Divining Political Legitimacy in a Late Ming Dream Encyclopedia The Encyclopedia and its Historical Context

Dire la légitimité politique selon une encyclopédie oniromantique de la fin des Ming

夢占與政治：晚明夢書中的政治合法性研究

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Divining Political Legitimacy in a Late Ming Dream Encyclopedia*

The Encyclopedia and its Historical Context

Brigid E. Vance

The following entry in the 1562 Ming encyclopedia *Guidelines for Dreams and Dream Divination* (*Meng zhan yi zhi*; hereafter *Guidelines for Dreams*) demonstrated that the right to rule could be communicated through a dream: “Emperor Guangwu of the Eastern Han dreamed he rode a red dragon up to heaven. Consequently, Feng Yi and the other generals urged him to establish himself as ruler.” The encyclopedia also included earlier extant versions, including one from *Han Records of the Eastern Tower* (*Dong guan han ji*), visually set off from the entry, which provided further details about the dream and the context:

“Emperor Guangwu summoned Feng Yi and said, ‘I dreamed I rode a dragon to heaven. When I awoke, I realized that my heart trembled with fear.’ Feng Yi bowed and congratulated him, ‘Thus is heaven’s mandate expressed through the spirit. Your heart trembling demonstrates you have the vigilant and serious nature of a ruler.’ Therefore, he [Feng Yi] and the other generals discussed [the dream] and agreed that [Guangwu] should ascend the throne.”¹

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1. Chen 2002: 432. All citations for Chen Shiyuan’s work are from the 2002 photographic reprint of the 1850 edition of the work in *Artistic Oceans and Pearl Dust* (*Yi hai zhu chen*). The dream narrative examples in the main text of the 1850 edition are included in the 1636 “Dream Origins” (*Meng yuan*) section of *An Explication of the Profundities in the Forest of Dreams* (*Meng lin xuan jie*; hereafter *Forest of Dreams*). Note that the 1636 publication excluded the locus classicus for the dream narrative examples. For more on *Forest of Dreams*, including edition comparison and relationship with

The dream and its recorded interpretation granted legitimacy to Emperor Guangwu's rule and also conveyed the message that dreams were acceptable means of asserting legitimacy. The encyclopedic compiler did not include the time of the dream, its interpretation, or subsequent recording in the entry. In the dream narrative, the dream took place before Emperor Guangwu was enthroned as ruler. Feng Yi, who interpreted the dream, was the means by which the Emperor's claim on the throne became evident both to the dreamer and to others around him. The symbolism of the dream carried legitimating weight and offered the dreamer an aura of authority in the eyes of those around him—from the generals and those who read the recorded dream entry from the time of its initial recording to later readers who read its entry in the Ming.

How did Chinese rulers demonstrate legitimacy? Other scholars have documented the use of astronomical predictions in legitimating rule throughout the dynastic histories.² Astronomy in general and calendar making in particular, with attention to the accurate prediction of eclipses and the timing of other celestial anomalies, were a state affair. In order for the ruler and the dynasty to maintain the mandate of heaven, the state-adopted calendar needed to align with celestial realities. An accurate calendar was a measure of political legitimacy and reflected heaven's approval of the dynastic order, while an inaccurate calendar delegitimized the current ruler and indicated heaven's disapproval of the dynastic order.

Another way in which rulers communicated their legitimacy was through dreams, interpreted accordingly and documented in textual records. At the end of the Ming dynasty, encyclopedic compilers such as Chen Shiyuan collected

Guidelines for Dreams, see Lackner 1985, Liu 2003, Drettas 2007, Odaira 2012 and Vance 2012. *Guidelines for Dreams* was reprinted in 1833 in *Returning to the Clouds Miscellany* (*Gui yun bie ji*). Richard Strassberg translated Chen Shiyuan's *Guidelines for Dreams and Dream Divination*, which serves as an English introduction to the language, contents, and style common to this genre. In addition to translating Chen Shiyuan's dream encyclopedia, Strassberg also surveyed the history of Chinese dream lore, proceeding through Shang period oracle bones and dream interpretation manuals dating from the Warring States period, to Han rhapsodies (*fu*-4), Six Dynasties tales of the strange (*zhiguai*), Buddhist and Daoist theorists and finally ending with thinkers from the Song and early Ming. Strassberg maintained that for Chen, dreams were real, important, and worthy of investigation; importantly, dream interpretation was not a mechanical process, but depended on the insight of the interpreter. See Strassberg 2008. For a comparison of extant editions of *Guidelines for Dreams*, see Shimizu 2015: 107-123. For a discussion on the relationship between Chen Shiyuan's encyclopedia and the *Rites of Zhou*, see Ueno 2008: 40-57.

2. See Eberhard 1967, Elman 2005, and Sivin 2009.

dream examples into encyclopedias, offering a refracted look at a legitimated past. In *Guidelines for Dreams*, Chen Shiyuan drew dreams into a socio-political context of legitimacy and authority. *Guidelines for Dreams* reveals that dream interpretations were central to a shared understanding of the past, the then-unfolding present, and the future. Moreover, dream interpreters were central to revealing dream interpretations. Dream interpretations were not limited to the individual dreamer, but impacted the lives of others connected to the dreamer by familial, marital, fraternal, or political relationship as well.

In this article, I explore the relationship between dreams and political legitimacy as mediated through the role of dream interpreter. Through the lens of dream narrative examples culled from a late Ming dream encyclopedia, I examine the different ways in which political legitimacy was conveyed and, in effect, promoted or removed through dream interpretations. Political legitimacy was often communicated through a dream, which worked as a contract, binding dreamed symbolic reality to political reality. The dream interpreter was recognized as the one who helped bind symbolic reality to political reality and as such wielded considerable political power. In the earlier quoted example of Emperor Guangwu and his dreamed dragon, dream interpreter Feng Yi used the dream to offer evidence to demonstrate that the dreamer met with heaven's approval. According to Feng Yi, this dream was a clear sign that Emperor Guangwu had the right to rule.

Guidelines for Dreams was and is an essential vehicle for the transmission of ideas about dreams during the Ming. A study of this encyclopedia reveals what Ming literati understood to be the case about dreams, or what they wanted others to know or believe about dreams. Chen Shiyuan—and the compilers of the earlier texts upon which he drew—selected certain records that reflected ideas about dreams and interpretations. Specifically, dreams were interpretable and dreams could be used to indicate political legitimacy. The dream narratives contained in *Guidelines for Dreams* were not invented anew in a social vacuum, but rather re-contextualized and put into renewed circulation with the publication of *Guidelines for Dreams*.

