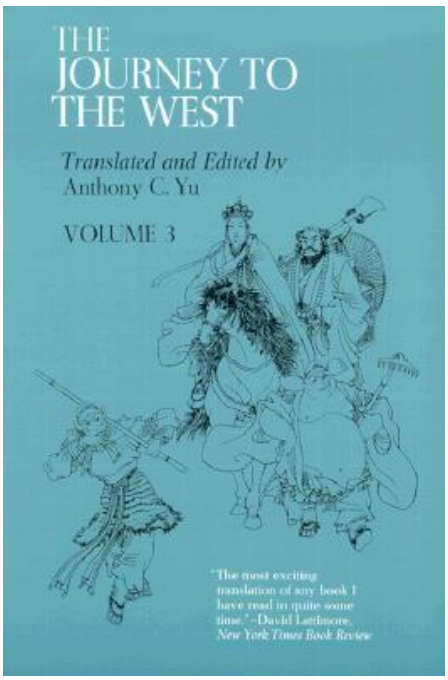

Journey to the West, Volume 3

Wu Cheng'en , Anthony C. Yu (Translator)

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The Journey to the West, volume 3, comprises the third twenty-five chapters of Anthony C. Yu's four-volume translation of Hsi-yu Chi, one of the most beloved classics of Chinese literature. The fantastic tale recounts the sixteen-year pilgrimage of the monk Hsuan-tsang (596-664), one of China's most illustrious religious heroes, who journeyed to India with four animal disciples in quest of Buddhist scriptures. For nearly a thousand years, his exploits were celebrated and embellished in various accounts, culminating in the hundred-chapter Journey to the West, which combines religious allegory with romance, fantasy, humor, and satire.

Journey to the West, Volume 3 Details

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ISBN	:	9780226971537
Author	:	Wu Cheng'en , Anthony C. Yu (Translator)
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From Reader Review Journey to the West, Volume 3 for online ebook

? says

I'm a fan of Monkey!

Britt says

One of the best and most engrossing series I've ever read. Imaginative and fantastic.

Letitia says

Much more varied types of adventures and enemies in this chunk of the story, compared to Chapters 26 - 50.

Chapter 64, where Tripitaka composes poetry with the tree immortals, is translated so exquisitely.

Turnip Cake says

My favourite out of the 4 volume set.

Melanie says

More and more, I ask myself "whatever made people choose this book series as one of the Four Great Classics of the Chinese Literature"? I have yet to find a book as annoying as this one (and the interesting part is that I probably said that to every single Journey to the West book I read until now). No wonder it took me so long to finish reading this one. One would think that, for a book to be this long (it's almost the same as reading War and Peace - TWICE), the story must be intriguing, more or less like the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. Well, it isn't. The third book, like the previous ones, is repetitive, boring and dull. You can't even say that nothing happens, but the thing is that there is little to no variation in each occurrence. Like in the previous books, Monkey, Pig, Friar Sand and Sanzang are in their way to fetch the scriptures, Sanzang gets kidnapped by a demon, Monkey subdues it. Repeat this through over 400 pages and there you have it. The third volume of Journey to the West. No, the characters don't grow mature. If you look very, very, VERY closely you'll notice that there are very, very, VERY subtle changes in Wukong's attitude towards his enemies, but that's about it. Wukong is still to naïve, Pig is too bone-headed, Friar Sand is still a coadjuvant and Sanzang is still a useless monk in the role of the damsel in distress.

One more book to go, then I can get rid of the series...

Leslie Ann says

Now I understand why vol. 1 focused so much on Pilgrim: he is pretty much the star of the series, constantly fighting fiends and saving the monk from his poor decisions. Idiot sometimes accompanies him, leaving the 3rd disciple to babysit the monk.

Aubrey says

Three books down, one to go. This work blurred together even more than the last, and the interesting convolutions of religion and society were largely replaced by unnecessarily nasty and salacious portrayals of women. Past times and all that jazz, but history's only a linearity to the complacent, and I found my patience tested whenever ever male monster was a worthy target even in failure and every female monster was merely doomed to fail. Monkey's character development shifted from open conflict with Sanzang to repeated breakdowns when he couldn't rescue his master after various attempts, but much like the poetic descriptions of Sun Wukong's back story, anything gets tedious after five or ten or twenty iterations. I've come across at least one of the characters that appeared at the beginning of the first volume's introduction of illustrations, so I'm holding out for a winding down that will finally reach the Thunder Monastery after so many fake ones. After getting through practically 1400 pages of this, you can hardly blame me for rejoicing in the finish line.

