

Vratislav Effenberger

# The Dynamic Symbolism of Dreams (II)

## 6. Dream Analogy and Prophetic Dreams

The analogy between the emotional or affective elements of waking life and the formation of the apparent dream content does not operate only in one direction. It also works in the opposite direction; in such cases when the dream content affects the waking life activity, the dream acquires some prophetic qualities.

Jung records somewhere a tragic incident involving his friend, a doctor who jokingly confided in him his dream. In the dream, he was climbing a high mountain, and the higher he climbed, the better and happier he felt. When he reached the top, he felt so happy that he wanted to fly into the air. The moment he jumped he woke up in a kind of ecstasy. Jung warned his friend never to go to the mountains alone, although he was an experienced mountaineer. He ignored this warning and jumped into the air three months later after reaching the highest peak of a steep mountain.

This event can be judged, due to the effectiveness of the prophecy, independently of its origin in the dream; its fulfilment is brought about by the person to whom it was communicated. However, the fact that life was at stake, and that mental disorder must be ruled out, suggest a certain deep relationship between dream experiences and conscious activity that is more powerful than the instinct of self-preservation.



Kateřina Piňosová, *Between Myth and Fairytale* (2021)

## 7. The Dynamic Formation of a Dream Symbol

Apart from atavisms that act forcefully, albeit only partially, it is memory that is involved in the formation of symbolic functions, perhaps to a much greater extent. If forgetting of perceptions does not really exist, if the unconscious stores all the perceptions acquired by a special system of overlapping with potentially mobile ones, it cannot be excluded that mingling and intertwining of these perceptions leads to their transparent layering, similarly as in a kaleidoscope. In such a case, this layering would be different from the layering of a certain number of photographic

negatives or slides, which when projected, will create a confused mass of shapes; on the other hand, living, dynamic perceptions, stored in the unconscious tend to create an integrative image that connects individual layers, creating a more or less integrated, even though somewhat dispersed, dreamlike dramatic scene.



Kateřina Piňosová, *Kriophoros* (2021)

Such a layering of perceptions is most evident in dreams where persons are difficult to identify; they transform or consist of certain features of familiar persons, or in dreams where familiar places are somewhat different, dreamily altered. In any case, it is the integration tendency that prevails in this layering, presenting the dreamer with a dream scene in its entirety, as if it was a real experience. Identification uncertainty occurs only after waking up, when recalling the dream and trying to compare it with reality. Here we are also most often exposed to the temptation to see separate symbolic functions even in those dream elements, which may only serve as a projection part of the analogy of the actual stimulus, and per se do not take on the role of a symbol, although they belong to the semiotic construction of the dream.

The hypothesis of the participation of layered perceptions raises the twofold question a) on which basis they become connected and b) why this or that perception acquires semantic predominance in the formation of dream content. Although the answer will not be simple, it will at least require special attention to the association of ideas, which is related to dream symbolism, but largely depends on the dream analogy of the actual stimulus, because it is this analogy which is able to give dream ideas movement, namely intentional movement. Only on this semantic level, in which the motivated movement of ideas takes place, can the symbolic functions of the individual dream elements be sought.

*From the compilation The Dream (September 30, 1982)*

*(Translated from the Czech by Dagmar Štěpánková)*

# Gellu Naum



J. Perahim, *Portrait of Gellu Naum* (undated)

## The Remembrance of Memory (III) (1943 – 1944)

I was near a big ski slope on which girls were sliding at an amazing speed along a rope. At first I hesitated. I was afraid. Then I went, too. One of the girls, who was above me, caressed me. I grabbed her by the waist and tried to bring her down so I could embrace her. She became small, almost the size of a doll, probably so that I could bring her down more easily. Then I remembered a dream from a few nights ago and wanted to do to her what I had done to the woman from that dream. I put her in the same position, trying to reenact, as faithfully as possible, that dream.



Victor Brauner, *Object That Dreams* (1938)

I am with M. at a street corner. We kiss and caress. She says that she wants to show me my child, the child she had with me. I doubt that the child is mine. I don't believe anything at all of what she tells me, but I go see the child.

A very beautiful room. A few young women that I know. They come closer, talk and play with the child that they consider mine. And they didn't tell me anything until now, they hid from me all along the fact that I had a child! I am indignant, but am not sure that the child is mine, that he is *myself*.

Come to think of it, I wish to become something between a bum and a beggar, and under no circumstances a father in such a family. Here, the

child will lack nothing. Everything is comfortable, luxurious. But is he really mine?

