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**INTERPRETATION OF COCO'S DREAMS IN WEI HUI'S  
SHANGHAI BABY:  
A CASE STUDY OF CARL GUSTAV JUNG'S  
INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS**

**A THESIS**

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**LASTIKO ENDI RAHMANTYO**

**St. N : 120110269**

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AIRLANGGA UNIVERSITY**

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**A THESIS**

**Submitted as Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
For the Sarjana Degree of the English Department  
Faculty of Letters, Airlangga University**

**LASTIKO ENDI RAHMANTYO  
St. N : 120110269**

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FACULTY OF LETTERS  
AIRLANGGA UNIVERSITY  
2006**

**dedicated to  
my beloved family and friends  
for their outstanding supports**

**Approved to be examined  
Surabaya, 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2006**

**Thesis Advisor,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. E. Widjajati', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a short horizontal line.

**Dra. S. E. Widjajati, M. S.  
NIP. 131 291 817**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LETTERS  
AIRLANGGA UNIVERSITY  
2006**

This thesis has been accepted and examined by the Board of Examiners of English Department, Faculty of Letters, Airlangga University on 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2006.

**The Board of Examiners:**

1.



**Dra. Christinawati**  
NIP. 131 459 657

2.



**Dra. S. E. Widjajati, M.S.**  
NIP. 131 291 817

3.



**Drs. Sumitro**  
NIP. 131 459 656

4.



**Lina Puryanti, S.S., M.Hum**  
NIP. 132 205 667

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Surabaya, 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2006

Lastiko Endi

**Making love with a woman and sleeping with a woman are two separate passions, not merely different but opposite. Love does not make itself felt in the desire for copulation (a desire that extends to an infinite number of women) but in the desire for shared sleep (a desire to one woman)**  
**(Milan Kundera)**

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## ABSTRACT

Wei Hui's *Shanghai Baby* (1999) is a novel that shows the connection between one's dream with his/her past and future. The main character, Coco is an ordinary woman with her unique way of life. She often dreams about something that are mostly connected with her life, whether her past, present, or future. By looking closely into her dreams, the writer can see a slight vision of what will happen in her life or, trace back the past of her. The image that pops in her dream shows many things that may happen in one's life, too.

This study emphasizes the connecting images of Coco's dreams with her life. The method used in this study is library research and descriptive analysis through literature. Jung's theory in dream's interpretation is used as a tool to describe the images in her dreams. The theory itself is divided into four steps: making associations, connecting dream images with inner dynamics, interpretation, and rituals.

The output of this study is to show that dream is interrelated with one's inner personality, and the results of the analysis show that Coco's dreams are connected and related with her life and personality. The personality itself contains Coco's hopes, fears, and hidden wishes. Hence, based on the results of this study, the writer can make a conclusion that one's dream cannot be ignored or neglected because it can reveal one's 'hidden agenda'.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the study

Chinese literature has been considered as one of the best Asian literature. Great works such as Sun Wu's *Sun Tzu* (The Art of War) -around 320 BC and 400 BC- and Luó Guànzōng's *Sam Kok* (Romance of Three Kingdom) –around 14<sup>th</sup> century- have been known by people as legendary works. They have a lot of implications toward one's daily life, economically and philosophically. So does with the contemporary Chinese literature. Recent works of Chinese authors have reached the European and American markets. For example is the novel that the writer is going to analyse, a work of Zhou Wei Hui entitled *Shanghai Baby* (1999). The diction that the author picks expresses the condition of China, especially Shanghai, at that time. Wei Hui said, "The young Chinese women are socially and sexually liberated. They are so different, and their voice is strong and fresh, Shanghai in my books looks like it could be anywhere in the West" (online). In fact, the issues taken in this novel happen in most of the world, a woman who is trying to find her true self-identity. In her 'voyage of life', she finds that problems obstacle her and she finally conquers them.

The sale of this book is not smooth. This book published in 1999, but in May 2000, Chinese authorities banned "Shanghai Baby". They burned thousands of copies and made sure state media never mentioned its title or its author, Zhou Wei Hui, who uses the pen name Wei Hui (online). China's custom may cause

this problem to happen. As Easterners, they highly respect the traditional values and the issues, such as, pornography which is extremely prohibited in their country. As a country which has eastern ideology (although there is only a slight difference between eastern and western ideology), it is obvious that they are aroused by the pornography issues in the novel. From an interview, Wei Hui said “I was quite shocked initially, but the book's subject matter was very frightening for mainstream China not just because of the sexuality, but because it reflected what was going in the newer generation” (online). Chinese authorities do not take the reality of the book; they just notice the diction and find out that this book is porn. From that point of view, they considered that this book is not good enough to be published in China and should be demolished from the Chinese markets. On the contrary, the banning of the book has inflicted people's curiosity and this is how the book comes to be a bestseller at that time. People are looking for this book to fill their thirst of curiosity. After knowing that her novel is banned and considered as a mental-destructive book, she again blows a statement “I was a national bitch, and was portrayed by the Press as something of a bad girl, so there was some initial embarrassment of them”(online). She had already published six novels and none of them are banned like this one.

On the interview, she jots one statement “The downfall of *Shanghai Baby* may not have been the sex,” she says. “But the fact it was written from the perspective of a girl; the idea that a woman can express herself so boldly” (online). It is one big thing about the author. She felt that the banning of *Shanghai Baby* was not just caused by the sex that is vulgarly exploit in that novel but it is

more on the patriarchal ideology on most of the world.

Wei Hui, daughter of a Chinese army officer, studied literature at Shanghai's prestigious Fudan University. She is the author of *The Shriek of the Butterfly*, *Virgin in the Water*, *Crazy Like Wei Hui*, and *Desire Pistol* (online). *Shanghai Baby* is her first full-length novel, as well as her first writing to be published in English. She lives in Shanghai and writes a popular weekly column for a newspaper in Hong Kong. Most of her novels were talking about the condition of a young woman who is looking for her true life, but is sometimes trapped into a cruel and violent world. In fact, *Shanghai Baby* is sold in about 20 countries and has done well in Japan, where it sold about 200,000 copies. Her next book entitles *Marrying Buddha* released on 2005 is the sequel of *Shanghai Baby*, but it is emphasized on the spiritual side of Coco after those sad incidents in the previous novel.

This banned book is talking about Coco, who waits on tables in a café when she meets her first lover, a sensitive Chinese artist. By defying her parents, Coco moves in with her boyfriend and enters a world of drugs and hedonism. But, being helpless to stop her gentle lover's into addiction, Coco becomes attracted to a Westerner, a rich German businessman with a penchant seduction. Now, with friends ranging from a streetwise Madame to a rebellious filmmaker, Coco enters into the territory of love and lust cross the borders between two cultures, awakening her guilt and fears of discovery, yet stimulating her emerging sexual self. It is briefly the story of *Shanghai Baby*.

At some parts of the novel, the author, Wei Hui, uses dreams to convey her idea of what will happen in the character's future. Indeed, the use of dreams is very effective to lure or inflict the curiosity of the readers. People tend to find out that every dream has its own symbols and try to connect this with the next incidents happening in this novel (Johnson:4). The dream of the main character, Coco, is full of imagery that can be analysed using Jung's theory, which consist of four steps (making associations, connecting dream images with inner dynamics, interpreting, and rituals). In fact, the more the reader reads this novel, the more he/she will find out that every part of Coco's dreams is related to her life before and after she got her dreams. It is the most interesting part in the novel that should be analysed, and the results of the analysis will show the relation between the dreams and the life that Coco has.

The writer of this study takes this topic because most people consider dreams as their "flowers of sleeping", and ignore them. The worst case is that they take dreams as a sign to gamble. It is ironic when comparing what dreams can give us. This thesis is trying to refute peoples' opinion about dreams and make people understand them.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

In the following analysis, the writer would like to answer the following questions:

1. What do Coco's dreams symbolize?
2. How do Coco's dreams reflect her life?

### **1.3. Objective of the study**

Based on the statement of the problem, this study also has its own objective such as:

1. To see the example of dream symbols and their interpretation
2. To prove that dream reflect things that happen in one's life

### **1.4. Significance of the study**

Related to the objective of the study, the significance of this study is to show the ways to interpret a dream. It is because some of the dreams are reflecting one's life. The symbols and signs that occur in dreams are related to one's life in the past, present, and future. From this study, the writer hopes that the readers will see dream from different points of view, and see dreams as things that may be good for the readers' mind and soul.

### **1.5. Scope and Limitation**

Before doing the analysis, the writer of the study has to decide the scope and limitation for the analysis. It is needed to keep the analysis in track. The study focuses on Coco, the main character of this novel, and emphasizes on her dreams. The dreams will be analysed using Jung's four steps of dreams' interpretation and link it to Coco's life.

