THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS IN ANCIENT CHINA

by

ROBERTO KEH ONG

B.A.(Hons.), McGill University, 1976

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Asian Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming

to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

May 1981

© Roberto Keh Ong, 1981

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Asian Studies

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date 23 April 1981

ABSTRACT

This work is an exercise in armchair ethnography. It aims to show, by examining certain data from the inexhaustible traditional Chinese literature on the subject of dreams and dreaming, some aspects of the dream life of the ancient Chinese.

The first five chapters deal with the various ways in which dreams were regarded as significant in ancient China. Although my approach is primarily thematic, the data are presented in a more or less chronological order, so that some light may be thrown on the developmental dimension of the traditional Chinese thinking on dreams in the process.

Chapters six and seven are concerned with the methodology of Chinese dream interpretation. Two distinct approaches to this are identified, which I term the corroborative and the associative. The Ricoeurian notion of "interpretation as recollection of meaning," with its emphasis on contextual understanding, is found compatible with the underlying principles of the Chinese oneirocritical practice.

In the final chapter, I further label the corroborative approach "iconic" and the associative approach "symbolic."

I conclude with the observation that the ancient Chinese owed their interest in dreams to their unremitting

search for meaning in the cosmos, of which man, in the traditional concept, was an integral part. I find this interest indicative of the affective aspect of the Chinese mind, and conjecture that as long as the Chinese have hopes, fears, joys and sorrows, as do the rest of the world, they will continue to dream.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS vi

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER I: DREAM AS HARBINGER OF FUTURE EVENTS 8

1.1 The Dreams of Huang-ti
1.2 The Dreams of Other Ancient Emperors
1.3 Predictive Dreams in the Confucian Classics

CHAPTER II: DREAM AS MESSAGE FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD 18

2.1 Dreams in the Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions
2.2 Dreams Involving Spirits in the _Tso-chuan_
2.3 Dream Ghosts and the Duality of Souls
2.4 Message Dreams from the Dead
2.5 Message Dreams from Deities of Human Origin
2.6 Dream Incubation
2.7 Dream as Commodity
2.8 The Dream-God

CHAPTER III: DREAM AS RESPONSE TO PHYSICAL STIMULI 54

3.1 The Internal Stimuli
3.2 The External Stimuli
3.3 A Freudian Critique

CHAPTER IV: DREAM AS PROJECTION OF MENTAL STATES 66

4.1 Confucius as Dreamer
4.2 Dream and Rationalism
4.3 Confucius as Dreamt
4.4 Dream and Skepticism
4.5 Dreams Come False

CHAPTER V: DREAM AND REALITY 84

5.1 Chuang-tzu and Descartes
5.2 The Butterfly Dream as Allegory
5.3 Dream as Flight
5.4 Dream Realism in the _Lieh-tzu_
5.5 The Illusion of Time and Space
5.6 The Buddhist Vision
5.7 The _Kuan-yin-tzu_ on Dream Ambiguity
5.8 Dream Realism from T'ang to Ch'ing
5.9 Spatio-temporal Discreteness and Continuity

CHAPTER VI: TOWARD A THEORY OF CHINESE DREAM INTERPRETATION 143

6.1 Meaning and Interpretation
6.2 Dream as Multivocal Text
6.3 The Classification of Dreams

CHAPTER VII: METHODS OF CHINESE DREAM INTERPRETATION 165

7.1 The Corroborative Approach

7.1.1 Oneiromancy and Tortoise-Shell Scorching
7.1.2 Oneiromancy and Yarrow-Stalk Casting
7.1.3 Oneiromancy and Sun-Dog Watching

7.2 The Associative Approach

7.2.1 Decoding Dream Symbols by Direct Association
7.2.2 Decoding Dream Symbols by Poetic Logic
7.2.3 Decoding Dream Symbols by Linguistic Means

7.2.3.1 Paronomastic Linkage
7.2.3.2 Ideographic Analysis

CHAPTER VIII: SUMMARY 197

NOTES 203

BIBLIOGRAPHY 219

APPENDIX: LIST OF TRANSLITERATED CHINESE WORDS 226

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks are due to Professor Daniel L. Overmyer for his patient guidance as advisor; to Professors Jan W. Walls and Yvonne L. Walls of the University of Victoria for their friendship, encouragement, and help in more ways than there is space to record here; to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Mouat, P. Eng., under whose blessed roof I have had numerous pleasant dreams in the last three years; and to Mr. Ronald J. Balden, soon to be with the Atomic Energy Limited of Canada, for many stimulating discussions and for telling me, in particular, the story of August Kekulé and his hypnagogic vision.

Lastly, it is my wish to dedicate this humble fruit of love's labor to my friend Miss Holly E. Ratcliffe of McMaster University.

Lernen wir träumen, meine Herren, dann finden wir vielleicht die Wahrheit.

-- August Kekulé
Ber. 23(1890):1307

Introduction

1 Rationale

Dreams have always fascinated humankind. They are worthy of serious investigation simply because, if for no other reason, they are, or are at least thought to be, there.

Dreaming is a private experience. As long as the dream itself cannot be objectified, its occurrence remains an assumption. Nevertheless, this assumption is a universal one; for dream reports can be found in all societies whether ancient or modern and however primitive or advanced.

Dreams are, as a rule, reported as events that have taken place in sleep. Quite apart from the philosophical question whether such events are essentially different from our waking experiences, it is legitimate to ask, at the experiential level, whether they mean anything.

This question often presents itself because many dreams verge on the bizarre. For people in the habit of assuming that whatever does not make immediate sense should be quickly forgotten, such a question may not exist. For others, however, strangeness itself is an invitation to adventure and discovery, and incomprehensibility an indication of hidden significance. Hence the interpretation of dreams, an art held in many ancient societies to be of such importance that no personal, social, political, or economic question could be decided upon without first having recourse to it.

In more recent centuries in the West, particularly after the advent of the Age of Reason, the importance ascribed to dreams and dream interpretation had considerably decreased, so that when Freud revived the whole issue with the publication of his Die Traumdeutüng at the turn of this century, the event could justly be described as epoch-making.

Since then, the subject of dreaming has become respectable in academic circles. It is almost fashionable as a topic for research in such disciplines as psychology, sociology, philosophy, anthropology, religion, literature, and even clinical physiology.

This thesis aims to contribute to the current interest in dreams by delving into the vast store of material on the subject preserved in traditional Chinese sources. It attempts to show two things; first, how dreams were regarded as significant by the ancient Chinese, and secondly, the ways in which the meaning of dreams was determined.

2 Sources

Theoretically, since I intend to pursue the subject within the confines of China's past, anything written in Chinese before the modern era touching on dreams is potential primary source material. Realistically, however, it behooves me to be selective. Thus, my references are of three general types. First, works of official standing, such as the Confucian classics and the dynastic histories. Secondly, works by individual thinkers, scholars, and writers

throughout the ages, e.g. the Chuang-tzu, Lieh-tzu, Lun heng, Ch'ien-fu lun, etc. Thirdly, works that cater to popular tastes or of popular origin, e.g. the numerous pi-chi hsiao-shuo (anecdotal fiction) and the anonymous Chou-kung chieh-meng (Duke of Chou interprets dreams).

Of the first group, the Tso-chuan and Chou-li, both dating back to pre-Ch'in times, are of the greatest importance for my present purpose. Of the second group, all the four works mentioned above are indispensable. In the case of the Chuang-tzu, I refer in particular to the "Ch'i-wu lun" chapter (2), which, as one of the so-called "inner chapters," dates back to the Warring-States period. The Lieh-tzu as we have it now, although containing material from the third century B.C., was written in about A.D. 300, as pointed out by A.C. Graham in his introduction to his translation of the book. I have made extensive use of the "Chou Mu-wang" chapter (3).

Both Lun heng and Ch'ien-fu lun are indisputably from Han times. In spite of their advanced state of corruption, both texts are mostly readable, thanks to Liu P'an-sui's Lun heng chi-chieh (prefaced jen-shen, i.e. 1932; rpt. Peking, 1957) and to Wang Chi-p'ei's annotation and emendation of the Ch'ien-fu lun (prefaced Chia-ch'ing 19th year, chia-hsü, i.e. 1814; rpt. Shanghai, 1978). The relevant chapters in the first book are "Lun ssu," (62) "Chi yao," (64) and "Ting kui." (65) In the second, "Meng lieh" (28) is invaluable.

As for the third group, I have availed myself of the handy collections _Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan_ and _Wu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo ta-kuan_. The respective dates of the individual works in these collections will be given as I refer to them in the text.

One important secondary source in this category is Chang Feng-i's _Meng-chan lei-k'ao_ (prefaced Wan-li _i-yu_, i.e. 1585), in 12 _chüan_. This work is a compilation of dream episodes gleaned from ancient and contemporary sources. It also includes one or two anecdotes personal to the compiler.

In his preface Chang Feng-i states his reason for undertaking this work thus:

> Some years ago I had an illness so serious that both physicians and quacks could do nothing about it. I recovered, however, thanks to a dream.
>
> Then I thought: Although the secret art of the ancient sages had got lost in transmission, the proven cases on record could still be verified.
>
> Thus, I traced the source to the Six Classics and searched through the histories, relating my findings to various other texts, tangentially touching on writings of a fictive nature as well.
>
> No matter how remote or recent it might be, or whether the people involved were Chinese or outlandish, so long as the material provided some

> evidence for dreams, I would pick and include it in this work, which I have entitled Meng-chan lei-k'ao or A Study of Dream Interpretation by Categories.

The categories (lei) or sections (pu) were set up in reference to the content of the material. Thus, "t'ien-hsiang" (heavenly signs) is the first section, "ti-li" (geographical features) the second, "sheng-hsien" (saints and sages) the third, and so on. The final section is "shuo meng" (speaking of dreams), which contains texts relating to the theoretical aspect of dreams and dream interpretation.

This collection has served as my key to the whole subject. It should be used with caution, however, for some citations are abridged, others slightly altered. Hence, I have made a point of always referring to the original source where available.

The Chou-kung chieh meng, a sort of dream dictionary, is of uncertain date. If Chang Feng-i did not make a snide remark about it in his preface to his own work, I would have absolutely no idea as to its vintage. He says:

> Verily, there was no better mantic art than dream [interpretation]. During the Wei-Chin period, each generation still had its famous specialists. In Sung-Yüan times, however, people had lost so much interest in it that some crafty ones in the book market appropriated the name

> "Duke of Chou." For it was Confucius who was said to have dreamt of the Duke of Chou, whereas the duke himself had never had dreams [sic]. How then can he have [written such] a book? And how can it have been handed down? [For a book of this nature] to have been transmitted not through the *Chou-li* but ostensibly as one book, does this stand to reason?

Based on this evidence, let me tentatively propose that the *Chou-kung chieh meng* was already in existence, and quite popular at that, in the sixteenth century. My own copy is found in another book in popular circulation called *Hsiang meng yü-hsia chi* (Dream interpretation and the record from a jade box). The *Yü-hsia chi* or, more formally, *Hsü Chen-chün yü-hsia chi* (Record from the jade box of Hsü the True Lord), is by itself a book of Taoist origin. Ascribed to Hsü Hsün of Chin times, it contains, among other things, a calendar listing the feast-days of various Taoist deities and saints. It is included in the *Hsü Tao-tsang* (Supplement to the Taoist patrology).

3 Methodology

In any study of dreams and dreaming, one methodological issue which immediately confronts the student is the problem of how a dream report can be considered genuine, that is, regarded as a faithful account of an actual dream experience. I have addressed myself to this issue in the opening paragraphs

paragraphs of Section 6.2. Since, in undertaking this research, I saw myself primarily in the role of a sedentary anthropologist in the tradition of James Frazer and Edward Tylor, I felt obliged to make some sort of distinction between "real" and "fabricated" dreams, however tenuous it might seem. For it occurred to me that, although fictitious dreams could certainly tell us something about the alleged dreamers, as Freudian psychoanalysts would generally acknowledge, they belonged in the personal histories of their originators not as dreams but, properly, as fabrications.

Owing to this methodological scruple, I have had to exclude, with much regret, dream material from such works of fiction as the _Hung-lou meng_ (Dream of the red chamber) and the _Hsi-yu pu_ (Sequel to journey to the West), to mention but two notable examples. I have also refrained from any reference to the dream-like language and symbolism of the _I ching_ for similar reasons.

On the other hand, I have made extensive use of comparative material from other cultures, both ancient and modern, in the hope that a cross-cultural perspective may be brought to bear upon the subject.

Finally, owing to my conviction that, as far as the traditional Chinese views on dreams are concerned, their implications for religion and philosophy are far more extensive than for any other field of human knowledge, I have allowed myself to be guided in this endeavor by the methodological principles formulated by Mircea Eliade and his followers in

the field of the phenomenology of religion and those taught by Paul Ricoeur in that of philosophical hermeneutics.

N.B.: The word "ancient" in the title of this work is used in the French sense of ancien régime. Hence, by "ancient China" I mean the China before the revolution of 1911.

CHAPTER I

DREAM AS HARBINGER OF FUTURE EVENTS

The idea that dreams may come true has found credence in many cultures. The contents of such dreams may be quite straightforward and require no further explanation, or they may consist of symbolic imageiries calling for the expertise of a dream interpreter to decipher.

Although in our modern sophistication we can always explain or explain away precognitive dreams in terms of the workings of the unconscious, subconscious, or preconscious mind, for the ancients such dreams had a reality of their own and were often attributed to supernatural causes.[1] They were generally believed to have been sent by some deity or spirit whose message had to be taken seriously. The Old Testament, for example, records the dreams of King Nebuchad-nezzar or Babylon, Pharaoh of Egypt, Jacob of Israel and his son Joseph, all of which foreshadowed future events.

1.1 The Dreams of Huang-ti

In ancient China, legend has it that Huang-ti or the Yellow Emperor of high antiquity once dreamt that he saw a great wind blowing away the "dust and dirt" under heaven. Then, in another dream, he saw a man with an extremely heavy cross-bow herding myriads upon myriads of sheep. Upon waking, he sighed and interpreted the dreams thus: <u>Feng</u> (the Chinese word for 'wind', which happened to be the clan-

name of Fu-hsi/P'aó-hsi, one of the sage-kings of pre-historical China, as well), is one who gives orders and holds office. When *t'u*, 'earth', is taken away from *kou*, 'dirt', what remains is *hou*, 'leader'.[2] May it not be that there is someone surnamed Feng and called Hou under heaven? As for the heavy cross-bow, to handle it requires extraordinary *li*, 'strength'; and herding myriads upon myriads of sheep means someone capable of looking after the people (*mu min*) and doing good. Surely there must be under heaven a person surnamed Li and called Mu, 'shepherd'!

Having thus interpreted his own dreams, the Yellow Emperor had the two persons in question sought. Consequently, Feng Hou was found in a secluded spot by the sea, and Li Mu in the vicinity of a great lake. The former was appointed prime minister and the latter a general.[3]

Thus, not only did the Yellow Emperor subject his dreams to a symbolic interpretation, but he also resorted to an oneirocritical method based on linguistic associations derived from dream imageries.[4]

Huang-fu Mi of Western Chin times, who recorded this legend in his *Ti wang shih-chi* (Periodical accounts of emperors and kings),[5] concluded it with the following statement: "As a result, Huang-ti wrote the *Chan meng ching* (Classic of dream interpretation) in eleven *chüan*."[6] And indeed, the *Han-shu I-wen chih* (Chapter on the arts and leterature in the dynastic history of Han) lists a work entitled *Huang-ti ch'ang-liu chan-meng* (The Yellow Emperor's long-willow oneiro-

mancy) in eleven *chüan*, followed by another called *Kan Te ch'ang-liu chan-meng* (Kan Te's long-willow oneiromancy) in twenty *chüan*.[7]

1.2 The Dreams of Other Ancient Emperors

According to the *Chu-shu chi-nien* (Bamboo chronicles),[8] Emperor Yao once dreamt, presumably before his accession to the throne, that he climbed up to heaven.[9] The *Ti wang shih-chi* has a slightly different version of Yao's dream; it states: "At T'ang, Yao dreamt that he went up to heaven riding a dragon. Consequently, he possessed all under heaven."[10]

Then Shun, the right-hand man of Emperor Yao, is said to have dreamt that his eyebrows were as long as his hair. Apparently, this was regarded as a good omen. For later he was to be appointed regent by Yao and finally to succeed him as emperor.[11]

Yü, the hydraulic engineer, Emperor Shun's protegé and successor, once dreamt too that he washed himself in a river and drank from it.[12]

And the *Chu-shu chi-nien* records that when T'ang was about to receive the heavenly mandate and overthrow Chieh, the last emperor of the dynasty founded by Yü, he dreamt that he reached up to heaven and licked it.[13]

I Chih/I Yin, who was to become T'ang's prime minister, when he was about to answer T'ang's call to duty, dreamt that he cruised by the sun and moon in a skiff.[14] I Chih was said to be a descendant of Li Mu, the Yellow Emperor's general mentioned above.

The Ti wang shih-chi relates the circumstances under which I Chih came into T'ang's employ as follows:

> Preoccupied by the thought of procuring able men, T'ang dreamt that a man came with a cauldron on his back and holding high in his hands a chopping-block. The man smiled at him.
>
> T'ang woke up and interpreted the dream thus: The cauldron is for combining the flavors and the chopping-block for slicing and cutting. Surely there must be someone under heaven who is going to be my cook (tsai, which also means 'minister')!
>
> Now, I Chih was a descendant of Li Mu. He took to tillage in the wilds of Yu-shen. Having heard of him, T'ang sent him a present by way of invitation. But he was detained by the ruler of Yu-shen. T'ang therefore made a marriage proposal to the ruler, who then sent his daughter to T'ang. She was accompanied by I Chih as a servant. When he arrived at Po (T'ang's capital) and saw T'ang, he was carrying a cauldron on his back and holding a chopping-block in his hands.[15]

In this instance we have a predictive dream in which a pun is involved.[16]

1.3 Predictive Dreams in the Confucian Classics

That dreams forebode happenings in the future is implied

in the following lines from the Shih-ching (Book of odes):

> Below, the rush-mats; over them the bamboo-mats.
> Comfortably he sleeps,
> He sleeps and wakes
> And interprets his dreams.
> 'Your lucky dreams, what were they?'
> 'They were of black bears and brown,
> Of serpents and snakes.'
>
> The diviner thus interprets it:
> 'Black bears and brown
> Mean men-children.
> Snakes and serpents
> Mean girl-children.[17]
>
> (Arthur Waley's translation)

Whoever wrote these lines was certainly aware of the symbolic nature of dream imageries, whose meanings would have to be deciphered through an understanding of the conventions involved. The "diviner" mentioned here may have been a professional dream interpreter.

The next poem in the Shih-ching again mentions some dreams and another interpreter:

> Your herdsman dreams
> Dreams of locusts and fish,
> Of banners and flags.
> A wise man explains the dreams:
> 'Locusts and fish

Mean fat years.

Flags and banners

Mean a teeming house and home.[18]

It is not at all clear how the "diviner" or the "wise man" arrived at the meanings given for the dream objects mentioned, although we can see that some kind of associative principle was at work. There must also have been cultural factors that had to be taken into account.

The Shu-ching (Book of documents) relates how King Wu-ting of the Shang dynasty discovered the recluse Fu Yüeh, later his chief adviser, through a dream. The king dreamt of the man. Upon waking, he instructed the court artist to paint a picture of Yüeh based on his description. Then he despatched a search party to the countryside with the picture. Fu Yüeh was found in a cave.[19] This was a fairly literal dream.

The Shu-ching also contains a "pep talk" given by King Wu, future founder of the Chou dynasty, to his troops in preparation for launching his campaign against Shou/Chou, the last Shang/Yin king. After enumerating the enormities perpetrated by this tyrant, King Wu continued, "My dreams are in accord with the oracle-bone crackings; thus the omen is doubly auspicious. We shall triumph for sure in attacking the Shang."[20]

Here King Wu alluded to an occult practice requiring the mutual corroboration of two divinatory techniques. This will be discussed at length in Chapter VII as an approach to dream interpretation in classical times.

Next, the Tso-chuan tells the story of Yen-chi, a lowly concubine own by Duke Wen of Cheng. She dreamt that Heaven sent for a lan-flower and gave it to her, saying, "I am Po-ch'ou, your ancestor.[21] Let this be your son's emblem. As the lan exudes a stately fragrance, so shall the people obey and love him."

Later, it happened that Duke Wen saw her, gave her a lan-flower, and slept with her. Wishing to decline his advances, she said, "Your maid-servant is a worthless person. Even if by luck she should bear a son, she would not be believed. May she make bold to use this lan as evidence, if that should happen?" The duke consented.

Afterwards, she indeed gave birth to a son and named him Lan, who became Duke Mu.[22]

Yen-chi's dream would lose much of its predictive character if one could show that she had a weakness for this particular flower and that Duke Wen knew about it. But as the text stands, the dream is meant to be understood as predictive. This, too, was a literal dream.

The same source relates the following dream of Sheng-po, an officer of Lu. He dreamt that he was crossing the river Huan, where someone gave him a carnation gem and a fine pearl. He ate them and wept, shedding tears of gems and pearls on his bosom, until it was fully covered. Then he began to sing:

> As I crossed the river Huan,
>
> A gem and a pearl were given to me.

Home, home I must go,

Now that my bosom swells with jewelry.

He woke up and was so scared that he dared not have the dream interpreted.

Three years later, on his way back from Cheng, he arrived at Li-shen, where he finally had the dream interpreted, saying, "I was afraid that the dream prefigured my death, that's why I was reluctant to have it interpreted. Now that my followers have increased and have stayed with me for three years, it should be harmless to tell it."

So he told it, and died in the evening of that very day.[23]

Referring to this dream episode, Tu Yü says in his commentary that the pearl and gem signify the han-jewelry placed in the mouth of the deceased at burial. Hence Sheng-po's apprehension.

This story also suggests the idea that a predictive dream would not take effect until it was told. This seems to agree with the Talmudic doctrine that "the dream follows the mouth," that is, "everything happens in accordance with the interpretation."[24]

Another Confucian classic, the Li-chi (Book of rites), says that King Wen of Chou once asked his son King Wu, "What dreams did you have lately?"

King Wu said, "I dreamt that the Ti-god gave me nine teeth."[25]

"And what do you think the dream means?"

"Well, since there are nine states in the West, it could

mean that you, Father, will yet bring them into our fold."

"No," said King Wen, "that's not the meaning. In ancient times the word for teeth means 'years' as well. You may expect to live to be ninety, and I a hundred. I will give you three years."

This episode ends with the statement that King Wen was ninety-seven when he died and King Wu ninety-three.[26]

In his interpretation of King Wu's dream, King Wen apparently relied on his knowledge of the etymology of the word ch'ih, 'teeth'. Dreams containing this type of linguistic symbolism will also be treated in Chapter VII.

Finally, the Li-chi relates how Confucius himself, sensing his approaching death, got up early one morning and began to sing a mournful song.

When Tzu-kung came to see him, he described to this disciple the way in which the funeral rites used to be conducted in the preceding two dynasties. He said that under the Yin dynasty, of whose royal house his family was a branch, the ceremony took place between the two pillars of the hall , that is, between the stpes for the host and those for the guest. The people of Chou, however, did it at the top of the western steps, thus making the deceased, as it were, a guest.

"Some nights ago," the Master went on, "I dreamt that I was sitting between the two pillars, with the sacrificial offerings in full view. Since sage-kings do not arise, who on earth will honor me? I am dying, I suppose." After this, he lay ill for seven days and died.[27]

And so there went another prophet unhonored in his own country.

In sum, I must point out that the idea of dreams having a predictive function can be found not only in such older texts as I have adduced in this chapter, but in Chinese writings of all times, including the modern era.

CHAPTER TWO

DREAM AS MESSAGE FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD

In many ancient societies, spiritual beings, such as gods, demons and ghosts, were believed to have a mode of existence of their own. Nevertheless, they also seemed capable of communicating with human beings.

The ancient Egyptians, for example, regarded dreams as messages from the gods. The Babylonians and the Assyrians, on the other hand, attributed dreams to demonic forces.[1] The ancient Greeks, too, considered a dream to be a visit paid to a sleeping person by a god or ghost.[2]

Among the examples given in the foregoing section, there is one that involved spiritual beings, namely, the dream of Yen-chi. In this dream "Heaven" may be regarded as a god or nature spirit and Po-ch'ou a ghost.

This chapter deals in particular with dreams that show interactions between the spirit world and that of the living.

2.1 Dreams in the Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions

Pyro-scapulimancy, or divination by interpreting cracks produced by heat on bones, mostly shoulder blades of domestic cattle and a few other animals, as well as on turtle shells, particularly plastrons, was practised in China during the Shang and Chou dynasties.[3] The discovery of the inscribed oracle bones in 1899 was a momentous event in modern Chinese archaeology.[4]

The oracle-bone inscriptions reveal to us not only such

mundane concerns of the Shang/Yin people as hunting, fighting and weather forecasts, but their religious activities as well.

There are a significant number of oracle-bone inscriptions having to do with dreams. These were charges to the oracle which "sought to determine the potentially ominous significance of a dream, usually the king's, that had already taken place and to discover which ancestor or power had caused the dream."[5]

For example, there are several inscriptions referring to the dreams of King Wu-ting mentioned in the foregoing chapter. According to these inscriptions, the king often dreamt of his consort or of one of his concubines and wanted to know whether such dreams would bring disaster. He also dreamt of other people, such as ancestors, deceased brothers and courtiers. All these oneiric apparitions seemed to disturb him. He also had recurrent ghostly dreams, which were undoubtedly frightening.[6]

In general, the Shang people seemed convinced that dreams were caused by the dead, in particular the <u>hsien-kung</u> and <u>hsien-pi</u>, that is, the patriarchal and matriarchal ancestors, whose ghosts were requiring propitiations by sacrificial offerings.[7]

2.2 Dreams Involving Spirits in the <u>Tso-chuan</u>

The <u>Tso-chuan</u> has always been notorious for its accounts of the prodigious. It tells of the dream, for example, of Tzu-yü, a general of the state of Ch'u, who had once made for himself a cap of fawn-skin, which he had not worn. Prior

to a crucial battle against the army of Chin, he dreamt that the river god said to him, "Give me [your cap], and I will bestow on you the marsh of Meng-chu. He refused to comply.

Knowing about the dream, his son Ta-hsin and Tzu-hsi, another general, sent Jung-huang to remonstrate with him, but to no avail.

The battle took place and Tzu-yü suffered defeat. Afterwards, he committed suicide.[8]

Apparently, the ill-fated general suffered the conseq-uences of refusing to give in to the demands of a nature spirit made known to him in a dream.

Another passage from the Tso-chuan tells how Duke Ch'eng of Wei was forced by the Ti barbarians to move his capital to Ti-ch'iu, where Hsiang, the fifth king of the Hsia dynasty, had resided for a certain length of time.

Soon afterwards Duke Ch'eng dreamt that K'ang-shu, the first marquis of Wei, said to him, "Hsiang has grabbed the offerings due me." The duke then ordered that sacrifices also be offered Hsiang.

But Ning Wu-tzu, a courtier, objected and said, "Spirits are not pleased with the offerings of those who are not their own kin. Besides, what are Ch'i and Tseng (two states descen-ded from the line of Hsia) doing, anyway? Hsiang has not received offerings here for a long time now; it's none of our fault. You should not tamper with the rules made by King Ch'eng and the Duke of Chou with regard to sacrifices.

Please withdraw your order about sacrificing to Hsiang."[9]

Here we have a case of an ancestral spirit trying to influence the behavior of the living through dreams. He would have succeeded, had it not been for a ritual technicality.

In contrast to this, there is the anecdote about Tzu-ch'an, the learned prime minister of Cheng, who once went on a good-will visit to Chin, where he was consulted by Han Hsüan-tzu, who came to meet him.

"Our ruler has been ill in bed for three months now," began the latter, "and we have scuttled to the mountains and rivers and offered sacrifices to them all, but his illness has become worse instead of better. Now he has dreamt of a yellow bear entering the door of his chamber. What monstrous devil can that be?"

"With the intelligence of your ruler and with the government in your hands," replied Tzu-ch'an, "what monstrosity can there be? In the old days, when Yao put Kun to death on Mount Yü, his spirit changed into a yellow bear, which excaped into the abyss of Yü. Thus, under the Hsia dynasty (founded by Kun's son the great King Yü), as well as the two following dynasties, an ancillary sacrifice was offered to Kun, too, at the annual sacrifice to Heaven. May it be that Chin, as leader of the confederate states, has not sacrificed to him yet?"

So then Han Hsüan-tzu offered the prescribed sacrifice and, as a result, the marquis of Chin got somewhat better. Tzu-ch'an was rewarded with two square cauldrons from Chü.[10]

Here we see that the marquis of Chin got sick apparently because of his negligence in offering the Hsia sacrifice to Kun who, although not his ancestor, was entitled to the sacrifice by precedent. Thanks to the erudition of Tzu-ch'an, who seemed aware of the common roots of myth and dream, the yellow bear in the marquis' dream was correctly identified. Otherwise, the outcome would certainly have been different.

2.3 Dream Ghosts and the Duality of Souls

Apparently, Tzu-ch'an had quite a reputation in his day as a knowledgeable person in matters of the occult. The following episode contains his discourse on the making of a ghost and on the dualistic concept of the soul.

The people of Cheng frightened one another about Po-yu. "Here comes Po-yu!" they would say and then ran off without knowing where they were going.[11]

In the second month of the year when the document on punishment was cast (i.e. the preceding year), someone dreamt that Po-yu stalked in armor, saying, "On the _jen-tzu_ day I will kill Tai, and next year on the _jen-yin_ day I will kill Tuan."

When Ssu-tai did die on the day _jen-tzu_, the people were even more terrified.

In the month that the states of Ch'i and Yen made peace (i.e. the first month of the current year), when Kung-sun Tuan died on the day _jen-yin_, the people's horror knew no bounds. It came to an end only when the next month Tzu-ch'an appointed Kung-sun Hsieh and Liang-chih to calm the people.[12]

Tzu-ta-shu asked him the reason for making the appointments. Tzu-ch'an said, "When a ghost has a place to go to, then it won't do evil. I have provided such a place for the ghost."

"But why did you appoint Kung-sun Hsieh as well?" prusued Ta-shu.

"To assuage the people," explained Tzu-ch'an. "Since Po-yu was not righteous, I had to think of a way to please them. In governmental affairs, there are times when measures must be taken which run counter to the normal procedures, so as to pander to the people. If you don't do so, they won't trust you, and distrust leads to disobedience."

When Tzu-ch'an went to Chin, Chao Ching-tzu asked him, "Is it the case that Po-yu could still become a ghost?"

"Certainly," replied Tzu-ch'an. "When a human being is born, what first takes shape is the _p'o_-soul. When this is produced, the Yang force which it contains gives rise to the _hun_-soul. By employing things the vital elements are increased. The _hun_- and _p'o_-souls are thus fortified. Consequently, they become refined and bright, to the point of attaining divine luminosity.

"Even when an ordinary man or woman dies a violent death, his or her soul could still hang around people and cause excessive havoc. What more Liang Hsiao (= Po-yu), a scion of our former ruler Duke Mu, grandson of Tzu-liang and son of Tzu-erh, all ministers of our state, having pursued political careers for three generations!

"Although Cheng is not well-endowed and, as the phrase goes, 'a wisp of a state', in the case of a family whose members had been at the helm of government for three generations, the things employed were indeed extensive and the vital elements extracted therefrom plenteous. Moreover, the clan is a great one, and what the soul draws on is ample. Is it not indeed fitting that our Liang-hsiao, who died a violent death, was capable of becoming a ghost?"[13]

In later times, the dual-soul theory as expounded by Tzu-ch'an here, when fully developed, became integrated with the cosmological theory of Yin-Yang.[14] The _p'o_-soul was then said to be responsible for the sensory functions of the eyes and ears, the cognitive function of the mind, the motor activities of the limbs, and the production of vocal sound. The _hun_-soul, on the other hand, seemed rather ill-defined; its attributes were diffused and impalpable; its presence was attested by vitality itself.

Tzu-ch'an's statement on the subject could be taken as implying that the _p'o_-soul existed before the _hun_. But this statement should be understood in a conceptual sense rather than in terms of temporal sequence. In this regard, K'ung Ying-ta's commentary states:

> Liu Hsüan says that when a man is endowed with life, his body must possess vital force (_ch'i_), and that the union of vital force and body does not posit the priority of one or the other. Yet it is stated here [by Tzu-ch'an] that 'what first takes shape is called _p'o_, and the Yang element

contained therein *hun*.' This implies that the body exists before the vital force and, hence, *p'o* precedes *hun*. That there is a temporal order for the coming into being of *hun* and *p'o* is based on the observation that the body has substance, while the vital force does not. From [the existence of] the body is the vital force known; hence *p'o* is said to precede *hun*. In reality, however, they come into being simultaneously.[15]

A further elaboration on this soul theory was that there were three *hun*-souls and seven *p'o*-souls, and that the former would ascend to heaven at the demise of their possessor, as the latter sank into the earth. But it is not clear to me whether each of the three *hun* or of the seven *p'o* was assigned a specific function.[16]

Working on an enormous amount of ethnographical material pertaining to the north American Indian notions of the soul, Åke Hultkrantz distinguishes between the free-soul and the body-soul. The free-soul is the spiritual principle which is active while the body is in a passive state, whereas the body-soul manifests the life of the waking individual. The free-soul functions primarily as a detachable, extra-physical soul, hence identical with the dream-soul. When it gives expression to the ego-consciousness, then it manifests itself as the ego-soul. The body-soul, on the other hand, may easily be split up into a number of functional souls bound to different organs whose vital principles they are.

Each body-soul, however, may be temporarily converted into an extra-physical soul and, as such, may exhibit the properties that are combined with a specific free-soul.[17]

If this description is correct, then the North American Indian free-soul would seem to correspond to the Chinese hun-soul, and the body-soul to the p'o-soul; for the Chinese soul concept also has a physiological aspect.

The Nei-ching su-wen, for example, states that the p'o-soul is stored in the lungs and the hun-soul in the liver.[18]

The Ch'ien-chin pao-yao, another medical work, claims that injuries to the liver provoke dreams.[19] If so, it would follow that it is the hun-soul that is involved in the process of dreaming. This would further accentuate its identity with the North American Indian free-soul.

But the Shu-chü-tzu, a Ming philosophical work written by Chuang Yüan-ch'en, gives a different opinion:

> The hun-soul of a person dwells in the heart and wanders in the eyes, hence all waking situations are created by it. The p'o-soul of a person wanders in the kidneys and dwells in the liver, hence all dreaming situations are created by it.
>
> But then why is it that waking situations are palpable, whereas dreaming situations are ephemeral? Well, because the hun-soul is transmigrated from kalpa to kalpa, its set habits are ingrained and its ideational complex hard-bound;

> hence the situations it creates are hard to rarefy or destroy. The *p'o*-soul grows with the body, its set habits are superficial and its ideational complex transient; hence the situations that it creates no sooner arise than they vanish.
>
> All cognitions effected by the *hun*-soul, though distinct, go to make up the same Ocean of Reality (*hsing-hai*, 'the Sea of *Bhūtatathatā*). As a result our waking situations are generally alike. Every affective situation originating with the *p'o*-soul is evolved from a particular embryonic vital force; hence our dreaming situations differ from person to person.[20]

At this point, it is hard to say to what extent Buddhist notions influenced Chuang Yüan-ch'en's thinking.

With regard to the North American Indian notion of the plurality of the soul, Hultkrantz has also said that the free-soul, normally active, may become passive as an ego-soul, and that the body-soul, passive as a rule, may become active when it temporarily turns into a disembodied soul assuming the qualities proper to a specific free-soul. In this light, perhaps the *hun*-*p'o* dichotomy should likewise be understood as representing two facets of a single psychic entity, even if at the phenomenological level each stands as a unitary concept in its own right.

