The Contributions of T’ang and Five Dynasties Transformation Texts
(pien-wen) to Later Chinese Popular Literature

by
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Since the discovery of the Tun-huang manuscripts around the turn of this century and the beginnings of the study of the pien-wen ("transformation texts") found among them, it has commonly been asserted that this genre of T'ang period (618-906) and Five Dynasties period (907-960) popular Buddhist narrative had a crucial impact on the subsequent development of Chinese literature. Unfortunately, these assertions have not been accompanied by sufficient rigor and data to be convincing. The earliest known form of prosimetric (chantefable) fiction in China, the transformation texts also represent the first extended examples of vernacular narrative. Their appearance in China over a thousand years ago and their recent reemergence in our midst are clearly matters of great moment. The problem we are confronted with, however, is how to assess their role in the history of Chinese literature fairly and accurately.

The crucial overall impact of Buddhist literature on the development of Chinese narrative has already been delineated by Průšek:

An analysis of the still preserved popular stories of the Sung [960-1279] indicates that their form was but an adaptation and an improvement of the pien-wen of the T'ang period. Thus the hypothesis that even the secular narrators during the T'ang dynasty were already influenced by religious sermons becomes probable. Despite the fact that the narrators had existed probably in China for ages long, still during the T'ang dynasty, this art had been permeated by the influences of popular, Buddhist literature to such an extent that it had become transformed into a new type of literature which had, in its form at least, very little in common with the ancient popular stories, the "hsiao-shuo," already mentioned in the literary history of the Han dynasty. Therefore, we may say that the history of the popular narrative and novel, such as it existed in China up to the most recent times, commenced no earlier than during the T'ang dynasty, and that even though this literature, within the scope of its development, had drawn upon purely Chinese material, still it was essentially a religious creation, a by-product of Buddhism and it bore traces of its origin for a long
Průšek's observations in the latter part of this paragraph are of profound importance for the history of Chinese popular literature. The purpose of this paper is to bring together some of the findings, made by scholars who are expert in various genres of Chinese popular literature, that support Průšek's observations. We shall see that the impact of folk Buddhist transformation performances and popular transformation texts as well as Buddhist literature in general on later narrative literature in China -- both fiction and drama -- was enormous.

Liu Wu-chi sees "the germs of both fiction and drama" as having "long been existent in pre-T'ang times, but it was in the T'ang and Sung periods that they emerged from their embryo stage." Fair enough, but one still wishes to know what were the nourishing factors present in the T'ang and Sung which caused these "germs" to sprout and ultimately to fructify.

Paul Demiéville dates the beginnings of popular [written, as opposed to folk oral] literature in China from the eighth and ninth century -- i.e., from the same time as the rise of Tun-huang pien-wen. And, although he does not spell out in detail the relationship between the two, he sees the appearance of popular literature at that particular time as having to do with the fact that Buddhism reached its peak in China between the seventh and tenth centuries. This makes eminently good sense. Demiéville's analysis can be elaborated on by pointing out that the Buddhist influences which contributed to the appearance of popular written literature in China are manifold. They include social, educational, religious, literary, artistic, linguistic, and other aspects of the overall Buddhist impact on Chinese life.

Sun K'ai-ti has postulated the influence of Buddhist storytelling on the whole train of development in Chinese popular literature to the end of the Ming [1368-1644] period:

If now, in our researches, we look at [the matter] from [the standpoint] of artistic development, had there been no performances of pien and storytelling of the period after the Chin removed south [317] to the T'ang and Five Dynasties, there could not have been the storytelling of the Sung nor the lyric tales (tz'u-hua 三者 五 ) of the Yüan [1260-1368] and Ming. Had there been no storytelling of the Sung nor lyric tales of the Yüan and Ming, there could not have been the late Ming short story.

My only quarrel with this series of limited postulations is that, except in perhaps inchoate forms, pien cannot be shown to have come into existence before the T'ang period.

One of the most straightforward general statements on the subject is that of Ogawa Tamaki:
Vernacular fiction in China did not arise of itself nor did it have an independently occurring form. Rather, it was born under Indian influence. In other words, we may fairly say that its origins are in India. Today, there are many unclear points regarding the route of this influence. But, if we put forward the hypothesis that, within China proper, the direct parent of vernacular fiction is Buddhist literature -- especially * pien-wen -- differences of opinion notwithstanding, I believe that it is nonetheless an appropriate explanation.

Most prominent authorities on various types of prosimetric, popular literature of the Sung and later periods trace these genres back to * pien-wen. Cheng Chen-to has delineated the basic outlines of the influence of transformation texts on the overall development of prosimetric literature (*shuo-ch'ang wen-hsüeh 説唱文獻*) in China. Ch'iu Chen-ching identifies * pien-wen as the forerunner of Sung and Yüan "expository tales" (*p'ing-hua 議芳*) and all subsequent prosimetric literature. Li Shih-yü sees "precious scrolls" (*pao-chüan 宝卷*) as growing out of * pien-wen and Sung "sūtra tellings" (*shuo-ching 説經*). Fu Hsi-hua says that Ch'ing period [1644-1911] "young bannermen books" (*tzu-ti-shu 弟弟書*) derive from "strum lyrics" (*t'ân-tz'ü 探詞*) but ultimately from T'ang * pien-wen. Yet it has not heretofore been adequately shown how these genres relate to * pien-wen and, more importantly why the prosimetric form in popular literature can be traced back no earlier than to the T'ang period.

Yeh Te-chün begins his important study of prosimetric literature in the Sung, Yüan, and Ming periods by stating that all prosimetric literary genres derived from Buddhist popular literature of the T'ang and Five Dynasties. Aoki Masaru, in a note written during July, 1941 and prompted by Tōhoku University 東北大學 Professor Doi Köchi 堤光知, pointed out that European fiction had also been influenced by Indian storytelling. This reinforced his earlier perception that Buddhist literature was the model for Chinese prosimetric storytelling forms. Fu Yün-tzu, too, has emphasized the crucial role of Tun-huang popular literature in the development of Sung storytelling. Lo Chen-yü deduced that the "sūtra-telling" of the Sung period entertainers directly derived from * pien-wen. It has been claimed, as well, that there is a direct connection between transformation texts, the "history lectures [narrations]" 讲史 of the Sung entertainers, and the later historical romances.

Yüeh Heng-chün has pointed out the indispensability of Tun-huang transformation texts for the study of the vernacular short story in China: "In actuality, if there were no * pien-wen, there would surely be no way to understand the origin of hua-pen.... However, by relying upon this relationship to hua-pen, it is also possible to provide a foothold for a certain aspect of * pien-wen studies." The "certain aspect" to which Yüeh refers is the developmental one.
Ch'iu Chen-ching perceives the vital influence of *pien-wen* on later popular literature as having two chief aspects, its prosimetric form and the vivid quality of the stories that characterizes its content. The former aspect was more decisive for the development of *pao-chüan*, *chu-kung-tiao*, *ku-tz'u*, *t'an-tz'u*, etc. and the latter aspect was more important in the rise of the vernacular short story and the novel. Ch'iu holds that the two aspects exerted equal force in the growth of Chinese drama. Anthony Yu also recognizes the important place of *pien-wen* (and, presumably, their oral antecedents) in the development of Sung and Yüan storytelling and drama. Although he is careful not to imply that any of the major novels had an "oral composition", his caution is not meant to negate the possibility of oral antecedents. "...Such rhetorical features as the *Hua-shuo* [文說] and *Ch'ieh/Ch'üeh-shuo* [說說] (we were speaking of...) and the stock formula (if you want to know what follows, listen to the next round's unravelment), which open and close each chapter of the classic novel reflect unmistakably the expressions characteristic of an oral tradition."23

Rhetorical formulations of this nature also frequently appear in the expository tales (*p'ing-hua*). I have brought together a few examples to give some indication of their nature:

"How high did it appear?" 怎見得高？(before verse).

"It was the second watch of the night and the moon was bright as day. How did it appear?" 夜色二更，月明如晝，如何見得？(before verse).

"How was that banquet?" 那筵會如何？(before set piece).

"What did she say?" 說個甚的？(before verse).

"What were the four sentences he spoke?" 那四句道甚麼？(before verse).

"How did he speak?" 說道（before direct discourse, two occurrences).

"See (!) that Commandant in Charge [of the Northern Capital] at that time (!) he is sitting in the court, what is it like?" 看那留守坐廳時如何？

The consanguinity of these expressions with the *pien-wen* pre-verse formula and other quotative formulas that are found in Tun-huang popular literature is obvious. The continuation of such verse introductory formulas is also to be found in the later vernacular short story in such expressions as "all [he] saw was" (*tan chien* 但見), "there is a poem as evidence" (*yu shih wei cheng* 有詩為證), etc.

Men'shikov has remarked on the importance of *pien-wen* and Tun-huang songs for illuminating the origins of different genres of subsequent popular literature -- story, novel, and drama -- "in their genetic relationship with Buddhist literature."25 Chou Shao-liang maintains that the chief contributions of *pien-wen* to later popular literature were the following: 1. such
genres of folk literature as pao-chüan, t'än-tz'u, and so on are its direct descendants; 2. the use of verse passages in fiction; and 3. the prosimetrical form in drama. Cheng Chen-to has discussed the developmental relationship between pien-wen and "strum lyrics" (t'än-tz'u).27 And Hrdlička links28 the big drum ballads (ta-ku-shu 大鼓書) of this century directly to pien-wen. It is likely that the influence passed through the little drum lyrics (ku-tzu-tz'u 舌促), a Sung period popular literary genre for performance.

Fifty years ago there were still active in Kiangsu and Chekiang tellers of "precious scrolls" (pao-chüan), some of whom frequented the small teashops and others, dressed as monks (but they were not really), who were itinerant beggars (N.B.). Ch'ien Nan-yang, who reported29 this information, considered them to be descended from the Sung storytellers. This seems reasonable and, given the fact that Sung prosimetrical storytelling can be traced back to transformations, establishes a tentative series of links between twentieth-century "precious scrolls" and folk Buddhist literature of the T'ang period. Hence, it is commonly accepted among scholars who have studied pao-chüan intensively that their roots may be found in transformation texts and other related T'ang period performing arts.30 Striking correspondences do indeed exist between certain pao-chüan and specific Tun-huang texts. There are, for example, pao-chüan on the Buddhist saint Maudgalyāyana, the legendary heroine Meng Chiang-nü 梅娘 , the names of various birds 鳥名 and medicine names 草名.31 Through examination of the history of the Meng Chiang-nü story, it is apparent that the Tun-huang versions played a crucial role in its development. It is in the Tun-huang texts that the heroine's name is first fixed in its present form. There are other important details which differ from earlier versions and which become predominant in all later renditions. Among these is the fact that, in the Tun-huang texts, Meng Chiang-nü sets out on a long journey to send winter clothes to her husband, Ch'i Liang. This is highly significant in light of the fact that the episodic nature of prosimetrical texts is particularly well suited to the narration of journeys, flights, and so on.33 There are also a number of close parallels between the "Transformation Text on Wang Ling" and later fiction and drama dealing with the same subject but which were not present in earlier historical sources.34 Similarly, the transformation text on Wang Chao-chün is at the very core of the transmission of the story.35

Another scholar who credits pien-wen with having had a crucial formative influence on subsequent popular literature is Chang Ching-wen. Chang holds that "It is only due to the discovery of pien-wen that the origins of Sung dynasty hua-pen ("story roots", i.e. vernacular short stories) and chu-kung-tz'u [sic, → tiao], as well as later drama, pao-chüan, t'än-tz'u, ku-tz'u, etc. may be known, thus solving a number of problems in recent literary history."36 And, again, "The alternate use of sung and spoken passages in drama is undoubtedly due to the direct
influence of *pien-wen.*"\textsuperscript{37}

It is generally accepted that Yuan drama (*tsa-chü* 詩曲) has its immediate origins in the medley (*chu-kung-tiao* 章工調) and other nascent dramatic forms of the Sung period. At least one Yuan drama has the expression *chu-kung-tiao* in its title.\textsuperscript{38} This means that, traced back further, the roots of Yuan drama are to be found in transformation texts, for these latter have been shown\textsuperscript{39} to have a close relationship to the intermediary Sung dramatic forms. The important influence of Tun-huang narratives on the development of Chinese drama has been duly recognized by Chung-wen Shih when she says that "It was the *pien-wen* (early popular literature) and the oral storytelling of Sung times that had the greatest bearing on the emergence of Yuan dramatic literature." And, again, "The *pien-wen* and the 'medley' [*chu-kung-tiao*] are the embryo from which Yuan prose writing [in dramatic texts] developed."\textsuperscript{40}

This connection between Yuan drama and T'ang transformations would be logical even if we knew nothing at all about the Sung genres. For the form, the themes, and the narrative characteristics of the two genres bear obvious resemblances to each other. Even certain distinctive expressions in Yuan drama, such as *t'ai chü* (眺攝; "to look after, to nurture")\textsuperscript{41} and *tuan-sung* (縵詠; "to present a final gift", "to send off", "to do away with or finish off")\textsuperscript{42} can be traced through the medley (*chu-kung-tiao*) to popular Buddhist texts of the T'ang period. And, although he considers them "crude by comparison", David Roy does mention\textsuperscript{43} *pien-wen* together with Yuan drama. It is, furthermore, evident from Sun Hsien-chao's studies\textsuperscript{44} of the origins of many of the most popular Chinese dramas that *pien-wen* and related art forms played an important role in the transmission of the stories which form their plots. Hsiang Ta has rightly stressed the seminal importance of Tun-huang materials -- both in terms of language and of content -- for the study of the development of the medley, Yuan drama, popular fiction, and so on.\textsuperscript{45}

To assess properly the role of transformations in the rise of Chinese theater, it is necessary to discuss what dramatic traditions, if any, preceded them. There is no point in my attempting to detail exhaustively the pre-T'ang course of development of the theater. This has already been expertly done by Wang Kuo-wei\textsuperscript{46} and Tadeusz Žbikowski.\textsuperscript{47} I will make reference only to individual theatrical forms which have been singled out by various scholars as being "the origin of Chinese drama."\textsuperscript{48} By way of preface to my critical assessment of several of these proposals, I should state my understanding of what constitutes a true theater. Here I follow Chou I-pai who, in trying to discover when drama became an independent art in China, convincingly argues that the essential identifying factor for genuine Chinese drama is, as he says, "the enactment of a story"\textsuperscript{49} or, we may say, "the enactment of an extended, episodic narrative." It is this very aspect of drama which transformations bequeathed to the Chinese theatrical tradition.\textsuperscript{50}

Wang Kuo-wei, in his *History of Sung and Yuan Theatrical Cantos (Sung Yuan hsi-chü
(Shih), suggested that the ultimate origins of the theater in China were the shamanistic dances of Shang and Chou times. In the sacrifices to spirits, the shamans would entertain them with song and dance. While it must be admitted that this is true in the sense that certain analogous movements and religious affinities do exist between the performances of shamans and those of traditional actors, it must also be stressed that it is a partial truth because mature Chinese drama consists of many more elements than those which could possibly have derived from sacrificial rites, thaumaturgy, and exorcism. It is misleading, for example, to equate the "exorcistic plays" (no-hsi 傳戲) which were performed until recently in Kiangsi and Anhwei with their ancient Han forerunners called ch'ü-no 傳noise. The latter were rites for expelling demons and ghosts; plays were performed in conjunction with such rites only after the development of the drama. On the other hand, we must also remember that the proto-dramatic performances of the Rajasthani bhopo, the Indonesian wayang bèber dalang, and other related semi-religious, semi-theatrical figures were partially shamanistic in nature.

The southern lyrics from Ch'u known as the Nine Songs (Chiu-ko 虞歌) have also been offered as a precursor of Chinese drama. Although it is possible that these and, presumably, similar songs may have had some effect on the formation of the Chinese theater, it is inaccurate to consider them alone as being responsible for the birth of drama. They represent, rather, a type of shamanistic literature, and lack many of the most essential features of developed drama.

