

Julio Monteverde

Dream as Reality

“Reality is for me a word without opposite,” stated Pierre Mabilie (in *Égrégores ou La vie des civilisations* [Egregores or the Life of Civilizations]). If a phenomenon exists, if it manifests itself, it cannot be unreal, unless a more or less arbitrary effort has been made before to catalog phenomena through a series of assumptions that can be only biased in any of its parts. Everything that exists is being asserted in its existence. And by existing, it automatically enters in a dialectical relationship with its whole and also its parts, as this, and none other, is the way in which this assertion is developing. The dream acts the same. By manifesting itself in reality it cannot cease to affect directly and without regard the coherent whole. The dream intervenes, struggles with the existing, first on the individual level explicitly, then on the social level in more subtle but equally significant ways. Day by day, this existence is being hidden by the diurnal forces and confined, at best, to a non-complete, ghostly existence in which its powers have ended up being quarantined. In this hidden dialectic our desires have been resolved.

From the moment that reality can be understood as a human construct in which the series of phenomena that constitute it are being discovered as consciously chosen among others that, although existing, do not seem to be part of it, the problem of the dream as reality re-emerges on its own as a source of daily concern. For what we know is not only reality, it is something more than reality, since we know the real but also what has been decreed, out of previous needs, as unreal. Thus reality is coercive, it is an imperative that dictates its limits. Its exclusive nature cannot go unnoticed by anyone. And I am not referring here to the reality principle, i.e., to the struggle of man against what prevents him from achieving the realization of his desire, but to the determination by the very same man of what exists and what doesn't.

From this standpoint, who still dares to declare that dreams are not part of reality? It is about understanding that the relationship of man with his dreams is also included in the reality principle, and that this relationship has determinant value and consequences. Even more: that in the burning fountain of life that springs from dreams and from their relationship with wakefulness there is a reserve of freedom and possibilities of liberation from the concrete life of every one of us that turns it—and I am using my words carefully—into a *weapon*. The dream is reality to the extent that it is real. The attempt to create a life for us that is commensurate with what we indeed are cannot overlook such a decisive part of existence as dreams.

For the time of sleep is part of our life, we know it well, as are the hours of work or the time of rest, only infinitely more important (as is the time of love) as being determined by our initial aspirations. We go through our dreams every

day, and only the betrayal of memory prevents us from absorbing the heavy water of dreams during the day. For everything happens eight hours a day, every single day of our lives. Eight hours of work, eight hours of life, eight hours of sleep. Eight daily hours that we pass in the landscapes of awe and wonder and which are the nightlife that we experience. It is almost a tradition that any study on dreams includes a formula similar to the one that I just used, mixed with a more or less pronounced strangeness. It is a healthy habit that I refuse to betray. The word *daily* cannot have a more convincing development than when referring to the constant and everyday time in which life enters the uncertain territory of dreams.

However, and here I need to anticipate, if I use the word *uncertain* I do it with the intention that this adjective will be transitory in the history of mankind. The barrier that separates the worlds must fall, or at least be permeable, so that a transfer can occur effectively and in both directions. It is time to overcome the depressing idea of the separation of wakefulness and dream. Each time that we go to sleep, we are being buried under mountains of sand. Every time that we wake up, we do it with a stone in our hand.

Furthermore, it is of course possible to do it in a different way as well, for dreams have been studied from different angles throughout the centuries, and modern psychology in particular has reached far in the study of the oneiric world. However, these studies and practices have sinned, in my opinion, by imposing a very strict compartmentalization of the nocturnal space, causing them to stiffen due to their inevitable specialization from the moment they were exclusively approached and assaulted by the specialists in human psychology. The dreams have become an isolated compartment, and in their tendency to immobility, modern analysts have made the dream a place where relationships tend to inevitably reverse on themselves. The *aims* of the therapists were implanted in dreams and in their study, making the natural center of gravity of the dream vacillate towards the discovery of pathology.

However, what is often forgotten is that these (undisputed) relationships of which we speak are not exclusively the only ones that take place, and that there is a condition of the dreams as an essential part of life, not only as a mirror of the events of wakefulness, not only as a mental theater which represents events and the desires of the individual, but, above all, as an actual experience of human life. The dream, viewed from this perspective, claims its own presence without needing to be exclusively subject to the well-known world of permanent darkness. This world in which, to start with, Freudianism finally enclosed it, is a world where everything means something else in a preferential relationship with *the secret*. From this point of view it is obviously the dream that is always losing. But human life

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I see a vinyl record, it is the album of a certain group called *WITT*, whose lead singer's name is Mills. The title of the album is *The International Winged Child*, and its songs are taken from the soundtrack of a cartoon with the same title. On the album cover there is a commentary by André Breton.

