

## Several Zigzag Paths for Transmitting Texts: On the Oneiromancy in India

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Oneiromancy (the interpretation of dreams) has been cherished in Indian society from the ancient times: people from all walks of life are curious about dreams. Evidence of this goes as far back as the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* 3,2,4,16-17. In the huge Indian archives in various languages, there are countless examples describing the vagaries of dreams; especially on the subject of omens — auspicious and inauspicious. Some of these accounts such as the one in the *Mahāsupna Jatāka*, in which an individual's dreams are considered to be portend the outcomes of social incidents, appear to be based on the collective unconscious of the human race. In this study, however, I will only consider cases wherein individual's dreams are perceived as omens having implications on their own lives.

The descriptions of Oneiromancy in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* I,29,54cd-81, in the Trijata's dream in Valmiki's *Ramayana* (V,25), in The *Siṃhāsana-dvātriṃśikā* XXIII,8-11 (southern recension) and in the *Svapn-vicār* (a Hindi book for the general public) seem all to take the same line. We come across several parallel interpretations such as the commonly-held belief that the appearance of a bull, an elephant and so on in a dream indicates the onset of auspicious incidents, and going to the south riding on an ass is a bad dream.

On the other hand, although some stories on Lord Rama — Valmiki's one, the *Adhyātma Rāmayaṇa* (in Sanskrit), the *Kamba Rāmayaṇa* (in Tamil), the *Pauma-cariu* (in Apabhramsha) and the *Rām-carit-mānas* (in a Hindi dialect, Awadhi) — share the motif of Trijata's dream, their contents varies in each case; hence these accounts will not be considered as belonging to the same line. I presume the existence of zigzag paths in the process of transmitting an epic. Can the same be assumed in the case of Oneiromancy? In this paper, I propose to examine the feasibility of this assumption.