



National College of Art and Design

## School of Visual Culture

National College of Art and Design

Illustration [BA], School of Design

The Cultural Significance of *Journey to the West*: An Examination of its  
Endurance and Influence through the Centuries

Julie Lin

Submitted to the School of Visual Culture in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Illustration [BA]

2023



National College of Art and Design

## School of Visual Culture

I declare that this **Critical Cultures Research Project** is all my own work and that all sources have been fully acknowledged.

**Signed:** Julie Lin

**Programme / department:** Illustration [BA]

**Date:** 14/ 01/ 2023

## **Acknowledgements**

Firstly, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude towards my supervisor, Sarah Ross, for her unfaltering guidance, support, and encouragement throughout the semester. I would also like to thank Emma Rothwell and Dr Mary Redfern from the Chester Beatty Museum, Dublin, for their help in identifying *Journey to the West*-related items in their museum collections. It was immensely kind of them to send the information and photographs on to me. I would also like to thank Dr Julia Schneider from the Department of Asian Studies at University College Cork, for pointing me in the direction of Dr Barbara Wall's academic research on *Journey to the West*. Lastly, I would like to express my immense gratitude towards director, writer, and producer, Sarah Harper, for being so kind as to offer time out of her busy schedule for an interview with me. Her insights were truly thought-provoking.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Table of Contents	2
List of Illustrations	3
Introduction	5
Chapter One: The Theories of Storytelling	12
Chapter Two: The Endurance of <i>Journey to the West</i>	15
Chapter 3: The Influence of <i>Journey to the West</i> as Adaptations	19
3.1 Case Study: Akira Toriyama's <i>Dragon Ball</i>	20
3.2 Case Study: <i>LEGO Monkie Kid</i>	22
Conclusion	25
Appendices	27
Bibliography	28

## List of Illustrations

Fig. 1. Anon. (no date) <i>Snuff bottle carved with Queen Mother of the West and Monkey King</i> . Available at: <a href="https://viewer.cbl.ie/viewer/image/C_0447/1/LOG_0000/">https://viewer.cbl.ie/viewer/image/C_0447/1/LOG_0000/</a> [Accessed 8 November 2022].....	Page 5
Fig. 2. Müller, R. (2005) <i>Journey to the West</i> . Available at: <a href="https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JourneytotheWest.jpg">https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JourneytotheWest.jpg</a> [Accessed 8 November 2022].....	Page 6
Fig. 3. Braman, S. (2013) <i>Journey to the West rooftop figures on a Korean palace</i> . Available at: <a href="https://bramanswanderings.com/2013/04/02/journey-to-the-west/">https://bramanswanderings.com/2013/04/02/journey-to-the-west/</a> [Accessed 8 November 2022].....	Page 7
Fig. 4. Wall, B. (2017) <i>Sun Wukong at the Seoul Lantern Festival 2017</i> .....	Page 8
Fig. 5. Hewlett, J. (2007). <i>Promotional artwork for Monkey: Journey to the West</i> . Available at: <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Stone_egg.jpg">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Stone_egg.jpg</a> [Accessed 9 November 2022].....	Page 9
Fig. 6. The Simpsons (2021). <i>The Monkey King in episode 2, season 33</i> . Available at: <a href="https://simpsonswiki.com/wiki/File:Monkey_King.png">https://simpsonswiki.com/wiki/File:Monkey_King.png</a> [Accessed 9 November 2022].....	Page 10
Fig. 7. Game Science (2021). <i>Black Myth: Wukong video game scene</i> . Available at: <a href="https://www.artstation.com/artwork/ZGwgb0">https://www.artstation.com/artwork/ZGwgb0</a> [Accessed 9 November 2022].....	Page 11
Fig. 8. October Media (2015). <i>Monkey King: Hero is Back</i> . Available at: <a href="https://shirleyhsu.blog.wordpress.com/2016/02/18/monkey-king-hero-is-back-review-nostalgia-and-courage/">https://shirleyhsu.blog.wordpress.com/2016/02/18/monkey-king-hero-is-back-review-nostalgia-and-courage/</a> [Accessed 12 January 2022].....	Page 17
Fig. 9. Lasseter (1985). <i>Monkey King pencil sketches</i> . Available at: <a href="http://www.pixartouchbook.com/blog/2008/11/22/pixars-film-that-never-was-monkey.html">http://www.pixartouchbook.com/blog/2008/11/22/pixars-film-that-never-was-monkey.html</a> [Accessed 13 January 2022].....	Page 19
Fig. 10. Research and Markets (2022). <i>Global anime market forecast</i> . Available at: <a href="https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5406427/anime-market-size-share-and-trends-analysis?utm_source=BW&amp;utm_medium=PressRelease&amp;utm_code=2wxnbp&amp;utm_campaign=1747434++The+Worldwide+Anime+Industry+is+Expected+to+Reach+%2456+Billion+by+2030&amp;utm_exec=jamu273prd">https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5406427/anime-market-size-share-and-trends-analysis?utm_source=BW&amp;utm_medium=PressRelease&amp;utm_code=2wxnbp&amp;utm_campaign=1747434++The+Worldwide+Anime+Industry+is+Expected+to+Reach+%2456+Billion+by+2030&amp;utm_exec=jamu273prd</a> [Accessed 13 January 2023].....	Page 20
Fig. 11. Toriyama (1984). <i>First draft of Son Goku</i> . Available at: <a href="https://www.kanzenshuu.com/manga/prototypes/">https://www.kanzenshuu.com/manga/prototypes/</a> [Accessed 13 January 2023].....	Page 21

Fig. 12. Fineberg (2019). *Son Goku balloon*. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-sports-nfl-nba-los-angeles-314580300a4d4fe0a7b3abd718026a9e> [Accessed 13 January 2023].....Page 22

Fig. 13. Flying Bark Productions (2021). *Season Two poster*. Available at: [https://legomonkiekid.fandom.com/wiki/Season\\_2](https://legomonkiekid.fandom.com/wiki/Season_2) [Accessed 14 January 2023].....Page 23

# **The Cultural Significance of *Journey to the West*: An Examination of its Endurance and Influence through the Centuries**

## **Introduction**

If one was to go to a museum and peruse the Asian collection, it is quite possible that one might come across an artwork or object which features a simian figure, who may be holding a peach or wielding a martial staff, its head encircled by a golden band (for example, refer to the snuff bottle housed at the Chester Beatty Museum, Ireland, in fig. 1). Similarly, if one was to travel to East or Southeast Asia, this monkey character may be spotted again and again, on television or on a temple altar; often accompanied by four other distinctive companions. This character - whose depiction spans across a wide range of media - is the Monkey King, Sun Wukong, and he is a main character from one of the most influential works of all time in East Asian history: *Journey to the West* 西遊記 (Yang, 2019, pp. 206-207). This essay will aim to analyse the cultural significance of this work, as well as why it has been so widely adapted throughout its existence.