Dan Stanciu, dream of May 6, 1973

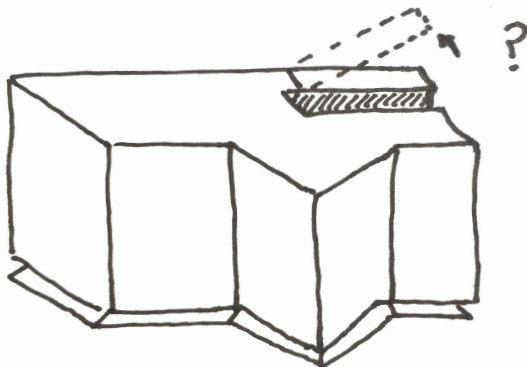
In 1990 I was in a used bookstore on Clark Street in Chicago and the bookseller climbed a tall ladder to retrieve this book for me. He handed it to me and said: "This is a very rare bibliolin." The dream was so vivid, I had to build one in as close a resemblance as I could to the bibliolin in the dream. The bibliolin in my dream didn't have this title, but this book captures a certain feeling I had when I woke up.



Hal Rammel, dream of 1990

I see Jacques Vaché's desk. It is a piece of dark veneer furniture/machine belonging to the "English officer" Jacques Vaché that can typeset with fonts of lead and print one sheet of songs with notes at a time so that they can be distributed to the assistants in that English military mess for sing-along singing. (They are classical songs but also some composed by Vaché).

The part indicated by pointed lines could apparently be twisted so that the operator could reach the secret mechanism, even if I didn't see Vaché operate it. (He was sitting beside the desk, smoking a pipe).



Bruno Jacobs, dream of September 30, 1995

I am in the Swiss mountains. I go up to the chalet where the members of the rock band Deep Purple took shelter for the past twenty years. They are now very old and have long white beards. They undoubtedly study magic and play a new kind of music, which is very slow and punctuated by strange percussion: it is the music of the spheres. I see indeed tin discs floating in the air in the room where we are.

Guy Girard, dream of November 2000

(from *A Short Universal History Seen in Dreams*, 2012)

I am walking on a street. I have a space carved out in the left side of my head. I have put a violin in that space—it fits perfectly there. I am walking like this, with that violin in my head, and humming a song.



Sasha Vlad, dream of March 15, 2010

I am holding a vinyl record in my hands. The cover background is of a homogeneous light brown. On it, just a few letters in a darker brown indicate the title and the author: *Whale Song, Joaquín Sabina*.



Noé Ortega Quijano, dream of July 28, 2015

I had a dream last night that I was celebrating my 100th birthday with Phil Lesh and Mickey Hart from the Grateful Dead ... just them ...

Michael Vandelaar, dream of February 17, 2016

Band name heard or seen in dream: *The New Johnsons*.

Bruno Jacobs, dream of 25 September 2016

I am in a bar, playing with an 18th century rococo version of a pinball or pachinko machine. It is distinctly lavender coloured, and plays very staccato baroque harpsichord music. I remark to myself that this old version of the game is "simple but elegant." The ball goes in at the top and you strike a button called a "release," after which the ball comes out of a panel and falls through the machine, like in pachinko. I immediately associate it with the era of Louis XVI before the French Revolution. I figure out the knack and start to win. It dispenses prizes: plastic balls containing weird charm-like objects. I win in this way a thin flimsy toy version of some car keys. I spend a lot of money in this way. A hyper-aggressive frat boy appears and confronts me about the game; he threatens to smash it. I coax him into admitting he thought the world would be better if there were only white people. After he agrees with this statement, I defiantly say: "Too bad for you there will always be Jewish communists like me around!"



Jason Abdelhadi, dream of January 30, 2016

I am at party and someone says to me that Mick Jagger wants to dance with me. I go to a different room where there are several people dancing and I see M.J. "dancing": he is lying on the floor on his back and is moving to the rhythm. I just stand there and look at him.