A little boy comes along, he is small, he barely reaches up to my knee. I call him: Robert! He comes to me. I slowly caress his cheek. I want to see whether he resembles me, whether he is myself, and search, at the same time, for somebody else's features. Certainly, he is mine. He looks awfully like my childhood photos. I especially look at his eyes, they have the same color as mine. Really, this child is myself. However, I cling to my doubt, not to be tied, to remain free. I ask him his name. He looks sad. "I'm called Edmond, Pippo, or Robert. But, actually, who am I?"

I have no idea. I don't know who I am either. Robert, Edmond, or Pippo is more and more sad. He looks me in the eye and tells me with uttermost seriousness: "I'm terribly bored."

I believe him. Especially when one of the women begins to caress him, to play with this child, who is awfully lucid and sad and who, in spite of my doubt that I still keep in order to preserve my freedom, is *myself*.

However, I think that this is also a way of protecting myself against death.



Gellu Naum as a child

I am in a concert hall. At one point, one of the dancers covers almost the entire hall with her legs and thighs. Sensation of vulgarity. The dancer comes to me and we start talking, while she continues her act. While we are talking, the hall turns into a kind of terrace where I am together with Dan and the dancer, who becomes a woman I know (Nadine?). She tells me something about T., with whom she had relations, which disgusts me. All these posers had relations with T. What do I care?



Gellu Naum and Victor Brauner, 1936-1937

Dan points Victor to me, who is downstairs and gestures to me. He looks at me, but I look at him for a while without recognizing him—that's how amazed I am that he is here. He is extremely beautiful, spiritualized. He seems to be taller, thinner, he has silvery hair and a part of his cheek (the mouth and chin) is covered by a vine leaf, which gives him an ineffable graceful demeanor. I rush to go around the terrace to greet him. (I linger a bit, the time to put on my shoes and grab a jacket.) We walk one toward the other, with outstretched arms. Dan and the woman on the terrace watch us with interest, as if they were watching a historic meeting. This embarrasses me and I exaggerate my reaction a little, that's why when I get to Victor I am extremely nervous. I don't know what to do. My pipe is in my mouth and also some bread that I chew. I think of spitting it out, so I can kiss Victor, but am embarrassed by this rather disgusting action. I decide, however, to spit it out, then we kiss several times on the mouth, seized by a great emotion. Victor tells me emphatically to leave aside the formal greeting words. I ask him whether he got here long ago. He answers that he has been here for four days. (Slight sadness: he has been here for four days and only now he came to see me.) Everything has an air of mystery. I ask him whether he brought T. with him too, which he confirms. He didn't bring Jacqueline along. What could she possibly do here? (It could be that we are talking about another woman; his woman, in any case.) In front of us there is a soda booth with no one inside. Victor walks inside the booth and pours into two glasses soda, which is not good and not enough. The saleswoman (an old woman) arrives, followed a bit later by an old man.



Lygia and Gellu Naum, late 1940s

The old woman doesn't say anything about us helping ourselves and tries to prepare better sodas for us. Victor leaves. The old man calculates the bill. We talk about the quantity (four sodas and a little piece of meat that the old woman gave me). I have to pay and I have no money. Embarrassment. I arrange to stop by with the money later in the day and give them the telephone number from Dan's place, where I can be found, while I insistently mention the name Mazzetti. They seem to be

accommodating. Finally, Lygia comes to the rescue and pays. Now we are in a room where the old man shows us his woolen socks, that are white and up to his thighs. One of the socks is stained. The old man gives a Roman salute with his arm outstretched, uttering the word "partisan!" He is Bulgarian, that's why I answer with a proverb: "You can tell a Bulgarian by his socks." We admire his socks. The old woman, who is Bulgarian too, brings trays with cookies that she stuffs into a wardrobe. She says that she does that all day for the children. (There are a few little children who play in the room.)

\*

I am in a garden with Adina. She says something and goes behind a fence. There is very much grass around. I watch Adina and she stops from what she was doing. Her fingers are wet. I call her and we start walking together down the street. I don't know what we are talking about. Toward us comes P., with whom I am on bad terms. I am glad to see him and look at him. He passes by. He holds a cane and I find him extremely comical. I call him.

I look at him and I tell myself that he is forced to walk about in disguise, that he is disguised as a madman.



Victor Brauner, *Composition with Portrait* (1935)

Nonetheless, we kiss. I ask him about his wife and for their current address. He gives me on the run an address that I don't hear well, but I find his house rather easily. It is somewhere near the railway station. It has a verandah, from where one can perfectly see the huge buildings that collapse all the time. I look for a moment at those buildings collapsing. It's really touching. Then I go up on the verandah. I am lying down between P. and his wife. Little erotic exercise, while I look at an engraving as big as a movie theater screen that depicts one of the French Revolution Councils. The engraving is entitled:

PEOPLE WHO GO TO THE THEATER ONLY TO BE COLD.

