

# A Comparison of the Themes of *The Journey to the West* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Yan Liu

English Department, Zhenjiang Watercraft College, No.130 Taohuawu Road, Zhenjiang 212003, China

Wenjun Li

English Department, Zhenjiang Watercraft College, No.130 Taohuawu Road, Zhenjiang 212003, China

**Abstract**—The Journey to the West, which tells the journey of four Buddhist monks who have overcome many hardships for the purpose of arriving in the West and asking for the Buddhist Scriptures, is one of the “four classics” of China. The Pilgrim's Progress tells the difficult journey of Christian from the “City of Destruction”, his hometown to the “Celestial City”. Despite of the sameness of the two stories, that is, the strong religious atmosphere, there are still obvious differences between them. This article tries to compare the themes of the Journey to the West and the Pilgrim's Progress. At the beginning, we will discuss the themes of the two novels. Then we will compare the differences of the themes and will discover that both of them have revealed the religious belief of “learn virtue and unlearn vice” and criticized the current society. But the aims of the journeys and the attitudes to the new rising class of the authors are of remarkable differences. The purpose of this article is to help the readers appreciate the two stories better, and to have better understanding of the reasons of such differences.

**Index Terms**—journey to the west, Pilgrim's progress, religious belief

## I. INTRODUCTION

The sameness of the Journey to the West and the Pilgrim's Progress are: they are both molded from the religious stories; they have respectively described an ideal character who has overcome many difficulties in the journey of the heaven; the characters in their stories were gifted the spirit of going ahead bravely and insistently without looking backs despite of the hardships. The Pilgrim's Progress is called as the “most perfect allegory” by the westerners while the Journey to the West is called as the “Medieval mythology of China”. (Guo Wen, 2001) Banyan and Wu Cheng'en both chose the unearthly subjects while they were attacking their nations' ills and cures, reflecting the profound senses of responsibility and vocation, and revealing their earthly thought. What's more, the title of the Pilgrim's Progress was translated as 《圣游记》 in China and according to Helen Hayes's translation, the Journey to the West was called the Buddhist Pilgrim's Progress: the Record of the Journey to the West. The similarity of the translations of the titles showed that the western and Chinese scholars have noticed the similarities of the two novels and compared them with each other. However, there are obvious differences between them on the motivation of journeys, the attitudes to the new rising class and the grammatical characteristics, so it is meaningful to explore the differences covered by the apparent similarities.

## II. A BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF THE THEMES OF THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST AND THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

During the latter part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the famous Christian novel titled as the Pilgrim's Progress was composed by Banyan. It was so influential in the western countries that the westerners generally considered it as the most important Christian classic preceded only by the Bible. On the basis of Christian doctrines, Banyan designed and described the human beings' way to the paradise through the form of a dream. Therefore the Pilgrim's Progress has always been seen as an allegory of salvation generated from the Christian doctrines. Similar to the Pilgrim's Progress, there is also a novel describing the human beings' way to the west. The novel is titled as the Journey to the West, which began to be popular in China since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and is still well-known by the Chinese now. The Journey to the West adopted the form of adventure of Sun Wukong, Xuan Zang, Zhu Bajie and Sha Seng, who had experienced all the difficulties on the way to the West, the ideal world of the Buddhism. However, despite that they are both religious novels describing the ways to the paradise, what they have conveyed is totally different: the different religions and cultures; the salvation of the soul in the western Christianity and the self-realization of the Chinese out of their psychology influenced by the Confucianism, the Buddhism and Taoist school.

### A. The Theme of the Journey to the West

The journey full of hardships of Sun Wukong, Xuan Zang, Zhu Bajie and Sha Seng was of complete difference from the journey of Christian, who went to the “Celestial City” on the purpose of seeking for the salvation of his soul since he thought he was guilty. In the Journey to the West, the image of Sun Wukong was the representative of the people