Although it is impossible to reconstruct the historical reading experience of *Guidelines for Dreams*, it is possible to imagine how a late Ming reader might have approached the text. The encyclopedia was comprised of multiple texts borrowed from other sources and shaped by the different formats of its varied components. Given the truncated dream narratives, readers likely searched for sections of interest rather than intensely reading cover to cover. In that

sense, the encyclopedia offered choices to readers. They could skim through the contents, pausing to read more closely when the topic interested them.³

Here, I allow the fictional elements to become part of my historical analysis.⁴ What is useful and interesting about these dream narratives is not whether they were true or false or even whether they were invented ad hoc. Whether or not the dreamers did or did not really exist, whether or not their dreams were related as wholly as remembered, whether or not the dream interpreters did or did not really exist, whether or not their interpretations subsequently came true or not—none of that matters for the purposes of understanding the content and function of the work.

Neither the compiler, subsequent editors, or even presumably the readers questioned the veracity or authenticity of the narrative examples in *Guidelines for Dreams*. Chen Shiyuan drew the dream narrative examples in *Guidelines for Dreams* from a variety of textual sources and he included the titles of his sources for the encyclopedic readers. The examples thus carried authoritative weight, even if they were not literally true.

I select and analyze dream interpretation examples from *Guidelines for Dreams* that deal with political appointments or political decisions. First, I introduce the historical source and its relevant context. Next, I examine political dreams that were interpreted according to a particular symbolic association, as in Emperor Guangwu's dreamed ride to heaven on a dragon, which indicated his right to rule. Then, I consider the use of the dream interpretation technique of homophony as used by dream interpreters. Finally, I turn to the use of glyptomancy (*chai zi*), the dissection and subsequent rearrangement of disparate components of Chinese characters with the purpose of revealing hidden meanings.

Dream interpreters relied upon common knowledge about dream interpretation techniques to present their interpretations as correct and plausible.

3. Shang Wei addressed the question of readership and approach to reading in late imperial China, arguing that *Jin Ping Mei*, with its complicated multi-layered format, conveyed a new vision of the world that called for new strategies of reading and comprehension, requiring readers to depart from methods of reading intensely, character by character. Shang 2003.

4. In her study of sixteenth-century French pardon letters, Natalie Zemon Davis points out that although her sources do not necessarily provide an objective truth of events, they do allow for a glimpse into the ways in which commoners told stories and which aspects of stories were considered important for inclusion. Davis' analysis allowed for an interweaving of fiction and fact, as she considered the influence of legal and professional officers on the pardon letters, as well as the reflection of cultural values in the letters (Davis 1987).

In some dream interpretation examples, the dream interpreters deliberately framed and reframed the dream in ways that either support or undermine legitimacy. In other dream examples, the dreamers themselves established legitimacy by appealing to a shared language of dream interpretation. In a few examples, the dream interpreters lied to the dreamer to promote a particular agenda or to pave the way for others to power. These untruths on the part of the dream interpreters demonstrates a buy-in to a particular system of knowledge, which reveals shared assumptions about dreams, dream interpretation, and legitimacy. Dreams could reveal a moral truth, which was open to interpretation, but only by interpreters.

The publication of reference and daily-use encyclopedias grew out of a certain intellectual approach to knowledge. Since Song times, the scholarly approach to natural studies and practical knowledge first popularized by Zhu Xi was reflected in the creation of encyclopedias, compendia, and collectanea. These types of works aimed to reunify classical knowledge toward a moral purpose.⁵ To this end, compilers textualized knowledge of things, events, and phenomena, binding the inchoate with the written word. Things, events, and phenomena were defined and explained through encyclopedic writing, which necessitated organization and categorization.

During the Ming, the production and consumption of compendia spread widely across both physical and social space, no longer limited to an audience of examination candidates. Existing frameworks of written knowledge were expanded to include publications on such topics as agriculture, medicine, legal issues, managing public or political affairs, dream interpretation, and astrology.

The late Ming also witnessed the rise of personal testimonials and autobiographical impulses in forms such as diaries (*riji*), scattered writings (*biji*), family histories (*jiapu*), and autobiographies (*zizhuan*). The general acceptance of emotional experience and the emphasis on the individual as part of Wang Yangming philosophy encouraged late Ming scholars to look within themselves for answers.⁶ Perhaps because of this trend, publications on dreams—including fiction and plays—peaked during the late imperial period.⁷

5. Zhu Xi was an influential Song dynasty Confucian scholar whose philosophical interpretations of the classics were canonized and taught in China and Japan. For more on Ming dynasty compendia and encyclopedias, see Elman 2007. For more on the Ming interest in dream books, see Shimizu 2015.

6. For example, see de Bary 1970. See also Peterson 1979, Mizoguchi 1980, and Brokaw 1991.

7. Shimizu (2015) attributed the increase in Ming dream book publication in part to an interest in older divinatory techniques and the popularity of the encyclopedia as genre. For more on writing on dreams in earlier time periods, see Liu 1989, 1993; Liu and

It was in this context that literatus Chen Shiyuan (1516-1595; *jinshi* 1544) compiled *Guidelines for Dreams*.⁸ Chen Shiyuan hailed from Yingcheng, then part of Huguang (in modern-day Hubei province).⁹ The oldest of seven sons, Chen studied as a National University student in Nanjing and specialized in the *Yijing*. Chen Shiyuan assumed an official post as magistrate of Luanzhou (in modern-day Hebei province). Despite being described as “an able and conscientious administrator,” Chen retired from his post after three years in 1547 and never again resumed official life.¹⁰ However, Richard Strassberg noted that some of Chen’s colleagues remarked that he had been unhappy in his official career, while others speculated that Chen resigned because his talents elicited envy.¹¹ After retiring from official life, Chen traveled and wrote

Cao 2003; Xiong 2004; and Lee 2004. These scholars gave no specific explanation for the late imperial peak in fascination with dreams. In his works on dreams, Liu Wenying provided an overview of dream interpretation methods as well as a discussion of extant dream books dating from the oracle bones, though the work centered on dreams in the Song and later. Liu’s works read as introductions to dream-related themes in Chinese history. Lee Han-Bin’s 2004 monograph focused on the place of dreams in the *Extensive Records of the Taiping Era (Taiping Guangji)*, writing on its Buddhist and Daoist influences, as well as detailing the categorization of dream types contained within the encyclopedia. For dreams in the Ming, see Struve 2007. Struve wrote on a scholar-official whose dream journal indicated his increasing disillusionment with Daoism and conversion to Buddhism during the fall of the Ming. For more on the late imperial publication of dream-related fiction and plays, see also Zhuang 1982; Liao 2000; and Liao 2008.