Fig. 1. Anon. (no date) *Snuff bottle carved with Queen Mother of the West and Monkey King*. Available at: [https://viewer.cbl.ie/viewer/image/C\\_0447/1/LOG\\_0000/](https://viewer.cbl.ie/viewer/image/C_0447/1/LOG_0000/) [Accessed 8 November 2022].

*Journey to the West* (Mandarin: *Xiyouji*; Japanese: *Saiyūki*; Korean: *Seoyugi*) is one of the masterpieces of classical Chinese literature. The title refers to a 100-chapter novel, published around the year 1592. The authorship is unknown but the book is commonly attributed to a Ming Dynasty scholar named Wu Cheng'en (Ruscica, 2021, p. 21; Wall, 2019, p. 2118). However, some of the story arcs found in *Journey to the West* (which shall be referred to as *Journey* from here onwards in this text), as well as prototypes of some of the characters, can be found in even earlier versions of the story, which had already been in circulation around East Asia hundreds of years prior to the publication of the Ming Dynasty novel. Academically, the period between the Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties (907-960) has been considered as a time of origin. Earlier editions include a text referred to as the *Kōzan-ji* edition – a 17-chapter version of *Journey* which was discovered in a monastery in Kyoto, Japan, and which dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier (Mair, 1987, p. 41; Ruscica, 2021, pp. 25-26). There is also a 24-scene Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) opera, which possesses the longest known length of any Yuan theatrical performance (Ruscica, 2021, p. 27). However, the Ming Dynasty novel is regarded as the definitive text for *Journey* and is known in academic circles as the 'Shidetang' edition (Wall, 2019, p. 2118).



Fig. 2. Müller, R. (2005) *Journey to the West*. Available at: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JourneytotheWest.jpg> [Accessed 8 November 2022].

The story of *Journey* follows Tripitaka the monk, as he travels from Tang China to India to fetch sacred scriptures from the Buddha. Along the way, he is joined by four supernatural beings, who have all been ordered by the Bodhisattva of Compassion, Guanyin, to aid him on his quest across perilous, fantastical lands. These include Pigsy (also known as Zhu Bajie or Wuneng), an anthropomorphic pig demon who often succumbs to lust and



gluttony; Sandy (also known as Sha Wujing), a gloomy river monster; a dragon prince named Ao Lie, who transforms into a white horse and acts as Tripitaka's mount; and – the most popular of all the characters – the Monkey King, Sun Wukong (see fig. 2 for a depiction of the group on the walls of the Summer Palace in Beijing, China). The story focuses heavily on the Monkey King and the first seven chapters are dedicated to his backstory; detailing his birth from a stone egg, his attainment of immortality and magical abilities, his war against the deities of the Chinese pantheon, and his subsequent downfall, where he is imprisoned under the Five Elements Mountain for 500 years after the Buddha intervenes (Bradeen and Johnson, 2005, pp. 40-41; Yu, 2012a, n.p.). After Sun Wukong is freed by Tripitaka, he becomes the monk's protector along the journey, wielding his signature weapon – a red and gold staff called the 'Ruyi Jingu Bang' (often translated as 'the Compliant Rod'), which can grow and shrink in size. The bulk of the story follows the 81 challenges the group faces as they cross mystical mountains and rivers, and explore new kingdoms. There is often a recurring pattern of Tripitaka being captured by a range of formidable demons (who can gain immortality if they consume his sacred flesh), prompting a rescue mission from his supernatural disciples (Bragg, 2021, n.p.).

The story is based on the pilgrimage of the real-life Tripitaka, who was born in 602 A.D. as the fourth child of a family of officials. He became a monk in his youth and, dissatisfied with the extent of Buddhist knowledge in China, journeyed to India to obtain the *Yogaśāstra* – which dealt with Idealist philosophy. He returned to China after 17 years and worked on translating the text from Sanskrit (Bradeen and Johnson, 2005, p. 40; Waley, 1952, pp. 11-14).



Fig. 3. Braman, S. (2013) *Journey to the West rooftop figures on a Korean palace*. Available at: <https://bramanswanderings.com/2013/04/02/journey-to-the-west/> [Accessed 8 November 2022].

It can be a challenge to explain the significance of *Journey* in multiple Asian countries, as there is no direct cultural equivalent in the West. It has permeated many mainstream aspects of East-Asian society in particular and has spawned a countless number of adaptations throughout its centuries of existence. In South Korea, the main characters of *Journey* can be found as ornamental roof figures on royal palaces from the Yi Dynasty (1392-1920), as seen in fig. 3. These palaces are popular tourist locations in Seoul. The nails used to affix figures to rooftops were even named after Sun Wukong, and were known as ‘Pilgrim Sun nails’ (Macouin, 2003, p. 31; Wall, 2014, p. 50). The Seoul Lantern Festival 2017 also predominantly featured lanterns shaped like the main characters of *Journey* (with the exclusion of Tripitaka). As seen in fig. 4, the Sun Wukong lantern includes his iconic staff. He is also resting on a cloud, in reference to his ability to summon and ride clouds in the book. There is also a K-drama known as *A Korean Odyssey* (2017-2018), which takes a modern-day spin on the story (Wall, 2019, p. 2127).



Fig. 4. Wall, B. (2017) *Sun Wukong at the Seoul Lantern Festival 2017*.

To assume that *Journey* remained confined within the borders of Asia would be incorrect. In the 1970s, *Monkey Magic* - a dubbed version of a Japanese live-action adaptation

of *Journey* – gained a cult following in the United Kingdom. It garnered several fansites and, decades after its airing, there was even a Facebook group with over 65,000 members (Geoghegan, 2008, n.p.). The BBC also produced an animated short for the 2008 Olympics, which featured characters and landscapes from *Journey*, with designs drawn by Jamie Hewlett and music by Damon Albarn, both of *Gorillaz* fame (BBC, 2008, n.p.). The two, along with director Chen Shizheng, also created a stage-adaptation known as *Monkey: Journey to the West*, which debuted in 2007. In promotional artwork created by Hewlett, the Monkey King can be seen leaping with his staff; the stone egg in the background referencing his birth (see fig. 5). It reflects director Chen’s statements about *Journey*, which he called the “funniest” of all Chinese classics, and which possessed “a certain kind of freedom and exuberance” (Stasio, 2013. n.p.; Wong, 2013, n.p.).



Fig. 5. Hewlett, J. (2007). *Promotional artwork for Monkey: Journey to the West*. Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Stone\\_egg.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Stone_egg.jpg) [Accessed 9 November 2022].

From cameo appearances on *The Simpsons* cartoon show (episode 2 of season 33, which aired on 3 October 2021 – see fig. 6) to having a system of Monkey Kung Fu named after him, it is clear that Sun Wukong and the story of *Journey* have been widely influential (Matsuda, 2014, pp. 118-131). There is something about its story and characters which has prompted human beings to continuously adapt *Journey* or incorporate it into some aspect of daily life.