The following passage from the *Shu-chü-tzu* seems conducive to this speculation:

> The lungs, kidneys, and spleen are the palatial

> chambers of the *p'o*-soul; the liver and the heart are the capital abodes of the *hun*-soul. The ears, nose and mouth are the *p'o*-soul's courtyards, whereas the eyes and tongue are the *hun*'s outbuildings. During daytime, they wander about in the courtyards and outbuildings. At night they return to the palatial chambers and capital abodes. Hence, while awake we are conscious and when in bed we dream.[21]

Note that in this passage the functions of the *hun*- and *p'o*-souls are not differentiated with respect to either the waking state or the dream state, although they are said to occupy different visceral residences at night and to loiter round the vicinities of different sense organs during the day.

But if we turn to the question of their destinations after death, then it is clear that the two souls go separate ways. The tradition of this idea may be traced to the following passage from the "Chi-i" (The meaning of sacrifices) chapter in the *Li-chi*:

> Tsai-wo said, "I have heard the terms *kuei* (ghost) and *shen* (spirit), but I don't know what they mean."
>
> The Master said, "The vital force is the *shen* nature in its fullness, and the *p'o* the *kuei* nature in its fullness. The highest teaching consists in the union of *kuei* and *shen*. All the living

> must die and, when dead, return to the ground. This is what is known as kuei. The bones and flesh decay down there; under cover, they turn into field soil. But the vital force springs upward and becomes a glorious splendor. The odors and vapors which induce melancholy are the refined essences of all things as well as manifestations of the shen nature.[22]

The vital force (ch'i) mentioned here, as the element which vivifies the body when united with it, is easily identifiable with the hun-soul. When death occurs, it escapes from the body and ascends to heaven where it partakes of the shen nature. It is then characterized by luminosity. The physical remains go under the ground, where they rot and are termed kuei, into which the p'o-soul is said to convert.

This statement on the nature of ch'i and p'o is susceptible to various interpretations. Wang Ch'ung (A.D. 27-97?), for example, paronomastically equates kuei, 'ghost', with kuei, 'return', meaning the return of the physical remains to earth. In the "Lun ssu" (On death) chapter of the Lun heng he states:

> What makes a person live is the subtle vital force (ching-ch'i), which expires when death occurs. The subtle vital force is produced in the blood vessels. When a person dies, the blood vessels are emptied, and the subtle

> vital force is spent. This causes the body to decay and turn into dust. By what means can he become a *kuei*?[23]

Then he adds:

> When a man dies, his subtle spirit (ching-shen) ascends to heaven and his skeletal remains return to earth. Hence *kuei*, which means 'return'.[24]

Wang Ch'ung's materialism does not make allowance for the possibility of post-mortem survival of personality nor of individual consciousness in whatever form. This view had a number of supporters in the subsequent ages.[25]

In contrast to this, the *Shu-chü-tzu* again provides the theistic view, as follows:

> When a man dies, his *hun* goes up and his *p'o* goes down. Not that the *hun*-soul is capable of riding the clouds and ascending to heaven, but that its efficacious element (*ling*) can [make it] move upward and float wherever it wants to go. It may enjoy the sacrificial offerings, or it may sneak into a womb [for re-birth]. Its mutations are unlimited. Hence the saying [from the *I-ching*] that the wandering soul effects transformations.
>
> Not that the *p'o*-soul is to submerge without a trace in the subterranean springs, but that its

efficacious element adheres to the corpse and hovers round the coffin and does not leave the seclusion of the grave. Thus, when the descendants [of the deceased] come to sacrifice at the grave, it may enjoy the offerings.

When the corpse decomposes and the grave deteriorates, then the _p'o_-soul turns into nothingness. For it was composed of the father's sperm and the mother's blood. Now that it has returned to its origin, it does not come back to life again. Hence the saying [from the _I-ching_] that the essential vital force becomes matter.

Now, this "matter" refers to the _p'o_-soul. Life comes from the union of _hun_ and _p'o_, and death is the result of their separation. But the _hun_-soul existing and the _p'o_-soul not yet dissipated are still linked and sympathetic to each other when they encounter dangers or difficulties, in much the same way as the branches and leaves are related to the roots. This explains why geomancers consider burial sites so important.[26]

To demonstrate the last point, Chuang tells a story:

Huang Shan-ku once suffered from a disease in the rib cage. Then a woman appeared in a dream and said to him, "I am your previous

> incarnation. Where I am now buried is infested with ants. They have burrowed through my waist-bone (i.e. lower portion of the spine). That's why you are having trouble in the rib cage. Rebuild my grave and your ailment shall be cured."
>
> Shan-ku complied and it happened accordingly.

Chuang's theory in this connection is that

> Owing to the wandering soul's transformation, Shan-ku came into being. The woman that appeared in his dream was the p'o-soul of his previous life which had been restored to the ground with the bones and flesh. When the p'o-soul is ill, so is the body; and when the p'o-soul is well, so is the body. Now, when a person is born with a deformity, it is because the p'o-soul of his/her previous self has not returned completely.[27]

The etiology of congenital handicaps as Chuang would have it may yet offer some hint to the avant-garde science of genetic engineering.

2.4 Message Dreams from the Dead

The first thing to be noted about the dead in dreams is that they do not appear dead but are, as a rule, alive and sometimes kicking. A Hittite text tells of a queen reporting: "In a dream something like my father has risen again, alive,..."[28]

The dead may appear in dreams for any reason. A

usual one is to ask the dreamer a favor.

Some of the things most frequently requested by the dead in dreams are new graves, better burial sites, and the like. This is a recurrent motif in the literature. According to A. Leo Oppenheim, it was first introduced into Western literature by Achilles's dream of Patroclus (Iliad 23:62ff.).

Dreams featuring the dead constitute a category of special importance because not only do they reveal a significant aspect of dream concept in general, but they shed light on such matters as soul theory and the structure of the underworld. To a student of popular religion, the value of such information cannot be overstated.

I propose, then, to examine a few dreams of this nature from Chinese sources dating back, this time, to the Wei-Chin period and after.

The I yüan (Garden of oddities) by Liu Ching-shu of the Liu-Sung dynasty (A.D. 420-478), for example, tells the story of a young widow who lived with her two sons. She was addicted to tea. There was an ancient grave in their quarters. Whenever she made tea, she never failed to make an offering of it first at the grave.

Her two sons were disturbed by this practice. "Does the old grave have any consciousness," they said to her one day, "so that you are obliged to make the offerings?"

They intended to dig it up, but had to desist from doing so because their mother persistently forbade them.

That night the mother dreamt that a person said to

her, "I have stayed in this grave for more than two hundred years, and you have been very kind in trying to quench my thirst. Not only have you protected my grave from being desecrated by your sons, but you have regaled me with your excellent tea. Although I am but a bunch of rotten bones under the ground, can I forget to repay your kindness?" Then she awoke.

The next morning she found in the courtyard a huge sum of coins, amounting to one hundred-thousand. They looked like having been buried for a long time, except that the strings which strung them together were all new.

She returned to tell her sons about the find, and they were remorseful. From then on she was even more conscientious in her prayers and libations.[29]

In this story the deceased did not so much appear in the woman's dream to make a request as to give thanks for unsolicited favors received. On his own admission, he was a bunch of rotten bones that had been interred for over two hundred years. Yet he appeared in the dream as a "person."

The same source mentions Ssu-ma T'ien, a general of the Chin dynasty. During an illness, he saw in a dream an old man.

"I am Teng Ai (a general during the Three-Kingdoms era)," he said. "One of my houses is in disrepair. Fix it for me, sir."

Ssu-ma made inquiries afterwards and found out that at the temple of Teng Ai there was a straw hut which had

long been run-down. He had a tile-roofed house erected in its stead.[30]

Then there is the tale about Hsi K'ang, the Taoist philosopher. As a young man, he was taking a nap one day when an extremely tall man appeared in dream who introduced himself as a musician at the court of the Yellow Emperor.

"My remains were buried in the woods located three li east of your house," said he. "Someone has unearthed them and left them exposed. Please be so kind as to bury them, and I will send a sumptuous reward."

Hsi K'ang went to the site mentioned and indeed found [two] bleached leg-bones, each to the length of three ch'ih. He buried them at once. That night he dreamt again of the tall man, who came to teach him the music of remote antiquity known as the Kuang-ling san. No sooner had he woke up than he began to play the wonderful music with precision, without a single false note.[31]

All the three dream stories just cited suggest that the dead were solicitous about the condition of their physical remains for a long time after their demise, ranging from a few hundred to thousands of years, and that they were able to enlist, through dreams, the help of the living for the maintenance and improvement of their physical condition.

The Sou-shen hou-chi, (Later record of seeking after spirits), a work ascribed to the Eastern-Chin poet T'ao Ch'ien (A.D. 372-427), relates the following story in the same vein.

Ch'eng Chien, a native of Tung-kuan, died of illness

and was buried somewhere on the county border. Ten years later, he unexpectedly appeared to the county magistrate in a dream one night and said to him, "I am Ch'eng Chien, a resident now dead. At this very moment some people are trying to rob me. Please hurry and help me, Your Honor!"

Thereupon the magistrate ordered his internal and external personnel to gird up and get organized into a platoon consisting of one hundred men. They were then despatched horseback to the grave-site.

When they reached there, the sun was just about to rise. But all of a sudden it became so foggy that even at close range they could not see each other, but could only hear the creaking sound coming from within the grave, where the coffin being pried open. There were two men on the mound keeping watch, but, thanks to the blinding fog, they did not notice the approaching party.

When the magistrate himself arrived, all the hundred men gave a loud cry at the same time. Three men in the grave were arrested, while the two on the mound escaped. The coffin was not too badly damaged. The magistrate immediately had it repaired.

That night he dreamt again of Ch'eng Chien, who said to him, "I can recognize to the last detail the two who got away. One has on his face a dark birthmark which looks like a bean-leaf. The other has two chipped front teeth. If Your Honor but follow these clues in your search, they will surely be found."

The magistrate did what he said and both fugitives were caught accordingly.[32]

In this case, the lapse between the death and the dream was ten years, a much shorter length of time compared with the above. But the dream-apparition's concern was the same: the repose of his earthly remains. Here he appealed to the local civil authorities for protection and helped to catch the culprits. This detail makes the story sound like a prototype for some courtroom plays of the Yüan period. In such plays the role of a ghost, which may or may not appear in dream, often leads to the resolution of the mystery.[33]

The following story from the same source tells of the dream-apparition of someone not so dead. Cheng Mao likewise died of an unspecified disease. When all the last rites had been performed short of interment, his wife and other family members simultaneously dreamt that he said his apointed time had not yet come and that his breath had just been cut off by chance through suffocation.

"You may open the coffin," he instructed them, "then ignite the carriage lantern and apply it to the top of my head." They did so and he was indeed revived.[34]

In this case the interval between the apparent death and the oneiric visitation was even shorter: just a few days, presumably. Bearing the Chinese dualistic soul theory in mind, we may say that Cheng Mao's <u>hun</u>-soul, which must have been hovering about his coffin all the while, frantically

seeking means to reunite with his inert body, was responsible for the dreams his family had.

The application of the lighted lantern to his crown was significant, for light signifies the Yang principle, and the head, as the head-dress of Taoist priests accentuates, is where all the Yang forces in the body culminate. This potent conjunction was designed by Cheng Mao himself to lure his vagrant hun-soul back to its former domicile.

Another point of interest in this episode is the phenomenon of simultaneous dreaming, a familiar theme in the dreamlore of many cultures. When two or more people report an identical dream, its supernatural origin is thought highly plausible.

Apart from asking favors, ghosts may also appear in dreams to do the dreamer a good turn. The Hsü sou-shen chi (Sequel to the record of seeking after spirits) tells of a fisherman who moored his boat at the estuary in Ho-fei one night. Then he heard music from an ensemble of lutes, flutes, and other instruments, and dreamt that someone was driving him away and telling him, "Don't come near where officials and courtesans are." It turned out that, according to local hearsay, Lord Ts'ao once took some courtesans aboard his boat and it capsized at this spot.[35]

Sometimes dream messages from the dead may not be explicitly stated and therefore require interpretation. The following passage from a vignette entitled "Shuo meng" (Speaking of dreams) in the Yung-hsien-chai pi-chi (Notebook

from the Studio of Plain Indolence) by Ch'en Ch'i-yüan of late Ch'ing times is an example:

> The _Chou-li_ speaks of an officer for oneiromancy, who interprets good and bad dreams in many ways. It is a pity that this art is now lost.
>
> I dream readily whenever my head hits the pillow. In a single night I may have several dreams, all coming to naught. My late father, however, often did not have any dream throughout the year. But whenever he had one, it invariably came true, sure as an echo. This sort of thing is certainly difficult to rationalize.
>
> In the year _ping-ch'en_ of Hsien-feng reign period (1856), my late wife Madame Wen became ill during the epidemic. Then my father unaccountably dreamt of my late mother. He took the occasion to tell her, "Do you know that our daughter-in-law is dying?"
>
> "Good for her," said my mother.
>
> On waking, my father said to me, "Your wife is dying and your mother says that's good for her. I am afraid the ravages of the war will soon reach our province."
>
> And indeed, in the following year Chin-hua was attacked by the bandits (referring to the T'ai-p'ing rebels), and two years later the whole

> of Chekiang fell. Our family had to evacuate and disperse, resulting in nine deaths. They were all cursorily interred, without ceremony. It was indeed good fortune that my wife had died beforehand.[36]

If, in his father's dream, the remark of the writer's mother sounded ominous, the old man's instant recognition of the message still depended largely on his awareness of and pre-occupation with the current social upheaval now known as the T'ai-p'ing Revolution. From this we may infer the oneirocritical principle that in interpreting a dream, the dreamer's personal cirmumstances at the time of dreaming should be taken into account. This point will be further discussed in Chapter VI. The reference to the Chou-li will be fully treated in Chapter VII.

2.5 Message Dreams from Deities of Human Origin

So far I have shown that certain spirits, whether benevolent or malevolent, are reported to have appeared in some ancient Chinese dreams. Nature spirits, such as "Heaven" in Section 1.3 and the river god in Section 2.2, were among them.

Ancestral spirits, too, are prominent in Chinese dreamlore. Of the twenty-eight dream episodes recorded in the Tso-chuan, I found eight having to do with this kind of spirits (not necessarily the dreamer's own ancestors' though).[37]

Since human beings deified after their deaths constitute

an important category of deities in the Taoist pantheon as well as in that of Chinese popular religion, this section is devoted to dreams relating to them.[38]

The Chi-shen lu (An account of the investigation of spirits) by Hsü Hsüan (A.D. 916-991) tells of a butcher named Cheng Chiu who lived in Shou-ch'un in dire poverty. Once he dreamt that a man introduced himself as Lien P'o and said to him, "You may dig up my sword. It is buried in the eastern part of the village. I will make you rich on condition that you do not give up your job. Chiu followed his instructions and indeed found the sword. The following year he became rich. But when he subsequently revealed the matter, the sword was lost.

Now, historically, Lien P'o was a general of the state of Chao during the Warring-States period. He was deified presumably for the same reason that Kuan Yü (popularly known as Kuan-ti, 'Emperor Kuan', or Kuan-kung, 'Lord Kuan') of the Three-Kingdoms period or Yüeh Fei of Southern Sung times was: they were all stalwart warriors who met violent deaths.

Among all Chinese deities of human origin, Lord Kuan was undoubtedly the most popular, owing to his alleged readiness to lend a helping hand to whoever needed it. To give an example:

> During the Chia-ching reign-period (A.D. 1522-1566), in Lin-chiang county there was a Buddhist temple which housed an image of Lord Kuan. When Minister Chang Ch'un was still an undergraduate, he used to

study in this temple. Whenever he passed in front of the Lord's statue, he never failed to bow in reverence. Come new moon or full moon, he always made a point of burning some incense and praying in silence.

It happened that some bees built a hive in one of the ears of the Lord's statue. When Chang Ch'un noticed the messy ear, he took the trouble to clean it.

That night he dreamt that the Lord came into his study. He fell on his knees to welcome the august guest.

"I owe you one for taking care of my ear," said the Lord, "and I shall reciprocate. Say, when you read the Ch'un-ch'iu, do you understand its hidden meaning?" Then he began explaining a few passages.

As he listened on, Chang Ch'un came to realize that his exposition was such as he had never heard from anyone else. From then on he dreamt of the Lord's visit every night.

One day, some friends of his who specialized in this classic met with him to practise writing essays on it. Ch'un put together a composition based on what the Lord had expounded to him. They read it and could not refrain from heaving sighs in admiration.[39]

According to popular tradition, Lord Kuan, a patron saint of the literati among other things, was a great reader of the *Ch'un-ch'iu* (Spring and autumn annals). He is invariably represented, in painting and sculpture, as holding a volume of the classic in one hand and poring over it in a dramatic stance. Hence, in this case, it was only fitting that he chose to impart to his benefactor in a series of dreams his own insights into this work.

Even in Buddhism, monks of great sanctity are said to have appeared in dreams to deliver messages. The following episode, which took place in the early Ch'ing period, is recounted in the *Jen-wu feng-su chih-tu ts'ung-t'an* (Collected anecdotes on personalities, customs, and institutions), a modern work:

> The Monastery of Longevity is the present abode of the Reverend Shih Lien. In this monastery there used to be an elder who passed on fourteen years ago, was niched in a cell, and had not been placed in a pagoda.
>
> Shih Lien at one time was undertaking such a construction and had already chosen a date for the removal when the elder appeared in a dream, saying, "My flesh-body in the niche is intact and uncorrupt. Some day it will come out, therefore it should not be cremated. Please open the niche and show it to all the faithful."
>
> Torn between doubt and belief, Shih Lien

> prayed before the niche: "If I alone said so, it might sound absurd and frivolous. If Your Reverence has spiritual efficacy, please show Yourself to the congregation in a dream."
>
> That day the whole congregation indeed had a dream, which they conveyed to all the elders and superiors in the other mountains as well as to all laity.
>
> Then they all gathered together to open the niche. [The dead monk's] face looked as if he was alive. He sat in a solemn posture with his hands clasped. His nails were very long, but on his neck and one cheek there were two small holes corroded by insects.
>
> He was installed on a high seat for veneration.[40]

Although it is a basic tenet in Buddhism that the phenomenal world is <u>māyā</u>, that is, an illusion (of this more in Chapter V) and that, insofar as it partakes of the nature of the phenomenal, the body is to be considered as nothing but a "stinking leather bag (<u>ch'ou</u> <u>p'i-nang</u>)," the corpse of a monk in a state of nonputrefaction is always regarded, as in Catholicism, as a mark of sanctity. It is not clear, however, whether it is also the case that the soul is believed to remain in it. At any rate, in this episode our monk seemed to value his leather bag so highly that he was prevailed upon to cause simultaneous dreaming.[41]

2.6 Dream Incubation

If spiritual beings may on their own initiative manifest themselves in dreams for whatever reason, it is also the case that they may be deliberately induced to appear in dreams through prayer and/or some form of propitiation.

In some ancient cultures, dream incubation was institutionalized. In Egypt, for instance, temples dedicated to Serapis, the god of dreams, were located throughout the land. These temples, called serapeums, were managed by professional dream interpreters known as the Learned Men of the Magic Library. The Serapeum at Memphis, constructed about 3000 B.C., was one of the most important. The technique of incubation consisted in praying, fasting and sleeping in these temples. It was also possible to induce dreams in such a temple by proxy in case the actual suppliant could not make the journey.[42]

In ancient Greece dream incubation became a highly developed art. Incubation centres had their beginnings around the fifth century B.C., and there were more than three hundred of them functioning throughout Greece and the Roman Empire in the second century. Visitors came as a rule to seek answers to medical problems. The god would indicate in a dream what type of medicine should be taken. Later it was the oracles or interpreters who would specify, on the basis of the dream recounted to them, the appropriate remedy.[43]

The ancient Hebrews, too, believed that dreams could

be provoked artificially, although the Rabbis forbade the use of incubation. Nevertheless, it was practised: the Temple of Aesculapius was visited by Greeks, Romans, and Hebrews alike. The tractate Sanhedrin goes so far as to say that one may sleep on the grave of a dead person so as to receive some message from the dead. Moreover, according to the Talmud, it is possible to pray for good dreams and for the nullification or changing of bad dreams. The Berakoth states: "If a dream spirit tells a man 'Tomorrow you will die,' he should not despair. Prayer and good deed help."[44]

Finally, dream incubation was also practised, as a royal privilege and as a priestly function, by the Babylonians, Hittites, Assyrians and Akkadians in ancient Near East.[45]

In ancient China, too, there used to be shrines famous for dream incubation in various localities. One such shrine in Fukien province was described in the following passage from the Min hsiao-chi (Little notes on Min) by Chou Liang-kung:

> Everyone knows about praying for dreams at Chiu-li (Nine Carp), but not about the Hsien-men Tung (Cave of the Immortals' Gate) presided by Lord Chiu-ho (the titular deity). It is located twenty-two li west of the Hsien-yu county [seat].
>
> [Here] the cliff on either side stands like a wall and attains a height of ten or so jen (one

> _jen_ is eight _ch'ih_, the Chinese foot). Going in zigzag fashion toward the west, one finds Taoist temples and Buddhist monasteries.
>
> Around the cave's entrance and along the creek, boulders flank the banks in such a way that an avalanche of waterfalls consisting of more than ten terraces is created. Where the banks come to an end the land is more cultivated. The presence of fowl, dogs, mulberry trees and hemp crops marks it out as a distinct area.
>
> Five _li_ beyond this point stands a watershed which is already within the boundary of Chin-chiang county. The dreams procured [at this site] are as marvelously efficacious as those at Carp Lake.[46]

This description of the shrine suggests that, though situated amidst surroundings of great natural beauty, owing to its far-flung location and rugged terrain, it was visited only by those who were singularly motivated.

Fortunately for dream seekers, some other dream dispensaries were more accessible. The temple of _ch'eng-huang_, 'god of walls and moats', in a town or city, for instance, was a very popular one. This deity was a kind of guardian spirit who looked after the general wellfare as well as particular needs of the people within his jurisdiction. He was as a rule a deified personage who during his lifetime had distinguished himself by virtue of his exemplary conduct.

There is a legend about Yü Ch'ien, Minister of Military

Affairs of the Ming dynasty during the reign of Emperor Ying-tsung (A.D. 1436-1449), who was wrongly accused and ordered executed by the emperor. Afflicted by remorse, however, the emperor reinstated him posthumously in his offical position and gave him the office of Arch-God of Walls and Moats of All-under-Heaven. Since Yü Ch'ien was a native of Hangchow, it was decreed that his residence in that city be converted into a temple in his honor. This temple soon became a centre for dream incubation. In an article, Wang Yung-ch'üan, a modern writer, described it as follows:

> On the eve of winter solstice each year, at about nightfall, people seeking after dreams move toward the temple of the Arch-God of Walls and Moats of All-under-Heaven with incense and candles in their hands and blankets and bedding on their shoulders.
>
> Ordinarily, this temple is all deserted and quiet. But on this particular day lamps and candles are lighted, causing a lot of fuss that is hard to tolerate.
>
> On entering the temple, the dream seekers light up their incense and candles. After going through the prescribed ritual of kneeling thrice and kowtowing nine times, they spread out their blankets and beddings and fall asleep in a peaceful frame of mind. When a late-comer cannot find

find a bed-space, he will voluntarily spend the night outdoors.

> The climate in our province of Chekiang is such that at the winter solstice it is already very cold. If snow does not come, there is bound to be frost. In spite of this, some people choose to go to Yü Ch'ien's tomb and sleep beside it in the open-air, in order to procure dreams.
>
> On the eve of winter solstice, at dusk, one never fails to see faithful dream seekers along the road with lanterns in their hands and blankets and bedding on their shoulders. (Yü Ch'ien's tomb is located at Mao-chia Pu in the West Lake region, ten-odd li from Hangchow.) Generally, they go to pray for dreams at an early hour. What is the reason for this? Perhaps the dream-seeking faithful subscribe to the notion that "When the night is long, dreams come in plenty!"[47]

In the foregoing description, some dream seekers at this particular temple were willing to undergo some form of of asceticism as evidence for their sincerity.

It appears, however, that with regard to dream incubation the ch'eng-huang could occasionally be influenced by means other than spiritual, as can be seen in the following episode from the Chin-hu lang-mo (Dabblings from a Bronze Urn) by Huang Chün-tsai of the Ch'ing period:

> Ch'in Chung-yüan of Chiang-ning had a series of

> bad dreams. Disgruntled, he got ready a lot of sacrificial money and burned it at the temple of the *ch'eng-huang*, together with a prayerful essay, the gist of which read: "Amidst the sundry glitters of this world, human fortunes are predetermined. The momentariness of a dream surely does not matter one way or another. This sum of money is hereby offered in payment for auspicious dreams." When this prayer was over, ghostly voices were heard squealing, as if disputing over the money. From then on his dreams became rather agreeable.[48]

The reference to ghosts quarreling noisily over the sacrificial money offered at the temple seems to indicate that the god did not keep the money for himself but turned it over to the ghosts directly responsible for the occurrence of the bad dreams as a bribe or propitiation. This would imply that he was not the dispenser of dreams, but acted rather like a monitor or a mediator.

2.7 Dream as Commodity

The conception of dream as something transferable can be found in some cultures. A. Leo Oppenheim cites the famous epigram of Juvenal (*Satires* VI: 546-547) concerning the Jews of Rome who sold customers for little money the kind of dream they wanted: "A few coppers purchase, where Jews are concerned, fulfilment of dreams and fancies."[49]

In this regard, Arthur Waley tells the story of the two daughters of Regent Masatoki of Japan (12th cent.).

The younger dreamt that the sun and moon fell into her lap. The elder, called Masako, talented and versed in oneirology, cozened her sister into believing that it was a terribly unlucky dream. Then she offered to buy it, explaining that a dream bought or sold had no potency. She paid for it with an ancient Chinese mirror which her sister had always wanted. The latter was to realize what she had lost by selling her dream only long afterwards when Masako became the virtual ruler of Japan.[50]

The Chin-hu-lang-mo cited in the preceding section recounts the story of the consort of Chin Ch'un-ch'iu, king of Hsin-lo (one of the three ancient kingdoms of Korea) as follows. When still a maiden, she heard her elder Pao-chi mention that she had a dream in which she ascended the West Mountain and sat there. Before long she found herself adrift all over the country. Upon waking, she told the [future] queen about it. The latter said, "I'll buy your dream, sister." Later, [King] Ch'un-ch'iu took her in. Thus the good omen indeed came true.[51]

2.8 The Dream-God

In discussing the Jewish practice of buying and selling dreams in ancient Rome, Oppenheim maintains that this was an outcome of the Talmudic concept of the dream which postulates "the existence of a ruler of dreams who could be induced by prayers or magic to provoke certain dreams in certain individuals."[52]

Parallel to the Hebraic notion of a supernatural dis-

penser of dreams, Mesopotamian religion also knows of several gods of dreams, variously designated as Mamu, Anzaqar or Anzaggar, and Zaqīqu or Ziqīqu.

The semantics as well as theological implications of these names are fully discussed by Oppenheim. As he points out, the designation "god of dreams" may mean a number of things in various contexts. For example, the connotations of the term zaqīqu, Assyrian in origin, range from 'storm' to 'evil spirit' and even to 'nothingness'.[53] Hence, when the Mesopotamian dream-god is designated by this term (sometimes used to refer to the souls of the dead as well), we may sleep assured that the flighty, chthonic, destructive, or even demonic aspect of dreams is at issue.[54]

The demonic conception of the dream entails its being regarded as an objective event. In this view, evil dreams remain operative even if the dreamer happens to forget their content. Perhaps this was the idea behind the apotropaic ritual of invoking Po-ch'i, a mythical beast, to devour the unwanted dreams during Han times when the annual ceremony of ta nuo (grand exorcism) was being held.[55]

Was there a dream-god in ancient China comparable to the Babylonian Mamu, the Sumerian Manu, the Egyptian Serapis, or the Grecian Hermes or Aesculapius, who could be invoked to grant certain types of dreams? Well, the Shih-lei t'ung-pien (Compendium of Literary Allusions) mentions a dream-god called Chih-li. This source also mentions a mantra to be recited seven times before retiring, as follows: yüan chou

tsang kuan ch'ü chu mi t'i.[56] Evidently, this incantation is of foreign origin.

The dream-god's name does not sound Chinese either.

CHAPTER THREE

DREAM AS RESPONSE TO PHYSICAL STIMULI

In the foregoing chapters I have shown that in ancient China, as in some other parts of the ancient world, dreams were thought of as having divinatory significance and as originating from the spirit world. Both notions implied that the dream was a supernormal event. This concept was the natural outcome of the magico-religious world-view entertained by the ancients.

As human knowledge about the world increased, the processes of nature were understood in more detail. And, for the enlightened, the time soon came when all phenomena observed by our forebears had to be explained in terms of natural cause and effect. The somatic basis of the dreaming process was thus sought after.

3.1 The Internal Stimuli

We know that in many ancient societies, medicine was a branch of religion, and the priest or shaman often doubled as a healer. With the progress of human knowledge, science and religion parted company; and medicine, shedding its sacerdotal trappings, came into its own.

Thus, Hippocrates was able to teach that epilepsy, referred to by the Greeks of his day as the Sacred Disease, was not divine in origin. On the contrary, it had a natural cause: either phlegmatic or bilious attacks on the brain.

He noted the influence on bodily health of such elements in nature as the precailing winds, the water supply, and the soil. He observed the effect of food and drink, of occupation, and of the habits of people in causing disease.[1]

As well, Hippocrates wrote a treatise on the medical significance of dreams. Without denying that some dreams were sent by the gods to apprise people of future events, he considered dreams primarily as diagnostic indicators of bodily conditions. Dreams consisting of actions and thoughts similar to those experienced by the dreamer during the day indicated a healthy state, whereas dreams that ran counter to daytime experience and that involved some struggle or triumph signified bodily disturbance, the seriousness of which was in direct proportion to the degree of violence in the struggle.[2]

In the mid-seventeenth century, Thomas Hobbes was to echo the Hippocratic view on dreams as follows:

> And seeing dreams are caused by the distemper of some of the inward parts of the Body, diverse distempers must needs cause different Dreams.[3]

Hobbes managed to give an account of the psychosomatic mechanism involved in dreaming. In his view, an emotion that we experience in our waking life produces a certain physical sensation, so that when this sensation is aroused by some physical stimulus when we are sleeping, the corresponding psychological state ensues, this time accompanied

by an appropriate imagery (Hobbes termed it "imagination") arising from the brain.[4]

At about the same time, Jeremy Taylor wrote:

> Dreams follow the temper of the body, and commonly proceed from trouble or disease, business or care, an active head and a restless mind, from fantastic remembrances, or from some common demon, good or bad.[5]

Although Taylor acknowledged the demonic origin of dreams, he nonetheless emphasized their physiological aspect as follows:

> The dream of the yolk of an egg importeth gold (saith Artemidorus), and they that use to remember such fantastic idols, are afraid to lose a friend when they dream their teeth shake, when naturally it will rather signify a scurvy; for a natural indisposition and an imperfect sense of the beginning of a disease, may vex the fancy into a symbolical representation; for so the man that dreamed he swam against a stream of blood, had a pleuresy beginning in his side; and he that dreamt he dipped his foot into water, and that it was turned into a marble, was enticed into the fancy by a beginning dropsy; and if the events do answer in one instance, we become credulous in twenty.[6]

Taylor, a churchman, exhorted the reader not to be impressed by dreams with regard to their alleged predictive function, for in so doing he or she might be fooled by the devil into accepting "a false proposition upon a ground weaker than the discourse of a waking child."[7]

Writing in 1896, Wilhelm Wundt offered a psycho-physiological theory of dreams. He thought the dreaming process to be conditioned by what he called "the specially modified dospositions to sensations and volitional reactions."[8] In Wundt's view, while the external motor activities were inhibited in ordinary sleep and dreams, the sensory functions became more excitable. While admitting that these changes had not been investigated directly, he assumed from the psychological symptoms that the physiological conditions generally consisted "in the inhibition of activity in the regions connected with processes of volition, and apperception, and in the increased excitability of the sensory centers."[9]

The concept of dreams as indicative of internal bodily conditions can be found in the Chinese medical literature as well. Even to this day, it is nothing unusual for a Chinese physician practising traditional medicine, when making a thorough diagnosis, to ask the patient what dreams he or she has been having lately.

After a lengthy passage explaining the cosmological theories (viz. the bipolar complementarity of Yin and Yang, and the circular periodicity of the Five Agents) underlying

the Chinese medical practice, their interrelations, and how they correspond to the four seasons, the human body and so forth, the Huang-ti nei-ching su-wen (The Yellow Emperor's classic on internal medicine: plain questions) states:

> Thus do we know that when the Yin flourishes, one dreams of wading through great [bodies of] water in fear. When the Yang flourishes, one dreams of great fire burning and scorching. And when both Yin and Yang flourish, then dreams of killing and maiming each other occur. When the upper [pulse] flourishes, one dreams of flying. When the lower [pulse] flourishes, one dreams of falling.[10] Overfed, one dreams of giving. Famished, one dreams of taking. When the breath of the liver flourishes, one dreams of being angry. When the breath of the lungs flourishes, one dreams of crying. An abundance of short worms[11] [in the bowels] brings about dreams of gathering a throng. An abundance of long worms[12] causes dreams of beating and hurting each other.[13]

In this passage we see what sort of bodily excess or deficiency triggers what dream imagery.

The Ling-shu ching (Classic on the vital axis)[14] has a passage in the same vein. After mentioning all the above dream imageries, it continues the list thus:

> When the breath of the heart flourishes, one dreams

> of being prone to laughter or of fear and timidity. When the breath of the spleen flourishes, one dreams of song and music, or of one's body growing heavy and unwieldy. When the breath of the kidneys flourishes, one dreams that the waist and backbone are loose and disjointed.[15]

That Yin is equated with water and Yang with fire hardly needs any comment. Under normal conditions, the force of Yang waxes as that of Yin wanes and vice versa; the balance of nature is thus maintained. It follows that when both forces increase at the same time, then, instead of complementing each other, they clash. Hence dreams of "killing and maiming each other."

Since the "upper" pulse is located in the neck and the "lower" at the wrist, each triggers off a dream experience corresponding to its location. That when we are well-fed our dreams are characterized by generosity and when starving by greed stands to reason even in our waking thoughts. I suspect, however, that the notion of Yin-Yang complementarity also plays a part in these two equations. As to why hookworms suggest gregariousness and tapeworms are antisocial is anybody's guess.

The symbolism involved in dreams brought about by an excess of "breath" in each of the five viscera (i.e. heart, liver, spleen, lungs, kidneys) can easily be explained if we bear in mind how these five internal organs are correlated with, among other things, the emotions, ostensibly based on

the theory of the Five Agents.

The Ling-shu ching, for example, states that when the subtle breath or vital force (cf. Section 2.3) binds itself to the liver, then one is worried; to the heart, happy; to the lungs, sad; to the kidneys, fearful; and to the spleen, timid.[16] Thus each of these emotions is found to have a specific physiological correlate.

With respect to dream symbolism, the Ling-shu ching further states:

> When the impeding breath (chüeh-ch'i) dwells in the heart, one dreams of hills, mountains, smoke and fire; in the lungs, of flying about and seeing strange objects of gold and iron; in the liver, of forests and trees; in the spleen, of hills and great marshes, and of winds and rains destroying houses; in the kidneys, of verging on a chasm, or of being submerged in water; in the bladder, of travelling; in the stomach, of drinking and eating; in the large intestines, of fields and the wilds; in the small intestines, of villages and towns, and of roads high and low; in the gall bladder, of fights and litigations, or of disembowelling oneself; in the genitalia, of accepting or receiving; in the nape, of being beheaded; in the legs, of walking but not being able to move forward, and of living in a caved-in place or a sunken garden; in the thighs and forearms,

> of performing ceremonies which involve kneeling and rising; and in the mucous membrane of the bladder, of urinating.[17]

Here, not only are the five viscera mentioned again, but six other internal organs, the liu fu, 'six bowels', and some other external body parts are included as well.

