

Chinese pillow

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 11 Sep 1998

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Peter Stephenson — 11 Sep 1998, 14:54

(I've been away, which is why I'm referring to something discussed several megabytes ago.)

The Chinese pillow episode in Peace has a possible literary precursor in `Das Glasperlenspiel (The Glass Bead Game)', by Herman Hesse. It's slightly annoying that you never find out much about the game itself. I found the book very readable, though, and it had to me the sense of saying something deeper than appears in the narration. The story is actually in an appendix: one of the `Lebenslauefe' (which can mean anything from `life history' to `resume') supposedly written by the main character of the novel, Joseph Knecht --- the book is essentially his biography. I've forgotten what it's called, but I think it's the third, and is set in India rather than China. Maybe it's well-known in Eastern mythology? It's rather different from the the main story, which has no obvious fantasy element except for being set in an invented future. Actually, my favourite of the three is the one called `Der Beichtvater (The Confessor)'. (BTW, I think the book sometimes translated as `Magister Ludi', but I may have made that up.)

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