustration to the first page.

Compiler. At the head of the first chüan is the legend - "Compiled (編)⁵³ by Yang Chih-ho 陽至和 of Ch'i-yün 齊雲; checked (校) by Chao Yü-chên 趙毓真 of T'ien-shui 天水."

Printer. Immediately following this legend is a similar mark - "Printed by Chu Ts'ang-ling 朱蒼嶺 of Chih-t'an 芝潭".⁵⁴

This, and all the details given above, are derived from the sole known surviving edition from the Ming period (or immediately after it), preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.⁵⁵ It is printed in the characteristic Fukien format of the time.

⁵³ In the earliest edition the part of the page which bears this word is torn, and I supply it by analogy with the later reprints.

⁵⁴ I am indebted to Mr. Piet van der Loon both for drawing my attention to the existence of the text described here and for supplying the following note: "Chih-t'an, an abbreviation of Chih-ch'eng T'an-i 芝城潭邑, stands for Chien-yang county in Chien-ning prefecture. Chih-ch'eng is so named after Mount Tzu-chih 紫芝山; the pseudonym for Chien-yang recalls the tribal settlement Ta-t'an 大潭, which was occupied by the Chinese in a military campaign between A.D. 203 and 205. I do not know of other books printed by Chu Ts'ang-ling. He probably belonged to the publishing family Chu, whose firm, the Yü-keng t'ang 興耕堂, was active for two centuries. According to the information available to me, its earliest dated publication was issued in 1395, the last in 1594, but members of the family continued to print books till at least 1633."

⁵⁵ It is currently catalogued under the number Vet.Or.d.Chin.70. This was an early acquisition of the library, presented, according to a handwritten note in Latin on the back flyleaf, by George, Lord Berkeley. The designation "Dominus" applied to him there "implies that the gift was made before 1679, since in that year he was raised to an earldom" (A. F. L. Beeston, "The earliest donations of Chinese books to the Bodleian", *Bodleian Library Record*, 4 (1952-3), p. 307, n. 3). Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1908), Vol. II, p. 347a; and F. Madan and H. H. E. Craster, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1922), Vol. II, Part 1, p. 542, No. 2853.

⁴⁷ I have not seen this edition. Details are derived from Tanaka Iwao, 1957, p. 60.

⁴⁸ On the authority of the Publisher's Note in the 1954 reprint (p. 1), I adopt the reading *ching* in preference to Tanaka's *ch'ang* 昌 (*loc. cit.*), which seems more likely to be a misprint.

⁴⁹ Cf. Huang Su-ch'iu, p. 173; Torii Hisayasu, November 1959, p. 6. The Cambridge University Library holds a reprint of this version, bearing on its title-page the mark *Shan-ch'êng-t'ang ts'ang-pan* 善成堂藏版.

⁵⁰ References by Huang Su-ch'iu (p. 173) and the editors of the 1954 reprint (Publisher's note p. 4) suggest that this version, which I have not seen, lies closer to the C editions.

⁵¹ Cf. the note "Chiao-tu hou chi 校讀後記" by Wang Yüan-fang 汪原放.

⁵² According to Wang's note it was likewise headed with the mark *Shan-ch'êng-t'ang*. Cf. above, note 49.

Extent. The text is complete except for a missing page (5ab) in the second *chüan* and three (38ab, 39ab, 40ab) at the end of the fourth. This version of the story has, however, survived independently in a series of popular reprints produced throughout the Ch'ing period, often in crude and corrupt imitation of the printing blocks of the Ming version.

The earliest and best such reprint known to me, also preserved in the Bodleian Library,⁵⁶ is dated 1730. With only minute divergences and corruptions it follows closely the textual format and illustrations of the Ming printed version and provides a useful substitute for missing or damaged passages in the old text. The printing house was the Wên-ho-t'ang 文合堂 of Lung-chiang 龍江 (the modern Lung-ch'i hsien 龍溪縣 in Fukien). Later reprints have been current in China until recent times, some with more serious textual modifications.

The work became associated with three other short novels to form a group known as *Szū yu chi* 四遊記,⁵⁷ each containing stories of familiar legendary characters involved in some journey to a particular point of the compass. Copies of the collection dating from the early nineteenth century are extant,⁵⁸ but the works date individually at least from the early seventeenth century. Two (*Nan-yu chi* 南遊記 and *Pei* 北 -*yu chi*) are attributed to Yü Hsiang-tou 余象斗, editor of a famous *Shui-hu* 水滸 edition.⁵⁹ Copies of these in a Fukien-style format, originating apparently from the early seventeenth century, are preserved in the British Museum.⁶⁰ A similar edition of the *Tung* 東 -*yu chi* attributed to Wu Yüan-t'ai 吳元泰 is in the Naikaku Bunko.⁶¹

It has usually been assumed that Yang Chih-ho was a contemporary of these Fukien publishers of the turn of the century. No more concrete information on his life is available.⁶²

A modern reprint,⁶³ which in the case of *Hsi-yu chi chuan* is based on a number of "blockprint editions from before the liberation" and in

which a number of words have been "corrected by comparison with the 100-chapter version", has in fact often added to the obscurities of an already corrupt text.

References below will therefore be limited to the two earliest editions as preserved in the Oxford library, which represent a more reliable textual authority than has previously been used.⁶⁴

The "Chu version"

Chüan-title. *Hsin-ch'ieh ch'üan-hsiang T'ang San-tsang Hsi-yu shih-ni* (=o) *chuan* 新鐫全像唐三藏西遊釋尼(=厄)傳.⁶⁵

Division. 10 *chüan*. The narrative is divided into headed sections, as the Yang version, but not *hui*.

Lineation. 10 columns, 17 characters.

Illustrations. At the top of each page, flanked by four-word captions, again in the Fukien style.

Compiler. The second and third lines of the opening page read - "Compiled (編輯) by Ch'ung-huai Chu Ting-ch'ên 冲懷朱鼎臣 of Yang-ch'êng 羊城" (i.e. Canton), and "printed by the publisher Lien-t'ai Liu Ch'iu-mao 蓮台劉求茂". Chu Ting-ch'ên was a compiler by trade, active in Fukien in the late sixteenth century.⁶⁶

*Extent.*⁶⁷ Title-page and table of contents are absent. A page appears to be missing from the end of *chüan* 4; 23ab is missing from *chüan* 7. In *chüan* 6 the text of pp. 17ab and 19ab has been exchanged, although the numbering remains consistent. Some pages are missing at the close of the final *chüan*.

Exemplars. (a) Rare Books Collection of the Peking National Library.

⁵⁶ Lu Hsün writes (1923, p. 296): "Judging from the appearance of the printed editions they (i.e. *Szū yu chi*) must date from the Ming dynasty." It is not clear from this exactly what editions he had seen, but they would appear to have been such block-reprints as are described above. Ch'eng Chên-to (1933, p. 275) uses a similar phrase, specifying the name Yü Hsiang-tou and the period of the Wan-li reign; then he proceeds to draw his quotations from a nineteenth-century reprint. There is no mention of a Ming print of the work in his personal library (Ch'eng, 1963, loc. cit.) No other scholar mentions a Ming edition. The edition described by Chou Yüeh-jan 周越然 (cf. Liu Ts'un-yan, 1964, p. 63) would appear to be a reprint (judging from its illustrations and crude printing) as described above.

⁶⁵ This is the title at its fullest, as it appears in *chüan* 4 (opening), 9 (opening). There are variants. Cf. below, note 197a.

⁶⁶ Mr. van der Loon has kindly drawn my attention to a number of Ming popular publications with which Chu Ting-ch'ên was associated in an editorial capacity. Two of these are dated: one 1584 (cf. *Naikaku bunko kanseki bunrui mokuroku* 內閣文庫漢籍分類目錄, Tokyo, 1956, p. 191b), the other 1591 (cf. *Toshoryō tenshō kaidai* 圖書寮典籍解題, Tokyo, 1960, p. 228a). Details of four others are to be found in the following: Liu Hsiu-yeh, May 1958, p. 71 and p. 86 (cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1957, p. 177); Fu Yün-tzu 傅雲子, *Pai-ch'uan chi* 白川集, Tokyo, 1943, p. 105 (cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, pp. 81-2, judging the edition to be "of Wan-li date"); *Naikaku bunko kanseki bunrui mokuroku*, p. 48b.

⁶⁷ This applies specifically to exemplar (a).

⁵⁸ Ser. e.76 and Ser. e.158. *Chüan* 1 and 2 are listed separately from 3 and 4, but the two items belong to the same edition.

⁵⁹ There are also the titles *Szū yu ho-chuan* 合傳 and *Szū yu ch'üan-chuan* 全傳. Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1957, pp. 221-2.

⁶⁰ Cf. Hu Shih, 1931, p. 409.

⁶¹ Cf. Irwin, p. 67 seq.

⁶² Described by Liu Hsiu-yeh (May 1958, pp. 87-8) and Liu Ts'un-yan (1963). The *Nan-yu chi* is dated *hsin-wei* 辛未, the *Pei-yu chi* *jên-yin* 壬寅. A passage near the end of the latter observes that since Yung-lo 3 (1405) "more than 200 years" had passed. As far as this edition is concerned, the date 1602, which also coincides with Yü Hsiang-tou's known period of activity, is likely to be the earliest possibility.

⁶³ Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1957, p. 170.

⁶⁴ Chang Mo-shêng 張墨生 (p. 75) seems to be alone in claiming that Yang "was alive around 1566". He cites no evidence or authority.

⁶⁵ *Szū yu chi*, Shanghai, 1956. There are earlier reprints by the Ta-ch'êng shu-chü 大成書局 (Shanghai, 1927) and Ta-ta t'u-shu kung-ying shé 大達圖書供應社 (Shanghai, 1934) listed among the books of the late Ch'eng Chên-to (1963, *chi-pu-chung* 集部中, pp. 66a and 67b), but I have not seen them.

Microfilm: Library of Congress (from which the present study has been made).

(b) Jigendō, Nikkō.⁶⁸

In many ways this text, much briefer than the 100-chapters, is comparable to the Yang version, and in many parts is identical to it. It is unique among all Ming versions of the *Hsi-yu chi* in devoting an extended section (the whole of *chüan* 4) to the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story. These matters must be reconsidered in detail below.

These are the outstanding problems:

1. How do the Yang and Chu versions relate to the scheme of 100-chapter editions and to each other? Did either of them serve as a sketchy pattern upon which the elaborate novel was tenaciously executed? Or were they crude and uneven abridgements?
2. What place did the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" chapter, as we have it now, occupy in the original novel – did it ever belong there, and if not, did any equivalent take its place? If it did, why is no such chapter to be found in the A and B editions? And what are the origins of the present chapter 9?

Considerable attention has been devoted to these questions by students of the novel, and most conceivable permutations of potential solutions have been suggested, without any winning general assent. But no single study has been founded on a close simultaneous examination (a) of the "Hua-yang" version, (b) of the C and D editions, (c) of the Yang/Chu versions.⁶⁹

The results presented below are based on such an examination: they not only offer consistent answers to the questions put above, but show that the two groups of problems are inseparably linked, and further explain such minor anomalies as the repeated passages at the head of chapters 9 and 10 in the D edition.

2. The position of the Yang version

It would be important to define the relationship of this version to the 100-chapter work if only because two extended interpretations of the novel⁷⁰ have been founded on the assumption that Yang's was the earlier, "original" version and that the later author's implicit ideas may be detected in terms of what he added to it. A misconception of the position could on this level distort one's whole reading of the work.

⁶⁸ Cf. Toyoda Minoru, pp. 12–13.

⁶⁹ Cheng Chên-to (1933) seems not to have used C.1 and confines his argument to general observations on the texts. Liu Ts'un-yan (1963) uses only A.1 and the Chu version; his references to the Yang appear to be based on the faulty modern reprints. My detailed reasons for not accepting his textual arguments are set out in *Hsin-Ya hsieh-pao*, 6, 2, pp. 513–18.

⁷⁰ By Hsü Hsü-shêng 徐旭生 in "*Hsi-yu chi tso-chê ti szü-hsiang* 西遊記作者的願想", *T'ai-p'ing-yang* 太平洋 4, 9 (1924), 1–18, and Chang Mo-shêng, q.v.