who conveyed the spirit of self-realization in the Chinese traditional culture. Being different from the western culture which centered itself in the Christianity and emphasized the human beings' soul, the Chinese people focused on the human beings' mind. The term "mind" here is the essential and most basis element of the nature of a person. According to Mencius, "Kindness exists in the mind of the people and uprightness should be reflected by the conducts of the people." (Jame, 2008, P.405) It means that the kindness is the nature of the people's mind. So Li Wanjun said, "the essence of a person is the reason for a person being called as a person; the definition of a person is the differences between the human beings and the animals. The reason for a person being called as a person is the mind of him." (Li Wanjun, 2005, P.167) Here the mind means the sweet and kind appearances and the self-realized personality of a person inside. So the mind is the core of the nature of the human beings. It also contains the inner motivations of a person to love the others. The nature of the human beings' mind is kindness, which is actually the moral consciousness of a person of practicing to be the perfect one in the interactions with the outer world. Therefore, the human beings' mind does not only contain the kindness, but also the subjective initiation.

At first, Subhuti named the monkey as "Wukong" (understand the emptiness) to suggest that the monkey could eliminate the stupidity and obscurant of ignorance and un-civilization only when it realized the emptiness of desire and self. In fact, to understand the emptiness and to eliminate the un-civilization are interactive, that is to say, when you have eliminated the stupidity and obscurant of ignorance and un-civilization, you can understand the emptiness and anatta (no self). So Chen Yuanzhi said, "To grasp the attention of a people in order to capture the devil in his mind; to capture the devil in the mind of a person in order to restore the rationality of him; to restore the rationality of a person in order to recover the purity of a person just like he was at the beginning of his life." (Yang Zhouhan, 1995, P.19) The process of Sun Wukong's indulgence of itself to the returning to the right way, and then to the understanding of the true self was conducted in the adventure where it had beaten down the monsters and ghosts time and time again and cultivated itself from time to time. On the way to the west, there were many similar ones among the eight one set difficulties, which make people feel repeated. Actually, the repeated and varied difficulties, the iterative monsters and ghosts and again and again fights with them were precisely the one and another evil ideas in people's mind. And the fights of Sun Wukong were the process of overcoming the evil ideas and returning to the rational and upright way of people. Thus we can see that the author treated Sun Wukong, a monkey, as a human being and depicted the process of Wukong's self-realization to convey the process of self-realization of the human beings.

### B. *The Theme of the Pilgrim's Progress*

Through the form of a dream, Banyan told the story about the progress of Christian from the "City of Destruction" to the "Celestial City". I, the narrator, behold Christian, a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. He wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain. He cried to his wife and his family, "I am for certain informed that this our city (this world) will be burned with fire from heaven; in which fearful overthrow, both myself, with thee my wife, and you my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruin, except (the which yet I see not) some way of escape can be found, whereby we may be delivered." (John Bunyan, 2003) When Christian was crying since he had no idea about the fire and the ruin, a man named Evangelist came to tell him to "flee from the wrath to come".

Then Christian ran to the shining light that Evangelist told him and sought for salvation from the "Celestial City". He began his progress to the heaven. When he was at the beginning of his journey, a friend named Obstinate came to put him off but did not succeeded. A friend named Pliable followed him, but when they drew near to a very miry slough named Despond, and both fell suddenly into the bog, Pliable gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on one side of the slough and went away. But Christian gave his hand to Help and Help drew him out and set him upon sound ground. Later Christian was diverted by Mr. Worldly Wiseman into seeking deliverance from his burden through the Law. Then by the help of Evan and Good-will, Christian, he returned to the direct way and entered the Wicket Gate embodying the cross. During his progress, Christian experienced all kinds of difficulties and suffered a lot of hardships. He went through the Hill of Difficulty, the Valley of Humiliation, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the Vanity Fair. He was helped and encouraged by "xianhui", Piety and Charity. He also acquired the friendship of Faithful. Finally, at the companion of Hopeful, Christian crossed the River of Death and arrived at the Celestial City.

## III. THE SAMENESS AND DIFFERENCES ON THE THEMES OF THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST AND THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

### A. *The Sameness*

Both novels are religious allegories and have depicted the vivid living scenes of the three realms (the heaven, the earth and the under-earth) encyclopedically by the help of the travelogue structure, just as Li Wanjun has pointed out, that both of them are the combinations of religion and reality. Two mainline, the character of religion and the spirit of criticism, run through the two stories.

