

## 4 Religious Aspects, Deities and Monsters

Many of these articles include a discussion on the *sanjiao guiyi* 三教歸一 / *sanjiao heyi* 三教合一 principle that dominated Late Ming thought and popular literature. This sentiment is even verbalized within *Xiyang ji*: in chapter 28 Jin Bifeng 金碧峰, the protagonist of the novel and spiritual leader of the treasure fleet, states that “the Three Teachings were originally one” (*sanjiao yuanlai shi yi jia* 三教元來是一家). Islam also plays a role in *Xiyang ji*, but mostly in relation to foreign countries, a circumstance that is reflected in the studies on Islam/Muslims in the novel. These articles can therefore be found in Chapter 5.3.

### 4.1 General Religious Aspects

4.1.1 Huang Huizhen 黃慧珍. “Mingdai zongjiao wenhua yu *Xiyang ji* shenmo hua guanxi zaikui: jianlun *Xiyang ji* fulu zongjiao beiwen de jiazhi” 明代宗教文化與《西洋記》神魔化關係再探—兼論《西洋記》附錄宗教碑文的價值. (1) In: *Studien zum Roman “Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi”* 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》之研究, vol. 2, ed. by Shi Ping and Roderich Ptak [Maritime Asia, 24. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013], 91-105. (2) *Zheng He yanjiu dongtai* 鄭和研究動態 29 (2014), 35-41.

Huang Huizhen explores the religious background of the *Xiyang ji* in a time where efforts were made to combine different religions and cults under one ideological roof and to “spiritualize” Confucian thought. Huang shows how *Xiyang ji* mirrors various forms of popular belief, the *sanjiao heyi* idea, as well as the wish to assign a leading role to the power of Buddhism. The article also discusses four different inscriptions appended to the novel, suggesting that these documents may bridge the gap between fiction and the reality of the voyages. Reprints of this material are included in the book but were unfortunately omitted from the second publication.

4.1.2 Liu Honglin 劉紅林. “*Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi* shenmohua qiantan” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》神魔化淺談. *Ming Qing xiaoshuo yanjiu* 明清小說研究 77 (2005), 209-213.

Liu Honglin explores the reasons why the story of Zheng He's voyages was turned into a fantastic tale in *Xiyang ji*, which includes the decline of historiographical material in the Late Ming. Attention is given to the introduction of the "heavenly dimension" through the protagonist Jin Bifeng.

- 4.1.3 Liu Yuqing 劉毓慶. "Zhongguo shenhua de san ci da bianqian" 中國神話的三次大變遷. *Wenyi yanjiu* 文藝研究 10 (2014), 43-53.

This article introduces *Xiyang ji* as part of the "third wave" in the development of "mythological works" (*shenhua chuangzuo* 神話創作). It is also mentioned in the *sanjiao heyi* 三教合一 discussion.

- 4.1.4 Pan Xianqiang 潘賢強. "Ming Qing zongjiao wenhua yu shenmo xiaoshuo de sixiang neirong" 明清宗教文化與神魔小說的思想內容. *Fujian xuekan* 福建學刊 1992.4, 50-55.

This article looks at how the Late Ming religious theory of *sanjiao heyi* influenced "fantasy novels" such as *Xiyou ji*, *Fengshen yanyi* and *Xiyang ji*.

- 4.1.5 Wang Feng 王峰. "Lun guangming chongbai dui gudai xiaoshuo shenguai xingxiang suzao de yingxiang" 論光明崇拜對古代小說神怪形象塑造的影響. *Shanxi shida xuebao (Shehui kexue ban)* 山西師大學報(社會科學版) 41 (2014), 96-98.

Wang Feng looks into worship centered on light (*guangming* 光明) in China since antiquity and its influence on the characterization of figures in Chinese fiction. He mentions several examples (including *Xiyang ji*) from the genres of "fantasy novels" and *zhiguai* 志怪 collections.

- 4.1.6 Zhu Qian 朱乾. "Shilun Fo jing dui Ming Qing xiaoshuo de yingxiang" 試論佛經對明清小說的影響. *Xiandai qiye jiaoyu* 現代企業教育 2006.12, 201-202.

