

The Four
Masterworks of
the Ming Novel

Ssu ta ch'i-shu

四大奇書

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IN MEMORY OF
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Hsi-yu chi:
Transcendence of
Emptiness

I

The second work to be considered here as an example of the literati novel form coming of age in sixteenth-century China is *Hsi-yu chi*. At first sight, the transition from *Chin P'ing Mei* to *Hsi-yu chi* might seem to invalidate the notion of a unified literary genre, since these two books could not be further removed from one another in subject matter and style. But I hope to show that these two disparate works share a very wide and firm common ground of both form and meaning. It is on this common ground that I will stake out the generic boundaries of the Ming literati novel, which will then enable me to treat *San-kuo chih yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan* as sixteenth-century novels despite the more problematical assignment of their composition to this period.

The connection between *Hsi-yu chi* and *Chin P'ing Mei* is immediately borne out in the prevailing theories regarding their composition. The common attribution of *Hsi-yu* to Wu Ch'eng-en 吳承恩 (ca.1506–ca.82)—which we will see below to be less than unassailable—would probably put its creation sometime around mid-century, from the late Chia-ching period to the beginning of Wan-li.¹ This, together with the date 1592 on the

¹The attribution of the novel to Wu Ch'eng-en is based on a bibliographical entry in a T'ien-ch'i period gazetteer of Huai-an prefecture (*Huai-an fu-chih* 淮安府志), printed in 1648, *chüan* 19, *I-wen chih* 藝文志, p. 3b. See citations in K'ung Ling-ching, *Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih-liao*, pp. 64–81; Chiang Jui-tsao, *Hsiao-shuo k'ao-cheng*, pp. 42–47; and Lu Hsün, *Hsiao-shuo chiu-wen ch'ao*, pp. 62–75. One of the first persons to connect the book mentioned in this entry with our novel appears to have been Wu Yü-chin 吳玉搢 (1698–

earliest extant full edition (the Shih-te t'ang 世德堂 text), would parallel fairly nicely the assumed late Chia-ching or more likely Wan-li composition of the latter, with a nearly full manuscript appearing in circulation by 1595 or 1596.²

This would appear to provide sufficient grounds for proceeding with an interpretive analysis of *Hsi-yu chi* as an exemplar of the sixteenth-century Chinese novel form. However, a number of unresolved problems in connection with the origins of *Hsi-yu chi* will require reopening the file before I turn to the primary focus of my discussion.

One aspect of the genesis of *Hsi-yu chi* that throws off the neat parallel to *Chin P'ing Mei*, and even casts doubt on their contemporaneity, is the fact that the former work is unquestionably the culmination of a long tradition of antecedent versions dealing with the same narrative outlines. This immediately distinguishes its process of composition from that of *Chin P'ing Mei*, although at the same time it sets up striking parallels to those of *Shui-hu chuan* and *San-kuo chih yen-i*. The materials in question include the accounts of the actual journey of the historical Hsüan-tsang 玄奘 (596–664), gradually embellished in the popular imagination into a full story cycle, as well as certain other types of popular religious narratives, and more sophisticated prose and dramatic works covering various parts of the story.³ Among these, the most important are the *Ta-T'ang San-*

1773), a fellow native of Shan-yang hsien 山陽縣 (for his dates see Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon to sono kaisaku," p. 90), in his *Shan-yang chih-i* 山陽志遺, *chüan* 4 (cited in K'ung, *Shih-liao*, pp. 65–67). For problems regarding the absence of this entry in later editions, see n. 11. Other early references include Ting Yen (1794–1875, see Ogawa, "Saiyūki genpon"), *Shih-t'ing chi-shih hsiu-pien*; Ch'ien Ta-hsin, *Ch'ien-yen t'ang wen-chi*, *chüan* 29, p. 461; and a discussion in Juan K'uei-sheng's *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua*, pp. 674f. A slightly different quotation is given in Yeh Te-chün, "Hsi-yu chi yen chiu ti ts'ai-liao," pp. 556–560, and in Chiao Hsün, *Chü-shuo*, *chüan* 5 (in K'ung, *ibid.*). See Liu Hsiu-yeh, "Wu-ch'eng-en chu-shu k'ao," and "Wu ch'eng-en lun-chu tsa-shih k'ao," pp. 232–46, esp. 234f.; Chao Ching-shen, "Hsi-yu chi tso-che Wu Ch'eng-en nien-p'u," pp. 251–63, esp. 253f.; and Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en: His Life and Career," pp. 1–97, esp. 65ff., and his entry on Wu Ch'eng-en in *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, pp. 1479–83. See also the following general studies: Lu Hsün, *Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih-lüeh*, pp. 167ff.; Glen Dudbridge, "The Hundred-chapter *Hsi-yu chi* and Its Early Versions," pp. 187ff.; Anthony Yu, *The Journey to the West*, vol. 1, Introduction, pp. 16f.; Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," pp. 88f.; Hu Shih, "Hsi-yu chi k'ao-cheng," pp. 354–99, esp. 376ff.; Kuo Chen-i, *Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih*, pp. 302ff.; and Yeh Te-chün, "Ts'ai-liao," pp. 556ff. I will reconsider the shakiness of this attribution in further discussions and in nn. 11, 22, and 23.

²For the dating of the hundred-chapter edition, see the following discussion. For the dating of the *Chin P'ing Mei*, see above, Chapter 2, Part I.

³For general reviews of the various sources of the novel, see Hu Shih, "K'ao-cheng," pp. 358–76; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 70ff.; Glen Dudbridge, *The Hsi-yu chi*; Cheng Ming-li, *Hsi-yu chi t'an-yüan*; Chu I-hsün and Liu Yü-ch'en, *Hsi-yu chi tzu-liao hui-pien*; Anthony C. Yu, *Journey*, pp. 1–13; Kuo Chen-i, *Hsiao-shuo shih*, pp. 276–92; Chao Ts'ung, *Chung-kuo ssu ta hsiao-shuo chih yen-chiu*, pp. 143–53; Ota Tatsuo, "Kaisetsu,"

tsang ch'ü-ching shih-hua 大唐三藏取經詩話 and the *Hsi-yu chi tsa-chü* 西遊記雜劇, which attest to the earlier treatment of the basic narrative in more or less continuous form, plus the fragments contained in the *Yung-lo ta-tien* 永樂大典 and the Korean text *Pak t'ongsa ōnhae* 朴通事諺解, which enable us to postulate the existence of prior versions of the entire narrative.⁴ Since these materials have been amply treated in recent scholarship, notably in the work of Hu Shih, Liu Ts'un-yan, Glen Dudbridge, Anthony C. Yu, and others, there is no need to rehearse here the particulars, except where they affect my interpretation of the hundred-chapter novel.

The possible existence of one or more full-length narratives covering the outlines of the entire story cycle prior to the Ming period, and perhaps as early as the late Sung or Yuan, is of no small importance to this study.⁵ This is especially true since the notion of a nonextant *p'ing-hua* 平話 version as the missing link between the Sung-Yuan *shih-hua* 詩話 and the later Ming novel roughly parallels the theory of a hypothetical *tz'u-hua* 詞話 posited between *Hsüan-ho i-shih* 宣和遺事 and *Shui-hu chuan*, or the key position of the *San-kuo p'ing-hua* in the development of *San-kuo chih yen-i*.⁶ As in these latter cases, there is not enough verbal correspondence between the later Ming novel *Hsi-yu chi* and any antecedent narratives to prove a direct textual relationship, but a careful comparison of the text with the

pp. 431ff., and his *Saiyūki no kenkyū*; Saitō Akio and Itō Keiichi, "Saiyūki no kenkyū to shiryō," pp. 210f.; and Hu Kuang-chou, *Wu Ch'eng-en ho Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 45–62.

⁴For a review of the specialized studies on the use of the respective source materials in the novel, see b.n. I.

⁵The extrapolation from the *Yung-lo ta-tien* and the *Pak t'ongsa ōnhae* fragments to a hypothetical full-length narrative is largely speculation. The former, which covers only a peripheral anecdote from the prologue section, could easily derive from some common source material, as is often the case in prologues in Ming colloquial fiction. The latter, with its brief outline of the entire story line and its full presentation of one episode from the body of the narrative, provides a more convincing case; but here, too, the argument is just as plausible that what we have are two independent traditions drawing upon common sources. For that matter, the fact that the editions of this work available to us date only from the late fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries make possible any amount of revision or even interpolation by that time (for bibliographical information, see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 60ff.; and Isobe Akira, "Genpon Saiyūki ni okeru Son Gyōja no keisei," pp. 103–27, esp. 103ff.). See also Liu Ts'un-yan ("Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 76f.), who downplays the significance of these fragments; and Yen Tun-i, "Hsi-yu chi ho ku-tien hsi-ch'ü ti kuan-hsi," pp. 149f. For optimistic assessments of the possibility of a fourteenth-century *p'ing-hua* antecedent, see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 63, 82f.; Kuo Chen-i, *Hsiao-shuo shih*, pp. 289f., 297; Cheng Chen-to, "Hsi-yu chi ti yen-hua," pp. 270, 273; Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," p. 85; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 11f.; and especially Lo Chin-t'ang, "Clues Leading to the Discovery of the *Hsi-yu chi P'ing-hua*," pp. 176–94; and Hu Shih-ying, *Hua-pen hsiao-shuo kai-lun*, pp. 198, 293. For further information on the *Pak t'ongsa ōnhae* texts, see Ōta Tatsuo, "Boku tsūji genkai shoin Saiyūki kō," pp. 1–22.

⁶For theories regarding *p'ing-hua* or similar antecedents of the novels *San-kuo chih yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*, see below, Chapters 4, Part I, and 5, Part I.

two narrative fragments, especially that in the *Pak t'ongsa ōnhæ*, does reveal a few such echoes.⁷ Thus, it is quite reasonable to hypothesize about a direct chain of development linking the main known antecedent materials.

But though the novel *Hsi-yu chi* is undeniably the end-product of a long chain of development, to read it as simply the final stage in an expanding story cycle is to miss the quantum leap that transpired between the middle and the end of the process. As I have argued in my discussion of *Chin P'ing Mei* and will again insist in treating *San-kuo yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*, the relation of the novel to various antecedents is of far less consequence than is the radical structural transformation and revalorization of meaning effected on these materials when they are recast in the new generic mold.

Nearly all of the modern scholars working on this subject have taken due note of the fact that the hundred-chapter novel goes far beyond anything before it.⁸ Beyond the simple fact that this text brings the narrative and dialogue to its fullest development, it has been pointed out that the restruc-

⁷ See, for example, a passage in chapter 46 of the novel in which Sun Wu-k'ung transforms himself into a centipede and then clamps onto the nose of a villain ... 道士鼻凹裏叮了一下。See *Hsi-yu chi*, 1972 Jen-min wen-hsüeh edition (hereafter HYC), vol. 2, p. 638 (citations by volume and page number, e.g., 2:638). This line may echo the corresponding line in the *Pak t'ongsa ōnhæ* version: 大仙鼻凹裏放了 (see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 187, l. 301). Cf. also the expression "one hundred percent accuracy" (*pai-hsia pai-cho* 百下百著) in the *Yung-lo ta-tien* fragment (facsimile edition, *chüan* 13139, p. 8b), which is echoed in the novel version (1:124, l.5). Another term that figures in the scene (1:128), the "dragon-slicing platform" (*kua-lung t'ai* 剛龍臺), appears in the *Yung-lo* fragment (p. 9a), but not in the Yang Chih-ho version of the incident (*Ssu-yu chi*, p. 116, to be discussed below). The only weak verbal reflections I can discern in the *shih-hua* version are such expressions as "wait while I go on ahead" (*tai wo ch'ien-ch'ü* 待我前去), "it is obviously a demon" (*ting shih yao-kuai* 定是妖怪), and "to destroy the weeds you must remove the roots" (*chan-ts'ao ch'u-ken* 斬草除根).

⁸ For example, Lu Hsün (*Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih-lüeh*, p. 169) describes the changes effected in the hundred-chapter edition as a complete "transformation" (*kai-kuan* 改觀), the same expression he uses to describe the *fan-pen Shui-hu chuan* (see Chapter 4, n. 76, of this book). Hu Shih ("K'ao-cheng," pp. 59ff.) describes this development as one of "elaboration and definitive revision" (*chia-kung hsieh-ting* 加工寫定). See also Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," p. 264; Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, p. 152f.; Yen Tun-i, "Hsi-yu ho hsi-ch'ü," p. 150f.; and Anthony Yu, *Journey*, p. 37; etc. The opposite view is voiced by Ch'en Tun-fu in the Introduction to his *Hsi-yu chi shih-i*, p. 6 (see b.n. II.10 for information). Dudbridge treats the "hundred-chapter novel" as the basic text of his study, but he is slightly ambiguous on this point (see *Hsi-yu chi*, 103f.). Cf. Chang P'ei-heng's assertion that the text was modified by adding some Wu-dialect expressions at a later stage. See his "Pai-hui-pen Hsi-yu chi shih-fou Wu Ch'eng-en so-tso," p. 303. Earlier, in Wu Yü-chin's discussion of the Shan-yang gazetteer entry (see above, n. 1), the contribution of Wu Ch'eng-en was described as the transformation of an earlier text into a "popular elaboration" (*t'ung-su yen-i* 通俗演義), and a similar view is suggested in Juan K'uei-sheng's *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua*, p. 675. Hu Shih's remark ("K'ao-cheng," p. 377) that this passage was absent in his edition of *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua* indicates that it may be an interpolation. See below, n. 11 for further discussion of this question. A similar comparison of Wu Ch'eng-en's role to that of Lo Kuan-chung is suggested by Kuo Chen-i (*Hsiao-shuo shih*, p. 297) and by some of the traditional commentators.

turing of the work with the story of the Monkey King as an extended prologue to the narrative proper, the interjection of suggestive philosophical terminology, and the extensive addition of incidental verse, mark major changes that put the novel into a new literary class.⁹ In addition, a number of episodes in the novel, some of which are of key significance for the allegorical framework, do not appear in any of the known antecedent materials.¹⁰

The question that remains unanswered, however, is precisely when this leap took place, that is, when were the story-cycles in the popular story-telling and dramatic traditions, and perhaps even a lost *p'ing-hua*, recast as the hundred-chapter novel? Did this occur only around or shortly before the time of the appearance of the Shih-te t'ang edition in 1592? Was it the handiwork of Wu Ch'eng-en roughly a generation earlier? Or does the credit go back still farther, to the unnamed author of a *p'ing-hua* version in the Yuan or early Ming period?

⁹ The shift of the Monkey King story to the head of the text is noted by Liu I-Ming in his *tu-fa* introduction to the edition entitled *Hsi-yu yüan-chih* (see b.n. II.8 for information). In the *Hsi-yu chi tsa-chü* version, Sun Wu-k'ung first appears only in Scene 9. There is no narrative presentation of this material in the *Shih-hua*, although one speech in section 11 does fill in some of the details (see 1954 reprint, pp. 24f.). On the sources of the Monkey King legend, see Dudbridge (*Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 114-54); Li Shih-jen and Ts'ai Ching-hao ("Ta-T'ang San-ts'ang," pp. 24f.); Isobe Akira ("Son Gyōja," pp. 103-27); Chu T'ung, "Lun Sun Wu-k'ung," pp. 68-79; Chang Ching-erh, "The Monkey-hero in the *Hsi-yu chi* Cycle," pp. 191-217, 537-91, and his "Lun Hsi-yu ku-shih chung ti Wu-k'ung," pp. 14-59; Na Tsung-hsün, "Hsi-yu chi chung ti Sun Wu-k'ung," pp. 66-78. For other unique materials in the hundred-chapter novel, see Nicholas Koss, "The Xiyouji in Its Formative Stages," chaps. 1, 3, and 4. (I have read this dissertation only in incomplete draft sent to me by the author, so my references are by chapter number only.)

¹⁰ Among those elements in the allegorical framework of the book that do not seem to show up in any of the antecedent materials, I would include the renaming of Dual Border Mountain (*Liang-chieh shan* 兩界山) in chapter 14 (1:182); the episode of the *jen-shen* (人參) fruit at the Temple of the Five Estates (*Wu-chuang kuan* 五莊觀) in chapters 24-26; the two exiles of the mind-monkey in chapters 27-31 and 56-58 (although the Black Pine Forest [*Hei-sung lin* 黑松林] in which the first of these incidents takes place is a stock setting of the vernacular tradition, as for example in *Mu-lien chiu-mu ch'üan-shan hsi-wen*, Act 62 [see Ōta, "A New Study on the Formation of the Hsi-yu chi," pp. 101f.]; in the *Hsiao-shih chen-k'ung pao-chüan* [see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 94]; and in certain episodes in *Shui-hu chuan* [see below, Chapter 4, Part I]); the moonlight meditation scene in chapter 36; the episode in the Black Cock Kingdom (*Wu-chi kuo* 烏雞國) in chapters 37-39; as well as the episodes involving the One-horned Rhinoceros Demon (*Tu-chiao ssu ta-wang* 獨角兕大王) in chapters 50-52; the temptation by the centipede spirits (*wu-kung ching* 蜈蚣精) in chapters 72-73; the parody on medical lore in chapters 68-71; the episode in the Land of Dharma Destruction (*Mieh-fa kuo* 滅法國) in chapters 84-86 (this place-name is mentioned in the *Hsiao-shih chen-k'ung pao-chüan*, but it apparently is a different story); and the near sub-mission of the Master to the temptations of the Jade Hare in chapters 93-94. The poetry-composing scene in chapter 64 also appears to be unprecedented, although we may perceive here a trace of the tree spirits who appear in section 8 of the *Shih-hua*.

In attempting to solve this riddle, we must note at the outset that the accepted attribution of the novel to Wu Ch'eng-en is itself far from certain. In fact, it is based on evidence of the sort commonly dismissed by literary historians. As a number of recent scholars have acknowledged, this evidence consists primarily of a few laconic entries in local gazetteers assigning the authorship of a book called *Hsi-yu chi* to Wu Ch'eng-en. The identification of this title with our novel is supported only by a set of circumstantial arguments: the occurrence of certain regional dialect expressions in the text, Wu Ch'eng-en's reputation for wit, and certain passages in his collected writings that exhibit an interest in supernatural phenomena.¹¹ In short, the attribution of the book to Wu Ch'eng-en is of the same order as that of *Shui-hu chuan* and *San-kuo yen-i* to Lo Kuan-chung 羅貫中 or Shih Nai-an 施耐庵, which I will call into serious question in the following two chapters.¹²

¹¹For the gazetteer references in question, see n. 1. See also Lu Hsün, *Chiu-wen ch'ao*, pp. 62ff.; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 65; and Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 16f. A Ying (Ch'ien Hsing-ts'un) points out in *Hsiao-shuo hsien-t'an*, pp. 176ff., that the title *Hsi-yu chi* is deleted in most later printings of the Shan-yang gazetteer. Tanaka Iwao argues in "Saiyūki no sakusha," p. 37, that the description of Wu's book as a "miscellany" (*tsa-chi* 雜記) in Wu Yü-chin's reference would not fit a work of colloquial fiction such as this. Isobe Akira ("Saiyūki ni okeru Cho Hakkei zō no keisei," p. 185) suggests that this entry may in fact refer to an edition of the drama *Hsi-yu chi tsa-chū*. Cf. an additional reference to a book entitled *Hsi-yu chi* in the late seventeenth-century catalogue *Ch'ien-ch'ing t'ang shu-mu* 千頃堂書目 of Huang Yü-chi 黃虞稷. Chang P'ei-heng argues ("Pai-hui-pen," p. 296) that the listing of this book under the category of historical and geographical works in this catalogue shows that it is a different sort of book, perhaps a travelogue recording Wu's journey to take up his official post at the court of the Prince of Ching (see n. 20). Su Hsing rejects this (in "Yeh t'an pai-hui-pen Hsi-yu chi shih-fou Wu Ch'eng-en so-tso," pp. 250 ff.) on the basis of evidence that Wu never actually went to take up this position. See also Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ch'üan-chien chiao ho hsiao-shuo Hsi-yu chi," pt. 1, p. 55. The passages in Wu Ch'eng-en's *wen-chi* resonating with the language of the novel include those on pp. 15, 19, 28, 75, 77, 95. (See Liu Hsiu-yeh edition, cited in n. 1.) See especially Wu's poem "Erh-lang-shen sou shan t'u ko" 二郎神搜山圖歌 and his preface to a work entitled *Yü-ting chih* 禹鼎志, included in *She-yang hsien-sheng ts'un-kao, chüan* 2, p. 7b (see Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," p. 88f.; and Chang P'ei-heng, "Pai-hui-pen," pp. 303ff.). The attribution to Wu of the *tz'u* collection *Hua-ts'ao ts'ui-pien* containing material drawn from colloquial fiction would, if true, also link Wu to the latter medium. See Hanan, *The Chinese Short Story*, p. 166. The presence of Huai-an dialect expressions is discussed in Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," p. 90; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 67; and Huang Su-ch'iu, "Hsi-yu chi ti chiao-ting ho chu-shih kung-tso," pp. 180f. See also Chang P'ei-heng, "Pai-hui-pen," pp. 298ff. Another link between Wu Ch'eng-en and the field of colloquial fiction may be seen in a reference in Juan K'uei-sheng's *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua*, p. 641, indicating that Wu wrote a laudatory piece (*tsan* 贊) on certain illustrations of the thirty-six *Shui-hu* heroes. See also Wu's friendship with Li Ch'un-fang, to be discussed in n. 22.

¹²For general discussions of the weakness of the attribution of the novel to Wu Ch'eng-en, see Glen Dudbridge (Tu Te-ch'iao), "Hsi-yu chi tsu-pen k'ao ti tsai-shang-ch'üeh," pp. 497-519; Tanaka Iwao, "Saiyūki no sakusha"; Arai Ken, "Saiyūki no naka no Saiyūki,"

Even if one chooses to adopt a less critical approach and accept the indications that Wu Ch'eng-en did write a book entitled *Hsi-yu chi*, a number of problems still remain. Chief among these is the question of whether the hundred-chapter novel, as represented by the 1592 Shih-te t'ang edition, actually constitutes a close approximation of Wu Ch'eng-en's putative work.

This issue has been beclouded by scholarly debate over the precise relationship between the Shih-te t'ang text and two other early texts: the *T'ang San-tsang hsi-yu shih-o chuan* 唐三藏西遊釋厄傳, compiled by Chu Ting-ch'en 朱鼎臣, and *San-tsang ch'u-shen ch'üan-chuan* 三藏出身全傳, compiled by Yang Chih-ho 楊致和 (陽至和) appearing in roughly the same period.¹³ Since these two texts cover more or less the same outlines of the

p. 600; Anthony Yü, *Journey*, pp. 17f.; Yen Tun-i, "Hsi-yu ho hsi-ch'ü," p. 556; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 65f.; Chang Ching-erh, *Hsi-yu chi jen-wu yen-chiu*, pp. 11-17. The latest and most thorough refutation of the "evidence" linking the novel to Wu is that by Chang P'ei-heng in "Pai-hui-pen," pp. 295-305. See also Ch'en Yü-p'i, "Wu Ch'eng-en Hsi-yu chi ch'eng yü wan-nien shuo hsin-cheng," pp. 3f.; and Huang Su-ch'iu, "Chiao-ting ho chu-shih," pp. 180ff. Ch'en Tun-fu, for his own reasons, gives the most absolute rejection of this theory (see *Shih-i*, pp. 4ff., 10ff., 18). The fact that the writer of the preface in the Shih-te t'ang edition, Ch'en Yüan-chih, claims to have no idea who the author might be has also been taken as a weak point in the theory of Wu Ch'eng-en's authorship, since he was a fairly well-known literati figure associated with some of the "latter seven masters" (*hou ch'i-tzu* 後七子), discussed above in Chapter 1. Additional acknowledgments of the tentative nature of the attribution to Wu Ch'eng-en can be found in Ōta Tatsuo, "Saiyū shōdōsho kō," and in his "Kaisetsu," p. 439; Isobe Akira, "Hsi-yu chi ti chieh-na yü liu-ch'uan," p. 151; C. T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, pp. 116, 124.

¹³For bibliographical information regarding the Chu and Yang editions, see b.n. II. 2-3. Liu Ts'un-yan treats this issue in "Ssu-yu chi ti Ming k'e-pen," pp. 344ff., 355, 363. The same argument also appears in his *Chinese Popular Fiction in Two London Libraries*, pp. 138-44, 204ff., and in his *Ho-feng t'ang tu-shu chi*, pp. 379-432, as well as in his "The Prototypes of Monkey," pp. 55-71, and his "Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 75, 81. See also Dudbridge, "Early Versions," pp. 159ff.; Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 163ff., 172ff.; Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 266ff., 275ff., 286; Chang P'ei-heng, "Pai-hui-pen," p. 300; Chang Ching-erh, *Jen-wu yen-chiu*, pp. 27ff.; Chao Ching-shen, "Tu Ssu-yu chi" and "Ssu-yu chi tsa-chih," pp. 221-28; Ōta Tatsuo, "New Study," pp. 106-12, and his "Saiyūki zakkō," pp. 1-18. For a comprehensive treatment of this question, see Nicholas Koss, "Formative Stages," chap. 1. See also Kuo Chen-i, *Hsiao-shuo shih*, pp. 299ff.; C. T. Hsia, *Classic Novel*, pp. 122ff.; Hu Shih, "K'ao-cheng," pp. 332ff., and "Pa Ssu-yu chi pen ti Hsi-yu chi-chuan," pp. 408-11; Sun K'ai-ti, *Jih-pen Tung-ching so chien Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shu-mu*, pp. 79ff., 83, 95, and his *Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu*, p. 190; Dudbridge (Tu Te-ch'iao), "Tsai-shang-ch'üeh," pp. 497-519; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 13f.; and Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," pp. 86f. Within these studies, the priority of the Chu version was first suggested by Lu Hsün in *Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih-lüeh*, and is upheld by Liu Ts'un-yan and Nicholas Koss. Hu Shih tried to show that the Shih-te t'ang edition preceded the Chu text. This line of reasoning is followed by others, including Dudbridge and Sun K'ai-ti. Ōta ("Kaisetsu," p. 438) puts the Chu text even after the Yang edition. Cheng Ming-li, in "Lun Hsi-yu chi san-pen chien chih kuan-hsi," pp. 173-234, argues for an earlier prototype (*tsu-pen* 祖本).

story, but are briefer (sixty-seven and forty-one chapters, respectively), discussion has centered on the question of whether what we have here is an expansion of a shorter text or an abridgment of a longer one. This issue parallels the debate over the priority of the *fan-pen* 繁本 or the *chien-pen* 簡本 recensions of *Shui-hu chuan*, that of the *San-kuo chih t'ung-su yen-i* or the *San-kuo chih-chuan* 志傳, and perhaps that of the *Chin P'ing Mei tz'u-hua* or what is commonly known as the Ch'ung-chen 崇禎 edition of that work.¹⁴ This analogy is thrown off somewhat by the fact that the printing of the Shih-te t'ang edition is not appreciably better than that of the Chu edition. But on the other hand, the name of the Fukien publisher Yü Hsiang-tou 余象斗, known for his work on various *chien-pen* editions of *Shui-hu*, also appears on an earlier printing of a companion volume to the Yang edition of *Hsi-yu chi*, which suggests that we are dealing with an associated chapter of literary history.¹⁵

The debate over the chronological priority of the Shih-te t'ang, the Chu, or the Yang text has seesawed back and forth for half a century without leading to any definitive conclusions in the matter.¹⁶ To my mind, all of these efforts suffer from a tendency to lose sight of the possibility (which all generally admit but then disregard) that both the longer and shorter versions may derive from earlier prototypes, so that any comparison of the

¹⁴For the somewhat similar debate over the priority of the different recensions of our other three masterworks, see below, Chapters 2, Part I, 4, Part I, and 5, Part I. The early editions of *Hsi-yu chi* are also discussed in terms of the distinction between "fuller" and "simpler" recensions (*fan-pen*, *chien-pen*) by various scholars, including Sun K'ai-ti (*Jih-pen*, p. 84), Cheng Chen-to ("Yen-hua," p. 285), Ogawa Tamaki ("Saiyūki genpon," p. 116, n. 18), Ōta Tatsuo ("New Study," p. 107), and Saitō Akio and Itō Keichi ("Saiyūki no kenkyū to shiryō," p. 211). See also Ch'en Hsin, "Ch'ung-p'ing Chu Ting-ch'en T'ang San-tsang Hsi-yu shih-o chuan ti ti-wei ho chia-chih," pp. 61–67.

¹⁵Both the Chu edition and certain Wan-li reprints of the Shih-te t'ang text appear in the split-page format, with woodcut illustrations positioned above the text, which is characteristic of the Fukien editions known by the abbreviated designation *Min-pen* 閩本. Cf. certain later Wan-li editions in *Min-pen* format described by Sun K'ai-ti (*Jih-pen*, p. 73); Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 163ff.; and Liu Ts'un-yan, *Buddhist and Taoist Influences on Chinese Novels*, p. 152. See also Nicholas Koss "Formative Stages," chap. 3; and Ōta Tatsuo, *Saiyūki no kenkyū*, pp. 261f. Cheng Chen-to uses this detail to date the Chu edition earlier than the Shih-te t'ang text ("Yen-hua," p. 281). Cf. also the use of the term *chi-chuan* 記傳 in certain editions, which recalls similar usage in various *chien-pen* editions of *San-kuo chih yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan* (see Chapters 4 and 5 of this book). For the connection between Yü Hsiang-tou and the printing of colloquial fiction in the Wan-li period, see Chapter 4, n. 63, of this book.

¹⁶See, for example, Dudbridge, "Early Versions," pp. 167ff.; and Nicholas Koss, "Formative Stages," chaps. 3, 4, 6, 7. Koss's conclusions regarding the probable priority of the Chu edition are based on close comparisons of chapter titles and concluding verses, certain narrative details, general style, linguistic style-markers, and the use of poetry in the two texts. Cf. Huang Su-ch'iu's identification of the Shih-te t'ang edition as Wu Ch'eng-en's original text ("Chiao-ting ho chu-shih," p. 180). See also Cheng Ming-li, "Lun Hsi-yu chi san pan-pen," pp. 173–234.

secondary editions that have by chance come down to us cannot prove much about the original filiation of the three versions.¹⁷

The idea that there must have been an edition of *Hsi-yu chi* earlier than the extant Wan-li texts is unavoidable, since Wu Ch'eng-en died around 1582. This is supported by a number of other pieces of evidence. The most obtrusive of these appears at the head of the Shih-te t'ang and the Chu texts themselves, where we get the explicit mention of a prior text entitled *Hsi-yu shih-o chuan* (not to be confused with the identically titled Chu edition).¹⁸ More tantalizing evidence occurs in the early Ch'ing *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu* 西遊証道書, edited by Wang Hsiang-hsü 汪象旭 and Huang T'ai-hung 黃太鴻. The commentary in this edition speaks in several places about an "original edition" (*ku-pen* 古本), different from the later text on a number of points, which it identifies as a "Ta-lüeh t'ang" 大略堂 edition.¹⁹ Even more suggestive is a preface signed by Ch'en Yüan-chih 陳元之 in the 1592 edition claiming that this text is based on an earlier manuscript

¹⁷The possibility that neither of these editions represents the "original text" is implied by Koss in discussions in chap. 6; and also by Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 174f.; Yen Tun-i, "Hsi-yu ho hsi-ch'ü," pp. 149f.; Anthony Yu, "Narrative Structure and the Problem of Chapter Nine in the *Hsi-yu chi*," p. 5; Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 275–86; and C. T. Hsia, *Classic Novel*, p. 124.

¹⁸In the Yang edition, this title is given as *San-tsang shih-ni chuan* 三藏釋尼傳 (the character *ni* here obviously a misprint for *o* 厄). See *Ssu-yu chi*, p. 100. See also Ōta Tatsuo, "New Study," pp. 111f.; and Dudbridge (Tu Te-ch'iao), "Tsai-shang-ch'üeh," pp. 500ff. The fact that the Chu version also begins with the same reference, notwithstanding its own identical title, seems to prove that it is a yet earlier text that is at issue.

¹⁹For bibliographical information on the Wang Hsiang-hsü edition, see b.n. II.5. In a note in chapter 9 (p. 1b) he refers to the earlier "Ta-lüeh t'ang" edition as *Shih-o chuan* (*Shih-o chuan ku-pen* 釋厄傳古本). In another place (chapter 100 [14a]), the co-editor Huang T'ai-hung enumerates the differences between this edition and the "original edition" (*ku-pen*), including the well-known point about the interpolated story of Hsüan-tsang's birth and early adventures, plus certain differences in the use of popular verse and dialect expressions. Another note in chapter 22 (p. 1b) raises the possibility that this "ku-pen" may perhaps refer to a Wan-li edition such as the *Li Cho-wu hsien-sheng p'i-p'ing Hsi-yu chi* (see b.n. II.4). For additional discussions of the Ta-lüeh t'ang reference, see Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 169, 182f.; Dudbridge, "Tsai-shang-ch'üeh," pp. 509f.; Ōta Tatsuo, "Kaisetsu," p. 438, "Shōdōsho," pp. 10f., and "New Study," pp. 111f.; C. T. Hsia, *Classic Novel*, p. 124; Isobe Akira, "Genpon Saiyūki o meguru mondai," pp. 10f. The identity of the Ta-lüeh t'ang text remains a mystery. Liu Ts'un-yan speculates that this may refer to a prototype of the Chu Ting-ch'en edition in his "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 1, p. 57; and in pt. 5, p. 72, he tentatively identifies this as an original "Ch'üan-chen" Taoist version. I have found no mention of this publishing house in any of the general studies on Yuan and Ming printing mentioned in Chapter 1, n. 69, of this book, including K. T. Wu, "Ming Printers and Printing," Liu Ts'un-yan, *Ming-Ch'ing Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo pan-pen yen-chiu*; Lo Chin-t'ang, *Li-tai t'u-shu pan-pen chih-yao*; Liu Kuo-chün, *Chung-kuo shu-shih chien-pien*; Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*; and Nagasawa Kikuya, *Wakansho no insatsu to sono rekishi*. Nor has it turned up in the detailed lists of printing houses given in Shih Mei-ts'en, *Chung-kuo yin-shua fa-chan shih*; P'an Ch'eng-pi and Ku T'ing-lung, *Ming-tai pan-pen t'u-lu*

associated with an unspecified "princely house" (Wang-fu pen 王府本). Since Wu Ch'eng-en at one point in his career may have served as a tutor in the household of a Prince of Ching 荆王, this has led scholars to speculate that this notice may refer to none other than the lost book by Wu Ch'eng-en himself.²⁰

One frequently overlooked document indicating an even earlier text akin to the hundred-chapter novel is the preface by Yang T'i 楊悌 to Yang Shen's 楊慎 *tsa-chü* play *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi* 洞天玄記, in which the allegorical scheme of this play is explained with reference to a prose work called *Hsi-yu chi* that seems quite close to the novel we know from the Shih-te t'ang edition. If that is so, then the early date on another preface to this play, 1542, would suggest the existence of such a text somewhat

ch'u-pien; Nagasawa Kikuya, "Genson Mindai shōsetsu-sho kankōsha hyō shohen," pp. 41–48; or Nancy Lee Swann, "Seven Intimate Library Owners," pp. 363–90. I have also found no trace of it in my browsing through the bibliographical descriptions in Ming *pi-chi* writings, such as Hu Ying-lin's *Shao-shih shan-fang pi-ts'ung* and Liu Jo-yü's *Cho-chung chih*.

²⁰ This theory is based on the reading of an ambiguous passage in the Ch'en Yüan-chih preface, where three unclear phrases—"produced in the domain of a certain nobleman of the imperial family" 出天潢何侯王之國, "produced by a follower of the eight masters" 出八公之徒, and "produced under the private sponsorship of the prince" 出王自製—have led scholars to the conclusion that the novel was sponsored by a certain Prince of Ching, or at least written during the tenure of Wu Ch'eng-en as "tutor" (*chi-shan* 紀善) in his household. (For bibliographical information regarding this edition, see b.n. II.1. A convenient reprint of the preface is provided by Sun K'ai-ti in *Jih-pen*, p. 75. The first scholar to suggest this reading appears to have been Cheng Chen-to ("Yen-hua," p. 269). For later discussions of the theory, see Ōta Tatsuo, "New Study," pp. 106ff., 111f., and "Kaisetsu," pp. 439f.; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ssu-yu chi," p. 375; and Hu Kuang-chou, *Wu Ch'eng-en ho Hsi-yu chi*, p. 18. In "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 72, Liu Ts'un-yan brings evidence of patronage of dramatic literature by this same Prince of Ching. In addition, Ōta Tatsuo ("Kaisetsu," p. 439) cites a late Ming *pi-chi* work (*Hsiu-an ying-yü* 休菴影語 by Sheng Yü-ssu 盛于斯) that speaks of *Hsi-yu chi* as the product of another princely house, this time a *Chou-wang fu* 周王府 (*Chou-ti* 周邸). Cf. also another reference to a *Lu-fu pen Hsi-yu chi* 魯府本西遊記, based on an entry in Chou Hung-tsu's *Ku-chin shu-k'e*, p. 377, discussed by Ōta Tatsuo in "Saiyūki seiritsu shiryaku," p. 29, and in his *Saiyūki no kenkyū*, pp. 239ff. 244–59. See also Isobe Akira ("Cho Hakkei no keisei," pp. 185f.), who suggests that this may refer to a dramatic work. The possibility of identifying the Ching-wang in question depends on whether one follows Liu Hsiu-yeh's dating (see "Wu Ch'eng-en nien-p'u" 吳承恩年譜, in *Ts'ung-k'ao*, p. 224), which would place Wu in this position in the year 1562 or 1563, or Liu Ts'un-yan's counter-argument that he may have held this post as early as 1553. For further information, see Ch'en Kan, "Wu Ch'eng-en ti Ching-fu chi-shan chih pu ho Hsi-yu chi ti hsieh-tso k'an-k'e," pp. 206–14. According to the genealogical charts (*piao* 表), no. 4, in the *Ming shih* (*chüan* 103, p. 2876), the holder of the hereditary title of Ching-wang from 1554 to 1570 was Chu I-chü 朱翊鉅 (the position seems to have been briefly vacant in 1553). See also Ōta Tatsuo, "Zakkō," pp. 13ff. Ch'en Yü-p'i reviews this piece of evidence in "Wu Ch'eng-en Hsi-yu chi ch'eng yü wan-nien shuo hsin-cheng," and cites a paper presented by Liu Ts'un-yan in China in 1981, which tries to link Chu I-chü's three sons with the three princes in Yü-hua-chou 玉華州 in chapter 89 of the novel.

sooner than is normally assumed.²¹ If it is a book by Wu Ch'eng-en that this writer is talking about, then at the very least this would contradict the theory that the novel was a product of Wu's later years.²²

Given the wide acceptance of the prevailing theory of authorship, there is no reason for me to deny that Wu Ch'eng-en had some role in the development of the novel. But once again, there are no grounds for assuming that any one of the extant early editions provides a close replica of the text hypothetically assigned to Wu. On the other hand, the remote possibility that the novel as we know it was already in existence by the Chia-ching period leads us to reconsider the theories of a yet earlier *ur-text* of the novel, one that Wu—if he indeed had any hand in the history of the novel at all—may have revised, edited, or perhaps only composed a preface for, as one inventive commentator has recently suggested.²³ It bears repeating here that the two fourteenth- or fifteenth-century fragments that have been taken, a bit optimistically, as evidence of a full-length text of *Hsi-yu chi* by the beginning of the Ming period do not really prove the point.²⁴

²¹ *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi*, in *Ku-pen Yuan-Ming tsa-chü*, vol. 2, *ch'ien-hsü* 前序. Dudbridge (*Hsi-yu chi*, p. 172, n. 3) mentions this work, but he does not consider the relevance to the problem of dating.