Again, in correlating the dream imageries with their respective physical sources, the cosmological principles underlying the traditional Chinese concept of the human body are applied. For example, the heart is associated with the element of fire, hence dreams of smoke and fire when this organ is impeded by the noxious breath. The liver has the attribute of wood, therefore dreams about forests and trees occur when it is similarly affected.

3.2 The External Stimuli

The statement about dreams of decapitation in the passage from the Ling-shu ching last cited found a parallel centuries later, and in Europe to boot, in the case of Alfred Maury, the French psychologist, who dreamt that he was tried and executed by a tribunal during the French Revolution and was then guillotined. In reality, however, a piece of the wooden molding from the canopy of his bed fell on his neck and woke him up, at the very moment when the blade descended in his dream.[18]

Dream accounts of this type have often been adduced ~~have often been adduced~~ by proponents of the theory that

dreaming is a physiological mechanism triggered by sensory stimuli. The *Po-wu chih* (Record of various things) by Chang Hua of Han times claims that when one sleeps on a belt, one dreams of a snake; and that when a bird holds one's hair in its beak (however this may happen), one dreams about flying.[19]

In his *Yu-yang tsa-tsu* (Mixed chops from Yu-yang), Tuan Ch'eng-shih of T'ang times confirms this view thus:

> Since the blind do not dream, we know that dreaming is [a matter of] habit (*hsi*). My maternal cousin Lu Yu-tse dreamt that he saw someone beating the drum. When he awoke, his kid brother was at play pounding the door in simulation of street-drums. Also, my paternal aunt's husband P'ei Yüan-yü said that among his retainers there was one who took a fancy to the girl next door. He dreamt that the girl gave him two cherries to eat. Upon waking, [he found] cherry pits dropping onto either side of his pillow.[20]

That the blind do not dream is of course a misconception. This statement, however, does not detract from the plausibility of the two instances that Tuan gives in support of his view.

Finally, the *Kuan-yin-tzu* from late T'ang times thinks of the weather conditions as possible instigator of dreams. It asserts that when the day is getting cloudy, one will dream of water; when it is getting sunny, of fire.[21]

3.3 A Freudian Critique

In the West, the view that dreams arise from physiological causes, whether external or internal, was widely accepted among educated people toward the end of the nineteenth century. It is no longer countenanced by a good number of modern psychologists, particularly those of the Freudian persuasion. Ernest Jones puts it this way:

> It is commonly believed in scientific circles that the mental processes of which dreams are composed arise, without any psychical antecedent, as the result of irregular excitation of various elements in the cerebral cortex by physiological processes occurring during sleep. This, it is maintained, accounts for the confused and bizarre nature of the mental product, and any apparently logical connection and order that frequently appear to some extent in dreams are explained by the supposition that the mental processes in question are represented in cortical elements that stand in close, anatomical or physiological relation to one another, and so are simultaneously stimulated by the peripheral stimuli. Hence any problem as to the psychical origin of the mental processes, still more as to the *meaning* of the dream as a whole, is by the nature of things excluded as being nonexistent, and any investigation along such lines is condemned as savouring of antiquated superstition about the

'reading of dreams' unworthy of educated people.[22]

While not denying that the source of some dream material is to be found in somatic stimuli during sleep, Jones adamantly holds that they are in no case the whole cause of the dream, but are merely woven into its fabric in exactly the same way as any physical material, and only when they fulfil certain requirements. Sometimes somatic stimuli may serve as the effective instigator of a dream, but it can rarely explain the whole of it.[23]

To bring his point home, Jones gives the following example:

> A man saw in front of him in a dream a Greek altar composed of a solid mass of writhing snakes. There were nine of them, and they finally assumed the shape of a pyramid or triangle. He awoke at this point suffering from severe colicky pains in the abdomen, and, being a medical man, the resemblance at once flashed across his mind between the idea of contracting coils of intestines and that of writhing snakes.[24]

Jones points out that, in this case, there was no doubt a genetic relation between the somatic stimulus and the dream, and that for those who uphold the physiological theory of dreams this was a good illustration for it. But the psychologist thinks this etiology inadequate: it fails to account for such other features in the dream as the altar, the number

nine, and the triangular form.

It happened that, at a banquet on the preceding day, a young lady had asked the dreamer why the number nine was so prominent in Greek mythology. He replied that it was because nine, being three times three, possessed in a high degree the properties of the sacred number three. He was spared the embarrassment of having to explain to her why three, a number having phallic significance (with its relation to religious worship in general and to snake-worship in particular), was sacred, as her attention was somehow diverted at this point.

In Jones' view, the dream was plainly a narcissistic and exhibitionistic one, for the dreamer identified himself with the god Priapus who was adored for his masculine attributes, symbolized in his dream by the snakes.[25]

It is clear that the Freudian reading of dream-symbols is culture-specific. Its claim to universal application is therefore questionable. Nevertheless, Jones's critique of the view of dream as caused by physical stimuli is incisive. His insistence that dreams have meaning and that their meaning has to be unravelled through symbolic interpretation is commendable.

It remains for me to point out that, in ancient China, except for a few members of the literati, the physiological theory of dreams was never popular.

CHAPTER FOUR

DREAM AS PROJECTION OF MENTAL STATES

Any non-specialist who has occasion to wonder why all this attention focused on dreams in modern psychology will soon find, even with minimal probing, that all the major schools in this discipline agree that there is a meaningful relationship between the dream state and the waking state. Moreover, this relationship obtains on the psychical plane. Thus, dreaming is a mental process which we experience in sleep, just as thinking, remembering, imagining, decision-making are mental processes which take place when we are awake. In this light, the subject of dreaming is clearly under the purview of psychology.

This position differs radically from that held by the late nineteenth-century psychologists, such as Maury and Wundt mentioned in the preceding chapter, who theorized about dreams from a rationalistic, mechanistic world-view. For them, the dream was explained as soon as its physical source, whether external or internal, was identified.

Over against this materialist approach, Freud's impassioned plea was loud and clear:

> Dreams are not to be likened to the unregulated sounds that rise from a musical instrument struck by the blow of some external force instead of by a player's hand; they are not meaningless, they are not absurd; they do not imply that one portion

> of our store of ideas is asleep while another portion is beginning to wake. On the contrary, they are psychical phenomena of complete validity -- fulfillments of wishes; they can be inserted into the chain of intelligible waking mental acts; they are constructed by a highly complicated activity of the mind.[1]

Thus Freud started it all. Although his theory of dreams subsequently underwent modifications even in the hands of his faithful followers, the major premisses, that dreams are meaningful, that they are valid psychical phenomena, and that they can be integrated through interpretation with diurnal mentations, have not changed.

A Chinese proverb says, "What you think by day, that you dream at night." This summarizes Freud's teaching on _Tagereste_, 'day residues', which consist of memories of very recent experiences, particularly experiences from the day immediately preceding the dream. Day residues, according to Freud, are basic elements in dream formation.[2]

In the following sections I shall adduce instances from traditional Chinese sources in support of this view. It is not my intention to suggest, I hasten to add, that such instances may be described as "Freudian" with all the nuances of the term.

4.1 Confucius as Dreamer

If Confucius is said to have anticipated his own death

through a dream vision (see Section 1.3), he is also known to have been reticent about matters relating to the uncanny or things not of immediate concern to the practical side of life.

For example, when asked about the problem of death, he said, "If we still don't know about life, how can we know about death?" And when asked how to serve the spirits, he said, "If we still cannot serve the people, how can we serve the spirits?"[3]

Confucius's agnosticism may have been more apparent than real, but the question at hand is why, in subsequent ages, no Confucian worth his salt would venture to discourse on supernormal phenomena without hedging himself with some skeptical comments or advancing some moralistic justifications.

To give an example: the Analects records Confucius as saying, " I must be growing weak; I have not dreamt of the Duke of Chou for a long time now."[4] What follows is a selection of comments on this passage by some latter-day Confucians.

Kung An-kuo (Han):

> In his decrepitude, Confucius never dreamt of the Duke of Chou again. This indicates that, in his prime of life, he used to dream of the duke, whose teachings he intended to implement.[5]

Hsing Ping (Sung):

> Here Confucius sighed for his failing health,

> saying that in his heyday, he used to dream of the Duke of Chou, whose teachings it had been his ambition to put into practice; but that since, for some time now, he had not dreamt of the duke again, he must have grown weak and senile.[6]

Chang Shih (Sung):

> The mind which caused the Master to dream of the Duke of Chou was identical with the mind which made the latter think of the three sage-kings. In the heyday of his life, expecting that the Way would soon be realized, and that the measures initiated by the Duke of Chou would soon apply to the whole realm, the Master kept pondering on the matter even as he lay in bed and dreamt. When he became old and feeble, however, knowing that the Way could not be realized after all, he ceased to dream of seeing the duke again. But if we were to suppose that it was owing to his thinking and pondering that the sage saw the Duke of Chou in dream, then we would be [found mentally] impeded and constipated, for the sagely mind is incapable of delusive dreams.[7]

All the three commentators cited above correlate Confucius's dream of the Duke of Chou with the fact that he was then young and ambitious. Chang Shih further alludes to the error of the speculation that somehow Confucius was deluded by the dream. He makes it clear that the sagely mind is all

penetrating and may not succumb to any form of delusion. This point was amplified by Wei Hsiang-shu of Ch'ing times thus:

> The moment our mind thinks of evil, a demon is present therein to beguile and play upon it, so that during the day it appears in discernible shape and at night in our dreams, and [this demon] won't rest until damage has been done. Hence an evil mind is the demon itself. What is so odd, then, about one demon being in cahoots with another? The moment our mind is righteous, a god is found therein to protect and keep watch over it, and [this god] won't rest until both our parents and our offspring have earned its blessing. Therefore a righteous mind is itself a god. Now, what is so questionable about one god consorting with another?[8]

Here we see that gods and demons are not spoken of as beings in their own right, but rather as projections of our mental states with ethical overtones: they are nothing but good and evil objectified, the better for us to recognize them for what they are. It follows that, in this view, bad dreams are nothing but the natural product of a morally depraved mind, as Wei said further:

> If our mind is at ease, so will be our speech and action. If our speech and action are at ease, so will be our dream soul. And if our dream soul is

> at ease, so will be our life and our death. If, however, one is ill at ease in life and in death, the reason is to be found in one's mind.[9]

And elsewhere he added:

> To be able to hold one's own while dreaming is a sign of consummate scholarship. Such an ability ensures orderliness in the management of important affairs. My own experience has attested to this.[10]

In Wei's opinion, then, our mental disposition is the be-all and end-all of dreaming. The last citation suggests the idea that if we but had the right frame of mind, it might even be possible for us to manipulate the content of our dreams.

A parallel to this idea can be found in the book Creative Dreaming by Patricia Garfield, who maintains that our psychological problems can be dealt with at their source in our minds. One effective way to do this, she suggests, is dream control. She argues for the "shapability" of dreams as follows:

> Patients in therapy describe having Freudian-type dreams -- that is, dreams with predominant sexual and aggressive symbols, -- when they consult a Freudian analyst. The same patient, when he switches to a Jungian therapist, begins to have Jungian-type dreams of mandalas and archetypes. This change is not merely a shift of emphasis in

> interpretation but a shift in actual dream content. The patient has learned to shape his dreams according to the wishes and expectations of his therapist.[11]

The point is that if psychiatric patients can alter the contents of their dreams to suit their therapists' purposes, so can we tailor our dreams to suit ours. As a matter of ethnographic fact, this is routinely done by the Senoi tribe in Malaysia, who teach their children, from the time they can talk, to dream in a particular pattern.[12]

According to Garfield, therapists who are convinced that consciousness can shape dreams have used this knowledge to help their patients improve by deliberately influencing their patients' dreams.[13] Since, in this view, the conscious mind is believed to be capable of lording it over dream content, the dream is robbed of its mystery. We can take our dreams in our own hands, so to speak, and do whatever we like with them. Thus, all hideous denizens of the night world are made to cower in the light of human consciousness. Now, to the orthodox Confucian, the human mind is by nature rational. It is imperative that we behave according to the dictates of reason and lead a virtuous life, for reason cannot divorce itself from moral considerations.

4.2 Dream and Rationalism

Again, from the Confucian perspective, the reason that resides in us is an extension of the underlying principle of

the universe itself. Reason, then, is the basis upon which correspondences between the human sphere and the world of nature are established. This metaphysical concept may be exemplified by the following story in the Hsin hsü (New order) ascribed to Liu Hsiang (77 B.C.-A.D. 6):

> Duke Wen of Chin was on a hunting trip and the guide reported to him, "There is a huge snake ahead! Its body is as thick as a dyke, and so the road is completely blocked."
>
> "I have heard," said the duke, "that the princes fortify their virtues, the officers improve their services, and the scholars cultivate themselves, when they have had bad dreams, in an effort to thwart the advent of calamity. I have erred, and Heaven has sent this to warn me." Then he turned round his chariot and was set on his way back.
>
> The guide said, "Your servant has heard it said that a happy man should not offer rewards and that an angry man should not impose penalties. But now it's either evil or good luck that lies before us and [the course of events] cannot be changed. Why don't we just chase it away?"
>
> "Not so," said the duke, "for the ghostly cannot overcome the Way, nor can the prodigious overcome Virtue. No evil or good has come about yet, hence it can still be altered." Then he headed his carriage back to his abode.

Having fasted for three days, the duke confessed in the temple thus, "The animals I used as sacrifices were not fat and the offerings were not ample: sin number one. My fondness for hunting knew no restraint: sin number two. I have levied many taxes and duties and meted out heavy punishments and penalties: sin number three. I ask that from now on, let no tariffs be collected at the city gates and markets, let no duties be imposed at the marshes and dams, let criminals be pardoned, let the taxes on old farmlands be reduced by half and let no tax be levied on new ones."

These orders were carried out and within five days, the officer assigned to guard the snake dreamt that the heavenly Ti-god slew it, saying, "For what reason did you block the way of the sagely ruler?"

Awakened from the dream, he saw that the snake had decomposed, emitting a stench. He reported it to Duke Wen, who remarked, "Right! It did turn out that the ghostly could not overcome the Way, and the prodigious could not overcome Virtue. How can people refrain from seeking after Reason and let Heaven be responsible? All we should do is counter it (i.e. the monstrous) with Virtue.[14]

If, in this view, inauspicious portents and dreams are to be regarded as indicative of moral shortcomings on the

dreamer's part, then, conversely, good dreams may be attributed to the dreamer's superior character. This brings out the compatibility of dream with rationality which, in the Confucian vision, is the only basis for moral thought and action.

4.3 Confucius as Dreamt

Just as Confucius had dreamt of the Duke of Chou, his intellectual as well as moral exemplar, so also did his admirers in subsequent ages dream about him.

In his famous work, the Wen-hsin tiao-lung (The literary mind and the carving of dragons), Liu Hsieh (c. A.D. 465-522) told us the following dreams that he had dreamt:

> As a child of seven I dreamt of colored clouds like brocaded silk and that I climbed up and picked them. When over thirty years of age, I dreamt I had in my hand the painted and lacquered ceremonial vessels and was following Confucius and travelling toward the south. In the morning I awoke happy and deeply at ease. The difficulty of seeing the Sage is great indeed, and yet he appeared in the dream of an insignificant fellow like me![15]

Such uplifting and inspiring dreams were no doubt a cause for joy to a dedicated writer. In fact, Liu Hsieh mentioned them as a prelude to explaining why he wanted to write about literature.

Wu Yü-pi of the Ming dynasty, probably the greatest dreamer in the Confucian fold, claimed that he had on separate

occasions dreamt of Confucius and King Wen of Chou; of Chu Hsi, the Sung Neo-confucian master; of Confucius's grandson Tzu-ssu; and of Chu Hsi's father and wife. Wu had the audacity to say he had even dreamt that Confucius came with two followers to pay him a visit![16]

Wang Ming-yüeh of Ch'ing times, too, reported that he once dreamt of peeking at King Wen and the Duke of Chou through a window, as they passed by riding two chariots in tandem.[17]

After citing these and other instances in his essay entitled "Shuo meng" (Speaking of dreams), Yü Yüeh (A.D. 1821-1906), the eminent Ch'ing scholar, remarked, "Whether such things may or may not have happened should be determined on a personal basis."[18] Bluntly put: some such reported dreams may have been pure fabrications, regardless of whether the dreamer was an honest-to-goodness Confucian. Could we blame Yü Yüeh for sounding skeptical?

4.4 Dream and Skepticism

Apart from the more specific meaning of rationalism in Western philosophy as an epistemological theory opposed to empiricism, the term is also used to characterize that attitude of mind which makes light of opinions derived primarily from authority, tradition, or revelation. Reason instead is the only basis for the formation of opinion. It is in the latter sense that the term has been used in Section 4.2. It is in this sense, too, that skepticism, as sworn-enemy of dogmatism, conformism, and traditionalism, may be regarded as rational-

ism's blood-brother.

Of the not too numerous doubters and debunkers in the history of Chinese thought, Wang Ch'ung, already referred to in Section 2.3, certainly ranked among the greatest. We know that he was not crazy about gods and demons. Nor about dreams:

> The meaning of dreams is dubious. Some say that dreams are [caused by] the subtle spirit which lingers by itself in the body, thus producing good and evil signs. Others say that the subtle spirit acts and intermingles with people and things.
>
> Now, suppose that it indeed lingered in the body, then the subtle spirit of the dead would do so as well. And suppose that it indeed acted, yet when one dreamt that one killed or hurt others, and that the one who killed and hurt others was also killed by others; having looked over one's person and examined one's body the next day, one would not find evidence for wounds inflicted by sword-blade.
>
> Granted that dreams make use of the subtle spirit, still this subtle spirit [in dreams] is [akin to] the subtle spirit of the dead. If the subtle spirit of dreams cannot hurt people, then how can the subtle spirit of the dead hurt?[19]

In this passage Wang Ch'ung argues, by analogy from dreams, that the moment one dies, one's subtle spirit loses its power. Thus, a dead person does not have the wherewithal to become a ghost. Since consciousness does not persist after death, the dead can do no harm.

In the "Chi yao" (An account of the monstrous) chapter (64) of the Lun heng, Wang Ch'ung relates the story of Chao Chien-tzu, who had been ill and in a coma for seven and a half days. When he came to, he told his courtiers that he had gone up to the abode of the Ti-god, had roamed the middle heaven with a host of deities, and had been treated to celestial music and dance.

Then a black bear attempted to seize him, and the Ti-god commanded him to shoot it. He did and it died. Then came a brown bear. Again he took a shot, hitting and killing it.

The Ti-god was so pleased that He gave him two caskets containing jewelries. Then he saw a child at the Ti-god's side. And the Ti-god entrusted to him a Mongolian dog, telling him to give it to his son when he grew up. The Ti-god also made certain prophesies to him with regard to the future of the Chin state as well as some other events yet to take place.

Wang Ch'ung comments on the dream thus:

> How do we know that the Ti-god which Chao Chien-tzu saw was not the real Ti-god? We know it from the interpretation of dreams. Mansions, terraces, mountains, and ridges are not official positions.

> Thus do we know that the Ti-god that Chien-tzu saw in his dream was not the Ti-god in heaven. If this was not the Ti-god in heaven, then the middle heaven that he claimed to have roamed with the host of spirits cannot be heaven.
>
> Shu-sun Mu-tzu dreamt that heaven weighed down upon him (see Section 4.5). If this had been real, then heaven must have descended and reached the earth. Upon reaching the earth, it would have met the barrage of mansions and terraces. Hence it could not have touched him. For if it had, then the mansions and terraces would have been crushed. That they remained intact indicates that heaven did not reached the earth. If it did not reached the earth, then it did not weigh down upon the man. If it did not weigh down upon him, then what did weigh down upon him was not heaven itself but rather the image of heaven. From the fact that the heaven which weighed down upon Shu-sun Mu-tzu in his dream was not heaven, we know that the heaven which Chao Chien-tzu had roamed was not heaven.[20]

Wang Ch'ung was not trying to be funny. Like a good lawyer, he presented his argument in logical fashion and by appeal to common sense. He continues:

> Some say that people may also have literal dreams.

> One saw A [in dream] and the next day one indeed saw A. One saw Mr. X [in dream] and the next day one indeed saw Mr. X. Yes, people may also have literal dreams. But such dreams consist in images. It is their imageries that are literal. How do we demonstrate this?
>
> When a literal dreamer saw A or Mr. X in a dream, and the next day he indeed saw A or Mr. X, this [type of dream] is literal. If we asked A or Mr. X however, neither of them would [say they had] seen [the dreamer]. If neither of them saw the dreamer, then the A and Mr. X seen in dream were nothing but images that looked like them. If this was a matter of the images looking like them, then we know that the Ti-god seen by Chien-tzu was an image that looked like the Ti-god.[20]

It would be interesting to know what Wang Ch'ung would have said about parallel or reciprocal dreams.[21]

Wang Ch'ung has more to say about the unreality of dreams:

> Moreover, the oneirocritics say that when one dreams, one's soul travels. When one dreams of the Ti-god, it is one's soul that ascends to heaven. Ascending to heaven is like ascending a mountain. When we dream that we are ascending a mountain, our feet climb the mountain and our hands clutch

> at the trees; only thus can we go up. But to go up to heaven, there is nothing to rely on; how can we get up there? Heaven is ten thousand li away from us! A person walks a hundred li a day. With soul and body together, yet one cannot go fast; how then can one expect the soul to go fast travelling alone? Suppose that the soul could travel as fast as the body, then it would have taken several years for Chien-tzu to ascend to and descend from heaven before he awoke. And yet it was only after seven days when he came to. How could the time be so short?[22]

Wang Ch'ung's whole argument was based on the theory that the soul had no separate existence and could act with efficiency only when residing in the body. Hence any notion about dream realism was untenable because dream events were irreconcilable with our experiences of the physical world. Other than this, he acknowledged the existence of dreams as dreams.

4.5 Dreams Come False

Now, one reason for skepticism to rear its quizzical head, whenever the question of the reality of dreams arises, is because there are notable dreams on record that did not come true. The dream of Shu-sun Mu-tzu mentioned by Wang Ch'ung just cited is a case in point.

Earlier in his life, Shu-sun left his family in Lu and went to Ch'i. On the way he met a woman at Keng-tsung,

who cooked for him and sheltered him. She asked where he was going. When told, she cried and saw him off.

He arrived in Ch'i and later married a lady of the Kuo family, who bore him two sons.

One night, Shu-sun dreamt that the sky weighed down upon him, and he was unable to bear it. At that critical moment he turned round and saw a man, dark and hump-backed, with deep-set eyes and a piggish mouth.

"Niu ('Ox')," he cried out, "help me!" After this he was able to withstand the pressure.

The next day he summoned all his followers, but could not find such a man among them. So he told them to remember his dream.

Afterwards, upon his countrymen's invitation, he returned to Lu, where he was made a minister. Then the woman of Keng-tsung and presented him with a pheasant. He asked her whether she had a son and she replied, "My boy is quite big now; he was able to come with me carrying the pheasant."

When the boy was summoned, whom did Shu-sun see but the person he had seen in his dream. Without asking what his name was, Shu-sun called out, "Niu!" and the boy answered, "Aye." Then Shu-sun summoned all his followers to look at the boy and made him a waiting-boy.

Shu-sun loved the boy and had high hopes for him. But Niu grew up to become the main source of his grief. When at last Shu-sun became very ill, Niu denied him food and drink, thus starving him to death.[23]

Another famous dream which proved misleading was that of Emperor Wen of Han, who once dreamt that he wanted to climb up to heaven but could not. Then an imperial oarsman (identified in the dream by his yellow cap) pushed him up to it. The emperor turned round and noticed that the man's garment had a hole in the lower portion between the girdle and the small of his back.

Upon waking, Emperor Wen went to Chien-t'ai (Terrace of Gradation) located in the middle of a lake on the palace grounds, on purpose to look for the man he saw in his dream. There he found Teng T'ung, whose garment had the tell-tale hole. On learning that the man's surname was Tèng, which he took to mean tēng, 'to ascend', the emperor was very pleased indeed.

From then on, imperial honors and favors showered upon Teng T'ung day by day. Finally, he was appointed a first-class minister (shang tai-fu), although he had no talent to speak of, apart from his impeccable personal behavior.

All told, Teng T'ung did not amount to much, except perhaps his acting like a sycophant on occasion.[24]

CHAPTER FIVE

DREAM AND REALITY

Do dreams have a reality of their own?

For those who believe that dreams have a predictive function and for those who believe that they are messages from the spirit world, the answer would be Yes. On the other hand, those who think that dreams can be sufficiently explained in either physiological or psychological terms alone would certainly say No.

But just what makes ordinary people call waking experiences real and dream experiences unreal? If, in deference to the seeming tangibility of our waking life, we feel obliged to characterize our dream life as unreal, then we may be said to be capable of experiencing the unreal. In such a case, the term "unreal" would refer to the object of our experience, and not to the experience itself. In other words, at the experiential level, the dream is still real.

At least it was and still is considered so in some preliterate societies, where things and events seen in dreams are either thought to be identical with those of the waking state or regarded as belonging to another world where they are realities in their own right.[1]

There are, however, ontological and epistemological issues involved in this question. Since some of the best minds in the history of both Eastern and Western thought

have addressed themselves to such issues, I propose to present their views in this chapter.

5.1 Chuang-tzu and Descartes

The first thinker in ancient China who spoke of dreams from a philosophical angle was Chuang-tzu (c. 4th cent. B.C.). In the "Ch'i-wu lun" (Discussion on making all things equal) chapter of the book ascribed to him, he states:

> He who dreams of drinking wine may weep when morning comes; he who dreams of weeping may in the morning go off to hunt. While he is dreaming he does not know it is a dream, and in his dream he may even try to interpret a dream. Only after he wakes does he know it was a dream. And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream. Yet the stupid believe they are awake busily and brightly assuming they understood things, calling this man ruler, that one herdsman -- how dense! Confucius and you are both dreaming! And when I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming too.[2]
>
> (Burton Watson's translation)

This essay in its entirety develops the idea that if all states of being seem so cut off from one another as to result in such polar contrasts as self and things, this and that, great and small, right and wrong, good and bad, high and low, and even life and death, it is because we, as finite

beings, tend to discriminate entities and their attributes from a point of view determined by our contigent spatio-temporal circumstances. To Chuang-tzu's mind, all categories are artificial and all distinctions relative. Hence, ultimately, in their natural, undifferentiated state, all things partake of the same primordial stuff, whose principle of organization, or apparent lack of it, is conceptualized as the Way. From this outlook, nothing in the world is to be considered more acceptable than any other. And it would be a colossal delusion indeed, if one should prefer life to death. Chuang-tzu puts it this way, "How do I know in hating death I am not like a man who, having left home in his youth, has forgotten the way back?"[3]

In the passage cited above, the polarity of the dream and the waking state is used to illustrate this idea. The apparent disjunction between the two states is tacitly acknowledged. But the fact remains that, as dreams go, there is no internal evidence on the basis of which they may be known as such. Granted that sometimes we experience lucid dreams, that is, dreams in which we realize that we are dreaming, this realization itself more often than not turns out to be part of the dream: we could even dream that we had awakened from a dream and started interpreting it! Only when we finally wake up does it dawn upon us that we have dreamt in a dream. The tantalizing question is, of course, whether we ever really wake up.

Two milleniums later and across the oceans, Descartes

was to express the same skepticism in his "First Meditation," in which he described himself as at first feeling certain that he was "here, sitting by the fire, wearing a winter cloak,..." but then as being puzzled when he recalled:

> How often, in the still of the night, I have the familiar conviction that I am here, wearing a cloak, sitting by the fire -- when really I am undressed and lying in bed!"[4]

Descartes held the deceitfulness of the senses responsible for his philosophical doubt. His claim that there is no internal criterion for distinguishing between dreams and waking experiences has repeatedly been brought to task by thinkers in recent decades, particularly the followers of Ludwig Wittgenstein.[5]

Arthur Danto, for example, reduces to a paradox Descartes' claim that the senses can always deceive him by pointing out that this could have been discovered in no other way save on the basis of the evidence provided by the senses themselves. He refutes the Cartesian Dream Argument thus:

> One must be awake no less to argue than to sense. So, if the argument is to be taken seriously, it must be presupposed that he who offers it is awake. Or else he is not arguing but only talking in his sleep. If he is really arguing, he is awake, and if he is awake, he is sensing and not seeming to sense, and so the Dream Argument cannot be sound.

> But if he is not awake, he is not really arguing, and since there is no argument, there is nothing to refute! So either there is no Dream Argument, or else the Dream Argument is refuted through its very presuppositions.[6]

But, as Danto immediately points out, in presenting his Dream Argument, Descartes was not so much concerned with facts about dreams *per se* as with a theory of perception. This theory holds that the contents of our experience are nothing but "pictures" whose representational value is at best dubious. It may well be that they do not stand for anything in the real world. Since there is no conceivable way of comparing these pictures with their supposed counterparts in the real world, the very existence of such counterparts is questionable, and the real world itself becomes a mere hypothesis. Consequently, there is no way of telling whether the pictures we have are real or imaginary. All we can say is that our perception of them is real.[7]

5.2 The Butterfly Dream as Allegory

To the extent that the perceptual or experiential aspect of human existence is accorded validity in Descartes' meditation on the subject, we may say that his ideas are in accord with Chuang-tzu's musings. But, as a metaphysician in the Western philosophical tradition, Descartes had to work out his ideas by deductive reasoning. Chuang-tzu, for his part, was a poet who had not much use for discursive thought. Rather,

he relied on an intuitive grasp of things to achieve his unique vision epitomized by the oft-quoted dream-story with which he concludes the "Ch'i-wu lun":

> Once Chuang Chou dreamt he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn't know he was Chuang Chou. Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Chuang Chou. But he didn't know if he was Chuang Chou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Chou. Between Chuang Chou and a butterfly there must be <u>some</u> distinction! This is called the Transformation of Things.[8]
>
> (Burton Watson's translation)

Ostensibly, this charming story is intended to drive home the burden of the whole essay, namely, that from a supra-mundane standpoint, where all relativity does not obtain and all contention ceases, the various modes of being will be perceived in their essential oneness. In such a state they are mutually convertible. Hence, dream experiences partake of the same nature as waking experiences, and the dreamt butterfly is every inch as real as the dreaming philosopher. Thus put, the allegorical value of Chuang Tzu's dream is obvious.

To begin with, the image of the butterfly itself is fraught with symbolic meaning. Partly owing to Chuang Tzu's

dream, the butterfly as poetic imagery in Chinese literature is often associated with a sense of ease, gaiety and abandon. Freed from the bondage of its pupal stage, it "flits and flutters around" at will and without aim, being thoroughly absorbed in the celebration of life. This, I take it, is the ideal way to live as Chuang-tzu saw it.

In our myopic visual field brought about by our ingrained habit of making distinctions upon distinctions, however, all existence is compartmentalized and appears to us in the form of infinite categories: form, substance, time, space, relation, number, and so on. This being the case, between Chuang Chou and the butterfly, as between dream-time and waking moments, some distinction is no doubt in order.

Again, the winged insect in all its splendor owes its existence to a puny, creeping larva which, _qua_ larva, ceases to exist as soon as the metamorphosis takes place. This wonder of nature accounts for the fact that in many cultures the butterfly is a symbol of the soul released from the body at the hour of death. In classical Greek, for example, the word _psyche_ may mean 'life', 'departed spirit', or 'the immortal soul'. Significantly, it also means 'butterfly' or 'moth'. And in Christian iconography the butterfly figures in the Easter symbolism of the resurrection.

Well, we cannot expect Chuang-tzu to have known classical Greek and Christian symbolism to boot, but must we suppose that he was also unable to see the analogy between the dormant chrysalis and the benighted human ego shrouded in its spatio-

temporal strait jacket, and that between the glorious butterly and the liberated soul immersed in the beatific state of total awareness, or what he calls ta chüeh, 'the Great Awadening'?

5.3 Dream as Flight

With the above considerations in mind, Chuang-tzu's butterfly dream may be regarded as a paradigm, as far as Chinese dreamlore is concerned, of what Mircea Eliade terms "the symbolism of ascension." This signifies the ecstatic mystical experience of escaping from the clutches of Death into a new mode of existence.[9] It is comparable to the shamanic flight in trance described in great detail by Eliade in his book Le Chamanisme, where he mentions that shamans in various parts of the world claim to be capable of flying away like birds, or mounted upon a horse or a bird.[10]

In this connection, Eliade also takes as examples some Chinese legends about emperors flying through the air. He dwells in particular on the term "feathered sage" or "feathered visitor," which referred to a Taoist adept.

Eliade notes that the motif of magical flight is very ancient in folklore and is of universal distribution. What characterizes the countless myths and legends embodying this theme "is the fact that weight is abolished, that an ontological mutation has occurred in the human being himself."[11] This weightless condition is implied, I believe, in Chuang-tzu's expression hsü-hsü-jan, which Watson mimetically and imagistically renders as "flitting and fluttering around."

Again, according to Eliade, the images of "flight" and "wings" signify the spiritual life and, in addition, the power of intelligence which seeks to understand secret things and metaphysical truths. Such secrets and truths are discovered in the course of new awakenings of consciousness.[12] At this point our eminent historian of religions himself takes flight from his chosen field and roves in the rarefied sphere of philosophic anthropology. Thus, he states:

> Now, if we consider the "flight" and all the related symbolism as a whole, their significance is at once apparent: they all express a break with the universe of everyday experience; and a dual purposiveness is evident in this rupture: both <u>transcendence</u> and, at the same time, freedom are to be obtained through the "flight."[13]

It is certainly true that the notions of transcendence and freedom constitute the dominant theme of all symbolic representations of the "flight," be they myths, legends, or dreams. It also seems reasonable that these two essential motifs are expressive of an ontological change in man, in the sense that a rupture of the plane of everyday experience has taken place. Nevertheless, the specific content of either state varies in kind and degree with respect to the personal circumstances of the individual concerned and, more importantly, in accordance with the cultural and spiritual tradition which serves as his frame of reference. A poet's flight of fancy may not take him bodily out of the attic,

but it certainly creates for him, if only for a flitting moment, the vision of a better world where bread and butter do not constitute a problem. In any event, the flight itself represents progress toward a higher reality.

In Buddhism, for example, the flight of an arhat signifies his transcendence of the human condition. The Buddha himself is said to have reached the summit of the Cosmic system even at his nativity, when he placed his feet flat on the ground, took seven strides towards the North and proclaimed, "I am at the top of the world, I am the best in the world; this is my last birth; for me, there will never again be another existence."[14]

For Chuang-tzu, however, transcendence on the spiritual plane consists in the mystical awareness that the Tao, the primordial vital principle underlying all existence, is immanent. Once this transcendence is achieved, all distinction at the phenomenal level is abolished.

In an essay entitled "Chuang Chou meng hu-tieh lun" (On Chuang Chou's dreaming of the butterfly), Li Yüan-cho, a professor at the Imperial Academy during Southern Sung times, wrote:

> All things spring from the same root; Is and Is-not partake of one essence. What is this that we call Chou and what is this that we call butterfly? If we consider Chou to be no butterfly, then we fail to forget selfhood. If we regard the butterfly as no Chou, then we fail to forget

thinghood.

> Things and self depend on each other, and all appearances are chaotically intertwined. Hence, to say that they are unequal is simply false description.
>
> Don't we know that things are of themselves no-thing, hence even a butterfly is naught; and that self is of itself no-self, hence even Chou is illusory?
>
> Moreover, granted that there is a distinction: flitting and fluttering, one dreams and becomes a butterfly and lo, there is the butterfly and no Chou! Bristling and bustling, one wakes and becomes Chou and presto, there is Chou and no butterfly! But this [points up] the exclusivity of our perception and the equality of things.[15]

If this text is shot with Buddhist terminology, the mode of thought remains basically Taoist. Chou sleeps and dreams that he is a butterfly; upon waking, he then wonders whether he is being dreamt by the butterfly. But, in his human condition, he cannot have it both ways at the same time. It's like looking at one of those optical illusions, of which the viewer can get only one picture at a time. It also seems like the dilemma suggested by the saying: You cannot eat the cake and have it. Besides, there is the possibility that as you eat the cake, it eats into you as well.

By the same token, as we dream, we are also dreamt. Whoever realizes this truth at the existential level, it may be said of him that the flight is accomplished: the dream is over, he is now fully awake.

