

EADEM SED ALITER: \*  
"Pastoral" Idyl and *Vanitas* in  
Late Chinese Fiction and Verse †

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Part I — The Idyll

Chapter Ten of the *Hsi-yu Chi* (西遊記) opens with an interesting interlude which, because Waley left most of the verses in *Hsu-yu Chi* untranslated in his *Monkey*, has largely gone unnoticed by the English reader. This interlude, a kind of literary stereotype, is the subject of the first half of this paper, and in order to make clear what I want to discuss later, I have appended a somewhat shortened translation of it below. Though it is, on balance, an extended idyll, there are so many Taoist preoccupations incorporated in it that I have had recourse to a gaggle of upper-case letters (with their explanations in a footnote) to draw the reader's attention to the scattered parts of the Taoist Complex:<sup>1</sup>

(*Hsi-yu Chi* 10)

Now it happened that outside the city of Ch'ang-an on the banks of the Ching river there were two worthy men (山人); one a fisherman known as Chang Shao, the other a woodcutter called Li Ting. The two were "graduates who had never sat for the examinations" and learned soothsayers in their own right.<sup>2</sup>

One day in Ch'ang-an, after the one had disposed of his burden of firewood and the other had sold his pannier of fish, they went to a

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\* "The same thing in a different way": Schopenhauer's motto for all of history.

† This article is a revised version of one chapter from the author's unfinished work, *SONGS FROM XANADU: Essays on Yüan Dynasty san-chü*.

wineshop and drank until pleasantly aglow. Then, each with a jug in hand, they slowly walked back toward their homes.

"Brother Li," said the fisherman at length, "since 'he who fights for fame loses himself,' 'he who struggles for profit dies untimely,' 'he who accepts honors is sleeping with a tiger,' and 'he who gains privilege walks with a viper in his robe,'<sup>B</sup> it appears to me that none of them is as well off as we who travel the 'clear waters and the green mountains,' happy with little and content with our lot."<sup>E</sup>

"Exactly so, Brother Chang," replied the woodsman, "but your 'clear rivers' are not as desirable as my 'green mountains.'"

"Ah, no! It is your 'green mountains' which cannot compare with my 'clear waters' and I have a lyric to the pattern of *Tieh-lien-hua* (蝶戀花) to prove it:

C  
↓  
C

So tiny the shallow boat  
In all that mist and wave  
Peaceful; riding its lonely sail.  
The Voice of Hsi-shih<sup>3</sup> coils 'round it.  
D { Washed of worries, cleansed of cares  
For fortune or for famous deeds,  
Leisurely I gather water-pepper fruits  
And for my mat I harvest reeds.  
Wheeling specks of sandgulls;  
How they rejoice in their Way.  
A willowed bank, a reedy bend,  
The happy laugh of wives and children.  
Waking from a peaceful sleep  
D { I find the wind and waves have died —  
As have worries over glory, shame and pride."

烟波萬里扁舟小，靜依孤篷，西施聲音繞。  
滌慮洗心名利少，閑攀蓼穗蒹葭草。  
數點沙鷗堪樂道，柳岸蘆灣，妻子同歡笑。  
一覺安眠風浪消，無榮無辱無煩惱。

"Brother, I have a stanza of the same *Tieh-lien-hua* as proof that your waters are not the equal of my hills," replied the woodsman:

C  
↓

“Clouds and forest are all of a piece  
As powdery pine blossoms bloom full.  
In the silence hear the finch —  
His clever tongue a flute.  
Reds grow sparse as greens fatten —  
The light has changed again

Straight on comes Fall  
With all its changes.  
Chrysanthemums grow spicy  
And wonderful to touch.

Snatched here by some giant hand  
Swiftly comes deep winter's snow.

E { I journey every season  
And no man tells me how.”

雲林一段松花滿，默聽鶯啼，巧舌如調管。  
紅瘦綠肥春正暖，倏然夏至光陰轉。  
又值秋來容易換，黃花香，堪供玩。  
迅速嚴冬如指拈，逍遙四季無人管。

“But, brother woodsman, the living to be got from your hills is not the equal of my rivers and lakes. I have a stanza of *Che-ku T'ien* (鷓鴣天) to prove it:

C  
↓

This cloud-and-water faery land —  
From here my daily bread will come.  
E { Ship the sweeps and crosswise strand  
My little boat and I am home.  
Fish fresh-sliced, green-shell turtles steam;  
A boiling pot of purple crab  
And the small red shrimp that fill the stream.  
With —  
Green reed shoots,  
Lily roots,  
Caltrops and ‘crane-heads;’  
Tastier still,  
Full-grown lotus, arrowroot,  
Whitebird buds,  
And watercress,  
And river-dill.”

仙鄉雲水足生涯，擺檣橫舟便是家。  
 活剖鮮鱗烹綠蟹，旋蒸紫蟹煮紅蝦。  
 青蘆笋，水荇芽，菱角雞頭更可誇。  
 藕蕪老蓮芹葉嫩，慈菇茭白烏莢花。

“No, your living can not equal what I get from my hills, and I will sing a stanza of *Che-ku T'ien* as proof:

C  
 ↓

Your crabs and turtles cannot match  
 My salted pigeon, pickled doves —  
 My hare and deer and roebuck put to shame  
 Your meagre catch.

C  
 ↓

Cedrela's leaves,  
 Melia roots,  
 Mountain tea and bamboo shoots.  
 The ripened plum, the apricot  
 Outside my gate  
 Mulberries, sweet,  
 And cinnamon, hot,  
 And sourdate.”

腌腊鷄鵝強蟹蟹，獐狝兎鹿勝魚蝦。  
 香椿葉，黃棟芽，竹笋山茶更可誇。  
 紫李紅桃梅杏熟，甜梨酸棗木樨花。

\* \* \*

“Good, brother woodsman,” said Chang the fisherman, “I think it’s proven:

‘We sing our subtle song and rime our rime  
 Without a clapper made from sandalwood  
 Or golden jug for wine.’

But it’s one thing to sing a few stanzas of *tz’u* on any subject whatever — that’s no feat—but suppose we alternate with linked lines to show everyone that the wooductter and the fisherman can swap verses with the best of them?”

“Excellent, brother fisher, a marvelous idea; you start the chain.”<sup>4</sup>

- F { (Fish.) My boat rests in the misty waves and green waters.  
 (Wood.) My home lies in the deep hills amid the wilds.  
 \*\*\*
- E { (Fish.) My angle and my net will sustain my old age.  
 (Wood.) My carrying pole, my binding cord will see me to my grave.  
 \*\*\*
- D { (Fish.) The jousting fields of lips and tongue must do  
 without my talents.  
 (Wood.) Shores of the Sea of Right-and-Wrong will lack  
 my footprints.  
 \*\*\*
- A&G { (Fish.) I hide my traces, flee the world, play the fool.  
 (Wood.) I conceal my name, forget my title and play the  
 deaf-and-dumb.  
 \*\*\*
- H { (Fish.) Who casts his hook for fishes must  
 Remove himself from the World of Dust  
 (Wood.) To be a woodcutter is to be  
 Halfway to immortality  
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C. T. Hsia is the only scholar I know who has pointed out the Woodcutter and the Fisherman to Western readers. In his *Classic Chinese Novel* (p. 120), he remarks:

In adapting this portion of the early *Hsi-yu Chi*, Wu Ch'eng-en has retained Chang Shao as a fisherman but made *Li Ting* into a woodcutter.<sup>5</sup> Both are presented as lettered countrymen so that they can carry on a poetic debate about the relative advantages and disadvantages of their callings. A staple in the pastoral literature of the European Renaissance, such debates are not uncommon in Ming fiction. In *Feng-shen-yen-i* (The investiture of the gods), a historical fantasy contemporaneous with *Hsi-yu-Chi*, we find a fisherman and a woodcutter pointedly referring to their vocation as *yü-ch'iao wen-ta* (dialogue between fisherman and woodcutter).