#### 1. The religious belief of "learn virtues and unlearn vice"

The stories of both novels have developed on the basis of religion. The author of the Pilgrim's Progress composed the novel according to the Christian thoughts: sin-belief-salvation-saved-blessed. First Banyan described the beginning of Christian's journey, in order to seek for truth and brightness, with the burden of sin. He was once tempted by Mr. World Wiseman, but he could get himself to the Wall of Salvation and come up with the cross. His burden loosed from off his

shoulders, and fell from off his back. It means that Christian accepted the religion, found the right way of salvation and entered the heaven at last. The Journey to the West, however, focuses mainly on the Buddhist ideas of Larma (comeuppance), ascetic practices for salvation, helping the others and entering the Pure Land. The four main characters, Sun Wukong, Xuan Zang, Zhu Bajie and Sha Seng, all committed crimes in their previous lives and were sent to the earth to suffer the hardships. As soon as they set the goal of going to the west for the Buddhist scriptures, they were always helped by the kinds of gods and fairies. The eighty one hardships were the experiences of ascetic practice the four main characters as well as the experience of accumulating the virtues of beating monsters and helping the common people.

Both novels describe the pursuit of the followers of the ideal realms of their religions: the heaven of the Christianity and the west of the Buddhism, despite of the hardships and backslides. The main characters of both novels are the most sincere and firm followers of their religions. In the Pilgrim's Progress, Christian has passed the examinations of Beelzebub, beauties, wealth, power and betrayal and makes up his mind to reach the heaven. In the Journey to the West, Sun Wukong is a hero who will kill and beat down every monster and villain and will help everyone in the sufferings. The four characters are the Buddhist followers who should confront with many hardships in the journey since no mountains are without monsters and no places are without dangers. The theme of the Journey to the West is to declaration the common belief of all religions: Larma (comeuppance); to punish the evils and praise the kindness; to believe in the gods sincerely; to conduct ascetic practice and the almighty of the gods. As the novels drawn from the religious stories, both of them chose the classic of their religions: the Bible and the Buddhist scriptures. As a pietistic Christian and preacher, Banyan learnt mainly from the Bible, so he was called as the "man of one book" and was very familiar with the Bible. The first and the second part of the Pilgrim's Progress have respectively quoted 160 and 94 similes from the Bible and the doctrines of Christianity exist in every part of the whole novel. The Pilgrim's Progress is full of the strong religious atmosphere of kindness, tolerance, glory of the God and the puritanical thought of self-governance and reasons. Wu Cheng'en, the author of the Journey to the West, was not a pure Buddhist or Taoist. He was gifted the traditional thoughts of the combined Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism just like the other Chinese scholars. So, among the gods of the story, there are Buddha and Bodhisattva of the Buddhism and the Jade Emperor and the heavenly gods of the Taoism. They usually unite with each other and attack the monkey, the rebelling one. Xuan Zang is a Buddhist aiming at delivering all living creatures from torments, but he is weak, pedantic and unable like the Confucian scholars. At first Sun Wukong learnt from Subhuti, and then he converted to Buddhism. The Buddhist stories, Confucian classics and Taoist sayings are everywhere in the novel. And at the end of the story, the four characters got the Scriptures (Buddhism), became immortal (Taoism) and continued to help the common people in the sufferings (Confucianism). This ending is the mutual-shining combination of the three influential trends of the Chinese society. The author tried hard to mix the Confucian virtues of faith, respect, politeness and righteousness with the merciful Buddhist thoughts and the simple Taoist style while he obviously regarded the Buddhism as the most ideal stage of the cultivation. Therefore, there were a lot of details that were directly from the Buddhist classics. According to Linsay, "the Buddhist scriptures are vivid and living in the story, just like the remarks from the Bible." (Wang Hanchuan, 2002)

At the same time, there were also many Taoist thoughts and speeches in the Journey to the West. The most representative parts were at the beginning and the end of the novel, the doctrines and images of Yijing, the Book of Changes were mentioned and the Taoist stories and the adventure brought out the best in each other. Superficially viewing, the two novels described the journey to the ideal paradise of their respective religions and treated the changes of locations as the mainline of them; but thoroughly viewing, we can find that both were telling the spiritual path of the followers who pursued the sanctity of their souls by learning virtues and unlearning vices. The degree of the piety of the characters went synchronously with the progress of the plots.