²² On the life and career of Wu Ch'eng-en, see sources cited in n. 1, and Chao Ching-shen, "Hsi-yu chi tso-che Wu Ch'eng-en nien-p'u," pp. 251–63; Hu Kuang-chou, *Wu Ch'eng-en ho Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 3–44; and Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 154–60. The idea that *Hsi-yu chi* was written late in Wu's life is expressed in Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," p. 91; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 84; and Hu Kuang-chou, *Wu Ch'eng-en ho Hsi-yu chi*, p. 20. See also Ch'en Kan, "Hsieh-tso k'an-k'e," p. 213. Cf. Liu Ts'un-yan's suggestion that the author of *Hsi-yu chi* may have seen and borrowed from a manuscript of the *Chin Ping Mei* ("Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 80). Hu Shih "K'ao-cheng," pp. 376ff.) puts the composition of the novel in the period from 1540 to 1550. See also *Hsi-yu chi*, "Tsai-pan shuo-ming" 再版說明, in the 1972 Jen-min wen-hsüeh edition, p. 1. The argument that the book was written in the first half of Wu's life is voiced in Su Hsing, "Kuan-yü Hsi-yu chi ti chiko wen-t'i," pp. 134–48, esp. 134ff., 145. Another biographical connection between Wu Ch'eng-en and the novel may be derived from his documented friendship with Li Ch'un-fang 李春芳 (1511–85), whose name has been suggested as a possible identification of the Hua-yang tung-t'ien chu-jen 華陽洞天主人 mentioned as compiler of the Shih-te t'ang edition (see b.n. II.1). For discussion of this evidence, see Liu Yin-po, "Hsi-yu chi Ming-Ch'ing liang-tai ch'u-pan shih k'ao," pp. 76–79. See also Su Hsing, "Yeh t'an," p. 249.

²³ This last theory, suggested by Ch'en Tun-fu (*Shih-i*, p. 18), is based on a rather imaginative repunctuation of the list of Wu's writings in the *Huai-an fu-chih*. Wu's preface to *Ch'un-ch'iu lieh-chuan* 春秋列傳序 appears in *She-yang hsien-sheng ts'un-kao* (*chüan* 2, p. 1a). See Liu Hsiu-yeh, *Shih-wen chi*, p. 50.

²⁴ See nn. 5 and 7. Examples of this sort of hasty conclusion are found in Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 103: "... within clear sight of the story told in the hundred-chapter work of the sixteenth-century." Similarly, Cheng Chen-to speaks of the *Yung-lo ta-tien* fragment as a kind of *ur-text* of the novel ("Yen-hua," p. 273), while Ogawa Tamaki speaks confidently of the "Yuan edition" of the novel ("Saiyūki genpon," pp. 85, 103). Cf. Lo Chin-t'ang's "Clues Leading to the Discovery of the *Hsi-yu chi Ping-hua*," pp. 176–94.

With this in mind, it becomes less far-fetched to reexamine the earlier attribution of the novel to "Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen" 長春真人, the late Sung Taoist master Ch'iu Ch'u-chi 丘處機. This attribution was quite widespread during much of the Ch'ing period and finds expression in a number of relevant documents, the most important of these being the preface bearing the name Yü Chi 虞集 attached to the influential Wang Hsiang-hsü *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu* edition.²⁵ By the eighteenth century, scholars had pointed out the apparent confusion, at the basis of this attribution, between the Ming novel *Hsi-yu chi* and the Yuan text *Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen hsi-yu chi* 長春真人西遊記, a well-known account of Ch'iu Ch'u-chi's travels through Central Asia of much interest and importance in its own right, but totally unconnected to our novel.²⁶ This theory persisted to the end of the Ch'ing, and thus twentieth-century scholars have still felt the need to refute it by pointing out the source of the confusion between these two unrelated books.

For the past few generations, practically no one has seriously entertained the possibility that the *Hsi-yu chi* was written by a thirteenth-century

²⁵ For the "Yü Chi" preface, see *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu*, "Original preface" (yüan-hsü 原序). See b.n. III for bibliographical information and for further discussion. The piece bears the date T'ien-li chi-ssu 天曆己巳 (1329). Additional examples of the attribution to Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen are found in Wu Yü-chin's *Shan-yang chih-i* (cited in n. 1); in Liu T'ing-chi's *Tsai-yüan tsa-chih*; T'ao Tsung-i's *Ch'o-keng lu*, pp. 429-31. See n. 34 for other Ch'ing period references. Liu Ts'un-yan reviews this evidence in "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. I, pp. 55f.

²⁶ Early examples include Ch'ien Ta-hsin's "Pa Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen hsi-yu chi," in *Ch'ien-yen t'ang wen-chi*; Yü Yüeh's 俞樾, *Hsiao fu-mei hsien-hua* 小浮梅閑話 (cited in K'ung Ling-ching, *Shih-liao*, p. 75); and Lu I-t'ien 陸以湜, *Leng-lu tsa-chih* 冷廬雜識 (cited in K'ung Ling-ching *Shih-liao*, p. 70). See also Juan K'uei-sheng, *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua*, chüan 21 (also cited in Yeh Te-chün, "Hsi-yu chi yen-chiu ti ts'ai-liao," p. 559), and a preface by Wang T'ao 王韜 printed in a nineteenth-century lithograph edition of *Hsin-shuo Hsi-yu chi* (cited in Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu-ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 170ff.). Among twentieth-century scholars, this point was first restated by Hu Shih "K'ao-cheng," p. 354, and in an appendix to Wang Kuo-wei's annotated edition of *Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen Hsi-yu chi chu* (fu-lu, p. 123), in Yen I-p'ing, ed., *Tao-chiao yen-chiu tzu-liao*, no. 2 (Taipei: I-wen, 1974), as well as by Lu Hsün (*Hsiao-shuo chiu-wen ch'ao*). For a good review of this issue, see Isobe Akira, "Genpon Saiyüki o meguru mondai," pp. 60-75; and Ōta Tatsuo, "Shōdōsho," p. 93. Ōta points out the faulty basis of Lu Hsün's citation. See also Ch'ien Ching-fang, *Hsiao-shuo ts'ung-k'ao*, p. 50. Ch'en Tun-fu, predictably, defends the attribution to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi in *Shih-i*, pp. 15ff., citing additional sources that repeat the claim. There exist a number of modern editions of the *Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen hsi-yu chi*, the best being the Wang Kuo-wei annotated edition mentioned in this note. Cf. Arthur Waley's translations in *Travels of an Alchemist*. In his preface to this volume (p. x), Waley also points out the apparent confusion. For additional studies in connection with Ch'iu Ch'u-chi, see b. n. III. Some passages in the Ch'iu Ch'u-chi *Travels* do seem to vaguely resonate with the novel: certain settings (e.g., the Long Pine Ridge 長松嶺, p. 36), descriptions of cities, gardens, etc. (e.g., p. 71), monsters and demons (e.g., pp. 43, 91), mountain and water barriers (e.g., pp. 28, 41, 47, 67, 81), and even certain philosophical terms (e.g., *ling-hsing* 靈性, p. 92, *hsin* 心, pp. 87, 103, 106).

Taoist master. It simply makes more sense to dismiss this as an example of the all-too-common phenomenon in Chinese literature in general, and colloquial fiction in particular, of attributing the composition and editing of books to celebrated literati figures. But in exploring this question I have come across a number of points that, though insufficient to salvage the long-dead theory, do, I believe, warrant at least leaving the case open.

To begin with, it is curious that of all the modern scholars who mention the "Yü Chi" preface, only to dismiss it as referring to a different book, surprisingly few go on to label the preface itself spurious.²⁷ In fact, a number of discussions speak of this as an actual, verifiable piece by the great Yuan scholar Yü Chi, one that forms part of his extant writings. Lu Hsün, for example, states flat out that the preface is taken from Yü's *Tao-yüan chi* (an abbreviation for the *Tao-yüan hsüeh-ku lu* 道園學古錄).²⁸ In my unsuccessful attempts to track down this preface, I have encountered a bibliographical tangle due to the incomplete state of most of the extant copies of this collection; thus the possible existence of the piece remains unverified.²⁹

What is most important about this preface is not simply its impressive endorsement of the novel by a major intellectual figure, or its assignment of the authorship of the novel to a famous religious personality like Ch'iu Ch'u-chi. All of this is to be expected in fiction prefaces. What is significant for us is its interpretation of the allegorical framework of the novel in terms

²⁷ Recent scholars who note the misplacement of the Yü Chi preface but do not deny its authenticity include Hu Shih ("K'ao-cheng," p. 378), Sun K'ai-ti (*Jih-pen*, p. 78, and *Shu-mu*, p. 191), Chao Ts'ung (*Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 141, 168), Kuo Chen-i (*Hsiao-shuo shih*, p. 274), Ōta Tatsuo ("Kaisetsu," p. 433, and *Saiyüki no kenkyū*, p. 285), and Saitō and Itō ("Kenkyū to shiryō," pp. 214f.). Ōta Tatsuo ("Shōdōsho," p. 4) goes the farthest in affirming the existence of the piece, arguing that it does not read like a forgery. Dudbridge does brand it a "forgery" in "Early Versions," p. 151, but he is less unequivocal in "Tsai-shang-ch'üeh," p. 509. Liu Ts'un-yan dismissed the piece as a forgery by Wang Hsiang-hsü in "Ssu-yu chi," p. 372, but more recently he has given the evidence serious reconsideration. See his "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 1, pp. 58ff., and pt. 5, pp. 71ff., and especially his discussion of Yü's association with certain Taoist figures mentioned in the preface whose writings are actually quoted in the novel. The most comprehensive treatment of the problem is found in Isobe Akira, "Genpon Saiyüki o meguru mondai," pp. 60-75. Isobe also accepts the authenticity of the preface (p. 72), suggesting that perhaps Yü Chi himself had not seen the Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen *Travels*, thus leading to the confusion. He also calls attention to a similar preface attributed to Yü Chi in a printing of another Yuan work of colloquial fiction, *Chiao-hung chi* 嬌紅記, mentioned in Itō Sōhei, "Kaisetsu," pp. 465f., appended to the Japanese translation of that work included in the *Chūgoku koten bungaku taikei* series edition of *Chin-ku ch'i-kuan* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1973).

²⁸ Lu Hsün, *Hsiao-shuo chiu-wen ch'ao*, p. 69. A volume of selected pieces by Yü Chi under the abbreviated title *Yü Tao-yüan chi* (copy in Gest Oriental Library, Princeton) also does not contain the preface.

²⁹ For bibliographical information, see b.n. III.

of Taoist terminology, plus its description of the text as "several hundred thousand words" in length 數十萬言 —two points that accurately describe our hundred-chapter novel, but none of the other known earlier versions of the narrative.³⁰ In the unlikely event that the piece was actually written by Yü Chi, then, even if the attribution to Ch'iu is groundless, this would still mean that a text fulfilling some of the defining features of the novel already existed by Yü Chi's time.

Having already come this far in deference to a dubious theory, we may now go one step further to reconsider the unlikely attribution to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi. A few tantalizing scraps of evidence make this a little less fanciful than it might appear. For example, in one preface to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi's collected works we are told that among his various writings he left several volumes: two poetry collections, *P'an-hsi chi* 潘溪集 and *Ming-tao chi* 鳴道集, and another book called *Hsi-yu chi*.³¹ Recalling now that the famous *Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen Hsi-yu chi* was not actually written by Ch'iu himself but by his disciple Li Chih-ch'ang 李志常 (who in fact narrates the

³⁰ Of particular interest is the discussion of the term *fang-hsin* 放心 to be considered later in this chapter. As for the estimation of the length of the book, my own rough calculation comes to around 500,000 characters. Isobe Akira ("Son Gyōja," p. 105) suggests the figure 300,000 and says that the Yü Chi estimation is exaggerated. Ch'en Tun-fu (*Shih-i*, p. 18) puts it at 700,000. Cf. the description in the Ch'en Yüan-chih preface, which substitutes *ch'ien* 千 for *shih* 十, thus yielding an astronomical figure. The Yuan Yü-ling preface (see b.n. II.4) reduces this by a factor of ten 數百萬言 but still gives an unreasonable length. Ōta Tatsuo ("Shōdōsho," p. 4) agrees that the contents of the preface can only refer to our novel. Additional details of interest in the preface include the mention of a certain Tzu-ch'ung tao-jen 紫瓊道人, identified as the Yuan Taoist figure Chang Mo 張模 (see his biography in *Shang-yang tzu Chin-tan ta-yao, lieh-hsien chih* 上陽子金丹大要列仙誌 by Ch'en Chih-hsü). See Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 1, pp. 59ff; Ōta Tatsuo, "New Study," pp. 99ff, and "Kaisetsu," pp. 433, 432; and Isobe Akira, "Son Gyōja," p. 105. In earlier articles ("Shōdōsho," p. 6, and "Saiyūki seiritsu shiryaku," pp. 21f.), Ōta suggests that this Chang Mo himself may have been the author or redactor of a prototype of the novel. The mention of both Chang Mo and Hsi-yüeh tao-jen 西月道人 (Wang Shou-yen 王壽衍) tallies with the experience of Yü Chi, although these figures seem to have been sufficiently well known that they might easily be cited by a later Ch'ing forger. The same is true with respect to Yü Chi's familiarity with the life and works of Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen. Ōta Tatsuo ("Shōdōsho," p. 4) also identifies the Wei Ching-fu mentioned in the preface with Wei Su, with whom Yü Chi was known to have had connections.

³¹ The passage in question reads: 有潘溪鳴道集西遊記行于世. See *Ch'iu-tsu pen-chuan* 邱祖本傳, included in Ch'iu Ch'u-chi, *Ch'iu-tsu ch'üan-shu chieh-chi*, p. 5a. Cf. a similar title mentioned among Ch'iu Ch'u-chi's writings in a biographical sketch given in T'ao Tsung-i's *Ch'o-keng lu*, p. 431. See Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 1, p. 56; Ōta Tatsuo, "New Study," pp. 99ff.; and Isobe Akira, "Genpon Saiyūki," pp. 66f., for other sources of this citation. Ōta's reference curiously adds the number "two" before the name of the book, thus leading to speculation that more than one text of this title is at issue here. Liu Ts'un-yan gives a similar citation in "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 3, pp. 72f., but he rejects Ōta's punctuation.

death of his master in the course of the book), we have to assume that this entry, if authentic, must refer to yet another work by the same title.

As a matter of fact, there is no scarcity of journeys to the West or books entitled "Journey to the West" in Chinese literature, particularly in the period of Mongol rule. But a few other passages in Ch'iu's extant writings seem to point to a text closer to our own *Hsi-yu chi*. In one place, for example, the reader is reminded of the use in his book *Hsi-yu chi* of the term "seven apertures" (*ch'i-ch'iao* 七竅).³² This expression does not occur in the Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen *Travels*, but a slight variation ("nine apertures") does figure in some memorable lines in the novel. Still more suggestive is another line that speaks of the *Hsi-yu chi* of Master Ch'iu as "a guide to the True Scriptures in the western region" 指示真經在西天 —a description that cannot apply to the Ch'iu Ch'u-chi *Travels* but sounds suspiciously like our *Journey to the West*.³³ Obviously, these small indications are not enough to substantiate this improbable theory; but at least they should force us to consider the possibility a bit more seriously. I might add that a number of Ch'ing scholars, including respected figures such as Mao Ch'i-ling 毛奇齡—who should have known the difference between the novel *Hsi-yu chi* and the *Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen Hsi-yu chi*—still granted credence to the Yuan attribution.³⁴ A cogent objection raised as early as the seventeenth

³² See *Ch'iu-tsu yü-lu*, in *Ch'iu-tsu ch'üan-shu*, p. 8a, preface by P'an Ching-kuan 潘靜觀, dated Yung-lo 13 (1415). For further information on this text, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 1, p. 56. Isobe discusses the dating of this text in "Genpon Saiyūki," pp. 69f., 74, n. 33. Of course it is entirely possible that this work was compiled, if not fabricated, by someone else. Other works of the Yuan period with similar titles include a *Hsi-yu lu* 西遊錄 by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材, described by Paul Pelliot in "L'édition collective des oeuvres de Wang Kuou-wei," p. 172; and a work entitled *Hsi-yu chi* 西遊集 mentioned by Yü Yüeh in an entry in his *Chiu-chiu hsiao-hsia lu* 九九消夏錄, cited in K'ung Ling-ch'ing, *Shih-liao*, p. 75. Lu Hsün cites a reference to another *Hsi-yu chi* by Hsü Ch'ien 許謙 in *Hsiao-shuo chiu-wen ch'ao*, p. 64. The passages in the novel dealing with the idea of "nine apertures" occur in chapter 2 (1:21) and 3 (1:42). Liu Ts'un-yan ("Ch'üan-chen chiao," *Ibid.*) notes similar terminology in chapters 6, 17, and especially 41 of the novel.

³³ The passage in question reads: 紫陽翁, 悟真篇, 盡把參同奧旨宣; 西遊記, 邱祖傳, 指示真經在西天 (in *Ch'iu-tsu ch'üan-shu*, p. 256). The line seems to be written in third person. Cf. the name Li Kung-ch'en 李拱辰, credited with "presenting" (*ching* 敬) this set of poems in the *Ch'iu-tsu ch'üan-shu* (p. 18a). See n. 36. The *Wu-chen p'ien* referred to in the first half of the quotation is by the eleventh-century master Chang Po-tuan (Tzu-yang; see n. 145). Ōta Tatsuo ("Kaisetsu," p. 442) identifies a poem from this collection in chapter 36 of the novel (2:503).

³⁴ See above, n. 25. Mao Ch'i-ling's acceptance of the attribution (apparently based on the *Ch'o-keng lu* entry noted earlier) is mentioned by Ting Yen in his *Shih-t'ing chi-shih hsü-pien* (cited in K'ung Ling-ch'ing, *Shih-liao*, p. 71). Juan K'uei-sheng raises a doubt about the reliability of some of Mao Ch'i-ling's citations in *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua*, pp. 260f. See also Ch'en Tun-fu, *Shih-i*, p. 20. Ōta, "Shōdōsho," p. 3, reports the absence of this point in Mao's *Hsi-ho ho-chi* 西河合集.

century, to the effect that the presence of Ming place-names in the novel seems to rule out the possibility of Yuan composition, is an important point; but it is by no means conclusive, especially considering the long and complicated history of the novel's redaction.³⁵ More to the point, given the above assertion that one of the key distinguishing features of the hundred-chapter novel is its overlay of Taoist terminology, we should also note that virtually all of these terms are very much the language of discourse of Sung-Yuan Taoism in general, and the writings of Ch'iu Ch'u-chi and his disciples in particular.³⁶ At the very least, this helps to explain why the

³⁵ See Ting Yen, *Shih-t'ing chi-shih*; and Ch'ien Ta-hsin, "Pa Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen Hsi-yu chi" (see above, n. 1). Discussions by Ting Yen are found in sections entitled "Huai-yin ts'o-lu" 淮陰勝錄, pp. 4b-5a, and "Shu Hsi-yu chi hou" 書西遊記後, p. 22a (in *I-chih chai ts'ung-shu*). A similar idea is brought out by an anecdote recorded by Chi Yün 紀昀 in his *Ju-shih wo wen* 如是我聞, ch'uan 3, in *Yüeh-wei ts'ao-t'ang pi-chi* 閱微草堂筆記 (cited in K'ung Ling-ching, *Shih-liao*, p. 69, and Lu Hsün, *Chiu-wen ch'ao*, p. 65). See Liu Ts'un-yan's discussion of this point in "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 66. Ch'en Tun-fu argues against denying the attribution to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi on the basis of Ming terminology in *Shih-i*, pp. 17f. For a comparable discussion of the significance of Yuan place-names in the 1522 edition of *San-kuo yen-i*, see below, Chapter 5, Part I.

³⁶ Of course Ch'iu Ch'u-chi has no monopoly on the use of these common Taoist terms, but by the same token the traditional association of many of these concepts with Ch'iu and his school remains quite strong. For example, the poems in Ch'iu Ch'u-chi's *P'an-hsi tz'u* include such lines as the following: *sheng-t'ien ju-ti chü tsai hsin-wei* 昇天入地俱在心爲, p. 5a; *wu k'ung-hua pi-an kao teng* 悟空華彼岸高登, p. 10a; *lien-ch'u ts'un-hsin ju t'ieh* 鍊出寸心如鐵, p. 15a; *chien-chien fang-k'ai hsin-yüeh*, *wei-wei she-t'ou ling-t'ai* 漸漸放開心月, 微微射透靈台, p. 24b; and *hsi-yu ... ta-tao wu hsing fang-ts'un ho p'ing* 西游... 大道無形方寸何憑, p. 28b. Cf. also the occurrences of such expressions as *fa-shen* 法身, p. 1a; *shen wai shen i* 身外身易, p. 3b; *wu-tsei* 五賊, p. 4a; *chih-chi ts'ung* 枳棘叢, p. 4b; *p'ang-men* 旁門, p. 7b; *san-chiao* 三教, p. 9b; and *huan-tan* 還丹, p. 29b. Other terms used in the novel appear in the poems included in the *Ch'iu-tsu ch'üan-shu*; e.g., *chin-kung* 金公, *fu-hu* 伏虎, *se-k'ung* 色空, p. 21b; *ch'iao-nei ch'iao-chung* 竅內竅中, p. 24a; *chin-tan ts'ung wai lai ku fei tzu-chi wu* 金丹從外來, 固非自己物, p. 25a; *ying-erh* 嬰兒, *ch'a-nü* 姹女, p. 25a; *tu-yang ch'i neng ch'üan* 獨陽豈能全, p. 25b; *kung ch'eng sui tso fo sheng-hsien* 功成隨作佛聖仙, *ku-yin tu-yang ch'i neng ch'üan* 孤陰獨陽豈能全, *ch'un-yang chen chung-tzu neng t'ung t'ien-ti shou ch'i nien* 純陽眞種子, 能同天地壽齊年, p. 25b; *huo-kung* 火功, *hsin-huo* 心火, *k'an-li chiao-kou* 坎離交姤, p. 26a; *liu-tsei chieh lai jao-luan hsin-shen* 六賊皆來, 擾亂心神, p. 27a; and *yüan-shen huo-hou* 元神, 火候, p. 27b. Similar language is found in another text attributed to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi, the *Lung-men mi-chih*, pp. 45-60, esp. 49f.: "Hsiao chou-t'ien huo-hou k'ou-chüeh ko" 小周天火候口訣歌, which provides a presentation of the cycle of hours reminiscent of the opening segment of the novel, as well as such terms as *hsün-feng* 巽風, *huo-hou* 火候, *hua-kuo* 花果, and *ying-erh* 嬰兒 (p. 57). For general discussions of the Taoist terminology current in the Yuan and Ming periods, see Sun K'e-k'uan, *Yuan-tai Han wen-hua chih huo-tung*, plus his *Sung-Yuan tao-chiao yüan-liu*, and articles cited in b.n. III; and Ch'en Ming-kuei, *Ch'ang-ch'un tao-chiao yüan-liu*. See also Nakano Miyoko, *Saiyüki no himitsu*, pp. 250-59; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 291-330; and several articles in his *Ho-feng t'ang tu-shu chi* (see above, n. 13). Ch'en Tun-fu (*Shih-i*, pp. 5f.) sees in the novel specific reflections of the text entitled *Chung-Lü ch'uan-tao chi*, attributed to the legendary

seventeenth-century editor of the *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu*, in promoting his own interpretation of the novel as a Taoist allegory, might have created a false preface by Yü Chi. And this would also account for the most recent commentary edition, which presents the novel as a tract in Ch'üan-chen Taoist verities.³⁷

The upshot of all this speculation is, unfortunately, a state of uncertainty. Having expended considerable effort to undermine the accepted theory of composition, I can now only do an about-face and reaffirm my reading of the novel as essentially a product of the sixteenth-century intellectual milieu.³⁸ The remote possibility I have entertained that the novel, or at least a prototype, may in fact be a Yuan (or even a late Sung) composition would contradict this; but at the same time, it would strengthen the parallel to *Shui-hu chuan* and *San-kuo chih yen-i*. These, as we shall see, present roughly the same situation: with verifiable full texts not appearing much before the sixteenth century, despite accepted theories of fourteenth-century authorship.³⁹ This, at the very least, will ultimately reinforce the idea of the generic commonality of three of our four masterworks.

figures Chung-li Ch'üan and Lü Yen (Lü Tung-pin). (See *Tao-tsang ching-hua* ed.) Anthony Yu has uncovered certain other Taoist poems apparently alluded to in the novel (see his *Journey*, 1:41, 49, and 2:430, n. 22). See also Ōta Tatsuo, "Kaisetsu," p. 442, and "Shōdō-sho," pp. 6-8, for additional examples, especially a poem in chapter 2 of the novel (1:20), which according to Ōta is attributed to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi in *Ch'uan-ch'i hui-k'ao* 傳奇彙考. See below for a reconsideration of the use of Taoist terminology in the allegorical framework of the narrative.

³⁷ See above, nn. 26 and 36. For Ch'en Tun-fu's reading of the novel as a Ch'üan-chen tract, see *Hsi-yu chi shih-i* (see b.n. II.10). On the development of Ch'üan-chen Taoism, see Sun K'e-k'uan works cited, especially "Yü Chi and Southern Taoism," pp. 214, 228, 253; Ch'en Ming-kuei, "Ch'üan-chen chiao tsung-lun," in *Ch'ang-ch'un tao-chiao yüan-liu*, pp. 4-10; and Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, *Dōkyō no kenkyū*, "Zen-shin-kyō no seiritsu" 全真教の成立, pp. 175-95. See also Liu Ts'un-yan, *Buddhist and Taoist Influences*, pp. 128ff; and Ōta Tatsuo, "Shōdōsho," pp. 8f. Liu Ts'un-yan reviews the key Ch'üan-chen terminology in the novel in "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 2, pp. 59ff.

³⁸ This will lead me to revise my interpretation later in this chapter of the significance of the Taoist and Buddhist terminology in the text. On the fluctuating popularity of Buddhist and Taoist ideas in the sixteenth century, see Wu Han's discussion of the intellectual background of the Wan-li period, in his "Chin P'ing Mei ti chu-tso shih-tai chi ch'i she-hui pei-ching" (see above, Chapter 1, n. 55, and Chapter 3, n. 8). The Chia-ching emperor's flirtation with Taoism is the subject of an entire chapter in the *Ming-shih chi-shih pen-mo* 明史紀事本末 (*ch'uan* 52, pp. 547-58). See also Liu Ts'un-yan, "The Penetration of Taoism into the Ming Neo-Confucian Elite," pp. 31-102 (also in Chinese in *Ho-feng t'ang tu-shu chi*, 1:233-72; originally published in *Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao* 8, no. 1 [1967]); Miyakawa Hisayuki, "Min no Kasei jidai no dōkyō," pp. 631-43.

³⁹ See below, Chapters 4, Part I, and 5, Part I, for discussions of this point in relation to the analogous gap between fourteenth-century and sixteenth-century drama. See previous references comparing the role of the author of *Hsi-yu chi* to that of Lo Kuan-chung (n. 8).

The parallel with *San-kuo yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan* gains an additional measure of credence when we consider the links of intertextual allusion that bind these works together. This is an aspect of the text that was noticed by the traditional commentators and has also been pointed out by a number of modern scholars.⁴⁰ For example, Sun Wu-k'ung's 孫悟空 impersonation of a bride in a nuptial chamber in order to lure Chu Pa-chieh 豬八戒 into his clutches in chapter 18 obviously parallels Lu Ta's 魯達 similar trick in chapter 5 of *Shui-hu chuan*. To take a more subtle example, the cluster of associations between sexual vulnerability and wrath brought out in a temple haunted by "centipede spirits" (*wu-kung ching* 蜈蚣精) in chapter 93—where the ambiguous incident of the girl in the back room of a monastery seems to somehow lead into the temptations of the Jade Hare 玉兔 immediately following—is reminiscent of the strange episode of the lascivious Taoist and his ambiguous female partner, who call forth the wrath of Wu Sung 武松 at the Centipede Ridge (Wu-kung ling 蜈蚣嶺) in chapter 31 of *Shui-hu*.⁴¹ In addition, there are several passages in which the intertextual linkage goes beyond the level of similar scenes to the point of actual verbal correspondences. Examples of this include the proverbial expression used in chapter 39, "There are several types of crying ..." 哭有幾樣, the very same words that appear in the scene of P'an Chin-lien's

⁴⁰ For further comments on the intertextual relations among the four masterworks, see Chapter 6. References in the commentaries to intertextual allusion to other novels include the following examples. Relating *Hsi-yu chi* to *Shui-hu chuan*, Wang Hsiang-hsü, in chapter 5 (5b), points out the similarity of Sun Wu-k'ung's behavior to the entry of the bandits, with flowers in their hair, into the gardens of the Forbidden Palace in chapter 72 of *Shui-hu*, and in another place, 48 (1b), he calls attention to the obvious parallel between Sun Wu-k'ung's boudoir lure of Chu Pa-chieh and that by Lu Ta in chapter 5 of *Shui-hu*. With regard to *San-kuo yen-i*, Chang Shu-shen, in chapter 54 (14a), compares Hsüan-tsang's imperfect fortitude with Kuan Yü's resistance to Ts'ao Ts'ao's blandishments; Wang Hsiang-hsü, 59 (1b), and Ch'en Shih-pin, 61 (618f.), relate the trebling pattern in the episode at Huo-yen shan to the "three visits to the thatched cottage" episode (see n. 58); "Li Cho-wu" sees in the repeated temptation of Hsüan-tsang a reflection of Chu-ko Liang's sevenfold manipulation of Meng Huo, 72 (3b). See additional examples in Chang Shu-shen, 12(1b), 47(1a-2a), 48 (13b, 14a), 49 (1b, 16a-b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 8 (1a), 29 (1a), 59, 81 (1b, 2a); "Li Cho-wu" preface. Chang Shu-shen, chapter 30 (17a), notes an interesting connection to *Chin P'ing Mei*—Cf. Liu Ts'un-yan's discussion of source material shared by *Hsi-yu chi* and *Chin P'ing Mei* (in n. 22)—and sees reflections of *Feng-shen yen-i* in comments in chapters 12 (1b), 33 (1b), 67 (15a), and 95 (13b). See also Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 4. Also of interest are Chang Shu-shen's frequent references to similarities between the novel and certain dramatic works, especially *Hsi-hsiang chi*, e.g., chapters 12 (1b), 37 (2a), 81 (1b), 83 (11a); and *P'i-p'a chi*, e.g., chapters 52 (16a-18a), 81(15a); as well as *Ming-feng chi*, chapter 51 (12b).

⁴¹ For discussion of the relevant passages in *Shui-hu chuan*, see below, Chapter 4, Part IV. The centipede spirits (*wu-kung ching*) had already appeared earlier in chapter 73. A similar example of intertextual resonance with *Shui-hu chuan* is seen in Chu Pa-chieh's descent into a well in chapter 38 (cf. *Shui-hu*, chapter 54.)

crocodile tears in *Shui-hu chuan* (chapter 25—and thus taken over into *Chin P'ing Mei* as well); or perhaps the following line in chapter 82: "... if it were any other common man subject to the temptations of wine and sex ..." 若是...第二個酒色凡夫..., which seems to me to echo a very similar line applied ironically to Sung Chiang in chapter 72 of *Shui-hu*.⁴²

What do such instances tell us about the relationships between these separate works? The most reasonable explanation is that the author of *Hsi-yu chi* borrowed these passages from *Shui-hu chuan*, which might place its composition sometime after the appearance of the *fan-pen* text of *Shui-hu* in the Chia-ching period. However, the comparable uncertainty of the dating of the full text of *Shui-hu* makes it impossible to say this with absolute confidence. In fact, the borrowing could conceivably go in the other direction, especially if we are willing to entertain the possibility of an earlier text of the *Hsi-yu chi*. By the same token, the verbal reflection of certain other passages from *Hsi-yu chi* in the *Chin P'ing Mei*, as pointed out by Liu Ts'un-yan, seems to indicate that *Hsi-yu chi* came first; although the theory of late Chia-ching or early Wan-li composition for the latter work makes the possibility of reverse borrowing just as plausible, not to mention the even more likely explanation that the passages in question were adapted in both from other common sources. At the very least, the presence of intertextual allusion is of major significance for my argument, since it reinforces the sense of commensurability binding these four very different narrative works together within a single literary genre.

The main thrust of my argument, however, is not the textual history of these works, but the definition of their common ground of form and meaning. With this in mind, I will now turn to an interpretive analysis of the text itself. I will begin by observing the points on which *Hsi-yu chi* conforms to the structural features outlined in the chapter on *Chin P'ing Mei*, with the intention of expanding this common ground in the chapters on *Shui-hu chuan* and *San-kuo chih yen-i*. In doing so, my analysis will follow primarily the hundred-chapter text based on the Shih-te t'ang edition, though I will refer wherever relevant to discrepancies between the novel and its antecedents or later versions. In attempting to unravel the meaning of the allegory, I will rely heavily on several later commentary editions. These editions include the *Li Cho-wu hsien-sheng p'i-p'ing Hsi-yu chi* 李卓吾先生批評西遊記, Wang Hsiang-hsü's 汪象旭 *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu*, *Hsin-shuo Hsi-yi chi* 新說西遊記 by Chang Shu-shen 張書紳, and *Hsi-yu chen-ch'üan* 西遊真詮 by Ch'en Shih-pin 陳士斌, as well as the prefatory essays in a revised edition of *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu* by Ts'ai Yüan-fang 蔡元放, a late

⁴² The first example is found in *Shui-hu chuan*, chapter 25 (1:399); see also *Chin P'ing Mei*, chapter 5 (9a). For the second passage, see chapter 82 (3:1135), and *Shui-hu*, chapter 72 (4:1338). For discussion of these passages, see below, Chapter 4, Part IV.

eighteenth or early nineteenth-century edition entitled *Hsi-yu yüan-chih* 西遊原旨 by Liu I-ming 劉一明, additional comments in a late Ch'ing reprint of a Ch'en Shih-pin text, another Ch'ing commentary suggestively entitled *T'ung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih* 通易西遊正旨, and a recent edition prepared in Taiwan by Ch'en Tun-fu under the title *Hsi-yu chi shih-i*.⁴³ Admittedly, these commentaries, like that of Chang Chu-p'o, are quite uneven in the quality of their insights. But even where this is so, it is easy to justify using them, because they provide a firmer basis for interpreting the novel as a reflection of the immediate intellectual milieu of the Ming-Ch'ing era.

II

Starting again with the overall shape of the work, we immediately note that the hundred-chapter length, by which I have identified the basic form of the genre, is an invariable feature of all the full editions. This is itself does not say much, since all of the later editions are based on the Shih-te t'ang text. This also arbitrarily excludes from consideration the shorter Chu and Yang recensions for the sin of not comprising one hundred chapters.⁴⁴ But there is more to the hundred-chapter length of the novel than meets the eye. Not only does this length conform neatly to the generic dimensions of the *Chin Ping Mei*, but, more important, this precise number of chapters provides a numerological grid for several significant structural patterns to be explored in the following pages.

The aesthetic commitment to the hundred-chapter length is indirectly demonstrated by the juggling of material occasioned by the variations in chapter 9 in the different editions.⁴⁵ The implications of the absence in the 1592 edition of the section on Hsüan-tsang's childhood tribulations (which is presented in the ninth chapter in most other editions) have occupied a number of scholars, most recently Anthony Yu, who has convincingly shown that practically all the important details of this story are conveyed elsewhere in the Shih-te t'ang text.⁴⁶ Viewed from the perspective of this

⁴³ For detailed descriptions of the editions used in this study, see b.n. II.1–10.

⁴⁴ For the position of the Shih-te t'ang edition as the basic text, see *Hsi-yu chi*, "Tsai-pan shuo-ming," pp. 1–2; and Huang Su-ch'iu, "Chiao-ting ho chu-shih," p. 180. See also Sun K'ai-ti, *Jih-pen*, pp. 74ff.; Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 267ff.

⁴⁵ Cf. Wang Hsiang-hsü's explicit indication of this point in his comments in chapters 9 (1b) and 100 (14a); and Ts'ai Yüan-fang's discussion of certain implausible aspects of chapter 9 in his own received text (*tu-fa*, item 51). See also *T'ung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, chapter 9 (94a).

