



The Intrapsychic and Communicative Aspects of the Dream—*Their Role in Psycho-Analysis and Psychotherapy*¹

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Before the advent of Greek philosophy with its emphasis on logical analysis, the ancient Mediterranean world believed that dreams had an objective existence, independent of the dreamer. A significant step in the evolution of western thought took place when, around 500 B.C., Greek enlightenment recognized the dream as a psychic event rather than an external visitation. Greek philosophy, however, handed down to posterity two contrasting attitudes towards the dream: the first originated with Plato, the second with Aristotle. It remained for Freud to combine the two opposing positions into a unified theory.

We trace the beginnings of Greek thought to Hesiod and Homer. In Hesiod's *Theogony* the origin of dreams is discussed:

And night bare hateful Doom; the black Fate and Death and Sleep she bare, and she bare the tribe of dreams; all these did dark Night bare, albeit mated unto none (Mair translation).

In the *Odyssey* a dream is described as 'immured within the silent bower of sleep' which contains two portals, 'the ivory one from which come dreams which mock the brain' and 'the portal of horn where images of truth for passage wait with visions manifest of future fate' (xix, 560, Pope translation). The Homeric distinction between a mocking dream and a dream of truth was maintained throughout antiquity (Dodd, 1951).

The Assyrians believed a dream was a daemonic power who ran through the night attacking the dreamer, in a manner reminiscent of Jones's (1931) description of the nightmare. They felt that the dream did not lose its controlling influence, even when it was forgotten by the dreamer. On the contrary, this was taken as a sign that the God of Dreams was angry with the dreamer (Oppenheimer, 1956).

The Book of Daniel (Chap. 2) tells us that Nebuchadnezzar summoned his magicians, astrologers and soothsayers together and told them, 'I have dreamt a dream and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.' The advisers replied that while they could interpret his dream, only the King could recall it. Nebuchadnezzar's attitude was entirely logical within the archaic frame of reference.

The Assyrians were also aware of command dreams. Thus, Ningirsu appeared in a dream to command that a temple be built. In a subsequent dream he obligingly supplied the dreamer with an architectural plan (Frankfort et al., 1946).

In keeping with the not yet internalized attitude towards a dream, the Homeric poets never spoke of having a dream but of seeing one.

The dream usually takes the form of a visit paid to a sleeping man or woman by a single dream-figure. ... This dream-figure can be a god, or a ghost, or a pre-existing dream-messenger, or an 'image' ... created specially for the occasion, but whichever it is, it exists objectively in space, and is independent of the dreamer (Dodd, 1951).

Primitive imagination, as Bowra (1962) has pointed out, is in general

resolutely concerned not with what's absent in time or place, but with what is believed to be present but invisible.

Communicating dreams under ritualistically prescribed conditions to authorized persons played a significant role in the religious life of antiquity. Dreams were told to a priest in order to restore the ceremonial cleanliness of the dreamer. At times, they did not even have to be

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told to an animate object. Provided the sacred tenets were met, a piece of clay could absorb the miasma of a dream and, serving as a scapegoat, the clay had then to be dissolved (Oppenheimer, 1956).

Dreaming and the telling of dreams also had a therapeutic function. Aesculapius of Epidaurus specialized in interpreting incubation dreams which the supplicant had in the temple. The rite was practised elsewhere. Commemoration

tablets exhibited cures for the edification of sceptics. The tablets described not only the cure but also the dream which led to the cure. At Anthiarus' sanctuary in Attica it was customary for the supplicant to sleep in the temple on the skins of rams that had been sacrificed (Frazer, 1923).

Oppenheimer (1956) records a Hittite technique for curing impotence. The impotent man, having been made sacred by contact with the goddess, spent the night on a sacrificial table in front of her statue. His dreams were recounted to the priests the following morning. The prognosis was thought to be most favourable when the goddess consented to sleep with him. But if such a dream failed to appear, the mere appearance of the goddess, or her speaking in a dream, were regarded as good omens, also.

