

## 2 Sleeping time in early Chinese literature

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Chinese people do, of course, sleep – like all human beings, or rather like all warm-blooded creatures. In China, however, this fact becomes evident to a visitor more quickly than it does in Western countries. Especially in the early afternoon it is easy to observe people sleeping in public, sometimes in the most surprising postures and locations, and not only in a context of poverty or rough living, but obviously as a habit common among quite respectable people. This peculiarity has long caught the attention of Western visitors to the country. In the chapter ‘The Absence of Nerves’ from his nineteenth-century book, *Chinese Characteristics*, Arthur Smith observes:

It would be easy to raise in China an army of a million men – nay, of ten millions – tested by competitive examination as to their capacity to go to sleep across three wheelbarrows, with head downwards, like a spider, their mouths wide open and a fly inside!

(Smith 1894: 94; cf. Liu 1995: 51–76)

Over the course of the twentieth century the situation has hardly changed, as Li Yi points out in his chapter appearing in this volume. The habit of mid-day napping has never really suffered a setback despite the ups and downs in its ideological evaluation. Western visitors are still puzzled by the sight of sleeping Chinese and there is hardly a book of prints on China that is without a photograph of one or more picturesque sleepers.

Turning to early Chinese literature for an explanation of this distinctive sleeping behaviour – as I did when my fascination with sleeping Chinese became rather persistent – I discovered that sleep plays a marginal role in early Chinese texts. There is no god of sleep like Hypnos in ancient Greece, no comprehensive investigation like Aristotle’s *On Sleep and Wakefulness* (*De somno et vigilia*), no god like Vishnu, sleeping before the dawn of creation in the Hindu context, no motif of a ‘Sleeping Beauty’ as is common in the West from early Greek poetry to German fairy tales. Indeed, there are many early Chinese texts that go without even mentioning sleep or sleep-related subjects. The topic thus shares the fate of other private matters in early Chinese literature whose scarcity or absence is a well-known and often lamented fact. Thus, it is not surprising that, for the most

part, the topic of sleep has remained unexplored in sinology, with the exception of its most impressive aspect, dreaming (cf. Brown 1987; Eggert 1993; Liu Wenying 1993).

Despite the apparent scarcity of sleep as a topic in early Chinese literature (in texts that were written before the third century AD) there is a wide range of more or less prominent notions about sleep and sleeplessness: first and foremost, the topic of the appropriate sleeping time, i.e. the question of when to sleep and for how long.<sup>1</sup> Except in medical or lexical texts, sleep as such, however, is hardly ever treated as a topic that is explicitly reflected upon. If it is referred to at all, it is usually just mentioned in passing without the intention of giving information about the subject. A closer look at these secondary or implicit references to sleep reveals that they are mostly to be understood as rhetorical devices conveying different ideas in texts of different persuasions. The following investigation will thus introduce and analyse the main notions of sleeping time in early Chinese literature, and enquire into their rhetorical functions, emphasizing intertextual relations.

I would like to begin with a few remarks on the lexical ambiguity of some designations of ‘sleep’ in early Chinese literature. There are only two words in classical Chinese that primarily denote ‘sleep’. Of the two, the general one is *mei*. The other, *shui*, means specifically ‘to fall asleep or take a nap while sitting’. While both *mei* and *shui* are rare in classical Chinese, the designations *qin*, *wo* and *ming*, probably secondary, are quite common. Their capacity to denote ‘sleep’ is derived from prominent characteristics of that state – either from lying down (*qin*, *wo*) or from closing one’s eyes (*ming*). In the case of *qin*, for instance, it is very often unclear whether it means ‘to sleep’ or ‘to go to bed’ or just ‘to retire to (or stay in) one’s private chambers’. Another lexical feature that adds to the semantic problems that may arise from these ambiguities is the use of euphemisms, motivated by the desire to veil the state or the sphere of sleep. Not only might *qin*, *wo* and *ming* have originally been euphemisms, but there is also the widespread use of figurative phrases such as ‘to approach the cushion’ (*jiu zhen*), ‘to join the eyelashes’ (*jiao jie*) or simply ‘to rest’ (*an*, *xi*, *xu*) or ‘to dream’ (*meng*). On the other hand, not only were euphemisms used to avoid an explicit expression for ‘sleep’, but ‘sleep’ itself was also used as a euphemism. Compared to sex and death, it was obviously regarded as the ‘lesser evil’. Since they share some characteristics or connotations, sleep was employed to veil the spheres of sex and death. Both aspects are common in European languages as well.

### Medical writing: sleep as a natural phenomenon

A most remarkable discrepancy in early Chinese literature surfaces between texts that regard sleep as a natural phenomenon and texts that focus on the social implications of sleep. Concerning the evaluation of sleep, the medical texts in *The Yellow Emperor’s Inner Canon* (*Huangdi Neijing*, c. first century BC) seem to be fairly impartial: sleeping and waking are regarded as equally valued counterparts. This balance results from correlating sleeping and waking with macrocosmic

phenomena such as night and day, winter and summer and, finally, *yin* and *yang*,<sup>2</sup> which are, in principle, on an equal footing with respect to each other.

In the medical texts of *The Inner Canon*, sleep is explained, like any other bodily function, by the condition of the physiological *qi* – ‘energies that make the vital functions possible’ and ‘follow regular cycles of activity’ (Sivin 1987: 46–53). While the vital energies may basically be characterized by the complementary aspects *yin* and *yang*, *yin-qi* and *yang-qi* are not regarded as fixed opposites but also as temporal phases of a cyclical process.

As there is no systematic discussion of the nature of sleep and wakefulness in *The Inner Canon*, the basic understanding of these phenomena in this compilation must be extracted from scattered references in the elaborations on different kinds of illnesses. The following remarks are taken from a passage that explains excessive yawning:

*Yin* rules the night, at night we sleep [*wo*]. ... If *yang-qi* is exhausted [*jin*] and *yin-qi* is flourishing [*sheng*] we will fall asleep [*mu ming*], if *yin-qi* is exhausted and *yang-qi* is flourishing we will wake up [*wu*].

(*Huangdi Neijing* 1986: *Lingshu* 28.2/349)

First, the relation of *yin-qi* and *yang-qi* is described as determining sleep and wakefulness. Sleep, as well as the night, is correlated with *yin*, the dark, soft, turbid, moist, female, passive, latent, etc. In the same way, waking must be correlated with *yang*, bright, hard, clear, dry, male, active, overt, etc.<sup>3</sup> In traditional Chinese medicine, thinking in terms of *yin* and *yang* renders irrelevant the question felt to be most pressing in modern Western medicine, ‘Why do we sleep?’, a question that was also posed by Aristotle (384/3–322/1 BC) in his *De somno et vigilia* (454b). There simply had to be a counterpart to waking and to *yang* – where there is *yang*, there must also be *yin*. Within this concept, the discussion of a possible regenerative function of sleep is quite irrelevant, as are suggestions for ascetic behaviour, such as sleep reduction.