Certainly Hsia meant to indicate that we have in this little scene something from Chinese literature which is congruent with the pastoral idyll in Western tradition; and this, it appears to me, is a much more important point to make than the possible similarity in form between the debates in

Theocritus' *Idyllium* (or later pastorals) and the debate aspect<sup>6</sup> of this scene between the fisherman and the woodcutter. Debates in Western pastorals are, after all, simply matters of form, whereas the pastoral idyll and its immense appeal goes to the very roots of human emotions.<sup>6a</sup>

Disregarding the "debate" aspect, it appears to me that the golden precincts of one Arcady or another have generated or have been generated by powerful yearnings in men all over the world (at least for as long as men have immured themselves in cities). The impulse, the yearnings, are as archetypal as the vision of a "*locus amoenus*" which has spawned countless Utopias (or eutopias) and sent men on incredible journeys (mental and geographical) to discover if what they could conceive of in their minds actually existed or could be made to exist somewhere. Such complexes are intricately melded with visions of a "golden age" (where not only the place but the times were Utopian), and the "innocent Eden" is, if anything, more nearly archetypal than the other two. These impulses all seem so fundamentally human that if some form of them did *not* appear in Chinese poetry it would be as strange as finding that English poetry had never known the pastoral impulse. As W. W. Greg says,

The fiction [of a golden age] no doubt answered some need in human nature. . . [and comprehends] that outburst of pastoral song which sprang from the yearning of the tired soul to escape . . . to a life of simplicity and innocence from the bitter luxury of the court and the menial bread of princes.

(*Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama*, p. 6)

He also comments (*loc. cit.* note) with considerable acumen that:

The tendency to form an ideal picture of his own youth is common to both mankind and man. The romance of childhood is the dream with which age consoles itself for the disillusionments of life.

The pastoral's . . . importance is to be sought in the fact that the form is the expression of instinct and impulses deep rooted in the nature of humanity. . . . (p. 2)

Grant me, if you will (as I think Frye and other myth critics would), that the Chinese have, in this *idyllium* of the Woodcutter and Fisherman, tapped currents from the same kind of mythic dynamo that generated

Western pastoral poetry. Let us agree that this idyll and its ilk\* occupy in Chinese literature and emotion a place similar, in all broad measurements, to the pastoral. The question then arises: why should the two figures of Fisherman and Woodcutter occupy in China the same place as the shepherd in the West?

This much is obvious at the outset: the intensive and sedentary agriculture of China made any kind of herdsman a rarity. He *might* thereby have been all the more appealing (his very rarity cloaking him with romantic possibilities) save for the fact that though in the Mediterranean world (even in the areas of intense agriculture) the herdsman supplied many good things—cheese, nourishing forms of milk and yoghurt, and wool—in China, the nearest herdsmen were true outlanders, “barbarians,” who not only had outlandish costumes but who fed upon the secretions of animals—cheeses! sour milk! curds! And they wore the fur (wool) of their charges instead of weaving clothes from silk and cotton as did “normal” men.

The herdsman as a possible central figure for a Chinese “pastoral” idyll was so handicapped at the start that he never stood a chance.<sup>7</sup> But what of the farmer? Bucolic poetry East and West always pays him passing respect; but the peasant and his grinding toil was too much a present fact with the writer of such verse in China to bulk very large in his idylls.<sup>8</sup> The peasant was pinned to the land, its taxes and exactions, in an all too obvious way, and was totally at the mercy of Nature—who proved to be (more often than not) utterly merciless. Since those who wrote idylls were usually of a Taoist persuasion (either temporary or permanent), they viewed “nature” as something with which man should be a unity—or believed they did, at any rate—and the farmer was far too often only a hostage to nature’s caprices.

There seems to have been one occupation, however, fishing, which appealed greatly to poets and painters. In large part, it must be admitted, the appeal was possible precisely because most of them had never had anything like first hand experience with earning a living capturing something so fickle as fish. In some respects, fishing is more maddeningly at the mercy of the weather than farming: the sporadic and inexplicable appearance and disappearance of his livelihood has made the fisherman the

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\* See Appendix for two *san ch’ü* which place these characters in a kind of paradise.

most talisman-bound and superstitious of men. This is true even of the sports-fisherman.

Those are the negative aspects of the trade; but they were disregarded, and to the poet, the fisherman and his ways have a powerful appeal—first, I imagine, because of his utter independence. In the snug microcosm of his boat<sup>9</sup> (note that his self-sufficiency is alluded to twice in the excerpt I've translated), he was at home on the vast formlessness of water. He had but to moor the vehicle of his trade to turn it instantly into his dwelling. The Fisherman was completely mobile in a society almost insanely preoccupied with a person's place of registration and the propriety of his remaining there. There can be little doubt that fishermen who had no *pied-a-terre* were either low in social status or had none at all, but this only served to make them still more the envy of poets, some of whom carried their status about with them as one might carry a ball and chain.

Furthermore, to the intelligentry, blissfully ignorant of the complexities of fishing rights (either traditional or legal), the fisherman seemed at liberty to go anywhere and cultivate to his own purposes the vast, watery garden of China's lakes and rivers. The poet saw him (often from a boat which was carrying the poet far from home or the capital and toward duties which he might very well not wish to take up) fishing with impunity close to the river gazebo of the most powerful local official, or far out in the wilds with equal impunity in swamps which would swallow him alive if it were not for the almost effortless access and egress offered him by his small boat. The fisherman's mobility was his hedge against famine—if fish were not to be had here, he went there—unlike the peasant who starved to death where he was, or joined other hapless famine refugees in what was usually a futile flight to somewhere not so afflicted.<sup>10</sup> I am also of the opinion that the startling abundance (in schools and migratory runs of fish) to which the fisherman was sometimes heir, often made the latter an object of some envy. Fishermen, in addition, ate as a matter of course many delicacies that landlubbers can have had rarely and then only at great expense—the blue or mud crab, the little river shrimp and bivalves of all kinds—because of the nearly insoluble problem of transporting such perishables in traditional China. These actualities played some part in placing our Fisherman in a *locus amoenus*; and it should be kept in mind also that the intelligentry frequently favored fishing as a kind of contemplative sport (if we are to believe their writings) and so knew

something of the fisherman's satisfactions: satisfactions all the more attractive since the poet could easily be *in* but not *of* that world.

In contrast to the fair number of actual (as opposed to poetic or legendary) attractions of the fisherman's life, the Woodcutter seems less well endowed. To be sure, his life also embodied a certain self-sufficiency; he made his way into and out of places others feared and avoided, and, one supposes, could earn a livelihood even while living in such isolated spots. He too seemed free to move about as he pleased and would, among other things, be much more difficult to tax than the peasant, who was always found on his farm. I can imagine that it took a very doughty tax collector indeed to seek out the woodsman, who would more often be abroad than at home, but who, when at home, had about him the instruments of his trade—a match for any weapon except the crossbow. The woodsman probably had more informal commerce with the local bandits and scofflaws in hiding than anyone else, and could poach more readily what local game there was. I can see that, to the city dweller and intellectual, he might present an image of sturdy independence which was to be envied. On the other hand, I doubt the intelligentry throughout their lives had much to do with woodcutters at all; certainly one never went woodcutting as he might go fishing for recreation or contemplation!

No, the presence of the Woodcutter in our Chinese Pastoral must be accounted for almost entirely by poetic and transcendental traditions (which I treat next), unlike the Fisherman whose actual occupation may well have had some real-life appeal for the only person who could put him in this idyllic setting—the literary man.