The ancient Jews believed, as did other Mediterranean groups, that all dreams come from God. We learn this from Job's rebellious attitude:

When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my
couch shall ease my complaint;
Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest
me through visions
So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death
rather than my life (*Job*, vii, 13–15).

The Talmud records a special cathartic ritual which could mitigate the power of an ominous dream:

He who has seen a dream and knows not what he has seen, let him stand before the *Kohanim* (priests) at the time that they spread their hands ... and utter the following: 'Lord of the universe! I am Thine and my dreams are thine; a dream have I dreamed and know not what it is. Whether I dreamed concerning myself, or my fellows dreamed concerning me, or I have dreamed concerning others, if they be good dreams, strengthen and fortify them ... but if they require to be remedied heal them ... so do Thou turn all my dreams for me into good (*Berachot*, A. Cohen, transl.).

The Talmud also assigned supernatural powers to dream interpreters whose magic power is illustrated by the following. Rabbi Bisna consulted the twenty-four dream interpreters practising in Jerusalem about a dream, and received twenty-four different interpretations: All twenty-four were said to have come true. In another passage, a woman asks the meaning of a dream, 'The roof beam of my house was broken.' In the first interpretation she is told, 'A male child will be born'; in the second, 'You will bury your husband.' Allegedly, both interpretations materialized (*Berachot*, A. Cohen, transl.).

That dreams contain incestuous wishes was known to the Talmudic Rabbis: 'He who in a dream waters an olive tree with olive oil dreams of incest.' But openly incestuous dreams were said to signify wisdom (*Berachot*, A. Cohen, transl.).

The Bible differentiates between dreams and visions but the latter have a public character and have to be communicated. In the New Testament, such visions are used to overcome the dictates of a disavowed superego. In a vision St Peter saw beasts whose meat was forbidden by dietary laws:

And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill,
and eat.
But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never
eaten any thing that is common or unclean.
And the voice spake unto him again the second
time, What God hath cleansed, that call not
thou common (*Acts*, x, 13–16).

Within the Hebraic orbit of thought, isolated attempts were made to consider the dream not as a divine message but as an intrapsychic event. Outstanding in this respect was the prophet Jeremiah: 'Neither harken to your dreams which *ye* cause to be dreamed.'

The Talmud also says: 'A man is shown (in a dream) from the thoughts in his own heart.' But these are isolated insights devoid of a comprehensive theory.

Roheim (1952) gives three reasons why dreams are communicated to authorized persons in many primitive cultures: a need to expiate guilt, a wish to exploit the dreams' magic power and a difficulty in distinguishing between dreams and reality. Roheim believed that many primitive people, like young children and some schizophrenics and preschizophrenics, find it difficult to differentiate between what happened in a dream and what occurred in reality. The differentiation is facilitated when the dream is told to someone else. The evidence here assembled suggests that ancient man feared the dream and built institutionalized defences

against the power of the dream. Furthermore, he created a form of psychotherapy in which the telling of dreams played a conspicuous role.

In the realm of dreams, Haeckel's theorem that ontogeny repeats phylogeny seems to hold true. Piaget (1929) demonstrated that a child's view of a dream and those of ancient and primitive men are strikingly similar. Children from 4 to 7, refusing to enter a room because it is full of dreams and answering, when questioned about their origin, that dreams come from the night, echo Hesiod. Children believe that the people they dream about create their dreams.

In fact, for all these children the dream is an image or a voice which comes from outside and manifests itself in front of their eyes. This image is not real in the sense of representing real events, but as an image it does exist objectively. It is external to the child and is in no sense mental (Piaget, Chap. 3).

Greenacre (1964) observed that children in the pre-oedipal phase discuss their dreams. However, once the oedipal phase is reached and repression is established, children no longer relate their dreams freely and spontaneously.

