



Journey To

The West

Alex casey

Who wrote it?

The most likely author was Wu Cheng'en,
a poet and author in the Ming Dynasty.

However, it is not known for sure.



“Although Wu had knowledge of Chinese bureaucracy and politics, the novel itself doesn't include any political details that "a fairly well-read commoner could not have known.” -W.J.F Jenner



Is the Story Real?

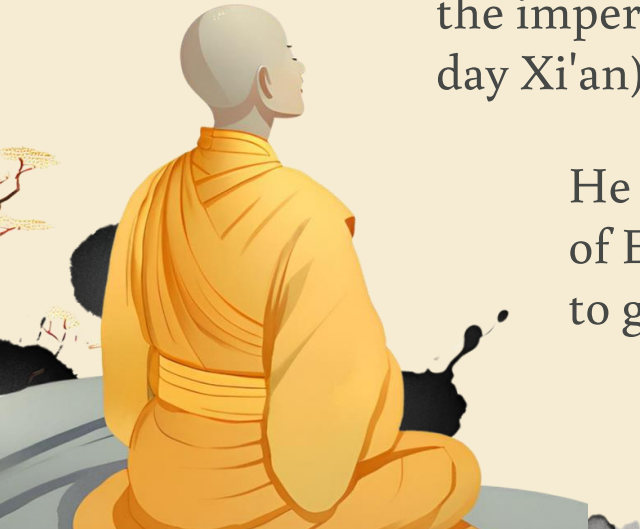


Yes, it is real (kind of)

Journey to the West is based on the Chinese monk Xuanzang (602–664), who traveled to India in the 7th century to bring back Buddhist scriptures to China.

Xuanzang was a monk at Jingtu Temple in the imperial capital Chang'an (present-day Xi'an)

He left Chang'an in 629, in defiance of Emperor Taizong's ban on travel to go to India.





Tashkent
Samarkand

CHINA

Chang'an

Benares

INDIA

Arabian Sea

Bay of Bengal

--- Travels of Xuanzang

Xuanzang traveled through Gansu, Qinghai, Hami, Turpan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and eventually India.

How is the history adapted?

The Buddha tasks the monk Tang Sanzang (or "Tripitaka"), with journeying to India along with three disciples: Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie, and Sha Wujing. Riding the White Dragon Horse, the monk and his three disciples journey to a mythical version of India and enlightenment through the power and virtue of cooperation.

The cast of
Journey to the
West

Tang Sanzang 唐三藏/Tripitaka

Tang Sanzang is based off of the monk Xuanzang, and his journey to India.

Tang Sanzang's title, "Sanzang," refers to his mission to seek the Tripitaka, which is the Sanskrit name for collections of ancient Buddhist scriptures.

Tang Sanzang is a Buddhist monk who is a reincarnation of Golden Cicada, a disciple of the Buddha.

Tang Sanzang is besieged by monsters because legend has it that one can attain immortality by consuming his flesh, all because he is a reincarnation of a holy being.

Artistic credits: overly Sarcastic Productions



Sun Wukong 孙悟空/Monkey King

Sun Wukong was born from a rock on Flowers and Fruits Mountain 花果山 (Huā guǒ shān).



Sun Wukong is a representation of the human mind, thought, and impulse.



Sun Wukong has the title “Great Sage Equal to Heaven,” or 齐天大圣 (Qí tiān dà shèng).



Artistic credits: Overly Sarcastic Productions





Zhu Bajie 豬八戒/Pigsy

Characterized by his appetites for food and women, Pigsy always looks for a way out of his duties.

Zhu Bajie is a representation of base human nature.

In modern times, Zhu Bajie is seen as a patron deity of massage therapists, hostesses, and prostitutes within Taiwan and other parts of East Asia.

Zhu Bajie originally held the title of Tiānpéng Yuánshuài (天篷元帥), or Marshal Canopy, but he was later banished for attempting to seduce Chang'e, the moon goddess.

Artistic credits: Overly Sarcastic Productions



Sha Wujing 沙悟淨/Sandy

Sha Wujing was previously the celestial Curtain Lifting General, and was banished for dropping a crystal goblet during the Peach Festival.

Sha Wujing is an representation of human obedience and conformity without thought.

Sha Wujing is a quiet but generally dependable and hard-working character, who serves as the straight foil to the comic relief of Sun and Zhu.

Artistic credits: Overly Sarcastic Productions



Bai Long Ma/White Dragon Horse

A dragon and a horse!

Bai Long Ma was sentenced to death for setting fire to his father's great pearl. He was saved from execution to stay and wait for his call of duty.

The White Dragon Horse is a representation of the human will.

He has almost no speaking role, as throughout the story he mainly appears as a horse that Tang Sanzang rides on.

Artistic credits: overly Sarcastic Productions



Why care about any of
this if it was hundreds of
years ago?