### **1.6. Theoretical Background of the study**

In analysing this topic which is about dream's interpretation, the writer of the study uses Jung's method of dream's interpretation. As a matter of fact, Jung was the pupil of Sigmund Freud, a famous psychoanalyst. At first, they share with each other about their opinion and theory, but in 1913 after six years of relationship, they finally broke.

Jung studied mythology, religion, ancient symbols and rituals, the customs and beliefs of primitive people, as well as dreams, visions, the symptoms of neurotics, and the hallucinations and delusions of psychotics, in his search for the roots and developments of human personality. He also finds steps to interpret dreams as a part of developing human personality. These steps are: making associations, connecting dream images to inner dynamics, interpreting, and doing rituals to make the dream concrete. In this novel, the writer follows the main character' development and using these steps to interpret Coco's dreams, and connects them to her real life.

### **1.7. Method of the study**

This study uses qualitative methodology. First, the writer chooses an interesting topic that will be analysed. After it is accomplished, the writer starts to gather the data in the novel which are related to the topic. Moreover, the writer goes to the library to find suitable reference for the study. The writer starts to analyze from the intrinsic part of the novel, which is Coco's dreams. Due to further analysis, the writer uses the presence of other character as addition. The



analysis uses interpretative analysis to describe and reveal the hidden or deeper meanings of this character's dreams.

### **1.8. Definition of Key Terms**

*Dreams* : involuntary and spontaneous psychic product, a voice of nature; and is usually obscure and difficult to understand because it expresses itself in symbols and pictures.

*Symbols* : In its basic sense, is a conventional representation of a concept or quantity; an idea, object, concept, and quality. It is also an arbitrary or conventional sign or something that stands for or suggests something else.

*Inner dynamics* : a form of energy that exists in every human being. It can be mood, anger, feeling, and attitude.

*Sexual relationship* : the relationship bound between a man and a woman in the form of sexual intercourse or any other gestures that trigger the passion between them.

*Nihilist* : a psychological belief that life is useless and human values are worthless.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

psychological condition during his/her life. The frequent occurrence of dreams makes the psychoanalysis expert, Sigmund Freud to develop theory to convey the symbols and meaning of dreams. So does Carl Gustav Jung, his well-known successor, who has his own idea of analysing dream. He paid a great attention toward dreams, as confirmed in his statement:

“He considered them to prospective as well as retrospective in content, and compensable for aspects of the dreamer’s personality which have been neglected in waking life” (Hall, 1970, 107)

Both Jung and Freud have different principle in interpreting dreams. The main reason which forms this theory is Jung’s rejection of Freud’s pansexualism.

“The immediate reason was that Freud...identified his method with sex theory, which I deemed to be inadmissible” (personal communication from Jung, 1954).

Jung soon proceeds to make his own theory of psychoanalysis, and his own method of psychotherapy, called analytical psychology. The most distinctive feature of Jung’s view is that he combines teleology - the supposition that there is design, purpose, directive principle, or finality in the works and processes of nature, and the philosophical study of that purpose- with causality (Hall, 1970, 80).

The writer of the study uses Jung's method of dream interpretation. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Jung has four basic approaches in interpreting dreams. In this chapter, those four approaches will be discussed deeper for better understanding. The four steps are: making associations, connecting dream images to inner dynamics, interpreting, and doing rituals.

### **1. Making associations**

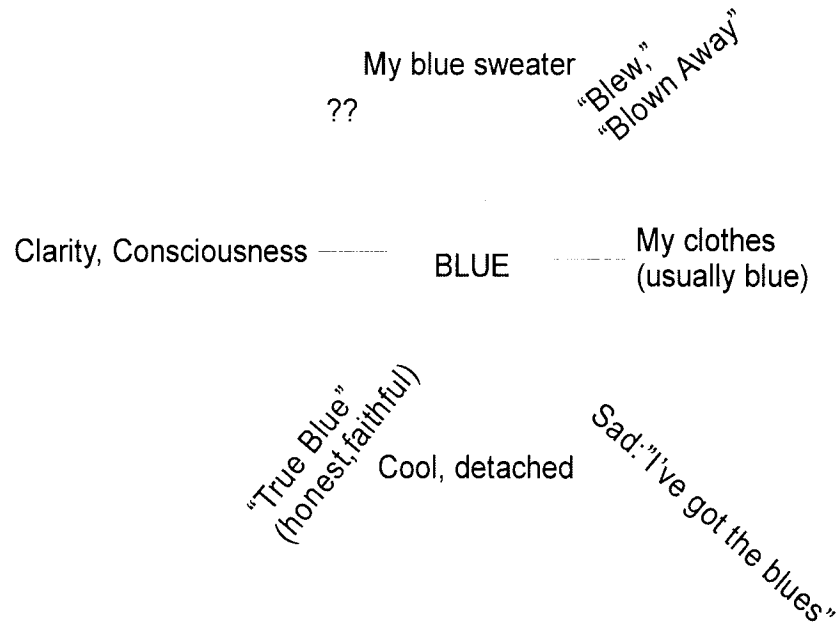
According to Daniel Johnson in *Inner Work* is that in this step, the writer is to connect a set of dream images with the dreamer's unconscious, since a dream contains plenty of symbols. This step is required to give a basic assumption of what the dream tells about.

Each of the dreams must have its own images that is considered as a part of a dreamer's waking life. First is to write the dreamer's dream, and then make a note of it. There are special images in it. Then the writer starts to associate it with the dreamer's life. The associations may be in words, ideas, mental pictures, feelings, or memories. Sometimes the associations made seem irrational and illogical.

In making associations, the writer is obligated to do direct association instead of chain associations. Direct association is an association that is made by turning back to the original image after making the next associations, while the chain association connects the first association to the next association in one image. The illustrations taken from *Inner Work* by Robert A. Johnson shows the difference between direct and chain associations.

BLUE → Sad → Hospital → Aunt Jennie → Apple Pie → Warm kitchen

This illustration shows the chain association. When the writer uses this association, the writer will not come back to the original image, but the writer will go into other images. The opposite of these associations is described below:



The illustration above will make a clear distinction between the two associations. The writer sees in the illustrations that there is one colloquial phrase. This is not a coincidence. The colloquial phrases in dream are often used in expressing feeling. The phrase come out simple, down-to-earth everyday life, and that makes it as excellent language for the unconscious.

Since the writer has already found the associations between the dreamer's dream and his/her unconscious, the writer decides to focus on the associations that can lead to the right interpretation. Jung has created a useful method that can solve this problem. He named it the "it clicks" method. He has invented a non-

complicated way so that the writer can connect the association that is made before with the association that relates with the other symbols happening in the dreamer's dream.

“One way to find the essence of a dream is to go to where the energy is-go to the association that brings up a surge of energy” (Johnson, 56)

There is still another technique that is used in order to find the associations. It is called the ‘archetypal amplification’ (Johnson:59). It is a process of gathering information about symbols that appears in the dreamer's dream by looking at the sources such as myths, fairy tales, and ancient religious traditions. Jung has noticed that the primordial symbols between the ancient myths and the dreams of modern people are equally the same. It is clear that the dream symbols are actually universal. The use of an “instant dream-books” and any other instant sources are extremely forbidden. Every symbol in a dream completely belongs to the dreamer, and although it has universal meaning, it has to do with the dreamer's life as well.

It is all about linking the associations and the symbols of the dreams. In these following paragraphs, the writer will explain the next step that is connecting the dream images with the inner dynamics.

## **2. Connecting dream images to inner dynamics**

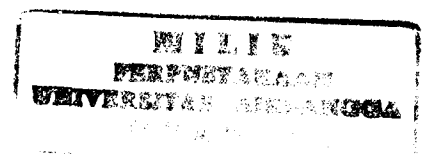
This second step is to connect what the writer has done in the first step with the dreamer's inner selves. Actually, inner dynamics is everything that is going on every human being. It is a source of energy system that lives and acts

from within them. It can be an emotional event such as anger, or inner conflict such as feeling, attitude, and mood. In this step, the writer connects each dream images to a specific dynamics in the dreamer's inner life. The writer identifies the parts of the dreamer's inner self that appear as the images in the dream. The main reason of doing this step is to figure out what is going 'inside' the dreamer that is represented by the situation in her dream. If the writer cannot tie the dream to specific events, the writer will find that the dreamer's dream is pointless.

Most dreams are representation of what goes on inside the dreamer (Johnson:66). Dreams usually speak on the evolution of forces inside people, the conflicts of values and viewpoints, the different unconscious energy that is trying to be heard, trying to find its way into dreamer's conscious lives. The overall subject of the dreams is actually the inner process of individualization. Most dreams are portrait of an individual journey, it show the adventures, obstacles, conflicts, and reconciliations.

Indeed, the writer should connect the images in dreamer's dream to specific characteristics. The writer has a set of fundamental characteristics. These basics include feelings, belief systems, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour and the values. All these traits show up in the dreams and can be identified if the writer looks for it.

