

MIRROR OF THE MIND AND MIRROR OF THE WORLD:

THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST AND THE FAERIE QUEENE

By

XUAN WANG

(Under the Direction of Karin Myhre)

ABSTRACT

In comparing the motifs, narrative structures and details within two influential texts, *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene*, compelling similarities become apparent, particularly concerning the problem of duplicity, anxiety over the nature of human perception, and solutions of resorting to magical mirrors (i.e. Merlin's Looking Glass and Imp-reflecting Mirror) as an attempt to distinguish truth and falsehood. Using the symbol of the mirror as a guiding "thread," this thesis will examine the cultural contexts of these two books: philosophy, literary and painting theory prevalent in both China and England at the end of the sixteenth century when the two works were published. By elaborating on such key issues imminent in these two literary pieces, the thesis also constitutes an attempt to suggest the more profound differences hidden in both works and cultures, despite their surface resemblances.

INDEX WORDS: *The Journey to the West*, *The Faerie Queene*, Mirror, Neo-Confucianism, Literary Theory, Aesthetic Theory

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XUAN WANG

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By

XUAN WANG

Major Professor: Karin Myhre

Committee: Charles Doyle
Thomas Cerbu

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2011

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INTRODUCTION

When the Monkey King turned to look, he discovered the Budhisattva Manjusri. Quickly putting away his rod, he drew near and bowed, saying, "Bodhisattva, where are you going?" "I came," said Manjusri, "to put away this fiend for you." Pilgrim thanked him and said, "I'm greatly obliged." Taking out **an imp-reflecting mirror** from his sleeve, the Bodhisattva aimed it at the fiend and the image of its original form became visible at once. (*The Journey to the West*, chapter 39. 行者回头看处，原来文殊菩萨，急收棒，上前施礼道：“菩萨，那里去？”文殊道：“我来替你收这个妖怪的。”行者谢道：“累烦了。”那菩萨袖中取出照妖镜，照住了那怪的原身。)

"Such was **the glassie globe** that Merlin made, /And gave unto king Ryence for his gard,/That never foes his kingdom might invade,/ But he it knew at home before he hard/Tydings thereof, and so them still debared./It was a famous Present for a Prince,/ And worthy worke of infinite reward, /That treason could bewray and foes convince;/ Happie this Realme, had it remained ever since. (*The Faerie Queene*, III.ii. 21)

In the year 1405, the Ming Emperor Yongle (永乐 ruled 1402-1424), whose ambition was to display the wealth and power of his kingdom, and to reinforce the Chinese tributary system on neighboring foreign countries, sent a fleet of over two hundred ships, which included the largest wooden one ever built¹, on the first of seven voyages across the southern China Sea and the India Ocean. During the Hongzhi (弘治 ruled 1488-1506) period, the Ming economic structure was entering a new phase of development. Particularly in the cities of the lower Yangtze, the urban market for agricultural products expanded on an unprecedented scale, personal wealth and luxury greatly increased, and cottage crafts such as spinning, weaving, and porcelain manufacturing evolved into a level of highly organized local industries.² By the Wanli (万历 ruled 1573-1620) period, virtually all books came to be

¹ See Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405-1433*, p. 8.

² See Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 13, and Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, pp. 1-7.

printed in a single standard typeface, a practice which not only lowered the costs, but extended reading beyond a tiny elite to a mass, more diverse audience.³ Maritime expeditions, overseas colonization, the flourishing urban culture, a surging population, the rising demand for commodities, and the expansion of trade—if this list of parallels in Ming China (明代 1368—1645) to the convergence of similar factors accounting for “early modern Europe” is perhaps easy to dismiss as misleading or strategic for attention⁴, at least on the surface level, the maps of social and economic life in both China and Europe in this period were similar.

In addition, with a vibrant printing industry and the growth of private schools in local literati communities, opportunities for education continued to increase and literati numbers grew. Around 1415, the Yongle Emperor finally established Zhu Xi’s (朱熹)⁵ Neo-Confucianism, or the Philosophy of the Principle (理学) as a state-sponsored orthodoxy⁶, a school of thought which believed that the Way (道) had been lost after Mencius (孟子), and only by studying the Four Books⁷ from antiquity would Neo-Confucianists recover the Way of the sages and revive the glory of true Confucianism⁸. A dream of returning to a

³ Crag Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*, p. 105.

⁴ See Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 14, and Craig Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*, pp. 231-233.

⁵ Zhu Xi (1130-1200), the greatest producer and synthesizer of texts in the history of Neo-Confucianism. He is one of the founders of the Philosophy of the Principle, which is one of the two schools in Neo-Confucianism. By returning to antique books written by sages such as Confucius, investigating things, and by committing to self-cultivation, this school believed that they could understand and grasp the Principle, or the Way (Dao 道)—the logic, reasoning, coherence, and the pattern that are inherent in nature and society. The Neo-Confucianists saw antiquity as an ideal period, that the period afterwards was one of decline, and it is them that could save the true Confucianism from corruptions of Buddhism and Daoism. Although Neo-Confucianism borrowed a lot from both Buddhism and Daoism, such as the concept of Qi(气), material force, or Li(理), principle or coherence, and is seen as the merger of the three schools of thought, Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, it still worked against these two religions and philosophies, since neither of them have a synthetic and integral understanding of antiquity and the classics as the origins of Chinese culture. See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, pp. 86-114.

⁶ See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, p. 95.

⁷ The four books are: *The Analects*, *The Mencius*, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, and *Great Learning*. (《论语》《孟子》《中庸》《大学》). Until the emergence of Neo-Confucianism in the Song dynasty, the Confucian classics meant the five major classics. By the fourteenth century the Five Classics had lost their importance to the Four Books.

⁸ See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, pp. 100-108.

golden age of antiquity is also shared by the early modern Europeans. This subtle parallel was captured by Oliver Goldsmith⁹: “in the year of the Christian era 1400, the emperor Yonglo [sic] arose to revive the learning of the East, while about the same time the Medicean family labored to raise infant genius from the cradle...”¹⁰ The humanist revival, which gained increasing momentum during the fifteenth century, especially in Medicean Florence—collecting antique manuscripts and works of art, rediscovering classical philosophy and literature, regaining the rightful roles of grammar and rhetoric, and ultimately acquiring the Greek tongue to read the authentic New Testament—raised geniuses such as Leonardo da Vinci(1452-1519), Erasmus(1466-1536), Thomas More(1478-1535), Rabelais(1483-1552), and paved the way for those gargantuan social changes such as the Renaissance and the Reformation.

At the heart of these social and intellectual debates between humanist self-cultivation and Medieval Scholastic education stands the desire for the redefinition of the self. “What piece of work is a man, how noble is reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god: the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!” (2.2.273-277)—If Hamlet’s sorrow and indeterminacy overshadow the confidence and pride in mankind, his words nonetheless confirm observations made by Harry Berger in his studies in Renaissance fiction-making: what differentiates the Renaissance from the Medieval imagination is that Renaissance individuals became more conscious of the mind’s constructive power, and that the mind may

⁹ Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). This paragraph is cited from his *A Citizen of the World*, published in 1762, a book trying to support the idea of a universally synchronized history.

¹⁰ Crag Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*, p 9.

actively choose, and make things up.¹¹ Yet, while these Renaissance men were celebrating the rediscovered creativity and trying to take advantage of this potential, their Chinese counterparts also passed through a period of internal discovery. Criticizing Zhu Xi's Philosophy of the Principle as doctrinaire and rigid, Wang Yang-ming(王阳明 1472-1528), who came to the sudden enlightenment that the Principle was not to be sought in antique books or objects, but in one's own mind, drew people's attention to the importance of the self and the mind. By the 1550s, intellectuals had already taken his Philosophy of the Mind (心学), which had become a new branch in Neo-Confucianism, more seriously than Zhu Xi's theory of learning.¹² Possibly, the founder of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuan-zhang(朱元璋 ruled 1368-1399) somehow anticipated the internal enlightenment of intellectuals two hundred years ahead, not the least because the dynastic name "Ming" itself means "bright," "enlightened."¹³

Given these similar cultural and social contexts of both *The Faerie Queene* and *The Journey to the West*, now we can return to the two literary texts themselves. Originally, Edmund Spenser (ca.1552-1599) planned to write twelve or possibly, twenty-four books for *The Faerie Queene*, each of which would tell a story of a knight, the personification of a virtue extolled in Elizabethan England. However, this ambitious allegorizer somehow stopped his history in the middle, only to leave us six complete books and an unfinished seventh book. In 1589, Spenser went to London to present his first three books to its

¹¹ See Berger, *Second World and Green World*, "The Ecology of the Mind: The Concept of Period Imagination—An Outline Sketch."

¹² See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, p. 191.

¹³ Crag Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*, p. 10.

dedicatee, Queen Elizabeth, whose image more or less is reflected by the Faerie Queene. These three books, depicting adventure of three knights, are essentially allegories of three virtues: Holiness, Temperance and Chastity. In the first book, the legend of the knight of the Red Cross or Holiness, which will be discussed in great detail, concerns a tortuous journey leading to the final victory. On the first day of the Faerie Queene's feast, Una, a sorrowful lady dressed in mourning clothes, came for help. Her parents, an ancient King and Queen, had been "shut up" in a "brazen castle" by a huge dragon.¹⁴ The bold yet inexperienced knight of Holiness volunteered for this task of the salvation. In his short but dangerous quest, the knight slew the snake Error (canto 1), overcame the furious brutality of Sanfoyl (faithlessness, canto 2), visited the house of Pride (canto 4) and cave of Despair (canto 9), was deceived by Archimago's magic art (canto 3) and Duessa's disguised beauty (canto 3), was temporarily separated from Una, was thrown into the dungeon of Orgoglio (Pride, canto 7), was saved by Arthur (canto 8), and ultimately completed the task by killing the dragon and saving Una's (Truth, canto 12) parents (Adam and Eve) from the "brazen castle" (symbol for their sins).

Luckily, *The Journey to the West* is a complete novel with exactly one hundred chapters. (Nevertheless, similar to *The Story of the Stone* 《石头记》 or the better known version of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, *The Faerie Queene*, because of its incomplete nature, always reveals the beauty of the mysterious and the incompleteness. 遗憾之美) Although whether Wu Cheng-en (ca. 1506-1582 吴承恩) is the author or not is less than conclusive¹⁵, it is certain that the novel's earliest extant full edition appeared in 1592, with a nearly full

¹⁴ See Spenser's letter to Sir Walter Raleigh Knight concerning his plan for *The Faerie Queene*.

¹⁵ See Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four masterworks of the Ming Novel*, pp. 183-202. Also Anthony C. Yu, Trans., *The Journey to the West*, Introduction.

manuscript in circulation by 1595 or 1596.¹⁶ Unlike Spenser, the only deviser and constructor of his allegorical fairy land, Wu Cheng-en is not at all an entirely original writer, and his works represent the culmination of a long prior and subsequent history of sources, antecedent narratives, and street talk¹⁷. With years of artistic portrayals of the westward quest, the actual journey of the historical Xuan Zang¹⁸ (玄奘 596—664) evolved into a full story cycle embellished in the popular imagination—a story that includes not only Xuan Zang (Tripitaka, or the Tang Monk 唐三藏), but also the three disciples he admitted at the beginning of this journey: the audacious and powerful Monkey King (Sun Wu-kong 孙悟空), the lazy Pigsy (Zhu Ba-jie 猪八戒), and the dullard Sand Monk (沙和尚). To some extent, this long journey might appear to be an expanded version of the quest of the Red Cross Knight; with monsters such as the snake of Error, the trickster Archimago, or the giant Orgoglio changed in to a white bone lady (chapter 27 白骨夫人), seven seductive spider spirits (chapter 72-73 蜘蛛精), the six-eared macaque (chapter 58 六耳猕猴) disguised as the Monkey King, or the Great King Golden Horn (金角大王) with a treasure gourd that would suck people inside and reduce them to pus (chapter 32-35), the journey expanded into one with exactly nine times nine (eighty-one) trials. Similarly, despite the frustrations, temptations and defeats encountered, the band of four monks, like the Red Cross Knight who accomplished his mission, finally arrived at their destination, the Great Temple of Thunderclap in India of the Great Western Heaven (大西天天竺国大雷音寺), and successfully returned to the Tang court with doctrines of the Great Vehicle Law of Buddha.

¹⁶ See Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four masterworks of the Ming Novel*, pp. 183-184. Also see Hsia, for the history of the story of the westward journey, pp. 118-122, Wu Cheng-en, like Shakespeare, adapts his sources with exuberant inventions.

¹⁷ Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 3. Also, Hsia, p. 117.

¹⁸ See Anthony C. Yu, Trans., v. 1, *The Journey to the West*, pp. 1-17.

With these more or less similar cultural backgrounds of the two books¹⁹, and parallels in structures, and details such as tasks assigned by the court, sexual temptations especially of female demons, and the failure of the eyes to perceive accurately, this thesis seeks to find similarities and differences in *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene*, particularly of its first book. Unable to tell the true from the false, the Red Cross Knight, even though he ultimately conquered the dragon, still appeared to be vulnerable to disguised temptations, such as Duessa, the duplicity of Una made by Archimago. Likewise, facing the duplicities of Tripitaka and the Monkey King, the pilgrims had to turn to Bodhisattva and authorities living in the heavenly palace for aid. Eventually, it seems that only the Imp-reflecting Mirror and Merlin's Looking Glass (appeared in the third book of *The Faerie Queene*) prove able to solve the problem of duplicity.

After exploring these similarities in the literary texts in the first chapter, the thesis will survey the associations to the mirror in both cultures, especially in literary and painting theory. In this chapter, several key issues related to the divergent directions of Chinese and European cultures will be brought up: Western mimesis, Chinese metaphysical writing theory, the rational perspective in Europe and traditional Chinese ideal for a good painting.

The last chapter returns first to the "mirror" in *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene*, and then delves into philosophical differences between the two cultures. The

¹⁹ So far, there is no historical evidence supporting that the formation of *The Journey to the West* is affected by the European literary traditions. The Jesuit began their missionary activities in China from 1580s. One of the earliest and the most important of the missionaries was the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci (利玛窦 1552-1610). He arrived in Macao in 1582 and spent several years in Nanchang(南昌) and Nanjing (南京). In 1601 he reached Peking, where he had an audience with the Wanli Emperor and received imperial sanction to build a church in the city. During his stay in China, he introduced mathematics and astrology to the Chinese, and translated *The Analects* into Latin. However, it seems his influence to the court is very small, since Wanli Emperor refused to see him in person. By 1605, it is said that only about 200 were converted to Catholicism in Beijing.

largest question behind these is that, with so many similarities between China and Europe, why they took some very different paths in cultural development by the end of the seventeenth century?