We would not have this

Black Myth: Wukong



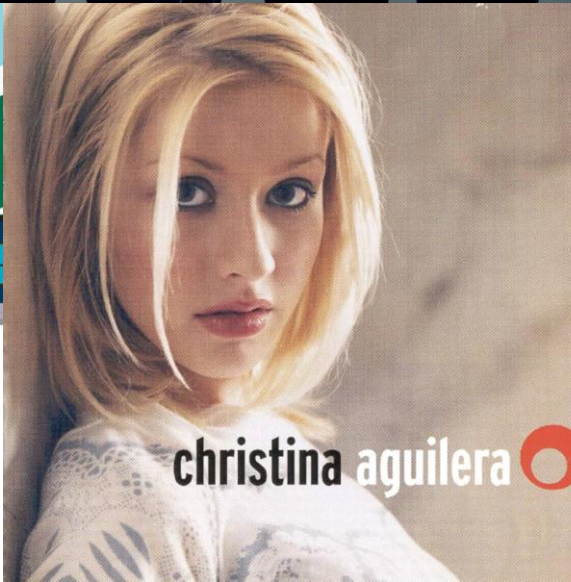
Lego: Monkie Kid



Dragon Ball Z







But actually... why does
this matter?

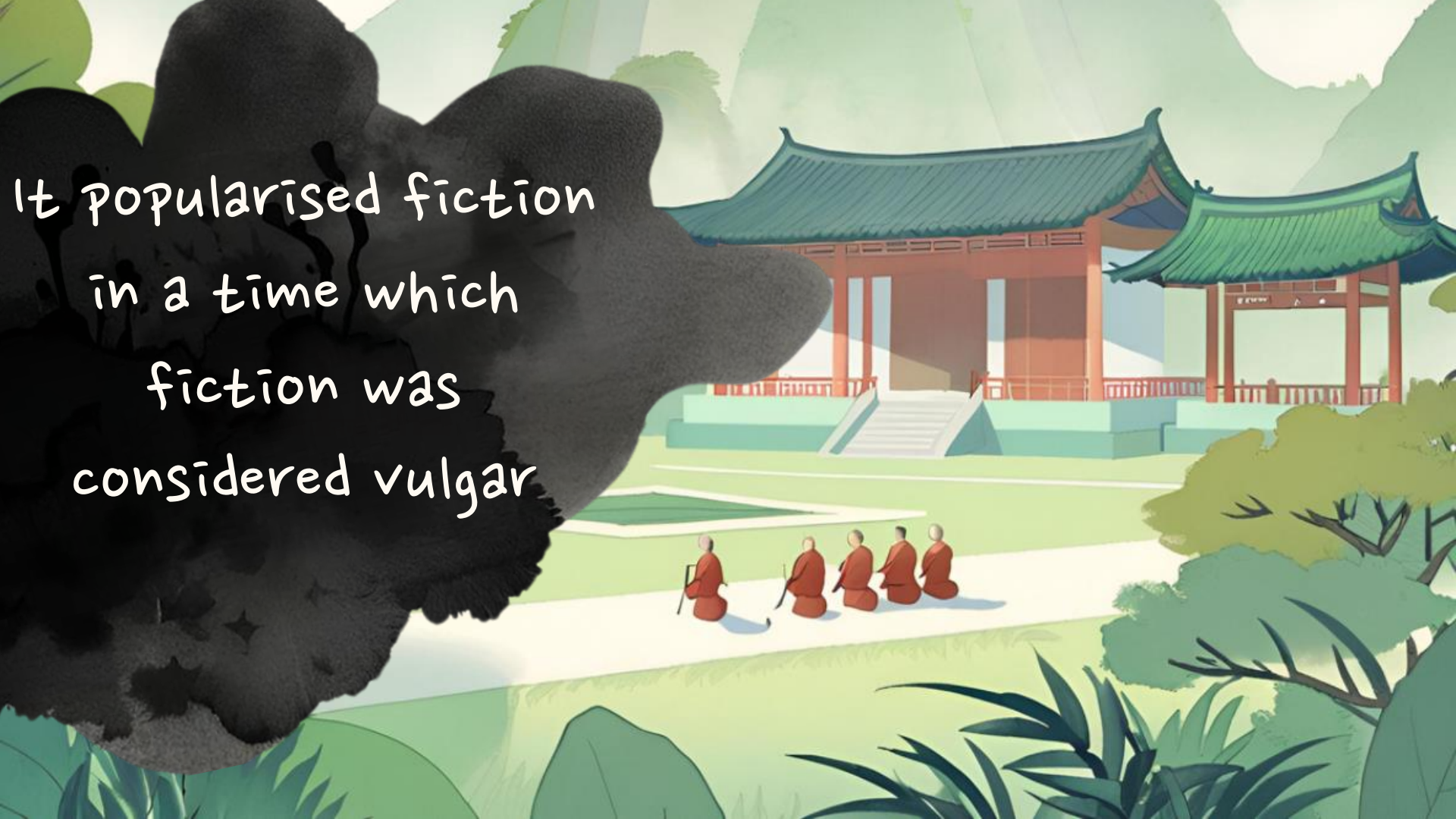
It still persists
in the cultural
zeitgeist today.



It furthered the
spread of Buddhism
and Taoism



It popularised fiction
in a time which
fiction was
considered vulgar





It matters because
it is a lodestone of
China's culture and
history.

Even if geopolitically, China and the United States are at a high point of tension, we can still see how throughout time-- even within times of strife--culture has the ability to cross borders when politics cannot.





Thank you!

谢谢！

