

BEHIND CLOSED EYES

DREAMS & NIGHTMARES IN ANCIENT EGYPT



KASIA SZPAKOWSKA

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The symbol of the Press is the Red Kite. This bird, once widespread in Britain, was reduced by 1905 to some five individuals confined to a small area known as 'The Desert of Wales' – the upper Tywi valley. Geneticists report that the stock was saved from terminal inbreeding by the arrival of one stray female bird from Germany. After much careful protection, the Red Kite now thrives – in Wales and beyond.

To my mother and father

It is human life. We are blown upon the world; we float buoyantly upon the summer air a little while, complacently showing off our grace of form and our dainty iridescent colors; then we vanish with a little puff, leaving nothing behind but a memory – and sometimes not even that. I suppose that at those solemn times when we wake in the deeps of the night and reflect, there is not one of us who is not willing to confess that he is really only a soap-bubble, and as little worth the making.

Mark Twain's Own Autobiography
(North American Review, May 3, 1907)

CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	ix
Chronology	xi
1. Theories of dreams	1
2. The dream phenomenon	15
3. Literature and politics	41
4. Dream interpretation	61
5. Dreams and religion	123
6. Nightmares	159
7. Conclusion	181
8. Appendix of texts	185
9. List of abbreviations	203
10. Bibliography	205
11. Index	231

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Kasia Szpakowska

CHRONOLOGY OF EGYPTIAN HISTORY

Adapted from *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, I. Shaw (ed.), 2000, Oxford University Press.

PREDYNASTIC EGYPT	5300–3000 BC
ARCHAIC EGYPT (Dynasties I–II)	3000–2686 BC
Dynasty I	3000–2890
Dynasty II	2890–2686
OLD KINGDOM (Dynasties III–VI)	2686–2125 BC
Dynasty III	2686–2613
Dynasty IV	2613–2498
Dynasty V	2494–2345
Dynasty VI	2345–2181
FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (Dynasties VII–XI)	2181–2055 BC
Dynasty VII–VIII	2181–2160
Dynasty IX–X (Heracleopolitan)	2160–2025
Dynasty XI (Theban)	2125–2055
MIDDLE KINGDOM (Dynasties XI–XIV)	2055–1650 BC
Dynasty XI	2055–1985
Dynasty XII	1985–1773
Dynasty XIII	1773–1650
Dynasty XIV	1773–1650
SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (Dynasties XV–XVII)	1650–1550 BC
Dynasty XV (Hyksos)	1650–1550
Dynasty XVI (Theban)	1650–1580
Dynasty XVII	1580–1550

Chronology

NEW KINGDOM (Dynasties XVIII–XX)	1550–1069 BC
Dynasty XVIII	1550–1295
Dynasty XIX	1295–1186
Dynasty XX	1186–1069
THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (Dynasties XXI–XXV)	1069–664 BC
Dynasty XXI	1069–945
Dynasty XXII	945–715
Dynasty XXIII	818–715
Dynasty XXIV	727–715
Dynasty XXV (Nubian or Kushite)	747–656
LATE PERIOD (DYNASTIES XXVI–XXX)	664–332 BC
Dynasty XXVI (Saite)	664–525
Dynasty XXVII (Persians)	525–359
Dynasty XXVIII	404–399
Dynasty XXIX	399–380
Dynasty XXX	380–343
Dynasty XXXI (Persians)	343–332
PTOLEMAIC PERIOD	332–30 BC
Alexander the Great	332–323
Ptolemaic Period	323–30
ROMAN PERIOD	30 BC–395 AD
BYZANTINE PERIOD	395–641
ISLAMIC EGYPT	641–present

INTRODUCTION: THEORIES OF DREAMS

*To die, to sleep –
 To sleep, perchance to dream, ay there's the rub,
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause; there's the respect
 That makes calamity of so long life.*