Since dream has something to do with beliefs and attitudes, the writer should deeply gain this matter. They are crucially important because they largely determine what the dreamer does, how she relates to people, and how she reacts to most situations. Usually, people are not aware of how much they are controlled by



their beliefs, even less aware of how unconscious their attitude systems are.

“No one decides what beliefs and attitudes he or she will start off with. We all begin our lives with a set of attitudes that are dictated to us by the world outside us-family, tribe, or society. Generally, we don't know we have them. If we are consciously aware of them as our beliefs, we assume that they are right; it rarely occurs to us to question them” (Johnson, 72).

Dream also talks about values: feelings about what is good, desirable, beautiful, true, moral, or honourable. Ultimately, values are the qualities that people seek in most of their life, the standards that give lives a sense of meaning. The value expresses what is highest and most important.

Another key term that mostly exists in dreams is behaviour patterns (Johnson:75). It is one of the most important personal traits that come from within. Most of the time people are not aware of values that they serve. One of the best ways to discover what the dreamer really believe in, what value he/she is really serving, is to watch his/her behaviour. When the writer of the study sees a pattern of behaviour in a dream, the writer will look diligently in the dreamer's personal daily life. Somewhere the writer will find it, and behind the dreamer's behaviour, it is her attitudes.

“A good way to connect to the inner parts of yourself is to think of each dream figure as an actual person living inside you. Think of each person in your dream as one of the autonomous personalities that coexist within your psyche and combine to make up your total self”

(Johnson:76).

Usually in the dreamer's dream, the writer sees the existence of the person in it. For example, if the writer sees a person that brings conflict in the dream, the writer will try to find the part of the dreamer's personality that is in conflict or rebellion, or else if the writer sees a person seeks relatedness and affection in the dream, then the writer must look at the part of the dreamer's life that is connected with friendship and love. Those are examples in treating the person in dream. Of course, the images in dreams are not only the 'dream-people'. There are also places, buildings, animals, colours, numbers, objects, and abstract geometric symbols. Dreams present an infinite variety of images and all of them used to symbolize the flow of peoples' inner life. In this term, the writer will explain more about the existence of an animal in the dream, because it has to do with the dreamer's dream.

Animals, like any other symbols, have both positive and negative connotations (Johnson:79). Dogs, for instance, is a pack animals, like wolf and coyote. A dog in a dream could refer to the human tendency to "follow the pack", to get so involved with groups and "belonging" that people cease to develop as individuals or to have an inner life. On the other hand, dogs are extremely loyal. The image of a dog may refer to a noble quality in people. It takes time to understand the meaning of the symbols found in the dreamer's dream but usually a very small detail in the dream will tell which way to take the symbol. Jung found that animals often represent primitive physical and instinctual energy systems. They may correspond to a physical need for food, rest or exercise or a



need for erotic sensual experience.

### **3. Interpreting**

This is the most essential element that will gathered all the information the writer gets from the two previous steps and will give a vision about what the dreamer's dream is talking about.

The interpretation ties together all the meaning that the writer makes from the dream into one interpretation. It is obligated to do the first two steps before the writer does this interpretation. Without it, the writer does not have the right to do this step, because dream interpretations will be invalid, and it is useless.

In the first two steps, the writer finds several interpretations from the associations, and all of those associations make sense. If the writer of the study is confused in deciding the right interpretations, the writer uses the "it clicks" method that has already been explained in the first step. Another way to choose the correct interpretation is by tracing the energy behind this interpretation. A dream is full of energy, if the writer feels the energy impulses beneath the interpretation; the writer can conclude that it is the right interpretation.

To trace the correct interpretation, the writer also follows the tiny clues that are offered by the dream. Usually, people only consider the big clues instead of tiny clues. It is incorrect because sometimes the tiny clue is more important than the big one. If the writer still finds that tracing the tiny clue is difficult, the writer tries to make a debate about the information collected. The writer should act as affirmative or opposite side. The writer tries to take a note of all

information given as the writer plays a debate. It will make two strong paths and the dreams will tell what the consequences are.

### **3.1. Principles in confirming the interpretation**

According to Robert A. Johnson, *Inner Work's* author, there are some general principles that the writer refers to confirm an interpretation or steer away from one that is 'unsound'. These principles are:

- Choosing an interpretation that shows something the writer does not know.

It is clear that dream main function is to communicate something to the dreamer that she does not know, that she is unaware of, that lives in the conscious. The dreams will not tell something that the dreamer has already known, and if a dream offers pre-existing assumptions and opinions, it will not give any developed interpretations.

- Avoiding the interpretation that inflates the dreamer's ego or self-congratulatory.

If the writer finds the interpretation that makes the dreamer flattered or raising her ego, then it is not the right interpretation. Dreams do not give those kinds of signals, and they do not inflict the ego inflations. Dreams are aiming at the unfinished business of the dreamer's lives, showing what they need to face and learn next.

- Avoiding interpretations that shift responsibility away from the dreamer.

Dreams are not concerned with pointing out the faults of other people, or where other people need to change. Dreams are telling about the dreamer, what is going inside her. Therefore, it is better to avoid the interpretations based on the dreamer's assumptions to other people.

- Learning to live with dreams over time and fit them into the long-term flow of the dreamer's life.

Dream interprets what the dreamer has done in the past, or even what will she going to do in the future. Dream is like a blueprint of the dreamer's lives, it is conducting the dreamer to reveal her past, present, and future.

#### **4. Rituals**

This step requires physical acts that will affirm the message of the dream. For example, if the dream tells that the dreamer spends too much time on work, that he/she needs more physical relaxation, then he/she could make a ritual of taking his/herself to the beach or some rural places, and so on (Johnson: 98). People are usually surprised to learn that the most powerful rituals are the small ones, the subtle ones. It is not necessary to do big things or expensive things. The ritual is a physical representation of the inner attitude change that the dream called for, and it is the level of change that is requested by the dream.

Ritual and ceremony in general are ways of using small, symbolic acts to set up a connection between the conscious mind and the unconscious. Rituals

provide a way of taking principles from the unconscious and impressing them vividly on the conscious mind. On the other hand, rituals have an effect on the unconscious. A highly conscious ritual sends a powerful message back to the unconscious, causing changes to take place at the deep levels where the values and attitudes originate.

Jung has an opinion that ritual is a means of approaching the inner world that the human race evolved early in its history. Ritual is one of the faculties that people have, like dreaming, that enable people to set up a flow of communication between the conscious mind and the unconscious (Johnson: 101). Ritual is the tool that makes it possible to bring the essence of dream situation, the essence of the principle the dream teaches, the essence of archetypal energy in the dream. There are no set of ritual established for the dreams, nothing is prescribed by a formula or a tradition. Instead, each of the dreamers must go into his/her own imaginations and literally “dream” the ritual that will serve to honour a particular dream.

Those steps offer a way to analyze dream, but the writer does not need to follow all of the steps. If the writer has already found that one method is enough to make a conclusion of the symbols of the dream, then the writer does not extend to use another way, because it will make the interpretation unfocused.

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. Introduction to Coco's dreams

People's life cycle is always different from one to another. In this novel, the author, Wei Hui is trying to describe to the reader that life can be bad and awful. It is always an interesting topic to analyse people's life cycle. This is not as smooth as plan. There are so many obstacles that may enter in this process. As a result, these obstacles are usually ignored and buried in one's deepest thought and could be the cause of one's dream. "He considered them to prospective as well as retrospective in content, and compensable for aspects of the dreamer's personality which have been neglected in waking life" (Hall, 107). From the quotation, the writer of the study sees that every matter, obstacle, or barrier in one's lives can reappear in a dream.

It does happen to the main character in Wei Hui's *Shanghai Baby*. Coco, a young woman working at the café named Orchard Road, down in the district of Shanghai. She ends up there after she quits her work as a magazine journalist. Dressed in a short skirt and small-fitted uniform, she looks more like a Chinese prostitute rather than a novelist. She is dead-bored until she finds a man who goes to the café everyday sending her an "I love you" note. His name is Tian Tian, a tall handsome man who usually stays for hours drinking coffee and reading a book.

The writer of the study sees that Coco and Tian Tian have different personalities and visions of life. Coco is a figure of an ambitious and active girl who sees the world as a ripe fruit waiting to be eaten, while Tian Tian sees the world in a different way. He thinks that the world is like a cake laced with arsenic; every bite poisons him a little more (2). Although both of them have different personalities, they decide to live in Tian Tian's apartment and act as husband and wife. They 'run' through their first night with enthusiasm and emotional feelings, but the realization is far from what they have expected. Tian Tian is unable to perform sex; he is impotent.

Tian Tian's impotency shocked Coco, because for her sex is always the ingredient of a relationship. Indeed, this situation causes an emotional conflict in Coco's heart. Her perspective of sex, so far, is different from what she expects and experienced with Tian Tian. She feels that she can 'dump' Tian Tian because of his disability. On the other hand, her deep feeling for Tian Tian is not just for sex but it is far beyond that. Tian Tian's stubbornness and fragility has made Coco to be responsible in 'handling' him and remorse if she neglects him (23).