To this one may add that in individual development, as well as in the historical evolution of mankind, the acceptance of dreams as intrapsychic phenomena represents a significant step towards greater individuation and autonomy. For mankind, this step took place after 500 B.C. in Greece.

Around 500 B.C., with the advent of Greek tragedy and the beginning of Greek philosophy, a profound cultural change could be discerned. In Homer, for example, Oedipus continued to reign after his guilt had been discovered, and he was buried with royal honours. In the play by Sophocles, Oedipus became a polluted outcast crushed under his burden of guilt (Dodd, 1951). A new attitude towards dreams is an integral part of this change. The following dialogue takes place in *Oedipus the King*:

Oedipus:

But surely I must needs fear my mother's bed?

Jocasta:

Nay, what should mortal fear, for whom the decrees of Fortune are supreme, and who hath clear foresight of nothing? 'Tis best to live at random, as one may. But fear not though touching wedlock with thy mother. Many men ere now have so fared in dreams also: but he to whom these things are as naught bears his life most easily (976. Jebb transl.).

That dreams contain incestuous wishes is self-evident to Jocasta; she makes no attempt to invoke supernatural powers to explain them.

In Euripides, Iphigenia reports a dream for cathartic reasons:

... the strange visions which the night now past Brought with it, to the air, if that may soothe my troubled thought, I will relate (*Iphigenia in Tauris*, 46–48, Potter transl.).

A conceptual transformation of the cathartic process has taken place. The ritualistic cleaning of pollution is no longer involved in the telling of a dream; rather the psychic experience of relief. The conceptual metamorphosis, suggesting the purgation of emotions, found its most celebrated expression in Aristotle's *Poetics*.² It was the Aristotelean definition of catharsis which Breuer and Freud (1895) referred to when they called their technique cathartic.

Herodotus was Sophocles' contemporary. In Book VII of his *History* he recorded an attitude toward dreams which stands midway between the archaic and the evolving philosophic point of view. Xerxes' uncle, Artabanus, advised against waging war on Greece. Though willing to be cautioned by his uncle, Xerxes was urged by a dream to make war. Artabanus answered with an interpretation that was to become characteristic of Greek enlightenment:

... Whatever a man has been thinking during the day, is wont to hover around him in the visions of his dreams at night.

This may be the first literary reference to the concept of the day residue. Xerxes, representing the archaic point of view, devised a test to see whether, under changed conditions, Artabanus would have the same cautionary dream. He was told to put on Xerxes' clothes, sit on his throne and sleep in his bed. Artabanus obeyed and his nephew's dream appeared to Artabanus, threatening to blind him if he persisted in opposing the war. Artabanus yielded and the ill-fated war on Greece began. We may interpret Herodotus to mean that even persistent dreams need not be prophetic.

The distinction between subjective and objective thought was crucial to the transition from the mytho-poetic attitude to the scientific. This distinction could not be achieved without

² A similar development took place in the Hebraic religion when the day of catharsis with its emphasis on the ritualistic scapegoat (*Leviticus*, Chap. 16) evolved into the Day of Atonement.

relegating the dream to the realm of the subjective. As Lewin (1958) has reminded us, natural science began with the repudiation of the dream. The first step leading to the 'internalization' of the dream was taken by Heraclitus, whose birth in 535 B.C. antedates that of Aeschylus by ten years. Heraclitus's *Fragment* 89 (after Herman Diehls) is of particular interest. 'The awakened, ' he says, 'have a single and common world while every sleeper turns away from it towards his own world.' Heraclitus also anticipated Freud's understanding of the connexion between the dream and psychosis. Sanity to him was synonymous with being awake and adhering to the world all men have in common; while an idiot was attached to the private world of the dream. Heraclitus is of interest to psycho-analysis in another context. He is the author of the statement 'character is destiny', a phrase that was elucidated when Freud (1916) made the transition from symptom to character analysis.

