

The Searching of “Dream Illusion” in Chinese Landscape Poetry of Liu Tsung-yuan

Yu-Ning Shen

National ChengChi University, Taiwan

0266

The Asian Conference on Arts & Humanities 2013

Official Conference Proceedings 2013



iafor

iafor
The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

i. The foreword

In Liu Tsung-yuan's literary works, it is obviously divided into two periods. The former uses "make his people good (Li an yuan yuan)" as its purpose, filling with the author's ambition and his political idealism; the later, however, desperation, explaining that there is no chance to carry out his ideals and focusing on the topics of mountains and rivers which seems to comfort his pain and lives in solitude. According to "History of the Early Tang," point out 'When Tsung-yuan as a provincial governor of Shao-Chou, later he relegated to Yuang-Chou and spent whole life in exile. He stayed in wastes land, emerged his sorrow as a poet. Readers always felt the same melancholy with him.' The things about the writing matters is of natural milieu and often with the appearance of melancholy What's more, reviewers always put Liu's poetry in the position with Qu Yuan and Hsieh Ling-Yun. A famous poet named Yuan Hao-Wen said '謝客風容映古今，發源誰似柳州深？朱弦一拂遺音在，卻是當年寂寞心¹。' Shen Deqian also indicated that Liu Tsung-Yuan wrote down temperance plain as "The songs of Chou." In conclusion, the art achievement of Liu's poetry is poetic melancholy. Thus, the landscape in Liu's poetry emerge from overwhelming frustration which involves in relegation. In other words, the emotion ingrained in Liu's mind deeply is self-prisoned awareness.

If interpreting Liu's poems about landscapes, we can discover that there are quiet amount of intense melancholy and worry. From this, we can examine his poems from dream illusion. Even though his terms contain many absurd and obscure words, due to the revealing of dream illusion, we can find that there are words with 'double-perspective' in accordance to Edward W. Said. Hence, in his writing, the usage of dream illusion, in fact, includes the escape to the fairy land of anxiety. On the other hand, the collision between fantasy and reality induces the fall of traditional writing. Therefore, in Liu's dream, there are depressed colors with desperation and collapse.

ii. The meaning of "dream illusion" in Liu's poetry

It's been long history about the "dream" beginning. First, it appears as a method about divination in "The Book of Poetry"². It's not only appeared rarely, but also

¹ In order to maintain the lyric in Chinese poetry, I quoted the 'critical poetry' in Chinese language and explained the meaning later. It means when Hsieh Ling-Yun wrote the typical landscape poetry, Liu Tsung Yuan became the most outstanding junior. However, the solitude is the only thing when we look into his poetic space. Therefore, not the scene but the lyrical feature is the most important point that we must notice.

² For example, 'On the rush-mat below, and that of fine bamboos above it, Here may he repose in slumber! May he sleep and awake, Divine for me my dreams.' and 'Your herdsmen shall dream,

pretended to utility without emotional infection. The one who truly associated the “dream” with philosophic imagine is Zhuangzi. He enriched the literature language with illusory fancy. The famous parable about ‘dreaming butterfly’ explained the interchanging between dreaming and awakening, life and death. Thus, Zhuangzi became ‘the important foundation of Chinese ancient theory of dream (Fu, p.154).’ However, so far we have discussed about “dream”, not “dream illusion” which is completed by Qu Yuan. “Dream illusion” makes a skeleton about ‘reality to fantasy to reality,’ and as its lyrical characteristic also appears with ‘anxiety to searching to disillusionment.’ In one word, the typical of the dreams-describing literature must throughout the three progresses that someone called it ‘daydreamy canto. (Fu, p.105)³’ Therefore, “dream” became a part of image in literature works.

In Tang dynasty, dreams-describing literature became more popular and be separated by An-shi Rebellion. In its early stage, the “dream illusion” took on vigorous atmosphere so called “Poetic Style & Features of the Golden Age of Tang Dynasty”, however, in later stage, implied that signs of doom. The individual spirit originated with the particular philosophy made poets dying to achieve self- transcendence. In case of poets tended to comfort themselves with wandering in mountains rivers that generate numbers of landscape poetry. At the meantime, ”dream illusion” vitalize the prime nature with philosophical meaning.