Second, the night is regarded as the appropriate time for sleep. Sleeping and waking are regarded as healthy when they are ‘intact’ in the literal sense of the word; when the macrocosmic rhythm of night and day corresponds with the individual microcosmic rhythm of sleeping and waking. The human rhythm of sleeping and waking is thus described as a reflex of the governing cosmic rhythm of night and day. This correlation is also mentioned in the famous and at times elaborate descriptions of the body as a microcosm, found in early Chinese literature (cf. *Chunqiu fanlu* 1994: 13.2/58; *Huainanzi* 1992: 7/55). In *The Inner Canon*, the relevant statement reads:

Heaven has day and night [*zhou ye*], man has sleeping and getting up [*wo qi*].  
(*Huangdi Neijing* 1986: *Lingshu* 71.2/446)

As already suggested, sleep is embedded in the annual cycle of *yin* and *yang*. A chapter of *The Inner Canon* that concerns appropriate personal behaviour during

the four seasons gives the following, among other more general, instructions for sleep:

During the three months of spring ... go to sleep late and rise early [*ye wo zao qi*]. During the three months of summer ... go to sleep late and rise early [*ye wo zao qi*], do not be weary of the sun. ... During the three months of autumn ... sleep early and rise early, be up with the cock [*zao wo zao qi, yu ji ju xing*]. ... During the three months of winter ... sleep early and rise late, be sure to await the sunlight [*zao wo wan qi, bi dai ri guang*].

(*Huangdi Neijing* 1986: *Suwen* 2.1/10)<sup>4</sup>

According to this macrocosmic setting of sleep, in times of rising and dominant *yang* it is suitable to sleep little, whereas in times of rising and dominant *yin*, sleep should be extended. The general recommendation goes: sleep at night – be it short or long – and stay awake in the daytime. Observing these recommendations results in significantly varying sleeping times over the course of a year – at least in northern China. The close correlation of sleep and night merges the two aspects of sleeping time – when to sleep and for how long.

It would, however, be misleading to presume a conceptual consensus in the Chinese medical tradition, even on a seemingly simple issue such as sleep. This is neither the case within *The Inner Canon* – which is, after all, a heterogeneous collection of medical texts – nor in the received medical texts from outside this tradition. Occasionally the discovery of tomb texts provides glimpses of the diversity of opinions that must have existed. With regard to sleep, the manuscript *Ten Questions* (*Shuwen*), buried in the second century BC and excavated in 1976 at Mawangdui in southern China, offers a fresh and unique understanding. It displays the teachings of the famous physician Wen Zhi, which do not confine sleep to night-time nor pair it with *yin*, but allocate to it both an explicitly capital role and functions that are clearly associated with *yang*.<sup>5</sup> The physician declares that ‘sleep [*wo*] ranks first’ in the 300 chapters he has written about the Way (*dao*). When questioned by King Wei of Qi (reigned 356/334–320 BC, cf. *Shiji* 1989: 46/1888–1892) about why he holds sleep in such high esteem, Wen Zhi explains:

Sleep causes food to be digested and medicine to flow through the body. The relation of sleep to food is like that of fire to metal. That’s why a single night without sleep cannot be compensated by a hundred days. ... For this reason, men of the Way will venerate sleep.

The metaphor paraphrasing the impact of sleep on food employs the distinctive *yang*-phase fire: sleep dissolves food just like fire melts metal. Wen Zhi’s ascription of physiologically positive effects to sleep may be exceptional in early Chinese medical literature but it is reminiscent of Western interest in the function of sleep. Regarding the adjustment of sleeping time to the rhythm of *yin* and *yang*, Wen Zhi’s outlook likewise goes beyond the scope of *The Inner Canon*. Referring

to his statement that 'a single night without sleep cannot be compensated by a hundred days', the king, a notorious pleasure-hunter, asked:

'I am habitually fond of drinking until late at night, am I then not prone to sickness?' Wen Zhi replied: 'This cannot do any harm. Among the birds and beasts some go to sleep early and rise early [*zao wo zao qi*] and others go to sleep late and rise late [*mo wo mo qi*].'

(*Mawangdui Hanmu boshu* 1985: 150–151)

Wen Zhi seems to dissolve the correlation between sleep and night, which is presumed not only in *The Inner Canon* but also in most of the received non-medical literature. His flexibility concerning sleeping time could be merely a clever move in order to comply with his counterpart's personality or to avoid the king's possibly dangerous annoyance at being contradicted.<sup>6</sup> Leaving aside *The Inner Canon* as a standard of assessment, it seems nevertheless more probable that the understanding of sleep accidentally preserved in this manuscript represents just another facet of what is probably a vast and heterogeneous body of lost medical teachings of early China. While the texts of *The Inner Canon* closely correlate sleep and night, which are equally associated with *yin*, in *Ten Questions* Wen Zhi breaks up this close correlation and attributes a capital role and positive physiological functions to sleep.

### Political writing: sleep as a socially relevant phenomenon

A different picture results if the sleeper is not, as in medical literature, viewed primarily as a warm-blooded creature subject to the laws of nature, but, rather, as a social being as occurs in political and ideological writing. Sleep is socially relevant since a sleeping person is temporarily inaccessible to the demands of participation in social life. To ensure a high degree of availability, sleep is subject to diverse restrictions and constraints, which often render inappropriate *The Inner Canon's* advice to sleep at night. Diverse as these restrictions may be, they are all traceable to temporal interferences. Even uncomfortable sleeping conditions that apparently intend to induce sleep of a poor quality – such as 'sleeping on a bed of straw, the head resting on a lump of earth' (*qin shan zhen kuai*, *Liji* 1992: 38.1/159), as required by certain mourning rites – in the end actually result in less sleep.

While every adult is expected to curb sleep to a certain degree for the sake of his or her duties (including self-cultivation), this demand is socially differentiated. This negative conception of sleep is common to the majority of early Chinese literature. It links factions of writing that otherwise are not at all concordant, texts later ranked as the Confucian canon, didactic and historical literature, Mohist and, with some modification, also Legalist writings.