Fig. 6. The Simpsons (2021). *The Monkey King* in episode 2, season 33. Available at: [https://simpsonswiki.com/wiki/File:Monkey\\_King.png](https://simpsonswiki.com/wiki/File:Monkey_King.png) [Accessed 9 November 2022].

This essay will examine why *Journey* has endured for so many centuries and why it has become the cultural phenomenon it is today. As discussed, the story has been adapted in many forms and in many instances throughout time. From historical artefacts and traditional architecture to modern day entertainment, we see the story and characters of *Journey* reappearing time and time again. It is evident that there are elements to *Journey* which makes it a highly influential work, even to this day. Each passing year contributes to a growing list of *Journey* adaptations, such as the upcoming 2023 Netflix animated feature, *The Monkey King*, and the upcoming multi-platform video game, *Black Myth: Wukong* (shown in fig. 7) – a highly anticipated project by the studio, Game Science, which attracted over 10 million views on the release trailer alone (Low, 2021, n.p.; Skrebels, 2021, n.p.; Young, 2021, n.p.). This essay will investigate the mechanics of storytelling and identify which aspects of *Journey* exhibit qualities which have continued to grip human beings throughout centuries. How these traits have lent themselves to the adaptability of *Journey* in popular culture (pop culture) will then be examined, by analysing case studies in animated adaptations in particular.



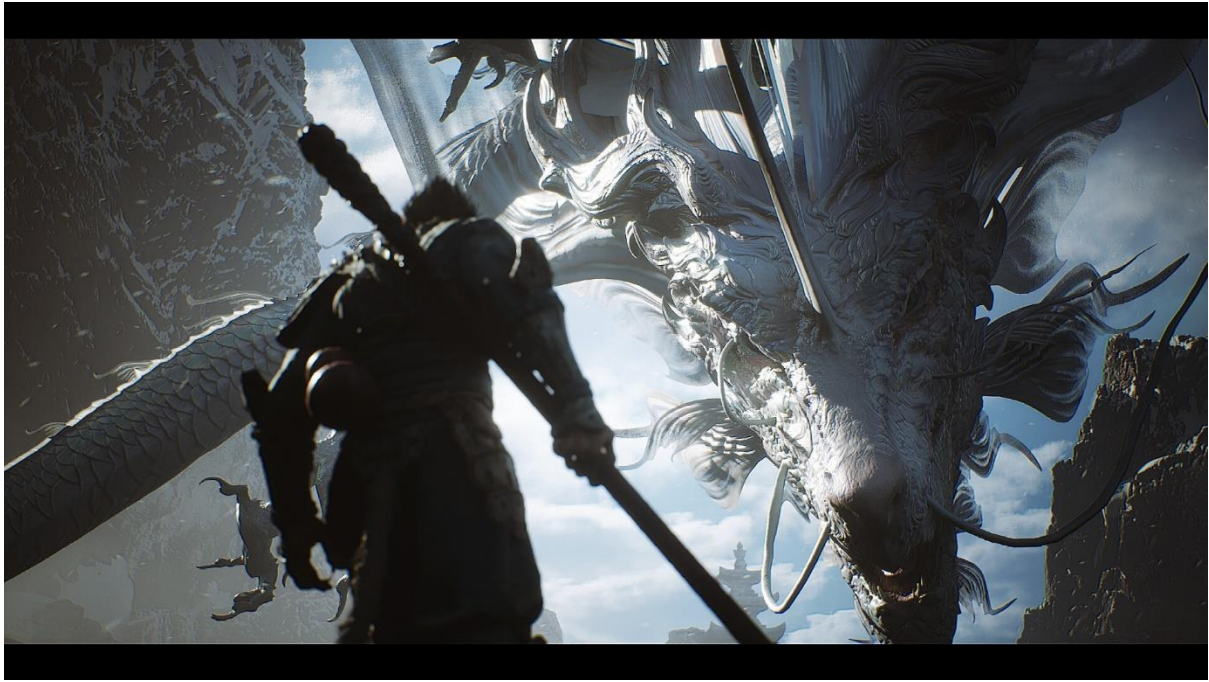


Fig. 7. Game Science (2021). Black Myth: Wukong *video game scene*. Available at: <https://www.artstation.com/artwork/ZGwgb0> [Accessed 9 November 2022].

By examining how the story and characters of *Journey* have been interpreted throughout adaptations, this study will shed insight on its enduring popularity and prevalence in pop culture.

## Chapter 1: The Theories of Storytelling

In order to understand the cultural significance of *Journey*, it is imperative to also consider the importance of storytelling in human society. In doing so, one may comprehend why a single work of fiction can come to be so influential, even after the passage of centuries. In modern times, there are entire college majors dedicated to the study of literature and folklore, as well as to the likes of creative-writing. It is evident that both the creation and the consumption of stories are significant parts of the universal human experience. Indeed, stories possess the ability to influence the course of history – as highlighted by the fact that the Macedonian king, Alexander the Great, kept a copy of Homer’s *Iliad* with him during his military campaigns (Puchner, 2018, n.p.). Stories have played a role in human societies since prehistory and their initial preservation and passing from individual to individual, as well as generation to generation, was through oral tradition – often in proximity to a fire. Even stories which do not possess a written record have survived through archaeological artefacts – such as vases, carvings, and cave paintings. The origin of storytelling shares the same spawning point as speech. As can be expected of hunter-gatherer societies, the earliest stories possessed an informative function and were used to communicate knowledge about such things as food sources, dangers, and certain phenomena. In time, the skill of storytelling became important for other social reasons as well. For example, individuals who possessed greater skills in storytelling could increase the effectiveness and relevance of their stories and themselves, thereby becoming more influential and obtaining a higher social status (Zipes, 2012, pp. 1-6).

This all implies an evolutionary link between storytelling and the human psyche. Our brains function in such a way so as to allow us to recall stories on command, as well as memories, images, and impressions. Early humans also relied upon the evocation of strong emotions to aid their survival. The organisation of experiences into narratives which could trigger emotional responses and memories also contributed to early storytelling (Parry, 1997, pp. 120-122). In a study conducted on the Agta (a Filipino hunter-gatherer population), it was found that stories coordinated group behaviour and educated about social norms, rules, taboos, and expectations. All Agta stories were about humanised animals or celestials (an element similar to *Journey*) and the studies showed that Agta communities with good storytellers displayed better cooperation. They also preferred good storytellers to good foragers, and the former also possessed greater reproductive success (Smith *et al.*, 2017, pp. 1-4). Therefore, one can consider storytelling to be inherent for humans. Stories can thus possess great potential to become culturally widespread and influential.

