

Interpretation of Dreams in Kalpa Sutra: Comparative Analysis with Freud's Psychology of Dreams

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Abstract: *The study attempts to analyze the psychology of dreams as given in ancient Jain text – Kalpa Sutra. Further this psychology and interpretation of dreams has been discussed in view of a renowned psychologist – Sigmund Freud how he understands of the psychology of dreams. The comparative analysis of Freud's approach towards dreams interpretation with the ancient Indian approach as depicted in 2500 years old Jain book 'Kalpa Sutra' will help us understand the extent of ancient Indian wisdom.*

Key Words: *Ancient Indian literature, Jain literature, Kalpa Sutra, Sigmund Freud, Psychology of dreams, Interpretation of dreams.*

1. METHODS AND MATERIALS:

Since the research is exploratory by nature, hence ancient Jain text- Kalpa Sutra and commentaries by ancient and modern Jain scholars on the book are used to understand the process of interpretation of dreams in ancient Jain society. On the other hand modern psychologist Sigmund Freud's literature on dreams has been studied and then a comparative analysis between the approaches of modern and ancient dream interpreters has been made to answer the following research question.

2. RESEARCH QUESTION:

Does Kalpa Sutra explain the psychology of dreams and the interpretation of the dreams of human beings? If yes, are they in line with modern stream of psychology of dreams?

3. HISTORY OF MODERN PSYCHOLOGY OF DREAMS:

According to Freud, "dreams always have a manifest and latent content. The manifest content is what the dream seems to be saying. It is often bizarre and nonsensical. The latent content is what the dream is really trying to say. Dreams give us a look into our unconscious. Freud believes that we can chip through the dream's manifest content to reveal the underlying significance and it's latent by utilizing the technique of "free association". Using this technique, you start with one dream symbol and then follow with what automatically comes to your mind first. You continue in this manner and see where it leads.

4. FREUD AND OTHER MODERN PSYCHOLOGISTS' VIEWS ON DREAMS:

Freud, the great psychologist attempted to analyze the psychology of dreams by looking for answer to the question: "Has the dream a meaning—can sense be made of each single dream as of other mental syntheses?" He tried to find the answer by investigating if there is any psychical significance of the dream, and understanding the psychical processes and then checked if there is a possible biological function or connection between the two. He calls the person who dreams as 'dream formers' and observed their tendencies in the estimation of dreams. According to him, "The foundation of dream life is for them a peculiar state of psychical activity, which they even celebrate as elevation to some higher state." Though modern psychologists do not support the idea of visualizing physical phenomenon behind the dreams but they claim that 'dreams are provoked and initiated exclusively by stimuli proceeding from the senses or the body, which either reach the sleeper from without or are accidental disturbances of his internal organs.' But all the scholars agree to the view that dreams tend to have some meaning, they are not vague visualizations. It is a common belief that there are future predictions in different form in the dreams we see during our sleep. One has to be an analyst to understand the real meaning of the content of the dreams. All the scholars opine that dreams symbolize some event, some future foretelling or a state of mind. That is why modern psychotherapists use the method of psychological investigation in many of their treatments.

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6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE PROCESS OF DREAM INTERPRETATION:

Freud has worked on the following points while analyzing and interpreting dreams:

- The conditions of its origin;
- Relationship to our psychological life when we are awake;
- its independence of disturbances which, during the state of sleep,
- its many peculiarities repugnant to our waking thought;
- the incongruence between its images and the feelings they engender;
- then the dream's evanescence, the way in which, on awakening, our thoughts thrust it aside as something bizarre,
- our reminiscences mutilating or rejecting it

He is of the view that "All these and many other problems have for many hundred years demanded answers which up till now could never have been satisfactory." The study attempts to find answers to these questions raised by Freud. Kalpa Sutra is one of the sources of ancient dream interpretation theories which are given by the dream interpreters of that era. The way they narrate from their great dream books, it seems that a lot of work on dream psychology had been done by that time, which was available in those dream books. All the above points mentioned in Freud's theory have been noticed by ancient Kalpa Sutra dream interpreters too. Three states of the dream visualization have been discussed in the book:

The conditions of its origin: The sleeping state of the two mothers, 'सुप्त जागरा' half asleep- half awake.