In “Liu Ho-tung chi,” we can discover that the “dream illusion” in Liu’s poetry enveloped in earlier literature works. Although the amount of the “dream illusion” is less than other nature-describing, the pure emotion hind in poet’s mind is much more obvious without disturbing of empathy such as “Bi””Xing.” Moreover, the liberty and variation hint dreams can flee from the cage in reality, as Shelley said:

It makes us the inhabitants of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos.....It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration. (Abrams ,p.282)

In Liu’s poetry, it’s a corresponding footnotes. As a prisoner in relegation, Liu were seized with terror about death, no matter from the Emperor’s judgement or terrible mental health, drove him to express his missing about homeland and negation to

Of multitudes and then of fishes;Of the tortoise-and serpent ; and then of the falcon banners.
The chief diviner will divine the dreams. How the multitudes dissolving into fishes, betoken plentiful years.’ In the two poetry, the “dream illusion” were used as divine the future. It shows that people expected abundant harvests at the era.

³ According to Fu, daydreamy imagination means a initiative imagination by writers.

dangerous situation. Such struggles between two opposing consciousness can be seen in the “dream illusion.” For convenience to discuss, I organized the “dream illusion” in Liu’s poetry in a form:

Types	poetry
Dreams about paradise	<p>“<i>Replying to Comforting Letters from Xiaocai Lo in Autumn Night</i>”: 客有故園思，瀟湘生夜愁。病依居士室，夢繞羽人丘。味道憐知止，遺名得自求。壁空殘月曙，門掩候蟲秋。謬委雙金重，難征雜佩酬。碧霄無枉路，徒此助離憂⁴。</p>
Dreams about homeland	<p>“<i>A Waterfall in Gie-Wei</i>”: 界圍匯湘曲，青壁環澄流。懸泉聚成簾，羅注無時休。韻磬叩凝碧，鏘鏘徹巖幽。丹霞冠其巔，想像凌虛遊。靈境不可狀，鬼工諒難求。忽如朝玉皇，天冕垂前旒。楚臣昔南逐，有意仍丹丘。今我始北旋，新詔釋縲囚。采真誠眷戀，許國無淹留。再來寄幽夢，遺貯催行舟⁵。</p>
	<p>“<i>Plum Rains</i>”: 梅實迎時雨，蒼茫值晚春。愁深楚猿夜，夢斷越雞晨。海霧連南極，江雲暗北津。素衣今盡化，非為帝京塵⁶。</p>
	<p>“<i>Hearing orioles</i>”: 倦聞子規朝暮聲，不意忽有黃鸝鳴。一聲夢斷楚江曲，滿眼故園春意生。目極千里無山河，麥芒際天搖清波。王畿優本少賦役，務閒酒熟饒經過。此時晴煙最深處，捨南巷北遙相語。翻日迴度昆明飛，凌風邪看細柳翥。我今誤落千萬山，身同僧人不思還。鄉禽何事亦來此，令我生心憶桑梓。閉聲回翅歸務速，西林紫樵行當熟⁷。</p>
Dreams about	<p>“<i>Early Spring in Hill Ling</i>”: 問春從此去，幾日到秦原。憑寄還鄉夢，慇懃入故園⁸。</p>
	<p>“<i>A farewell to my brother Tsung-Yi</i>”: 零落殘紅倍黯然，雙垂別淚越江邊。一身去國六千里，萬死投荒十二</p>

⁴ The missing about the homeland grew in nights and spread as extensive as River Xiao-Xiang. The banished man got sick and dreamed that stay in a land which belongs to Immortals. Even so, the beautiful dream ended with waking and he never back home in his life.

⁵ I'd been exiled to the South, but I maintain my loyalty to the court. Today, I were remitted and allowed to return to the North. The waterfalls sang joyously and the mountains rose awesomely. All my dream came true and I hasten my boat for getting back quickly.

⁶ The times went to later spring when the plums were met by seasonal rains. At nights, I heard monkeys screaming in melancholy. At dawns, my dreams were disturbed by cock crow. I've been more and more toilworn since I was banished from hometown.