Humans create and consume stories across a wide range of media. While oral storytelling and physical texts may have been the dominant transmission methods in the past, digital media is now prevalent and stories often play out across device screens, as movies or serialised shows. Humans are fixated with the consumption of stories. Some studies have found that, on average, an American individual will spend 1,900 hours per year watching television. Other studies found that daydreams possess an average length of 14 seconds and that humans are inclined to have around 2,000 daydreams per day. It is evident that humans possess a natural inclination towards immersion in stories and narratives (Gottschall, 2012, n.p.).

In terms of what makes certain stories more appealing and enduring than others, the mechanics of storytelling can be examined. In 1949, Joseph Campbell published a book titled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*; in which he discussed the idea of the “monomyth” that was “the hero’s journey”. This was what he believed to be a shared, repeating narrative structure with an archetypal “hero”, which was applicable to myths across the world. This involved the protagonist leaving the world of “common day” and entering a “region of supernatural wonder”. The hero then encounters “fabulous forces”, before achieving victory and returning from this adventure with “the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (Campbell, 2004, p. 28). Campbell divided the hero’s journey into three stages, each with their own subsections. In the first stage, there were: “The Call to Adventure” (the hero’s initial summons into adventure), “Refusal of the Call” (the hero’s initial reluctance to embark on the quest), “Supernatural Aid” (a supernatural figure which gives guidance or items which helps the hero later on), “The Crossing of the First Threshold” (the hero leaves his prior normalcy), and “The Belly of the Whale” (the hero is now entirely in unfamiliar territories). The second stage possesses the following subsections: “The Road of Trials” (transformative tests for the hero), “The Meeting with the Goddess” (the hero acquires items which will help him), “Woman as the Temptress” (the hero faces temptations which may lead him astray), “Atonement with the Father”, “Apotheosis” (the hero transcends to new realisations), and “The Ultimate Boon” (the quest is achieved). Finally, the third stage comprises of: “Refusal of the Return” (the hero initially does not wish for his old life), “The Magic Flight” (the hero perhaps flees with the boon), “Rescue from Without” (the hero is assisted by others on the return journey), “The Crossing of the Return Threshold”, “Master of the Two Worlds” (the hero is at balance with both the mortal and supernatural worlds), and “Freedom to Live” (unburdened and enlightened, the hero carries on with life).

Another attempt at identifying storytelling patterns was made by Christopher Booker, who suggested that there were seven archetypal plots: “Overcoming the Monster”, “Rags to Riches”, “The Quest”, “Voyage and Return”, “Comedy”, “Tragedy”, and “Rebirth”. However, Booker examined mostly stories of “our own Western civilisation” for his work, which he described as “the most richly developed complex of storytelling in the world” (Booker, 2004, n.p.). Notably, these theories can be too limiting and are not perfectly applicable to all stories. However, despite their flaws, certain story structures do appear to appeal to human beings on a wide scale. While *Journey* shares similarities with a few of these archetypes, the next chapter will examine how the story of *Journey* expands beyond these narrative formulas; thereby contributing to its eminent endurance throughout centuries.



## Chapter Two: The Endurance of *Journey to the West*

At first glance, *Journey* appears to follow Campbell's proposed monomyth relatively closely. The mortal monk, Tripitaka, embarks on a journey across unfamiliar, danger-riddled lands. His goal is to acquire sacred Buddhist scriptures and he is joined by supernatural companions and occasionally aided by deities. Following 81 trials, he and his companions reach the legendary Thunderclap Monastery, obtain the scriptures from the Buddha himself (Siddhartha Gautama), and return to the Tang Empire. Tripitaka, through his journey, reaches enlightenment and becomes a Buddha (Yu, 2012a, n.p.). This appears to be the classic formula of myths across the world. Even if this was all there was to *Journey*, this tried-and-tested plotline would have enabled it to endure as any classical text had done. However, other aspects of *Journey* have allowed it to possess great influence in modern pop culture – especially in terms of its popularity as a source material for adaptations.

While the monomyth can apparently be applied to Tripitaka's storyline, this is forgetting the fact that the most iconic character in *Journey* is not the "chosen one" monk but, rather, his magical disciple, Sun Wukong – the Monkey King. He has been called the "world's most popular superhero" (given his fame in East and Southeast Asia) – with no direct Western equivalent except "perhaps a combination of Robin Hood, Hell Boy and Shakespeare's Puck" (Trapp, 2016, n.p.). The novel explains how Sun Wukong obtained his arsenal of magical powers as well as how he acquired multiple layers of immortality. The first few chapters read almost like a "villain origin story", as Sun Wukong (who begins with good intentions) feels repeatedly wronged by the deities. In one instance, the Monkey King was recruited by the Jade Emperor to join the celestial court. However, when he discovered that his job was essentially a glorified stable boy, he felt insulted, freed all the heavenly horses, and left. Following several thefts of magical items on his part, he engages in a rebellious battle against the celestial realm. The deities team up and eventually imprison him within a fiery crucible. When Sun Wukong breaks free after forty-nine torturous days, he continues on an enraged warpath in the heavens, with an intention to dethrone the Jade Emperor. He is stopped only by the arrival of the Buddha, who traps him under a mountain for 500 years (Yu, 2012a, n.p.). The novel therefore shows his initial rise to power, followed by his dramatic downfall, and his long road to redemption after he is freed by Tripitaka. Sun Wukong is not a typical hero character. He is a rebel and a hell-raiser, who "laughs at attempts to be controlled" (Trapp, 2016, n.p.). He is the main cast's primary fighter, the most competent member, and the one who comes up with clever plans to help the group out of their dilemmas. His character is so significant that he has entered the

realms of real-world religion and there are various temples in Asia dedicated to his worship (Lai, 1994, p. 43).

The Monkey King has also captivated bestselling writer, Neil Gaiman, who had been planning a movie trilogy of *Journey to the West* with director Zhang Jizhong. They had discussed the project with filmmakers, James Cameron (*Avatar*) and Guillermo del Toro (*Pan's Labyrinth*). Gaiman described *Journey* as being “in the DNA of 1.5 billion people” and possessing “the best bad guys”, which he believed was “absolutely universal”. As for Sun Wukong, Gaiman believed the character was “irrepressible” and could not be censored (Landreth, 2011, n.p.).

Aside from having the charismatic Sun Wukong as a character, *Journey* lends itself well to adaptations due the episodic nature of the chapters, which span across approximately 2,500 pages. Demon after demon appear throughout various arcs, with the intention to kidnap the hapless Tripitaka. In other chapters, the group must solve issues plaguing some desperate monarch or townsfolk in the new lands they visit. There is a serialised nature to the story and the characters are comically aware of how they always run into trouble at every twist and turn. The chapters conclude in a fashion similar to modern shows, which often end episodes on a cliff hanger, followed by narration such as, “Find out next time”. For example, in one arc, where the main characters of *Journey* have to face off against three deceitful Taoists in an immortality competition, the chapter ends with the line, “We do not know what will happen to master and disciples; let’s listen to the explanation in the next chapter” (Yu, 2012b, p. 314).