⁴⁶ See Anthony C. Yu, "Narrative Structure and the Problem of Chapter Nine in the *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 295–311; plus the following studies: Huang Su-ch'iu, "Lun Hsi-yu chi ti ti-chiu-hui wen-t'i," pp. 172–77; Su Hsing, "Wu Ch'eng-en Hsi-yu chi ti-chiu-hui wen-t'i," pp. 31–36; Dudbridge, "Tsai-shang-ch'üeh," pp. 501f., and "Early Versions," pp. 170ff.;

discussion, however, what is most significant about this debate is the fact that at least one of the early editors (who that was depends on whether one says that the editor of the Shih-te t'ang edition removed this material or that Wang Hsiang-hsü inserted it) thereby reaffirms the inviolability of the hundred-chapter length.⁴⁷

In the preceding chapter I observed that the unalterable hundred-chapter length of the *Chin Ping Mei* is rationalized by the implicit division of that text into ten ten-chapter units, and that this demarcation is arguably borne out in the essential rhythms of the narrative structure itself. In the case of *Hsi-yu chi*, I have been unable to come up with convincing evidence that the author intended sets of ten chapters to bear the same sort of structural significance I have outlined in the *Chin Ping Mei*, and will repeat in *San-kuo yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*. For this very reason it is quite noteworthy with respect to my argument about a generic model, that several editions of the novel maintain the formal feature of dividing the text into five- or ten-chapter *chüan*-units.⁴⁸ For that matter, one might even perceive a less precise sense of these aesthetic proportions in both the Chu text, which is divided into ten *chüan* of unequal length, and the Yang text, whose forty-one chapters are broken up into four *chüan*. The insistence on equal *chüan*-units is given special emphasis in the Shih-te t'ang edition, where the twenty *chüan* of five chapters each are enumerated according to the sequence of words in a twenty-word poem by Shao Yung 邵雍, one word standing at the head of each *chüan*.⁴⁹

Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 287–80; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 73f., and "Ssu-yu chi," pp. 362f., 369ff.; Ōta Tatsuo, "Shōdōsho," pp. 12ff., and "New Study," pp. 97f., 109f.; Li Shih-jen, "Lüeh-lun Wu Ch'eng-en Hsi-yu chi chung ti T'ang-seng ch'u-shih ku-shih"; and Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," p. 87. The problem of chapter 9 is complicated by the fact that certain editions omit the material on Hsüan-tsang's birth but retain the same chapter titles as those that include it.

⁴⁷ Cf. Chang Shu-shen's comment on the inviolability of the overall structure, cited below. For the somewhat comparable problem of the interpolation of material in chapters 53–57 of *Chin Ping Mei*, see above, Chapter 2, Part II.

⁴⁸ See b.n. II.1–10 for the *chüan* divisions of the various major editions. At least one printing of the Ch'en Shih-pin *Hsi-yu chen-ch'üan* is divided into ten *chüan* of ten *hui* each, as is the *T'ung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*. The structural configurations of the Chu, Yang, and Shih-te t'ang editions can be conveniently compared in a table provided by Ōta Tatsuo in "Kaisetsu," pp. 436f; and a similar table in Chang Ching-erh, *Jen-wu yen-chiu*, pp. 261–66.

⁴⁹ The poem by Shao Yung is entitled "Song of the Clear Night" (*Ch'ing-yeh yin* 清夜吟). It reads as follows: "The point where the moon reaches the heart of heaven./The moment when the breeze touches the surface of the waters./The sense of the universal purity of mind./Few, it seems, can ever fully understand." (月到天心處 / 風來水面時 / 一般清意味 / 料得少人知。) See Ch'ien Mu, ed., *Li-hsüeh liu-chia shih-ch'ao*, p. 25. Cf. the pointed mention of Shao Yung's thought in the opening disquisition in chapter 1, to be discussed shortly in this section. On the citation of Shao Yung's name in some of our other novels, see above, Chapters 2, Part II, and 4, Part II.

Although the author of *Hsi-yu chi* does not punctuate his ten-chapter units with clear narrative subclimaxes, as in the *Chin P'ing Mei*, the fact that this is more than a simple formality or a publishing convenience is revealed in certain other ways. One of these ways emerges in the correlation, in terms of content, of certain chapters that appear at corresponding numerical positions of the different "decades." To take one very noticeable example, the problem of sexuality in one form or another seems to be taken up around the third and fourth chapters of each cycle (23, 53–55, 72–73, 82–83, 93–95).⁵⁰ A similar example of parallel slots may be seen around the seventh chapters, where we note for example the link between chapters 27–31 and 56–58 (the two exiles of the "mind-monkey"). Once the reader becomes attuned to the possibility of such patterns, a number of more subtle examples begin to emerge. To give a few of these, chapters 64 and 94 both portray the writing of poetry; chapter 98 realizes the gift of scriptures promised at a similar assembly in chapter 8; in chapters 19–20 and 79–80 we have allusions to the Heart Sutra; and chapters 9, 49, and 99 all present perilous water crossings. Granted, none of the above examples alone is sufficiently compelling to prove that this is a matter of conscious design; but taken together they do seem to indicate at least the loose aesthetic sense of a structural rhythm built on a framework of ten-chapter units.

Perhaps the principal reason the author does not articulate these ten-chapter units as clearly as in *Chin P'ing Mei* is that his eye is on other numerological patterns—chiefly the use of nines. In view of the special significance of the number nine in the allegorical scheme of attainment defined as a sequence of nine times nine trials, it seems to be no accident that the author plans his text so that the fulfillment of the quest, "the attainment of the nine nines" 九九功完, comes to pass precisely in chapter 99. The fact that this sort of number game was dear to the author is underscored by the reaffirmation of the formula $9 \times 9 = 81$ at the close of the journey, with the pointed addition of one more trial to fill out this required number. In fact, just as we get to chapter 90 we get a rash of demons and places with the number nine in their names.⁵¹

We will reconsider soon some possible interpretations of the numerol-

⁵⁰ Chang Shu-shen calls attention to one such resonance between chapters 23 and 73; see chapter 73 (14a). Cf. the repeated appearance of the centipede spirits in chapters 73 and 93, as well as the reflection in chapter 93 of the female domination presented in the Land of Women in chapter 53. The figural reflection between chapters 27 and 56–57 may perhaps be picked up in Sun Wu-k'ung's more merciful treatment of bandits in chapter 97.

⁵¹ Cf. the "Primal Sage of the Nine Spirits" (*Chiu-ling yüan-sheng* 九靈原聖) in chapters 89–90, dwelling in the "Cave of Ninefold Twists and Turns" (*Chiu-ch'ü p'an-yüan tung* 九曲盤桓洞), a demon who turns out to be a nine-headed lion (*chiu-t'ou shih-tzu* 九頭獅子). Cf. also the Nine-headed Son-in-law (*Chiu-t'ou fu-ma* 九頭駙馬) in chapters 62–63. Some of the numerological implications of the nines are suggested in a poem in chapter 90

ogy of nines within the context of Buddhist, Taoist, and *I Ching* concepts, or perhaps as a general cipher for the concept of multiplicity. In the meantime, we may note in passing the parallel between the allegory of nines within a structure of tens in *Hsi-yu chi*—whereby the nine times nine trials are completed in $99 + 1$ chapters—and the 3 times $33 + 1$ structure of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, as a vehicle for the attainment of a "nine" of another sort.⁵² This might also, incidentally, add a further layer of significance to the problem of chapter 9. Unfortunately, however, not all of the ninth chapters fall into this pattern, but at least chapters 9, 19, 39, 49, and 99 seem to betray a consciousness of numerology that cannot be entirely gratuitous.

Once the idea of the author's attention to numerological patterns in arranging his chapter numbers is accepted, then we may consider some other, even more tenuous, patterns that can add to our appreciation of the structural intricacy of the text and also support certain points of interpretation. One such pattern grows out of the sense of a contrived symmetry linking the two ends of the hundred-chapter text. For example, the lecture by the Master Subodhi that caps the opening mini-quest of the Monkey King 美猴王 in chapter 2 is restaged at the feet of the Buddha on the Holy Mountain in chapter 98. This might be explained away in terms of the general tendency of narrative works to provide some recapitulation of their beginnings close to their ends. But once one begins to look at the text in this way, a number of additional examples suggest themselves. For instance, it seems less than pure coincidence that the motif of tossing an embroidered ball in chapter 9 is repeated, not without pointed meaning as we shall see, in chapter 93. Similarly, the crossing of the pale of Tang jurisdiction in chapter 13 neatly counterbalances the reentry of the band into settled civilization in chapter 88 (3:1205), at which point we are told that the orderly rule in Yü-hua hsien 玉華縣 reached by the pilgrims here is "no different from that in China" 與中華無異. Other possible examples of this principle of organization may be at work in the recasting of the hunter

(3:1239). See discussion by Ch'en Tun-fu in *Shih-i*, p. 1062. The link between the water crossings in chapters 9, 49, and 99 is emphasized by Wang Hsiang-hsü in chapter 49 (1a). Cf. the highlighting of the "resuscitation pill compounded nine times" (*chiu-chuan huan-hun tan* 九轉還魂丹) in chapter 39.

⁵² On the symbolism of the number 9 in Dante see discussions of his *Vita Nuova*, where *nova* (*nove*, nine) suggests the new (Latin, *nova*) life of redemption. See, for example, Robert Hollander, "Vita Nuova: Dante's Perceptions of Beatrice," *Dante Studies*, pp. 1–18. Cf. the Tantric iconographic emblem of nine skulls worn around the neck of the Sand Monk (this detail appears already in the *tsa-chü* version, appropriately enough in Scene 9). Ch'en Shih-pin provides an interesting discussion of the numerological implications of chapters 19 (201) and 99 (1003), and compares this with the use of 3's in chapter 33 (341f.). See also comments in chapters 69 (703f.) and 82 (835). The numerological significance of the nine-times-nine trials is taken up in Hsü Chen-chi, "Hsi-yu chi pa-shih-i nan yen-chiu."

figure Liu Po-ch'in 劉伯欽 met at the start of the journey as the woodcutter whose rustic retreat is visited in chapter 86.⁵³

A still more whimsical example of numerical plotting seems to emerge in a number of special chapters that are singled out for treatment of allegorical issues in self-contained episodes. Often these happen to coincide with the numbers of perfect squares: chapters 9, 36, 49, and 64. To be sure, this pattern is not complete. Most disappointing, I can detect no comparable highlighting of chapter 81 (although, as we have seen, the author is saving his fulfillment of 9×9 for another point). On the other hand, chapters 16 and 25 do seem to bear a special degree of emphasis. Thus, in view of the author's general sensitivity to the numbers of his chapters, I am convinced that he was not unconscious of this sort of positioning. At least, this is a possible avenue of interpretation not overlooked by the more zealous of the commentators.⁵⁴

A second aspect of the overall structural design of *Hsi-yu chi* that bears out the generic expectations observed in the *Chin Ping Mei* is the manner in which the hundred-chapter text divides into two distinct halves. Perhaps even more than in *Chin Ping Mei*, the line between chapters 49 and 50 in *Hsi-yu chi* is clearly a great divide, as is symbolized by the midway water-crossing that takes place at this point. Here, several textual details reinforce the sense that we have arrived at the midpoint of the book. Most obvious is the fact that the crossing in chapter 49, which marks the end of the first half of the novel, is restaged at the end of the second half in chapter 99—down to the detail of the *yüan* 鼈 tortoise that ferries the pilgrims across on both occasions. This point is duly noted by the commentators.⁵⁵ Immediately thereafter, the author again contrives to sustain the sense of a second beginning by inserting a number of details that hark back to the first beginning. For example, in chapter 51 the two divinities No-ch'a 哪吒 and Li T'ien-wang 李天王, who had figured prominently in the opening section and then retreated into the wings, are now trotted back onto the stage. The motif of Lao Tzu's "diamond snare" (*chin-kang cho* 金剛琢), mentioned in chapter 6, is similarly repeated in chapter 52.⁵⁶

⁵³ The symmetry between the beginning and the end of the novel is discussed by Chang Shu-shen in a comment in chapter 100 (14b).

⁵⁴ For examples of commentators' discussions of the numerological significance of particular chapters, see Chang Shu-shen, chapter 19 (16a); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapter 33 (341f.); and Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 47 (1a, 1b). It is perhaps not accidental that the issue of the "five elements" is treated most explicitly in chapter 25.

⁵⁵ See, for example, Chang Shu-shen, chapters 47 (15b) and 98 (17a); and Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 47 (1a). See also Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 49.

⁵⁶ Another example of this sort may be seen in Sun Wu-k'ung's recollection of his earlier theft of the "peaches of longevity" (*p'an-t'ao* 蟠桃) in chapter 55. Perhaps the plaint that the mission is on the verge of being "abandoned midway" (半途而廢, 中道而止) in chapter 57 (2:795) reflects more than a simple cry of despair in this context.

Although the use of hemispheric divisions as a formal feature closely parallels that in *Chin Ping Mei*, the associated sense of a gathering of actors onstage in the first half of that book, followed by their inexorable dispersal in the second, is only partially fulfilled here. Perhaps this is because the unilinearity of the quest journey does not lend itself to the cyclical pattern of rise and fall that governs each of our other three texts.⁵⁷

At the other end of the scale of textual divisions, the relentless continuity of the narrative of *Hsi-yu chi* is broken up into smaller episode units, varying from two or three to four or even five chapters in length.⁵⁸ In addition, we have seen that there are a certain number of episodes confined to the space of a single chapter that often seem to bear a special signifi-

⁵⁷ For the significance of this pattern in the other three novels, see above, Chapters 2, Part II, 4, Part II, and 5, Part II. Chang Ching-erh sees a certain sense of climax at the point of chapters 74–77 ("The Structure and Theme of the *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 169–88, 179, 186). Wang Hsiang-hsü describes the gathering of the pilgrims in chapter 22 (1a) as a "minor reunion scene" (*hsiao t'uan-yüan* 小團圓), later followed by a "major reunion scene" (*ta t'uan-yüan* 大團圓) in chapter 100 (1a). Cf. Wang's use of the term "minor rest" (*hsiao-hsieh* 小歇) to describe a structural break in chapter 7 (1a). Many modern critics pay attention to the broad structural divisions of the text, for example, Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 290, 294ff.; Hsü Chen-chi, "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 73ff.; Arai Ken, "Saiyüki no naka no Saiyüki," pp. 591–96. Chang Shu-shen posits a division after chapter 26 in his "General Commentary" (*Tsung-p'i* 總批), item 26, which seems to demonstrate his sense that the preparatory phases of the narrative come to an end at this point, a pattern he goes on to relate to contemporary prose structure.

⁵⁸ For example, two-chapter episodes include chapters 16–17, 18–19, 20–21, 65–66, 72–73, 78–79, 91–92, and 96–97. Three-chapter units include 24–26, 37–39, 40–42, 44–46, 50–52, 53–55, 56–58, 59–61, 84–86, 88–90, and 93–95. The episodes in chapters 32–35, 68–71, 74–77, and 80–83 cover four chapters, and the long episode in chapters 27–31 stretches over a full five chapters (actually four plus an introductory section, a special pattern I will reconsider shortly). Cf. the spread of episodes over three or four scenes in the *Hsi-yu chi tsa-chü* (e.g., Scenes 1–4 on Hsüan-tsang, 9–10 on Sun Hsing-che, 13–16 on Chu Pa-chieh, and 19–20 on the Huo-yen shan episode). In the *Shih-hua*, on the other hand, every section comprises a separate episode. The commentators use a variety of terms to refer to these episode units. Liu I-ming, for example (*tu-fa*, item 9), speaks of "cases" (*kung-an* 公案) made up of two or three *hui* each, whereas Chang Shu-shen uses the terms "segment" (*chieh* 節) in *Tsung-p'i*, item 28 (7a, 7b), and "compositional unit" (*chang* 章) in item 29 (7b). In other places (e.g., *Tsung-p'i*, items 25, 26, 28, 29, 62) Chang speaks of the linking together of "chapters" (*p'ien* 篇) made up of related episodes, and elsewhere (e.g., *Tsung-p'i*, items 26 and 62), he speaks of separate narrative "topics" (*t'i-mu* 題目). This last usage is reminiscent of the "items" (*kuan-mu* 關目) that form the basic building blocks of *San-kuo yen-i* and, to a lesser extent, *Shui-hu chuan* (see below, Chapter 5, Part II). Liu I-ming (*tu-fa*, item 19) distinguishes between the narration of continuous and discontinuous episodes (*fen-shuo*, *ho-shuo* 分說, 合說). Cf. Wang Hsiang-hsü's discussion of the uneven matching of *nan* 難 to episode units in a note in chapter 99 (1b). The "trebling" pattern observable in the narrative sequence in many episode units is pointed out by Ch'en Shih-pin, 61 (618f.), and by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 59 (1b). On the generic significance of the *hui* organization in the hundred-chapter novel, see above, Chapter 2, Part II. See Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ssu-yu chi," pp. 370f.; and Koss, "Formative Stages," chap. 3. See also Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyüki genpon," pp. 81ff.

cance. Within the overall framework of the quest journey, with its hemispheric and decade divisions, these episode units give the text its primary structural coherence. Here *Hsi-yu chi* departs from *Chin P'ing Mei*, although the episode structure brings it more into line with *San-kuo yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*.⁵⁹

One particularly interesting pattern unique to *Hsi-yu chi* is that seen in episodes constructed of two or three chapters prefaced by one additional chapter that is thematically linked to, but technically separate from, the main body of the episode unit. The clearest examples of this type include the sequence from chapters 53 to 55, in which the two-chapter episode in the Land of Women at Hsi-liang 西梁女國 (chapters 54 and 55) is introduced by the incident of the pilgrims' "pregnancy" immediately before (chapter 53)—which raises the issue of inverted sexual hierarchies even before we get to the topsy-turvy kingdom. Thematically, these two parts of the section are of a piece, although in terms of narrative flow the events of chapter 53 constitute a separate incident concluded within the space of the chapter. A similar example occurs in the encounter with the Lady of the White Bones (Pai-ku fu-jen 白骨夫人) in chapter 27, which sets the allegorical stage for the exile of the mind-monkey, but is actually independent from the main part of the episode stretching from chapter 28 to 31.⁶⁰ This function of what one might call "pivotal" or "lead-in" chapters seems to be a deliberate part of the author's organizational scheme, and the commentators call attention to it.⁶¹

The structural design of *Hsi-yu chi* comes even closer to that outlined in *Chin P'ing Mei* with respect to the shape and significance of its opening and closing sections. There is room for debate over whether the main body of the narrative begins in chapter 9, 12, or 13, or perhaps only with the completion of the pilgrim group in chapter 22; but it is obvious that we have here in the story of the Monkey King another extended prologue. This is all the more striking since, as I have noted, the moving up of this traditional material to the head of the narrative appears to be the unique design of the novel, as opposed to any of the known antecedents.⁶² As in the case of *Chin P'ing Mei*, the use of the prologue section goes beyond the simple formal feature of the delayed beginning (what has been related to

⁵⁹ See below, Chapters 4, Part II, and 5, Part II.

⁶⁰ A similar pattern of organization can be seen in chapter 37–39, preceded by 36, and chapters 48–49, preceded by 47. Other, albeit less clear, examples include the prefacing of chapter 62 to 63–64, 80 to 81–83, and 88 to 89–90.

⁶¹ See, for example, Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 10 (114f.) and 47 (477f.).

⁶² See above, n. 9. That is not to say, of course, that the story of the Monkey King does not appear in the antecedents, only that its shift to the beginning of the text suggests a revised interpretation. On the other hand, we can observe that the extended treatment of Hsüan-tsang's birth and early trials in Scenes 1–4 of the *Tsa-chü* fulfills a comparable prologue function in the play.

the *ju-hua* 入話 in oral storytelling and the *hsieh-tzu* 楔子 in *tsa-chü* drama) to fulfill the specific function of setting up some of the central issues to be taken up in the body of the novel.⁶³

It has been pointed out by many critics that what we have in the first eight chapters of *Hsi-yu chi* is in effect a structural model for the rest of the book: a mini-quest for salvation complete with many of the motifs later developed, in a kind of parody of the enlightenment process.⁶⁴ The manner in which the novel ostensibly begins with light treatment of popular material conforms to a pattern we have seen in *Chin P'ing Mei* and will trace in subsequent chapters. But at the same time it also lays much of the terminological groundwork for the allegory, and ultimately begins to outline such weighty problems as the constraints of mortality, the impossibility of self-contained perfection, even questions of social order and chaos, which cast a shadow over the otherwise amusing career of the "Great Sage Equal to Heaven" 齊天大聖 and the story of his ultimate submission to the all-encompassing power of the Buddha nature. As we shall see, all of these issues are brought to bear on the interpretation of the main body of the narrative as well. I should also note here that some of the central motifs of the opening sequence—the birth of the hero, perilous water crossings, an attempt to cheat the forces of destiny—are repeated in the additional section that falls between the eight-chapter prologue and the body of the narrative. In this light, we can view this section as a second prologue, regardless of how we choose to deal with the problem of the function of chapter 9. The sense of a line demarcating these preparatory sections from the rest of the world of the novel is made quite explicit with the renaming of Five Elements Mountain as Dual Border Mountain (*Liang-chieh shan*), clearly signposting the entry into a new narrative realm.⁶⁵

⁶³ Wang Hsiang-hsü uses the term *hsieh-tzu* 楔子 in chapters 10 (1a) and 11 (1a). See also Wu Pi-yung, "Hsi-yu chi yen-chiu," pp. 12f.

⁶⁴ The function of the first few chapters as a model of the quest pattern in the novel as a whole is discussed in Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, items 27 and 29. A number of recent critics have suggested the same idea; for example, James Fu, *Mythic and Comic Aspects of the Quest*, pp. 90ff.; Karl S. Y. Kao, "An Archetypal Approach to *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 63–98; and Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," p. 184. A more contrived reading of the same structural pattern is given in Okuno Shintarō's "Mizu to honō no denshō," pp. 225ff, where he attempts to relate the Monkey King's mini-quest to a term for the quest journey of particular currency in Japanese narrative theory: "the tale of the wandering nobleman" (*kishū ryūri tan* 貴種流離譚).

⁶⁵ Other examples of recurring motifs that link the two introductory sections include the "grand assemblies" (*ta-hui* 大會) and the frustration of the powers of the dragon king in chapters 3 and 10. The melons delivered by Liu Ch'üan 劉全 to the underworld in chapter 11 to effect a rebirth may also give a faint symbolic echo of the stone egg in chapter 1. In addition, the stone marker at Dual Border Mountain (*shih-chieh* 石碣) also suggests an intertextual allusion to the similar monument in chapter 1 of *Shui-hu chuan*, where the release of potentially destructive forces is also at issue.

On the other side of the prologue, we observe yet another instance of striking conformity to the structural model of *Chin P'ing Mei*. Here, too, we find an initial disquisition that presents something of a prologue to the prologue. Whereas in *Chin P'ing Mei* this took the form of a homily on the deleterious effects of passion, here we get a quick review of the cyclical movements of cosmic and earthly time, leading up to the spontaneous emergence of the Monkey King out of his timeless rock.

It would be possible to take these added sections on the birth and origins of the main characters of the book as examples of a common device in Chinese fiction: the tendency to begin by running through the historical origins of the story down to the time of the narrative itself. But the topic of discussion in the opening disquisition, for all its pseudo-philosophical jargon, takes up a theme that is of central importance to the conception of the novel.⁶⁶ This is the concept of "nonbeginning," as expressed in the terminology of the *I Ching* in the formula *chen-hsia ch'i-yüan* 貞下起元, here worked out in several frames of reckoning and supported by an appeal to one of the most deeply metaphysical of all Chinese philosophers, Shao Yung. This, too, can easily be brushed aside as a reflection of the more popular image of Shao Yung as a soothsayer, rather than as a serious philosophical "message."⁶⁷ But I believe the opening exercise in cosmology goes right to the heart of the crucial question of how to relate the unilinear trajectory of the end-oriented quest to other, nonlinear, concepts of attainment. At the very least, it provides a basis for understanding the various sets of philosophical terms—notably the five elements and hexagram designations worked into the text—in terms of cycles with neither beginning nor end.⁶⁸

This gives a special meaning to the other primary point of structural articulation; i.e. the conclusion of this long work. If the story so pointedly begins at a moment of cyclical renewal, then should we take the literal end of the quest, with its songs of praise and apotheosis, at face value as a final

⁶⁶ Ōta Tatsuo ("Kaisetsu," p. 440) speculates that the earlier *Shih-o chuan* began with the recounting of the myth of creation associated with P'an-ku, and argues that the entire section preceding this is a later interpolation by the Shih-te t'ang editor, one he regards as superfluous.

⁶⁷ For example, Ōta Tatsuo, "Kaisetsu." See above, n. 49. Cf. the poem attributed to Shao Yung at the start of chapter 79 in *Chin P'ing Mei*, and the reference to Shao Yung as a master of the occult precisely in chapter 79 of *Hsing-shih yin-yüan chuan* 醒世姻緣傳.

⁶⁸ The commentators take the *chen-hsia ch'i-yüan* formula quite seriously. See, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 99 (1a, 6b); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 10 (115), and 50 (509); and Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 13 and preface. Liu I-ming also brings into his discussion the *I Ching* terms *i-fa* 已發 and *wei-fa* 未發. The significance of this preoccupation with beginnings and endings within the context of the allegorical structure will be explored below. For further discussion of the concept of *hai-mo tzu-ch'u* 亥末子初, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 297f.

fulfillment? I will have a good deal to say about this in the following interpretation of the allegorical level of the text. In the meantime, I will consider the structural implications of the ending with respect to the aesthetic shape of the novel. We have already seen in *Chin P'ing Mei* the manner in which that sprawling narrative draws to a close with an apocalyptic flourish of national cataclysm and personal salvation, which, however, fails to flesh out its parting note of emptiness. The *Hsi-yu chi* can be read as a variation on the same theme, and here, too, the inexorable unilinearity of the quest pattern sheds upon the moment of the consummation of the meandering journey only a superficial sense of finality.

In terms of simple narrative aesthetics, this makes perfect sense. Every story, like every banquet, must have an end. This sense of closure is recognized by the commentators, such as Wang Hsiang-hsü for example, who sees in the final chapter the function of the sort of "grand reunion scene" (*ta t'uan-yüan*) mandatory in Ming literati drama.⁶⁹ But although the aesthetics of the quest narrative demand a grand finale, the author is at evident pains to bring out at several points the idea that the literal-minded pursuit of the end is basically misguided. In effect, then, the wearying trek to the ends of the earth really goes nowhere and ends up where it began. Or, in other words, it ends with a reinterpretation of the meaning of final attainment, such that the metaphoric expression "creating the fruit" (*ch'eng-kuo* 成果) comes to mean the same thing as "returning to the point of origin" (*huan-pen* 還本).⁷⁰ I will have more to say about this issue toward the end of this chapter.

Finally, let us consider the author's use of certain other spatial and temporal schemes of structural arrangement that also link *Hsi-yu chi* to the artistry of our other sixteenth-century literati novels. The possibility of some sort of spatial design, such as the juxtaposition of the microcosm and macrocosm in *Chin P'ing Mei*, or the geographical sweep and countermovements in *Shui-hu chuan* and *San-kuo chih yen-i*, are more or less eclipsed in *Hsi-yu chi* by the unilinear path of the quest journey. The most we can say on this point is that the author develops a certain alternating movement

⁶⁹ See Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 100 (1a), where he compares the ending of *Hsi-yu* to that of other novels. The same term (*ta t'uan-yüan*) is used by Arai Ken in "Saiyūki no naka no Saiyūki," p. 604ff. See note 57.

⁷⁰ The rather pointed joke about the "wordless scriptures" (*wu-tzu ching* 無字經) may follow a hint of nonfulfillment in section 15 in the *Shih-hua*, where the glorious bestowal of scriptures is marred by the conspicuous omission of the Heart Sutra. On the allegorical significance of the attainment of the perfect "fruit" of cultivation (*ch'eng-kuo*), and the "return to the source" (*fan-pen* or *huan-pen*), see section V of this chapter, below. Some interesting parallels to the idea of ending at the beginning may be observed in Dante's *Commedia*, in Proust's *A la recherche*, and other works. See Wu Ta-yün, "T'ien-ti pu ch'üan," pp. 80–109.

between settled civilization and trackless wastes, or between land and water perils, as at least one commentator has noted.⁷¹

With respect to the temporal arrangement of the narrative, on the other hand, we can find more evidence of a conscious design, although this too is obscured by the plodding progression through the eight-one trials. One aspect of the temporal design of the novel that may be more significant than it appears is the intimation of a dual focus between the real time frame of the early T'ang and the mythical time referred to in the story of the Monkey King's prehistory, and in the additional passages relating the prior existence of the other pilgrims and demons. In the course of the novel, the discrepancy in time between these two ages is more than once described as a gap of "five hundred years."⁷² Generally this number can be understood as a loose reference to the misty past *in illo tempore*, such as we find in Buddhist and Confucian scripture.⁷³ But another possible explanation is suggested by the fact that five hundred years before the time of the narrative in the early T'ang happens to fall (by very rough arithmetic) in the mid-Han era. Thus the occasional references to Wang Mang 王莽 in descriptions of unbridled demons help to set up a historical and philosophical resonance of some significance, as I will discuss later.⁷⁴

Coming back closer to our generic model, it is interesting that despite the apparent timelessness of many of the fantastic episodes, the author of *Hsi-yu chi* still seems to pay attention to seasonality as an organizing

⁷¹ See Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 50 (1a), on the "cycle" of mountain and water scenes. This idea is discussed by Hsü Chen-chi in "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 82ff.; and Arai Ken, "Saiyüki no naka no Saiyüki," pp. 597f.

⁷² For examples, see chapters 2 (1:21), 24 (1:328f.), 28 (2:377), and 56 (2:777). The commentators frequently call attention to the reckoning of years within the temporal frame of the narrative; e.g., Chang Shu-shen in *Tsung-p'i*, item 43 (11b); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, items 13, 15, 17, 41; Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 48. Cf. the chronological discrepancy regarding the number of years of the journey's duration. See Koss, "Formative Stages," chap. 4; and Arai Ken, "Saiyüki no naka no Saiyüki," pp. 594ff., 605f.

⁷³ See, for example, Mencius's idea of the appearance of a true king every 500 years (2.B.13 and 7.B.38); plus certain well-known passages in the *Chin-kang ching*, e.g., *Chin-kang ching chien-chu*, pp. 9b, 22a. The sense of timelessness comes out in the expression "time has no sequence in the mountains" (*shan chung wu chia-tzu* 山中無甲子), cited in chapter 1 (1:3). The associated proverbial idea that "one day in heaven equals one year on earth" had been expressed earlier in the *Shih-hua*, section 3, and in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 9 and 10. See Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 60 (1a), 63 (1b), and 76 (1b); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 41; and Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 1 (8), 5 (54), 7 (77), 23 (241), 37 (377).

⁷⁴ I will reconsider the implications of Wang Mang in part V of this chapter. Sun Wu-k'ung is associated with Wang Mang at the start of chapter 14 (1:182). This is, of course, the literary image of Wang Mang, deliberately fostered in certain writings for political and ideological reasons, which differs sharply from the actual career of the man. Cf. the expression "500-year nemesis" (*wu-pai-nien yüan-chia* 五百年冤家), which appears frequently in *Chin Ping Mei*.

principle in ordering his text.⁷⁵ In a simple sense, the use of seasonal tags and motifs in the iconography of demons and their abodes is to be expected within the context of the fabric of colors, directions, and other details that go to make up the allegorical groundwork. But we do seem to have a more self-conscious development of a seasonal rhythm when the author contrives, for example, to stage the introduction and incorporation into the band of Chu Pa-chieh—his icon of material life force and animal vigor—precisely amidst the imagery of spring, or when he pegs the dead center of the novel, the crossing of the frozen river in chapter 49, in the dead of winter (*yen-tung* 嚴冬).⁷⁶ In these and other examples, he demonstrates a sensitivity to the cyclical alternation and interpenetration of cold and heat such as I have posited as a key to the temporal structure of *Chin Ping Mei*.⁷⁷ Here, cold and heat imagery take on a heightened degree of significance in connection with the water and fire symbolism that contributes to the allegorical structure. Given the special sensitivity to seasonal symbolism as a central structuring principle in the literati novel, it is not surprising that we find in *Hsi-yu chi*, as in all three of our other masterworks, a highlighting of the Yüan-hsiao Festival, here used as a setting in chapter 91 for one of the most perilous trials faced by the pilgrims.⁷⁸

A second area of analysis in which the *Hsi-yu chi* conforms to the generic criteria of the literati novel outlined in the previous chapter is in its capacity

⁷⁵ The commentators also draw attention to this aspect of the work. See, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 22 (1b): "The advent of each of the members of the group is in accordance with the proper season" 四衆之來各以其時.... See a similar comment by Chang Shu-shen in chapter 94 (1a). For another discussion of this point, see Arai Ken, "Saiyüki no naka no Saiyüki," pp. 591ff.

⁷⁶ Other examples include the early winter setting (*ch'u-tung* 初冬) at the start of the narrative proper and the late summer backdrop for the wind and fire imagery in chapters 20–21. The pegging of the pseudo-enlightenment scene in chapter 36 to the Mid-Autumn Festival (*Chung-ch'iu chieh* 中秋節) is all but obligatory. A similar sense is at work in the playing of scenes of sexual implications in chapters 53, 73, and 93 in the springtime.

⁷⁷ See above, Chapter 2, Part II, and below, chapters 4, Part II, and 5, Part II. This principle is enunciated by Wang Hsiang-hsü in chapters 26 (1a) and 61 (1a). In the latter note, Wang relies heavily on an earlier "Li Cho-wu" comment, chapter 61 (16a). See also "Li Cho-wu," chapter 48 (9b); and Chang Shu-shen, chapters 15 (1a), 38 (1a), and 40 (1a). The alternations of heat and cold are explained by Wang Hsiang-hsü in terms of *yin-yang* cycles. See, e.g., chapters 13 (1a), 26 (1a), 43 (2a), 55 (1b), 59 (1b), 63 (1a), and 80 (1a). See also Ch'en Shih-pin, preface and comments in chapters 5 (55), 7 (78), 17 (185), 19 (201), 22 (229), 26 (272), 38 (387), 54 (549), 59 (598), 69 (702), 72 (739), 73 (746), 82 (839), 92 (929), 94 (949), 95 (960), 99 (1003), 100 (1014); and Chang Shu-shen, chapters 34 (9a), 43 (11b), and 44 (11b), as well as in the *Tung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, chapters 15 (57b), 20 (94b).

⁷⁸ Ch'en Shih-pin discusses the significance of the Yüan-hsiao setting at length in a comment in chapter 91 (921). Cf. the poem on the Yüan-hsiao Festival interjected in that chapter.

to develop what I have termed textural, or "figural," density.⁷⁹ Here, too, as in the *Chin P'ing Mei*, we have an intricate composition whose intricacy lies not only in the sort of global structural patterns discussed above, but also in its weaving of finely textured local linkages. The very special nature of the contents of *Hsi-yu chi* has diverted the attention of most modern critics away from this aspect of its artistry, to questions of sources on the one hand, and allegorical interpretation on the other. But we do find among the remarks of the Ming-Ch'ing commentators on the novel considerable interest in this aspect of the work.

In this case, we do not have one preeminent guide to lead us through the labyrinthine passages of the text, such as we had in Chang Chu-p'o, and we will see again in Chin Sheng-t'an and Mao Tsung-kang.⁸⁰ However, this is more than compensated for by the cumulative contributions of several full-length commentaries still extant.⁸¹ The commentator who is by far the most interested in this critical area is Chang Shu-shen, whose quite slanted interpretation of the novel is nevertheless packed with textual analyses couched in the terms of fiction criticism inherited from Chin and Mao. Chang, for example, uses language reminiscent of descriptions of *Chin P'ing Mei* cited earlier to evaluate the overall intricacy of the text of *Hsi-yu chi*:

Not a single episode could be added, nor could a single part be taken away, since the vital spirit of the composition, from start to finish and all the way through, is intricately interwoven.

欲添一章，欲去一節，亦不得，蓋以上下前後之文氣脈絡，遞相聯貫也。⁸²

⁷⁹For additional explanations of the concept of "figural density," see above, Chapter 2, Part III, and below, Chapter 5, Part II. See also my article "Conceptual Models in Chinese Narrative Theory," pp. 25-47, esp. 32ff.

⁸⁰On Chang Chu-p'o, see above, Chapter 2, Part II. For Chin Sheng-t'an and Mao Tsung-kang see below, Chapters 4, Part II, and 5, Part II.

⁸¹For bibliographical information on these commentaries, see b.n. II. The work of these individual critics does not represent entirely independent efforts, but rather a dense network of acknowledged and unacknowledged borrowings. For example, Ch'en Shih-pin reproduces comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü in chapters 45 (456), 54 (549), 59 (599), 68 (693), 78 (796), 81 (824), 84 (855), 85 (866), 88 (894), and 92 (930); and perhaps by Chang Shu-shen in chapters 62, 63 (639), 69 (704), 82 (834), and 84 (855). Ch'en also mentions Li Chih in a comment in chapter 90 (911). Liu I-ming discusses the Wang Hsiang-hsü commentary, as well as that of Ch'en Shih-pin in his *tu-fa*, item 44. In fact, Liu I-ming makes it clear that he sees his own work as essentially an expansion of the Ch'en Shih-pin commentary. Chang Shu-shen mentions Chin Sheng-t'an in comments in chapter 12 (22b) and especially *Tsung-p'i*, items 37 (9b) and 40 (10b), where he nearly reproduces a line from Chin's *Shui-hu chuan tu-fa*. The *Tung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih* commentator complains of the inadequacy of some of Ch'en Shih-pin's comments in chapters 94 (39b) and 95 (49b).