8. By literati, I refer to classically educated men who may or may not have sat or planned to sit for the official examinations, as well as land-holding gentry. *Jinshi*, translated by Charles Hucker as “presented scholar,” refers to the highest degree title in the civil examination system. By the Ming, this degree was necessary for holding office. For more on the civil examination system, see Elman 2000.
9. For further biographical details on Chen Shiyuan, see Strassberg 2008 and Hu 1999.
10. No definitive explanation was given for his withdrawal from government office. However, Chen’s biographical entry in the *Dictionary of Ming Biography* hints that this decision was based at least partly on an inauspicious event during his tenure as magistrate in Luanzhou. Prior to Chen’s birth, Chen’s father had apparently dreamed of Mencius arriving at the family home. After Chen Shiyuan was born, his father gave him the cognomen *Meng qing* because of this dream. Years later, when Chen was serving as magistrate in Luanzhou, during a ceremony in the temple of Confucius, Mencius’s tablet fell on a sacrificial vessel and knocked it to the ground, which apparently prompted Chen to leave office. See Goodrich and Fang 1976: 178. See also Shimizu 2015: 111.
11. See Strassberg 2008: 28. There is some discussion about Chen Shiyuan’s relationship with the Donglin faction, though the details are not clear. For more on the connections

on a variety of topics including the classics, history, geography, language, and religion. Chen also edited the gazetteers of Xiaogan county in 1555 and De'an prefecture in 1579.

Chen's preface to *Guidelines for Dreams* dates the work to 1562 and it likely circulated in manuscript form; the work was published in 1582. Altogether, Chen included thirty chapters in eight *juan* and listed chapter titles at the beginning of each *juan*.¹² Chen organized the thirty chapters into ten inner and twenty outer sections. The inner sections covered explanations of dreams and dream interpretation, including the mechanisms by which people dream. In the outer sections, which comprise most of the work (six of eight *juan*), Chen Shiyuan catalogued and quoted from nearly 700 dream examples. Chen culled these from a variety of historical sources and included their corresponding interpretations. The layout and style of the encyclopedia is typical of other contemporary dream interpretation works, such as the *Imperial Readings of the Taiping Era (Taiping Yulan)*.¹³

In his dream encyclopedia, Chen recreated the universe with all its myriad phenomena in textual form. The overarching organizational scheme, which would have been familiar to late Ming literati, roughly followed a correspondence system, linking celestial, earthly, state, and bodily phenomena, arranged from large- to small-scale items or phenomena.¹⁴ The order of the categories indicated the way in which all the phenomena and things within the universe were arranged. Dreams about these things and phenomena were interpretable. Dreams of nature were metonyms for nature itself; dreams of

between Chen Shiyuan and the Donglin faction, see Shimizu 2015, especially 120. For more on the Donglin faction and late Ming politics, see Wakeman 1972 and 1986.

12. Note that there is no separate table of contents in the 1850 reprint. The Chinese term *juan* is often translated into English as 'volume,' which can be misleading because there are multiple *juan* in one physically separate bound 'book' of *Forest of Dreams*. *Juan* is an ambiguous unit of book division, so I retain the pinyin transliteration here.
13. One example is *The Treasured Way to Dreams (Meng zhen men)* in Yu Xiangdou (fl. 1596).
14. For more on the organizational structure of Chen's encyclopedia, see Ueno 2004. The outer section of Chen Shiyuan's dream encyclopedia includes the following chapters: Heavens (*tian zhe pian*), Sun and Moon (*ri yue pian*), and Thunder and Rain (*lei yu pian*), Mountains and Rivers (*shan chuan pian*), Appearances (*xing mao pian*), and Food and Clothing (*shi yi pian*), Official Examinations (*ke jia pian*), Spirits and Anomalies (*shen guai pian*), and Longevity and Fate (*shou ming pian*), Phoenixes and Birds (*feng niao pian*), Animals (*shou qun pian*) and Dragons and Snakes (*long she pian*), Tortoises and Fish (*gui yu pian*), Grasses and Trees (*cao mu pian*), Rewards and Retribution (*shi bao pian*), and General Metaphors (*fan yu pian*). It is from these chapters that I draw my examples.

the state were metonyms for the state; dreams of the body were metonyms for the body.¹⁵ The dream examples in the encyclopedia were grouped and presented according to the major symbol in the dream. For example, Chen grouped dreams about rain together in one chapter; dreams of the sun or moon were also collected together in the same chapter.

Based on the dreams and dream interpretations cited in Chen's encyclopedia, the earlier dreamers and interpreters viewed dreams as a symbolic combination of potentialities, of latent thoughts or perceptions or prefigurations which had not yet registered, but could manifest. Chen Shiyuan compiled these examples in his encyclopedia, thus underscoring his agreement with the idea that dreams were divinatory and reflected the future potentialities of the unfolding present. For Chen Shiyuan, dreams expressed a certain form of knowledge, which could be accessed, interpreted, and expressed in writing. As Chen stated in his dream encyclopedia, "a dream is the wandering of the spirit and the mirror that reflects what is to come..."¹⁶ A dream indicated what had not yet manifested, but what would potentially and likely become manifest. There was an act of meaning-making expressed through dreams and dream interpretation. Although the dreams themselves reflected potential realities about the past, present, and future, it was the dream interpreters who deciphered the meaning of dreams.

Both the dreamers and dream interpreters were portrayed as though they believed that dreams were connected to the actual unfolding of events. Dream interpreters relied upon the symbolic content of dreams to illuminate the solution of an ongoing or nascent conflict. As in the example in the beginning of this article of Emperor Guangwu's dream of riding a dragon, the dream interpreter and the others around him understood that the dream anticipated the emperor's ascension to the throne. Thus, the dream interpreter established, determined, and uncovered the message of potentialities within the dream.

15. For more on the correspondences system in early Chinese philosophy, see Sivin 1995. Sivin wrote that in early China, ideas of nature, the state, and the body were interdependent and interconnected, with each phenomenon or thing acting as a metonym for another. This so-called system of correspondences was laid out in the fourth century BCE in "The Great Plan" (*Hong fan*), a book in the *Classic of Ancient Documents* (*Shang shu*). "The Great Plan" set out a broad array of numerical categories, including what Sivin terms the five processes (*wu xing*). Each type of omen, each heavenly or earthly event or natural phenomenon was segregated and interpreted with the sole purpose of guiding the ruler. Disorder in the heavens paralleled disorder in the state and in the body; by the same token, order in the heavens reflected order in the state and in the body. For more on "The Great Plan," see Nylan 1992.

16. Chen 2002: 421.

People of status took part in dream interpretation and sought interpretation of their own dreams. Many of the dreamers—emperors, dukes, and officials—wielded a certain amount of political power. With the example of the dream interpreters, we see the privileged role dreams had in earlier time periods in Chinese history. Because the dream narrative examples were compiled and published during the Ming dynasty, we also see the late Ming interest in dream interpretation. Indeed, this work was part of the late Ming publication boom and an important example of what one scholar has called the ‘golden age’ of Chinese dreaming.¹⁷

Most of the dream narratives in *Guidelines for Dreams* identify a dreamer and dream. 179 of these dream narratives provide additional information about the dream interpretation and the dream interpreter. Of these 179 dreams, I identify 135 dream narrative examples that deal with the dreams of future or then-current rulers, tactical military decisions, official appointments, or particular court decisions. I base my analysis on these 135 examples. See the chart below for further information.