## 2. The criticism to the current society

The profound actuality and the strong criticism are the most distinct common features of the two stories. The religion is a belief of the knowledge of the world and the supernatural power as well as a kind of hope rooted in the reality. It is the hope that leads to the creation of the value of the religion and the establishment of the belief. Therefore, the religions are always related to the reality. As the novels representing the religious ideals of the author, the two novels carried the acknowledgements of the reality and the hopes of changing the presence. It was conveyed in every religious works, such as the great Divine Comedy, the Pilgrim's Progress and the Journey to the West. The humble origins of Banyan and Wu Cheng'en, the painful experience of them and the accurate observation are the important basis of the two novels. Banyan came from a tinker's family which had been in poverty for generations. He joined in the Parliamentarians during the English Revolution and was suppressed during the Restoration since he refused to accept the doctrines of the national Church of England. Bunyan began the work while in the Bedfordshire county gaol for violations of the Conventicle Act, which prohibited the holding of religious services outside the auspices of the established Church of England. In the gaol, Banyan finished his masterpiece, the Pilgrim's Progress, and many other religious works to show his faith of recovering the evils of the feudalism and pursuing the equality and freedom. Wu Cheng'en was born in a declined merchant's family. He was so straight and upright that he could compose the unwilling works to please the authority. Therefore, he was not picked up to be the winner and made a humble and poor living by writing articles for the others in the bottom of the society. Most of his works adopted the fairy tales to attack the evils of the society and revealed his hope of getting rid of the vices and prevent the nation and the common people.

These characteristics were given full play in the *Journey to the West*. The actuality and criticism of the two novels can be seen in the following. First, both novels have modeled the bright and vivid images of the actual people in the society. The most impressive part of the two novels is the vivid and living characters that existed in the allegories and fairy tales only. Although they possessed the super knowledge and ability that the common people never possessed, could go everywhere and were immortal, these characters were the reflections of the social beings. Generally speaking, the characters can be divided into two groups: the justice group and the evil groups. Christian and Sun Wukong were undoubtedly the members of the justice group in the novels since Christian was upright, sincere, firm, determined, and earnest and dare to fight with the evils. Christian was the embodiment of virtue and the model of the puritans during the Restoration in the mind of Banyan. Sun Wukong, who was savage, rebelling, energetic, irresistible, and willing to fight with the monsters and evils, was the symbol of the resisting the authority and tyranny, wisdom, courage, freedom, justice for the Chinese. Or we can see, it has become a popular and bright fairy character for the Chinese people. Both authors tried their best to describe the evils of the society and the crimes of the rulers. Banyan learnt from the traditional religious literature and described the social characters with conceptual images. The negative characters in the *Pilgrim's Progress* were not only the symbols of bad indeed and natures, but also the deputy of social evils. For example, Apollyon, the lord of the City of Destruction and one of the devil's companion arched evils, who tries to force Christian to return to his domain and service; Mr. Formalist, the hypocritical church member; Giant Slay-Good, a giant that enlists the help of evil-doers on the King's Highway to abduct, murder, and consume pilgrims; Mrs. Timorous, the hypocritical noble... There were also many monsters and ghost in the *Journey to the West*. For example, the White Bone Demon, a familiar image for the Chinese, Yellow-robe Monster, the Bull Demon King, Golden-feather Monster, the Wind Monster, the King of the Ghosts, the Green Lion and the Bear Monster... All of them could make threatening gestures like a beast of prey and were cruel and happy to eating human beings. The monsters and ghosts were not only the embodiment of the natural powers, but also the reflection of the society with evils and inequality.

Second, the crimes and evils of the society were revealed in the two novels. Both novels treated the experiences of the main characters as the lines of the book and showed the social life of their time encyclopedically to unmask the all kinds of evil of the current society. Bernard Shaw once said that the *Pilgrim's Progress* "was the attack to the morality and fame and the criticism to the evils and crimes". For example, Apollyon and the Valley of Humiliation that Christian confronted with was the reflection of the tyranny of Stuart Dynasty. In the famous description of Vanity Fair, the author wrote, "Therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold, as houses, lands, trades, places, honors, preferment, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures; and delights of all sorts, as harlots, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not." However, they would not sell truth. "And, moreover, at this fair there are at all times to be seen jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind." (Lu Qin, 2009) Christian said they would buy truth. "Therefore they took them and beat them, and besmeared them with dirt, and then put them into the cage, that they might be made a spectacle to all the men of the fair." (Lin Lin, 2005) They were even sentenced to death. This part was evident enough of the tough and evil reality during the Restoration.

