

Dreaming and Awakening in *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors* :
the Interpretation of *Xiyou bu* from the Perspective of Buddhist Philosophy

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Xiyou bu, also known as *A Supplementary of Xiyouji*, was written by Tung Yueh (1620-1686) in 1640.¹ Tung Yueh takes advantage of the episode of the Flaming Mountain (*huoyan shan* 火焰山) in chapters sixty one and sixty two of *Xiyou ji*, by creating a new story through the additional devices of dream, illusion, and desire; the protagonist Sun Wukong, being different from that in *Xiyou ji*, has to experience the desire (*qing*) that engendered from his own mind in order to overcome his inner Demon (*xinmo* 心魔) and achieve enlightenment. The story includes sixteen chapters, focusing mostly on Wukong's inner quest through his dream. Chapters two through chapter fifteen are actually Wukong's own

¹ There are many different opinions about who the author of *Xiyou bu* is. Some scholars say the author is Tung Sizhang (1586-1628), Tung Yue's father, and some others say the real author is Tung Yueh. Regarding this issue, In Zhao Hongjuan's *Mingyimin Dong Yue yanjiu* 《明遺民董說研究》, she has done a lot of research. She indicates in detail that the author of *Xiyou bu* is Tung Yueh. She says that there are some passages in Tung Yueh's work called *Fengcaoan Quanjì* 《丰草庵全集》 and *Fengcaoan wenji* 《丰草庵文集》 similar to some passages in *Xiyou bu*. However, she cannot find any similarity between Tung sizhang's work and *Xiyou bu*. In addition, Tung Yue, a dream penchant who possesses philosophical thoughts and Buddhist thoughts, is coincidentally aligned with the dream story *Xiyou bu*. Therefore, Zhao hongjuan thinks *Xiyou bu* is written by Tung Yueh.

In this paper, I use the edition of *Xiyou bu*, published by Shanghi guji, 1983. The story is translated into English *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: a supplement to Journey to the West* by Shuen-fu Lin and Larry J. Schulz, 2nd edition, 2000. All the notes refer to the content of *Xiyou bu* and its English translation *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors* will be given abbreviations *XYB* and *TMM*. The former will be given also chapter and page, and the later only page.

dream of desire, which appears as a demon called Qing Fish, literally a mackerel (pronounced “*qingyu*” in Chinese), chosen by the author for the meaning of the pun in Chinese --desire. In addition, the Worlds Wukong encounters in the dream, including the World of Ancient, the World of Future, and Emerald Green World through the mirrors in the Myriad Tower of Mirrors (*wanjing lou* 萬鏡樓) are also illusions conjured up from his mind. The author creates a parallel world of the real and the unreal, the true and the untrue to show his philosophical ideas. Moreover, he emphasizes that only through experiencing desire can his protagonist Wukong destroy it and attain Buddhist enlightenment. Desire, or emotional attachment, between male and female is probably the most difficult obstacle to transcend among all desires. By interweaving the dream worlds of desire and Wukong’s psychological activities, of which the Monkey is ironically unaware until he is awakened by his true spirit at the end of the story. For the Monkey, the illusory dream of his desire becomes a driving agent toward “the Great Way.” Creating the fantastic structure and the philosophical issues of dream, illusion, and enlightenment in his novel, Tung Yueh connects his story to many Buddhist concepts and philosophy. Therefore, my main focus in the paper is to explore how the author uses the

dreams of desire and illusory devices artistically to demonstrate his concepts of Buddhist philosophy.