⁷ I heard sounds from cuckoos all day and all night, suddenly, orioles sang. My dream about homeland disappeared at once and I saw spring sights in my garden. However, no matter how hard I tried, I cannot see my homeland behinds thousands of mountains. Since I made a mistake, I've been imprisoned in the South. Finally, I suggested you orioles go home quickly to instead of me.

⁸ I'll send nostalgic conscious in my dream and let it floated to my homeland with the spring passing.

bosom friend	年。桂嶺瘴來雲似墨，洞庭春盡水如天。欲知此後相思夢，長在荊門郢樹煙 ⁹ 。
	<p>“Response to Administer Yiang in summer”:</p> <p>郡樓有遺唱，新和敵南金。境以道情得，人期幽夢尋。層軒隔炎暑，迴野恣窺臨。鳳去徽音續，芝焚芳意深。遊鱗出陷浦，唳鶴繞仙岑。風起三湘浪，雲生萬里陰。宏規齊德宇，麗藻競詞林。靜契分憂術，閒同遲客心。驂騑當遠步，鵲駛莫相侵。今日登高處，還聞梁父吟¹⁰。</p>

First, most of Liu’s dreams imply that he desire to searching his homeland and it shows in two ways: “dream illusion” and “landscape.” The “dreams” point out a shadow of Liu’s homeland. On the contrary, “landscape” means the reality which put him in jail. Otherwise, the “landscape” in his poetry always be put a cover of faded colors just like the “dream” occurs at nights.

Second, the “dreams” about homeland is the most part in the poetry above. What Liu expects is the hope for return and at the same time melancholy of the homeless regret. It may note rather the mental situation of homelessness than the reality of without a refugee. If one can't satisfied with his or her situation, then one can't have a free conception at a certain place according to this perception¹¹. Here, I find some discrimination in Liu’s “dream illusion”:

1. The Compensation:

“Dreams illusion” build on fantasies which are out of disappointment about reality and failure to personal chasing, however, can be fulfilled in dreams. In Liu’s landscape poetry, he tends to translate mountains and rivers into scenes in homeland by dreams. So that, we can find that he take the “landscape” as misery and the “dream” as happiness. It’s obviously that Liu attempted to construct a certain habitat place for spirit, there is a gap between literary imaginary world and the real world.

For example, “*A farewell to my brother Tsung-Yi*” shows an opposite between “country” and “wastes land”, “reunion” and “farewell.” There’s the “dream illusion”

⁹ The falling flowers reflected my gloom and I said good-bye to you with falling tears. Henceforth I left my country so far away and struggled in extremis. The only way to miss you is in dreams.

¹⁰ You sent me the valuable poetry to comfort my mind, and I responded mine. I ascent a tower for a wide sight and never saw our place. The only way to miss you is dream. Finally, I wish the treacherous men go away from me and prove my innocent.

¹¹ Heidegger felt that “building and dwelling were always involved with attempts to make sense of existence, and were thus poetic” (qtd. in Shart 76).

to gather the two parts. Unfortunately, the fragile feature in “dreams illusion” makes Liu keep in mind that he cannot return his homeland. Thus, he ended the poem with ‘欲知此後相思夢，長在荊門郢樹煙,’ means he understand the situation which was symbolized by misty landscape and miss his homeland in dreams. The “dream illusion” becomes a paradise for the poet to neglect his failure in reality.

The same expressing process about “reality to dream” also occurs in “*Early Spring in Hill Ling*”. Liu applies the spring sights as an image of homeland which is saw in dreams. That means Liu has no choice but to stay in dream to make him escaped from reality.

2. The Obstruction:

“Dream illusion” is a fictitious space which consist of conscious and spirit by dreamers. Especially the dreamer must awake from dream. Therefore, “reality to dreams” and then “dreams to reality” emphasizes the happiness in dream and the misery in reality. It shows that Liu preferred to stay in dream which reflected his homeland but not to face his difficult position.

As “Hearing orioles”, the poet’s dreaming by a disturbance by a real creature. In his words revealed tenseness about time flies that the poet must suffer in anxiety of homeless regret.