It will be apparent from the description above that external factors offer no reliable basis for deciding the issue; and it has hitherto proved singularly difficult to find satisfactory internal evidence on either side. But we can begin with one general observation:⁷¹ the distribution of incident, which is reasonably uniform throughout the 100-chapter work, is completely out of proportion in the Yang version, where the opening fifteen chapters correspond to the first fourteen of the 100 chapters:⁷² after this point there is a gradual acceleration of incident, to the extent that, for instance, the Yang version's brief 37th chapter corresponds to ten full-length chapters of the long novel. This is due not to the progressive absence of various episodes (whose sequence, principal features and names here remain essentially as in the novel), but to the reduction of circumstantial narrative to an absolute minimum. A man who is spontaneously composing – or indeed retelling – a story is not likely to make this kind of structural blunder; but if he is adapting a longer text and at some point finds that he no longer has space or leisure to extend his original generous policy at the opening, he may well resign himself to transcribing the remaining stories in brief. This is a simple but valuable point which has never been effectively refuted. In the opening chapters Yang's text is close to that of the A or B editions (in the sense that virtually all the sentences and most of the verses in Yang can be identified in them), but in the later chapters this is true only in isolated sentences. It never regains a comparable level of detail.

Only specific textual evidence will make further progress beyond this point possible.

In existing published studies of this material I have seen none which satisfactorily indicates that the Yang version was not an abridgement, and have certainly not discovered such evidence myself. Yet conversely, amid the mass of uneven narrative and loosely improvised verses which faces the reader of the Yang version, it is still not easy to point to features which allow of no other explanation than abridgement. Simple omissions are not enough, and gaps that are possibly the result of binders' errors⁷³ must

⁷¹ Made first by Hu Shih (1931, p. 409).

⁷² I.e. to the point at which Sun Wu-k'ung is finally bound in the service of Tripitaka.

⁷³ At two points in this version there are signs of such gaps. Yang 1:1b jumps abruptly from the words "Heaven and Earth interacted together, all things came into being" (cf. *HYC*, p. 2) to "The Jade Emperor extended his mercy and said . . ." (*HYC*, p. 3), thus omitting the birth of the stone monkey. Yang 2:29b–30a closes a chapter at a point in the narrative where the pilgrims sight a distant mountain. The next chapter begins immediately with verses uttered by the monk Wu-ch'ao Ch'an-shih 烏巢禪師 (*HYC*, p. 221), who should have been introduced meanwhile. Cheng Chên-to (1933, p. 276) makes the general point that such obviously accidental gaps are most likely the result of reprinting conducted from a defective original edition. This original could be either some as yet unidentified edition of the 100-chapter novel (perhaps A.3, which has not yet been examined from this point of view), or an edition of the Yang version earlier than the one we have.

also be disallowed as evidence. The one telling criterion is radical inconsistency within an ostensibly smooth and intact narrative. The following pieces of evidence are submitted as falling within this category.

a. The Black Pine Forest

In chapter 19 of the A-B version⁷⁴ there is a speech in pentasyllabic verse in which the character Wu-ch'ao Ch'an-shih, after bestowing the *Heart Sūtra* on Tripitaka, gives warning of the perils awaiting him on the road. It contains the lines –

Be careful in Black Pine Forest –

Fox demons will several times bar your way.

This appears to anticipate a peril which in fact takes place in chapter 80,⁷⁵ where the pilgrims pass through Black Pine Forest and are three times waylaid by a disguised female demon whose intention is to seduce Tripitaka;⁷⁶ they take her on to lodge in the Chên-hai Ch'an-lin Monastery 鎮海禪林寺.

The Yang version, although it now lacks the narrative which should lead up to the Wu-ch'ao Ch'an-shih incident, does have a shorter version of his speech, including the lines –

Ahead lies Black Pine Forest:

Tigers and leopards will all be serving as attendants (作御).⁷⁷ Not only is the incident confused already at this point, but Black Pine Forest is never mentioned again in the book. The episode of the female demon appears, in due sequence, in the 38th chapter,⁷⁸ but reduced to a total length of ten lines in which all such circumstantial detail is suppressed:

After a few days they lodged in the Ch'an-lin Monastery. Suddenly there was a female demon who snatched away Tripitaka . . .

A rational pattern of anticipation and fulfilment in the A-B editions loses its meaning in the Yang version, first through curtailment of the original verse passage, then through reduction of the eventual episode.

b. The Black Bear

A-B editions, ch. 16: Tripitaka's jewelled *kaśāya* is stolen from the burning ruins of the Kuan-yin Ch'an Monastery; Sun Hsing-chê learns of a local demon – Hei Ta-wang 黑大王 – and seeks to trace the *kaśāya* in his

⁷⁴ Cf. A.1, 4:50b; *HYC*, p. 221.

⁷⁵ The name Hei-sung lin 黑松林 is admittedly found in the heading to ch. 28, but is not repeated as such in the text, which speaks more generally of a "pine forest" (松林) (cf. A.1, 6:31a; *HYC*, p. 319 seq.) The Yang version makes no mention of any pine forest at the corresponding point (Yang, 3:19b seq.)

⁷⁶ A.1, 16:53a seq.; *HYC*, pp. 911–16.

⁷⁷ Yang, 2:29b–30a. This second line occurs seven lines later in the A-B version, where it forms a natural parallel with the line *shih hsiang chün ch'êng-wang* 獅象盡稱王.

⁷⁸ Yang, 4:30b.

possession; (ch. 17) in the course of the search he encounters and kills a small attendant demon bearing an invitation-card in a box; the card is addressed –

Your servant the Bear bows his head in greeting and addresses to the Great Enlightener Chin-ch'ih Lao-shang-jên 金池老上人 in his Taoist chamber (丹房) these words . . .⁷⁹

Later, showing the card to Tripitaka, he observes –

"Look, on the card it says 'Your servant the Bear': this is a black bear turned demon, for sure . . ."⁸⁰

When all his efforts fail he finally appeals to the Bodhisattva herself in these reproachful terms:

On the road my Master came upon your Ch'an Monastery. You receive the incense-smoke of men, yet you allow a Black Bear spirit to live next door and have him steal my Master's *kaśāya* . . .⁸¹

The Yang version⁸² begins this episode with the identity of Hei Ta-wang similarly concealed under such general terms as "the demon of Hei-fêng-shan", "a swarthy fellow"; it lacks the small incident of the invitation-card, and for the subsequent dialogue between Tripitaka and Sun Hsing-chê it has simply –

Hsing-chê had no expedient but to return to rest in the monastery.

Tripitaka said: "If the demon is like this how are we to get back the *kaśāya*?" As they talked the monks offered hot water . . .⁸³

Sun Hsing-chê at once goes to see Kuan-yin and tells her:

"My Master took shelter for the night in a monastery, but his *kaśāya* was stolen by a Bear demon . . ."⁸⁴

But the incident and the inconspicuous conversation which had alone revealed the bear's true identity in the A-B version are absent from this. Nowhere in the story is Sun Hsing-chê able to penetrate the disguise of demons until their "true form" (真相) is revealed to him.

Economy of space again creates a gap in the logic of Yang's narration.

c. The attendant spirits

Sun Hsing-chê, retiring from a battle stricken with painful eyes, is treated by an old man. The following morning it is found that the old man and his whole household have vanished: a quatrain pinned to a tree explains that this was the work of an attendant spirit. Sun, in the A-B version,⁸⁵ comments:

"I haven't held a roll-call of that pack of ruffian spirits ever since we

⁷⁹ A.1, 4:21a; *HYC*, p. 195.

⁸⁰ A.1, 4:23b; *HYC*, pp. 197–8.

⁸¹ A.1, 4:25a; *HYC*, p. 199.

⁸² Yang, 2:20b seq.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 2:23b.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:24a.

⁸⁵ A.1, 5:7b; *HYC*, p. 239.

changed over to the Dragon-horse; but now here they come playing vanishing tricks! . . ."

Then he explains to Chu Pa-chieh 豬八戒:

"Brother, you don't know this yet. These Protectors of Monasteries, the six Ting and six Chia spirits (六丁六甲), Chieh-ti 揭諦 of the Five Regions and the four Duty-officers (四值功曹) were all directed by the Bodhisattva to give covert protection to our Master. Ever since they reported that day we have not used them further, because we have had you all along . . ."

The reference to "that day" on which the spirits first made their appearance is fully anticipated in a previous chapter,⁸⁶ in which they come and explain their own duties in the midst of Tripiṭaka's difficulties with the Dragon of Ying-ch'ou chien 鷹愁澗.

The Yang version⁸⁷ substantially duplicates the whole of the above dialogue following the treatment of Sun's eyes, including the line, "Ever since we have had you we have not used them again." There thus appears to be a similar backward reference to account for the presence of all the attendant spirits. But the passage in the Yang version which corresponds to chapter 15 as cited above omits the appearance of the group and their self-introduction, and nothing is offered to serve as a background to the later reappearance.⁸⁸

d. The restoration of Hua-kuo-shan

A-B version, chapter 28: Sun Hsing-chê, banished by his Master, returns to Hua-kuo-shan 花果山 and finds it devastated after the depredations of Êrh-lang and the heavenly troops. He reorganizes his demoralized monkey people, beats back an attack delivered against them by a band of hunters and restores the mountain to its old condition. The completed task is celebrated with a banner reading: "Hua-kuo shan restored, Shui-lien-tung 水簾洞 set in order again: Ch'i-t'ien Ta-shêng 齊天大聖."⁸⁹

The Yang version treats the entire episode in a few lines:

Now we tell how Hsing-chê abandoned Tripiṭaka (唐僧) and returned to Shui-lien-tung. When the monkeys saw Ta-shêng returning they made haste to come to receive him into the cave, and they had a heart-to-heart talk. Then they set up a great banner on which was written: "Ch'i-tien Ta-shêng restored Hua-kuo shan and set Shui-lien-tung in order again." All monkey-spirits large and small in the cave regained their easy and carefree life. No more of them.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ A.1, 3:53a; HYC, p. 167.

⁸⁷ Yang, 3:2b.

⁸⁸ Yang, 2:17b-18b, mentioning only the Golden-headed Chieh-ti who assists later in the episode (cf. HYC, p. 170).

⁸⁹ A.1, 6:30b; HYC, p. 318.

⁹⁰ Yang, 3:19b.

Without the knowledge of details given in the 100-chapter text alone the reader of the Yang version is not in a position to see the point of "restoring" and "setting in order again".

e. The capture of Niu Mo-wang

The extended struggle with Niu Mo-wang 牛魔王, the Ox King, and his formidable wife T'ieh-shan kung-chu 鐵扇公主 is one of the best known of all *Hsi-yu chi* episodes. It occupies chapters 59-61 in the 100-chapter version. Niu Mo-wang's spectacular struggles to evade capture fill most of chapter 61, where even the heavenly host is mobilized to bring him low.

The Yang version again gives only a few lines to the whole story, omitting even the character T'ieh-shan kung-chu. The episode concludes in this way:

Hsing-chê . . . made off with the Plantain Fan (芭蕉扇). Unknown to him the Demon King reached home, heard that Hsing-chê had taken the Fan, and hastily gave chase. On the road they received help from the spirits of Heaven and Earth. Having got possession of the Fan (they) fanned open Huo-yen-shan 火焰山 and succeeded in reaching the Chin-kuang Monastery 金光寺 in Chi-sai kuo 祭賽國, where they rested.⁹¹

Nothing is said of the capture of Niu Mo-wang: the resolution of the episode is perfunctory to the point of being defective.

These various points concern only trivial details in the text, but they have it in common that only a revision of the 100-chapter novel by Yang Chih-ho involving increasingly heavy abridgement can reasonably account for them. Examples *a-c* show points in Yang's text where details of consistency between different parts of the story have been forfeited by excessive economy towards the end of the work; examples *d* and *e*, both derived from the latter part of Yang's book, show how the cursory treatment he gives to the later episodes has perverted a story until it loses coherence. Each example will perhaps carry a different weight; but it remains true that these, and virtually all the obscurities latent in the Yang version, are fully illuminated by comparison with the 100-chapter novel, A or B text.

Such are my reasons for proceeding on the assumption that the Yang version was an abridgement of some text of the A-B type. In the light of this it remains plausible to suppose that Yang Chih-ho was a near contemporary of Yü Hsiang-tou.