Guidelines for Dreams: dream narrative examples with dreamer, dream, and interpretation

Political dreams: 135	Dream examples involving women, either as dreamers or interpreters: 42	Dream examples with a named dream interpreter: 125	Dream examples with a named dreamer: 167
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For more on the relationship between gender and dreams, see Chen 2011. Chen focused on female emotions and the medicalization of dream disorders in late imperial Chinese case-books and medical literature, connecting female madness and disease to sexual frustration.

The role of dream interpreter is particularly striking. The interpreter often served as a medium through which political legitimacy was determined. The dream, as interpreted by the interpreter, justified the ruler’s authority and legitimacy or undermined it. Legitimacy to rule arose in dreams interpreted by specific interpreters, who, as such, yielded political power. Dreams were the means by which legitimacy was conveyed to the dreamer, the interpreter, and those who read these dream entries. At least that was the way rule and dreams were supposed to work.

Dream interpreters relied upon multiple modes of dream interpretation techniques to grant legitimacy and also to take it away. Symbolism, homophonic

17. Bulkeley 2008: 68.

resonances, and glyptomancy conveyed legitimacy or disloyalty. The way in which the dream was explicated and understood mattered more than the dream itself. The encyclopedic dreams reveals the dream interpreters' toolkit and illuminates the assumed shared knowledge about legitimacy and dream interpretation.

Symbolism

Dream interpreters relied upon meaningful coincidence or correlation that varied according to both symbol and context, the logic of which was unexplained but implied in the encyclopedia. Even the same symbols appearing in different dreams were not necessarily interpreted in the same way, but seemed to depend on the individual context.¹⁸ The symbols acted as perceivable tokens of the invisible ordering structure of an individual's dream. Particular dream symbols connected to and constellated around a latent truth, often apparent to the interpreter but not always to the dreamer. A dreamed ride on a dragon coincided with Emperor's Guangwu's perceived ability or right to rule, which was immediately clear to Feng Yi.

Some dream interpreters relied on their knowledge of symbols to predict political appointments. For example, Li Shengmei, a governor during the Tang dynasty, dreamed that his head turned into a tiger head. When he awoke, he was unhappy about his dream, perhaps because of the unnatural transformation. His wife asked him if he had dreamed his head turned into a tiger head. He noted

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18. In one oft-cited dream interpretation example, a man thrice approached Zhou Xuan, a famous dream interpreter from the Three Kingdoms period, to request interpretations for three dreams of straw dogs. The man had invented the dreams to trick Zhou Xuan into giving false predictions. If the dreams were identical, the man maintained that the interpretations should also be identical, but would not come true, thereby undermining Zhou Xuan's dream interpretation reputation. However, Zhou Xuan interpreted each of the three dreams differently. Zhou's interpretations proved true and the man was trapped by the increasingly wretched fate Zhou predicted. When later questioned by the man about the three divergent—but ultimately correct—interpretations for the three invented dreams, Zhou purportedly explained, "Straw dogs are sacrificial offerings to the gods. Hence, your first dream meant you would attain food and drink. When a sacrifice has been completed, the straw dogs are then crushed under a wheel. Therefore, your second dream prefigured your fall from a carriage and you broke your legs. When the straw dogs have been crushed, they are taken away and used as kindling. So, the final dream warned you of fire." See Bulkeley 2008: 70. See also De Voskin 2000: 370.

that he had indeed dreamed his head became a tiger's head and wondered how his wife could have guessed his dream. She then told him she had dreamed the same dream: her head was that of a tiger's. She explained that she was happy because the symbol for a ruler is the dragon and the symbols for his officials are tigers. According to her interpretation, a tiger head dream intimated that her husband would become ennobled as an official. Ten days later, the emperor summoned Li Shengmei and appointed Li Grand Councilor of the Right. Both Li and his wife were ennobled, just as their tiger head dreams had predicted.¹⁹

The assumption was that the readers understood the dream interpretation logic used by Li Shengmei's wife. The entry did not explain the tiger symbolism; Chen Shiyuan did not add his own explication, either. In this dream interpretation example, Li Shengmei was initially anxious about his dreamed tiger head transformation. His wife reassured him by reminding him of the auspicious connotations of tiger symbolism. If the ruler was a dragon and the officials were tigers, it made sense that Li Shengmei's partial transformation into a tiger reflected an as yet unrealized auspicious reality: Li Shengmei and his wife would be ennobled. According to their shared dream, the husband and wife were already ennobled as tigers. Their dual transformation in the dreams offered legitimating weight to what Li Shengmei's wife knew and what came to pass. What is significant in this dream interpretation example is that the dream was recorded as though the dreamer, the dream, and the interpretation were all integral parts of a system of knowledge.

It was not just officials and nobles who relied upon shared symbolic knowledge to explain dreams. Rulers in accounts taken from *Guidelines for Dreams* also acknowledged shared knowledge about symbols and made political decisions based on the symbols in dreams, even dreams of others. According to another entry in *Guidelines for Dreams*, Jia Yinlin submitted a memorial stating that he dreamed the sun fell from the sky and he supported it with his head. The emperor responded that the dream indicated Jia Yinlin was supporting the ruler and appointed Jia judicial investigator of the capital.²⁰ Here, the emperor responded by using the shared language of dream symbolism: the emperor thanked Jia Yinlin for his dreamed expression of loyalty. If the metonym of the emperor was the sun, the central celestial body, then supporting the sun was equated with supporting the emperor. If the emperor reacted to the dream as though Jia Yinlin supported the sun-cum-emperor, then Jia, too, perhaps used the language of dream symbolism to gain

19. Chen 2002: 440.

20. Chen 2002: 434.

a coveted position in the bureaucracy. In this case, the dream worked to gain Jia a position and to gain the emperor a loyal official.

Today, Jia's dream and subsequent appointment might seem overly contrived. Perhaps Jia simply invented the dream to promote himself; perhaps the dream and its interpretation were written as a retroactive justification for Jia's political appointment. The encyclopedic entry did not relate the time at which Jia dreamed nor the time the dream was interpreted and recorded. The entry also did not include a justification for the interpretation. However, the cumulative weight of the dream interpretation examples revealed the skill of the interpreters, who wielded techniques that legitimized, or as we will see below, delegitimized political positions.