In Wu Cheng-en's *XiYou ji* (or *Journey to the West*), the Monkey King Sun Wukong possesses superior power that protects his Buddhist master, Xuanzang, from being devoured by monsters and helps overcome the obstacles they encounter during their journey to the West. When any crisis occurs, and when Xuanzang feels helpless, Wukong, as his most senior disciple, always jumps out gallantly to demonstrate his superior physical powers and fights against any demons and monsters. He often proudly replies to his Master Xunzang, "Don't worry, Master. If we disciples pool our strength, we needn't fear even a monster as big as heaven (*XYB* 1-2; *TMM* 15)." It seems that Wukong never experiences the challenge of desire or emotional attachment during the journey to the West. Larry J. Schulz comments, "he (the Monkey) deals only with the external surface of each situation, and in an almost mechanical intention."² His analysis is aligned with the ideas of Tung Yueh. As Tung Yueh states in his "Answers to Questions" (*Xiyou bu dawen*), "The Great Sage devised a scheme to obtain the Banana-leaf fan and cool the flames. In this he merely

². Larry J. Schulz comments on the Interpretation of *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors*, p.8.

uses his physical strength.”³ At the end of *Xiyou ji*, Wukong’s super power helps him overcome the ordeals and his submission leads him to salvation, and eventually he achieves enlightenment. Tung Yueh feels that the Monkey in *Xiyou ji* still lacks a stern challenge--the desire (*qing*) from his own mind that he never meets before. Therefore, he thought to devise the most difficult obstacle for the Monkey in *Xiyou bu* so as to make it an extra episode to the parent novel *Xiyou ji*. When Tung Yueh was asked why he merely has the Qing Fish enchant the Great Sage instead of forcing the sage to fight a million monsters like those in *Xiyou ji*, he replied simply that “there is no better way of learning than to seek [his] own strayed heart (XYB dawen; TMM 133.” Being aware of the function of mind, Tung Yueh decides to have the Mind-Monkey (*xinyuan* 心猿)⁴ experience the challenge from his mind. He thinks that “there is no place the heart cannot reach. And since there is no place the heart cannot reach it cannot really be left to stray.” (XYB Appendix; TMM 134) In Buddhist concepts, mind is the center of all; even ten spheres can be reached by the mind in a second.⁵

³ Tung Yueh, *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors & Appendix*, Trans. by Shuen-fu Lin and Larry J. Schulz, p. 133.

⁴ Larry J. Schultz indicates that Mind-Monkey is a metaphor for the incessant of *Hsin*—the heart and its tendency to turn its attention from one thought to another like a monkey leaping from branch to branch in a tree. *TMM* footnote in Ch. 1, p.1.

⁵ Ten spheres includes the spheres of Buddhas, Bodhisattva, Pratyeka Buddhas, Heavenly beings, Arahams, human beings, beasts, hell, and hungry ghosts 十法界在一念心。十法界包括：佛，菩薩，聲聞，緣覺，天人，修羅，人道，畜生，餓鬼，地獄。

The mind owns the power to create heaven and hell. Dreaming or awakening depends on the mind. However, because of egoistic attachment, living beings have the three poisons—craving, hatred, and ignorance--produced from their minds, so they cannot see the real. Just like a person wearing dark sunglasses, everything he sees will not be of authentic color. If one can overcome the three poisons in his mind, he is able to attain the Great Way. Therefore, in Buddhism, a person diminishing the three poisons is called the awakened (*Jue zhe* 觉者, or “*Daxiong* 大雄).” In the *gatha* of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, or the *Flower Garland Sutra* (*Huayan jing* 華嚴經) Buddha said, “If one wishes to understand the Buddhas in the three lives, one has to contemplate the nature of the universe that all spheres engendered from the mind.”⁶ Tung Yueh, to support his Buddhist philosophy, focuses only on Wukong’s mind in his novel, producing his fantastic dream and adventures to reflect the idea that there is “no place that heart cannot reach (*XYB* dawen; *TMM* 134).” To sum up, from the perspective of Buddhist philosophy, a living being, being reincarnated or attaining enlightenment, depends on the same mind.