The awareness of sleep as social or, more accurately, antisocial behaviour is heightened by the fact that it is very often directly or indirectly associated with different kinds of pleasure. The 'sweetness' (*gan*) of sleep<sup>7</sup> may consist in the

rather passive pleasure of waning strain. By falling asleep, one not only withdraws from the outside world and social responsibilities but also from one's own consciousness, an action that now and then may appear perfectly desirable.<sup>8</sup> The only definition of sleep found in early Chinese literature selects 'not knowing' or 'unconsciousness' (*wu zhi*) as the most distinctive feature of sleep:

Sleep is the intelligence not knowing of anything [*wo zhi er wu zhi ye*].

(*Mozi* 1988: 40/65, cf. Graham 1978: 280)

In sleep, the intelligence (*zhi*), the faculty of 'knowing' (*zhi*), is not employed: generally one neither perceives nor feels nor thinks. Expositions of the motif of sleep as a refuge, where one no longer 'knows' of the world and one's self, are to be found in the *Book of Songs* (*Shijing*), a collection of songs from the eleventh to sixth century BC. The following song is an impressive example:

There is a hare who moves slowly, the pheasant fastens in the net.  
In the early part of my life would that I had not acted [*shang wu wei*]!  
In the latter part of my life I have met with a hundred sorrows,  
would that I could sleep and not stir any more [*shang mei wu e*]!

There is a hare who moves slowly, the pheasant fastens in the trap.  
In the early part of my life would that I had not taken action [*shang wu zao*]!  
In the latter part of my life I have met with a hundred grieves,  
would that I could sleep and not wake up any more [*shang mei wu jiao*]!

There is a hare who moves slowly, the pheasant fastens in the snare.  
In the early part of my life would that I had not been busy [*shang wu yong*]!  
In the latter part of my life I have met with a hundred calamities,  
would that I could sleep and not hear any more [*shang mei wu ting*]!

(*Shijing* 1995: 70, cf. Karlgren 1944: 194)

The situation of the unknown singer must be desperate indeed. He does not couch his desire to escape the hundredfold sorrows of waking life in the wish for a positive change – nor even for comforting dreams, at least – but in the wish for the numbness of sleep. Desolation is expressed most strongly by the wish 'not to wake up any more', which comes close to a wish for death: death as well could provide the desired absence of sorrows.

In addition to the idea of a passive refuge, sleep is associated or mingled with the active pursuit of sensual pleasures. It is therefore frequently set in a context of undue indulgence in eating, drinking, sex and music. In early Chinese literature, these four belong closely to the sphere of sleep since they usually occur in the same places – bedrooms or private chambers – and since they are often pre-sleep or post-sleep activities.

Apart from this local and temporal intermingling of sleep and sensual pleasures – which is already sufficiently suggestive – some texts also establish causative relations. Excessive indulgence in drinking, for example, has to be compensated for by sleeping longer, which may have devastating effects on the performance of

social duties. As in political and ideological writing the person under consideration is generally the ruler of a state, his indulgence evoking the politically dangerous situation in which the state is virtually without a ruler. The coupling of sleep (generally accompanied by other sensual pleasures) with the neglect of duties is a widespread motif in didactic and historical writings, where it serves as a rhetorical pretext for remonstrations appealing to the ruler's sense of duty. One of four similar remonstrations of Yan Ying (Yanzi, c. 589–500 BC) to Duke Jing of Qi (reigned 547–490 BC), recorded in *The Springs and Autumns of Master Yan* (*Yanzi chunqiu*, c. fourth to third century BC), may exemplify this aspect:

Duke Jing had drunk wine and become intoxicated. When three days later he got up again, Yanzi attended the audience and asked: 'Did you suffer from a hangover?' When the duke answered in the affirmative, Yanzi said: 'In antiquity, when drinking wine, people were content to move their vital energies [qi] and to meet friends. ... That's why outside there were no complaints about the government and inside there was no disorderly behaviour. Now you drink so much wine in one day that it takes you three days to sleep it off [qin]. Outside there are complaints about the government of the state and inside your entourage raises disorder. ... I wish you would moderate yourself!'

(*Yanzi chunqiu* 1993: 1.3/1–2)

Although the ruler's absence is very aptly represented by his sleep, it is obvious that sleep itself is not the point. The focus of the argumentation is political; the reference to sleep merely serves to illustrate a political point, in this case the proper behaviour of a ruler.<sup>9</sup>

The association of sleep and drunkenness is rather persistent in early Chinese literature (cf. *Lienüzhuan* 1993: 6.7/55–56; *Hanfeizi* 1982: 7.2/21–35/738, 19.4/4–34/759, 22.15/1–11/771). Sleep and drunkenness seem to intensify each other, 'drunken sleep' signifying both exceptionally deep sleep and very heavy drunkenness. The association appears to be based not only on a causative relation (i.e. drinking promotes sleep) but also on the supposition of an intrinsic affinity of both states. The affinity probably lies in the desire to be relieved of consciousness, which can be accomplished by both sleep and drunkenness. Incidentally, drunken sleep was to become an important topos in Chinese literature, especially in poetry.

Although textual references to sleeping time are complex propositions, they can be conveniently differentiated according to the two aforementioned questions: when to sleep and for how long? An investigation of the textual evidence concerning the first question discloses a certain imbalance. While the approval of sleeping at the right time – during the night – is hardly ever emphasized, the disapproval of sleeping in the daytime is a much more conspicuous topic.<sup>10</sup>

*The Inner Canon's* cosmologically based demand to sleep at night is rarely emphasized in the political literature. Obviously, it is as unnecessary to insist on an adequate amount of sleep as it is to insist on drinking enough wine. There is

some evidence that sleeping at night was simply presumed, not least for the sake of public security. The *Book of Rites of the Zhou* (*Zhouli*, compiled c. third century BC) mentions the position of night watchmen (*si wu shi*, *Zhouli* 1993: 5.34/72), whose duty was to enforce the curfew, though no details are given. Indirect confirmation of the fact that sleep at night was simply taken for granted may be drawn from references to night activities that are expressly characterized as such – often associated with secrecy or even insidiousness (cf. *Zhanguo* 1992: 73A/30, 324/165, 399/192) – or from the concession of exceptional situations that allow one to depart from the usual night's rest.<sup>11</sup> Another indication of the assumption of night-time sleeping may be found in the *Canon of Mountains and Seas* (*Shanhaijing*). In this book of mythical geography, features like absolute sleeplessness or deviation from the natural rhythm of sleeping and waking are only ascribed to strange and decidedly non-human creatures, which live at the borders of the empire, far away from the centre and the ruling power.<sup>12</sup>

The relative prominence of the disapproval of daytime sleeping might have been triggered by a famous anecdote included in the *Analects* (*Lunyu*, c. fifth to third century BC), linked to Confucius and Zai Yu,<sup>13</sup> one of his disciples:

Zai Yu had a lie-down in the daytime [*zhou qin*]. Confucius said: 'Rotten wood cannot be carved, nor can walls of dirty earth be whitewashed. What can be expected from Yu?' Confucius said: 'Formerly, when I listened to other people's words I trusted in their behaviour. When I listen to other people's words now, I watch their behaviour. I changed [my attitude] because of Yu.'