To demonstrate the kind of half-romantic, imaginary identification possible between the Fisherman and the poet, let me insert here two *tz'u* (lyrics) to the pattern "Fisherman's song" (漁歌子, *Yü Ko-tzu*)<sup>11</sup> by Mao Hsi-chen (fl. 947).

I

Ch'u's blue hill,  
The Hsiang's green stream  
In the spring wind's caprice —  
Ah, who could ever look his fill?  
Grasses, dense green;  
Flowers, full bloom.  
From the fisherman's boat

The sound of his song trails the sound of his oar.  
 Where he wills it will float.  
 When his lines are in  
 He turns his boat  
 And sailing down moonlight he will come  
 To Crooked Bend and home —  
 Where wine fills his beaker,  
 Cooksmoke his room,  
 And no sign exists  
 Of the honors and insults of men.

楚山青，湘水綠。春風淡蕩看不足。  
 草芊芊，花簇簇。漁艇棹歌相續。  
 信浮沉，無管束。釣回乘月歸灣曲。  
 酒盈樽，雲滿屋。不見人間榮辱。

## II

Reed-flower Autumn,  
 Hsiao-Hsiang night.  
 The handsome sights of Chü-chou seen  
 Like painted landscapes on a screen.  
 In blue mist  
 Under full moon,  
 The fishing boat reels in its lines.  
 The river its homeland,  
 Rushes make its cabin,  
 Fish broth, plain rice;  
 Wine for the cup,  
 Books on the shelf.  
 No cares for fame or fortune  
 Hang in the heart.

荻花秋，瀟湘夜。橘洲佳景如屏畫。  
 碧煙中，明月下。小艇垂綸初罷。  
 水爲鄉，篷作舍。魚羹稻飯常餐也。  
 酒盈杯，書滿架。名利不將心挂。

There is no way of knowing whether these were done at anything like the same time, but the point is clear, I believe, that the poet could as readily write *about* the fisherman as he could *in the persona* of a fisherman, albeit a learned one, enjoying a kind of dignified seclusion.<sup>12</sup>

Although I cannot find any such identification by a poet with the

woodcutter, it should be kept firmly in mind that from early times pure and contemplative seclusion in the mountains was a kind of *beau-idéal* for the scholar-official. And though relatively few of them retired to real mountains or real solitude, the nearest neighbor (imagined or actual) to all who struck the pose was the woodsman. The self-conscious and literate recluse could hear his "axe ring in the forest" and his "song echo from beyond the clouds," and he wrote of it so often that such phrases became accepted as *pars pro toto* for idealized rustic retirement.

To the member of a complex and perforce "artificial" society, the simplicity of rural life and nature's rhythms has an enormous appeal; to those who work daily with recalcitrant human beings and abstractions (numbers representing other numbers which finally represent only words) the thought of something so basic as manured earth has a power to evoke superlatives out of all proportion to rational response. (Arcady knows no mosquitoes; no black-flies or schistosomes plague the river which "went out of Eden to water the garden!") So much is this the case, it seems, that the boundaries of Arcady often change imperceptibly, waver and mingle with those of the Elysian Plains themselves. It would not surprise me to find that the later Romans who read Theocritus' *Idyllium*, written about what *he* knew to be an actual Sicily, were half convinced that they described one of the Islands of the Blest (*Fortunae Insulae*). So it comes to pass that in later and more artificial pastorals, we find, not shepherds, not simple country lasses, but satyrs, nymphs, Pan,\* and sometimes God Himself.

In a like fashion, the ideal of rustic withdrawal from worldly cares cherished by the Chinese poet conflated with Taoist Paradises. As in the West, it is seldom clear whether the actual paradise is approachable by the still living; but it is certain that simple folk wished it were so warmly that Chinese Shangri-las during some ages could be given precise latitude and longitude. In early times, as Wolfgang Bauer points out, these imaginary map coordinates usually located paradise on an island, or in the mountains

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\* Note that Beethoven labeled his Sixth Symphony the *Pastoral*, and his program notes indicate clearly that he meant simply to evoke an idyllic landscape; but in a new medium, Disney's *Fantasia* promptly peoples it with demi-gods and a host of fabulous creatures as charming as they are imaginary. What's more, I don't think Beethoven would have objected in the least.

"far to the East" or in the K'un-lun range.<sup>13</sup> After the fall of the Han dynasty, Taoist Paradises, while still retaining their favored location among mountains, began to be situated in "worlds within caves" (洞天福地, *tung-t'ien fu-ti*; or 神仙洞府, *shen-hsien tung-fu*). It is just about this time that the most famous of these places (which are neither quite of nor precisely out of this world) was captured in writing by the poet T'ao Ch'ien in his "Peachblossom Fountain." This most Chinese and most influential *locus amoenus* is alluded to and elaborated on throughout the rest of Chinese literary history.<sup>14</sup> I am going to assume that the reader knows that in the original the paradise was discovered by a fisherman sculling his craft up a small stream while following floating peach petals to their source. T'ao Ch'ien's piece (prose introduction and verse) was composed sometime between 365 and 427 A.D., which makes the fisherman our earliest guide to paradise. The woodsman, however, is no Chang-san-come-lately either, for he was already associated with one form of the cave-worlds at very nearly the same time. The *Shu-yi Chi* (述異記, 4th century A.D.?) contains this story:

In the Hsin-an commandery there was a cave (石室, *shih-shih*).<sup>15</sup> During the Chin dynasty a certain woodcutter named Wang Chin came upon it and saw two youths there playing chess. They gave him an object to eat which resembled a sourdate pit. When he ate it he no longer felt hunger. He set his axe aside and sat to watch the lads play. Finally, one of them said to him, "Your axe handle has crumbled away." When Wang returned to his village there was no one else of his generation still alive.

The legend may be found in any good Chinese encyclopedic dictionary. I need hardly add that its Western counterpart can be found under the heading of Rip Van Winkle in any good dictionary of American literature. The association of a fisherman with some kind of wise, mysterious solitude begins with the figure of Chiang T'ai-kung who fished in the Wei River while waiting for King Wu of Chou to seek him out; but both the Fisherman and the Woodcutter had already become associated with some sort of Taoist paradise in the Six Dynasties period. Though a fisherman alone discovers the paradise beyond the Peach-blossom Fountain in T'ao Ch'ien's original, by the time of the T'ang dynasty a woodcutter also shares in the knowledge of this Shangri-la. T'ao Ch'ien's piece inspired (among many others)<sup>16</sup> a "*T'ao-hua Yuan Hsing*" by Wang

Wei (669-759). Below is my rendition of his version of the legend; note particularly line 17.

- The little fishing craft now following  
The stream, in love with mountains clothed in Spring,  
Both banks are lined with blooming peach  
That close in slowly til they reach  
5 An ancient ford. The dreaming fisher sees  
His course hemmed in by blushing trees,  
And gazing, loses track of where he's been.  
Til all at once the trace of men  
Appears at the head of one clear stream.

漁舟逐水愛山春。  
兩岸桃花夾古津。  
坐看紅樹不知遠。  
行盡青溪忽值人。

- 10 The cleft and narrow brook first seem  
Too small for him, and he must wade.  
Then cliffs recede, and from a glade  
A winding valley stretches out  
Whose distant edge is hemmed about  
15 With cloud-topped trees; but close at hand  
Lie homes and cultivated land.

山口潛行始隈隩。  
山開曠望旋平陸。  
遙着一處攢雲樹。  
近入千家散花竹。

- Woodcutters first brought this world within—  
Where men still wore the dress of Ch'in—  
The surname of the House of Han.  
20 But, some time within that span  
They found their Wu-ling farms to be  
Beyond the world's mortality.