This article looks at the ways in which Buddhism influenced Chinese novels from the Ming and Qing dynasties, as did *Xiyang ji* in the appearance of superhuman helpers in a *deus-ex-machina* fashion.

## 4.2 Studies on Jin Bifeng

Despite being inspired by Zheng He's voyages to the Western Ocean, the main protagonist of *Xiyang ji* is not Zheng He himself, but the Buddhist monk Jin Bifeng 金碧峰, a reincarnation of the Buddha Dipamkara (Randeng fo 燃燈佛 or Randeng gufo 然燈古佛).

### 4.2.1 Feng Hanyong. "Xiyang ji fawei". See 3.2.1.

This article includes a study of Jin Bifeng's origins.

### 4.2.2 Feng Hanyong 馮漢鏞. "Halima lai jing de yingxiang" 哈立麻來京的影響. *Zhongguo zangxue* 中國藏學 1991.1, 128-131.

Feng Hanyong explores the influence of [the 5th Karmapa Lama] Halima's visit to Nanjing in folk stories. He argues that the characterization of *Xiyang ji*'s protagonist Jin Bifeng was directly influenced by Halima.

### 4.2.3 Huang Huizhen 黃慧珍. "Mingdai zongjiao wenhua yu *Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi* shenmo hua guanxi chutan" 明代宗教文化與《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》神魔化關係出探. (1) In: *Studien zum Roman "Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi"* 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》之研究, vol. 1, ed. by Shi Ping and Roderich Ptak [Maritime Asia, 23. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011], 105-117. (2) *Zheng He yanjiu dongtai* 鄭和研究動態 22 (2011), 15-22.

This article looks at the monk by the name of Jin Bifeng in historical records and shows how the author of *Xiyang ji* molded him into Zheng He's most powerful assistant. She inserts the historical dimension of the entire book into a large spiritual framework and links this macro-arrangement to the nature of the sources, contemporary events along China's coast and to religious trends prevailing at the time.

For an extended abstract, see: *Zheng He yanjiu dongtai* 鄭和研究動態 26 (2012), 22-23.

- 4.2.4 Liao Kebin 廖可斌. “*Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi zhuren-gong Jin Bifeng benshikao*” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》主人公金碧峰本事考. *Wenxian* 文獻 1996.1, 24-46.

Liao Kebin looks into the origin of the “historic” Jin Bifeng, a 14th cent. man named Shi Baojin 石寶金, as he is described in Song Lian’s 宋濂 *Taming* 塔銘, *Jinling fansha zhi* 金陵梵剎志 and a variety of other sources, pointing out similarities between those texts and *Xiyang ji*. Lastly, Liao tries to place *Xiyang ji* within the context of Ming dynasty novels.

- 4.2.5 Liu Honglin 劉紅林. “*Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi zhujiao tan*” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》主角談. *Ming Qing xiaoshuo yanjiu* 明清小說研究 81 (2006), 163-168.

This article looks into the origins of Jin Bifeng and his role in *Xiyang ji*. Frequent comparisons to similar features in *Xiyou ji* characters (Sanzang 三藏, Zhu Bajie 豬八戒, Sun Wukong 孫悟空) are made. Some considerations are given to why Jin Bifeng rather than Zheng He is the all-powerful protagonist of the novel.

- 4.2.6 Shi Juefei 時覺非. “*Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi renwu bianxi*” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》人物辨析. (1) *Zheng He yanjiu* 鄭和研究 1993.4, 19-20. (2) *Zheng He yanjiu dongtai* 鄭和研究動態 17 (2010), 32-34.

This article takes a closer look at the “historical” Jin Bifeng, a Buddhist monk called Shi Baojin 石寶金, and compares this man to the protagonist of *Xiyang ji*.

- 4.2.7 Wang Yucheng 王聿成. “*Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi yu Nanjing Bifeng si*” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》與南京碧峰寺. *Zheng He yanjiu* 4 (2010), 35-37, 43.