### 3. The Reasons to the sameness

Obviously, the *Pilgrim's Progress* is a vivid explanation of the salvation of the soul by Christian. According to the traditional views of Christian, that God creates the human beings is the gift from God to the human beings, we should obey the God. Thus the relationship between God and human beings became self-degraded and depended of human beings to God. This kind of relationship is represented in the trust and love of the human beings to God. If anyone compares himself to God out of arrogance and pride and destroy the harmonious relationship between God and human beings, he will be considered to commit the most serious crime, that is, the origin of the evils.

On the other hand, *The Journey to the West* was more powerful to uncover the evil reality. For example, to reveal the luxury and rotten life of the rulers and the incapability of them, Wu Cheng'en described the grand feasts of the heaven again and again. The feasts were full of top-quality wines, the great delicacies such as "the dragon's liver and the phoenix's marrow" and many other rare delicious food. The gods were accustomed to squander as their wish on one hand, and were corrupted on the other hand. They would amend the fate records in the hell, sway by personal considerations in the heaven, and even in the west, the keepers of the scriptures as well as the major followers of Buddha, asked for the bribes from Xuan Zang. After being refused, they leagued together to mock Xuan Zang, Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie and Sha Seng and gave them the scriptures without any characters. The four followers nearly failed when they were approaching the success. Most of the rulers in this novel were of tough-looking outside but really timid within. The four Kings of Dragon would send what Sun Wukong wanted to him without resistance. The Death would remove Sun Wukong's name from the fate records. the Jade Emperor and Lady Queen Mother, who were of high status and strong power, and other gods with various capabilities had no idea to deal with the rebelling monkey. The "magistrate", gods of the earth and mountains would listen to and stand for Sun Wukong and other strong and powerful monsters.

## B. *The Differences*

### 1. The reasons for the journeys

Although both Banyan and Wu Cheng'en chose the religious theme to develop their compositions, there are greatly differences between the attitudes and understandings to the religions. The differences can be seen from the reason for

the journey of the hero. As a religious novel, the *Journey to the West* contains the Buddhist characters, but it is not a novel with the purpose of publicizing the Buddhism. According to Lu Xun, "there is only some knowledge about the old doctrines of generation-inhibition in five elements, but no much Buddhist knowledge." It means, the *Journey to the West* was an overthrowing novel, which had conveyed the complete satire to the feudal culture of ancient China and the rigid doctrines of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The stories of "Xuan Zang's journey for Scriptures" and the other Buddhist stories and sayings were the platform of the author to deliver his own emotions and thoughts.

The purpose of Xuan Zang's journey for scriptures was not for the honor of himself, but for "saving the multitude" and "reinforcing the rule of the feudalism". What needed salvation were the dying and ugly soul of the rulers, the declining time and the losing morality and civilization. Xuan Zang aimed at saving the soul of the multitude by the kind thoughts and cultivations of him. So he set him off and went to ask for the true scriptures. In the mind of the author, the scriptures were the last good ways to save the country and the time, though actually, the scriptures played a tiny role in the history. The salvation was not only manifested by the scriptures, but also in the journey to the west. If we think over the advices that Sun Wukong gave to the fatuous and self-indulgent rulers, we will find the purpose of the author: he did not want to overthrow the rule of the feudalism. From the sentences, "if you follow my advices, your kingdoms will be safe, powerful and prosperous for ever." (Wu Cheng'en, 2003) So the purpose of the Wu Cheng'en was to guide and suggest the emperors and hope that they could lead the country to a better situation instead of drive away the rulers.

Having drawing from the Bible, Banyan did not overthrow the Christian classic like Wu Cheng'en, but publicized and popularized it. At the time that Banyan lived, the English emperor was still the follower of the Roman Catholic while the Christian church was full of corruptions, heavy taxes and cruel conducts, which had completely opposed the thought of honesty, politeness, simplicity and kindness of the Bible. What Banyan should do was to recover the overthrown situation with his pen. So he needed not major principles, since he thought that the rotten world was resulted from the ignorance of the old doctrines in the Bible and he just should emphasize and retell the ideas from the Bible. In this novel, Banyan implicitly attacked the Roman Catholic and the Church of England. At the same time, he suggested that everyone who could get rid of the evils of themselves could still return to the group of followers of Jesus, which gave hope to the Roman Catholic.