Li Yüan-cho further argues that since the states of dreaming and of waking reside in the same subject, there must be some point of contact between them. But, insofar as either state constitutes a world of its own, one is as false (wang) and as real (chen) as the other. He wrote:

> Now, we look at our one body and consider it our own; we glue ourselves to ten thousand things and become attached to them. With our physical form we open ourselves to (i.e. the phenomenal world); thus, in our wakefulness we deal with the reality of events. With our hun-soul we come into contact with it; thus, in our sleep we deal with the vacuity of dreams.
>
> We do not know that the waking and dreaming of a single night is the opening and closing of one physical form, and the opening and closing of one physical form is the going and coming of one nature. Once turned into a thing, one is woefully disgusted; once reverted to a human, one is buoyantly happy.
>
> Just what makes thinghood so unpleasant and humanhood so gratifying? This only shows that the myriad transformations have never come to an end. Once the physical form is shaped, one stealthily

> considers it one's own. What delusion!
>
> Only when the Great Awakening occurs can we know the Great Dream; only when the Real Person appears can we have Real Knowledge.
>
> Since in dream one is not aware of the waking state, the dream is not taken to be delusive. Likewise, while awake one does not know about the dream state, hence wakefulness is not regarded as real. Since Chou did not know the butterfly, the butterfly was not considered false. Likewise, the butterfly did not know Chou, hence Chou was not thought to be true.[15]

Thus, if we want to know and attain the Way, then we must aim at ridding ourselves of self-attachment as well as attachment to external things. For the two are essentially the same. Just as our inner self relates to external things, so does dreaming relate to waking. They mirror each other. Both are equally aspects of the Way, the Ultimate Reality.

5.4 Dream-Realism in the <u>Lieh-tzu</u>

The <u>Lieh-tzu</u> is another major Taoist book that makes copious reference to dreams. Ascribed to Lieh Yü-k'ou, a thinker traditionally believed to have flourished a century before Chuang-tzu, the book itself as we have it now was probably forged in the fourth century A.D.[16] The third chapter entitled "Chou Mu-wang" (King Mu of Chou) is particularly rich in dream material. It says:

> What the spirit encounters makes a dream;

> what the body contacts makes an event. Thus, our thoughts during the day and our dreams at night are the encounters of our spirit and body. Consequently, when the spirit is recollected, thoughts and dreams will disappear of themselves.
>
> What we don't talk about while trusting our waking moments and don't understand while trusting our dreams is the departure and arrival of the Transformation of Things. The Real Men of yore forgot themselves when awake and did not dream when retiring -- is this idle talk?[17]

This passage asserts the unity of body and spirit. As a corollary, the homogeneity of dreams and wakeful thoughts is assumed. The motifs of self-forgetting and of not dreaming occur in the _Chuang-tzu_ as well.

The theme of dream-realism exemplified by Chuang-tzu's butterfly dream takes a dramatic turn in the following story from the _Lieh-tzu_:

> Mr. Yin of Chou managed a large estate. Those who worked for him scuttled about from dawn to dark without respite.
>
> There was an old servant whose muscular strength was all spent, yet he was put to work all the harder. By day, whining and groaning, he went about his job. At night, giddy and tired, he fell sound asleep.
>
> Then his spirit was set afield, and every night he dreamt that he was a ruler, lording it over the

people and in control of all affairs of state. He roamed about and gave banquets in his mansions and palaces, doing as he pleased. His joy was beyond compare.

Upon waking, however, he was on the treadmill again. When someone expressed sympathy for his hard lot, the servant said, "A man's life may last a hundred years, which are divided into days and nights. In the daytime I slave it out and, speaking of wretchedness, this is wretched indeed. But at night I become a ruler, and my joy is incomparable. What's there to carp about?"

Mr. Yin's mind was preoccupied with mundane affairs. His concern revolved around the family inheritance. Thus he wore himself out body and mind.

Now, every night he dreamt that he was a bondsman. He scurried about, doing all kinds of menial work. Abused, reviled, caned and whipped, he sustained all manner of ill-treatment. He muttered, mumbled, whined and groaned in his sleep, and found peace only at daybreak.

Sick of it all, Mr. Yin went to see a friend, who told him, "With a social position high enough to make you distinguished, and with enough assets and to spare, you are far better than others. If at night you dream that you are a slave, this

> reversion from ease to suffering proves the constancy of fate. How can you justifiably crave the best of both dream and waking worlds?"
>
> Having listened to his friend, Mr. Yin reduced his servants' workload and his own worries as well. Consequently, his ailment was somewhat relieved.[18]

This story suggests that dreams have a compensatory or retributory function with respect to the dreamer's circumstances in life. The moral is that, taken *in toto*, the ups and downs in our experience tend to cancel each other out, so that no particular way of life is to be considered superior to any other.

5.5 The Illusion of Time and Space

The story from the *Lieh-tzu* cited above brings out another important aspect of the dream, namely, its spatio-temporal dimension. In the dream world, as in our waking experience, time is sequential (e.g. night follows day) and space comes in chunks (e.g. the estate, mansions, and palaces). Thus the dream constitutes another world parallel to our everyday world. Moreover, they mirror each other in content. Within their respective spatio-temporal framework, both worlds are characterized by continuity, which is crucial to our perception of reality.

But if the two are mirror-images of each other and run parallel, they cannot intrude into each other. A line of demarcation must exist between them. Is this the case with

all dreams in relation to the waking state? The author of the Lieh-tzu seems to think otherwise, as can be seen in the next story from the same chapter:

> A man of Cheng was gathering firewood in the wilderness when he came upon a startled deer. He approached it, hit and killed it.
>
> For fear that people might see the poor thing, he hastily hid it in a ditch and covered it with brushwood. He was overwhelmed with joy. But soon afterwards he forgot where he had hidden the deer, and thought that it must have been a dream.
>
> He walked along the road rhapsodizing about the incident. A wayfarer heard him and, led by what he said, found the deer.
>
> When he got home, the man told his wife, "A while ago some woodcutter dreamt he had got a deer, but had no idea where it was. Now I have found it. His dream was plainly a true one."
>
> "Isn't it rather," said his wife, "that you dreamt and saw the woodcutter find the deer? But must there be a woodcutter? Now that the deer has really been found, isn't it your dream that has come true?"
>
> "Evidently, I've got a deer," said the man; "why should I care which one of us was dreaming?"
>
> When the woodcutter reached home, he was disquieted by the loss of the deer. And that

night he actually dreamt of the place where he had hidden it and of its present owner as well.

The next morning, acting on his dream, he found the deer and, in claiming it, embroiled himself in a dispute. A suit was filed with the magistrate, who pronounced:

"At first you (woodcutter) really got the deer, but falsely took it to be a dream. Then you really dreamt that you found the deer, but falsely took it to be reality.

"He for his part really took your deer, and is now disputing with you over it. What's more, his wife said that in a dream he saw the deer as belonging to somebody, but that [in reality] nobody had it. Now that this deer is here, I suggest you divide it between yourselves."

The case was reported to the ruler of Cheng, who remarked: "O dear, is the magistrate going to divide that 'somebody's deer' in a dream too?"

The Minister of State was interviewed and he said: "Dream or no dream, this is something your humble servant cannot tell apart. To distinguish between waking and dreaming, there was only the Yellow Emperor or Confucius. Since both the Yellow Emperor and Confucius are now gone, who is there to make the distinction? Let us for the moment abide by the magistrate's decision and that should

be fair enough."

This is a short-short story involving six characters, five male and one female, and each interesting in its own way. The woman's remark, when told by her husband about the deer, was remarkable in its implication of the idea that the only reality, whether in the dream or waking state, is whatever the self experiences. Hence, it was her husband's dream, if there had been one, that came true, as evidenced by the fact that it was he who found the deer. No, the woodcutter did not dream it. As a matter of solipsistic fact, there was no woodcutter in the first place.

More importantly, this story touches upon one of the greatest enigmas of our everyday life: how things get lost, and how, if we are lucky, they are recovered. The question-word "how" in most cases of this nature is superfluous, if we but read the lost-and-found column in the classified ads. A typical announcement reads: "Please return to owner if found. No questions asked."

But how people acquire things is just as mysterious, if not more so. Of course there are many success stories telling us, for example, how Andrew Carnegie made his first million. Well, we were told how he did it. But would the formula work for each one of us?

Anyhow, the point of the dream-deer story, as I see it, is that it makes no sense for us to be acquisitive and possessive, because things are illusory, and so are we. The deer murdered in broad daylight was as dead as the one appear-

ing in the dream. The Solomonic wisdom of the magistrate was amply demonstrated by his recognition of and resignation to the fact that there was no way to unravel the tangled skeins of dream and reality.

5.6 The Buddhist Vision

I have just shown that in the story last cited from the Lieh-tzu, the borderline between dream and reality once again dissolves. The relativity of the tangible and the illusory is thus brought out in stark relief.

If the ancient Taoist thinkers seemed to take a dim view of the reality as ordinarily perceived, so did their Buddhist colleagues. The Śūraṅgama sūtra (rendered into Chinese as Leng-yen ching by Master Paramiti of Central North India in A.D. 705 at Canton, China), for example, contains a gāthā dwelling on this point precisely, from which I quote the first eight lines:

> Of Reality all phenomenon is devoid,
> For, born of conditions, it is like an illusion.
> And noumenon, having neither inception nor extinction,
> Is as unreal as flowers in the sky.
> Words, while false, reveal realities;
> But falsehood and reality make two falsehoods.
> When even the real-unreal is denied,
> Wherefore any mention of seer and seen?[20]

The "Reality" (chen-hsing) in the first line is the immutable, unconditioned Bhūtatathatā as contrasted with the conditioned

and ever-changing world of phenomena. The former is to the latter as the ocean is to the waves or ripples. In Mahāyāna philosophy Bhūtatathatā is the sum of all things. In this perspective, our everyday reality is no different from the dream world.

The notion of Reality is conceivable, insofar as we are aware of the unreality, by comparison, of the phenomenal world. Owing to the limitations of human language, though, Reality cannot but be falsely represented. How, indeed, then, can we tell the real from the unreal?

The Vajracchedikā prajñāparamitā (translated into Chinese as Chin-kang ching, 'The diamond sutra', in the fifth century at Ch'ang-an by Kumārajīva, a monk from Eastern Turkestan, depicts the ephemeral quality of the phenomenal world with a string of imageries:

> As stars, a fault of vision, as a lamp,
> A mock show, dew drops, or a bubble,
> A dream, a lightning flash, or cloud,
> So should one view what is conditioned.[21]

But if the phenomenal world is comparable to a dream and the rest, it does not mean that phenomena in general, including dreams, are insignificant. On the contrary, they are instrumental to our understanding and eventual attainment of Reality. For it is through the appearance that the underlying reality is perceived. Hence, the phenomenal world is in effect the embodiment of the ebb and flow in the ocean of Samsāra (births and deaths). Precisely because it is born of

"conditions" (yüan), we may not take it lightly, but must tiptoe our way through it, so that our life may result in good karma, that is, meritorious deeds.

Whether awake or dreaming, good deeds produce good fruit and bad deeds bad. Such is the ineluctable law of Karma. This point is the subject of the following conversation between two chief disciples of the Buddha recorded in the Pañcaviṃ śatisāhasrikā prajñā pāramitā (Mo-ho po-jeh po-lo-mi ching):

> Thereupon Śāriputra asked Subhūti, "If, in a dream, a Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva (i.e. a perfected Bodhisattva) gets into the samādhi meditation on the three subjects of Emptiness (k'ung), Formlessness (wu-hsiang), and Absence of Desire (wu-tso), would this be conducive to the Perfection of Wisdom (prajñā pāramitā)?
>
> "If the Bodhisattva enters by day into the three samadhis," said Subhūti to Śāriputra, "and this is conducive to the Perfection of Wisdom, then it should be just as beneficial if he does so in a dream. Why? Because whether it happens by day or at night in dreams, it makes no difference. Śāriputra, if the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva practises the Perfection of Wisdom by day and this is good, then it should be just as good if he does it in dreams."

Śāriputra then asked Subhūti, "The *karma* perpetrated by a *Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva* in a dream -- does not this *karma* accumulate? As the Buddha says, 'All *dharma* are as dreams.' Hence, it should not accumulate. Why, Because in a dream there are no things to cause such accumulations, which happen only when we think, ponder, and differentiate while awake."

Subhūti then said to Śāriputra, "If a man dreamt that he killed someone or something, would it be pleasant for him when he woke up to recall and ponder, to hold on to the appearances and distinguish between his 'self' and the killed? Śāriputra, what would you say to this?"

"If there are no accessory causes (*yüan*)," said the latter, "then neither *karma* nor thoughts will arise. If such causes are present, however, they will give rise to both karma and thoughts.

"Quite so, Śāriputra, quite so..."[22]

This dialogue revolves around the doctrine that all entities, whether material or otherwise, owe their existence to a chain of contributory causes which, in turn, spring from our attachment to the appearance of objects in the phenomenal world. This boils down to the dictum that the immaterial is identifiable with the material (*k'ung chi shih se*, '*śūnya* is *rūpa*'). It accounts for the importance Buddhists, in the same way as the practitioners of most other

religions, attach to ritual and religious art and symbolism, which are "form" and "appearance" at their best.

In the case of Chinese Buddhism, at least the Pure Land sect seems to make use of the dream in particular as a means to achieve certain devotional aims, as can be seen in the following account from the Lang-huan chi (An account of Lang-huan) by I Shih-chen of Yüan times:

> Recently my friend Wang Chiu-lien the lay Buddhist was engaged in cultivating the Pure Land, on which he meditated single-mindedly. At night he dreamt that he saw the Buddha, but always as a sculpted image, not the living Buddha. He could do nothing about it.
>
> One day he met Master Chi the monk and told him the matter.
>
> "This is easy to deal with," said the monk. "When you think of your late father, can you hold [in your mind] his usual demeanor?"
>
> "Yes."
>
> "Can you see him in your dreams in such a way that he is no different from when he was living?"
>
> "There is no difference."
>
> "The Buddha in himself has no appearance," said the monk; "the appearance is manifested only in conformity with the way of things. From now on, you should think of your late father as

Amitabha. Little by little, imagine that there are white streaks of light in between his brows, that his face is as of real gold, and that he sits on a lotus-flower. You can even imagine that his body grows larger and larger. Then your late father *is* himself the living Buddha."

Mr. Wang applied the method as prescribed. From then on, whenever he dreamt of his father, he mentally said to himself, "This is the Buddha."

Then, sometime later, his father led him to sit on the lotus, and explained to him the essence of the teaching. He learned something, and became even more devout in his special exercise.

Then it happened that a certain Mr. Ma of his father's generation who, prior to the latter's death, had been a merchant in Szechuan and had not returned in the past ten years, came knocking at the door and asked to see him. This man said that one day he contracted a dangerous disease and died of it for half a day. Tied up, he was taken by an officer to the hells. In fear and anxiety, he suddenly saw a light of gold brightly shining. In the midst of it was the image of a person sitting cross-legged upon a lotus-flower.

"He called me by name. I stared at him and saw that it was your venerable father. He ordered the officer to take me home, and I came to. For

> this reason I have not spared this long journey back here to express my gratitude."
>
> Having said this, he asked, "What did your venerable father do to achieve this?"
>
> Mr. Wang told him the whole story. Amazed, he vowed to do likewise in the hope that he, too, might attain the Pure Land.

The writer appends the following comment:

> Judging from this episode, not only is this technique of Master Chi's conducive to personal salvation, but it also works for the salvation of others. Thus, hitting two birds with one stone as it were, what he revealed was unprecedented.[23]

The devotional technique of conjuring up vivid mental images in meditation is also employed in other religious traditions. Witness, for example, the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola. Nevertheless, the specific content of such meditations is determined by the dogmatic requirements of the tradition concerned. Imagine a Catholic spiritual director counselling his charges to think of their own earthly fathers as so many Christs hanging upon the cross! That would be sacrilege, to say the least. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, however, since Buddha-nature is believed to be immanent in all beings, sacred and profane alike, there is nothing out of character, in point of dogma, with imagining one's own father to be the Buddha himself.

Also implicit in the story is the notion that dream-

events are real even from the perspective of the transcendent. Hence, it is possible to achieve the salvation of oneself and others through dreaming.

The motif of the importance attached to the size of the contemplated image is found in yet another anecdote from the same source:

> There was a woman who had dispensed with adornment and who worshipped the great Bodhisattva Kuan-yin with much fervor. The nuns often urged her to cultivate the Pure Land, telling her to meditate on Kuan-yin by visualizing her dharma-body, the larger the better.
>
> Thereafter she frequently dreamt of the Bodhisattva at night. But it was very small and in the form of a jade Buddha, looking like a woman with her hair done up.
>
> One day she received from her husband a jade Kuan-yin which looked like the one she saw in her dreams. From then on she was all the more fervent in her devotion to the Bodhisattva.[24]

The efficacy of spiritual journeys and dream travels to the Never-Never Land under the guidance of a monk who possessed extraordinary powers is described in the following story from the Lang-huan chi as well:

> Master Teng exhorts people to study the Pure Land teaching. He considers faith essential for

the novice. Otherwise, he does not even disallow any worldly lifestyle, beyond saying that one should not talk about other people's faults, nor drink to get drunk, nor eat non-vegetarian food involving slaughter of animals, nor indulge in illicit sexual relations. [People are advised] to pursue their their vocations, and in their spare time to close their eyes and sit properly whereever they can, while reciting by heart the Buddha's name and contemplating his countenance. After a year or so, when they have gained facility in the technique, then they can do it whether walking, standing still, sitting, or lying down. Even in dreams they will be able to see the Buddha. This is evidence for certain success.

This monk also possesses some arcane techniques. Sitting together with someone in a quiet room, he can extract his companion's spirit for an excursion in the Realm of Peace and Nurture (an-yang ching-chieh, another name for the Pure Land) which is somewhat similar to what the Amitabha sūtra describes. When a person has undertaken such a journey once or twice, then what he sees in his dreams are often of the same description. When such dream-trips accumulate, then at the hour of death his spritual essence will certainly not go to anywhere else except the West (where Paradise is).

> Because of this, he has had many followers who have all been able to go to be reborn (in the Pure Land). [His techniques] are uncannily effective. There are even cases of [the departed] revealing themselves bodily to inform their families [of their present state]. This being the case, can we afford not to have faith in the doctrine of the Pure Land?[25]

The doctrinal basis of the dream-realism exemplified by these stories lies in the *Mahāyāna* conception of the "fundamental, absolute, and perfect mind of the *Tathāgata*" (*ju-lai-tsang pen-miao yüan-hsin*) as identical with both worldly mind and all phenomena but at the same time as being neither the one nor the other, as expounded in the *Śūraṅgama sūtra*. It therefore embraces both the mundane and the supramundane, and goes beyond either identity or difference (*li chi li fei shih chi fei chi*).[26]

Thus, delusion is simply our false awareness, in our samsaric state, of things as real objects, whereas in the perspective of the Supreme *Bodhi* (enlightenment), they are merely illusions arising from the six organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, intellect) and sense data.[27]

But the existence of the delusive presupposes that of the real, just as the five-colored circle round the light of a lamp seen by a person with inflamed eyes indicates the presence of the burning lamp.[28] By the same token, delusion arises from our defective consciousness. Nevertheless, it

points up the existence of at least the Basic Bodhi (pen-chüeh).

Again, to say that delusion has its roots in our faulty consciousness is to say that delusion begets delusion. If it has causes, then these are also under delusion. If so, can they be real?

The Buddha says that such causes are not real. Rather, they are comparable to the eyes and eyebrows of the madman Yajñadatta of Śrāvasti who took pleasure in seeing them in a mirror but who thought himself bedevilled when one morning he attempted to see them in his own head and failed:

> A person who has attained Bodhi is like one who, when awake, relates what he saw in a dream. Even if he is clever, by what means can he take anything out of it? Much less [can he make anything out of] a state which has no real cause and does not exist in the first place. Take that [fellow] Yajñadatta who lived in a city for example. Did he have cause to be horrified by the flight of his head? If his madness suddenly came to an end, his head could not be had from elsewhere; and if he remained unhinged, it was not lost either.[29]

Here the Buddha teaches us that once we realize the baselessness of delusion, and how its falsity intermingles with Reality, then it will vanish of itself, then the madness of the Yajñadatta in our mind will cease of itself.

The idea that illusion is ingrained in Reality may be traced back to the Mādhyamika or Middle School tradition

initiated by Nāgārjuna (c. 2nd cent. A.D.). The Doctrine of the Mean (chung tao) expounded in the Mādhyamika-śastra (Chung-kuan lun, attributed to Nāgārjuna and translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva A.D. 409) postulates a reality beyond such antitheses as materiality (jia) and immateriality (k'ung), creation (sheng) and extinction (mieh), being (yu) and nonbeing (wu), etc. The point is that none of these terms is absolute. Rather, each is dialectically related to its opposite, and the union of the two results in a synthesis which is thought to be a more adequate expression of the mystery of Ultimate Reality. This the Mādhyamika apologists choose to call the Mādhya, 'Mean', (chung).

Thus, in the later Mahāyāna literature, the dream becomes the exemplary metaphor of this doctrine. The following story from the Mahāprajñāpāramitā śastra (Ta chih-tu lun, another major Mahāyāna work ascribed to Nāgārjuna and translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva A.D. 397-415) is an example:

> When the Buddha was still in the world, there were three brothers. They heard that in Vaiśālī (an ancient state in Central India) there was a desirable woman by the name of Āmrapālī, that in Śravastī (a city) there was another named Sumanā, and that in Rājagṛha (another city) there was yet another called Utpala-vandana.
>
> These three men had each heard people extol the matchless integrity of the three women. They thought of them with such absorption and intensity

that liaisons happened in their dreams.

Upon waking, they pondered, "The ladies didn't come to us, neither did we go to them, and yet this illicit affair took place!" Thence it occurred to them that all *dharma* might well be just like that.

To resolve this problem, they went to see the Bodhisattva Bhadrapāla, who said, "Such is indeed the case with all *dharma*. It all arises, in all its variety, from our thoughts."

Then he took the opportunity to explain, with tact, the vacuity of all *dharma*. And so the men achieved *Avivartin* (the state of no retrogression).[30]

The Chinese Buddhist concept of the dream and its relation to reality is best summed up by Lien-ch'ih Ta-shih (Master of the Lotus Pond) of Ming Times in an essay entitled "Shih meng" (Mundane dreams) thus:

The old saying goes: Living in this world is like having a big dream. And Scripture says: When we come to look at the world, it is comparable to things in a dream.

Such terms as "like" and "comparable" are used because there is no better way of putting it than by way of comparisons. Ultimately, however, it may be said that it is a real dream, not just a comparison.

For our life commences from youth through adulthood, from adulthood through age, and from

age until death. No sooner have we entered one womb than we come out of another, and soon enough we shall have been in and out of it again *ad infinitum*.

And as when we are born we do not know where we come from, so when dead we do not know whither we are going. Willy-nilly, after one thousand births and ten thousand kalpas, we are still as ignorant of ourselves as ever. No sooner have we sunk to hell than we become ghosts, brutes, humans, devas. We rise and sink, and sink and rise again. Helter-skelter, after one thousand births and ten thousand kalpas, we are still as ignorant of ourselves as ever. Isn't this a real dream?

An old poem says:

On a pillow for a moment in a spring dream,
One traverses so many thousand *li* south of the Yangtze!

Now, there are people so led by profit and fame that they scurry ten thousand *li* back and forth. Does this have to take place on a pillow only?

Thus do we know that Master Chuang dreamt of a butterfly, but that prior to the dream, it was a dream too; Confucius dreamt of The Duke of Chou, but prior to the dream, it was a dream too. Throughout the Great Kalpas, there is not a single moment when we are not in a dream.

When we break through our benightedness and brilliantly achieve the Great Awakening and say,

> "Up in heaven and underneath it, I alone am exalted," then shall we be called the Awakened.[31]

Hence, the whole message of Buddhism to somnolent humanity is this: Wake up!

5.7 The Kuan-yin-tzu on Dream Ambiguity

From what I have discussed so far, it can readily be seen that there is some affinity between the Buddhist view of dreams and that of the Taoist. Small wonder that, in the Chinese popular mind, the cliché "Life is but a dream" is indifferently attributed to Buddhist or Taoist origin.

Rather than embark on the hair-splitting enterprise of making a tedious comparison between the two traditions on the subject, I shall present in this section the dream theory found in the Taoist book Kuan-yin-tzu already referred to in Section 3.2, hoping that, in the process, more similarities and perhaps some differences between the two lines of thought will be made be apparent.

To begin with, the Kuan-yin-tzu speaks of the nature of time and space in dreams thus:

> What is dreamt at night may sometimes be longer than the night: mind has no time. To one born in Ch'i, everything his mind perceives is of Ch'i. When later this person goes to Sung, to Ch'u, to Chin, and to Liang, the content of his mind differs in each case: mind has no space.[32]

With respect to the problem of time, this text is

apparently talking about our experience, on occasion, of time being compressed in dreams. This can be explained in terms of the Freudian dream-work mechanism of condensation: an editing process. Maury's dream cited in Section 3.2 was a famous example of this phenomenon. Later we shall see a few Chinese examples.

As to the problem of space, the text says, in effect, that mind cannot be structured in such a way that replicas of geographical areas in the external world can be found in it. Being no respecter of artificial boundaries, mind roams untrammelled.

Although in the second case the text makes no explicit reference to the dream state, there seems no reason why the statement cannot apply to it as well. After all, the disintegration of space boundaries, as well as the compression of time, is a common feature in the dream reports from many cultures.[33]

Next, in genuine Taoist fashion, the book discusses the futility of making distinctions:

> People of the world who distinguish between "others" and "us," on the ground that our thoughts differ from theirs and theirs from ours, certainly do not understand that in dreams people also [think]: "Our thoughts differ from theirs and theirs from ours." So, who are we and who are they? People of the world who distinguish between "others" and "us," on the ground that our pains

> differ from theirs and theirs from ours, certainly do not understand that in dreams people also [think]: "Our pains differ from theirs and theirs from ours." So, who are we and who are they? Nails and hair are not susceptible to pain, hands and feet are not capable of thought, yet they are "us"; how can we alienate them on such grounds?
>
> People of the world who consider what they see by themselves alone as dreams and what they see in common with others as waking experiences certainly don't understand that, on account of some spiritual links, a person may also perceive something alone by day; and on account of some psychic affinities, two persons may have the same dream at night. Both cases are [accountable by] our spiritual or psychical [conditions]. So, what is dream and what is wakefulness? People of the world who take what they see [for a moment] as dreams and what they see for a long while as waking states certainly don't understand that as momentary perceptions are due to the forces of Yin and Yang, so are protracted perceptions. Since both are due to our Yin and Yang, what is dream and what is wakefulness?[34]

Once again, the idea that Ultimate Reality is monistic and hence not subject to any kind of differentiation is eloquently argued for. The dual aspects of this Reality, namely, Yin and Yang, are then said to account for dream and waking vicis-

situdes alike.

As beings-in-the-world, we cannot but be influenced, whether awake or in sleep, by the workings of these two alternate forces, especially when they are manifested as the Five Agents. Only the sagely mind, unencumbered by matter, will be able to rise above such influences. In this tenor, the _Kuan-yin-tzu_ states:

> Those prone to Benevolence dream mostly of pines, cypresses, peaches and plums. Those prone to Righteousness dream mostly of swords, weapons, metal, iron. Those prone to Intelligence dream mostly of rivers, lakes, streams, and marshes. Those prone to Fidelity dream mostly of hills, mountains, plains and fields. Enslaved by the Five Agents, they do so without exception. But as soon as one hears something or thinks of something in a dream, the dream changes accordingly, not to be impeded by the Five Agents. The sage bridles matter with his mind and controls his mind with his nature, hence his mind is coterminous with Creation, not to be impeded by the Five Agents either.[35]

The five Confucian virtues, correlated with the Five Agents since Han times by Tung Chung-shu in his eclectic philosophy known as the Union of Heaven and Humankind (_t'ien jen ho-i_), are presented here as instigators of certain dream contents. The predictability of such contents is an

indication that the dreamer's mind is being impeded. Nevertheless, the mind naturally seeks to free itself of such impediment and is able to do so, as indicated by the volatility of dream contents. The mind of a Taoist sage, as suggested by this passage, is one which has transcended all encumbrance. Hence its creative capacity is identical with that of nature at large.

This creativity, whether as a function of nature or of the human mind, is so powerful that it sometimes results in anomalies. Hence the following counsel:

> When you see something with a snake's head and a human body, or something with the arms (sic) of an ox and scales of a fish, or something with the shape of a demon and wings of a bird, don't be shocked. For such things are not as shocking as dreams, and dreams are not as shocking as waking experiences. To have ears, eyes, hands and arms, these are even more shocking! Great speech is unspeakable, great wisdom unthinkable.[36]

Mind, then, as part and parcel of nature, is the source of all creation, anomalous or otherwise. But how, or by what means, does it work? The book says:

> There are perhaps countless millions and billions of people under heaven. Each person has different dreams, and each night the dreams vary. There are heaven and earth and people and things [in them].

> All these, created by thought, are perhaps as innumerable as dust. How do we know that the present heaven and earth were not thought up?[37]

It tells us that whether dreaming or awake, our mind works by thinking, thus creating all the things that we see in either state.

But the ability to think entails cognition. Hence, our cognitive power underlies the phenomenal world. It follows that, in order to rid ourselves of the impediment of this world, all we have to do is relinquish this power:

> In dreams, mirrors, and waters, there exist heavens and earths. Those who wish to relinquish the heaven and earth in dreams do not sleep when in bed. Those who wish to relinquish the heaven and earth in the mirror do not have their appearance reflected [in it]. Those who wish to relinquish the heaven and earth in water do not fetch it when it brims. The reason for their being lies here [in us] and not there [in them]. Hence, the sage does not give up heaven and earth; he gives up cognition.[38]

But if the sagely mind is capable of creating its own heaven and earth at will and independently of the ministration of the Five Agents, then even at this stage it has already transcended the phenomenal world to some degree. If so, the act of renouncing mind and consequently self can only mean a higher or perhaps the ultimate stage of transcendence:

> If one knows that this body is like the body

> in dreams perceived in accordance with the circumstances, then one can take the volar spirit as oneself and roam the Purest Heaven. If one knows that these things are like the things in dreams perceived in accordance with the circumstances, then one can concentrate one's vital essence to become a thing and traverse the frontier wilds.
>
> This teaching enables us to perceive our subtle spirit and prolong life, to forget the subtle spirit and transcend life. As metal produces water, so we inhale breath to nourish our vital essence. And as wood produces fire, so we inhale wind to nourish our spiritual being. This is the way to sustain our subtle spirit by external means.
>
> We rinse with water to nourish our vital essence, which then becomes inexaustible. And we stroke fire to nourish our spiritual being, which also becomes inexaustible. This is the way to sustain our subtle spirit by internal means.
>
> As regards the forgetting of our subtle spirit so as to transcend life, I have already talked about it before.[39]

The statements about nourishing the spirit by external and internal means probably refer to the arcane practice known as internal alchemy (<u>nei tan</u>). It is at such a stage, when one in pursuit of the Tao is still concerned with physical immortality, that what one perceives in dreams may

intrude into waking reality and blend with it. To the adept who is capable of effecting such a condition at will, the borderline between the dream and waking states is obliterated. He is thus able to fly in spirit and truly becomes a "feathered" one (cf. Section 5.3). In this connection the dream becomes more than just a metaphor. It is on a par with and inseparable from waking reality.

But the Taoist ideal of spiritual perfection demands that the seeker of the Way ignore and forget this amorphous state, however exhilarating it may be. In so doing, he may hope to find and lose himself at last in the elusive and inexpressible Tao which, in its utter ineffability, is like a dream. The Kuan-yin-tzu puts it this way:

> To speak of the Tao is like talking about dreams. For the dream-speaker says, "Such gold and jade, such utensils and vessels, such birds and beasts ..." The talker can talk about these but cannot take them and give them away, and the listener may listen to his talk but cannot receive and possess the things. The good listener, however, is not muddled and does not argue.[40]

This, then, is the philosophical underpinning of dream-realism according to at least one Neo-taoist work. The idea was to catch on, as evidenced by more and more stories with dream-realism as theme during the T'ang period and thereafter. Many of these stories are perhaps mere figments of poetic imagination, others claim to be veritable accounts, still

others seem a mixture of fact and fancy.

5.8 Dream-Realism from T'ang to Ch'ing

During the T'ang dynasty there was a plethora of fantastic tales concerned with dream-realism. Pai Hsing-chien (A.D. 776-827), younger brother of the celebrated poet Pai Chü-i and a writer in his own right, wrote a piece entitled "San meng chi" (An account of three dreams).[41] It tells of a case in which a dream-event in the making was chanced upon and reacted to by a waking person. The second story had to do with the activities of waking individuals which were observed by a man in his dream. The third involved reciprocal dreams corroborated by subsequent events in the waking world.

It is a moot question whether stories of this nature flourishing during T'ang times were influenced by Buddhist philosophy. For although it is true that by then Buddhism was well entrenched in mainstream Chinese thought, and although it is well known that the Pai brothers were adherents to the faith, Taoist influences in the literary products of this period cannot be gainsaid either. Pai Chü-i himself admitted that his mind had early found repose in Buddhism, but that he had wandered with abandon in the teachings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu as well.

The tale "Nan-k'o t'ai-shou chuan" (Governor of the Southern Branch) written by Li Kung-tso (c. 770-850), who knew Pai Hsing-chien personally, leaves no doubt as to whether it stands on the Buddhist or Taoist side, ideologically speaking.

It relates how Ch'un-yü Fen, an idle-rich young man of

the Yangtze River region, lived through more than twenty years in a dream as the son-in-law of the king of a country called Huai-an (Peace in an Ash Tree) and as governor of a southern tributary state. When he woke up, the two friends, with whom he had been carousing under a huge, old ash tree south of his house and who had carried him back home when he got drunk, were still there washing their feet by the couch. He told them the dream, on the clue of which they found a chain of ant-hills in a hollow under the ash tree. The topographical details of these ant-hills, as well as the comportment of the ants themselves, coincided with all that he had experienced in his dream. He ordered that the ant-hills be preserved. But a sudden storm ensued that night, and when he examined the holes in the morning, the ants had gone. Ten days later, one of his two friends died suddenly and the other was taken ill. Realizing that all was vanity whether one was dreaming or awake, he became a Taoist and led an austere life. He died three years later at the age of forty-seven, as predicted in the dream.

The story ends with the following poem:

> His reputation reaches to the skies,
> His influence can make a kingdom fall,
> And yet this pomp and power, after all,
> Are but an ant-heap in the wise man's eyes.[42]

(Chi-chen Wang's translation)

Well, isn't it said in the Chuang-tzu that the Way is in the ant?

The "Chen-chung chi" (An account of what happened inside a pillow) by Shen Chi-chi (c.750-800), is patently Taoist. From this tale was derived the legend of the "Huang-liang meng" (Yellow millet dream) which concerns Lü Tung-pin of Eight Immortals fame. This legend was in turn done into the Ming play "Han-tan meng" (Dream at Han-tan) by T'ang Hsien-tsu (1550-1617).

It tells of a young man who became acquainted with a Taoist priest at an inn by the road to Han-tan (in modern Hopei province). The young man considered himself a failure in terms of worldly achievement and told the Taoist so. As they talked, the inn-keeper was steaming a pot of millet. Then the young man grew drowsy. The Taoist gave him a pillow made of green porcelain and with an opening at each end. The young man somehow manages to crawl into it and found himself back home.

What follows was the story of his life for the next fifty years. He married the beautiful daughter of a good family and became rich. He passed the examinations, was appointed an offical and promoted from one post to another until he became one of the most influential political figures in the empire.

Thereafter, he was twice banished to the frontier wilds thanks to the slanderous attacks from his political enemies. Finally vindicated however, greater honors and more material rewards were heaped upon him.

Then he fell ill and died one night. Waking up with a start, he found himself lying in the roadside inn. The

Taoist priest was sitting by his side as before and the millet still cooking.