I am greatly indebted to Prof. Hu Jia-luan(胡家峦) from English Department at Peking University, who introduced me to English Renaissance studies, and whose passion for his field and seriousness in scholarly research will always be my exemplar that encourages me to move on. When I was at a loss for an interesting and workable thesis early this year, he pointed out that there is some striking similarity between *The Faerie Queene* and *The Journey to the West*, especially in the way that they present the image of the “mirror.” This is how I started my thesis. Since a partial function of the mirror in both literary works is to reveal the true forms of disguised figures, I find particularly in the first book of *The Faerie Queene* and *The Journey to the West* some interesting parallels concerning the problem of duplicity, and its solution of having a magical mirror to tell truth from falsehood. Intriguingly enough, these two works also share many other similarities, at least on the surface level: they were published roughly at the same time, their cultural contexts—late Ming China and English Renaissance—have already been compared and seen as somewhat similar²⁰, and both of the literary works concern a journey which can be read as a spiritual odyssey. Nevertheless, this thesis is not confined to seeking similarities. With the thread of the mirror in Western and traditional Chinese literary criticism and painting theory of that period, the second half of the thesis can be seen as an attempt to provide some deeper level of social

²⁰ See Crag Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*, pp. 7-19, pp. 231-233.

contexts to the two books, and to suggest possible connections that might account for those differences apparent in both works, in regard to the “collapses” of the magical mirrors in the end.

The earliest comparative study of *The Faerie Queene* with a Chinese literary work, to the best of my knowledge, is conducted by H. C. Chang in his 1969 book, *Allegory and Courtesy in Spenser—a Chinese View*. Focused on the mode of allegory in the sixth book of *The Faerie Queene*, the legend of Courtesy, and the novel, *Romance of the Flowers in the Mirror* (《镜花缘》) by Li Ru-zhen (李汝珍 1763—1830), his comparison is credited by C. T. Hsia as one of the few fruitful ventures into comparative studies of Chinese and Western literature and manners.²¹ In 1983, after translating *The Journey to the West* into a four-volume English version, Anthony C. Yu compares it to Dante’s *La Divina Commedia*, with an emphasis on the religious dimension of the two works. In 1987, Dore J. Levy brings our attention to the sexual problem in the two pieces; especially in the fifth book of Justice where the protagonist ventured into the kingdom of women, a curious place also encountered by the band of the four monks in their westward journey. When I was doing my research into *The Journey to the West*, and saw myself as a wanderer on a road where “there is no predecessors ahead, and no new comers behind” (前无古人，后无来者), I surprisingly and happily discovered that Andrew H. Plaks has already detected the similar problems of duplicity shared by both *The Faerie Queene* and *The Journey to the West*. In his notes to “Allegory in *Hsi-Yu Chi* and *Hung-Lun Meng*,” he states:

There are many striking similarities of structure and detail between these two nearly contemporary works that would seem to justify extended comparative treatment. Some of these areas of overlap include the meandering quest through gloomy glens and

²¹ C. T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 163.

gardens of delight, frequent temptations by false maidens-in-distress (cf. the snowy Florimell and 'the lady of the white bones' 白骨夫人), sojourns in a topsy-turvy Land of Women, and specific allegorization of the problem of duplicity (cf. Duessa and the 'two-mind-monkeys')²².

How exultant I am at these pleasures of recognition!

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the three professors in my committee for this MA thesis: Prof. Karin Myhre, Prof. Charles Doyle, and Prof. Thomas Cerbu, without whose help and encouragement this work could not be accomplished. And I will also thank those professors whose courses I took at University of Georgia, and whose intellectual wisdom has left some imprint on this paper.

²² Andrew H. Plaks, "Allegory in *Hsi-Yu Chi* and *Hung-Lun Meng*," from *Chinese Narrative*, ed. Andrew H. Plaks, p.173.

CHAPTER 1

THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST AND THE FAIRIE QUEENE

Although whether the author of *The Journey to the West* is Wu Cheng-en or not remains open to question in scholarship, the parallel between its earliest extant full edition in 1592 and the first appearance of Spenser's folio edition of *The Faerie Queene* in 1609, serves one of the foundation stones for the comparison of these two books. Presented to Queen Elizabeth in 1590, the first book, the legend of the knight of the Red Cross, probably shares the greatest similarities with *The Journey to the West* in terms of their motifs, narrative structures and thematic details.

Motif

The most obvious similarity between *The Journey to the West* and the first book of *The Faerie Queene* is the motif of journey. Despite their differences in length²³, both journeys are expeditions in which the protagonists are to be challenged by demons and monsters. Similarly, both of the journeys are successful ones: having been in "the evils from first to last in his late enterprise" (I.xii.17.3), the Red Cross knight finally overthrows the powerful dragon and saves the "auncient Lord and aged Queene" (I.xii.5.1). After nine times nine trials in the westward journey, the band of four pilgrims eventually arrives at the Great Temple of Thunderclap where they obtain the scriptures.

²³ *The Journey to the West* is a hundred-chapter novel (小说) with about eight-hundred pages generally in Ming vernacular Chinese. However, unlike the Western novel, a genre that is strictly separated from poetry and prose, Chinese classical novels are always a mixture of poetry and prose in narration. This distinctive mode of composition is shaped by the popularity and success of the Buddhist Bian-wen (变文) in the Tang (唐) dynasty (618-907). *The Faerie Queene* is an incomplete epic poem, consisted of seven books in which each of them is designed to have twelve cantos in Spenserian stanza.

Another parallel in motif is that both journeys are assigned in the court. Even though the Red Cross knight is already “pricking on the plaine” “in mightie armes and silver shieldes” (l.i.1.1-2) in the first canto, his “occasion”²⁴ for this dangerous quest is explained in Spenser’s letter to Sir Raleigh: a fair lady comes into the Fairy Queen’s feast, begging the Queen to assign her a knight to free her parents from the imprisonment of a dragon. The Red Cross knight, a “clownish person”²⁵ before wearing the armor bearing a Red Cross that the lady has brought, volunteers to join the adventure for honor and achievement.²⁶ Having toured the underworld, the Tang Emperor (Tang Tai Zong, or Li Shi-min, the second emperor in the Tang dynasty, 唐太宗) returns to life by promising the judges underworld to “celebrate the Grand Mass of Land and Water, so that those wretched, homeless souls may be delivered.”²⁷(作一场水陆大会，超度那无主的孤魂。第十一回) Thus, learning that the Tang Emperor is “extolling merit and virtue, and selecting illustrious monks to hold the Grand mass”²⁸ (宣扬善果，选举高僧，开见大会), the Bodhisattva(观音), at the request of Tathagata (如来), comes to the Tang court for a pilgrim who could travel to the West and acquire the Great Vehicle Law of Buddha²⁹. Tripitaka, previously named as Xuan Zang, a monk in the Tang Emperor’s temple, volunteers to be the pilgrim: “Though your poor monk

²⁴ In Spenser’s letter to Sir Raleigh, he explains the “occasion of these three knights severall adventures.”

²⁵ It is in Spenser’s letter to Sir Raleigh.

²⁶ The Red Cross knight’s motivation is that “Upon a great adventure he was bond,/That greatest Gloriana to him gave,/That greatest Glorious Queene of Faerie lond,/To winne him worship, and her grace to have,/Which of all earthly things he most did crave;/And ever as he rode, his hart did earne/ To prove his puissance in battle brave/Upon his foe, and his new force to learne;/Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and sterne.” (l.i.3)

²⁷ Yu, v. 1, p.248

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.268

²⁹ In the Tang empire, there were only doctrines of Little Vehicle; but only the Great Vehicle Law of Buddha could “untie the knot of a hundred enmities, dispel unexpected misfortunes.” (能解百冤之结，能消无妄之灾。) Bodhisattva said earlier in this chapter: “The doctrines of you Little Vehicle cannot save the damned by leading them up to Heaven’ they can only mislead and confuse mortals. I have in my possession Tripitaka, three collections of the Great Vehicle Laws of Buddha, which are able to send the lost to Heaven, to deliver the afflicted from their sufferings, to fashion ageless bodies, and to break the cycles of coming and going.” (你这小乘教法，度不得亡者超升，只可混俗和光而已。我有大乘佛法三藏，能超亡者升天，能度难人脱苦，能修无量寿身，能作无来无去。) See chapter twelve, Yu, vol. 1, p. 276.

has no talents, he is ready to perform the service of a dog and a horse. I shall seek these true scriptures on behalf of your Majesty, that the empire of our king may be firm and everlasting.”³⁰(贫僧不才，愿效犬马之劳，与陛下求取真经，祈保我王江山永固。第十二回)

Interestingly, both Wu Cheng-en and Spenser pay special attention to clothes and accessories wearing by the pilgrims. It seems that these pieces of clothing provide special powers, enabling the pilgrims to complete their tasks. As mentioned earlier, it is by wearing the armor which is brought by the fair lady Una that the “Red-Cross knight” becomes a real knight. In the letter to Sir Raleigh, Spenser says:

...the lady told him that unlesse that armour which she brought, would serve him (that is the armour of a Christian man specified by Saint Paul v. Ephes.) that he could not succeed in that enterprise, which being forthwith put upon him with dewe furnitures thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in al that company, and was well liked of the lady.

Before the westward Journey in the Tang court, Bodhisattva also brings Xuan Zang three treasures: an embroidered cassock with rare jewels, a nine-ring priestly staff, and the Golden, the Constrictive and the Prohibitive fillets³¹ (锦襴异宝袈裟、九环锡杖、金紧禁三个箍儿第十二回) It seems that only by having these clothes and accessories ordinary human beings can assume some more important roles of being the holy pilgrims. Correspondingly, after they have shown their commitment to the journey and were approved by the court, both of the pilgrims’ names are changed. Once, as in Spenser’s letter, the Red Cross knight does not have a name; he is simply a “tall clownishe younge man” known for his “rusticity.” After wearing the armor and starting his adventure with Una, he is named as “the Red Cross Knight,” or “the Knight of Holiness.” Similarly, Tripitaka is once Xuan Zang; yet, learning that

³⁰ Yu, v.1, p.279

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.268.

the pilgrim had no bynames, the Tang Emperor, in their farewell banquet in the twelfth chapter declares: “The Bodhisattva said earlier, that there were three collections of scriptures in the Western Heaven. Our Brother can take that as a byname and call himself Tripitaka. How about it?”³² (当时菩萨说，西天有经三藏。御弟可指经取号，号作三藏何如？第十二回) The two pilgrims, by agreeing to take the pilgrimages, reduce their names into ones that only will show their religious commitments: for the Red Cross Knight, it is Holiness of the Red Cross, and for Tripitaka, it is the three collections of scriptures in the West. Not only are journeys in both works assigned in the court, they are also taken outside the territory that their courts could control. In other words, both journeys are expeditions to the unknown, the unfamiliar, and even the strange. The journey to the West is about a hundred and eight thousand miles from Chang-an (the capital of Tang Empire, 长安). A poem at the beginning of chapter thirteen reiterates the journey’s difficulties: “through how many states did he roam beyond his own? Through clouds and hills he passed ten thousand times.”³³ (边界远游多少国，云山前度万千重) In *The Faerie Queene*, it seems that the fairy land is a complete separate realm from the kingdom of the fair lady’s ancient parents, whose “scepters stretcht from East to Western shore,/ And all the world in their subjection held.”(l.i.5.5-6) By the end of the first book, when the royal father asks the Red Cross to marry his daughter, the knight gently declines since he has to return to the fairy land and serve the Queen for another six years: “Backe to returne to that great Faerie Queene,/ And her to serve six years in warlike wize, Gainst that proud Paynim king, that works her teene:/ Therefore I ought crave pardon, till I there have beene.” (l.xii.18.6-9)

³² *Ibid.*, p.281.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

Structure

Either to save the royal family of the fair lady Una by killing a dragon, or to salve the orphaned spirits through acquiring Buddhist scriptures in the West, these two journeys are certainly not easy ones: meandering through dark forests and valleys, our pilgrims have to fight ugly monsters, be exposed to charming temptresses, be abducted into foul caves from time to time, and occasionally, due to their incompetence in the face of strong enemies, they need to be saved by their patron saints (for example, Arthur and Bodhisattva 观音) to resume the journeys. Hence, the two books are bound by an episodic structure, in which each episode tells a story of the pilgrims' triumph over a monster. These consecutive episodes of action link themselves in sequence and construct the long road of the journey.

In *The Journey to the West*, there are exactly eighty-one obstacles to overcome, and these eighty-one obstacles can be seen as eighty-one kinds of monsters or trials in eighty-one episodes. As noted above, there are powerful monsters such as the Great King Golden Horn with a treasure gourd that will suck people inside and reduce them to pus, and the three Daoists transformed from a tiger, a deer and an antelope, who kills all the Buddhist monks in the Cart Slow Kingdom ³⁴(chapter 44-46, 车迟国), and the yellow-browed king (黄眉大王) with the Bag of Human Seed (人种带) that can haul away all things (chapter 65-66). Further, there are also temptresses such as the white bone lady, or seven beautiful

³⁴ In this episode, both Monkey King and Pigsy urinated in the Three Pure Ones Hall (三清殿), the sacred temple for three Daoist immortals. This reminds us of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, in which Gargantua "paid the Parisians for his welcome" by "peeing over them that he drowned two hundred and eighty thousand and eighteen of them, without women and children." See chapter sixteen of the second book, *Gargantua*, pp. 257-258. Further, the Daoists' practice in the novel, the competition to see how long one could sit on a high pillar (chapter forty-six) is similar to the Christian practice in the saint's story, e.g., the life of St. Daniel the Stylite. To see more similarities between *The Journey to the West* and *Gargantua and Pantagruel* especially regarding food, refer to Hsia, p.152.

spider spirits bathing in a spring, or the scorpion spirit (蝎子精) who has dragged Tripitaka into her Cave of the Lute (chapter 55 琵琶洞).

Similarly, the first book of *The Faerie Queene* is structured by the trials which the Red Cross knight has been through. He slays the snake Error, then he is abducted into the house of Archimago, and tempted by the beauty of Duessa. Afterwards, he wanders to the wrong road and visits the house of Pride. Having been in the cave of Despair and dungeon of Orgoglio, he finally encounters the dragon outside Una's castle, and comes to his last trial.

Allegory

Although the mode of allegory as a genre was unfamiliar in Chinese literary history³⁵, it is hard not to read *The Journey to the West* beyond its surface narration. This view has already been pointed out some three hundred years ago in Yuan Yu-ling's (袁于令, 1674) famous introduction to *The Journey to the West* (《西游记题词》):

I think that the book is about the *allegories* of the Principle of five elements, and the Way of Daoists' cultivation. I think that the three schools (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, e.g. Neo Confucianism in modern terms) are already included in this one book, and those who are able to read this book, will find the truth in this variety of changes. What kind of circumstance they will not know? What kind of Way they will not understand? (my emphasis, 说者以为 寓五行生克之理, 玄门修炼之道。余谓三教已括于一部, 能读是书者, 于其变化横生之处引而伸之, 何境不通? 何道不洽?)

³⁶

However, since translation always involves some newly-added or deducted meaning in

³⁵ Plaks, *Chinese Narrative*, p.163.