The second significant step in the evolution of the understanding of dreams was achieved by Plato: In *Phaedo*, Plato quotes Socrates as believing that dreams represent the voice of conscience and therefore should be obeyed. Insofar as Socrates accepts dreams as originating from the conscience, this is a step forward. But the injunction that dreams must be obeyed represented a survival of the archaic point of view. The most extensive discussion of dreams is found in the *Republic*:

When the other part of the soul which is rational and mild is asleep, the part which is savage ... driving away sleep seeks to go and accomplish its practices ... dares do everything, for it scruples not the imaginary embraces of the mother or anyone else, whether man or god or beast, or to kill anyone (Chap. 9, 571 c. Taylor transl.).

Apparently Plato was frightened by this disclosure, for he continued,

We have indeed been carried too far in mentioning these things, but what we want to know is this: that there is in everyone a certain species of desire which is terrible, savage and irregular. Even in some who seem to us to be perfectly temperate and this ... becomes manifest in sleep (Chap. 9, 571 c. Taylor transl.).

There is a striking similarity between Plato's passage and Freud's description of the dream:

The desire for pleasure—the 'libido, ' as we call it—chooses its objects without inhibition, and by preference, indeed, the forbidden ones: not only other men's wives, but above all incestuous objects, objects sanctified by the common agreement of mankind ... (Freud, 1916–1917, p. 142).

Plato's differentiation between the rational and mild parts of the soul, the savage and the irregular, foreshadows Freud's distinction between the ego and id. We should note also that Plato recognized the universality of oedipal wishes.

Plato as a rational philosopher could no longer use the techniques of catharsis. Psycho-analysis has taught us that in the absence of culturally prescribed procedures for dealing with the concomitant guilt of such dreams, it can only be dealt with by an increase in superego severity or by psychoneurotic symptom formation. Plato not only developed a strict moral code but also a compulsive ritual associated with falling asleep.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 1900p. 69 and p. 620), Plato is quoted as saying, 'The virtuous man is content to dream what the wicked man does.' This *quinta essentia* of the philosopher's position is more consistent with Freud's thinking than Plato's. It does not reflect the anxiety Plato felt when confronted with a dream. To avoid threatening dreams, Plato developed a ritualistic compulsion for going to sleep. He advocated that 'reason' remain awake until the last possible moment while the two lower parts of the soul fall asleep before it does (*Republic*, Chap. 9, 571d, 2572a). The sharp distinction between wishing and acting, attributed to Plato by Freud, was achieved by psycho-analysis rather than Platonic philosophy.

Aristotle was probably the first to look upon the dream with the secularly dispassionate interest of a scientist. He believed that small stimuli were more easily noticed in dreams and that this reason alone explained why dreams could be used to diagnose incipient disease (*On Prophecy in Sleep*). He drew a definitive line of demarcation between sleep and waking: the awake are conscious, and waking consists of nothing else than the exercise of consciousness.

Nothing can be always awake, and similarly nothing can be always asleep (*On Sleeping and Waking*).

To Aristotle, the dream was

the mental picture which arises from the movement of the sense-impressions when one is asleep ... (*On Dreams*).

Freud quoted Aristotle's insight a number of times (1900p. 2; p. 550); (1933, p. 16).

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Aristotle also disputed the ancient connexion between dreams and religion. Observing that animals dream, he took this as proof that dreams did not come from the Gods. Furthermore, he stated that if dreams were sent by the Gods, they would certainly choose their recipients more carefully.

In contrast to rational Greek philosophy, eastern thought tended to obliterate the distinction between waking and dreaming.

Once upon a time I, Chuang Tzu, dreamt I was a butterfly ... following my fancies unconscious of my individuality as a man ... Now I do not know whether I was a man dreaming I was a butterfly or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man ... It is only at the great awakening that one knows that all has only been a dream (Chuang Tzu, Book II, Chi-Chen Wang transl.).