The story concludes with the young man saying to his companion:

> I know now at last the way of honor and disgrace and the meaning of poverty and fortune, the reciprocity of gain and loss and the mystery of life and death, and I owe all this knowledge to you. Since you have thus deigned to instruct me in the vanity of ambition, dare I refuse to profit therefrom?[43]

The theme of this story, as well as that of the preceding one, is the universal lament: Life is but an empty dream, and all worldly pursuit comes to naught. Each story ends with the protagonist achieving some degree of enlightenment. In this light one may justly wonder if such stories were not written partly for didactic purposes.

Another common motif in the two dreams is compression of the time that elapsed in each as opposed to the actual time spent in dreaming it. What the <u>Kuan-yin-tzu</u> says about mind having no time applies in these two stories. The relativity of all opposites cannot be more effectively dramatized than when set in a fluid temporal framework which makes a mockery of our ennui, our impatience with the slow rhythm of our humdrum existence.

For a story in a lighter mood featuring dream-realism, there is the <u>fu</u> (prose-poem) by Su Shih (1036-1101), entitled

"Hou ch'ih-pi fu" (The second _fu_-poem on the Red Cliff), in which the poet recounts:

> The time was about midnight. I looked into the quietude and emptiness around me. At this point a lone crane appeared. It came from across the river, heading east. With wings like chariot wheels and attired in mystic black and silky white, it gave a long, piercing call, swept past my boat and headed west.
>
> Soon after, my visitors took leave, and I slept. Then I dreamt that a Taoist priest in a feathery garment airily strolled by Lin-kao. He joined his hands in salutation and said to me, "Did you enjoy your trip to the Red Cliff?" I asked what his name was. He lowered his head and did not answer.
>
> "Alas, aha! Now I know! Earlier this evening, wasn't it you, sir, who flew past me and shrieked?" The Taoist priest looked at me and smiled, and I woke up with a start. Then I opened the door and looked out, but could not see where he was.[44]

Su Shih was of course writing poetry, but there is nothing implausible about the dream as he told it. Moreover, the Taoist motifs of featheriness and ontological change are very much in evidence.

In contrast to this, the Yüan work _Lang-huan chi_ cited earlier relates the story of Hsüeh Sung, who was said to be

a merciful man by nature. He abstained from killing, and would not hurt even a bug.

One night he dreamt that there was a swarm of bugs on his blanket. They gradually turned into tiny human biengs and said to him, "We have profited from your kindness for some time now. At this very moment you are in danger, and it is for us to reciprocate." Having said this, they all lined up on the blanket and dropped dead instantly.

Alarmed, Sung woke up. The lamps were still shining. He summoned his servant, and saw that the blanket had a streak of blood stain spreading across to the length of one foot or so. It consisted of dead bugs. Sung grieved over them for a long time, without knowing why they had died.

It turned out that that night there was an assassin who had been paid a hundred catties (sic) of gold by someone to kill Sung. This man had an old sword so keen that upon contact blood would spurt and the victim would die at once. And so that night, as the man lowered his sword, he saw blood instantly. Under the impression that death had indeed occurred, the man went back to report to his master. Both were jubilant.

Only the next day when they had sent someone to spy on Sung's household did they find out that he was unharmed. When they heard of the massacre of the bugs, they came to realize that these insects had died for Sung.[45]

The theme of ontological change is again present in this story, which also smacks of the Buddhist notion of karmic retribution. Its moral is unmistakable.

But dream realism also occurs in stories of a less sombre character. The <u>Hsiao-fu</u> (House of laughter) by the Ming popular novelist Feng Meng-lung (?-1646) contains the following gem:

> A great drinker dreamt that he possessed some good wine. He was about to heat and drink it when he suddenly woke up. Remorseful, he said, "I should have taken it cold!"[46]

A joke like this one is intended to elicite a good laugh from the audience and nothing more. This type of anecdotal tidbits, with its racy, sometimes raucous sense of humor, has always been popular with the Chinese common folk. Some modern literary critics consider it a genre worthy of special attention.[47]

The following, taken from the <u>Hsiao-tao</u> (Laughter that brings the house down) by Ch'en Kao-mo of Ch'ing times, is another example:

> A man dreamt that he was invited to an opera party. He had barely taken his seat when his wife disturbed and woke him up. As he was bawling her out, she said, "Don't rant. Go back to sleep while there is still time; the opera isn't half-way through yet![48]

As a final example of the dreaming-waking ambiguity, I take the following account from the <u>Mo-yü lu</u> (Record from residual ink) by Mao Hsiang-lin of the Ch'ing period:

Life is, after all, like a dream. Within the span of a hundred years we hustle and bustle, unable to decide for ourselves when to laugh and when to cry. This is sad enough. But what I have heard from my uncle Lord T'an-yüan is even more amazing.

During the K'ang-hsi reign period (1662-1722), in our home-town Sung-chiang (in present Kiangsu province) there was a certain Wei Ch'eng-chi, whose forebears were natives of Chekiang province. At that time he ran a pharmacy on the west side of the Level bridge (P'ing-ch'iao). Leading a frugal and simple life, he accumulated wealth and became rather prosperous.

He had two sons. Meng-hsiang, the elder, carried on the family business. Yao-p'u, the younger, was endowed with fine qualities and by inclination solitary and chaste. He was a bibliophile, and in his youth attended the provincial academy.

Yao-p'u married a lady née Ch'ien, and the following year they had a son. The boy was named Tuan, because he was born in Fifth month.[49]

The two brothers loved each other, and for this reason they did not live separately after their father's death.

Then Yao-p'u was engaged as a tutor by the Feng family of East village, located five or six

li away from the city. He often stayed overnight in the study.

One evening, owing to some sacrificial matters, he made known his intention to go home. But it turned out that his employer wanted to entertain some distinguished guests and so insisted that he stay for the banquet. It lasted until the second watch (nine through eleven o'clock). Three other guests left together with him, and their host sent a servant to see them home.

They talked along the way, and soon reached the East gate. They had barely entered the city when Yao-p'u suddenly stood immobile. Everybody asked what happened but he did not respond. So they took him home, and when they reached there his face was as white as paper and his limbs cold as ice. He breathed his last before daybreak.

Ten years or so after his death, Hsi Yü-chieh, courtesy name Pi-ch'ing, a scholar from the same town, travelled to Chin-ling (present Nanking) to take the Fall examinations. He lodged with a family surnamed Lu in the West Lane close to the Wu-ting bridge.

On the eve of the exams, his landlord regaled all the tenants with food and wine. At the party they told each other where they came from. When Hsi's turn came, he said, "Sung-chiang."

Thereupon Lu asked, "Sir, aren't you Hsi

Pi-ch'ing of Hua-t'ing?"

"Yes, I am," said Hsi.

Lu lowered his head and, overcome by sadness, heaved a sigh. Everybody was astonished and asked what the matter was.

"My friendship with Mr. Hsi has lasted for two lifetimes now," he began. "My ancestors were originally from P'ei-chou (a county in present Kiangsu province), but we lived here for three generations now. My father's name was Ying-lung. He was a satin-weaver, and set up a mill in Hsüan--tzu Lane at the southern gate. My name is Mao-fang. I learned my father's trade from childhood, and was married to my wife, née Hu, at the age of twenty-four. Nine years later, my father passed away. That fall, I fell ill during an epidemic and nearly died. When my illness took a critical turn, I was in a coma and half asleep, and, don't ask me how, was reborn as a son of the Wei family of Sung-chiang. From then on I could no longer remember the events at Chiang-ning. I went to school in Sung-chiang, got married, and had a son. I can still vividly recall all these things. I still remember taking the junior examinations one year, in which I ranked third and Mr. Hsi seventh."

"Were you Mr. Wei Yao-p'u in your previous life then?" asked Hsi.

"Well, not in a previous life, but in a dream!" said Lu, and all present clicked their tongues in amazement.

"I heard," continued Hsi, "that on your way home from school that day you got sick, and died the same night. Did you know the cause of your illness?"

"I remember holding a teaching position at the Fengs of East village. That evening my employer feasted some guests. When the banquet was over, I left for home in the company of such and such and a servant. A few steps after we entered the city, all of a sudden I saw a giant coming from the west! He wore a loose garment, held a club in his hand and walked very swiftly. He gave me a blow, which terrified me extremely and sent me scurrying like mad for more than two hours. Then, as my frayed nerves calmed down a bit, dazed like a lost soul, I looked around and realized that I was not on the accustomed road of former days. In front of me lay a creek, with several willow trees standing by. Gazing yonder, I saw some silhouetted village huts on the far side of the creek. As I was thinking of seeking information from some villager as to where the ford was, I saw lying in the moonlight directly toward the west and alongside the willows a little boat. I rushed forward and found that the boat was about ten feet off-bank. I held on to a twig and

jumped in haste. But my feet slipped, and I fell into the water.

"When I opened my eyes, I found myself in bed, with my heart palpitating and cold sweat oozing forth. I thought it was a nightmare, and asked whether my son Tuan was asleep. At the bedside was my present wife, who said, 'Your son? What dream-talk is this? You have been sleeping for a day and a night! Stay awake for a while and then have some porridge.'

"Greatly intrigued upon hearing this, I sat up, looked around carefully, and saw none of the old things. I was extremely scared and dared not talk about it. Only afterwards did I realize that this body had become a certain Lu of Chiang-ning. When I think of the events at Sung-chiang, however, they seem real and not a dream. Otherwise, how could a dream in Chiang-ning correspond to thirty years in Sung-chiang? I have always intended to go to Sung-chiang to retrace my past life. But ever since my father's death, the family fortunes have gradually declined. Besides, I have no brothers, sons, or nephews. That's why I can't make the long trip. Now that I have met you, it is clear that this prodigious event did happen. I wonder how the Wei family are doing lately?"

"Owing to Meng-hsiang's unremitting efforts," said Hsi, "the family fortunes have prospered even

more. And Madame has brought up the child properly. He passed last year's exams and was admitted to the county academy. I remember how, when we were school-mates, I used to admire the ease with which you wielded the writing-brush and turned out a free-flowing essay in just a jiffy. Is your literary genius still there?"

"I can still remember all the happenings at Sung-chiang," said Lu, "but when it comes to poetry and prose, I am at a loss."

When Hsi had written the examinations and was returning to his home-town, Lu made him a present of a variety of products native to the capital and said, "If I don't wake too soon from my present dream, I might still make it to Yün-chien (ancient name for Sung-chiang) eventually."

Hsi returned and told Wei's son about the matter. Owing to the dubiety of the father-son relationship, however, the young man did not find it appropriate to pay Lu a visit, and Lu never went to Sung-chiang either.

The idea that one may be aware of the events of a previous life frequently occurs in fiction, but it is certainly unheard of that a dream may encompass a lifetime, as in Lu's case.

This account has been obtained from Chao Shih-fu, the licentiate, of Hua-t'ing. He is Wei's

first cousin, and is a protégé of Lord T'an-yüan. Hence, I suppose, it is not fictitious.[50]

It appears that, as far as Lu Mao-fang was concerned, the life of thirty dream-years that he had led as Wei Yao-p'u was more real than his present life. He seemed to know nothing first hand about himself prior to the illness that occasioned the dream. This is implied by his statement that it was only some time after his awakening that he came to realize who he *then* was. If this was the case, he must have reconstructed his life before the dream from what others, particularly his wife, said about him, as well as from his own observation of what was going on around him. On the other hand, his wife and the other people concerned must have thought that he was suffering from a severe case of amnesia brought about by the illness.

Again, it is the spatio-temporal aspect of this dream that proves most intriguing. It gives me a chance to elaborate, in the next and final section of this chapter, on what I have discussed in Section 5.5.

5.9 Spatio-temporal Discreteness and Continuity

In the protagonist's own account of the dream last cited (according to the story as written of course), it occurred when he was thirty-three years old. He also said that his life as Wei Yao-p'u in the dream lasted more than thirty years. Hence a retrogression was involved which made them virtual contemporaries. This being the case, one wonders whether their paths had ever crossed, living in relatively

close proximity (in the same province) as they were.

Such a question may sound naive or even idle, but at least it serves a heuristic purpose, for it touches on the very nature of time and space as we perceive them.

In our everyday experience, time is characterized by linear continuity. As such, it is segmented into smaller or greater periods such as hours, days, months, seasons, years, and so on. These periods are thought of as succeeding each other in single file and proceeding in only one direction, so that time appears to be an irreversible flow. In this conception, events that occur in time cannot repeat themselves: what happens, happens once for all.

According to Joseph Needham, the idea of linear, continuous time is found in European as well as Chinese culture. It is from this idea that people in both cultures derive their sense of history.[51]

Moreover, in his book _La pensée chinoise_, Marcel Granet points out that the Chinese "préfèrent voir dans le Temps un ensemble d'_ères_, de saisons et d'époques, dans l'Espace un complexe de _domaines_, de climats et d'orients;" that they "n'avaient aucune disposition à concevoir, comme deux milieux indépendants et neutres, un Temps abstrait, un Espace abstrait;" that "le Temps et l'Espace ne sont jamais conçus indépendamment des actions concrètes...;" that the Chinese "décomposent le Temps en périodes comme ils décomposent l'Espace en régions;" and, finally, that the Chinese "ne se sont point souciés de concevoir le Temps et l'Espace comme deux milieux homogènes, aptes à loger des concepts

abstraits."[52]

These observations certainly throw light on that aspect of the Chinese mind characterized by secularism, by a this-worldness, a down-to-earth concern for practicality. Needham, too, wrote:

> For the ancient Chinese, time was not an abstract parameter, a succession of homogeneous moments, but was divided into concrete separate seasons and their subdivisions.[53]

He added, as did Granet, that "the idea of succession as such was subordinated to that of alternation and interdependence."[54] The latter idea refers to the cosmological theory of the School of Yin-Yang led by Tsou Yen (c. 350-270 B.C.) of the Warring States period. Even in his day this theory was already integrated with the theory of the Five Agents (see Sections 3.1 and 5.7 above).

Needham was quick to point out that this, though assuredly true, was not the whole story. For the Yin-Yang Schoolmen (Needham calls them Naturalists) had to contend with the competing schools of Mohists and Logicians, who were never interested in their theories. Moreover, the historians and other scholars undertaking long-term sociological studies and speculation had no use for the idea of "packaged" time. Needham therefore came to the following conclusion:

> There was both compartmentalized time and continuous time in Chinese thinking. Both were important in different ways, the former for some of the sciences

and technology, the latter for history and sociology.[55]

To recapitulate: Just as temporal infinity is an inferred abstraction, so also is the idea of an immense, boundless space. As far as our actual perception is concerned, space, too, consists of a series of partitions which, owing to their interlockings, nevertheless constitute a continuum. As do the discrete periods of time, the separate units of space flow into each other as well.

As civilized human beings, we are thus pinned down in a spatio-temporal strangle hold from which there is no natural release. If on occasion we fail to notice the passage of a certain length of time, such an event is construed as purely subjective. For example, Robinson Crusoe did not know, while marooned on his "island of Despair," that he had "lost" a day by falling sound asleep for two days in a row, until he returned to civilization and, presumably, checked his "account" with the calendar.[56]

With regard to space, we normally think we know where we stand and, when moving around, where our next step is going to land. We do not expect to tumble wide-eyed into a sort of terrestrial "black hole."

To return to the dream last cited: It was its spatio-temporal structure that made it seem so real to the dreamer. Precisely at the moment when he jumped and fell into the water, though, a conflation of this structure and that of the world into which he was getting took place. As a result, he

could not really tell which was dream and which reality.

On the other hand, had Lu Mao-fang/Wei Yao-p'u accepted either the Taoist idea that all opposites were complementary pairs or the Buddhist notion that all time and space were nothing but scaffolding of the illusive phenomenal world, then the distinction would not have been necessary in the first place.

CHAPTER SIX

TOWARD A THEORY OF CHINESE DREAM INTERPRETATION

In the foregoing chapters, I have shown that dreams were significant to the ancient Chinese one way or another. This chapter is concerned with the theoretical aspect of dream interpretation as practised in ancient China.

6.1 Meaning and Interpretation

If the use of language is species-specific to humans, so is the search for meaning.

When we ask what the meaning of a word is, we want to know what it signifies. But ambiguity, whether at the lexical or syntactic level, is a fact of natural language. Any literate person knows that to get the meaning of a word as used is not a simple matter of looking it up in a dictionary. More importantly, one has to examine its context. As a further complication, many people tend to use words in total disregard of their dictionary meanings. From a certain point of view, this constitutes a misuse or even abuse of language. In any event, where ambiguity is present, meaning is uncertain, and hence interpretation is called for.

But where does meaning come from? One possible answer is, "From nature." In the West, the medieval metaphor of "the book of nature" conveys the idea that our universe is of itself meaningful. Its meaning is manifested by the regularity of its operations, e.g. periodicity of the seasons, constancy of the movement of heavenly bodies, cyclicity of

the tidal ebb and flow, the lunar waxing and waning, the vegetal growth and decay, etc. The traditional Chinese belief that the writing system was derived from the forms and patterns found in nature seems to have sprung from the same idea.

And yet, the same natural phenomena can be perceived in different ways. Thus, a subjective element is introduced into our conception of the facts of nature. To my mind, any definition of culture is wanting which does not take into account the human capacity for perceiving things in different ways under different conditions. This entails the notion that human culture is an evolutionary, dynamic process.

In this perspective, the human act of perceiving things in different ways under varying spatio-temporal circumstances cannot but result in the discovery of new meanings and sometimes in the recovery of old ones. Hence, if we ask the question "Where does meaning come from?" a second time, the answer may well be, "From culture." This answer implies that meaning, so far from being inherent in the object, is what we read into it. Thus, the "reading-into" is what interpretation is all about.

The two contrastive notions of meaning and interpretation as discussed above, when applied to a theory of dream interpretation, boil down to the question whether meaning is intrinsic to the dream or it is rather a function of interpretation.

In my opinion, as far as the _practice_ of dream interpretation is concerned, the first view seems to have been tacitly

accepted by the ancient Chinese oneirocritics. For them, rather than "reading-into," interpretation was a matter of "reading-out-of."

It is also clear to me that the ancients were aware of the problem of multivocity in dream symbolism. Thus, the same dream imagery may have different significations in accordance with its changing contexts. Consequently, a dream dictionary is only as useful and limited in its usefulness as any language dictionary (see Section 7.2.2 in the next chapter).

At any rate, as practised in ancient China, the art of dream interpretation consisted in recovering the meaning hidden in dreams. It was therefore, in its intent and purpose, consistent with what Paul Ricoeur calls "interpretation as recollection of meanings,"[1] insofar as its underlying assumption was that dreams were meaningful in themselves and that their messages, though often veiled, were never false.

6.2 Dream as Multivocal Text

We know of our own dreams only as recollections, and of other people's dreams only as either oral or written reports, first-hand or otherwise. This points up the subjective nature of dreaming, and is the source of a peculiar type of skepticism concerning the reality of dreaming as an event. It poses the question whether we ever really dreamt. For all that can be verified is the fact that sometimes, when we wake up from sleep, we tell others that we had such and such dreams. But there is no way at all for us to prove to

our own or to our listeners' satisfaction that the reported dreams did occur, apart from our subjective feeling that they did. Thus Norman Malcolm, for one, argues that our concept of dreaming is derived from "a queer phenomenon," namely, dream-telling.[2] Nevertheless, this remarkable phenomenon has been observed in all known human societies, from the crudest to the most sophisticated.

The fact that a dream exists only as a private experience leads Calvin Hall and Robert Van de Castle to define it operationally as "that which a person reports when he is asked to relate a dream, excluding statements which are comments upon or interpretations of the dream."[3] Thus, until the day comes when technological advances will make it possible to monitor the content of dreams as they are being dreamt, any venture to treat the dream as an occurrence in its own right is an exercise in futility.

It is clear, then, that all we are dealing with is dreams as reported. Nevertheless, it is legitimate to ask whether a dream report is based on an actual dream experience, if any, or if it is a mere fabrication.

When we come across a reported dream in a book purported to be factual, say, a history or a biography, we are expected to accept the account as is, for the simple reason that verification is out of the question. To suspect that the reported dream might not be true, in whole or in part, in the sense that the reported dreamer did not dream it or did not dream it that way, would amount to compromising the writer's

integrity.

On the other hand, dream stories can of course be fabricated. All dreams of fictitious characters, such as Finnegan or Chia Pao-yü for example, are sheer fabrications because the alleged dreamers themselves are invented. One would be hard put to it though, to try to prove that a dream reported by a real person is false or inaccurate, short of calling him or her a liar. Hence, dream interpreters as a matter of principle do not question the veracity of a dream. In the Freudian tradition, material produced by free association is regarded as having as much psychical value as the dream itself.

In the preceding section, I mentioned the problem of multiple meaning as being known to the ancient Chinese oneirocritics. The following account, taken from the San-kuo chih (History of the three kingdoms), tells of an episode in the career of Chou Hsüan, a celebrated dream interpreter of the Three Kingdoms era:

> Once, someone asked Hsüan, "Last night I dreamt of straw dogs; what does that mean?"
>
> "You are about to have good food," Hsüan answered. Soon after, this man went out and was actually regaled with a sumptuous meal.
>
> Some time later, the same man came back to ask Hsüan, "Last night I dreamt of straw dogs again, why?"
>
> Hsüan said to him, "You are going to fall from

a carriage and break your legs. Please be careful!" And it soon happened as he had said.

Still later, the man came to ask Hsüan a third time, "Last night I dreamt of straw dogs again, why?" Hsüan said, "Your house will have a fire; you should watch it closely!" And the fire broke out before long.

Then the man told Hsüan, "You know, I didn't really dream on any of those occasions; I just wanted to test you. How could they have all come true?"

Hsüan answered, "It was the spirits that moved you and made you say those things; that's why they were no different from real dreams."

"But all the three dreams," pursued the man, "were about straw dogs, and yet their interpretations were all different; how's that?"

"Straw dogs," Hsüan explained, "are sacrificial offerings to the gods. Hence, your first dream meant you would get food and drink. When the sacrifice is over, the straw dogs are crushed under wheel, thus your second dream prefigured your fall from a carriage, ending in broken legs. When the straw dogs have been crushed, they are bound to be carted away as firewood. And so the last dream warned you of fire."[44]

Ch'en Shou (A.D. 233-297), the historian, concludes Chou

Hsüan's biography with the remark that in interpreting dreams, he scored an eighty to ninety percent accuracy.

Chou Hsüan certainly operated on the premise that a symbol may have several meanings, and that it has to be interpreted at any particular moment with contextual understanding. First of all, there was no difficulty for him to put the straw dogs in their proper context and identify them with sacrificial objects. This meaning may well have been listed in some popular dream book. But an experienced dream interpreter would not be content with just what the book says, even if he had occasion to consult it. He would probably use the information obtained from such a source in the same way that an experienced writer or habitual reader would use an ordinary dictionary. Just as a scrupulous user of words would always make a point of taking the linguistic environment of a word into account when pondering on its significance, so also would the expert oneirocritic ascertain the meaning of a particular dream symbol in terms of its cultural context among other things. In the case just cited the time frame in which each dream was reported to have occurred was of crucial importance to the dream interpreter in unravelling its meaning.

As well, Chou Hsüan's attitude toward fabricated dreams was noteworthy. When told that the dreams had not really been dreamt, he explained that they remained nonetheless valid because it was the spirits that moved the "false" dreamer to say what he had said. In other words, fabricated dreams had the same origin as dreamt ones. Again, this anticipated

Freudian dream theory. It implies that to dream is to fabricate, that is, to manipulate symbols in a capricious way. It follows that all dreams, whether dreamt or invented, are by nature deceitful, and can become true only when correctly interpreted.[5]

On another occasion, it took such an august personage as Emperor Wen of Wei to fabricate a dream and have Chou Hsüan interpret it. It was only when Chou Hsüan came up with a negative interpretation that the emperor said to him, "But I was only fooling you!" Not to be put out, Chou Hsüan said in reply, "The dream is nothing but ideation (i). When revealed in words, then its good or bad import is predictable."[6]

So then, beware; for no matter what you say about your dreams, the single-minded dream interpreter is prepared to take your word for it!

6.3 The Classification of Dreams

Before a dream can be interpreted, it has to be identified in terms of its general characteristics. Hence the numerous lists of dream types classified according to various criteria in many cultures by as many authorities throughout the ages.

To give an example: Artemidorus of Daldis (c. 2nd cent. A.D.) made a distinction, in the first place, between what he called enhypnion and oneiros. The enhypnion indicates a present state of affairs. For example, a lover dreams that he is with his beloved. Dreams triggered by physical stimu-

li also belong in this class. It is a characteristic of this type of dreams that its operation is limited to the duration of the dreamer's sleep, and does not contain a prediction of a future state of affairs. The oneiros, on the other hand, indicates future events; it is its nature to induce active undertakings when the dreamer awakes.[7]

Artemidorus further distinguished two kinds of oneiros or predictive dreams. One he called theorematic and the other allegorical. He defined them as follows:

> Theorematic dreams are those which correspond exactly to their own dream vision. For example, a man who was at sea dreamt that he suffered shipwrecked, and it actually came true in the way that it had been presented in sleep..... Allegorical dreams, on the other hand, are those which signify one thing by means of another: that is, through them the soul is conveying something obscurely by physical means.[8]

In this system of classification, a type of dreams labeled as enhypnion did not require interpretation because non-significative. Another type of dreams called theorematic also did not call for interpretation because they were to be understood literally. It was mainly on the type of predictive dreams regarded by Artemidorus as allegorical that he practised his art.

One would expect that there was a set of criteria by which to identify the different types of dreams before any interpretation was carried out. For it would be disastrous

in some cases to take a theorematic dream for an allegorical one, and vice versa. But I have failed to find any such criteria provided in Artemidorus's Oneirocritica (Interpretation of dreams). Are we to understand that this matter was entirely up to the interpreter's acumen, depending on his past experiences?

In the Chou-li, a Confucian classic dating back to the beginning of the Warring States era,[9] six types of dreams are distinguished. The are: 1) cheng meng -- regular or positive dreams (i.e. dreams that occur peacefully of themselves, not being induced or influenced by anything), 2) ô meng -- horrible dreams (i.e. dreams caused by fright), 3) ssu meng -- yearning dreams (i.e. dreams resulting from yearning thoughts while awake), 4) wu meng -- wakeful dreams (i.e. dreams triggered by something said while awake), 5) hsi meng -- happy dreams (i.e. dreams brought about by joy or delight), and 6) chü meng -- fearful dreams (i.e. dreams arising from fear).[10]

If we go by Cheng Hsüan's annotations (given above in parentheses), this system of classification is apparently based on the psychological causes of dreams rather than their contents.

There are two other notable lists of dream types from ancient Chinese sources. The list of six dream types given in the third chapter of the Lieh-tzu is identical with that in the Chou-li just given, except that in the Lieh-tzu they are referred to as the liu hou: six 'symptoms' or 'marks' of the dream.

The other list is found in the Ch'ien-fu lun (Essays by a recluse) by Wang Fu (c. A.D. 85-163) of Eastern Han times. In Chapter 28 of this book entitled "Meng lieh" (Dream pageant) ten types of dreams are discussed. They are the chih -- literal, hsiang -- symbolic, ching -- earnest, hsiang -- pensive, jen -- personal, kan -- climatic, shih -- seasonal, fan -- paradoxical, ping -- pathological, and hsing -- affective. The essay goes on to explain these terms as follows:

> In the old days, when I-chiang, consort of King Wu of Chou, conceived T'ai-shu, she dreamt that the Ti-god told her, "Name your son Yü and give him T'ang [as a fief]..
>
> Later, the child was born with the character for Yü on his palm, and that was the name given him. And when King Ch'eng conquered T'ang, the land was enfeoffed to him. This was a dream that literally came true.
>
> The Shih-ching states:
>
> Black bears and brown
> Mean men-children
> Snakes and serpents
> Mean girl-children
> . . .
> Locusts and fish
> Mean fat years
> Flags and banners
> Mean a teeming house and home[11]
>
> These are symbolic dreams.
>
> Living in an era of chaos, Confucius dwelt on the beneficence of the Duke of Chou by day and dreamt of him at night. Such dreams were induced

by earnest thinking.

When one thinks of something and then dreams that it happens, or when one is worried and dreams about his worries, such a dream comes from memory or pensiveness.

There are things which, when dreamt of by a noble, are considered auspicious, and when dreamt of by a nobody, are considered pernicious; and there are things which, when occurring in a gentleman's dream, are regarded as honorable, and when they turn up in a mean person's dream, are thought to be disgraceful. These are dreams [to be under-stood] according to the personal status [of the dreamer].

On the eve of the battle of Ch'eng-p'u, Duke Wen of Chin dreamt that the Viscount of Ch'u lay on top of him and sucked out his brain. This was very bad indeed. When the battle took place, however, it turned out to be a great victory for him. This was an extremely paradoxical dream.

Dreams of cloud and rain make people feel bored and perplexed. Sunny or arid dreams cause confusion and alienation. Dreams of great cold lead to doldrums, and dreams of high winds set people adrift. These are dreams brought about by climatic conditions.

In spring one dreams of coming forth and growing, in summer of exaltation and brilliance,

> in autumn and winter of maturity and storage. These are dreams in harmony with the seasons.
>
> Afflicted by Yin disease we dream of cold, and suffering from Yang disease we dream of warmth. Internal ailments bring dreams of confusion and external ones bring dreams of expansion. Dreams caused by disease are characterized by [images of] either dispersion or cohesion. These are known as pathological dreams.
>
> In the realm of human emotions, we speak of different likes and dislikes. The same feeling may cause good luck to one and bad luck to another. Hence, all of us should watch out for ourselves and make a point of interpreting [our dreams] in accordance with our propensities. These, then, are known as affective dreams.[12]

Wang Fu's "literal" dreams correspond to Artemidorus's theorematic dreams.[13] Although the example he gave for this type of dreams smacks of a self-fulfilling prophecy, this does not detract from its literalness. The following story from the Meng-chan lei-k'ao (see "Introduction") may serve as another example:

> Liu Ch'ao-lin was a man of sterling character. One night he dreamt that he came to a place with two pomegranate trees, under which he found one thousand strings of cash. [On waking up] he pondered that throughout his life he had never entertained

> thoughts of greed, and wondered how he could have had such a dream.
>
> Soon after, a townsman surnamed Tai hired him as a resident tutor. In the courtyard of his study there stood two pomegranate trees, just like what he had seen in his dream. Afterwards, he received a salary in the amount of exactly one thousand strings of cash.
>
> Eventually, he obtained his degree.[14]

But a literal dream need not involve a prediction about the relatively distant future. It may also be concerned with the immediate present, as the following story from the same source indicates:

> A man was suffering from a fracture. His physician advised him to treat it with a live turtle. He soon found one and was ready to kill it. One night, however, he dreamt that the turtle said to to him, "Don't harm me; I have an unusual formula for its cure. Just get one catty of fresh _Rehmannia lutea_ (_ti-huang_) and four taels of fresh ginger and have them uniformly heated. Then wrap them round the point of fracture with sackcloth and you will get well." The man woke up and tried out the prescription. It worked.[15]

One might question the propriety of using this eerie story as example of what Wang Fu called literal dreams on the ground that, like his celebrated near contemporary Wang Ch'ung,

though keenly interested in the irrational, he too had the inveterate tendency to explain them away in rationalistic terms, witness his essays on divination (25), on shamanism (26), and on physiognomy (27).

Be that as it may, the fact remains that, in matters relating to the predictive function of dreams, Wang Fu did not rule out the popular theory that dreams were sent by the gods. He wrote:

> Some dreams may be quite striking but predict nothing. Others may seem rather insignificant yet consequential. Why so? Well, what we call dream refers in the first place to a perplexing, incomprehensible phenomenon; the term itself suggests a nebulous state of affairs. Hence, in making decisions, one does not depend solely on it. In the management of one's affairs, one makes plans and gets on one's feet to carry them out; yet there are times when things don't follow through. How then can one be certain about dreams, which are impalpable and mixed in character? It is only when they are induced by earnestness of purpose or when they comprise messages from the gods that they may be prognosticated.[16]

Artemidorus, roughly contemporary with Wang Fu, was more guarded with respect to the question of the divine origin of dreams. It seems, however, that he too was inclined to give it the benefit of the doubt, especially in the case of dreams

whose significance was of immediate concern. Even so, in keeping with his generally rational, empirical approach to dream interpretation, he put the greater emphasis on the mind as the source of the predictive character of dreams.[17] In his explanation of the <u>oneiros</u> he stated:

> Oneiros is a movement or condition of the mind that takes many shapes and signifies good or bad things that will occur in the future. Since this is the case, the mind predicts everything that will happen in the future, whether the lapse of time in between is great or small, by means of images of its own, called elements, that are natural products. It does this because it assumes that in the interim we can be taught to learn the future through reasoning. But whenever the actual occurrences admit of no postponement whatsoever, because whoever it is that guides us causes them to happen without delay, the mind, thinking that prediction serves no purpose to us unless we grasp the truth immediately before having to learn it through experience, shows these things directly through themselves, without waiting for anything that is extraneous to show us the meaning of the dream.[17]

I find the parallel between Artemidorus's ideas and those of Wang Fu on this subject striking. Just as Artemidorus spoke of the predictive character of dreams being a function of the mind, so also Wang Fu wrote that "earnestness of pur-

pose" (<u>ching-ch'eng</u>) was responsible for certain dreams containing messages. Moreover, as Artemidorus hinted at the possibility of such dreams being caused by some unknown being, "whoever it is," so did Wang Fu state unequivocally that dreams brought by the spirits were predictive.

Again, what Wang Fu termed <u>hsiang</u> or symbolic dreams bear some semblance to Artemidorus's allegorical dreams, which he defined as "those which signify one thing by means of another: that is, through them, the soul is conveying something obscurely by physical means."[18] I take it that by "physical means" is meant symbolic images perceived in dreams.

Wang Fu, for his part, did not give any definition for what he called symbolic dreams. He did, however, cite the two stanzas from the <u>Shih-ching</u> as examples. On the strength of these examples I feel justified in assuming that his idea of the symbolic corresponds to Artemidorus's idea of the allegorical.

Another point of interest is that Artemidorus mentioned five classes of allegorical dreams set up by some oneirocritics of his day. First, there are "personal" dreams, in which the dreamer experiences something bound to happen to him alone. Secondly, there are "alien" dreams, in which the dreamer sees another person known to him experiencing something that will happen to the latter alone. Thirdly, there are "common" dreams involving the dreamer himself and others. Fourthly, there are "public" dreams that involve such things as the harbors and walls, the market places and gymnasia and the

public monuments of the city. Lasty, dreams that predict cosmic ~~cosmic~~ conditions, such as the total eclipse of the sun, the moon, and the other stars as well as the upheavals of earth and sea are termed "cosmic."

At first blush, one would think that the first three classes may all be subsumed under Wang Fu's category of "personal" dreams. But Wang Fu did make it clear in this case that by personal he meant the dreamer's status as a person (jen-wei) or personal circumstances such as being "highborn or lowbred, intelligent of slow-witted, male or female, and old or young.[19] Here Wang Fu was obviously talking about something having more to do with the dreamer than the dream itself. This information about the dreamer would substantially affect the meaning of the dream, in much the same way that it would alter the significance of his/her waking behavior. For instance, when a soldier kills enemy soldiers in the battlefield, it is generally considered to be a feat of valor; but when a merchant shoots rival merchants in the market-place, it may be construed as a matter of his competitive instinct gone haywire.

That the social status and personal circumstances of the dreamer should be taken into consideration was an oneirocritical principle not unknown to Artemidorus either. In Book I, Section 9 of his Oneirocritica he states:

> It is profitable -- indeed, not only profitable but necessary -- for the dreamer as well as for the person who is interpreting that the dream interpreter know the dreamer's identity, occupation,

birth, financial status, state of health, and age.[20]

What underlies this principle, I gather, is the assumption that dream symbols are plurivocal and that, therefore, to decipher their meanings, contextual understanding is necessary. Such understanding entails a detailed knowledge of the dreamer's social standing and personal affairs.