One of *Journey's* greatest assets is its ability to be read as a humorous, buddy-road-trip adventure story. While the synopsis gives the impression of an austere tale about enlightenment, the actual narrative is riddled with playful banter, chaotic antics, and surprising quantities of sass. Far from being zen and wise, Tripitaka frequently bursts into tears at the first signs of an inconvenience; while Sun Wukong engages in taunts, pranks, and banter with anybody who crosses his path. For example, in one arc, the group is imprisoned in a cave, while their demon captors debate how to cook them. Only Sun Wukong evaded capture and, to carry out a rescue mission, he enters the cave disguised as the demon matriarch. Pigsy spots Sun Wukong's monkey tail and (jeopardising his own rescue for an opportunity to laugh at the Monkey King) points this out. The demons do not hear him but Sun Wukong picks up on this. In response, he casually remarks to the demons that he is not keen on eating Tripitaka but that he hears the ears

of Pigsy are “quite marvellous” and suggests having them as appetisers – to which Pigsy sputters and gives away the disguise (Yu, 2012b, pp. 125-126).

*Journey* is also often considered to be a satire of Ming Dynasty bureaucracy. As explained by Lovell (2021), the 16<sup>th</sup> Century saw a series of tyrannical and incompetent emperors. In *Journey*, nobody in authority is portrayed in a flattering light. The condescension of the deities is what propels Sun Wukong on the path of rebellion, and every monarch the group encounters on their travels is weak or corrupt. As Lovell further points out, the characters often have to submit paperwork to the “correct supernatural departments” and even deaths are handled by “underworld civil servants”, who consult mortality schedules and ledgers. Once the characters finally reach Thunderclap Monastery, the officials there demand a bribe (Yu, 2012c, n.p.). Considering the fact that corrupt, incompetent, and autocratic governments are still an issue in the modern world, it is easy to see why this element of *Journey* continues to resonate with societies. Sun Wukong in particular has been regarded as an icon for resistance against oppression. More recent adaptations, such as in the 2015 film, *Monkey King: Hero is Back*, seen in fig. 8 (which grossed \$153 million in China), tend to depict him as somebody who struggles against both physical and metaphorical restraints, and who strives for his own agenda (Amidi, 2016, n.p.; Sun, 2018, pp. 115-117). Thus, he is exceptionally popular among youths.



Fig. 8. October Media (2015). *Monkey King: Hero is Back*. Available at: <https://shirleyhsu.blog.wordpress.com/2016/02/18/monkey-king-hero-is-back-review-nostalgia-and-courage/> [Accessed 12 January 2022].

In many ways, *Journey* was also ahead of its time. One notably feminist arc deals with the group accidentally stumbling upon the Land of Women. Here, gender roles are reversed and the characters experience what life is like in a world dominated by the opposite sex. They have to put up with being ogled and find ways to reject unwanted advances; reflecting what women in the real world are subjected to. At one point, Tripitaka and Pigsy drink from a magical river and accidentally become pregnant. Much panic ensues from the pair. Sun Wukong tries to fetch water from the Abortion Spring – however, he faces an issue: access to the abortion water has been restricted by a male Taoist (Bragg, 2021, n.p.; Lovell, 2021, n.p.). It is worth noting that the spectrum of issues the characters face throughout this arc are still applicable to women in modern times. Thus, many of the messages in *Journey* continue to be relevant; therefore, aiding its endurance.

### Chapter Three: The Influence of *Journey to the West* as Adaptations

The influence of *Journey* as a source material for adaptations can be highlighted by examining the animation industry, where it has played a monumental role in many early animations. In the 1980s, Pixar had intended to adapt the story of the Monkey King as their very first film. However, due to technological restraints with rendering materials like fur, they produced *Toy Story* (1995) instead (Price, 2008, n.p.). John Lasseter's sketches for Sun Wukong (figure 9) show how they would have portrayed the Monkey King.



Fig. 9. Lasseter (1985). *Monkey King pencil sketches*. Available at: <http://www.pixartouchbook.com/blog/2008/11/22/pixars-film-that-never-was-monkey.html> [Accessed 13 January 2022].

The animation industry in East Asia especially was propelled by *Journey* adaptations. In China, the first animated feature film was *Princess Iron Fan* (1941) by the Wan brothers. This was an adaptation of one of the chapters in *Journey*, which dealt with the Demon Bull King and his formidable wife: the titular Princess Iron Fan (Sun, 2018, p. 61). In Japan, the cultural icon, Osamu Tezuka (who is known as the Father of Manga and Anime, and credited with making this industry Japan's greatest cultural export) was also significantly inspired by *Journey*. He created a manga in 1952 called *My Son Goku* ("Son Goku" being the Japanese pronunciation of "Sun Wukong"), which later became his first work to be adapted into an animation, titled *Saiyūki* (Romano, 2016, n.p. ; Sun, 2018, p. 32). Shigeru Miyamoto (the creator of *Mario*, *Legend of Zelda*, and *Donkey Kong*) based the design of the *Mario* antagonist, Bowser, on the Ox King from Tezuka's *Saiyūki* (Oxford, 2009, n.p.). As discussed, the plethora of characters and story arcs, as well as the humorous adventure tones, in *Journey* makes it ideal for adaptation.

### 3.1 Case Study: Akira Toriyama's *Dragon Ball*

Japan is known for the exportation of pop culture media as soft power (Akbas, 2018, pp. 113-144). As shown in fig. 10, the global anime market is expected to reach \$56.39 billion by 2030.