This article discusses the portrayal of Jin Bifeng in *Xiyang ji*, which was influenced by a hagiography associated with Nanjing’s Bifeng Temple: *Bifeng si qizhi jilue* 碧峰寺起止記略 (1521). Finally, the author explores the connection of the Bifeng Temple to the *Feihuan’an xianghuo shengxiang ji* 非幻庵香火聖像記, Feihuan’an being part of the temple.

4.2.8 Zhang Huoqing. “*Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji de renwu jiaose yu litu fanying*”. See 1.3.8.

This is a study of various protagonists of *Xiyang ji*, including Jin Bifeng.

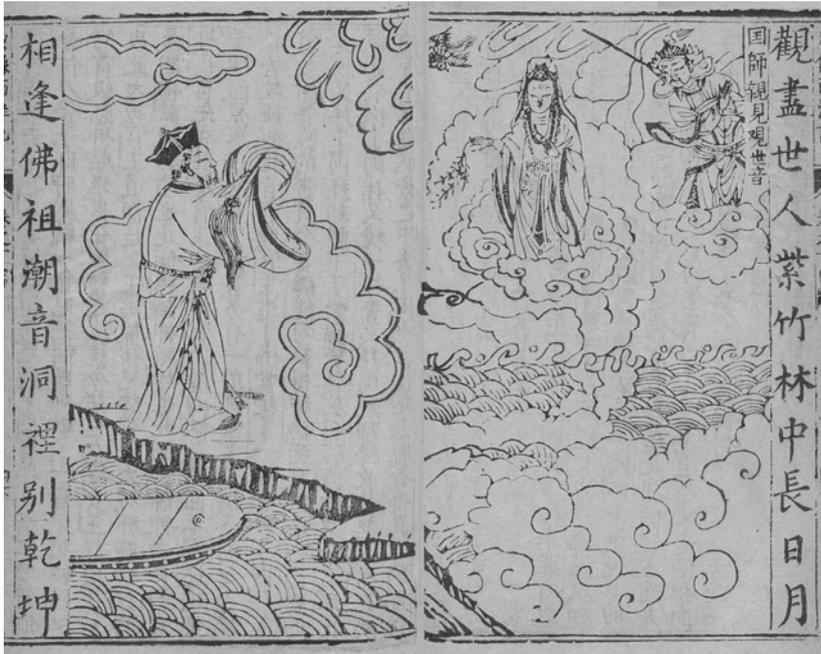


Fig. 7 *Xiyang ji*, Chapter 49 (10.45b-46a, 1307f):  
“The State Teacher [Jin Bifeng] Personally Meets Guanyin.”

### 4.3 Deities, Immortals, Spirits and others

- 4.3.1 Bao Zunpeng 包遵彭. “Lun *Sanbao taijian xia Xiyang ji yanyi* yu Tianhou gushi de yingxiang” 論《三寶太監下西洋記演義》與天后故事的影響. (1) *Youshi yuekan* 幼獅月刊 3.6 (1955), 8-12. (2) In: *Bao Zunpeng wencun* 包遵彭文存, by Bao Zunpeng [Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1980], 115-131.

Embedding *Xiyang ji* into its historical context, Bao Zunpeng argues that the novel contributed greatly to the preservation of old Chinese legends. A great number of popular deities that are familiar to readers of such novels as *Xiyou ji* and *Fengshen yanyi* appear throughout the novel. The author gives special attention to Tianhou 天后 (Tianfei 天妃 / Mazu 媽祖) – who saves the crew in a storm (chapter 22) – and traces her origins and development as a sea goddess, discussing Mazu worship on Taiwan separately. Lastly, Bao Zunpeng views the achievements of *Xiyang ji* as opening up the literary field of ocean journeys and as giving rise to an appreciation for maritime power.

- 4.3.2 Cai, Jiehua. “*Xiyang ji* und *Tianfei niangma zhuan*”. See 3.1.1.

At the center of this article is the role of Tianfei in *Xiyang ji* and *Tianfei niangma zhuan*.

- 4.3.3 Cai, Jiehua. “Li Hai und der Affengeist des *Xiyang ji*”. In: *Studien zum Roman “Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》之研究*, vol. 2, ed. by Shi Ping and Roderich Ptak [Maritime Asia, 24. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013], 123-139.