## 2. The different attitudes of the authors to the new rising class

Wu Cheng'en, the author of the *Journey to the West* lived in the late Ming Dynasty, when the capitalism began to develop, while Banyan wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress* during the English Bourgeois Revolution. Therefore, both authors could not avoid mentioning the new rising class. It is interesting to survey the attitudes of them to the new rising capitalist class.

The stories of the *Journey to the West* happened in the Tang Dynasty, but the cities and places that the four main character passed were the pictures of the cities of late Ming Dynasty, when the production was developing lively with the buds of the capitalism. The industry and commerce were not taken seriously in the traditional mind of the Chinese, so the author held the cautious confirmative attitude to the industry and commerce. The cautious attitude was suggested by the indirect confirmation of the new rising class. After all, Wu Cheng'en lived in the feudal society and looked at the around with the feudal views. He dared not directly praise and encourage the development of the industry and commerce. But actually he did show his agreement with the new rising class. Every time when the four characters arrived at a city, the author would praise the prosperous situation of it and treated the restaurants and party bars as the symbol of heavenly world. The historians of novels usually put the *Journey to the West* and the *Golden Lotus* at different times, which is actually incorrect. The *Journey to the West* was the origin of the *Golden Lotus* and the other social novels. The attitudes to the new rising capitalist class and the new spirit of the time of the *Journey to the West* and the *Golden Lotus* were similar, so we won't feel many gaps when we are reading them. It shows that there are same elements between the spirit conveyed by the classics and the modern views.

Without the description of "Vanity Fair", the *Pilgrim's Progress* will be a pure religious novel aiming at advising the others. So the description of "Vanity Fair" provided the evidence of the time spirit of the novel. The "Vanity Fair" by Banyan was a place of desire, prurience and absence of morality. Every thing could be bought here, including "countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures; and delights of all sorts, as harlots, wives, husbands, children..." (John Bunyan, 2003:215) Here the people could see the rascals and villains and could find people stealing, murdering, adultery and cheating. It was a horrible and frightening place. Christian and Faithful wanted to buy Truth, but they were mock by the others, beaten, imprisoned and sentences. Faithful was even killed. The "Vanity Fair" was actually the symbol of the noble life of the English capitalism. Banyan had joined in the New Model Army led by Cromwell and was educated by the capitalist ideas. He did not oppose the capitalism; he opposed the people who "forget God's remarks". So he was just attacking the dissolute noble people who forgot the words of God and the monks robbing heavily during the movement of enclosures and the reformation of production. As for the new rising class, Banyan kept his confirmative and critical attitude to it.

## 3. The motivation of the creation

The authors' motivations of creations can be found from the characterization, so were the *Journey to the West* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*. The people discussing the *Journey to the West* usually begin from the perspectives of ideological level and epochal character. In fact, they always get the wrong ideas if they reader the *Journey to the West* with the modern views. The author of the *Journey to the West* was first a story teller, who might show his own opinions

unconsciously when he was telling the story. The novels were looked down upon by the orthodox scholars and had little influence to the society. So, the *Journey to the West* is first a story, in which the thoughts and opinions of the author were gradually reflected. When people are reading the *Journey to the West*, they are first attracted by the wonderful and interesting stories and affected by the comic atmosphere of the novel. They will smile from the heart, even when they find the parts attacking the reality, they will feel comfortable to be exited instead of lose the interest of reading. To give a poker face and attack the reality seriously are the job of the old pedants. The greatest achievement of the *Journey to the West* exists in its profound explanation of “making every word as an article, no matter good or bad ones, happy or angry ones.” (Annette, 2009:227) So the major work of Wu Cheng'en was to compose interesting and attractive stories to draw the attention of the readers. This work needs the popularity and smooth of the characters and the profound characterization. The four main characters in the *Journey to the West* are the most successful one in the Chinese classics. Sun Wukong, Xuan Zang, Zhu Bajie and Sha Seng are all distinct and impressive in the history of Chinese novels. They have centralized most of the characters of the multitude and can be considered as the typical case of their kinds. The bold and fearless hero spirit of Sun Wukong and the thoughts of little peasants of Zhu Bajie are also described vividly.