⁸²Chang Shu-shen, chapter 18 (1b). See above, n. 47. Chang expresses similar ideas in his *Tsung-p'i*, 18 (5b), 19 (5b), 28 (7b, 8a), 40 (10b), 49 (13b), 67 (18a), and in chapters 8 (1a),

Writing during the Ch'ien-lung period, Chang had the full benefit of the contributions of the giants Chin Sheng-t'an and Mao Tsung-kang to traditional fiction criticism, but even in the earlier "Li Cho-wu" commentary we already find considerable interest in this aspect of the novel.⁸³

In any event, the terminology and critical concepts applied by the commentators to the novel are very much the language of discourse of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century criticism. In attempting to analyze the perceived density of the text into its structural patterns, for example, the commentators on *Hsi-yu chi* also distinguish between examples of forward projection (*fu-pi* 伏筆, *mai-fu* 埋伏, *ko-nien hsia-chung* 隔年下種)⁸⁴ and retroactive reflection (*chao-ying* 照應, *hui-chao* 回照).⁸⁵ At the same time, they pay special attention to problems of narrative continuity, discussing transitions between textual units (*kuo-chieh* 過節, *p'o-chan* 破綻), as well as matters of narrative pace and sequencing of episodes. This last topic will be reconsidered later, in my interpretation of the direction and pace of the quest.⁸⁶

54 (1a), 59 (2a-b), 65 (1b), and 68 (15a). Chang's application of the terms of classical prose analysis is quite in keeping with his Confucian reading of the novel, but nearly all of the other commentators also draw upon similar critical terminology; for example, "Li Cho-wu," chapter 11 (13a, *tp*); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapter 20 (212); *Tung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, chapter 73 (34b); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 5.

⁸³Regardless of whether or not the attribution to Li Chih is dismissed, all scholars agree that the "Li Cho-wu" edition dates roughly from his lifetime, which makes it the earliest of the extant commentaries on the novel. See Liao Nan, "Kuo-nei fa-hsien Ming-k'an Li Cho-wu p'ing Hsi-yu chi." Cf. Wang Hsiang-hsü's extensive reliance on this commentary, as observed above (see b.n. II.5). On the complexities of the problem of the attribution to Li, see the Appendix of this book. See also my paper "The Ch'ung-chen Commentary on the *Chin P'ing Mei*," pp. 2ff.

⁸⁴For examples of the term *mai-fu*, see Chang Shu-shen, chapters 1 (18b), 39 (1b), and 53 (1b), and *Tsung-p'i*, items 40 (10b) and 45 (12b); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapter 20 (212); Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 39 (1b); for *ko-nien hsia-chung*, see Chang Shu-shen, chapter 57 (14a). Similar terms include *ts'ao-she hui-hsien* 草蛇灰線; see, e.g., Ch'en Shih-pin, 20 (212), 47 (477), and *Chia-p'i Hsi-yu chi*, *chüan* 3 (27b). "Li Cho-wu" occasionally uses such terms as *yin-tzu* 引子 and *chang-pen* 張本 to describe this function, as does Wang Hsiang-hsü, 13 (2a). See also *Chia-p'i Hsi-yu chi*, *chüan*, 1 (10b, 11b), 2 (1a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 9b, 20a), 3 (18a, 22a, 22b), 4 (1b, 6b, 15b), 5 (15a, 17b), 6 (12a), 7 (1a, 3a, 18b), 9 (20a, 25a).

⁸⁵Variations on the term *chao* 照 appear in Chang Shu-shen, chapters 8 (1a), 35 (15a), 43 (1a), 45 (15a), 51 (1b), and *Tsung-p'i*, items 29 (7b), 76 (19b); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 18 (192), 20 (212), 21 (219), 43 (437); "Li Cho-wu," chapter 60 (1a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 44 (1a), 61 (8b); *Chia-p'i Hsi-yu chi*, *chüan* 6 (2b), 7 (6b, 17b, 19b), 8 (15a, 16a), 9 (6b), 12 (1a, 18a); *Tung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, chapters 88 (82b), 94 (34b), 97 (91b). In addition, the terms *tou-ch'u* 逗出 or *tien-tou* 點逗 are sometimes used in the special sense of the retroactive evocation of an earlier motif; e.g., Chang Shu-shen, chapter 39 (3b).

⁸⁶For example, the term *kuo-chieh* occurs in Chang Shu-shen, chapters 8 (1a), 43 (1a), 65 (1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 84 (85b), 87 (884), 91 (922), 98 (992); Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 10 (1a). *P'o-chan* is used in Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 15. Other terms that treat the

In all of these critical discussions, the aesthetic sense of prose density in the novel again rests on the principle I have called "figural recurrence." As in *Chin Ping Mei*, the simple fact that textual elements tend to be repeated over and over again can easily be taken as evidence of haphazard composition, quite the opposite of the consummate control claimed by the commentators.⁸⁷ Or it can be ascribed to the influence of popular storytelling, with its use of predictably recurrent narrative materials.⁸⁸ Therefore, in order to demonstrate that what we have here are instances of *significant* recurrence, I will quickly review several types of recurrent figures in the following pages, before returning in the second half of this chapter to try to specify where this significance lies.

For a text that otherwise displays such inventiveness, it is a bit surprising that the same figures seem to reappear again and again in the novel. Sometimes we see precisely the same characters introduced at several points. For example, Li T'ien-wang and No-ch'a, as I have noted, are first brought in to combat the errant Monkey King, and later provide the means to subdue other figurally similar creatures in chapters 42, 51, 61, and 83.⁸⁹ The same is true for Erh-lang shen 二郎神, whose early prowess is restaged in chapter 63.⁹⁰ Similarly, the wayward Green Lion under the command of the bodhisattva Manjusri (Wen-shu 文殊), first introduced in chapter 39, puts in more than one appearance, as do the Bull Demon King (Niu mo-wang 牛魔王) and others.⁹¹ In some cases, this is just a question of the early mention and later recall of a name, as, for example, in the re-appearance of the Red Child (Hung-hai-erh 紅孩兒) in chapter 59, leading into the related episode of the Mountain of Flames (Huo-yen shan), or the

problems of narrative pacing and sequencing include *ch'i-po* 起波: e.g., Chang Shu-shen, chapters 54 (1a), 99 (11b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 76 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapter 83 (844); *shou-sha* 收煞: Chang Shu-shen, 77 (1a), 95 (13b); and Ch'en Shih-pin, chapter 100 (1013), etc.

⁸⁷ Certain instances of loose threads or other discrepancies in the text are pointed out by Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," 84, n. 172; Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 265f.; and Su Hsing, "Hsi-yu chi so-t'an," pp. 62f.; among others. A more positive assessment of the author's repetitions is given by James Fu, *Quest*, p. 16. Cf. discussions of this point by the commentators, e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 80 (1b); Chang Shu-shen, chapter 49 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, chapter 97 (981).

⁸⁸ Such examples as the "trebling" pattern (see below, Chapter 5, Part II) or the repeated use of stock settings (e.g., the Black Pine Forest) reflect such storytelling conventions.

⁸⁹ See chapters 33 (2:461), 42 (2:587), 51 (2:710), 58 (2:805), 61 (2:853), 80 (3:1101), and 83 (3:1142, 1146).

⁹⁰ Chapters 6 (1:74ff.), 63 (2:876ff.).

⁹¹ Wang Hsiang-hsü takes note of this repeated appearance in chapters 51 (1a), 74 (1b), 83 (1a); and Ch'en Shih-pin calls this a case of "transformation" (*hua-shen* 化身). See also Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 32. Cf. Su Hsing, "Hsi-yu chi so-t'an," p. 62.

introduction of the term "Jade Hare" in a poem in chapter 81 (3:1113), long before a figure with this name actually appears in chapters 93–95. At the very least, I would suggest that these instances fulfill the literary function of tightening up the "figural density" of the text.⁹²

In other cases, the sense of redundancy is based on recurring types of characters rather than the same specific figures. For example, the woodcutter who provides a refuge for the band in chapter 86 seems somehow linked to the hunter who rescues the fledgling pilgrim in chapter 13, as I have mentioned.⁹³ By the same token, we can see a number of chains of demon figures who share either a false form (e.g., the temptresses Pai-ku fu-jen and Ti-yung fu-jen 地湧夫人) or a camouflaged "true form" 本相 (e.g., the various animal or insect spirits who bar the pilgrims' way).⁹⁴

A similar redundancy may be seen at the level of smaller textual details. For one thing, though the journey ostensibly makes its way through vast stretches of territory, the landscape through which the pilgrims pass is remarkably repetitive, with its recurrent round of mountains, caves, and deep pools. Even the cities have a certain sameness about them, with the resulting sense of circularity in the path of the pilgrimage.⁹⁵ This principle

⁹² In other words, these can be viewed as instances of forward (*fu*) or backward (*chao*) reflection. Other examples include the repeated mention of such figures as the bodhisattva Ling-chi 靈吉菩薩 in chapters 21 (1:288f.) and 59 (2:823); and Shan-ts'ai f'ung-tzu 善財童子 in chapters 42 (2:591), 49 (2:687), 57 (2:791), and 84 (3:1152). See also the recall of Wu-ch'ao ch'an-shih 烏巢禪師, first glimpsed in chapter 19 (1:263ff.), in chapter 93 (1266).

⁹³ See chapter 13 (1:175ff.) and 86 (3:1187ff.). Also cf. the woodcutter who directs Sun Wu-k'ung to the Master Subodhi in chapter 1 (1:10f.), and the woodcutter who appears in chapter 32 (1:434). This repetition is noted by the commentator in *T'ung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, chapter 86 (64b).

⁹⁴ Pai-ku fu-jen appears in chapter 27, Ti-yung fu-jen in chapters 82–83. For the appearance of these figures in the antecedent sources, see Part I of this chapter. The taxonomy of animal spirits includes foxes (chapters 34, 70); deer (*pai-lu* 白鹿), chapters 45, 70, 79; tigers (chapters 13, 29, 45, and 90); lions (chapters 52 and 89–90), a hare (chapter 95); apes (chapters 58, 83); a rhinoceroslike creature (*ssu* 兕), chapter 50; a panther (chapter 86); a python (*mang* 蟒), chapter 67; spiders (*chih-chu ching* 蜘蛛精), chapter 73; and centipedes (*wu-kung ching* 蜈蚣精), chapter 93. For an analysis of the various categories of demons see Kao Ming-ko, "Hsi-yu chi li ti shen-mo wen-t'i," pp. 118–27; and Hsü Chen-chi, "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 51–72. Cf. comment by Wang Hsiang-hsü in chapter 71 (10a), enumerating various types of demons.

⁹⁵ We see mountain caves in, among others, chapters 1, 8, 15, 17, 18, 20, 28, 29, 32, 33, 50, 59, 63, 72, 74, 81, 88, 90, and 91; we cross water barriers in chapters 1, 3, 5, 9, 11–12, 14, 15, 22, 26, 30, 37–38, 44, 47–49, 53, and 87; we visit cities in chapters 29, 37, 44–46, 54–55, 62, 68, 76, 78, 84, 87, 91, 93, and 96. Ch'en Shih-pin, in chapter 97 (981), notes the similar urban landscape that links Mieh-fa kuo 滅法國 to Chu-tzu kuo 朱紫國. Cf. the advance mention of Hsi-liang nü-kuo in chapter 48 (2:674).

also applies, as we have seen, at the level of specific motifs, such as the recurring "diamond snare" and the embroidered ball.⁹⁶ But we will find more fertile ground for this interpretive analysis at the level of recurrent patterns of narrative action. Here, again, many of the repeated figures are associated with basic *topoi* of the storytelling tradition (e.g., the boatman's trick given in several chapters).⁹⁷ Yet, a number of these recurring scenes set up patterns that demand more rigorous interpretation. This is true of the three quests for salvation, the multiple water crossings, the predictable self-enclosure of demons—all of which function within the allegorical framework.⁹⁸ It is also quite evident in the restaging of the "exile" of the mind-monkey,⁹⁹ or in the several episodes in which the pilgrims are stymied by replicas of their own selves.¹⁰⁰ All of these instances will be treated in greater detail in my full allegorical reading of the novel. Here the point is simply to stress the extent to which the text is constructed on the principle of significant recurrence, in line with the general aesthetics of the literati novel form.

One final aspect of the figural density of the text that deserves mention is the manner in which the main figures are woven into a composite scheme

⁹⁶ The "diamond snare" (*chin-kang cho*) is introduced in chapters 6 (2:80) and 52 (2:732). Wang Hsiang-hsü, in chapter 50 (1a), notes the reappearance of this motif, as does Ts'ai Yüan-fang (*tu-fa*, item 49). See n. 56. Besides the embroidered ball, cf. the "banana fan" (*pa-chiao shan* 芭蕉扇), which is mentioned in chapters 34 (2:465), 39 (2:535), and 52 (2:732) before becoming a focus of attention in chapters 59–61. Cf. the various transformations into small creatures (fly, bee, gnat, crab, bat, fish, moth, rat, butterfly) in order to gain entry into a closed lair (see n. 224). In other cases, such recurrent motifs indicate the persistence of certain allegorical issues, as in the "false" weapons that confuse the pilgrims in chapters 34–35, 71, 73, and 87, or the "encompassing" objects that dominate a number of scenes. I will discuss this last category in Part V of this chapter.

⁹⁷ The boatman's trick is staged in chapters 9, 15, 43, 48, and 53. For the corresponding motif in *Shui-hu chuan*, see below, Chapter 4, Part II. It is also mentioned in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 12. Set pieces derived from popular storytelling can also be identified in other conventional scenes, such as the resuscitation of expired heroes in chapters 9 and 38–39; the staging of formal or burlesqued "assemblies" (*hui* 會) in chapters 5, 7, 8, 12, 17, and 89; the scenes of "wreaking havoc" (*nao* 鬧) presented in chapters 7, 25, 52, 58, 70, 79, 81, and 95. For this latter pattern in *Shui-hu chuan*, see below, Chapter 4, Part II.

⁹⁸ This point is brought out by Chang Shu-shen, in chapter 49 (1a), and Liu I-ming (*tu-fa*, item 27). I have already considered the structural implications of the parallel quests. Other recurrent themes of special significance for the allegory include the theft of spiritual weapons, instances of sexual temptation, the danger of false compassion—all of which will be taken up later in my interpretation of the allegory. Cf. the pattern of recurrence that links the "six thieves" with the "seven passions."

⁹⁹ See Part V of this chapter.

¹⁰⁰ For example, the false Master in chapter 39, the two "mind-monkeys" in chapter 58, the false Chu Pa-chieh in chapter 61. Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 39 (1b), suggests that the two Masters in that chapter prefigure the two mind-monkeys in chapter 58.

based on five-elements correspondences.¹⁰¹ This scheme is not entirely consistent (Sun Wu-K'ung, for one, seems to straddle the area between fire and metal); nor is it fully worked out (Chu Pa-chieh is exclusively linked to the element wood, but both Hsüan-tsang 玄奘 and the Sand Monk 沙和尚 share certain affiliations with earth, while the dragon-horse only has an identification with water by implication). In like manner, the emblematic colors and directions woven into the presentation of various demons frequently draw upon five-elements associations, but nowhere are these articulated into a uniform scheme. Later I will consider the ramifications of this arrangement for the allegorical structure of the novel.¹⁰² In the meantime, let me simply call attention here to the use of the five-elements scheme as an aspect of the aesthetic patterning of the text, one we have seen in a very loose sense in the *Chin P'ing Mei*, and that later forms a crucial framework of meaning in the *Hung-lou meng*.¹⁰³

III

The third category of analysis I used to account for the textual richness of the *Chin P'ing Mei* included a range of special rhetorical effects. I argued that its deliberate adaptation of the characteristic rhetorical devices of the colloquial fiction tradition, far from indicating a direct link to popular storytelling, identifies that work instead as an exemplar of the literati novel genre.¹⁰⁴ In the case of *Hsi-yu chi*, this argument goes in a somewhat different direction, since the hundred-chapter novel is undeniably linked to an actual oral tradition. But here, too, the final impression the reader gets in assessing this aspect of the novel is one of selective adaptation for specific literary functions, rather than the simple preservation of fossils of

¹⁰¹ I will consider the allegorical implications of this pattern in greater detail later. For additional discussions, see Fu Shu-hsien, "Hsi-yu chi chung wu-sheng ti kuan-hsi," pp. 10–17; Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," pp. 170ff.; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 49ff., and my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi* and *Hung-lou meng*," pp. 176ff. The commentators do not neglect these references. See, e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 43 (1a, 1b), 49 (4a); "Li Cho-wu," chapter 46 (15b, 1p), Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, items 33 and 37. This aspect of the text is also emphasized in most of the prefaces, as it is in Liu T'ing-chi's critical review of the novel in *Tsai-yüan tsa-chih*.

¹⁰² For the allegorical significance of the five-elements labels, see discussion in Part V of this chapter.

¹⁰³ See above, Chapter 2, Part III. I have attempted to set forth the implications of the five-elements scheme in *Hung-lou meng* in my *Archetype and Allegory in the Dream of the Red Chamber*, chap. 4.

¹⁰⁴ See discussion of this point above, Chapter 1. I have made a more extensive argument on this issue in "Full-Length *Hsiao-shuo* and the Western Novel," pp. 163–76.

oral performance. Thus on this point as well, *Hsi-yu chi* falls squarely within the generic criteria of the sixteenth-century novel.

The fact that the basic medium of narration in *Hsi-yu chi* shows less variation than in our three other works probably says more about the artistic control of the author than the lack of it.¹⁰⁵ We find, for example, liberal use in *Hsi-yu chi* of the conventional tag expressions of the colloquial narrator, especially the chapter-ending formula, uniformly given as "just listen to the next chapter for the explanation" (*ch'ieh t'ing hsia-hui fen-chieh* 且聽下回分解).¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, *Hsi-yu chi* fails to exploit the device of *k'an-kuan t'ing-shuo* 看官聽說 passages of authorial commentary, which we saw to play a key role in *Chin P'ing Mei*—probably because the voice of an omniscient narrator would clash with the deliberate opacity of the allegory.

Another clear indication of the purposeful adaptation of the rhetorical devices of the colloquial fiction tradition traced in the last chapter was seen in the innovative use of quoted songs and dramatic arias, plus other special effects in the citation of incidental verse. The author of *Hsi-yu chi* also demonstrates a high degree of creativity in this area, although here the use of poetry within the narrative takes somewhat different directions. One of these is the use of highlighted opening and closing verses in each chapter, as well in the interpolated poems, to carry much of the burden of the allegory.¹⁰⁷ Often this is just a matter of injecting suggestive philosophical terminology into otherwise uninspired poems, but in some cases the author's wit turns these expressions into quite clever conceits.¹⁰⁸ In addition, in terms of sheer versification the *Hsi-yu chi* stands out among the four masterworks for the exuberance of its poetic style, particularly in its modification of existing poetic conventions to convey a certain mock-epic quality consonant with the nature of the quest.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ For other discussions of this issue, see Ōta Tatsuo, "New Study," p. 113; Ogawa Tamaki, "Saiyūki genpon," p. 113; Koss, "Formative Stages," chaps. 6 and 7.

¹⁰⁶ Wang Hsiang-hsü discusses the use of the chapter-ending formula in a comment in chapter 100 (14a). See also Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, items 10 and 12, on the special function of chapter titles.

¹⁰⁷ On the use of opening and closing verses, see Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 10.

¹⁰⁸ The special poetic effects achieved in the verse passages are analyzed by Anthony Yu in "Heroic Verse and Heroic Mission," pp. 879, 897, and in his *Journey*, pp. 24ff. See also Francis So, "Some Rhetorical Conventions of the Verse Sections of *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 177–94; Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 185f.; and Dudbridge, "Tsai-shang-ch'üeh," pp. 515f. On the particular device of delayed amplification, see Koss, "Formative Stages," chaps. 3 and 7. Some poems in a similar pattern can be found in the *Tsa-chü*; e.g., Scenes 12, p. 665, and 16, p. 676. The enthusiasm with which the best of these pieces were received by the sixteenth-century readers may be gauged by "Li Cho-wu's" liberal application of "critical dots" (*p'ing-tien* 評點) to mark particularly fine examples.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the possibly tongue-in-cheek comment by "Li Cho-wu," chapter 1 (2b): "All the poems and other verse in *Hsi-yu chi* are just meant to be fine-sounding, . . . anyone who tries

Once again, however, the key element of fictional rhetoric—the point on which I am identifying the four disparate Ming novels as members of the same generic class, and that which, in fact, justifies the use of the imported term "novel" in the first place—is the reliance on irony to undercut the conventional significance of traditional figures.¹¹⁰ Here, however, I will have to modify my earlier working definition of irony as any discrepancy between surface meaning and underlying intent in a text to allow it to take in the more fully articulated disjunction of meaning that materializes in allegory. As in the *Chin P'ing Mei*, here too the author's ironic wit ranges from very light to quite heavy, from occasional jokes and parodies to the serious allegorical framework of meaning that will occupy the bulk of the remainder of this chapter. Let us begin with the lighter side. The text of *Hsi-yu chi* is liberally sprinkled with innumerable little jokes and puns. These are most transparent in the names of many of the characters and places in the narrative, from witty stabs at false pretenses, as in the Jade-faced Princess (Yü-mien kung-chu 玉面公主), to hints of a more doctrinal nature (e.g., the *yüan* tortoise).¹¹¹ The traditional commentators devote considerable ingenuity to deciphering names of this sort. I should point out that these include quite a few instances of sexual innuendo, both in names—for example, the Bodhisattva Below the Belt (Pan-chieh Kuan-yin 半截觀音) in chapter 83, and in other details.¹¹²

to interpret them according to literary principles is a foolish pedant" 凡西遊詩賦只要好聽... 若以文理求之則腐。

¹¹⁰ See review of the use of ironic rhetoric in the four masterworks below, Chapter 6.

¹¹¹ Yü-mien kung-chu makes her appearance in chapter 60 (2:829). We may note the common iconography that links her with Pai-ku fu-jen in chapter 27, and the Jade Hare (Yü-t'u 玉兔) in chapters 93–95. The commentators frequently gloss the suggestive names of characters and places in the text. For example, "Li Cho-wu" glosses the name of the Sand Monk in chapter 22 (15a); Pai-ku fu-jen in chapter 26 (14a); Yü-mien kung-chu in chapter 60 (1b); and he expresses delight at suggestive names in a number of places (e.g., 67 [1b]). See also Wang Hsiang-hsü, on the Chia widow and daughters in chapter 23 (5a), on Chin-tou Mountain 金兜洞 in chapter 50 (1b), and on the Cave of Coiling Threads 盤絲洞 in chapter 72 (1a). See also Ch'en Shih-pin on Pai-ku fu-jen in chapter 30 (339) and on the centipede spirits in 73 (746); and Chang Shu-shen on the Pao-hsiang kuo 寶象國 in chapter 28 (2b, 3b), on Wen-shu in chapter 37 (16b), on the Buddha Ju-lai in chapter 58 (14a), and on the lions in chapter 90 (14b). In *Tsung-p'i*, item 11 (4a), Chang explicitly states the principle of significant naming. See also Wang Hsiang-hsü, comments in chapters 44 (1b), 49 (1b), and 99 (1a).

¹¹² Chapter 83 (3:1146). Chang Shu-shen notes the suggestiveness of this name in chapter 80 (5a), and "Li Cho-wu" all but spells out the joke in chapter 83 (14a, *tp*): "I wonder whether this 'half Kuan-yin' is the top half or the bottom half? I wish people would tell me whether it is the top half they prefer or the bottom half. Ha!" 半截觀音不知是上半截不知是下半截。請問世人還是上半截好還是下半截好，一笑一笑！Other examples of more or less subtle sexual hints seem to be present in the white jade scepter (*pai-yü kuei* 白玉珪), in chapter 37 (2:511), *yü-t'u* in the same chapter (2:514); and the warning not to "leak heavenly

In addition, the author apparently enjoys concocting elaborate word games to jolt his reader into considering the discrepancy between text and meaning. For example, in the very first chapter he indulges in a little joke on the name of Sun Wu-k'ung, playing the old game of "character splitting" (*ch'ai-tzu* 拆字) to get "small child" out of the name Sun. When he goes on to relate this to the Taoist term "newborn babe" (*ying-erh* 嬰兒), the joke turns in a more suggestive direction, and this is further developed when Sun proceeds to claim that he has no surname (*wu-hsing* 無姓), punning on the expression "no nature" (*wu-hsing* 無性) to stress the idea of his spontaneous birth.¹¹³ Later, this is taken up again in chapters 34 and 35, where the confusion between the true monkey-pilgrim (Sun Hsing-che 孫行者) and the false Che Hsing-sun 者行孫 and Hsing-che Sun 行者孫 leaves Sun Wu-k'ung's identity literally turned inside out. The tendency to begin with a pun and then plumb it for additional layers of meaning also applies to the "monkey of the mind" metaphor (*hsin-yüan i-ma* 心猿意馬), which begins as not much more than a conventional joke, but is eventually plugged into the larger allegorical scheme. One of the most intriguing instances of wordplay in the book is found in a puzzling line of verse that appears in chapter 20 and is then repeated, with variations, in chapter 40:

A cave to collapse faces a cave to collapse,
When the cave becomes about to collapse, the cave becomes a
mountain.

當倒洞當倒洞，洞當當倒洞當山。¹¹⁴

secrets" (*hsieh-lou t'ien-chi* 洩漏天機) in chapter 44 (2:620), in a scene dealing with a leak of another sort. I think we can also detect a lascivious pun in the catfish spirit (*nien-yü ching* 鮎魚精) into which Chu Pa-chieh transforms himself in order to join the bathing goddesses in chapter 72 (3:999); most particularly in chapter 95, where references to a "short staff" (*tuan-kun* 短棍) and to a "Downy Hill" (*Mao-ying shan* 毛穎山) make unmistakable reference to the sort of salvation proffered by the Jade Hare (3:1291, 1295). The Jade Hare herself, of course, bears strong erotic connotations, which may hark back to the pursuit of a white hare in the episode at Wu-chi kuo. In response to such innuendo, the commentators are occasionally willing to indulge in little jokes of their own, as in "Li Cho-wu's" rather crude derision of the Master as a catamite in chapters 54 (9a) and 29 (3b); and Chang Shu-shen's quip in chapter 29 (3b): 和尚走後門，其惡絕妙。The most puzzling example of this type is seen in repeated mention of the "lute bone" (*p'i-p'a ku* 琵琶骨), which is pierced to subdue a number of demons, including the Monkey King himself; see, e.g., chapters 6 (1:80), 43 (2:606), and 63 (2:880). This term has generally been taken in its modern sense to refer to the clavicle, but a small piece of evidence (see below, n. 193) indicates the possibility of sexual associations in the expression. Cf. the P'i-p'a Cave in a scene of sexual affront in chapter 55.

¹¹³ Chapter 1 (1:14).

¹¹⁴ Chapters 20 (1:272), and 40 (2:551). In the second occurrence the word *tang* 當 is changed to *t'ang* 堂, and the final *shan* 山 becomes *hsien* 仙, perhaps suggesting that this is nothing but a nonsense rhyme. But at least one commentator, Ch'en Shih-pin (32:331f.), picks up on this combination of sounds and images.

Although I do not claim to fully understand this line (and in fact it may be nothing more than nonsense syllables), I suspect that what the joke is talking about has to do with the complementary concepts of mass and void, which not only inform the landscape of mountains and caves collapsing into one another—as in the opening sequence of the enclosed vault of heaven within a waterfall cave—but also resonate with more abstract qualities of solidity and emptiness of special significance to the author's vision. At the very least, witticisms like these force the reader to look beyond the amusing surface of the story to consider the possibility of hidden patterns of meaning.¹¹⁵

One additional area in which the author applies his ironic brush may be seen in his presentation of individual figures. Sometimes this is a matter of hyperbole in the delineation of character traits: Chu Pa-chieh's sloth, Sun Wu-k'ung's temper, the Sand Monk's exaggerated moroseness. This is of course one of the basic elements in the humor of the book. More significant for my argument is the tendency to expose the weak underside of the heroes of the popular *Hsi-yu* tradition. In the case of Hsüan-tsang's helplessness and nervousness, or the self-destructive rivalry between Sun Wu-k'ung and Chu Pa-chieh, this is quite transparent. But also in those significant instances in which Hsüan-tsang reveals his inner weakness precisely where he should be strongest (i.e., in certain cases of sexual temptation), the irony begins to cut a bit deeper.¹¹⁶ The same is true in certain scenes in which Sun Wu-k'ung is shown to be all too vulnerable, or else to reach the limits of his extraordinary powers. This type of ironic undercutting is of special significance, since I will appeal to the same idea to explain the reduction in the stature of the popular heroes of *San-kuo yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan* when their stories are reworked in the novel form.

Before turning now to the serious dimension of the author's bifocal ironic vision, I must pause a moment to acknowledge the humorous side of the novel. For the remainder of this chapter I will focus exclusive attention on a serious reading of the allegory, but it would be a grave error to deny that the humorous side of the novel also exists. Hu Shih was not the first critic to dismiss the forced interpretations of the Ch'ing commentators and praise instead the sheer good fun of the book; but his has been the most influential argument. It finds its way into the writings of many twentieth-

¹¹⁵ Additional examples of extended plays on words include the attribute "overmindfulness" (*to-hsin*) applied to Hsüan-tsang (cf. the propensity to tears ascribed to Sung Chiang and Liu Pei, to be discussed below, Chapters 4, Part IV, and 5, Part IV).

¹¹⁶ Hsüan-tsang's obtuseness in the face of self-evident peril is emphasized in chapters 27, 33, 40, and 80, among other places. His exaggerated innocence and sexual vulnerability are the central issues in a number of chapters. The commentators are predictably sensitive to this issue; e.g., Chang Shu-shen, chapters 47 (15b), 73 (1b). See Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 43f.; James Fu, *Quest*, pp. 45f.

century critics of Chinese fiction, and also dominates the reputation of the book in the West, thanks to Waley's brilliant *Monkey*.¹¹⁷ Although I personally feel that the serious side of the novel is far more interesting, given the intellectual context of Hu Shih's evaluation in the midst of the literary revolution in the early part of this century, his reading is fully understandable as a reflection of the spirit of the times. And, for that matter, nothing is wrong with it as far as it goes. *Hsi-yu chi* is after all a very funny book. But it is also quite a serious book, not dead serious perhaps, but it does raise serious intellectual issues. Having made this apology, I can move on to my own attempt to make something of the serious side of the text.

IV

To pursue the argument that there is more to the *Hsi-yu chi* than its amusing surface narrative, we must move from the notion of irony into the adjacent territory of allegory. Irony and allegory are, after all, sister tropes: they both describe ways in which texts can say one thing and mean another.¹¹⁸ But where the emphasis in irony is on the undermining of the authority of what is "said," in allegorical compositions we get a more fully articulated projection of what is ultimately "meant."

This essential function of allegory to shift the reader's vision from patterns of narrative shape to corresponding patterns of meaning sets *Hsi-yu chi* apart from our other three novels, which, for all their varying

¹¹⁷ Hu Shih, "K'ao-cheng," p. 390; Lu Hsün, *Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih-lüeh*, p. 173; Chao Ts'ung, *Ssu ta hsiao-shuo*, pp. 184ff. See also Ou-yang Chien, "Hsi-yu chi ti wan-shih chu-i ho hsien-shih ching-shen," pp. 54-71. The commentators discuss the mix of humor and seriousness at many points; e.g., "Li Cho-wu," chapters 19 (14a, *tp*) and 25 (15a, *tp*); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 3 (8b), 17 (1b); Chang Shu-shen, 4 (16a, b), 18 (7a), 25 (3a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 26 (273), 45 (458), 55 (560); *T'ung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, 67 (70b). For general discussions of the reception of the novel by Ming readers, see Su Hsing, "Hsi-yu so-t'an," pp. 54-63, esp. 57ff.; Isobe Akira, "Hsi-yu chi ti chieh-na yü liu-ch'uan," pp. 147ff.; and Lo Lung-chih, "Hsi-yü chi ti yü-yen ho hsi-nüeh t'e-chih," pp. 11-19.

¹¹⁸ This minimal definition of allegory is reflected in the term *alienoloquium* attributed to Isidore of Seville. For a review of the sources and various definitions of allegory in Western literature, see my *Archetype and Allegory*, pp. 87ff., and "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 163ff. A crucial aspect of the theoretical basis of Western allegory lies in the distinction between "allegorical composition" and "allegorical reading" (roughly equivalent to Dante's "allegory of the poets" and "allegory of the theologians," that is, texts that are composed in accordance with an allegorical scheme versus those that are simply susceptible to allegorical interpretation). In what follows, my analysis is based on the conviction that the *Hsi-yu chi* qualifies as a self-consciously programmed allegorical composition, which demands a rigorous allegorical reading. Chang Ching-erh discusses this issue in *Jen-wu yen-chiu*, pp. 17ff.

degrees of ironic deflation and suggestive use of language, cannot really be said to deliver this sort of message. In *Chin P'ing Mei*, it is true, we do find a strong hint of the allegorical impulse—strong enough to have inspired Chang Chu-p'o's essay "On the Allegorical Meaning in the *Chin P'ing Mei*" ("Chin P'ing Mei yü-i shuo" 金瓶梅寓意說).¹¹⁹ But clearly neither this nor either of the other sixteenth-century masterworks comes close to working out a consistent allegorical scheme.

The idea that *Hsi-yu chi* ought to be read allegorically is seconded by virtually all of the traditional commentators whose readings are still extant. In the prefaces and marginal comments of these critics, we find numerous passages that explicitly proclaim the allegorical foundations of the book. For example, the preface attributed to Yü Chi warns us that

What is said refers to Hsüan-tsang, but what is meant is actually not about Hsüan-tsang. What is recorded refers to the fetching of scriptures, but what is intended is not about the fetching of scriptures. It just deliberately borrows this to allegorize the great Tao.

所言者在玄奘而意實不在玄奘。所紀者在取經，而志實不在取經，特假此以喻大道耳。¹²⁰

Similarly, the nineteenth-century critic Liu I-ming insists that "the intended meaning of the work lies completely beyond the given words" 其用意處盡在言外, and nearly all the traditional critics refer at one point or another to the "hidden meaning" (*shen-i* 深意, *yin-i* 隱意, *yin-yü* 隱寓) underlying its surface texture.¹²¹ This does not mean, of course, that such readers fail to appreciate the humor for which the novel is justly praised. But that does not keep them from insisting on the presence of a serious level

¹¹⁹ For discussions of Chang Chu-p'o's "Chin P'ing Mei yü-i shuo," see above, Chapter 2, pp. 125, 127. As in the case of Western allegory, fully realized examples of this mode are less common than shorter sequences within longer narrative works. Other examples of what I could call allegorical composition in the Chinese fiction tradition include *Hsi-yu pu* 西遊補, and portions of *Lü-yeh hsien-tsung* 綠野仙踪, *Ching-hua yüan* 鏡花緣, and *Lao-ts'an yü-chi* 老殘遊記, etc.

¹²⁰ On the attribution of this preface to Yü Chi, see Part I of this chapter and b.n. II.5, and III.

¹²¹ Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 2. See b.n. II.8. Examples of occurrences of the other terms are as follows: *shen-i* 深意: Chang Shu-shen, 9 (1b), Wang Hsiang-hsü, 24 (2a), "Li Cho-wu," 4 (14a), *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 14 (47b); *yin-i* 隱意: Chang Shu-shen, *Tsung-p'i*, 23 (11a), Ch'en Shih-pin, 11 (124), Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 17; *yin-yü* 隱喻: Ch'en Shih-pin, 43 (438), 55 (559), 77 (784), 91 (921), Chang Shu-shen, *Tsung-p'i*, 8 (3b), 13 (4b), 70 (18b); "Li Cho-wu," 14 (12a), 16 (16a), and 63 (14b); *yü-i* 寓意: Chang Shu-shen, 28 (1a), 29 (1a), 32 (17b), 59 (17b), 72 (17a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 1 (1b), 3 (2a), 6 (2b), 33 (8b), 52 (14b). Other examples include Wang Hsiang-hsü, 24 (1b), 69 (1a), 78 (1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 9 (104), 30 (309), 37 (378), 50 (509), 54 (550), 59 (599), 69 (703), 72 (734), 94 (949); Chang Shu-shen, 6 (2b), 13 (5a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 72 (19b); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 14 (47a).

of meaning beneath the amusing surface, as they explicitly argue in many comments.¹²²

Now, when these critics use such terms as "allegorical figure" (yü 寓) or "metaphoric expression" (yü 喻) to refer to this unarticulated dimension of meaning, what they often seem to have in mind is simply the presence of some kind of a didactic "message," short of true allegorical reference.¹²³ For this reason, in order to push ahead with my reading of the novel as an allegorical text, it will be necessary to lay out in full the articulated structure of meaning I contend to be present.¹²⁴ In doing so, I will first set forth some of the key terms in which the allegory is couched, and then will consider the manner in which these are worked together into interlocking schemes—especially those whereby they are integrated into the dynamic movement of the narrative itself. With that done, I will be able to turn to my own interpretation of the "intended" meaning of the book.

As observed earlier, one of the things that distinguishes the hundred-chapter *Hsi-yu chi* from all other extant antecedents and parallel versions of the Hsüan-tsang story cycle is the imposition onto the text of an extensive

¹²² This is the general assumption underlying the notion of a "hidden" layer of meaning. See, e.g., "Li Cho-wu," 2 (14b, *tp*), Wang Hsiang-hsü, "Yü Chi" preface; Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 4 and *passim*, Liu I-ming, *tu-fa* and prefaces *passim*, and *Hsi-yu chi shih-i*, preface. Cf. the *Tung-t'ien hsüan chi*, Yang T'i preface (see n. 21), where the *Hsi-yu chi* is characterized in similar terms.