In fact, Coco is a best-selling short story writer. Her short story is sold for about 10,000 copies and is planned to be reprinted. Her short story does not make a lot of money, but it gives her attention indeed. Coco's condition as a best-selling short story writer makes Tian Tian asks Coco to consider her option as a novelist rather than a waiter at a cafe. She agrees with his opinion and decides to quit her current job to start a new career as a novel writer.

After Coco turns to be a novelist, she does not have a chance to do anything else than writing. Moreover, Tian Tian is more determined about the novel rather than Coco. Her conditions concerning Tian Tian's impotency and her feeling in facing her new novel inflict her to have her first dream. In her dream, she is naked, entangles with a man with a golden body hair wearing dark glasses. Their hands stick on each other like an octopus, and they are also embracing and dancing. Their gestures show that they are in 'pleasurable' sexual activities. In the embracement, Coco feels itchy because of the man's golden body hair (25).

From this dream, the writer of the study sees that Coco needs a man who can give her sexual satisfaction. Indeed, one night, Madonna (Tian Tian's friend) introduces her to Mark, a German businessperson from Germany, who works as a German-owned multinational investment consultant on Huashan Road. Both of them meet in a retro theme party called Return of Avenue Jofre on the top of the high-rise building at the corner of Huahai and Yandang Roads. From the first impression, Coco has admired him. "His eyes were shining in the darkness, like those of an animal lurking in the shrubbery" (29). Coco's feeling about Mark becomes more and more intensified after Mark drives her home to her apartment after the party. After the first meeting, Mark often calls her just to say *nihao* and the relationship bound between these two people becomes closer each day. Coco feels that this feeling is more like a hash brownies (38), the more she eats that brownie, the more she liberates from her recent condition. It is more like an 'escape' move that she has to do in order to conquer her depression. This relationship adds to Coco's depression, such as finishing her novel, and the reality

of her sex life. On the other hand, Tian Tian is addicted to marijuana.

Several days after her meeting with Mark, Coco goes to an exhibition at Liu Haisu Art Museum alone. Tian Tian does not accompany her because he realizes that Mark has asked her to go and he is jealous. After attending the exhibition, Coco goes to Mark's apartment and in that apartment both of them cannot resist the temptation to have sex. She only needs self-control to prevent the temptation. Indeed, she has none of it and starts to have sex with Mark. She regrets this and begins to blame herself. She justifies herself that it will be the first and the last time she has sex with Mark (64). However, this does not happen. From that time on, both Coco and Mark cannot do without sex whenever the situation permits.

Mark and Coco's sex activities reach the peak when Tian Tian decides to go to Haikou to refreshen his mind, mental, and physics. Mark and Coco are having plenty of sex activities from the most pleasant to the worst conditions, like in the dirty toilet. Mark enjoys this situation but Coco does not. She feels terrible after she has sex with Mark, but she has always made 'justification' of what she has done with Mark, although she knows that she has done something wrong and sinful. "My life with Tian Tian had too many fine cracks that we couldn't mend on our own, so there was always the threat that an external force would make its way inside" (67). Coco considers that the existence of Mark in her life is an external factor that enters her relationship with Tian Tian. Coco's recent condition makes her dream about sunflowers, a box, and a cat.



Coco dreams about a room with a potted sunflower. Its seeds blow away and grow into more sunflowers. There is also a cat that wants to eat the sunflower, but when he jumps, he falls out from the window and disappears. Suddenly, Coco is outside the room, watches those incidents with a racing heart. This dream also shows about a never-ending box. This box contains smaller boxes inside, and when it comes to the very last box, she finds a heavy book. Actually, Coco wants to give the book to someone, but she forgets his/her name and address (103).

After she has this dream, she consults it with her psychologist, David Wu. The time setting is on Christmas night, when at this time people usually gather around to celebrate this holy day. It is different with Coco; she decides to extend that particular day by going to Beijing, to meet her ex-boyfriend named Pu Yong. He works as a DJ in Beijing's discotheque, and Coco decides to go to Beijing after cruising the night with a taxi. She hears Pu Yong's voice on the radio. At that time, both her lovers are away. Each with his own affair. Mark spends Christmas with his family and Tian Tian is in Haikou to refresh. Spontaneously, Coco goes to Beijing without any second opinion, because she has to spend this Christmas with someone she knows. After she gets back to Shanghai, once more she has weird dream.

Coco dreams about Tian Tian who goes somewhere by an old-fashioned steam train. In the dream, she is helpless when the train is about to leave, carrying also a man in military uniform and steel helmet, and a bunch of strangers. Coco is late in attending Tian Tian's departure, so she feels sad when the train moves. She also feels guilty because she has misread the departure time, and in the very last

second the train moves, she does not have the guts to jump into the train (113).

Coco's burden of life has been added when she finds out that Tian Tian is using morphine when he was in Haikou. Tian Tian meets Li Le; his friend at the Health Reproduction Center who offers him to use morphine to 'run' temporarily from his problems in life. Unfortunately, he agrees with Li Le's opinion and starts to use morphine. Coco realizes this problem after she receives a call from Tian Tian asking a transfer of a large sum of money. Tian Tian's credit card's limit is worth thirty thousand RMB, and indeed, it is a lot of money to spend. Coco becomes suspicious with his favor and asks more about what he has spent in Haikou. The question becomes clearer after Tian Tian tells her that he is using morphine. "His voice was very weak, but he still managed to tell me the most terrible thing, too terrible for there to be any chance of misunderstanding it: He was taking morphine" (143). All of a sudden, Coco flies to Haikou to force Tian Tian to go home.

After that incident, Coco feels anxious about what Tian Tian has done in his life. Coco is easily worried, especially when she finds out that Tian Tian is not in their apartment. One day, she receives a terrible news that her mother has felt down and broke her leg. She leaves the apartment to stay with her mother for several days. The moment she stays in her parents' house, she has another dream.

She dreams that she is crossing a yellow, muddy, and broad river. This river seems to have no end, no bridge to cross. The only way to cross this river is by using a bamboo rake guarded by an old man. The condition of the rake itself is already messed up. It leaks a lot, so the water trespasses to the body of the boat.

While cruising the river, Coco is accompanied by a stranger whom she does not know. Half of the voyage, a huge wave hits the rake. Coco yelps, but she is already wet from the water that leaks from the boat. The person whispers in Coco's ear, calms her down, and suddenly he/she uses his/her body to balance the boat (241).

She is worried after she wakes up and calls Tian Tian's apartment and learns that no one is there. Coco decides to leave her parents for a while to check where Tian Tian is. She finds out that Tian Tian is in Madonna's villa. There, Coco chats with Madonna for a while, and decides to take Tian Tian home with her. After Coco arrives in Tian Tian's apartment, she takes a nap and has another dream.

Again Coco dreams about Tian Tian. She dreams that Tian Tian uses drugs again, and he is being seized by the police. She also watches Tian Tian uses his blood to write his epitaph on a white canvas, watches an earthquake, and the sky falls like a stone wave that explodes on impact (246).

After having this dream, Coco remembers one evening, when she finds Tian Tian using narcotic, he is very lame and really needs her attention. In this condition, he states that he really loves Coco, no matter what. Two months after Coco's dreams of Tian Tian writing an epitaph, Tian Tian dies. He passed away on a beautiful, peaceful morning. Coco feels terrible about it. "It cannot be avoided and it cannot be explained. When your lover leaves, you can cry out all the tears in your body, but he won't come back. He's gone forever, taking with him your broken memories, reduced to ashes, and leaving behind a soul, alone"

(p.248).

The next sub-chapter will analyze the symbols in Coco's dreams using the steps that are shown in the second chapter.

### **3.2. The symbols of Coco's dream.**

In this subchapter, the writer of the study divides the dream analysis into five parts. Those are the octopus, the sunflower, the old-fashioned steam, the muddy yellow river, and the earthquake dreams. The analysis of symbols and the reflection of Coco's life will combine in the dream analysis. The writer will also apply the steps in dream's interpretation which has already described in the previous chapter.

#### **3.2.1. The Octopus Dream**

The writer of the study is going to analyze Coco's first dream. This dream happens after she decides to have sex with Tian Tian. She turns out to be a novelist instead of merely a waiter at a small cafe. The dream is:

“Late one night, I had an erotic dream. In it, I became entangled, naked, with a man wearing dark glasses. Both sets of four limbs entangled like an octopus, embracing and dancing, the man's golden body hair glistening so provocatively that my body itched all over” (p.25)

After having this dream, Coco starts to guess the possibilities of the reason of this dream, it has to do with Tian Tian. From the fact that Tian Tian is more focused than Coco in writing, she considers that the attention he gives can be used

as an aphrodisiac (26) toward their imperfect love. It means that Tian Tian's attention toward Coco makes her think that it is the exchange of sexual intercourse. At first, she feels guilty when she has this dream. She feels that she has already betrayed Tian Tian's trust toward her, by having sexual intercourse with somebody whom she does not know. However, in the end she thinks that this dream must have some messages underneath, and this has to do with Tian Tian's attention.