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act III, Sc. 1

General introduction

Dreams are a near-universal phenomenon experienced by many sleeping creatures, including the majority of predatory birds and mammals, and even monotremes such as the duck-billed platypus. Naturally, this includes all peoples of both the modern and ancient world. Indeed dreaming seems such a commonplace occurrence that one might expect this topic to have been thoroughly explored in the case of ancient Egypt. References to Egyptian dreams abound in modern works, both scholarly and popular, but until now these have focused heavily on the role of dreams in divination and oracles. Much emphasis has also been placed on incubation – the custom of sleeping in a specified location, usually a temple, for the purpose of soliciting a divine dream to answer a question or to gain information – a custom claimed to have been widely practised throughout the ancient world. In addition, the interpretation of dreams has been a popular topic of research, and the famous ‘Ramesside Dream Book’ (contained in P. Chester Beatty III) published by Alan Gardiner – which is a list of dreams and their possible meaning – is cited as evidence for the importance of dream interpretation in ancient Egypt.

But the variety of genres and contexts in which dreams are mentioned, suggests that their functions and roles were complex, varied, and changed through time. Recently discovered and published texts furnish new evidence, while concurrently the focus in Egyptology has shifted, encouraging the exploration of a broader spectrum of society. We shall here

investigate the many roles which the dream played in ancient Egypt, from the viewpoint of royalty, nobles, and to the extent possible, commoners. We shall look at the emotional response of Egyptians to this familiar yet mysterious phenomenon, as well as their own perceptions of dreams. In ancient Egypt, dreams could be understood as an external phenomenon – as a sort of liminal zone between the living and the divine worlds, or they could be used as literary devices. We shall explore the possible function of dreams in politics, religion, and rituals. Not all dreams are good ones, so we shall also examine methods of warding off bad dreams and nightmares. Finally, we shall not use dreams to try to analyse the psychology of an ancient Egyptian, but rather to explore the Egyptians' perceptions of dreams and nightmares, as they are reflected in the archaeological evidence, both textual and non-textual.

In an effort to reconstruct an impression of the earliest Egyptian perceptions of dreams, this book is limited to reports and documentation attested from the first two millennia of Egypt's history, that is, up to the end of the New Kingdom. This is not to imply that the evidence after this time should be considered unimportant, irrelevant, or any less Egyptian. On the contrary, numerous Demotic and Greek-Egyptian documents have survived, attesting to the growing popularity of dreams and, in particular, dream interpretation at that time. But including these documents in the current discussion would necessitate an explanation of the intricate relationships between Egypt and the surrounding cultures of that time, the impact of foreign rule, increasing immigration, and the effects of reciprocal influence. Instead, this book will focus on dream attestations prior to the Third Intermediate Period, thus enabling us to include lesser-known documentation and artefacts that reflect the roles and functions of dreams from earlier times.

This study has been inspired by the view that for the ancient Egyptians the relationship between the nocturnal sphere and the farworld¹ – sleep and death, and darkness and rebirth – held a profound significance and figured largely in Egyptian religious documentation. The observation that the sun travels through the sky every day, then seems to disappear (or die) every night, yet always rises again in the morning in a seemingly eternal cycle, played a major role in the Egyptian belief in the afterlife. The events that occurred nightly in the divine realm, out of sight of human eyes, also played a special role in Egyptian religious belief, and one might expect that dreams, the visions that one sees in the night, would also be significant.

Some Egyptian speculations and theories about these nocturnal events can be found in funerary compositions such as the *Am Duat* which describes the journey which the deceased pharaoh takes with the sun-god Re through the twelve divisions or hours of night, and the Book of the Night which again depicts the sun-god's journey through the hours. Clearly, the night was both a time and a realm inhabited by the gods and the dead. The pharaoh Akhenaten wrote in a hymn that at night the 'earth is in darkness as if in death; one sleeps in chambers, heads covered, one eye does not see another'.² Since this was a potentially dangerous time for mortals, when natural rules did not apply, what would be the meaning of seeing a dream while fast asleep in the night? We shall examine what this significance was, how it changed through time, and how it impacted the society of ancient Egypt through the New Kingdom.