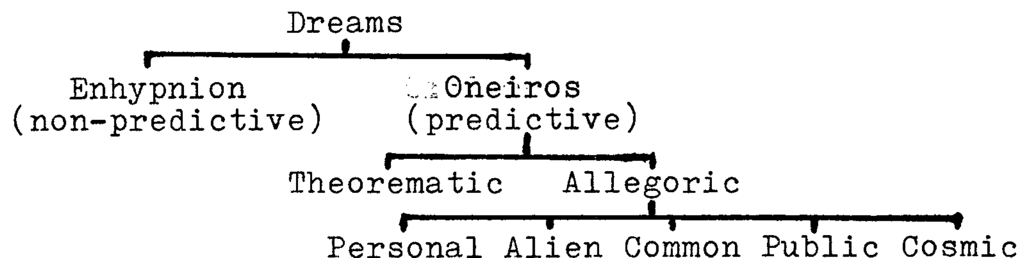
If this is the case, then Wang Fu's category of personal dreams should be regarded as a sub-class of the general category of "symbolic" dreams, for the reason that the dreamer's social and personal circumstances are extrinsic to the dream itself.

Wang Fu did not say so, but there seems no reason why a personal dream may not sometimes be understood literally. This observation applies to all the remaining seven types of dreams in Wang Fu's system of classification as well.

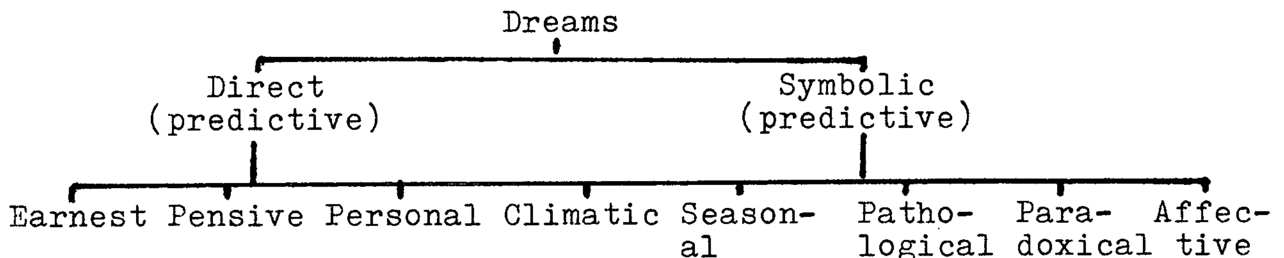
Being a Greek, Artemidorus was logically-minded enough to list all the three classes of dreams having to do with the dreamer's personal circumstances as sub-classes of allegorical dreams. In fairness to Wang Fu, however, I must point out that the text of the Ch'ien-fu lun as we have it now is corrupt. It is a textual curiosity, for instance, that immediately after the examples given for all the types of dreams, we find simple definitions for the eight types beginning from the third down to the tenth, but no definitions for the first two: the literal and the symbolic. There are at least two possible ways to explain this situation. One is to suppose that Wang Fu did define "literal" and "symbolic,"

but that the lines are missing from the text extant. The other hypothesis is that Wang Fu did not define them at all, either because he thought that these two types of dreams were easily recognizable to his readers after he had given the examples; or because, like Artemidorus, he intended the first two types to be two general, exhaustive categories with repect to properties <u>intrinsic</u> to the dream, which could only be interpreted either literally or symbolically. In short, the literal-symbolic dichotomy was a catch-all classificatory device. If so, then the remaining eight types, partially following Artemidorus's treatment, should be considered subclasses of either literal or symbolic dreams, as shown in the following two diagrams:

A. Artemidorus's Classification of Dreams



B. Wang Fu's Classification of Dreams



If none of the above conjectures holds water, then we have no other choice, as far as I can see, but to accept the text as it stands and say that Wang Fu, true to the character

of the stereotypical Chinese scholar, was "unscientific."

As a parting shot to this chapter, let me cite the following anecdote about Yüeh Kuang (A.D. 252-304) of the Western Chin dynasty and his future son-in-law Wei Chieh (286-312) from the Shih-shuo hsin-yü (A new account of tales of the world) by Liu I-ch'ing (403-444):

> When Wei Chieh was a young lad with his hair in tufts, he asked Yüeh Kuang about dreams.
>
> Yüeh said, "They're thoughts (hsiang)."
>
> Wei continued, "But dreams occur when body and spirit aren't in contact. How can they be thoughts?"
>
> Yüeh replied, "They're the result of causes (yin). No one's ever dreamed of entering a rat hole riding in a carriage, or of eating an iron pestle after pulverizing it, because in both cases there have never been any such thoughts or causes."
>
> Wei pondered over what was meant by "causes" for days without coming to any understanding, and eventually became ill. Yüeh, hearing of it, made a point of ordering his carriage and going to visit him, and thereupon proceeded to make a detailed explanation of "causes" for Wei's benefit. Wei immediately began to recover a little.
>
> Sighing, Yüeh remarked, "In this lad's breast there will never be any incurable sickness."[21]
>
> (Richard Mather's translation)

Exhibiting his prowess as a "pure-talker," Yüeh Kuang reduced dreams to two types: those resulting from "thoughts" and those from "causes." Although he did not elaborate on what he meant by "thoughts," from the objection raised by Wei Chieh we may infer that he meant psychical causes.

Wei Chieh's remark was reminiscent of Wang Ch'ung's theory that the soul could function as such only as long as it was bound to the body (cf. Section 4.4). Thoughts were the natural outcome of such a union. His objection may be paraphrased as follows: While dreaming, the spirit is believed to be wandering away from the body, how can thoughts then be possible?

This led to Yüeh Kuang's second answer, namely, "causes," by which he apparently meant physical stimuli which triggered "thoughts" which in turn gave rise to dreams.

Like all other products of reductionist thinking, the charm of this theory lies in its simplicity, its shortcoming in its tendency to distort if not ignore certain facts and make unwarranted assumptions. For example, how did Yüeh Kuang know that no one had ever dreamt of the two dreams he mentioned? Granted that the feasibility of these two dream scenarios was nil, yet, since they were conceivable in "thoughts" (and even expressible in words), by his own theory there should be no reason why they were undreamable.

CHAPTER SEVEN

METHODS OF CHINESE DREAM INTERPRETATION

The belief in the predictability of future events, or in the possibility of revealing the unknown through observation of the known, entails acceptance of the notion that our world, for all its apparent chaos, has a hidden design. Hence, nothing ever really happens at random or by chance. In this view, nature may be liken to an open book replete with hidden meanings and messages.

Divination is the interpretive process by which the unknown is made known. The methods of divination are many in number and in kind, but each culture seems to have its preferences.

Divination by astrology, for example, was preferred by the ancient Egyptians. In ancient Rome, a class of priests called augurs was set apart to interpret the signs in the sky. Among the Arabs, predictions are often made on the basis of the shapes seen in sand. Other popular methods practised in various parts of the world include palmistry, crystal-gazing, shell-hearing, haruspicy or the inspection of entrails, the casting of lots, the use of cards, etc.[1]

In pre-Ch'in China, the preferred method of divination was pyro-scapulimancy, which I have briefly discussed in Section 2.1. Then there was divination by consulting the I-ching hexagrams which involved the casting of yarrow-stalks. The observation of meteorological phenomena, such as solar hues, vapors and coronas, constituted a third method. Other

than these, oneiromancy, or divination by dream, was of utmost importance.

There is textual evidence showing that these mantic arts were sometimes combined to prognosticate the same data. Dream interpretation in particular seems to have been practised conjointly with each of the other three techniques mentioned above. Whether this practice implied misgiving on the dream interpreter's part as to its accuracy or trustworthiness is not for me to say. My conjecture is that the idea behind it was to obtain an external confirmation or corroboration of the dream omen. Hence, I term this the corroborative approach to the interpretation of dreams.

Apart from the corroborative approach, dreams were also interpreted internally with reference to their imageries, the significance of which was determined by one way of association or another. This I call the associative approach.

These two approaches to traditional Chinese dream interpretation will be discussed separately in the following sections.

7.1 The Corroborative Approach

The prominence of dream interpretation as a divinatory technique in pre-Ch'in China is described in the Han-shu i-wen chih as follows:

> There are many mantic arts, but the greatest of them all is dream [interpretation]. Thus, during Chou times, officials were appointed to take charge of it. The Shih-ching also records dreams

> of black and brown bears, of locusts and fish, amd of flags and banners, showing how prognostications of the great men [i.e. dream interpreters] were conducive to the verification of good and bad omens.

Then it goes on to say:

> This was probably [carried out] in conjunction with pyro-scapulimancy and divination by yarrow stalks.[2]

The statement that during Chou times dream interpretation had official standing is based on a passage in the Chou-li, a Confucian classic dating back, according to Bernhard Karlgren and Ch'ien Mu, to at least the beginning of the Warring States era.[3] The final statement about the combination, in practice, of dream interpretation with the two other divinatory techniques also comes from this source.

As a Confucian work, the Chou-li purports to give a comprehensive account of the intricate bureaucratic system designed by the Duke of Chou himself. The "Ch'un-kuan tsung-po" chapter of this book mentions two officials having something to do with dream interpretation. One is the T'ai-pu,'Grand Augur', who is in charge of matters relating to the san-chao or three types of significant cracks produced on tortoise shells or shoulder blades of cattle for purposes of divination, the san-i or three versions of the I-ching which serves as the basis for yarrow-stalk divination, and the san-meng or three methods of dream divination. These three mantic arts, each in itself comprising a three-way differentiation, are coor-

dinated by the pa-ming, 'eight ordinances', that is, eight types of routine questions put to the oracles.[4]

Another passage in the same chapter mentions the Chan-meng, 'Dream Interpreter', whose office it was to divine the good and ill omens of the six types of dreams (cf. Section 6.3) in the following ways. First, by scrutinizing the instances of the union of heaven and earth throughout the four seasons. Secondly, by distinguishing the Yin and Yang modes of the vital force. Thirdly, by referring to the conditions or positions of the sun, the moon, and the stars. In winter, it was his duty to inquire about the king's dreams and to present to him auspicious dreams, which the king received with courtesy. Next, the Dream Interpreter would offer the sacrifice of she-meng in the four quarters, thus sending off bad dreams. Only then would the annual Ceremony of Purification (nan = nuo) be initiated, the purpose of which was to drive away all pestilence.[5]

If we accept the description given in these two passages as having some historical validity, then dream interpretation may have been institutionalized and practised during Chou times in combination with pyro-scapulimancy and yarrow-stalk casting as well as the observation of cosmic phenomena.

7.1.1 Oneiromancy and Tortoise-Shell Scorching

As mentioned in Section 2.1, the Shang oracle-bones recorded a good number of royal dreams. If the art of dream divination in China indeed dates back to prehistoric times, as the legend of the Yellow Emperor interpreting his own

dreams (see Section 1.1) seems to suggest, then perhaps it is not entirely groundless to surmise that the Shang people too practised divination by dreams and, by way of double-check, subjected their dreams to oracle-bone prognostication as well.

Besides, in Section 1.3 we quoted King Wu of Chou, in his long-winded harangue to his troops as to why they should march on the tyrant King Chou of Shang, as saying: "My dreams are in accord with the oracle-bone prognostications!" This was a clear reference to the practice of combining divination by dreams with that by oracle-bones.

7.1.2 Oneiromancy and Yarrow-Stalk Casting

As for combining dream interpretation with divination by yarrow stalks, a good example may be taken from the Tso-chuan, Chao 7. It relates that Lady Chiang, the wife of Duke Hsiang of Wei, was childless. The duke's concubine Chou-ko, however, gave birth to a crippled son named Meng-chih.

Then K'ung Ch'eng-tzu, a minister, dreamt that K'ang-shu, the first marquis of Wei, told him to set up a certain Yüan as successor to the ducal title, and that he, K'ang-shu, would make Yü and Shih Kou ministers to Yüan. Now Yü was the great-grandson of K'ung Ch'eng-tzu, the dreamer, and Shih Kou the son of Shih Ch'ao, another minister.

It happened that Shih Ch'ao had the same dream, and told Ch'eng-tzu about it. Moreover, both dreams had occurred before the concubine bore a second son, who was to be named Yüan. When this finally took place, K'ung Ch'eng-tzu consulted the

I-ching by posing to the divining stalks the question whether Yüan would enjoy the bounties of Wei and preside over the sacrifices to the Gods of Earth and Millet. The hexagram obtained was Chun, the third in the I-ching as we have it today, which Wilhelm/Baynes translated as "Difficulty at the Beginning."

Then K'ung Ch'eng-tzu put another question to the oracle as to whether it would be commendable for him to set up Meng-chih. In answer to this he got the Chun hexagram again. This was followed by Pi, the eighth hexagram, translated by Wilhelm/Baynes as "Holding Together." He showed the results to Shih Ch'ao, who remarked, "Yüan succeeds; is there any doubt?"

Now, the phrase "Yüan succeeds," or in Chinese "yüan heng," (Wilhelm/Baynes' rendition: "supreme success") is the first statement in the "judgment" appended to the hexagram Chun. But in the I-ching the word yüan, meaning first or foremost, is a technical term. Here Shih Ch'ao took it to mean the personal name of the prospective heir. So Ch'eng-tzu questioned him, "Doesn't that mean the eldest?"

Shih Ch'ao said in reply, "Since Marquis K'ang so named him, he may be regarded as the eldest. Meng Chih is defective as a person, and may not have a place in the ancestral temple, therefore he may not be considered eldest. Besides, the judgment on this hexagram also states, "It is good to appoint a prince." (li chien hou) Now, if the heir were auspicious, why would there be any mention of appointing another? Surely the term "appoint" must refer to somebody other than the heir.

Since both hexagrams indicate the same thing, you had better set Yüan up in accordance with the behest of Marquis K'ang and the indications of the two hexagrams. The divining stalks reinforce the dream portents, and even King Wu [of Chou] abided by this principle. What will you do, if you don't comply with it?"

Convinced, K'ung Ch'eng-tzu accordingly set Yüan up as successor to the ducal title of Wei.[6]

7.1.3 Oneiromancy and Sun-Dog Watching

Auguries obtained in dreams may further be corroborated by a fourth method of divination. In the Chou-li passage about the T'ai-pu or Grand Augur, three methods of dream divination are named, corresponding to the three types of cracks in oracle-bone divination and the three versions of the I-ching. They are called chih-meng, chi-meng, and hsien-chih. According to Cheng Hsüan, the first means "that which the dream arrives at,"[7] and was devised during Hsia times, the second and third both mean "what the dream obtains," and were devised by the people of Yin and of Chou respectively.[8]

The Chou-li text goes on to say that each of these three methods has ten basic yün. Again, Cheng Hsuan equates yün with hui, 'brightness', and takes it to refer to the method of observing the ten kinds of vaporous illuminations occurring in close proximity to the sun, a symbol of the king, who was said to resort to this mantic art to obtain the good or evil portents of dreams that he had during the previous night.

Now, immediately after mentioning the office of the Chan-

meng or Dream Interpreter, the Chou-li describes the duties of another bureaucrat called Shih-chin, 'Ominous-Vapor Watcher'. He practises the art of distinguishing the shih hui or ten vaporous illuminations mentioned above. The usual gloss for hui is 'light and vapor around the sun'.[9] Professor Ho Ping-yü, in a lecture given to the Astronomy Club of the University of Hong Kong two years ago, proposed the theory that the shih hui referred to in the Chou-li are in fact what are known in meteorological optics as parhelia, also called in English mock suns or sun-dogs.[10] If this is correct, then we may say that in ancient China the observation of meteorological phenomena was also thought to have a bearing on divination by dreams.

7.2 The Associative Approach

The associative approach to dream interpretation is characterized by the interpreter's absorption in the symbolic aspect of the dream itself. The meaning of a dream is determined by establishing associative links between the dream imageries and their referents. This can be done in three ways: first, by direct association; secondly, by poetic logic; and thirdly, by linguistic means.

7.2.1 Decoding Dream Symbols by Direct Association

This method is similar to what Jungian psychologists call "amplification."[11] It is resorted to when dream symbols are given culturally-based meanings acceptable to a particular culture group. For example, for the Chinese, the dragon, the sun, and sometimes the moon as well, are royal symbols.

Legend has it that King Wen of Chou once dreamt that the light of sun and moon came in touch with his body.[12] The mother of Emperor Yüan of Liang, prior to his birth, had dreamt that the moon fell into her lap. She was said to have become pregnant right after the dream.[13] Hsiao Tao-ch'eng (A.D. 429-482) dreamt, at seventeen, that he went up in the sky riding a blue dragon which travelled westward chasing the sun. Eventually, he usurped the throne of Southern Sung and founded the Southern Ch'i dynasty.[14]

Meanings of dreams given in popular dream-books are mostly of this type. The following passage on the symbolism of 'heaven' or 'sky' is taken from the first paragraph of the "Chou-kung chieh meng" section in the Yü-hsia chi (see Introduction):

> When [one dreams that] the gate of heaven opens, [it means some] illustrious person will make recommendations and introductions [on the dreamer's behalf].
>
> When [one dreams that] heavenly light is shining, it signifies that illness will be eliminated.
>
> When [one dreams that] the sky is clear and rain has dissipated, [it means that] a hundred worries will go away.
>
> When [one dreams that] the sky brightens, some woman will bear an illustrious son.
>
> When [one dreams that] the heavenly gate turns red, it signifies a great rising.

> When [one dreams that] one lifts up one's face toward heaven, [it signifies] great enrichment and high position.
>
> When [one dreams of] riding a dragon and going up to heaven in search for a wife, [this means] his sons and daughters will attain high positions.
>
> . . .
>
> When [one dreams that] heaven splits open, [this means] there will be the sorrow of a divided nation.
>
> . . .
>
> When [one dreams that] the heavenly stars are bright, it signifies that dukes and ministers will arrive.[15]

Since the sky or heaven above us is immense and sends the rain that we need, and is something people everywhere can see but cannot reach, its associations with such ideas as bounty and prestige are easily established and recognized across cultures. But there are also dream symbols whose meanings are culture-specific, as the following examples from the same source demonstrate:

> When [one dreams that] in the hall the floor caves in, it signifies that one's mother is in distress.
>
> . . .
>
> When [one dreams that] excrement and dirt pile up, [it means] money and riches will gather.
>
> . . .
>
> [When one dreams of] loss of cap or hat, it means leaving or withdrawing from office.
>
> . . .

> When [one dreams of] sharing an umbrella with someone, it signifies separation or dispersion.[16]

In the first example, the image of a hall suggests "mother" because, traditionally, that is where mother is to be found when she is at rest. The word t'ang, 'hall', is in fact a synonym for 'mother'. One might say that this synonymy is metonymically derived. Further, I must add that the word yu, 'worry, distress', is a euphemism for 'death'.

In the second example, money conjures up the repulsive images of dung and dirt because, proverbially, it stinks. This association reflects the reputed hauteur, or highmindedness if you will, on the part of the traditional scholar class toward pecuniary matters, as was expressed by Yin Hao (A.D. 306-356) in the following anecdote from the Shih-shuo hsin-yü IV, 49:

> Someone once asked Yin Hao, "Why is it that
>
> About to get office,
One dreams of coffins;
About to get wealth,
One dreams of filth?"
>
> Yin replied,
>
> "Office (*kuân) is basically 'stinking decay,'
So someone about to get it
Dreams of coffins (*kuân) and corpses.
Wealth is basically 'feces and clay,'
So someone about to get it
Dreams of foul disarray."
>
> (Richard Mather's translation)

In his reply, Yin Hao clearly associated wealth with dung and dirt. His interpretation of coffin dreams will be discussed in Section 7.2.3.1.

In his analytical way, Artemidorus has the following to say about dreams of dung:

> Cow dung means good luck only for farmers, which is also true of horse dung and all other kinds of excrement except for human feces. But for other men it signifies sorrows and injuries, and, if it stains, it means sickness as well. It signifies benefits and has been observed to indicate success only for those who are engaged in lowly professions.[17]

The last point agrees with the signification given for dung and dirt in the "Chou-kung chieh meng" and makes explicit the class of people to whom dreams of such a content may be auspicious.

The cap in the third example is a status symbol, being part of the investiture of a mandarin. Hence, the symbolism is of a synecdochic nature. The culture-specificity of this interpretation can be brought out by contrasting it with the meanings assigned to cap dreams in G.H. Miller's <u>Ten Thousand Dreams Interpreted</u>:

> For a woman to dream of seeing a cap, she will be invited to take part in some festivity. For a girl to dream that she sees her sweetheart with a cap on, denotes that she will be bashful and shy in his presence.
>
> To see a prisoner's cap denotes that your courage is failing you in time of danger.

> To see a miner's cap, you will inherit a substantial competency.[18]

None of these associations would have occurred to a traditional Chinese dream interpreter.

The fourth example is technically different from the preceding three. The association of "umbrella" (san) with "dispersion" (san) is based on homophony. That is to say, a pun is involved. This type of association has been noted by dream interpreters everywhere throughout the ages. Both Freud and Jung have paid special attention to it. Since association by linguistic means has its own rules and constitutes an important type of symbolism by itself, it deserves a separate treatment (see Section 7.2.3).

7.2.2 Decoding Dream Symbols by Poetic Logic

This differs from the preceding method in that the association of the dream symbol with its supposed meaning is more universally applicable. It is, as a rule, established by such rhetorical devices as parallelism, analogy, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, etc.[19]

An interpretation by this method may sometimes appear plainly reasonable and at other times tenuous or at best far-fetched, depending on the wit and experience of the interpreter. After all, metaphor, as Monroe Beardsley puts it, is but "a poem in miniature."[20] Hence the term "poetic logic," which should not be taken to imply any disparagement on poets.

To give an example. T'ao K'an, the famous general

of the Eastern Chin, once dreamt, when young, that his body had eight wings. Thus equipped, he flew up to heaven and saw that it had nine gates, one enclosed within another. He managed to get in as far as the eighth but failed to enter the last one, where the gatekeeper hit him with a cane. As a result, he fell back down to earth and broke all his left wings in the process. Upon waking, he still felt pain in his left arm pit. Subsequently, he became the viceroy of eight prefectures. He often reflected on his youthful dream about the broken wings, which made him content with his lot and deterred him from getting involved in court politics.[21]

In interpreting his own dream, T'ao K'an seems to have associated both the eight wings that he had and the eight celestial gates that he entered in his dream with the eight prefectures under his jurisdiction afterwards. But there is no conceivable reason as to why "wings" or "gates" should mean "prefectures." The parallelism is perceived purely on the basis of the numerical sameness between the dream images and their purported referents in reality. On the other hand, the equation of "reaching up to heaven" with the idea of success and that of "falling down to earth" with that of failure seem self-explanatory.

The Wu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo ta-kuan, a collection of fictive writings from the Wei-Chin down to the Ming period, contains fragments from an oneirocritical work simply entitled Meng-shu (Dream book, c. 6th cent.), from which I take the following to demonstrate the interpretive method under discussion:

-- Whoever dreams of dwarfs will not succeed in his undertakings. He will stop in the middle of an enterprise and subsequently fail to attain renown, thus becoming the object of people's laughter and scorn.

-- When one dreams of combs, it means that one's anxiety will disappear.

-- [Dreaming that] one has lustrous hair means one's mind is at ease.

-- [Dreaming that] mites and lice are all gone means one will recover from all ailments.

-- [Dreaming that] mites and lice are causing trouble means one will be gnawed bodily.

-- When one sees mites and lice in a dream, it means that trouble is in the offing.

-- [Dreaming of] quail fighting means one is at enmity with others. Seeing quail in a dream means one is worried about fights.

-- Yarsticks are the means by which we determine lengths. Hence, dreaming that one has got a yardstick means one wants to rectify others.

-- [Dreams of] curtains and screen mean one is hiding one's self.[22]

In my discussion of the straw-dog dreams as interpreted by Chou Hsüan in Section 6.2, I remarked that an expert dream interpreter at work would rely more on his professional experience and good sense than on the information obtained

from popular dream books, because they often give only the most likely meaning or meanings for a particular dream symbol. This is borne out by the above examples from the Meng-shu. For the novice dream interpreter, such information might be helpful to some extent as hints or leads; to become adept at his business, however, he was expected to draw from his own knowledge about the world and his understanding of human affairs.

Again, the problem of multiple meaning comes to the fore. It is in the nature of a symbol to have what Ricoeur calls "a surplus of meaning," such that its specific signification in a particular context has to be determined by contextual understanding.

Owing to the fluidity of the significatory process of symbols, no dream dictionary, whether ancient or modern, can really claim to be exhaustive in any of its definitions of dream imageries. As Charles Rycroft points out, "Dreamers use images of objects with which to make metaphorical statements about themselves," hence, "listing standard meanings of objects 'appearing' in dreams is a pointless, methodologically unsound, activity."[23]

For purposes of comparison, however, again I take the following examples from Miller's book:

> -- To see your friends dwarfed, denotes their health, and you will have many pleasures through them.
>
> Ugly and hideous dwarfs, always forbode distressing states. (p.209)

-- To dream of combing one's hair, denotes the illness or death of a friend or relative.
Decay of friendship and loss of property is also indicated by this dream. (p.156)

-- If you see well kept and neatly combed hair, your fortune will improve. (p.272)
To see tangled and unkempt hair, life will be a veritable burden, business will fall off, and the marriage yoke will be troublesome to carry. (p.273)

-- To see quail in your dream, is a very favorable omen, if they are alive; if dead, you will undergo serious ill luck.
To shoot quail, fortells that ill feelings will be shown by you to your best friends.
To eat them, signifies extravagance in your personal living. (pp.463-464)

-- To dream of a yard stick, fortells much anxiety will possess you, though your affairs assume unusual activity. (p.613)

-- To dream of curtains, foretells that unwelcome visitors will cause you worry and unhappiness.
Soiled or torn curtains seen in a dream means disgraceful quarrels and reproaches. (p.180)

Apparently, both Miller and the anonymous author of <u>Meng-shu</u> took the image of a dwarf to be symbolic of negative mental states, such as distress and frustration. The sight of anything stunted never fails to elicit from the unreflec-

tive public a mixed sense of the lugubrious and the ludicrous. In this light, the dwarf may be seen as a symbol of hopeless failure for which the subject cannot be held responsible. Nevertheless, in some folkloric traditions, the dwarf appears as a benevolent, if sometimes mischievous, imp, as evinced by various Scandinavian and German legends. Miller seems to have taken this into account in his positive reading of dwarfish dreams.

Combs are the means by which tangled hair is set in order. The act of combing is therefore analogous to that of problem-solving, as is implied by the Meng-shu interpretation of comb dreams. Miller, however, interprets antiphrastically in this case; hence his negative reading.

As for lice and other related bugs, both authorities agree that nobody (except softies like Hsüeh Sung mentioned in Section 5.8) loves parasites, especially the blood-sucking variety. The fact that both works interpret the presence of lice in dreams as meaning physical maladies in reality is significant in that the metaphor is derived from literal similarities.[24]

It would help to understand the meaning given for oneiric quail in the Meng-shu if one knew that these birds were known in ancient China to be prone to belligerence and were raised accordingly as game fowl. Apart from this, Li Shih-chen (1518-1593), the noted Ming physician and herbalist, in his annotation of the Pen-ts'ao kang-mu (Compendium of medicinal herbs), mentioned that quails were monogamous.[25] If this is universally

true, then Miller's interpretation shows awareness of it in taking the quail to signify friendliness.

In taking measurements, we aim at precision. The yardstick is a norm or standard for measuring lengths. Since we also conceive of our personal conduct as having to conform to a certain norm, the yardstick is an apt metaphor for it. This is as far as the Meng-shu interpretation goes. Miller's interpretation goes one step farther. By way of metaphorical deduction, the yardstick becomes for him a symbol of anxiety, presumably for the reason that it is not always pleasant or easy to try to live up to a rigid standard.

With regard to dreams about curtains, to say that such dreams imply a desire to hide one's self, as the Meng-shu does, is to state one of the obvious purposes curtains are hung up for. Again, this metaphor is a fairly literal one. Miller's interpretation in this case merely indicates one of the possible implications of the meaning given in the Meng-shu.

Thus we see that, in spite of their apparent differences, the meanings given to the dream images found in two popular dream books, which differ in both the time and the cultural milieu in which they were written, share some basic assumptions. In view of this, perhaps it is not too wide of the mark to generalize that dream interpreters everywhere have always entertained similar notions of the processes of symbolic representation.

So far I have shown that, to some ancient Chinese dream

interpreters, metaphorical imagery was the stuff dreams were made of. Hence, for them, the first step in dream interpretation was to ascertain the subject or theme to which the dream images metaphorically applied.

Now, in our waking life, we use metaphor consciously as a figure of speech, when the metaphor used is a live one, in place of direct statement. In a dream, however, one is not aware of the substitutive nature of its metaphorical imagery. The meaning of such imagery is realized only upon waking, if at all. Charles Rycroft puts its thus:

> Imagery in dreams fulfils a function the reverse of that fulfilled by metaphor in waking speech. Metaphor in waking speech adds to or defines more precisely and vividly a meaning already and consciously intended; imagery in dreaming lacks as yet the meaning that will turn it into metaphor. It is, as it were, a thought that has yet to acquire the author who will give it metaphorical meaning.[26]

Doesn't this echo, if somewhat obscurely, the Talmudic adage referred to in Section 1.3, that a dream is only as true as its interpretation? The situation of the dreamer who, while dreaming, does not comprehend the metaphorical meaning of his dream is analogous to that of a poet who lets his fancy soar high and, in his moment of inspiration, does not care, let alone understand, what he writes. Hence, enter the oneirocritic or the literary critic, as the case may be.

But, as we know, critics of whatever stripe are notorious

for their extravagance and, in spite of the authoritative stance they generally assume, are quite capable of making unsubtantiated statements about the object of their criticism. In short, critics are not infallible. Oneirocritics are no exception, as the following episode from the Sui-shu (Dynastic history of Sui) about the scholar Wang Shao illustrates:

> His Majesty [Emperor Wen of Sui] dreamt that he wanted to climb up a high mountain but could not, until he got Ts'ui P'eng to hold his feet from below and Li Sheng to support his elbows. Then His Majesty said to P'eng, "In life and in death, I shall be with you."
>
> Shao remarked [when told of the dream], "This dream is highly auspicious. Climbing up a high mountain indicates supreme loftiness and great serenity, for ever as the mountains. For 'P'eng' suggests Patriarch P'eng [P'eng-tsu, the Chinese Methuselah, who legend says lived to be eight thousand years old], and Li refers to Li the Old One [i.e. Lao-tzu, regarded as an Immortal by Taoists]. To be supported and attended to by these two men is indeed a sign of longevity."
>
> Upon hearing this, His Majesty could not hide his pleasure. That year, however, he died, and soon after Ts'ui P'eng also died.[27]

Benefiting from hindsight, even an amateur should be able to say that the mountain the emperor dreamt of signified his

eternal domicile, and that Ts'ui P'eng holding the emperor's feet from below meant the former would follow right behind the latter on his way there.

In sum, metaphorical imagery in dreams is at best ambiguous. Hence interpretation by antiphrases or opposites, an oneirocritical principle attested in various traditions. Such ambiguity may be rooted in language (see, for example, "The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words," in The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. XI, pp.155-161).

7.2.3. Decoding Dream Symbols by Linguistic Means

Since language is an integral part of culture, the method of dream interpretation by linguistic association may rightly be considered a special case of the culture-oriented technique discussed in Section 7.2.1. However, as I have explained at the end of that section, owing to its prominence in the literature and to the fact that it exhibits some underlying principles governing its distinct mode of interpreting, I think it appropriate to consider it under a separate heading.

Since speech, as well as writing in literate societies, has always been a fundamental activity of Homo sapiens, small wonder that language should play such a crucial role in our dream life.

Metaphor may be considered a major function of language. What we are concerned with here, however, are the raw facts of language: the speech sound and the script that represents it.

In a dream interpreted by any of the methods about to be discussed, dream images are equated with words either as heard

or as written. I shall term the first method "paronomastic linkage" and the second "ideographic analysis."

7.2.3.1 Paronomastic Linkage

This is simply dream interpretation by puns. Alexander the Great is reported to have dreamt, near the end of his arduous siege of Tyre, that he saw a satyr dancing. This was interpreted by his dream interpreter as meaning <u>sa-tyros</u>, 'Tyre is thine', which spurred the empire-builder to victory.[28]

Artemidorus himself recorded the following dream together with its interpretation, apparently based on puns, which he said was related by "Menecrates the grammarian":

> A man who wanted to have children dreamt that he met someone who owed him money. He collected the debt and gave the debtor a quittance. This was the content of the dream. But Menecrates goes on to say that the dream interpreters in Alexandria were unable to interpret it, and the man, who was at a loss as to what the dream might mean, prayed to Serapis to unravel the mystery for him. He dreamt that Serapis said to him, "You will not have children." For a man who gives a quittance does not receive interest (τόκος). And a child at the moment of its birth is also called τόκος (offspring).[29]

Interestingly, Artemidorus gave this as an example of interpretation "based on etymologies of words." Granted that the two meanings of the Greek word in question are etymologically related, still it is not hard to see that the relation is

derived from a metaphor, probably dead to the dreamer but not to the grammarian.[30]

The *Meng-chan lei-k'ao* records the following punning dream that proved predictive:

> A scholar went to the Temple of the Nine Immortals to pray for dreams. The first time he dreamt that an Immortal told him, "The *hu-lu* (gourd) has not sprouted yet." He failed that year.
>
> Later, in due time he went to pray again and dreamed that the Immortal said, "The *hu-lu* has already sprouted." That year he failed again.
>
> When the appointed time came again he went to pray and dreamt that the Immortal said, "The *hu-lu* is not ripe yet." That year he failed a third time.
>
> Frustrated, the scholar did not go to pray anymore. Nor did he pass any subsequent examinations.
>
> One day, pressed by his colleagues, he went to pray for dreams again and dreamt that the Immortal said, "The *hu-lu* is ripe."
>
> He woke up with a start and told the dream to his colleagues. None of them could interpret it.
>
> He passed the examination that year. Then, reading the bulletin, he noticed that a certain Hu preceded him [in rank] and a certain Lu came after him, both aged twenty. And he figured out that in the year when he first went to pray for dreams, both of them were yet unborn.
>
> Everyone who heard his tale thought it marvel-

lous, knowing that scholastic success was temporally predestined.[31]

Again, the meaning of the series of punning dreams in this episode could only be understood by hindsight, owing to the fact that the puns involved the surnames and biological development of two individuals who were total strangers to the dreamer.

Some punning ~~punning~~ dreams acquired standard meanings probably by reason of their frequent occurrence. The equation of *san*, 'umbrella', with *san*, 'dispersion', cited in Section 7.2.1 is an example. Another fairly standard equattion is that of *kuan*, 'coffin', with *kuan*, 'official'. The "*Chou-kung chieh meng*" states:

> For the coffin to emerge from the grave by itself is greatly auspicious. To carry a coffin into one's house means official appointment is arriving.[32]

Which leads us back to the anecdote about Yin Hao homologizing the interpretation of coffin dreams with that of money dreams (see Section 7.2.1). According to him, officials by nature stink, being corrupt; hence, one dreams of coffins and corpses when about to be appointed. In his translation, Richard Mather points up the punning involved by inserting parenthetically the pronunciations for the two words in question.

In this regard, the *Meng-chan lei-k'ao* records the story of one Chao Liang-ch'i, who once dreamt that there were more than ten coffins lying side by side. Starting from the east end, he stepped on them one after another until he reached the

eleventh, which caved in and caught his feet. Afterwards, he actually occupied eleven official positions in a row and finally died in office as a secretary in the Grand Council (chung-shu she-jen).[33]

But puns in dreams were not always as straightforward as in the examples just given. Sometimes a punning dream contained a twist of meaning which required identification before the dream could be correctly interpreted. For example, Emperor Wen of Sui, in his early life before his accession to the throne, is reported to have once dreamt, while sleeping in a boat moored for the night, that he did not have a left hand. Upon waking up, he felt the dream repugnant. So he went ashore to a thatch temple, where he found an old monk and told him the dream in its entirety. Thereupon the monk stood up and congratulated him, saying, "To have no left hand is to be single-fisted (tu-ch'üan). You shall become the Son of Heaven."[34]

Undoubtedly, the learned monk had identified the phrase tu-ch'üan, 'single-fisted', derived from the dream imagery of "having no left hand," as a pun on tu-ch'uan, 'independent authority'.