樵客初傳漢姓名。  
居人未改秦衣服。  
居人共住武陵源。  
還從物外起田園。

Beneath the moon, the pine, the mountain sky  
Their peaceful dikes and houses lie.  
25 At dawn from where men expect it least,  
The calls and cries of barnyard beast.

月明松下房籬靜。  
日出雲中雞犬喧。

Now they hear a stranger's come,  
Each hopes to take him to his home  
To ask him news of Court and State.  
30 Each dawn they rise and sweep the gate;  
Each dusk, the last of twilight's gleam  
Sees boats come home by peaceful stream.

驚聞俗客爭來集。  
競引還家問都邑。  
平明閭巷掃花開。  
薄暮漁樵乘水入。

At first they came here fleeing mortal strife,  
But now they have attained Eternal Life,  
35 The outside world won't take them back again.  
They know nothing of the world of men;  
While men see only clouds and empty space  
Suspecting nothing of this hidden place.

初因避地去人間。  
更問神仙遂不還。  
峽裏誰知有人事。  
世中遙望空雲山。  
不疑靈境難聞見。

The world is too much with the Fisherman;  
40 His thoughts are homeward turned. He thinks he can  
Go back, return and find the cave again  
When at last he leaves the world of men,  
Saying, "Surely now I've gone this way  
I can come back; why should I go astray?"

塵心未盡思鄉縣。  
山洞無論隔山水。  
辭家終擬長遊衍。  
自謂經過舊不迷。

- 45 He thought that hills and valleys never change,  
 Yet suddenly the way seems strange.  
 He tries to think how deep he went  
 And past which brooks that first ascent  
 To cloud-topped trees? But all in vain—
- 50 Early spring has come again  
 And now whichever way he looks  
 Petals fill the mouths of all the brooks  
 How can he tell which one will bring  
 Him to the lost Peach Blossom Spring?

安知峰壑今來變。  
 當時只記入山深。  
 青溪幾度到雲林。  
 春來遍是桃花水。  
 不辨仙源何處尋。

Now we have come full circle; at first the Woodcutter may have been simply an alternate guide to paradise, but it would appear that by the time of *Hsi-yu Chi* a Chinese “pastoral” idyll needed *both* Woodcutter and Fisherman in a kind of singing debate, and that is why the author changed one of the fisherman of his source into a Woodcutter.

To demonstrate how closely the Woodcutter has become identified with Taoist paradises, look at the lyric (*tz'u*) *Man-t'ing fang* (滿庭芳) in Chapter I of *Hsi-yu Chi*, which Monkey hears sung in the forest. Having listened to it all the way through, Monkey concludes it was sung by an Immortal and hastens to meet the singer. The first stanza of the song goes:

Whose axe-handle rotted in the wilderness  
 While he watched Immortals at their chess?  
 Slow steps he takes, his axe-strokes ring  
 Down cloudside valleys, echoing.  
 He sells his faggots to buy him wine  
 And mad, happy laughter beneath the mountain pine.

觀棋柯爛，伐木丁丁，雲邊谷口徐行，  
 賣薪沽酒，狂笑自陶情。

Monkey assumed the singer, a woodcutter, is himself an Immortal and, though the woodsman insists that he was simply singing a song taught him by the Immortals, both Monkey and the reader are only half convinced by his protestation; especially since the last stanza of his song went:

Contentment will extend my years; I meet each day  
With Sages; men who've found the Way,  
Who sit at ease while lecturing  
From the sacred Taoist Text, *Huang-t'ing*.

恬淡延生。相逢處，非仙即道，靜坐講黃庭。

As though to confirm the ambiguity, the author of *Hsi-yu Chi* gives, in a kind of rhymed parallel prose, a description of the antic dress worn by this particular woodcutter:

His hat plaited from new-cast seed leaves  
Of the young bamboo. His garment of wild cotton  
Woven from finger-twisted yarn.  
The girdle round his waist,  
Silk spit from the mouth of the Ageless Silkworm.  
Grass sandals bound with thongs of rolled sedge grass. . .

頭上戴箬笠，乃是新筍初脫之簍。  
身上穿布衣，乃是木綿拈就之紗。  
腰間繫纒絲，乃是老蠶口吐之絲。  
足下踏草履，乃是枯莎槎就之爽。

The Taoist flavor and symbolism of this idiosyncratic costume is so pronounced that the reader is bound to think the woodcutter is being less than candid about his status as an Immortal.

I believe it is the close association of the Woodsman and the Fisher to Taoist paradises and Taoist ideals of seclusion and withdrawal that involves them in some way with another expression and cliché—*yü ch'iao Wen-tui* (漁樵問對) or *yü-ch'iao wen-ta* (漁樵問答). There is a well-known book called *Yü-ch'iao Wen-tui* (漁樵問對)<sup>18</sup> by Shao Yung (邵雍, 1011-1077), a widely read and much admired scholar (Ssu-ma Kuang [司馬光] was one of his admirers) with Taoist and eremitic inclinations.<sup>18a</sup> The book is actually a Taoist cosmology put into the mouths of a fisherman and a woodcutter. Below is a sample of the kind of thing with which it deals:

"... All things which have form can be burned."

"Does water have form?"

"It does."

"Can water be burned?"

"The nature of fire is to effect (lit. "greet") and not to be effected (lit.

“follow”). Which is why fire is extinguished. The nature of water is to be affected and not to effect, which is why it grows warm. For these reasons we have hot springs but no cold fires. This is called “mutually cancelling.” Fire is basically useful and secondarily has form; hence it is active. Water is basically form and secondarily has uses; hence it is passive.” (Ts’ung-shu Chi-ch’eng ed., p. 1b)

The reader will probably recognize in the above some old Taoist chestnuts treated in other works like Yang Shen’s (楊慎) *Tan Ch’ien Lu* (丹鉛錄). The question is, however, did the literary cliché (see note 1 above) come from the book title or the other way around. It is my feeling that authors generally seek to incorporate allusions, poetic citations, or proverbial expressions in the titles of their books,<sup>19</sup> and I would hazard a guess that *Yü-ch’iao wen-tui* once used to be such a phrase (?), saying (?), which had some (presently unknown) allusive force, and Shao Yung used it for his title. After the book became well-known, of course, the phrase could apply equally well in its old or new allusion. In the case of *Feng-shen Yen-yi*, which C. T. Hsia cites, the statement that what was going on reminded the woodcutter of the “story” (故事, *ku-shih*), *yü-ch’iao wen-ta*, could hardly allude to anything save knowledge of the phrase itself, for in fact (as I pointed out above) in the book when Wu Chi, the woodcutter, makes this statement to Chiang T’ai-kung (the most famous of all “fishermen”), they have just met; no dialogue at all has passed between them. Subsequently what they talk about has nothing to do with either paradise or Taoist metaphysics. However, the song by which Wu Chi, the woodcutter, introduces himself into the scene does have something of the idyll complex about it:

. . . I take my load of firewood  
 And barter for my daily food. . .  
 Wild greens and salads all are mine;  
 And when I buy my jug of wine  
 I share my cup with the moon above  
 Happy in my lonely grove. . .  
 I wander far or take my ease  
 Or come or go just as I please.<sup>20</sup>

擔柴一石，易米三升。隨時菜蔬，沽酒二瓶。  
 對月邀飲，樂守孤林。深山幽僻，萬壑無聲。  
 奇花異草，逐日相侵。逍遙自在，任意縱橫。

It strikes me, however, that in *Feng-shen Yen-yi* the author simply drops the well-known (whether because of its proverbial or its book-title life) phrase to let the reader know that he is aware that he has arranged a scene in which a woodcutter and Chiang T'ai-kung, the "fisher of men," are taking part, and it awakens echoes of other similar literary interludes.<sup>20a</sup> In any event, by the time of the long Ming romances, dialogues between woodcutter and fisherman as a means of creating some kind of rustic retirement scene or idyll (the Chinese equivalent of a pastoral, in fact) appear to have been well established.