Previous research

Previous analyses of ancient Egyptian dreams have focused on dream interpretation and royal dreams³ while the function of dreams in the context of literary works and religious belief has been largely glossed over. Some of the reasons for this may be that the oneiromantic and royal texts, though rare, are more widely known. The major texts are long and impressive, whereas many of the other references to dreams are found in short lesser-known texts and ostraca. Many of these texts have only recently been discovered and published, and thus were not available to the earlier scholars. The idea that the ancient Egyptians practised dream interpretation appeals to western sensibilities influenced by psychologists such as Freud and Jung, and many people are familiar with the concept of dream divination through a popular knowledge of the ancient Greek culture. But focusing only on mantic texts creates a rather unbalanced view; the limited scope of this approach has led to somewhat superficial examinations of Egyptian dreams, and that in turn led to some rather hasty assumptions. The main result of this can be seen in the oft-repeated though mistaken belief that, to the Egyptian, the dream was purely a divinatory tool,⁴ that oneiromancy was prevalent throughout Egypt's history, and that indeed Egypt was the earliest civilization to practise this form of divination.⁵ As we shall see, however, even in the New Kingdom dream interpretation does not seem to have been commonly practised, at least as a written tradition. When the records of dreams with a divinatory function are examined within the larger context of dream reports in general, their divinatory role dwindles, and a range of other functions comes to light.

The perception of dreams in ancient Egypt was no less complex than their perception today, and their roles were rich and diverse.

The Egyptians themselves did not seem to be concerned with categorizing their dreams until well after the New Kingdom, nor did they discuss any dream theories addressing the nature of dreams.⁶ A number of strategies have been adopted by modern scholars to provide a typology for these dreams. Leo Oppenheim proposed a three-tiered system for both Mesopotamian and Egyptian dreams, dividing them into message dreams, symbolic dreams, and mantic dreams (used for prophecy or divination).⁷ This system is limited in its usefulness for Egyptian dreams, as many do not fit into any of these categories, while others overlap. Another and more useful way to approach dreams is from the standpoint of the emotional response they evoke in the dreamer.⁸ Long after the details of the content have been forgotten, people tend to remember whether the general quality of the dream was happy, or sad, or frightening, or even inspiring, and this is apparent in the recorded dreams of the Egyptians as well. For the purposes of determining the function of dreams, perhaps the most important differentiation to be made is between those dreams that arose spontaneously, and those that were provoked or sought.

In addition, one must remain cognizant of the fact that our textual evidence from Egypt spans over two millennia, and one would expect to find this literature reflecting a change, possibly even a transformation in the concept of dreams, and definitely in the content of the dreams over time. But with few exceptions this issue has remained relatively absent in Egyptological discourse.⁹

Modern dream theories

There are a number of approaches to the study of dreams in contemporary non-Egyptological scholarship. Foremost is Sigmund Freud. Although he did not invent dream interpretation,¹⁰ his theories profoundly affected modern views on dreams.¹¹ He believed in the symbolic nature of dreams, and his method of psychoanalysis was based on interpreting the manifest images which he believed hid the meaningful content of dreams. While his work is increasingly challenged,¹² there is no doubt that his hypotheses continue to impact our view of human nature. They do not, however, play a role in a study of dreams of ancient Egypt. Freud worked with ‘typical dreams’, which he assumed were shared by everyone, both in content and in meaning. His views were based on actual dreams which were narrated to him

in detail by his patients, which he used on the understanding that the patient really did dream them. Obviously, no such oral discourse remains from ancient Egypt, and ancient Egyptians rarely recorded detailed descriptions of their dreams. As we shall see, when detail was provided, it was usually in a literary environment and subject to the conventions of that period. Even Freud's work on dreams in folklore¹³ proves to be of no use, as it is based on detailed oral narrations, the likes of which are not found in the ancient Egyptian corpus. It is quite improbable that any sort of statement regarding the psychology of an individual Egyptian can be made. Issues which were important to Freud,¹⁴ such as the function of dreams – which he believed to be that of guarding sleep – or their motivating force – which he determined was that of wish fulfilment – are of no import to the topic at hand. For what is important here is not how Freud would view ancient Egyptian dreams, but rather what the Egyptians perceived to be the functions and motivating forces behind dreams, if they considered this question at all.