The writer of the study sees that Coco dreams of having a sexual intercourse with someone "she does not know at all". The energy exploits in that dream shows how intense their sexual intercourse is. The main symbol in this dream is a man wearing dark glasses. This can refer to a mysterious person that Coco has never met. Both of them are entangling, embracing, and dancing like an octopus. It shows that the relation between Coco and this mysterious person are very close. It is also interesting to see the character with his golden body hair. Golden body hair refers to a westerner. It could be a Caucasian. However, Coco does not have a boyfriend from abroad, let alone a Caucasian.

If the writer simplifies the dream, it would show that Coco intends to have relation with a stranger (westerner) with golden body hair. Indeed, the causality of this dream infers with Coco's recent condition with Tian Tian. In the past, Coco has several boyfriends and all of them offered sexual intercourse, although they have different styles in performing sex. Now, she definitely needs sex with Tian Tian, a "habit" she has had with her previous boyfriends. On the other hand, Tian Tian could not give her what she wants, especially in sexual experience. With that

kind of condition, she becomes depressed since she is stuck when writing her new novel.

The word 'octopus' also has a significant meaning; it can show about the inseparable relationship between those two people in her dream. The tentacles of an octopus are very tight indeed. Once it sticks to something, it will stick forever until the octopus releases its tentacles. The condition shown in the dream about Coco and the mysterious man entangling like an octopus applies to this circumstances and it refers to the relationship between Coco and the mysterious man.

The symbols in Coco's dream are related with the condition of sexual intercourse between the couple. The word "naked", "entangled" like octopus sounds erotic, confirming that Coco needs sexual intercourse with Tian Tian very badly. This sort of condition has never happened since her previous sexual relationship with her ex-boyfriends. Therefore, even though she does not realize it, she is very depressed with this condition. When she discovered that Tian Tian is impotent, she was very devastated; she even thinks that she cannot live with him. However, since the time when Coco was still in college, she considers that sex is a basic necessity (5).

Coco's past experience is always related with sex. And when she is stuck with this condition, she will find a way to overcome it. Actually, she can just abandon Tian Tian, but she can never allow herself to do this. Her love for Tian Tian is so pure. She can bear this love, even without sex. Her life with Tian Tian is like a dream, everything is pure, intuitive, and unburden by loneliness (67).

Actually, she can easily abandon something, but somehow she feels that she has to keep this relationship. For Coco, abandoning something is like a flip of a hand, goes from one goal to another, and keeps moving (23).

One day, she is introduced to Mark, a German businessperson who works in a German multinational office. From the first impression, Coco seems to admire Mark in every way. When she shakes hand with him, she feels that “his hand was warm and dry, was comfortable to be touch” (28). And also when Mark asks her to dance with him, she feels that “his eyes were shining in the darkness, like those of an animal lurking in the shrubbery. I was surprised by the feeling those eyes gave me. His clothing was crisply ironed, and he'd applied lots of hair gel, too...”(29). Indeed, both of them are already attracted to each other from the very first time they are introduced. The feeling also happens during the post-introduction. When Mark calls her later, she happens to think, “Here comes a tall western man” (37). This sort of thought refers that she has been waiting for Mark’s phone call.

From this condition, it is allegedly clear that both of them are attracted to each other. This relationship comes to its peak when both of them decide to have sexual intercourse after attending an exhibition at Liu Haisu Museum. However, during the intercourse he shows no pity, never stopping for a second. The pain from sexual intercourse turns into a kind of apoplexy (63). She looks on Mark half in love, half in hatred.

One thing for sure, Coco has already broken Tian Tian’s trust upon her, but on the other hand, for Coco, sex is one of the ingredients in having a

relationship, which has been part of her nature. She must feel distracted about these circumstances, but indeed, she has to find someone who can give her what she wants, especially a sex experience. The word half-in love, half in hatred also expresses her feeling toward this condition. In the next paragraphs, the writer will give his interpretation of Coco's dream.

Overall, the first dream that Coco has is about the significance of Coco's sex life. What is written in her dream is about nakedness, embraces, and entanglement. That sort of words describe the condition when two people, male and female, are having a sexual intercourse. At first, Coco does not know who the person is, who is entangling and embracing her like an octopus, because that person is wearing dark sunglasses. Afterward, the mystery is solved. It is Mark who wears that dark sunglasses. As a matter a fact, Mark is a foreigner and he has golden body hair, the exact description in Coco's dream. There is always a desire to have sex with someone she loves, like what she has done with her previous boyfriends. Now on, she is stuck, she has to find someone who can share sex with her, and that person is Mark. The existence of Mark in Coco's life has a lot of significances until she has her second dream.

#### **3.2.1.2. The Sunflower Dream**

The dream about sunflower comes out suddenly, without any previous notification. For Coco, this repetitive dream shows her condition when she is depressed regarding Tian Tian's impotency, Mark's existence, and her writing. She dreams that she is in a room where a potted sunflower exists. It blossom wilts



and grow into more sunflowers. She becomes terrified with it. Also, there is a cat which wants to eat those flowers, when it jumps, it disappears. All in a sudden, she is outside the room, watching all those incidents. Coco also often dreams about a box. She finds a box that has smaller boxes inside. She opens those boxes over and over again until she finds the very last box. In it she finds a quite heavy book. Suddenly, she wants to give this book to someone but she forgets the person (103).

The existence of objects that appear in this dream show a never-ending process, from the sunflower which grows bigger and bigger until the box with its unlimited smaller boxes underneath. It shows Coco's problems while facing her life. She has a lot of problems and it seems that they are unsolvable.

Soon after she has this dream, she consults David Wu, her most trusted psychologist. He said that Coco has some kinds of fear that somehow makes a change in her body and has made impacts on her writing (104). A fear of becoming pregnant or facing the failure of her book, for instance. David also assumes that Coco wants to realize her dream, but somehow there is always an obstacle in front of her.

David Wu's opinion shows that Coco is anxious about her future that relies on her present life, from her relationship with Mark until her novel's writing. The meaning of the sunflower has something to do with her condition with Mark. Its seeds are drifting away and grow into more sunflowers; it means that her relationship with Mark may cause her pregnancy. Her anxiety of becoming pregnant is one big thing that always haunts her when she has sex with

Mark. Once, when she has sex with him, she imagines that her act will seed a fetus (154). She also imagines that she will tell the truth about her relation with Mark to Tian Tian. Then she prepares herself to have a baby from Mark. She hopes that the baby can be dispersed in a haze (154), a solution to all her problems. It proves that her imagination is possessing her soul and she even thinks of something that is unreliable. She knows that having a son from “forbidden love” is uncalled for and may even bring inconvenience to both of them.

One thing is; she always thinks that a man can make a division between love and sex, but a woman cannot. “Once, I’d convinced myself that a woman can separate her heart and her body—a man can; why not a woman? But in reality, I found I was thinking more and more of Mark, of those deadly and divine moments we spent together” (p.226). She feels that this proverb is currently right and she feels that her relationship with Mark becomes more than just a sex. It is some kind of dilemma for her and she does not know how to solve it. Her thought is now divided into two different people, one is for Tian Tian and the other is for Mark.

Having to face a dilemmatic situation, Coco feels empty in her heart. Her heart is filled with the love that she cannot release (104). The man who ‘totally’ loves her cannot give her a sexual satisfaction, and the most important protection for her. Furthermore, he smokes dope and ‘disengages’ himself from the world. While the man who can give her sexual satisfaction is a married man, who does not have an emotional bond in her. There is always a protective layer to keep Coco and Mark from connecting mentally.

Coco's love over Tian Tian is unexplainable, even though he cannot give her sexual satisfaction. It has to do with Coco's emotion. She feels that their love is tightly bound and that no one can separate their love. On the other hand, Mark, the one who can give her sexual satisfaction, does not have a place in Coco's heart. For her, it is just a physical satisfaction and attraction.

The cat in her dream shows Tian Tian's figure. A cat is an animal that is very spoiled and "weak", as it is a carnivore, it does not make sense that it eats the sunflower. The writer considers that it shows the condition of Tian Tian. He already knows that Coco has a relationship with Mark and he is jealous of it. It can be seen when Coco asks him to go to Liu Haisu Museum and he refuses, although he often goes to all sorts of art and painting exhibitions (58). He said, "Is that German guy always so attentive to other's people girlfriends?"(59). It is believed that Tian Tian already knows about the triangle love that involves him, Coco, and Mark. The cat itself is a representation of Tian Tian, who is afraid to "break" the fact between Mark and Coco, because he does not have the courage to do it. He knows, but does nothing, like a cat which falls out of the window and disappears. He prefers to run away from reality rather than to trace the real fact of her love, Coco. "Suddenly I'm outside the room watching all this". It means that Coco is anxious with her recent condition, realizing that she cannot solve these problems. She is watching this and she feels that it has to be resolved. However, Coco's action in resolving problems is similar to Tian Tian; she chooses to run away from this situation and buries all of these problems behind.