³⁶ See 郭绍虞编, 《历代文论选》, p.291. Many pieces of Ming and Qing commentary on *The Journey to the West* pay special attention to the allegorical dimension of this novel. For example, Li Zhuo-wu (李卓吾), who saw the original appearance of the hundred-chapter version of the novel, warns that: "*The Journey to the West* contains a great number of allegorical figures, which the reader should at no cost pass over in haste." (西游记极多寓言, 读者切勿草草放过。) See Plaks, *Chinese Narrative*, p. 174. The preface attributed to Yu Chi also warns us that: "what is said refers to Xuan Zang, but what is meant is actually not about Xuan Zang. 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 Dao." (所言者在玄奘而意实不在玄奘。所记者在取经, 而实志不在取经, 特假此以喻大道耳。) See Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p.225.

each word translated³⁷, (there is simply no words whose multi-layers of meanings will precisely correspond to a translated new word), 寓言 (Yu-yan) and its English counterpart, allegory, are a case in point. Philosophically speaking, they signify two completely incompatible concepts.³⁸ If allegory “says one thing and means another,” Chinese “Yu-yan” can definitely be categorized as allegory. However, since metaphor, simile, and even irony also indicate one thing in words and another in meaning, this definition seems too broad to rely on. Further, when Chinese uses the term “Yu-yan,” what they seem to have in mind is the hidden presence of some didactic message, or moral lesson as an unarticulated dimension of meaning³⁹, for example, Chinese will call the fables of Aesop as “Yu-yan” (伊索寓言).

Hence, not only does a typical Western allegory say one thing and mean another, it also should be a developed and continued metaphor, that is, a systematic arrangements of events and characters to convey a double significance⁴⁰: one concrete and the other abstract, one sensible and the other inaccessible to senses. More often than not, allegory, because of its complexity and meaning-oriented structure, is self-consciously designed before it is being written. *The Faerie Queene* is read as a stereotypical allegory since Spenser clearly points out in his letter to Sir Raleigh that he would use the “conceit of allegory.” A mere reference to the knight of the Red Cross is a simple figure of speech—not an allegory. Yet, if the Red Cross knight, the symbol of Holiness, slays the snake Error, overcomes the furious brutality of

³⁷ See Saussy, p.43. Translation is nothing but problems. “We began with a translation problem that could not be solved in either of the languages in which it was posed, and we came just now to a solution of a translation problem in which knowledge, or language’s power of referring to objects, had to be sacrificed for the work of translation to be carried out.”

³⁸ See Saussy, p. 17.

³⁹ See Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p.226.

⁴⁰ See Wimsatt, p. 22.

Sanfoi (faithlessness), visits the house of Pride and cave of Despair, is thrown into the dungeon of Orgoglio (Pride), is saved by Arthur, and ultimately completes the task by killing the dragon and saving Una's (Truth) parents (Adam and Eve) from the "brazen castle" (sin), then the metaphor has certainly grown into an allegory. Obviously, beyond a tale of physical travel and adventure, this book is about a spiritual progression, a progression towards the true faith. A firm supporter of the Queen's leaning towards Protestantism, Spenser tries to marry Una (Truth) to Red Cross (holiness) in the end—when Holiness is devoted to the False, such as Duessa, it becomes bad faith. Even though Spenser does not spell out the differences that he believes exist between the true and the false, his depictions of the two—one is sober, sad and moderate, the other superstitious, often associated with rosaries, popes and magic papers⁴¹—clearly suggest the further split of Christianity in the age of Reformation.

The art of allegory, with two levels in the literary universe, is actually predicated on the Western philosophical framework of ontological dualism⁴²—the assumption that there is a truer reality transcendent to the mortal, historical realm where we live. The personified figures of abstract concepts, presented in the actions of narrative, are created as a projection into a hypothetical plane which has ultimate primacy. However, this system of ontological dualism does not exist in the realm of Chinese philosophical thoughts.⁴³ Other than assuming that there is a perfect, true world completely separate from the earthly one,

⁴¹ The snake Error, for example, will vomit "full of bookes and papers." (l.i.20.6) Archimago "told of Saintes and Popes, and evermore/He strowd an Ave-Mary after and before." (l.i.35.8-9)

⁴² See Saussy, "The Question of Chinese Allegory," pp. 13-46. Also see Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, pp. 224-243.

⁴³ We are going to have an intensive study of these differences in the last two sections of the second chapter.

a Chinese mind believes that the truth (Dao) is imminent within the mundane world that they are living in. To quote Pauline Yu's more concise observation:

Indigenous Chinese philosophical traditions agree on a fundamentally monistic view of the universe...true reality is not supernal but in the here and now, and this is a world, furthermore, in which fundamental correspondences exist between and among cosmic patterns and operations and those of human culture.⁴⁴

Thus, the Chinese mode of "allegory," though can be superficially similar to a Western one, is based on a fundamentally different set of assumptions from those of metaphor or allegory in the West.⁴⁵ Instead of viewing concrete, physical beings as exclusive to an abstract, metaphysical dimension, Chinese readers and writers will see the two categories as the same. As Saussy tries to answer "The Question of Chinese Allegory:"

The secret of Chinese rhetoric is that there is no rhetoric. The seeming allegories, metaphors, and tropes of Chinese poets do no more than report on features of the Chinese universe. The virtue of flowers and the virtue of the official—or the fragrance of each—are not akin but the same thing.⁴⁶

Even though Plaks contends that *The Journey to the West* is an allegory, he agrees that it is one, after all, that differs from a traditional Western allegory:

The Chinese allegorist, therefore, instead of signaling the truth or falsity, the figural density, or the hierarchical position of his specific narrative elements, consists more in setting them into larger patterns and cycles of recurrence that, taken as a whole, bear the meaning of the work.⁴⁷

And the hidden meaning in *The Journey to the West*, according to Plaks, lies in the cultivation

⁴⁴ See Saussy, p. 25.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁶ See Saussy, p.31. Saussy also quotes Plaks' comments on Chinese allegory: "since all reality, in the Chinese view, exists on one plane...the trope by which individual symbols in a Chinese allegorical structure refer to the invisible configurations of truth must be identified not as the similarity-difference relation of metaphor, but if anything as the horizontal extension of synecdoche. Each isolated element of the Chinese allegory, by virtue of the existential process of ebb and flow in which it is caught up, 'stands for' or 'partakes of' the sum total of all existence that remains invisible only in its extent, and not in its essence." (29) Plaks also generalized: "western allegory looks upward, while Chinese allegory looks outward." (33)

⁴⁷ Plaks, *Chinese Narrative*, p.168.

of the mind⁴⁸, the key issue in the Philosophy of the Mind, or Ming Neo-Confucianism, the philosophy of thought prevalent in Wu Cheng-en's time.⁴⁹

On the surface, it seems that *The Journey to the West* should be a Buddhist allegory, since it is after all a story about fetching Buddhist scriptures from the West. However, even though Tathagata and the pilgrims' patron saint, Bodhisattva have solved numerous problems in the journey, Tripitaka, the embodiment of Buddhist doctrine and who is most devoted to Buddhism, has to be seen as the "constant source of ridicule."⁵⁰ Almost every time before a trial, Tripitaka will show his cowardliness, and in Hsia's reading: "he becomes in the novel a person forever apprehensive of his danger."⁵¹ For example, in chapter eighty-five, almost at the end of the journey and his religious cultivation, Tripitaka is again terrified by the sign of coming dangers:

Stop saying there's nothing. I can see how precipitous the mountain peak is, and even from a great distance there appear to be violent vapors and savage clouds souring up from it. I'm getting more and more apprehensive, my whole body's turning numb, and I'm filled with troubled thoughts.⁵² (休言无事。我见那山峰挺立，远远的有些凶气，暴云飞出，渐觉惊惶，满身麻木，神思不安。第八十五回)

As an ordinary human being, Tripitaka not only cannot fully comprehend the meaning of his Buddhist scriptures, such as the Heart Sutra, he is also enslaved by these doctrines he was constantly reciting, which become the real obstacles for his self-enlightenment. In some sense, he is doctrinaire: following the Buddhist command not to kill, he banishes the

⁴⁸ Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 234.

⁴⁹ Nevertheless, *The Journey to the West* is not without any potential allegorical figures. Tripitaka, whose name means three collections of scriptures, at least serves as the embodiment of the Buddhist doctrine in the westward journey. The most import pilgrim, the Monkey King, is occasionally named as the Monkey of the Mind. Some minor demons are also tagged with abstract and doctrinal labels. For example in chapter fourteen, the six thieves, Eye that Sees and Delights, Ear that Hears and Rages, Nose that Smells and Loves, Tongue that Tastes and Desires, Mind that perceives and Covets, and Body that Bears and Suffers (眼看喜，耳听怒，鼻嗅爱，舌尝思，意见欲，身本忧) are symbols of six kinds of temptations. In chapter seventy-two, the seven spider spirits (蜘蛛精) in the cobweb cave (盘丝洞) represented the seven passions, following a Chinese idiom, 七情六欲 (mixed passions and desires, seven passions and six desires) .

⁵⁰ Hsia, p.139.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.126.

⁵² Yu, v. 4, p.159.

Monkey King two times simply because he believes that this disobedient disciple has killed some innocent human beings rather than disguised monsters.

Although *The Journey to the West* is filled with Daoist terminology⁵³, it cannot be read simply as a Daoist allegory either. If Tripitaka is seen as a laughingstock, the Daoist priests are derided in “some of the most hilarious episodes.”⁵⁴ In most cases, monsters in the journey are practitioners of Daoism. Believing that they will gain immortality by either eating Tripitaka’s flesh or having sex with him, these savage monks will lurk in the way for their arrival. The recurrent pattern in these trials is that the Monkey King fails to save his master and comes to Bodhisattva for help. Before he goes to the owner of the monster for intervention, the Goddess will point out the real identity of the strong enemy. Logically enough, many of these owners are Daoist immortals: the Great Golden Horn is one of Lao Zi’s (太上老君) Daoist youths, who steals the treasure gourd and leaves the Region Above.⁵⁵ The royal father-in-law who gathers children in geese coops to serve as an ingredient in the King’s medicine is actually the Aged Star of South Pole’s (南极老人) white deer that runs away when he is playing chess (chapter 79)⁵⁶. Furthermore, we cannot say that the Confucian types perform better in the novel, since both heavenly and earthly court appeared to be chaotic and helpless to achieve salvation⁵⁷. Thus, to locate the allegory within sixteenth century Chinese thought, the new branch of Neo-Confucianism founded in

⁵³ Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, pp. 230-233.

⁵⁴ See Hsia, p.139. Also see Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 237.

⁵⁵ Yu, v. 2, p. 162.

⁵⁶ Yu, v. 4, p. 65.

⁵⁷ See Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, pp. 239-240.

the Ming dynasty—the philosophy of Mind, probably should be the hidden meaning of *The Journey to the West*⁵⁸.

Driven by the desire for the key to the unity of those various schools of thought⁵⁹, and believing that all things possess coherence and belong to a larger coherent whole, Neo-Confucianism, either the branch of the philosophy of Principle or the philosophy of Mind, first of all, is a synthesis of the three schools of thought: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Adopting terminologies of the three schools, Neo-Confucianism contends that none of the three schools is superior, and it is when they work together that the truth becomes manifest. Once Tripitaka says to a Daoist monk in chapter thirty-three: “O teacher, we two belong to the same calling—I’m a monk and you’re a Daoist. Though our attire may differ, the principles in cultivation, in the practice of austerities are the same.”⁶⁰(先生啊，你我都是一命之人，我是僧，你是道，衣冠虽别，修行之理则同。) This is probably why usually in one episode, neither the heavenly court (Confucianism), nor Lao Zi (Daoism), nor Bodhisattva (Buddhism) can solely conquer the monster. Yet when they work together (the best example probably is the episode of subduing the Monkey King at the beginning of the novel), the problem can be easily solved. In fact, even at the very start of the novel, Wu Cheng-en has already started to weave the philosophical fabric of syncretism:

The doctrine of three vehicles he subtly rehearsed, /Including even the laws’ minutest title./The yak’s-tail waved slowly and spouted elegance;/His thunderous voice moved e’en the Ninth Heaven./For a while he lectured on Dao./For a while he discoursed on Zen/To harmonize the three schools was a natural thing./One word’s elucidation in conformity to truth/Would lead to a life birthless and knowledge most profound.⁶¹ (妙演三乘教，精微万法全。慢摇麈尾喷珠玉，响震雷霆动九天。说一会道，讲一会禅。三家配合本如然。开明一字皈诚理，指引无生了性玄。第二回)

⁵⁸ For the complete arguments, see Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 240.

⁵⁹ Bol, p. 57, and p. 103, also see note 5.

⁶⁰ Yu, v. 2, p. 119.

⁶¹ Yu, v. 1, p. 83.

Not only is the Philosophy of the Mind a synthesis of the three schools, it is also known for its central focus on the cultivation of the Mind, and this is why it can also be translated as Idealism.⁶² Following the belief that the Mind is the Principle (Truth or Dao 心即是理), the ultimate reality, and that the self-enlightenment lies only in the cultivation of the mind, *The Journey to the West* repeatedly reminds its reader that the quest is essentially one of the mind⁶³: the monsters are products of the mind, as Tripitaka wisely argues at the start of the journey: “With the emergence of consciousness, all types of demons come forth; with the extinction of consciousness, all the demons are extinguished.”⁶⁴ (心生，种种魔生；心灭，种种魔灭。第十三回) And this is probably why the cloud-soaring monkey cannot simply somersault to the West and fetch those scriptures, since the enlightenment only occur within the mind: “Seek not afar for Buddha on Spirit Mount;/Mount Spirit lives only in your mind./There’s in each man a Spirit Mount stupa;/Beneath there the Great Art must be refined.”⁶⁵ (佛在灵山莫远求，灵山只在汝心头。人人有个灵山塔，好向灵山塔下修。第八十五回)

Monsters in Disguise and Failures of the Visual Perception

The Redcross Knight, though inexperienced as a knight, is known for his boldness and rusticity. Not listening to his companion Una’s advice, he enters the “Errours den” that “is no

⁶² This school of thought is very similar to Berkeley’s Idealism. Huang in his book, *Essentials of Neo-Confucianism*, says: “Wang Yang-ming anticipated the epistemological idealism of Berkeley by almost two centuries, and many of his ideas are similar to those of later European idealists.” See Huang, p. 196. Wang Yang-ming, the founder of the Philosophy of the Mind once said: “there is nothing in the world that is external to the mind. What relation, then, do these high mountain flowers and trees, which blossom and drop of themselves, to my mind?” (天下无心外之物，如此花树，在深山中，自开自落，于我心亦何相干), see Fung, vol.2, p. 507. This is very similar to Berkeley’s observation that “surely there is nothing easier than for me to imagine trees, for instance, in a park and nobody by to perceive them. The objects of sense exist only when they are perceived; the trees therefore are in the garden no longer than while there is somebody by to perceive them.”—“to be is to be perceived.”

⁶³ Plaks, *Chinese Narrative*, p. 181.