In the "Biographies of Jesters" (Ku-chi lieh-chuan 樂記) of The Records of the Grand Historian (c. 93 Before the International Era), there is an account of one "Entertainer Meng" 難. Reference has frequently been made to this account as proof of the existence of the theater in China before the Han period. This reasoning, however, is fallacious because the account itself tells us very clearly that "Entertainer Meng" was nothing more than an impersonator; it makes no mention of the acting out of a story on the stage.

The "Biography of Ts'ai Yung" 慕容 (133-192) in the History of the Later Han (450 IE, referring to events of the second century) has the following passage:

The scholars, in competing for advantage, made quite a stir. The more lofty among them were much given to citing classical exegesis and parables; the inferior ones would link up a series of vernacular expressions (su-yü 十語), as though they were actors (p'ai-yu 嬰語), or they would plagiarize entire texts and have the empty glory of a "famous name".

This proves that Later Han actors did more than just indulge in mime, pantomime, dumb show, or skits. But it does not permit us to draw the conclusion that Han plays portrayed an extended
scenario.

Another often mentioned source of Chinese drama are the "hundred entertainments" 百戲 of the Han period. In his "Rhymeprose on the Western Capital" 西京賦 (107 CE), Chang Heng 張衡 (78-139) gives capsule descriptions of many of the "hundred entertainments". They include lifting heavy objects, pole-climbing, somersaults, playing with small wooden balls, wrestling, rope-walking, dressing up like a huge fish or dragon and dancing about, etc. Aside from the fact that most of these Han entertainments can themselves be traced to foreign sources, none of them can be considered as drama since none portrays an extended story.

The early Ch'ing writer, Na-lan Hsing-te, correctly saw a connection between the Western Regions and the rise of the theater: "Acting 威伶 flourished during the Yüan era but, during Liang times (502-556), there was the 'Great Cloud Music' 大雲之音 in which an old man was made to enact matters of the transformations of divine immortals 神仙變化之事. In actuality, acting begins with this." While it is possible to make a case that "acting" begins with this sort of performance, it would be incorrect to say that drama did. The most we can gather from the description of the "Great Cloud Music" is that the performance consisted of music, perhaps song, and dancing. There is no evidence that an extended story was enacted.

A more realistic and accurate understanding of the origins of Chinese drama must take into account the fact that it is a complicated art form which consists of song, dialogue, music, gesture, dance, costuming, and so on. All of the various types of performances considered just above did contribute important elements to the evolving dramatic tradition. In regard to the question of the birth of Chinese drama, Taduesz Žbikowski has made the eminently sensible statement that, "In all probability, Chinese drama came to life as a result of the combination of two independently developing elements, the art of impersonation and acting on the one hand and the story-telling and ballad-singing on the other." Žbikowski's statement has, however, less applicability for the southern tradition which he was studying than it does for the northern. L. Carrington Goodrich has alluded to the crucial impact of foreign influences during the T'ang period in the development of a full-blown Chinese theater: "In the field of drama, the earlier short plays performed by court fools developed into plays of some length, a development that may have had a central Asiatic origin."

The gist of all my remarks here is simply this: Buddhist narrative arts were, by no means, solely responsible for the birth and development of Chinese drama. The sources of Chinese drama are as numerous as are its many parts. What does need to be pointed out, however, is that the prosimetric, episodic shape of the narrative in the vast majority of Chinese performing arts, including the various traditions of the stage, are traceable to Buddhist storytelling, preaching, and lecturing. All the numerous attempts to find an earlier, native source for these characteristics of
Chinese drama have failed because the necessary data to support them do not exist. The data which lead the investigator to Buddhist oral narrative as the source of these characteristics are overwhelming and cannot be ignored.

Since this paper is an attempt to assess the importance of transformation texts for the development of fiction and drama in China, I cannot discuss thoroughly the overall impact of India on Chinese theater. Since, however, transformation texts are Buddhist and have clear Indian antecedents, we should at least try to keep in mind the original performing arts context from which they emerged. There are dozens of different aspects of Indian theater that might be studied in order to understand better the origins of Chinese drama, but I shall mention only one. In pondering the extent and nature of Indian influence on Chinese theatrical traditions, I have often wondered about the derivation of $\text{ Kai}$ (kai or $k\epsilon i$) and $\text{ K'ua}$ (k'ua) ("gesture", "action or movement on stage", also written $k'\text{ u}a\ b'\text{ i}w\text{ om}$, 科范，科汛，科泛 etc.). Literary historians have thus far not provided any convincing explanation of the origins of these basic terms. The usual interpretation given is that $\text{ Kai}$ equals $\text{ Ki}$ ("intersection" or "break" or "division") and that $\text{ K'ua}$ is the distinctive "movement" of the actor(s) which invariably occurs at or marks these important points in the progress of a play. But this is tantamount to no explanation at all. I believe that one or both of these terms may be derived from Sanskrit karana ("posture"). In the Nāyāsastra of Bharata, which established the science of Indian drama, there are 108 of these postures described. They have been carved in stone at Chidambaram. I once began a systematic comparison of the standard gestures in Yüan drama and in Indian dramaturgy. The results were encouraging at a preliminary stage and merit further investigation.

One other important area that ought to be considered in any discussion of the evolution of the Chinese theatrical tradition is the contribution of shadow-plays and puppet-plays. It will be remarked that I place these two types of plays after T'ang transformations. Although it has often been asserted that both go back to at least the Han, such an assertion requires critical examination.

Ying Shao (flourished 178 IE), in his Comprehensive Configuration of Customs, referred to puppet performers (k'uei-lei 恩字) at festivals in the Han capital. But there are several other essential facts concerning the history of Chinese k'uei-lei which must be noted before any conclusions are drawn about the nature and significance of these performances. The first is that competent Chinese commentators from the T'ang and earlier have always recognized that these performances did not begin until Ling-ti's (168-188 IE) time, that they consisted of song and dance, and that they were originally used in accompaniment with funerary music. There is never any mention of their being used to tell a story or enact a drama before the Sung period. These bits of information allow us to draw the following conclusions about the historical
The development of puppets in China: "Puppets" began as funerary effigies (yung) which were used to replace the human sacrificial victims so well known from the excavations of Shang dynasty tombs. Recent archeological discoveries in China attest to the widespread use of such effigies. Japanese burial mound figurines (haniwa) also go back to remote antiquity. But, as with the Chinese funerary images (yung), there is no indication that these clay images were used in dramatic representations. The development of puppet plays is an entirely separate matter, one that is dependent on the prior existence of storytelling traditions. This is not to deny that the technical knowledge employed in making various types of dolls and funerary images could well be utilized in creating puppets for puppet-theater. The point is simply that, without oral narrative, puppets alone do not constitute a type of theater. During Han times, jointed string puppets (k'uei-lei) entered China and were notable as a technical advance over the immobile funerary images. Yet it would appear that the k'uei-lei had become detached from the narratives which, in India, they were used to enact. Hence these novel devices in China were used primarily to entertain people at banquets with song and dance. It was, to reiterate, not until the Sung period that they were reunited with a dramatic and narrative tradition.

Lo Chin-t'ang, in a brief but devastating article, has cast serious doubt on the supposed Han origins of the puppet play. He has also demonstrated conclusively, following Hiian-lin Dschi, that the reference to a puppet in Lieh-tzu counts for nothing in terms of trying to find an early Chinese origin. In the first place, the book as a whole is a Chin dynasty forgery. Secondly, though the Lieh-tzu purports to be a Taoist work, it shows strong Buddhist influence at certain key points. Indeed, the preface by the reputed fourth-century compiler, Chang Chan states that Buddhism and Taoism amount to practically the same thing. And the passage in Lieh-tzu which mentions a puppet bears a great deal of similarity, even in small details, to that in the Jātaka-nidāna, translated in 285 IE by Dharmarakṣa. Both deal with the craft of the artisans who created the superbly life-like puppets and the king's reactions upon viewing them. Both also tell how the king becomes angry when the puppet eyes his consort. Dschi believes that these correspondences could not possibly be accidental. The same story also occurs in the Mahāvastu and in a Tocharian text.

The plethora of variant polysyllabic orthographies alone make it virtually certain that the Chinese word for string puppet is foreign in origin. It is undoubtedly the same word as kukla which appears in so many Eurasian languages with the meaning "puppet". The best information now available on string puppets is that they spread through Asia and Europe, presumably with nomadic gypsies who carried them from their ancestral home in northwest and north-central India. From at least the beginning of the International Era, Indian musicians, storytellers, conjurers, and other types of entertainers spread over the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia in
large numbers. Their exodus had its ramifications in East Asia as well.

We may safely assume that there were true puppet-plays in China by the time of the late T'ang period. This is attested by a passage from The Recorded Sayings of Ch'ian Master Lin-chi Hui-chao of Chen Prefecture [d. 867]:

The Master said:

Look at the wooden puppets performing on the stage!
Their jumps and jerks all depend upon the man behind.

There is also an extended metaphorical reference to string puppet drama in a Tun-huang text (British Library manuscript S3872), one of the lectures on the Vimalakīrti-sūtra:

And it is like a mechanized puppet,
That all because of pulling and drawing of strings and threads,
May dance or sing,
May walk or run,
But when the canto's over and the story's finished,
Is tossed to one side.

Note particularly, in addition to other basic elements of developed drama, the crucial mention of "story" (literally shih "matter"). Additional Tun-huang manuscripts mentioning puppets are S4037, where in line thirteen we find the phrase "to work puppets" , and Leningrad Institute of Asian Peoples manuscript Flug 365 which compares certain aspects of puppetry to samādhi (deep meditation).

It is conceivable that string puppets were used at Tun-huang to enact religious dramas. Paris Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript P2975v is a notification to members of a religious association listing fines imposed for infractions of the association rules. Among the fines levied -- all of which appear to have been used by the association in conjunction with meetings they held -- is the item "string puppet(s)" . One wonders for what purpose a lay Buddhist association required puppets.

If genuine puppet-plays are not to be found in China before the T'ang period, there is likewise no proof of the existence of shadow-plays there until the Sung. In the "Biographies of
Imperial In-Laws [i.e. Wives] of the History of the Han 漢書, there is an account of a mysterious wonder-worker from Ch'i 齊 named Shao-weng 少翁 showing the emperor Wu 武帝 ("Martial Emperor") an image of his beloved, deceased Lady Li 夫人 in the year 121 BIE. This was accomplished at night and involved the use of candles and curtains that had been set up expressly for the purpose. The "Biographies of Consorts" in the History of the Southern Dynasties 南史 has a strikingly similar account of the Liu-Sung emperor Hsiao-wu-ti 孝武帝 ("Filial and Martial Emperor", r. 452-464) being shown, this time by a shaman, an image of the Lady Yin 吳 after she died. Both of these accounts are frequently referred to as proof that China possessed a shadow-play from Han times on. But it is curious that, aside from the more obvious correspondences, both accounts mention a rhyme-prose or rhapsody written in honor of Lady Li. This alone makes the History of the Southern Dynasties account suspect. And, even were the latter account authentic, the technique of projecting an image on a screen would still have to be declared a rarity in China before the Sung (when it became popular) because it is mentioned only in these two works which are more than five hundred years apart. Still, assuming that such a technique did exist in the Han and Liu-Sung periods, it has no bearing on the question of the date when shadow-plays first appeared in China. For neither of these accounts pretend to disclose anything more than that a convincing likeness of a departed consort was shown to a lovesick emperor. There is not the slightest indication in these accounts of a narrative or dramatic performance. As such, they are largely irrelevant to the study of the history of the Chinese shadow-play.

A work attributed to P'ang Yüan-ying 龔元英 (fl. 1078-1082), Meadow of Conversation (T'an-sou 談敘), recounts briefly the anecdote about Shao-weng's efforts on behalf of the Han emperor. It then comments that,

after this, the world had the shadow play. However, from the time of Han Wu on, nothing more was heard of it. During the period of Jen-tsung's reign (1023-1063) in the Sung dynasty, there were among the market people those who could tell the events of the Three Kingdoms. Some adopted their stories and, by adding embellishments, made shadow figures (ying-jen 陰人) so that, for the first time, representations of the battles of the Three Kingdoms -- Shu, Wei, and Wu -- were brought into being. They have been transmitted to the present day.

We must note, with the author of this passage, that there is more than a thousand-year gap between the Shao-weng anecdote and the appearance of genuine shadow-plays in the Sung period. This
same passage is repeated in *The Notes on the Origins of Events and Things* by Kao Ch'eng (fl. 1078-1085), under the heading "Shadow-Play", which contains important information on the history of shadow-plays in China. After recording with some skepticism the story of Shao-weng's causing the appearance of Madame Li's shadowy image for Han Wu-ti, Kao goes on to cite the passage quoted above. As presented by Kao, the passage would seem to be saying fairly straightforwardly that, so far as the story of the Three Kingdoms is concerned, the shadow-play versions developed out of storytelling during the Sung period.

That there was a flourishing shadow theater in China from the early Sung period on is confirmed by a report in *Miscellany for Illuminating the Way*, compiled by Chang Lei (1052-1112). We read about a rich young man in the capital, Pien-liang (Kaifeng), who was fond of watching shadow plays.

What, then, led to the birth of the shadow-play after the T'ang? Sun K'ai-ti has put the matter in this fashion: "If the monks who gave popular lectures during the T'ang and Five Dynasties had not set up illustrations at their lecture sessions, there might have been no basis for the birth of the shadow-play in the Sung.*

It is worth remembering that one of the purposes of Buddhist narrative as laid down by the Buddha himself is *to teach the illusory nature of the world*. Shadow-plays and storytelling with pictures were particularly effective in this regard for they were performed in dark settings with lamp or candle illumination. Artificial illumination is a necessity for shadow-plays, of course, but we know from the modern Indian traditions of storytelling with pictures that a light is often shone upon the part of the picture being explained. The flickering flame reveals the scenes and figures in such a manner that, to the observer, they seem actually to have been conjured up out of nothing. I can bear witness to the uncanny effect presented by a *wayang kulit* (Indonesian shadow-play) performance. On October 25, 1976, I had the good fortune of attending such a performance presented by the talented American *dalang*, Larry Reed, at Harvard's South House. In many ways, I was more transfixed by the hazy dancing images projected by the oil lamp that by the clear and steady ones of modern cinema. This effect was heightened by the skillful shamanistic performance of the narrator. The whole Indonesian tradition of *wayang* in all its forms is living testimony to the truism that the Indian illustrated narrative performances were meant to convey point-blank the message that the world is but an illusion even though it may seem quite real. As Claire Holt puts it, all of the various types of *wayang* "reflect the same shadowy yet glittering universe permeated with supernatural forces, ever charged with tensions...."*93

The didactic religious purpose of shadow-plays during the Ming period can be seen from the fact that their performance was referred to in Hopei province as "proclaiming scrolls". This remained a common expression for shadow-play performances in the lower Yangtze valley.
while in the Yellow River valley the equivalent expression became "reciting scrolls" 念卷. Particularly in North China, where peasants were involved in White Lotus rebellions, the government laid part of the blame on the shadow-play performers. They were accused of "using paper men to stir up phantoms and create rebellion." The officials referred to these performers as "occult lamp bandits" 焚燈匪 and arrested them in substantial numbers.95

In Fukien and in Taiwan, shadow-plays are called "Leather Monkey Plays" 皮猴戲 (peikau hi). One is automatically led to think of the Indian monkey-god, Hanuman, and his lateral descendant in China, Sun Wu-k'ung ("the monkey who is enlightened about emptiness") 孫悟空. It is particularly appropriate that the shadow-play should be named after these heroes who are both known for their unparalleled powers of supernatural transformation.