Other psychological theories will similarly prove to be of little use for the understanding of dreams in ancient Egypt. Even Carl Jung's theories of archetypes and the collective unconscious¹⁵ cannot be applied to a culture which does not reveal to us the images or narratives of its dreams. At first glance, the Ramesside Dream Book¹⁶ might appear to be an exception. This papyrus consists of a catalogue of images a person may see, a judgment on whether the dream is good or bad, and a brief interpretation. This 'key to dream interpretation' will be covered more fully at a later point in this monograph, but for the moment I need to be clear that it does not claim to consist of dreams actually seen by any specific person. Indeed the author's attention to word-plays, analogies, contraries, and groupings by grammatical forms,¹⁷ indicates that it refers to possibilities applicable to any number of citizens, rather than actual dream reports narrated by a particular individual. The case of the Demotic Dream Book as well as the omnia texts of the archive of Hor should be studied separately from the Ramesside Dream Book, keeping in mind the possibility that they may reflect Egypt's capacity for absorption of foreign influences and making them her own,¹⁸ rather than any inherent predilection for dream analysis. Finally, Jung himself points out that the analyst must be familiar with and judge the 'conscious psychology of his patient'.¹⁹ He explains why this familiarity is so vital in the analysis of any dreams:

At present the only thing we know about the contents of the unconscious, apart from the fact that they are subliminal, is that they stand in a compensatory

Chapter 1

relationship to consciousness and are therefore essentially relative. It is for this reason that knowledge of the conscious situation is necessary if we want to understand dreams.²⁰

But the extant reports of actual dreams from ancient Egypt are at best brief and vague, offering us the most minimal glimpses into the actual character of the dreamer, and leaving both the background situation and the 'conscious situation' of the participants invisible.

While Jung's theories would have had little relevance in the pharaonic civilization, the echo of the ancient Egyptian conception of a fluid relationship between dreaming and waking may possibly be heard in the theories of certain other modern scholars. Modern dream research, focusing on the physiological nature of sleep and dreams, defines their stages in terms of physiological responses measured as EEG, EMG, and EKG patterns, REM periods,²¹ and responses to stimuli. Based on the results of sleep research, some theorists have begun to question whether there is a fixed boundary between waking and dreaming cognition, or whether they should both be considered as part of a continuous spectrum.²² One study on dreams offers an example:

However, the idea of waking mentation as a baseline is brought into question if a high percentage of waking thought shows characteristics of dream mentation when assessed by identical scales and if demonstrated differences are primarily quantitative rather than qualitative. Perhaps dreams are better conceptualized as the end point on a continuum and the dream state could be tapped in a variety of ways, including meditation, hypnosis, introspections, and relaxed wakefulness.²³

This dream research relies of course on living patients, but its results will nevertheless prove useful and be revisited when defining the terms such as 'dream', 'nightmare', and 'bad dream' used in this monograph.

Yet another perspective on dreams combines both the behavioural and physiological approaches. Bert States, for example, explores the function of dreams by examining the patterns of associations and categorizations that dreams seem to follow.²⁴ He finds that dreams are unlikely to be symbolic communiqués from a hidden self to a conscious self, and indeed denies the existence of symbolism at all. Instead, he suggests that dream images are associated by the same connections as are used in language, specifically simile, metonymy, and metaphor. The latter is considered to be particularly important by scholars such as Lakoff, who suggests that paying attention to the everyday metaphors expressed in dreams can add

significantly to modern therapeutic techniques.²⁵ When we examine the Ramesside Dream Book we will see that many of the links between image and interpretation are based on similar associations, particularly those of metonymy and metaphor.

Anthropologists conducting research on contemporary cultures have also become interested in the topic of dreams.²⁶ These scholars remind us that what we may access is not so much dreams, as the accounts of portions of dreams which the dreamer chooses to communicate in a particular social context, and in a particular medium.²⁷ The only person who actually experiences the dream is the dreamer, and so we must remain outsiders.²⁸ When studying a dead civilization the problems are compounded, for many of the methods employed by cultural anthropologists cannot be used when dealing with a culture which can neither offer oral information, nor be directly observed. However, asking some of the same questions as are pertinent in the anthropological discourse may prove fruitful. The anthropologist Erika Bourguignon, for example, gives a number of methods that have been followed by anthropologists gathering dream materials, in terms of the questions they ask. One of the main issues is to examine the kinds of dreams that people report, and the other is to determine the ways dreams are used and integrated into various cultural practices.²⁹ This book will attempt to address both of these issues.