⁶⁴ Yu, v. 1, p.283.

⁶⁵ Yu, v. 4, p. 159.

place for living men" (I.I.13.9):

But full of fire and greedy hardiment,
The youthfull knight could not for ought be staide,
But forth unto the darksome hole he went,
And looked in: his glistring armor made
A litle glooming light, much like a shade,
By which he saw the ugly monster plaine,
Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,
But th'other halfe did womans shape retaine,
Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine.
(I.I.14)

Luckily for them, although the bold knight cannot discern the danger of a place as Una alertly does, he nevertheless "perceived"⁶⁶ the monstrosity of the snake's body and strangles her afterwards. However, not all the monsters are willing to display their foul forms, and when they hide their true identity, it seems that the naïve knight of Redcross is doomed to be deceived. After this snake episode, the two travelers immediately meet "an aged sire,"⁶⁷ the magician Archimago. Following Una's suggestion, who for this time also fails to detect their hidden danger, the Redcross Knight accepts the old man's invitation and rests in his house for the night. While these two exhausted travelers are fast asleep, Archimago, with his "Magik books and arts of sundry kindes,"⁶⁸ "cald out of deepe darknesse dred/Legions of Sprights,"⁶⁹ and "Of those he chose out two, the falsest twoo,/And fittest for to forge true-seeming lyes."⁷⁰ Using one of these two Sprights, he creates Duessa, whose resemblance is made as an imitation of that of Una:

Who all this while with charmes and hidden artes,
Had made a Lady of that other Spright,
And fram'd of liquid ayre her tender partes
So lively, and so like in all mens sight,

⁶⁶ I.i.17.1

⁶⁷ I.i.29.2

⁶⁸ I.i.36.8-9

⁶⁹ I.i.29.1-2

⁷⁰ I.i.38.5-6

That weaker sence it could have ravisht quight:
The maker selfe, for all his wondrous witt,
Was nigh beguiled with so goodly sight:
Her all in white he clad, and over it
Cast a black stole, most like to seeme for Una fit.
(I.i.45)

Hence, Archimago sends this fake lady into the Redcross Knight's dream to make him
"dreame of loves and lustfull play"⁷¹ and this trickster almost succeeds:

In this great passion of unwonted lust,
Or wonted feare of doing ought amis,
He started up, as seeming to mistrust
Some secret ill, or hidden foe of his:
Lo there before his face his Lady is,
Under blake stole hyding her bayted hooke;
And as halfe blushing offred him to kis,
With gentle blandishment and lovely looke,
Most like that virgin true, which for her knight him took.
(I.i.49)

Fortunately, not overwhelmed by the lust and passion aroused by this dangerous
temptress, the Redcross knight begins to suspect her truth:

Her doubtfull words made that redoubted knight
Suspect her truth: yet since no' untruth he knew,
Her fawning love with foule disdainefull spight
He would not shend;...
(I.i.53.5-8)

However, after he fails to seduce the knight to sleep with the false Una, Archimago
comes up with another idea: waking up the sleeping knight, he says:

Rise, rise, unhappy Swaine
That here wex old in sleepe, whiles wicked wights
Have knit themselves in Venus shameful chaine,
Come see where your false Lady doth her honour staine.
(I.ii.4.6-9)

Doubtless, seeing the fake face of Una in bed with a man, the Redcross Knight takes the
lady in the bed as Una.

⁷¹ I.i.47.4

Where that false couple were full closely ment
In wanton lust and leud embracement:
Which when he saw, he burnt with gealous fire,
The eye of reason was with rage yblent,
(I.ii.5.4-7)

Full of fury and jealousy, he leaves the house of Archimago:

He could not rest, but did his stout heart eat,
And wast his inward gall with deepe despight,
Yrkesome of life, and too long lingring night...
Then up he rose, and clad him hastily;
The Dwarfe him brought his steed: so both away do fly.
(I.ii.6.3-9)

Thus, because of his inability to distinguish between true Una and a false one, the Redcross Knight leaves his faithful lady who is still sleeping in the house, and starts a journey of falsehood, as indicated in the summary at the beginning of the second canto:

*The guilefull great Enchaunter parts
the Redcrosse Knight from truth,
Into whose stead faire Falshood steps,
and workes him wofull ruth*

If Red Cross knight's only problem lies in his inability to tell the true apart from the false, we find this same weakness in the protagonist of *The Journey to the West*, our Tang monk, Tripitaka. More often than not, monsters who disguise themselves will form a blockage to both perception and judgment of these two holy pilgrims.

A classic example in *The Journey to the West* can be found in the episode of the white-bone lady (chapter 27), who disguises herself first as a young girl, then the young girl's mother, finally her father to deceive Tripitaka into eating her poisoned food. Thanks to our Monkey King, the possessor of superior visual perception, Tripitaka is exempted from these real dangers. Yet, not believing that the Monkey has killed a monster rather than a family of

three innocent people, he stupidly becomes so indignant at the Monkey's violence that he banishes this poor disciple at the end of the episode. Eventually, the Monkey King returns to the expedition at the request of Bodhisattva, but he will always remind Tripitaka of the inadequacy of his human eyes, in chapter ninety-two, he exclaims: "O Master! Because you could not distinguish the true from the specious, you have caused such delay in your journey and wasted so much effort. I shouted at you repeatedly, trying to tell you that these were not good people, but you were already making your bows..."⁷² (师父啊, 为你不是真假, 误了多少路程, 费了多少心力, 我一行说不是好人, 你就下拜.....第九十二回)

In fact, the entire westward journey can be seen as a series of revelations of disguised demons: some of them were animal or insect spirits, some are divine beings who make some mistakes and flee to the earth for easier life, and some are sent by Bodhisattva or even Bodhisattva herself as trials for the four pilgrims.

Duplication

In the first book of *The Faerie Queene*, the confusion between appearance and inner truth is mainly staged by the magic of the great magician, Archimago. Not only does he create Una's false counterpart, Duessa, to confuse the Redcross' eyes, he also duplicates the Redcross Knight in order to deceive Una. With "hidden power of herbes, and might of Magicke spell,"⁷³ "he could take/As many forms and shapes in seeming wise,"⁷⁴ and by putting on the garment of Redcross, he makes himself a duplication of the knight of

⁷² Yu, v. 4, p. 277.

⁷³ I.ii.10.9

⁷⁴ I.ii.10.2-3

Holiness:

But now seemde best the person to put on
Of that good knight, his late beguiled guest:
In mighty armes he was yclad anon:
And silver shield, upon his coward brest
A bloody crosse, and on his craven crest
A bouch of haire discoloured diversly:
Full jolly knight he seemde, and well addrest,
And when he sate upon his courser free,
Saint George himself ye would have deemed him to be.

(I.ii.11)

When Una sees Archimago bearing the shield of the Redcross, she is indeed deceived by what she perceives, and weeps at her “joyous sight”⁷⁵ and “shining lampe of blis”⁷⁶:

from whence when she him spyde,
By his like seeming shield, her knight by name
She weend it was, and towards him gan ryde:
Approaching nigh, she wist it was the same,
And with faire fearefull humblesse towards him shee came.

(I.iii.26.5-9)

Thanks to Sanloy, who mistakes Archimago as the Redcross Knight, the murderer of his brother Sanfoy, Archimago is immediately pushed to the ground by this furious avenger, and his true form is finally revealed:

But rudely rending up his helmet, would
Have slaine him straight: but when he sees his age,
And hoarie head of Archimago old,
His hasty hand he doth amazed hold,
And halfe ashamed, wondred at the sight:
For that old man well knew he, though untold,
In charmes and magicke to have wondrous might,
Ne ever wont in field, ne in round lists to fight.

(I.iii.29.2-9)

As we have seen in *The Faerie Queene*, Duessa, with a black stole over the face, found her appearance in the resemblance of Una. Archimago, bearing the shield with a Red Cross,

⁷⁵ I.iii.27.6

⁷⁶ I.iii.27.9

almost deceives Una's eyes into believing that he is her companion in their journey. Coincidentally enough, to complicate this problem of asymmetry between appearance and the true essence beneath it, like Spenser who produces his major characters in duplicate, Wu Cheng-en also duplicates his pilgrims in their westward journey.

In chapter thirty-nine of the episode in the Black Rooster Kingdom (乌鸡国), the monster of the green-haired lion, while fighting the Monkey King in the sky, feels incompetent against this strong opponent, and hence transforms into the a disguise of Tripitaka:

He could no longer withstand the Monkey King and fled instead back into the city on the way he came. Hurling himself into the two rows of civil and military officials before the white jade steps, the demon king gave his body a shake and changed into an exact image of Tripitaka T'ang, both of them standing hand-in-hand before the steps.⁷⁷(他两个战经数合，那妖魔抵不住猴王，急回头从旧路跳入城里，闯在白玉阶前两班文武丛中，摇身一变，即变得与唐三藏一般模样，并挽手，立在阶前。第三十九回)

In this case, even the Monkey King, the bearer of superior visual perception, fails to discern his true master. Hence, he asks the mountain god for help: "Both of their form and substance seem exactly the same and it's difficult to tell them apart..."⁷⁸ (老孙至此降妖，妖魔变作我师父，气体相同，实难辨认.....第三十九回)

About twenty chapters later, another Monkey King jumps out, whose real identity not only baffles ordinary eyes of Tripitaka, Zhu Ba-jie (Piggy 猪八戒), and Sand Monk, but also confuses the divine Bodhisattva.

The two Pilgrims closed in, and you could not distinguish the true one from the false. What a fight! Two iron rods,/ two monkey sprites,/This fight of theirs is truly no light thing!/They both want to guard the royal brother of T'ang,/Each seeking merit to acquire great fame./The true ape accepts the poverty faith;/The specious fiend utters false Buddhist claims./Their magic gives them transformations vast:/They're

⁷⁷ Yu, v. 2, p. 225.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

exact equals, that's the honest truth! ⁷⁹(二行者在一处，果是不分真假，好打呀：两条棒，二猴精，这场相敌实非轻。都要护持唐御弟，各施功绩立英名。真猴实受沙门教，假怪虚称佛子情。盖为神通多变化，无真无假两相平。第五十八回)

The various deities and the Bodhisattva stared at the two for a long time, but none could tell them apart. "Stop fighting," said the Bodhisattva, "and stand apart. Let me look at both of you once more." They indeed let go of each other and stood on opposite sides. "I'm the real one," said one side. "He's a fake!" said the other.⁸⁰(众诸天神与菩萨都看良久，莫想能认。菩萨道：“且放了手，两边站下，等我再看。”果然撒手，两边站定。这边说：“我是真的！”那边说：“他是假的！”第五十八回)

Deprived of any alternatives, Bodhisattva takes the two monkeys to the heaven where the Jade Emperor (玉皇大帝) resided, and asks for the aid of their treasures—the Imp-reflecting mirror (照妖镜), which has successfully revealed the true form (本相) of the false Tripitaka in the Black Rooster Kingdom twenty chapters earlier:

Taking out an imp-reflecting mirror from his sleeve, the Bodhisattva aimed it at the fiend and the image of its original form became visible at once.....Exceedingly ferocious in appearance, that demon king had Eyes like large goblets of glass;/A head like a cooking vat;/A body of deep summer green;/And four paws like autumn's frost;/Two large ears that flipped downward;/A tail as long as a broom;/Green hair full of fighting ardor;/Red eyes emitting gold beams;/Rows of flat teeth like jade slabs;/Round whiskers rearing up like spears;/The true form seen in the mirror/Was Manjusri's lion king.⁸¹ (那菩萨袖中取出照妖镜，照住了那怪的原身。行者才招呼八戒、沙僧齐来见了菩萨。却将镜子里看处，那魔王生得好不凶恶——眼似琉璃盏，头若炼炒缸。浑身三伏靛，四爪九秋霜。搭拉两个耳，一尾扫帚长。青毛锐气，红眼放金光。匾牙排玉板，圆须挺硬枪。镜里观真象，原是文殊一个狮狒王。第五十八回)

Fascinatingly, *The Journey to the West* is not the only place where this sort of magical mirror, which solves the problem of perception, is employed. In the third book⁸² of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser writes: "Such was the glassie globe that Merlin made, /And gave unto king Ryence for his gard,/ .../ And worthy worke of infinite reward, /That treason could

⁷⁹ Yu, v. 3, pp. 118-119.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁸¹ Yu, v.2. p. 227-228.

⁸² The third book, however, concerns mainly about the status of chastity, rather than the problem of truth and appearance in the first book.

bewray and foes convince;/ Happie this Realme, had it remained ever since.”(III.II.21)

The old problem of telling the inner true nature from the surface of appearance—the confusion between friends and foes, devotion and treason, humans and monsters, masks and disclosed faces, disguises and original forms—is thus temporarily solved by our magical mirrors in the two literary works. With these common grounds between *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene* laid out in the first chapter, the second chapter will focus on mirrors and their associations in the cultural contexts of Ming China and England at the end of the sixteenth century. Using the “mirror” as a guiding thread, this following chapter will discuss similarities and differences in literary and painting theories between the two cultures. By doing this, the second chapter provides a platform to suggest the more profound differences hidden behind these two literary works, in spite of their surface resemblances.

CHAPTER 2

MIRROR

Magical Mirror that Reveals the Truth

Entering her father's "closet," Britomart sees the "looking glass" devised by the great "magician Merlin." As mentioned in the previous chapter, this magical glass will reveal treason and manifest enemies' conspiracy beforehand. To protect the "Prince's happy realm," this magical mirror will always show the truth in the face of disguises and deceits:

What ever foe had wrought, or frend had fayned,
Therein discovered was, ne ought mote pas,
Ne ought in secret from the same remaynd;
(III. ii.19. 5-7)

This powerful mirror reveals true nature and exposes secret intent. It destroys numerous veils of lies, excuses, secrets and pretensions. However, Spenser is not the first writer who uses a magical mirror to lift up the veil of pretenders. At least since Virgil, this literary motif of having an enchanted mirror for truth has been practiced, and there is an ongoing discussion of such a mirror from the medieval period to the early modern era.⁸³

In Virgil's imagination, this mirror is mounted on top of a tall tower in Rome, so that "all those who looked at it/ From a day's travel away could see/ Every human creature/ That desired or attempted/ To hurt or harm Rome."⁸⁴ With such an invaluable mirror, it seems that Rome could not be conquered. Logically, the eventual destruction of this glorious city is often associated with the destruction of this Virgilian mirror: the Romans were eventually convinced by outsiders to dig for the treasure beneath the tower, and they accidentally

⁸³ See Eileen Reeves, *Galileo's Glassworks*, p. 15.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, P. 16.

toppled the structure beneath the tower on which their national security relied.⁸⁵ Even though this story is only some legendary fiction, the fourteenth-century chronicler Jean d'Outremeuse still offered the conventional observation that "if the Romans had guarded this mirror well, they would still be the rulers of the world."⁸⁶

The magical mirror described by Chaucer in "The Squire's Tale" of *The Canterbury Tales* also draws on the Virgilian tradition. This mirror, as a gift to Cambyuskan, or Genghis Khan in the "land of Tartarye," "has power such that in it men may see/when there shall happen any adversity/unto your realm, and to yourself also;/ And openly who is your friend or foe/ More than all this, if any lady bright/ has set her heart on any kind of wight,/ If he be false she shall his treason see,/ his newer love and all his subtlety/ so openly that nothing can hide."⁸⁷

In China, there has always been a literary tradition of using a magical mirror to tell the inner truth. Nevertheless, it is not the knight in Chaucer's tale who brings this tradition to China. As early as the reign of Qin Shi Huang (秦始皇)⁸⁸, the first emperor of a unified China, there is a famous legend of his mirror that would literally show one's inner "truth"—the "gall-reflecting mirror" (照胆镜). In the *Miscellaneous Records of the Western Capital* (《西京杂记》)⁸⁹, the collector writes:

(Qin Shi Huang) has a square mirror, which is four feet wide and five feet and nine inches high, which is crystal-clear both inside and out. When people behave well and look at it, they can see their reflections upside down. Using their hands to cover their hearts, they will see their intestines and other inner organs without difficulty. If people

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁷ See *The Canterbury Tales*, p. 294.