Actually, Tung Yueh creates an independent story which is very

⁶ The *Avatamsaka Sutra*, or the *Flower Garland Sutra* (*huayan jing* 華嚴經), “若人欲了知，三世一切佛，應觀法界性，一切惟心造”

different from *Xiyou ji*, though he takes advantage of the episode of the Flaming Mountain to insert his supplement. In *Xiyou bu*, the author has Sun Wukong become his central character instead of Xuanzang, the monk. In addition, he gives the Monkey more human attributes so as to make him walk into his dream of desire and experience the nature of its illusion, and then awakened from his illusion. Compared with the role of the Monkey in *Xiyou ji*, Wukong possesses more human characteristics here and is involved in his own emotional entanglements. And the Demon, Qing Fish or Little Moon King, doesn't look like the monstrous demons in *Xiyou ji*, either with the heads of cows or tigers or with the noises of a jackal or the glare of a wolf, but more like a human with young and delicate attributes (XYB dawen; TMM 135). Tung Yueh's reply to the question of why the Qing Fish appears as "young and delicate, almost human, how is this?" is "... young, delicate, almost human—precisely describe the appearance of the foremost demon since the beginning of time (XYB dawen; TMM 135)." In fact, the demon Qing Fish, though more powerful than the Monkey, is also projected from the Monkey's mind, his desire. Moreover, it is the first time that the Monkey has to cope with his own physical desires, and his magical power seems insufficient enough for him to deal with the

situations he encounters.⁷ For example, he cannot positively identify the Little Moon a monster, although he believes he must be one (*XYB* 12; *TMM* 105). Seeing a beautiful enchantress, Wukong is surprised by her beauty and says “When people on earth speak of beauty, they speak in comparison to the Bodhisattva Guanyin. Now, I haven’t seen the Bodhisattva often—maybe ten or twenty times—but seeing this lady, it almost seems the Bodhisattva could be her disciple (*XYB* 14; *TMM* 115).” He seems to indulge himself deeply in the sensory world like common people when he sees the beauties. When he uses his senses to experience the world, his super powers become weak at the same time. In chapter one, when the Master and his disciples take a break on the roadside where stands a peony tree, the Money points out surprisingly that the peonies are so red. His Master implies to him that “the peonies aren’t red; it’s the disciple’s heart that’s red (*XYB* 1-5; *TMM* 16-17).” His Master actually gives him an advice to imply his following dream journey. He says, “Don’t force yourself to go on while your vision is blurred. If you take the wrong road, it will be no one else’s fault (*XYB* 1-3; *TMM* 16).” In the encounter with the well-known beautiful women in Chinese history, he disguised himself as Yu

⁷ Hegel, *The Novel in the Seventeenth-Century China*, p. 160.

Meiren, or Lady Yu, the concubine of Xiang Yu (232-202 B.C.), but ironically the Monkey does not recognize his form as Lady Yu. At the drinking party with the ladies, the Monkey even speaks the poetic line with sexual desire, “I regret that my heart follows clouds and rain in flight (*XYB* 5-70; *TMM* 47).” Here “clouds and rain” is a metaphor that means “sex.”⁸

When facing the demon from his mind, Wukong is totally not aware that he has gone astray into his dream of desire, but ironically he thinks he is in the real world. In addition, Tung Yueh makes his protagonist more human but with less magical power, which actually resulted from his delusion. At the beginning of *Xiyou bu*, Wukong compulsively kills the girls and boys who tease the monk, indicating his attempt to use physical power to deal with desire, but later he himself finds his power inefficient, regrets his deeds, and pays sympathy to them (*XYB* 1-9; *TMM* 19-20). In his dream adventure, he is eager to borrow the Bell of Removing Mountain from Qin Emperor to remove the mountains on the way of the journey, implying that his habit is to solve obstacles with physical power. However, when he meets the challenge of desire, his physical powers cannot help him anymore like before. Thus, he becomes more like human, and more easily

⁸ Larry J. Schulz also comments on the Interpretation of *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors*, p10.

bewildered and confused during the adventure.