3. The position of the Chu version

The same general observation can be made about this as about the Yang version: it begins with a large proportion of text in common with the A and B editions; the acceleration begins seriously in the eighth of its ten *chüan*;

⁹¹ Yang, 4:23a.

the ninth *chüan* is equivalent to fifteen chapters of the novel (chs. 21-35), the tenth to the last sixty chapters. Simultaneously, a close verbal similarity to the Yang version begins precisely with the eighth *chüan*, both in the wording of chapter-headings and in the text itself, and continues, with a few exceptions, to the end of the work.

Of the Yang version's inconsistencies as listed above, the Chu likewise commits all but the third (c), where the significant passage occurs in the seventh *chüan* (p. 20b; cf. 7:23b and 9:2b). The other four fall within the last three *chüan*.⁹² The gap in the extant Yang version which leaves the character Wu-ch'ao Ch'an-shih without an introduction (cf. note 73, above) is also present, in precisely the same form, in the Chu version (8:9a). All this would at once suggest that the author of one of these short versions initially consulted the 100-chapter text, then, at a certain point in the story (midway through the episode of Hei Ta-wang 黑大王), turned to the other short version as a model for the rest of his work.

For confirmation that Chu Ting-ch'ên perpetrated his own inconsistencies in the earlier part of his version, I would first cite the following.

a. *The abandonment of the infant Hsüan-tsang*

It has been noted above that Chu Ting-ch'ên was alone in devoting a large section of his text (the fourth *chüan*) to the story of Ch'ên Kuang-jui and his abandoned child. In the Ming versions of the long novel this episode is alluded to at the point in chapter 11 when Tripitaka is found suitable to be High Priest for T'ang T'ai-tsung's great Mass of the Dead. This is his moment of entry into the story, and he is introduced in twenty-four lines of verse summarizing his previous career. They include the lines:

Descending to his incarnation on earth he at once fell upon ill fortune:

Before he was born he encountered vile brigands.

His father was Ch'ên of Hai-chou, a *chuang-yüan* graduate,

His mother's father, a *tsung-kuan* 總管 minister, was a leading man at court.

His birth fell foul of a star that decreed he should fall into the Yangtze (江)⁹³ —

He floated along with the waves.

But a great destiny was his on the island of Chin-shan:

The monk Ch'ien-an 遷安 raised him,

And at the age of eighteen he recognized his own mother...⁹⁴

⁹² For a (Black Pine Forest), cf. Chu, 8:9a and 10:19b; b (Black Bear), cf. Chu, 7:27a-8:2b; d (Restoration of Hua-kuo shan), cf. Chu, 9:21ab; e (Niu Mo-wang), cf. Chu, 10:12b-13a.

⁹³ The A and B editions here read *hung* 紅. This would be obscure were it not easily corrupted from *chiang* 江. A single mistaken reading from a manuscript may lie behind this cumulative error. The D edition (ch. 12:8a) corrects to 江.

⁹⁴ A.1, 3:12b; HYC (ch. 12), p. 131.

This is the story as we know it in part also from the remains of a Southern dramatic version.⁹⁵ It has as characteristic features the rank *tsung-kuan* for the grandfather, the floating on the Yangtze River, the monk named Ch'ien-an. Furthermore, in the List of Hardships enumerated in chapter 99, the third and fourth items read —

When a month old he was thrown into the Yangtze (third hardship),

He sought out his parents and took revenge (fourth hardship).⁹⁶

The story that we find in *chüan* 4 of the Chu version is at odds with this: the grandfather's appointment is *ch'êng-hsiang* 丞相, the priest who raises the abandoned infant is Fa-ming 法明,⁹⁷ and, above all, the episode of floating on the Yangtze river is by-passed. Instead, the abducted mother Man-t'ang-chiao 滿堂嬌 receives a dream in which she is warned to remove her new-born son from his extreme danger; on awaking she hears the voice of a monk, who enters and offers to take the child out of harm's way...

The girl at once wrote out a letter in blood, with the names of the father and mother and all the details and reasons set out in it. Then, reluctantly, she handed the boy to the monk, her tears streaming to the ground. The monk took the boy, received the letter and left the private quarters of the Yamen. He disappeared in a streak of clear wind. And who did this monk turn out to be? It was Nan-chi hsiung-chün 南極星君 from the World Above. Mistress Kuan-yin had instructed him to come to give assistance, so that they should not come to any harm. Now she made him change into a monk again and take the child to Chin-shan Monastery for the Abbot to raise and educate.⁹⁸

The child is at once given two names: a pet-name (*érh-ming* 耳名) Chiang-liu 江流,⁹⁹ and a religious name (*fa-ming* 法名) Tripitaka 三藏.

There are inconsistencies within the text of this single story, and they must be considered again below; but here it is sufficient to point out that in Chu, *chüan* 6:13ab (which here corresponds to the 100-chapter text, ch. 11), the verses on Tripitaka's early career are included almost verbatim,¹⁰⁰ and they unmistakably reveal Chu Ting-ch'ên's confusion at finding himself

⁹⁵ As reconstructed in Ch'ien Nan-yang, pp. 165-72.

⁹⁶ A.1, 20:42ab; HYC, p. 1115.

⁹⁷ Ch'ien Nan-yang (p. 171, note) wrongly states the opposite.

⁹⁸ Chu, 4:11b-12a.

⁹⁹ This, the traditional name, embodies a reference to the "floating" motif which at once clashes with the narrative in Chu, *chüan* 4.

¹⁰⁰ There are the following variants:

A.1 line 2: 聽佛講	Chu line 2: 講佛經
8: 當朝長	8: 輔朝佐
10: 順水隨波逐浪決	10: 順水順波逐浪決
11: 海島金山有大緣	11: 托孤金山有大緣
12: 遷安和尚	12: 法明和尚
21: 順為僧	21: 昇為僧
23: 古佛兒	23: 三藏兒

faced with a text so much at odds with the fourth *chüan* he had already written. He unthinkingly preserves the lines –

His birth fell foul of a star that decreed he should fall into the Yangtze –
He floated along with the waves . . .

which bear no relation to his own story. He adds the words “entrusting the orphan” (*t'o-ku*) in the eleventh line, changes the old name Ch'ien-an to his own Fa-ming (line 12), and substitutes his own “San-tsang-êrh” for “Ku-fo-êrh” (line 23), but forgets to alter the closing line –

His religious name was Ch'ên Hsüan-tsang (法名喚做陳玄奘)¹⁰¹ which again clashes with his own *chüan* 4. (The name Hsüan-tsang is nowhere else mentioned in the Chu version.)

This confusion, which is one sign that Chu was writing a text at second hand, is peculiar to his version. Yang Chih-ho suppressed the whole verse passage and substituted a few lines of prose (but with phrases which echo the verse);¹⁰² his account preserves the title *tsung-kuan* and the name Ch'ien-an ho-shang; it causes the girl to put her son in a box and cast it into the Yangtze, where it floats to the Chin-shan Monastery. The subsequent phrase “therefore he was named Chiang-liu-êrh” clearly accords well with the account thus preserved. Yang was evidently faithful to the detail of some hundred-chapter edition, but simply dispensed with the long verse passage.

b. The woodcutter's song

A-B editions, chapter 1: the Monkey King has set out into the world in search of spiritual instruction. Upon a mountain in the Western Continent he hears a song ending with the lines:

I know no cunning stratagems or calculations,
I have no vanity or shame.

My life goes on mildly and placidly,

If I meet anyone

It is either an Immortal or a Taoist

Who quietly sits and expounds the Book of the Yellow Court.¹⁰³

The singer is a woodcutter, whom the Monkey now addresses as a Taoist immortal. When he disclaims any such title, the Monkey takes him up:

“I came by the side of this wood just now and heard you say: If I meet anyone / It is either an Immortal or a Taoist / Who quietly sits and expounds the Book of the Yellow Court . . .”¹⁰⁴

This is a direct quotation from the text of the song.

The Chu version gives the episode in some detail. There are one or two

¹⁰¹ Chu, 6:13b; cf. A.1, 3:12b; HYC (ch. 12), p. 131.

¹⁰² Yang, 2:4b.

¹⁰³ 不會機謀巧算。沒榮辱。恬淡延生。相達處。非仙即道。靜坐講黃庭。A.1, 1:9a; HYC, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴ A.1, 1:9b.

variants in the text of the song, but the most significant is the changed cadence of the closing lines:

If I meet anyone

It is either an Immortal or a Taoist.

And when we are sitting quietly

We go and expound the Book of the Yellow Court.¹⁰⁵

This is obviously a move towards closer parallelism in the verses. We know that it must almost certainly have been a feature introduced by Chu into an existing verse when we see that his subsequent quotation on the lips of the Monkey King conforms again with the A version, rather than with his own modified text.¹⁰⁶

The discrepancy bears out the conclusion above: that Chu Ting-ch'ên in the opening part of his book was working from a version distinct from his own and fuller than the Yang. Again, he shares a good deal of text with the A and B editions, and again the comparison with them illuminates his inconsistencies. We may therefore again conclude that his version in its opening part – but with the exception of the fourth *chüan* – may derive from some such version of the novel.

4. Relationship between the Yang and Chu versions

It has already emerged that the two versions are closely related in their latter pages, even to the point of duplicating textual faults: thus the examples *a*, *b*, *d* and *e*, from the Yang version described above are faulty in both versions, and the lost passage which should introduce the monk Wu-ch'ao Ch'an-shih, with the bestowal of the *Heart Sūtra*, creates an identical gap in both.

It has been generally assumed that the Chu version was the earlier of the two and hence that Yang Chih-ho relied closely on it in his closing chapters. Chêng Chên-to¹⁰⁷ found the Yang version more sanely proportioned – the heavy reductions at the end anticipated by a relatively bare opening – and argued that this in itself shows it to be the later version.

But actual textual evidence argues rather the opposite. The Yang version, Chêng himself admitted, is in some respects closer to the 100-chapter editions.¹⁰⁸ This shows most obviously in its treatment of Tripitaka's adventures in infancy, but more significantly in its inclusion of episodes lacking in the Chu version. There are five such groups of stories:

- (i) Episode with the King of Wu-chi kuo 烏雞國 (Yang, 3: 34b-4:3b; missing after Chu, 9:37b), including the battle with the Black Lion

¹⁰⁵ 相達處。非仙即道。靜坐處。去講黃庭。Chu, 1:10b.

¹⁰⁶ Chu, 1:11a. The Yang version (1:4b) follows exactly the wording of the 100-chapter texts.

¹⁰⁷ Chêng Chên-to, 1933, pp. 281-6.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Demon (Yang, 4:12-3b) – but Chu, 9:37b, adds what is essentially the final poem of this absent episode.

- (ii) Contest in Ch'ê-ch'ih kuo 車遲國 and
- (iii) Mishap in the T'ung-t'ien River 通天河 (Yang, 4:9a-13a; missing after Chu, 10:5a).
- (iv) Intervention of Kuan-yin of the Fish-basket 魚籃觀音 and crossing of T'ung-t'ien River on turtle-back (Yang, 4:13a-14a; missing after Chu, 10:5a).
- (v) Encounter with the demons San-tsun Fo 三尊佛 at the Lantern Festival in Chin-p'ing Fu 金平府 (Yang, 4:31b-32b; missing after Chu, 10:21b).¹⁰⁹

The mere fact of omission proves nothing, but from these passages some firm pieces of evidence emerge.

a. The episode at Chin-p'ing Fu

In the Yang version the pilgrims stay at a monastery in Chin-p'ing Fu, go out to view the lamps and encounter three demons who pose as Buddhas to command an annual offering of incense from the people.¹¹⁰

In its essentials this is the story as told in the 100-chapter editions (ch. 91 *seq.*). The next move is to the Pu-chin Monastery 布金寺, where Tripiṭaka overhears the weeping of the abducted Princess of T'ien-chu kuo 天竺國, and finally restores her to her rightful place.¹¹¹ This again follows the broad lines of the 100-chapter editions (chs. 93-5).

The Chu version omits the encounter with the demons, but preserves the opening words of the episode – *i.e.* those which set the incident in Chin-p'ing Fu – and proceeds at once to the next story (Princess of T'ien-chu kuo), causing it to take place in Chin-p'ing Fu:

Travelling for a few more days, they came to Chin-p'ing Fu and lodged in the Tz'ü-yün Monastery. When their meal was finished they sat down in the rear hall for the evening with an aged abbot of the monastery. Tripiṭaka suddenly heard the sound of bitter weeping and asked the monk: "Where is that piteous sound?" (Chu, 10:20b-21a)

To this extent, then, the two episodes are run together in Chu Ting-ch'ên's version. But throughout these later chapters it sustains an almost word-for-word similarity with the Yang version. To conclude that Yang,

¹⁰⁹ Chêng Chên-to's comparative table of chapter headings (1933, pp. 277-81) is inaccurate and misleading. Apart from a number of graphic variants, it duplicates the heading 觀音老君收伏妖魔 (Chu, *chüan* 10), it fails to show that the material of two pairs of chapters in Yang (觀音老君收伏妖魔 to 顯聖耶彌勒佛收妖) is contained under two single headings in Chu, *chüan* 10 (觀音老君收伏妖魔 and 孫行者被弼猴弄亂), and it conceals the absence from the Chu version of (v) above under a common chapter heading.