The writer will now move to another object, which is the box. The large box here contains smaller boxes, and the very last box contains a book. The box here means all her anxieties when writing her new novel. A bunch of worries haunted her from the beginning to the end of making her new novel. Indeed, the novel has created a new anxiety for Coco. She feels that she cannot separate her real life and her novel. She does not know how to disguise herself to her readers (92). As the plot develops, she feels that the novel has an impact on her future.

One thing for sure is her ambition to be famous has been burdening her in making her new novel. It seems that the success of her short stories has obliged her to repeat her past success. It makes her consider a lot before she decides to write a new plot in her novel. She tries many experiments in order to make it become a masterpiece. "I was hypnotized by my novel. To convey one torrid scene authentically as possible, I tried writing naked". (167). It is uncommon to write while not wearing anything, yet she feels an urge to do so to make her novel be her best.

The problems do not only lie on her optimism in making her new novel, but also the pessimism that she has. Every person has pessimistic feeling in his/her life, including Coco. She often feels that she cannot finish her novel. The enthusiasm, the inspiration she has in the beginning, somehow disappears (205). She blames herself as an ordinary woman who badly looks for fame. When she looks at her desk, she feels that she fails in making her life and dreams.

Coco's lack of enthusiasm in finishing her new novel makes her sad. She feels that she is exhausted of her fame. She decides to write the novel merely to

fulfil her exhaustion. Her pessimism in making her novel is the one that the writer considers as the problem. The boxes in her dream are getting smaller each time. It symbolizes that her problem is getting smaller each time. The existing problem is only on her novel. Two months after Tian Tian's death, Coco feels that his soul is still accompanying her, enforcing her to finish her novel. Indeed, while Coco is 'busy' with her manuscripts, she feels that "Tian Tian's spirit watches her silently and tenderly" (255), and when she looks back, he is frightened and goes away. It proves that Tian Tian's spirit still accompanies her until she finishes her novel.

It certainly shows the last point of Coco's dream, when in the very last box she finds a book and she does not know to whom she actually wants to dedicate the book to. The presence of Tian Tian, who always gives her spirit to complete the book is no longer present; so there is no one whom she wants to show her masterpiece. Mark has also left for Germany and she is alone in Shanghai. Both Tian Tian and Mark are the most important people in Coco's life at that time, but they were nowhere when she needs them. It is relieving for Coco, but indeed it also brings sadness to her. She feels relief like when "she shoots from a mountaintop to the ski slopes toward the bottom, a feel of release, and strange sense of sadness" (254).

The complete interpretation about this dream is about Coco's fears. Those are fears of being pregnant and of not finishing her novel. Indeed, Mark's presence in her life makes her feel guilty. She fears the result of their sex activity, because she still loves Tian Tian very much. She needs sex and she throws Tian Tian away and leaps to Mark. Her anxiety of making her new novel also makes

her depressed, and her depression is decreasing gradually. The climax of her fear is when Tian Tian dies and Mark returns to Germany. She is relieved with her condition, and finally she can finish her novel. On the other hand, when she has finished her novel, the man who always supports her is gone, so that she cannot show her masterpiece to him. That is sorrowful. No one is beside her to share her success.

### **3.2.1.3. The Old-fashioned Steam Train Dream**

Coco has this dream after her lonely Christmas Eve. It occurs after Coco goes to Beijing to meet her ex-boyfriend named Pu Yong, a local DJ in Beijing's pub. She flies to Beijing because Tian Tian is in Haikou and Mark is spending his Christmas with his family in Germany. Indeed, she feels lonely and needs someone to spend Christmas with. Coco dreams that she is in a station and watches Tian Tian going somewhere by an old fashioned train. She feels helpless and does not know what to do. The train itself are packed with strangers, and she also sees a man wearing military uniform comes into the train. Suddenly she cries in vain, hates herself for mistaken the departure time. In the last second, she wants to jump to the train but she does not have the nerve to do it. (113).

In this dream, Coco seems reluctant to let Tian Tian go alone to Haikou, especially with strangers. She wants to follow him but she cannot, because the train has already move. Indeed, she regrets her incapability to 'follow' where her lover goes.

She has this dream after Tian Tian left her for Haikou. The old-fashioned steam train here has two meanings. One is the denotative meaning of an old-fashioned steam train and the other is the childhood of Tian Tian. The coherence between an old-fashioned steam train and strangers are also considered as a part of the writer's analysis of Tian Tian's childhood.

Here, the writer can see the correlation between old-fashioned steam train and strangers. Tian Tian's childhood is the starting point of what he has done in recent time. His childhood is full of bad memories, from the death of his father and the ignorance and abandonment from his mom. When Tian Tian was a child, his father died because of "myocardial infarction". Tian Tian's grandmother does not believe that this is a natural death, she accused Tian Tian's mother for planning a murder. In one way, Tian Tian believes this accusation, but on the other hand, he depends on her because she is the one who gives him money every month. After his father's death, Tian Tian turns into a sort of nihilist child. "He lost the power of speech and dropped out from school at first year" (4). He hates the outside world; it means that he spends his time mostly on his bed: reading, watching videos, smoking, musing on the pros and cons of life versus death. These are the reasons why in present time, Tian Tian seems reckless, and sees life "as a cake laces with arsenic, which every bite of it poisons him more and more" (2).

Tian Tian's grandmother also takes part in his mental 'disorder'. "She is a stubborn old lady, with white hair, glasses, and fine white skin. She is more like a professor's wife" (262). She accused Tian Tian's mother for planning a murder to

Tian Tian's father, but indeed his father died because of "myocardial infraction". At that time, Tian Tian lived with his grandmother because his mother went to Spain to attend a restaurant. So, this condition makes Tian Tian believe more to his grandmother than to his mother. His hatred toward his mother certainly lies on this problem.

On the contrary, Tian Tian's mother also plays a role in causing her son's mental sickness. One day, she comes to Tian Tian's apartment and she finds Coco. She cannot meet Tian Tian because at that time he is at a detox center. It is a place for drug-addict to detoxify the toxic caused by drugs in his/her blood. Tian Tian's mother's name is Connie; "a middle-aged woman with overdone outfit and twang, exotic flavor of accent" (188). She admits to Coco that she has done something wrong by ignoring Tian Tian in the past. She blames herself by not taking Tian Tian with her to Spain. She admits that she only thinks about the development of her restaurant. Her selfishness makes 'space' between her and Tian Tian. She thinks that her presence in Shanghai will make Tian Tian hate him. She thinks that Tian Tian will take revenge on her because of his father's death. One thing that she can do to show her love and concern for Tian Tian is only by sending him money every month. She also dreams that one day, she will give the restaurant to Tian Tian in order "to 'pay' for her past mistakes" (191).

The writer sees that Tian Tian's mother has ignored him in the past; she is too busy handling her restaurant so her attention and affection to her son is divided. It gives an impact on his mental condition and turns him into a sort of very sensitive person. When a child, he was a nihilist, a sort of person who



believes that life is pointless and human values are worthless. Logically, this makes him become a person who lacks socialization, especially with strangers. It is the main reason why in this dream Coco feels sad when Tian Tian leaves her. It has to do with the strangers. Coco is afraid when Tian Tian is among strangers concerning his psychological condition as a sensitive person. On the other hand, the denotative meaning of old-fashioned steam train means that Tian Tian is going to Haikou by train. “I looked on helplessly as the train started to move, brushing close by my face.” This word shows Coco’s feeling when Tian Tian leaves her for Haikou. She feels that her effort in loving Tian Tian is nothing compared to Tian Tian’s love over her.

Coco and Tian Tian are getting closer each day. They like to spoil each other. And now they will be separated for two months. It is quite a long time considering on how close their relationship is. For Coco, “there will be no one who bangs the bathroom door wanting to shower together” (88), no one who share the bed with her, and no one will hear her talk while sleeping. So, when Tian Tian leaves her, it seems that no one can share her love and this makes her very sad.