Unlike the Monkey in *Xiyouji*, Wukong's magical power turns into vulnerability during his absurd adventures in the Tower of Myriad Mirrors; he is bewildered and does not know where to come into (*XYB* 5-15; *TMM* 43). The mirrors, pronounced *jing*, meaning worlds or spheres in Chinese, symbolizes the conditions that Wukong encounters that are actually illusions and not real. When he accidentally steps into the Tower of the Myriad Mirrors, he experiences the illusory worlds with absurd mixing time that also resulted from his dream of desire.⁹ Therefore, the way to wake up from the dream is to see through the illusory nature of it and destroy it. However, his magical powers cannot help him escape from the illusion of desire and he is trapped by red threads which symbolize a net of desire (*qingwan* 情網), until the Elder of Void comes to rescue him. The red threads, like the red peonies Wukong saw at the beginning, both symbolize his desire. Later, in chapter 15 the climax of his illusion, he encounters his son, King Paramita, and eventually realizes that he has a family--a wife, Lady Rakshas and five sons. It has never occurred to him that he has a wife and children since he was born from a stone and never

⁹ "Dream thoughts are upside down." The author replies in *XYB* dawen, p 135.

experiences reincarnation (*XYB* 15-247; *TMM* 124). In short, in *Xiyou bu*, Sun Wukong, with insufficient power, is endowed with human characteristics whereas the demon Qing Fish possesses not only human characteristics, but the supernatural power than that of Sun Wukong, which implies that the Demon is not easy to destroy by physical power.

By creating Wukong's inner quest, Tung Yueh evokes not only the Buddhist philosophy of dreaming vs. awakening (*mi yu wu* 迷與悟), but shows how to see through the illusory nature of one's desire. Monkey's dream of desire is an illusion, yet it can also be a vehicle toward enlightenment. In *Answers to questions on The Tower of Myriad Mirrors* (*Xiyou bu* dawen), Tung Yueh states,

The forty-eight-thousand years are the amassed roots of desire. To become enlightened and opened to the Great Way, one must first empty and destroy the roots of desire. To empty and destroy the roots of desire one must first go inside desire. After going inside desire and seeing its emptiness, one can then go outside it and realize the reality of the root of the Way. (*XYB* dawen; *TMM* 133)

Obviously, Tung Yueh thinks that "desire" is the attachment that is hard to

recognize and crush, but he emphasizes the fact that one must face one's desire, experience it, and be aware of its illusory nature in order to destroy it and liberate oneself from the cycle of life and death. At the beginning of the story, the "Mind-Monkey (*xinyuan* 心猿)" was confused and bewildered by the Qing Fish. When he remarks upon the redness of the peonies, his master scolds him and gives him a *gatha*:

The peonies aren't red

It's the disciple's heart that's red

When all the blossoms have fallen,

It's as if they hadn't yet bloomed (*XYB* 1-5; *TMM* 16-17)

This echoes a famous Zen story "Not the Wind, Not the Flag." There are two monks arguing about a flag. One says: "The flag is fluttering." The other says, "The wind is blowing." The Sixth Patriarch of Chan happens to pass by, and sharply utters the wise remarks: "Not the wind, not the flag; the mind is moving."¹⁰ Actually, Tung Yueh gives his thematic scheme at the beginning, "One sees throughout that the causes of all emotions are floating clouds and phantasms (*XYB* 1-2; *TMM* 15)." "Floating clouds" and "phantasms" refer to the fact that our emotions are unreal and illusory.

¹⁰ *Zen Flesh Zen Bones*, compiled by Paul Reps & Nyogen Senzaki, p.143-144. Chinese Translation: "風動? 幡動? 仁者心動!"