But there is another, more frequent *topos* involving the two tradesmen we are interested in, which appears most clearly and most often in the *hsiao-ling* and *san-ch'ü* of the Yüan dynasty, and that is the subject of what follows in Part II.

## Part II — *Vanitas*

There is a fairly well-known *hsiao-ling* by the very well-known playwright Po P'u (Pai Jen-fu) (1226-1306?) written to the *ch'ü* meters of *Ch'ing Tung-yüan* (慶東原), which goes as follows:

Forgetfulness distilled from grains,  
 pleasures from smiling blossoms  
 Both bid us hang up the heavy cap of cares:  
 For, What serve now the speeches of Lu Chia  
     What serve now the schemes of wise Tzu-ya  
     And what the valor of Chang Hua?

Ancient wrestlings over rights and wrongs — do they matter  
 Save as subjects for Fisher and Woodsman's evening chatter?  
 (CYSC, p. 201)

忘憂草。含笑花。勸君聞早冠宜掛。  
 那裏也能言陸賈。那裏也良謀子牙。那裏也豪氣張華。  
 千古是非心。一夕漁樵話。

If somehow the names of the ancient worthies cited above could be made to sound properly Roman, the verse could almost be matching lines from Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* on the subject of "vanitas" or "ubi-sunt":

Ubinunc fidelis ossa Fabricii manent?  
(Where now lie the bones of the faithful Fabricus?)\*  
(Book II, poem 7)

To be sure, Boethius' *Consolations of Philosophy* was such an influential book, in the Middle Ages and eventually in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, in part because of its appealing marriage of Platonic cosmology and Christian morality—things utterly foreign to its Chinese counterpart, of course. However, pensive recognition of the vanity of earthly glories rings clearly through both.

A much more famous *ch'ü* from the same period, Ma Chih-yüan's (馬致遠) *Yeh-hsing ch'uan* (夜行船), sounds a variation of the same note but more brilliantly:

The lights and shadows of a century  
Were dreamt of by a butterfly:

Gaze back and sigh  
For deeds bygone!  
Today Spring's born  
Tomorrow its flowers die.

The lamps of dying night are going out;  
Fine me my cups of wine now.  
The castles of Ch'in, the halls of Han  
Are but coarse pasture for sheep and cow.  
(Else what would Woodsman and Fisher talk about?)

This way lies the weedgrown tomb,  
That way its toppled monument:  
Mighty, carved dragons are become

---

\* And also the medieval lyric, "Ubi sunt qui ante nos fuerunt?" ("Where are those now who went before us?")

Just so many snakes in the grass! . . .

(CYSC, p. 269)\*

百歲光陰一夢蝶。重回首往事堪嗟。  
今日春來。明朝花謝。急罰盞夜闌燈滅。  
想秦宮漢闕。都做了衰草牛羊野。  
不恁麼漁樵沒話說。縱荒墳橫斷碑。不辨龍蛇。

Though the note of irony ("Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!") is lacking in the Chinese, there is no doubting that the Ozymandias theme is common to the *ch'ü* by Ma Chih-yüan and Shelley's sonnet by that name. A third *san-ch'ü* which uses the allusion (but in this example couples it with Taoist ideals of withdrawal and seclusion) is Hsü Tsai-ssu's (徐再思) *hsiao-ling*, translated below:

(#2) Old Lao-tzu watched  
As Han Kao-tzu  
Cut the mighty snake in twain;  
He helped Hsiao Ho restore the throne,  
And Duke Han Hsin who broke his heart in vain.

Heroes of the Ancient Age,  
Of three Kingdoms  
And of Han,  
Are only tales Woodcutter tells  
His friend the Fisherman.

To Hill-Beyond-the-Cloud  
Where Ageless Ch'ih Sung-tzu lives, I'll go  
And leave my heavy seal of office here below.

(CYSC, p. 1033)

那老子見高皇斬了蛇。助蕭何立大節。  
薦韓侯勞汗血。漁樵做話說。千古漢三傑。  
想著雲外青山。納了腰間金印。伴赤松子歸去也。

Once again, as with the pastoral idyll, it appears to me that to be

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\* In *Sunflower Splendor* a note implies that the three songs which precede these lines are part of the *t'ao*, but as Cheng Ch'ien points out (北曲套式彙錄詳解, p. 183) they form a *t'ao* by themselves. See also *Tamkang Rev.* 1975, 1.

motal and to think about human life is eventually to arrive at the question, "ubi-sunt" (where are they now?), whether you ask it in Chinese, Latin, or some European language. I believe mulling over the ambiguities of life and setting down thoughts about them is so basically human that it would be strange only if Chinese poetry *lacked* evidence of musings on the vanity of worldly glories. But what of the peculiar form this seems to take? Why should the Chinese verse imply that such speculations were somehow properly the concern of woodsmen and fishermen?\* I can assure the reader that this particular juxtaposition is so common in Yüan *san ch'ü* that eventually one need only paraphrase "Woodsmen and Fisher's idle chatter" (漁樵閒話, *yü-ch'iao hsien-hua*) in some fashion to summon up immediately a host of associations having to do with the vanity of past glories. Below are four examples extracted from some twenty<sup>21</sup> I came upon during rather random readings of the *Ch'üan Yüan San-ch'ü*:

Plains of Huang-chou  
Landings of Redcliff;  
All alike submerged in weeds.  
Hesitant Chou Yü,  
Wily Ts'ao Ts'ao;  
Only Fisherman and Woodsman  
Now discuss their deeds.

(CHSC, p. 1301)

黃州地。赤壁磯。衰草接天涯。  
周公瑾。曹孟德。果何爲。  
都打入漁樵話裏。

... Deny the "stallion heat"  
Lock out the "passion of the ape."  
The raft that helped Fan Li escape,  
Official posts that caused T'ao Ch'ien's retreat,  
Alike forgot these thousand years —  
Just tales by Woodsman for the Fisher's ears.

(CYSC, p. 1382)

鎖心猿拴意馬。鷗夷泛海槎。  
陶潛休縣衙。入千古漁樵話。

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\* This is not, however, the *only* cliché used for the *vanitas* theme; see appendix.

How dazzlingly clear:  
The greatest virtue of today  
Was the vice of yesteryear.  
When Woodsman, Fisher and I discuss these things,  
Whatever wealth or honor brings  
Count no more  
Than autumn wind that whispers past my ear.  
(CYSC, p. 1333)

灼然見昔非今是。  
閑共漁樵講論時。  
說富貴秋風過耳。

Waste no argument on Antiquity  
And its Glory —  
At best but an outline ( 話本 , *hua-pen*)  
For Woodsman or Fisher's story!  
(CYSC, p. 1384)

千古興亡費討論。  
總一段漁樵話本。

Yüan dynasty *san-ch'ü* yield the largest number of examples, but, as might be expected, the two tradesmen whose literary fortunes we have been following also appear associated with the *vanitas* cliché in a number of Yüan dynasty *tsa-chü* dramas and usually as part of an overall allusion to the evanescence of name and fame. Here is one occurring in an aria from YCH #78, *Wu Ju T'ao-yüan* (see YCH, p. 1353):\*

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\* In this play, not only does a woodsman usher two strangers into one of the cave paradises — this one the Cave of the Peach Blossom Fountain itself — but, having lived there for what seems a year with two demi-goddesses, the men wish to return home. Having done so, they find generations have gone by while they stayed only a short time in paradise. Here the Peach Blossom Fountain and the Rip Van Winkle theme coalesce. The drama seems to be based on the *Lü-ch'uang Hsin-hua* ( 綠窓新話 ) version, but the story and the names of the two strangers go all the way back to the era of the Six Dynasties (3rd and 4th centuries A.D.). For another example, see YCH *Wai-pien*, pp. 951,954.