Once again, we must ask whether it is probable that the technique of the shadow-play could have been transmitted to China from abroad. The answer is yes and, as with picture-storytelling96 and puppet plays, a Central Asian route is virtually certain. Proof of the existence of Indian-derived shadow-plays in Buddhist Central Asia during the T'ang period and earlier is found in the mention of the Prakrit name chāyā-nālai in a Khotanese text.97 Chāyā means, literally, "shadow" (cf. Greek ἱάζε)98 and the Sanskrit form of nālai is nāṭaka which means "dance" or "drama".99 In the so-called Book of Zambasta (V.98), chāyā-nālai occurs in combination with several words indicating unreality:

So does he recognize this parikalpa [deception]: it is like a dream, a mirage. Until bodhi [enlightenment], it is like a magic illusion. A mere shadow-play is being performed.

\[\text{ta tuto parikalpo paysendā hūni māñanda marīce yā -- va balysūstā kho māya samu chāya-nālai ggeiste} 100\]

The more evolved form naule, which seems to mean full-fledged drama, is found in a late Khotanese text.101

The equipment required for a shadow-play performance could be very simple: two hands, a white cloth, and perhaps a lamp. This is known from a poem about a "Hand-Shadow Player" 手影戲者 by a Buddhist monk named Hui-ming 惠明. The poem was published in the twelfth century by Hung Mai in his Record of the Listener:

With three feet of raw silk for a stage,
He completely relies on ten fingers to act out his jokes;
Sometimes, in the bright moon, beneath the lighted window,
A laugh even comes from his palm and fist.\textsuperscript{102}

There is, then, no difficulty as regards the problem of transporting over great distances elaborate equipment. The performer himself could surely have carried all the necessary properties, even if they consisted of a full set of shadow figures.

All things considered, it would appear that the rise of the shadow-play in China was ultimately related to the importation of Buddhist narrative and dramatic forms. The exact nature of transmission and adaptation will probably never be known, but the historical evidence presented here points to such a connection. Liu Mau-tsai has noted,\textsuperscript{103} furthermore, that shadow-play and puppet-play scripts stylistically resemble \textit{pien-wen}.

Sun K'ai-ti's important article, "An Examination of the Derivation of the Conventions of Singing and Acting in Modern Drama from Puppet Theater and Shadow Theater,"\textsuperscript{104} though not universally acknowledged by scholars, has never been seriously challenged.\textsuperscript{105} Without going into all of the elaborate details, suffice it to say that Sun identified\textsuperscript{106} the following three characteristics of Chinese drama as having evolved directly from puppet and shadow plays:

1. The actor's aside to the audience upon first entrance (so he will not be mistaken for someone else) in which he tells who he is and, often, what he is going to do.
2. The distinctive design of facial make-up (\textit{lien-p'u} \( \frac{\text{ù}}{\text{ù}} \)): 
   a. to define the nature of the player;
   b. to fix his social position;
   c. to indicate his part in the play.
3. The gestures and postures of human actors that are highly unnatural and intentionally mimic those of puppets. This is true especially of the characteristic gait of the actor in Chinese drama. His leg bends at the knee to a right angle, rising perpendicularly to the floor and then dropping mechanically. This makes no sense until one realizes that it is identical to the movement of string puppets.

All of these characteristics are vestigial signs of the descent of Chinese drama from puppets and shadows. It seems to me that there is no other logical explanation than that advanced by Sun. This explanation is confirmed by the known historical process of evolution of Indonesian and Turkish theaters.\textsuperscript{107}

It would appear that the ideas which Sun K'ai-ti elaborated into a full theoretical statement had already been voiced several years earlier. Genevieve Wimsett, for example, writing before 1936, offered the following perceptive analysis, based partly on the ideas of Mei Lan-fang:
Many of the Chinese actor's significant gestures are frankly patterned on the movement of a puppet swinging from its strings, and, consequently, executing stylized movements never spontaneous in the human being. So profound a student of the drama in all its phases as the celebrated actor, Mei Lan-fang, is of the opinion that the human actor is the direct descendant of the animated puppet, inheriting from this spiritual ancestor certain conventions of posture and movement still characterizing Chinese dramatic technique. As Dr. Mei points out, this peculiarity is well exemplified in the common wheeling movement with which the actor executes a rotary turn, no deviation from the fixed form being permissible that could not be executed by the puppet prototype. Certainly, in Japan the derivative art of the stage makes full acknowledgment to the seniority of the marionette.

Sun also commented on the fact that in Yuan drama only one character did all of the singing which he felt to be a logical consequence of its evolution from more purely narrative forms. As we shall see below, there are many intermediary genres of popular dramatic narrative that serve to link human drama with oral narrative. Puppets and shadows occupy a place near the beginning of the separation of drama from its narrative roots. The transformation (pien), which is basically a type of picture storytelling, stands even further back on this evolutionary path of bifurcation. The aim of all of these arts is to create the impression that the story presented by the performer(s) is real. It is, incidentally, interesting to remark that in Peking opera, colored bursts of smoke are sometimes used to create a special atmosphere of illusion. One wonders whether this practice is in any way related to the Sung "gunpowder puppets."  

The descriptions of life in the Sung capitals contain valuable information on popular entertainments, some of which is directly relevant to our studies. The Records of Dreams of the Splendors of the Eastern Capital states that in Pien-ching, during the Ghost Festival of the seventh month (chung-yuan chieh), "the musicians from the entertainment quarters, starting from the seventh day, would enact the variety play 'Maudgalyāyana Rescues His Mother.' It lasted straight through to the fifteenth [i.e., nine days] before stopping. The onlookers were twice what they normally were." This is interesting because it tells us that one of the most popular transformation texts had already by the Northern Sung become a type of drama, that it was extremely well-received, that it lasted as long as nine days, and that the performers were in all probability not monks but professional actors.

Under the heading "Various Entertainers from the Entertainment Quarters"
the Notes on the Sights of the Capital City, there is an important description of the shadow-play in Hangchow, the Southern Sung capital:

At first, shadow-play forms were carved from plain paper by men of the capital. Later, they used leather decorated with colors to make them. Their stories are quite similar to those of the history-tellers; for the most part they are half-true and half-false. The public-spirited and the loyal are carved with an upright appearance, the lascivious and evil ones are given ugly appearances. It is probably to embody rewards and punishments for the commoners in the markets who see the plays.

What is most intriguing about this description is that it almost seems to suggest that shadow-figures were first cut out of picture scrolls made from plain paper. This is precisely the process of dramatic evolution which I have predicted for China on the basis of information from Indonesian wayang and Indian storytelling traditions. Also interesting in this description is the assertion that the stones of the shadow-plays were the same as those for storytellers. This, too, is in accord with the theory I have been proposing that fiction and drama in China are two sides of the same coin.

Also in the Notes on the Sights of the Capital City under the same heading, among miscellaneous manual arts, there is mentioned "Tricks with Thread" (pien hsien-erh). Pien here seems to imply a type of jugglery or prestidigitation. This immediately brings to mind a parallel with ancient Indian śaubhikā which was both a type of picture storytelling and a form of conjuration.

Finally, in the same text, there is listed "sūtra-telling, that is to say the elaboration of Buddhist books." A nearly identical definition is found in the Ephemeral Millet Dream Record under the heading "Storytellers and Narrators of Sūtras and History." And in the Old Affairs of Hangchow, there are listed under the heading "Various Types of Entertainers" seventeen "Sūtra-Tellers and Sūtra-Jokesters" Only four of them are identified as "monks," including the first who has the colorful appellation "Long Whistle Monk." Perhaps these are some of the categories that overtly religious transformations and sūtra lectures (chiang-ching-wen, another type of Buddhist popular literature from Tun-huang) evolved into during the Sung period. The word pien itself may have been dropped because of its alien associations. The presence of assimilated Buddhist narrative themes and forms is conspicuous even in a cursory examination of these Sung accounts of entertainments. This is in sharp contrast to the accounts of entertainments from pre-T'ang times where the stress is on mimicry and acrobatics. We may conclude from this
that T'ang Buddhistic performing arts must have had a profound effect on the development of theater in China.

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Chou Shu-chia states\textsuperscript{119} that it is widely accepted among scholars that the Chinese novel finds its origins in T'ang Buddhist \textit{pien-wen}. While this may be so, some scholars remain skeptical because the proofs of influence have not been made rigorous enough. Let us see if we can go part of the distance towards alleviating this deficiency.

According to Huo Shih-hsiu,\textsuperscript{120} there were two major literary developments in the T'ang period, poetry (\textit{shih-ko} 詩 歌, [referring to the flowering of regulated verse]) and the classical short story (\textit{ch'uan-ch'i} 傳 奇). Both of these he traces back to antecedents in the Six Dynasties period, the former to the phonological (\textit{sheng-li} 声 律) researches of Buddhist translators and the latter to the "accounts of anomalies" (\textit{chih-kuai}) tradition which bear the direct impress of Indian influence. As Huo says, "Many of the Six Dynasties accounts of anomalies pilfered stories from the Buddhist canon or foreign legends...."\textsuperscript{121} The classical short story writers absorbed and adapted these foreign tales with more skill and finesse than had their Six Dynasties predecessors. The indebtedness of the T'ang classical short story to the Indian storytelling tradition can be massively documented by reference to such collections as the \textit{Pañchatantra}, \textit{Kathā-sarit-sāgara} and, of course, the Buddhist canon. The influence is obvious not only in terms of content (themes, motifs, and even entire plots have been borrowed) but also in terms of shape and form. Huo demonstrates,\textsuperscript{122} beyond the shadow of a doubt, that one of the most famous short stories of the T'ang period, Shen Chi-chi's 沈起濟 "Record of Being in a Pillow" 枕中記 (also called "Yellow Millet Dream" 黃粱夢) has its source in a collection of Buddhist tales.\textsuperscript{123} The same also holds true for the well-known story, "Tu Tzu-ch'un" 杜子春,\textsuperscript{124} spectacular stories of swordsmen,\textsuperscript{125} and countless other T'ang tales.

The early existence of a rich narrative tradition in India is indisputable. "Among the many volumes of the Theravada Buddhist canon is a collection of 547 popular stories,\textsuperscript{126} taking up over 1800 pages in the standard English translation.\textsuperscript{127} These form the collection known in Pali as \textit{Jataka}, and commonly referred to as 'The Jatakas,' probably the largest and finest collection of narrative literature from any ancient civilization in the world."\textsuperscript{128}

Eberhard has made the amazing statement\textsuperscript{129} that "When a Chinese animal tale or any other tale can be traced as far back as the sixth century or earlier, it is almost certain that the tale is of Indian origin and that the origin can normally be proved by the Buddhist translations of Indian texts." Upon further investigation, it turns out that the statement is not so amazing after all since this claim has been convincingly documented by scholars specializing in early Chinese fiction. Huo Shih-hsiu has made a similar statement: "For a good many famous classical tales (\textit{ch'uan-ch'i}) of the T'ang dynasty, we can nearly always find their origins in Buddhist sūtras or Indian stories.\textsuperscript{130} He also provides abundant examples to substantiate his claim. Likewise, Hu
Huai-ch'en has said that "Ancient Chinese popular tales and fiction written by literati invariably take their materials from stories in the Buddhist canon or from other foreign traditions."\(^{131}\) "In sum," as T'ai Ching-nung has written, "it is a fact that Indian stories had so deeply penetrated into folk works that people no longer were aware of the foreign thought [therein]."\(^{132}\) Liu K'ai-jung has also written\(^{133}\) of the vitally formative influence of Indian (especially Buddhist) literature on Chinese fiction, both in terms of form and of content, during the Six Dynasties period. He further states that this led to the creation during the T'ang of the genuine short story in China. And he goes on to describe the growth of vernacular literature in the Sung and Yüan as being a direct outgrowth of this Indian influence.

The relationship between transformation texts proper (i.e., apart from other types of Buddhist literature) and the classical Chinese tale (ch'uan-ch'i) is problematical. Liu K'ai-jung thought\(^{134}\) that they were directly and intimately related although he did not spell out how this might have come to be. Maeno Naoki, on the other hand, has reservations about Liu's theory. He holds\(^{135}\) that pien-wen, being derived from a kind of performing art, can at best be considered a lower form of ch'uan-ch'i.

Perhaps, before going further, I should say something about the basic terminology involved. The Chinese term for "fiction" is hsiao-shuo (literally, "small talk" or "minor talk"). This immediately points to a fundamental contrast with the English word which is derived ultimately from the past participle of Latin fingere ("to form" or "to fashion"). Where the Chinese term implies a kind of gossip or anecdote, the English word indicates something made up or created by an author or writer. "Hsiao-shuo" implies something, not of particularly great moment, that is presumed actually to have happened; fiction suggests something an author dreamed up in his mind. By calling his work "fiction", an author expressly disclaims that it directly reflects real events and people; when a literary piece is declared to be "hsiao-shuo", we are given to understand that it is hearsay or report. For this reason, many recorders of hsiao-shuo are at great pains to tell us exactly from whom they heard their stories. Judged by these standards, there is very little before the T'ang period that can properly be designated fiction in a narrow sense.

The "Bibliographical Treatise" of the History of the Han tries to explain the origin of the term hsiao-shuo.\(^{136}\) The "Treatise" states that the writers of hsiao-shuo probably derived from pai-kuan ("tare-gathering officials"). "They are wrought from the chit-chat of the streets and the conversations of the alleys, what is heard on the highways and what is told on the byways." Supposedly, these anecdotes were gathered by the government in order to gauge the real sentiments of the people, the same as with the yüeh-fu ("ballads"). This description in no way implies that there was a tradition of genuine fictional creation during Han times. Nor is there any evidence of a tradition of storytelling for the same period. This, by no means, to affirm that
there was no narrative before the T'ang period. The superb writing of the *Chronicle of Tso* (Tso chuan 左傳) and the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Shih-chi 史記) are ample evidence of a highly sophisticated tradition of historical narrative. But this is not "fiction". From around the time of the Han dynasty on, however, there comes into existence what might be called fictionalized history in such works as the *Intrigues of the Warring States* (Chan-kuo ts'e 戰國策), the *Spring and Autumn Annals of Wu and Yüeh* (Wu Yüeh ch'un-ch'iu 吳越春秋), and the *Lost Book of Yüeh* (Yüeh-chüeh shu 越絕書). Later, we find such works as the *Esoteric Account of the Martial Emperor of the Han* (Han Wu-ti nei-ch'ün 漢武帝內傳) and *Miscellaneous Notes on the Western Capital* (Hsi-ch'ing tsa-ch'i 西京雜記). It appears that these latter works were not meant to be taken as fiction at all but rather as insiders' accounts of goings-on at court and so forth.

In order to gain a true comprehension of the rise of fiction in China, we must recollect that nearly all post-T'ang popular, fictional narrative adopts the pretense of the storyteller's mode. This is such a pervasive trait that any history of Chinese literature is obliged to take it into account when making claims about the origins of fiction. Hence, there was great excitement when in the late fifties a now celebrated pottery figure of an entertainer was discovered in an Eastern Han tomb at T'ien-hui chen 天恆 near Chengtu, Szechwan. It is a delightful work of art that shows a fat-breasted man energetically beating a small drum. Very soon after the discovery, the figure was being promoted as a storyteller and later was considered by many writers of literary history to be substantial proof of the existence of a tradition of storytelling during the Eastern Han period. Still more recently, a similar animated figure from Hsin-tu 新都 county (also in Szechwan) has been touted as a "shuo-ch'ang [prosimetric] balladeer". This is impossible for, as I have shown in chapter four of *T'ang Transformation Texts*, there is no reliable evidence for a prosimetric tradition in China until hundreds of years after the Han. Even if there were textual grounds for the existence of prosimetric storytelling during the Eastern Han, there is nothing about these pottery figures that would link them to it. To make the claim that these charming entertainers are prosimetric storytellers is, at best, fanciful and wishful conjecture or, at worst, irresponsible and unscholarly misrepresentation. The original archeological report, in a detailed description, cautiously identified the T'ien-hui chen piece only as a "figure beating a drum". Chinese friends who viewed the Hsin-tu figure with me at the Philadelphia Museum of Art on March 29, 1987 variously described it as "a dancer", "a drummer for an acrobatic troupe", "a bare-breasted entertainer", and so on. I had asked them not to look at the museum label in order to avoid being influenced by the "official" interpretation of this most delightful piece. Certainly, there is no justification for fabricating a Han period storytelling tradition on the basis of these charming, though enigmatic, statuettes. Chao Chün-hsien has shown that there is yet no adequate
proof aduceable to substantiate the claim that professional storytelling existed during the Han period. Though it seems, in all probability, that there ought to have been professional storytellers at that time, we are not permitted to grant that there were without advancing particular data in support of such a claim.