(*Lunyu* 1995: 5.10/10)

As taking a nap in the daytime is, of course, not a sufficient reason to condemn a person so severely, commentators have speculated on the exact nature of Zai Yu's stay in his private chambers. However, regarded in the light of his availability to the demands of society, it does not matter whether Zai Yu was actually taking a nap or having sex or just being idle (cf. Steger's contribution in this volume). It is the unjustified withdrawal from public life at a public time that counts. The only justifications for being in bed in the daytime are given in the following passage from the *Book of Rites* (*Liji*, compiled c. first century BC):

If somebody stays in his inner [chamber] in the daytime [*zhou ju yu nei*] it is legitimate to inquire after his health. If somebody stays outside at night [*ye ju yu wai*] it is legitimate to condole with him.<sup>14</sup> That's why the gentleman will not spend the night outside without sufficient reason. Unless he is fasting or sick, he will not stay in his inner [chamber] day and night [*bu zhou ye ju yu nei*].

(*Liji* 1992: 3.37/14)

This passage maintains that by merely considering somebody's whereabouts at certain hours, it is possible to decide whether somebody is ill or in mourning. Considering how little we really know of early Chinese life, it is impossible to

know whether ritual regulations like these reflect actual habits or whether they are ideologically motivated attempts to establish such conventions.

A closer look at other references to Zai Yu in the *Analects* reveals that he 'enjoys the dubious distinction of having been criticized by Confucius on more occasions than any other disciple', as Lau (1992: 248) puts it. He is even denied humanity (*ren*), the central Confucian virtue, on account of his 'unfilial' criticism of the strict mourning rites proposed by Confucius (*Lunyu* 1995: 17.21/50). Zai Yu thus appears to serve as a negative model.

Confucius's abhorrence of daytime sleeping invited not only doubt and straightforward protest – like that of Wang Chong (27–c. 100) in his voluminous treatise *Weighing of Discourses*<sup>15</sup> – but also more subtle forms of contradiction. In a superbly ironic anecdote, which has come down to us in the compilation *The Springs and Autumns of Lü Buwei*,<sup>16</sup> Confucius himself is depicted as 'having a lie-down in the daytime' (*zhou qin*). Moreover, in order to probe the decency of his favourite disciple, Confucius feigns sleep and then even a dream, thus resorting to a considerably indecent trick himself. This anecdote might be exposing Confucius's harsh disapproval of daytime sleeping to ridicule, but all the same, it argues in line with the impropriety of this practice.<sup>17</sup>

Thus in both the *Analects* and *The Springs and Autumns of Lü Buwei*, criticism of daytime sleeping is utilized for rhetorical ends that have nothing to do with sleep. Talking about sleep serves as a pretext to convey distinctive ideological opinions that go beyond the private sphere of sleep: in the case of the *Analects* as regards the evaluation of central virtues like filial piety or humanity, in the case of *The Springs and Autumns of Lü Buwei* as regards the evaluation of Confucius. Since the widespread disapproval of daytime sleeping encountered in early Chinese texts is set in a context of ideological argumentation, it may not be interpreted as bearing testimony to an equally widespread custom of daytime sleeping. In the absence of relevant reliable data, any hypothesis on the existence of a napping or siesta culture in early China can only be speculative.

A similar pattern can be observed in an episode reported by Ban Gu (32–92) in the *Book of the Han Dynasty* (*Han shu*, c. 100). This official history discloses an imperial nap, that of Liu Xin, Emperor Ai of the Han (25–1 BC, reigned 7–1 BC) with his favourite, Dong Xian (23–1 BC):

Dong Xian usually went to sleep and got up together with the emperor [*chang yu shang wo qi*]. Once they had a lie-down in the daytime [*zhou qin*] and Dong Xian lay just on the emperor's sleeve. Dong Xian was still asleep when the emperor wanted to get up. As he did not want to disturb Dong Xian, the emperor cut off his sleeve and got up. So far reached his grace and love.

(*Han shu* 1990: 93/3733–3734)

The story became rather famous and the 'cut sleeve' turned into a common metaphor for male homoerotic relationships (cf. Vitiello 1992). The historian, however, certainly does not hand down this episode to inform his posterity of the 'grace and love' of Emperor Ai or to promote the idea that a lover's sleep should

be protected from disturbances. It is not even daytime sleeping or the existence of a favourite as such that is disapproved of, but the submissive character of the emperor's relationship towards Dong Xian, as it is unworthy of an emperor. In another episode, Ban Gu tells of Liu Xin's irresponsible handling of the mandate of heaven in a more direct way: he reports that the emperor offered to abdicate the throne in favour of Dong Xian, who in the course of his liaison with the emperor had acquired immense political powers (*Han shu* 1990: 93/3738). In light of the impending fall of the Han dynasty at the hands of Wang Mang, whose Xin dynasty was to last from 9 BC to AD 23, the emperor's negligence appears abominable.

As regards the second question concerning sleeping time – how long one should sleep – textual evidence indicates a certain social differentiation. Generally speaking, severity in terms of sleep duration increases with the social rank of a person, the top of the hierarchy ideally being sleepless. Whenever sleep is mentioned in connection with the exemplary ruler, it is in the negative; in other words, he is depicted as being awake at night as he is expected to spend his nights pondering the welfare of his people and scrutinizing his own rulership – an idea that might confuse Western readers who are used to associating sleep with a clear conscience, at least in the sphere of politics.<sup>18</sup>

A passage in the *Records of the Historian*<sup>19</sup> shows sleepless King Wu (reigned 1049/45–1043 BC), founder of the Zhou dynasty, being visited by his younger brother, the Duke of Zhou (*fl.* 1042–1036 BC), who is obviously just as sleepless. They subsequently converse on the problem of how to secure heaven's support for the rising power of the Zhou in a historically vital situation:

When King Wu had arrived in Zhou he could not sleep [*bu mei*] at night.