We fled the red dust's complexity and subtlety,  
 Abandoned fame and fortune, withdrew ourselves in poverty.  
 We imitate the Sages:  
 Wash our hearts of right and wrong,  
 And share what time for talk we can  
 On the rise and fall of ages  
 With Woodcutter and Fisherman;  
 Defer to those who knew the course  
 of Fortune good or Fortune bad was much the same —  
 As did the Old One of the Frontier Fort  
 Who lost his horse . . .

逃塵冗。避紛華。棄富貴。就貧乏。  
 學聖賢洗滌了是非心。共漁樵。  
 講論會興亡話。羨殺那知禍福  
 塞翁失馬。

Since in this drama the two protagonists have withdrawn from the world to gather herbs for a living and to follow the Way, and they appear to be looking for a kind of Taoist "sainthood," it is interesting to see that (in literature, at least) one of the things they *should* engage in is conversation with woodcutters and fishermen—who now appear to be repositories of wisdom about the vanity of worldly fame. In other words, our two tradesmen now seem not only to chat with each other about such subjects, but those who would adopt a properly Taoist view of worldly glory may be expected to seek them out to share in such conversations. What early looked like simply an allusion or felicitous phrase has here begun to be acted out; that is, given dramatic proportions by taking it as fact that woodsmen and fishers speak in some particularly knowledgeable way about the ephemeral nature of worldly glories.

Perhaps the fullest enactment of this belief, which is founded (as I shall insist) solely on a poetic cliché, occurs in the Epilogue to the *Ch'uan-ch'i* (傳奇) drama, *T'ao-hua Shan* (桃花扇, 1699 A.D.) by K'ung Shang-jen (孔尚任, 1648-1718).

As the reader doubtless knows, K'ung dated each of the forty-one scenes of his *T'ao-hua Shan* according to the year and the month of the events the scene dramatizes. No more than a month or two passes between any two contiguous scenes, except for the Prologue (which takes place forty-one years after the final fall of the Ming dynasty) and the Epilogue.

The Epilogue, which is played by two characters from the body of the drama (now in the guise of a woodcutter and a fisherman respectively), is dated over three years after the last scene of the drama proper. The play is over; the dynasty and its glories are but a remembered dream. The two lovers (whose fortunes were followed in more or less every other scene throughout the play) have renounced worldly desires, taken religious orders and are seeking the Way in separate parts of the empire. There seems no doubt that the playwright arranges all this so he can devote his Epilogue to an exploration of the vanities of dynastic glory through the two protagonists whom we are by now quite used to hearing about in this role. Though the sense of *vanitas* is limited to the vanished glories of a dynasty only a half-century dead when K'ung Shang-jen was writing his play, the general tone (even if there were no explicit citation of the cliché in the last lines of the play) is unmistakable:

. . . wildfires time and again  
Have scorched the tall catalpas  
Sheltering the royal tomb.  
More than half are burnt;  
There, sheep now run  
Instead of eunuch tomb-guards, who have fled.  
Bird-litter, bat-dung scattered through the offertory,  
Dead twigs, dried leaves mantle the steps.  
And who is there to sweep — ?  
Imperial tombstone lacking its cap —  
Lost to the wanton hands of herdboys.

(*Jenmin*, 1961 ed., p. 259)

野火頻燒。護墓長楸多半焦。  
山羊羣跑。守陵阿監幾時逃。  
鴿翎蝠糞滿堂拋。枯枝敗葉當階罩。  
誰祭掃。牧兒打碎龍碑帽。

After much more of a similar gothic nature, the woodcutter and fisherman flee a Ch'ing dynasty bailiff who has come to force them to serve the new dynasty. The bailiff finally gives up the chase, pretends to hear someone far off reciting verse, and exits to catch up with whoever is speaking it. Voice(s) from offstage recite the final lines:

Fisherman and woodcutter  
 Chatting of the past,  
 Each to each recalling  
 Dreams that did not last:  
 Scorn for the swallow letter,  
 Praise for the painted fan,  
 Sighs for old companions  
 Ere grief befell Chiangnan . . .

(Birch trans., in *The Peach Blossom Fan*, p. 312)

漁樵同話舊繁華。短夢寥寥記不差。  
 曾恨紅箋啣燕子。偏憐素扇染桃花。  
 笙歌西第留何客。煙雨南朝換幾家。

So much for the cliché as it appears in occasional verse and drama in Yüan and Ming times. Let me conclude this rather lengthy display with one example from a long historical romance.

Though the older so-called Hung-chih (弘治) edition of the *San-kuo Chih Yen-yi* does not contain this verse, the commoner Mao Tsung-kang (fl. 1660) edition does, so I suppose he should be credited with its composition. In any case it is one more perfect example (this time from the world of popularized history) of our woodsman and fisherman being associated with the vanity of glories past:\*

Rolling, rolling past, the Long River slips east.  
 Its cresting waves have washed away the last hero.  
 Right, wrong, victory and defeat —  
 Hollow prizes the moment they are won.  
 The hills alone remain:  
 How often have they reddened in the setting sun?

Fisher and Woodsman at the river's edge —  
 Heads whitened from many autumn moons  
 And winds of spring —  
 Their joy: a jug of coarse wine as long as it may last.  
 And hark! Food for their idle talk and laughter —  
 The many deeds of ages past.

(*Jenmin Wenhsüeh*, 1953 ed., p. 1)

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\* Apparently done to the tz'u-p'ai Lin-chiang Hsien (//76755//)

滾滾長江東逝水，浪花淘盡英雄。  
是非成敗轉頭空：青山依舊在，幾度夕陽紅。  
白髮漁樵江渚上，慣看秋月春風。  
一壺濁酒喜相逢：古今多少事，都付笑談中。

Having burdened the reader with so many examples of the allusive phrase *yü ch'iao hsien-hua* and its variants as a kind of metonymy for *vanitas*, I feel it incumbent on me to give him my thoughts about the source of the phenomenon.

In an extremely valuable section of his *Gen Zatsugeki Kenkyū* (元雜劇研究, ch. 3), Yoshikawa Kojirō, describing the eclecticism of Yüan *ch'ü* verse, points out that the genre seems never so pleased with itself as when it can miter in well-known lines from older verse leaving no tool marks to show where it was done. Yoshikawa then gives a number of examples of quite famous lines which get incorporated (or transmogrified) into Yüan songs; but what is even more interesting, as far as this present research is concerned, are the types of verse collections in which many of the original poems may be found. It appears that the kinds of things thought most fit for inclusion (by Yüan dramatic versifiers, at least) were to be found in homiletic hornbooks for children, "popular parlor verse" collections and the like. Yoshikawa quotes a most revealing statement by Wu Ch'u-hou (吳處厚, fl. 1093):

Wang Tao of Pingying wrote verse that was easily comprehended and full of homely wisdom—"Think only about the doing of good things; think not of what their doing brings," for example. These lines seem to be known almost everywhere, but few have ever seen the original poems themselves.<sup>22</sup>

Yoshikawa indicates that it was just this sort of situation which prevailed among writers of Yüan dynasty *ch'ü* verse.