The same holds true for written fiction. A late-Ming literary critic, Hu Ying-lin, states that T'ang and earlier authors did not write with a consciousness of creating fiction:

In general, unusual tales were prevalent during the Six Dynasties. But they were mostly erroneously transmitted records; their words were not necessarily set down as wholly illusional. It was only with the T'ang that people consciously favored the strange, and borrowed "small-talk" (hsiao-shuo, i.e. "fiction") as a pretext for the thrust of their writing.143

A modern literary historian, Huo Shih-hsiu, makes a similar statement and points to the influx of literature from abroad as providing the impetus for this fundamental change in the Chinese attitude toward fiction:

...Although we early on had the term "small talk" (hsiao-shuo), it was not until the classical tale (ch'uan-ch'i) of the T'ang dynasty that there began to be conscious creation. Furthermore, because of the absorption of a large quantity of foreign -- especially Indian -- stories, Chinese fiction was enriched and invigorated, thus opening up limitless new possibilities for later fiction.144

Liu Wu-chi, too, has seen the qualitative difference between T'ang and earlier narrative literature: "Crude and incidental in nature, meager in plot interest and characterization, these [pre-T'ang] anecdotes are not comparable in literary quality with later stories. It was not until the T'ang dynasty that Chinese fiction made an important stride in its development."145 Hence, we may say that, before the introduction of Buddhism, there was no tradition of consciously created fictional or dramatic narrative in China. It must be recognized, of course, that there was an abundance of historical narrative, euhemerized mythology, and cultic legend. The possibility for the creation of genuine fiction in post-Buddhist times was due to the introduction of a new Weltansicht.146 So far as the growth of fiction is concerned, the Six Dynasties must then be viewed as a kind of transitional period which lasted even into the beginning of the T'ang.

Tao-shih 道 世 (fl. 668), the compiler of the Pearl Grove in the Garden of Dharma (ţé 珠林), regarded the stories that he assembled therein -- some of which are quite unbelievable
because of their supernatural content -- almost as journalistic news gathering. They were, for
him, reports of actual spiritual events. Kan Pao (c. 300), in the preface to his Notes on
Researches into Spirits, also made it clear that he was attempting to record objective
and verifiable metahistorical data. Kan Pao is at pains to point out that he is trying to write a factual
history of the spirit world to supplement such works as Ssu-ma Ch'ien's Records of the Grand
Historian which deal with the world of men. The brevity of the accounts of anomalies shows that
the overwhelming interest of the researches was on content rather than on the development of the
narrative or any of its constituent elements. Many of these accounts betray obvious Buddhist or
more general Indian origins. Some show traces of an early Chinese mythology which has become
fragmented. The nature of the collections and some of the remarks of the compilers indicate that
these strange stories may have had a basis in oral tradition. But we have no way of knowing for
certain whether such tales were transmitted by professional storytellers or simply were told
informally and casually by many different types of individuals. There is some evidence in the
stories themselves that the latter case is more likely to be true.

Lu Hsün's comments on Six Dynasties tales of the supernatural are instructive in this regard:
"The men of that age believed that although the ways of mortals were not those of spirits, none the
less spirits existed. So they recorded these tales of the supernatural in the same way as anecdotes
about men and women, not viewing the former as fiction and the latter as fact." Of the
chih-kuai ("accounts of anomalies"), Jordan Paper has rightfully said that "These were not
original fiction, but stories recorded in a journalistic fashion." He has also characterized them as
"usually short and written as an account of a strange, but factual, incident, more in the style of
journalism than fiction." Hsü Chia-jui affirms that, before the T'ang, there was no
extended fiction. He holds that the expository tale (p'ing-hua) developed in the Sung because of
the Buddhist influence from pien-wen and that, thus, the ultimate origins of the Chinese novel are
to be found in India.

Another important step in the development of fiction during the Six Dynasties period was a
kind of coterie discourse called "pure talk" (ch'ing-t'an). It was a droll, intellectual type
of humorous exchange that was popular among groups such as the Seven Sages of the Bamboo
Grove. This social and philosophical discourse grew out of a movement known as "abstruse
learning" (hsüan-hsüeh). This is sometimes called "neo-Taoism" by Western scholars
but it should not be forgotten that it included elements of Buddhism and Confucianism. Pure talk
anecdotes are, again, very short and the wit is so rarefied that it oftentimes tends to escape us.
These anecdotes do not pretend to be fiction but profess, rather, to be records of actual dialogues
and colloquies.

Now, when we come to the T'ang period, some very fundamental changes take place in the
way fiction (both classical and vernacular) is told and written. The most important of these changes (prosimetric form, greater extension, abandonment of the claim that historically verifiable facts are being recorded, and so on), it can be demonstrated, are due to the massive infusion of Buddhism and the Indian cultural baggage it brought along. It might well be asked, why the T'ang period? Why not earlier? Had not Buddhism already penetrated China by the end of the Han dynasty at the latest? The reason these important developments in fiction did not take place until the T'ang period is because it was only then that Buddhism really came to be at home in China. It was during the T'ang that true Chinese schools of Buddhism were founded. More and more Chinese pilgrims were travelling to India (the names of over 100 are known); more and more Indians and Buddhicized Central Asians were coming to China. Against this mighty flood of Buddhist culture that poured over China, resistance was impossible. Finally, a sort of capitulation took place such that Chinese thought accommodated itself to the Indian Weltanschaung. A basic Indian presupposition about the world was that it is all illusion. Everything is, so to speak, "made-up" or, to press the point, a "fiction". In the orthodox Chinese view, everything is real and substantial. Things are not products of mind -- they are empirically and historically verifiable configurations of material forces. At times, the physical stuff of the universe may be highly attenuated, but the phenomenal world was never considered to be a product of the imagination. Given such differing ontological presuppositions, it is natural that there would be a tendency for fiction to be widespread in India while the customarily hyperpragmatic Chinese environment would not be conducive to it. For this reason, it was only after Buddhism had thoroughly worked its way into many levels of Chinese society and Chinese people (some, at least) became familiar and comfortable with Indian ontological presuppositions that there developed a receptivity to genuine fictional creation.

If we are unable to find examples of extended, imaginative narrative in literature before the time of the introduction of Buddhism into China, nor can we discover artistic representation of serialized narratives.153

In a series of highly speculative articles,154 Bulling has tried to make the case that certain tomb paintings from the Han period were representations of scenes from plays or illustrations of spectacles. Even if her hypothesis is proven correct, we still have no way of knowing whether these "plays" were accompanied by dialogues or even narration. In any case, the themes are largely historical rather than imaginative and represent only single scenes; they do not convey the impression of extended narrative or dramatic presentation and so cannot account for the appearance of these latter literary forms during a later period.

In his article entitled "An Illustrated Battle-Account in the History of the Former Han Dynasty," Duyvendak offers evidence that certain Han historical narratives may actually have been
derived from pictures. Yet the fact remains that, even if this be true, such narratives are historically and not fictionally motivated.

We do know that the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* must at one time have been accompanied by illustrations. This is alluded to, for example, in a poem by T'ao Ch'ien (372-427) in which we read this line: "And view the pictures in the *Seas and Mountains Classic*." It is also clear from such references, however, that the illustrations were either individual scenes later described in the text (which seems to have been the case with the *Classic of the Seas*) or single scenes that were intended to depict a portion of a pre-existing text. There is no evidence of any serial or narrative qualities in the illustrations themselves. Furthermore, even if there were, it could not be shown that these illustrations were evidence of fictional narration since they were intended to complement the purpose of the *Classic of the Mountains and Seas*, viz., ostensibly factual, geographical reportage.

By contrast, the most cursory examination of the history of Buddhist art reveals that it has had, from the time of its origins in India through its later diffusion to other Asian countries, a pronounced narrative content. The monumental art of Bhārhat and Sānchi bears eloquent testimony to the important place of pictorial narratives in the Buddhist tradition from a very early period (second century BCE and before). In a late fifth-century inscription from cave 16 at Ajanṭā, there is a reference to pictures in a religious edifice: "(The dwelling) which is adorned with windows, doors, beautiful picture-galleries [*su-vīthi*], ledges, statues of the nymphs of Indra and the like, which is ornamented with beautiful pillars and stairs and has a temple of the Buddha inside." Visual aids have always played an important role in Buddhist evangelism and worship. Stein recovered from Dandan-oilik a picture of two "monks" preaching. One of them is holding some sort of cards (perhaps pictures) in his hand. Also in the Stein collection is a set of sketches for illustrations of the *Vimalakīrti-nīrdeśa-sūtra* which indicates that visualization was an important element in full apprehension of the import of religious stories. Similar sets of sketches have been found for other Buddhist sūtras, such as those for the *Maitreya-vyākaraṇa* which Akiyama has described so well. Conze, in discussing Tantric art, gives a plausible rationale for this sort of imperative: "The artistic image is regarded as a basis for visualizing the deity. It is a kind of prop which should be dispensed with in due course, when what we would call the 'hallucination' of the deity takes its place." Though Conze is here talking about visualization of a deity outside of any necessary narrative context, the same impulse towards initial concreteness and later abstractness is witnessed in regard to Buddhist stories. The "imagined" image is considered to be more real than the graphic one. But the former cannot be attained without the aid of the latter. This is particularly true in Buddhism for the masses.

In the villages of northeast Thailand, the story of Wesandaun is recited during the *Bun*
Victor H. Mair, "The Contributions of Transformation Texts to Popular Literature"

Phraawes festival in front of an enormous (as long as forty feet or more) painted cloth divided into several registers, each with many panels. Winston King has stated explicitly how important religious pictures are for the common folk in Burma: "...The popular expression of faith consists usually in a round of periodic visits to pagodas for veneration of the images or the pagoda itself and edification by its pictures or for occasional instruction by a monk." At Tilawkaguru, Burma, there are narrative wall-paintings from the Jātaka that are arranged in bands about one feet high. The rows of scenes have a strip along the bottom which explains the scenes briefly, much as though a wayang bèbèr scroll had been pasted flat on the wall. For dividers between scenes, rocks, trees (N.B. rocks and trees are also used for the same purpose in the Śāriputra transformation scroll [P4524]), plants and occasionally even architectural elements are employed.

In his valuable study of the historical development of narrative illustrations in China, A-ying confirms our expectation that serialized narrative pictures from the Han and earlier have not yet been discovered. The earliest serialized narrative illustration he mentions is a sculpture depicting scenes from the Buddha's life dating to 527. Another, dealing with the same subject, dates from 543. A-ying identifies the next major step in the development of serialized pictorial narrative in China with the Tun-huang wall-paintings such as representations of episodes from the Lotus Sūtra and stories of former births of the Buddha. He also emphasizes the importance of the more than twenty silk banners recovered from Tun-huang that mostly depict episodes of the Buddha's life and that were evidently intended to be hung on the walls of temples because of the triangular straps sewn on at the top and the type of mounting around the banner. These banners are usually divided into four segments per side and were obviously intended for use as illustrative aids for conveying the significance of the major events in the Buddha's life. The earliest printed fictional and dramatic texts with accompanying illustrations are known, respectively, from Yüan and Ming times. In short, one cannot help but come away from reading A-ying's history of serialized narrative illustrations in China with a profound sense of the formative impact of Buddhism.

Having investigated some ancillary topics that are beneficial to any general and theoretical discussion of the rise of fictional and dramatic narrative in China, it is appropriate now to turn to an examination of specific texts and forms which embody that nascent tradition.

The similarity in language (tending to the colloquial with little use of literary language particles), style (frequent grouping of characters in units of four), imagery (chiefly concrete), the Buddhist theme, and so on, all point to a close relationship between the Tale Interspersed with Poetry on Tripitaka of the Great Tang Dynasty Retrieving Buddhist Sūtras and transformation texts. But what is even more striking is that the titles of the chapters in this story about the famous Chinese pilgrim to Indian, Hsüan-tsang, end with the character ch'u.
There is no other logical way to explain the word in this context than to view it as functioning in the same way it does in the pre-verse formula in pien-wen. This demonstrable connection between the poetic tale about Hsiian-tsang and the pien-wen tradition allows us to link together hypothetically some of the evolutionary high-points in the formation of the Journey to the West 西遊記 thus: [disconnected stories about Hsiian-tsang's pilgrimage] → [established oral narrative(s)] → [oral storytelling with pictures] → [written transformation text(s)] → *Tale Interspersed with Poetry on Tripiṭaka → Journey to the West.* Indeed, the crucial importance of Buddhism for the development of novels such as *Journey to the West* and *Investiture of the Gods* 封神演義 is so obvious that it scarcely requires demonstration.

Hsü Hsiao-t'ing has shown that the important structural concept of "session" > "chapter" (hui 回) in Chinese popular fiction has a Buddhist origin. Before the T'ang period, hui did not have the meaning of "a time", etc. It meant, rather, "to turn", "to go back", and so on. We notice, however, that T'ang poets do begin to use it with the former meaning. Hsü explains this usage as coming from the Buddhist technical term *parināmanā* (向 向) "transference of merit"). Buddhist texts (e.g., *Awakening of the Faith in Mahāyāna* 大乘起信論) often end with *parināmanā gāthā* 向 向 佛陀 whereby the merit of the text is "returned" (i.e., "dedicated") to all sentient beings. It was also always the practice to bring a worship service (fa-hui 法會) to a close with a *parināmanā* text 向 向 in order to consecrate the merit acquired to the aim for which it was held. For example, when the famous Japanese pilgrim to T'ang China, Ennin, stayed at the Korean cloister called Red Mountain Monastery in Ch'ing-ning village (in Wen-teng district, Shantung), after the lecture, the lecturer recited such a text whereupon he left the platform. In a note to his translation of this entry in Ennin's *Diary*, Reischauer states that "Ekōmon 向 向 (here 向 向) are hymns or prayers chanted at the end of a service to bring the benefits derived from the service to others." It was also always the practice to bring a worship service (fa-hui 法會) to a close with a *parināmanā* text 向 向 in order to consecrate the merit acquired to the aim for which it was held. For example, when the famous Japanese pilgrim to T'ang China, Ennin, stayed at the Korean cloister called Red Mountain Monastery in Ch'ing-ning village (in Wen-teng district, Shantung), after the lecture, the lecturer recited such a text whereupon he left the platform. In a note to his translation of this entry in Ennin's *Diary*, Reischauer states that "Ekōmon 向 向 (here 向 向) are hymns or prayers chanted at the end of a service to bring the benefits derived from the service to others." From the use of this sort of benediction to close a religious service, it is just a short step to the designation of a storytelling session as *i-hui 一 回*. If the "seat-settling text" (ya-tso-wen 押座文) in a popular religious service is comparable to the "entering words" (ju-hua 入話) of the storyteller or the "introduction" (yin-tzu 民 在) in drama, then the *parināmanā* at the conclusion of the popular lecture is analogous to the capsule summary with which the storyteller ends each section of his tale ("truly it is [a case of...]" and the exodium ("today we have seen...") at the close of the play. The expression for a general exit (san-ch'ang 散場) at the end of a storytelling session or dramatic production, incidentally, was originally a Zen euphemism for dying (compare our expression "make one's exit").

Thus far in this paper, I have tried to show that both fiction and drama received vital inputs
from the Buddhist narrative tradition. If it be accepted that Buddhism had a shaping influence on Chinese popular literature, we would expect that fiction and drama would bear certain identifying marks of their descent from a common ancestor. This is, indeed, true and is easy to demonstrate.