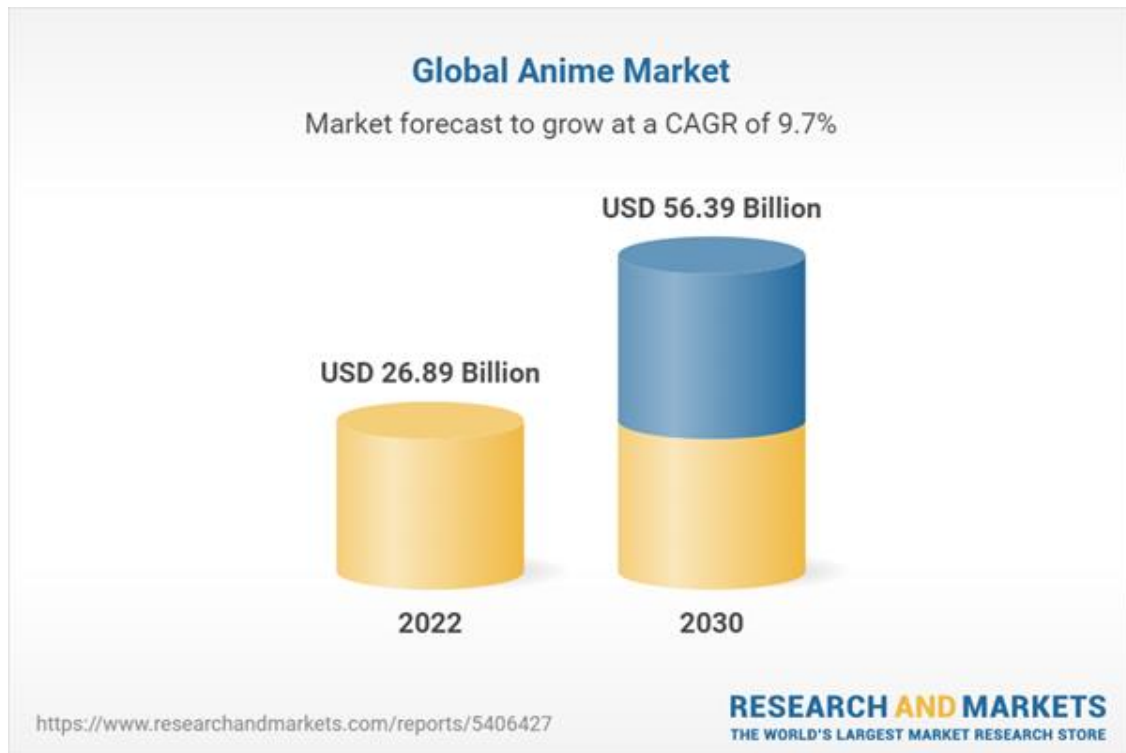


Fig. 10. Research and Markets (2022). *Global anime market forecast*. Available at: [https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5406427/anime-market-size-share-and-trends-analysis?utm\\_source=BW&utm\\_medium=PressRelease&utm\\_code=2wxnbp&utm\\_campaign=1747434++The+Worldwide+Anime+Industry+is+Expected+to+Reach+%2456+Billion+by+2030&utm\\_exec=jamu273prd](https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5406427/anime-market-size-share-and-trends-analysis?utm_source=BW&utm_medium=PressRelease&utm_code=2wxnbp&utm_campaign=1747434++The+Worldwide+Anime+Industry+is+Expected+to+Reach+%2456+Billion+by+2030&utm_exec=jamu273prd) [Accessed 13 January 2023].

Four out of six of the top-selling manga series of all time (all of which possess successful animated adaptations) are either *Journey* adaptations, feature plot points influenced by *Journey*, or include the Monkey King as a character. The second top-selling series, *Dragon Ball* by Akira Toriyama, has sold over 300 million copies (Hale, 2022, n.p.). As a franchise, *Dragon Ball* has earned over \$27.7 billion since its creation in 1984 (Kurten, 2022, n.p.). Toriyama based this series on *Journey*, which he believed was apt for adaptation due to its possessing many “absurd and adventurous elements”. Reflecting the fact that the original *Journey* was written in a vernacular style, so as to allow the common masses of the time to enjoy it, Toriyama simplified the plotline and included sci-fi elements, aiming for a young target audience. The main character, Son Goku, was originally designed to look simian (fig.

11). However, Toriyama's wife urged him to change the design – therefore, the character became human in appearance (Ruscica, 2021, pp. 35-43).



Fig. 11. Toriyama (1984). *First draft of Son Goku*. Available at: <https://www.kanzenshuu.com/manga/prototypes/> [Accessed 13 January 2023].

The episodic nature of *Journey*, along with its range of supernatural bad guys and overarching grand quest, makes it highly compatible with modern day media – such as serialised manga and animated shows, which often feature action-packed fight scenes, fantastical elements and “monster-of-the-week” style villains. Toriyama turned his Son Goku into an action-hero type character, who possesses similar powers to the original Monkey King, such as the ability to fly on clouds and wield a magical staff. The sacred scrolls were replaced by the seven Dragon Balls, while Tripitaka was replaced by the heroine, Bulma. Pigsy and Sandy's counterparts became Oolong the pig and Yamcha the desert bandit respectively (Nishijima, 2022, n.p.). *Dragon Ball* has itself become an iconic series in pop culture. It is credited with being one of the key players in introducing Japanese animation to the West and is a much-beloved series by many across the world. A giant Son Goku balloon at the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade in Manhattan made the front page of *The New York Times* (fig. 12). Multiple athletes and celebrities - such as Michael B. Jordan and Ronda Rousey - have also publicly expressed their love for the series (Landrum, 2019, n.p.). While *Dragon Ball* has become a highly popular and influential series in its own right, one cannot forget that it began from the centuries-old tale of *Journey to the West*.





Fig. 12. Fineberg (2019). *Son Goku balloon*. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-sports-nfl-nba-los-angeles-314580300a4d4fe0a7b3abd718026a9e> [Accessed 13 January 2023].

### 3.2. Case Study: *LEGO Monkie Kid*

*LEGO Monkie Kid* is an ongoing animated series produced by Flying Bark Productions in Australia. The show – which began airing in 2020 - is an adaptation of *Journey*, where the story is set vaguely in the future, and follows an ordinary boy named MK who stumbles upon the Monkey King’s legendary staff and becomes his successor. The cast features prolific voices actors such as Jack DeSena (Sokka in *Avatar: The Last Airbender*) as MK, Sean Schemmel (Goku in *Dragon Ball*) as Sun Wukong, Johnny Yong Bosch (multiple Power Rangers and Ichigo in *Bleach*) as Prince Nezha, and the late Billy Kametz (Blue in *Pokémon Masters*) as Macaque. The show has been compared to cult-favourite *Avatar: The Last Airbender* due to its balance of humour and adventure, and its richly cultural worldbuilding (Barrios, 2022, n.p.).

The series is directed by Sarah Harper, who won the 2022 Australian Directors’ Guild Award for Animation based on Season 3 of *Monkie Kid* (Knox, 2022, n.p.). Harper is also a writer and producer on the show. In an interview, she discussed the endurance of *Journey* as a



popular source material for adaptations, pointing out how the original text was essentially the original “Marvel Cinematic Universe”, due to how it grabbed “elements from mythology, folklore, and history; bundling them up in a blender and spitting out one of the biggest and most hilarious fantasy epics of all time” (Lin, 2023). In regards to how the show approached their interpretation of the Monkey King, Harper acknowledged that the character was such a cultural icon that there could be tendency to treat him with “too much reverence” and make him “squeaky clean”. Harper’s conviction that the character’s flaws be included ended up making it into the show, where he plays the role of a mentor figure to the protagonist. According to Harper, Sun Wukong was a “cosmic sponge with limitless potential, for great evil, or for great good”. This multifaceted aspect of the character is indeed what makes him intriguing – as the protagonists of adventure stories are usually depicted as wholly moral, with clean back stories. It is no wonder that a character who, according to Harper, has spiralled down the “path of self-destruction” has latched so strongly onto public imagination for centuries. It is worth noting that *Journey* is sometimes interpreted as an allegorical text, with each of the main characters representing a different part of human nature. Sun Wukong was considered an allegory for the human mind and heart – subject to mutability, arrogance, and chaotic pursuits (Lovell, 2021, n.p.). Thus, perhaps contributing to his relatability among audiences.