Another story tells of a certain Ma Liang who, when his term of office as magistrate of the sub-prefecture of Chiang-ling was about to expire, had the bizarre dream that a tuft of hair cropped up on his tongue. Then a dream interpreter explained to him, "Hair growing on the tongue cannot be shaved off. This means you'll serve a second term." And so it happened.[36] [35] In this case the word t'i, 'to shave', derived

from the dream imagery of "hair on tongue," was equated with t'i, 'to substitute for'.

Dreams interpreted this way often contained ominous imageries which were shown to be auspicious only upon interpretation. The following is another example:

> Li Ti was handsomely mustache and bearded. On the day before the imperial examination, he dreamt that someone gave him a very thorough shave. He felt it abhorrent. However, an interpreter said, "You will certainly receive the chuang-yüan honors [awarded to the best scholar in the exam], because this year the sheng-yüan [first honor in the provincial exams] is Liu Tzu. [In your dream] you took Tzu's place (t'i Tzu, homophonous with t'i tzu, 'to shave off the mustache'), what else can that mean if not the chuang-yüan?" When the bulletin was released, it turned out as predicted.[36]

In each of the three episodes last cited, the dream interpreter came up with an interpretation consoling to the dreamer, thus relieving the anxiety brought about by the ominous imagery of his dream. Thus, the dream interpreter in ancient China functioned in much the same way as the psychotherapist of our times.

But then there were also dreams with imageries of a dubious character which were unfavorably interpreted. The Yu-yang tsa-tsu tells the story of Chang Chan, a homebound commercial traveller who dreamt that he cooked in a mortar.

Perplexed by the dream, he went to consult a professional dream interpreter surnamed Wang, who said to him, "When you reach home, sir, you may not be seeing your wife; for to cook in a mortar means there is no pot." Chang went home only to find that his wife had been dead for several months already.[37]

In this case wu fu, 'no pot', derived from the dream imagery of "cooking in a mortar," was found to be homophonous with wu fu, 'no wife'. The bluntness of the interpreter in this instance was somewhat redeemed by the fact that, as it turned out, the merchant's wife was already dead when he had the dream.

7.2.3.2 Ideographic Analysis

This is the method by which dream imageries are converted into the Chinese script which is then analyzed and interpreted with a view to ascertaining its predictive import.

The "Pen-ching hsün" chapter of the Huai-nan-tzu has it that when Ts'ang-chieh (one of the Yellow Emperor's able men) invented the writing system, millet rained down from heaven and ghosts wailed at night.[38] The commentary of Kao Yu (Eastern Han) on this passage states:

> Ts'ang-chieh first saw the patterns of birds' traces, then he invented writing. As a result, deceit and artifice cropped up; people strayed from the basic and flocked to the trivial. They abandoned husbandry and sought to profit from wielding the awl [used in making inscriptions

> on hard material before the invention of paper). Heaven knew that they would starve, and so sent down a spate of millet. Ghosts were afraid that they might be denounced by written texts, hence their wailing at night.[39]

This comment touches on the negative consequences of the invention of writing in human society. Greater stress, however, seems to lie on the disturbance it caused in the cosmic order. For if Ts'ang-chieh was indeed the inventor of writing and human at that, then the invention would amount to an act of intrusion by a mortal into the world beyond. Hence the reported anomalous phenomena attendant upon the event. Script, as purveyor of meaning, was to be the means by which the mysteries of Heaven and Earth would be disclosed to Man. Thus viewed, Ts'ang-chieh's status as a mytho-cultural hero was of Promethean proportions. For, like fire, writing was indispensable to human civilization.

At any rate, to the traditional Chinese popular mind, the written characters were some sort of encapsulated ideas. Moreover, since ideas in themselves were not susceptible to temporal wear and tear, their potency was conceived of as cutting across time-frames. Hence their predictive power.

Ideographic analysis as an independent mantic art is very ancient. There are still Chinese fortune-tellers who specialize in this technique, or combine it with others.

As applied to dream interpretation, again, if the legend

of the Yellow Emperor interpreting his own dreams is any indication, it must have a venerable tradition as well. The literature abounds in stories exemplifying this technique.

The Chin-shu records the following episode about an ambitious man who came to grief:

> Wang Tun led his army toward the interior [i.e. seat of central government]. When they camped at the lake, Hsü Hsün went with Wu Chün to see him, hoping to talk him out of the campaign.
>
> At that time Kuo P'u was on Wang Tun's advisory staff. Thus, thanks to him, they met Wang Tun, who was so pleased as to offer them a drink.
>
> Then Wang asked, "I dreamt that a piece of wood broke into heaven. What do you gentlemen think of this?"
>
> Hsün said, "That's not a good omen." And Wu Chün rejoined, "For the wood to go up and break into heaven, this spells the character wei, 'not yet'. [It signifies that] my lord may not act rashly at this point."
>
> Tun would not listen, and consequently suffered defeat.[40]

Had Carl Jung been consulted by Wang Tun about the dream, he probably would have seen in the wood the unmistakble cosmic tree. And Freud, had he been similarly approached, might have come up with the ubiquitous phallic symbol. Wu Chün, however, simply wrote the word for wood out as mu 木, and

then added a horizontal stroke to the upper half of this character to represent heaven, and the result was the character wei 未.

To give another example. Ho Chih, a functionary of Shu Han of the Three Kingdoms period, once dreamt that a mulberry tree grew in a well. He asked the dream interpreter Chao Chih about it. Chao Chih said, "The mulberry does not belong in a well. It's bound to be transplanted. However, the character for mulberry, 桒 (sang), consists of four 'tens' (十) and an'eight' (八) below. Your age, I'm afraid, will not exceed this." Afterwards, Ho Chih became magistrate of Chien-wei and indeed died at the age of forty-eight.[41]

Chao Chih's analysis of this character as being composed of four 'tens' and one 'eight' was uncouth. A more plausible analysis, if one was concerned with scholarliness, would be breaking it up into three tens and one 'tree' (木), with the latter as its classifying component. Traditionally, however, dream interpreters, like the practioners of other mantic arts, had a penchant for riding roughshod over scholarly niceties.

Either of the two examples just cited had only one predominant dream image identified as a graphic representation of the character involved. But there were also instances where two images (and in some cases more) were considered significant and brought into play, as exemplified in the following story from the Meng-chan lei-k'ao:

> Wang Wei of Eastern township had two sons, named Pang-ch'eng and Ying-ch'i, who went to take the

> entrance examination at the academy. The wife of their mentor, Professor (*wen-hsüeh*) Ku, dreamt that the two students came with half of their bodies wet because they had fallen into the water. Upon waking, she told the dream to Ku, who remarked, "Put the 'half' (*pan* 半) beside the 'water' (*shui* 水= 氵) and we get the character 泮 (*p'an*, 'academy'). May it be that those two students are going to rove about in that august hall of learning?" And so it happened.

In this case it was the juxtaposition of two ideographic elements derived from their corresponding dream images that brought out the crucial character.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY

In the traditional Chinese scheme of things, the spatial universe, dichotomized as heaven and earth, was pregnant with meaning, thanks to the regularity of its operations and the patterned forms and shapes observable in the myriad things found in it. The spectator was, of course, man. For his own good, man really could not afford to ignore any sign of nature, be it the movement of the sun, moon, and stars, the rotation of the seasons, the alternation of day and night, the trembling of the earth, or the flooding of rivers. All such phenomena were vitally significant to him and therefore aroused his interest.

As a child of nature himself, his own bodily processes also engaged his attention. He soon took it into his head that this entity that was him also constituted a universe by itself, albeit in miniature. And before long, correspondences between the two universes, analogically derived, were identified.

To the extent that heaven and earth were thought of by the ancient Chinese as the source of life, their concept of the universe may be described as "vitalistic": heaven and earth were imbued with a meta-gaseous substance called _ch'i_ which, when joined to any physical form, animates it. This substance was, in effect, the spiritual essence of all existents, including man, except that in him it became highly

refined and was manifested as conscious intelligence. It was the power of intelligence that distinguished him from wood, stone, bird, beast, insect, and fish. This was also the means by which man came to make sense out of the universe.

Thanks to this light of reason in him, man was able to read the signs of nature in a number of ways. These became formalized as the various divinatory techniques which enabled him to decode messages coming from both without and within him.

Such messages were often perceived in their original form directly through the visual, auditory, or tactile sense. For, then as now, the medium was the message. Thus, mantic information could be gathered not only from the sun's light and hue, the formation of clouds, the direction of winds, the shape and location of rainbows, the duration of fogs, the paths of lightning, but also from the mysterious humming in the ear as well as the cooking pot, the barking of dogs, the shrieking of crows, the involuntary twitching of the eyelid, the unaccountable fever on the face and ears, the jerking of muscles, cardiac palpitations, and sneezing (see Yü-hsia chi, pp.64-68).

On top of all these techniques, as the Han-shu i-wen chi tells us, the interpretation of dreams reigned supreme.

Judging from the amount and variety of dream material preserved in the immense storehouse of traditional Chinese literature, we can safely conclude that the ancient Chinese took their dreams seriously. Their interest in dreams,

ranging from the spiritistic through the physico-psychological to the religio-philosophical, may be said to have encompassed almost the whole gamut of oneiric phenomena ever experienced by humanity at large.

That this interest did not include the physiologically-oriented, empirical approach to the study of dream mechanism conducted in the West in the past three decades is understandable. The ancient Chinese did not set up laboratories for the study of dreams for the same reason that they did not set up laboratories, in the modern sense, for the study of anything. This was not a question of technology either, for to say so would beg the question why the technology was not there in the first place.

As I see it, the reason why, for all their ostentatious concern about practicality, the ancient Chinese did not set much store by the positivistic, physiological view of dreams was that, to them, the mystery of the dream was part of its meaning, and that, consequently, any effort at demystification would result in diminishing its meaningfulness. For the same reason, as far as I know, the ancient Chinese never attempted to send a rocket to the moon. They preferred to visit it, if at all, in their dreams and reveries, and afterwards record such visits in their poems and legends.

As was the case with the other divinatory techniques mentioned above, dream interpretation as practised in ancient China did not always require a verbal form of expression. Although we know next to nothing about the technical aspect

of the corroborative approach to dream interpretation as described in the Chou-li (see Section 7.1), from what it does say, I gather that all the three methods under this heading were non-verbal in nature. Rather, the content of dreams was taken as it stood and its import was interpreted in a generalized way as being either good or bad. I do not rule out the possibility that in some cases more specific significances could be determined. In any event, no linguistic association was involved. After being so interpreted, confirmation by means of any of the other techniques was then sought for. The fact that in the oracle-bone inscriptions only the barest content of dreams was recorded and not the least bit of interpretive material could be found seems to support my theory.

If the foregoing description fits the available data, then this mode of interpretation may be termed "iconic," in the sense that the configurations of forms and shapes found in nature as well as dream imageries were examined in terms of their representational properties.

In contrast to the iconic, there was the symbolic mode of interpretation as exemplified by the associative approach to dream interpretation, wherein we see a totally different picture. Here the meaning of dreams was deciphered not in accordance with what their imageries ostensibly represented, but through the mediation of explicit or implicit language manifested as either speech or writing.

I think that this latter approach was considered by the

ancients to be a methodological improvement on the first one and therefore superseded it. The loss of the pre-Han dream-books, such as those two listed in the Han-shu i-wen chih (see Section 1.1), was probably not accidental. If so, the regrets expressed by some oneirologists in later ages (see, for example, the preface to the Meng-chan i-chih ((The vagrant significance of dream interpretation)) by Ch'en Shih-yüan of Ming times) would be superfluous.

Beyond a doubt, the ancient Chinese were a nation of dreamers. From high antiquity downwards, through the temporal corridor and on the social ladder, sage-kings, culture-heroes, emperors, empresses, courtiers, philosophers, scholars, soldiers, poets, peasants, priests, monks, nuns, tradespeople and artisans, both the highborn and the lowbred alike, all dreamt and somehow many of them managed to have their dreams recorded. This in itself was a great service to human culture, if only because it preserved for posterity the most vivid, colorful and authentic portrayal of that other aspect of the Chinese mind which in this day and age is so easily overlooked, partly because de-emphasized and even frowned upon by the modern Chinese themselves.

To some Westerners (e.g. Henry Kissinger and his breed) nowadays, the quintessential Chinese is either the Mao-suited hardhead at the international conference table, or the shrewd merchant behind the counter in any Chinatown shop playing his lute of an abacus, or even the bespectacled science student from Peking, Taipei, or Hong Kong. It would indeed tax their

imagination to the hilt if such people were asked to see a Li Po in any one of these or an Emily Dickinson in, say, Madame Mao, although some years ago her husband himself almost got nominated for the Nobel prize, in recognition not of his contribution toward world peace but of his poetic effort.

Nevertheless, the good people of China still dream. But that's another story.

NOTES

Chapter I: Dream as Harbinger of Future Events

1 See Robert L. Van de Castle, "Psychology of Dreaming," in Dreams and Dreaming, ed. S.G.M. Lee and A.R. Mayes (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1973), pp.17-22.

2 For the characters involved, see Appendix.

3 Hsü Tsung-yüan, Ti wang shih-chi chi-ts'un (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1964), p.21.

4 To be discussed in Section 7.2.3.

5 This work was lost during Southern Sung times. Since Yüan times there have been several collated versions in existence. A good modern edition is Hsü Tsung-yüan's work just cited.

6 Hsu Tsung-yüan, p.21.

7 Han-shu i-wen-chih (Po-na ed.) 10:31b.

8 This work is traditionally believed to be the annals of Wei of the Warring States era. It was discovered, thanks to a tomb thief, in the second year of the T'ai-k'ang reign period (A.D. 280-289) of the Western Chin dynasty, only to be lost again for good; see Ch'ü Wan-li, Ku-chi tao-tu (Hong Kong: Lü-yüan shu-tien, 1964), pp.77-78. I am using Hsü Wen-ching's collated edition; see next note.

9 Hsü Wen-ching, Chu-shu chi-nien t'ung-chien (prefaced 1750; rpt. Taipei: I-wen yin-shu-kuan, 1966), p.107.

10 Hsü Tsung-yüan, p.35.

11 Ibid., pp.39-40.

12 Hsü Wen-ching, p.149.

13 Ibid., pp.214-215.

14 Ibid.

15 Hsü Tsung-yüan, p.67.

16 See Section 7.2.3.1.

Chapter I, NOTES continued:

17 Shih-ching, Ode 189 (Ssu kan); Arthur Waley, The Book of Songs (London: Allen and Unwin, 1937), p.283.

18 Ode 190 (Wu yang); Waley, p.168.

19 See the prefatory note to the "Yüeh-ming shang" chapter, which happens to be one of those forged during Eastern Chin times; see Ch'ü Wan-li, op. cit., p.144.

20 Shu-ching 21 ("T'ai-shih"); cited in Michel Soymié, "Les songes et leur interprétation en Chine," in Les songes et leur interprétation (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 'Sources Orientales' 2, 1959), p.259.

21 In his commentary, K'ung Ying-ta points out that Po-ch'ou cannot have called himself Heaven and Heaven cannot have turned itself into Po-ch'ou, and that this kind of ambiguity can occur only to a dreamer; see Ch'ung-k'an Sung-pen Tso-chuan chu-shu (1815; rpt. Taipei: I-wen, n.d.) 21:17a.

22 Tso-chuan, Hsüan 3; James Legge, The Chinese Classics V (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960; rpt. 1970), 294.

23 Tso-chuan, Ch'eng 17; Legge V, 404.

24 Cited in Roger Caillois, The Dream Adventure (New York: The Orion Press, 1963), pp.xii-xiii.

25 I follow Wang Meng-ou's reading and emend ling, 'years of age', to ch'ih, 'teeth'; see Li-chi chin-chu chin-i (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1970) v.1, pp.274-275.

26 Li-chi 8 ("Wen-wang shih-tzu"); Legge I (rpt. 1967), 344.

27 Li-chi 3 ("T'an-kung"); Legge I, 138-139.

Chapter II: Dream as Message from the Spirit World

1 Van de Castle, op. cit., pp.17-18.

2 Ibid., p.19; see also Carl Alfred Meier, "The Dream in Ancient Greece and Its Use in Temple Cures (Incubation)," in The Dream and Human Societies, ed. G.E. von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p.304.

3 For a description of this practice, see Kwang-chih Chang, Shang Civilization (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp.31ff.

Chapter II, NOTES continued:

4 For a detailed account of this discovery, see Hu Hou-hsüan, "Chia-ku-wen fa-hsien chih li-shih chi ch'i ts'ai-liao chih t'ung-chi," in Chia-ku-hsüeh Shang-shih lun-tsung ch'u-chi (rpt. Hong Kong: Wen-yu-t'ang, 1970), v.2, ts'e 4.

5 David N. Keightley, Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p.34.

6 Hu Hou-hsüan, "Yin-jen chan-meng k'ao," in op.cit., v.2, ts'e 3, pp.3b-5b.

7 Ibid., p.6ab.

8 Tso-chuan, Hsi 28; Legge V, 210. For a study of the symbolism and cultural implications involved in this dream, see Georg von Koeppen, "Zwei Träume aus dem Tso-chuan und Ihre Interpretation," Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 119 (1969):133-156.

9 Tso-chuan, Hsi 31; Legge V, 219.

10 Tso-chuan, Chao 7; Legge V, 617.

11 For an account of Po-yu's death, see Tso-chuan, Hsiang 30; Legge V, 557.

12 Kung-sun Hsieh was the son of Tzu-k'ung, who had also been put to death; see Tso-chuan, Hsiang 19; Legge V, 483. Liang-chih was Po-yu's son.

13 Tso-chuan, Chao 7; Legge V, 618.

14 Cf. Daniel L. Overmyer, "Acceptance in Context: Death and Traditional China," in Death and Eastern Thought, ed. Frederick H. Holck (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), pp. 213-219.

15 Tso-chuan chu-shu 44:14a.

16 This notion of the duality or even plurality of souls is not confinced to Chinese religious thought. For a summary of the various traditions on this subject, see Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture, 4th ed. (London: J. Murray, 1903), I, 434-435.

17 Åke Hultkrantz, Conceptions of the Soul among North American Indians, Monograph Series 1 (Stockholm: Ethonographical Museum of Sweden, 1953), pp.27, 241.

Chapter II, NOTES continued:

18 Nei-ching su-wen 23 ("Hsuan-ming wu-ch'i"); Ilza Veith (tr.), Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wen: The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1949), p.208.

19 Sun Ssu-miao, Ch'ien-chin pao-yao, ed. Kuo Ssu, in P'ing-chin-kuan ts'ung-shu, i-chi (1807), 6:8b.

20 Chuang Yüan-ch'en, Shu-chü-tzu, in Po-tzu ch'üan-shu, han 7 (Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1919), nei-p'ien, 2:6b.

21 Ibid., 4:6b.

22 Ch'ung-k'an Sung-pen Li-chi chu-shu (rpt. Taipei: I-wen), 47:14a-15a.

23 Wang Ch'ung, Lun Heng (Peking: Jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1974), p.315.

24 Ibid.

25 For a discussion of this issue, see Ch'ien Mu, "Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang-shih chung chih kui-shen-kuan," (Views on ghosts and spirits in the history of Chinese thought) in Ling-hun yü hsin (Soul and mind) (Taipei: Lien-ching, 1976), pp.79-89.

26 Chuang Yüan-ch'en, nei-p'ien, 6:3.

27 Ibid.

28 A. Leo Oppenheim, "Dreams in Ancient Near East," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s. 46(1956): 204.

29 Liu Ching-shu, I-yüan, in Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan, ts'e 153, 7:1b-2a.

30 Ibid., 7:4b.

31 Ibid., 7:4a.

32 T'ao Ch'ien, Sou-shen hou-chi, in Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan, ts'e 152, 6:3ab.

33 Cf. George A. Hayden, Crime and Punishment in Medieval Chinese Drama: Three Judge Pao Plays (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), p.10.

34 T'ao Ch'ien, op. cit., 4:3a.

35 Cited in Chang Feng-i, Meng-chan lei-k'ao (prefaced 1585),

Chapter II, NOTES continued:

11:11a.

36 Ch'en Ch'i-yüan, Yung-hsien-chai pi-chi, in Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan III (rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing shu-chü, 1962), 2701.

37 Hsi 31, one; Ch'eng 2, one; Ch'eng 10, one; Chao 7, four; Chao 17, one.

38 Cf. Holmes Welch, The Parting of the Way (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), pp.135-141.

39 Kuan-sheng ti-chün sheng-chi t'u-chih (1838; rpt. Hong Kong: Wu-sheng-t'ang, 1960), 3:5a.

40 Chu-an, Jen-wu feng-su chih-tu ts'ung-t'an (Shanghai: I-chia-she, 1948), p.203.

41 For modern parallels see the case of Master Tz'u-hang in Taiwan and that of Ting-hsi in Hong Kong as reported in Holmes Welch, The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 344-345. Welch comments on the Buddhist cult of the "meat-body" thus: "Indeed, the whole concept of the meat body would seem to exemplify the antithesis of the doctrine of the impermanence and to violate the spirit in which the bhiksus of Buddhist India were urged to sojourn in cemeteries, drawing lessons in impermanence from the decomposition of corpses -- a fairly repellent custom in itself." (Ibid.)

42 Van de Castle, op. cit., p.17.

43 Ibid., p.19.

44 Sandor Lorand, "Dream Interpretation in the Talmud," in The New World of Dreams, ed. Ralph L. Woods and Herbert B. Greenhouse (New York: Macmillan, 1974), pp.152-154.

45 A. Leo Oppenheim, op. cit., p.188.

46 Chou Liang-kung, Min hsiao-chi, in Lung-wei mi-shu (1794; rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing,1969) III, 1763-1764.

47 Wang Yung-ch'üan, "Hang-chou ch'i-meng ku-shih," (Stories of dream incubation in Hangchow) Folklore Weekly of National Sun Yat-sen University VI (rpt. Taipei: The Chinese Association for Folklore, 1970), 35(Nov. 1928):7.

48 Huang Chün-tsai, Chin-hu lang-mo, in Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan III, 2790.

Chapter II, NOTES continued:

49 Rolf Humphries, *The Satires of Juvenal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), pp.85-86; cited in Latin in Oppenheim, op. cit., p.237.

50 Arthur Waley, *The Secret History of the Mongols and Other Pieces* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963), p.73.

51 Huang Chün-tsai, op.cit., p.2790.

52 Oppenheim, p.237.

53 Ibid., p.234.

54 Ibid., pp.234-235.

55 *Hou Han-shu* (*Po-na* ed.) "Li-i chih," 5:12b.

56 Huang Pao-chen, *Tseng-kuang shih-lei t'ung-pien* (Shanghai: Wen-sheng shu-chü, 1915).

Chapter III: Dream as Response to Physical Stimuli

1 Hippocrates, *The Medical Works of Hippocrates*, tr. John Chadwick and W.N. Mann (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1950), pp.14, 90, 184, 214-218.

2 Ibid., pp.194-201.

3 Cited in Ralph L. Woods and Herbert B. Greenhouse (ed.), *The New World of Dreams* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), p.177.

4 Ibid., p.178.

5 Ibid., p.162.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p.163.

8 Ibid., p.179.

9 Ibid.

10 See *Nei-ching chiang-i* (Lecture notes on the *Nei-ching*) (Shanghai: K'o-hsüeh chi-shu ch'u-pan-she, 1964), p.216.

11 Ibid., p.220.

Chapter III, NOTES continued:

12 Ibid.

13 The Nei-ching, traditionally ascribed to the Yellow Emperor, is listed in the Han-shu i-wen chih. It was referred to for the first time as Shu-wen in the Shang-han lun (Treatise on typhoid fever) by Chang Chi (= Chang Chung-ching) of Han times. Ilza Veith translated only the first thirty-four chapters.

14 The Ling-shu-ching (The vital axis), also ascribed to the Yellow Emperor and often printed as a single book, is regarded by some as a sequel to the Nei-ching. It is not listed in the Han-shu i-wen chih, nor in the Sui and T'ang dynastic histories. Its existence was first divulged by Shih Sung of Southern Sung times, who said an old edition of it was in the family collection; see Ch'ü Wan-li, Ku-chi Tao-tu, p.87.

15 Ling-shu-ching (Peking: Jen-min wei-sheng ch'u-pan-she, 1963), 43 ("Yin-hsieh fa-meng"), pp.85-86.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Herbert Greenhouse, "Dream of the Guillotine," in Woods and Greenhouse (1974), pp.89-90.

19 Chang Hua, Po-wu chih, in Po-tzu ch'üan-shu, han 7, 10:1b.

20 Tuan Ch'eng-shih, Yu-yang tsa-tsu (1608; rpt. Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng shu-chü, 1975), p.50.

21 Kuan-yin-tzu, in Po-tzu ch'üan-shu, han 8, "Erh chu," p.2b.

22 Ernest Jones, "Freud's Theory of Dreams," in Lee and Mayes (1973), p.40.

23 Ibid., pp.58-59.

24 Ibid., p.59.

25 Ibid., p.60.

Chapter IV: Dream as Projection of Mental States

1 Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, tr. and ed. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1955), p.122.

2 Ibid., pp.165-188.

Chapter IV, NOTES continued:

3 Lun-yü 11 ("Hsien chin"):12.

4 Ibid., 7 ("Shu erh"):5.

5 Ch'ung-k'an Sung-pen Lun-yü chu-shu (1815; rpt. Taipei: I-wen) 7:2a.

6 Ibid.

7 Chang Shih, Lun-yü Chang Hsüan-kung chieh (Ming manuscript; rpt. Taipei: Chung-kuo tzu-hsüeh ming-chu chi-ch'eng pien-yin chi-chin-hui, 1977) 4:3a.

8 Wei Hsiang-shu, Han-sung-t'ang yung-yen, in Han-sung-t'ang ch'üan-chi (prefaced 1708), ts'e 5, p.2a.

9 Ibid., p.27b.

10 Ibid., p.21b.

11 Patricia L. Garfield, Creative Dreaming (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974; rpt. Toronto: Ballantine Books, 1976), p.5.

12 Ibid., pp.4, 51, 80-117; see also R.G. D'Andrade, "The Effect of Culture on Dreams," in Lee and Mayes (1973), p.206.

13 For a development of this idea in science-fiction, see Roger Zelazny, The Dream Maker (London: Panther Books, 1968).

14 Liu Hsiang, Hsin hsü, in Po-tzu ch'üan-shu, han 1, 2:2b-3a.

15 Liu Hsieh, Wen-hsin tiao-lung, tr. and annotated Vincent Yu-chung Shih, bilingual ed. (Taipei: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1970), p.2.

16 Yü Yüeh, Chiu-chiu hsiao-hsia lu, in Ch'un-tsai-t'ang ch'üan-chi (1892), ts'e 153, 12:11a; cf. also Lien-che Tu Fang, "Ming meng," Ch'ing-hua hsüeh-pao, 10.1 (June 1972): 55-73.

17 Yü Yüeh, op. cit.

18 Ibid.

19 Wang Ch'ung, Lun heng, (Shanghai: Jen-min, 1974), p.321.

20 Ibid., pp.334-337.

Chapter IV, NOTES continued:

21 An example of this types of dreams is recorded in *Tso-chuan*, Hsiang 18. It relates that during the autumn of that year, the marquis of Ch'i invaded the northern border of Lu. At that time Chung-hsing hsien-tzu (of Chin) was about to attack Ch'i, when he dreamt that he was having an argument with Duke Li (of Chin), whom he had murdered. The duke struck him with a halberd, and his head fell off before him. He kneeled down, (took it and re-) mounted it (on his neck). Steadying it with his hands while running away, he saw Kao, the shaman of Keng-yang. On a certain day thereafter, he saw the shaman on the road and talked to him (about the dream and the latter said he had had) the same (dream). (Legge V, 478) The last sentence is elliptical but the meaning seems clear.

22 Wang Ch'ung, p.337.

23 *Tso-chuan*, Chao 4; Legge V, 598-599.

24 *Han-shu* (*Po-na* ed.) 93:1b-2a.

Chapter V: Dream and Reality

1 See Arlene Sheila Gould, *Dream and Reality among Five North American Indian Peoples: An Examination of the Literature* (M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978).

2 Burton Watson (tr.), *The Complete Works of Chuang-tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp.47-48.

3 Ibid., p.47.

4 René Descartes, *Descartes: Philosophical Writings*, ed. Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter T. Geach (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1954), p.62.

5 See, for example, Norman Malcolm, *Dreaming* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959).

6 Arthur C. Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of Kowledge* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p.170.

7 Ibid., p.171.

8 Watson, p.49.

9 Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*, tr.

Chapter V, NOTES continued:

Philip Mairet (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), Chapter V, passim.

10 Mircea Eliade, Le chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase (Paris: Payot, 1951), pp.365ff.

11 Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, pp.101, 104.

12 Ibid., p.105.

13 Ibid., p.106.

14 Ibid., pp.110-111.

15 Li Yüan-cho, Chuang Lieh shih lun (Ten essays on Chuang-tzu and Lieh-tzu), in Tao-tsang 1001/1263 (se hsia).

16 See A.C. Graham (tr.), The Book of Lieh-tzu (London: John Murray, 1960), p.1.

17 For A.C. Graham's translation, see The Book of Lieh-tzu, p.67.

18 See also A.C. Graham, pp.68-69.

19 Cf. Graham, pp.69-70.

20 Leng-yen ching i-tu chien-chu (Peking: Keng-shen fo-ching liu-t'ung-ch'u, 1943) 5:3. I am indebted to Prof. Leon Hurvitz for helping me to translate these eight lines. As it stands, this translation is not done: just abandoned. See also Upāsaka Lu K'uan-yü (Charles Luk, tr.), The Sūrangama Sūtra (London: Rider and Co., 1966), p.116.

21 Edward Conze(tr.), Vajracchedikā Prajnāpāramitā, Serie Orientale Roma XIII (Rome: Instituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1957), p.92. Conze points out (pp.2-3) that probably owing to the exigencies of Chinese versification, Kumārajīva's translation of this verse gives only six comparisons instead of nine. Whatever the "exigencies" were, both Bodhiruci and Hsüan-tsang managed to include all the nine similes in their translations; see Lo Shih-hsien, Neng-tuan chin-kang po-jeh po-lo-mi-tuo ching tsuan-i (Hong Kong, 1975), p.188.

22 Taisho Tripitaka 8:347.

23 I Shih-chen, Lang-huan chi, in Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan, ts'e 148, chüan chung, pp.7b-8b.

24 Ibid., chüan hsia, p.11b-12a.

3

Chapter V, NOTES continued:

25 Ibid., p.11ab.

26 Leng-yen ching i-tu chien-chu 4:11-14; Luk, pp.95-96.

27 Ibid., 3:29; Luk, p.80.

28 Ibid., 2:20; Luk, p.49.

29 Ibid., 4:16. My translation differs from Luk's in the punctuation of the first sentence; see Luk, p.98.

30 Taishō 7:110.

31 Lien-ch'ih ta-shih, Chu-ch'uang san-pi, in Lien-ch'ih ta-shih ch'üan-chi (1897; rpt. Taipei: Chung-hua fo-chiao wen-hua-kuan, 1973), pp.67b-68a.

32 Kuan-yin-tzu, in Po-tzu ch'üan-shu, han 8, "Ssu fu," p.7b.

33 In recent times, experiments on the rapid eye movement seemed to show a correlation between the dream narrative and the way the eyes moved. This led William Dement, one of the pioneers in the field, to think that REMs were indeed an indication that dreaming was taking place, and that the action of the dream was not instantaneous but lasted as long as the REM period lasted (see Woods and Greenhouse, p.277). Without discounting Dement's reputation as a keen observer, the question remains whether this is true of all dreams involving action.

34 Kuan-yin-tzu, "Liu pi," p.8b.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., "Erh chu," p.2b.

38 Ibid., p.3a.

39 Ibid., "Ssu fu" chapter.

40 Ibid., "Chiu yao" chapter.

41 See Lu Hsün (ed.), T'ang Sung ch'uan-ch'i chi (Peking: Wen-hsüeh ku-chi k'an-hsing-she, 1955), pp.108-110.

42 Ibid., pp.81-91.

43 Ibid., pp.29-33.

Chapter V, NOTES continued:

44 Su Shih, "Hou Ch'ih-pi fu," in Ching-chin Tung-p'o wen-chi shih-lüeh (Peking: Wen-hsüeh ku-chi k'an-hsing-she, 1957), 1:4-5.

45 I Shih-chen, op. cit., chüan shang, p.21.

46 See Chou Ch'i-ming (ed.), Ming Ch'ing hsiao-hua ssu-chung (Hong Kong: T'ai-p'ing shu-chü, 1963), p.93.

47 Ibid., pp.1-5; see also Wu Chia-ch'ing, Chung-kuo hsiao-hua hsüan (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1971), "Introduction."

48 Cited in Chou Ch'i-ming, pp.122-123.

49 "Tuan" is a poetic equivalent for Fifth month in the Chinese lunar calendar. It refers to Tuan-yang, the so-called "Dragon-Boat Festival," which falls on the fifth of this month.

50 Mao Hsiang-lin, Mo-yü lu, in Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan III, 2066.

51 See Joseph Needham, Time and Eastern Man, Occasional Paper 21 (London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1965), p.v.

52 Marcel Granet, La Pensée chinoise, in L'Evolution de l'humanité: Synthèse collective XXV$_{bis}$ (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1950), pp.86, 88, 96, 113; cited in Joseph Needham (1965), p.7, n.1.

53 Needham, Science and Civilization in China II (Cambridge: The University Press, 1962), 288.

54 Needham, Time and Eastern Man, p.8; cf. Granet, La Pensée chinoise, pp.329ff.; Needham, SCC II, 289ff.

55 Needham, Time and Eastern Man, p.8.

56 Daniel Defoe, The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1869), pp.94-95: "After my broken and imperfect prayer was over, I drank the rum in which I had steeped the tobacco, which was so strong and rank of the tobacco that I could scarcely get it down; immediately upon this I went to bed. I found presently it flew up into my head violently; but I fell into a sound sleep, and waked no more till, by the sun, it must necessarily be near three o'clock in the afternoon the next day -- nay, to this hour I am partly of opinion that I slept all the next day and night, and till almost three the day after; for otherwise, I know not how I should lose a day out of my reckoning in the days of the week, as it appeared some years after I had done; for if I had lost

it by crossing and recrossing the Line, I should have lost more than one day; but certainly I lost a day in my account, and never knew which way."

Chapter VI: Toward a Theory of Chinese Dream Interpretation

1 Paul Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 28ff.

2 Norman Malcolm, op. cit., pp.83-90.

3 Calvin S. Hall and Robert L. Van de Castle, The Content Analysis of Dreams (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p.18.

4 Ch'en Shou, San-kuo chih (Po-na ed.), "Wei chih" 29:12b-13a.

5 In this regard, the Talmudic tradition seems to make an even stronger claim, namely, that all dreams are only as true as their interpretations. Hence the adage: "A dream that is not interpreted is like a letter that is not read." Cited in Hall and Van de Castle, p.23; see also Caillois, The Dream Adventure, p.xii.

6 Ch'en Shou, op. cit., "Wei chih" 29:12ab.

7 Artemidorus, Oneirocritica: The Interpretation of Dreams, tr. Robert J. White (Park Ridge, N.J.: Noyes Press, 1975), Bk.1, Sec.1 (p.14).

8 Ibid., I, 2 (p.15).

9 For the dating of this book, see Ch'ü Wan-li, op. cit., pp.159-171; Bernhard Karlgren, "The Early History of the Chou-li and the Tso-chuan texts," BMFEA 3 (1931); Sven Broman, "Studies on the Chou-li," BMFEA 33 (1961).

10 Chou-li, "Ch'un-kuan tsung-po" chapter. Cf. Richard B. Mather, (tr.), Shih-shuo hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), p.98, n.1.