I look attentively at each and every character. They all shiver, they hide under their thin clothes. Nobody looks at the stage. These people, who cannot bear the cold, are pleased that here in the theater it is awfully cold. I look at each one separately. They are all standing, their heads turned to the left, to the right, or upward. They are terribly cold. My friend's wife continues her little erotic exercise.

Among the characters in the engraving, almost in the middle of the hall, there is a bed on which rests a half-naked man. He is the only one lying down, the only one who is not cold. There is a burning stove on his head. When my eyes see the stove, P.'s wife says:

HOT!

(Translated from the Romanian by Sasha Vlad)

*Men are the dreams of a shadow.*

– Pindar

*I chatted in a dream with Aphrodite.*

– Sappho

*Why does the eye see a thing more clearly in dreams than in imagination when awake?*

– Leonardo da Vinci

*Dreams must be heeded and accepted.*

– Paracelsus

*I am accustomed to sleep and in my dreams to imagine the same things that lunatics imagine when awake.*

– René Descartes

*I am infinitely more accessible to pity in my dreams than in a waking state.*

– Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

*Man is this Night, this empty nothing that, in its simplicity, contains everything: an unending wealth of illusions and images which he remains unaware of—or which no longer exist. It is this Night, Nature's interior, that exists here—pure self—in phantasmagorical imagery, where it is night every-*

*where... where, here, shoots a bloody head and, there, suddenly, another white shape—only to disappear all the same. We see this Night whenever we look into another's eyes—into a night that becomes utterly terrifying—wherein, truly, we find the Night of the World suspended.*

– Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

*The dream is the aquarium of the night.*

– Victor Hugo

*In the dream [...] we have the source of all metaphysic. Without the dream, men would never have been incited to an analysis of the world.*

*Even the distinction between soul*

*and body is wholly due to the primitive conception of the dream, as also the hypothesis of the embodied soul, whence the development of all superstition, and also, probably, the belief in god. "The dead still live: for they appear to the living in dreams." So reasoned mankind at one time, and through many thousands of years.*

– Friedrich Nietzsche

*We are near waking when we dream we are dreaming.*

– Novalis

*Our dreams are a second life. I have never been able to penetrate without a shudder those ivory or horned gates which separate us from the invisible world.*

– Gérard de Nerval

*Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing, doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before.*

– Edgar Allan Poe

*True teaching can only come from life or, better still, dreams.*

*Learning to dream is thus the first stage of wisdom. The world can give you*

*'dream' (in which case we say, 'something just occurred to me' or, 'it has just dawned on me'), or a sleeping dream, in which we are instructed through symbolic images. Likewise all true art comes from the realm of dreams. The gift of invention as well. Men speak in words, dream in living images. The fact that they are taken from the happenings of the day has deceived many into thinking they are meaningless; which they are, of course, if you don't pay them any attention! In that case, the organ through which we dream will trophy, just like a limb we do not use, and a valuable guide will fall silent: the bridge to another life, that is of much greater value than earthly life, will collapse in ruins. Dreaming is the footbridge between waking and sleeping; it is also a footbridge between life and death.*

– Gustav Meyrink

*Dreams have as much influence as actions.*

– Stéphane Mallarmé

*In dreams begins responsibility.*

– William Butler Yeats

*The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up.*

– Paul Valéry

*Dream in a pragmatic way.*

– Aldous Huxley

*Dream is not an escape. Our night thoughts—even the most bizarre—come out of the same crucible as our day thoughts. We cannot expect to shake off in sleep the desires, fears, or mere turn of mind that shape every phase of our existence.*

*Dream is not a revelation. If a dream affords the dreamer some light on himself, it is not the person with closed eyes who makes the discovery but the person with open eyes, lucid enough to fit thoughts together.*

*Dream—a scintillating mirage surrounded by shadows—is essentially poetry.*

– Michel Leiris

*I would photograph an idea rather than an object, a dream rather than an idea.*

– Man Ray

*Dreams that are not made to make us fall asleep, but to wake us up.*

– René Magritte

*The dream is an allusion.*

– Louis Scutenaire

*We always say the next day what we saw at night in a dream.*

– Louis Scutenaire

*Only the poetical interpretation of the dream is objective and scientific.*

– Trost

*The dream is neither a narrative form of desire, nor a second life. It is, to be exact, the real image of life, but "concentrated" and folded in on itself.*

– Trost



Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, *The Dream* (1883)