Sasha Vlad, dream of November 30, 2016

I am attending a record exchange between surrealists. I have a couple of Swedish folk-pop LPs from the 70s with very colorful covers, but nobody is interested. Michael Vandelaar has an LP by an African-American musician (probably blues or similar) called Canaille. The cover shows him dressed in a suit and standing in a countryside environment with trees in the background, supposedly from the South. The picture is in black and white and intentionally softly grainy.

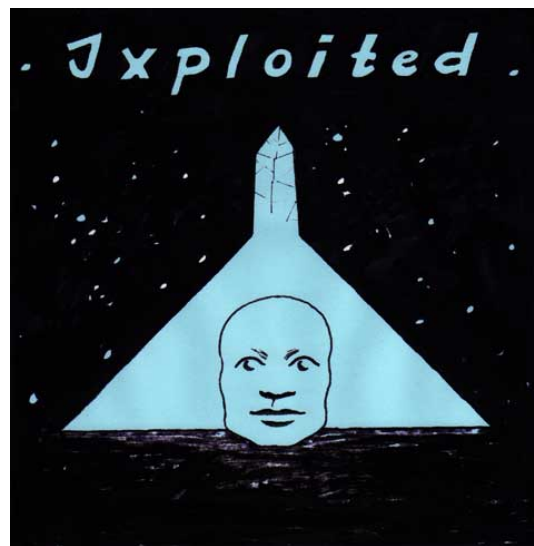
Bruno Jacobs, dream of January 6, 2017

An old man amuses himself by driving a horse and sleigh around his suburban home, along with two creepy dolls, one a pink elephant and the other a strange sort of yellow tusked creature (perhaps a plush representation of an extinct species of megafauna). The guy is distinctly singing a weird song to the dolls, and mimicking their voices in response. I get the impression that he drives and sings like this every day. It also becomes somehow apparent that the yellow doll harbors evil feelings about the man and wants to kill him in his sleep.

Jason Abdelhadi, dream of March 15, 2017

I am in the very chaotic basement of a friend who is playing the record of a band whose drummer I figure could only be Gene Krupa, "the best drummer ever." And all of a sudden there he is, very tall, dressed in bright colors, that is, in a tight jersey and somewhat too short white pants and wearing those typical black and white shoes from the 30s, and smiling. I then learn that he is originally from Barcelona: Eugenio Krupka.

Bruno Jacobs, dream of August 3, 2017



Niklas Nenzén, record cover, dream of December 12, 2017

Last night I dreamed of a new sub-genre of extreme heavy metal called "birth metal." Apparently it concerns itself with mimicking the intense noises of giving birth, the escape from the birth canal, etc.

Jason Albelhadi, dream of May 1, 2018

Edward G Robinson in black facial makeup and wearing a long black cape is the frontman of a heavy metal band.

Bruno Jacobs, dream of January 6, 2018

I am in a university auditorium where I listen to a woman lecturer. A man from the audience starts talking about a band, whose vocalist is a woman. He says that the band's name is "kings bog" (I visualize the name in lower case). I correct him: "The name of the band is 'kings bogs' (plural) and the name of the vocalist is Kateřina Piňosová, whom I happen to know personally, although purely by accident. As for 'kings bog,' that is just a cover band." Then I start talking to that guy and show him a large format book of Katka's work, where there are reproductions of her drawings and sculptures, and also photographs and other art projects that appear to be more conceptual in nature.

Sasha Vlad, dream of December 15, 2018

I see the cover of a CD by saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell. It is black with thick white letters, but I can't see the title itself. It consists of 48 very short pieces, a kind of equivalent to the ones composed by Anton Webern.

Bruno Jacobs, dream of June 1, 2019

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does not work that way. All that happens to us is related to the totality of what we are, and it is in its totality that it acquires real significance. In its polymorphism, the dream has a generating capacity of the poetic and of the marvelous that deserves to be fully recognized. And this circum-stance is what allows it to manifest itself and be understood by us as a human experience of freedom.

The reality of dreams comes from its presence. It is thus through this physical presence that the relations and the consequences that these dreams have on life can be verified. It entails, as I said, a constant transfer that occurs in both directions, in a flow that sometimes works through subtle manifestations, but that daily extends its back and forth paths to a broader and deeper reality, a reality in which the weapons of the dream manifest themselves in the often mysterious directions that our lives take on so many occasions. It is too easily forgotten that everything that happens to us has consequences precisely because it happens. Dreams do not crash against the wall of open eyelids. They spill into our life, modifying it and making it *what it really is*.