Finally, another approach to the study of dreams is suggested by Peter Burke in his work on cultural history.³⁰ He argues that dreams have multiple layers of meaning: one which has significance for an individual, one which is shared universally, and one which has cultural or social meaning. He suggests that patterns can be discerned in the dream content which reflect the culture of the dreamer, and that thus we can expect that social change will lead to a corresponding change in the general dream patterns. For the historian, studying the dreams themselves (rather than the history of the interpretation of dreams) can provide valuable insights into the cares and anxieties of a particular culture that might otherwise remain hidden or repressed.

What Burke does not explicitly state, but which will prove important for this study, is that the fact that individuals record their dreams at all is revealing of the prevalent attitude towards dreams within a given culture. For much of Egypt's history, dreams rarely appear in the written record. It might be that this absence is meaningful as well, and their appearance at a later date could be related to historical or social change. In terms of

the content, what an author chooses not to include in his dream reports is also indicative of the cultural restrictions and ethics which envelop him. And it is this approach which may prove most fruitful in the exploration of ancient Egyptian dreams.

Non-Egyptian dreams

As we have seen, dreams defy easy categorization, even by dream-researchers, scientists, and theorists using the most modern criteria and tools. Their importance and role is fluid, changing from one given culture to another, and from one period to another. They resist a universal definition, and their nature is kaleidoscopic and mutable. The following examples highlight how a few diverse cultures have perceived dreams. In early Celtic society the importance of dreams was such 'that they composed a separate genre of narratives, along with the conceptions, cattle-raids, and kin-murders enumerated in the saga lists of Ireland'.³¹ Dreams have played a vital role in the religion and daily life of the Quiché in the highlands of Guatemala,³² and for the African Yansi, who begin each morning by recounting their dreams, dream-life is at least as important as waking life.³³ For the Kagwahiv of Brazil, dreams are closely related to myths. Both are meant to be actively related and shared, and their narrations are marked by distinct grammatical forms.³⁴

In other societies dreams could be used as an indispensable source of knowledge. Visionary experiences, whether acquired through spontaneous dreams or vision quests, guided the lives of many of the aboriginal Plains people of North America.³⁵ They were an integral part of their religious traditions, rituals of passage and healing, and helped sanction gender identity and formulate decisions.³⁶ For other cultures a dream was important for prognostication; in ancient Palestine and Syria 'dreams and visions are a recognized means of God's revelation, as such they can be understood as messages announcing future events'.³⁷ Similarly, in the religious traditions of Islam dreams were important vehicles for divine revelations, and dream interpretation was a sanctioned practice.³⁸ For the Zinacantans, a group of Mexican Indians, dreams were used not only on the most important occasions, but were deferred to for making decisions on a daily basis. This reliance on dreams was markedly strong, as explained by Laughlin: 'dogs dream, and cats dream. Horses dream, and even pigs, say the Zinacantecs. No one knows why; but there is no question in the mind of a Zinacantec why men dream. They dream to live a full life. They

dream to save their lives.³⁹ The ability of a dream to reveal the future to an individual is partially explained in some cultures by its existence as an alternate plane of reality. For the Rarámuri Indians of Mexico, dreams are quite real, and they attribute a comparable reality to both the dream world and the waking world.⁴⁰ Both the Sambia of New Guinea and the Kalapalo of Brazil differentiate between the two ‘realities’ and believe them to be experienced by separate parts of the dreamer’s self.⁴¹ The Zuni of New Mexico believe that in dreams a segment of a person can travel through time and space outside of the body, though individuals disagree on precisely what part is able to travel.⁴²

Some cultures separate dreams into simple categories, such as the Persians who distinguish between waking dreams and those which occur during sleep, and further between those that are ‘true’ and those that are ‘false’.⁴³ In ancient Greece, both Artemidorus and Macrobius also divided dreams into true and false⁴⁴ (a differentiation that did not exist in the ancient Egyptian view). Ancient Indian medical texts classify dreams into distinct types while Tibetan literature includes manuals of dreams organized by predictions.⁴⁵ In China, the interpretation of dreams is mentioned as early as the sixth–fifth century BC in *Zuo zhuan*, where the focus is on royal succession and methods of structuring events.⁴⁶ In Africa the range of importance that can be attributed to dreams is readily apparent, where the Berti peoples make no effort to remember their dreams or share them publicly,⁴⁷ while for the Yansi, the dream-life is vitally important, as mentioned above.⁴⁸