¹¹⁰ Yang, 4:31b-32a.

¹¹¹ Yang, 4:32b-34a.

working from the Chu version, recognized this elision, rejected it in favour of the original version of the 100-chapters, yet returned to the example of Chu Ting-ch'ên for the actual wording of the common text is improbably laborious. A much more natural explanation is that Chu was working from the Yang version and simply ran these two episodes into one.

b. The second crossing of T'ung-t'ien River

In the 100-chapter novel the pilgrims first cross the river on the back of a friendly turtle, who asks them to make a personal inquiry with the Buddha about his future (*HYC*, ch. 49, pp. 572-3). On their return towards Ch'ang-an they are landed abruptly on the far bank of the same river and again ride on the turtle's back. When he finds they have forgotten his request he promptly sinks them (*HYC*, p. 1118).

The Yang version follows this story in both its parts.¹¹² As they land on the way back, Sun Hsing-chê says:

"When we had the help of the turtle in crossing on our way out here, it was on the bank of this very river . . ."

The Chu version lacks the first crossing of T'ung-t'ien River, but the text of the later incident on the return journey remains exactly as in the Yang version, and includes Sun Hsing-chê's now meaningless remark.¹¹³

Here again the only plausible explanation is that Chu simply eliminated the former episode as he found it in the Yang text, but neglected the consequences when it returned a second time.

c. A minor gap in the Chu text

In the opening lines of its final chapter¹¹⁴ the Chu version contains a corrupt sentence: 菩薩看簿見路走十萬八千次還一次未滿 (literally: "The Bodhisattva read the list and saw that the road had been travelled 108,000 times and there was still one more time to complete"). The full sentence is clear in Yang (4:38a):¹¹⁵ . . . 菩薩看部見路走十萬八千難逢八十次還一次未滿 (" . . . saw that they had travelled 108,000 (miles) of road, had encountered eighty perils and had still one more to complete"). This is a simple matter of the four characters 難逢八十 dropping from the text.

It is easier for a text to become and remain corrupt in this way than to find its way back to a plausible sense. This small gap accords well with the findings from the two previous examples: that the Chu version in its late chapters shows signs of being modelled upon and slightly reduced from the Yang.

¹¹² Yang, 4:14a and 38a. (This latter reference is drawn from the 1730 reprint, as the closing pages are missing from the Ming text.)

¹¹³ Chu, 10:26a.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Reference again drawn from the 1730 reprint.

In answer to the first group of problems we can now come to these interim conclusions:

that the Yang and Chu versions bear the signs of abridgement from some version of the 100-chapter novel, the Chu version independently of the Yang;

that Chu Ting-ch'ên, arriving at the eighth *chüan* of his work, turned from the 100-chapter novel to the version of Yang Chih-ho for his model.

There remain the unanswered questions: What was the source of Chu Ting-ch'ên's *chüan* 4?, and What are its implications for the total scheme of texts? They at once introduce the second group of problems.

5. Wang Tan-i 汪儼漪 and the ninth chapter

The "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" chapter makes its first known appearance in the long novel in the edition C.1. As to its place there and its source, these facts can be stated:

The text is so close to that of the Chu version (*chüan* 4) that almost every sentence can be identified there; to this there are certain firm exceptions; and the new chapter throughout lacks verses and repetitive speeches and narrative devices to be found in the Chu text.¹¹⁶

The story clashes in several details with the later chapters.

The chapter is accommodated by means of some redivision of chapters 9-12 as we know them in the A and B editions, and some changes in the chapter headings.

The editor Wang Tan-i claimed to have found this chapter in an "old edition by the Ta-lüeh-t'ang 大略堂" entitled *Shih-o chuan* 釋厄傳.

There are basically three possibilities:

a. Wang was telling the truth: the *Shih-o chuan* was an old edition with a "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" episode from which Chu Ting-ch'ên and Wang Tan-i each derived their own. In this case the chapters must originally have been arranged as Wang gives them, and the A and B editions must have suppressed the old chapter 9, spread out chapters 10-12 to occupy four chapters and thus preserved the round total of 100. The clash of details remains unexplained.

b. Wang did work from a *Shih-o chuan*, but it was not an "old edition" so much as a revision of the 100-chapter novel to incorporate the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story. The Chu version would either have served as a source for this, or have drawn its own text from it.

c. Wang in fact worked from the Chu version (which contained a variant of the words *Shih-o chuan* irregularly in its title),¹¹⁷ or some reprint of it,

¹¹⁶ Chapter 9 as reprinted in the *Tso-chia* edition follows a still later version, slightly reduced from the C.1 text and at one more remove from that of Chu.

¹¹⁷ Cf. above, p. 157. The phrase is related to the closing words of the verses which open all versions of the novel, including Chu, 1:12. I am not convinced that in the verses these words necessarily named a specific title.

conducted the revision himself and deliberately created a legend to lend authority to his work.

The choice between the latter two amounts to little more than a question of Wang's editorial ethics; but it is of some consequence to determine whether the first possibility was in fact the case, because it raises the whole matter of the novel's original form. It can be tested by examining these questions: Are Wang's claims in themselves above suspicion? Does the Chu version show signs of being based on a novel whose chapters were divided as in C.1? How can the clash of details be accounted for? Does the absence of this chapter leave an intolerable gap in the A and B editions?

Wang's claims

Among his comments at the opening of chapter 9 are the words:

... As a boy I saw popular editions (*su-pên* 俗本) that eliminated this chapter completely and left the reader in the dark about Tripiṭaka's (唐僧) family history. One suspected that (his origin) was something like the stone egg on the summit of Hua-kuo shan. Yet in the List of Hardships in chapter 99 there were, right at the outset, four entries – "Disgrace from Heaven", "Incarnation", "Throwing to the River" and "Revenge" – leaving the reader at a loss to know what grounds there were for them. I strongly resented the author's carelessness. Later I obtained and read an old edition called *Shih-o chuan* by the Ta-lüeh-t'ang. It gave in full the account of Ch'ên Kuang-jui's journey to office and mishap on the way. After this I felt gratified and no longer indignant. Popular book merchants cannot grasp the significance of literature and often edit and cut at will what men in the past have written, with no regard for ridiculous incongruities.¹¹⁸ There is more than one example of this, and deplorable it is.¹¹⁹

Again, at the conclusion of chapter 100 he adds a general comment: Hsiao-ts'ang-tzū and I (Tan-i-tzū) had been friends for years but had never yet done literary work together. Not until the summer of the year *ch'an-o* did he invite me over to Tiao-chi 調寄, where he took out an old edition of the *Hsi-yu (chi)* by the Ta-lüeh-t'ang and told me to annotate and correct it. Hsiao-ts'ang-tzū had been familiar with this book from his boyhood.

Receiving it from him I read it through and exclaimed: this old edition is better than the popular version in three ways – the first is that the popular versions leave out the four "perils" of Tripiṭaka's birth; the second is that they deliberately put a duck's neck on a crane,¹²⁰ and fill

¹¹⁸ I paraphrase a figure of speech based on the disproportion in length between the necks of ducks and cranes.

¹¹⁹ C.1, ch. 9:1b. See pl. I.

¹²⁰ Cf. above, n. 118.

up half (the book) with vulgar expressions; the third that there is a good deal of Chin-ling 金陵¹²¹ dialect in the text. But the old edition has what is necessary and lacks what is undesirable, so that the reader finds everything clear on the first reading. This is surely a happy event in the world of letters!¹²²

In both these passages Wang contrives not to tell us just what relation his text bears to that of the "old edition": we are presumably meant to believe that he was reproducing it more or less exactly.¹²³

He professes that the absence of a "Ch'en Kuang-jui" story was something which upset him in reading the "popular versions", but in saying that they "left the reader in the dark about Tripitaka's family history" he is overstating the case. In the classes A and B we have many examples of editions which conform to his general description: they lack the "Ch'en Kuang-jui" chapter, they are popular in tone and relatively rich in dialect expressions; yet the verse-passage in chapter 11 is common to them all,¹²⁴ and it gives the reader a clear idea, at the appropriate moment, of Tripitaka's whole background. In this respect Wang's indignation comes to seem rather contrived.

Both the above passages make some capital out of alleged incongruity in the popular versions. Yet in spite of his commendation of the "old edition" in which "everything is clear on the first reading", Wang was uncomfortable about certain features in his own chapter 9. His opening remarks upon it further include these words:

Liu Hung¹²⁵ posed as an official, took up the appointment and held it for eighteen years. Yet the Court conducted no investigation, and his official colleagues failed to detect it. Not one of the relatives in Hai-chou 海州 came on a visit. Even the old lady in the Wan-hua Inn 萬花店 did not find her way to Chiang-chou 江州. Safe and secure while six

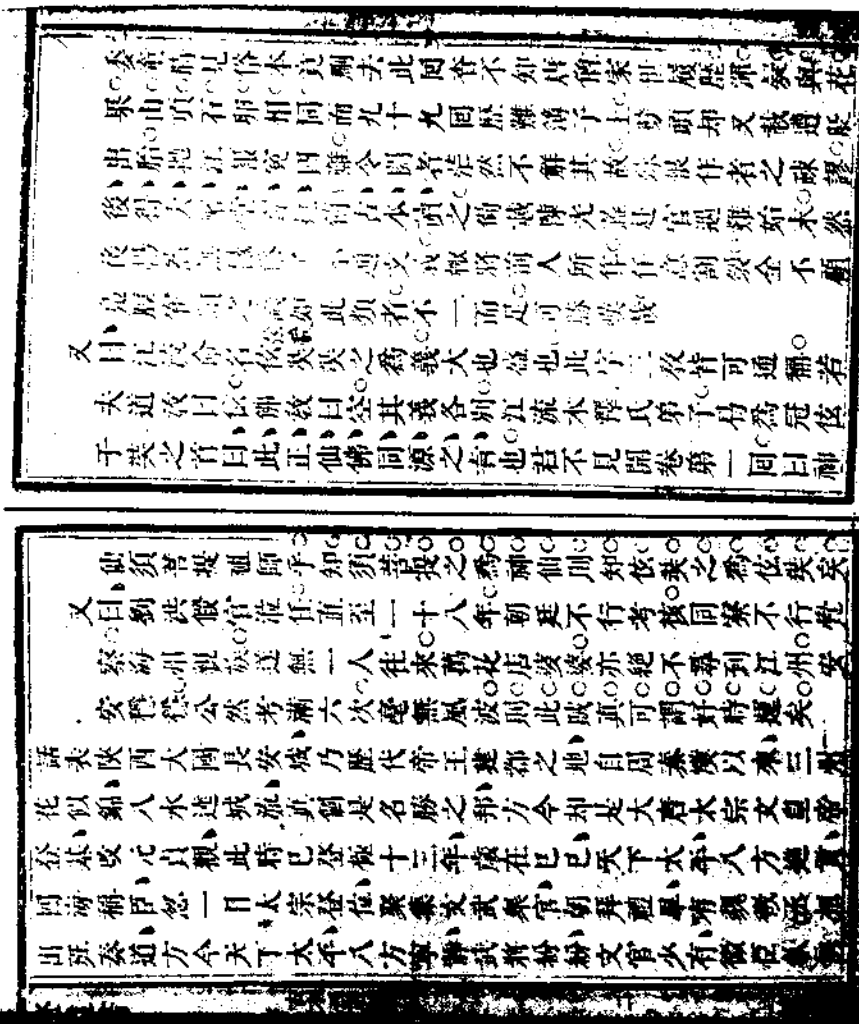
¹²¹ I.e. area of Nanking. This is an interesting observation on the language of the novel, which has other affinities with Nanking. Later writers spoke of its "Huai dialect", in support of the case for Wu Ch'eng-ên's 吳承恩 authorship. The two areas in fact belong to one broad dialect group. Until linguistic research can decide the issue we had better not draw too precise conclusions from these various personal observations.