As a matter of fact, Tian Tian has taken his regular trip once a year. He needs this when he wants to relax after his daily activities. The writer sees that Tian Tian’s everyday activities are very unfruitful and useless. He is unemployed who likes to “read, watch videos, smoke, muse on the pros and cons of life versus dead, call premium phone lines, sleep, paint, walk with Coco, eat, shop, browse in book and records shops, sit in cafes, and go to the bank” (4). Those activities are what Tian Tian has been doing in his entire life. It is a monotonous activities, so

when he needs to relax, he decides to take a regular trip once a year. “He couldn’t bear the cold, damp weather; even the occasional sunshine is gray and gives you goosebumps when it shines on you” (p.87). Tian Tian is a very sensitive person; the presence of minor things like weather or climate can make him downgrade his mood. Thus, in her dream Coco is anxious when Tian Tian leaves her with strangers. This also inflicts the guilt that Coco has toward him. She thinks that Tian Tian is depressed because of their daily contact. She also feels that “Tian Tian’s departure is a temporary escape from their daily contact” (87).

The existence of a man wearing military uniform reflects Coco’s fear that Tian Tian is using drugs again. Military uniform shows the figure of a law enforcer, who deals with this problem. Coco fears that Tian Tian might face a problem with the law enforcers, concerning his drug addiction. In Shanghai, Tian Tian has been using dope to refreshen his mind. Coco is worried that in Haikou Tian Tian might be using drugs that is more dangerous than doping. Coco’s fear becomes a reality after she finds out that Tian Tian uses morphine offered by Li Le, his friend in the Health Reproduction Center. Soon after, Coco goes to Haikou to pick him up.

“I cried in utter despair, hating myself for having misread my watch or mistaken the departure time. In that last second, maybe I simply lacked the nerve to jump on the train” (113). By this time, Coco regrets she has let Tian Tian go alone to Haikou and she also feels lonely after he leaves. But on the contrary, Coco is relieved. She feels a little bit free with Tian Tian’s absence at the moment. She has more time and space while Tian Tian is gone. Coco has a

contradictory feeling. On one side, she feels guilty, but on the other hand she is relieved.

Hence, the dream tells about Coco's condition after Tian Tian leaves to find a relaxation from his monotonous life. Coco is worried about Tian Tian, she believes that Tian Tian is a sort of person who has difficulty in adapting with strangers, especially since he is alone in Haikou. She is concerned because Tian Tian is being addicted. She is also afraid that Tian Tian will use drugs and thus that will affect his mental and physical condition. On the other hand, Coco is relieved by Tian Tian's departure, because she feels that she has a lot of space, her relationship with Mark will be at its top level. "Besides, Mark had begun to embed himself in the weakest link of our love, like a tumour. The tumour existed because of a virus spreading in a certain place in my body- and that virus was sex" (87). Finally, Coco realizes that she is trapped in Mark's 'web'. Furthermore, she needs sex and the one who can give her is Mark. During Tian Tian's absence in her life, Coco seems to have a sort kind of freedom to have sex with Mark. Coco's sexual desires now seems to be fulfilled by the absence of Tian Tian and the intense relationship between her and Mark. It is clear enough to have conclusion that Mark is one of the influential persons in Coco's life.

#### **3.2.1.4. The Muddy Yellow River Dream**

This dream occurs when Coco returns to her parents' house. She is there because her mother had an accident and had a broken leg. When she comes back to Tian Tian's apartment, she finds out that Tian Tian is not home. She feels that

“her sudden disappearance makes Tian Tian confused and leaves his apartment” (240). Coco is too tired to think about this possibility; she takes tranquilizer and goes to bed. Suddenly she is dreaming about something.

“I dreamed of a broad, muddy yellow, frightening river. There was no bridge, only a leaking bamboo ferry with a white-bearded, foul-tempered old man guarding it. I was crossing river with someone whose face I couldn’t see. Halfway across, a huge wave hit us. I yelped, but I was already wet from the water that had leaked into the boat. The person whose face couldn’t see hugged me tightly from behind. “Don’t be afraid,” he (she?) whispered in my ear, and used his (her?) body to balance us” (p.241).

Coco dreams that she is crossing a muddy river with someone she does not know. She crosses the river in a leaked boat rowed by an old man. In the middle of the voyage, a huge wave hits the boat. She is unable to control the boat, but the person accompanying her calms her down and balances the boat.

Her dream about the river explains about her life. ‘Broad, muddy yellow, and frightening river’ show her recent ambition in making her life famous. Yellow colour symbolizes cowardice and jaundice. Indeed, in her life’s voyage, her ambition in making herself famous has turned to pieces. What Coco has done everyday is to find a way to make herself famous (1). She tries many ways to fulfil her ambition, indeed, her best-selling short story has been considered as one of her attempt to make herself famous. Since she found Tian Tian and decided to live together, she seems to have a lot of problems that blocks her way to succeed.

The problems come from Tian Tian's impotency, her writing's stuckness, and also the presence of Mark seem to be the causes of decreasing her will to succeed. Coco feels that she is not strong enough to reach her ambition. She feels that she is no more than 'dirt bag' in this world. "It is better for her to yank herself off from this planet" (160), or even with Tian Tian leaves the society to go to the African jungle; grows marijuana, raises chickens, and dances primitive dances. It is obvious that Coco has already given up in reaching her ambition.

At first Coco is an ambitious young woman, but when she has problems she feels that she is unable to fulfil it. Coco's contradicting thoughts show that she is disrupted by her previous ambition and finally she finds out that her life is terrifying. The absence of a bridge means that she gets no company in her life. She cannot find a person whom she can really depend on. Coco is always alone; she is an individualist. Her father always says, "Remember how you liked to go out all alone when you were young? In the end, you always lost your way. You've always been a girl who loses her way" (231).

Indeed, the old-man in her dreams shows the character of Coco's father. For Coco, he is a good-looking and amiable old chap. On the other hand, he is a sort of father who is over protective toward his family, especially his daughter, Coco. "When Coco was three years old, her father was always worried that she loose her body and soul to a sex maniac" (19). It proves that Coco's father is so protective toward his family, especially to his precious daughter, Coco.

'I was crossing the river with someone whose face I couldn't see'. This sentence explains that Coco is still in doubt about the person who accompanies

her at present. It is understandable because the person, that is Tian Tian who always gives her support and love is undependable. He is impotent, reckless, dependent, and has a spoiled habit. "The rest of the time he painted, walked with me...When he needed money, he would go to the post office and send letters in beautiful blue envelopes to his mother." (4) Indeed, at first Coco always thinks that Tian Tian is an unreliable man, lame, and reckless, but in the end of her dream, she already changes her thought about him. Tian Tian's condition is just that through his entire life; but on the other hand his love toward Coco has given her strength and confidence.

The dream showing that the boat is leaking everywhere, shows the condition of the two people, Tian Tian and Coco. Problems always happen in their life. Tian Tian's impotency, sensitiveness, and suspicions affect Coco psychologically. "Coco, no matter what, don't ever lie on me." He fixed his eyes on mine, and an invisible chisel slashed my heart." (77). The problems do not only appear on Coco and Tian Tian's relationship, but also to her relationship with Mark. The writer considers this as a new problem in Coco's life. The symbol of a big wave represents her problem with Mark. It is about Coco and Mark's love story, "And I finally realized I'd fallen into the trap of love and passion set by this German man who wasn't supposed to be anything more than a sex partner." (238). The sentence shows that Coco is 'drown' in love that is built on sexual activities. The wave also represents Coco's depression while making her new novel. Indeed, "her novel brings her a new worry" (92).

‘I yelped, but I was already wet from the water that had leaked into the boat’. Coco is aware of her mistakes and obstacles. Tian Tian’s disabilities have affected Coco’s mental. It is obvious that Coco is disappointed. She has never pictured herself of having an impotent boyfriend. If she is honest with herself, she is actually very disappointed and frustrated; but she suppressed them deep down in her subconscious mind. She uses to masturbate when she is in need and ‘lonely’. “...again and again I used my slim fingers to masturbate, making myself fly, fly into the mire of orgasm. And in my mind’s eye, I saw both crime and punishment” (16). She spends most of the night masturbating, because Tian Tian is unable to satisfy her. The novel that Coco writes also depresses her very much. Furthermore, her relationship with her family and her ex-boyfriends also add to the list of her problems. Her family always compares her with Zhu Sha (Coco’s cousin who comes first place in everything), and it burdens her so. Her ex-boyfriends also affect her life. Coco has never had a perfect boyfriend starting from the first boyfriend until Tian Tian. She experiences having a boyfriend from a sex maniac to an impotent one. Thus, before the ‘wave’ shocks her, Coco’s life has already been full of problems. This is what ‘the water leaked to the boat’ means. Small problems will become big ones if they are not solved in time.

The writer sees that someone who will balance Coco in the end of her dream is her recent lover Tian Tian. From their first meeting, Tian Tian has already showed his love to Coco by giving her full attention and affection. Despite Tian Tian’s feeling of love, Coco always neglects him but he keeps on trying to reach Coco’s love. He also supports Coco to write a novel and always pays full

attention on her.

The writer is of the opinion that Tian Tian has provided Coco with pure love and stabilizes her behaviour. Tian Tian's mother also confesses that "My son is capable of ignoring everything for the one he loves" (200). It shows how deep Tian Tian's love is toward Coco.