It so happens that after a desultory search lasting more than a year, I stumbled (largely, I fear, by accident) upon this entry in the *Chung-kuo Wen-hsüeh-chia Ta Tz'u-tien* (中國文學家大辭典), which seemed to describe exactly the kind of thing that Yüan poets would dearly love to include in their verse:

(Chang) Sheng (張昇) was a talented writer of tz'u, but his works are never seen; however, the splendid lines from his verse are everywhere on the lips of men. For example:

How many dynasties here rose and fell?  
Few can tell,  
Nor does it matter  
Except as woodsman and fisher's idle chatter

Beside the looming ruin I rest,  
Downcast, watching  
A sun gone cold slip wordlessly west.<sup>23</sup>

多少六朝興廢。盡入漁樵閑話，悵望倚危樓，寒日無言西下。

Chang Sheng lived from 992 to 1077, and I have never come across the phrase *yü-ch'iao hsien-hua* and its allusion to the vanity of glory in any form of verse prior to, let us say, 1000 A.D. Since this is exactly the type of well-known line Yüan *ch'ü* writers loved to adapt, it is my opinion that Woodsman and Fisher owe their reputation in literature for wry wisdom about the glories of bygone ages solely to the fact that Chang Sheng's line was indeed so much "on the lips of men" (and on their pen tips as well) that the phrase which made our tradesmen famous finally became synonymous with the sense of *vanitas*.

Chang Sheng, your lyrics may have been mostly lost to the eyes of men, as the book says, but one of your couplets (and its progeny) has so echoed down the corridors of time that it surpasses in durability any of the dynastic glories about which you were so sceptical.

## Appendix

In the two verses below it appears that Hu Ch'i-yü has tried to couple unexpected learning with the fisherman and woodcutter in two ways: In the first they are unlettered (didn't take the exams?) yet are "natural" statesmen, as it were; in the second, the fisherman is literate—something that was not expected in the ordinary way of things. It may be that the fisherman in the second is a personification of the poet himself.

The Fisher catches fish  
And finds it good.  
Serene the brow of Woodsman  
Who has found his firewood

The Fisher sets his pole aside;  
The Woodsman will  
Put away his axe and bill.  
The two of them are satisfied  
To meet where woods touch riverside;  
Both unlettered statesmen, they  
Can talk and laugh at mankind's way  
In ages past—and still today.

漁得魚心滿願足。樵得樵眼笑眉舒。一箇罷了釣竿。一箇收了斤斧。  
林泉下偶然相遇。是兩箇不識字漁樵士大夫。  
他兩箇笑加加的談今論古。

Under the moon  
A jug of wine, a flower patch.  
Beside the river,  
Beneath the trees, a hut of thatch.

This lettered Fisherman can learn  
To covenant with gull and tern\*  
And at the same time hide away  
Secure from savage beasts of prey.

He can cast  
His hook and catch  
Both Today and Ages Past.  
Cape and cap of rushes,  
Pole of cane,  
Breasting slanting winds  
And misting rain.

(CYSC, p. 69)

月底花間酒壺。水邊林下茅廬。避虎狼。盟鷗鷺。  
是箇識字的漁夫。裝笠綸竿釣今古。一任他斜風細雨。

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\* Allusion to the *Chuang-tzu* and the lad who could sport with gulls until someone asked him to catch one. Even the thought broke the covenant with the gulls and they no longer played with him.

Pei-mang Shan is an actual hill in the vicinity of Lo-yang where, during the Han dynasty the great and near-great were buried. However, in Yüan songs it is used to mean the grave that awaits us all. Note the following two *ch'ü*:

Han Hsin's plans men would abuse;  
Hsiang Yü must his battles lose—  
All life is like a moonbeam's móte.

Pa-wang at Wu-chiang cuts his throat  
Han dies in Wei-yang's palace rooms  
And what is left of either man  
Is buried now at Pei-mang Shan  
In long neglected tombs.

韓信機謀枉用。項羽爭戰無功。一般瀟灑月明中。  
霸王勿烏江岸。韓侯斬未央宮。都做了北邙山下塚。

Success or failure, as you will—  
The Hare-in-the-Moon rises still.  
Fame? dishonor? Whichever one  
Westward sinks the Bird-in-the-Sun

The victor once was Han Kao-tsu  
Who cut the great white snake in two.  
Pa-wang, the loser; Hsi-ch'u's king  
Whose strength could lift great brazen *ting*.

Ah, wealth and name, what are they worth?  
What is left of either man  
Is buried now in Pei-mang Shan  
Their bodies turned to earth.

(CYSC, pp. 1694-5)

搬與廢東生玉兔。識榮枯西墜金烏。富貴榮華待何如。  
斬白蛇高祖勝。舉鼎霸王輸。都做了北邙山下土。

There are two "occupational" *hsiao-ling* by Chao Hsien-hung (these include herdsman, farmer, etc.) which set the woodsman and fisher in Arcadian surroundings. In part they read as follows:

## The Fisherman

Boat drawn sloping up the bank at Wildford  
Nets drying on the spit at Tingsands:  
His family all untroubled by the world  
With their sweetwines, their purple crabs,  
Their red shrimp and brocade carp . . .

舟橫野渡。網曬汀沙。一家老幼無牽掛。  
恣意喧嘩。新糯酒香橙藕芽。錦鱗魚紫蟹紅蝦。

## The Woodsman

At his waist the axe  
Whose handle rotted as he watched  
Immortals at their chess,  
Whose blade was ground for many months . . .  
Fame is a halter and name is its bit;  
He'll sing his heartpent song beyond the clouds . . .

(CYSC, pp. 1179-80)

腰間斧柯。觀棋會朽。修月曾磨。不將連理枝梢剝。無缺鋼多。  
不饒過猿枝鶴窠。慣立盡石澗泥坡。還參破。名韉利鎖。雲外放懷歌。

## Notes

1. I believe it is the *philosophical* trajectory (as opposed to the idyllic) of episodes and conventions like this which involves the two protagonists in a literary *chiché*—namely, *yü ch'iao wen-ta* (漁樵問答)—which I want to treat in the last section of Part I, so I letter and list the Taoist elements below, as follows:

A: Denial of knowledge	E: Independence and self-sufficiency
B: Denial of action	(emotional withdrawal)
C: Idyll	F: Isolation (physical withdrawal)
D: Freedom from social realities and goals	G: Concealment of identity
	H: Intimation of Immortality
2. In *Yüan-chü Su-yü Fang-yen K'ao* (元劇俗語方言考), the term *shan-jen* is glossed “wanderers of ‘rivers and lakes’ who are diviners, fortune tellers, or Masters of Ritual.” The term in popular literature strongly implies a kind of Taoist sainthood (or at least acolyte standing), and I believe it to have been a rebus for *hsien* (仙, immortal) in *Yüan-Ming* times. On the poetic assumption of “natural” or concealed scholarship and its fusion with the *vanitas* theme, see the first two *hsiao ling* in the appendix.