⁸⁸ Qin Shi Huang (259 BC-210 BC), the king of State Qin in the Warring States period. He unified China in 221 BC, ushering the imperial rule with a centralized government in China. He champions the philosophy and statecrafts of Legalism(法家), which is known for the harsh punishments. To ensure security, he burned books of hundreds of schools of philosophy, as well as buried many scholars alive.

⁸⁹ The book is a collection of histories and historical anecdotes of the Han dynasty and Pre-Han dynasties. The author of the book remains to be a question. Some credited it to Ge Hong (284-364 葛洪), a Daoist monk who is known for his treatise on alchemy, medicine and religion of Daosim, 《抱朴子》, see *Alchemy, Medicine, Religion in the China of A.D. 320*, translated by James R. Ware.

have disease, they can cover their heart and look at the mirror, and will see the origins of their disease. If women are evil, (in the mirror) her galls will be tightened and heart pounding fast. Qin Shi Huang often uses this mirror to see reflections of his palace maids, and he will kill those whose galls tightened and whose heart pounds fast. (有方镜，广四尺，高五尺九寸，表里洞明。人宜来照之，影则倒见，以手扪心而来，即见肠胃五脏，历然无碍。人有疾病在内，掩心而照之，则知病之所在。女子有邪心，则胆张心动。秦始皇常以照宫人，胆张心动者则杀之。)⁹⁰

At least since then, mirror has become a magical device that is able to reveal the inner truth. On the outer band of a mirror from early Tang dynasty, the inscription reads:

I received a gift: the mirror of the King of Qin/For this, I would have paid willingly a thousand taels of silver./ In no way would I use it to unveil you gall./ Verily, I only wish to lay bare my own heart.⁹¹ (赏得秦王镜、判不惜千金。非关欲照胆、特是自明心。)

Mentioning the mirror of Qin Shi Huang that illuminates the gall and the heart, the author of this poem shows his promise of exposing his inner truth, and hence, this mirror becomes a symbol of his integrity, a proof of being honest and loyal. The idiom, 肝胆相照 (reflecting livers and galls, treating each other with utmost sincerity), a common phrase in everyday Chinese, probably dates back to the anecdote of Qin Shi Huang's magical mirror.

Other Associations to Mirror in Literature Shared by both Cultures

In spite of this similar tradition of imagining the mirror as a magical device that will reveal the hidden truth, a remedy for the inadequacy of human eyes, the mirror, even more frequently, is associated to an encyclopedia or an exemplar, especially in historiography in the two cultures.

In China, the earliest historical trope built on the mirror can be found in *Mencius* (《孟

⁹⁰ 《西京杂记》，卷三。

⁹¹ See Eugene Y. Wang, "Mirror, Moon, and Memory in Eighth-Century China," p. 49.

子》). Looking back to the dynasty of Shang (商), or Yin Shang⁹² (殷商) (ca. 1750-1100 B.C), Mencius⁹³ warns those kings in the Warring States: “the mirror of Yin Shang is not remote” (殷鉴不远，在夏后之世)⁹⁴. Hence, the mirror becomes symbolically the reference to the past, a mirror that not only preserves the entire society of the Shang dynasty, but also provides lessons of statecrafts for future rulers. Since then, this mirror metaphor has evolved into a pattern of moralizing historiography or historicizing homily—the most well-known one probably goes to *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*, (《资治通鉴》)⁹⁵, one of the most comprehensive encyclopedias in Chinese history, which includes a vast amount of examples of good and bad emperors. Li Shi-min (李世民, 唐太宗 599—649), the second emperor in the Tang dynasty and whose period of reign is known as a golden age in Chinese history (贞观之治), once said:

With a bronze mirror, one can see whether he is properly attired; / with history as a mirror, one can understand the rise and fall of a nation; /with men as a mirror, one can see whether he is right or wrong. /I used to have these three mirrors to avoid making mistakes. Now Wei-zheng (a faithful minister famous for his advice and direct criticism of the government) has died, and I've lost one of my mirrors. (太宗谓梁公曰: “以铜为镜，可以正衣冠；以古为镜，可以知兴替；以人为镜，可以明得失。朕尝宝此三镜，用防己过。今魏征殁，遂亡一镜矣。”)⁹⁶

More often than not, compendiums of history with “mirror” in titles are particularly created for princes, the future emperors. For example, a late Ming collection of one hundred and seventeen anecdotes about Chinese emperors from the semi-legendary Yao to Song

⁹² Yin is the capital city in the Shang dynasty, and this is why people will call the Shang dynasty as Yin Shang dynasty.

⁹³ Mencius (ca. 372-289 B.C), a representative philosopher in Confucianism, whose interpretation of Confucianism has been considered as the orthodox version by subsequent Chinese philosophers, especially by the neo-Confucians since the Song (宋) dynasty. In his only extant book, *Mencius*, he contends that human nature is fundamentally good, and it is the bad social influence that contaminates the benevolent human nature.

⁹⁴ 《孟子·卷七》。

⁹⁵ Consisted of 294 volumes, this huge book, written by Si-ma Guang (司马光 1019-1086) from the Song dynasty, chronologically records the history of China from the Warring States period to the Five Dynasties (403 B.C- 959 A.D). This history book is the first one that is written in chronological style rather than a biographical one, such as *Records of the Historian* (《史记》) by Sima Qian (ca. 145 B.C.-86 B.C.).

⁹⁶ 《魏郑公谏录·卷五·太宗临朝诏群臣》或《贞观政要·君道》。

Huizong (宋徽宗 r. 1100-1125), *The Emperor's Mirror, An Illustrated Discussion* (《帝鉴图说》), is compiled by the Senior Grand Secretary Zhang Ju-zheng (1525-1582 张居正), as a means to educate the newly enthroned, nine-year-old Wan-li emperor (r. 1572-1620).⁹⁷

Doubtlessly, using the mirror as the simile for history recording and exemplary models is not confined solely to China. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia's lament over the Prince's decline, who was once the "glass of fashion and the mode of form,"⁹⁸ might offer its own gloss for "mirror" or "glass." Mirror, that is, "encyclopedic and didactic writings,"⁹⁹ constitutes one of the two modes in the medieval period,¹⁰⁰ and has become a word popularly applied in medieval titles to an assortment of writings that forms a reasonably coherent class.¹⁰¹ Nursed by the Christian confidence that the world is ordered rationally in ways which man can often discover, a great number of medieval works called mirrors generally aim to be inclusive, complete, and exemplary: they are either compendiums of exemplars or compendiums of corrupted entities in which archetypes are implicit.¹⁰²

An early example of such a work is the twelfth-century Latin *Speculum Stultorum* (*Mirror of Fools*), a book that relates the odyssey of Brunellus the Ass—his meetings with a spectrum of knaves and fools which gave him the chance for an inclusive view of their kind.¹⁰³ Another well-known book of speculums is the thirteenth-century *Speculum Maius* of Vincent of Beauvais, which includes three great encyclopedias of nature, history and

⁹⁷ See Julia K. Murray, "From Textbook to Testimonial," p.65.

⁹⁸ *Hamlet* (3.1.153)

⁹⁹ Wimsatt, p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ The other mode is allegory, see Wimsatt, p. 22.

¹⁰¹ Wimsatt, p. 22.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

doctrines.¹⁰⁴ In England, we have Caxton's *Mirroure of the World*¹⁰⁵ (probably before 1440), modeled after Honorius of Autun's *Speculum Mundi* of the twelfth century. While books such as *The Mirror for Magistrates* of the sixteenth century provided glasses in which a prince could see what courses of action were right (similar to the Chinese mirrors for princes), mirrors reflecting negative examples, such as *Looking Galsse for the Soule* (1643), showed "what sinnes tend to the breach of every one of Gods commandements."¹⁰⁶

Mirror and Literary Theory

"Epic poetry and Tragedy, as also Comedy, Dithyrambic poetry, and most flute-playing and lyre playing, are all, viewed as a whole, modes of imitation."¹⁰⁷—since Aristotle defines poetry as essentially an imitation of aspects of the universe, the literary term, mimesis, has become a prominent item in Western critical vocabulary all the way through the eighteenth century. Poetry, according to Sidney, is "a representing, counterfeiting, speaking picture,"¹⁰⁸ constructed according to prior models in the nature of things—everyday reality, physical objects, the phenomenal world, and even the beautiful nature. Hence, Shakespeare's masterpiece holds "mirror up to nature; to show her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, while this mirror might somehow unravel Hamlet's dark Denmark, and seek the light that may give us all reason to exist, it is primarily seen to be imitating and reflecting the social life rather than

¹⁰⁴ Wimsatt, p. 138.

¹⁰⁵ This book is the first model of such kind of mirrors that achieved a wide readership in England. See Grabes, p. 43.

¹⁰⁶ See Herbert Grabes, *The Mutable Glass*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁷ See M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, p. 9. This passage comes from Aristotle's *Poetics*.

¹⁰⁸ See Harry Berger, *Second World and Green World*, p.8.

¹⁰⁹ *Hamlet* (3. 2. 21-23)

actively expressing what is beyond, as a mind in the Romantic age may contends. This transition in the history of literary criticism is neatly captured in Abrams' *The Mirror and the Lamp*—prior to Romanticism in the eighteenth century, the mind can be compared to a mirror of external objects, and it is the romantic conception that clearly points out that the mind should be rather a radiant projector.¹¹⁰

This long literary tradition of Mimesis in the West, that is, to regard poetry as a copy of the real world and a mirror reflecting reality, however, is almost absent in prevalent Chinese poetics.¹¹¹ If Plato drives the poets out of his ideal Republic simply because these imitators were thrice removed from the Truth (Idea/Form)—they are only imitating the earthly world, some imperfect representations of the eternal and unchanging Idea, Chinese intellectuals will always include the poets in their Peach Blossom Spring because of their pursuit of and devotion to Truth—Dao (道), the Way. For Chinese, the best poet is not thrice away from the truth; instead, by identifying himself with Dao, his poems become the expressions and reflections of the truth.¹¹²

This significant divergence in the attitudes to literature between China and Europe lies

¹¹⁰ Abrams, p. viii.

¹¹¹ See James. J. Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, pp. 47-57. Also see Ming Dong Gu's "Mimetic Theory in Chinese Literary Thought," and "Is Mimetic Theory in Literature and Art Universal?" On the surface, it seems that Ming Dong Gu disagrees with Liu's view that there is no mimetic theory in Chinese tradition. However, since Gu regards that the mimetic theory can also be platonic imitation of the Form (Truth), he is essentially not at odds with Liu who defines mimesis as the Aristotelian vision of imitating the material world or human society. To see more comments on the differences between Chinese and Western literary theories, see Liang Shi, "The Leopardskin of Dao and the Icon of Truth: Natural Birth Versus Mimesis in Chinese and Western Literary Theories."

¹¹² Art is generally regarded as manifestation of Dao in the Chinese tradition. Thus, not only does literature reveal the Dao of the universe, painting as well as music will also show the cosmic harmony. For example, in the "Record of Music," a chapter of the *Book of Rites* (《礼记》), a book on ancient ritual compiled in the first century B.C. and another work in the Confucian Canon, it states: "the forces of Yin and Yang rub against each other, heaven and earth stir each other. When this interaction is roused by thunder, stimulated by wind and rain, moved by the four seasons, and warmed by the sun and moon, then all kinds of changes arise. That is why music the harmony of heaven and earth." (地气上齐, 天气下降, 阴阳相摩, 天地相荡, 鼓之以雷霆, 奋之以风雨, 动之以四时, 暖之以日月, 而百化兴焉。如此, 则乐者天地之和也。) See James J. Y. Liu, p. 19. By contrast, Western tradition generally believes that earthly ears cannot hear the heavenly music. In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, Lorenzo says to his wife Jessica: "Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven/ Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold./ There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st/ But in his motion like an angel sings,/ Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;/ Such harmony is in immortal souls,/ But whilst this muddy vesture of decay/ Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it." (5.1. 58-65)

in their different perceptions of the “truth” and reactions to their own definitions. At the first glance, we might find that the Platonic Form or Idea sounds similar to the Chinese concept of the Dao or the Way, since both of them can be translated as “Truth.” However, according to Plato, the “Form” is always unattainable by and separated from human beings. Comparing this earthly world to a cavernous cell down under the ground, Plato, like a prisoner who flees from the cave and then returns, tries to enlighten his prison inmates with the dazzling lights of truth that no one wants to face and see: human beings are living in a cave of darkness; what they recognize as reality is only shadows of artifacts, and what they see as reward for hard work are as ridiculous as prizes for the competitions for the speed at recognizing the shadows as they pass the walls of this big cave.¹¹³ Hence, with such a helpless vision of human condition and its obvious exclusion to the “Truth,” the Platonic Form is one that can never be obtained in this material world. In comparison, the Chinese Way (Dao), the unitary principle of all things and the totality of all beings, is never inapproachable; rather, it is always innate within the phenomena of existence. Contrary to the Western concept of Truth that is absolutely independent of the realm of a physical world, Dao depends on rather than denies it. As Liang Shi observes: “Dao, instead of being separated from the physical world, pervades everything in the universe, e.g., heaven, earth, cloud, water, even things as vulgar as “shit and piss.”¹¹⁴ Therefore, despite disagreements among various schools of philosophy (e.g. Daoism, Confucianism, or Mohism) concerning the means to and purposes for obtaining the Dao, they generally share the same assumption that “Truth,” hidden within the changing world of incidents, can somehow be obtained

¹¹³ See Plato’s *Republic*, from Julia Annas, Ed. *Voices of Ancient Philosophy*, pp. 177-180.

¹¹⁴ Liang Shi, p. 150.

through self-cultivation. In other words, unlike Plato who decides that Truth (Idea) in the other world could not be imitated well and thus those poets are always making things up, Chinese intellectuals are generally confident in their ability to follow or imitate the Dao, and hence they see the good poetry as an embodiment of a deeper reality inherent within an ever-changing society.