Tung Yueh's scheme of creating dream of desire, illusion, and enlightenment reflects his familiarity with Buddhist philosophy. In the *Sutra of perfect Enlightenment (YuanjueJing 《圆覺經》)*, Buddha answered Maitrey's (彌勒菩薩) question about the root of cyclic existence (*samsara*):

Good sons, sentient beings are in cyclical existence because of their possession, from beginningless time, of affection, attached love, craving, and desire. Since all the different types of beings—those born from eggs, those born from wombs, those born from moisture and those born by transformation—all receive their birth and life from sexual desire, you should realize that cyclic existence has attached love as its basis. The tendency to be gripped by attached love is abetted by the existence of all desires, and therefore it is able to empower the continuity of *samsara*. Desire arises depending upon attached love; life power exists depending upon desire. Furthermore, the attached love and life of sentient beings have desire as their root. Attached love and desire are causes; attached love and life are results.¹¹

¹¹ Skyamoni Buddha, *The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment 《華嚴經》*, trans. A Charles Mullers, p. 141. Chinese translation: “善男子。一切眾生從無始際由有種種恩愛貪欲故有輪迴。若諸世界一切種性。

Attached love, the basis of *samsara*, or the root of transmigration, produces craving and desire. And desire enhances the attached love, so with the two working together, one is naturally in the cycle of life and death, and rebirth. Tung Yueh himself indicates that “the root of desire in this world can be summed in one word: “sorrow” (*XYB* dawen, *TMM* 135). “Sorrow” is equivalent to “suffering” (*dukkha* 苦), which is one of three characteristics of Buddhism-- “Three Dharma Signs (*sanfayin* 三法印) --impermanence, suffering , and no self.¹² Gautama Buddha gives us an important teaching that the so-called three poisons: desire, hatred, and ignorance could be agents toward enlightenment. He states:

Good sons, all the hindrances are none other than ultimate enlightenment. Whether you attain mindfulness or lose mindfulness, there is no nonliberation. Establishing the dharma and refuting the dharma are both called nirvana, wisdom and folly are equally *prajna*[wisdom]; the method that is perfected by bodhisattvas and false teachers is the same bodhi; ignorance and suchness are not different realms; morality, concentration, and wisdom, as well as desire, hatred, and ignorance are all

卵生胎生濕生化生。皆因姪欲而正性命。當知輪迴愛為根本。由有諸欲。助發愛性。是故。能令生死相續。欲因愛生。命因欲有。眾生愛命還依欲本。愛欲為因愛命為果。”

¹² Lin zhongyi 林忠億, *Foxuemingchi-zhongyingbafan huiji* 佛学名词中英巴梵彙集, p.122.

divine practices;

All defilements are ultimately liberation.¹³

This passage indicates the insight of the Buddha. Actually, there are hundreds of thousands of methods toward enlightenment. Before one is liberated from the duality, one is living in the realm of duality and cannot see the reality. Thus, morality, concentration, wisdom, as well as desire, hatred, and ignorance, are all practices of Dharmas. Obviously, Tung Yueh's intentions in his novel are aligned with the Buddhist concept that the dream of desire is a vehicle toward Enlightenment. He points out that "the deluded man and the enlightened one were not two different people" (*XYB* dawen; *TMM* 134). The distinction between the two is that one has awakened from desire, and the other is still indulged himself in it. In *Xiyoubu*, Tung Yueh's focus is mainly on the human mind. The mind is able to engender thousands of different worlds; most importantly, they are not real, but illusions. This concept comes from Buddhist philosophy. From Buddhist viewpoint, dream and illusion are similar in meaning. Everything in the world comes within the realm of the causal law.