Even in the Hellenic world Aristotle's scientific attitude towards the dream met with considerable resistance. The Stoics continued to believe that a dream was prophetic while the Epicureans became the defenders of Aristotelian scepticism. Cicero, writing an essay *On Divination*, supported the Epicurean point of view:

If I feel inclined to read or write anything, or to sing or play on an instrument, or to pursue the sciences of geometry, physics or dialectics, am I to wait for information in these sciences from a dream, or shall I have recourse to study ... Again, if I were to wish to take a voyage, I should never regulate my steering by my dreams. For such conduct would bring its own punishment.

How, then, can it be reasonable for an invalid to apply for relief to an interpreter of dreams rather than to a physician? ... (C. D. Yonge transl.).

Lucretius, the Epicurean poet-philosopher, noted that reality testing was suspended in a dream:

Moreover memory is prostrate and relaxed in sleep and protests not that he has long been in the grasp of death and destruction whom the mind believes it sees alive ... And generally to whatever pursuit a man is closely tied down and strongly attached, on whatever subject we have much previously dwelt, the mind having put to a more than usual strain in it, during sleep we, for the most part, fancy that we are engaged in the same: lawyers think they plead causes and draw up covenants of sale, generals that they fight and engage in battle, sailors that they wage and carry on war with the winds ... (C. D. Yonge transl.).

This passage has much in common with the psycho-analytic concept of the day residue.

As an interesting sidelight, I would suggest that Lucretius was the source for Shakespeare's evocation of the goddess of the dream, Queen Mab:

And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lover's brains, and then they dream of
love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies
straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on
fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream.
(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Scene 4).

In the literature Freud examined when he wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the Aristotelean view prevailed: it was the traditional attitude of scientists. Plato's discovery, on the other hand, was either forgotten or repressed; but it was rediscovered by Luther who urged

that dreams be studied so that man gets to know his most delightful and most beloved sin (Seafield, 1865).

Freud found a number of writers, among them Burdach, Novalis, Radestock and Robert, who pointed to the cathartic nature of dreams.

... 'A man deprived of the capacity for dreaming would in the course of time become mentally deranged, because a great mass of uncompleted, unworked-out thoughts and superficial impressions would accumulate in his brain' ... Dreams serve as a safety-valve for the over-burdened brain. They possess the power to heal and relieve (**Freud. 1900p. 79**).

Freud, adapting the idea that a dream was a discharge mechanism, gave it a new interpretation. The dream was a safety-valve to release unconscious wishes. During sleep unconscious wishes are mobilized when they come in contact with day residues. Charged with energy these wishes seek an outlet but are unacceptable to the censor. If they emerge undisguised, sleep is interrupted. To prevent this, their latent content is converted by the dream work into a manifest content. Psycho-analytic technique of dream interpretation travels the same road, but in the opposite direction. It demands that the manifest content be broken up into its components by free association: the work of interpretation is that of reassembling the pieces of latent content into a new configuration.

In 1900 Freud had already abandoned the therapeutic technique based on catharsis. In practice, the dream was used to serve a therapy which now stressed the resolution of intra-psychic conflict while dream theory remained

a cathartic theory. If we look upon Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* within this historical perspective, we find that he was the first to combine Plato's knowledge of the dream as an expression of repressed unconscious wishes with the Aristotelean concept of dreams as mechanisms of discharge.

Freud did not treat the telling of dreams, even in the analytic situation, as a communication.

The productions of the dream-work, which, it must be remembered, *are not made with the intention of being understood*, present no greater difficulties to their translators than do the ancient hieroglyphic scripts to those who seek to read them (1900p. 341).

The metaphor is apt if we assume that the archaeologist who deciphered the script was not the person for whom the communication was intended. Even in 1933 Freud added,

... dreams are not in themselves social utterances, not a means of giving information.³ Nor, indeed, do we understand what the dreamer was trying to say to us, and he himself is equally in the dark. ... We have ... made the assumption ... that even this unintelligible dream must be a valid psychical act ... which we can use in analysis like any other communication.