Dan, Duke of Zhou, went to the king's place and said: 'Why is it that you cannot sleep?' The king replied: 'I tell you: ... As until now I have not secured heaven's support how could I have time to sleep [*xia mei*]?'<sup>20</sup>

(*Shiji* 1989: 4/128–129; cf. *Yi Zhoushu* 1992: 44/20–21)

An important quality of this specific kind of insomnia is its effortlessness. For a gentleman it is not difficult at all to stay awake as the power of his virtue makes him 'forget to sleep at night' (*ye ze wang mei*),<sup>20</sup> like other physical needs that disturb ordinary people:

The gentleman's longing for humanity and righteousness is such that by day he forgets to eat and by night he forgets to sleep [*junzi si ren yi zhou ze wang shi, ye ze wang mei*]. At sunrise he gets down to work, in the evening he scrutinizes himself [*ri dan jiu ye, xi er zi xing*], thus cultivating his personality.

(*Da Dai Liji* 1992: 5.2/33)

There is a great distance between *The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon's* modest advice to sleep at night and the exalted image of the sleepless gentleman presented in texts of Confucian provenance, as in the *Book of Rites of the Elder Dai* quoted

above.<sup>21</sup> This discrepancy is brought about by different perspectives. Political texts are not concerned with the well-being of individuals but with their successful socialization. Thus, they favour the submission of one's personal needs to the needs of others. The effortless renunciation of sleep attributed to the ruler also appears to be motivated by a politically relevant intention. The sleeplessness of the ruler or gentleman proves and heightens his aloofness: while all men are equal before sleep, he is not.

The comparatively mild reduction in sleeping time, exemplified by the phrase 'early to rise and late to bed' (*su xing ye mei*), does not adhere to *The Inner Canon's* 'neutral' evaluation of sleep either. 'Early' generally refers to the concrete time of the 'cock's crow' (*ji ming*), i.e. well before sunrise, whereas 'late' less specifically means 'late at night'.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, in terms of sleep, 'early to rise and late to bed' is the most frequently encountered instruction in texts of Confucian persuasion, from the *Book of Songs* through to the official histories (cf. Steger concerning Japan). It appears to be the minimal demand for all sorts of people; in other words, the first step on the way to socialization. This minimum concession is required from everybody except small children,<sup>23</sup> apparently as a prerequisite for proper conduct of proficient rulers, of men that are regarded as filial sons and of devoted wives alike. However, to label someone as one who is 'early to rise and late to bed' is not primarily intended to give information on his or her sleeping habits but to characterize the degree of commitment to his or her respective business. Again, sleep itself is not the point.

In pre-imperial times this pattern of characterization also appears in Mohist writings with an openly anti-Confucian tendency. These texts even modify the formula 'early to rise and late to bed' according to various factions of society (cf. *Mozi* 1988: 9/9, 25/37, 32/55–56, 37/61). By Han times, though, when the Mohist school had vanished, 'early to rise and late to bed' had become something of an exclusively Confucian label and was adopted with growing frequency. This does not mean that only Confucians used it. The formula occurs, for instance, in the Daoist compilation *Master of Huainan*,<sup>24</sup> where it is put to exemplary use. The infamous villain Zhou, last king of the Shang dynasty,<sup>25</sup> is reported to have been annoyed and disturbed by the success of his rival, King Wen of Zhou, who threatened to win over the people of the Shang empire.<sup>26</sup> The king of the Shang is notorious for 'banquets of the prolonged night' that are said to have turned 120 days into a single night (*Lunheng* 1996: 25/107). Imminent danger moves him to consider embracing a different way of life as a remedy for the impending ruin of the state:

If I rise early in the morning and retire late at night [*su xing ye mei*] I will be a match for [King Wen] as regards conduct. But [if I do so] my heart will be embittered and my body will be weary.

(*Huainanzi* 1992: 12/114)

This unpleasant prospect alone drives Zhou to dismiss the idea. Remarkably, 'early to rise and late to bed' suffices to indicate the whole Confucian concept of

conduct. As with the other occurrences of the formula in the *Huainanzi*, 'early to rise and late to bed' serves to enhance or mark a typically Confucian context – in other words, it is something like a theme song, which is then nonetheless utilized in serving the respective rhetorical ends of the Daoist compilation.

Unlike the minimal demand 'early to rise and late to bed', the earlier mentioned quality of being spontaneously able to 'forget sleep' is ascribed exclusively to the perfect ruler or gentleman. I encountered just one passage in which this phrase was applied to the common people. Notably, this application was accompanied by a complete shift of meaning. The sleeplessness that had otherwise been the adornment of the perfect ruler was now inappropriate and thus condemned. When the common people 'forgot sleep', this was deemed a manifestation of their suffering; in other words, a symptom of an inadequate ruling authority (cf. *Zuozhuan* 1995: Zhao 19/371).

High-born but less virtuous men may try to keep awake at night as well, but since they act on pure volition and lack the necessary inherent quality to 'forget sleep', they must either do violence to themselves or fail. The eminent Warring States politician Su Qin (d. c. 320 BC) is described as having pierced his legs with an awl till the blood ran off at his heel just to keep himself from falling asleep while at study.<sup>27</sup> This act of self-mutilation earned him the honorary name of 'Master who pierced his legs' (*Cigu xiansheng*, cf. *Beitang shuchao* 1962: 97/50) and an immortal place as a model student in numerous Chinese encyclopaedias. He is even granted a line in a text as short as the popular primer *Three Character Classic*<sup>28</sup> – alongside a brother in spirit, by the way, who lived about 700 years later and is famous for having tied his hair to a roof beam in order to feel pain when nodding off (Huang Peirong 1995: 200). The pre-eminence of Su Qin's learning covers up both the selfishness of his motives – he was driven by personal ambition only – and the dubiousness of his measures (cf. Steger on sleep reduction and studying).

Doing violence to oneself is – in a similar way to military bravery – a highly questionable measure in Confucian terms as it contradicts the central virtue of filial piety, which demands keeping one's body intact. While self-mutilation is thus rare in the context of early Chinese texts, it becomes much more common after the advent of Buddhism in China. The most prominent example in our context is the assumed founder of the Zen school in China, the Indian monk Bodhidharma (fl. c. AD 520), who, according to an apocryphal account, is said to have so hated the interruption of meditation by sleep that he cut off his eyelids.

In pre-Buddhist Chinese literature there appears to be only one example of an attitude similar to that of Su Qin's: Youzi (c. 508–457 BC), a disciple of Confucius, who allegedly scorched his palms to fight off sleep while at study. Commenting on Youzi's approach to self-discipline, the Confucian philosopher Xunzi<sup>29</sup> concludes:

The perfect man – why should he have to force himself or overcome himself or guard himself?

(*Xunzi* 1996: 21/105)

For Xunzi, Youzi's intention of doing away with sleep is not questioned. Rather, he looks down on those that have to employ such drastic methods in order to achieve their intentions. Once again, sleep itself is not the point. The attitude towards sleep merely serves as a convenient indicator of the extent of a person's self-control and self-discipline.