Comparing with the *Journey to the West*, the story of the *Pilgrim's Progress* is not interesting very much. The essence of the novel exists in the debates between Christian and the others. It is easily to find that all the characters and places are the “fictional symbols”. The author just personified them. So, maybe there were only the doctrines from the Bible in the mind of Banyan. He adopted the form of story to make the doctrines easier to understand. The character named Christian was the ideal representative of Christians in the mind of Banyan and every word Christian had said reflected Banyan's own opinions about the world and the religion. This is a good contrast with Defoe, who created the image of Robinson, the representative of capitalists in Defoe's mind. Besides, in order to make the novel profound, Banyan applied many Biblical sentence structures and many short oral sentences to emphasize the tone. For example, “So he did”, “That is it”. This kind of sentences is the half literary and half vernacular styles, which was the mark of the mature stage of the English essays. The English novel became popular and easy to understand since then. To the extent of this aspect, the status of Banyan in the English literature can equal the status of Hu Shi in the Chinese literature. The following Defoe, Swift and many other novelists were all affected by Banyan.

#### 4. The reasons to the differences

The *Journey to the West* revealed the rebelling thought of the author by the help of religion while the *Pilgrim's Progress* advocated the Christian thought with the religious materials. Despite of the different attitudes, the themes of the two novels were similar. Both novels criticized the society in the process of the salvation of the ideal characters; at the same time, both authors hoped that the rulers could realize the crimes of them and make up of their faults in order to create another prosperous time. As for the different ways of salvation, they were caused by the different cultures of the western world and China. The natures of them were same. The characters of the *Journey to the West* found the help from the west while the characters of the *Pilgrim's Progress* achieved the self-salvation. In face, the self-salvation of everyone equaled the salvation of the whole nation.

Although both western and Chinese authors held the aggressive attitude to the same class, Wu Cheng'en just appreciated the development of production led by capitalism and paid little attention to the thoughts and flaws of it, because Wu Cheng'en lived in the primary stage of the development of the capitalism. At that time, there were no summary about the thoughts of it and the weakness of the capitalist class itself according to Marx had not been found then. As for the time of Banyan, the capitalism had developed for over one hundred years and he could judge it properly then. On one hand, Banyan affirmed the active effect of the capitalism to the development of production; on the other hand, he exposed the nature of materialism before the readers. Banyan also hoped that the capitalists could save themselves, get rid of the evils and purify their souls by the guidance of the Bible. The cautious confirmative attitude of Wu Cheng'en and confirmative and critical attitude of Banyan to the capitalism were resulted from the features of different times.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, despite of the cultural and religious differences between the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Journey to the West*, the English people in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the Chinese people in the 16<sup>th</sup> century all conveyed strong dissatisfaction to the society. The scholars wanted to show their wish of saving the society through novels. So the two novels are the models of combination of romanticism and realism. At the same time, the journey of Christian from the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the four characters from the *Journey to the West* symbolize the spiritual adventure of them. Since the Celestial City and the Soul Mountain are the destinations of the people's pursuit, they should pay more than the others to achieve the stages. The two novels also tell us that people should notice the spiritual cultivation of themselves. If they set a goal and insistently work hard for it, everyone will be successful. Finally, we can encourage us with a Buddhist poem:

The Buddha is in the Soul Mountain and nowhere else;  
The Soul Mountain is in your mind and nowhere else;  
Everybody! Cherish your own Soul Mountain;  
And conduct your cultivation you can.

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**Yan Liu** was born in Zhenjiang, China in 1979. She received her Master degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology from Leuven University, Belgium in 2005.

She is currently a lecturer in Zhenjiang Watercraft College, Zhenjiang, China. Her research interests include Comparative Study and American literature.

**Wenjun Li** was born in Nanjing, China in 1987. She received her Bachelor degree in Jiangsu University in 2010. She is currently a sales manager in Lock Coating Equipment CO.,LTD, Nanjing, China. Her research interests include American literature and business English.