I'm continually reminded of how much context I'm missing out on whenever the text deigns to grant me a series of footnotes, usually confined to the realm of explaining that a piece of poetry is untranslatable or has puns based off of references to medicines or boxing moves. The ideal is, two or three decades on when I'm far more settled, I'll be more free to shell out for the latest translation with an accompanying 500 pages or so of supplementary material, but it's still frustrating to fell compelled to give the text so much grief while fully aware that I don't have the full picture. Sill, as I mentioned earlier, I doubt any number of footnotes can make up for the cloying amounts of repetition and sexism in one too many sectors. The fact that Guanyin continues to be the second most powerful figure barring the Buddha admittedly somewhat makes up for this, and it's always entertaining to imagine her yelling at the chagrined companions of the holy monk as described in the text. However, now that the third volume is over, I'm looking forward to the character development, which even in the case of Sun Wukong has dreadfully stagnated, that will hopefully pick up the pace with the closing in towards the final goal. It may end up as drearily perfect as Dante's 'Paradisio" was, but it will have the helping hand of the ending being within reach.

One of the more interesting passages, the poetry about the girls who were actually spider demons, was an explicit example of the "Golden Lotus" phenomenon discussed in Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding. Other than that and a quick and interesting look into various beliefs about medicinal herbs, I really don't remember much about this work other than endless fights and mountains and deus ex machinas., Not the best reception for this classic, but my finishing the series in the fall alongside a new career trajectory will at least provide an inspired closing on my undergrad career more official than the onerous payment of the semester's tuition. Reading cred will matter less where I'm headed, but I'll (hopefully) be enabling others to read instead, and that in some ways is more worthwhile in the long run.

Greg Kerestan says

The paradox of the third volume of "Journey to the West" is that as the story gets more involved and action-

packed, it also becomes more formulaic. The journey continues, as demons and monsters perpetually try to kidnap, eat or seduce Sanzang. Monkey and his brothers defeat them, usually with the aid of a new magical weapon from heaven or the aid of an immortal.

However this third volume contained a number of incidents I remembered (in altered form) from "Dragon Ball," so the appearance of the Ox King on Fire Mountain literally made me go "Yes! Finally!" in my head as I reached that point. Will the final installation shake things up? We shall see...

Chris says

The monsters grow gradually more fearsome and more sociable as the journey edges west, and some of them are women soccer players who are also spider spirits. Kyriarchy: At work even in cheerfully goofy Buddhist adventures! What's most interesting is watching Monkey get closer and closer to the end of his rope, as his allies grow less reliable and their interventions less effective. I wonder if he'll have a true low point in v. 4 or if it's already happened without announcing itself.

Jack Ziegler says

Since I decided to be a chaperone for Jenny's trip to China in the spring, I figure I should learn some more about the country. This is a recommendation from http://wikitravel.org/en/China.

Dipa Raditya says

Just like any other classics that I've read, the premise that being brought by this gigantic yet epic novel is how to repent your past sins. By keeping your life in the sequence of locomotion, the world has offered you many things to repent your past mistakes. The one you could choose by doing it hesitantly . The story of this epic journey told you about the essence of repentance. Some of us may tried it differently. Fixing our past mistakes may be burdensome. That's what I like to see from this story and they made it.

Mary Soon Lee says

This is the third volume of Anthony C. Yu's four-volume translation of the Chinese classic, "The Journey to the West." The story continues to be fantastical, violent, and, despite its episodic nature, surprisingly compelling to me. I was reading the previous volume in parallel with Ken Liu's The Wall of Storms. Once I started this third volume, I decided to shelve Ken Liu's book in favor of Tripitaka and Pilgrim's continuing adventures. For a Chinese classic published over four hundred years ago, the content is far less elevated and far more entertaining than I'd expected. Consider, for instance, this edifying quote, "Even a fart is additional air!" I am now impatiently waiting for Amazon to deliver the final volume.