The application of forcible measures to reduce sleeping time is not a widespread topic in early Chinese literature and appears to occur merely as an extreme. It nevertheless seems to represent a general implicit tendency to devalue sleep as a waste of time. The following anecdote from *The Springs and Autumns of Lü Buwei* may serve to clarify this point:

Ning Yue was an ordinary man from Zhongmou. When he had become weary of the troubles of ploughing and sowing he asked his friend: 'What can I do to get away from this weariness?' His friend replied: 'There is nothing better than studying. If you study for thirty years, you may succeed.' Ning Yue said: 'I ask for fifteen years. When others rest I will not dare rest and when others sleep I will not dare sleep [wo].' In fifteen years he was tutor to Duke Wei of Zhou.

(*Lüshi chungiu* 1994: 24.5/158)

Ning Yue's story illustrates well the disregard of sleep compared with the manifold opportunities and promises of waking – from this point of view, sleep is only accepted as a necessary evil. This perspective even extends to the views of Yang Zhu (c. 395–c. 335 BC), who, despite enjoying the label of 'hedonist', also regards sleep as time lost for 'real life':

Yang Zhu said: 'A hundred years is the maximum of longevity. To live to an age of a hundred years is not even achieved by one man in a thousand. Supposing there was one: in the arms [of his mother] in infancy and in drowsy old age, about half of the time is taken. The nightly suspension by sleep [*ye mian*] and the daily waste of time when awake, again take about half of the time. Pain and illness, grief and weariness, loss and failure, sorrow and fear again take about half of the time.'

(*Liezi* 1996: 7/38)

The long line of miserable equivalents to sleep makes Yang Zhu's point very clear: only life that can be consciously enjoyed is worth living. As he strives for nothing but individual pleasure, Yang Zhu's intentions differ completely from those of his Confucian, Mohist or Legalist adversaries who focus on the well-being of the community. Nevertheless, on the path towards their respective ends they all share a deep concern about 'losing time' and utilizing one's life span as fully as possible.

As regards the perception of sleep in Legalist writings, they share some of the perceptions described above; for instance, they similarly view sleep as a state that should, to a certain extent, be reduced. However, the Legalist approach to sleep

differs from that displayed in Confucian or Mohist writing. It is characterized by distinctive features that arise from the Legalist sensibility towards control and execution of power. As falling asleep involves a temporary abandonment of one's faculty of control and self-defence, the sleeper delivers him- or herself not only to sleep but also to the mercy of those around that are awake. This weakness can cause the loss of property or well-being or even life: murder in bed also occurs in early Chinese literature (cf. *Lienüzhuan* 1993: 5.1/41, 5.15/50; *Zuozhuan* 1995: Zhuang 8/44; on fears related to sleeping see also Rensen in this volume).

But this is not the only reason to mistrust sleep. Alongside the latent danger from without, there is also danger from within: during sleep, the self-control of bodily functions is at a very low level. There is neither a guarantee against unpleasant dreams nor a way to influence one's words or deeds. In well-known episodes of *Master Han Fei*,<sup>30</sup> this multiple uncertainty drives Zhao, Marquis of Han,<sup>31</sup> to take unique measures after decisive talks with his political advisers:

He never refrained from sleeping alone [*du qin*] as he was afraid others could find out about his intentions through the words he might utter in his dreams.

(*Hanfeizi* 1982: 34.21/816)

One of the core issues of Legalist thinking – taking strong actions against the slightest violation of the law – is illustrated by another instance of Marquis Zhao's totalitarian consequences taken in apparent trifles: his famous punishment of the managers in charge of the Marquis's caps and cloaks who violated their respective areas of responsibility while the Marquis was asleep. The keeper of caps covered the sleeping Marquis with his cloak, while the keeper of cloaks failed to do so. They were both executed (*Hanfeizi* 1982: 7.2/738). Considering the rhetorical function of sleep, it proves here to be a pretext or dramaturgical vehicle for triggering probation, similar to the anecdote of Confucius feigning sleep in *The Springs and Autumns of Lü Buwei*. Under examination is not only the loyalty of the officials but also the success of the ruler. His sleep serves as a criterion for the effective implementation of his laws, which should ideally work like laws of nature, needing neither supervision nor even intervention. When this ideal is reached, it is finally proper to 'sleep on a high pillow' (*gao zhen er wo*). This genuinely Legalist metaphor transcends and relieves the intense mistrust of sleep as a sphere largely beyond human control. 'Sleep on a high pillow' was widely employed as a metaphor for the absence of danger and the redundancy of control or intervention in historical and didactic writing of Han times.<sup>32</sup>

Summing up the attitude towards sleep in texts of Confucian, Mohist and Legalist provenance results in a surprisingly homogeneous picture of the mistrust of sleep. Implicit restrictions concerning sleeping time are manifold: no one should sleep during the day; everyone should go to sleep late and get up early; the gentleman should be able to forget sleep and other physical needs effortlessly. However, as these notions are set in a context of ideological argumentation, they serve primarily rhetorical purposes and do not necessarily tell us anything about actual sleeping behaviour in early China. A similar scepticism should be applied

to the various aspects of sleep reduction. The uncertainty regarding the representational faculty of the received literature of early China might perhaps be gradually diminished in future by the vast quantities of manuscripts discovered in the last decades awaiting reading and comprehension.

### Daoist writing: sleep as a counter-conception

A completely different approach prevails in the Daoist compilation, *Master Zhuang*,<sup>33</sup> where sleep is characterized as a positive counter-conception in both literal and rhetorical respects – certainly not in the sense of recommending sleep but in the sense of a refutation of society's claim to control and instrumentalize the individual. In radical contrast to the Confucian, Mohist and in part also the Legalist praise of waking, the *Zhuangzi* emphasizes that there is only a relative distinction between the states of waking, dreaming and sleeping.

The famous story of Zhuang Zhou's bewilderment about whether he was dreaming he was a butterfly or whether the butterfly was dreaming it was Zhuang Zhou (*Zhuangzi* 1988: 2/7), is joined by likewise notable anecdotes praising dreamless sleep – the only true absent-mindedness. Dreaming, after all, is still a kind of subjective mental activity that is only relatively distinct from waking and doubtless still bears the marks of civilization and ego alike. In the *Zhuangzi* and other Daoist texts, the attribute of dreamlessness is projected onto the Daoist ideal of True or Perfect Men (*zhen/zhi ren*) who lived before civilization began.