Furthermore, Freud was then primarily interested in deciphering the intrapsychic meaning of the dream and, therefore, tended to see the dreamer as a solitary figure. In 1917 and again in 1923, Freud did consider the impact of the analytic situation on the dream process. He dealt with the question of confirmatory dreams and those brought on by the suggestive power of the analyst. But even here he was more concerned with the way in which the analysis disrupted the objective validity of data obtained from the dream than with it as a communication.

Ferenczi was the first to regard dreams as communications. In 1913 he stated,

one feels impelled to relate one's dreams to the very person to whom the content relates.

This paper originated the rule-of-thumb in psycho-analysis that to whomever the dream is told is present in the dream. As evidence of a rather startling view, Ferenczi's short paper contained only a charming couplet by Lessing:

Alba mihi semper narrat sua somnia mane,
Alba sibi dormit: somniat Alba mihi
(Alba always tells me her dreams in the
morning,
Alba sleeps for herself but Alba dreams for me.)

Sleep is narcissistic, but dreaming is related to objects. Ferenczi may not have realized the inherent difficulty in reconciling the dream's intrapsychic meaning with its communicative function. The first to formulate this problem explicitly was Kanzer (1955):

The narcissistic and communicative functions are reconciled if we recall the character of secondary narcissism. The dreamer, withdrawing from the outer world, can relinquish objects only by introjecting them in symbolic form ... Falling asleep is not a simple narcissistic regression by the consummation of a conflict in which the good (oedipal or preoedipal) part is re-attached to the ego and the bad eliminated.

According to Kanzer, dreams are communicated because the distinction between sleeping and waking is not an absolute one and the dream wish is carried back into the waking state. He reported the case of a woman who, afraid of the development of deeper transference feelings toward the analyst, told her dream to her husband; her unconscious intent was that of eliciting his opposition to the analyst. Indeed, it seems that psycho-analysts have been aware of the danger of the dream's communicative function. It has been generally accepted that dreams should be told only to the analyst. They are, so to speak, his monopoly: a breach of this agreement is usually treated as a sign of acting out.

Since dreams cannot be discussed without being remembered, the question of dream memory must now be considered. Why dreams are remembered was not discussed by Freud who, naturally enough, was more interested in the question of why they are forgotten.

Freud had noted,

It not infrequently happens that in the middle of the work of interpretation an omitted portion of the dream comes to light and is described as having been forgotten till that moment. Now a part of the dream that has been rescued from oblivion in this way is invariably the most important part; it always lies on the shortest road to the dream's solution and has for that reason been exposed to resistance more than any other part (Freud, 1900p. 518–519).

Rapaport (1950) pointed out that psycho-analytic theory deals with the problem of forgetting in a way that implies a theory of remembering. In dreams, memories are organized by the dream wish.

³ The translation does not do full justice to the original. The German phrase 'Mittel der Verständigung' is more accurately translated as 'means of communication' than the stated 'means of giving information.'

If we regard dreams as discharge mechanisms, it is difficult to discover a sound reason for remembering them. Once a dream has fulfilled its discharge function, why should it be remembered? Indeed, Arlow (1961) says that because they are made to be forgotten, dreams differ from myths which are instruments of socialization. Under ordinary life situations the capacity to forget one's dreams is regarded as a sign of health while the intrusion of a dream into waking life is a sign of disturbance (Federn, 1952).

The questions: 'Which dreams are remembered; and why?' can now be raised in a new frame of reference. Since the recent experimental work initiated by Aserinsky and Kleitman (1953), and recently reviewed by Fisher (1965), has demonstrated that between twenty and twenty-five per cent of sleep is spent in dreaming, we know that only a very small fraction of a night's dreams can be recalled and subsequently repeated. We can, therefore, no longer accept Freud's belief that patients over-estimate the amount of dreams they have forgotten (Freud, 1900p. 517). Freud operated with the concept of repression as the psychic force responsible for the forgetting of dreams. Analytic experience demonstrates clearly that some dreams are repressed, but it does not follow that all dreams are repressed. Were this so, dream repression would be a constant drain on psychic energy.