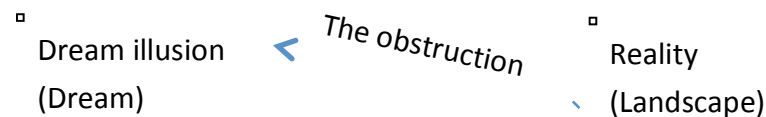
“*Plum Rains*” also gives us a picture of the poet overlook the raining scenery after he woke up. He felt ghastly lonely in the extensive distances. It may be noted that Liu’s self-prisoned awareness always broke his dream. Thus, the “dream illusion” in Liu’s landscape poetry lingers on vagrant space between past homeland and present prison.

“The compensation” and “the obstruction” are the double aspects in “dream illusion”, involve disturbance in the reality. By that, the paradise in dream cannot be abidingly maintained and the landscape in reality become paleness, even hint a cage sometime. Obviously, the “landscape” is a media to describe his difficult situation and the “dream” is a space between satisfied and disappoint in Liu’s mind.

iii. The “double-perspective” in Liu’s “dream illusion”

In the discussion about “the compensation” and “the obstruction” above, it may be noted that Liu purposed to take “dream illusion” as a refuge to escape from the cage was built by mountains. However, there’s fulfilled with solitude that Liu satisfied himself in the dreamland and dropped into reality after awareness. So that, Liu sank into a close

circle was constructed by “happiness” and “unhappiness.” As the diagram shows:



After relegate, Liu used his self-prisoned awareness in poetry. His “dream illusion” became a paradise which is in instable space-time. The “dream illusion” comforted Liu’s mind in order to its opposite of reality, but his self-conscious is summoned by anxiety about awakening. Consequently, in his “dream illusion” includes two aspects about “happiness” and “unhappiness”. It may be explained in Edward W. Said:

There is a popular but wholly mistaken assumption that being exiled is to be totally cut off, isolated, hopelessly separated from your place of origin. Would that surgically clean separation were true, because then at least you could have the consolation of knowing that what you have left behind is, in a sense, unthinkable and completely irrecoverable. The fact is that for most exiles the difficulty consist not simply in being forced to live away from home, but rather, given today’s world, in living with the many reminders that you are in exile, that your home is not in fact so far away, and that the normal traffic of everyday contemporary life keeps you in constant but tantalizing and unfulfilled touch with the old place. The exile therefore exists in a median state, neither completely at one with the new setting nor fully disencumbered of the old.(Said,p.48-49¹²)

In Liu’s poetry, there’s fulfill of melancholy in exile. Especially the topic of “dream illusion” points out the struggles in median state. Just like ” Response to Administer Yiang in summer,” seems a poem among friends, but within his emotion. He utilized the sentences in “Zhao-Ming Anthology” to convey his appreciation to his friend. Then, “幽夢尋” broaden the space for missing friends and farewell emotion. What the most important is he ended the poem with rejecting persecution from treacherous men. Apparently, Liu has kept his failure in polity and self-prisoned awareness in mind that make his poetic space fulfill with solitude and melancholy in his landscape poetry. His “dream illusion” overlaps the shadow of homeland and often turns to cage imagery that reminds those who is in exile. That means Liu uses an attitude about the “double perspective” actually. According to Said :

¹² Edward W. Said: *Representations of the Intellectual*, Random House press, 1996.

Because the exile sees things both in terms of what has been left behind and what is actual here and now, there is a double perspective that never sees things in isolation. Every scene or situation in the new country necessarily draws on its counterpart in the old country. Intellectually this means that an idea or experience is always counter-posed with another, therefore making them both appear in a sometimes new and unpredictable light: from that juxtaposition one gets a better, perhaps even more universal idea of how think.(Said, p.60)

For Liu, “Dream illusion” is not only a fictitious space to recall his homeland, but also a difficult situation that put him in an anxiety about the reality those reminds him the hopelessness to go home. Let’s see again “Hearing orioles”, the bird came from his homeland flew the eyesight between the reality and the dream. By this, the mirage of homeland became visible. However, Liu still took the “dream illusion” with homeland in a group, the “landscape” with reality in the other then concluded his poetry with self-prisoned awareness again. It’s evident that he miss the homeland with remorse, even in dreams or daily life.