Relationship of dreams with psychological life when awake: After Trishala wakes up from the state of actual dream visualization. "चउद्स महासुपिणे पासित्ताणं पडिबुद्धा समाणी हट्टुट्टा चित्तमाणंदिया पीडमाणा परम सोमणस्सिया हरिसबसविसप्पमाणहियया धारा ह्य कयम्ब पुप्फंगं पिव समुस्ससिय रोमकूवा समिणुगगहं करेइ]" meaning "After having seen these great fine, beautiful, lovely, handsome dreams, the lotus eyed queen awoke on her bed while the hair of her body bristled for joy."(46a).

Sleep of the Queen Trishla is described with the help of following details:

- its independence of disturbances which, during the state of sleep: taking fits of sleep, in a state between sleeping and waking
- its many peculiarities repugnant to our waking thought: The state after the dream visualization
- the incongruence between its images and the feelings they engender;
- then the dream's evanescence, the way in which, on awakening, our thoughts thrust it aside as something bizarre,
- our reminiscences mutilating or rejecting it

According to Freud, "The dream-work carries out these transformations at the behest of the "censor," which makes sure the partial satisfaction of wishes does not disturb sleep" but in the ancient book, the state is half awake- half asleep.

As per the narrations documented and recorded in the book 'Kalpa Sutra' we can say that the ancient dream interpreters have worked elaborately on the first two points from Freud's list of major points to ponder upon. There is a possibility that they worked on all or more points but we have lost them in this long gap of 2500 years.

a) Interpretation of Dreams by different levels of society: In Kalpa Sutra the fourteen dreams are interpreted by three different levels of the society –

1. Brahmin Rishabhadata: He was a Brahmin by birth who was supposed to be highly educated. He himself had adequate knowledge of interpreting the dreams, but there is a doubt, whether he was a dream interpretation expert or not. Anyhow he interprets the dreams to his wife and concludes that a fortunate blissful son is to be born to them after due period of pregnancy.
2. The King Siddhartha: He belonged to elite class, but was not an expert of the subject – 'dream interpretation'.
3. Professional dream interpreters: They were the paid professionals who used the literature on dream interpretation and disclosed that the Lord of all was to take birth as a result of these dreams.

The ancient book Kalpa Sutra discusses the fourteen dreams visualized by the two mothers who were to give birth to the natural Lord- The Tirthankara. One of the mothers who belonged to less rich but intellectual section of the society named 'Brahmins', her sleeping state has been described in the words, "जं रयणीं च णं समणे भगवं महावीरे देवाणंदाए माहणीए कुच्छिसि गम्भताए वक्कते , तं रयणीं च णं सा देवाणंदा माल्ली सयणिज्जंसि सुत्तजागरा ओहीरमाणी – गय, वसह, सीह, लच्छी, दाम, ससि, दिणयरं, झयं, कुम्भं, पउमसर, सागर, विमाण-भवण, रयणुच्चय, सिहिं च]इमे एयारूवे चउदस महासुमिणे पासित्ता णं पदिबुद्धा]"

"In that night in which the venerable Ascetic Mahavira took the form of an embryo in the womb of Brahmani Devananda, the Brahmani Devananda was on her couch, taking fits of sleep, in a state between sleeping and waking, and having seen the following fourteen illustrious, beautiful lucky, blest, auspicious fortunate great dreams, she woke up – to wit(3)

1. An elephant
 2. A bull
 3. A lion
 4. The anointing (of the Goddess Sri)
 5. A garland,
 6. The moon,
 7. The sun,
 8. The flag,
 9. A vase,
 10. A lotus lake,
 11. The ocean,
 12. A celestial adobe,
 13. A heap of jewels and
 14. The smoke less flame.
- Brahmani Devananda, having seen these dreams woke up, glad and joyful in her mind."