The focus of this article is the story of Li Hai 李海 (chapters 19 and 20), a sailor who falls overboard and drifts to a small island where he is saved by the local spirit, an old monkey mother who becomes Li’s consort. The article examines the internal structure of the Li Hai story, its unusual symbolism and the remarkable role of the monkey spirit. It also compares this multi-faceted episode to other narrations on the relations between monkeys and humans.

- 4.3.4 Feng Hanyong. “*Xiyang ji fawei*”. See 3.2.1.

This article includes a discussion of “Tianfei’s Lanterns” (St Elmo’s Fire).

- 4.3.5 Jia Haijian 賈海建. “Shenguai xiaoshuo zhong de shanshen gushi yu shanshen xinyang” 神怪小說中的山神故事與山神信仰. *Minzu wenxue yanjiu* 民族文學研究 2014.4, 128-137.

This is a study of stories surrounding mountain gods (*shanshen* 山神) in “fantasy” novels. In *Xiyang ji*, the Gods of the Five Summits (Wuyue shen 五嶽神) are listed in chapter 6, Lupi daxian 鹿皮大仙 is entrusted with the role of mountain god (chapter 71), and the Eastern Summit (Dong Yue 東嶽, i. e. Taishan 泰山) is named as an important station in the progression of a deceased to the underworld (chapter 87).

- 4.3.6 Lévy, André. “Le motif d’amphitryon en Chine”. See 3.2.4.

This article discusses the Five Rat sprits in *Xiyang ji*.

- 4.3.7 Li Yongqing 李永青. “Zhongguo gudai xushi zuopin zhong de yingwu yixiang yanjiu” 中國古代敘事作品中的鸚鵡意象研究. *Tongren xueyuan xuebao* 銅仁學院學報 10.5 (2008), 36-39.

Introduces the significance of parrots in China and traces their importance in Buddhist scriptures and Chinese fiction. Parrot appearances are discussed in chapters 1, 8 and 78 of *Xiyang ji*.

- 4.3.8 Pan Jianguo. “*Wu shu nao dong jing* xiaoshuo kao”. See 3.2.9.

This article discussed the Five Rat spirits in *Xiyang ji*.

- 4.3.9 Ptak, Roderich. “Vom Weißen Aalgeist oder Baishan jing”. In: *Studien zum Roman “Sanbao taijian Xiyang ji tongsu yanyi” 《三寶太監西洋記通俗演義》之研究*, vol. 1, ed. by Shi Ping and Roderich Ptak [Maritime Asia, 23. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011], 119-138.

This article examines the role of the Baishan jing 白鱧精 (White Eel Spirit), who threatens the fleet both on the outbound voyage and when the ships return home. The paper shows how Baishan’s role and Zheng He’s behavior should be understood and how one can relate these segments to the overall structure of the story. It also provides some notes on the term *baishan* (and similar expressions) and on earlier references to eel spirits.

For a Chinese language abstract, see: “*Xiyang ji* zhong de baishanjing” 《西洋記》中的白鱧精. *Zheng He yanjiu dongtai* 鄭和研究動態 25 (2012), 10.

4.3.10 Su, Ming-yang. *Seven Epic Voyages of Zheng He*. See 1.1.4.

This book also discusses the novel's use of supernatural elements, namely dragon kings, weak-water seas, magnetic barriers and Mazu.

4.3.11 Wang Li 王立. "Ru dayu dashe fu shenghuan gushi de Fo jing wenhua yuanyuan" 入大魚大蛇腹生還故事的佛經文化淵源. *Nan-Ya yanjiu* 南亞研究 2007.1, 78-83.

This article looks at the motif of "entering the belly of a giant fish or giant snake and returning alive". It examines stories about "giant fishes" in *biji* literature from the Song and Ming, medieval Chinese translations of Buddhist sutras and legendary accounts that influenced episodes in the Ming dynasty fantasy novels. One such episode is found in chapter 96 of *Xiyang ji* in the shape of the Makara, a ship-swallowing fish demon.