¹²³ For example, Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 55: "Within its bantering tone there is always a profound meaning" 科諢中皆有妙理. Similar ideas are expressed in the Ch'en Yüan-chih preface, the Man-t'ing kuo-k'e preface, and in "Li Cho-wu" comments 2 (19b), 6 (13b), 16 (16a), 19 (14a), 25 (15a), and 46 (16a); Chang Shu-shen, *Tsung-p'i*, items 1 (1a), 3 (2a-b), 8 (4a), 11 (4b), 13 (15a), 17 (5b-6a), 19 (6a), 21 (6b), 31 (8b-9a), 33 (9a-9b), 36 (10a-10b), 45 (13b), 52 (15a), 65 (18a), 66 (18a-18b), 69 (19a), 70 (19a), 72 (19b), 75 (20a); the Yu T'ung preface and 50 (509), 53 (539), 59 (594), 69 (703), 72 (734). Hu Shih's rejection of allegorical readings is found in his "K'ao-cheng," p. 390. An earlier critic, Juan K'uei-sheng (*Ch'a-yü k'e-hua*, p. 675), also brushed aside any forced attempt to find deeper meaning in the novel. Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng, on the other hand (see K'ung Ling-ching, *Shih-liao*, p. 69), provides an oblique affirmation of the more serious readings when he states, "Although it is basically a sort of didactic fable, it still contains a measure of ultimate truth" 雖屬寓言, 却有至理. A very similar view is expressed in Hsieh Chao-che, *Wu tsa-tsu*, 15:36a; as well as in Liu T'ing-chi's *Tsai-yüan tsa-chih* (2:24b), and in the *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi* preface. Liu Ts'un-yan defends the Ch'en preface as "original" (*hsin-hsien* 新鮮) in "Ssu-yu chi," p. 374. See also my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 173ff.

¹²⁴ "Li Cho-wu," in chapter 14 (12a-b, *tp*), emphasizes the painstaking efforts required for this allegorical composition. This notion of strict allegorical design contrasts with the sort of loose didactic parable or fable that Wu Ch'eng-en seems to have in mind when he uses the term yü 寓 in a passage often cited as evidence of his allegorical intentions (see above, n. 11). I am aware of the controversial implication of intentionality in this view of allegory, but I would argue that if speculation about an author's intentions is anywhere valid, it is here in allegorical narrative, where what we have is essentially an intellectual exercise, a challenge to the reader to decode the author's intended meaning.

overlay of suggestive philosophical terminology. If the speculations on the role of Ch'iu Ch'u-chi in the history of the novel ever prove to have some basis in fact, then the isolation in the "Yü Chi" preface of some of the key terms of the allegory would shift the first introduction of these terms into the story back to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. But for the time being, all other available evidence indicates that this allegorical framework is the contribution of a sixteenth-century author.

In either case, the primary distinguishing feature of the novel text is precisely this injection of allegorical terms. These tag words do not simply crop up at random points; they are strategically inserted in a certain number of predictable locations. One of these places is in the names applied to the fictional characters within the story: both the principal pilgrims with their various appellations, and the demons bearing such suggestive names as the Lady of the White Bones (Pai-ku fu-jen), the Red Child (Hung-hai-erh), the Iron Fan Princess (T'ieh-shan kung-chu 鐵扇公主), the Jade Hare (Yü-t'u), and the Many-eyed Demon (To-mu kuai 多目怪). Of course, in those cases in which these names are taken over from preexisting sources we obviously cannot say that the author has deliberately created them for roles in his allegory, only that he has perceived the potential significance of these names and gone on to develop them within his own allegorical framework.¹²⁵ On the other hand, a good many of the interesting names given to these figures do, in fact, seem to be original with the author of the hundred-chapter novel.¹²⁶ The same is true for many of the iconographic details attached to specific characters. The metal band that encloses the head of the mind-monkey as well as those that enclose the tip of his magic cudgel, the nine-toothed rake used by Chu Pa-chieh both as a weapon and as a tool to clear allegorical brambles and muck from the true path, the necklace of nine skulls worn by the Sand Monk as trophies of his unredeemed past, not to mention the emblematic colors, elements, and weapons that define each of the major demons who bar the pilgrims' way to

¹²⁵ Some very suggestive examples are in fact found in antecedent versions of the narrative. For example, Pai-ku fu-jen appears in the *Shih-hua*, section 4. See T'an Chia-chien, "Sun Wu-k'ung san ta pai-ku ching ku-shih t'an-yüan," p. 66; and Chang Ching-erh, "The Monkey-hero in the *Hsi-yu chi* Cycle," pp. 208f. Ti-yung fu-jen is mentioned in the *Pak t'ongsa önhæ*, transcribed in Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 183, and in the *Hsiao-shih chen-k'ung pao-chüan*, l. 38 (see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 94; and Hu Shih, "Pa Hsiao-shih chen-k'ung pao-chüan," p. 3612). The monastic name of Sun Wu-k'ung is a case in point. Although this designation is not unprecedented, we can readily perceive the manner in which the author gets allegorical mileage out of its different levels of meaning (see n. 288). For studies on the sources regarding Sun Wu-k'ung and Chu Pa-chieh, see b.n. I. The same is also true of the development of the significance of certain place-names, such as Huo-yen shan (see *Tsa-chü*, Scene 18, and *Pak t'ongsa önhæ*).

¹²⁶ See above, nn. 9 and 10.

salvation—all of these derive from prior sources, so their use here is more a question of exploiting allegorical potential than of inventing entirely new imagery.¹²⁷

These allegorical clues become more obtrusive when they appear in certain special positions in the text, primarily in chapter-title couplets and in the other forms of incidental verse described earlier. For example, such chapter headings as "Tripitaka Does Not Forget His Original Source; the Four Sages Put to Trial the Mind of Meditation" 三藏不忘本, 四聖試禪心 in chapter 23; "Perverse Teachings Lead the True Nature Astray, the Primal Spirit Aids the Essential Mind" 外道迷真性, 元神助本心 in chapter 33; and "Where the Mind-monkey Is Rectified the Various Affinities Are Quelled, Slashing through the Devious Gate, the Brightness of the Moon Comes into View" 心猿正處諸緣伏, 劈破傍門見月明 in chapter 36 quite explicitly label the allegorical significance of the narrative figures and events in question.¹²⁸ The same is true for a large number of other lines of incidental verse in the text, many of which I will cite in the following discussion.¹²⁹

What are these terms used to transform the received story cycles into an allegorical novel?¹³⁰ To begin with, we may quickly pass beyond the various terms associated with Mahayana Buddhism. In view of the fact that the narrative is framed as a quest for scriptures for the purpose of saving the lost souls of an entire empire, it is hardly surprising that there is so much mention of the Buddha and principal bodhisattvas. Among these, Kuan-yin is singled out for particular attention, not only by virtue of her dominant place in Mahayana soteriology, but also because the specific iconographic details associated with this figure, especially her "vase of purification" (*ching-p'ing* 淨瓶), resonate with some of the crucial imagery in the novel.¹³¹

¹²⁷ On the iconographical details associated with the *Hsi-yu* figures, see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 18ff., 47ff.; Su Hsing, "Hsi-yu so-t'an," pp. 54–63; Kao Ming-ko, "Hsi-yu chi li ti shen-mo wen-t'i," pp. 118–27.

¹²⁸ Another good example is found in chapter 14: "The Mind-monkey Returns to the True Way; the Six Thieves Vanish without a Trace" 心猿歸正, 六賊無踪.

¹²⁹ Cf. Liu I-ming's discussion of the allegorical function of the chapter titles and concluding verses in his *tu-fa*, items 10 and 12.

¹³⁰ For a thorough review of the allegorical terminology programmed into the novel, see Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 36–62; and my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 175–81. Nicholas Koss has some of these in mind when he notes the insertion of "literati terms" to heighten the didactic flavor of the Shih-te t'ang edition ("Formative Stages," chap. 4).

¹³¹ Kuan-yin appears in chapters 6, 8–12, 14, 15, 17, 22, 26, 41, 83, 84. On the *ching-p'ing*, see Ts'ao Shih-pang, "Hsi-yu chi jo-kan ch'ing-chieh ti pen-yüan tsai-t'an," pp. 35f. For additional background on the Buddhist terminology in the novel, see Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 53f.; Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 14; and my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 179ff. Liu Ts'un-yan considers the significance of some Buddhist terms in "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 3, p. 87.

The use of some of the principal icons of Mahayana salvationism, insofar as it is dictated by the prior tradition, should not be unique to the hundred-chapter novel—and indeed these figures are well represented in the extant antecedent versions of the story.¹³² By the same token, the recurrent evocation of the concept of "crossing over" to the "other shore" of salvation (*tu* 渡, *teng pi-an* 登彼岸) may be viewed as a necessary part of the tale of the quest journey. These also appear frequently in the sources, although, as we shall see, the diminished weight of the end point within the structure of the novel significantly alters the new meaning of the arrival on that other shore.¹³³

As for explicit references to Buddhist scriptures, there is no lack of these in the antecedent materials. Especially prominent are the Lotus Sutra (*Fa-hua ching* 法華經) and the Diamond Sutra (*Chin-kang ching* 金剛經). In the novel, however, allusions to these texts are minimal, while the corresponding highlighting of the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra (*Hsin ching* 般若波羅蜜多心經) sets up one of the central frames of meaning in the book.¹³⁴

Within the general area of Buddhist thought, the author does not unequivocally favor the teachings of any particular sect. For example, he stages a fairly weak conventional debate on Mahayana and Hinayana doctrine in chapter 12, and as we shall see he does not appear to present a clear choice in the theological controversy over self-attained versus externally bestowed enlightenment (*tzu-li* 自力, *t'a-li* 他力), or between sudden and gradual attainment.¹³⁵ On the other hand, however,

¹³² For example, Manjusri appears in the *Shih-hua*, section 4. See Ts'ao Shih-pang, "Pen-yüan tsai-t'an," pp. 34ff.

¹³³ The image of crossing over a water barrier (*tu*) figures prominently in a number of chapters, including 1, 15, 22, 49, 50, and 98. Of course, this motif is an integral part of the prior narrative cycle; e.g., in the *Shih-hua*, section 17. The commentators frequently pick up on this motif and its traditional associations. Cf. the metaphor of the raft (*fa* 筏) with its conventional gloss as *dharma* (*fa* 法), on which one is absolutely dependent to stay afloat throughout one's "passage," but which is then rejected as utterly useless once one has reached the "other shore." See *Chin-kang ching*, p. 11a.

¹³⁴ The *Hsin ching* is introduced with much fanfare in chapters 19–20 and is recalled several times thereafter at key points. It is also mentioned in some of the antecedent materials, including the *Shih-hua*, section 17, where it is singled out for special attention, although the significance of its message is not developed. See Anthony Yu, "Two Literary Examples of Religious Pilgrimage," p. 222. The *Chin-kang ching* is brought up for more substantive, though essentially humorous, treatment in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 21 (it is mentioned again in Scene 22). Ch'en Shih-pin makes pointed reference to the *Hua-yen ching* 華嚴經 in chapter 38 (387), as does the Yu T'ung preface. See also *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 44 (31b), 56 (61b), 82 (13b), and 98 (88b).

¹³⁵ See more detailed discussion of the implications of this issue in interpreting the novel in Part V of this chapter. The debate on Mahayana versus Hinayana doctrines is staged in chapter 12. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 13 (1a), and 42 (1b).

he does provide for a special focus on Ch'an thought and imagery.¹³⁶ This is notable, since the historical Hsüan-tsang of course had no connection with the Ch'an School (unless we exaggerate the common ground between Ch'an and "Mere Ideation" philosophy). In any event, the allegorical level of the novel draws heavily upon Ch'an elements, both for ideas regarding the "true nature" (*pen-hsing* 本性) of reality, and for favored imagery such as the autumn moon in the enlightenment scene that forms the nucleus of chapter 36.¹³⁷ This emphasis on Ch'an places the primary focus of interest on the enlightenment of the mind, and this will contribute one of the central axes of my own interpretation.

It is in the introduction of specifically Taoist terminology, however, that we find the clearest evidence of recasting of the source narratives into our allegorical novel. Although one can perceive traces of certain such terms in the antecedent materials, there is no question about the fact that this overlay represents a crucial element in the conception of the hundred-chapter novel.¹³⁸

The most prominent terms within the province of Taoist lore are those derived from cinnabar alchemy (*lien-tan* 鍊丹).¹³⁹ Aside from the actual cinnabar itself, we also find references in the novel to certain implements involved in this occult art: crucibles, firing furnaces (*lu* 爐), cauldrons (*ting*

¹³⁶ The most prominent images with strong Ch'an associations are the refulgent moon and the subdual of dragons or tigers of consciousness (*fu-hu*, *fu-lung* 伏虎, 伏龍). These concepts are often emphasized by the commentators; e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, 13 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 19 (202), 23 (241f.), 36 (368), 40 (405), 46 (467), 47 (478), 58 (588f.), 85 (867), 86 (875), 90 (911f.); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 23. Hsüan-tsang's inaccurate identification as a Ch'an master also appears in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 4 and 5. On the relationship between Ch'an and the historical Hsüan-tsang's "Mere Ideation School" of Buddhist philosophy, see Fung Yu-lan, *History of Chinese Philosophy*, 2:299ff., 388ff.; Kenneth Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 235ff., 297–364, and esp. 323ff.

¹³⁷ See especially chapters 64 and 93. The moon symbolism is also emphasized in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 23.

¹³⁸ For a review of the Taoist terminology in the novel, see Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 36–52, and his "Pilgrimage," pp. 223ff.; Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 82f.; Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," pp. 170ff.; and my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," pp. 176–82. For additional background on this terminology, see for example Liu Ts'un-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 291–330, and his "Ch'üan-chien chiao," plus studies cited in n. 36.

¹³⁹ The terms of cinnabar alchemy are emphasized in all of the commentaries; for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 39 (1a), 52 (1a), 53 (1a); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 8. Predictably, they also figure prominently in the interpretations of Ch'en Tun-fu. See, for example, pp. 29ff., and his *Tsung-lun*, pp. 29–32. Cf. the emphasis on this frame of meaning in the early descriptions of the novel; e.g., Ting Yen (see n. 35), cited in K'ung Ling-ching, *Shih-liao*, p. 72. For further analysis and background on this alchemical lore, see Anthony Yu, "Pilgrimage"; Judith Berling, "Paths of Convergence," pp. 123–47; Kristofer Schipper, *Le corps taoïste*, pp. 144ff., 226–36; and works cited in n. 138.

鼎), a kind of measuring spoon called *tao-kuei* (刀圭), etc.¹⁴⁰ Most significant are the various uses of alchemical terms based on *yin-yang* and five-elements designations to refer to some of the central figures in the narrative: Mother of Wood (*Mu-mu* 木母) for Chu Pa-chieh, Lord of Metal (*Chin-kung* 金公) for Sun Wu-k'ung, Yellow Hag (*Huang-p'o* 黃婆) for the Sand Monk.¹⁴¹ A second set of Taoist terminology of relevance to the novel is that associated with various forms of physical cultivation: quiet-sitting, breath control, and, most important, sexual exercises.¹⁴² As we shall see, these oblique references to late Ming sexual cults occupy a special place in the novel, where they play upon the *yin-yang* symbolism worked into many scenes.

These separate sets of Taoist terms begin to merge when we note that many of the expressions for sexual union and its issue—"the conjugal joining of *yin* and *yang*" (*yin-yang chiao-kou* 陰陽交媾), "the lovely maiden" (*ch'a-nü* 姹女), and especially "the newborn babe" (*ying-erh* 嬰兒)—are applied with equal currency to the union of alchemical substances and the corresponding gestation of a "child" of the elements.¹⁴³ The connection between these two sets of terms is strengthened by the use of the term "firing time" (*huo-hou*), not only because it refers literally to the crucial question of the timing of the process of cultivation, but also because it lends itself to a nice pun on the name of the fire-monkey (also *huo-hou* 火猴) who is the principal guardian of the pilgrim band.¹⁴⁴ As in the case of the Buddhist lore considered earlier, the loose insertion of these terms

¹⁴⁰ Ch'en Shih-pin glosses the term *tao-kuei* in chapter 38 (388). See Anthony Yu, *Journey*, p. 51.

¹⁴¹ Examples of the use of the terms *Chin-kung* and *Mu-mu* occur in poems and chapter titles throughout the text. On the term *Huang-p'o*, see Wang Hsiang-hsü, 47 (1a), and 53 (1b). Cf. the use of practically all of these terms in *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi* (e.g., pp. 12b, 13a). For a thorough analysis of the five-elements terms in the novel, see Alice Nai-yin Lung, "An Interpretation of the *Hsi-yu chi* Pilgrims in terms of the Five Elements." See also Nakano Miyoko, *Saiyüki no himitsu*, pp. 72–145.

¹⁴² On sexual practices and other physical cultivation in Ming Taoism, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 301ff.; and Kristofer Schipper, *Le corps taoïste*, pp. 144ff., 171ff., and passim.

¹⁴³ These overlapping terms occur throughout the text, and are especially prominent in chapters 19, 24, 40, 53, 78, and 94. The commentators frequently link their interpretations to these terms; e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, 38 (1a), 44 (1b), 47 (1a), 53 (1b), 80 (1a–1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 17 (185), 22 (229), 54 (548), 69 (702), 72 (734), 82 (834), 92 (929), 94 (949). Once again, a proximate literary source for much of this terminology is found in *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi*, especially pp. 12b, 13a, 14a–b, 15a–b.

¹⁴⁴ For examples of the use of the term *huo-hou* in the novel, see chapters 73 (3:1008) and 88 (3:1214). The term is emphasized in comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 4 (3b), 92 (1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 4 (44), 32 (333), 91 (921), 99 (1003); *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 84 (41b); and Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 8. An earlier occurrence of the term can be found in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 9.

makes it difficult to identify with any precision the sectarian origins of particular expressions. But it is worth repeating that though the bulk of these terms belong to the common vocabulary of Ming Taoism found in abundance in practically any of the texts in the *Tao Tsang* 道藏, nearly all of them can be traced back at least to the teachings of southern Taoism in the late Sung and Yuan period—particularly to the writings of Ch'iu Ch'u-chi and other Ch'üan-chen luminaries.¹⁴⁵ One other Taoist idea read by certain commentators between the lines of the novel is the notion of the "dual cultivation of the physical and essential self" (*hsing-ming shuang-hsiu* 性命雙修), which by the Ming period had come to refer fairly specifically to cults of sexual union, while still retaining more abstract philosophical significance beyond the exclusive bounds of Taoism.¹⁴⁶

Another set of terms that figures prominently in the allegorical framework of the novel involves expressions derived from the *I Ching* and associated texts. In a loose sense, we might relate some of the numerological patterns in the book, particularly the repeated formula of nine nines, to the *yang* number, nine, in which case the expression "the execution of the three threes" (*san san hsing* 三三行) used to describe the fulfillment of the mission, would yield a similar reading.¹⁴⁷ Some more strictly scriptural

¹⁴⁵ For background on Sung and Yuan Taoism, see above, n. 36. Some examples of Taoist texts I have read that seem to have particular relevance to the terminology imposed on the narrative include *Wu chen p'ien chi-chu*, attributed to Chang Po-tuan (Tzu-yang chen-jen) (see n. 33). Cf. references to Tzu-yang chen-jen in Wang Hsiang-hsü, 62 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 22 (229), 29 (294), 39 (396), 68 (692), 69 (703), 91 (920); *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 18 (82b), 57 (72a), 61 (10b), 71 (8a), 95 (49b); and the *Chin-tan ta-yao* by Ch'en Chih-hsü, which makes liberal use of such terms as *huo-hou*, *huan-tan*, *t'ai*, and *kuei*. The author of this text is linked by Ōta Tatsuo ("Shōdōsho" p. 4) through a chain of associations to Yü Chi. Cf. Ch'en Tun-fu's assertion that the allegory follows the *Chung-Lü ch'uan-tao chi* (see n. 36). For a review of this terminology, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ch'üan-chen chiao," Pt. 1, pp. 58ff. Although the novel evinces little interest in classical Taoist sources, Chang Shu-shen occasionally draws analogies to the thought of Chuang Tzu; e.g., *Tsung-p'i*, 13 and 78. See also *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 18 (80b), 19 (92b), 97 (72a); and Ch'en Shih-pin, 15 (168), 18 (192), 45 (456), 48 (486), 57 (576), 64 (651), 75 (763), 77 (784), 78 (795), and 98 (993).

¹⁴⁶ For further explication of the Ming Taoist interpretation of this particular term, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 307f., 318f. A more extensive treatise dealing with this concept is *Hsing-ming kuei-chih* 性命圭旨 (see biblio.). The term appeared in Sung and Yuan Taoist writings, but it may not have taken on this specific range of meaning until the Ming period (cf. the different application of the terms *hsing* and *ming* in Neo-Confucian thought). See *Tung-i cheng chih*, 14 (47a), 80 (99b).

¹⁴⁷ The formula *san-san hsing chiu-chiu kung* 三三行九九功 is invoked in chapters 1 (1:13), 36 (2:503), and 43 (2:595), etc. The "three threes" may perhaps refer to the six stacked horizontal lines in the *Ch'ien* hexagram ䷀; see my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," p. 179. The idea comes up for discussion by Chang Shu-shen in chapter 99 (1a-b); as well as by Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 3 (10a), 19 (7b); Ch'en Shih-pin, preface and chapters 19 (201), 32 (331), 33 (341f.), 37 (378), 69 (704), 70 (713), 82 (835), 99 (1003), 100 (1015); and Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 8.

usages occur in the references to particular hexagrams in lines of verse and other allegorically charged positions. These terms go beyond their common use as pseudo-philosophical ornamentation to take on greater meaning when the author draws upon specific implications, such as the pure *yin* and pure *yang* of *ch'ien* and *k'un* (乾坤), or the fire and water trigram components (*k'an* 坎, *li* 離) that go to make up the hexagrams *chi-chi* and *wei-chi* 既濟, 未濟—these latter endowed with special significance due to their literal reference to water crossings.¹⁴⁸ The *chi-chi* and *wei-chi* hexagrams are also given heightened attention since the inverted order that puts *chi-chi* ("fully completed") before *wei-chi* ("not yet completed") in the "Later Heaven" sequence of hexagrams provides a key for dealing with the problem of the paradoxical fulfillment of the quest at the close of the narrative.

It would shed a certain balance on this review if these various allusions to *I Ching* lore could be pigeonholed as "Confucian" terms, as opposed to the Buddhist and Taoist expressions outlined earlier. But, of course, the language of the *I Ching*, like that of *yin* and *yang* and the five elements, really belongs to none of the three "schools" exclusively. But this very fact may be more help than hindrance to us, since it is precisely in the syncretic breadth of Ming Neo-Confucianism that I will seek the principal focus of my interpretation.¹⁴⁹

I hope this cursory review of the terms of discourse of the novel will give some idea of the universe of words within which the allegorical pilgrimage takes place. At this point, I must go on to pursue what are the more crucial functions of allegorical composition: first, the linking of these isolated symbolic terms into complex interlocking schemes; and second, the interaction of these symbolic figures in the context of the narrative itself. Although the text is studded with allegorical labels of the type I have discussed above, the simple identification of textual figures with suggestive philosophical designations does not in itself constitute true allegory, especially since many of these tags appear in the prior sources.¹⁵⁰ This is only the raw material of allegorical composition, which must

¹⁴⁸ The hexagram terms *chi-chi* and *wei-chi* figure in a number of chapters, notably 61 (2:847, 856). The commentators frequently discourse on the symbolism of the fire (*li*) and water (*k'an*) components of these hexagrams. See, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü, 2 (2a), 4 (1b), 15 (1a), 16 (1a), 18 (1a), 20 (2a), 43 (1a). The *Tung-i Hsi-yu cheng-chih*, despite its promising title, only rarely bases its interpretations on *I Ching* concepts; e.g., 77 (82a), 79 (95b). In fact, it seems to come out strongly on the side of three-teachings syncretism in a final colophon (*hou-pa* 後跋). Similar terms are used in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 19, 20, and in *Tung-t'ien hsiian-chi*, pp. 5a, 13a, and passim.

¹⁴⁹ I will reconsider, however, certain more explicitly Neo-Confucian ideas in the text later.

¹⁵⁰ See n. 127.

be drawn into a fabric of dynamic interaction for the allegory to really function.

This principle is most obvious with respect to the *yin-yang* and five-elements terms liberally applied to specific characters. The simple labeling of characters with one element or another does not really tell us much. True, the tagging of Sun Wu-k'ung and Chu Pa-chieh as Lord of Metal and Mother of Wood, respectively, does convey something of their essential qualities—Sun Wu-k'ung's mercurial energy, Chu Pa-chieh's vegetative life-force. But these terms only take on their full allegorical significance within the context of the overall framework of interaction worked out in the narrative itself.

The same holds true for the use of hexagram terms, in keeping with the fundamental understanding of the *I Ching* whereby the essential meaning of each separate hexagram phase of reality resides only within the framework of the complete cycle of phenomenal change—an understanding with direct bearing on my interpretation of the apparent circularity of the quest journey in the body of the text.¹⁵¹ In this light, the various schemes become much more interesting when we note the extent to which they reinforce one another. Just as the terms of cinnabar alchemy and sexual cultivation come together in their common use of *yin-yang* and five-elements jargon to evoke the shared concept of generative harmony, so do the fire and water components in the two hexagrams of most relevance to the narrative (*chi-chi* and *wei-chi*) set up a mutual resonance with associated imagery in Buddhist, Taoist, and even Confucian texts. This is particularly true with respect to the common focus on the cultivation of the mind in sixteenth-century Chinese thought, which, as promised, will provide the key to my interpretation of the novel as an allegory of self-cultivation.

Even this complex interrelation of symbols, however, becomes what can be accurately termed "allegorical" only when the individual symbols enter into the dynamic flow of the narrative; i.e., when we press the button and set the entire scheme in motion.¹⁵² The fact that the author expects his readers to work at decoding the surface texture of his narrative is signaled in a number of fairly explicit allegorical figures. In the very first obstacle

¹⁵¹ For additional discussions of the nonfinality of the ending of the narrative, see Parts II and V of this chapter.

¹⁵² I have stressed this dynamic definition of allegory in my "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi*," p. 165. A similar idea is expressed in the 1801 preface to Liu I-ming's *Hsi-yu yüan-chih*: "Each term and each idea is brought out in the actual course of concrete experience" 一辭一意俱在履實踐中發出. See also the 1778 preface: "It uses concrete events to elucidate principles" 以事明理. Cf. the "Yü Chi" preface: "It is a text in which the principles of transformation take on concrete images" 夫大易皆取象之文.

faced by the Master after crossing the frontier of civilization and taking on his principal disciple in chapter 14, the doctrinal label "the six thieves" (*liu-tsei* 六賊) is attached to the problem of misguided reliance on the senses; and later on, in chapter 72, a similar cartouche is applied in a scene of temptation by seven beauties who are unambiguously labeled "the seven passions" (*ch'i-ch'ing* 七情).¹⁵³ There are many other passages in which these labels become less obtrusive, but still outline narrative situations that are often just too scriptural to be read as anything but doctrinal exempla—as in the treacherous crossing of the River of Communion with Heaven on thin ice (*lü-ping* 履冰) in chapter 48, the descent into a well (*ju-ching* 入井) in chapter 38, the subduing of ferocious tigers (*fu-hu* 伏虎) in chapters 13, etc.¹⁵⁴ The traditional commentators regularly take the trouble to gloss such examples, not because their significance is opaque, but simply to emphasize the type of allegorical reading demanded by the text.¹⁵⁵

Slightly less obvious, but still fairly transparent, are certain narrative relationships that draw upon the symbolic designations of the principal figures in five-elements terms. For example, once Sun Wu-k'ung and Chu Pa-chieh have been identified with the elements metal and wood, respectively, the overcoming of the wayward pig in chapter 19 emerges as a simple enactment of the principle that metal conquers wood (*chin k'e mu* 金剋木). This, in turn, provides an easy gloss on the necessary role of Chu Pa-chieh in bringing the unruly Sand Monk into line in chapter 22 (*mu k'e t'u* 木剋土, or *mu k'e shui* 木剋水). The same elemental symbolism further explains why Sun Wu-k'ung is for the most part invulnerable to fire but

¹⁵³ Despite the proverbial familiarity of the designation *liu-tsei*, the commentators still feel the need to point out its significance. See, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü, 56 (1a), 72 (1a-b), 96 (1a). The term also figured in the earlier *Tsa-chü*, Scene 21, as well as in *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi*, where the "six thieves" occupy a key role in the dramatic plot.

¹⁵⁴ The image of treading on thin ice (*lü-ping*) brings to mind the *I Ching*, *k'un* hexagram, line 1 (*Chou-i che-chung*, pp. 140, 758). See Wang Hsiu-hsü, 48 (1a). The descent into a well (*ju-ching*) may hark back to *Lun-yü*, 6:26 or to Mencius (2A:6, 3A:5). Cf. the scene involving a descent into a well in *Shui-hu chuan* (see below, Chapter 4, Part IV). Examples of the subduing of tigers (*fu-hu*) occur in chapters 13 and 21. For the cluster of traditional associations linking images of tigers, damaging winds, poison, cutting metal, and autumn in *Chin P'ing Mei*, see above, Chapter 2, Part III. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 13 (1a), 68 (1a).

¹⁵⁵ For example, Wang Hsiang-hsü discusses the Nine-headed Son-in-law (*Chiu-t'ou fu-ma*) in chapter 63 (1a), as does Chang Shu-shen in chapters 62 (1a) and 63 (14a). Chang glosses the binding of Chu Pa-chieh to a tree in chapter 24 (2a, 2b) as "setting the fruit" (*chieh-kuo* 結果), the Many-eyed Demon (*To-mu kuai*) in chapter 72 (1b, 2a) as an incarnation of sensuality (*se* 色); the hollow bamboo in chapter 14 (17b) as "without a heart" 無心; the spider demons (*chih-chu*) in chapter 73 (9b) as obsession (*ch'ih* 癡). See also Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 47 (478), 49 (501), and 64 (651).

nearly helpless in water, and is forced to call upon the services of Chu Pa-chieh, who is quite at home in water, every time a denizen of the depths needs to be overcome.

This sort of prescribed reading of allegorical figures also applies to the central metaphor of the text: the identification of the irrepressible monkey with the human mind, by way of the expression "monkey of the mind, horse of the will" (*hsin-yüan i-ma*).¹⁵⁶ Although this is after all a quite common locution—in fact, it appears in some of the antecedents of the novel—here it is very obviously raised to the level of a key to the entire allegory, as our commentators do not fail to note.¹⁵⁷

With all this allegorical apparatus at our fingertips, it might appear that it would be a simple task to decode the meaning of this text. As in the case of *Chin P'ing Mei*, there is no lack here of seemingly straightforward didactic preaching. After all, this is the story of a group of "pilgrims" engaged in an ecclesiastical mission crowned with success, and the book closes with hymns of praise and thanksgiving. Given the insistence of the allegorical signposts, the critical commentators on the novel have felt no hesitation in assuming that a didactic message is present in the book.¹⁵⁸ Significantly, however, not a single one of them accepts at face value the Mahayana pieties with which the journey begins and ends as exhausting the intended meaning of the work.¹⁵⁹ Instead, they all seem to recognize

¹⁵⁶ Among the innumerable uses of this expression in the text, we may cite as examples occurrences in the titles of chapters 7, 14, 15, 30, 36, 41, 46, 51, 54, 75, 81, 83, 85, and 88. For a review of the sources of this metaphor, see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 167–76; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 59f.; Hsü Chen-chi, "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 11f; and Liu Ts'un-yan, "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 2, p. 63. As these discussions show, the originally Buddhist associations of the term were diffused by the time of the novel's composition, and it was reduced to a nondoctrinal expression for libidinous energy. Hsieh Chao-che singles this out as the main idea in his description of the novel in his *Wu tsa-tsu*, pp. 1286f.

¹⁵⁷ For example, the term occurs in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 10, and in the *Tung-f'ien hsüan-chi* preface (see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 172). Our earliest commentator, "Li Cho-wu," takes due note of the term in chapter 14 (12a–b, *tp*), as does Wang Hsiang-hsü, 15 (1a). Liu I-ming (1778 preface) criticizes Wang Hsiang-hsü for overemphasizing this idea. Ts'ai Yüan-fang (*tu-fa*, items 15, 16, 17, 18) lists various examples of this usage. See also Ch'en Shih-pin, 7 (78), 14 (158), 36 (369). Chang Shu-shen goes one step further, in chapter 4 (14b), to link the term *i* in the "horse of will" with the Neo-Confucian concept of *ch'eng-i* 誠意. He expands on this idea in chapters 15 (1a), 22 (1a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 11 (4a), 16 (5a).

¹⁵⁸ For a general review of the traditional interpretations of the allegory, see Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," pp. 263, 274; Huang Su-ch'iu, "Chiao-ting ho Chu-shih," pp. 180ff.; and Chang Ching-erh, *Jen-wu yen-chiu*, pp. 17ff. For a list of commentary editions available today, see b.n. II. Ch'en Tun-fu (*Shih-i*, p. 20) adds to this list a *Hsi-yu chi chu* 西遊記註, compiled by a certain Ts'ai Chin 蔡金, which I have been unable to identify. Sun K'ai-ti (*Shu-mu*, p. 191) listed this edition, but he also had not seen it.

¹⁵⁹ The sole exception is discussed in P'eng Hai, "Hsi-yu chi chung tui fo-chiao ti p'i-p'an t'ai-tu," pp. 160ff.

that the overlay of Taoist terms and other symbols must radically modify the meaning of the Buddhist story.

With the exception of one recent commentator, none of the critics have gone to the other extreme of concluding that the insertion of Taoist terms into the text requires a thoroughly Taoist interpretation of the allegory as a whole.¹⁶⁰ Instead, they have taken due note of the fact that these two sets of terms are not at all incompatible, and have chosen to emphasize the confluence of Buddhist and Taoist ideas (*hsien-fo t'ung-yüan* 仙佛同源) as the ground of meaning of the book. The clearest and most consistent exposition of this position is that in Wang Hsiang-hsü's *Hsi-yu cheng-tao shu*, seconded and restated in Ts'ai Yüan-fang's reissue, and a similar interpretation eventually emerges in Ch'en Shih-pin's far more sophisticated and difficult critical commentary.¹⁶¹ This syncretic ground again underlies the nineteenth-century commentary of Liu I-ming, even though his somewhat disappointing introductory essay, "How to Read The Original Meaning of *Hsi-yu chi*" ("Hsi-yu yüan-chih tu-fa" 西遊記讀法), has been reprinted in a collection of Taoist treatises.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ This is, of course, Ch'en Tun-fu, whose *Hsi-yu chi shih-i*, bearing the subtitle "Record of the Mind According to Lung-men Teachings" (*Lung-men hsien-chuan* 龍門心傳), was issued under the auspices of the Ch'üan-chen society in Taiwan (see b.n. II.10). Ch'en outlines the principles of his Taoist interpretation in a series of prefaces, esp. pp. 15, 16, 18, and goes on to provide a "General Discussion" (*Tsung-lun* 總論), complete with a glossary of Taoist terminology (see also his commentary on p. 1151). Wang Hsiang-hsü's renaming of the novel as *Cheng-tao shu* ("a book to validate the Tao") is misleading, since his reading is actually a syncretic amalgam. To the extent that the overlay of Taoist terminology may represent at least one level of the novel's meaning, this may have a bearing on the question of its date of composition, since the mid-sixteenth century was marked by a pendulum swing from infatuation with Taoism under the Chia-ching emperor to a minor renaissance of Buddhist thought fostered by the patronage of the Wan-li emperor, and boosted by the intellectual authority of influential monks such as Chu-hung and Chih-hsü (see above, Chapter 1). Attempts to pin down the authorship of the novel on this basis have not been altogether convincing, but at least this line of inquiry parallels attempts to date the composition of the *Chin P'ing Mei* on similar grounds, notably that by Wu Han (see above, Chapter 2, Part I).

¹⁶¹ See, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü's comments in chapters 1 (1a), 44 (11b), 78 (1b), and 98 (1a, 1b). A good example of the sort of blend of Buddhism and Taoism followed by Wang can be seen in the Wan-li text *Wu-Liu hsien-tsung ch'üan-chi* by Wu Ch'ung-hsü, especially the section entitled "Hsien-fo ho-tsung" 仙佛合宗, which is liberally sprinkled with many of the allegorical terms of our novel (e.g., *huo-hou*). See also Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11; "Li Cho-wu," chapter 98 (3a); and *Hsi-yu yüan-chih*, 1778, 1798, 1801 prefaces. Liu T'ing-chi (in his *Tsai-yüan tsa-chih*) acknowledges that Wang Hsiang-hsü's reading is essentially valid, but he criticizes him for unconvincing interpretations of specific points. See also Isobe Akira, "Genpon Saiyüki o meguru mondai," pp. 72f.

¹⁶² See Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 4, and passim (see b.n. II.8). The three-teachings reading is discussed by Liu Ts'un-yan, in "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 83; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, p. 38; Cheng Chen-to, "Yen-hua," p. 274; James Fu, *Quest*, p. 58; and the explanatory introduction

stances in which Confucian values are explicitly expressed often call forth denunciations as "false moralism" (*tao-hsüeh ch'i* 道學氣) from the commentators.¹⁶⁸

— If the author denies us an easy interpretation of his text in terms of the didactic values of Buddhism, Taoism, or Confucianism, what are we to make of the allegorical journey with its apparent message of attainment through perseverance, or transcendence of worldly temptation, in the pursuit of a higher aim? What, then, is the purpose of all the excess baggage of philosophical terminology added here to the traditional narrative? The majority of twentieth-century critics would simply reply that these have no particular significance at all, that this is just literary embellishment, at most a kind of literati joke designed to mock the naive reader. To my mind, however, the sheer amount of allegorical terms, as well as the manner in which they are integrated into the narrative structure, rule out such a blanket dismissal. At the very least, the Ming-Ch'ing commentators, presumably closer to the intellectual and literary presuppositions of the time of composition, refuse to allow such a conclusion.

Unfortunately, the task remaining before us—that of working out this allegorical interpretation in detail—is by no means an easy one. The allegorical framework is not necessarily fully articulated or even consistent. In fact, even our intrepid guides among the traditional commentators on occasion admit their own frustration in attempting to crack the author's allegorical code. For example, Ts'ai Yüan-fang and Liu I-ming acknowledge a number of undecipherable passages, and even the ingenious Ch'en Shih-pin throws up his hands at one point and complains:

I have read this chapter over and over a number of times from start to finish, then closed the book and pondered deeply; but in the end I am unable to grasp its meaning.