These fourteen dreams of the mothers were interpreted by their husbands; one of them was an intellectual scholar who could grasp the meaning of those dreams with his own innate intellect and intuition.

"नवणहं मासाणं बहुपडिपुत्ताणं अद्धट्टमाणं राइदियाणं वइक्कताणं सुकुमाल पाणिपायं अहीण पडिपुत्ता पंचिदियसरीरं लक्खण वंजण गुणो ववेये माणुम्माण पमाण पडिपुत्ता सुजाय सव्वंग सुदरंगं ससिसोमागारं कन्तं पियदंसणं सुरूवे दारंगं पयाहिसि]" meaning "you have seen illustrious dreams,, you have seen beautiful, lucky, blest, auspicious, fortunate dreams which will bring healthy, joy, long life, bliss and fortune. We shall have pleasure, we shall have happiness, we shall have a son, after the lapse of nine months and seven and a half days, you will give birth to a lovely and handsome boy with tender hands and feet, with a body containing the entire and complete five organs of sense, with the lucky signs, marks and good qualities, a boy on whose body all limbs will be well formed, and of full volume, weight and length, of a lovely figure like that of the moon."

The other husband was a king and had his education from the royal systems of that era. Hence their interpretation stands valid as per the standards of the historical period of the book Kalpa Sutra.

Herman Jacobi translates the interpretation of these dreams by the king in the following words, (9) And this boy, after having passed his childhood and, with just ripened intellect, having reached the state of youth will repeat, fully understand and retain (in his mind) four Vedas to which the Itihasa is added as the fifth, and the Nigghantu as the sixth- together with their Angas and Upanagas, and the Rahasya. He will know the six Angas; he will be versed in the philosophy of the sixty categories and well-grounded in arithmetic, in phonetics, ceremonial grammar, meter, etymology and astronomy, and in many other brahmanical (and monastic) sciences besides. (10).

In the book, The Brahmin mother's dreams are just named while the royal mother Trishla's dreams are highlighted more, for example, when she saw an elephant, it is explained like this- "Then Trishla saw in her first dream a fine, enormous elephant, possessing all lucky marks with strong thighs and four mighty tusks; who was whiter than an empty great cloud, on a heap of pearls, or the ocean of milk or the moon – beams, or spray of water, or the silver mountain, whose temples were perfumed with fragrant musk- fluid, which attracted the bees, equaling in dimension the best elephant of the king of the Gods; uttering a fine deep sound like the thunder of a big and large rain cloud.(33)

One very strange feature of these dreams has been explained in the book Kalpa Sutra that these dreams symbolize the birth of a coming Lord and "every mother of a Tirthankara sees these fourteen dreams in that night in which the famous Arhat enters her womb."(46b)

Interpretation of fourteen dreams by the royal family member : “You have seen illustrious dreams , you will give birth to a lovely , handsome boy, who will be the ensign of our family, the lamp of our family, the crown of our family, The frontal ornament of our family, the maker of our family’s glory, the sun of our family, the stay of our family, the maker of our family’s joy and fame, the tree of our family, the exalter of our family;(a boy) with tender hands and feet.”(51). And this boy after having passed his childhood, with just ripened intellect, having reached the state of youth , will become a brave , gallant and valorous king, the lord of the realm , with a large and extensive army and train of wagons.”(52) Call the interpreters of dreams who well know the science of prognostics with its eight branches, and are well versed in many sciences besides.”(64)

The King Siddhartha asks them to interpret the dreams. “What to be sure will be the result portended by these fourteen great dreams.”(73)

A group of interpreters was invited to interpret the dreams seen by the Kshatriya queen Trishla.They assembled and interpreted the dreams in the following words:

b) Stealing of Dreams: Is it possible to steal some one’s dreams?