This tradition of seeing literature as a manifestation of the Dao can be traced as early as to the *Great Commentaries* (《大传》) on the *Book of Changes* (《易经》)¹¹⁵:

The book of Changes is co-equal with heaven and earth, and therefore it can encompass and enwrap the Dao of heaven and earth. With it the sages contemplates the configurations of heaven above and the orderly arrangements of the earth below, thereby understanding the causes of darkness and light.¹¹⁶ (易与天地准，故能弥纶天地之道。仰以观于天文，俯以察于地理，是故知幽明之故。)

Liu Xie (ca. 465-522 刘勰), in his famous book on literary theories, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (《文心雕龙》)¹¹⁷, reiterates the idea that literature originates from the beginning of the universe, thus will manifest the essence and true spirit of the universe:

Man is the finest essence of the Five Agents, and truly the mind of heaven and earth. When mind was born, then language was established; when language was established, then literature shone forth. This is a natural principle (Dao)...The origin of human literature began with the Great Primordial. In profoundly manifesting the divine light, the signs in the Book of Changes were the first...¹¹⁸(惟人参之、性灵所钟、是谓三才、为五行之秀、宝天地之心。心生而言立、言立而文明、自然之道也.....人文之元、肇自太极、幽赞神明、易象惟先。)¹¹⁹

Therefore, to write a good poem as some embodiment of the Dao, a poet needs to understand the Dao, unite with the Dao (天人合一), and hence he can follow the Dao in his

¹¹⁵ One of the oldest Chinese classic writings.

¹¹⁶ See James J. Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, p. 18.

¹¹⁷ This book is said to be the first systematic treatise on literature in China.

¹¹⁸ See James J. Y. Liu, p. 23.

¹¹⁹ Owen, pp. 188-190.

own works. As Zhou Dun-yi (周敦颐)¹²⁰ put it in his well-known slogan, “essay (literature) is a vehicle of the Dao” (文以载道), for a poet, “transmitting the spirit (Dao)¹²¹”(传神), is far more valued than mere “closeness to the real” (逼真), that is, an imitation of the phenomenal world. “Whoever attains resemblance by diverging from external shape/ Approximates such a person” (离形得似、庶几斯人¹²²)—with an intense awareness that things are always in transformation, Si-kong Tu (司空图)¹²³, in his *Twenty-four Categories of Poetry* (《二十四诗品》), anticipates the later tradition in the coming Ming and Qing periods, a tradition that attached far greater weight to “spiritual resemblance”(神似) rather than to “bodily resemblance”(形似). This is probably why Wang Shi-zhen (1634-1711 王士禛), the leading figure of the metaphysical school (神韵派) in the early Qing period, asks poets to encounter the Spirit (Dao) before writing (神会)¹²⁴. Following the old belief that the Dao is ultimately beyond expression, as stated in *Dao De Jing* that “the Dao that can be put in words is not the constant or immanent Dao” (道可道、非常道)¹²⁵, the literati cherishes the moment when the words are not given but resonance of spirit is achieved, that is probably why Zhong Rong (468-518 钟嵘)¹²⁶ says that “the idea lies outside the spoken word” (意在言外);¹²⁷ and why Si-kong Tu admires the ability of “not adding a character, but obtaining

¹²⁰ Zhou Dun-yi (1017-1075), a famous philosopher in the Song dynasty, links Confucianism to Daoist cosmology. He is one of the pioneers of Neo-Confucianism, and the master teacher of both Zhu Xi (朱熹) and Wang Shou-ren (王守仁), both of whom are founders of the two branches of Neo-Confucianism.

¹²¹ Spirit, similar to Dao or Truth, is what is beyond transformation of external shapes, beyond earthly life, and is what is unchangeable in this ever-changing earthly world. It is a kind of aesthetic suggestiveness that reveals the essence and larger pattern of represented objects and the universe.

¹²² Owen, p. 344.

¹²³ Si-kong Tu (837-908) was immensely attached to Daoist mystery and profundity, who is well known in Chinese metaphysical school (神韵派). He is the first poet to voice explicitly the concept of poetry as an embodiment of the poet’s apprehension of the Dao, see James Liu, p. 35. His book, *Twenty-four Categories of Poetry*, championed by Wang Shi-zhen, has become extremely popular during the Qing dynasty (清 1644—1911). See comments by Stephen Owen, *Reading in Chinese Literary Thoughts*, Chapter six, pp. 299-358.

¹²⁴ James J. Y. Liu, p. 44.

¹²⁵ *Dao De Jing*, 《道德经》.

¹²⁶ He writes *Gradings of Poets*, 《诗品》.

¹²⁷ See Yang Zhou-han, p. 103.

all the beauties” (不着一字、尽得风流). This exaltation of suggestiveness, of innuendo, has become a hallmark of classical Chinese poetry.

Mirror and Painting

While Aristotle, despite the diversity between poetry and painting resulting from different medium, introduces their common ground in imitation of the earthly world, Chinese intellectuals might genuinely agree with this conclusion of their close relations. “Poetry and painting have different names but the same body.” (书画异名而同体)¹²⁸ “Poetry is painting without shapes, and painting is poetry with shapes.” (诗是无形画、画是有形诗)¹²⁹ For a Chinese, the aesthetic experiences of these two art forms are so interrelated that one kind of the best poems and paintings can be regarded as “inside the poem, there is a painting, and inside the painting, there is a poem,” (诗中有画、画中有诗), as is manifested in Wang Wei’s (王维)¹³⁰ works. This interaction between poetry and painting in Chinese culture is also keenly observed by Andrew H. Plaks: “...it is extremely

¹²⁸ Zhang Yan-yuan (815–907 张彦远《历代名画记》卷一《叙画之源流》), also see Qian Zhong-shu (钱钟书《七缀集》“中国诗与中国画” p.5).

¹²⁹ Guo Xi (1023-1085 郭熙《林泉高致》第二篇《画意》), also see Qian Zhong-shu (钱钟书《七缀集》“中国诗与中国画” p.5).

¹³⁰ Wang Wei (699-759), is very famous and influential for both his paintings and poems. He is credited with the introduction of the broken ink style which gives variety and emphasis to the brush line, and the texture stroke, which created a more impassioned surface in contrast to the flatness of the traditional color-wash. These brush techniques were to become fundamental and essential to the later development of Chinese landscape painting, or the literati painting (文人画). Thus, Wang Wei is also credited to be the founder of the literati painting. (By the ninth century, the interest of artists had begun to shift from figure painting to landscape painting, and by the eleventh century the shift was complete, and was never afterward reserved. It was landscape painting that was to prove the characteristic product and chief glory of the whole Chinese painting tradition.) In addition, his poems have a great contribution to the landscape school of Chinese poetry (山水诗), and his paintings influenced what become known as the Southern school of landscape painting, the literati painting in particular. This school of painting, shaped by the philosophy of sudden enlightenment championed by the southern Chan Buddhism, is characterized by strong brushstrokes contrasted with light ink washes, which is distinct from the finely rendered details in paintings of the Northern school that believe that the enlightenment should be gradually attained.

Su Shi (1037-1101 苏轼) once comments on Wang Wei’s poetry: “The quality of Wang Wei’s poems can be summarized as: the poems hold a painting within them. In observing his paintings you can see that, within the painting there is poetry.” (味摩诘之诗、诗中有画、观摩诘之画、画中有诗) For Wang Wei, see “Painting before the Ming Dynasty” written by Edmund Capon in *The Restless Landscape: Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Qing Dynasties*, p. 10, and *Chinese Painting*, by James Cahill, p. 19. For the history of Chinese landscape painting, see *Chinese Painting*, by James Cahill, p.25.

significant that the language of many of the above critical discussions derives directly from the terminology of art and art criticism, and from that of landscape painting in particular.”¹³¹

However, if classical Chinese literature commits itself to the pursuit and imitation of Spirit or Truth, Chinese painting might be a much more radical expression of it¹³².

Su Shi (1037—1101 苏轼), the leading and pioneering figure of literati painting (literary man's painting, or scholar-official-amateur painting, 士夫画/文人画), has formulated a theory and standard based on a wider appreciation of the art: “Those who insisted only on formal likeness have the understanding of a child.” (论画以形似 见与儿童邻)¹³³ The painter that he admires most, Wang Wei of the Tang dynasty, who emphasizes on brush and ink and begins the landscape painting, is best known for one of his lost paintings, a painting with green banana leaves (grown in the southern China) in the snow. Hence, the painting critic, Zhang Yan-yuan comments: “when Wang Wei is painting, he does not concern about four seasons. Peach, apricot, cotton rosemallow, and lotus can be painted in one picture.” (王维画物，不问四时，桃杏蓉莲，同画一景。)¹³⁴ As Cahill observes and concludes: “the rhetoric of anti-representation proved so powerful, and was so

¹³¹ See Andrew H. Plaks, “Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative.” *Chinese Narrative*, pp. 333-335. One of the common practice for literary critics is to compare poems to natural landscapes by using terms of art and art criticism. For example, in Zhong Rong's (钟嵘 469—518) *Gratings of Poets* (《诗品》), he says that Qiu's poems are like quilted patches charmingly bright, like fallen petals lying on the grass (丘诗点缀映媚，似落花依草), or Fan Yvn's poems are bracingly nimble and smooth-turning, like a flowing breeze swirling snow (范诗清便婉转，如落风迴雪), or Xie Ling-yun's poetry is like lotus flowers coming out of the water, Yan Ru-cuo's is like a mix of colors with inlays of gold (谢诗如出水芙蓉，颜如错彩镂金), see *Theories of arts in China*, “Evaluation in the Shih-p'in” by John Timothy Wixted.

¹³² For more comments, see Qian Zhong-shu, (钱钟书) *Chinese Poems and Chinese Paintings* (《中国诗与中国画》) In this essay, although Qian admits the closeness between Chinese paintings and poems, he points out that standards to judge a good painting is different from those to determine a good poem. That is why the Southern school of painters are generally seen as superior to their Northern counterparts, while the Northern school of poets (e.g. Du Fu, Li Bai, 杜甫 李白) are agreed to be better than the Southern one (e.g. Wang Wei).

¹³³ See *Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Qing Dynasties*, p. 62, and *Chinese Painting*, by James Cahill, p. 91, or *The Painter's Practice*, pp. 113-115, or Christian Murck, “Su Shih's Reading of Chung Yung”, pp. 267-268, from *Theories of the Arts in China*. For Su Shi's original comments, see his 《书鄢陵王主簿所画折枝》.

¹³⁴ 张彦远，《画评》。

successful in linking form-likeness to lower levels of cultivation and connoisseurship, that artists who chose to violate the expressive-brushwork aesthetic in pursuit of naturalistic effects were likely to be belittled by critics.”¹³⁵

Dong Qi-chang¹³⁶, the contemporary of Wu Cheng-en and one of the leading scholars and calligraphers of his day, also explicitly reveals his contempt for the artificial and affected resemblance of things in paintings:

Painting is no equal to mountains-and-water—real scenery for the wonder of scenery; but mountains-and water are no equal to painting for the sheer marvels of brush and ink...Among the ancients, there are those who regarded painting as simulations of natural landscape and regarded natural landscape as real paintings. How they have inverted things in their opinions. (以境之奇怪论，则画不如山水；以笔墨之精妙论，则山水决，不如画。东坡有诗曰：“论画以形似，见与儿童邻。作诗必此诗，定知非诗人。”余曰：“此元画也。”晁以道诗云：“画写物外形，要物形不改。诗传画外意，贵有画中态。”...余曰：“此宋画也。昔人乃有以画为假山水，而以山水为真画者，何颠倒见也。”)¹³⁷

Thus, familiar and comfortable only with the old technique of Chinese divergent perspective, Emperor Kang Xi (康熙 1662—1722) persuaded his Italian court painter, Giuseppe Castiglione (郎世宁)¹³⁸, not to use shadows and his European rational perspective. The reason, as given by our Empress Dowager Ci Xi (慈禧太后 1835—1908), who demanded that her American painter Katherine A. Carl¹³⁹ erase the shadows from her face,

¹³⁵ See Cahill, *The Painter's Practice*, p. 114.

¹³⁶ Dong Qi-chang (1555-1636 董其昌), was by far the most eminent authority on painting. It is him who codifies painting styles, and classifies the old master painters according to his famous system of “Northern and Southern Schools.” See *Chinese Painting*, by James Cahill, p. 149. Also see *The Distant Mountains*, by James Cahill, pp. 13-27, pp 87-128.

¹³⁷ See *The Restless Landscape: Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Qing Dynasties*, p. 62. For the original texts, see Dong Qi-chang's 《画意》、《画眼》.

¹³⁸ Giuseppe Castiglione, (1688-1766 郎世宁) an Italian Jesuit Brother, missionary in China, and painter at the court of the Emperor. He arrived in Peking, where he was to spend the remainder of his life, in 1715 as a Jesuit missionary but his claim to fame is not as successful emissary for the Catholic church but as a painter at the Court of the Emperor of China. His skill as an artist was appreciated by the Emperor Qian-long (乾隆) and Castiglione spent many years painting various subjects. His style was a unique blend of European painting with Chinese subjects and themes. In addition to his demonstrable skill as a painter, he was also in charge of designing the Western-Style Palaces in the imperial gardens of the Old Summer Palace. See *Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Qing Dynasties*, p.144.

¹³⁹ Katherine A. Carl (1865-1938). This anecdote is recorded in her memoir, *With the Empress Dowager of China*, see pp. 161-164, 174-177, and 294-306. Carl has painted several portraits of the Dowager Ci Xi during her visit to the Summer Palace from the United States. In this valuable memoir, she writes: “...I found I was to be bound down by the iron fetters of Chinese tradition! I could neither choose an accessory, nor even arrange a fold according to the lines of the composition. I was obliged to follow, in every detail, centuries-old conventions. There could be no shadows and very little perspective, and

is probably that: I do not have a “Yin-yang face” (阴阳脸), which is not how I really look.

Nevertheless, one man’s poison is another man’s meat. With Aristotle’s mimesis as the foundation of Western aesthetics, it is not surprising that the geometric linear perspective, the painting technique that is most faithful to the real world according to human eyes, is first discovered in Europe. In 1425, two paintings came out, and the Florentine sculptor Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446) becomes the milestone in the history of art¹⁴⁰. This breakthrough in Western civilization, not only provides a new way of seeing, but also visually verifies the significance of the phenomenal reality in one’s mind’s eye. The mirror, once regarded as a mysterious device which would capture the potency of relics or manifest divine revelations¹⁴¹, is then, after Brunelleschi, used as a tool to check a perspective painting, where the three-dimensional space can be held in a two-dimensional plane.¹⁴²

everything must be painted in such full light as to lose all relief and picturesque effect...”p. 161.

¹⁴⁰ One showed the eastern façade of the Florentine Baptistery, the other was about the Palazzo Signoria. Both of them were lost, and we only know them through later descriptions. See Edgerton, pp.1-76.