此篇從頭至尾，翻覆數過，掩卷沈思，而終莫得其解。¹⁶⁹

But since I cannot claim to have reached the level of Ch'en Shih-pin's insight, I also need not give up without a struggle. As is undoubtedly clear by now, my own understanding of the allegorical meaning of the novel rests on locating the allegory within sixteenth-century Chinese thought, especially its central focus on what is commonly called the "philosophy of

¹⁶⁸ See for example "Li Cho-wu," chapters 17 (2b), 41 (3b), 57 (tp); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 29 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 30 (309), 78 (796). This theme gives added significance to the highlighting of T'ang T'ai-tsung's somewhat tainted role as a spiritual leader in the narrative.

¹⁶⁹ Ch'en Shih-pin passage is found in chapter 93 (938). For similar admissions of difficulty, see Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 56; Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 26; Chang Shu-shen, 43 (17a), 93 (13b); and T'ung-i cheng-chih, 56 (61b).

mind" (*hsin-hsüeh*).¹⁷⁰ I will for convenience refer below to this body of intellectual groundwork as primarily Neo-Confucian, although this does not mean that Buddhist and Taoist ideas are completely effaced within the amalgam. The point is that it is precisely within the sphere of "philosophy of mind" that the various sets of terms used by the three schools show the greatest degree of compatibility; thus, we can speak of the "convergence of the three teachings" as something more integral than any particular movement of contrived syncretism. If the idea of a Neo-Confucian synthesis in this looser sense is a valid description of the intellectual foundations of the literati milieu to which this allegorical novel belongs, this has a special importance for my argument, since it reinforces what I have claimed to be the Neo-Confucian dimension of meaning in the *Chin Ping Mei*, and what I will stress in my subsequent chapters on *San-kuo yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*.

This convergence of meaning within the post-Sung philosophy of mind is borne out in the novel with the appearance of certain terms of special relevance to each of the respective schools of Ming thought. Among Buddhist ideas, we find an emphasis on the "mind of (Ch'an) meditation" (*Ch'an-hsin* 禪心) and the "illumination of the mind" (*ming-hsin* 明心), in addition to references to the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra highlighted at several key points in the text—not to mention the identity of Buddha-nature and mind invoked at the start of the journey in chapter 14 (佛即心 心即佛).¹⁷¹ Within the province of Taoist thought, the crucial indicator pointing in this same direction is the reinterpretation, standard by this time, of all references to cinnabar alchemy in terms of the notion of the "internal

¹⁷⁰ For general discussions of the philosophy of mind in the Ming period, see Fung Yu-lan, *History*, pp. 572–629; Wing-tsit Chan, "The Ch'eng-Chu School of Early Ming," pp. 29–52; Shimada Kenji, *Chūgoku ni okeru kindai shii no zassetsu*; Araki Kengo, *Mindai shisō kenkyū*; Hou Wai-lu, *Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih*, vol. 4; and other works. See above, Chapter 1, for further discussion. If there should prove to be any substance to the possibility of the fourteenth-century authorship of an allegorical work similar to our novel, this would obviously weaken my case; but at the same time, I could easily cite earlier phases of this same intellectual movement (e.g., Lu Chiu-yüan 陸九淵 (Hsiang-shan 象山), Yang Chien 楊簡, Wu Ch'eng 吳澄 to account for this dimension of meaning. The commentators occasionally refer to the thought of Wang Yang-ming in elucidating certain passages; e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, 4 (9a), and Chang Shu-shen, 18 (1a). Cf. the late Ming attempts to reconcile Neo-Confucian and Buddhist ideas through the medium of *hsin-hsüeh* concepts (see Yü Chün-fang, "Some Ming Buddhists' Responses to Neo-Confucianism," esp. pp. 2, 10f. 18f.). See Anthony Yu, "Pilgrimage," pp. 222ff.; and Wen Chi, "Hsi-yu chi cha-chi," pp. 55ff.

¹⁷¹ The idea of the identity of Buddha and mind is expressed in chapter 14 (1:182). See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 74 (1b); Chang Shu-shen, 1 (17b), 19 (1a, 16a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 37 (9b), and additional citations in n. 284. On the highlighted invocation of the *Heart Sutra*, see C. T. Hsia, *Classic Novel*, pp. 127f. The use of the *Hsin ching* in the novel parallels the pointed citation of the *Chin-kang ching* in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 21.

cinnabar" (*nei-tan* 內丹), nearly always a cipher for the inner core of the self.¹⁷² These ideas, however, are fully compatible with the Ming redefinition of Confucian self-cultivation as primarily a cultivation of the mind (*hsiu-hsin* 修心), a term that in fact takes in all of the other ideas cited above.¹⁷³ Our commentators are fully aware of this confluence of terms and ideas within their intellectual heritage. Chang Shu-shen's attempt to read all the examples of *hsin-hsüeh* terminology in the novel as placeholders for Four Books concepts is more than a little forced,¹⁷⁴ but the Yu T'ung preface goes to the heart of the matter in its opening discussion of the equivalence running through the Buddhist notion "illumination of the mind to perceive the true nature" (*ming-hsin chien-hsing* 明心見性), the Taoist idea of "cultivating the mind to refine the true nature" *hsiu-hsin lien-hsing* 修心練性), and the Confucian concept of "preserving the mind to nourish the true nature" (*ts'un-hsin yang-hsing* 存心養性).¹⁷⁵ Yu's choice of the yoked terms "mind" (*hsin*) and "nature" (*hsing*) in each of these three parallel expressions serves to deepen this convergence, since these two levels of being are often taken as virtually interchangeable with respect to Buddhist attainment (e.g., *Ch'an-hsing*) or Taoist immortality, and they also appear in this sense in many Neo-Confucian contexts.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² On the concept of the "internal cinnabar," see Judith Berling, "Paths of Convergence," pp. 123–47; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 51f.; Liu Ts'ung-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 292f., and his "Ch'üan chen chiao," pt. 2, pp. 61ff. See comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, 24 (251), 36 (369ff.), 68 (692f.), and other discussions in chapters 27 (281), 33 (342), 39 (397), 40 (405), 43 (438), 49 (498), 50 (509), 70 (713), 71 (724), 73 (744), 74 (753), 98 (996), 99 (1003).

¹⁷³ On the Neo-Confucian shift of the understanding of "self-cultivation" from the *Ta-hsüeh* stress on the balance of inner and outer selfhood (*hsiu-shen*) to focus more on the interior dimension (*hsiu-hsin*), see works cited in n. 170, and W. T. de Bary, "Individualism and Humanitarianism in Late Ming Thought," pp. 145–248, passim. See Anthony Yu, "Pilgrimage," p. 222; and Tu Wei-ming, review of *Journey* (see n. 180).

¹⁷⁴ Chang provides the fullest expositions of this reading in chapters 16 (3a) and 39 (1a). See n. 163. A similar transfer of ideas is suggested at certain points by Ch'en Shih-pin in chapter 66 (672), "Li Cho-wu" in chapter 44 (16b, *tp*), and Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 19, 20.

¹⁷⁵ See Ch'en Shih-pin edition, Yu T'ung preface, and 2 (22), 7 (78), 8 (89, 93), 13 (145f.), 14 (158f.), 21 (219), 27 (281f.), 39 (397), 40 (405ff.), 42 (428), 43 (438), 86 (874), and 93 (939). Cf. the use of the expression *ming-hsin chien-hsing* in *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi*, p. 7a; it also occurs in a couplet at the end of chapter 98 (3:1343). See also Chang Shu-shen, chapters 19 (1a, 16a), 39 (1a), 58 (14a); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 8; *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 12 (16b).

¹⁷⁶ See, for example, chapters 67 (2:682f.) and 85 (2:866f.); and comments by "Li Cho-wu," 12 (13a, *tp*), 37, (16a, *tp*), 91 (19a, *tp*); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 80 (1b); and Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 20. Cf. the use of the expression *ts'un-hsing* in the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 14. For further discussion of certain related concepts—e.g., *pen-hsing* and *shuang-hsiu hsing-ming*—see my remarks later in this chapter.

V

With this frame of reference in mind, I can now move on with my allegorical reading of *Hsi-yu chi*. At the very outset, I must take due note of the author's considerable efforts to undermine the notion of a simple pattern of quest and attainment. Despite the constant crossing of trackless wastes and impassable barriers by our not-so-intrepid pilgrims, we still get the sense of a certain circularity in the progress of the band.¹⁷⁷ At the least, they seem continually to be passing through the same landscapes, vulnerable to the same external and internal trials; and when they finally reach their promised land it is suspiciously reminiscent of the T'ang capital from which they set out.

Even more troubling are the doubts cast over the necessity of the entire journey. More than once the question is raised as to why the cloud-soaring monkey cannot simply somersault over the Himalayas and fetch the long-sought scriptures without further trials on the part of his earthbound master.¹⁷⁸ The final irony of the "wordless scriptures" (*wu tzu chen-ching* 無字真經) is a rather transparent joke, unless we choose to emphasize the proverbial desirability of "empty" scriptures in Chinese philosophical discourse, in which case the final restoration of the "real" scriptures itself further diminishes the ultimate attainment of the quest.¹⁷⁹ Since the parting touch of withholding the scriptures appears only in the novel, in contrast to the triumphal endings in the *Shih-hua* and *Tsa-chü* versions, we can only take this as a final undermining of the fulfillment of the mission.

The solution to this problem lies in reading the quest narrative not as a kind of literal "Pilgrim's Progress," as has been suggested by certain recent critics, but rather as an internal pilgrimage of the mind.¹⁸⁰ This is already strongly suggested by the inclusion of so much *hsin-hsüeh* terminology,

¹⁷⁷ This circularity is emphasized in comments by "Li Cho-wu," 29 (1a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 15 (1a); and Ch'en Shih-pin, 19 (202f.). In a sense, the pilgrimage only ends when it returns to the midpoint and re-crosses the River of Communion with Heaven.

¹⁷⁸ "Li Cho-wu" asks the same question in chapter 12 (13a, *tp*), as does Liu I-ming in his preface, and *tu-fa*, item 26.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. comparable deficiencies in the scriptures bestowed in the *Shih-hua*, sections 15, 16, and *Tsa-chü*, Scene 22. The insistence on a precise total number of scriptures also figures in *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi*, p. 13a. See "Li Cho-wu," 57 (14a), and 99 (11a).

¹⁸⁰ The parallel with *Pilgrims Progress* has been suggested by C. T. Hsia, *Classic Novel*, pp. 126ff.; Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," p. 22; and Wu Pi-yung, "Hsi-yu chi yen-chiu," pp. 102ff. Anthony Yu ("Pilgrimage") elucidates the notion of the pilgrimage of the mind, as does Tu Wei-ming, in his review of *Journey to the West in History of Religions* 19, no. 2 (November 1979); 177–84. The internal nature of the quest is stressed by Ch'en Shih-pin, in 76 (774) and 85 (866).

and it is stated almost outright at a number of points in the text. Thus, for example, the Holy Mountain to which the pilgrims later direct their steps is obliquely identified in the very first chapter with the mind, in the little anagram of the Cave of the Crescent Moon with Three Stars (*Hsieh-yüeh san-hsing tung* 斜月三星洞). Much later, as they come nearly within sight of the journey's end in chapter 85, they are told that "the Holy Mountain is nowhere but in your mind" (*Ling-shan chih tsai ju hsin-f'ou* 靈山只在汝心頭).¹⁸¹

But to simply state that the allegorical journey is a pilgrimage of mind raises as many questions as it answers. In order to put some flesh on this skeleton interpretation, we must work out the allegorical significance of such things as the precise course and pace of the spiritual progress, the sequence of episodes, and the nature of the obstacles barring the path. I will also have to reinterpret the meaning of the goal of final attainment, as well as the reason the hundred-chapter novel reorganizes the traditional material to give us not one, but in effect three quest stories.

Let us begin by analyzing the obstacles to the spiritual progress of the pilgrim group. At first sight, what we have is a series of external hurdles to surmount, from the physical barriers: the ever-present mountains and rivers, to the more imaginative blockages: the expanse of brambles in chapter 64, the stretch of rotten persimmons in chapter 67—all of which refer to spiritual rather than physical hindrances.

As for the various demons (*yao-mo* 妖魔) who bar the way, here too the initial sense of simple maliciousness soon gives way to more complex kinds of symbolism. For one thing, the iconographic details of secluded mountain lairs and caves, with their characteristic stone furnishings, strongly suggest the abodes of Taoist immortals—even before we learn, in the majority of cases, that these "demons" are in fact denizens of the world of the immortals only temporarily banished to this world for the sin of earthly desire. And this same sort of origin is shared by all of the disciples in the pilgrim band: Chu Pa-chieh, the Sand Monk, the dragon horse, and most pointedly, Sun Wu-k'ung, whose prior existence is lavishly staged for us in the prologue section lest we miss the point. In later scenes, Sun Wu-k'ung goes on to disclose his earlier links to some of the demon figures now imperiling the journey, most noticeably the Bull Demon King (*Niu mo*-

¹⁸¹ Chapters 1 (1:12) and 85 (3:1166). See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 8 (14a) and 39 (16a): "[The goal of the quest] is not outside yourself" 不在身外也; Wang Hsiang-hsü, 13 (2a): "One need not search for it afar" 何必遠求; chapters 24 (2a), 25 (1b), and 74 (1b), where he points out that Sun Wu-k'ung is "none other than one's own mind" 行者即此心. See also Ch'en Shih-pin edition, Yu T'ung preface and chapter 76 (775); Chang Shu-shen, 18 (6a), 32 (15b), 33 (5b), 96 (14a); and Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 31. In my discussion below, I will draw additional distinctions between the external and internal obstacles to the quest.

wang).¹⁸² But by this time we have already been informed that "the bodhisattvas and the demons are all manifestations of a single concept" (*p'u-sa yao-ching tsung shih i-nien* 菩薩妖精總是一念). Indeed, at the very start of the mission, this understanding of the internal locus of the demons was stated quite explicitly: "With the emergence of consciousness, all types of demons come forth; with the extinction of consciousness, all the demons are extinguished" 心生, 種種魔生, 心滅, 種種魔滅. In other words, all the demons who threaten the life and limb of the travelers are essentially manifestations of the unenlightened state of the mind in its process of cultivation.¹⁸³

At this point, I will go on to consider in greater detail the specific pitfalls in the cultivation of mind that are allegorized in the separate episodes.¹⁸⁴ One of the least problematical types of obstacles arises in those cases in which it is primarily carelessness, or lack of vigilance, that gives rise to a serious setback to the progress of the group. This includes the predictable complacency of the pilgrims at the start of each episode, where we see them freshly delivered from the preceding peril, whistling down their road to the West, only to fall heedlessly into the clutches of the next waiting demon. In some cases this negligence entails the violation of specific instructions, as for example in the inability of the group to remain within the protective circle (*ch'üan-tzu* 圈子) drawn on the ground by Sun Wu-k'ung in chapter 50, or their failure to guard properly certain divinely bestowed tokens of salvation: for example, the Master's cassock whisked away in chapter 16, or the weapons snatched in chapter 88, just as they reach a stage of self-satisfaction with the degree of attainment under their belts.¹⁸⁵

The most pointed instance of this problem is found at the pivotal point

¹⁸² The linked prehistory of Sun Wu-k'ung and the various demons is emphasized in comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapters 28 (1a), 32 (1a), 41 (1b), 61 (1a); Chang Shu-shen, chapter 61 (7a); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 44; and "Li Cho-wu," chapter 17 (15a). See Tu Wei-ming review of *Journey*; and Cheng Ming-li, "Huo-yen shan ku-shih ti hsing-ch'eng," p. 8f. This same sense is brought out in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 9 and 10.

¹⁸³ Chapter 13 (1:169). See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 17 (16b); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 23; Wang Hsiang-hsü, 49 (1a), 57 (1a), 59 (1b), 60 (1a), 70 (1a); Chang Shu-shen, chapter 92 (1b) and *Tsung-p'i*, 37 (9b), 38 (9b), 42 (11a-b), 46 (13b-14a); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 51 (55b).

¹⁸⁴ This question is emphasized in Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 1, 2, and especially 35. See discussions by Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," p. 185; Hsü Chen-chi, "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 51ff.; and Wu Pi-yung, "Hsi-yu chi yen-chiu," pp. 47ff.

¹⁸⁵ The incident of negligence in chapters 88-90 is followed immediately in chapter 91 by a peril brought on by the Master's "relaxation of his meditative nature" 寬了禪性 (see 3:1247). The commentators frequently raise this point; e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, 24 (1b), 47 (1a), 53 (1a), 83 (1a), 89 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 62 (629); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, 29; and Chang Shu-shen, 23 (4a, 11a).

in chapter 36, where the Master's premature bid for enlightenment in a classic scene replete with symbols of all-pervading illumination, terminates not in the final attainment that is sought but in the issue, out of his own dream consciousness, of a new trial—one not without sexual overtones. The allegorical labels attached to this scene are quite explicit on this point. We are first told, "When one's merit has reached the proper degree, the [attainment] will be fulfilled spontaneously" (*kung tao tzu-jan ch'eng* 功到自然成); and then we are informed that "his merit was not yet complete" (*kung wei-wan* 功未完).¹⁸⁶

Not all of the spiritual obstacles presented in the allegory are simply manifestations of insufficient attainment or a premature relaxing of vigilance, however. Instead, certain episodes bring into focus a small number of separate but interrelated philosophical issues current in sixteenth-century thought.

Among the principal pitfalls of this type is the problem of disunity, which threatens the progress of the group at several key points. This is most graphically presented in the episodes that literally recount the breakup of the pilgrim body: namely, the two instances of the "exile" of the mind-monkey (*fang-hsin* 放心, see below), both of which lead to a perilous state of dis-integration. As Wang Hsiang-hsü rather succinctly puts it, "The mind and body were split asunder" (*hsin-shen hsiang-li* 心身相離).¹⁸⁷ These two episodes are transparent enough, and may seem to convey nothing more than the humorous playing out of the petty rivalries and clash of wills within the band—one of the common arenas of the humor of the novel. But when we proceed to a detailed exegesis of the *fang-hsin* concept later in this chapter, we will see that a number of more specific philosophical implications are raised here.

One of the primary conceptual axes of the book is the drawing of a contrast between primal unity and discordant division. This is the idea with which the book begins, with its opening discourse on cycles of cosmic harmony, before moving immediately into a world of undifferentiated innocence and its loss. This is mythically expressed in the Monkey King's leap through the water curtain into a world of pristine perfection, only to succumb to the anguish of mortality lurking within his enclosed paradise. A similar idea is stressed at the opening of the main body of the quest

¹⁸⁶ Chapter 36 (2:492) and (2:503). See also chapter 57 (2:795): "to desist mid-journey, to stop halfway" 半途而廢, 中道而止. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 23 (1b): "They have not yet penetrated deeply into the Way" (*ju-tao wei-shen* 入道未深); Chang Shu-shen, 36 (15b), 64 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 24 (253), 36 (369), 40 (406), 50 (510), 53 (558); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 47 (83a), 61 (12a), etc.

¹⁸⁷ Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 28 (1b). Cf. the frequent use of the expression "disperse like wildfire" (*san-huo* 散火) in, for example, chapters 30 (1:412), 32 (1:438), 57 (2:795).

narrative itself, where the transition from a state of heavenly grace to the pitfall-strewn path of uneven progress toward enlightenment is marked by the crossing of a conceptual demarcation at the Dual Border Mountain (*Liang-chieh shan*)—a sense reinforced soon after when we arrive at the Ridge of the Double Fork (*Shuang-ch'a ling* 雙叉嶺).¹⁸⁸

Right after this, the author's concern with the issue of division is dramatized in the episode of the "six thieves." Here, our attention is directed to a particular side of this issue: the problem of multiplicity as an impediment to the singularity of consciousness demanded for spiritual cultivation. This theme is continuously allegorized by means of the various number-named demons who threaten to tear asunder the unity and integrality of the group, as in the cases of the Six-eared Ape (*Liu-erh mi-hou* 六耳彌猴) in chapter 58 and the Nine-headed Son-in-law (*Chiu-t'ou fu-ma*) in chapters 62 and 63.¹⁸⁹ The "Li Cho-wu" commentator, for one, explicitly glosses this latter creature as a symbol of the "multiplicity of man's consciousness" 人之頭緒多也.¹⁹⁰ The incident of the Six-eared Ape in chapter 58 is a particularly telling example of this idea, since here the disunity caused by the second "exile" leads directly into the appearance of this many-eared monster, who immediately confronts the pilgrims with the bogey of multiplicity in the form of a false doubling of the mind-monkey himself.¹⁹¹ The connection drawn between the "cloning" of the monkey and the dangerous refraction of the mind into discordant impulses reminds us of yet another side to this issue: that of excessive centrifugality as allegorized, among other places, in the episode of the Many-eyed Monster (*To-mu kuai*), also known as the Hundred-eyed Prince of Demons (*Pai-yen mo-chün*).¹⁹²

This brings us to the problem of excessive emotional attachment, and in particular the destabilizing power of sexual desire. For a narrative dealing almost exclusively with a group of monks on a quest for scriptures, it is striking—although often overlooked—that a good many of the episodes specifically treat the problem of sexual temptation. This theme is already quite pointed in the depiction of the entanglement of Chu Pa-chieh, literally in a web of desire, in chapter 23; and in the second half of the book this

¹⁸⁸ See discussion of the structural significance of this dividing line in Part II of this chapter. This is treated by James Fu in *Quest*, pp. 50ff., 57ff., 69ff.

¹⁸⁹ Other examples of demons of multiplicity appear in chapter 73 (the Hundred-eyed Prince of Demons 百眼魔君) and chapter 90 (the Primal Sage of the Nine Spirits). See n. 51 and comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 63 (1a), 90 (1b).

¹⁹⁰ "Li Cho-wu," chapter 63 (14b, *tp*).

¹⁹¹ See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 58 (13b, *tp*), and Chang Shu-shen, 59 (1a). The figure of false duplication here is reminiscent of the duplicitous Duessa in the first few books of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.

¹⁹² See above, n. 189. Cf. also the centipede spirits who inhabit Hundred-leg Mountain 百脚山 in chapter 93 (3:1269).

subject begins to dominate the stage, constituting the central focus of the episodes in chapters 53–55, 72–73, 80–83, and 93–95. In some of these cases, it is entirely possible to read the sexual motifs as simple instances of assault on the purity of the Master, or humorous slaps at the sexual incontinence of Chu Pa-chieh. In fact, I have noted that in a number of passages the author himself indulges in sexual innuendo, as for example in the pun on the Gate of Ch'an (*Ch'an-men* 禪門) in chapter 53, or the little joke on what I have rendered as Bodhisattva Below the Belt (Pan-chieh Kuan-yin) in chapter 83.¹⁹³

But there seems to be more at stake in these instances than the simple matter of fortitude in the face of temptation. For one thing, the author lavishes considerable effort on making some of the temptations in question as sensually appealing as possible. This is true in chapter 23 (as several commentators admit); and in chapter 72, in the scene of Chu Pa-chieh transformed into a slippery fish frolicking in a bathing pool with naked temptresses, we get imagery that rivals Spenser's Bower of Bliss in its evocative sensuality.¹⁹⁴ By the time we come to the episode of the Jade Hare in chapters 93–95, the ground has been prepared for the convincing portrayal of Hsüan-tsang's apparent submission to demonic designs on his pure essence, right at the point where the goal of the quest comes within sight.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ See chapters 53 (2:738) and 83 (3:1146). See above, n. 112. Another, less transparent, example of sexual overtones can be seen in the repeated mention of the *p'i-p'a ku* (see also, n. 112). This has been rendered by translators in its modern usage (e.g., Waley, *Monkey*, p. 71: "lute-bone"; Yu, *Journey*, 1:169: "breastbone"), but according to an entry in *Ch'a-yü k'e-hua* (p. 154), the expression seems to have referred to either the pelvis or perhaps the thighs. Could this simply be a pun for *p'i-ku*? In any case, the expression seems to have carried certain unmistakable sexual connotations, as we see in comments by Chang Shu-shen, 4 (6b), 27 (16a), 30 (17a), 31 (1a), 56 (1b, 15b), 60 (3a), 73 (1a), 78 (1b, 14a), 80 (1a, 5a); and Ch'en Shih-pin, 17 (185), 55 (559f.). The commentator who is most interested in this area of meaning is "Li Cho-wu"; see chapter 5 (1b), 23 (15a–b), 27 (196), 54 (9a), 70 (12a), 71 (2b), 72 (14b), 74 (16a), 79 (13a), 82 (13b), 83 (14a), 95 (13b).

¹⁹⁴ Cf. "Li Cho-wu's" comment in chapter 23 (15a)—"Who today wouldn't be brought to ruin by [these girls]; we shouldn't just laugh at our friend the pig" 今人那一個不被...弄壞了, 不要獨笑老豬也—reproduced with different wording by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 23 (9a). See also Wang's comments in chapter 24 (2a), 27 (1a), 54 (1a), 55 (1b), 56 (1a), 59 (1b), 60 (1a), 72 (1a, 1b), 82 (1a), and 95 (1b).

¹⁹⁵ This entire episode is heavily laden with sexual suggestiveness. Aside from the connotations of the name of the seductive Jade Hare, such details as the "Downy Hill" (*Mao-ying shan*) and the "short staff" (*tsuan-kun*) corroborate the impression of sexual innuendo (see above, n. 112). Ch'en Shih-pin, in chapter 94 (949), sees in this episode hints of "southern-style" (*nan-feng* 南風) love—that is, homosexuality—as does "Li Cho-wu," 95 (13b). Other comments by Ch'en Shih-pin bring in a variety of other concepts of Ming sexual lore; e.g., 18 (191) 23 (241): "seizing the Yin to replenish the Yang" (*ts'ai-yin pu-yang* 採陰補陽); 54 (548f.), 60 (609): "the external wife and the internal wife" 身外之妻,

Once again, we could read these sections as straightforward parables of resistance to the temptations of the flesh, or perhaps as sarcastic digs at the proverbial lust burning beneath the robes of Buddhist monks. But within the context of the allegorical framework set up in the book, it may be more useful to relate this theme to several other philosophical issues.

One of these is the problem of emotional attachment, in a broader sense than sexual desire alone.¹⁹⁶ There are a number of episodes in which it is the compassionate nature of the Master, more than anything else, that leads him into extreme peril. The notion of emotional attachment as a block to enlightenment, even when this attachment is essentially chaste, is emphasized by many of the commentators as one of the principal obstacles on the path to salvation. Chang Shu-shen, for example, frequently brings in the Confucian concept of "material desire" (*wu-yü* 物慾) as a gloss on these passages.¹⁹⁷ The "Li Cho-wu" commentator, on the other hand, draws upon the more specifically Buddhist idea of the "net of desire" (*yü-wang* 慾網) to explain this entanglement of consciousness.¹⁹⁸ In this context, the author's insistent use of the image of greedy eyes to bring out the illusory nature of sexual experience marks another point of common understanding that links *Hsi-yu chi* to *Chin P'ing Mei*.¹⁹⁹

A somewhat different side of this theme comes out in those scenes in which it is not sexuality per se but rather its tendency to throw off the equilibrium of the self that is at issue. This idea refers primarily to the disorientation of individual consciousness—the crucial problem of "losing oneself in sensuality" (*mi-se* 迷色), which I have discussed in the chapter on *Chin P'ing Mei*—that is conveyed in the text with such terms as the "disorder of the mind" (*luan-hsin* 亂心), the "disturbing of the mind" (*tung-hsin* 動心), and "forgetting one's basic nature" (*wang-pen* 忘本), all of which

身內之妻; 78 (796), 80 (815), 92 (929), 93 (939), 95 (960). Wang Hsiang-hsü notes the preponderance of female demons in a comment in chapter 23 (2a), repeated in chapter 82 (1a); and a similar idea is found in "Li Cho-wu," chapter 82 (13b, 15b). See also *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 37 (67b), 55 (51b); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 28.

¹⁹⁶ The most obvious examples of such emotional vulnerability appear in the recurrent scenes of demons masquerading as damsels (or babes) in distress; e.g., chapters 27, 33, 40, 64, 80. Cf. *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 10 and 12. See Ch'en Shih-pin comments in chapters 27 (281) and 62 (629).

¹⁹⁷ See examples in chapters 16 (10a), 18 (13b, 14a), 27 (1b), 31 (17b), 32 (1b), 33 (3b, 5b, 8a), 37 (1a, 4b, 16a), 40 (2a), 44 (1a, 16b), 71 (1a), 73 (14b), 79 (14b), 91 (1a), 95 (1a), 98 (1a); and *Tsung-p'i*, 10 (4a), 21 (6a), 23 (6b), 26 (7a), 42 (11a, b), 56 (15b), 58 (15b), 59 (15b, 16a), 60 (16b), 65 (18a). See also Wang Hsiang-hsü, 72 (1a–b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 71 (725), 72 (734f.); and *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 21 (9b).

¹⁹⁸ "Li Cho-wu," chapter 74 (16a).

¹⁹⁹ See above, Chapter 2, Part V. Chang Shu-shen discusses this issue in chapters 72 (1a) and 80 (1a). Once again, we find a striking analogue in Spenser's allegorical epic (e.g., Book II, Canto XII, 69, 73, 78).

I will reconsider later.²⁰⁰ Both chapters 23 and 72, for example, are unmistakably captioned with labels of similar import, and expressions of the same idea are abundant in the episode of the Lady of the Earthly Wellsprings (Ti-yung fu-jen) in chapters 81–83.²⁰¹ Here, by the way, we have another example of a narrative figure that had already appeared within the sources of the novel, now being singled out by the author for special treatment within his own allegorical framework.²⁰²

The same can be said for the inverted sexuality in the Country of Women at Hsi-liang in chapters 54 and 55, which also appears in one form or another in most of the narratives of the Hsüan-tsang cycle, even in the records of the historical monk's journey to the West. But here it is invested with a heightened allegorical function in exploring the problem of sexual disequilibrium.²⁰³ Of particular interest in this regard is the application to certain figures in the novel of the term "lovely maiden" (*ch'a-nü*). In view of the association of this metaphor with late Ming Taoist alchemical and sexual cults, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the insertion of such terms as these reflects a kind of backlash reaction to sixteenth-century literalist excesses in this area. Ch'en Shih-pin makes a strong statement of this view in a comment in chapter 54:

... granted, the process of becoming an immortal or a Buddha is inextricably linked to the Way of sexual generation, but this is not talking about union of the flesh giving free run to one's desire, only a spiritual union....

...成仙作佛雖不能離男女化生之道, 第非形交而順其所欲, 乃神交...

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²⁰⁰ See, e.g., chapters 23 (1:311), 27 (1:373), 64 (2:888), 94 (3:1270). See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 72 (14a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 23 (1b), 27 (1a), 54 (1b), 56 (1a), 59 (1b), 70 (1a), 72 (1a, 1b), 80 (1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 81 (823ff.), and *Chia-p'i Hsi-yu chi*, 1 (12a), 3 (11a, 22a, 22b), 4 (6b, 7b, 8a, 9b, 14a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a), 8 (13b), 10 (7b, 8a, 10a, 13a). This aspect of the allegory is discussed by C. T. Hsia (*Classic Novel*, 155ff.); James Fu (*Quest*, 24ff., 37, 41ff.); Liu Ts'un-yan ("Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 82ff.); Wu Pi-yung, "Hsi-yu chi yen-chiu," pp. 51ff., Hsü Chen-chi, "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 23f., 32f.

²⁰¹ See Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 26, 27, 28, 35.

²⁰² See above, n. 111, and Chang Ching-erh, "Monkey-hero," pp. 215ff.

²⁰³ Earlier versions of the Land of Women can be seen in the Nü-erh kuo of the *Shih-hua*, section 10; in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19; and in the *Pak t'ongsa önhue* (see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, p. 74). For an example in the quasi-historical accounts of Hsüan-tsang's journey, see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 13f. I might add to this the later reworking of the Land of Women *topos* in *Ching-hua yüan*, chapters 32–34. A similar example is the Iron Fan Princess (T'ieh-shan kung-chu), who appears in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 17 and 18, and in the *Nan-yu chi* section of *Ssu-yu chi*, among other places. See Ch'en Yü-p'i, "Kuo Huo-yen shan." Here it is clearly the problem of "flames of desire" (*yü-huo* 慾火) that is at issue in this figure.

²⁰⁴ On Ming sexual practices, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Taoist Self-cultivation," pp. 292ff.; R. H. Van Gulik, *Sexual Life in Ancient China*, esp. pp. 263–336, 339–59; and R. K.

Perhaps the reason the issue of sexuality occupies so much of the allegory is that it covers virtually all of the aspects of the unenlightened consciousness treated in the text: loss of inner calm, disproportionate emphasis on individual fulfillment, and disruption of concentration. In many of the allegorical obstacles outlined above, we can see that the various problems of consciousness reduce themselves to a failure or blockage of vision. Sometimes this is dramatized in the blindness of the pilgrims to the presence of real dangers, or their refusal to heed warnings and injunctions. It is certainly significant that Sun Wu-k'ung is depicted as a bearer of superior visual perception, an attribute included in the initial description of the Monkey King in chapter 1. But in his case as well, the author insists on including examples in which his eyes are also subject to malfunction—especially due to the effects of the smoke from "demonic fire."²⁰⁵

At other times, this failure of perception is presented as the result of deliberate subterfuge on the part of hostile creatures. Thus, we have episodes constructed around the idea of the false masquerading as the true, or alternatively, a confusion between true and false versions of various things: weapons, pilgrims, temples.²⁰⁶ If we take this in a looser sense, then the majority of episodes involve some form of impersonation or misrepresentation. In the majority of cases, the state of blocked vision culminates in the concealment of the demon within a locked enclosure, from which it is made to emerge only when it is forced to "reveal its true form" (*hsien pen-hsiang* 現本相).²⁰⁷

This brings us to a final category of philosophical problems confronting our seekers of scriptural truth in the form of implacable demons along their path. Just as in practically every episode the demons eventually shut themselves up in a mountain cave, underwater lair, or some such, in a majority of these cases these same demons attempt to subdue the pilgrims by encompassing them within one or another kind of enclosing object. These "weapons" range from actual metal rings or snares to a variety of rather whimsical variations on the theme: gourds, vases, girdles, even bronze bells

McMahon, "The Gap in the Wall," for fuller discussion of the literary significance of these associations. See comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, especially 34 (353), 47 (478), 54 (548f), 78 (796), 92 (929). I will reconsider the significance of the term *ch'a-nü* later.

²⁰⁵ Instances of smoke damage to the eyes of Sun Wu-k'ung occur in chapters 5, 20, 41, 75.

²⁰⁶ For examples in which the pilgrims are temporarily confounded by false weapons, or by false demons masquerading as true souls, see Part II of this chapter. See comments by "Li Cho-wu" in chapters 57 (14a) and 65 (14a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 21 (1a), 23 (5a), 39 (1b), 51 (1a), 53 (1a), 57 (1b), 66 (1a), 80 (1a), 93 (8b), 97 (1b); Chang Shu-shen, 27 (1a), 39 (16a), 42 (4a), 58 (13a–b), 85 (1b), 91 (1a); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 25; Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 25, 26; and Ch'en Shih-pin, 13 (146), 34 (352), 65 (662f), 66 (672), 92 (929) 95 (959f.).

²⁰⁷ For discussion of this pattern, see remainder of this chapter.

or the hemisphere of a brass cymbal.²⁰⁸ In view of the ingenuity exercised in developing this pattern, it is evident that the author has more in mind here than simply an original arsenal of outlandish kinds of weapons. At several points it is strongly suggested that the image of entrapment carries a special burden of meaning, as the commentators often point out.²⁰⁹ For example, one of the clearest uses of this type of image is found in chapter 33, where it is another "vase of purification" (*ching-p'ing*)—this time not Kuan-yin's vase containing healing waters, but one capable of "swallowing up the entire world" (*chuang-t'ien* 裝天)—that threatens to engulf and annihilate the pilgrims by reducing them to a few drops of pus. Only by being able to counter the symbolic import of these encompassing devices can the pilgrims escape the prospect of extinction. The question of how this impossible task is to be accomplished will occupy us shortly.

Having reviewed some of the obstacles barring the path to salvation through the cultivation of the mind, let us now move on to the manner in which our pilgrims confront and surmount these barriers in the course of their allegorical quest. First, we must reconsider the overall direction and pace of the journey taking shape in the narrative. As already outlined, the majority of the extended episodes that make up the text fall into a recurrent pattern of development: we begin with our happy pilgrims on the road, buoyant and satisfied with themselves for having overcome their preceding ordeal, only to find their equanimity disturbed by cold, hunger, or discomforts of some other sort. Out of this ruffling of consciousness emerges

²⁰⁸ See the following examples: a red gourd in chapters 22 (1:303) and 33 (2:460); various sorts of sacks: *ta-lien* 搭連 in chapter 25 (1:343), *ju-i p'i-tai* 如意皮袋 in chapter 41 (2:574), *jen-chung tai* 人種袋 in chapters 65 and 66 (2:917); a bell (*chin-ling* 金鈴) in chapter 70 (3:973); a metal cymbal (*chin-nao* 金鐃) in chapter 65; variously shaped bottles (especially the *ching-p'ing*) in chapters 12 (1:165), 26 (1:360), 33 (2:455), 42 (2:584), 74 (3:1030) (see following note); a snare in chapters 6 (1:74), 34 (2:469), 50 (2:696), 52 (2:721), 59 (2:826); a box in chapter 84 (3:1153). We may also consider the web spun out by spider demons to ensnare the pilgrims in chapters 72 and 74; and attempts to spin them (*chüan* 捲) into their mouths or snort them into their noses in chapters 41 (2:579), 74 (3:1029), 77 (3:1063) as variations on the same concept.