The story in the book says that the Brahmani’s auspicious dreams were stolen by the queen. A logical reason has been given that the fortunate son – the would be Lord is to be born from the womb of elite class- Kshatriya queen only.

“After the lapse of eighty two days, on the eighty third day, the current (since his conception) the embryo of the Venerable Ascetic Mahavira was, on the command of Sakra, safely removed from the womb of the Brahmanai Devananda to that of Kshatriyani Trishla.” (30)

Possibly the mention of stealing of dreams is just a symbolic expression advanced medical technology of that era to describe medical transfer of the womb from one mother to the other and has no physical meaning. But if it was an actual phenomenon as explained in the book, then the science of psychology of dreams have many more dimensions than known to our young dream psychologists. Till now modern psychologists have not come up with this concept that the dreams can be stolen.

c) Can dreams predict the birth of a child and also list the qualities of the child?

Though modern science has not reached at this level of dream interpretation where the qualities of a child taking birth after visualizing a dream or a set of dreams can be predicted but the ancient theory of dream interpretation was quite advanced in this field. There is a narration of professional dream interpreters in this book who speaks about 42 and 30 great dreams with reference to the dream books they had in hand in the context. “In our dream books are enumerated four two common dreams and thirty great dreams. The mothers of universal monarchs or Arhats wake up after seeing these fourteen great dreams out of the thirty great dreams; when the embryo of a universal monarch or Arhat enters their womb.”(74)

The narration gives a clear tabulation of dreams and prediction of a child’s birth: “अम्हं सुमिण सत्येवयालीसं, सुमिणा तीसं महासुमिणा, बावात्तरिं सब्व सुमिणा दिट्ठा] तत्थणं देवानुप्पिया! अरहंत मायरो वा , चक्कवट्टिय मायरो वा , अरहंतसि वा चक्कहरंसि वा गब्भंवक्कममाणंसि एएसिं तीसाए महासुमिणाणं इमे चोदस महा सुमिणे पासित्ताणं पडिबुज्झंति]” (71) meaning “According to the science of dreams , there are seventy two types of dreams , out of which forty two are known as dreams and thirty two as great dreams . When an Arhant or Chakrawarti is conceived, his mother sees fourteen of the thirty great dreams.”

Table 1: Dreams predicting the birth of a child

Kind of child who is to be born	No. of dreams the mother visualizes	Origin from Kalpa Sutra	Meaning
Vasudeva	Seven	मायरो वा वासुदेवंसि गब्भंवक्कममाणंसि एएसिं चोदसण्हं महा सुमिणाणं अण्णतरे सत्त महा सुमिणे पासित्ताणं पडिबुज्झंति (72)	“The mothers of Vasudeva wake up after seeing any seven great dreams out of these fourteen great dreams, when the embryo of a Vasudeva enters their womb.”(76)
Baladeva	Four	मायरो वा बलदेवंसि गब्भंवक्कममाणंसि एएसिं	“The mothers of Baladevas wake up after seeing any four great

		चोद्दसण्हं महा सुमिणाणं अण्णतरे चत्तारि महा सुमिणे पासित्ताणं पडिबुज्जंति (73)	dreams, when the embryo of a Baladeva enters their womb.”(77)
Maandalika	One	मायरो वा मंडलियंसि गब्भं वक्कममाणंसि एएसिं चोद्दसण्हं महा सुमिणाणं अण्णयरं एगं महा सुमिणं पासित्ताणं पडिबुज्जंति (74)	The mothers of Maandalikas wake up after seeing a single great dream out of these fourteen great dreams, when the embryo of a Maandalika enters their womb.”(78)
Tirthankara	Fourteen	सुविण सत्थंसि बयालीसं सुमिणा तीसं महा सुमिणा जाव एगम महा सुमिणं पासित्ताणं पडिबुज्जंति(८०) चोद्दस महा सुमिणा दिट्ठा, तं जहा ओराला णं तुमे जाव जिणे वा तेलोक्कनायए धम्म वर चाउरंत चक्कवट्टी (81)	“The Kshatriyani Trishla has seen these fourteen great dreams and this boy, the lord of a realm, with a large and extensive army and train of wagons, a universal emperor or a Jina, the Lord of three worlds, the universal emperor of the law. (79-80) therefore the Kshatriyani Trishla has seen illustrious dreams.”(81)