In another example from the encyclopedia, Duke Ling of Wei (*Wei linggong*) made two men his confidants. These confidants purportedly took advantage of their position and kept other officials in the dark about political affairs. At this time, Tu Zhen told the Duke, "I dreamed I saw your Excellency." The Duke asked about the dream and Tu responded that he saw the God of the Stove in his dream. The dream greatly upset the Duke and he said, "I have heard that when one dreams of a ruler, one dreams about the sun. Now you have dreamed about the God of the Stove and said it is about me. Why is this?" Tu responded using the shared knowledge of dream symbols: "The sun illuminates everything under heaven. Nothing is kept in the dark, but this is not the case with the stove. Somebody may light a fire at the front of the stove, but someone standing behind the stove might not see that light. I fear that some people may be lighting a fire in front of you."²¹ Tu's dream implied that the Duke's rule was problematic. The Duke only listened to his two confidants who used their position to block the light from the stove. Not only was the light from the stove blocked, but it was also not even true ruling light, which should have originated from the sun. The implications of the accusation were clear to the Duke, who understood Tu's point. The Duke was angry at Tu Zhen's dream because the symbol of ruler should have been the sun, not the God of the Stove. Tu Zhen's choice of dream symbolism and the Duke's reaction indicate that both men understood the negative symbolism of the God of the Stove as opposed to that of the sun for the Duke's rule.

Sometimes, a dream augured danger for those who sought—consciously or not—positions of authority and power. One account in *Guidelines for Dreams* related the dreams of Zhang Jing'er's wife. She apparently told her husband,

21. Chen 2002: 433-34.

“In the past, I dreamed that my hands were hot like fire and then you became administrator of Nanyang Commandery. During the Yuanhui era (473-476), I dreamed that half my body became hot. Then, you became magistrate of Xiangyang. Just now, I have dreamed my entire body was hot.”

A eunuch overheard her and reported her recent dream to Emperor Shizu of the Southern Qi. A few days later, Zhang Jing'er was executed.²² Unchecked political power as predicted by his wife's dream spelled the end of Zhang Jing'er. It is clear from this example that the dreams of others impacted the future of individuals. Zhang Jing'er himself may not have had any inkling, dreamed or otherwise, that he intended to rebel against the emperor, but his wife's dream indicated he was a threat to the throne. Here it is unclear if it was Zhang's rise in rank or the implied symbolic association between the sun-cum-ruler and the heat of the sun that demonstrated to the eunuch Zhang's desire for power. Either way, Zhang's wife's dream intimated his death. Her dream reflected an unexpressed truth. Unfortunately, once she spoke to her husband about her earlier dreams, the palace eunuch connected her dream to potential treason, interestingly not on her part, but on her husband's. Here, dreams foretold the fate not of the dreamer, but of another. We see the social aspect of dreaming; the impact of a dream was felt beyond the individual who had the dream.

Sometimes the dream interpreter let the ruler know his fate, but in other instances, the interpreter colluded with others to trick the ruler. In such cases, the dreamer's potential future actualized according to the dream interpreter's explanation, not the dreamer's. For example, *Guidelines for Dreams* includes a dream narrative in which the Duke Jing of Qi (*Qi jing gong*) dreamed of battling two suns and suffering defeat. When Master Yan attended him at court, the Duke said, “I must be fated to die because of my dream.” Yan said, “Let's summon the dream interpreter.” When the dream interpreter arrived, Master Yan (*Yan gong*) secretly intercepted the dream interpreter at the gate and told him the reason for being summoned. He instructed the dream interpreter say to the Duke: “Your illness is *yin* and the sun is *yang*. A single *yin* cannot defeat two *yang*, so you will recover from your illness.” The interpreter followed these instructions. No doubt relieved at the auspicious twist on the dream, three days later, the Duke's illness abated.²³ Here again, we see the symbolism of the sun. In this dream, the ruler suffered defeat at the hands of two suns, which seems to imply death for the ruler. The role of ruler, represented by the sun,

22. Chen 2002: 440.

23. Chen 2002: 434.

overpowered the body of the ruler, here represented by the Duke. The quick-thinking Master Yan provided an alternate dream interpretation to the dream interpreter and the Duke escaped death from this illness. The Duke trusted the authority of the dream interpreter over his own dream interpretation, and the Duke's illness abated. Although the encyclopedia gave no explanation as to why the dream interpreter's interpretation held more weight than that of the dreamer's, it is likely that the perceived authority of the dream interpreter in this recounted example convinced the Duke and led to a positive result.

Again, we see with the above example that there was an automatic legitimacy given to the dream interpretation, even though it was not the dream interpreter's interpretation, but that of the Duke's court attendant. The text did not indicate why the dream interpreter cooperated with Master Yan. It is precisely because this element was not recorded that we see the assumption was that the dream interpretation itself carried symbolic weight and authority.

Some of the dream interpreters relied on historic precedent to interpret dreams. If another, previous dreamer had had a similar dream, the same dream interpretation held true again for the later dream. Gao Yang (529-559) dreamed that somebody used a brush to mark his forehead. Wang Tanzhe congratulated him, "Your Highness will rule as emperor." As reported in *Guidelines for Dreams*, previously, Sun Quan, King of Wu (r. 222-252) also had a dream like this. An earlier dream interpreter named Xiong Xun asserted that Sun's dream meant that Sun would ascend the throne, which did indeed come to pass. Thus, Wang Tanzhe, the later dream interpreter, used the earlier dream interpretation as precedent to interpret Gao's dream. Wang remembered an earlier dream interpretation example and divined Gao Yang's dream referring to the earlier interpretation.²⁴

Homophonic Resonances

In addition to symbolism, dream interpreters also relied on homophonic resonances (Chinese characters with the same or similar pronunciation but different meanings) to interpret dreams. Some Chinese characters with similar pronunciations were and are linked together conceptually. Occasionally, but not always, homophonic characters were grouped together under the same radical or graphical component, thus rendering the homophonic resonances visually resonant as well. For example, a bat (*fu-I*) symbolized and symbolizes luck

24. Chen 2002: 445.

(*fu*-2).²⁵ Both characters were part of the *fu* (*fu*-3) rhyme. Bats were equated with luck because of the homophonic resonances of the pronunciation of the two words. Chinese characters possess a number of strokes that map onto morphemes, and their meaning is often suggested by particular configurations.

Dream interpreters used homophonic resonances to interpret dreams. Empress Wu of the Tang (r. 690-705) had two dreams, interpreted homophonically to the same end. According to the dream encyclopedia, Empress Wu dreamed about a parrot (*yingwu*) with beautiful plumage, but two broken wings. Her secretary Di Renjie said, “The ‘*wu*’ in parrot signifies Your Majesty’s surname. The parrot in your dream has two broken wings, which refers to Your Majesty’s second son, the Prince of Luling (*Luling wang*). If Your Majesty were to elevate the prince to become heir-apparent, the parrot’s wings would be healed.”²⁶ Here, the dream interpreter used homophonic resonances to promote a particular political agenda. Without designating the second son as heir-apparent, the dynasty, no matter how beautiful, would break.