Fig. 13. Flying Bark Productions (2021). *Season Two* poster. Available at: [https://legomonkiekid.fandom.com/wiki/Season\\_2](https://legomonkiekid.fandom.com/wiki/Season_2) [Accessed 14 January 2023].

Despite the more futuristic setting of *LEGO Monkie Kid*, the majority of the characters (which can be seen in fig. 13), as well as the dynamics between them, are lifted directly from the book. Each supernatural antagonist MK and his friends face, as well as the magical items they come across, are from the original *Journey*. It is remarkable that a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century cartoon series can so directly borrow characters and plot points from a 16<sup>th</sup>-Century manuscript, without having to change anything substantially. The humour and the banter between the characters - with characters still finding time to sass each other during times of peril - have also remained the same. Harper commented on this aspect of adapting *Journey*, calling the original novel “genuinely funny” and saying that she did not know how much the original influenced her, or how much it just sat in her “comedic sensibilities naturally”.

As evidenced by the global success of series such as *Dragon Ball* and the fact that animated adaptations (among other kinds of adaptations) are still being produced (as in the case of *LEGO Monkie Kid*), *Journey* continues to demonstrate its influence in modern pop culture through its popularity as a source material for media.

## Conclusion

It is quite possible that when the anonymous author of *Journey* (possibly Wu Cheng'en) sat down to write this lengthy manuscript, they never would have imagined that their stories and characters would endure long past the Ming Dynasty and continue to be prevalent even in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; with its cars, electricity, and digital media. It is also unlikely that they realised that the long, linear narrative they used – broken into smaller, interconnecting subplots – was in fact the perfect formula for a modern-day television series, with its cliff-hanger episodes and weekly bad guys. It is perhaps an indication that the human beings of the past are not quite so different from the human beings of today, and that, despite technological advancements, the inherent nature of *Homo sapiens* is still to crave stories – particularly if the stories are humorous and filled with action.

The cultural significance of *Journey* is indeed vast in scope – too vast, in fact, to cover in a single essay. There are religious temples and historical palaces to consider, as well as woodblock prints, artefacts, live-action films and series (including Western shows such as *Into the Badlands* and *The New Legends of Monkey*), music, books, festivals, and more. It is quite possible that some digging around in something seemingly unrelated will reveal that its roots are actually tied in some way to *Journey*.

As discussed, the influence and endurance of *Journey* may be due to some innate human response. The human psyche has evolved in such a way that cultures around the world share many similarities in their mythos. *Journey* takes this and expands upon it; mainly with its most charismatic and iconic character, Sun Wukong the Monkey King, as well as with its use of comedic and entertaining scenarios. Combined with, as Harper called it, “a cinematic universe” quality, these aspects make *Journey* a prime candidate for adaptations; particularly, in the animation industry – from Pixar and their initial intention to adapt the story of the Monkey King for their first film, to the earliest feature length animations in Asia, and to modern day series in both East and West.

*Journey's* role in launching the animation industry in East Asia cannot be overstated. From the Wan brothers' *Princess Iron Fan* sparking a young Osamu Tezuka's interest in making comics and animation, to Akira Toriyama's *Dragon Ball* gaining worldwide recognition and paving the way for many more Japanese series to be exported, *Journey* has permeated pop culture without most people even realising it. Nowadays, the anime and manga industry is highly lucrative and many of the most popular franchises (such as Eiichiro Oda's

*One Piece*, which sold over 516.6 million copies) follow *Dragon Ball's* plot formula; thereby somewhat unknowingly absorbing the tropes Toriyama had borrowed from *Journey* (Hale, 2022, n.p.). In this way, *Journey* lives on even in indirect ways.

Undoubtedly, the future will see even more *Journey* adaptations come to life. Many of its themes – the rebellious Sun Wukong, fighting bitterly against authority; the Land of Women, where gender roles are reversed – continue to be relevant. This essay began with the discussion of the cultural significance of *Journey* in Asia; where its influence can be seen on public buildings, during religious festivals, and on various forms of media from traditional opera to children's cartoons. However, as shown by examples discussed previously, this centuries-old tale has also begun a literal journey westwards. From the time of the Ming Dynasty until now, the influence and endurance of *Journey to the West* has not faded. If anything, they have grown stronger and this peculiar tale about Tripitaka the monk, crossing perilous lands to find sacred scriptures, and his supernatural companions – Pigsy, the power-napping glutton; Sandy, the gloomy, blue demon; Ao Lie, the dragon-turned-horse; and, of course, Sun Wukong the irrepressible Monkey King – will continue to inspire and to entertain audiences for generations to come.

## **Appendices: Interview with Sarah Harper from Flying Bark Productions, Australia**

The following are questions which were sent to Sarah Harper via email correspondence:

1. Why do you think *Journey to the West* has endured in popularity for so long, and why do you think it is such a popular source material still for modern day media?
2. When working on *Monkie Kid*, are there any elements of *Journey to the West* that you try to keep or capture?
3. What are some of the challenges associated with adapting *Journey to the West* for *Monkie Kid*?
4. Who is your favourite *Monkie Kid* character and why?
5. What is your personal interpretation of the Monkey King?
6. MK works really well as a protagonist - what do you think are some of his most important qualities as a character, and was there anything you kept in mind when developing a 'successor' type of story with him?
7. *Monkie Kid* did an amazing job with fleshing out and highlighting other characters from *Journey to the West*. One such character who is a huge fan favourite is Macaque. Why do you think he became so popular?
8. Which is your favourite episode and why?

