Nithin Raghavan

Jake Dalton

SASIAN C154

5 April 2020

I found the final scene -- where it is proposed that time is just a constant refusal to accept God's invitation to join heaven -- as particularly striking. There is a distinct similarity to the concept of dream yoga. One of the key principles in dream yoga is that the mind can be 'dissolved' and then 'reversed' to let one enter a dimension wherein one abides in the primordial purity of emptiness: a Clear Light reflecting the true nature of the universe. And part of the dialogue in this scene -- that dreams offer a glimpse into the true nature of reality -- greatly parallels this principle, indicating that Philip K. Dick's philosophy of accepting God's calling is tantamount to experiencing the emptiness of the universe. Additionally, the protagonist becomes unsure of how to cope with his inability to awaken; regarding this, the movie suggests that perhaps real life itself is just an extension of the dream, further reflecting an idea in Dream Yoga where one can dissolve his mind by training himself to realize that "all daytime visions are a dream" (Norbu 75). Thus the protagonist undergoing repeated false awakenings helps us understand that reality is just another aspect of dreaming -- less grounded than we realize.

Another striking aspect about this scene is its frequent referrals to the land of the dead. In Tibetan Buddhism, the concept of *bardo* exists as a state between death and rebirth, and dreaming is considered isomorphic to this liminal state; the visualization body is the same as the mind and the *bardo*. And from corpse meditation and chö, we can infer that these post-death visualizations can provide experiences of reality proportional to the meditator's spiritual capability, indicating the protagonist may be quite familiar with the true nature of the universe.