What occupied the deepest conscious in Liu’s mind is he orientated himself as a prisoner that pressed him to do literature works as consolations. As the saying in “A letter to Hanlin Lee”: ‘I often visit the nature for temporary smiling and soon feel melancholy. Why? Just like prisoners stretching their bodies when they met scenery.’(Liu, p.382) It seems that Liu tended to ‘be happy with the ideas of unhappiness’:

The intellectual as exile tends to be happy with the idea of unhappy, so that dissatisfaction bordering on dyspepsia, a kind of curmudgeonly disagreeableness, can become not only a style of thought, but also a new, if temporary, habitation.(Said, p.51.)

For Liu, ‘the idea of unhappy’ resulted from relegation, therefore, the only way to healing is returning. Once he got a chance to back home as the timing of “*A Waterfall in Gie-Wei*”. In the poem, the “landscape” were in vivid colors differed the other landscape poetry. It means the landscape no longer be the reminder in exile, but turned into a fairyland when his wish was satisfied. Moreover, the reason for the aesthetic impression changing in Liu due to the disappearance of self-prisoned awareness. The “dream illusion” here means his desires reached completion.

However, such “dream illusion” is as rare as a transitoriness in Liu’s life. Almost his “dream illusion” is under a “double perspective” that shows the opposite between dream and reality. So that, the dream, journey, and waking of his narrations, the collision between dream and reality becomes more obvious. In Liu’s poem, the “dream illusion” is a nostalgia-describing concretely. It may lead a confusing self-located when the old place disappeared in the existing space, only the mind can be as accommodating and reproduction. At this moment, an aspect in Liu’s poem is revealed: the presence of anxiety. Finally, for divert himself from the solitude, Liu used the “dream illusion” as a fictitious space in nostalgia. In summary, the “dream illusion” symbolizes a space for escaping, and the “landscape” stands for experiences in reality. The collision between fantasy and reality induces the falling. Therefore, in Liu’s dream, there are depressed colors with desperation and collapse.

Iiii. The Conclusion

The dream illusion applies the imagination of original home in literature; the landscape are suppressed scene of relegated officer’s situation. Liu uses the fantasy of dream illusion and transformation to fulfill his unexpected dream of return. However, the compromise of dream illusion can approach to the deepest aspiration of the poet. On the one hand, it provides rest, but in its fragility and uncertainty in spiritual condition, it creates partition. Consequently, in Liu’s poem, the dream, journey, and waking of his narrations, the collision between dream and reality becomes more obvious. However, if not due to the dream, there is no hope for Liu’s deepest aspiration to return his homeland. Only owing to the absurdity of mountains and rivers and the unhappiness in the reality of writing, he can create his pure happiness wholly. That is, the space of dreamland is the settlement way of Liu after his relegation in his way of literary composition.

iiii. Works Cited

- Liu Tsung Yuan. (1994) *Liu Ho-tung chi*, PeiJing : Chinese bookstore.
- M.H. Abrams. (1979) *The Mirror and the Lamp*, London: Oxford University.
- Edward W. Said. (1996) *Representations of the Intellectual*, US:Random House press.
- Fu ChengKu. (1999) *The history of Chinese dream-describing literature* ,Tapei.
- Shart, Adam.(2007) *Heidegger for Architects*. New York: Rutledge.
- Shang Yongliang.(2000) “On the Direct Symbolicalness and the Indirect Expressivity of Liu Zongyuan's Travel Writings (Poems and

Essays)” Literary Heritage: p.25-33.

Xu Tung-Hai.(2004) “Scene and Anxiety: The Comparatively Reading between Liu Zongyuan's Scene Essays and Cifu in Yongzhou” Journal of Chenchi University (Cinese Literature): p. 75-112.

Xu Tung-Hai.(2004) “Returning, Dreaming, Anxiety: The Guitian Tradition and Works by Tao Yuanming and Liu Zongyuan” Chinese Studies. p.47-80.

Xia Tsung-Mei.(2006) “Translation, Compensation and Sublimation: The Aesthetic Impression in Chinese Landscape Essay of Liu Tsung Yuan” Journal of Shandong University (Social Science): p. 120-122.

Shang Yongliang. (2011)“Associated with the Motivation and Expressing Type in Chinese Modern Style Poetry and Chinese Classical Poetry” Literary Heritage:p. 52-59.

iafor