The True men of antiquity slept without dreams and awoke without sorrows [*qi qin bu meng, qi jiao wu you*]; they did not relish their food and breathed from very deep.

(*Zhuangzi* 1988: 6/15)

In the *Zhuangzi*, the fundamental inconsistency of human consciousness that sleep reveals is not regarded as dangerous (as in the Legalist writings) but as promising because it may provide a temporary liberation from the restrictions of waking perception and consciousness and thus from the limitations of subjectivity. For this reason, sleep could serve as a metaphor for meditation, like in the story of Master Beiyi who was overjoyed and started singing when he discovered that his disciple Nieque had fallen asleep – not only during the daytime, but in the middle of a lesson on the Way (*dao*).<sup>34</sup> The story of Beiyi's delight at his disciple's sleep may well allude to Confucius's disapproval of his disciple Zai Yu when he found him sleeping during the day, subtly offering an alternative to Confucius's obsession with utility.

The suitability of 'sleep' as a metaphor for meditation lies in the intellectual emptiness of sleep, especially of dreamless sleep. The following words, put into the mouth of the legendary Yellow Emperor, address this idea concisely:

Not to think, not to ponder, therein lie the beginnings of knowing the Way.  
(*Zhuangzi* 1988: 22/57)

The *Zhuangzi*'s attitude towards life and death displays a similar impartiality as that towards waking and sleeping, an impartiality that is moreover characterized by a complete absence of anxiety. Whereas the close association of sleep with death usually causes a mistrust of sleep – which may even be expressed as a warning to sleep on one's back, like a corpse (cf. *Lunyu* 1995: 10.24/25; *Lunheng* 1996: 68/302) – in the *Zhuangzi*, the same close association serves as an expression of a markedly different attitude to life. The *Zhuangzi* values a deep trust in life in its wholeness; that is, including both waking and sleeping, being alive as well as being dead – in this respect sharing the 'impartial' cosmological perspective of the medical texts in *The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon* (cf. *Zhuangzi* 1988: 6/17, 18/46). In a playful discourse with his friend Hui Shi (c. fourth century BC), triggered by the topic of a great useless tree, Zhuang Zhou praises uselessness, including sleep, which is very often regarded as a waste of time:

Now, if you have that great tree and feel sorry that it is so useless, why don't you plant it somewhere where there is nothing or on a wide open field and enjoy yourself in doing-nothing at his side or roam in sleep [*qin wo*] beneath it? It won't die an early death by axe or cleaver; nothing will harm it. If you are of no use at all, why should there be hardship and trouble?

(*Zhuangzi* 1988: 1/3)

Presenting his idea of life, Zhuang Zhou allows a day – spent in doing nothing and roaming – to fade away in sleep, thus granting sleep its place on the level of everyday life as well, not only as a metaphor of meditation.

### Summary

Early Chinese texts of different persuasions share the treatment of sleep as a marginal subject. However, if this subject is mentioned, it always enhances the genuine characteristics of and contrasts between the different concepts of life and a person's role in society, which texts ascribed to the different so-called 'schools of thought' maintain. While the naturalist or cosmological perspective taken in medical writing results in an impartial treatment of human sleeping and waking, the political writings of Confucian, Mohist or Legalist provenance are generally partial: they explicitly or implicitly favour waking and disregard or even despise sleep, as they view man in a social rather than cosmological perspective. The *Zhuangzi*'s impartiality towards waking and sleeping appears to counter this widespread and dominant attitude on the philosophical as well as rhetorical level.

As references to sleep thus reveal important aspects of the respective notions of life, it is possible to infer the main rhetorical aims of a text from one of the central anecdotes concerning sleep. Confucius's contempt for Zai Yu's lie-down in the daytime suggests the strict subordination of the individual to social requirements that is so characteristic of Confucianism. The Marquis of Han's concern about the inevitable loss of control in sleep evokes the Legalist obsession



with control and the execution of power. Yang Zhu's disregard of sleep as a waste of time reveals the utilitarian traits of his so-called hedonistic attitude towards life. Beiyi's delight when his disciple Nieque suddenly falls asleep proves the *Zhuangzi's* trust in the wholeness of life, including the inconsistency of human consciousness in sleep.