Maeno Naoaki has observed that "There are two fields in Chinese literature the appearance of which was strangely belated. They are drama and fiction." There is, of course, no simple answer to this dual conundrum. The factors inhibiting the growth of drama and fiction are many; to go into them thoroughly is the subject of another study. But it may not be too optimistic to hope that we have been able to discern in this study some of the factors which contributed to their growth from the T'ang period on. The central role of Buddhist popular literature, particularly oral transformations and transformation texts, in this growth cannot be overlooked.

Men'shikov has delineated most forcefully the pervasive influence of transformation texts on all later popular Chinese literature:

*Pien-wen* exerted considerable influence on subsequent Chinese literature.... The reasons for this influence lie first and foremost in its fundamentally new form.... [There are] certain other peculiarities which stipulate the influence of *pien-wen*.... All subsequent genres of Chinese literature in which, to one degree or another, these features are found (the drama, the short story, the early novel, and the sung-narrative genres) show either direct or indirect links to *pien-wen*.179

Eberhard, too, has perceived "the basic unity of novel, story-teller's tale, and play."180

Popular entertainers in the Sung such as storytellers, puppet players, and shadow-play performers all used "story-roots" (*hua-pen*, basic plot outlines, not "prompt-books") as the basis for their narratives.181 Since these story-roots were said to have been virtually identical regardless of the genre to which they were applied, it is not illogical to assume that there is some developmental connection among these various forms of popular entertainment. Let us attempt to discover, in some specific instances, just what that might be.

The historical reasons for the intimate connection between fiction and drama have been most cogently described in a brilliant but unfortunately neglected study by Li Chia-jui entitled "Traces of the Transformation from Oral Narrative to Drama." In this study, Li demonstrates that numerous types of dramatic performance in China, including the medley (*chu-kung-tiao*), and shadow-plays (*teng-ying-hsi*) bear the unmistakable marks of having evolved from storytelling:

...From the past up to today, regardless of which type of drama, at the beginning a
few sentences are always recited as an introduction or a poem is recited upon stepping on the stage. These are vestiges of the "address" (also called "entering speech") at the beginning of an oral narrative. Furthermore, the self-announcement by characters of their names and surnames in plays and the narration of their background by the characters themselves, etc., cannot but be said to have been influenced by storytelling. When people first see Chinese plays, they are immediately perplexed by this sort of dramatic form. But, if they were to understand that it evolved from storytelling, they would no longer feel it strange.

I will discuss in some detail just one of these transitional forms, the "Performance with Four Consecutive Sets of Dancers" (ta lien-hsiaŋ 打連繩) which was said to be based on the Major Music of the China and Liao dynasties 金遼大樂. The troupe consisted of actors (male mo-ni 末泥, female tan-erh 旦兒, etc.) who moved about the stage (kou-lan 口欄) and gestured but were silent, a narrator (called ssu-ch'ang 司掌) who was seated off-stage among the audience, and some musicians (balloon guitar [p'i-p'a 血血], reed-pipes [sheng 衛], and flute [ti 血]). The narrator, in effect, related a prosimetric story. The actors were dependent on him and their movements had to conform to what he was saying. Among other remarks on the "Performance with Four Consecutive Sets of Dancers," Mao Ch'i-ling (1623-1716) states that "still the dancers did not sing; the singer did not dance." As Li Chia-jui says, "In truth, the storyteller used human beings as puppets to portray the characters in the story which he was narrating." This reminds one very much of Japanese puppet theater known as bunraku except that, with the latter, the puppets are not yet fully human. What is even more remarkable about the "Consecutive Sets of Dancers" type of play as a specimen of transition between oral narrative and genuine drama is that during the Ch'ing period, such plays evolved into a form where there was no longer a singer-narrator. Though still referred to as "Consecutive Sets of Dancers," the actors had begun to speak for themselves. Here again, however, there is a parallel with bunraku because we know, for example, that Chikamatsu's plays, which were originally written for puppets, are now generally performed by human actors. This type of dramatic performance survived into the twentieth century in Peking. In short, oral narrative which had previously been "illustrated" by human puppets had now become genuine drama. This points to a progression from oral narrative (with or without illustrative aids) to shadow and puppet plays, then to human "puppet" theater and, finally, to genuine human drama. It is when the puppets and shadow begin to speak for themselves in the first-person that the transition from oral narrative to drama has been completed. But still there often remain vestiges of third-person narration. Given this sort of evolutionary progression, drama is bound to carry the unmistakable impress of its ancestor, the oral narrative.
Donald Keene, in a discussion of bunraku, has made clear that it is as much a form of oral narrative as it is a type of drama:

Bunraku ... is basically a narrative art. The chanter [tayū 太夫 ] declaims the story, altering his voice in the dialogue to suggest the tones of a warrior, a woman, or a child, and at times, in poetical passages, rising from speech to song. But he is neither an actor nor a singer, but a storyteller.... In some parts of Japan performances are preferred of the chanTERS alone without the puppets, as if the latter were an unnecessary or even undesirable addition to a master chanter's rendering of the text. The Bunraku plays, it need hardly be said, are written specifically for a narrator rather than for actors, as one can tell immediately from the almost invariable addition of such concluding phrases as "thus he spoke" or "he said with a smile." These comments are natural in a narrative, but would be unnecessary in a theatre of actors. Bunraku, then, is a form of storytelling, recited to a musical accompaniment, and embodied by puppets on a stage. 186

Elsewhere, Keene has noted that still today, when performing kabuki plays, "the actors occasionally imitate the movements of puppets, thus acknowledging their debts to an older tradition."187 This coincides perfectly with Sun K'ai-ti's theory of the development of Chinese drama.

Bastian, in a journey to Siam in the year 1863, observed188 an unusual feature of the masked plays known as Len Khon. The actors did not speak for themselves but had a narrator who spoke for them. Had he known the Indic heritage of Siamese drama, Bastian would not have been so surprised by this peculiarity.

When the dalang of western Siamese shadow-plays narrates his stories, say for a pupil, he uses the form "X said 'such-and-such'" and "Y answered 'thus-and-so.'" Yet, during actual performance, he dramatizes the exchange of dialogue by voice modulation to indicate different characters who speak for themselves. Sweeney, in analyzing these two types of presentation by one and the same performer, refers189 to them as the "narrative form" which is casual and the "dramatic form" which is non-casual.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that Indonesian wayang bēbēr (storytelling with pictures) and wayang kulit (shadow-plays) are not independent and unrelated entities. Both are utilized to tell the same type of stories, employ a similar orchestra (gamelan), and the figures in both have exactly the same appearance. Certainly one must have evolved from the other and the exigencies of technological progress alone would indicate that it was the complex which derived from the simple.
But there are other reasons for declaring wayang bèber to be the earlier form. Among these is the analogous evidence from India where picture storytellers will occasionally also use dolls and shadows to enliven their performance. The pictures are primary; the shadows and puppets derivative. Hence, Batchelder's perception that wayang bèber "is a limited form of drama -- a kind of illustrated storytelling --" is essentially correct. In other words, wayang bèber is a precursor of wayang kulit and ultimately of wayang wong (human drama).

Soeripno's observations on the classical dance of Java lend support to the assertion of the primacy of shadow and puppet theater over human drama:

The dance-dramas are derived from plays with puppets silhouetted against a screen, called Wayang Poerwa or Wayang Koelit. Wayang means shadow, and the fact that the play with human beings is also called Wayang, namely Wayang Wong, indicates clearly that the play with silhouettes is the original form. This is further shown not only by the mask-like lack of expression in the dancers' faces but also by their poses, since they always try to imitate the carved leather puppets of the shadow-plays and move in two-dimensional directions.

Soeripno neglects only to search for the roots of shadow and puppet theater in picture storytelling. Claire Holt has also discussed the formative effect of shadow-plays upon the Javanese classical dance.

Pischel is in agreement with the assertion that human drama in Asia is derived from shadow and puppet theater:

It is not improbable that the puppet-play is in reality everywhere the most ancient form of dramatic representation. Without doubt this is the case in India. And there, too, we must look for its home.

The stage-manager of India drama is still called sūrādhāra, "thread holder", which surely must derive from puppets. The attempt to explain this word as "the holder of the thread [of the narrative]" is too forced to be acceptable. Indeed, sūrādhār is still the name for puppet-players in India. Furthermore, in the olden days of Indian drama, there was a man called sthāpaka who seconded the stage manager. Now sthāpaka means "the setter up" and this term too quite probably comes from the shadow or puppet theater.

Kapila Vatsyayan, an authority on the Indian stage, has shown the interrelatedness of human drama with puppet and shadow-plays, picture storytelling, and "narrative theater". It is no
accident, for example, that Kathakali, a South Indian type of dance drama from Kerala Kalamandalam whose roots can be traced to at least the sixteenth century, is often referred to as a "story play". H. K. Ranganath, on the other hand, has described Indian storytelling as "one man theatre" or "mono-drama".197

Gargi, in discussing modern Indian folk plays, has appropriately characterized them in terms of cinematography and conjuration that have striking parallels to what we know of Asian picture-telling traditions:

The Sutradhar [stage manager, lit. "thread holder"], like a film editor, builds up a montage of varied dramatic episodes. It is the same spot, but it is transformed into a different place every time. The folk actor uses very few props. He creates palaces, rivers, forests, battle scenes and royal courts by the sorcery of his art.198

Sawada Mizuho has perceptively noted199 that the arrangement and progression of episodes in the Maudgalyāyana transformation text greatly resemble the succession of scenes in a movie. This might very well be due to the fact that the basic shape of the text was determined by the strictures of a narrative picture scroll. This is certainly and demonstrably true of the Śāriputra transformation text. In the transformation tradition, as between narrative pictures and narrative text, the primacy of the illustrations is assured. However, this would seem to be in disagreement with Weitzmann's dictum that "The first condition for a text to be illustrated is its popularity."200 By this, he actually means that a written narrative text exists first and that, because it becomes well known, there is a demand that it be illustrated. But Weitzmann, in making this formulation, was not taking into account the South Asian and East Asian experience. Here the progression to a written text has nearly always been dependent on the prior popularity of an orally transmitted narrative. If a given oral narrative were broadly enough known and sufficiently stable in content, it would be illustrated in paintings or in sculpture. Then, once an iconology developed which portrayed a relatively fixed narrative sequence, the reverse process occurred: the pictures would serve as the basis for written texts. All the while, of course, oral narrative continued to thrive. In Japan, at least, the pictures are understood to be primary in picture storytelling. This is obvious from the etoki エトキ ("picture explanations"). Naturally the pictures did not arise out of thin air. They were derived, as I have explained, from pre-existent oral narratives of broad popularity. In China, where we encounter in titles the expression ping t'u 平圖 "together with pictures", the illustrations and written text are conceived of more as complementing each other. Yet even in China, an overall consideration of the relationship between transformation stories and transformation illustrations leads one to the conclusion that, between text and pictures, the latter
were considered primary and the former explanatory. Thus, in the "Transformation on the Han General, Wang Ling", it is written that, "from this one layout is the beginning of the transformation." The written transformation still expresses deference to an ancestral or actual pictorial layout. This is a very important distinction to make and it deserves repeating. In China and in Japan, once an oral narrative achieved sufficient popularity to be depicted graphically, the pictures illustrating it were held to be primary in terms of their relationship to subsequent written texts which used them as a point of departure. Naturally, after a long period of development of the written text, it could attain a position of relative primacy with regard to later illustrations that accompanied it.

The situation described by Weitzmann, however, does seem to obtain for ancient Egypt. Gaston Maspero has suggested that Egyptian tomb paintings may have served as illustrations for established written narrative: "The scenes at the beginning of the Tale of Two Brothers might easily be illustrated by scenes from the paintings in the rock tombs of Thebes; the expressions used by the author are found almost word for word in the texts that explain the pictures." While discussing Assyrian palace wall narrative paintings, Güterbock makes an important distinction about two types of relationship between text and picture: "In the 'label' inscriptions writing serves to explain a picture; this is the opposite of illustrating a text by pictures." This holds true in India, China, and Indonesia as well. Where the pictures are primary, the accompanying text is brief and limited, at most, to inscriptions and labels. The multitude of empty cartouches on Tun-huang and other Central Asian paintings indicates that they were not very important components of the narrative complex. Where, on the other hand, written text occupies a noticeably larger portion of the scroll, book, banner, or wall-painting, the pictures are proportionately secondary. Regardless of whether text or painting is primary, however, there is always a pre-existent narrative. This narrative may be known to the artist and storyteller through written or unwritten forms, although the latter predominated in Asian folk and popular literature.

The most ancient examples of genuine Assyrian text illustrations are drawings which accompany liver omnia from the library of King Ashurbanipal. It is interesting to note that, in one text, the illustrations are preceded by a line which reads "this is the drawing of it." This is to be contrasted with transformation texts where there is first reference to a "place" on a picture and then the question "how shall I explain it?"

It is fruitless now to speculate on the possibility of cultural exchange between Indian and Middle Eastern civilizations before 1000 BIE because there is insufficient knowledge of the types of communication which were being carried on at such an early stage. Furthermore, narrative illustrations have been excavated from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa (third millennium BIE), so it would seem that the Indian tradition may have been an independent one.
Weitzmann has specified the usual requirements for sequential narrative illustration:

The essence of good pictorial narrative is not so much the concentration on a single event in a comprehensive picture that focuses on a climactic moment... as to divide an episode into a series of consecutive phases in which the protagonist is represented again and again.... The art of such extensive picture narratives... reached its final solution in our own day in the motion picture.207

Since, as I have shown, Chinese popular literature was strongly influenced by a tradition of picture storytelling, we would expect that it have a basically episodic shape. In the following pages, I shall attempt to document this.

Students of Chinese literature are often perplexed by such (actually futile) questions as why tragic drama which cathartically reveals the hubristic struggles of a hero or the novel with its unified plot and emphasis on the psychological development of characters did not develop in China. In the first place, there is simply no necessity that they should have developed there. The philosophical presuppositions and consequent value systems of China and the West were sufficiently different that it is only natural for them to have resulted in correspondingly dissimilar literary forms. I have never heard anyone ask the questions, "Why didn't the West have parallel prose?" or "Why did the West have no developed tradition of linked verse?" There were numerous literary genres in China which the West lacks entirely. Surely a people are entitled to forge and practice their own literary forms without asking whether these comply with the practices and predilections of other peoples.

Another related factor is that no literary genre is eternal, all having a common evolutionary pattern of birth, growth, adaptation, and extinction. For better or worse, we in the West may be witnessing the demise of the novel in its traditional guise. James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* and the works of Günter Grass are examples of the breakdown of the linear development of plot in extended fictional narrative. This fragmentation of linearity has also appeared in the world of art, witness the paintings of Pablo Picasso and Pieter Mondriaan or the sculpture of Henry Moore. Marshall McLuhan has discussed these tendencies within Western, "electronic" culture as a whole; literary critics have discerned similar evolutionary trends in the history of the novel in particular. The deconstructionists have even made the destruction of linearity, presumably the basis of Western logical thought, the programmatic centerpiece of their school. Whether all of these developments are more than a passing fad remains to be seen. The point is that the shape and nature of such things as the novel are not to be considered eternal.

We should not trouble ourselves unduly with such questions as why Chinese writers "failed" to create sustained fictional narrative. It is more appropriate to describe, rather, the authentic
process of evolution of Chinese literary genres themselves without making favorable or unfavorable judgments as to how these compare to European genres. Still, the episodic structure of Chinese fiction is striking to those who encounter it for the first time, for example, in *The Scholars* (儒林外史 c. 1739-1750, first published c. 1768-1777) or even in some of the early novels of Lao She 老舍. Hence, it is meaningful to say that Chinese dramatic and fictional narratives tend to be episodic rather than sustained because of their historical roots in a common tradition of oral storytelling which emphasized discrete moments and loci presented in a sequential fashion. But it is facile to imply that this is, somehow, a congenital defect of Chinese fictional and dramatic literature. I would like, therefore, to propose the notion of an "episodic plot structure" which is applicable both to fiction and to drama in China and which is securely rooted in their history.