Another of Empress Wu’s dreams also gave Di Renjie the chance to push for the designation of the Prince of Luling as the heir apparent. Empress Wu (r. 609-705) summoned Di Renjie to court and told him, “I have dreamed several times of playing the dice game double-sixes and losing. What can this mean?” Di Renjie and Wang Fangqing both replied, “to lose at double-sixes means that you are ‘without dice’ (*wuzi*-1) or ‘without a son’ (*wuzi*-2).”²⁷ The Chinese phrase “no dice” sounded the same as “no son.” Losing the dice game amounted to losing a son. Without a son and officially designated heir, the dynasty would be lost as well. The empress immediately understood and that very day recalled her demoted son, the Prince of Luling, back to court and officially welcomed him as heir-apparent. Di Renjie had an agenda regarding the rule by Empress Wu and used the dream to influence the Empress’s political actions. This time, two dream interpreters agreed on the interpretation, which finally spurred Empress Wu to action. She did, in fact, recall her son to court and designated him heir-apparent.

Homophonic resonances were also used to alleviate anxiety wrought by dreams initially interpreted as nightmarish. For example, before being named as emperor, Emperor Wen of the Sui once traveled by boat along the Yangzi River. One night, he moored his boat and slept. While sleeping, he dreamed he no longer possessed his left hand. When he awoke, he was appalled by his dream. Later, when he went ashore, he visited a monk’s hut. The monk

25. Eberhard 1986: 30.

26. Chen 2002: 460.

27. Chen 2002: 443.

apparently rose, bowed, and said, “He who lacks a left hand is a single fist [(*duquan-1*), which is the homophone for sole power (*duquan-2*)]. You will become the Son of Heaven.”²⁸ After Emperor Wen ascended the throne, he rebuilt the hut into a temple, which is located thirty *li* downstream from the city of Wuchang. A dreamed single fist was actually auspicious, not because of the connotations of the loss of a hand, but because it was an aural reference to exclusive political power.

In another example, the dream interpreter similarly used homophones to predict success in the civil examinations. The night before the palace examination, a hopeful candidate named Li Di dreamed his whiskers were shaved off by someone else. Li Di was terrified by his dream (*e zhi*) and loss of whiskers, but a dream interpreter reassured him, saying: “You will become the principal graduate. This year, the top candidate from the provincial examinations is Liu Zi, but you will replace him.”²⁹ The encyclopedia entry does not explicitly explain the homophonic interpretation. Here, “*ti zi*” (*tizi-1*; literally “replace [Liu] Zi”) as given in the commentary is a homophone for “*ti zi*” (*tizi-2*; “shave whiskers”). That year, Li Di did become the principal graduate, as anticipated by his dream. The dream interpreter’s reliance on homophonic resonances alleviated Li Di’s anxiety about the upcoming civil examination.

During the Tiansheng era (1023-1032), another candidate named Liu Hang went to the provincial capital for the examinations. He dreamed he was beheaded by someone and was thoroughly appalled by this dream. A dream interpreter explained the dream and said, “You won’t pass as the principal graduate, but you will be ranked second. Though your head was cut off [in the dream], your neck was preserved. Your surname (*liu-1*) and to preserve (*liu-2*) have the same pronunciation. Neck (*xiang*) and your given name Hang rhyme.” Indeed, Liu Hang passed as the second highest candidate in that examination, just as the homophonic resonances of his dream indicated.³⁰

Shen Qingzhi dreamed he led the honor guard bearing the imperial insignia into a privy. He was appalled by his dream, but an expert interpreter of dreams told him, “You, sir, will enjoy great wealth and exalted position, but it will not be soon.” When asked for an explanation, the dream interpreter responded that ‘the honor guard signifies wealth and position; what enters the privy might be said to denote the phrase ‘under a future emperor [*hou-di-1*]...’” Again, the encyclopedic entry does not explicitly give the homophonic explanation for the

28. Chen 2002: 440.

29. Chen 2002: 450.

30. Chen 2002: 450.

dream interpretation; presumably readers of the encyclopedia would understand the interpretation without explanation. Here, *hou-di*-1 is a homophone for behind (*hou-di*-2). The dream interpreter claimed that such wealth and position would not be attained in this lifetime, but in the future.³¹ Thus, according to the homophonic resonances of his dream interpretation, Shen Qingzhi would need to wait to enjoy wealth and position. As the commentary concluded, Shen would not enjoy wealth or position in this lifetime (*fugui bu zai jinsheng*).

It is important to remember that dream interpretation was assumed to be a legitimate means of expressing a form of truth. On occasion, it seemed that dream interpreters did not tell the “truth” to the dreamer. The interpreters were nonetheless depicted as correct, whether the “true” divination was shared with the dreamer at the time of the dream or not. In some instances, the dream interpreter lied purposely, sometimes apparently out of self-interest. To us today, all versions of the dream interpretation might seem equally valid and offer an explanation of the dream. Much like the earlier example of Jia Yinlin, whose dream of supporting the sun landed him a high position in the bureaucracy, some of the dreams and the interpretations now read as only partially veiled attempts to access, grant, or deny power. The technical ability and moral loyalty of the dream interpreters was not questioned in the dream narrative examples in *Guidelines for Dreams*; nor was the truth of their interpretation.

Dream interpreters not only offered interpretations of dreams, but did so while employing skill in subtle techniques such as homophony and glyphomancy. For example, according to one dream narrative, after An Lushan (ca 703-757) instigated the so-called An Lushan rebellion, rebel forces captured the famous dream interpreter Huang Fanchuo. An Lushan apparently dreamed that his gown and sleeves grew until they reached down the steps of the imperial dais. Huang interpreted the dream to mean that An Lushan would rule the empire by employing a policy of non-intervention. Without easy access to his legs and hands, non-intervention was a safe and acceptable interpretation to a rebel leader. An Lushan next dreamed that the window lattices on the imperial palace were upside-down. He questioned Huang about this dream, too. Huang replied that lattice (*ge*-1) meant overthrowing (*ge*-2) an old order, relying upon homophonic resonances to promote an auspicious interpretation for the dream.

Later, An Lushan was defeated. When Huang Fanchuo returned to his place of former employ, the Xuanzong Emperor interrogated Huang about his time as a captive, perhaps concerned that Huang offered legitimating interpretations

31. Chen 2002: 443.

to the upstart rebel. Huang reassured the Xuanzong Emperor and said he knew An Lushan would not succeed because of An's two dreams, but that he did not reveal the actual interpretations to An Lushan. Huang reported An Lushan's two dreams to the Xuanzong Emperor and gave the actual but untold (at least to An Lushan) dream interpretations, neither of which conferred legitimacy on An Lushan. The long sleeves and gown of the first dream equaled An's failure to grasp his desired goal: holding onto the imperial mandate. Long sleeves would prevent easy access to his hands. A long gown would prevent easy access to his legs. An Lushan would trip and lose hold of the coveted mandate to rule.