## Bibliography

- Akbas, I. (2018) 'A "cool" approach to Japanese foreign policy: linking anime to international relations', *Perceptions*, 23(1), pp. 25-120.
- Amidi, A. (2016) *Chinese hit 'Monkey King: Hero is Back' gets U.S. distribution*. Available at: <https://www.cartoonbrew.com/feature-film/chinese-hit-monkey-king-hero-back-gets-u-s-distribution-141538.html> (Accessed 13 January 2023).
- Barrios, A. (2022) *This obscure animated show can match Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Available at: <https://www.cbr.com/lego-monkie-kid-avatar-the-last-airbender/> (Accessed 13 January 2023).
- 'Bart's in Jail!' (2021) *The Simpsons*, Series 33, episode 2. Fox Broadcasting Company, 3 October.
- BBC (2008) Olympics 2008 Monkey Movie - BBC Sport. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yr5ZWYRaAyw&t=1s> (Accessed 9 November 2022).
- Booker, C. (2004) *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. London: Continuum.
- Bradeen, R. and Johnson, J. (2005) 'Using *Monkey* to teach religions of China', *Education About Asia*, 10(2), pp. 39-43.
- Bragg, M. (2021) *In Our Time*. [Podcast]. 20 May 2021. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000w5hd> (Accessed 8 November 2022).
- Campbell, J. (2004) *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Geoghegan, T. (2008) 'What was Monkey Magic all about?', *BBC News Magazine*, 23 July. Available at: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/7520243.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7520243.stm) (Accessed 8 November 2022).
- Gottschall, J. (2012) *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Hale, A. (2022) *10 best-selling manga of all time (and how many copies were sold)*. Available at: <https://www.cbr.com/best-selling-manga-how-many-copies/> (Accessed 13 January 2023).
- Knox, D. (2022) *Australian Directors Guild Awards 2022: winners*. Available at: <https://tvtonight.com.au/2022/12/australian-directors-guild-awards-2022-winners.html> (Accessed 13 January 2023).
- Kurten, G. (2022) *The ten highest-grossing anime franchises of all time, ranked*. Available at: <https://screenrant.com/highest-grossing-anime-franchises-all-time/> (Accessed 13 January 2023).
- Lai, W. (1994) 'From protean ape to handsome saint: the Monkey King', *Asia Folklore Studies*, 53(1), pp. 29-65.
- Landreth, J. (2011) *Neil Gaiman journeys East to pen 'Monkey King' movies in China*. Available at: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/neil-gaiman-journeys-east-pen-166497/> (Accessed 13 January 2023).

Landrum, J. (2019) 'Celebs, athletes give 'Dragon Ball' pop culture super status', *Associated Press News*, 15 January. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-sports-nfl-nba-los-angeles-314580300a4d4fe0a7b3abd718026a9e> (Accessed 13 January 2023).

Lin, J. (2023) Email to Sarah Harper, 10 January.

Lovell, J. (2021) *Monkey King: Journey to the West*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. New York: Penguin Random House.

Low, E. (2021) *Stephen Chow's 'Monkey King,' plus 'Boons and Curses' and 'Mech Cadet,' coming to Netflix in 2023*. Available at: <https://variety.com/2021/tv/news/stephen-chow-monkey-king-netflix-1234977665/> (Accessed 8 November 2022).

Macouin, F. (2003) 'Des figurines de toiture coréennes les *chapsang*', *Journal Asiatique*, 291(1-2), pp. 17-34.

Mair, V. (1987) 'Parallels between some Tun-huang manuscripts and the 17th chapter of the *Kōzanji Journey to the West*', *Cahiers d' Extrême-Asie*, 3, pp. 41-53.

Matsuda, M. (2014) *Monkey Kung Fu: history & tradition*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Nishijima, C. (2022) *Dragon Ball was inspired by this piece of classic Chinese literature*. Available at: <https://www.cbr.com/dragon-ball-journey-to-the-west-inspiration/#:~:text=Many%20of%20Dragon%20Ball's%20original,mystical%20stone%20in%20the%20mountains.> (Accessed 13 January 2023).

Oxford, D. (2009) *Iwata asks: the birth of Bowser*. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20100917090724/http://ds.kombo.com/article.php?artid=7373> (Accessed 13 January 2023).

Parry, A. (1997) 'Why we tell stories: the narrative construction of reality', *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 27(2), pp. 118-127.

Price, D. (2008) *Pixar's film that never was: "Monkey"*. Available at: <http://www.pixartouchbook.com/blog/2008/11/22/pixars-film-that-never-was-monkey.html> (accessed 13 January).

Puchner, M. (2018) *How stories have shaped the world*. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20180423-how-stories-have-shaped-the-world> (Accessed 12 January 2023).

Romano, A. (2016) *Osamu Tezuka was the "Walt Disney of Japan." His beautiful manga biography shows why*. Available at: <https://www.vox.com/2016/8/2/12244368/osamu-tezuka-story-explained> (Accessed 13 January 2023).

Ruscica, G. (2021) 'From China to the world: the main media pilgrimages of Sun Wukong (孙悟空) and Son Gokū (孫悟空)', *Mutual Images*, 10, pp. 21-50.

Skrebels, J. (2021) *Black Myth: Wukong developer responds to huge popularity of first trailer*. Available at: <https://www.ign.com/articles/black-myth-wukong-developer-response-popularity> (Accessed 8 November 2022).

Smith, D., Schlaepfer, P., Major, K., Dyble, M., Paige, A.E., Thompson, J., Chaudhary, N., Salali, G.D., Mace, R., Astete, L., Ngales, M., Vinicius, L. & Bamberg Migliano, . (2017)

‘Cooperation and the evolution of hunter-gatherer storytelling’, *Nature Communications*, 8(1853), pp. 1-9.

Stasio, M. (2013) *Legit Review: ‘Monkey: Journey to the West’*. Available at: <https://variety.com/2013/legit/reviews/legit-review-monkey-journey-to-the-west-1200560375/> (Accessed 8 November 2022).

Sun, H. (2018) *Transforming Monkey: Adaptation and Transformation of a Chinese Epic*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. Washington: University of Washington Press.

Trapp, J. (2016) *Is the Monkey King the world’s most popular superhero?* Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/monkey-king-worlds-most-popular-superhero> (Accessed 12 January 2023).

Waley, A. (1952) *The real Tripitaka and other pieces*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Wall, B. (2014) *Transformations of Xiyouji in Korean intertexts and hypertexts*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Ruhr University Bocham.

Wall, B. (2019) ‘Dynamic texts as hotbeds for transmedia storytelling: a case study on the story universe of *The Journey to the West*’, *International Journal of Communication*, 13, pp. 2116–2142.

Wong, E. (2013) ‘A Western detour for a Chinese tale’, *The New York Times*, 4 July. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/05/arts/music/chen-shi-zheng-s-road-to-monkey-journey-to-the-west.html> (Accessed 8 November 2022).

Yang, Q. (2019) ‘Cross-cultural variation: Chinese Monkey King legend as a trickster in America’, *Comparative Literature: East and West*, 3(2), pp. 205-215.

Young, C. (2021) *Black Myth: Wukong - the world exclusive story behind the breakout action-RPG*. Available at: <https://www.ign.com/articles/black-myth-wukong-making-of-behind-the-scenes-exclusive> (Accessed 8 November 2022).

Yu, A. C. (2012) *The Journey to the West: volume 1*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Yu, A.C. (2012) *The Journey to the West: volume 2*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Yu, A.C. (2012) *The Journey to the West: volume 4*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zipes, J. (2012) *The Irresistible Fairy Tale: The Cultural and Social History of a Genre*. 1<sup>st</sup> edn. Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press.