All of this leads to the recognition that the basic "stuff" of both Chinese fiction and drama is the narrative moment (shih 時 ) and the narrative locus (ch'u 條 ). A succession of such moments and loci joined together constitutes an episodic narrative; this is the typical form of all prosimetric fiction and drama in China. For this reason, it would be unlikely to expect that the drama and the novel as they are known to the West could be found in pre-modern China. Because of the common historical origins of fiction and drama there, it is appropriate to speak in terms of narrational drama or dramatic narrative (in this analysis, fiction is subsumed under narration). By this is meant that most examples of the one partake, to a greater or lesser degree, of elements of the other. Skwarczyńska's analysis of the difference between epic (i.e., narrative) and dramatic forms of plot in the West is valuable for the contrast it points to in Chinese literature where no such strong dichotomy exists:

We know that the epic and the drama are very much alike, both being founded on the construction of the plot. But there exist specific differences between the typical epic plot and the typical plot of drama. Undoubtedly, they both represent a growing sequence of events, framed by the beginning and the end. The events determine the fates of the heroes and are linked with each other not only as a succession of events but also with internal cause-effect ties. But for a typically epic plot the majority of events happening externally, outside the hero, and from the outside somehow shaping his fate, will be satisfactory, while the typical dramatic plot employs the majority of events determined by the hero's volition, and thus qualifying his deeds. Moreover, the typical epic plot may present the evolution of events in a straight line, in an ever changing stream of facts, internally connected and following one another. The dramatic plot presents the development of basic events resulting from a struggle, a clash of two antagonistic forces. For the epic it is enough to speak about the
development of events, for the drama it is necessary to speak about the development resulting from a struggle. 208

While the notion of the interdependency of fiction and drama may thus have only limited application for the study of these types of literature in the West, it is essential for the correct understanding and interpretation of Chinese popular literature.

It is not only legitimate to speak of narrational drama or dramatic narrative in the Chinese case, it is necessary to employ such terminology simply because it provides the critic with the conceptual tools for correctly interpreting and illuminating individual works. A given work may more nearly approach or resemble one mode than the other, but it never totally eclipses either the dramatic or the narrative (fictional). That this is an essential feature of Chinese popular literature is borne out by examination of well-known plays and novels. As such, the notion of narrative advanced by Scholes and Kellogg is not wholly applicable in the traditional Asian situation:

By narrative we mean all those literary works which are distinguished by two characteristics: the presence of a story and a storyteller. A drama is a story without a storyteller; in it characters act out directly what Aristotle called an "imitation" of such action as we find in life. A lyric, like a drama, is a direct presentation, in which a single actor, the poet or his surrogate, sings, or muses, or speaks for us to hear or overhear. Add a second speaker, as Robert Frost does in "The Death of a Hired Man," and we move toward drama. Let the speaker begin to tell of an event, as Frost does in "The Vanishing Red," and we move toward narrative. For writing to be narrative no more and no less than a teller and a tale are required. 209

Though to a Western theoretician dealing with generic types it may seem a contradiction in terms, certain forms of Indian, Chinese, Indonesian, and Japanese drama may utilize a narrator. And various forms of Asian storytelling may require puppets, shadows, or even actors as animated visual aids.

The dramatic and episodic nature of Chinese fiction is recognized by Francis Westbrook in his observation that "...Dream [of the Red Chamber] consists of brief and rapidly changing 'scenes,' skits in which the author's intrusion sometimes amounts to little more than stage-directions." 210 H. C. Chang has noticed the combination of the fictional and the dramatic in the short story called "K'uai-tsui Li Ts'ui-lien chi." 211 The Shrew' thus contains within itself the two basic ingredients ... storytelling and dramatic performance.

There was discovered in volume 13,991 of the Grand Collectanea from the Eternal Joy Reign
Period 大典, compiled at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the text of a play about
the graduate Chang Hsieh 章元. After a prologue that is in the form of a medley
(chu-kung-tiao) comes the following question: "Rather than singing and telling the medley like
this, why not perform this tale as a drama [literally, present it in an elaborated fashion]?"\textsuperscript{212} This
is further indication that, even in the Ming period, it was thought easy to switch back and forth
between oral narrative and drama.

The ambiguous status of such a work as "The Erroneous Execution of Ts'ui Ning" 斬 is apparent from an examination of the narrator's intrusions into the story. In a text
interlarded with "now, to resume the story" 现和 "let us not mention idle talk" 现话件题,
we also find the narrator addressing his audience with the words "onlookers, listen to what I say"
看官听我\textsuperscript{213} followed by a statement and a direct question. K'an-kuan 看官 is commonly
interpreted to mean "reader", but this is actually impossible given the simulated context. It would
seem that we may have here a residual remainder of a time when "watching" was as important at a
storytelling session as "listening".

One would expect that a shadow-play would employ direct, first-person dialogue but the
Chinese performer often describes the actions of the characters in third-person narrative.\textsuperscript{214} This
is clear evidence of an evolutionary link to storytelling forms. Eggeling's remarks on a manuscript
copy of Dūtāngada in the India Office Library are quite revealing in this regard: "Not only is the
dialogue itself considerably extended in this version by the insertion of many additional stanzas, but
narrative verses also are thrown in, calculated to make the work a curious hybrid between a
dramatic piece (with stage directions) and a narrative poem."\textsuperscript{215} It should be observed that this
text is designated on various manuscripts as a chāyā-nāṣaka (literally, "shadow-play"); cf. my
discussion of Buddhist Central Asian chāyā-nālai above). It is most interesting to note, on the
other hand, that there are pao-chūan ("precious scrolls", normally thought of as a narrative genre)
in which the narrator speaks in different personae. Thus, such pao-chūan as that on Ho Wen-hsiu
何文秀寶卷 represent an intermediary, evolutionary stage between fictional narrative and
dramatic narrative.

In Shantung "drum book" (ku-shu 鼓書) performances, a pair of storytellers work
together, the narrative passing back and forth between them. One tells the parts about the main
character and the other tells the parts about the supporting characters. The effect is clearly
transitional between oral narrative and drama.

I was recently introduced\textsuperscript{216} to a type of dramatic narrative or dance drama that is still
performed in Shen-yang (Mukden, Manchuria). It is called "Two Person Turn" or "Whirl-About
Duet" (erh-jen-chuan 二人傳). The performance is accompanied by a fairly large orchestra
(lute, dulcimer, three fiddles, clappers, mouth-organ, double-reed oboe, and cello ![]). The two
actor-narrators wear costumes, use gestures, dance, sing, and engage in dialogue. Sometimes they simply narrate the tale in the third-person and the narrative thread passes back and forth between the two. In a more elaborate version which is presented on stage and is called "Play with Drawn-Out Acts" (la-ch'ang-hsi 🂵=https://pinyin.org/cn*/, the players have fixed roles. More than two actors are involved but only two appear on the stage at any one time. In contrast to the "Two Person Turn" where singing and dancing alone set the scene, in the "Play with Drawn-Out Acts", props and scenery are employed. The orchestra noticeably adopts the percussion patterns of Peking opera which were lacking in the simpler version. The most elaborate type of related theater is called "Kirin Opera" (Chi-chü 🂵=https://pinyin.org/cn/*). In this type of play, a third actor may appear on the stage as well as whole chorus-like groups. The actors engage in full-blown operatic dialogue and wear the elevated soles and long sleeves of operatic actors. Thus, in the same area of China, we can still observe a whole series of related performing arts that are arranged along the spectrum from narrative to drama.

Yüan and Ming drama often have passages that betray their origins in storytelling. Such passages are clearly narrative and stand out starkly from the dramatic dialogue. Without a background knowledge of the development of Chinese drama, it is difficult to comprehend the reason for their existence.

In many types of Chinese storytelling, even to this day, the performer uses a large variety of gestures and movements which makes the session fall somewhere between simple narration and drama:

To convey the idea of someone running with all his might, he waves his arms and heaves his shoulders. The only "properties" are a fan or a handkerchief. Folded, the fan can be a sword or a whip; opened, a hat, a bed coverlet or a sail. The handkerchief can serve as a letter, a written accusation, or many other things. The narrator moves very little, but expresses the essence of the character with a mere sweep of the eye or a symbolic movement of the hand or fan. In the past a young person was thought to have acquired his fundamental training after four or five years of apprenticeship, and mastery of the art only after lifelong practice.217

The semi-narrative, semi-dramatic nature of Chinese storytelling is forcefully seen in this translation of an actual transcription of a scene from The Western Chamber 🂵=https://pinyin.org/cn/* as told by a Soochow performer:

(Speaking as the narrator): As a matter of fact, Ying-ying is not asleep at all.... After the maid has gone, she wonders about what she has done. She thinks
(Impersonating Ying-ying): "I am the daughter of a prime minister, but I've ordered my maid to take a message to Chang. I'm sure she will not tell anyone else about it, but I'm afraid she'll laugh at me behind my back." (Speaking as narrator again): Thoughts run wild in the head of the young girl as she lies on her bed. She hears the footsteps of Hung-niang on the stairs. Hung-niang enters and Ying-ying closes her eyes, feigning sleep.... Hung-niang lifts the curtain of the bed. This angers Ying-ying, who feels it a rude action. Then she hears Hung-niang say: "You don't sleep at night but love to sleep in the daytime. What's the matter with you?"

Her anger mounts. (As Ying-ying): "She speaks to me as if she were my superior.... She's doing this because I asked her to take the message. Now she's proud, thinking she's done a great service...." (As narrator): Anger burns in Ying-ying's heart, but she keeps her eyes tightly closed and says nothing.218

The Soochow strum-lyric (t'an-tzu 聽子 tān zi) performer whom we have just observed adopts the voice and expressions suitable for all the characters he portrays. He alternates narration with spoken dialogue, gestures, makes sound effects, creates a setting, fills in background, and so on. It is impossible to type such a performance as being either strictly narration or drama. Sometimes the lead performer, who plays a three-stringed fiddle (san-hsien 三弦 sān xián), is accompanied by another player on the biwa (balloon guitar or lute, p'i-pa 琵琶 pí pa) who may also take an acting role. In this century, still more instruments have occasionally been added and the instrumentalists may all sing and act. There is thus very little difference between this form of what was originally narrative and operatic drama.

A hazy recollection of pien 作 as a type of narrative manipulation may have survived more or less continuously in the realm of folk literature. The Soochow expository storyteller 蘇州評話, Chin Sheng-po 金聲伯, stated in November 1983: "If you had to use only one word to characterize my storytelling it would be 'pien'." When pressed to define what he intended by pien, Chin was not at all clear himself about its meaning.219 Perhaps he implied no more than "variety", but it is significant nonetheless that he used a word that goes back to the Buddhistic beginnings of Chinese prosimetric dramatic narrative to describe his art.

Chiang Po-ch'ien has also observed this ambivalent nature of Chinese oral performing arts when he says that "the drum-songs, precious scrolls, and strum-lyrics which are current today, strictly speaking, are not really fiction but nor are they drama...."220

The seventeenth-century playwright and literary theoretician, Li Yü 李夢(1611-1680), stresses heavily the relatedness of the narrative and the stage. As explained by Patrick Hanan, "...he occasionally refers to stories while discussing plays. The copious reflexive comment in his
fiction constantly makes use of terms that belong properly to the drama."221

Thus, while on the one hand Chinese fiction has a strong dramatic component, on the other hand Chinese theater has a noticeable narrative factor. Heightened conflict, though sometimes present, is not its central feature. By Western standards, building up to a confrontation or climax is expected even in comedy. With Chinese drama, however, the play proceeds through a flow of episodes that is essentially narrative in nature. Hence, I reiterate the suggestion that we think in terms of "narrational drama" and "dramatic narrative" since, in China, the two are never wholly separable. By "dramatic narrative" and "narrational drama" I mean two closely related classes of literature that are neither simply narrative fiction nor theatrical drama but that embody elements of both to varying degrees. This partly accounts for the tendency of those critics who are accustomed to and conditioned by a strict dichotomy between the narrative and dramatic modes to find popular Chinese literature wanting. The thesis which I am here attempting to develop, from an evolutionary perspective, is that the character of both fiction and drama in China has been partially determined by the common forbear from which they sprang, i.e., Buddhist storytelling. I am, therefore, in complete agreement with Vandier-Nicolas when she describes pien-wen as a category of texts "intermédiaire entre celle du récit et celle du drama...."222 The only proviso that needs be made for this type of description is that it not be understood as relating to a process of development which has occurred only once in history. That is to say, although Indic Buddhist pien-wen may represent the first evolutionary connecting link between narrative and drama that is known for China, various forms of storytelling survived or succeeded it and continued to spawn new kinds of theater and, naturally, new "intermediary" genres. The sequence of the development of fiction and drama from storytelling which I have been discussing may be schematically depicted as in the figure below. Some of the steps depicted here may be repeated or varied many times. Hence this diagram should be thought of more as indicating evolutionary and typological linkages than as mere chronological events. It should also be noted that drama and fiction continually enrich each other at every stage of the process after they have arisen. And, naturally, there was mutual interaction between them and other genres (ranging from written history to lyric meters) as well. The schematic arrangement presented here omits many subsidiary influences (dance, mime, acrobatics, and other theatricals), intermediary steps (medley, court text [yüan-pen קורס], by-products (precious scrolls, strum-lyrics), and hybrid forms (four sets, drum book) of the evolutionary process.

We have seen how the development of both fiction and drama during the Sung and later periods is intimately tied to popular Buddhist storytelling of the T'ang period. The prosimetric form, vernacular language, episodic nature, and many other aspects of dramatic narrative are all evidence of the fundamental importance of pien-wen ("transformation texts") for Chinese popular literature of the last millennium.
Some Influences on the Development of Chinese Vernacular Fiction and Drama

folk (oral) literature

- classical written literature (history, poetry, essays, etc.)
- ch'uan-ch'i and other classical language tales

oral explanations of narrative tableaux (statuary [chiefly in relief], scrolls, banners, wall paintings, hangings), i.e., pien or mandala

- detachment of figures and illumination from behind (shadow play)
- removal of screen (puppets)

- puppets become increasingly three-dimensional, realistic and more mechanically sophisticated
  - human puppets (e.g., jou-kuei-lei)
  - human actors

Yu-hsien ku
("The Grotto of Playful Sylphs")
mixed vernacular and classical fiction

- storytelling without pictures
  - legend, myth, anecdote

- written exemplars without simulated context (e.g., the story of Wu Tzu-hsü)

- written exemplars partially utilizing simulated context (pien-wen)

- formalization of simulated context
  - retain pictures (ping-hua)
  - omit pictures (hua-pen)

lengthening (chaptered novels)

DRAMA

VERNACULAR FICTION
Notes


6. Ibid., p. 566.


14. Among those he mentions, for the Sung, are t'ao-chen 陶真, yai-tz'u 決詞, ku-tzu-tz'u 鼓子詞, chu-kung-tiao 諸宮調, and fu-chuan 覆贊; for the Yüan, tz'u-hua 詞話, yü-shuo 勢說, and huo-lang-erh 貨郎兒; and, for the Ming and Ch'ing (1644-1911), t'an-tz'u 弹詞, ku-tz'u 鼓詞, and pao-chüan 寶卷. With apologies, I offer the following tentative translations of these genre names: Amusing with the Truth, Horizon Lyrics, Little Drum Lyrics, Medley, Profit-Turning, Lyric Tales, Charioteer Tales, The Peddler, Strum Lyrics, Drum Lyrics, and Precious Scrolls.


17. In the colophon to the section on "Buddhist cantos" (Lo's name for pien-wen in a broad sense). Lo Chen-yü 羅振翊, Sung-weng chin-kao [Recent Manuscripts of Old Pine] 松翁近稿 (Published by the author, 1925), p. 22a. To shuo-ching 説經, we can add shuo ts' an-ch'ing 説參請 and shuo hun-ch'ing 說譯請.