In An's second dream, the window frames were upside down. Huang wondered aloud to the Xuanzong Emperor how a foreign barbarian could possibly understand how to right the Han-made window frames. Satisfied with Huang's interpretations and reassured that the rebel An Lushan never held or would hold the mandate of heaven, the Xuanzong Emperor pardoned Huang Fanchuo.³² Huang expertly employed symbolic and homophonic dream interpretation techniques—first to placate An Lushan and then to placate the Xuanzong Emperor. Based on the reported reactions of both An Lushan and the Xuanzong Emperor, Huang's divergent dream interpretations mollified the rebel leader and the emperor. The encyclopedia entry gave no indication which interpretation was more or less valid. Both were recounted and the reader was left to decide the criteria upon which a would-be interpreter might rely upon in order to choose one interpretation over another. Maybe multiple dream interpretations were equally valid, depending on the context in which the dream interpreter interpreted the dreams.³³

32. Chen 2002: 428.

33. As Wolfgang Bauer made clear in his ethnographic study of glyphomancy in fortune telling in Taiwan, Taipei-area practitioners followed the same set of culturally bound rules on how to dissect characters, but often arrived at divergent interpretations of the same character. See Bauer, 1979: 71-96. In the course of his stay in Taiwan, Bauer consulted twenty-seven glyphomancers about his future. When given the option, Bauer presented the same character to each of these glyphomancers for interpretation. The ensuing interpretations varied from one glyphomancer to another. Bauer compared his experiences with those listed in glyphomantic manuals. According to him, the use of glyphomancy by fortune-tellers originated at least during the Sui (581-618) and was widely used from the Song. As Bauer wrote, the earliest work specifically discussing glyphomancy is the *Essentials of Breaking Characters* (*Po zi yao jue*), which is listed in the *History of the Sui* (*Sui shu*). The work is no longer extant. Li Chunfeng (602-670) and Yuan Tiangang (d. 627) allegedly co-authored an interpretive work entitled

Glyphomancy

A third technique employed by dream interpreters was glyphomancy. This divination method has a documented literary and cultural history in a variety of contexts from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE) until the present day. Glyphomantic techniques have remained largely consistent: characters can be split apart into constituent radicals, strokes can be added to existing characters, radicals can be deleted, and two or more characters can be combined to create a new character.³⁴

One interpretive example in Chen's encyclopedia combined symbolism with glyphomancy. When Cai Mao was in Guanghan, he dreamed he was seated in a great hall. On top of the roof were three ears of grain. He leaped up and snatched the one in the middle, but then lost it. He asked Recorder Guo about the dream and Guo congratulated him, replying, "The great hall is the symbol of a palace. Grain located on the roof means a large official salary. Taking the middle ear of grain refers to a government position in the Central Pavilion. If the graph for grain (*he*) is combined with the graph for 'to lose' (*shi*), it forms the character that means an official salary (*zhi*)."³⁵ Within a month, the dream was confirmed when Cai gained a government position.³⁵

In another one of the dream interpretation examples, before he ascended the throne as emperor, the Qi Shizu Emperor (r. 440-493) apparently dreamed that he climbed the top of the Taiji Palace stairs while wearing a pair of mulberry clogs. According to an unnamed old man's interpretation, the type of wood used to make the clogs determined the dreamer's fate. He stated that the Chinese character for "mulberry" (*sang-1*) comprised four "tens" and two "dots."

Thus, at the age of forty-two (four tens equals forty; plus two equals forty-two), the dreamer would attain the position of emperor. This indeed came to pass, just as predicted in his earlier dream.³⁶ Interpreting the character for mulberry (*sang-1*) as printed in *Dream Divination* required knowledge of an alternate form of the character for mulberry, which is also pronounced 'sang,' but written differently (*sang-2*). This version of the character written in running script was derived from clerical script and was conventionally used by scholars.

Conjecturing the Meaning Behind Graphs (Tui bei tu); recent editions of this particular text rely upon glyphomantic principles in divination.

34. See Strassberg 2014.

35. Chen 2002: 448.

36. Chen 2002: 438.

Other glyphomantic examples were more straightforward. In another dream, Wang Jun was serving in a commandery and dreamed four knives were suspended from the rafters of a building. Wang was terrified by the dream, but Subordinate Assistant Magistrate Li Yi congratulated him and told him that three graphs for knife (*dao*) comprise the character for region (*zhou*). The fourth knife is an “additional one” (*yi*). Li claimed the dream indicated that Wang Jun would someday administer Yizhou, which did indeed happen.³⁷

In another example, a dream interpreter combined glyphomancy with homophonic resonances to interpret a dream. A man named Deng You dreamed he was walking along the edge of water. There, a woman and a terrifying beast approached him. The beast tore off Deng You’s leather belt-pouch, which contained a seal of office. A dream interpreter told him that the element for water (*shui*) placed by a woman (*nü*) is the graph pronounced ‘*ru*.’ Tearing off the pouch implied that a new beast would become the leader, because beast (*shou-1*) is a homophone for leader (*shou-2*). The interpreter further explained that the dreamer would become the governor of Ru’nan or Ruyin. Later, Deng You became governor of Ruyin.³⁸

Occasionally, dreamers used glyphomancy to interpret their own dreams. For example, Ding Gu dreamed a pine tree grew out of his stomach. He told somebody that the graph for pine (*song*) is composed of the graphs for eighteen (*shi ba*) and duke (*gong*). He claimed he would become a duke in eighteen years and indeed it came to pass as predicted.³⁹

Sometimes glyphomancy was used to interpret the future of somebody other than the dreamer. The dream thus bore meaning not for the dreamer, but for somebody connected with the dreamer. As we saw earlier in the article with the example of Zhang Jing’er, his wife’s dreams augured an inauspicious future for him. After the palace eunuch learned of Zhang Jing’er’s wife’s dreams, Zhang was put to death. The next example is less dire. Xue Chu dreamed that Zhang Liang hung silk threads on a mountain. After awakening, Xue told Zhang his dream. Zhang had Xue’s dream interpreted and was told that the graphical components of silk threads suspended above a mountain form the character *you* which meant Zhang would become an official in Youzhou. Within the year, Zhang Liang was appointed prefect of Youzhou, just as Xue Chu’s dream indicated.⁴⁰

37. Chen 2002: 443.

38. Chen 2002: 442.

39. Chen 2002: 439.

40. Chen 2002: 436.

In another example, the dream interpreter falsely interpreted a dream to the dreamer. When Zhuge Liang was leaving the mouth of North Valley, Wei Yan led the vanguard. They had traveled more than ten *li* from Zhuge Liang's camp when Wei dreamed that he grew a horn on his head. He consulted the dream interpreter Zhao Zhi. Zhao deceived him and said, "A *qilin* beast has a horn but does not use it. This symbolizes that without [your] fighting, the rebels will destroy themselves." After leaving Wei, Zhao told the others, "the graph for horn (*jiao*) is comprised of the graph sword (*dao*) on top of the graph meaning 'to use' (*yong*). A sword over one's head is an extremely unlucky sign."⁴¹ Here, we are reminded of the earlier example in which dream interpreter Huang Fanchuo adjusted his interpretation of An Lushan's dream according to his audience. Zhao Zhi avoided upsetting Wei Yan with an inauspicious though "true" interpretation, likely to protect himself from the consequences. Dream interpreters relied upon a shared language of symbolism and technique to interpret dreams in a way that made sense to the dreamer; the dream interpreters could use their judgment to present an interpretation that not only made sense, but was also acceptable to the dreamer.