¹²² 笑蒼子與懶翁子。訂交有年。未嘗共事筆墨也。早閱維夏。始遂過。出大暑堂。西遊古本。屬其評正。笑蒼子于是書。固重而習之者。因受讀而嘆曰。古本之較俗本。有三善焉。俗本遺却唐僧出世四難。一也。有意續免就端。半用俚詞填湊。二也。篇中多金陵方言。三也。而古本雖有者有。應無者無。令人一覽了然。豈非文壇快事乎。

¹²³ Sun K'ai-ti's version of the first passage (1958, p. 78) is not quotation but summary, and supplies the misleading words "cut extra blocks of this one chapter" (補刻此一回), as if it were simply borrowed to add to the common text. And indeed Ch'eng Chên-to (1933, p. 288) took up these words and attributed them directly to the C.1 edition, which he was apparently not using himself.

¹²⁴ Whether this is true of the A.3 edition is not known.

¹²⁵ The name of the criminal ferryman.



full examination-terms passed by without any repercussions – this bandit may indeed be described as fortunate!¹²⁶

It is only one among many absurdities latent in this version of the story: a formidable list was later drawn up in Wu-i-tzū's comment on the chapter.¹²⁷ There are others about which Wang is silent, but which he discreetly suppresses: such are the wild incongruities preserved for us in the Chu version – failure to have the child float on the river (Wang substitutes a more orthodox passage restoring this essential feature of the story);¹²⁸ the point at which the mother finds that Tripitaka at eighteen years of age lacks one toe and, to convince herself that he is the baby whose toe she bit off so many years ago, produces the original toe and fits it to his foot, where it "leaves no trace of the join"¹²⁹ (Wang omits the passage and allows her to be content that a toe is missing).

Sun K'ai-ti¹³⁰ has drawn up a list of inconsistencies as between this chapter and the rest of the novel. It should be pointed out that Wang's own version of the novel by no means commits them all, because most arise from a clash with the verses introducing Tripitaka in chapter 11 (A and B editions), whereas Wang (unlike Chu) *eliminates that whole passage*.¹³¹ One such incongruity, however, Wang fails to avoid: it is the date "13th year of Chên-kuan 貞觀", which is stated at the outset of the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" chapter (while Tripitaka is yet unborn), but then again in the narrative which leads up to the holding of the Mass of the Dead¹³² – i.e. at a time when Tripitaka has already grown to the age of eighteen years.¹³³

There is, in short, enough incongruity implicit in this chapter, whether Wang remarks it himself, suppresses it in silence or passes it unnoticed, to disqualify such a criterion for asserting the authority of an "old edition".

Wang's other criticisms of the "popular versions" – that they are too full of vulgar expressions and Chin-ling dialect – cut both ways. They may indeed be used to attack some cheap travesty of a fine text; but they will as easily serve the purpose of a shrewd editor anxious to justify his economical reduction of a rich and popular novel.

The simple claim to have discovered an old edition cannot carry much weight. It was made, apparently, in the mid-seventeenth century – "a time when Chang Ts'ai 張采 (Chin Shêng-t'an)'s¹³⁴ influence spread throughout the critical world and the practice of abridging and reducing old books had

¹²⁶ C. r., ch. 9:2a. See pl. I.

¹²⁷ Cf. edition C.2 (ch. 9).

¹²⁸ C. r., ch. 9:6b-7a.

¹²⁹ Chu, 4:18a.

¹³⁰ Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 79.

¹³¹ C. r., ch. 12:6a. See pl. II.

¹³² *Ibid.*, ch. 12:6b. See pl. II.

¹³³ Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 80.

¹³⁴ For the confusion of these two names, cf. A. W. Hummel (ed.), *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* (Washington 1943-4), p. 164.

already grown to be a general habit".¹³⁵ Chin Shêng-t'an himself was making similar claims for his *Shui-hu chuan*,¹³⁶ and Mao Tsung-kang 毛宗崗 for his *San-kuo yen-i*,¹³⁷ both of them transparently new revisions, whose particular innovations were being defended by this appeal to old authority.

No trace of a publishing house with the name Ta-lüeh-t'ang has been found.

Wang's claims, then, cannot be accepted as of unquestionable authenticity in themselves. We are free to draw conclusions from textual study.

6. Division of chapters and the Chu version

Brief tables comparing the division and headings of chapters 9-12 in the A and C editions have been drawn up in several different studies,¹³⁸ but none has shown enough detail for useful conclusions to be drawn. It has never been considered, in particular, how the different divisions relate to the narrative. Some of this detail must first be presented in tabular form.

A and B editions	C editions ¹³⁹
Ch. 9: 袁守誠妙算無私曲 老龍王拙計犯天條 "Yüan Shou-ch'êng subtly tells a fortune without personal bias. The Dragon King, through his foolish scheme, disobeys a decree from Heaven."	Ch. 9: 陳光蕊赴任逢災 江流僧復讐報本 "Ch'ên Kuang-jui, on his way to take up office, meets disaster. The monk 'Chiang-liu' takes revenge and thus repays his parents." - opening with the passage beginning <i>Hua piao Shensi</i> 話表陝西... ¹⁴⁰
	Ch. 10: 老龍王拙計犯天條 魏丞相遺書託冥吏 "The Dragon King, through his foolish scheme, disobeys a decree from Heaven. Chancellor Wei gives a letter to hand to an official of the Underworld."

¹³⁵ Cheng Chên-to, 1929, p. 224.

¹³⁶ Cf. Irwin, p. 91.

¹³⁷ Cheng Chên-to, 1929, p. 236.

¹³⁸ E.g. Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 75; Cheng Chên-to, 1933, p. 269.

¹³⁹ The 1954 reprint preserves the divisions characteristic of the C editions at this point.

¹⁴⁰ See pl. I; cf. *HYC*, p. 89.

- opening with passage
Tx'ü tan piao Shensi 茲單
表陝西...

- ending with preparations
for game of chess.¹⁴¹

- no passage *Hua piao*
Shensi...

Ch. 10: 二將軍宮門鎮鬼
唐太宗地府還魂

"Two generals suppress demons at the Palace gate. T'ang T'ai-tsung's soul returns from the Underworld."

- opening with the game of chess and quotation from
Lan-k'o ching 爛柯經¹⁴²

- ending with the death of
T'ai-tsung.

Ch. 11: 遊地府太宗還魂
進瓜果劉全續配

"After a journey to the Underworld T'ai-tsung's soul returns. By presenting melons, Liu Ch'üan prolongs his married life."

- opening with verse *Pai-sui kuang-yin* 百歲光陰¹⁴³

- ending with T'ai-tsung's
departure from Wang-szü-
ch'êng 枉死城¹⁴⁴

Ch. 11: 還受生唐王遵善果
度孤魂蕭瑀正空門

"Restored to life, the T'ang Emperor complies with the law of good deeds.

To deliver the Lonely Spirits Hsiao Yü authenticates the Buddhist faith."

¹⁴¹ Cf. *HYC*, p. 109, line 6.

¹⁴² For its text, cf. *HYC*, p. 109, line 6 seq.

¹⁴³ Cf. *HYC*, p. 115.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *HYC*, p. 121, line 4.

- opening with verse *Pai-sui kuang-yin* . . . , followed by T'ai-tsung's approach to the Wheel of Six Ways
六道輪迴¹⁴⁵

- ending with the departure of Liu Ch'üan and his wife from the Underworld.

Ch. 12: 唐王選僧脩大會
觀音顯像化金蟬

"The T'ang Emperor chooses a Priest¹⁴⁶ and holds a Mass of the Dead.

Kuan-yin appearing in earthly¹⁴⁷ form, converts the Golden Cicada."

- opening directly with the return of Liu Ch'üan and his wife.

- ends with final arrangements made for the Mass of the Dead.

Ch. 12: 玄奘秉誠建大會
觀音顯象化金蟬

"Hsüan-tsang, firm in sincerity, inaugurates the Mass of the Dead, Kuan-yin, appearing in earthly form, converts the Golden Cicada."

- opening with verse *Lung-chi Chen-kuan* 龍集觀貞 . . . and a full statement of the date.¹⁴⁸

From this it will be apparent that, apart from the obvious variants in the headings, there are two radical differences between the two versions:

1. The verse *Pai-sui kuang-yin* . . . in both cases opens the eleventh chapter, which means that it appears at a different point in the narrative of each version: in the A and B editions, at the outset of T'ai-tsung's departure from the Underworld, in the C editions, immediately following the death of T'ai-tsung.¹⁴⁹

2. The passage beginning *Hua piao Shensi ta-kuo Ch'ang-an ch'êng* . . . in both cases opens the ninth chapter: i.e. in the A and B editions gives the general setting for the episode of beheading the Dragon and all that follows; in the C editions gives the setting for the Palace examinations, which lead into the story of Ch'ên Kuang-jui.

In the A and B editions the opening of the twelfth chapter coincides with the resounding passages in verse and prose which announce the date and setting of the Mass of the Dead scene. The edition C.1 lacks the verse *Lung-chi Chên-kuan* . . . and moves the details of the date a few lines back in the narrative.¹⁵⁰

We are therefore left with four tests of the origin of the Chu version:
the wording of its chapter-headings;
its placing of the verse *Pai-sui kuang-yin* . . . ;
its treatment of the passages beginning *Lung-chi Chên-kuan* . . . ;
its own division of the narrative into chapters.

The placing of the passage *Hua piao Shensi ta-kuo Ch'ang-an ch'êng* . . . , it will be shown below, must be considered in another light.

In the Chu version the narrative is divided as follows:

Chüan 4: "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story.

Opening with the passage *Hua piao Shensi* . . .

Chüan 5:

p. 1a 袁守誠抄算無私曲

"Yüan Shou-ch'êng subtly tells a fortune without personal bias."¹⁵¹

The section ends baldly, without conventional closing phrases or verse.

p. 7a 老龍王拙計犯天條

"The Dragon King, through his foolish scheme, disobeys a decree from Heaven."¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ Cf. *HYC*, p. 115 for verse, p. 121 for narrative.

¹⁴⁶ These are the words used in the C.1 edition. The different heading quoted by Sun K'ai-ti (1958, p. 75) represents a correction made first apparently by the editor of C.2.

¹⁴⁷ The phrase 顯聖 in this heading as quoted by Sun K'ai-ti (*ibid.*) derives from the body of the D edition text and appears to be a misprint of the orthodox 顯像 given in the table of contents of the same edition.

¹⁴⁸ For the text, cf. *HYC*, p. 132, line 10 seq.

¹⁴⁹ Its theme is the evanescence of life and the prudence of doing good works, which could be broadly related to either situation: in the former case, as a reflection on the lost souls in the Underworld and T'ai-tsung's pious resolution to hold a mass for them; in the latter, as a reflection on his own death.

¹⁵⁰ C.1, ch. 12:6b. See pl. II. The Tso-chia text is based on A.1, its chapter division on C and D.

¹⁵¹ Equivalent to A.1, 2:35a (ch. 9); *HYC*, p. 100.

¹⁵² Cf. A.1, 2:42a (ch. 9); *HYC*, p. 105, line 15.

No conventional ending; four lines of verse.

p. 10a 太宗詔魏徵救蛟龍

"T'ai-tsung summons Wei Chêng, in order to save the dragon."¹⁵³

Ending with conventional closing phrases identical to those at the close of chapter 9 in A.1 (2:46a); four lines of verse, related to those beginning "Ch'i-p'an wei ti 棋盤爲地..."¹⁵⁴

p. 11b 魏徵奕棋斬蛟龍

"Wei Chêng plays chess and beheads the dragon."¹⁵⁵

Section ends with additional four lines of verse; no conventional phrases.

p. 13b 二將軍宮門鎮鬼

"Two generals suppress demons at the Palace gate."¹⁵⁶

p. 17b - this is the point at which chapter 10 ends in the C editions; in the Chu version there is no new heading and no verse: the narrative is simply broken with the words -

"No more of that. Now we turn to..." (不提, 卻說)¹⁵⁷

The section ends baldly (p. 20a) with fourteen of the lines of verse which describe the Palace of Hell.¹⁵⁸

p. 20a 唐太宗地府還魂

"T'ang T'ai-tsung's soul returns from the Underworld."¹⁵⁹

This section brings the *chüan* to an end (p. 25a) at the point where chapter 10 and *chüan* 2 end in the A editions.¹⁶⁰

Chüan 6:

p. 1a 還受生唐王遵善果

"Restored to life, the T'ang Emperor complies with the law of good deeds."¹⁶¹

The section opens with the verse *Pai-sui kuang-yin*... which thus finds itself in the same position as in the A and B editions. The subsequent narrative is resumed in words exactly the same as in A.1, 3:1a. The section ends abruptly (p. 7a) with the text of a proclamation.¹⁶² No conventional phrase, no verse.

p. 7a 劉全捨死進瓜果

"Liu Ch'üan abandons himself to death and offers up melons."¹⁶³

¹⁵³ Cf. A.1, 2:45a (ch. 9); *HYC*, p. 108, line 5.