²⁰⁹ Ch'en Shih-pin puts his finger on this range of meaning in chapter 35 (362): "... Is not [enlightenment] a matter of man's mind being able to encompass what is beyond heaven and earth? But people always [fall into] the 'gourd that engulfs heaven and earth'" 非心包天地之外乎。人固有裝天地之葫蘆也; and chapter 51 (519): "... but his vision could not yet penetrate to the entire ground of being, and so he ultimately failed to extricate himself from the snare" 未能洞見全體，而終難脫彼圈套也。 See also comments by "Li Cho-wu" 5 (6b), 6 (13b), 33 (15b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 6 (69), 26 (273), 33 (341ff.), 41 (417), 42 (426f.), 49 (498), 53 (538), 65 (663), 75 (763); Chang Shu-shen, 34 (16b); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 32; and Wang Hsiang-hsü, 42 (1a), 50 (1a), 53 (1a), 71 (1a), 75 (1a). In chapter 75 (1a), Wang Hsiang-hsü compares the various weapons of this sort. See additional comments by Wang, 35 (1a), 52 (1a), 65 (1a); *Chia-p'i Hsi-yu chi*, 1 (19a), 5 (4a), 7 (5a), 10 (6a), 11 (1a); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 74 (42a).

a demon, who after one or repeated attempts manages by stealth or sheer force to snatch the Master and perhaps other pilgrims away from their protective circle and entrap them in a secluded lair. Sun Wu-k'ung, who is usually not among those initially captured, employs his powers of vision (or the help of others) to locate the prisoners, but fails in his initial attempts to break through the spell. In most cases it is only after he seeks external aid—the bestowal of either a secret formula or a magic weapon, or the direct intervention of powers of salvation—that the demon is finally subdued: its true form revealed, and the thralldom dispelled, leaving the pilgrims free to continue on their way until the quick emergence of the next peril.

Within the predictability of this general pattern over the course of the narrative as a whole, a number of significant variations arise along the way.²¹⁰ First, in view of the pains taken by the author to undercut the basic concept and the necessity of the unilinear quest journey as a whole, it is difficult to grasp what is intended by the precise sequence of episodes within the overall framework of the allegorical circuit. It would be helpful if we could discern some sort of logical progression, a step-by-step ladder of ascents to be serially mounted on the path to enlightenment. This is precisely what the commentators attempt to do in numerous discussions. For example, Wang Hsiang-hsü explains the fording of the River of Communion with Heaven (*T'ung-t'ien ho*) crossed with help in chapter 49, on the heels of the figurally similar river crossing at the River of Black Waters (*Hei-shui ho*) in chapter 43, as follows:

Having eliminated the heterodox Taoists and passed through the Double Pass (*shuang-kuan* 雙關), the true waters of the individual self can now merge unassisted with those of the universe.

外道已除，雙關已過，則吾身真水自可通天。²¹¹

This type of reading, however, is rarely more than locally convincing. I may put the argument on slightly firmer ground by trying to show that certain types of spiritual progress are emphasized at different points as the journey inches toward its destination. I have observed the fact that the author seems to take up the problem of sexuality in greater earnest in the

²¹⁰ This generalized pattern describes most accurately the following episodes: 27–31, 32–35, 40–43, 50–52, 56–58, 59–61, 65–66, 72–73, 74–77, and 80–83. Of course, every one of the other episodes presents at least one or more of these elements. Cf. Wang Hsiang-hsü's discussion of the transition from one trial to another in chapter 83 (1a): "No sooner do they extricate themselves than they become ensnared once again" 脫而復陷。

²¹¹ Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 47 (1a). See also chapters 43 (1a, b), 44 (1b), 59 (1a), and 80 (1b). See also Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 16 (177), 24 (251), 53 (538), 62 (629), 68 (692), 80 (814), 91 (920), 94 (949), 96 (968); Chang Shu-shen, chapter 47 (15b); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 26 (60b), 55 (51b), 77 (77b), 88 (83b, 84a), 95 (49a, b).

second half of the book, and I will argue that there is a noticeable rise in the degree of integration of the pilgrim group as they move into the final phases of their mission.²¹² But for all this, we cannot really say that the pilgrimage progresses steadily toward the goal of perfect attainment. Quite the contrary, we are given abundant evidence of backsliding late in the novel: the old rivalry between Sun Wu-k'ung and Chu Pa-chieh surfaces as late as chapter 85, and despite all his accumulated experience in the paths of salvation, Hsüan-tsang is just as nervous and hesitant as ever even as he is forcibly ferried to the other shore. Perhaps more serious, we witness the most troubling undermining of Hsüan-tsang's impenetrable resistance to temptation on the very edges of enlightenment, in the incidents of Ti-yung fu-jen and the Jade Hare.

The question of whether the fulfillment of the quest is to be viewed as a cumulative process of attainment or an instantaneous flash of deliverance conforms precisely to the perennial issue of sudden versus gradual enlightenment in Chinese Buddhist philosophy. From the point of view of this issue, the fact that the apparent progress of the pilgrimage is subverted by the persistence of the same obstacles at the very end as at the beginning gives rise to the idea that the illusion of progress may itself be the greatest impediment to ultimate attainment. At least this idea would help us to understand the not overly hidden point, made fairly explicit in the novel, that the goal of the quest lies in the path itself, not in the prize of dubious scriptures waiting at the end of the road. The most recent commentator on the novel, Ch'en Tun-fu, aptly expresses this point within his otherwise idiosyncratic reading, when he glosses the term "scriptures" (*ching* 經) as "the path" (*ching* 徑).²¹³

In any event, the author's allegorical reflection of this question does not seem to be unequivocal; or, at least, the traditional commentators find much room for disagreement on the point. The "Li Cho-wu" commentator, for one, denies the value of sequential stages and insists that ultimate enlightenment must be instantaneous:

[Enlightenment] certainly does not reside in [progress] from beginning to end; it is a matter of a single instant. 豈居前後，悟即刹那。²¹⁴

²¹² See below in this chapter for further discussion. The sense of gradual spiritual progress through the course of the journey is discussed by Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," p. 177; and James Fu, *Quest*, p. 29. For example, the chain of figurally linked occurrences staked out by chapters 16, 27, 57, and 97 shows a clear "improvement" of sorts from wrathful destruction to more merciful subdual of the allegorical "thieves" of the senses. Cf. Chang Shu-shen's invocation, in chapter 99 (1b), of the Confucian metaphor of "the last basketful of earth" needed to raise a mound (*wei shan wei ch'eng i-k'uei* 爲山未成一簣). See Lun Yü, IX: 19.

²¹³ Ch'en Tun-fu, *Shih-i*, p. 2. Some of the early commentators give the same gloss.

²¹⁴ "Li Cho-wu," chapter 29 (1a). He expresses a similar idea in chapter 90 (14a).

Those commentators who advocate a more strictly Taoist reading of the allegorical quest tend to favor the idea of gradual attainment. As Ts'ai Yüan-fang astutely observes, instantaneous enlightenment makes enough sense in Buddhist thought, but within Taoist learning the idea of final attainment is predicated on a slow process of cultivation.²¹⁵ Ch'en Shih-pin, with his characteristic breadth of vision, allows that both aspects may be necessary: the steady advance of cultivation on the one hand, and the quantum leaps of illumination on the other.²¹⁶

Another side of the same question comes out in the apparent contradiction between the promise of attainment through one's own efforts, and salvation bestowed by the grace of external forces, what in Buddhist thought is often expressed in terms of salvation "through one's own powers" (*tzu-li*) and that brought about "by virtue of the power of others" (*t'a-li*). Within the province of Neo-Confucian thought, and perhaps within Taoism as well, we find a similar debate on the extent to which the Mencian dictum of "every man a sage" may be interpreted literally.²¹⁷ On the face of it, the novel provides a very significant role for the principle of externally bestowed salvation. After reciting parables of salvation in both prologue sections, the narrative presents a chain of episodes in which deliverance from allegorical perils is effected only through the intervention of divine beings, especially the bodhisattva Kuan-yin, leading up to the final granting of the long-sought scriptures by the Buddha himself in chapter 98.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 7: "In Buddhism there are both types, sudden and gradual, but in Taoist attainment there is only the gradual kind, not the sudden" 佛教有頓漸兩樣，道教工夫只有漸而無頓。

²¹⁶ See chapter 98 (996): "That is to say, the wordless [scriptures] represent sudden attainment and those with words represent the gradual way. The sudden way is without deliberate effort and the gradual way takes deliberate effort. To proceed from the gradual to the sudden, from the deliberate to the nondeliberate, is the path of the true scriptures" 蓋無字爲頓法，有字爲漸法，頓爲無爲，漸爲有爲，由漸而頓，由有爲而無爲，皆真經也。See also chapter 100 (1015): "Although there is a distinction between gradual and sudden, between ease and effort, respectively, in attainment they are united" 雖各有漸頓安勉之殊，而成功則一。

²¹⁷ Chang Shu-shen addresses the issue of "every man a sage" with a bit of sarcasm in chapter 18 (1a), and more seriously in chapter 100 (16a-b). "Li Cho-wu," with his characteristic wit, mocks the mass-produced sages in a comment in chapter 41 (3b): "What a lot of sages! It's just like those people who expound on 'innate knowledge'; no sooner do they get to the lecture hall than they start calling themselves 'great sage'" 何聖人之多也極矣，講致良知者，一入講堂便稱大聖人矣。

²¹⁸ For example, soteriological intervention is required in chapters 7, 14, 17, 21, 22, 26, 31, 35, 39, 42, 43, 49, 52, 55, 58, 61, 66, 69, 71, 73, 77, 83, 87, 90, 92, and 95. The *deus ex machina* is Kuan-yin in chapters 14, 17, 21, 26, 42, 49, 55, 58, and 71. We may recall, of course, that it is Kuan-yin who initiates the quest journey in the first place. Wang Hsiang-hsü, in chapter 49 (1a), compares the various instances of divine intervention, distinguishing between instances in which Kuan-yin comes herself and those in which she sends an agent,

The other side of this coin is the inability of Sun Wu-k'ung to work his own salvation, as Wang Hsiang-hsü observes in chapter 52.²¹⁹ This point is of importance here not only because the frustration of the self-generated attainment of the Monkey King is the obvious message of the expanded prologue, but also because this reduction in his heroic stature from that which he enjoys in the popular tradition reminds us of the focus on the limitations of individual potential in all the literati novels, a pattern I will appeal to again in my discussions of *San-kuo chih yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*.²²⁰

In any event, we may note here several additional variables of major importance in the process of effecting the mode of salvation allegorized in the *Hsi-yu chi*. First I would distinguish between those episodes that culminate in a titanic clash—related with all the narrative flourish the author can bring to bear, and leading to the physical destruction of the demons, or at least their defeat in formal debate or some other contest,²²¹ and those in which the pilgrims simply escape by sneaking away in the dead of night. This distinction is conceptually related to the contrast between those scenes in which the final submission of a demon leads to the recall of the wayward creature by a divine master, and by contrast those that require the uncompromising destruction of the demons, their abodes, and all the creatures in their train.²²² The significance of this latter alternative is suggested in the frequent use of the expression "to remove the weeds one must eliminate the roots" (*chan-ts'ao ch'u-ken*). This extreme solution is called for most consistently in the episodes involving threats of a sexual

and between those in which her assistance is sought and those in which she appears unbidden. See also comments by Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 28, 45. Ironically, the very first assault on the full pilgrim band occurs at a "Temple of Kuan-yin." The role of the various savior figures is discussed by Hu Shih ("K'ao-cheng," p. 367); Anthony Yu ("Pilgrimage," p. 221); and Hsü Chen-chi ("Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 141ff.).

²¹⁹ Wang Hsiang-hsü, chapter 52 (1a): "Sun Wu-k'ung's... wits and powers were both exhausted, he had no choice but to seek a savior" 行者... 智力俱竭, 勢不得不尋主人公矣。

²²⁰ On the recurrent theme of the limitations of heroic capacity, see below, Chapters 4, Part IV, and 5, Part IV. See also Chang Ching-erh, "Monkey-hero," pp. 561ff., 572ff.

²²¹ Full-scale pitched battles (aside from the titanic struggles of the prologue section) are staged in chapters 17, 19, 20, 22, 25, 29, 31, 34, 35, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 76, 81, 83, 85, 86, 89, 91, 92, 95. The struggle takes the form of a debate in chapters 64 and 78, and a contest of magical arts in chapters 35, 45, 46, 66, 69, 75, 84, 87, 97. In chapters 92 and 95 the pilgrims sneak away after subduing their foes, a pattern repeated at the last stop on their journey in chapter 99.

²²² The wayward demons are recalled to their prior estate in chapters 31, 35, 39, 42, 43, 46, 49, 52, 61, 64, 66, 71, 77, 79, 83, and 90. They are mercilessly destroyed in chapters 55, 58, 72, 73, 74, 79, 89, and 92. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 63 (1b); Ch'en Tun-fu, *Shih-i*, p. 983; and in *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 92 (18b).

nature, which we have seen to stand out particularly in the second half of the book.²²³

Perhaps the most bizarre means of overcoming the demons—yet apparently one very dear to the author—is found in those numerous episodes in which the monster must be subdued not by a frontal assault but, in one way or another, *from the inside*. This is in a sense the other side of the coin of encompassment and self-enclosure considered earlier. This pattern is worked out in many different forms, often showing considerable imagination. In chapter 17, for example, it is in the guise of a cinnabar pill that Sun Wu-k'ung manages to penetrate one demon's defenses; and in chapter 82 he first tries, unsuccessfully, to enter his enemy in the froth of a cup of wine, and later gains access in the form of a luscious peach.²²⁴ One of the most fully articulated examples of this type is presented in the episode at the Little Thunderclap Temple (*Hsiao Lei-yin ssu* 小雷音寺) in chapters 65 and 66. In this episode Sun Wu-k'ung is first entrapped under the edge of a brass cymbal (*chin-nao*), from which he escapes by borrowing out with the aid of a dragon's horn, only to be "bagged" once again in the girdle (*ta-pao-erh*) of the demon. Eventually the spell of encompassment is broken, not by enclosing the demon with another bag, but rather by getting inside him, this time in the form of a juicy melon.²²⁵ This game of outwitting the engulfing power of demonic forces seems also to be behind another conceptually related pattern, in those cases in which the secret of subduing the hostile creature lies in tricking him into identifying himself, as if, by defi-

²²³ For example, the following episodes conclude with the total annihilation of the offending demons: Ch'e-ch'ih kuo (chapter 46), Hsi-liang nü-kuo (chapter 55), Six-eared Ape (chapter 58), python demon (chapter 67), spider demons (chapter 73), Mieh-fa kuo (chapter 86). See also chapters 64, 79, and 92. Notable exceptions include chapters 83 and 95, both instances of sexual assault ending with the recall of a wayward temptress to her prior state. The expression *chan-ts'ao ch'u-ken* may be susceptible to more than one interpretation: "to mow down the weeds and then dig up the roots" or "in order to get rid of the weeds, you must first remove the roots." This common term is also used in various antecedents, e.g., the *Shih-hua*, section 6; the *Tsa-chü*, Scene 2; and at a number of points in *T'ung-t'ien hsüan-chi*.

²²⁴ The commentators find this imagery interesting. See Ch'en Shih-pin, 4 (44), 22 (230), 39 (396), 59 (599), 82 (835), 83 (844), and Chia-p'i *Hsi-yu chi*, 8 (6b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 75 (1b); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 30, 33, 34; and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 17 (75a), 39 (85b), 64 (38b), 83 (21b). See also Ch'en Tun-fu, *Shih-i*, p. 917. Sun Wu-k'ung transforms himself into the following tiny creatures to penetrate his enemies' defenses: bee, 16, 55, 78, 94; gnat, 32, 59; flea, 49; louse, 71; fly, 34, 41, 51, 70, 72, 75, 82; firefly, 92; ant, 86; butterfly, 89.

²²⁵ Chapter 66 (2:917f.). The same pattern is again driven home in the later episode in which the python demon is also subdued by means of a *bellum intestinum*. Cf. the traditional symbolic significance attached to the melon image, similar to that of the hulu gourd (e.g., chapters 32–35) endowed with power to encompass the universe (*chuang-t'ien*). See N. J. Girardot, *Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism*, for further discussion of gourd symbolism in China.

ning its own being, the force is reduced to the vulnerable proportions of a finite self.²²⁶

All of these examples provide important counterweights to the simple saving grace bestowed upon the pilgrims in some of the episodes, since here the question of confronting and overcoming the demonic power is clearly more conceptual than physical. In the last few examples cited, what we witness is an abstract form of solution to the problem of self-enclosure, whereby the encompassing force is neutralized not by the expansion, but by the contraction of the bounds of selfhood.

This brings us back to the original focus of the reading of the allegory of *Hsi-yu chi* as essentially a *psychomachia* of the process of the cultivation of the mind as construed by sixteenth-century thinkers. Having reviewed some of the principal obstacles to this process and the means of overcoming them, as presented through the medium of allegorical narrative, we can now reconsider these same issues in terms of the problems and their solutions at the level of individual consciousness. A careful reading of the novel now establishes that there is much more to it than a set of Taoist terms imposed on a Buddhist fable; that it is heavily charged with the language of syncretic *hsin-hsüeh*, which substantially conditions the meaning of its allegorical figures. This philosophical language both redefines the problems raised in the allegorical journey and suggests possible solutions in terms of various conceptualizations of the cultivation of the mind.

The most immediately obvious of these formulations is seen in the use of the notion of the "lost mind" (*fang-hsin*), which is very pointedly programmed into two key episodes, in chapters 27–31 and again in chapters 56–58. In each of these cases, the mind-monkey is "let go" (literally, "exiled," in the harsher meaning of the same word, *fang*). And in both incidents, the crisis resulting from the ensuing state of "mindlessness" raises the same theoretical problem of consciousness: the loss of unitary focus due to conflicting claims of compassion—in this case misguided—and pride. The contrived design of the two scenes leaves little room for doubt that what is intended is an allegorical exemplum of the Neo-Confucian concept of mind cultivation, based on Mencius's definition of true "learning" (*hsüeh-wen* 學問) as "seeking the lost mind" (*ch'iu ch'i fang hsin* 求其放心).²²⁷

²²⁶ This divulging of identity is a more pointed manifestation of the revealing of one's true form (*hsien pen-hsiang*). The most explicit example occurs in chapter 58, where a "demon-reflecting mirror" (*chao-yao ching* 照妖鏡) brings to light the slippery identity of the Six-eared Ape. Of course, this may also be recognized as a common folktale motif. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 42 (1b), 58 (1b), 73 (1a), 77 (1a).

²²⁷ Mencius, VI:A:10a (*Ssu-shu chi-chu*, pp. 168f.). The pun based on the two levels of meaning of *fang-hsin* is used for humorous effect in chapters 27 (1:375) and 56 (2:776), and perhaps also in chapter 23 (2:314). Other pointed occurrences of the expression are found in chapters 14 (1:190), 28 (1:381), 32 (2:437), 48 (2:671), 49 (2:681), 54 (2:754), 55 (2:769), 56–58 (2:776–88), 67 (3:921), 74 (3:1019–24), 83 (3:1145), 85 (3:1166), 86

This is abundantly clear from the way in which the episodes in question are developed. In the first instance, the dismissal of Sun Wu-k'ung immediately causes the band to drift apart, leaving them easy prey for the Yellow-robed Demon 黃袍怪, until they are finally forced to beg the exiled mind-monkey to return, a situation obviously conceived in terms of the original Mencian passage. When the scene is restaged in the second half of the novel, the author deepens the significance of the lost-mind state through his allegorical treatment of the problem of false identity that arises with the appearance of the false "double mind-monkey" (二心猿). In the latter case, the spectacle of the two mind-monkeys battling for supremacy further defines the problem as one of refraction of consciousness, a point driven home when we learn that it is an aptly named Six-eared Ape who is responsible for the entire disorder. Since the problem in these episodes is so canonically defined in terms of "letting the mind go," the prescribed solution consequently lies in "keeping" it (*ts'un-hsin* 存心) or else "recovering" it (*ch'iu-hsin* 求心, *shou-hsin* 收心), as the text itself specifies at a number of points.²²⁸

A slightly different conception of more or less the same issue surfaces in the many scenes in which the problem is the disequilibrium of the mind, the opposite of what Mencius would call the "unmoved mind" (*pu tung hsin* 不動心).²²⁹ We can see reflections of this idea in practically every episode in which an initial state of harmony is subverted by restlessness and discomfort, giving rise to perils according to the formula cited earlier: "with the emergence of consciousness ..." ²³⁰ Typically, the "moving" of the

(3:1186), 88 (3:1206f.), 89 (3:1224), 94 (3:1287). See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 13 (6a); Chang Shu-shen, chapters 14 (17a), 19 (15a), 56 (1a–1b), 57 (8b, 14a), 58 (12b), and *Tsung-p'i*, 24 (6b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 3 (8b), 27 (1a–2a), 30 (1a), 56 (1a, 6b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 36 (369), 56 (569); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 29 (86b), 30 (99a), 31 (11b), 56 (61b). See Hsü Chen-chi, "Pa-shih-i nan," pp. 5ff., 127ff.

²²⁸ For example, *ts'un-hsin* occurs in 74 (3:1032), 81 (3:1118), 85 (3:1166). See comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, 2 (21), 3 (35), 36 (368f.), 43 (437), 56 (568); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 3 (1b), 4 (5b), 14 (2a), 19 (1a), 31 (1a), 32 (1b), 57 (1a); Chang Shu-shen, 3 (1a), 14 (17a), 19 (15a), 56 (1a, 1b), 57 (8b, 14a), 58 (12b), 59 (12a), 60 (18a), 79 (14a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 24 (6b), 68 (18a); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 1, 15, 17; and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 87 (70a). These terms also occur in the *Tsa-chü*, Scenes 16 and 21.

²²⁹ Mencius, II:A:2 (*chüan* 2, p. 36f.). The expression *tung-hsin* occurs in chapters 16 (1:215, 221), 23 (1:311), 50 (2:694), 78 (3:1084), and 82 (3:1130). See comments by Chang Shu-shen, 34 (1b), 72 (17a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 77 (1a); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 48 (90b).

²³⁰ Chapters 13 (1:169) and 20 (1:266). "Li Cho-wu" seizes on this idea as the "basic meaning" (*tsung-chih* 宗旨) of the book; see chapter 13 (13a). See also Ch'en Shih-pin, 20 (210f.), 23 (242), 43 (437), 50 (570f.); Chang Shu-shen, 34 (1b), 51 (14b), 56 (1b), 60 (16b), 62 (1b), 92 (1b). In chapter 72 (2a, 17a) Chang applies the variation *tung-ch'ing* specifically to the problem of sexual disequilibrium. In chapter 16 (1:216–21) the expressions *fang-hsin*, *tung-hsin*, *tu-hsin* 毒心, and *pu hsiao-hsin* 不小心 are introduced in rapid succession. See also *Tsa-chü*, Scene 21.

heart takes the form of wrath, from the peevish outbursts that prompt Hsüan-tsang to "lose his mind" in the "exile" scenes, to the unbridled fury personified in the Red Child (Hung-hai-erh), with his blazing carts and other iconographic emblems of rage.²³¹ The traditional association between the heart as a bodily organ and the element fire, as allegorized in the figure of the monkey-pilgrim with his alternate connections to fire and metal symbolism, helps to account for a good deal of this sort of imagery in the novel. This covers both his general mastery of fire of the natural sort, and his vulnerability to "demonic" fire (*hsieh-huo* 邪火) blazing out of control, allegorically presented in the two linked episodes of the Red Child and the Iron Fan Princess, as well as in several other incidents in the narrative.²³²

At the same time, similar associations are evoked through various uses of the wind motif, taking in both the relatively benign gusts (*hsün-feng* 巽風) harnessed by the Monkey King and the blustery squalls summoned up by various demons, many of whose names refer specifically to demonic winds.²³³ In a word, what I believe is suggested by all this huffing and puffing is the notion of "disorder of the mind" (*luan-hsin*), already familiar to us from the chaos at the heart of the *Chün P'ing Mei*.²³⁴ The obvious antidote to the poison of unbridled consciousness is a cooling of psychic energy. This is precisely the idea behind the central metaphor of the novel's conception: the "stilling" of the mind-monkey (*ting hsin-yüan*

²³¹ The figure of Hung-hai-erh reminds me of Spenser's icon of Wrath in Book I, Canto IV:33, and also his Pyrochles (Book II, Cantos IV-VI) whose famous line "I burne, I burne, I burne" (VI:44) could well have been uttered by Hung-hai-erh.

²³² The allegorical significance that underlies the figure of Hung-hai-erh is brought out again in the episode of his parents at Huo-yen shan, where it is also supported by the identification of the element fire with the heart; see chapter 61 (855). See Wang Hsiang-hsü, 4 (1b), 25 (1a); "Li Cho-wu," 41 (1a), 42 (3a, 7b), 56 (15b), 59 (15a). On the discrepancy of the five-elements assignment of Sun Wu-k'ung to both metal and fire, see "Li Cho-wu," 41 (16a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 59 (1b), 62 (1a), 70 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 17 (184f.), 41 (415ff.); Chang Shu-shen, 60 (16b, 17a); *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 42 (20b). In a comment in chapter 40 (1a), Wang Hsiang-hsü explains that Hung-hai-erh represents "fire in its ascendancy as a single element" 一行偏至之火, whereas Sun Wu-k'ung represents "fire as the complete amalgam of all the five elements" 五行全備之火.

²³³ The traditional five-elements symbolism brings into association images of autumn winds, tigers, cutting metal, and poison. Cf. the iconographic color of this quarter, white, which figures in such names as Pai-hu shan-ling and Pai-ku fu-jen. Unusual winds blow in chapters 16, 18, 20, 28, 38, 40, 43, 44, 47, 49, 54, 58, 59, 61, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 75, 78, 81, 85, 91, 98; tigers appear in chapters 13, 14, 20, 27, 29, 34, 36. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 13 (1a), 68 (1a), 73 (1a); and Ch'en Shih-pin, 13 (146), 14 (158), 15 (166), 21 (219), 56 (569).

²³⁴ See above, Chapter 2, Part VI. The idea of *luan-hsin* is emphasized in comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 23 (1b), 24 (1b); *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 62 (21b), 63 (29b), 80 (1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 28 (289), 40 (407), 50 (511); and Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 36.

定心猿).²³⁵ Not only does this conception represent a pointedly stressed reversal of the adapted metaphor of the mind-monkey, with its own long history in various literary sources, but it also informs the structural design of the novel whereby the unprecedentedly extended prologue treatment of the insurrection of the mind-monkey precedes his subdual and harnessing, without which the quest journey could not even get under way.

Aside from the prominently signposted instance of stilling the mind-monkey in chapter 7, the term *ting-hsin* does not occur often in the novel. But other expressions containing the character *ting* recur throughout the text, the most important among them being "stilling one's nature" (*ting-hsing* 定性), substituting for *hsin* (心) the term *hsing* (性), which we have seen above to be so closely linked as to become nearly interchangeable in many contexts. And once this nexus of meaning has been established, then such details as Sun Wu-k'ung's iron cudgel made from the staff used by the Great Yü to "fix the depths" of the seas (*ting-ti* 定底), which he acquires in chapter 3 and puts to significant use in the conquest of Chu Pa-chieh in chapter 22; the "spirit-calming post" (*ting-hun chuang* 定魂粧) to which Hsüan-tsang is tied in chapter 28; and several instances of "quelling the winds" (*ting-feng* 定風)—all of these take on a more specific range of meaning.²³⁶

At the same time, a whole range of other terms of nearly synonymous import are used in the text and in the commentaries to convey similar ideas. These include "calming the mind" (*ning-hsin* 寧心) and "quieting the mind" (*ching-hsin* 靜心), as well as "pacifying the mind" (*an-hsin* 安心), "ordering the mind" (*chih-hsin* 治心), "subduing the mind" (*hsiang-hsin* 降心)—not to mention the terms *shou-hsin* and *ts'un-hsin* mentioned earlier.²³⁷ This per-

²³⁵ Chapter 7 (2:82). This expression, however, is not original to the hundred-chapter novel. It occurs in Scene 21 of the *Tsa-chü*, and in fact is also the title of a separate dramatic piece (see Hu Shih, "K'ao-cheng," p. 368). See Ch'en Shih-pin, 36 (368), and Wang Hsiang-hsü, 46 (1b). Wang states this even more strongly in a comment in chapter 57 (6b), when he insists that "the return of the mind-monkey back to within the passes" 心猿復進關 "completely wraps up all the hidden subtleties of the *Tao Tsang*" 括盡道藏之精蘊.

²³⁶ Examples of the use of *ting-hsing* occur in chapters 10 (1:122f.), 16 (1:212), 31 (1:432), 36 (2:491), 45 (2:632), 50 (2:699), 59 (2:823), 60 (2:832), and 64 (2:885-87). Associated expressions include *ju-ting* 入定: 12 (1:158), 21 (1:201); *tso-ting* 坐定: 41 (2:573); *ting-feng* 定風: 21 (1:280), 59 (2:824), etc. For the epithet *ting-ti* applied to the magic staff, see chapters 3 (1:34) and 22 (1:293). For the philosophical implications of the term *ting-hsing*, see Yü Chün-fang, "Buddhists' Responses," pp. 8f., reference to Chang Tsai's "Ting-hsing shu" 定性書. See Chang Shu-shen, 21 (13a, 15a); and Ch'en Shih-pin, 3 (35), 7 (78), 36 (368), 77 (784f.).

²³⁷ Examples include *ning-hsin*: 21 (1:285); and *ching-hsin*: 93 (3:1270). See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 4 (14a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 4 (5b), 50 (32); Ch'en Shih-pin, 42 (426); and Chang Shu-shen, 15 (16a), 20 (14b).

sistent emphasis on the stilling of conscious energy, by the way, has special relevance in connection with the practice of "quiet-sitting" (*ching-tso* 靜坐), shared by adherents of all three of the major schools of thought in this period.

By the late Ming, however, quiet-sitting had in itself become a point of considerable controversy.²³⁸ We may perhaps see a minor reflection of this issue in the provocative use of certain other terms in the novel. The "unmoved mind," for example, may describe an ideal state of unperturbed equilibrium of consciousness, but if by virtue of remaining stationary the mind begins to gather moss, then this state becomes something less than desirable. This is the danger of taking on a film of dust, as it were, what is expressed in Neo-Confucian language by the concept of the "beclouding of the mind" (*hsin-pi* 心蔽), understood to refer to selfish desires that block one's vision of the ultimate nature of things. I cannot cite any instances of the explicit expression of this idea in the text—although we do find plenty of associated ideas, and the commentators occasionally bring this into their discussions.²³⁹ On the other hand, certain accepted correctives to this condition find frequent mention in the course of the narrative. One of these is the notion of "cleansing the mind" (*hsi-hsin* 洗心).²⁴⁰ This is originally a Buddhist concept, but it is fully assimilated within Neo-Confucian terminology and occurs in several passages in the novel, where it often merges with the idea of the "illumination" of the mind (*ming-hsin* 明心). In chapters 36 and 64, for example, the ironic treatment of the immediate outcome of Hsüan-tsang's "illumination" in the dazzling white moonlight forces the reader to look beyond the superficial Buddhist sense of the term.²⁴¹

Two other specific obstacles to the cultivation of the mind treated in the allegory deserve a closer look here. The first of these is the problem of duplicity and multiplicity treated earlier. We have already seen the use of the term "double-mind" (*erh-hsin* 二心) in the allegorization of this idea in

²³⁸ For background discussion on the practice of "quiet-sitting," see Jen Yu-wen, "Ch'en Hsien-chang's Philosophy of the Natural," pp. 78ff.; and Rodney Taylor, "Meditation in Ming Neo-Orthodoxy," pp. 149–82. The concept is reflected in comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 46 (1b); Chang Shu-shen, 63 (14b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 50 (511) and 74 (754), where he refers specifically to Ch'en Hsien-chang's ideas on this subject.

²³⁹ For example, Chang Shu-shen, 37 (1a), 78 (14b), and *Tsung-p'i*, 21 (6b), 23 (6b); "Li Cho-wu," 32 (1b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 14 (2a). See the idea of "cleansing from dust" (*ti-kou* 洗垢) in chapter 62 (2:857).

²⁴⁰ For *hsi-hsin*, see chapter 8 (1:100), 53 (2:735), 62 (2:857), 64 (2:887), 87 (3:1202). See comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, 67 (702), 72 (733f.); and Chang Shu-shen, *Tsung-p'i*, 65 (18a).

²⁴¹ These ideas are brought out in comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 19 (193), 36 (369f.). Cf. the initial discussion of *ming-hsin chien-hsing* in the Yu T'ung preface to the Ch'en Shih-pin edition. This expression also appears in Ch'en's comments in chapters 80 (814) and 94 (949). See also Chang Shu-shen, 36 (15b), and *Tsung-p'i*, 14 (5a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 92 (1b); and Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 8.

chapters 57 and 58.²⁴² And now we can add the frequent citation of the expression "multiple-minded" (*to-hsin*), taken for the most part in its humorous sense in colloquial usage to mock the excessive mindfulness of Hsüan-tsang.²⁴³ In addition, we may perhaps catch a bit of a joke in the repeated references to the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra by the elliptic title *To-hsin ching* (obtained by adding the final syllable of the transcription from Sanskrit to the descriptive Chinese title).²⁴⁴ In at least one episode, however, the issue of multiplicity of mind is clearly worked up into an allegorical tableau. This is the scene in chapter 79 in which Sun Wu-k'ung dissects himself to reveal a large number of hearts pumping within his breast.²⁴⁵ This in itself may be taken lightly, as a witty parody of Taoist side-show antics, but since this scene comes in the middle of an episode dealing with the striking imagery of the gathering of human hearts for a king's medicine prescribed by a Taoist wizard, the spectacle of Sun Wu-k'ung's multiple hearts is not entirely gratuitous.

A final set of related concepts involves spiritual disorder caused by the straying of the mind from the proper path, as expressed in such terms as "the straying of the mind" (*mi-hsin*), "stubborn attachment of the mind" (*chih-hsin* 執心), and "one-sidedness of the mind" (*p'ien-hsin* 偏心).²⁴⁶ As used by both the author and the commentators, these terms refer within the context of the novel primarily to the venom of sectarian heterodoxy, the antidote for which is a return of the mind to its proper course (*cheng-hsin* 正心).²⁴⁷

²⁴² For discussions by the commentators, see, e.g., Wang Hsiang-hsü, 57 (1a–b), 58 (1b); "Li Cho-wu," 58 (13b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 57 (579), 58 (588f.), 59 (598); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 57 (71b).

²⁴³ For example, chapters 40 (2:550), 76 (3:1060), 79 (3:1088). See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 19 (7b); and Chang Shu-shen, 20 (2a), 79 (14a). The exact opposite of *to-hsin* is the quality of *i-hsin* 一心, the "single-minded" devotion often ascribed to Sun Wu-k'ung (e.g., chapters 32 (1:437) and 58 (2:811)).

²⁴⁴ This version of the title of the Heart Sutra is not altogether uncommon. For example, it appears in the *Shih-hua*, sections 15, 16. This discrepancy is pointed out by Liu Ts'un-yan in "Wu Ch'eng-en," p. 84, n. 172, who cites additional examples. See also his "Ch'üan-chien chiao," pt. 3, p. 90, n. 41. The sutra is given as *Mi-to hsin-ching* in chapter 45 (2:632).

²⁴⁵ This issue is taken up by Ch'en Shih-pin, 21 (221), 48 (487), 85 (867f.), 93 (939f.); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 79 (1a); and Chang Shu-shen, 74 (4b), 79 (14a), and 93 (1b), as opposed to a "reduction of mindfulness" (*kua-hsin* 寡心).

²⁴⁶ These and similar terms are used in comments by "Li Cho-wu," 62 (14b), 73 (15a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 71 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 29 (299), 47 (477); Ts'ai Yüan-fang in *tu-fa*, item 29.

²⁴⁷ See Wang Hsiang-hsü, 3 (1a), 15 (1a); Chang Shu-shen, 28 (14a), 36 (1a), 63 (1a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 3 (2a–b); "Li Cho-wu," 7 (12a, tp); Ch'en Shih-pin, *Chia-p'i Hsi-yu chi*, 1 (2a, 2b, 3b), 2 (24a, 31b), 3 (14a, 15b, 16b, 18a), 4 (24b), 8 (13a), 10 (9b, 10a, 11b, 12a), 12 (6b, 15a); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 36. Cf. the opposition between "the constancy of mind" (*hsin chih ch'ang* 心之常), represented by the Buddha, and the mercurial mutability of mind (*hsin chih p'ien* 心之變), symbolized by Sun Wu-k'ung's monkey nature.

In the last few pages, the focus of my discussion has turned exclusively on the idea of cultivation of the mind as the ground of the allegorical meaning of *Hsi-yu chi*. I have argued earlier, however, that the key to understanding this book has to do with the concept of an integration of the separate elements of the self within an organic whole. This apparent contradiction can be resolved easily in accordance with the Neo-Confucian concept of self-cultivation, embracing as it does both mind and body within the comprehensive boundaries of the "self." In this sense the separate terms "cultivation of the mind" (*hsiu-hsin*) and "cultivation of the physical self" (*hsiu-shen* 修身) become virtually interchangeable with reference to the conjoining of the external and internal facets of existence. Based on this understanding, we can now proceed to explore in greater detail the concept of the integration of the self presented in the allegory.