As we can see, dreams are conceptualized in many different ways, in many different civilizations. We cannot anticipate the importance that dreams will have or the role that they can play in one culture simply based on another, or the changes they may undergo reflecting the changing social norms. We must also keep in mind that individual beliefs concerning dreams will vary, even within a homogeneous population. Nevertheless, so long as it is studied not in isolation but as part of a cultural matrix, we can discern a culture’s general attitude towards the phenomenon of dreams.

The ‘dream’ defined

To study the ancient Egyptians’ perception of dreams then, we need to examine the evidence that they themselves acknowledged as dreams. This will include those texts which directly mention either *rsu.t* or *qd* (the Egyptian words for ‘dream’) or things seen or heard while asleep, (usually indicated by *qd* or *sdr*), whether this occurs in the day, or at night.

Nightmares could also be referred to indirectly as terrors to be kept at bay by magical means. There are a number of texts that modern scholars suggest might possibly refer to dreams, but that are not explicitly described as dreams in the original texts. As the event described in these texts can also be understood as being unrelated to dreams, I have excluded them in this study. Thus texts such as the story of Khonsuemhab and the Ghost,⁴⁹ and the story of the Levitating Ghost,⁵⁰ have been excluded. As fascinating and imaginative as these tales are, the fragments found to date do not indicate in any way that they describe anything other than confrontations with the dead in the domain of the living, in non-dreaming and non-sleeping states.⁵¹ The Instruction of Amenemhat is a problematic case, as the king does appear to his son in a vision, but this is described specifically in the text as a *wp m maat*, a ‘revelation of truth’, thus distinguishing the event from a *rsw.t* or *qd*.

The Egyptians themselves provide us with quite clear and consistent clues when something was a dream, whether good (*nfr.t*) or bad (*dw*). While I am focusing on dreams that were experienced while asleep, thus differentiating them from our conceptions of related phenomena such as ‘visions’ or ‘hallucinations’ or ‘meditation’, it bears noting that these modern nuances may have held little importance for the ancient Egyptians, for

whether the dreams which occur during REM sleep are distinguished or merged with other vivid hallucinatory experiences will depend in part on cultural dogma. This dogma influences not only the *reporting* of dreams and other pseudo-perceptions, including secondary elaborations, but also, as far as we can tell, the subjective experience of these states.⁵²

The ancient Egyptian dogma seems to allow the states experienced by certain individuals to be classified under the category of visual phenomena known as *qd*, while others experience a state referred to as *rsw.t*. The etymology of and relationship between these two terms will be discussed in the next chapter. The issue of nightmares, as a phenomenon distinct from dreams, will be considered in a separate section. For the present, I will simply note that these are limited to visitations by hostile entities occurring while the intended victim is asleep, usually at night.

Because the evidence for dreams in Pharaonic Egypt is largely textual, this study is based mainly on sources through the New Kingdom written in hieroglyphs or hieratic, but where appropriate, examples of non-textual artefacts will be included. The format mostly follows what I perceive to be the main functions of Egyptian dreams. The flow will generally be from

the earliest to the latest texts, with discussions of the religious and social contexts in which the dream records occur. The issue of the changes in the perception of dreams over time, and the effect of external belief systems on the pre-existing culture patterns, has often been ignored, sometimes leading to a projection backwards from the more abundant material evidence of the Graeco-Roman Period. An example of this is the claim that incubation and dream interpretation were widely practised by the ancient Egyptians. The earliest concrete evidence for incubation, however, appears not until the Late Period, 2500 years after the country's unification, and long after the earliest mention of unsought dreams in the Letters to the Dead. The earliest Dream Book dates from the Ramesside Period, approximately 1,000 years after the earliest reference to dreams. My goal at this time is to trace the evidence from Egypt's first 2,000 years in particular, highlighting the permutations in the perception of dreams.