¹⁴¹ See Edgerton, p. 24. During the very Christian Middle Ages in Europe, pilgrims often carried small round mirrors to sacred shrines in order to reflect the relics. Following this convention, Donne, in his “Obsequies to the Lord Harrington,” writes: “God is the glasse; as thou when thou dost see/ Him who sees all, seest all concerning thee,/ So, yet unglorified, I comprehend/ All, in these mirrors of thy ways, and end./ Though God be our true glasse, through which we see/ All, since the being of all things is hee,/ Yet are the trunks which doe to us derive/ Things, in proportion fit, by perspective,/ Deeds of good men; for by their living here,/ Vertues, indeed, remote, seeme to be neare.” See Grabes, p.174.

¹⁴² The seventeenth century was marked by a fascination with perspective and with the concomitant reflections and inter-reflections of the landscape in mirroring surfaces. For example, in Andrew Marvel’s *Upon Appleton House*, he writes: “They seem within the polish Grass/ A landskip drqwen in Looking-Glass./ And shrunk in the huge Pasture show/ As spots, so shap’d on Faces do./ Such Fleas, ere they approach the Eye,/ In Multipliug Glasses lye./ They feed so side, so slowly move, / As Constellations do above.” See Grabes, p. 115.

CHAPTER 3

MIRROR OF THE MIND AND MIRROR OF THE WORLD

The Mind and the World

If the real mirror in the West since Renaissance is gradually losing its magical spells¹⁴³, the imp-reflecting mirror, which previously manages to show the true essence of the false Tripitaka in *The Journey to the West*, also somehow becomes useless while facing the two Monkey Kings:

What appeared in the mirror were two reflections of Sun Wu-kong. There was not the slightest difference between their golden fillets, their clothing, and even their hair.”¹⁴⁴ (镜中乃是两个孙悟空的影子，金箍衣服，毫发不差。第五十八回)

As a result, the mirror is dismissed, and Bodhisattva has to take them to see the more resourceful Tathagata for a better judgment.

In *The Faerie Queene*, functions of Merlin’s mirror are not confined to its magical power of differentiating between foes and friends; more significantly, the mirror has shown Britomart her future husband of the faerie land—this mirror, as a telescope, additionally, is able to project “the world it selfe” (III.ii.19.9):

It virtue had, to shew in perfect sight,
What ever thing was in the world contaynd,
Betwixt the lowest earth and heaven hight,
(III.ii.19.1-3)

With those fundamental differences in aesthetic and philosophical conventions between East and West laid out in the latter half of the second chapter, this last section will

¹⁴³ Not only in common practice, mirror was no longer seen as divine and magical, in the literary field, mirror was also gradually losing its supremacy as a metaphor. Starting in the last third of the sixteenth century, the anatomy-metaphor has become prevalent. The reason for this change is, as Grabes observes, people were then evidently willing to alter radically the object of investigation—to dissect and dismember it—in order to get at the truth, see Grabes, pp.230-234.

¹⁴⁴ Yu, v. 3, p.122.

first return to *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene*, for their dissimilarities in the handling of the mirror afterwards in the texts.

As we have just seen, the imp-reflecting mirror is deprived of its former magic by Wu Cheng-en, and this abandoned mirror, to some extent, becomes a foil to the supreme knowledge of Tathagata.¹⁴⁵

Taking the two monkey kings to the Thunderclap Monastery where Tathagata resides, Bodhisattva confesses to her great master:

But I truly could not distinguish between them. They then went to both the Palace of Heaven and the Office of Earth, but even there they could not be recognized. I have come, therefore, especially to beg Tathagata to do this on the true pilgrim's behalf.¹⁴⁶(前日在弟子荒境，委不能辩。他又至天宫地府，亦俱难认，特来拜告如来，千万与他辨明辨明。第五十八回)

With a smile, Tathagata gives the answer:

Though all of you possess vast dharma power and are able to observe the events of the whole universe, you cannot know all the things therein, nor do you have the knowledge of all the species...As I see the matter, that specious Wu-kong must be a six-eared macaque, for even if this monkey stands in one place, he can possess the knowledge of events a thousand miles away and whatever a man may say in that distance. That is why I describe him as a creature who has a sensitive ear,/ discernment of fundamental principles,/knowledge of past and future,/ and comprehension of all things./ The one who has the same appearance and the same voice as the true Wu-kong is a six-eared macaque.¹⁴⁷ (汝等法力广大，只能普阅周天之事，不能遍识周天之物，亦不能广会周天之种类也...我观假悟空乃六耳猕猴也。此猴若立一处，能知千里外之事，凡人说话，亦能知之，故此善聆音，能察理，知前后，万物皆明。与真悟空同相同音者，六耳猕猴也。第五十八回)

But what is Tathagata's knowledge of "things therein" after all?

¹⁴⁵ Tathagata (如来), who resides in the Great Temple of Thunderclap in the Great Western Heaven, has the greatest power in the novel among the Buddhist Gods. It is him who finally subdues the Monkey King before the journey when the monkey is trying hard to rebel against the heavenly court; it is also him who orders Bodhisattva to go to the Tang court and bring some devoted pilgrims in order to fetch the Great Vehicle Law of Buddha.

¹⁴⁶ Yu, v. 3, pp. 130-131.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

Seeing the two Monkey Kings fighting each other in the sky, Tathagata tells his disciples:

The existent in the nonexistent;/the nonexistent in the non-nonexistent/.../Reality has no fixed reality, reality is emptiness/ Emptiness has no fixed emptiness, emptiness is reality/ The knowledge of emptiness is not emptiness; the knowledge of reality is not reality.”¹⁴⁸ (不有中有、不无中无.....色无定色、色即是空、空无定空、空即是色、知空不空、知色不色.....第五十八回)

This lecture directly brings us back to the *Heart Sutra* (心经), the central wisdom text of Mahayana Buddhism precious to the historical Tripitaka¹⁴⁹, and a text given by the Crow’s Nest Zen Master¹⁵⁰ (鸟巢禅师) at the start of their journey in the nineteenth chapter of the novel. In Hsia’s words, the *Heart Sutra* is so important that “Wu Cheng-en has done nothing less than make his whole novel a philosophical commentary on the Sutra.”¹⁵¹ Every time Tripitaka complains about difficulties in their journey, the Monkey King will remind his master of the *Heart Sutra*. For example, in chapter thirty-two, the Monkey says:

Don’t you remember the words of the *Heart Sutra* given to you by that Crow’s Nest Priest: ‘No hindrances on the mind, and therefore, no terror to fear; he is far removed from error and delusion’? Only you must/ Sweep away the filth of your mind,/ And wash off the dust by your ears./ Without tasting the most painful pain,/ You will never be a man among men...¹⁵²(你记得那鸟巢和尚的《心经》云心无挂碍,无挂碍,方无恐怖,远离颠倒梦想之言?但只是扫除心上垢,洗净耳边尘。不受苦中苦,难为人上人。第三十二回)

In chapter ninety-three, the Monkey King brings up the *Heart Sutra* again and complains about his master’s vain recitation of the text:

Master, could it be that you have quite forgotten again the *Heart Sutra* of the Crow’s Nest Zen Master?... Master, you may be able to read it, but you haven’t begged that Zen Master for its proper interpretation.¹⁵³(师父,你好是又把鸟巢禅师《心经》忘记了也? 师父只是念得,不曾求那师父解得。第九十三回)

Undoubtedly, Tathagata’s lecture is a reflection and reminder of the *Heart Sutra*, part of

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹⁴⁹ Hsia, p. 127.

¹⁵⁰ According to Fung, “to the Neo-Confucianism, Zen and Buddhism are the same,” since in all the schools of Buddhism, Zen was the most influential at that time, see p.440.

¹⁵¹ Hsia, p. 128.

¹⁵² Yu, v. 2, p. 98.

¹⁵³ Yu, v. 4, p. 295.

which says:

Sariputra, reality is no different from emptiness, emptiness no different from reality; reality is emptiness, and emptiness is reality... Sariputram it is thus that all dharmas are but empty appearances, neither produced nor destroyed, neither defied nor pure, neither increasing nor decreasing. This is why in emptiness there are no realities and no sensations, perceptions, volition, nor consciousness; no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind; no reality, sound, smell, taste, touch, or object of mind...Because there is nothing to be attained, the mind of the Bodhisattva, by virtue of reliance upon the Perfection of Wisdom, has no hindrance in the mind, no hindrance, and therefore, no terror or fear; he is far removed from error and delusion, and finally reaches nirvana...¹⁵⁴(舍利子，色不异空，空不异色，色即是空，空即是色.....舍利子，是诸法空相，不生不灭，不垢不净，不增不减。是故空中无色，无受想行识，无眼耳鼻舌身意，无色声香味触法.....以无所得故，菩提萨埵。依般若波罗蜜多故，心无挂碍，无挂碍故，无有恐怖。远离颠倒梦想，究竟涅槃.....第十九回)

The *Heart Sutra*, originally a text from the Buddhist doctrines, has also been well studied by Neo-Confucianists since the Song dynasty. As the sutra emphasizes particularly on the power of the “heart” or “mind” (“心”–“xin” can be translated into either heart or mind, since the Philosophy of Mind (心学) and *Heart Sutra* (《心经》) share the same “心”, but are translated differently), it fundamentally agrees with Neo-Confucianism’s concern on how to cultivate one’s mind¹⁵⁵: because the sensory perception of reality is ultimately an empty illusion (色即是空), we should not have desire, fear, disappointment or any other attachments in our mind, and we can thus obtain the peace of mind. At the same time, dialectically, the converse is true as well—meditation on emptiness itself becomes an illusory experience¹⁵⁶ (空即是色), since you have already had the desire of obtaining self-enlightenment. This is probably why the Monkey King refuses to spell out his interpretation of the *Heart Sutra* and remains silent in the ninety-third chapter, and why Tripitaka comments that “his

¹⁵⁴ Yu, v. 1, p.395.

¹⁵⁵ In order to revive Confucianism and to find common foundation among the philosophies of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism, Neo-Confucian scholars were usually open to Daoist and Buddhist philosophical ideas, also see note 5.

¹⁵⁶ See Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 275.

interpretation is made in speechless language, this is true interpretation.”¹⁵⁷(悟空解得是无言语文字，乃是真解。)

The emphasis on the power of the mind continues to be strengthened by Tathagata’s further observations on the two fighting Monkey Kings: “You are all of one mind, but take a look at two minds in conflict arrive here.”¹⁵⁸ (汝等俱是一心，且看二心竟斗而来也。) This remark again points to the allegorical level of the pilgrims’ westward journey—the pilgrimage of the mind—the Neo-Confucianism, or the Philosophy of the Mind. The Monkey King, in fact, after he joins the pilgrimage, has acquired another name full of allegorical suggestions—the Mind Monkey (心猿). On a higher level of reading, the duplication of the monkey can be connected to the dangerous regression of the mind into discordant and multiple consciousnesses¹⁵⁹, as is indicated in the title of this chapter fifty-eight—“Two Minds cause Disturbance in the Great Universe; It’s hard for One Substance to Make Perfect Rest.” (二心搅乱大乾坤、一体难修真寂灭)

If the dismissal of the magical mirror is realized by replacing it with a more powerful mind in *The Journey to the West*, Spenser’s mirror in *The Faerie Queene* expands itself into the exploration of the physical world:

...A Looking glasse, right wondrously aguized,
Whose vertues through the wyde world soone were solemnized.

It virtue had, to shew in perfect sight,
What ever thing was in the world contaynd,
Betwixt the lowest earth and heaven hight,
So that it to the looker appertained;...

¹⁵⁷ Yu, v. 4, p. 295. This also agrees with the Daoist truism: the Dao that can be put in words is not the constant Dao. (道可道，非常道)

¹⁵⁸ Yu, v. 3, p. 129.

¹⁵⁹ See Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 247.

For thy it round and hollow shaped was,
Like to the world it selfe, and seemed a world of glas.
(III.ii.18-19)

To see a mirror as a telescope reflecting the world, which has never captured Chinese intellectuals' imagination, becomes rather a commonplace in Western literature, especially after the middle Ages. As Grabes concludes:

Reflection of the world or its parts begins to crop up with some frequency only from the end of the sixteenth century onwards, in the form of the mirror of sense-perception, quintessentially the eye: "These Mirrors take into their little space,/The forms of Moone, and Sunne, and every Starre,/Of every Bodie, and of every place,/Which with the worlds wide Armes embraced are."¹⁶⁰

The Cosmographical Glasse (1559), a book dedicated to the Earl of Leicester by William Cuningham, writes: "I...have devised this mirror, or Cosmographical Glasses" to reflect "the heavens with her planets and stares, th'Earthe with her beautifull Regions, and the seas with her merueilous increase."¹⁶¹ In the burning passion of Donne's *The Canonization*, lovers' eyes are also conceived as mirrors or even spy glasses showing images of the earthly world—"you, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;/ who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove/ Into the glasses of your eyes/(so made such mirrors, and such spies,/ That they did all to you epitomize,)/ Countries, towns, court; beg from above/ A pattern of your love!"¹⁶²

In 1608, Galileo produced some fascinating new instrument, the perspective tube that we call a telescope. Since then, the glass reflecting oceans and lands would no longer solely belong to the field of literary imagination. This great Dutch inventor had considered that the new device would be most useful to sailors for spotting ships at sea, or to military commanders for discerning distant enemy installations, but finally, he turned this new

¹⁶⁰ The poem is written by John Davies of Hereford, see Grabes, p. 115.

¹⁶¹ Demaray, p. 111.

¹⁶² Kenner, Ed., p.8.

instrument to the moon. In March 1610, he published *Sidereus nuncius* (Messenger from the Stars)¹⁶³, a book that not only reveals the rough surface of the moon, but it also shakes the common belief that the moon is a perfect heavenly sphere completely different from the earth.¹⁶⁴

Two Philosophical Directions

Based on *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene*, the mirror, pregnant with a variety of literary associations, is actually reflecting some almost opposite directions taken by cultures of China and the West at that time¹⁶⁵: the former becomes an inner exploration¹⁶⁶, while the latter grows into an outward adventure; one turns into the

¹⁶³ Edgerton, pp. 151-167.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

¹⁶⁵ We select metaphors that correspond closely to pre-existing concepts. In other words, the selection of metaphors will reflect how people perceive the world. See Grabes, p. 225-226.