¹⁵⁴ A.1, 2:46b, line 10. *HYC*, p. 109, line 16.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. A.1, 2:46a (opening of ch. 10); *HYC*, p. 109, line 6 seq.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. A.1, 2:48b (ch. 10); *HYC*, p. 110, line 13.

¹⁵⁷ Chu, 5:17b, line 1; cf. A.1, 2:51a, line 11.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. A.1, 2:53a; *HYC*, p. 117, lines 1-4.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. A.1, 2:53a; *HYC*, p. 117, line 5.

¹⁶⁰ A.1, 2:58a; cf. *HYC*, p. 121, line 4.

¹⁶¹ Cf. A.1, 3:1a. *HYC*, p. 125 for verse; p. 121 for narrative.

¹⁶² Cf. A.1, 3:6a. *HYC*, p. 125, lines 3-6.

¹⁶³ Cf. A.1, 3:6a. *HYC*, p. 125.

Section ends with conventional phrases (p. 8b: 話分兩頭又聽下回分解) and four-line poem.

p. 8b 劉全夫婦回陽世

"Liu Ch'üan and his wife return to the land of the living."¹⁶⁴

Section ends baldly (pp. 10b-11a) with the verses beginning *Jên-shêng jên-szû*... 人生人死.¹⁶⁵

After this section the episode of Yü-ch'ih Ching-tê's 尉遲敬德 repayment of Hsiang Liang 相良 and the foundation of the Hsiang-kuo Monastery 相國寺 is omitted.¹⁶⁶

p. 11a 度孤魂蕭瑀正空門

"To deliver the Lonely Spirits, Hsiao Yü authenticates the Buddhist faith."¹⁶⁷

The section ends (p. 14 ab) with conventional words identical to those which close chapter 11 in A and B editions, and four lines of verse.

p. 14b 玄奘秉誠建大會

"Hsüan-tsang, firm in sincerity, inaugurates the Mass of the Dead."¹⁶⁸

Begins, as chapter 12 in A and B editions, with the same sentences stating the date Chên-kuan 13, but omits the introductory verses beginning *Lung-chi Chên-kuan*...

Ends (p. 16a) with conventional closing phrases and verse.

p. 16a 觀音顯象化金蟬

"Kuan-yin, appearing in earthly form, converts the Golden Cicada."¹⁶⁹

The section ends (p. 22a) abruptly with only the first four lines of the verses beginning *Jui-ai san pin-fên*...¹⁷⁰

p. 22a 唐太宗描寫觀音像

"T'ang T'ai-tsung paints a portrait of Kuan-yin."¹⁷¹

The section ends (p. 24a) with conventional closing phrases and four lines of verse: this point corresponds to the close of chapter 12 in all editions.

The facts we require now stand revealed:

- (i) The wording of headings at eight points (*chüan* 5: 1a, 7a, 13b, 20a; *chüan* 6: 1a, 11a, 14b, 16a) is identical to that of double-headings to

¹⁶⁴ Cf. A.1, 3:7ab. *HYC*, p. 127, line 5.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. A.1, 3:9b. *HYC*, p. 129, line 8.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. A.1, 3:9b-11b. *HYC*, pp. 129-30.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. A.1, 3:11b. *HYC*, p. 130, line 10.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. A.1 3:13b; *HYC*, p. 132, line 10 (opening of ch. 12 in A and B).

¹⁶⁹ Cf. A.1, 3:16b; *HYC*, p. 134, line 4.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. A.1, 3:22a; *HYC*, p. 139, line 14.

¹⁷¹ Cf. A.1, 3:23b; *HYC*, p. 140, line 3.

- chapter 9-12 in the A and B editions;¹⁷² but the Chu version destroys one of the careful parallels by introducing other sub-headings between the single halves of the original.
- (ii) The verses beginning *Pai-sui kuang-yin* . . . are placed as in the A and B editions, not the C (cf. Chu, 6: 1a).
 - (iii) The verses beginning *Lung-chi Chên-kuan* . . . are omitted, but the sentences opening the section on 6: 14b are those which open chapter 12 at the corresponding point in the A and B editions.
 - (iv) At each point in the narrative where the A and B editions make a chapter-division, the Chu version does so too (*chüan* 5: 11b, 25a; *chüan* 6: 14a), and its conventional closing phrases are in each case the same as those used in the A and B editions. Of the nine remaining divisions in the Chu version, only two are attended with conventional closing phrases;¹⁷³ the remaining seven¹⁷⁴ are little more than simple breaks in the narrative. At the two points which correspond to chapter divisions in the C editions (Chu, *chüan* 5: 17ab and *chüan* 6: 8a) the Chu text proceeds without a break.

The results are unambiguous: the Chu version, in the phrasing of headings, allocation of verses and division of narrative, corresponds exactly to the A and B editions. It was therefore evidently not based upon a source which, in common with the C editions, had distributed the material to accommodate a chapter 9 on Ch'ên Kuang-jui, but on an edition which shared the relevant features of classes A and B.

A common source for the Chu version and C.1 thus becomes an impossibility. Nothing remains to suggest that Wang's *Shih-o chuan* was an old, authoritative edition. Chu Ting-ch'ên was almost certainly responsible for introducing the self-contained piece of narrative on Ch'ên Kuang-jui. Given the affinity between Chu Ting-ch'ên's text (*chüan* 4) and that of C.1 (ch. 9), it must be concluded that Wang's chapter was based, directly or indirectly, on the Chu version.

7. The clash of details

The suggestion that Chu Ting-ch'ên introduced the present text of the Ch'ên Kuang-jui story is further confirmed by the fact of its inconsistency with the subsequent verse passage on Tripitaka's early career. This evidently came about because Chu Ting-ch'ên adhered too closely to the A- or B-type edition which again served him as a model from *chüan* 5 to 7. Wang Tan-i more circumspectly suppressed the now incongruous verse passage and presented a superficially more consistent narrative.

¹⁷² Sun K'ai-ti (1958, p. 83) remarked this, but failed to explain it.

¹⁷³ Chu, 6: 8b and 16a.

¹⁷⁴ Chu, 5: 7a, 10a, 13b, 20a; *chüan* 6: 7a, 10b, 22a.

But it has already been pointed out that he too was guilty of an oversight with the date Chên-kuan 13: and this he shares with the Chu version. It can be explained simply by accounting for the passage *Hua piao Shensi ta-kuo Ch'ang-an ch'êng* . . ., which is found at the head of chapter 9 in all editions, of chapter 10 additionally in the unabridged D edition, and of *chüan* 4 in the Chu version.

It reads:

There is a *shih* 詩 which says:¹⁷⁵

The great capital city is truly a fine spectacle:

Eight streams flow right around the four hills.

How many Emperors flourished in this place!

From ancient times the whole world has talked of Ch'ang-an.¹⁷⁶

Our story tells: the great capital city Ch'ang-an, in the province of Shensi, had for generations been the site of imperial capitals. Right from the time of the dynasties Chou, Ch'in and Han its Three Rivers¹⁷⁷ had been brilliant and gay, and its eight streams had flowed around the city walls. There were thirty-six streets in the gay quarter and seventy-two houses of music. On the map of the whole world, civilized and barbarian, it was supreme.¹⁷⁸ Truly, a place of rare beauty!

But now it was the Emperor Wên 文, T'ai-tsung of the Great T'ang who had come to the throne and instituted the reign of Chên-kuan. At this point he had been on the throne for thirteen years, and the year stood at *chi-szū* 己巳.¹⁷⁹ The Empire was at peace: tributes came in from all sides, and all within the four seas paid homage.¹⁸⁰ The whole mass of the people sang hymns of prosperity and delight. The officials civil and military before the throne of T'ai-tsung were heroes all, who had fought at the frontier and founded the Imperial Demesne.¹⁸¹

It is in fact this passage alone that fixes the date of the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story at Chên-kuan 13.

As we meet it in the A and B editions (and incidentally also in Yang, 1: 33a), it fixes the date of the whole action involving T'ai-tsung's journey

¹⁷⁵ Chu, 4: 1a reads: 右言古風.

¹⁷⁶ C.1 lacks this verse.

¹⁷⁷ *San-ch'uan* 三川: evidently the rivers Ching 涇, Wei 渭, and Lo 洛. The Chu version reads *san-chou* 三州, a phrase obscure in itself, but easily recognized as a corruption of *san-ch'uan*; in its wake the C and D editions, at the opening of ch. 9, all read *san-chou* (cf. pl. I), but in ch. 10, D.1 gives the correct "*san-ch'uan*", for a reason which is explained below.

¹⁷⁸ C.1 lacks the lines "there were thirty-six . . . it was supreme." See pl. I.

¹⁷⁹ A.1, 2: 35b, in common with D, ch. 10, after this point adds only the sentence: "For the moment we say nothing of those heroes before T'ai-tsung's throne who settled the country, fought at the frontiers and founded the Imperial Demesne." In D the opening of ch. 9 corresponds rather to that in C.1.

¹⁸⁰ C.1 lacks the remaining sentences after this point.

¹⁸¹ See Chu, 4: 1ab.

to the Underworld, leading up to the proclamation of the Mass of the Dead and the appointment of a High Priest, where it is taken up again in the verses and opening sentences of chapter 12. In fact, the date Chên-kuan 13 stood at this same point in the narrative even in the early *Yung-lo ta-tien* 永樂大典 fragment, which preserves the story of the beheaded dragon of Ching River.¹⁸² The passage with this date thus belongs more essentially to the complex of chapters 9-12 in the A-B editions than to the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" narrative.

There is a simple explanation. Chu Ting-ch'ên, preparing to introduce his fourth *chüan*, first freely borrowed the passage which began the following ninth chapter of the 100-chapter novel open before him and then added his own narrative to it. When he resumed the narrative of the original chapter 9 he omitted the passage which he had already used. Later, however, he failed to notice that his action created a discrepancy in the dates. Wang Tan-i missed it too, and simply followed the text of Chu Ting-ch'ên, with a few minor abridgements.

It was not until the editor Chang Shu-shên, in the D edition, decided to restore as much of the original text as he could, that the passage once more appeared in its old position.¹⁸³ It has been noted that Chang Shu-shên's *Hsin-shuo Hsi-yu chi* offered a fuller and richer text than any edition since those of the Ming dynasty. His attitude as an editor is clear from this comment at the close of chapter 10:

The old version of *Hsi-yu chi* was originally in 100 chapters. It is not known who eliminated the ninth chapter, with the episode of Ch'ên Kuang-jui and the child Chiang-liu, and, within the chapters 10, 11 and 12, created an extra one by redivision to make up the total, so that the subject-matter was confused, the structure (法脉) obscured. This is an extreme example of unseemly aping.¹⁸⁴ If it is not corrected there will be no division between the parts, and the text will be unreadable.

The episode about the child Chiang-liu in chapter 9 is here added, but the verse passages in it have been eliminated and do not survive. If I get hold of the originals I shall make every effort to append them, so as to avoid this blemish in a fine jade.¹⁸⁵

From his remarks we may at once conclude: that he had at his disposal an edition – perhaps of Ming date – of the A-B type and was puzzled by its

¹⁸² The fragment, attributed to a work named *Hsi-yu chi*, is found in *chüan* 13, 139 of the *Yung-lo ta-tien*, pp. 8b-10a (photolithographic reprint, Peking, 1960). I hope to discuss the value of this source more fully in a forthcoming publication.

¹⁸³ Cheng Chên-to (1933, p. 264) wrongly asserts that it did so in every edition (including the *Chêng-tao shu* – C.1) of the last 300 years, which obscures the important distinction between C and D editions; he later (p. 290) excepts the edition C.2.

¹⁸⁴ I paraphrase an allusion to the story of the ugly woman who foolishly imitated the staring eyes of Hsi Shih 西施 when she was sick.