¹³ *The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*, trans. by A Charles Mullers, p162. Chinese translation: "一切障礙即究竟覺。得念失念無非解脫。成法破法皆名涅槃。智慧愚癡通為般若。菩薩外道所成就法同是菩提。無明真如無異境界。諸戒定慧及婬怒癡俱是梵行。眾生國土同一法性。地獄天宮皆為淨土。有性無性齊成佛道。一切煩惱畢竟解脫。"

“Causality explains the rising and passing of things.”¹⁴ Hence, all things in the world are of impermanence (*wuchang* 無常), suffering (*ku* 苦), and no self (*wuwo* 無我).¹⁵ Due to the impermanence of the world, sufferings follows, rendered as birth, aging, illness, death, and various distresses since we use five senses to feel the world and then manifest the five aggregates of grasping (*wuyun* 五蘊). The sensuous world you feel is impermanent and of no self, which does not come from your true nature (*zhenrubenxing* 真如本性).¹⁶ All these factors make the life of the world a dream and an illusion without permanent happiness. The famous *gatha* in the *Diamond Sutra* said by Buddha,

All the Dharmas of Implementations

Are just like a Dream, a Phantasm, a Bubble, or a Shadow,

They also bear likeness to Dew-Drops or Electricity;

One should contemplate on all things in this wise.¹⁷

¹⁴ David j Klupahana, *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 36.

¹⁵ They are so called “The Three Characteristics of Existence.” (*sanfayin* 三法印). It is the first teaching Buddha gives his disciples after achieving enlightenment.

¹⁶ There is a clear and precious description of true emptiness (*zhenkong* 真空) and true nature (*zhenrubenxing* 真如本性) in *The Heart Sutra*. “Likewise, Shariputra, all phenomena are empty. They have no defining characteristics they are unproduced; they do not cease; they are unstained; they are not separate from stains. They do not increase nor do they decrease. This being so, Shariputra, in emptiness there are no forms, no feelings, no discriminations, no compositional factors, no consciousness; no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no visual forms, no sounds, no smells, no tastes, no tactile sensations, no metal objects. From the eye element to mental element, right through to the element of mental consciousness—all do not exist. There is no ignorance and no ending of ignorance right through to no aging and death and also no ending of aging and death. In the same way there is no suffering, no source of suffering, no cessation, no path, no wisdom, no attainment, and no lack of attainment.” The quote of the English translation of *The Heart Sutra* is from Ruth Sonam.

¹⁷ Gautama Buddha, *The Diamond Sutra (The Diamond Prajna-Paramita Sutra)*, trans. By Master Cheng

The statement means even Dharmas are like dream or a shadow, they can not be depended on, but as a vehicle toward enlightenment. The mind, like the myriad mirrors, can create various worlds like the worlds in the Tower of Myriad Mirrors, but they are not real. Through the Monkey's dream quest, Tung Yueh lets us see not only the Monkey's psychological activities and the process of his enlightenment, but also the author's innovative capability to create fantastic illusory worlds. Concerning this issue, Qiancheng Li indicates that Tung Yueh uses the device of the doubles in *Xiyou bu*, which an innovation is ever being used among in Chinese novels.¹⁸ Interestingly, we are not aware that the story is actually the Monkey's dream adventure in the fantastic worlds until the last chapter of the story. During his dream journey, we see his adventures in the three different Worlds through the Tower of Myriad Mirrors designed by Little Moon King, or Qing Fish Demon, and his rescue by the Elder of the Void when trapped in the red threads. At the end of the story, we realize that during Wukong's fantastic adventures, the Demon Qing Fish, the Elder of the Void, and the transformation of the Spirit of Qing Fish are actually all Wukong's doubles, and they all come from his mind.¹⁹ The Demon Qing

Kuan, p. 62. Chinese translation: “一切有爲法，如夢幻泡影，如露亦如電，應作如是觀。”

¹⁸ Li Qiancheng, *Fictions of Enlightenment*, p. 103.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Fish is the Monkey's ego, the Elder of the Void is the true spirit of the Monkey himself, and the Spirit of the Qing Fish is none other than the Monkey himself. In addition, not only are these figures projected from his mind, but each World conjured up from each mirror in the Tower of Myriad Mirrors is also from the Monkey's mind. In the last chapter, the elder of the Void explains the situation to Wukong:

There were no springtime lads and lasses;

They were the root of the Qing Fish.