4.3.12 Wang Li 王立. "Ming Qing guainiu xingxiang de yiguo qingdiao ji Fo jing fanyi wenxue yuanyuan" 明青怪牛形象的異國情調及佛經翻譯文學淵源. *Shanxi daxue xuebao (Zhexue shehui kexue ban)* 山西大學學報 (哲學社會科學版) 34.5 (2011), 48-54.

Wang Li begins this article by demonstrating how Qing dynasty descriptions of foreign lands used the motif of "strange cattle" to create an "exotic atmosphere". Next the author explores descriptions of cattle in Chinese translations of Buddhist texts and their development in Chinese literature, including the Bull Demon King (*niu mowang* 牛魔王) in *Xiyou ji* and the White Bull (*bainiu* 白牛) and Black Bull (*qingniu* 青牛) in chapters 82-84 of *Xiyang ji*. Further attention is given to fights against vicious bulls and cattle as helpers of humans.

4.3.13 Weigold, Katrin. "Guan Yus Gastrolle im *Xiyang ji*". See 3.2.12.

This article explores the role of Guan Yu in chapters 75 and 76 of *Xiyang ji*.

4.3.14 Weiß, Katrin. "Lishan laomu im *Xiyang ji*". See 6.1.4.

This article analyses the role of Lishan laomu in *Xiyang ji* and points out certain features she shares with Nüwa.

4.3.15 Witt, Barbara. "Der Himmelskönig Li im *Fengshen yanyi* und *Xiyang ji*". See 3.2.13.

This is a study of the Heavenly King Li and his son Nezha in *Xiyang ji*, *Fengshen yanyi*, and *Xiyou ji*.

- 4.3.16 Zheng Jiewen 鄭杰文. “Daojiao xianshi Guigu xiansheng ji qi *Guigu zi* kaobian” 道教仙師鬼谷先生及其《鬼谷子》考辨. *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 1992.4, 34-38.

This article explores the origins of the Daoist immortal Guigu 鬼谷 who is featured in *Xiyang ji*.

- 4.3.17 Zhang Bing and Zhang Yuzhou. “Zhong Kui gushi de chuanbo fangshi yu yanbian guocheng”. See 3.2.15.

This article discusses the Five Rat spirits in *Xiyang ji*.

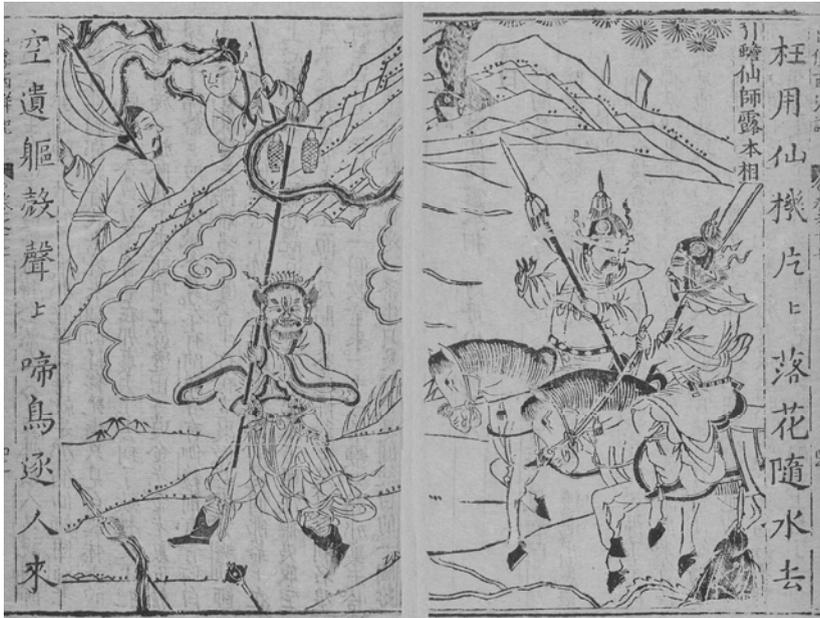


Fig. 8 *Xiyang ji*, Chapter 84 (17.40b-41a, 2224f):  
“Immortal Yinchan Shows His True Face.”