## Notes

- 1 For a comprehensive analysis of the notion of sleep in early Chinese literature, see Richter (2001).
- 2 On the concepts of *yin* and *yang*, see Graham (1986).
- 3 The only explicit correlation of sleep and *yin* in early Chinese literature is expressed in *Qianfulun* (1995: 28/53). Implicit correlations are to be found more often, e.g. in *Chunqiu fanlu* (1994: 13.3/59), *Huainanzi* (1992: 3/19), *Lunheng* (1996: 64/285) or *Taixuanjing* (1995: 2/1, 86/61).
- 4 Cf. the so-called 'monthly commands' (*yueling*) in *Liji* (1992: 6/38–50), *Lishi chunqiu* (1994: 1–12/1–62) and *Huainanzi* (1992: 5/39–49).
- 5 A description of the main features of the manuscript is found in Harper (1998: 28–29). For references to Wen Zhi (*fl.* c. 343–301 BC) in the received literature, see *Lishi chunqiu* (1994: 11.2/54) and *Lunheng* (1996: 24/98–99).
- 6 Incidentally, to suppose fear or opportunism on the side of Wen Zhi would be out of tune with the *Lishi chunqiu's* (1994: 11.2/54) account of his undaunted death at the hands of King Wei's grandson, King Min of Qi (reigned 300–284 BC).
- 7 Cf. *Huainanzi* (1992: 6/51, 7/57, 20/215 (*gan wo*)) and *Zhuangzi* (1988: 24/67 (*gan qin*), 32/89 (*gan ming*)).
- 8 The withdrawal, which is typical of sleep, has been remarked upon by Western thinkers as well. The pre-Socratic philosopher Heraklitos (c. 500 BC) declared that in sleep, man is removed from the shared empirical world of the day and immersed into a world of his own (cf. Mansfeld 1986: 1/234). Two millennia later, William Shakespeare (1564–1616) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (III/2) wrote of 'sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye, / steal me awhile from mine own company'. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) in his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1916/1917) coined the term 'narcissism of sleep' and remarked that the psychological nature of sleep consists in an 'interruption of interest in the world'. He adds: 'Our attitude towards the world ... appears to have the consequence that we are not able to endure it without interruptions' (cf. Freud 1940–1968: 11/84–85).
- 9 This connection has been pointed out by Harbsmeier (1995: 355), concerning eroticism in Chinese poetry. Other examples for remonstrations that draw on sleep are to be found in *Zhanguoce* (1992: 307/155–156) and *Lienüzhuan* (1993: 2.1/12).
- 10 A similar attitude appears to have been common in ancient Greece. Demokritos (460/459–c. 400 BC) regarded daytime sleeping as an indicator of bodily disorders, confusion, idleness or a lack of spiritual education (cf. Mansfeld 1986: 2/ 265).
- 11 Exemptions from night's rest were granted in cases such as travelling to the funeral of one's parents (*Liji* 1992: 35.2/155) or during thunderstorms (*Liji* 1992: 13.5/80).
- 12 Cf. *Shanhaijing* (1994: 17/74). Parallels may be found in the records of the ancient Greek historiographer Herodotos (c. 484–425 BC).
- 13 Confucius, i.e. Kong Qiu, courtesy name Zhong Ni (551–479 BC); Zai Yu, courtesy name Ziwu, alternative name Zai Wo (c. 520–481 BC).
- 14 The *Book of Rites* and other early Chinese texts of Confucian persuasion maintain that – especially after the death of one's parents – an enormously complex and graduated system of mourning instructions should come into effect and last for up to three years. The essentially ascetic mourning instructions aimed at marking every aspect of life of the person under consideration as mourning. Of course, this also referred to sleeping behaviour: the mourner should no longer sleep in his private chamber but spend the night outside, alone in a hut near the grave of the deceased, and should go without comfortable pillow or mattress.
- 15 *Lunheng*, c. 100. Regarding Confucius's condemnation of Zai Yu, see *Lunheng* (1996: 28/124–125).
- 16 *Lishi chunqiu*, compiled c. 240 BC under the auspices of Lü Buwei (290–235 BC), former Chancellor of Qin. On Confucius's 'lie-down in the daytime', see *Lishi chunqiu* (1994: 17.3/102).
- 17 In Confucian political writing, apart from the above-mentioned exceptional situations, falling asleep during the day appears to have been considered unsatisfactory in any case, even if no withdrawal into the inner chamber is mentioned. In a passage of the *Book of Rites*, a discussion between the Marquis Wen of Wei (reigned 424–387 BC) and Zixia (i.e. Bu Shang, 507–c. 420 BC) is recorded. The marquis asks Zixia the reasons for his failure to listen attentively to the ancient music in a ritual context: 'When in my correct attire I listen to the ancient music, I am only afraid to fall asleep [*wo*]' (*Liji* 1992: 19.24/102). In this case as well, inattention to one's duties is expressed through a reference to sleep.
- 18 An exemplary case may be the sleeplessness that Shakespeare ascribes to Brutus before the murder of Caesar (*Julius Caesar* II/1).
- 19 *Shiji* (c. 100 BC), completed by Sima Qian (?145–?86 BC).
- 20 There are a number of variants or synonymous expressions, e.g. 'lie down but cannot sleep' (*qin er bu mei*, *Zhuozhuan* 1995: Zhao 12/353), 'do not find rest on pillow and mat' (*bu an zhen xi*, *Lishi chunqiu* 1994: 9.2/44), etc.
- 21 *Da Dai Liji*, allegedly compiled c. first century BC.
- 22 Variants of synonymous expressions comprise 'be early for the morning audience and retire late' (*zao chao yan tui*, *Zhanguoce* 1992: 461/226), 'sleep late and rise early' (*ye qin su xing*, *Mozzi* 1988: 9/9), 'go out early and come home late' (*zao chu mo ru*, *Mozzi* 1988: 9/9), etc.
- 23 In the *Book of Rites* children are explicitly exempt from the strict adult time regime: 'Children [may] go to bed early and get up late [*zao qin yan qi*], just as they like' (*Liji* 1992: 2.5–6/73).
- 24 *Huainanzi*, compiled before 139 BC at the court of Liu An (?179–122 BC), King of Huainan.
- 25 Di Xin (reigned c. 1086–1045 BC), last king of the Shang, is commonly referred to by the abusive name Zhou. Cf. *Shiji* (1989: 3/105–110).
- 26 King Wen of Zhou (reigned c. 1099/1056–1050 BC), cf. *Shiji* (1989: 4/116–119).
- 27 *Du shu yu shui*, *yin zhui zi ci qi gu*, *Zhanguoce* 1992: 40/13–14). Cf. *Shiji* (1989: 69/2241–2248).
- 28 The *Sanziying* (compiled c. thirteenth to fourteenth century AD) is made up of 356 lines of three characters each.
- 29 Xunzi (i.e. Xun Kuang, alternative name Xun Qing, c. 340–c. 245 BC), author of a text of the same title.
- 30 *Hanfeizi*, a collection of writings by the Legalist philosopher Han Fei (c. 280–c. 233 BC).
- 31 Marquis Zhao of Han (reigned 358–333 BC) is something of a model ruler for Han Fei, as acting on the advice of Shen Buhai (c. 400–337 BC), he was the first to employ modern Legalist methods of government in Han Fei's native country.
- 32 Cf. *Hanfeizi* (1982: 26.1/780 (*gao zhen*)), *Zhanguoce* (1992: 133/65 (*gao zhen er wo*)), *Chunqiu fanlu* (1994: 6.6/26 (*an zhen er wo*)).
- 33 *Zhuangzi*, a heterogeneous collection of Daoist writings that are partly ascribed to the philosopher Zhuang Zhou (c. 365–c. 290 BC).
- 34 Cf. *Zhuangzi* (1988: 22/58). Concerning the legendary figures of Beiyi (alternative name Puyizi) and Nieque (traditionally dated to the middle of the third millennium BC), cf. *Gaoshizhuan* 1: 1a–2a.

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NIGHT-TIME AND SLEEP IN ASIA AND THE WEST

The phenomena of sleep and night are experiences that most people take for granted as a natural part of their daily lives. However, both ideas and practices concerning sleeping and night-time are constantly changing and widely differ between cultures and societies. *Night-time and Sleep in Asia and the West* traces the many different associations attached to the night as well as highlighting the diverse sleep patterns and attitudes towards sleep between cultures.

Drawing on case studies from China, Japan, India, Europe and the USA, the contributors address:

- notions of sleep and sleeping time in pre-Buddhist Chinese texts
- the concept of the 'mid-day nap'
- historical developments of sleep patterns determined by socio-economic changes
- the role of sleep in the life of the homeless and the military
- the relationship between fear and sleep
- night-time behaviour of the young in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

This book suggests that far from being natural phenomena, sleep and night-time are sites of political struggle between groups as distinct as religious leaders, school boards and political parties. The essays here provide an important resource for students of Asian and cultural studies and will also appeal to the general reader interested in such a rarely studied everyday event.

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IN ASIA AND THE WEST

Exploring the dark side of life

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