The writer believes that the analysis of symbols on the muddy yellow river dream shows about Coco's life voyage which are full of obstacles and problems. And the one man who always 'guards' her is her father who is symbolized as an old-man. Furthermore, when Coco is confronted with the biggest problem in her life, her depression when writing her novel and the problem with Mark, the person who 'balances' and 'stabilizes' her is her true lover, Tian Tian. His affection and love toward Coco reduces all the problems she has.

#### **3.2.1.5. The Earthquake Dreams**

Coco has this dream after Tian Tian uses drugs again. She feels anxious with this condition and starts to have a nightmare.

"Tian Tian began taking drugs again, flirting with the devil. I descended into a world of nightmare. Again and again I watched Tian Tian being led away by the police, watched him use blood oozing from his wrist to write his epitaph on a white canvas, watched an earthquake, watched the sky fall in like a stone wave that explodes on impact". (p.246)

This dream shows that Tian Tian suffers from the drug he takes. He has been arrested few times and he even uses his blood to write on his epitaph. Coco also



sees an earthquake and the sky that falls from the top. Tian Tian's being arrested some time later shows the probability of his future that he is still taking drugs. He may be arrested by the police who are in charge on this problem.

The use of epitaph, earthquake, and sky fall are the words used to describe about the end of the world. Epitaph is an inscription on a tombstone or monument commemorating the person buried there. In this dream, Tian Tian uses his blood to write his epitaph. It shows that Tian Tian has surrendered his life, and in his desperation he hopes that his life will end soon. In the dream, Tian Tian also writes his epitaph on the white canvas. White represents the peaceful and freedom that he longs for so long. It means that he will end his life peacefully and be free from problems. As a matter of fact, Tian Tian dies peacefully in a beautiful morning. Before the day he dies, he already gives a hint to Coco about his vision of the future. He says to her:

“If one day I die...what kind of person will you think I've been?”

“I will h-a-t-e you,” I enunciated clearly.

“Death is the expression of exhaustion, a solution arrived at rationally once one has known the deepest depths of tiredness. I've thought about it for a long time, perhaps all my life, and having thought it thorough, I'm not ashamed of dying. A person like me can't go on constantly polluting himself, annihilating his soul.” (p.161-162)

The background of Coco's dream is because Tian Tian tells her about the possibility of his death. The dialogue about Tian Tian's death makes Coco think a lot about it and thus, it pops in her dream. Tian Tian seems to be in despair with

his recent condition and he thinks that the only thing that can free him is death itself.

Earthquake and sky falling from the top also represent the end of something, and it usually shows the condition of a doomsday. Hence, the epitaph, earthquake, and sky fall represent the end of Tian Tian' life. The dream implies about Tian Tian's death which happened that way. Naturally, Coco is very sad, but she survives and continues her life. Coco feels that the death of Tian Tian cannot be avoided and explained, although she cries in vain, it will not bring him back again. Tian Tian has already died, forever, taking their memories, reducing to ashes, and leaving behind a soul (248). She considers that Tian Tian's death is one realistic thing, and she will not regret or sad about it. She is a strong woman who can face the world with her own way. The earthquake dream is all about the 'clue' of Tian Tian's death. The use of specific words that refers to death like earthquake and sky fall implies that Tian Tian's death is just a matter of time.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

Wei Hui's *Shanghai Baby* tells about Coco's journey, a female writer who caught in the 'desert of problems.' In the novel, Coco has a lot of problems, and as a result, those problems pop in her dreams. From the analysis, symbols that often appear in Coco's dream are mostly about the problems of love and work.

The writer of the study concludes that the 'octopus dream' is symbolizing Coco's desire to find a man who can 'satisfy' her in bed. It is because her recent boyfriend is impotent and he cannot give her sexual satisfaction. The symbols that exist in the dream, such as octopus and a mysterious man wearing dark glasses reflect her hidden desire. In addition, the activities in the dream – entangling and embracing – is certainly about Coco's desire to find her sexual satisfaction. Yet, the presence of Mark in her future life somehow can fulfil her desire to have a pleasant sex.

The 'sunflower dream' reflects her stress while working on her novel. Furthermore, this dream also shows her anxiety of having a baby from her relationship with Mark. The sunflower grows more and more shows that she is afraid that her frequent sexual relationship with Mark can seed her fetus. Moreover, the 'never-ending book' shows her never-ending problems that exist in her life. It is reduced by and by with time and finally it is over when she finishes her novel, and she realizes that her relationship with Mark does not exceed anything instead of a sexual satisfaction.

Coco's next dream is an old-fashioned steam train. This symbolizes Coco's despair when Tian Tian left her. Indeed, Tian Tian leaves her for Haikou to refresh his mind. Coco and Tian Tian cannot be separated. So, when Tian Tian left her, she feels afraid that he will not come back. The old-fashioned steam train packed with strangers also reflects that Coco is afraid that in Tian Tian's journey, he will meet and socialize with strangers. Tian Tian's introverts' mental also adds her fear when Tian Tian left her.

The 'muddy yellow river' dream shows Coco's life voyage. The river itself symbolizes the life that Coco sails. Indeed, the presence of the old man in her dream shows her father who always tries to protect and keep her in a 'right track'. Coco's life is also full of problems and it is symbolized by the waves in the dream. It hits Coco's rake but the person who accompanies her stabilizes her to keep steady. The writer concludes that the person who accompanies Coco in her voyage is Tian Tian. He always loves Coco with his pure love and even after he died, he keeps giving his attention to her. It shows how great Tian Tian's love toward Coco is.

The last dream, which is the 'earthquake' dream, shows Coco's worries toward Tian Tian when he decides to take drugs again. She is afraid that Tian Tian will be busted by the police because of his drug's problem. Indeed the image of a police in this dream shows Coco's assumption toward Tian Tian at that time. While the earthquake and sky fall symbolize Tian Tian's death. Furthermore, Tian Tian dies in a beautiful morning. Coco is sad by Tian Tian's death, but she realizes that it is a 'fact of life'; everyone must die someday, somehow.

All of Coco's dreams, from the 'octopus' until 'earthquake' show the relationship between her and her two persons who are mostly involved in her life. The two persons who always pop as symbols in Coco's dream are Tian Tian and Mark. Both of them are the most influential people in Coco's life, and it is proven by their presence in every dream she has.

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## SYNOPSIS

The story of Wei Hui's *Shanghai Baby* is about Coco, a woman who works as a waiter at a cafe in Shanghai. Her past was so awful, her affairs, her addiction to sex, and in her family, she is always compared with her cousin Zu Sha, who is considered as a perfect woman, with her perfect attitude and behavior. One day at the cafe, she meets a handsome man named Tian Tian. He is the one who changes Coco's life from a waitress to a novelist because Tian Tian knows that she has a good background to be a novelist. During her past, Coco used to be a short-story writer, and her books were best-sellers. She falls in love with him and decides to live in Tian Tian's apartment. Soon, she realizes that Tian Tian has disabilities in performing sex; he is impotent. Although Tian Tian goes to clinic, the doctor judged him as a healthy man. On the other hand, Coco is a sort of person who needs sex as an essential part of her life. She feels anxious with this situation. She still has the love for Tian Tian, but on the contrary, she needs to fulfill her desire.

One night, Tian Tian introduces Coco to his friend named Madonna. She was an 'ex-mami' who is already divorced and her husband leaves a bunch of money from their divorce. Soon, Madonna introduces Coco to Mark, a German businessperson who works in a German-owned multinational investment consultancy in Huashan Road. It seems that Mark has a feeling with Coco. Moreover, he often goes with Coco and the relationship between them finally reaches its peak by their sexual intercourses. After Coco's first affair with Mark,



Coco feels guilty to Tian Tian, however, she is forced by the situation, to continue what is done.

Coco's career as a novelist makes her stay in the apartment for some time. The career needs special concentration. On the other hand, Tian Tian always gives her encouragement to finish her novel as soon as possible. Within this 'pressure', she is depressed, while Tian Tian remains stubborn with his 'point'. Both situations, her novel's progress and her affair with Mark, make her have many dreams as a representation of her depressive conditions.

In winter, Tian Tian decides to refresh and go to Haikou. During Tian Tian's absence, Coco is having the freedom to do everything she wants. She spends most of her time having sex with Mark. On the other hand, Tian Tian meets his old friend from the Health Reproduction Clinic, where Tian Tian checks his impotency. His name is Li Le. He offers Tian Tian to use drugs to free his problems. Tian Tian becomes a drug-addict, and always asks a sum of money from Coco. Coco is suspicious with Tian Tian, and finally she knows that Tian Tian is using drugs. She decides to go to Haikou to bring him back home. Both of them return home together in awful condition. Tian Tian almost dies because of overdose and Coco has 'empty' her pocket for the travel. Not long after they are back in Shanghai. Tian Tian dies not long after that.