It is clear, however, that the actual experience that the dream gives us is not interchangeable with that of wakefulness, as it has its own characteristics and a certain intensity that often produces an effect of diffuse presence. This realization, however, is less definitive than it might seem at first glance, because, in fact, the intensity of dreams is, most of the time, much higher, at least emotionally, than that of most of the daily wakefulness. It may be so that the degree of reality of the dreams, its specific weight as experience, is sometimes very weak, but the fact remains that wakefulness, most of the time, presents itself to the individual in our society as equally diffuse, equally brief, to the point of being able to lead the same individual to ask himself where he has been throughout his day, what has happened during all those past hours of which he retains only a thin layer of memory.

Therefore, the answer concerning the status of the reality of dreams cannot be determined by the degree of intensity of that same reality that the dreams activate, but above all *by its significance*. The dream has its own place in reality that in many cases is more important in regard to specific consequences than that of daily wakefulness. If we have an oneiric conversation with someone close, and if that person tells us things of importance or something we dislike in that conversation, that does not mean that said person will behave in the same way in waking life, and that this fact would allow us to follow a pattern of behavior of the kind that we follow in waking life. However, it cannot be denied that this conversation can be taken, in its meaning, as probably more important to the individual than any other that he may have had with that person when awake.

The experience of the dreams, as not participating within the constraints of reality or of all constraints of reality, cannot be totally reduced or completely violated by them. The experience of the dream has its field of action above all in the imagination of man and in the behavior that follows from his going through it. It is therefore in this field that it acquires its importance and its necessity as a phenomenon of reality.

It ensues that the reality of the dreams is neither based in fantasy nor in its abstract relationship with thought, because dreams really do occur. Did we experience it, or did we dream it? Yes, we experienced it—we always experience it, either in dream or in wakefulness. It depends on us that dreams stop every morning. They have traversed us so during the night that our own shadow is formed by them. They expand in our arteries and surround our brain like a monotonous and powerful flow. There reality exists. There are the important aspects of our life understood as a whole being solved. There is life being deepened in itself. A new organ will eventually grow out of our chest: a third arm made of dreams, and with it we will *act*.

(From *De la materia del sueño, Pepitas de calabaza, Logroño, 2012*)

ONEIRIC ECHESES

NEW DREAM ENQUIRY

Proposed by Joël Gayraud

1. Do you dream in black and white, or in color? Always the same way, or sometimes one, and sometimes the other? If so, in what proportions?
2. Do you easily remember your dreams? Do you write them down upon waking up (regularly, sometimes, never)?
3. Do you think that your dreams always reflect the contents of the previous day's experience? Do deep-buried memories sometimes reappear when nothing recent evoked them?
4. Some researchers claim that the faces that appear in dreams have already been perceived in a waking state, and that one cannot dream of someone whom one has never seen. Does your experience confirm or contradict this opinion?
5. Do you dream—often, sometimes, or never—of objects, landscapes, cities, etc. totally imaginary that have no correspondent in reality?
6. In your dreams, are oneiric representations produced by assembling given elements (in the manner of mythological chimeras), by deformation of pre-existing images, or by pure invention?
7. Do you dream more, less or as often of people of your sex or of the opposite sex?
8. Freud, though very attached to a rationalist approach to psychic phenomena, did not exclude the existence of the transmission of thought, especially in dreams (see “Dream and Telepathy” and “Psychoanalysis and Telepathy,” in Results, Ideas, Problems, Volume II). Have you had telepathic dream experiences? If so, recount them in detail.
9. Freud was much more dubious about premonitory or prophetic dreams. Did you, however, have the experience of dreams announcing explicitly unforeseeable events that occurred later?
10. Have you had any cosmological nightmares or end-of-the-world visions as Dürer dreamed of during the peasants' war?*
11. You undoubtedly have erotic representations in your dreams. Do they correspond to your conscious fantasies, or are they totally foreign to them? Do they influence your fantasies? If so, to what extent?
12. Did any of your dreams have a decisive influence on the course of your life?

* See *Sundew* #3 (at <http://surrint.blogspot.com/2015/12/drosera-n-3.html>) for Albrecht Dürer's dream and its visual rendering (*Editors' note*).

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