¹⁸⁵ D, ch. 10:19a. Huang Su-ch'iu (pp. 173-4) remarks this passage but fails to explain it.

characteristic division of chapters 9-12; that he accepted Wang Tan-i's claims about an "old edition" and was convinced by Wang's explanation; that he was anxious at all costs to reconstruct the original text, and to this end "added" (the word is significantly used) the ninth chapter as he found it in some C edition – perhaps the *Chêng-tao shu* itself – redividing the original text to accommodate it. Naturally, since he was clinging so piously to the fuller (i.e. A-B) text, with its rich proportion of verse, he preserved the opening of its chapter 9, which was now his own chapter 10. His edition was thus left with virtually the same passage at the heads of chapters 9 and 10, betraying through a small textual fault¹⁸⁶ which sources were involved.

The above arguments have made it possible to reconsider Wang Tan-i's statements: they cannot be taken at their face value, and the evidence for an "old version", significantly different from the A and B editions, insofar as it rested upon Wang's testimony alone, now disappears.

8. Absence of the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" chapter

There remains a final question: Were Wang Tan-i and the later editors right in claiming that the absence of Ch'ên Kuang-jui's story represents a serious structural lack? The most careful attempt to put this case has been made by Huang Su-ch'iu (q.v.). He points out nine places in the narrative (apart from the verses in chapter 11) which refer to the episode, and claims that only a fairly substantial presentation of the whole story within the novel could bear the weight of so much allusion.

In two of these examples¹⁸⁷ the allusion goes no further than to remark that Tripitaka's secular surname was Ch'ên. In another there is the further detail of his family's village. Two examples (again within a few pages of one another)¹⁸⁸ allude only to the manner of his mother's wooing – the tossing of an embroidered ball from an upper floor. Three examples refer to the theme of disaster on the river.¹⁸⁹ 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

¹⁸⁶ The discrepancy between *san-chou* in ch. 9 and *san-ch'uan* in ch. 10. See above, n. 177.

¹⁸⁷ In ch. 47 (HYC, p. 546) and ch. 48 (HYC, p. 561).

¹⁸⁸ In ch. 93 (HYC, p. 1056) and ch. 94 (HYC, p. 1062).

¹⁸⁹ HYC, ch. 37 (p. 424); ch. 49 (p. 564); ch. 64 (p. 734).

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 *Êrh-lang* 二郎 legends;¹⁹⁰ chapter 66 opens with a similar cluster of stories about the Warrior of the North 北方真武;¹⁹¹ a brief paragraph in chapter 83 covers the whole story of Nāṭa 哪吒 and Li T'ien-wang 李天王.¹⁹² Again, the origins of such central figures as Chu Pa-chieh and Sha Ho-shang 沙和尚 are presented only in allusion or otherwise indirectly, in moments of retrospect.¹⁹³ Above all, irrespective of whether the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story should in fact form part of the text, the stage in Tripitaka's career previous to that again – his celestial identity as the Golden Cicada 金蟬 – is still left quite unaccounted for in the formal narrative, although evident throughout the novel in the form of allusion, and finally as the first item in the "List of Hardships".¹⁹⁴

It was clearly consistent with the author's practice elsewhere in the work to exploit an established, independent legend for purposes of allusion without first devoting an extended narrative treatment to it. And certainly the birth and adventures of the infant Hsüan-tsang had become a famous story in Ming China. Hsü Wei 徐渭 (1521–1593) cited a Southern dramatic version as one of a small group of plays second only to the *P'i-p'a chi* 琵琶記,¹⁹⁵ and its songs were much quoted by later anthologists.¹⁹⁶ The *Hsi-yi chi* allusions share some features with this version in particular.¹⁹⁷

In a sense the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story is alien to the novel in terms both of structure and of dramatic force. Of all the diverse blocks of narrative which fill the first twelve chapters, this episode alone contributes nothing to the progress of the plot as a whole. It inevitably remains as a self-contained action concentrating the strong emotive values of family loyalty. The ironical, restless author of the 100-chapter *Hsi-yu chi* cannot easily be imagined choosing to dwell for its own sake upon such a weighty theme.

Wang Tan-i's resentment seems to have been ill-judged. A distinct whole chapter on Ch'ên Kuang-jui and the infant Hsüan-tsang was by no means internally essential to the *Hsi-yu chi*.

A future edition of the novel should in this respect confidently preserve the true form of the Shih-tê-t'ang text, which promises to stand as close to the original as any that survives.

¹⁹⁰ *HYC*, pp. 61–3.

¹⁹¹ *HYC*, p. 751.

¹⁹² *HYC*, p. 948. Among many other legends, compare also that of Saṅgha 僧迦 alluded to in ch. 66 (*HYC*, p. 754).

¹⁹³ E.g. in ch. 8 (*HYC*, pp. 83 and 85).

¹⁹⁴ *HYC*, p. 1115.

¹⁹⁵ *Nan-tz'u Hsi-lu* 南詞敘錄 (*Chung-kuo ku-tien hsi-ch'ü lun-chu chi-ch'êng* 中國古典戲曲論著集成, Peking, 1959, Vol. 3), p. 243.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Ch'ien Nan-yang, pp. 165–72.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. above, p. 165.

9. The Chu version and its sources

It has been argued above that Chu Ting-ch'ên used a version of the 100-chapter novel exhibiting some essential features of surviving A and B editions. We should not expect to identify the edition any more precisely than this, if only because it is likely that there were others, to which Chu may have had access.^{197a} One thing may yet be said with confidence: that although in format, title and style of illustration the Chu version closely resembles the edition A.2, it cannot have been based directly upon it. For this there is a simple proof: the Chu version preserves material, verses in particular, which are absent from the edition A.2.

Chu, 1: 5b has the verse *Kua-fêng yu ch'u to* 刮風有處躲 . . .¹⁹⁸ – absent from A.2, 1: 3b.

Chu, 1: 7a has the verse *Ch'un ts'ai pai-hua* 春探百花 . . .¹⁹⁹ – absent from A.2, 1: 3b.

Chu, 1: 9b has the verse *Chêng ming to li* 爭名奪利 . . .²⁰⁰ – absent from A.2, 1: 4b.

etc.

It is known that Chu Ting-ch'ên was active towards the end of the sixteenth century, and the two explicit dates which remain upon his published work are 1584 and 1591. The edition A.1 seems to have appeared in 1592.²⁰¹ It is

^{197a} A new study of these questions by Ōta Tatsuo, which has come to my notice since this article went to press, proceeds more boldly to postulate an anterior version of the novel, of which the Chu version would have been an abridgement, and A.1 a stylistically sophisticated revision. Ōta claims that this version – (a) was divided not into 100 chapters (*hui*), but into two or three hundred shorter sections, many of which were "mechanically" adapted and reproduced in the Chu version; (b) contained the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story as preserved by Chu; (c) was in form close to so-called *chantefable* (*chiang-ch'ang*) literature, featuring a proportion of popular verse preserved by Chu and eliminated in A.1. After studying this case (see *Kōbe gaidai ronsō* 17.4 (August 1966), 1–17), I find that there is nothing in the arguments and conclusions of the present article that I would wish to revise or retract. A number of much earlier prose versions, now all but lost, may well have anticipated the hundred-chapter novel. In terms of close textual affinities, one or more editions of the novel previous to A.1 are also certainly possible. But I do not share Professor Ōta's confidence that such an edition can be so positively identified. Apart from disagreeing with the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" theory (on the grounds set out above) and the chapter-division theory (particularly in view of the meticulous parallelism of chapter-headings in A.1, many of which recur, separated and scattered irregularly, in the Chu version), I am reluctant to depend so implicitly on an assumption that Chu Ting-ch'ên was incapable of exercising any freedom or inventiveness in the expansive early part of his adaptation. Some of the textual evidence used by Ōta appears susceptible of different interpretations: to my mind it does not amount to a proof that an earlier full-length *Hsi-yu chi* was seriously different from A.1. The position of the Yang version, consulted only in current modern reprints, is not discussed: the traditional assumption is simply endorsed. On pp. 2–3 of his article Professor Ōta usefully reproduces in full the *chüan*-titles of the Chu version: cf. above, note 65.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. *HYC*, pp. 4–5.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. *HYC*, p. 5.

²⁰⁰ Cf. *HYC*, p. 7.

²⁰¹ Subject to the possibility described above, in n. 9.

possible (but may not be categorically asserted) that this at once created a vogue to which the Fukien publishing trade quickly responded. The Yang Chih-ho version could thus have appeared very soon after 1592, and Chu Ting-ch'ên's version soon after that again.²⁰² The whole could have taken place within two or three years of the recorded 1591. More thoroughgoing Fukien issues of the 100-chapter novel may have followed slightly later; A.2 in particular in 1603.

Within the text of the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story in Chu, *chüan* 4, there are a number of flaws which make it seem likely that this part too was based on some distinct text – in this case not necessarily directly related to the *Hsi-yu chi* tradition.

Chu, 4: 3b, line 4: the daughter of the minister Yin Kai-shan 殷開山 is introduced under the name Man-t'ang-chiao 滿堂嬌, which indeed is used of her later in the story (e.g. 4:10b – by the voice in her dream); but at other points in the narrative she is also called Wên-chiao 溫嬌 (e.g. 4:13a – the opening words of her letter in blood and 4:15b – as Tripitaka tells her the name of the mother he is seeking).

Strictly, then, this other name should have been introduced also in 4: 3b, as it is by the scrupulous Wang Tan-i (ch. 9:3a).

Chu, 4: 11b–12a: the scene in which the mother reluctantly hands her child to a monk has been quoted above (p. 165). She performs no further action than to write a letter in blood, which she also gives to the monk. But when the eighteen-year-old Tripitaka calls on his abbot for an explanation (4: 13a), the box with the letter also contains an undershirt (汗衫) which the mother later recognizes as proof of his identity (4: 15b); further, she makes him remove a shoe:

Miss Yin saw that a toe was missing on his grown foot: years before, when she entrusted her "orphan" to the Abbot Fa-ming of Chin-shan Monastery, she had deliberately bitten off a toe as a memento. She now promptly took out from a scent-bag the toe she had originally bitten off and fitted it on (the stump of) that toe. There was not the least trace (of the join) (4: 18a).

This action was also left unmentioned at 4: 11b–12a.

Such features again suggest careless transcription. The many external inconsistencies prove that Chu Ting-ch'ên went further afield than chapter 11 of the *Hsi-yu chi* for material in writing his fourth *chüan*. It is easily

²⁰² One should, however, acknowledge the opinion of Cheng Chên-to (1933, p. 267) that the appearance of the Chu version suggests a date no later than the opening of the Wan-li 萬曆 reign (i.e. 1573).

possible that Chu, whose trade was compilation, had some cheap version of the "Ch'ên Kuang-jui" story open before him as he wrote.

10 Wu Ch'êng-ên and *Hsi-yu chi*

For some fifty years Wu Ch'êng-ên (1506?–1582?) has been generally regarded as the author of *Hsi-yu chi*. The absence of his name from the present article calls for some explanation.

I am content to remain sceptical about this ascription chiefly because the evidence to support it is ultimately thin and dubious. The sceptical case has been convincingly argued by Tanaka Iwao (1953): in making the points summarized below I am indebted to his initiative.

Of all known individuals connected with published editions of *Hsi-yu chi* in the Ming period, not one knew who the author was.

Ch'ên Yüan-chih wrote in his preface to the first "Hua-yang" edition (A.1) –

We do not know by whom (the book) was written. Some say it came from the lands of the present Royal Prince Ho-hou 何侯; some say from the "disciples of the Eight Lords";²⁰³ some say from the hand of the Prince himself . . .²⁰⁴

Nothing was known to him but rumour. It follows that neither Hua-yang-tung-t'ien chu-jên, the man who "checked" this edition, nor T'ang Kuang-lu, the publisher who "entrusted the preface" to Ch'ên Yüan-chih, were any wiser.

The author of the "Li Cho-wu" commentary at several points draws attention to evidence in the text of the writer's skill,²⁰⁵ yet refrains from mentioning a name, which argues that he too did not know one. Yüan Chin, author of the inscription prefaced to some of the "Li Cho-wu" editions, is also silent on this point.