¹⁶⁶ This mirror imagery appears in *A Dream of Red Mansions* (《红楼梦》) as well, and serves as an important device to convey and strengthen Cao Xue-qin's (1724-1763 曹雪芹) philosophical meditation beneath the surface narration of his masterpiece (其中味). This large mirror (穿衣镜) is first introduced when Jia Zheng (贾政), the authority of the whole family visits the Grand View Garden (大观园), Jia Bao-yu (贾宝玉) and his sisters future residence: "...but on reaching the door they suddenly saw a party just like their own confronting them—they were looking at the mirror..." (v.1, p. 242) (及至门前, 忽见迎面也进来了一群人, 都与自己形相一样——却是一架玻璃大镜相照 第十七回) And then, it is mentioned several times through other visitor's perspective, for example, Jia Yun (贾芸) in chapter twenty-six, and Granny Liu (刘姥姥) in chapter forty-one. Granny Liu, a country woman who has never been in such a rich family, brings a lot of fun during her stay: Looking at her own image in this big mirror, she mistakes it as her son-in-law's mother, and talks to her for a while. Afterwards, she "suddenly recalled having heard that rich folk had in their houses some kind of full-length mirror. It dawned on her that this was her own reflection. She felt it with her hand and looked more carefully. Sure enough, it was a mirror set in four carved red sandalwood partitions." (v.2, p. 13) ("我常听见人家说大富大贵人家有一种穿衣镜, 这别是我在镜子里头罢。" 说毕伸手一摸, 再细一看, 可不是, 四面雕空紫檀板壁将镜子嵌在中间。 第四十一回)

With these forward projections (草蛇灰线, 伏延千里), we come to the very important fifty-sixth chapter. Hearing that there is a rich family, the Zhen family (甄家) in Nanjing (this Zhen family has been mentioned many times since the first chapter), Jia Bao-yu feels confused and has an unusual dream: he arrives at Zhen Bao-yu's garden and wakes the sleeping Bao-yu up, who says: "I didn't believe the old lady when she told me that in the capital there's another Bao-yu whose character's just like mine. Just now, though, I had a dream. I dreamed I was in a big garden in the capital, where I met some girls who called me a stinking wretch and refused to talk to me. When at last I found his room he (Jia Bao-yu) was asleep." (v.2, p. 264) ("我听见老太太说, 长安都中也有个宝玉, 和我一样的性情, 我只不信。我才作了一个梦, 竟梦中到了都中一个花园子里头, 遇见几个姐姐, 都叫我臭小厮, 不理我。好容易找到他房里头, 偏他睡觉, 空有皮囊, 真性不知那里去了。") And seeing Jia Bao-yu, Zhen Bao-yu cries: "so you're Bao-yu! This isn't a dream then." (原来你就是宝玉? 这可不是梦里了。) Immediately after this, Bao-yu is waked up by his servants, and as he opens his eyes, he sees his reflections in that big mirror. (原是那嵌的大镜对面相照)

This episode not only associates itself to Zhuang Zi's story of dreaming of the butterfly, it also leads its readers to

cultivation of the mind¹⁶⁷, the other shifts to an expansion of a physical world.

In Harry Berger's studies in Renaissance fiction-making, he points out that what differentiates the Renaissance from Medieval imagination is that people became more conscious of the mind's constructive power, and that the mind may actively choose to make things up.¹⁶⁸ This realization of individual creativity of the mind in the Renaissance, however, can actually be capsulated in one slogan championed by the Philosophy of Mind prevalent in the Ming dynasty, in Wu Cheng-en's time in particular¹⁶⁹: "the mind is the Principle (Dao/Way/Truth)." Nonetheless, again with this more or less similar starting point, and with this overt attention to the constructive power of the mind, Chinese intellectuals turned out to be more and more focused on the cultivation of it. Since for a classical Chinese, the cultivation of the mind (修心) is the only way leading to become a sage.¹⁷⁰ On the other hand in the Western sphere, finding that the outward exploitation of the world can be realized by

ponder on the relationship between the true and the false, the reality and the illusion: Jia (贾), Bao-yu's family name, has the same pronunciation with "falsehood" (假), while Zhen (甄), the family name of the other Bao-yu, shares the same sound with "truth" (真). Thanks to this large mirror in Bao-yu's room, the profound and philosophical idea of Cao Xue-qin, "when false is taken for true, true becomes false; if non-beings turns into being, being becomes non-being," (假作真时真亦假、无为有处有还无) is realized in a real situation. In *The Journey to the West*, the false monkey king can be read as the Monkey King's disturbed mind, here, this big mirror in Bao-yu's room can also be seen as the mirror of his mind.

¹⁶⁷ In James T. C. Liu's *China Turning Inward*, he concludes in his epilogue: "What is taught was not much connected with such practical problems as peasants, village life, townspeople, religious practices, social conditions, and the art of governing even though its readers occasionally mentioned these topics in their writings. On the whole, Neo-Confucian philosophy tended to emphasized the inward-looking side of Confucian ethical thought, the introspective discipline, and internalized moral values within the individual person rather than in the patterns and structures of society and the political order...they did not look out or outside the system for possible way to change the reality, instead, they worked hard on improvements within the system. They were not strictly speaking conservatives in the sense of standing pat. They were inward-looking." see pp.151-155.

¹⁶⁸ See Berger, *Second World and Green World*, "The Ecology of the Mind: The Concept of Period Imagination—An Outline Sketch."

¹⁶⁹ The philosophy of the mind, founded by Wang Shou-ren (王守仁, 阳明先生, 1472-1529), has dominated Chinese intellectual scene for the next hundreds of years. See Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*, p. 17.

¹⁷⁰ Chinese paintings also manifest literati's disinterest in the physical world. In Cahill's *The Painter's Practice*, he uses two paintings about flour mills in different periods to suggest the undergoing changes in Chinese social life: "what we can learn from an anonymous tenth-century work depicting a flour mill powdered by a water wheel, for instance, we could reconstruct the entire apparatus, as well as the social organization surrounding it. A fourteenth-century artist depicting the same subject reveals no understanding to the mechanism, and no interest in it. Underlying this change is the well-studied decline in China's engagement in technological innovation in the same period, and one can write, as I have, of a corresponding loss in the Chinese painter's involvement in the project of describing or exploring the physical world." See pp.117-118.

human intelligence, Europeans have already begun their brave exploration in the material world.

Gradually, this external exploitation of the world in the West brings science and scientific technology, which means, as Berger quotes from *Essays in Sociology*, that “principally there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted. One need no longer have recourse to magic means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage, for whom such mysterious powers existed...This above all is what intellectualization means.”¹⁷¹ For the Western civilization, the mysterious powers probably are referred to religion and a god in another realm. Yet for Chinese intellectuals, a transcendental god had never officially existed and universally been acknowledged, and Dao—the Way, the ultimate truth, and the principle of all things, is referring to patterns and rhythms found in everyday life, rather than some mysterious and incalculable forces outside the human realm. Indeed, can one master all things by calculations of technology? Can we be so disenchanted that we only believe in what we see and what we make, and we might eventually replace the transcendental truth with our man-made technology? Can we say that beyond everything that is material, and beyond everything that can be approved by science, there is no longer some truth that is transcendental and that has always invisibly been there?

If we say that intellectualization converts Western culture from its transcendental yearning to an earthly exploration, Chinese civilization has always been haunted by the

¹⁷¹ See Berger, *Second World and Green World*, pp. 106-107, the paragraph is written by Max Weber.

realization of its own transcendental Truth, and the entire culture became even more transcendental after the emergence of the Philosophy of the Mind and their intense awareness of the mind's power. To summarize this in a very reductive and even simplistic way, as our great Chinese philosopher Fung Yu-lan (冯友兰 1895—1990) did in the conclusion of his paper, *Why there is no Science in China* (《为什么中国没有科学》), “the direction of Western culture is outward, and the direction of the Eastern one is inward. Westerners emphasize on what we have, and the Chinese emphasize on what we are.” (西方是外向的, 东方是内向的。西方强调我们有什么, 东方强调我们是什么。)¹⁷² Indeed, this oppositional dichotomy might appear too absolute and over-generalized, representing what Chinese, especially at the beginning of the twentieth century, liked to do when they compared their native culture to the Western one they recently got in touch with.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, since a conclusion always will involve with harsh generalization, ignorance of exceptions, and hence leads to revision and re-revision, it is probably inevitable that Fung's keen observation appears to be unsophisticatedly simple.

¹⁷² See Fung Yu-lan, 《中国哲学小史》, p.106.

¹⁷³ Shih, pp. 53-55.

EPILOGUE

Divided by three chapters, this thesis, with the thread of associations to the mirror, takes three steps in an attempt to explain some similarities and differences in literature, aesthetic theory, and philosophy between the ancient Chinese and European cultures particularly at the turn of the sixteenth century. Based on agreements and disagreements between *The Journey to the West* and *The Faerie Queene*, especially in the handling of the mirror, the second and the third chapters try to explain these dissimilarities by referring to different standards in aesthetic and philosophical preoccupations in the two cultures. Although this thesis has been mechanically separated into three parts based on their major concerns, it can also be seen as a synthesis of similarities and differences: while the first half of it is roughly about similarities, the second half is, on a large scale, dealing with distinctions. Possibly the largest question behind this thesis is that, with so many similarities between China and the West in terms of conventional practice and the development in philosophy, why would these two cultures take different directions, especially after the seventeenth century?

It is said that the past two hundred years of Chinese history is full of scars and unforgettable nightmares, and that Chinese society has undergone the most drastic changes compared to those in its previous four thousand years. Facing Western science, technology and beliefs fluxing into the old empire at the turn of the twentieth century, Chinese people know that they could no longer dwell on their sedate cultivation of the mind. Instead, different means to save the nation were brought up: revolutions trying to overthrow those old schools of philosophy and institutions, radical reforms in language after the May Fourth

movement in 1919, adoptions of the Western concept of democracy and science, and Marxism eventually... These “awakened” Chinese intellectuals, at that time, generally believed that it was fundamentally the Chinese philosophy, the old corrupt Neo-Confucianism that had ruined China.¹⁷⁴ Possibly, it will just be bad for anything to live for such a long time, as Gulliver had learned in his travels in Luggnagg. However, more than a hundred years have passed, and exactly one hundred years after the Xinhai Revolution (辛亥革命) in 1911, shall we still so fervently rebel against our old heritages by ignoring, shattering and toppling them? If revolutions have overthrown the old rules, conventions and cultures, what are the new ones that we are going to build upon and to build with?

There is no doubt that there are many abhorrent conventions that modern China needs to completely be rid of, for example, foot-binding, inferior social position of the female, Daoist superstition...however, there are certainly good things inherent in this old tradition that need to be preserved and continued. The problem is, how can we differentiate between the bad and the good in those conventions?

In the conclusion for this epilogue, I want to end with a long quote from Lu Xun (1881—1936 鲁迅) in his satire, *The Take-over Policy*, published in 1934:

It is not my intention either to speak of what we have “given away,” for that would be old-fashioned. I am just urging that we should be a little more parsimonious and take things over as well as giving them away. This is the “Take-Over” policy.

¹⁷⁴ However, this progressive response to Neo-Confucianism is countered by the conservative group who still believes that Chinese philosophy is superior. In fact, realizing that China was no longer the only powerful country, Chinese people have always been struggled between the receptions of Western culture and retaining their own civilization. In Lin Yu-tang's(1895-1976) *My Country and My People*, he describes this awkward situation directly faced by the Chinese in the 1930s: “we grope for reasons, and begin to tell one another little anecdotes, trifles of everyday life, escaped or casual words of conversation, things of tremendous importance that make us philosophers and enable us to become, with great equanimity, either her (China's) implacable critics, allowing nothing good for her, or else her ardent, romantic admirers. Of course, these generalizations are rather silly. But that is how human opinions are formed all over the world, and it is unavoidable.”

...

So we should use our brains, take a broader view, and bring things in ourselves.

Suppose one of our poor youths, thanks to the virtue of some ancestor (if I may be permitted to suppose such a thing), comes into possession of a large house -- never mind whether obtained by trickery, force, lawful inheritance or marriage into a wealthy family. What then? That would be no time for nicety, I fancy. "Take it over!" But if he dislikes the previous owner and therefore hovers timidly outside for fear of being contaminated, he is a weakling. If he flies into a rage and sets fire to the place to preserve his integrity, he is a fool. If he admires the old master but accepts the situation and marches cheerfully into the bedroom to smoke all the opium left, he is clearly even more worthless. This is not what I mean by the policy of "Take-Over!"

A man of this sort must exercise discrimination. If he sees shark's fins, he must not throw them down on the road to show his affinity to the man in the street. If they are nourishing, he can share them with his friends like turnips or cabbage, but he need not keep them for banquets. If he sees opium, he must not throw it publicly into a cesspool to show what an out-and-out revolutionary he is. He should send it to a pharmacy for use as medicine, not try to trick people by announcing a bogus clearance sale. If there are opium pipes and opium lamps, though they are different from those in India, Persia and Arabia and so distinctively Chinese that if taken round the world men would stare at them, it seems to me that apart from gifting a few to some museums he might as well destroy the rest. And as for all the concubines, he might as well send them away. Otherwise the "Take-Over" policy might prove dangerous.

In brief, we must take things over. We must use them, put them by, or destroy them. Only so can the master be a new master and the house a new house. But we must first be serious, brave, discriminating and unselfish. Without taking things over, we cannot become new men. Without this, art and literature can have no renaissance.¹⁷⁵

我在这里也并不要对于“送去”再说什么，否则太不“摩登”了。我只想鼓吹我们再吝啬一点，“送去”之外，还得“拿来”，是为“拿来主义”。

...

所以我们要运用脑髓，放出眼光，自己来拿！

譬如罢，我们之中的一个穷青年，因为祖上的阴功（姑且让我这么说说罢），得了一所大宅子，且不问他是骗来的，抢来的，或合法继承的，或是做了女婿换来的。那么，怎么办呢？我想，首先是不管三七二十一，“拿来”！但是，如果反对这宅子的旧主人，怕给他的东西染污了，徘徊不敢走进门，是孱头；勃然大怒，放一把火烧光，算是保存自己的清白，则是昏蛋。不过因为原是羡慕这宅子的旧主人的，而这回接受一切，欣欣然的蹩进卧室，大吸剩下的鸦片，那当然更是废物。“拿来主义”者是全不这样的。

他占有，挑选。看见鱼翅，并不就抛在路上以显其“平民化”，只要有养料，也和朋友们像萝卜白菜一样的吃掉，只不用它来宴大宾；看见鸦片，也不当众摔在茅厕里，以见其彻底革命，只送到药房里去，以供治病之用，却不弄“出售存膏，售完即止”的玄虚。只有烟枪和烟灯，虽然形式和印度，波斯，阿刺伯的烟具都不

¹⁷⁵ See Yang Xian-yi and Gladys Yang., Trans. *Lu Xun: Selected Works*, "The Take-over Policy."

同，确可以算是一种国粹，倘使背着周游世界，一定会有人看，但我想，除了送一点进博物馆之外，其余的是大可以毁掉的了。还有一群姨太太，也大以请她们各自走散为是，要不然，“拿来主义”怕未免有些危机。

总之，我们要拿来。我们要或使用，或存放，或毁灭。那么，主人是新主人，宅子也就会成为新宅子。然而首先要这人沉着，勇猛，有辨别，不自私。没有拿来的，人不能自成为新人，没有拿来的，文艺不能自成为新文艺。¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ See 鲁迅，《且界亭文集》。

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