Junius Fulcher says

See review of vol. 1

Pedro Martinez says

A true reading Journey!

Robert Sheppard says

THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST, THE CHINESE WIZARD OF OZ, THREE MUSKETEERS, DON QUIXOTE AND PILGRIM'S PROGRESS----FROM THE WORLD LITERATURE FORUM RECOMMENDED CLASSICS AND MASTERPIECES SERIES VIA GOODREADS—-ROBERT SHEPPARD, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

"The Journey to the West" (???, Xi You Ji) is perhaps the most beloved book in China. It is once a great action, travel and adventure story, a mythic and phantasmagorical Odyssey and Quest, an epic of Buddhist pilgrimage and devotion, a comic classic, a tale of brotherhood and loyalty in the Musketeers tradition and a humanist allegory of the striving of disparate dimenbsions of the human condition, the organic-physical, the imaginative-intellectual, the quotidian-realistic and the aspirational-spiritual, towards human wholeness and unity. It is one of the four great classical novels of Chinese Literature, alongside the Dream of the Red Chamber, The Romance of the Three Kingdoms and the Water Margin, and is beloved in popular culture across East Asia outside of China, being the object of films, television, cartoons, video games and graphic novels from Japan to India.

The Journey to the West, in broad outline, tells the story of the long,arduous and dangerous pilgrimage of the Buddhist monk Xuanzang, or Tripitaka of Tang Dynasty of China across the wastes and mountain barriers of Central Asia to obtain and translate the sacred scriptures of Buddhism (sutras) from India and bring them to enlighten the people of China and East Asia. This High Quest and Pilgrimage is joined by an extraordinary league of heroes, without whose aid the monk's mission would be doomed: The magical-mischievous Monkey-King Sun Wukong, the physically awesome and insatiable "Eight Precepts Pig" Zhu Bajie or Pigsy, the gritty and down-to-earth monk Sandy or Sha Wujing and the monk's faithful White Horse, Yujing, all recruited by Guanyin, the "Buddhist Virgin Mary" helping maternal spirit who overwatches them through their many trials and adventures. Together, this band of diverse heroes must overcome the perils of the arduous journey across the Himalayas, especially the demons, beasts and devils en route that wish to defeat their mission of bringing enlightenment to the peoples of China and the world. The most engaging and dominant of these questing heroes however, is the sly, mischievous and magically super-empowered Monkey-King Sun Wukong, who has become the immortal beloved central figure of the classic, such that many translations, such as Arthur Waley's early edition, was simply entitled: “Monkey."

From our Western experience, then, how can we get an initial handle on and approach The Journey to the West? One of the first notional points of contact is to compare its characters with the group dynamics of the band of journeying fellows of Yellow Brick Road: the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Cowardly Lion alongside Dorothy in Frank Baum's fantasy classic "The Wizard of Oz." Both classics of fantasy are beloved by

children across the world. In the Wizard of Oz the Tin Man lacks a heart, the Scarecrow lacks a brain and the Cowardly Lion lacks courage, while Dorothy, although endowed with each in an immature form must grow and mature in each direction. In the Journey to the West, in contrast, each character is overindowed in one dimension----The Monkey-King has immensely precocious powers of intelligence and cunning, yet lacks the discipline, spiritual wisdom and maturity to make his intelligence and pluck more than a nuisance; Pigsy has immense physical strength accompanied by gargantuan appetites, both culinary and sexual, yet lacks the intelligence, self-control and either human or spiritual inslight to turn his lust for life towards a love and service of life; Sandy is practical, down to earth and even tempered, yet lacks the inspiration of either intelligence and imagination, carnal appetite or spiritual aspiration to make his life meaningful; Xuanzang the Tang Monk, has spirituality and humanity, yet they, like Dorothy are powerless and helpless in their brave new world, unable to cope with challenge unless aided by outside powers.