Those responsible for the A.1 edition were working at the latest a mere ten years after the death of Wu Ch'êng-ên.²⁰⁶

Basically, two sources link Wu's name with a title *Hsi-yu chi*.

a. *Gazetteer of Huai-an Fu* 淮安府志, compiled in the T'ien-ch'i 天啓 reign (1621–7) in a list of literary works by eminent writers of the Huai region, has the following entry under Wu Ch'êng-ên's name:

Shê-yang chi 射陽集, 4 ts'ê, – *chüan*; Preface to *Ch'un-ch'iu lieh-chuan* 春秋列傳序; *Hsi-yu chi*.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ This alludes to the group of literary men associated with Liu An 劉安 (d. 122 B.C.), who in turn was associated with the region "South of the Huai" 淮南. The phrase thus appears to mean "literary circles of the Huai region".

²⁰⁴ A.1, 1b. Cf. Torii Hisayasu, 1958, pp. 8–9; Sun K'ai-ti, 1958, p. 75.

²⁰⁵ See Tanaka Iwao, 1953, p. 34 for examples.

²⁰⁶ I.e. in the early 1590's. Wu seems to have died in the early 1580's: see Liu Hsiu-yeh, June 1958, p. 232.

²⁰⁷ *Huai-an Fu-chih*, compiled by Sung Tsu-shun 宋祖舜 and Fang Shang-tsu 方尚祖, printed edition of 1648, *chüan* 19:3b.

b. A seventeenth-century catalogue – the *Ch'ien-ch'ing-t'ang shu-mu* 千頃堂書目 – lists:

Wu Ch'êng-ên: *Hsi-yu chi*

but under the general heading "Geography" (輿地類), within the "Histories" (史) division.²⁰⁸

In neither case is there any specification of number of *chüan*. The entry in *b* casts a very doubtful light on the work. "Geography" would not be a natural category for a work of fiction: catalogues tended to reserve a part of the "Philosophers" (子) division for such works of fiction as they included.²⁰⁹ In the present case Wu Ch'êng-ên's work keeps company with records of personal travels and the like. A mistake by oversight in the case of a large novel which had been famous for a century is barely conceivable, especially as a manuscript or indeed printed edition of it would have been an unusually bulky set of encased volumes.

The entry in the Huai-an Gazetteer, repeated verbatim in the succeeding compilation of the K'ang-hsi 康熙 reign (1662–1722),²¹⁰ was the sole authority for all those who during the Ch'ing dynasty affirmed Wu to be the author of the novel:

Wu Yü-chin 吳玉搢 (1698?–1773):

The old Gazetteer of the T'ien-ch'i reign ranks him (*i.e.* Wu) as the head of the literary scene in recent years (. . .) "various works of a miscellaneous nature (雜記) which he wrote created a general sensation at the time"; at first one did not know what sort of books these were, but reading the *List of Works by Eminent Writers of the Huai Region* (one saw it) recorded that *Hsi-yu chi* was by the Master . . .²¹¹

Juan K'uei-shêng 阮葵生 (1727–1789), writing in the mid-eighteenth century:

While Chin Chang-shan 金漳山 was prefect of Shan-yang 山陽 he edited the local Gazetteer. He wanted to mention in it that Wu Shé-yang 吳射陽²¹² had composed the *Hsi-yu chi*. I said the authenticity of this was not worth discussing. The old Gazetteer records that Shé-

yang was by nature quick witted and clear minded – could write extempore *shih* 詩 verses and prose – was given to jesting – wrote several works of a miscellaneous nature. Unfortunately it fails to note the titles of these works. Only the *List of Works by Eminent Writers of the Huai Region* records that Shé-yang wrote the popular romance (通俗演義) *Hsi-yu chi*.²¹³

The original entry in the T'ien-ch'i gazetteer was of course by no means so explicit.

Ting Yen 丁晏 (1794–1875):

. . . In the list of literary works in the old *Gazetteer* of our area compiled early in the K'ang-hsi reign there is entered, below the name Wu Ch'êng-ên, the work *Hsi-yu chi*.²¹⁴

The whole ascription thus rests upon a single entry, with no more than a bare title, in a gazetteer dating originally from forty years after Wu's death. *Hsi-yu chi* has been a common enough title in Chinese literature, and several different names have been connected with it. On the nature of Wu's work in particular we have no information beyond the fact of its appearance in the geographical section of the *Ch'ien-ch'ing-t'ang shu-mu*. Later the essentially arbitrary assumption that it was in fact the 100-chapter novel became accepted, especially among loyal natives of the Huai region, and was eventually embraced by Hu Shih, Lu Hsün, Chêng Chên-to,²¹⁵ and all subsequent critics and editors of the work.

The attribution to Wu Ch'êng-ên has been of little service to *Hsi-yu chi* studies. There have been attempts to identify his sense of humour with that in the novel: but the wit with which Wu is said to have entertained his literary friends would not necessarily have had much in common with the delight in ridicule, irony and irreverence which pervades the *Hsi-yu chi*. To search further in the novel for the voice of Wu Ch'êng-ên's indignation at an unspectacular official career is to put a distorting strain upon it.²¹⁶

²⁰⁸ By Huang Yü-chi 黃虞稷 (1629–1691): *Shih-yüan ts'ung-shu* 適園叢書 edn., *chüan* 8:13b. These references are cited also by Liu Hsiu-yeh (June 1958, p. 233).

²⁰⁹ In fact this same catalogue has a category *hsiao-shuo-chia* 小說家 in the *tsu* division (12:15a–37b) mainly containing scholars' notebooks. A note under the name Ch'ü Yu 瞿佑 (p. 15a) mentions his collection of literary stories *Chien-t'eng hsün-hua* 剪燈新話 (mistakenly giving the character 餘 in place of 新) and points out that they would have been included, together with Li Ch'ang-ch'i's 李昌祺 sequel *Chien-t'eng yü-hua* 剪燈餘話, had the work not been suppressed in the fifteenth century. A clear enough indication that this is the section, if any, to which fiction would have been assigned.

²¹⁰ According to Lu Hsün (1926, p. 62). Liu Ts'un-yan (1967, p. 65) points out the title *Hsi-yu chi* was absent from the compilation of 1883.

²¹¹ In the work *Shan-yang chih-i* 山陽志遺: quoted by Lu Hsün (1926, pp. 68–9).

²¹² Shé-yang: the *hao* 號 of Wu Ch'êng-ên: derived from a local place-name. Cf. Liu Ts'un-yan, 1967, p. 4.

²¹³ *Ch'a-yü k'o hua* 茶餘客話 (Peking, 1957 edn.) *chüan* 21, p. 674.

²¹⁴ *Shih-t'ing chi-shih* *hsü-pien* 石亭記事續編 (*I-chih-chai ts'ung-shu* 頤志齋叢書): 22ab.

²¹⁵ See Hu Shih, 1923, p. 376 *seq.*, Lu Hsün, 1923, p. 304, Chêng Chên-to, 1933, p. 263.

²¹⁶ The theme of protest against authority has dominated the recent school of interpretation on the Chinese mainland, well represented in the collection *Hsi-yu chi yen-chiu lun-wen-chi*. One specific point concerns Wu's "Song upon a painting of Erh-lang combing the hills" (二郎搜山圖歌), a poem of which Hu Shih claimed (1923, p. 381) that "it well expresses the feelings and attitude to writing of the author of *Hsi-yu chi*". It is frankly the description of a painting, ending with some lines of stormy protest against abuse in high places. The novel never resorts to such overt declamation: such political innuendoes as it contains have to be sought and reconstructed by the reader from fictitious situations in the story. The figure of Erh-lang the hunter of demons, although incidentally prominent in the novel, had long been an independent and universally familiar legendary character. At the best, this poem can scarcely be expected to cast much light directly upon the novel.

Some prosodic parallels drawn between the novel and Wu's surviving literary work²¹⁷ seem so generalized, even *qua* circumstantial evidence, that their significance would completely depend upon the prior demonstration of his authorship.

When we have to make an effort to accommodate the presence of Wu Ch'êng-ên, to read him into the *Hsi-yu chi*, we are to that extent doing violence to the work and, as shown above, on only the most slender and doubtful authority. Until there is unambiguous evidence of his, or another's, authorship we lose nothing by standing where Ch'ên Yüan-chih stood, at the point when the earliest extant text appeared.

11. The first appearance of the hundred-chapter novel

The novel's date of composition has usually been considered solely in the light of the Wu Ch'êng-ên attribution. If this is itself open to question then independent evidence must be sought.

With its broad, 100-chapter scope, fluent colloquial prose style, confident handling of descriptive verse welded easily into the narrative, the *Hsi-yu chi* certainly appears to belong among the great popular romances of the mid- and late sixteenth century – particularly the unabridged editions of *Shui-hu chuan*, the *Fêng-shên yen-i* 封神演義, in some respects also the *Chin P'ing Mei* 金瓶梅. The detailed analysis which would be necessary to place it more exactly in its contemporary literary context is a task which falls outside the scope of this article.

Within the text itself no sound evidence has yet been forthcoming to suggest an early limit for the time of its composition. References to institutions of the Ming dynasty have been remarked,²¹⁸ but none precise enough to point to a given year, or decade, in the sixteenth century.

In his preface to the Shih-tê-tang edition (A.1), Ch'ên Yüan-chih has this to say of the work's origins:

T'ang Kuang-lu purchased this book and felt it to be outstanding. Accordingly, for the benefit of lovers of the novel he edited and checked it (訂校), drew up a list of *chüan* and had blocks cut (秩其卷目梓之) ... (pp. 3b-4a).

If we take this account at its face value – no extant evidence suggests otherwise – it is fair to surmise that before falling into the hands of the publisher T'ang the novel was editorially in an unfinished condition; that possibly, since T'ang is said specifically to have had printing blocks of the book prepared, he bought it in manuscript form; that it had perhaps not previously been widely known to the public.

²¹⁷ Liu Ts'un-yan, 1967, pp. 68-70.

²¹⁸ By Chi Yün 紀昀 (1724-1805) in *Ju-shih wo-wên* 如是我聞 (*Yüeh-wei-ts'ao-t'ang pi-chi* 閱微草堂筆記 9:10a – *Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan* ed.); see also Liu Ts'un-yan, 1967, p. 66.

We cannot deduce from this how recently the work itself had been written. Long books could wait for decades before finally appearing in print.²¹⁹ Ch'ên Yüan-chih refers also to an "old" preface,²²⁰ which may have remained with the manuscript novel for some years.

A certain amount of confirmation – if only negative – that the work was not widely known at least before the middle of the sixteenth century is furnished by the *Pao-wên-t'ang shu-mu* 寶文堂書目, which records the titles in the library of Ch'ao Li 晁瑒 and his son Tung-wu 東吳 during a period ending c.1560,²²¹ and offers rich evidence of the popular fiction available to enthusiasts at the time. This collection boasted two editions each of *Shui-hu chuan* and *San Sui p'ing-yao chuan* 三遂平妖傳 (one of these expressly a Nanking print) and one of *San-kuo t'ung-su yen-i* 三國通俗演義;²²² yet there is no mention in the same section of a *Hsi-yu chi*,²²³ which would have been, and by the end of the century had become, a work of comparable interest and importance to a collector.²²⁴ This absence to some extent reinforces the impression that the 100-chapter *Hsi-yu chi* was not known in a widely circulated published form before the later part of the sixteenth century.

²¹⁹ A comparable example was the later edition *Hsi-yu yüan chih* (C.3), q.v.

²²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 2a.

²²¹ *Szû-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu* 四庫全書總目 (photolithographic reprint, Taipei, 1964), 87: 3b-4a.

²²² *Pao-wên-t'ang shu-mu* (Shanghai, 1957 reprint), pp. 100, 108, 109, 132.

²²³ Ch'ao does, however, note the title in his section *Yüeh-fu* 樂府 among dramatic works (*op. cit.*, p. 139), and this may well represent one of the plays on the *Hsi-yu chi* which are known to have existed, perhaps even the long *tsa-chü* 雜劇 sequence (reprinted in *Ku-pên hsi-ch'ü ts'ung-k'an* 古本戲曲叢刊, 1st series, Shanghai, 1954).

²²⁴ A *Hsi-yu chi* in 20 *chüan* (i.e. corresponding exactly to the dimensions of the early editions of the novel) is listed in a section on Buddhist works in the *Hung-yü-lou shu-mu* 紅雨樓書目 (compiled by Hsü Po 徐燾 in the early years of the seventeenth century and reprinted together with the *Pao-wên-t'ang shu-mu* in 1957), p. 358.