3. This line is a stereotype called forth by the image of a small boat on vast waters. The Fan Li legend has it that after the beautiful Hsi-shih had turned King Fu-ch'ai's head and brought his kingdom to ruin, she and Fan Li went off together in a small boat (or raft) and disappeared from the world of men.
4. I have excerpted only five couplets from the fifty-eight sets they exchange with each other in this last poetic flight before they return to the story proper and discuss the soothsayer of Ch'anġ-an, who daily tells the fisher what the weather will be and where to fish with such uncanny accuracy that he never fails to catch all he can want.
5. Italics mine. In the older fragment of *Hsi-yu Chi* found in the Ming dynasty *Yung-lo Ta-tien* (永樂大典) (see Dudbridge, p. 177), two fishermen converse, and the story of the soothsayer who can predict both weather and fishing results is told by them; they have nothing to say about the Utopian condition of their lives. It appears that *Hsi-yu Chi's* author, when he conceived of a "pastoral" interlude to insert here, reflexively supported the fisherman with a woodcutter companion in order to make the idyllic cliché conform to popular expectations.
6. While there are other examples of such debates in Ming fiction and drama, as Hsia says, they usually organize themselves around another theme, as I will indicate in Part II of this paper. Hsia's citation from *Feng-shen Yen-yi* can be set aside, for there the statement concerning the dialogue between fisherman and woodcutter is simply a kind of allusion (to convince the reader of the author's literacy?). There has been, in fact, no dialogue between them at all up to the point where the statement is made.
  - 6a. "Certain motifs which became permanent elements in a long chain of tradition: the place of heart's desire, beautiful with perpetual spring . . . the lovely, miniature landscape which combined trees, spring and grass; the wood with various species of trees; the carpet of flowers" (p. 186). "Arcadia was forever being discovered . . . yes, in the pastoral world all worlds 'embrace one another'" (p. 187). E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, Ch. 10, "The Ideal Landscape."
7. However, the stereotype of Jurched tribesmen in Yüan drama is that of an honest, sturdy warrior, indefatigable, simple and incorruptible. He should be equated, however, with the "noble savage" ideal rather than a pastoral character. The closest to a Chinese romantic view of a shepherd type is the herd-boy, typically lounging and piping on the back of the ox which is his single charge. In Chapter I of *Shui-hu Chuan* (水滸傳), such a herd-boy is turned into a Taoist acolyte (道童, tao-t'ung) who is nothing less than a transfiguration of the great Taoist Master. This brings the herd-boy within the ambit of possible sainthood in the same fashion as the Woodcutter and the Fisherman.
8. There are some true eclogue types in late Chinese verse: consider Six Dynasties *t'ien-yüan shih* (田園詩); the so-called *Ts'un-lo T'ang* (村樂堂, The Hall of Rustic Pleasures) (CYSC, p. 1799); a number of *hsiao-ling* constellations on the seasons (CYSC, pp. 1196-7 and 1178-9), on rustic occupations (CYSC, p. 1180), and a large number of sets of *hsiao-ling* celebrating or imitating T'ao Ch'ien (see CYSC, pp. 1181, 1290, etc.).
9. According to the myth critics, the correspondence between archetypal boat and "microcosm" is outstanding. The fisherman's mobility is clearly remarked

in the following *hsiao-ling* by Sun Chou-ch'ing (孫周卿):

The boat a small leaf  
In wave-flower spray.  
Sung, mobile nest no season can stay:

Last year, Lan River,  
The Hsiang today,  
Tomorrow may see him at  
Pa-ch'iu; his blue-arum hat  
Bobbing through white duckweed  
That chokes their ford . . .etc. (CYSC, p. 1062)

浪花中一葉扁舟。到處行窩。天也難留。

去歲蘭江。今年湘浦。後日巴丘。青蕩白笠。蘋渡口。

10. When a crop was blighted, it was many months before another could be grown to take its place; but if fishing was bad today there was always tomorrow to look forward to.
11. As has been noted (Wang Li in *Han-yü Shih Lü-fa* [ 漢語詩律法 ], p. 514), the titles (*tz'u-p'ai*) and subject matter of early *tz'u* often coincide—unlike later ones. These two lyrics may be found in Chapter 10 of *Hua-chien Chi* ( 花間集 ).
12. Part of the seeming identification between poet and fisherman is certainly attributable to the peculiar position of *ku-ch'uan* ( 孤船, solitary boat) in Chinese poetic language of almost any age and the landscape painting of some. It is strikingly noticeable that the *ku-ch'uan* is simple metonymy for the poet's self—the cliché has much in it of one man's ultimate aloneness in an enlarging world. (See E. Eoyang, *JAS*, pp. 32-4 [ 1973 ] for a number of examples.) After all, independence is both alluring and terrifying; it depends on the personality (or even the passing mood) of the poet as to which emotion will predominate.
13. Or, as in *Chuang-tzu*, Hyperborea ( 終北, *chung-pei*). See Bauer's *China and the Search for Happiness*, N.Y., 1976.
14. There was a multitude of works inspired by T'ao Ch'ien's original (see note 16 below for some), but what is perhaps the latest one is too easily overlooked: In *Lao Ts'an Yu-chi* (1904-07) there appears a somewhat curious use of the term *tung-fang* ( 洞房 ) which, in context, must mean a kind of man-made "cave paradise." There can be no doubt that Liu Ngo's "cave paradise" was a late echo of T'ao Ch'ien's original *locus amoenus*. The reader should recall that the travellers in *Lao Ts'an* who reach this *tung-fang* are said to be going to Peach-blossom Mountain, and they get there by travelling up the *dry bed of a winter-frozen stream*, finally sighting the village which is their goal through an "orifice in the rocks" ( 石罅 ). In addition, the people of this village are referred to as "the insiders" ( 此中人 ). The only thing needed to make the analogy complete is a fisherman or woodcutter guiding them. See Shadick's translation (*Travels of Lao Ts'an*), pp. 85-90.

15. The term *shih-shih* "stone room" is a bit odd, but the way it is used and what transpires there make it something like an antechamber to one of the Taoist "cave paradises" or grottos.
16. Let me merely note here Liu Yü-hsi's (劉禹錫) "Yu T'ao-yüan" (游桃源), Han Yü's "T'ao-yüan T'u" (桃源圖), Chang Hsü's (張旭) "T'ao-yüan Chi" (桃源谿), and Wang An-shih's (王安石) "T'ao-yüan Hsing" (桃源行). Of course, since Su Tung-p'o (蘇東坡) did "responses" (和, *ho*) to all of T'ao Ch'ien's poems, he too has a Peach-blossom Fountain verse.
17. At least it is closest in structure to that *tz'u-p'ai*.
18. *Wen-hsüeh Chia* gives the title of Shao's book as *Yü-Ch'iao Wen-tui*, but it appears in Morohashi as *Yü-Ch'iao Tui-wen* (漁樵對問). To make it more confusing, *Chung-wen Ta Tz'u-tien* (中文大辭典) lists it as *Yü-Ch'iao Wen-ta* (漁樵問答), which is certainly wrong.
- 18a. In *Hsüan-ho Yi-shih* he's given credit for occult knowledge and a prophecy about the coming disaster of Wang An-shih. *Sung Yüan P'ing-hua Ssu-chung* ed., p. 7.
19. I am speaking from the vantage point of a twentieth century man, of course, and Chinese philosophic writers may not have chosen their book titles that way at all.
20. *Feng-shen Yen-yi*, Peking, 1955, p. 212.
- 20a. One title of what should be a farce *yüan-pen* (院本) entertainment found in *Ch'o-keng Lu* is *yü-ch'iao wen-hua*, and I should not be surprised if it were a parody of a philosophical dialogue in the mouths of a comic Fisherman and Woodcutter.
21. See, for example, CYSC, pp. 69 429 1207 1301 1382 1389  
 266 531 1242 1321 1383 1393  
 310 1033 1292 1381 1384 1750
- I would like to thank Professor Eleanor H. Crown (friend and colleague) for pointing out several of these occurrences to me.
22. See Cheng Ching-mao's translation of Yoshikawa's *Kenkyū*, p. 261.
23. *Chung-kuo Wen-hsüeh-chia Ta Tz'u-tien* #1999. For one version of the entire *tz'u*, see *Sung-tz'u Hsüan*, Shanghai 1962, pp. 23-4; Hu Yün-yi, ed. and English trans. of same in *Tamkang Review*, VII, 2, 1976, by H. K. Josephs.