The key point is that the four together, either as a group or as symbolic representatives of the internal "organs of human potential" of any human personality, may unite to constitute human wholeness and the capacity for transcendent growth and sustainability. We see other echoes of complementarity in other familiar works of our classical heritage: Don Quixote is a paragon of nobility and the spirituality of knightly aspiration, yet lacks any grasp of the real world or the perspective of reason that would make him more than a charicature of his aspirations; Sancho Panza, has the peasant's down-to-earth practicality and resourcefulness, yet lacks the aspirational nobility of soul and spirituality that would make his life meaningful. Together, however, they can aspire to whole human personality and potential.

In the Three Musketeers saga of Dumas, Porthos, like Pigsy and Rabelais' Gargantuan * Pantagruel, is endowed with gigantic physical strength and appetite for life, Athos has a keen sense of honor and glory, Aramis has a religious and spiritual calling and the young D'Artagnan, like Dorothy has innate courage, uprightness, pluck and intelligence, but only in an immature and weak state that must benefit from greater experience, insight and growth to be capable of dealing with the challenges,complexity and evils of the real world. It is again, only working together that they may in full complementarity grow to human wholeness and the human potential for stregnth in life and capacity for positive transcendence. We could even find the same dynamics in the comic trio, the Three Stooges, with the physical excesses of Curly Joe, the practical worldliness of Larry and the overly sadistically over-repressive Moe, who yet still exhibits some fortitude and leadership potential. Though mere buffoons, they show the power to complement each other to grow towards greater wholeness of spirit, a potential fusion of a charicatured outline of Freud's id, ego and superego, that ultimately evokes our deeper affection. Similarly in the Chinese traditional spiritual cosmology, neither the female nor the male principle in isolation, the Yin and the Yang, can attain the wholeness and sustainability in life but by creative and fruitful interfusion with the other.

In Volume I of this edition of the "Journey to the West" our story begins with an account of the origins and precocius life of that miraculous and beloved being, Sun Wukong, the Monkey-King. The Monkey-King is in effect half-human and half-simian, miraculously born from a stone nourished by the Five Elements, and like all homo sapiens chagrinned at the dilemma of his finding himself betwixt and between----too endowed with the intelligence and imaginative energies of the gods to be a mere animal, yet too flawed and immature in their development to take a fruitful place in the divine order of things. Sun Wukong thus quickly rises to become the King of the Monkeys by virtue of his innate abilities, yet leaves his kingdom behind to embark on a quest in search of enhanced powers and immortality. In doing so he studies with a Taoist Grand Master, or Patriarch who gives to him from his esoteric lore immense magical powers and abilities. Under the Taoist (Daoist) Sage he learns the Proteus-like shape-shifting power of "The 72 Transformations," the Secret of Immortality, invincible powers of combat through advanced Taoist Kung Fu and Martial Arts and the abiility of "Cloud-Hopping" which enables him in a single somersault to traverse one-hundred and eight thousand

miles flying through the sky! He acquires a special weapon, an iron rod which is infinitely expandable and contractible, varying at his will from a chopstick carried behind his ear to an immense clubbing staff capable of subdoing giants and demons. He is the Great Sage's most adept student, finally attaining the status of Qitian Dasheng (????)or "Great Sage Equal to Heaven." Yet for all these precocious powers, Sun Wukong remains an immature adolescent given to mischievous monkey-shines and without wisdom or enlightenment. Thus, the Taoist Patriarch, tired of his disorderly shenanigans, in the end banishes Wukong from the monestery telling he must seek his destiny elsewhere.