20. Ch'iu Chen-ching 趙鎮京, Tun-huang pien-wen shu-lun [An Account of Tun-huang
21. For tentative translations of these genre names, see note 14 above.


25. L. N. Men'shikov, "Izuchenie Drevnekitaiiskikh Pis'menn'ikh Pamyatnikov," Vestnik Akademii Nauk SSSR, 5 (May, 1967), 59-62 (the quotation is from p. 61). In her bibliography of recent Soviet studies on Chinese literature, Jeanne Kelly mentions an article (item no. 284, not available to me) by Men'shikov on the medley (chu-kung-tiao) that "places this genre within the chain of genres linking pien-wen and Yüan tsa-chü." See also Kelly's item no. 286 for another article by Men'shikov dealing with the history of pien-wen as a genre. "A Survey of Recent Soviet Studies on Chinese Literature," Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews, 2.1 (January, 1980), 101-136 (especially pp. 131-132).


29. Ch'ien Nan-yang, "T'ung-hsün [Communication]" Ko-yao chou-k' an [Folksong Weekly], 1.90 (1925), 5b-8a (reference is to p. 8a). In fact, tellers of pao-chüan were active in many parts of China up to 1949 or shortly thereafter when they were dispersed by the government to other jobs. In a lecture before the East Asian Studies Colloquium at the University of Pennsylvania on September 20, 1984, Kuan Te-tung presented tape-recorded examples of pao-chüan performed in Kansu within the previous few years.


32. Ibid., p. 10, lines 3-11.


39. Li-li Ch'en, "Outer and Inner Forms of Chu-kung-tiao, with Reference to pien-wen, tz'u and Vernacular Fiction," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 32 (1972), 124-149 (especially pp. 141-143). Ch'en offers a list of striking similarities between the language describing battle scenes in the Wu Tzu-hsü story and two medleys. I consider the Wu Tzu-hsü story to be an evolutionary offshoot of transformation texts, in combination with pre-T'ang fictionalized histories, that came into being while the transformations themselves were still current.

40. Chung-wen Shih, The Golden Age of Chinese Drama: Yüan Tsa-chü (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 11 and 163. On this subject, see also Kawaguchi Hisao 川口久雄, "Setsuwa yori gigaku e -- Tonkō henbun no seisaku to Nihon bungaku -- (From Narrative to Drama -- On the Relationship between the Character of Tun-huang Pien-wen and Japanese Literature --)" 說話より劇へ -- 敦煌談文的性格と日本文学.-- Kanazawa daigaku hōbungakubu ronshū, bungaku hen (Studies and Essays by the Faculty of Law and Literature, Kanazawa University, Literature) 関西大学法文学部論集,

42. Ibid., pp. 73-74.

43. David T. Roy, Review of Li-li Ch'en, Master Tung's Western Chamber Romance, in Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 37.1 (June, 1977), 207-222 (the quotation is from p. 212).


48. The introduction to my Tun-huang Popular Narratives provides more information on a different aspect of the study.

49. Chou I-pai, "Chung-kuo hsi-chü te ch'i-yüan ho fa-chan [The Origins and Development of Chinese Theater]" 中國戲劇的起源和發展, Hsi-chü lun-ts'ung

51. For information on these two analogues of transformations, see Mair, Painting and Performance, chapters 3 and 4.


53. History of the Later Han [Hou Han shu] 後漢書 (K’ai-ming edition), ch. 90B, 833.4.

54. In Wen-hsüan [Selection of Literature] 文選, ch. 2.

55. For example, Chang Heng explicitly mentions the Sanskrit word for Buddhist relic (śarīra). An astonishing variety of entertainments (among them many types of illusionism and prestidigitation) came to Han China from Central, South, and West Asian countries. Cf. An Tso-chang 安作璋, Liang-Han yü Hsi-yü kuan-hsi shih [A History of the Relations between the Two Han Dynasties and the Western Regions] 兩漢與西域關係史 (n.p. [Shantung]: Ch’i-lu shu-she, 1979; originally published in 1959 by Shantung jen-min ch’u-pan-she), pp. 171-174. For archeological evidence of some Han entertainments, see Judith Magee Boltz, "Divertissement in Western Han," Early China, 1 (1975), 56-63. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties and afterwards, the "hundred entertainments" were also referred to as "dispersed music" (san-yüeh 散樂). See Chung-kuo yin-yüeh tz’u-tien pien-chi-pu [Editorial Section for the Dictionary of Chinese Music] Chinese Music tér 光 科學 類典 編輯部, ed., Dictionary of Chinese Music (Chung-kuo yin-yüeh tz’u-tien) 中國音樂辭典 (Peking: Jen-min yin-yüeh ch’u-pan-she, 1984), p. 333b. In their zeal to connect these variety shows with true drama, many historians of the theater attempt to equate san-yüeh with Japanese sarugaku 猿楽 (apparently because the two terms sound remotely similar) which was a forerunner of the kyōgen 狂言 farce and Noh 能 plays. See Hagen Blau, Sarugaku und Shushi, Studien zur
Japanologie, 6 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1966). The major problem with this patently weak theory is that sarugaku, as is attested by old Japanese picture scrolls and texts about the performing arts, literally refers to "monkey music" as its name implies.

56. This refers to seven tunes by Liang Wu-ti 梁武帝 preserved in the Yüeh-fu shih-chi [Collection of Ballad Poetry] ？癪府詩集, 51.


60. Bharata is mentioned by Bhāsa (end of the second century CE) and may not be much older than him. This is the latest date given but some scholars have placed him as early as the second century BCE. The dramatic tradition codified under Bharata's name contains many elements that certainly derive from several centuries before the beginning of the International Era. See Sten Konow, The Indian Drama, tr. from the German of Das Indische Drama by S. N. Ghosal (Calcutta: General Printers and Publishers, 1969), pp. lxxxii, 3, and 81.

61. I have gathered extensive evidence of the similarity between dance postures depicted in Tun-huang wall-paintings as well as in other T'ang paintings and those codified in classical Indian dance treatises. Iranian dance traditions have also proven to be germane.

62. William Dolby's "The Origins of Chinese Puppetry," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 61.1 (1978), 97-120 is a useful and helpful collection of references in Chinese texts to puppets but is completely innocent of existing scholarship, particularly in Japanese and in Western languages, on the subject. Dolby seems to ignore altogether the fact that Chinese string-puppets in all probability came from abroad. For additional references to scholarly works on Chinese puppets, see Iriya Yoshitaka 入矢義高 and Umehara Kaoru 梅原郁, tr. and annot., Tōkei muka roku -- Sōdai no toshi to seikatsu [A Record of the Remembered Serenity of the
63. Ying Shao (Le Fong Sou T’ong Yi [Comprehensive Configuration of Customs] 廢俗通義 (Peking: Centre Franco-chinois d’Études Sinologiques, 1943), ch. 4, p. 112.

64. For the use of funeral effigies during Chou times, see the "Tan-kung" 禮記 (4) chapter of the Li-chi [Records of Ritual] 礼記, 9.20b (p. 172b) in Shih-san ching chu-shu [The Thirteen Classics with Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries] 三經注疏 (Taipei: I-wen, 1976, reprint of 1896 edition [1815 colophon given by publisher is incorrect]). Pottery images were put to similar use in ancient Egypt. See Francisco Porras, Titelles Teatro Popular (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1981), pp. 24ff.

65. In 1979, an articulated string puppet 1.93 meters in height was discovered in a tomb at Lai-hsi 萊西 district, Shantung that dates to the middle of the Western Han period. The precise use to which this isolated puppet was put has not been determined. It is probable that it was employed in connection with burial ritual as a mortuary object. See Yu Wei-min 倪為民, "K’uei-lei hsi chi’i-yüan hsiao k’ao (Notes on the Origin of the Puppet Show) 備傀戲起源小考, Nan-ching ta-hsüeh hsüeh-pao, Che-hsüeh she-hui k’e-hsüeh (Journal of Nanjing University, Philosophy and Social Sciences) 南京大學學報哲學社會科學, 3 (August, 1980), 98-100 (reference is to p. 98). Also see Ch’iu K’un-liang 鄭坤良, "T’ai-wan te k’uei-lei hsi [Puppet Theater of Taiwan] 台灣的傀儡戲, Min-su ch’ü-i [Folk Performing Arts] 民俗曲藝, K’uei-lei hsi chuan chi [Special Issue on Puppet Theater] 備傀戲專輯, 23-24 (May, 1983), 1-24 (reference is to p. 2).

66. The earliest mention of wooden puppets used for purposes of entertainment (also in connection with banquets) is to be found in Xenophon (430?-355? BIE), 4.55. See Hugo Blümner, "Fahrendes Volk in Altertum," Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse, 6.9.2 (1918), p. 23.

68. Hiäm-lin Dschi, "Lieh-tzu and Buddhist Sūtras: A Note on the Author of Lieh-tzu and the Date of Its Composition," Studia Serica, 9.1 (1950), 18-32. Regrettably, Lo does not acknowledge Dschi's remarkable investigative contributions. My account in the remainder of this paragraph is more indebted to Dschi than to Lo. See also Kuo Li-ch'eng 軍成, "Hsiao-ch'eng ching-tien yü Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo hsi-chü [Hinayāna Scriptures and Chinese Fiction and Drama]" 小乘經典與中國小說戲曲, Fo-chiao yü Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh (see note 9), p. 161.


71. His father or grandfather may have done the actual work of putting together the book from various sources, both old and new.


75. See the introduction to Mair, Tun-huang Popular Narratives.

76. For a review of scholarly views on the etymology of this word, see Otto Spies, "Türkisches Puppentheater: Versuch einer Geschichte des Puppentheaters im Morgenland," Die Schaubühne, 50 (Emsdetten: Lechte, 1959), pp. 7-12.


According to the 11th c. Persian poet Firdūsī, who collected many legends and traditions of pre-Muslim Persia in his "Book of Kings" (*Shāh-nāmah*), the 5th-century Sāsānian king Bahrām Gūr, invited ten thousand Indian musicians to his realm, and gave them cattle, corn and asses, that they might settle in the land and entertain his poorer subjects, who had been complaining that the pleasures of music and dance were reserved for the rich. But the musicians refused to settle; they ate the cattle and seed-corn which the king had given them, and wandered about the land like wolves or wild dogs.

Though Firdūsī's story may not be wholly accurate, it shows that low caste Indian musicians were well known in the Middle East at a very early time. With the Arab conquest of Sind in the early 8th century further groups of Indian entertainers must have found their way westwards and later have moved on to Africa and Europe. Folk called Athinganoi are recorded as living in Constantinople in A.D. 810, and later Byzantine records refer to these Athinganoi or Azinganoi as magicians and conjurors. These were probably the forerunners of the Tsigany bands who appeared in Central and Western Europe in the late Middle Ages. The earliest record of Gypsies in Europe other than in the Balkans is from the German city of Hildesheim, where a passing band is recorded in 1407. A great horde of Gypsies passed through Basel in 1422, under a chief who called himself Michael, Prince of Egypt. Within a few decades they had overrun all Europe; the earliest records show that they had all the characteristics of their descendants -- they were careless, lazy, dirty and cheerful, skilled in metal work and tinkering, splendid musicians and dancers, their bodies bedecked with bright garments and jewellery, their menfolk cunning horse-dealers, their womanfolk telling fortunes, and both sexes losing no opportunity to pilfer from the unsuspecting *gorjo*.

80. Tun-huang pien-wen chi, p. 581, line 15. A very similar poem is elsewhere attributed to the T'ang poet Liang Huang 梁锽. Chi Yu-kung 计有功 (fl. 1126), comp., T'ang-shih chi shih [Topical Collection of T'ang Poetry] 唐詩紀事 (Ssu pu ts'ung-k'an [Collection of Republished Works from the Four Categories of Literature] 四部叢刊 ed.), 29.6b, cf. P'eng Ting-ch'iu 彭定求 (1645-1719), et al., ed., Ch'üan T'ang-shih [Complete T'ang Poetry] 全唐詩, 12 vols. (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1960), vol. 1, p. 42. A note says that it was recited by the T'ang emperor, Hsüan-tsung 玄宗, when he removed to the west in his flight from the capital which had been taken over by rebels.

81. Naba Tochisada 波利富, "Tōdai no shayū ni tsukite (On 'Shayū', an Intimate Union of Masses, in the days of T'ang Dynasty)" 唐代の社邑に就きて, parts 1-3, The Shirin (Journal of History) 史林, 23.2 (April, 1938), 15-57; 23.3 (July, 1938), 71-110, plus two plates; and 23.4 (October, 1938), 93-157, plus two plates. Republished with the English title "On the Sh’éi (Voluntary Associations) in the Tang periods" in the same author's Tōdai shakai bunka shi kenkyū (Historical Studies on the Society and Culture of T'ang China) 唐代社会文化史研究, Tōyōgaku sōsho (Oriental Studies Library) 東洋学叢書, 8 (Tokyo: Sō bunsha, 1974). pp. 459-574 (reference is to p. 482).

82. This might possibly also be interpreted to mean "string puppeteer".


85. The majority of historians of Chinese theater uncritically recount the anecdote in the History of the Han of Shao-weng's invocation of the moving image of Lady Li. No one has attempted to relate it meaningfully to later developments (i.e., from the Sung period on). In section 26.g.6 of the volume (4, part 1, with the collaboration of Wang Ling and the special cooperation of Kenneth Girdwood Robinson) on Physics in his Science and Civilisation in China (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 12ff. Joseph Needham mentions a number of devices and techniques used for making optical illusions. He begins his account with the Shao-weng anecdote. Needham reminds us that the story is also recounted in the Shih-chi (Records of the Grand Historian) 史記 (K'ai-ming edition), 12.43b and 28.11bc; (Chung-hua edition), 12.458 and 28.1387-88. It is slightly briefer here and the Lady, who is accompanied by a "Ghost of the Furnace," is surnamed Wang. Needham, too, suggests that this is an early reference to the
shadow-play (ying-hsi 戲 ). In both places, however, the account is too sketchy to tell exactly what was involved. Since it seems that the emperor was sitting behind two curtains, it is possible that Shao-weng had a girl walk back and forth between them. The flickering lamps, the curtains, Shao-weng's intimations, and the emperor's wishful imagination would have been more than sufficient to bring about an apparition of his beloved concubine. In any case, there is no indication that any sort of dramatic presentation was involved. Shao-weng simply caused to appear before the emperor's eyes a moving image of his lost beloved. Beyond this it is unwise to speculate.

86. And the Records of the Grand Historian (see the previous note).

87. It is possible to punctuate so as to read "...making shadows, people first...."

88. Cited in Ch'en Meng-lei 陳夢雷 (1651- c. 1723), et al., comp., Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng [Encyclopedia of Maps, Charts, and Books from All Ages] 古今圖書集成 , 10,000 chüan in 1,628 vols. (Shanghai: T'u-shu chi-ch'eng ch'ien-pan yin-shu-chü, 1884), section 17, i-shu tien (canon of arts) 藝術典 , 805.2b.


91. We must understand that these were "monks" only in a very special sense and that, by "popular lectures", the usual meaning of "lectures for laymen on sûtras" does not fit here.

92. Sun K'ai-ti, "Chin-shih hsi-ch'i te ch'ang-yen hsing-shih ch'u tzu k'uei-lei-hsi ying-hsi k'ao [An Examination of the Derivation of the Conventions of Singing and Acting in Modern Drama from Puppet Theater and Shadow Theater]" 近世戲曲的唱演形式出自傀儡戲 影戲考 , in the same author's Ts'ang-chou chi, pp. 238-307 (the quotation is from p. 261, see also p. 303).