11 Waley's translation; see Section 1.3.

12 Wang Fu, Ch'ien-fu lun, annotated Wang Chi-p'ei (Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1978), pp.371-372.

Chapter VI, NOTES continued:

13 Artemidorus defines theorematic dreams as "those which correspond exactly to their own dream-vision. For example, a man who was at sea dreamt that he suffered shipwreck, and it actually came true in the way that it had been presented in sleep." (I, 1, p.15).

14 _Meng-chan lei-k'ao_ 6:27a.

15 Ibid., 4:13a.

16 Wang Fu, op.cit., pp.376-377.

17 Artemidorus, p.15.

18 Ibid.

19 Wang Fu, p.373.

20 Artemidorus, p.21.

21 Liu I-ch'ing, _Shih-shuo hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World_, tr. Richard B. Mather (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), p.98.

Chapter VII: Methods of Chinese Dream Interpretation

1 Cf. Leslie Shepard (ed.), _Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology_ (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1978), p.247.

2 _Han-shu i-wen chih_ (_Po-na_ ed.) 10:32b.

3 See Chapter VI, n.9.

4 Sun I-jang, _Chou-li cheng-i_ (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1967) IV, 13.47:60-69.

5 Ibid., 13.48:88-94.

6 _Tso-chuan_, Chao 7; Legge V, 619.

7 Sun I-jang, 13.47:66.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., 13.48:95.

10 Ho Ping-yü, "Hou-i she-jih, po-hung kuan-jih, ch'üeh yu ch'i shih?" _Chung Pao Monthly_ 2 (Hong Kong: Chung-pao yüeh-k'an, March, 1980), 51-54.

Chapter VII, NOTES continued:

11 Edward C. Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest: Basic Concepts of Analytical Psychology (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p.38.

12 Hsü Tsung-yüan, op.cit., pp.82-84.

13 Meng-chan lei-k'ao 1:9a.

14 Ibid., 1:5b.

15 Hsiang-meng yü-hsia chi (Hong Kong: Ch'ang-hsing shu-chü, n.d.), p.81. For a discussion of this source, see Introduction.

16 Ibid., pp.82-83.

17 Artemidorus, II, 26(p.106).

18 Gustavus Hindman Miller, Ten Thousand Dreams Interpreted (Chicago: M.A. Donohue and Co., 1901), p.124.

19 Following J.R. Searle, I consider metonymy and synecdoche to be special cases of metaphor; see John T. Searle, Expression and Meaning (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.111.

20 Monroe Beardsley, Aesthetics (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958), p.134; cited in Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning (Fort Worth, Texas: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), p.46.

21 Meng-chan lei-k'ao 2:12b.

22 Meng-shu, in Wu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo ta-kuan (rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing, 1960), pp.627-629.

23 Charles Rycroft, The Innocence of Dreams (London: The Hogarth Press, 1979), p.86.

24 For a discussion of metaphor of this type, see J.T. Searle, op. cit., pp.91-94.

25 Li Shih-chen, Pen-ts'ao kang-mu (c. 16th cent.; rpt. Shanghai: Chin-chiang shu-chü, 1885) 48:126.

26 Rycroft, p.71.

27 Sui-shu 29 (Po-na ed.), "Lieh-chuan" 34:9a.

28 Cited in Richard Cavendish (ed.), Encyclopedia of the

Chapter VII, NOTES continued:

Unexplained (New York: McGraw Hill, 1974), p.78.

29 Artemidorus, IV, 80 (p.216).

30 In Chinese too, interest is called tzu-ch'ien, 'child-money', and capital mu-ch'ien, 'mother-money'. This metaphor is very old.

31 Meng-chan lei-k'ao 1:33b.

32 Yü-hsia chi, p.87.

33 Meng-chan lei-k'ao, 9:16a.

34 Meng-chan lei-k'ao 2:14b.

35 Ibid., 2:11b. Artemidorus devotes a whole section to dreams of tongues, including hairy ones; see Oneirocritica, I, 32 (p.33).

36 Meng-chan lei-k'ao, 2:16a.

37 Tuan Ch'eng-shih, op. cit., 8:50.

38 Liu An, Huai-nan-tzu (Ku-su: Chü-wen-t'ang, 1804; rpt. Taipei: Chung-kuo tzu-hsüeh ming-chu chi-ch'eng pien-yin chi-chin-hui), p.265.

39 Ibid.

40 Meng-chan lei-k'ao 1:3b (cited from the Chin-shu).

41 Ibid., 5:14a (cited from the San-kuo chih).

42 Ibid., 1:29b.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1 In Chinese:

Chang, Feng-i. Meng-chan lei-k'ao. Prefaced 1585.

Chang, Shih. Lun-yü Chang Hsüan-kung chieh. Ming manuscript; rpt. Taipei: Chung-kuo tzu-hsüeh ming-chu pien-yin chi-chin-hui, 1977.

Ch'en, Ch'i-yüan. Yung-hsien-chai pi-chi. Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan, 4 vols.; rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing shu-chü, 1962.

Ch'en, Shih-yüan. Meng-chan i-chih. Prefaced 1562. I-hai chu-ch'en, ts'e 10.

Ch'en, Shou. San-kuo chih. Po-na ed.

Ch'ien, Mu. Ling-hun yü hsin. Taipei: Lien-ching, 1974.

Chou, Ch'i-ming (ed.). Ming Ch'ing hsiao-hua ssu chung. Hong Kong: T'ai-p'ing shu-chü, 1963.

Chou, Liang-kung. Min hsiao-chi. Lung-wei mi-shu, 1794; rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing, 1969.

Chu-an. Jen-wu feng-su chih-tu ts'ung-t'an. Shanghai: I-chia-she, 1948.

Ch'ü, Wan-li. Ku-chi tao-tu. Hong Kong: Lü-yüan shu-tien, 1964.

Chuang, Yüan-ch'en. Shu-chü-tzu. Po-tzu ch'üan-shu, han 7. Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1919.

Ch'ung-k'an Sung-pen (CKSP) Chou-li chu-shu. Ed. Juan Yüan, 1815; rpt. Taipei: I-wen yin-shu-kuan, n.d.

CKSP Li-chi chu-shu.

CKSP Lun-yü chu-shu.

CKSP Shih-ching chu-shu.

CKSP Shu-ching chu-shu.

CKSP Tso-chuan chu-shu.

Erh-shih-ssu-shih. Po-na ed. Shanghai: Han-fen-lou, 1930-1937; rpt. Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1967.

Fan, Yeh, Hou Han shu. Po-na ed.

Fang, Lien-che Tu. "Ming meng." Ch'ing-hua hsüeh-pao 10.1, 1972.

Ho, Ping-yü. "Hou-i she-jih, po-hung kuan-jih, ch'üeh yu ch'i shih?" Chung Pao Monthly (Hong Kong) 2, March, 1980.

Hsiang-meng yü-hsia chi. Hong Kong: Ch'ang-hsing shu-chü, n.d.

Hsü, Tsung-yüan. Ti wang shih-chi chi-ts'un. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1964.

Hsü, Wen-ching. Chu-shu chi-nien t'ung-chien. Prefaced 1750; rpt. Taipei: I-wen, 1966.

Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan. Ed. Chang Hai-p'eng, 1805.

Hu, Hou-hsüan. Chia-ku-hsüeh Shang-shih lun-ts'ung ch'u-chi. 2 vols.; rpt. Hong Kong: Wen-yu-t'ang, 1970.

Huang, Chün-tsai. Chin-hu lang-mo. Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan III. Shanghai: Chin-pu shu-chü, n.d.; rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing shu-chü.

Huang, Pao-chen. Tseng-kuang shih-lei t'ung-pien. Shanghai: Wen-sheng shu-chü, 1915.

I, Shih-chen. Lang-huan chi. Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan, ts'e 148. Ed. Chang Hai-p'eng, 1805.

Ku, Shih. Han-shu i-wen chih chiang-shu. Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1924.

Kuan-sheng ti-chün sheng-chi t'u-chih. 1838 ed.; rpt. Hong Kong: Wu-sheng-t'ang, 1960.

Kuan-yin-tzu. Po-tzu ch'uan-shu, han 8. Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1919.

Leng-yen-ching i-tu chien-chu. Peking: Keng-shen fo-ching liu-t'ung-ch'u, 1943.

Li, Shih-chen. Pen-ts'ao kang-mu. Shanghai: Chin-chiang shu-chü, 1885.

Li, Yüan-cho. Chuang Lieh shih lun. Tao-tsang, se hsia, 1001/1263.

Lien-ch'ih ta-shih ch'üan-chi. 1897 ed.; rpt. Taipei: Chung-hua fo-chiao wen-hua-kuan, 1973.

Liu, An. Huai-nan-tzu. Ku-su: Chü-wen-t'ang, 1804; rpt. Taipei: Tzu-hsüeh ming-chu chi-ch'eng.

Liu, Ching-shu. I-yüan. Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yuan, ts'e 153.

Liu, Hsiang. Hsin hsü. Po-tzu ch'uan-shu, han 1. Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1919.

Liu, Hsieh. Wen-hsin tiao-lung: The Carving of Dragons and the Literary Mind. Tr. and annotated Vincent Yu-chung Shih. New York: Columbia University Press, 1957; bilingual ed. Taipei: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1970.

Lo, Shih-hsien. Neng-tuan chin-kang po-je po-lo-mi-tuo ching tsuan-i. Kowloon: Fo-chiao fa-hsiang hsüeh-hui, 1975.

Lu, Hsün (ed.). T'ang Sung ch'uan-ch'i chi. Peking: Wen-hsüeh ku-chi k'an-hsing-she, 1955.

Lung-wei mi-shu. Ed. Ma Chün-liang. 1794.

Mao, Hsiang-lin. Mo-yü lu. Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan III, rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing shu-chü.

Meng-shu. Wu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo ta-kuan. Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1926; rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing, 1960.

Nei-ching chiang-i. Shanghai: K'o-hsüeh chi-shu ch'u-pan-she, 1964.

Pan, Ku, et al. Han-shu. Po-na ed.

Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan. Shanghai: Chin-pu shu-chü, n.d.; rpt. Taipei: Hsin-hsing shu-chü.

P'ing-chin-kuan ts'ung-shu. Ed. Sun Hsing-yen. 1807.

Po-tzu ch'üan-shu. Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1919.

Su, Shih. Ching-chin Tung-p'o wen-chi shih-lüeh. Peking: Wen-hsüeh ku-chi k'an-hsing-she, 1957.

Sun, I-jang. Chou-li cheng-i. 86 chüan, prefaced 1899; rpt. Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1967.

Sun, Ssu-miao. Ch'ien-chin pao-yao. Ed. Kuo Ssu. P'ing-chin-kuan ts'ung-shu, i-chi, ed. Sun Hsing-yen, 1807.

T'ao, Ch'ien. Sou-shen hou-chi. Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan, ts'e 152.

Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō. 85 vols. Tokyo: Society for the Publication of the Taisho edition of the Tripitaka, 1924-32.

Tuan, Ch'eng-shih. Yu-yang tsa-tsu. 1608 ed.; rpt. Taipei: Hsueh-sheng shu-chü, 1975.

Wang, Chung. Lun heng. Shanghai: Jen-min chu-pan-she, 1974.

Wang, Fu. Ch'ien-fu lun. Annotated Wang Chi-p'ei. Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1978.

Wang, Meng-ou. Li-chi chin-chu chin-i. Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1970.

Wang, Yung-ch'üan. "Hang-chou ch'i-meng ku-shih." Folklore Weekly of National Sun Yat-sen University VI; rpt. Taipei: The Chinese Association for Folklore, 1970.

Wei, Cheng, et al. Sui-shu. Po-na ed.

Wei, Hsiang-shu. Han-sung-t'ang yung-yen. Han-sung-t'ang ch'üan-chi. Prefaced 1708.

Wu, Chia-ch'ing. Chung-kuo hsiao-hua hsüan. Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1971.

Wu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo ta-kuan. Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1926.

Yü, Yüeh. Chiu-chiu hsiao-hsia lu. Ch'un-tsai-t'ang ch'üan-chi, ts'e 153. 1892.

2 In Other Languages:

Artemidorus. Oneirocritica: The Interpretation of Dreams. Tr. and commentary Robert J. White. Park Ridge, N.J.: Noyes Press, 1975.

Beardsley, Monroe. Aesthetics. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958.

Broman, Sven. "Studies on the Chou-li." BMFEA 33, 1961.

Caillois, Roger. The Dream Adventure. New York: The Orion Press, 1963.

Chang, Kwang-chih. Shang Civilization. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.

Conze, Edward (tr.). Vajracchedikā Prajnāpāramitā. Serie Orientale Roma XIII. Rome: Instituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1957.

Danto, Arthur C. Analytical Philosophy of Knowledge. London: Cambridge University Press, 1968.

Defoe, Daniel. The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe. London: George Routledge and Sons, 1869.

Descartes: Philosophical Writings. Ed. Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter T. Geach. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1954.

Eliade, Mircea. Le Chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase. Paris: Payot, 1951.

_____. Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities. Tr. Philip Mairet. New York: Harper and Row, 1960.

Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology. Ed. Leslie Shepard. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1978.

Encyclopedia of the Unexplained. Ed. Richard Cavendish. New York: McGraw Hill, 1974.

Freud, Sigmund. The Interpretation of Dreams. Tr. and ed. James Strachey. New York: Basic Books, 1955.

_____. "The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words." The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud XI. Tr. J. Strachey et al. London: The Hogarth Press, 1957; rpt. 1964.

Garfield, Patricia L. Creative Dreaming. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974; rpt. Toronto: Ballantine Books, 1976.

Gould, Arlene Sheila. Dream and Reality among Five North American Indian Peoples. M.A. thesis, U.B.C., 1978.

Graham, A.C. The Book of Lieh Tzu. London: John Murray, 1960.

Granet, Marcel. La Pensée chinoise. L'Evolution de l'humanité: Synthèse collective XXV. Paris: Albin Michel, 1950.

Hall, Calvin S. and Robert L. Van de Castle. The Content Analysis of Dreams. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966.

Hayden, George A. Crime and Punishment in Medieval Chinese Drama: Three Judge Pao Plays. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Hippocrates. The Medical Works of Hippocrates. Tr. John Chadwick and W.N. Mann. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1950.

Hultkrantz, Åke. Conceptions of the Soul among North American Indians. Monograph Series 1. Stockholm: Ethnographical Museum of Sweden, 1953.

Humphries, Rolf (tr.). The Satires of Juvenal. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958.

Karlgren, Bernhard. "The Early History of the Chou-li and the Tso-chuan Texts." BMFEA 3, 1931.

Keightley, David N. Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Legge, James. The Chinese Classics. 5 vols. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960; rpt. 1970.

Luk, Charles (Lu K'uan-yü, tr.). The Sūrangama Sūtra. London: Rider and Co., 1966.

Malcolm, Norman. Dreaming. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959.

Mather, Richard B. (tr.) Shih-shuo hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976.

Miller, Gustavus Hindman. Ten Thousand Dreams Interpreted. Chicago: M.A. Donohue and Co., 1901.

Needham, Joseph. Science and Civilization in China. Vol. II. Cambridge: The University Press, 1962.

_____. Time and Eastern Man. Occasional Paper 21. London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1965.

Oppenheim, A. Leo. "Dreams in Ancient Near East." Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s. 46, 1956.

Overmyer, Daniel L. "Acceptance in Context: Death and Traditional China." Death and Eastern Thought. Ed. Frederick H. Holck. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974.

Ricoeur, Paul. Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.

_____. Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning. Fort Worth, Texas: Texas Christian University Press, 1976.

Rycroft, Charles. The Innocence of Dreams. London: The Hogarth Press, 1979.

Searle, John T. Expression and Meaning. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

Soymié, Michel. "Les Songes et leur interprétation en Chine." Les Songes et leur interprétation. Sources Orientales 2. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1958.

Tylor, Edward B. Primitive Culture. Vol. I, 4th ed. London: John Murray, 1903.

Van de Castle, Robert L. "Psychology of Dreaming." Dreams and Dreaming. Ed. S.G.M. Lee and A.R. Mayes. Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1973.

Veith, Ilza (tr.) Huang-ti nei-ching su-wen: The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1949.

von Grunebaum, G.E. and Roger Caillois (ed.). The Dream and Human Societies. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.

von Koeppen, Georg. "Zwei Träume aus dem Tso-chuan und Ihre Interpretation." Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 119. 1969.

Waley, Arthur. The Books of Songs. London: Allen and Unwin, 1937.

_____. The Secret History of the Mongols and Other Pieces. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963.

Welch, Holmes. The Parting of the Way. Boston: Beacon Press, 1957.

_____. The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.

Whitmont, Edward C. The Symbolic Quest: Basic Concepts of Analytical Psychology. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969; New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

Woods, L. Ralph and Herbert B. Greenhouse (ed.). The New World of Dreams. New York: Macmillan, 1974.

Zelazny, Roger. The Dream Master. London: Panther Books, 1968.

APPENDIX

LIST OF TRANSLITERATED CHINESE WORDS

1 Words and Phrases:

chan-meng 占夢
chen 真
chen-hsing 真性
ch'eng-huang 城隍
cheng meng 正夢
ch'i 氣
chi meng 觭夢
chia 假
chia hsü 甲戌
chih 直
ch'ih 尺
ch'ih 齒
chih meng 致夢
ching 精
ching-ch'i 精氣
ching-shen 精神
ch'ou p'i-nang 臭皮囊
chü meng 懼夢
chuang-yüan 狀元
chüeh-ch'i 厥氣
chung 中
chung-shu she-jen 中書舍人
chung-tao 中道
fan 反
feng 風
fu 賦
han 含
hou 后
hsi 喜. 習
hsi meng 喜夢
hsien-chih 咸陟
hsien-kung 先公
hsien-pi 先妣
hsiang 想
hsiang 象
hsing 性
hsü-hsü jan 栩栩然
hu-lu 胡盧
hui 煇
hun 魂
i 意
i-yu 乙酉
jen 人. 仞
jen-shen 壬申
jen-tzu 壬子
jen-wei 人位
jen-yin 壬寅
ju-lai-tsang 如來藏
pen-miao yüan-hsin 本妙圓心
kan 感
kuan 官
kuan 棺
kui 鬼
kui 歸
k'ung 空
k'ung chi shih se 空即是色
kou 垢
lan 蘭

lei 類
li 力
li chi li fei 離即離非
  shih chi fei chi 是即非即
li chien hou 利建侯
ling 齡
ling 靈
liu fu 六府
liu hou 六候
mieh 滅
mu-ch'ien 母錢
mu min 牧民
nan 難
nuo 儺
o meng 噩夢
pa-ming 八命
pen chüeh 本覚
pi-chi hsiao-shuo 筆記小說
ping 病
ping-ch'en 丙辰
p'o 魄
pu 部
san 傘
san 散
san-chao 三兆
san-i 三易
san-meng 三夢
shang tai-fu 上大夫
she-meng 舍萌
shen 神
sheng 生
sheng-hsien 聖賢
sheng-yüan 省元
shih 時
shih-chin 眂祲
shih-hui 十煇
ssu meng 思夢
ta chüeh 大覚
ta nuo 大儺
t'ai-pu 大卜
t'ang 唐
teng 登
t'i 剃
t'i 替
ti-huang 地黃
ti-li 地理
t'i tzu 剃髭
t'i tzu 替滋
t'ien-hsiang 天象
t'ien-jen ho-i 天人合一
tsai 宰
t'u 土
tu-ch'üan 獨拳
tu-ch'üan 獨權
tzu-ch'ien 子錢
wang 妄
wei 未
wen-hsüeh 文学
wu 無
wu fu 無釜
wu fu 無婦
wu-hsiang 無相
wu meng 寤夢
wu-tso 無作
yu 有
yu 憂
yüan 元
yüan chou tsang kuan 元州牂管
  ch'ü chu mi t'i 娶竺米題
yüan heng 元亨

yün 運

2 Personal Names:

Chang Chan 張瞻
Chang Ch'un 張春
Chao Chih 趙直
Chao Ching-tzu 趙景子
Chao Liang-ch'i 趙良器
Chao Shih-fu 趙式夫
Ch'eng, Duke of Wei 衛成公
Ch'eng, King of Chou 周成王
Ch'eng Chien 承檢
Cheng Chiu 鄭就
Cheng Mao 鄭茂
Chia Pao-yü 賈寶玉
Ciang, Lady 姜氏
Chieh 桀
Ch'ien, Lady 錢氏
Chin Ch'un-ch'iu 金春秋
Ch'in Chung-yüan 秦仲原
Ch'ing-tu 慶都
Chou, Duke of 周公
Chou, King of Shang 紂
Chou Hsüan 周宣
Chou-ko 婤姶
Ch'u, Viscount of 楚子
Chung-hsing hsien-tzu 中行獻子
Ch'un-yü Fen 淳于棼
Feng 風.湡
Feng Hou 風后
Fu-hsi 伏羲
Fu Yüeh 傅說
Han Hsuan-tzu 韓宣子
Ho Chih 何祇
Hsi K'ang 嵇康
Hsi Yü-chieh 奚玉階
Hsiang 相
Hsiang, Duke of Wei 衛襄公

Hsiao Tao-ch'eng 蕭道成
Hsü Chen-chün 许真君
Hsü Hsün 许遜
Hsüeh Sung 薛嵩
Hu, Lady 胡氏
Hua-t'ing 華亭
Huang Shan-ku 黄山谷
Huang-ti 黄帝
I-chiang 邑姜
I Chih 伊摯
I Yin 伊尹
Jung-huang 容黄
K'ang-shu 康叔
Kao, Shaman 巫皐
Kuan-kung 關公
Kuan-ti 關帝
Kuan Yü 關羽
Kun 鯀
Kung-sun Hsieh 公孫洩
Kung-sun Tuan 公孫段
Kuo, Lady 郭氏
Kuo P'u 郭樸
Li, Duke of Chin 晋厲公
Li Mu 力牧
Li Sheng 李晟
Li Ti 李廸
Liang-chih 良止
Liang-hsiao 良霄
Lien P'o 廉頗
Liu Ch'ao-lin 劉巢林
Liu Hsüan 劉炫
Liu Tzu 劉滋
Lu Mao-fang 陸懋芳
Lu Yu-tse 盧有則
Lü Tung-pin 呂洞賓
Ma Liang 馬亮

Meng-chih 孟縶
Meng-hsiang 孟祥
Mu, Duke of Cheng 鄭穆公
Ning Wu-tzu 甯武子
Niu 牛
Pai Chü-i 白居易
Pang-ch'eng 邦城
Pao-chi 寶姬
P'ao-hsi 庖羲
P'ei Yüan-yü 裴元裕
P'eng-tsu 彭祖
Pi-ch'ing 陛卿
Po-ch'ou 伯儵
Po-yu 伯有
Sheng-po 聲伯
Shih Ch'ao 史朝
Shih Kou 史苟
Shih Lien 石廉
Shih Sung 史嵩
Shou (= Chou, King of Shang) 受
Shu-sun Mu-tzu 叔孫穆子
Shun 舜
Ssu-ma T'ien 司馬恬
Ssu-tai 駟帶
Ta-hsin 大心
Tai (= Ssu Tai) 帶
Tai 戴
T'ai-shu 太叔
T'an-yüan, Lord 探園公
T'ang, King of Shang 湯
T'ao K'an 陶侃
Teng Ai 鄧艾
Teng, Master 等師
Teng T'ung 鄧通
Tsai-wo 宰我
Ts'ang-chieh 蒼頡

Ts'ao, Lord 曹公
Tsou Yen 鄒衍
Ts'ui P'eng 崔彭
Tuan, Kung-sun 段
Tuan 端
Tung-kuan 東莞 地名
Tzu-ch'an 子產
Tzu-erh 子耳
Tzu-hsi 子西
Tzu-kung 子貢
Tzu-k'ung 子孔
Tzu-liang 子良
Tzu-ssu 子思
Tzu-ta-shu 子大叔
Tzu-yü 子魚
Wang Chiu-lien 王九蓮
Wang Ming-yüeh 王命岳
Wang Shao 王劭
Wang Tun 王敦
Wang Wei 王尉
Wei Ch'eng-chi 魏承吉
Wei Chieh 衛玠
Wen, Madame 聞氏
Wu Chün 王君
Wu-ting 武丁
Wu Yü-pi 吳與弼
Yao 堯
Yao-p'u (Wei) 瑤圃
Yen-chi 燕姞
Yin (Mr.) 尹氏
Yin Hao 殷浩
Ying-ch'i 應麒
Ying-lung 應龍
Yü, King 禹
Yü 虞
Yü Ch'ien 于謙
Yüan 元

Yüeh Fei 岳飛

Yüeh Kuang 樂廣

3 Place Names:

Ch'ang-an 長安

Chiang-ning 江寧

Ch'eng-p'u 城濮

Ch'i 杞

Chin-chiang 晉江

Chin-hua 金華

Chin-ling 金陵

Chien-t'ai 漸臺

Chien-wei 犍為

Chiu-li 九鯉

Chü 莒

Ho-fei 合肥

Hsien-men tung 仙門洞

Hsien-yu 仙游

Hsin-lo 新羅

Hsüan-tzu (Lane) 鏇子巷

Huai-an 淮安

Huan 洹

Keng-tsung 庚宗

Keng-yang 梗陽

Ku-su 姑蘇

Li-shen 貍脤

Lin-chiang 臨江

Lin-kao 臨皋

Mao-chia pu 茅家埠

Meng-chu 孟諸

P'ei-chou 邳州

P'ing-ch'iao 平橋

Po 亳

San-ho 三河

Shou-ch'un 壽春

Sung-chiang 松江

Tan-ling 丹陵

T'ang 唐

Ti-ch'iu 帝丘

Tseng 鄫

Wu-ting (bridge) 武定橋

Yu-shen 有莘

Yü, Mount 羽山

Yü, abyss of 羽淵

Yün-chien 雲間

4 Other Proper Names:

An-yang ching-chieh 安養境界
Chia-ching 嘉靖
Chia-ch'ing 嘉慶
Chih-li 趾離
Chiu-ho, Lord 九何君
Chun 屯
Hsien-feng 咸豐
I, Constellation 翼
K'ang-hsi 康熙
Kuan-yin 觀音
Kuang-ling san 廣陵散
Pi 比
Po-ch'i 伯奇
T'ai-k'ang 太康
T'ai-p'ing 太平
Ti (barbarians) 狄
Ti (god) 帝
Tuan-yang 端陽
Wan-li 萬曆

5 Names of Authors and Editors:

Chang Chi 張機
Chang Feng-i 張鳳翼
Chang Hua 張華
Chang Shih 張栻
Ch'en Ch'i-yüan 陳其元
Ch'en Shih-yüan 陳士元
Ch'en Kao-mo 陳臯謨
Ch'en Shou 陳壽
Cheng Hsüan 鄭玄
Ch'ien Mu 錢穆
Chou Ch'i-ming 周啓明
Chou Liang-kung 周亮工
Chu-an 銖庵
Chu Hsi 朱熹
Ch'ü Wan-li 屈萬里
Chuang Yüan-ch'en 莊元臣
Feng Meng-lung 馮夢龍
Ho Ping-yü 何炳郁
Hsing Ping 邢昺
Hsü Hsüan 許炫, 徐鉉
Hsü Tsung-yüan 徐宗元
Hsü Wen-ching 徐文靖
Hu Hou-hsüan 胡厚宣
Huang Chün-tsai 黃鈞宰
Huang-fu Mi 皇甫謐
I Shih-chen 伊世珍

Kao Yu 高誘
K'ung An-kuo 孔安國
K'ung Ying-ta 孔穎達
Kuo Ssu 郭思
Li Kung-tso 李公佐
Li Shih-chen 李時珍
Li Yüan-cho 李元卓
Lieh Yü-k'ou 列禦寇
Lien-ch'ih ta-shih 蓮池大師
Liu An 劉安
Liu Ching-shu 劉敬叔
Liu Hsiang 劉向
Liu Hsieh 劉勰
Liu I-ch'ing 劉義慶
Liu P'an-sui 劉盼遂
Lo Shih-hsien 羅時憲
Lu Hsün 魯迅
Ma Chün-liang 馬俊良
Mao Hsiang-lin 毛祥麟
Pai Hsing-chien 白行簡
Pan Ku 班固
Shen Chi-chi 沈既濟
Su Shih 蘇軾
Sun I-jang 孫詒讓
Sun Hsing-yen 孫星衍
Sun Ssu-miao 孫思邈
T'ang Hsien-tsu 湯顯祖
T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛
Tu Yü 杜預
Tuan Ch'eng-shih 段成式
Wang Chi-p'ei 汪繼培
Wang Ch'ung 王充
Wang Fu 王符
Wang Meng-ou 王夢鷗
Wang Yung-ch'üan 王永泉
Wei Cheng 魏徵
Wei Hsiang-shu 魏象樞
Wu Chia-ch'ing 伍稼青
Yü Yüeh 俞樾
Fang-Tu Lien-che 房杜聯喆
Juan Yüan 阮元
Ho Ping-yü 何炳郁
Huang Pao-chen 黃葆真
Ku Shih 顧實
Li Yüan-cho 李元卓
Chang Hai-p'eng 張海鵬

6 Names of Publishers:

Ch'ang-hsing shu-chü 長興書局
Chin-chiang shu-chü 錦江書局
Chin-pu shu-chü 進步書局
Chü-wen-t'ang 聚文堂
Chung-hua fo-chiao wen-hua-kuan 中華佛教文化館
Chung-hua tzu-hsüeh ming-chu chi-ch'eng pien-yin chi-chin-hui 中國子學名著集成編印基金會
Fo-chiao fa-hsiang hsüeh-hui 佛教法相學會
Han-fen-lou 涵芬樓
Hsüeh-sheng shu-chü 學生書局
Hsin-hsing shu-chü 新興書局
I-chia-she 一家社
I-wen yin-shu-kuan 藝文印書館
Jen-min wei-sheng ch'u-pan-she 人民衛生出版社
Keng-shen fo-chiao liu-t'ung-ch'u 庚申佛教流通處
K'o-hsüeh chi-shu ch'u-pan-she 科學技術經出版社
Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she 古籍出版社
Lien-ching shu-tien 聯經書店
Lü-yüan shu-tien 綠原書店
Sao-yeh shan-fang 掃葉山房
T'ai-p'ing shu-chü 太平書局
Wen-hsüeh ku-chi k'an-hsing-she 文學古籍刊行社
Wen-sheng shu-chü 文盛書局
Wen-yu-t'ang 文友堂
Wu-sheng-t'ang 武聖堂

7 Titles of Written Works:

Chan-meng ching 占夢經
Chen-chung chi 枕中記
Chi-shen lu 稽神錄
Chi-i 祭義
Ch'i-wu lun 齊物論
Chi yao 紀妖

Chia-ku-hsüeh Shang-shih lun-ts'ung ch'u-chi 甲骨學商史論叢初集

Ch'ien-chin pao-yao 千金寶要

Ch'ien-fu lun 潛夫論

Chin-hu lang-mo 金壺浪墨

Chin-kang ching 金剛經

Ching-chin Tung-p'o wen-chi shih-lüeh 經進東坡文集事略

Ch'ing-hua hsüeh-pao 清華學報

Chiu-chiu hsiao-hsia lu 九九銷夏錄

Chiu yao 九藥

Chou-kung chieh meng 周公解夢

Chou-li cheng-i 周禮正義

Chou Mu-wang 周穆王

Chu-ch'uang san-pi 竹窗三筆

Chu-shu chi-nien t'ung-chien 竹書紀年統箋

Chuang Chou meng hu-tieh lun 莊周夢胡蝶論

Chuang Lieh shih lun 莊列十論

Ch'un-tsai-t'ang ch'üan-chi 春在堂全集

Ch'ung-k'an Sung-pen . . . chu-shu 重刊宋本...注疏

Chung-kuan lun 中觀論

Chung-kuo hsiao-hua hsüan 中國笑話選

Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang-shih chung chih kui-shen-kuan 中國思想史中之鬼神觀

Chung-pao 中報

Erh chu 二柱

Erh-shih-ssu shih 二十四史

Han-shu i-wen-chih chiang-shu 漢書藝文志講疏

Han-sung-t'ang ch'üan-chi 寒松堂全集

Han-sung-t'ang yung-yen 寒松堂庸言

Han-tan meng 邯鄲夢

Hang-chou ti ch'i-meng ku-shih 杭州的祈夢故事

Hou Ch'ih-pi fu 後赤壁賦

Hou-i she-jih po-hung kuan-jih ch'ueh-yu ch'i-shih 后羿射日白虹貫日確有其事

Hsiang-meng yü-hsia chi 祥夢玉匣記

Hsiao fu 笑府

Hsiao tao 笑倒

Hsin hsü 新序
Hsü Sou-shen chi 續搜神記
Hsü Chen-chün yü-hsia chi 許真君玉匣記
Hsü Tao-tsang 續道藏
Hsüan-ming wu-ch'i 宣明五氣
Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan 學津討原
Huang-liang meng 黃粱夢
Huang-ti ch'ang-liu chan-meng 黃帝長柳占夢
Huang-ti nei-ching su-wen 黃帝內經素問
Huai-nan-tzu 淮南子
I-yüan 異苑 I-hai chu-ch'en 藝海珠塵
Jen-wu feng-su chih-tu ts'ung-t'an 人物風俗制度叢談
Kan-te ch'ang-liu chan-meng 甘德長柳占夢
Ku-chi tao-tu 古籍導讀
Kuan-sheng ti-chün sheng-chi t'u-chih 關聖帝君聖蹟圖誌
Kuan-yin-tzu 關尹子
Lang-huan chi 瑯嬛記
Leng-yen i-tu chien-chu 楞嚴易讀簡注
Li-chi chin-chu chin-i 禮記今註今譯
Lien-ch'ih ta-shih ch'uan-chi 蓮池大師全集
Ling-hun yü hsin 靈魂與心
Ling-shu ching 靈樞經
Liu pi 六匕
Lun heng chi-chieh 論衡集解
Lun ssu 論死
Lun-yü Chang Hsüan-kung chieh 論語張宣公解
Lung-wei mi-shu 龍威秘書
Meng-chan i-chih 夢占逸旨
Meng-chan lei-k'ao 夢占類考
Meng lieh 夢列
Meng-shu 夢書
Min hsiao-chi 閩小紀
Ming Ch'ing hsiao-hua ssu chung 明清笑話四種
Ming meng 明夢
Mo-yü lu 墨餘錄
Mo-ho po-je po-luo-mi-tuo ching 摩訶般若波羅蜜經

Nan-k'o t'ai-shou chuan 南柯太守傳
Nei-ching chiang-i 内经講義
Neng-tuan chin-kang po-je po-luo-mi-tuo ching tsuan-i
能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多经纂義
Pen-ching hsün 本经训
Pen-ts'ao kang-mu 本草綱目
Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan 筆记小说大觀
Po-tzu ch'üan-shu 百子全書
Po-wu chih 博物志
P'ing-chin-kuan ts'ung-shu 平津館叢書
San chu 三柱
San-kuo chih 三國志
San-meng chi 三夢记
Shang-han lun 傷寒论
Shih-lei t'ung-pien 事類统编
Shih meng 世夢
Shih-shuo hsin-yü 世说新语
Shu-chü-tzu 叔苴子
Shuo meng 说夢
Sou-shen hou-chi 搜神後记
Ssu fu 四府
Ssu kan 斯干
Su-wen 素問
Ta chih-tu lun 大智度论
Taishō shinshū Daizō kyō 大正新脩大藏经
T'an-kung 檀弓
T'ang Sung Ch'uan-ch'i chi 唐宋傳奇集
Ti wang shih-chi chi-ts'un 帝王世纪輯存
Ting kui 订鬼
Tseng-pu shih-lei t'ung-pien 增補事類统编
Wen-hsin tiao-lung 文心雕龍
Wen-wang shih-tzu 文王世子
Wu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo ta-kuan 五朝小说大觀
Wu-yang 無羊
Yin-jen chan-meng k'ao 殷人占夢考
Yüeh-ming shang 说命上
Yung-hsien-chai pi-chi 庸閒齋筆记