To begin, let us pay a bit more attention to the external aspect of this two-sided coin of cultivation: the harmonizing of the self within a network of human relations in society and the world at large. Although the allegory of *Hsi-yu chi* is clearly oriented toward the problems of the inner self, it is important to recognize that the other side of the picture is not entirely absent. The most obvious area in which the question of social integration arises is with respect to the pilgrimage group itself. I have observed earlier that, despite all the rivalry and contrariness that disturbs the harmonious functioning of the band right up to the end of their journey, we can still see a certain gradual improvement on this point as they proceed through the stations of their pilgrimage. Moreover, in the course of the narrative the author takes rather evident pains to manipulate his material to allow for significant contributions to the quest by each of the members of the group. Aside from Sun Wu-k'ung's central role, Chu Pa-chieh raises his rake to remove sticky obstacles or plunges into deep water to defend his comrades in chapters 22, 64, and 67; the Sand Monk brings healing water to his pregnant fellows in chapter 53; and even the dragon-horse manages to transform himself into a dancing girl and wield an unlikely weapon to save the master on one occasion in chapter 30.²⁴⁸

The fact that the author intends to make the on-again off-again spirit of cooperation among the members of the little band something more than a subject for humorous exploitation is made quite clear in his consistent application of abstract allegorical terms describing their fluctuating degree of integration. I have already discussed some of the allegorical labels used for certain instances of flagrant disunity, and in those short-lived moments when the pilgrims are reunited, their state is described with such expres-

²⁴⁸ The dragon-horse also performs an indispensable function in the final rescue in chapter 99. See comments by Chang Shu-shen, 32 (17b), 64 (4a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 67 (1a); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 58 (76a).

sions as "the four comrades in harmonious concord" (*ssu-chung ho-ho* 四衆和合), "with a common will and a single mind" (*ho-i t'ung-hsin* 合意同心), and "with a single mind and intense efforts" (*t'ung-hsin lu-li* 同心戮力).²⁴⁹ These expressions often draw quite pointed discussions from the traditional commentators.²⁵⁰

Although these references to integral relationships apply primarily to the nuclear group adrift in the wilderness, we should also take note of certain intimations of a broader social context in the book. For one thing, the fact that the author's tale is focused exclusively on a group of monastic pilgrims does not keep him from displaying considerable interest in the realm of family ties. In fact, quite a few episodes involve specific issues of filial relationships, both in the positive ideal set up in the parable of Hsüan-tsang's rescue of his parents in chapter 9—which in a sense qualifies him for this noble mission in the first place, and in the negative examples of violations of sacred bonds, calling forth the valiant efforts of the pilgrim heroes to restore proper hierarchical order.²⁵¹

The disordering of family relations receives its most sarcastic treatment, of course, in the episode of the Land of Women at Hsi-liang. Against this background the question of filial piety, taken in its broadest sense, seems to resonate with some of the various metaphors for attainment that I will treat later. Thus, the violation of this principle is tantamount to a denial of the subordination of the individual self to the chain of existence, as we see in the vaunt of self-procreation by the unredeemed Monkey King in chapter 1.²⁵² This brings the author's vision into line with one of the key problematic areas traced in my interpretation of *Chin P'ing Mei*. Chang Shu-shen may be exaggerating a bit when he puts the concept of *hsiao* (孝) at the core of his interpretation, but his argument may not be as far out of line as it first appears when he goes on to insist on the reflection of other Confucian virtues in the novel. At the least, as quite a few critics have

²⁴⁹ See, for example, *ho-ho ssu-hsiang*, 100 (3:1362); and *t'ung-hsin lu-li*, 81 (3:1122).

²⁵⁰ See, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü, 16 (1a), 22 (1b), 27 (1b), 32 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 27 (282), 59 (598), 72 (734f.); "Li Cho-wu," 50 (1b); and Chang Shu-shen, 98 (1a-b). A good discussion of this point is found in Wu Ta-yün, "T'ien-ti pu ch'üan," pp. 80-109.

²⁵¹ Cf. the issue of filiality suggested in the question of the "parentage" of various demons; e.g., Hung-hai-erh in chapters 40-42, Ti-yung fu-jen in chapter 83, or in the episode involving usurped patrimony in Ch'e-ch'ih kuo. See also the figure of the filial woodcutter in chapter 86. Cf. Chang Shu-shen's discussion in a comment in chapter 50 (1a-b). This idea is discussed by James Fu in *Quest*, pp. 26ff.

²⁵² See Chapter 1 (1:14). See discussion by "Li Cho-wu," 1 (14a); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 12 (25b, 26a). We can perhaps detect in the presentation of the Monkey King's spontaneous generation a parody of the ideas in Chang Tsai's *Hsi-ming* 西銘. This parallels the sense of the unparented state of Hsi-men Ch'ing in *Chin P'ing Mei*, discussed above, Chapter 2, Part V.

pointed out, the number of scenes in which the pilgrims provide valuable service to other humans in need seems to be more than gratuitous, despite the problematic nature of the issue of compassion within the terms of the allegory.²⁵³

Having come this far in considering the human context of our allegorical fantasy, we may also take a bit more seriously certain reflections of the concrete historical frame of reference in the novel. I have observed above that the author makes somewhat more of the historical setting than he would have had to in arranging his temporal structure. For example, he introduces the tangential subject of the T'ang founder Li Shih-min not only in chapter 11, but also in chapter 39; and at various points he hints at a certain conceptual connection between the unruly arrogance of the Monkey King and other demons and the proverbial image of Wang Mang "five hundred years" earlier. The commentators do not necessarily have this in mind when they bring into their discussions analogies to a wide range of controversial historical figures from ancient times down to the Ming to make their points; but I am convinced that the author of *Hsi-yu chi* is vitally concerned with this aspect of his text.²⁵⁴ If that is so, then this provides another unexpected link between this allegorical novel and our other three more mimetically grounded texts, all of which, in their different ways, are deeply enmeshed in the exploration of historical issues. Of course, I cannot really claim that the author makes very much of this dimension of meaning. Perhaps the most that can be said is that he, too, like our other authors, has learned his Four Books catechism well, and that he is therefore fully aware of the social, historical, and other interpersonal contexts that form the matrix of individual human consciousness.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ The commentators treat these implications quite seriously. For example, Chang Shu-shen identifies the protective circle (*ch'üan-tzu* 圈子) in chapter 50 (1a) as symbolizing the network of ritual propriety (*li* 禮). Ch'en Shih-pin, 24 (253), associates the five elements with the five cardinal relations (*wu-lun* 五倫). See also Anthony Yu, *Journey*, pp. 56f.; James Fu, *Quest*, p. 73; and Chang Ching-erh, "Monkey-hero," pp. 582f., who reviews the instances of service to others rendered by our pilgrims in the course of their journey.

²⁵⁴ See above, nn. 73 and 74. Various historical parallels are suggested by the commentators. For example, Wang Hsiang-hsü draws parallels to such figures as Shen-sheng 申生, Wang Mang, Chu-ko Liang, and Wen T'ien-hsiang 文天祥. Chang Shu-shen repeats many of these, e.g., 47 (2a, 4a), 91 (1b), and adds Yüeh Fei, 57 (1a). Ch'en Shih-pin, 46 (468), strikes closer to home with a reference to Fang Hsiao-ju 方孝儒. More recently, Chang Ching-erh has suggested that the muddle-headed Master of our pilgrimage may reflect a veiled portrait of the Wan-li emperor ("Monkey-hero," pp. 202f.). Cf. Su Hsing's argument that the novel was intended as an attack on the Chia-ching emperor, in his "Hsi-yu chi tui Ming Shih-tsung ti yin-yü p'i-p'an ho ch'ao-feng," pp. 33–53. See Part II of this chapter for the possible significance of references to Wang Mang in the temporal scheme of the text.

²⁵⁵ I might point out that Wu Ch'eng-en, if he is the author of our text, was not entirely uninvolved in political life, despite the image he presents of a recluse. Cf. his

But for all this, the novel ultimately focuses more on *hsiu-hsin* than on *hsiu-shen*; in other words, it is the internal integrality of the individual self that concerns the author more than the integration of the self into a wider set of relations—even though these are, in the final analysis, two sides of the same coin. The theoretical issue of the wholeness of the self is fleshed out in the allegory in a number of ways. First, many of the allegorical tags convey to us a sense that the Master and his four disciples together constitute a single composite entity. The fact that each of the disciples and even the Master himself are usually singled out as separate elements does not contradict this; it only emphasizes the point that his is the aggregate identity of which they all individually partake. The text is fairly explicit on this point, referring to the pilgrim band as a "single body" (*i-f'i* 一體) in a number of passages.²⁵⁶ Once we recognize this principle, the entire narrative process of disintegration and reintegration yields a fairly easy allegorical interpretation. In fact, from this perspective all of the obstacles outlined above—the tendency to disunity, various forms of the disorienting push of desire, the blockages of vision, and especially the problem of self-replication—can be taken as aspects of the loss and recovery of the integrality of the self.

Beyond this, the author further relates this ground of meaning to other schemes of analyzing the components of self that were current in his intellectual milieu. Thus, in certain scenes he speaks of the unity of "mind" and "will" (*hsin-i* 心意), drawing at one and the same time on the key terms of the "monkey of the mind" metaphor, on the common Ming Taoist division of the self into "mind," "spirit," and "will" (*hsin, shen, i*), and on the two crucial internal foci of Neo-Confucian self-cultivation: "the rectification of the mind" and "the stabilization of the will" (*cheng-hsin, ch'eng-i* 正心誠意), as I would like to render these terms.²⁵⁷ In other places, he frames this conceptual division in terms of distinctions between "mind" and "nature"

relations with Hsü Chung-hsing 徐中行, a committed partisan of Yang Chi-sheng, and other figures, discussed in Liu Ts'un-yan, "Wu Ch'eng-en," pp. 18ff.

²⁵⁶ The expression *i-f'i* occurs in chapters 32 (1:433), 58 (2:802), 77 (3:1062), 84 (3:1151, 1162), 90 (3:1239), 99 (3:1347, 1349), 100 (3:1362). The commentators frequently discourse on this subject, insisting that the separate pilgrims must be understood as comprising a single self. See, for example, "Li Cho-wu," 49 (7b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 16 (1a), 20 (2a), 22 (1a), 27 (1b), 28 (1a, 1b), 32 (1a), 34 (1a), 44 (11b), 56 (1b), 67 (1a), 94 (1a); Chang Shu-shen, 22 (14b), 23 (1a), 94 (8a), 99 (1a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 7 (3b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 8 (92f.), 29 (299), 57 (579), 58 (587), 85 (866), 87 (884); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 30. Cf. the allegorical theme of disunity discussed earlier. See Okuno Shintarō, "Mizu to honō," p. 228.

²⁵⁷ Various combinations of the terms *hsin* and *i* occur in many chapters; e.g., 19 (1:262), 50 (2:694), 54 (755, 761), 58 (2:814), 77 (3:1075). See comments by Chang Shu-shen, 33 (1a), 49 (1b); "Li Cho-wu," 49 (14b); and Wang Hsiang-hsü, 15 (1a), who criticizes narrow-minded Confucianism for taking the rectification of mind 心 and will 意 as two separate levels.

(*hsin-hsing* 心性),²⁵⁸ or between "ultimate nature" and "physical existence" (*hsing-ming* 性命), whose "dual cultivation" (*shuang-hsiu*) we have seen to have had a special interpretation within Ming Taoist thought.²⁵⁹

One additional allegorical scheme of particular relevance to the idea of integration is provided by the use of five-elements symbolism in the text. Aside from the generative and destructive relations among the pilgrims themselves, frequently labeled with five-elements tags (e.g., chapter 31, "Metal follows, wood conforms to reach the true fruition" 金順木馴成正果; or chapter 57, "When earth and wood have no attainment, then metal and water are split asunder" 土木無功金水絕),²⁶⁰ a number of entire episodes are patently mapped out on a grid of five-elements interaction.²⁶¹ The key to the interpretation of these references lies in the realization that the five elements can be both components of harmonious integration and forces of mutual destruction. This seems to be behind the frequent association of the unleashed fury of the most savage demons with one or another of the five elements in their unchained separate phases, as for example in the noxious image of the Red Child, the Iron Fan Princess, and various other color-labeled creatures.²⁶²

Significantly, the threat to the harmonious integrality of the mission through the disordering of the five elements forms the allegorical core of

²⁵⁸ See the following uses of the term *pen-hsing*: 13 (1:173), 77 (3:1062), 83 (3:1138), 98 (3:1330). Cf. the use of the terms *ting-hsing* and *ming-hsing*, discussed earlier. See comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, 1 (11), 3 (34), 8 (89), 18 (193), 19 (201), 26 (272), 27 (283), 33 (341), 34 (351), 35 (359), 40 (406), 41 (415), 43 (437), 47 (477), 50 (509), 53 (538), 55 (559), 77 (784), 83 (844), 98 (993); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, items 33, 38; Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 12, 19, 46; and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 13 (33b). In the *Tung-t'ien hsüan-chi* preface Hsüan-tsang is identified with the term "true nature" (*chen-hsing* 眞性).

²⁵⁹ Liu I-ming in particular emphasizes this concept at a number of points. See also Ch'en Shih-pin, 27 (282), 36 (370), 40 (406), 50 (509), 55 (559), 100 (1015); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 14 (47a).

²⁶⁰ Chapters 31 (2:417) and 57 (2:793).

²⁶¹ In addition to the episode at Wu-chuang kuan in chapters 24–26, to be discussed below, we can also see the same allegorical focus in the following episodes: the conflict with Hung-hai-erh in chapters 40–42; crossing the River of Communion in chapter 49; the incident at Huo-yen shan in chapters 61–62; the clash with Sai-t'ai-sui 賽太歲 in chapters 70–71. See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 46 (15b), 92 (14b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 1 (1b), 7 (1a), 14 (1b), 23 (2a), 24 (1a), 40 (1a), 43 (1a–b); Chang Shu-shen, 40 (1a, 16b, 17a), 60 (18a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 1 (8), 4 (44), 7 (77), 22 (229), 24 (251ff.), 34 (351), 35 (359f.), 41 (415f.), 58 (587), 61 (620), 68 (693), 91 (921), 99 (1003); and Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, items 33 and 37. This is discussed in James Fu, *Quest*, p. 69, and his "Wu-sheng ti kuan-hsi," pp. 10–17 (under Fu Shu-hsien). See also Wen Chi, "Hsi-yu chi cha-chi," p. 52.

²⁶² See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 1 (1b), 7 (1a), 18 (1a), 19 (5b), 32 (1b), 34 (7b), 40 (1a), 43 (1a, b), 49 (4a), 50 (2a), 51 (1a), 59 (1a, 1b), 62 (1a), 70 (1a), 92 (1a, b); and Chang Shu-shen, 22 (14b), 44 (2a), 64 (2a, 16b). For additional comments on the assignment of respective pilgrims and demons to the five elements, see Wang Hsiang-hsü, 32 (1b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 34 (351f.); "Li Cho-wu," 46 (16a, tp); Liu I-ming, *tu-fa*, item 30.

one of the first fully realized trials faced by the pilgrims after reaching their full complement (of five). Here, in the episode that unfolds within the precincts of the Temple of the Five Estates (*Wu-chuang kuan*)—placed, true to form, in the chapter numbered 25—there grows a fruit of perfect completeness on a "ginseng" tree (*jen-shen kuo* 人參果), whose very name suggests the triple harmony of heaven, earth, and man (人參天地). The greed and impatience of the pilgrims, however, give rise to the force of "five-elements repulsion" (*wu-hsing hsiang wei* 五行相畏), which in turn leads to discord and peril that can be finally salved only through the healing power of Kuan-yin's "sweet-dew elixir" (*kan-lu shui* 甘露水), another symbol of all-inclusive, integral harmony in chapter 26.²⁶³ We cannot but recall at this point the message proclaimed to be the secret of immortality long before this at the start of the Monkey King's pseudo-quest in chapter 2:

Fully integrate the five elements and apply them backward and forward; when this is accomplished you can become a Buddha or immortal at will.

攢簇五行顛倒用，功完隨作佛和仙。²⁶⁴

Within the context of the allegorical treatment of the five elements in the novel, I would like to interpret this ambiguous formula as saying that the proper understanding of five-elements harmony lies in moving *both* backward *and* forward, thus combining both directions—that is, the generative and destructive functions (*sheng k'e* 生剋) of elemental process—within a larger totality. This principle is well formulated in the following discussion by Ts'ai Yüan-fang:

Only when the five elements have been successfully integrated does one have the necessary foundation, so that his subsequent attainment will remain in the proper path without deviation . . . he must not relax his vigilance for a moment, lest they lapse back into disorder, each seeking one-term dominance, and thus becoming destructive forces. 五行既合方有其基，後面工夫正自不易 . . . 不可一刻懈弛。稍一不謹則合者仍復散亂偏勝而為賊矣。²⁶⁵

²⁶³ See Wang Hsiang-hsü, 24 (1a, 1b); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 29.

²⁶⁴ Chapter 2 (1:20). This idea is discussed by Wang Hsiang-hsü in chapters 14 (1b), 34 (7b); and Ch'en Shih-pin, chapters 12 (139), 22 (229), 23 (241), 35 (360), 58 (587), 82 (835), 88 (893), 92 (929f.).

²⁶⁵ Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 29. See also items 13, 21, 51; and Wang Hsiang-hsü, 6 (1a), 14 (1b), 19 (5b), 59 (1a); Chang Shu-shen, 23 (1a), 36 (15b), 38 (1a), 40 (1a); "Li Cho-wu," 12 (13a, tp), 14 (12a, tp); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 81 (1a). See also Chang Ching-erh, "Structure and Theme," p. 180. A similar pattern of meaning emerges in various references in the text to the concept of *yin* and *yang*, as in the *yin-yang erh-ch'i p'ing* 陰陽二氣瓶 in chapters 74–77, and the sexual imbalances in chapters 82–83 and 93–95. See comments by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 43 (2a), 48 (1a), 59 (1b); and Ch'en Shih-pin, 5 (55), 12 (139), 14 (158), 22 (229), 23 (241), 32 (331f.), 36 (368f.), 59 (508f.), 69 (702f.), 70 (713), 82 (834ff.), 83 (844), 88 (893),

The desirability of attaining a degree of completeness within the self is certainly an attractive enough idea. But this very notion of self-containment presents a certain conceptual problem that appears to trouble our author. As Yuan Yü-ling, the writer of the Man-t'ing kuo-k'e 幔亭過客 preface to the "Li Cho-wu" edition, puts it, "The demons are none other than the individual self" (*mo fei t'a chi wo* 魔非他即我).²⁶⁶ This little rhyming epigram may be a bit too precious to take at face value, but it does zero in on what is perhaps the central issue of the allegorical text: the danger that the completeness of individual consciousness *within* the self may give rise to the illusion that the self is complete *unto* itself.²⁶⁷

The degree to which the author recoils from such a possibility explains many of the allegorical figures in his text. At the very start of the book, in the expanded version of the Monkey King parable put at the head of his composition, he confronts head-on the inner contradiction of self-containment and self-sufficiency. The image of the unparented generation of the Monkey King, followed by his spontaneous establishment of a harmonious community after the leap through the divisive barrier of the Water Curtain Cave (*Shui-lien tung* 水簾洞) into the enclosed paradise of the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit (*Hua-kuo shan* 花果山), immediately sets up the outlines of the issue.²⁶⁸ It does not take long for there to develop trouble in paradise—in the form of despair over the limitations of mortal existence. The Monkey King's attempted solution to this problem is to seek immortality in a parody journey of self-cultivation, the pursuit of which leads him to the point of arrogating the title Great Sage Equal to Heaven (Ch'i-t'ien ta-sheng 齊天大聖).²⁶⁹ Although this title does appear in some of the sources of the novel, it obviously struck our author as particularly mean-

92 (929), 95 (959f.). For a good discussion of this understanding, see Wu Ta-yün, "T'ien-ti pu ch'üan."

²⁶⁶ Yuan Yü-ling preface. I suspect that the character *t'a* 他 should be given its alternate reading *t'o* here to add to the little rhyming game. Ch'en Shih-pin indulges in a similar play on these words in chapter 74 (754): "When my self occupies the demon and the demon is reduced to my self, then the demon submits of its own accord" 我主魔而魔亦歸我, 魔自伏. James Fu discusses similar ideas in *Quest*, pp. 20, 35.

²⁶⁷ See discussions by Ch'en Shih-pin, 20 (212), 47 (477), 53 (539), 62 (630f.), 63 (639), 69 (702), 72 (734). See also Wu Ta-yün, "T'ien-ti pu ch'üan."

²⁶⁸ This is perhaps the point of the joke about the mythical Monkey King's "lack of a nature" (*wu-hsing*), referred to earlier (n. 113). See pointed discussions of this issue by Ch'en Shih-pin, 54 (549); "Li Cho-wu," 42 (4b); and Chang Shu-shen, 51 (14b), 88 (1a), 89 (1a), 90 (1a). See also James Fu, *Quest*, p. 34.

²⁶⁹ For the title Ch'i-t'ien ta-sheng in the antecedents see e.g., *Pak t'ongsa önhae*, the *Hsiao-shih chen-k'ung pao-chüan*, and *Tsa-chü*, Scene 9. It also occurs in various versions of the story of the white ape described by Dudbridge (*Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 119–23, 127, 129), and other popular sources (cf. the play *Erh-lang shen so Ch'i-t'ien ta-sheng* 二郎神鎖齊天大聖 (see Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, 158f.). But our allegorist must still be credited with bringing out its full implications.

ingful, since he repeats the same idea in the name of another demon, the King Who Merges with the World (Hun-shih mo-wang 混世魔王), whom he has occupying the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit in the Monkey King's absence (an early instance of the pattern of destructive self-replication), and again in the name of the master of the ginseng tree: the Prince Coeval with the World (Yü-shih t'ung chün 與世同君) in chapter 24.²⁷⁰ This hubristic challenge to the authority of heaven proves quite unstoppable to all who try to combat the monster of ego on its own terms. It is only after demonstrating the actual smallness of the monkey's bloated self in the shadow of the Buddha's fingers in chapter 7, that the overblown mind-monkey is reduced to finite proportions, and his rehabilitative imprisonment under Five Elements Mountain (the inverted image of the five fingers of the Buddha) can begin.²⁷¹

After the unruly monkey of the mind is "stilled" and the journey gets under way, the author continues to press this same issue in numerous other allegorical figures. We have already noted the pattern by which the inability of the pilgrims to stay within their protective circle leads directly into allegorical perils, and conversely, we have seen Sun Wu-k'ung's success in subduing demons by first getting inside them. More important, from this perspective the encompassing weapons that so dominate the author's *psychomachia* may be understood as allegorical symbols for the tendency of the self to fall into the trap of taking its own scope of vision as a total frame of reference. This idea is brought out in the imagery presented in chapter 33, where the illusory attempt to "engulf the heavens" (*chuang-t'ien*) within a false version of Kuan-yin's "purification vase" nearly leads to the literal "dissolving" of the band. Here the falsity of this premature attempt to grasp the meaning of totality contrasts sharply with the symbolism of the River of Communion with Heaven (T'ung-t'ien ho), whose crossing marks the midpoint of the book.²⁷² And the same illusion of the totality of the self seems to underlie the demon of self-gratification in many of the episodes devoted to sexual temptation.

The traditional commentators do not fail to recognize this pattern of meaning. For example, "Li Cho-wu" glosses the cage formed by the Buddha's hand that finally entraps the mind-monkey in chapter 7 as "the

²⁷⁰ Cf. the similarly chaotic state on Hua-kuo shan discovered by Sun Wu-k'ung at the time of his "exile" in chapter 28. A similarly named figure, T'ung-t'ien ta-sheng 通天大聖, appears as a brother of Ch'i-t'ien ta-sheng in some of the sources (Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 120, 129). Cf. the use of this latter name (T'ung-t'ien ta-sheng) for Sun Wu k'ung himself in the *Tsa-chü* (see Scene 10).

²⁷¹ Cf. the inverse relationship between Five Elements Mountain and the "Eight-trigrams furnace" (*pa-kua lu* 八卦爐), which fails to temper the Monkey King's elemental imbalance in chapter 7.

²⁷² The expression "T'ung-t'ien" in this context now means the exact opposite of the same words in the name T'ung-t'ien ta-sheng (see above, n. 270).

circle of self-containment out of which he ultimately cannot leap 究竟跳不出自在圈子, and Ch'en Shih-pin and Chang Shu-shen express similar ideas in a number of discussions.²⁷³ In all of these examples, it is the distortion of self-containment into self-indulgence or selfishness that gives rise to allegorical peril—what is expressed in Neo-Confucian terms as the beclouding focus on individual desires (*ssu* 私).²⁷⁴ Thus it is Sun Wu-k'ung's discontent (*pu chih tsu* 不知足) that leads to the inevitable destruction of the initial paradise at the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, just as it is the impatience and greed of the pilgrims that turn the five-elements fruit into a hostile force in chapter 25. The enunciation of this principle is what originally wins the chastened Monkey King a promise of deliverance in chapter 8:

When the human mind gives rise to any single thought
Heaven the Earth must always be aware.
For if good and evil were without their proper recompense,
Then the universe would be subject to selfish one-sidedness.
人心生一念，天地盡皆知，善惡若無報，乾坤必有私。

And this very formula is repeated for final emphasis as the pilgrims near their destination in chapter 87.²⁷⁵

The same sort of paradox between the attractive ideal and the inherent danger of self-containment also hangs over the allegorical presentation of the goal of the quest. I have already discussed in several different contexts the provocatively unfinished nature of the end of the novel.²⁷⁶

²⁷³ See "Li Cho-wu," 6 (13b, *tp*); Chang Shu-shen, 24 (16a), 49 (15b), 90 (1a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 14 (2a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 4 (43), 33 (341), 35 (362), 49 (498), 53 (538), 55 (560), 65 (664), 75 (764), 76 (774); *Tung-i cheng-chih*, 25 (46a), 52 (12b, 17b), 53 (29b), 75 (48b, 54a). The problem of entrapment within the self may also be behind the crushing of Wu-k'ung under the proverbial burden of T'ai-shan 泰山, as allegorized in chapter 33; and perhaps we can see a little joking reference to this idea in the frequent resort to the trick of "getting outside oneself" (*shen-wai-shen fa* 身外身法) in many of the battle scenes. A similar idea is singled out for special attention in the seventeenth-century novel *Hsi-yu pu*, where the solution to the problem of illusory self-containment is conveyed in the following line from the *I Ching*: "In it are contained the forms and scope of all the transformations of the universe, so that nothing goes beyond it" 範圍天地之化而不過 (See *Chou-i che-chung*, p. 980, and Hellmut Wilhelm, *The I Ching, or Book of Changes*, p. 296).

²⁷⁴ The author cannot have missed the ironic implications of the name of the Monkey King's original paradise in *Ao-lai kuo*, which I would render as the "Land of Burgeoning Pride." Liu Ts'un-yan suggests a source for this name in "Ch'üan-chen chiao," pt. 5, pp. 71f. This overweening pride characterizes the essential nature of the unchained mind-monkey in the prologue chapters, as well as his unredeemed side throughout the journey.

²⁷⁵ Chapters 8 (1: 104) and 87 (3: 1200). See Chang Shu-shen, 49 (15b).

²⁷⁶ See Part II of this chapter, and comments by Chang Shu-shen, 36 (15b), 90 (13b), 98 (14a), 99 (1b); and "Li Cho-wu," 99 (11a).

This undermining of the surface finality of the successful fulfillment of the quest is underscored in the two principal metaphors applied to the attainment of the long-sought end. One of these is the notion that the goal of self-cultivation is in some sense a return to the "source" or "root" of existence (*fan-pen*). This idea is explicitly stated at a number of points, and underlies those many scenes in which selfish deviation from this sacred mission is labeled "forgetting the root" (*wang-pen*) or "straying from the source" (*mi-pen*), especially in instances of sexual confrontation.²⁷⁷ In particular, the notion of straying from, or returning to, the root is inserted at the point of the most severe trials: in the two instances of "exile" and in the ultimate temptation by the Jade Hare. Within this context, we can perhaps say that this "source" (*pen*) refers to the "original nature" (*pen-hsing*)—a term of currency in all three of the three teachings.²⁷⁸

At the same time, we have in the text another set of metaphors that refer not to the starting point of the original "root," but to a newly created "fruit" of attainment.²⁷⁹ The symbolism of fruit can be seen to inform some of the underlying conceptions spanning the entire narrative: from the original world of harmonious self-containment on Hua-kuo shan, and the episode of the ginseng fruit in chapter 25, to the final "attainment of the fruit" of enlightenment (*ch'eng-kuo* 成果). Significantly, in several cases the premature grasp of self-containment is abused or, to put it another way, gives rise to the natural desire to have one's perfect fruit and eat it too. In this light, it seems less than an accidental touch that the original paradise on Hua-kuo shan must be destroyed, like Dante's purgatorial Eden, before the true "attainment of the fruit" can be realized.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ See the following occurrences of these terms: *fan-pen*, 35 (2: 485); *wu-pen*, 49 (2: 691); *wang pen*, 23 (1: 306), 64 (2: 888); *mi-pen*, 72 (3: 989). Cf. the notion of *mi-se* considered in *Chin P'ing Mei* earlier. The term *kuei-yüan* 歸元 reminds me of the opening formula *chen-hsia ch'i-yüan*, and this idea is driven home when the *yüan* tortoise becomes the instrument of bringing our pilgrims back to their starting point. See comments by Ch'en Shih-pin, 5 (53), 23 (241), 24 (251, 253), 25 (263), 31 (321), 62 (629), 72 (733f.), 80 (814), 98 (993); "Li Cho-wu," 72 (12b, *tp*); Chang Shu-shen, 23 (1a, 17a); and *Tsung-p'i*, 75 (20a); Liu I-ming, preface and *tu-fa*, item 20; and Wang Hsiang-hsü, 72 (1b).

²⁷⁸ For examples of the expression *kuei pen-hsing*, see 31 (2: 417) and 95 (3: 1301). I should add that the return to one's original form (*hsien pen-hsiang*), which marks the submission of many demons, also provides the means of their salvation. See comments by "Li Cho-wu," 7 (12a), 12 (13a); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 4 (1a); Ch'en Shih-pin, 29 (299), 33 (343); and Chang Shu-shen, 26 (1a), 49 (1a), and *Tsung-p'i*, 74 (19b).

²⁷⁹ Probably the fullest development of this metaphor is found in chapters 24–26. For sources of this episode, see Ts'ao Shih-pang, "Hsi-yu chi jo-kan ch'ing-chieh ti pen-yüan wu-t'an," pp. 34f. Cf. the counterpart of this idea in Buddhist terms discussed by Anthony Yu in *Journey*, p. 61.

²⁸⁰ This is especially clear in the opening sequence on Hua-kuo shan, where it is the problem of insatiety that leads to the loss of the primal world of self-containment. For the

The symbolism of creating fruit also resonates meaningfully with the metaphors of birth that occupy a prominent place in the allegorical apparatus of the novel—from the opening pseudo-myth of self-generation of the cosmos, and the birth of the Monkey King from a stone egg, through the birth of the foundling Hsüan-tsang, to various allegorical tours de force, not the least of which is the inversion of pregnancy in the Land of Women.²⁸¹ As we have seen, the notion of organic procreation links up with the language of alchemical gestation, so that the terms “internal cinnabar” and “newborn babe” become nearly interchangeable with reference to the tangible results of the process of cultivation.

When we arrive at this point, it is not so hard to reconcile the apparent paradox between the metaphors proclaiming a return to primal unity and those that bespeak the attainment of a new state, since in all three of the philosophical contexts of Ming thought the notion of attainment is inseparable from the idea of a solid core of selfhood—regardless of whether we are talking about trees and fruit, parents and babes, or elemental gold and cinnabar.

The idea that the fruit of attainment is organically linked to the root of the self brings us back to the meaning of the problem of self-containment we have found underlying many of the allegorical figures of the novel. The resolution of this paradox seems to lie in the understanding that neither of the two principal metaphors for the goal of the quest are really talking about any kind of ultimate transcendence of the self, but rather a return to the basic bedrock of selfhood.²⁸² In other words, the figurative pursuit of Taoist immortality or Mahayana salvation points to a kind of self-cultivation that remains within the sphere of conscious existence; thus the manifest nonfinality of the quest may be explained more as a lesson in non-attainment than in terms of steady progress toward a final goal. This is precisely the sort of revisionist position that marks Chinese thought in general, but especially that of the late Ming and Ch'ing reaction to the excesses of T'ai-chou intuitionism; and it finds frequent expression in the commentaries on the novel.²⁸³

parallel to Dante's fallen Eden, see *Purgatorio*, 28–32, esp. 32. Cf. Wang Hsiang-hsü's remark in chapter 24 (1b): “When Sun Wu-k'ung steals the forbidden fruit, it is used as a metaphor for the mind's impatient desire [for immortality]” 行者之竊人參果，亦借以喻此心之急。

²⁸¹ Given the prominence of certain Mencian ideas in the allegory, we may perhaps detect in these instances another hint of an oblique reference to Mencius's concept of the newborn babe (*ch'ih-tzu* 赤子). Chapters involving births, babies, or children include 1, 9, 12, 24–26, 37, 47–49, 53, 66, 77, 78, and 94. See Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, items 20, 23, 25, 26; and Ch'en Shih-pin, 40 (406), 74 (754).

²⁸² See n. 173 on the concept of self-cultivation within the late Ming intellectual context.

²⁸³ The *T'ung-i cheng-chih* commentator, for example, insists on the cultivation of *shen* alongside *hsin*, 13 (34a), 27 (70b), 59 (92a).

Perhaps I can most conveniently sum up this issue by returning to the Heart Sutra, which is bestowed as a key to enlightenment in chapter 19 (by a Ch'an monk) and which remains an occasional point of reference later on in the journey.²⁸⁴ The best-known line from this brief classic, the one most often cited in works of colloquial fiction, is the formula that tells us “Perceived reality is no different from emptiness, emptiness is no different from perceived reality, reality is emptiness, emptiness is reality” 色不異空，空不異色，色即是空，空即是色。²⁸⁵ It is possible to understand this line as a simple declaration of the illusory nature of reality 色即是空。But I would like to give the author and the commentators credit for recognizing that the message is actually a two-way street. That is, I believe that the allegory of *Hsi-yu chi* is designed to demonstrate the principle that, though the sensory perception of reality (*se*) is ultimately an empty illusion, at the same time the converse is also true—meditation upon emptiness itself tends to turn into an illusory experience. From this perspective, the chief obstacle to be overcome on the path to enlightenment is the conscious pursuit of enlightenment itself, an idea most clearly allegorized in the abortive illumination of the Master in chapter 36.

The author comes close to stating something like this at several points in the text, and the commentators frequently take up his challenge.²⁸⁶ In chapter 94, for example, Wang Hsiang-hsü points to this kind of nominalist approach to enlightenment (*i wu wei ming* 以悟爲命) as the principal remaining obstacle, and in chapter 25 Ch'en Shih-pin explains that “the attempt to intuitively grasp the empty-ness of emptiness means a failure to grasp the fruit of emptiness” 悟空中之空而不識空中之果。²⁸⁷

This last comment can perhaps help us to redefine the author's understanding of the name of the principal figure in his book: the “heart” of the pilgrimage, Sun Wu-k'ung. To the extent that he is not simply using the name ironically, as a dig at the incomplete state of the monkey's attain-

²⁸⁴ Chapters 19–20 (1:264ff.). Later references to the Heart Sutra occur in chapters 32 (1:433), 58 (2:811), 80 (3:1102), 85 (3:1166), 93 (3:1266), 100 (3:1364). See n. 244. Among the writings of recent critics, the use of the *Hsin ching* is discussed by C. T. Hsia, *Classic Novel*, pp. 127ff.; James Fu, *Quest*, pp. 76ff., 90; Anthony Yu, *Journey*, p. 48; Dudbridge, *Hsi-yu chi*, pp. 14f.; and Hsü Chen-chi, “Pa-shih-i nan,” pp. 8f.

²⁸⁵ “Reality,” in this rendering, of course means only the illusion of reality based on sensory perception. The well-known formula is also cited in *Chin P'ing Mei*, chapter 62 (21a), for the soul of Li P'ing-erh. See above, chapter 2, Part VI.

²⁸⁶ See discussions by Wang Hsiang-hsü, 4 (1a): “Emptiness is inadequate by virtue of being empty” 空失其空... 14 (2a–b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 19 (201), 56 (568), 72 (734), 82 (834), 84 (855), 85 (866); Chang Shu-shen, 98 (6b); Ts'ai Yüan-fang, *tu-fa*, item 50; “Li Cho-wu,” 99 (11a, tp); and *T'ung-i cheng-chih*, 57 (71b), 65 (50b).

²⁸⁷ Wang Hsiang-hsü, 94 (1a), and Ch'en Shih-pin, 25 (264). Similar ideas are expressed by Ch'en in 20 (211), 52 (527), 75 (764), 96 (968).

ment, perhaps it would be better to take this as signifying not an awakening from illusion *into* "vacuity," as translators have tended to render it in English, but rather as an awakening *about* the meaning of emptiness, as just one side of the coin of existence; or, at least, an awakening to the vanity of distinguishing between reality and emptiness.²⁸⁸ This, then, would mean that the path to enlightenment involves a coming to terms with the self, rather than the obliteration of the self through some kind of loincloth nirvana. Recalling the central place of the dialectics of *se* and *k'ung* in the *Chin P'ing Mei*, we have now arrived at a final link between our two sixteenth-century masterworks. And we shall see that even in *San-kuo chih yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan*, despite the primary concern with their respective spheres of concrete historical experience, sooner or later meditations on emptiness begin to occupy their authors' minds.²⁸⁹ Such questions were, after all, very much in the air in sixteenth-century China. In each of our other three works it is possible to dismiss this dimension as not really central to the authors' concerns. But here in *Hsi-yu chi* it can help us to recognize that this most penetrating exploration of the realm of emptiness is intended to be much less empty than it at first appears.

²⁸⁸ See Arthur Waley, *Monkey*, p. 31; and Anthony Yu, *Journey*, p. 82. On the sources and prior uses of the name Sun Wu-k'ung, see b.n. I.5. Isobe Akira ("Son Gyōja," p. 115) points out the existence of an actual monk named Wu-k'ung at the time of T'ang Hsüan-tsung. For the adoption of this name by various later religious figures, see Richard Shek, "Religion and Society in Late Ming," p. 205. The commentators are aware of the more pointed use of the name in the hundred-chapter novel. See "Li Cho-wu," chapter 8 (13b); Ch'en Shih-pin, 4 (44), 19 (201), 73 (746); Chang Shu-shen, 98 (6b); Wang Hsiang-hsü, 14 (2a-b). Cf. the formula *tzu-se wu-k'ung* 自色悟空 invoked in chapter 1 of *Hung-lou meng*.

²⁸⁹ See above, Chapter 2, Part VI, and below, Chapters 4, Part V, and 5, Part V. Other expressions of the idea of emptiness occur in chapters 32 (1:433), 39 (2:540), 62 (2:859), 73 (3:1016), 78 (3:1084), 96 (3:1302), 100 (3:1355, 1358, 1362). On the late Ming polemics over the concept of emptiness, see Yu Chün-fang, "Buddhists' Responses," pp. 1, 3, 4.



Chapter 69: "Sung Chiang Honorably Releases the Double-lance General" 宋公明義釋雙鎗將, from T'ien-tu wai-ch'en preface edition, *Chung-i shui-hu chuan* (see b.n. II.1)