Sun Wukong then journeys to the Celestial Court of the Emperor of Heaven. But to his immense irritation he is only appointed as a menial in the heirarchy of heaven. Thereupon ensues one of the most famous episodes of the novel "Making Havoc in Heaven" in which Sun Wukong rebels, steals the Divine Nectar and Peaches of Heaven and sets himself at war with all of the divine forces of the Celestial Order who attempt but fail to apprehend and control him. But much to the Emperor of Heaven's chagrin, they are unable to control the Monkey-King's unprecedented magical powers and he remains at mischief. Here the Monkey-King joins in the Archetype of the Rebel Against the Gods, and the Trickster, in common with others of the Western heritage such as Prometheus and Milton's Satan. Like Prometheus he has misappropriated divine powers and prerogatives, such as invincibility and immortality. Prometheus, hero of Aeschulus'and Shelley's dramas "Prometheus Bound" and "Prometheus Unbound" is also a prodigy of intelligence and creative ability, a Titan who had aided Zeus in his own celestial Civil-War against Chronos and the old celestial order to become the King of the Greek gods, then audaciously misappropriated the power of fire and conferred it as a benefactor on man, also having had the hubris, emulating the God of Genesis, to create man from clay and endow life upon him, for which transgresions he was condemned to have his liver torn out daily by an eagle on a rock in Hades. Milton's Satan also rebelled against the divine order, but in his case by refusing to serve man, God's beloved creation, and enviously attempting to supplant Him in heaven. Sun Wukong also demands that he should replace the Emperor of Heaven as ruler of the heavenly order, resolving to war against him until he resigned. Nonetheless, the Monkey-King has none of Satan's propensity for pure Evil, but is rather compelled by his innocent adolescent pride and exuberance, egotism and native mischievousness.

His punishment thus, as a juvenile offender is commensurately less. Order is resatored when the Emperor of Heaven enlists an even higher authority and power in the Chinese pantheon, Buddha. Buddha intercedes in the celestial war by calling a parley with the Monkey-King, seeking to convince him or the error of his ways, proving to him the much higher merits of the Emperor to claim the Throne of Heaven. To resolve the impasse he proposes a wager to test Sun Wukong's powers. He extends his divine hand and bets the Monkey-King that with all his "Cloud-Hopping" magic he cannot even travel far enough to leave the palm of his hand, with the Throne of Heaven as the high stakes. Sun Wukong accepts the wager, confident he can travel to the ends of the Earth in a single somersault. He sets off flying through the sky until he comes to the end of the world where appear five pillars. To preserve the evidence of his feat he has the audacity to piss on the base of the central pillar and inscribe a graffiti: "The Great Sage Sun Wukong, Equal of Heaven, was here." Returning to Buddha he demands the throne. Buddha extends his hand and shows that the Monkey-King had never left its limits,showing how the graffiti was but inscribed on his middle finger and cursing the smell of the monkey-piss he had left between his fingers! Realizing his delusions of grandeur and his own smallness, Sun Wukong accepts defeat and departs. Later he is further punished for additional transgressions by having an iron band placed around his forehead and is sealed by Buddha beneath a great mountain for 500 years to contemplate his wrongdoing. It is at this point that Sun Wukong joins the Tang monk Xuanzang, as Guanyin, the "Buddhist Virgin Mary" in her mercy, arranges his release from confinement on condition that he do penance for his past errors by guiding and protecting Xuanzang on his mission to India to obtain the holy scriptures.

Each of the Pilgrim brothers also is recruited to perform the pilgrimage and quest an Act of Penance through guiding and protecting the Holy Monk Xuanzang on his holy mission to India. Pigsy, or Zhu Bajie, was formally the Commander of the Heavenly Naval Forces, but was banished to mortal life for his transgression in attempting to seduce the Moon Goddess, Chang'e. A reliable fighter, he is characterised by his insatiable appetites for food and sex, and is constantly looking for a way out of his duties, which causes significant conflict with Sun Wukong. Sandy, or Sha Wujing, was formerly a Celestial Court retainer, but was banished to mortal life for breaking a priceless crystal goblet of the Queen Mother of the West. He is a quiet but generally dependable character, who serves as the "straight man" foil to the comic relief of Sun and Zhu. The White Horse was formerly a Prince, who was sentenced to death for setting fire to his father's great pearl, but saved by the mercy of Guanyin.

The bulk of the novel is then the account of innumerable adventures of the pilgrim brothers, the Monkey-King, Pigsy, Sandy, Xuanzang and the White Horse on the high road to India. Each chapter or episode is generally a formulaic set-scene in which some shape-shifting demons, beasts or other opponents of the Pilgrims attempt to capture the Tang Monk. As devouring the Tang Monk can bring the demons immortality, they often seek to capture and eat him. His rescuer is generally the magically gifted Sun Wukong. The encounters are often grusome or action-packed with combat and Kung Fu, and many times humorous, as some demon-monster shape-shifts into the form of a beautiful seductress to entice the Tang Monk or Pigsy as part of their nefarious plot. It is generally the Monkey-King who sees through such disguises and adopts some hilarious counterstrategy. The episodes are always lively and entertaining, but as the novel progresses interest can flag as the formulaic situations repeat themselves. The repetition often comes from the original oral storytelling tradition of the saga, but also because Xuanzang must undergo the "81 Tribulations" which are requisite before one may attain Buddhahood.