Notes

¹ I am using the word 'farworld' here in place of the usual 'netherworld' or 'underworld'. Neither of these latter terms is an appropriate translation for the Egyptian *dwꜣt*, for by definition the English terms place this region under the world or below the earth. And while this may be appropriate for the Greeks, it is not for the Egyptians. Careful reading of not only the royal Afterlife Books, but of the texts presented in this discussion reveals that while the regions of the dead could be accessed through the ground (for example P. Chester Beatty III r. 9.14: 'If a man sees himself in a dream placing his face against the floor; BAD, [it can mean] seeking something from him by the ones who are yonder') that realm is most often described as being 'over there', or 'far away'.

² 'The Great Hymn to the Aten' (Lichtheim 1976, 97).

³ Volten 1942; Oppenheim 1956.

⁴ For example, Bottéro 1987, 10 writes that 'in contrast with other cultures, such as the culture of pharaonic Egypt, the recognition, the practice, and the study of the divinatory value of dreams in ancient Mesopotamia did not occupy more than a small sector of a much larger enterprise, the object of which was virtually the entire earth'. He is voicing here the popular generalization that mantic dreams played a major role throughout Egypt's history. However the evidence upon which this conclusion rests seems rather fragile, and needs to be re-evaluated both synchronically and diachronically.

⁵ Gardiner 1935, 8, and Cailliois 1966, 23.

⁶ Classification schemes were developed at a later point. The Demotic Dream Book, for example, written in the second century AD, is organized by categories such as dreams of beer and dreams that women might have of monstrous births. The New Kingdom Dream Book has a separate section for the dreams of

Chapter 1

a particular type of person, but the dreams themselves are divided only into those that are good and those that are bad. This can be contrasted with other cultures such as the Chinese, which even in early times developed complex classification systems (Pei and Juwen 2000).

⁷ Oppenheim 1956. New studies on dreams in Mesopotamia can be found in Butler 1998 and Zgoll (forthcoming).

⁸ This approach was first adopted in Sauneron 1959.

⁹ An exception is John Ray (1981) who traced the development of oracles and divination in Egypt in the context of the neighbouring cultures.

¹⁰ He was himself influenced by 'biblical, Talmudic, and Greek dream interpretation' (Noegel 2001, 52.)

¹¹ For example, see Nelson 1974.

¹² See for example Hobson 2001, and Crews and Bulkeley 2001.

¹³ Freud and Oppenheim 1958.

¹⁴ For a concise discussion of Freud's theories see Van de Castle 1994, 109–39.

¹⁵ For presentations of Jung's theories I have consulted mainly Jung 1974.

¹⁶ P. Chester Beatty III in Gardiner 1935.

¹⁷ Groll 1985, 71–118.

¹⁸ Ray 1981, 174–90.

¹⁹ Jung 1974, 45.

²⁰ Jung 1974, 46.

²¹ EEGs, or electroencephalograms, measure variations in brain activity; EMGs, or electromyograms measure variations in muscular activity; EKGs, or electrocardiographs measure the heartbeat; REM refers to periods of rapid eye movement.

²² For an overview of some of the recent approaches to this question see Kahan 2001. For an opposing view see Hobson 2001.

²³ Weinstein, Schwartz and Arkin 1991, 196.

²⁴ States 1997, 157.

²⁵ Lakoff 1997, 2001.

²⁶ Of particular note are Tedlock 1987 for research on North and South American peoples, and Jedrej and Shaw 1992 for African cultures.

²⁷ Tedlock 2001, 249.

²⁸ Reynolds 1992, 32.

²⁹ Bourguignon 1972, 411–12.

³⁰ Burke 1997.

³¹ Jones 1992, 195.

³² Tedlock 1982, 46–74.

³³ Mpier 1992.

³⁴ Kracke 1987.

³⁵ Irwin 1994, 2001.

³⁶ Irwin 2001, 103.

³⁷ Jeffers 1996, 125.

³⁸ Hermansen 2001; Sirin 2000.

³⁹ Laughlin 1976, 3.

⁴⁰ Merrill 1987, 200–2.