There was no New Emperor;

.....

No Little Moon King ever lived;

He was the Spirit of Qing Fish

He was the energy of the Qing Fish.

.....

The old man relates more truth for him:

There is no Qing Fish;

It is simply Monkey's desire.

(*XYB*16-255~261; *TMM* 128-129)

From the analysis of the Elder of the Void, we know the Demon, the

demonic worlds, and the adventures that Wukong encountered are all manifested from his own illusory dream and his mind. When he awakens from his dream, he eventually finds that he experienced and faced his dream alone; no other characters appeared to share his adventure. There are no Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, the Demon Qing Fish, or any monsters, but only Wukong himself. The plot of the Monkey's awakening resembles the *gatha* stated by Sixth Patriarch of Chan School when he attains enlightenment:

Bodhi doesn't have any trees

This mirror doesn't have a stand

Our Buddha nature is forever pure

Where do you get this dust?²⁰

The true nature, or Buddha nature, comes only from our own mind. If one achieves enlightenment, one is awakened with the wisdom of emptiness, free from life and death--*samsara*; if one is deluded, one is bewildered by the illusory phenomenal world and suffering, living in the cyclical existence of life and death. In *Xiyoubu*, deluded by his dream of desire, Wukong does not know that the old man who comes to his rescue is

²⁰ Master Hui-neng, *The Platform Sutra*, trans. by Red Pine, p. 106. Chinese Translation: “菩提本無樹，明鏡亦非台，本來無一物，何處惹塵埃。”

actually his true spirit (*fasheng* 法身)²¹ until the old man shouts, “This is what’s called saving one’s self! Too bad you regard the unreal as real, real as unreal (*XYB* 10-168; *TMM* 87)!” The author knows well that enlightenment can only be achieved when one experiences desire. In the *Mahaparinibbana Sutra* (*daboniepang jing* 《大般涅槃經》), the Buddha, before being nirvana, tells his disciples to depend on two things to attain enlightenment hereafter: One is the Dharma (Buddha’s teachings) and the other is their own experience.²² It is a critical concept that enlightenment can be attained only by individual experience; no one can do it for you.

Throughout his life, Tung Yueh was fond of making dreams and collecting dreaming stories. He not only a penchant for dreams, but realizes the philosophical meaning of dreams, and later he even took Buddhist tonsure and became a monk.²³ When creating the fictional piece *Xiyou bu*, his attempt to implement Buddhist philosophy is obvious. He makes the Monkey Wukong more human and has him meander in his inner journey. To emphasize the illusion of desire, the author deliberately makes his protagonist explore the worlds between illusion and reality. He shows us

²¹ A Buddha has the threefold body or nature of a Buddha called “*Trikaya*”, including *Dharmakaya*, the absolute or spiritual body (*fashen* 法身), *Sambhogakaya*, the body of Bliss (*baoshen* 報身), and *Nirmankaya*, the body of Incarnation (*huasheng* 化身).

²² *Maha Parinibbana Sutra*, 6.1. The passage is translated by David Snellgrove. See his “Sakymuni’s Final Nivana,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental And African Studies* 36 (1973): 401-2.

²³ Liu Fu 劉復. “*Xiyou bu zuozhe Dong Ruoyu Zhuan* 西游補作者董若雨傳.”

the incredible power of mind, which can keep dreaming or be awakened, depending on your decision. Tung Yeuh used the cases to show Wukong's decision to kill "desire" with a single stroke, and plotted him to punish Qin Kuai and pay respects to Yue Fei. All these symbolize his mind to return to the right track (*XYB* dawen; *TMM* 134). Moreover, by devising the double and mirrors, Tung Yueh provides his Buddhist insight in his story that the nature of desire is an illusion; being in the illusion is a suffering. Yet, only by experiencing the desire and destroying it can one be awakened from the illusory dream. Thus, according to Buddhist philosophy, desire can serve as a vehicle toward Enlightenment.

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