Source: Kalpa Sutra, Chapter 1

The above table familiarizes the reader with peculiar phenomena of dream psychology which is rarely found in ancient history, other than Jain philosophy. This feature of dream interpretation is beyond the reach of modern psychologists. No one today or in the history has claimed a systematic set of dreams predict the birth of a child with certain symbols and qualities. Analysis of Freud’s work on dream psychology and analysis of Kalpa Sutra by the author provides us the following comparative table:

Table 2: Comparative analysis of Freud’s modern and Kalpa Sutra’s ancient approach of dream interpretation

Psychology of dreams by	latent content	dream-work	manifest content
Freud	the repressed wishes	condensation, displacement, dramatization, elaboration	dream as we experience it, often unintelligible
Kalpa Sutra	Future foreseeing of a fortunate son	dramatization, elaboration	Dreams are quite intelligent as they can be explained as per the virtues possessed by the coming child.

The above table shows how the ancient approach of dream interpreters as depicted in Kalpa Sutra and modern approach of psychologists like Freud differ in their understanding. Freud feels that dreams are visualizations of suppressed wishes while in ancient era there was a complete science available with theories of future predictions which deal dreams as an intelligent phenomenon.

7. SYMBOLISM IN ANCIENT JAIN AND MODERN THEORY OF DREAM INTERPRETATION:

Interpreters in the Kalpa Sutra seem to have followed the first approach displacement, where desire for a healthy and lucky son is symbolized by fourteen symbols named lion, fire flag etc. This is also known as secondary revision.

Unlike Freud who is particularly preoccupied with sexual content in dreams. He believes that sex is the root cause of what occurs in your dreams. According to Freud, every long slender or elongated object (i.e. knife, cigar, gun, etc.) represents the phallus, while any cavity or receptacle (bowl, cave, tunnel, etc.) denotes the female genitalia.

Freud also talks about ancient system of dream interpretation “In what we may term "prescientific days" people were in no uncertainty about the interpretation of dreams. When they were recalled after awakening they were regarded as either the friendly or hostile manifestation of some higher powers, demoniacal and Divine. With the rise of scientific thought the whole of this expressive mythology was transferred to psychology ;”(Freud)

8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The author herself is not a psychologist, but is well acquainted with Freud’s work. There was a scope of improvement if a psychologist would have done this study, but at the same time the modern psychologist might be/might not be well versed with the ancient Jain text – Kalpa Sutra. Since this is a common limitation in dual or multi- disciplinary researches hence there is still further scope of research to analyze the research question not only from a Jain follower’s views but also from a modern psychologist’s view. In future when these two analyses are read together they can give us a complete picture of the level of perfection in dream interpretation found in our ancient texts. Through this research paper, the author invites modern psychologists to come forward and contribute to the idea.

9. CONCLUSION

Dream interpretation with scientific techniques to get real meaning of the visualizations of dreams was a well developed science in the ancient Jain era. Comparison with modern techniques of dream interpretation leads to the information that Kalpa Sutra interpreters were using far advanced techniques of dream psychology which are not available with our modern scholars. Further scope of the study would be to analyze the psychology of dreams by a psychologist, till now these are analytical statements of a management practitioner and academician. Through this paper, I invite readers to come forward for a deeper analysis of the statements in Kalpa Sutra.

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