It would seem more parsimonious to assume that dreams which are forgotten are dreams which were successful in disguising their latent content and have been successful in fulfilling the dream wish. Only those that fail in the attempt to disguise the latent content, or where the id wishes or the superego demands are particularly strong, cannot be forgotten. They are either repressed or linger in memory. In such dreams segments of the latent content break into the dream work. Or else the dream work is successful in eliminating the censored content but cannot prevent a disturbing affect. Indeed, as Schlesinger (1965) pointed out, Freud himself (on other occasions) distinguished the normal mechanism of forgetting from repression. Schlesinger has further pointed out that repression can be conceptualized in psycho-analysis as a force which brings about a special kind of forgetting; but it can also be conceptualized as a mechanism which preserves wishes and memories.

I believe that memory is experienced by the ego passively as well as actively. It is experienced passively in relation to all traumatic events. When the ego is unsuccessful in its efforts to bring about forgetting, all early memories, insofar as they are not converted into screen memories, belong in this category. With the growing strength of the ego, attempts are made to convert memory into an ego function. In this stage, memory is experienced actively. The signalling functions of the ego are based on such a conversion of the passively experienced trauma into an activity in the service of survival or adaptation.

Some dreams are, therefore, remembered and communicated because the telling of the dream completes the discharge function. Other dreams are remembered because they portray a conflict which cannot be expressed in any other way. Upon examination, such dreams often contain a hidden communication to the analyst.

We have seen that the psychic need to communicate dreams is part of the cultural as well as individual development. With the emergence of the superego the need to communicate dreams succumbs to repression. In the analytic situation, with its concomitant regression (Kris, 1956), the reporting of dreams becomes possible again particularly since it is sanctioned and encouraged in the analysis. In the analytic situation two forces are mobilized: one is the wish to communicate; the other is the resistance against communicating. When both forces operate simultaneously, the wish to communicate will bring about recall of the dream, but resistance will render it unintelligible. In such situations telling the dream represents a compromise formation analogous to symptom formation. To illustrate: A patient dreamt that he met Frank Sinatra in the waiting room. Associations showed that Sinatra is a singer and that 'to sing' means, in the language of the underworld, to confess. Those who sing are often killed.

Further associations revealed that by the underworld the patient meant his mother would punish him for disclosing her secrets to the therapist. Seen from an intrapsychic point of view, the dream demonstrates that a punitive, paranoid aspect of the maternal object representation has emerged. As a communication, however, the dream was an appeal to the therapist to counteract the danger. For, unlike Frank Sinatra, the dreamer could neither be 'frank' nor 'sing'. His ego would like to form a therapeutic alliance but is not allowed to communicate this wish except by code. To inquire what the dream means emphasizes its

intrapsychic significance; to ask what the dream tells the therapist often elicits the communicative function of the dream.

In psychotherapy, when much of the transference remains unanalysed, the communicative function of the dream is of particular significance since what cannot be expressed directly is expressed obliquely and symbolically through dreams.

This seems to be the main reason why patients in psychotherapy, which does not encourage dream interpretation, often report dreams even though they know the therapist is not interested in interpreting them.

There are a number of situations in which the communicative aspects of the dream are of particular significance. Psycho-analysis has long known that the first dream reported in an analysis is frequently very significant: it contains the whole psychic conflict in a nutshell. It has been assumed that the patient, being naïve, has not yet learned to disguise the dream. But if my hypothesis is correct, we may regard the first dream as an attempt to communicate the intrapsychic conflict in code. Dreams have a similar significance in a state of transference crisis. Finally, impending termination is often communicated by a dream. In such situations, dreams are reported because the patient can communicate only in code. It is an indication of inner conflict. But, by the same token, it is also a sign that the therapeutic alliance is still operative.

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