Conclusion

As seen in the above examples, dreams offered a means by which dreamers and interpreters determined what should happen in the life of an individual connected to the state. These dreams were not simply personal, but had implications for others in the life of the dreamer. Dreams reflected the answers required to retain a sense of order in the life of the dreamer and in the lives of those around the dreamer. Individual's dreams and the impact on others were closely connected. It was precisely this assumed point of contact that dream interpreters acknowledged in their interpretations. Dreams were one means of conveying political legitimacy.

Interpreters used a variety of means such as symbolism, homophonic resonances, and glyptomancy to justify political decisions. Sometimes interpreters used deception to affect, influence, or determine a particular political outcome. Indeed, the interpreters who lie are fascinating because in that situation the interpreters arranged reality to reflect what they determined to be the truth of the dream, and not always to the benefit of the individual dreamer, as in the case of Zhang Jing'er, who was executed because of his ambitions as predicted by his wife's dreams. Lying dream interpreters reflect

41. Chen 2002: 439.

the contextual nature of interpretive “truth.” Even when there was no “lie” or even multiple interpretive meanings, the “true” interpretation of a dream depended on the situational context. The status and power relations between the dreamer, interpreter, and others involved shaped the dream interpretation, even when the effect was not acknowledged in the encyclopedic entry.

Engaging in dream interpretation either as a dreamer or an interpreter implied a certain amount of risk. Dreamer Zhang Jing'er lost his life because of a dream recounted to his wife. Dream interpreter Huang Fanchuo offered two divergent dream interpretations to placate his audience and perhaps save his life. Even Tu Zhen seemed to be playing with fire when he told the Duke about a dream of the God of the Stove, instead of the sun. Dream interpreters were historicized as visionaries, who possessed the technical and paleographic tools necessary to see into the past, unfolding present, and future. That the dream interpreters took on the risk suggests that the risk was perhaps worthwhile or necessary or even unavoidable. It also indicates that dream interpretation was one means of asserting, imparting, or questioning legitimacy. Dreaming rulers or political aspirants not only needed dream interpreters by their side, but more importantly *on* their side, who would wield dream interpretation techniques to demonstrate legitimacy. Only then might they be able to ride a red dragon to heaven.

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GLOSSARY

An Lushan 安祿山
biji 筆記
Cai Mao 蔡矛
cao mu pian 草木篇
chai zi 拆字
Chen Shiyuan 陳士元
dao 刀
De'an 德安
Deng You 鄧悠
Di Renjie 狄仁傑
Ding Gu 丁固
Dong guan han ji 東觀漢記
duquan-1 獨拳
duquan-2 獨權
e zhi 惡之
fan yu pian 泛喻篇
feng niao pian 鳳鳥篇
Feng Yi 馮異
fu-1 蝠
fu-2 福
fu-3 富
fu-4 賦

fugui bu zai jinsheng 富貴不在今生

Gao Yang 高洋

ge-1 格

ge-2 革

gong 公

Guanghan 廣漢

Guangwu 光武

gui yu pian 龜魚篇

Gui yun bie ji 歸雲別集

Guo 郭

hang 沆

he 禾

Hebei 河北

Hong fan 洪範

hou-di-1 後帝

hou-di-2 後底

Huang Fanchuo 黃幡綽

Hubei 湖北

Huguang 湖廣

Jia Yinlin 賈隱林

jiao 角

jiapu 家譜

jinshi 進士

juan 卷

ke jia pian 科甲篇

lei yu pian 雷雨篇

Li Chunfeng 李淳風

Li Di 李迪

Li Shengmei 李勝美

Li Yi 李毅

li 里

Liu Hang 劉沆

Liu Zi 劉滋

liu-1 劉

liu-2 留

long she pian 龍蛇篇

Luanzhou 瀾州

Luling wang 廬陵王

Meng qing 孟卿

Meng zhan yi zhi 夢占逸旨

Meng zhen men 夢珍門

Nanyang 南陽

nü 女

Po zi yao jue 破字要訣

Qi jing gong 齊景公

Qi Shizu 齊世祖

qilin 麒麟

ri yue pian 日月篇

riji 日記

ru 汝

Ru'nan 汝南

Ruyin 汝陰

sang-1 桑

sang-2 乘

shan chuan pian 山川篇

Shang shu 尚書

shen guai pian 神怪篇

Shen Qingzhi 沈慶之

shi ba 十八

shi bao pian 施報篇

shi yi pian 食衣篇

shi 失

shou ming pian 壽命篇

shou qun pian 獸群篇

shou-1 獸

shou-2 首

shui 氺

song 松

Sui shu 隋書

Sun Quan 孫勸

taiji 太極

Taiping Guangji 太平廣記

Taiping Yulan 太平御覽

tian zhe pian 天者篇

tiansheng 天聖

tizi-1 替子

tizi-2 剃子

Tu Zhen 塗偵

Tui bei tu 推背圖

Wang Fangqing 王方慶

Brigid E. Vance

Wang Jun 王濬
Wang Tanzhe 王曇哲
Wang Yangming 王陽明
Wei Linggong 衛靈公
Wei Yan 魏延
wu xing 五行
Wuchang 武昌
wuzi 無子
xiang 項
Xiangyang 襄陽
xiaogan 孝感
xing mao pian 形貌篇
Xiong Xun 熊循
Xuanzong 玄宗
Xue Chu 薛琚
Yan gong 宴公
yang 陽
Yi hai zhu chen 藝海珠塵
Yijing 易經
yin 陰
Yingcheng 應城
yingwu 鸚鵡
Yizhou 益州
you 幽
Youzhou 幽州
Yuan Tiangang 袁天綱
Yuanhui 元徽
Zhang Jing'er 張敬兒
Zhang Liang 張亮
Zhao Zhi 趙直
zhi 秩
zhiguai 誌怪
Zhou Xuan 周宣
zhou 州
Zhu Xi 朱熹
Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮
zizhuan 自傳