At the end of the saga after fourteen years the Pilgrims successfully return to the Tang Court in China and establish a monestery for translating and publishing the holy sutras. Xuanzang and Sun Wukong attain Buddhahood, and Sandy becomes an Arhat, while the White Horse is delivered from his sentence. Pigsy, Zhu Bajie, because even his good deeds have always been tainted by his ulterior motives of greed and sexual desire, fails to attain the high state of his brothers, but is made an altar cleaner, priviliged to eat the leftover offerings at the temple.

The story of the Journey to the West is based on historical fact, albeit with considerable fantastic embellishment. In actual history the monk Xuanzang of the Tang Dynasty (596-664 AD) did in fact journey to India to obtain sutras, the Buddhist holy scripture, to translate them into Chinese, publish and popularize them. The Chinese invention of printing was most probably an evolution from the previous Buddhist woodblock printing of India, associated with the spread of Buddhism in China, and the historical Xuanzang made a considerable contribution to the spread of literacy and printing in Chinese civilization. Like many other works such as the Faust tales and the Iliad and Odyssey, for centuries they were the subject of oral storytelers before being rendered in classical written form. It is thought that Wu Cheng'en the probable author of the classic novel in 1592, thus a contemporary of Shakespeare and Cervantes, adapted these rough oral tales passed on by professional storytellers into a consummately crafted novel. The star character, the Monkey-King, was based on the character Hanuman, the Monkey-King magician of the Indian classic, The Ramayana, of Valmiki, which probably circulated in the oral tales of itinerant storytellers into China, but which Wu Cheng'sn crafted into a magnificantly original creation. Although a Buddhist classic, the Journey to the West is largely free of religious didacticism and presents itself a a vivid and exciting narrative of adventure and fantasy.

The Journey to the West influenced the composition of my own latest work Spiritus Mundi, the contemporary and futurist epic of the modern world in several ways. First, in Book II, Spiritus Mundi, The

Romance which is more mythically oriented, The Monkey-King appears as a character in aid of the Quest of the social activist heroes to save the world from WWIII by acquisition of the Sylmaril Crystal. Sun Wukong thus joins Goethe and the African God-Hero Ogun as counselors and aiders of the Quest on the journey through the Center of The Earth and their visit to the Temple of the Mothers on the Island of Omphalos where they may access the Cosmic Wormhole through Einsteinian Space-Time to visit the Council of the Immortals at the Black Hole at the center of the Milky Way Galaxy.

Spiritus Mundi also shares the universal Archetype of the Quest with the Journey to the West, along with other works such as the Epic of Gilgmesh, The Divine Comedy of Dante, The Ramayana of Valmiki and the Aeneid of Vergil, as well as modern fantasy epics such as the Lord of the Rings by Tolkien. It thus addresses the powerful forces of the universal Collective Unconscious transcending and uniting all human cultures and civilizations as delineated by the famous spiritual psychologist C.G.Jung and other literary and cultural critics such as Joseph Campbell in his work "The Hero With a Thousand Faces."

In conclusion, I would highly recommend that you take a look at The Journey to the West by Wu Chengen, as it is a work absolutely central to Chinese culture and to that of Southeast Asia. No educated person can live in and undersand the modern world, especially with the rise of China and Asia, without having some basic familiarity with this foundational Classic of Chinese and Asian culture. I also invite you to explore its themes and characters shared in the modern contemporary and futurist epic Spiritus Mundi, by Robert Sheppard.

For a fuller discussion of the concept of World Literature you are invited to look into the extended discussion in the new book Spiritus Mundi, by Robert Sheppard, one of the principal themes of which is the emergence and evolution of World Literature:

For Discussions on World Literature and Literary Criticism in Spiritus Mundi:
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