93. Claire Holt, Art in Indonesia: Continuities and Change (Ithaca: Cornell University Press,

94. Kuan Chün-che 彈 王 等 , *Pei-ching p'i-ying-hsi [Peking Shadow-Plays]* 1959, p. 6. This expression was also used, particularly in the south, to refer to the performance of pao-chüan ("precious scrolls"). *Hsüan chüan* ("proclaiming scrolls") itself is commonly explained as an abbreviation of *hsüan chiang pao-chüan* (proclaiming and explaining precious scrolls). See Lily Chang, "The Lost Roots of Chinese Shadow Theater: A Comparison with the Actors' Theater of China" (University of California at Los Angeles, Ph.D. dissertation, 1982), pp. 212-3 and the references cited there.


96. In China, this form of storytelling was represented by the oral antecedents of transformation texts.

97. H. W. Bailey, "The Culture of the Iranian Kingdom of Ancient Khotan in Chinese Turkestan: The Expansion of Early Indian Influence into Northern Asia," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko (The Oriental Library)*, 29 (1971), 17-29 (reference is to p. 27; this article deals with the period 100 BIE to 400 IE) and the same author's "Story-Telling in Buddhist Central Asia," *Acta Asiatica* -- Bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture, 23 (September, 1972), 63-77 (reference is to p. 66).


99. Sushilkumar De, *History of Sanskrit Literature* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1947), p. 501 and 501 n 2 is doubtful of the essential connection between *chāyā-nātaka* (such as *Dūṭāṅgada* and *Mahānātaka*) and the evolution of Sanskrit drama. He even suspects that the expression *chāyā-nātaka* may not mean "shadow-play" at all in these cases but, rather, suggests that it might
mean "an epitomised adaptation of previous plays on the subject." Recently, however, Jiwan Pani, *Ravana Chhaya* (New Delhi: Sangeet Natak Akademi, n.d.), pp. 8-9 has proven irrefutably that some *chāyā-nāṭaka*, such as Meghaprabhācārya’s "Dharmābhudyodayam" and Somesvāra’s "Ullaghāraṇagha" (13th c.), can be shown by internal evidence to have been true shadow-plays. See Georg Jacob, Hans Jensen, and Hans Losch, ed. and tr., *Das indische Schattentheater* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1931). Indeed, the *chāyā-nālai* in question here that were known to exist in Central Asia were indubitably shadow-plays. See F. W. Thomas, selected and translated, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, parts i-iv, Oriental Translation Fund, n.s. 32, 37, 40-41 (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1935-1963), vol. 1, p. 116 and vol. 2, p. 312; R. E. Emmerick, ed. and tr., *Tibetan Texts Concerning Khotan*, London Oriental Series, 19 (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 42-45 and p. 151; and H. W. Bailey, ed., *Indo-Scythian Studies*, Being *Khotanese Texts*, vol. 6, Prolexis to the Book of Zambasta (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1967), pp. 131-132.


105. The first full-scale critical appraisal of Sun's theories has recently been issued by Chou I-p'ai in his "Chung-kuo hsi-chü yü k'uei-lei hsi ying-hsi [Chinese Drama as It Relates to Puppet-Plays and Shadow-Plays]" 中國 戏劇 與 傀儡 戲 影 戲, in the same author's Hsi-chü lun-wen hsüan [Selection of Articles on Drama] 戏劇 論 文 選, (Changsha: Hu-nan jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1982), pp. 32-80. In my estimation, Chou does not succeed in his efforts to disprove Sun because his argument is forced and based largely on negative opinion. This is apparent from his frequent use of strong rhetorical questions. Chou presents very little new material that was not already brought forward by Sun but prefers, rather, to interpret Sun's findings in a different light. That is all well and good, except that Sun's theory has coherence and integrity whereas Chou's counter-argument has none. Chou's attempt to deal with the word p'u 鋪 as having nothing to do with pictorial representation is highly strained and consequently cannot be sustained. This is but one example of the untenable character of Chou's argumentation. Sun's theory that puppet-plays and shadow-plays influenced the development of Chinese theater is not incompatible with the notion (advanced by Chou and others) that dance, acrobatics, and other performances by humans were also factors. Chou's central thesis in much of his work -- that story is central to the emergence of drama -- is actually strongly supported by Sun's theory. It is unfortunate that Chou failed to comprehend this most significant aspect of puppet-plays and shadow-plays.


110. Tung-ching meng-hua lu [Records of Dreams of the Splendors of the Eastern Capital] 東京 夢華 續, ch. 8 in Tung-ching meng-hua lu (wai ssu chung) [Record of Dreams of the Splendors of the Eastern Capital (plus Four Related Texts)] 東京 夢華 續 (外 四 種) (Shanghai: Shang-hai ku-tien wen-hsüeh ch'u-pan-she, 1956), p. 49. Cf. the analysis of this passage in Sawada Mizuho 澤田 瑞穂, Jigoku-hen [Hell Transformations] 地獄 変換 (Kyoto:
Another name for wayang kulit ("leather shadows") is rekha-carma which may be the Sanskrit equivalent of valulang inukir ("chiselled leather") although it has not yet been found in any Indian source. See J. Ensink, "Rekhacarman, On the Indonesian Shadow-Play with Special Reference to the Island of Bali," [Brahmavidya] Adyar Library Bulletin, Dr. V. Raghavan Felicitation Volume, 31-32 (1967-1968), 412-441 (reference is to p. 414 n 5 [continued from p. 413]). This is interesting for it may shed some light on the meaning of ts'u 宋族 in this passage. Cf. also camma rupa ("leather puppet") which is unmistakably derived from Sanskrit carma rupa (Prakrit camma rupa, Oriya carma nataka).


Tung-ching meng-hua lu (wai ssu chung), p. 97.

Ibid., p. 98.

Meng-liang lu, ch. 20, in Tung-ching meng-hua lu (wai ssu chung), p. 313.

Wu-lin chiu shih [Old Affairs of Hangchow] 武 林 舊 事 , ch. 6, in Tung-ching meng-hua lu (wai ssu chung), p. 455. It is highly unlikely that these four performers were actually ordained Buddhist monks.

Cf. Lo Chen-yu's remarks on Buddhist cantos 僧曲 in Tun-huang ling-shih [A Gathering of Assorted Texts from Tun-huang] 敦煌零拾 (by the compiler, 1924 [?]), 4.11a. See my "Oral and Written Aspects of Chinese Sutra Lectures (chiang-ching-wen)," Han-hsüeh yen-chiu (Chinese Studies) 漢學研究所, 4.2 (cumulative 8) (December, 1986), 311-334 and "Lay Students and the Making of Written Vernacular Narrative: An Inventory of Tun-huang Manuscripts" (see note 1 above), pp. 5 and 91 for more information on chang-ching-wen.

120. Huo Shih-hsiu, "T'ang-tai ch'uan-ch'i wen yü Yin-tu ku-shih [Ch'uan-ch'i Writing of the T'ang Period and Stories from India]" 唐代傳奇文與印度故事, Wen-hsüeh [Literature] 文學, Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh yen-chiu chuan-hao [Special Issue Devoted to the Study of Chinese Literature] 中國文學研究專號, 2.6 (June 1, 1934), 1051-1066.

121. Ibid., p. 1051b.

122. Ibid., p. 1052b-1053a.


131. "Chung-kuo ku-tai hsiao-shuo chih wai-kuo tsu-liao," p. 3a. Hu had another, earlier article on this subject of foreign borrowings in Chinese fiction, entitled "Chung-kuo ku-tai hsiao-shuo te kuo-chi kuan-hsi [The International Relations of Ancient Chinese Fiction]" 中國古代小說的國際關係, Shih-chieh tsa-chih [World Magazine] 世界雜誌, 1.4 (April 5, 1931), 629-638 and 2.4 (October 5, 1931), 631-636 in which he stated (p. 629b) the cautious attitude he adopted: "Of fiction by Chin and T'ang writers, all those which deal with supernatural matters invariably take their materials from Buddhist books, or they may also be suspected of pilfering from Indian stories. However, without decisive proof, one dare not declare that such is necessarily the case."


134. Ibid., preface, p. 3. The influence of pien-wen on T'ang ch'uan-ch'i has also been discussed by Ch'eng I-chung 程毅中 in "Kuan-yü pien-wen te chi-tien t'an-so [Several Investigations concerning pien-wen] 關於變文的幾點探索, Wen-hsüeh i-ch'an tseng-k'an [Literary Heritage, Supplements] 文學遺產補刊, no. 10 (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chih, 1962), pp. 80-101 (reference is to pp. 89-90).

136. Han shu (Chung-hua ed.), p. 1745. In his introduction to Chung-kuo ku-tai tuan-p’ien hsiao-shuo hsüan-chu [Annotated Selection of Ancient Chinese Short Stories] 中國古代短篇小說選注 (Taipei: T‘ai-wan hsüeh-sheng shu-chü, 1976), P‘an Ch‘ung-kuei 潘重規 cites the following sentence from Chuang-tzu in defense of the antiquity of Chinese fiction: 謂小說似干縣令, 其於大達亦遠矣. None of the half-dozen commentaries that I have consulted interprets hsiao-shuo here to mean "fiction". They all take it to imply mean or petty ideas. Cf. Burton Watson, tr., *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 296 (emphasis added): "If you parade your little theories and fish for the post of district magistrate, you will be far from the Great Understanding."

137. *Book of the Demise of Yüeh* (?).


141. After I finished this section, Anthony Yu directed me to an important article by Yau-Woon Ma which thoroughly debunked the notion that this figure is a storyteller. See his "The Beginnings of Professional Storytelling in China: A Critique of Current Theories and Evidence," in *Études d'histoire et de littérature chinoises offertes au Professeur Jaroslav Průšek*, Bibliothèque de


145. An Introduction to Chinese Literature, p. 150.


150. Ibid., p. 82.

Victor H. Mair, "The Contributions of Transformation Texts to Popular Literature"

64, 61, in *Shang-hai chung-yang jih-pao (Shanghai Central Daily)* (April 2, 1948).

152. For one marvelous collection of such anecdotes that has been expertly translated, see Liu I-ch'ing 劉義慶 (403-444), *A New Account of Tales of the World,* tr. Richard B. Mather (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976).

153. Recent archeological excavations in the area of ancient Ch'u 楚 have yielded intriguing paintings that may help to reconstruct the mythology of the south. But none that I have seen are arranged so as to depict a flow of events in an extended narrative.


157. V. V. Mirashi, ed. and tr., *Vākāṭaka Inscription in Cave XVI at Ajañṭā,* Hyderabad Archaeological Series, 14 (Calcutta: The Archaeological Department of His Exalted Highness the


160. Akiyama Terukazu, "Miroku kashōkyōhen hakubō funbon (S259) to Tonkō hekiga no seisaku (Les dessins illustrant des passages du 'Mi-lo hia cheng king' [Maitreyavyākaraṇa] au verso d'un sūtra de Touen-houang (Stein 259) et leurs rapports avec les peintures murales de la même région)" と敦煌壁畫の製作, in Saiiki bunka kenkyū (Monumenta Serindica) [Studies on the Culture of the Western Regions] 西域文化研究, 6 vols. (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1958-1963), vol. 6, pp. 47 (53)-74; French summary; plus 2 plates and numerous figures.


166. *Ibid.*, p. 3. Elfriede R. Knauer, a research associate at the University Museum in Philadelphia who is a specialist on Greek and Roman art as it is manifested outside of the classical world, has shown me abundant evidence of Western influence (carried through Scythian and other intermediaries) on the development of Central Asian and Chinese narrative panels.


169. Lai Ming detects Buddhist influence in the imaginative quality of the narrative when he says that this story of Hsüan-tsang is "one of the very few novels of romantic fantasy and imagination. This is no doubt due to the influences of Buddhist literature. For prior to the introduction of Buddhist literature to China, Chinese stories were merely outline sketches." *A History of Chinese Literature* (New York: John Day, 1964), p. 280.

170. For a discussion of this formula (X ch’u jo-wei ch’en-shuo 处若為陳說 [...the place where X happens, how does it go?]), see the appendix to my *Tun-huang Popular Narratives* and chapter three of *T’ang Transformation Texts*.

171. The bracketed stages lack formal proof of existence. The evolution of *Journey to the West* is, of course, much more complicated than this schematized and hypothetical diagram can possibly convey. For a more detailed account, see Glen Dudbridge, *The Hsi-yu chi: A Study of Antecedents to the Sixteenth-Century Chinese Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).


181. See Meng-liang lu, ch. 20 in *Tung-ching meng-hua lu (wai ssu chung)*, p. 311.


184. Mao Ch'i-ling 毛奇齡 (1623-1716), *Hsi-ho tz'u-hua* [Talks on Lyrical Poetry by Mao Ch'i-ling] 西河詞話, Tz'u-hua ts'ung-pien [Collectanea of Talks on Lyric Poetry] 詞話叢編, ts'e 4 (Nanking: Tz'u-hua ts'ung-pien she, 1935), 2.4b. Mao also holds that the four consecutive


197. Cited in Cathy Spagnoli, "A Storyteller's India," The National Storytelling Journal, 1.2 (Spring, 1984), 3-6 (reference is to p. 3 [note]).


201. Tun-huang pien-wen chi, p. 36, line 12.


204. While there are no hard and fast rules governing the proportion of text and pictures to determine which is primary, my experience has shown that when the text occupies approximately one-third or more of the total surface, the accompanying pictures are generally to be considered as illustrations of it.


206. Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets, &c., in the British Museum, 31 (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1911), plates 10ff. See particularly plate 14 (K2089) and plate 40 (K1999).
Victor H. Mair, "The Contributions of Transformation Texts to Popular Literature"

207. Ancient Book Illumination, p. 31.

208. Quoted and translated by Źbikowski, Early Nan-hsi Plays, p. 129.


216. By Iris Pian, who showed a videotape and gave a lecture on the subject at a session of CHINOPERL during the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting in Chicago (April 3, 1982).

217. Chen Chung-hsien, "Soochow Storytelling," China Reconstructs, 10.10 (October, 1961), 19-21 (the quotation is from p. 20). Tseng Yung-i has also described the process whereby prosimetric storytellers don costumes, stand up, gesture, and otherwise take on the
characteristics of actors in a theater. He also shows how puppet plays are connected to human theater. "Chung-kuo ti-fang hsi-chü hsing-ch'eng yü fa-chan te ching-lu [The Path of the Formation and Development of Chinese Local Theater] 中國地方戏曲形成與發展的徑路, paper delivered at the Second International Conference on Sinology, Academia Sinica (Taipei, December 29-31, 1986) and soon to be published in the Proceedings of the conference.


219. Chin's interviewer, Susan Blader, writes in "'Yan Chasan Thrice Tested': Printed Novel to Oral Tale," Chinoperl Papers, 12 (1983), 84-111 (the quotation is from p. 87) that he recognized two basic types of pien : enrichment and reforming. Chin's reluctance or inability to specify the precise signification of pien may imply that it is an old concept handed down to him by earlier generations of storytellers.


Addendum to note 139 (page 62)

The most recent treatment of these figures has fortunately adopted a much more responsible position. In the catalogue for an exhibition organized by Lucy Lim entitled Stories from China's Past: Han Dynasty Pictorial Tomb Reliefs and Archaeological Objects from Sichuan Province, People's Republic of China (San Francisco: The Chinese Cultural Foundation of San Francisco, 1987), pp. 133-134 and 139, color plates 2 and 3, plates 42 and 46 (plus details), figures 6 and 7, over ten so-called "storyteller" figures are reported to have been discovered from Eastern Han tombs in Szechwan. The authors (Lucy Lim and Kenneth J. DeWoskin) note the dwarf-like features of these figures. Indeed, several of the figures, especially the seated ones, display various symptoms of achondroplasia and hypochondroplasia. In this respect, and in their exaggerated grimaces and odd bodily postures, they remind one of the court jesters or fools (often deformed and dwarfed) that have been common in many other parts of the world from ancient times. Lim and DeWoskin correctly describe these colorful figures as entertainers and mention historical and literary records of their activities. They were clearly associated with acrobats, singers, dancers, and magicians, and it is likely that they themselves told jokes, performed energetic skits to the accompaniment of their drums, and kept up a witty patter, but there is not one iota of evidence that they were prosimetric storytellers.
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