

The Shadow of the Object

*Psychoanalysis of the
Unthought Known*

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FOR Freud, the dream is an emblematic arrangement of veils articulated by the unconscious, and the task of psychoanalysis is to read the discourse of the dream by translating its iconographic utterance into the word. As Pontalis (1974) and Khan (1976) have pointed out, the classical notion of the dream as only the road to something else (the unconscious) has unfortunately resulted in some neglect of the dream as a lived experience.

I regard the dream as a fiction constructed by a unique aesthetic: the transformation of the subject² into his thought, specifically, the placing of the self into an allegory of desire and dread that is fashioned by the ego.³ From this point of view, the dream experience becomes an ironic form of object relation, as the part of the self in the dream is the object of the unconscious ego's articulation of memory and desire. The arrangement of this intrasubjective rendezvous is one of the major accomplishments of the dream experience, an object relation partly contingent on the aesthetic function of the ego. Finally, I think the person's experience in the dream is based not only on instinctual representations, but on what I believe are ego memories, a view that suggests the ego fulfils a highly idiomatic and creative function when it re-presents these memories in the dream.

As the subject's experience inside the dream is usually not as the director of the theatric but as an object within a fantastical play, the dream setting provides us with an ironic form of object relation, with the subject as the ego's object. In part, the subject is the object of the ego's representational formation of needs, memories, desires and daily experiences, and, for this reason, we may say that as the subject is the object of the ego's transformation into play of memory and desire, the ego sponsors a character

who plays the self in the recurrent theatre of the dream.

One of the aesthetic accomplishments of dream work is the dream setting, the establishment of an environment composed of imagery that leads the dreamer into the dream experience. There are two ways in which we need to view this dream environment. We may translate it from imagery into word, from dramatic experience into thematic nucleus, an endeavour exhaustively outlined by Freud. We may also focus on the implications of the dream setting's management of the subject as a form of object relation. This suggests that we inquire how the dreamer is handled by the ego, a structural and aesthetic consideration that can complement our posing questions about the dream's thematic content, much as we might distinguish between the thematic and the aesthetic properties of a poem. A poem is a unique way of forming a theme, and poetic handling becomes as important as the theme it presents; similarly a dream is a special technique of forming meaning, for the dream not only speaks us – it handles us.

According to Freud, the motivating urge of a dream is an infantile repressed wish. Without the presence of a repressed wish, other dream thoughts – for example memories of past events and thoughts from the day's experience – will not be constructed into a dream. We need the inspirational drive of the wish to fuse a multitude of thoughts into the living theatre of the dream. 'Our theory of dreams,' writes Freud, 'regards wishes originating in infancy as the indispensable motive force for the formation of dreams' (1900, p. 589). The dream event seems to have been arranged by an Other whom Freud nominates as the infantile part of the self. Objectively, of course, we know this Other is part of us, that it is not distinctly separate from our being; subjectively, the experience is that the Other casts us, both throwing light on our thoughts and placing us in a drama each night. Freud did not ignore this subjective truth, this otherness of the dream author:

A second factor, which is much more important and far-reaching, but which is equally overlooked by laymen is the

following. No doubt a wish-fulfilment must bring pleasure; but the question then arises 'To whom?'. To the person who has the wish, of course. But, as we know, a dreamer's relation to his wishes is quite a peculiar one. He repudiates them and censors them – he has no liking for them, in short. So that their fulfilment will give him no pleasure, but just the opposite; and experience shows that this opposite appears in the form of anxiety, a fact which has still to be explained. Thus a dreamer in his relation to his dream-wishes can only be compared to an amalgamation of two separate people who are linked by some important common element. (1900, pp. 580–1)

In many of our dreams, although we may temporarily enjoy the illusion of managing the dream event, we recognize that we are inside a drama that has a bewildering logic of its own. Not only do such moments often not feel of our own making, but they may be repellent and disturbing occasions that deny any semblance of our subjectivity and seem to underline precisely the opposite: our rather passive presence as an object cast into some bizarre drama without any recognizable script.

To create this dream fiction requires an aesthetic: a mode of transforming thought into dramatic representation. Although Freud sees dream formation as a kind of industrial enterprise (he likens the dream thoughts to an entrepreneur and the wish it evokes to capital), it is foremost a theory of aesthetics (how the thematic is transformed by the poetic). He himself suggests this in one of his countless definitions of the dream when he writes that a dream is 'the form into which the latent thoughts have been transmuted by the dream-work' (1900, p. 183). He compares the dream to the literary text:

As regards the dimensions of dreams, some are very short and comprise only a single image or a few, a single thought, or even a single word; others are uncommonly rich in their content, present whole novels and seem to last a long time. (1900, p. 91)

In the sense that the dream experience is a highly sophisticated form of theatre that challenges all our critical capacities, the ego which fashions the dream setting reflects an organized and avowing unconscious whose discourse, as Lacan has argued, is structured like a language: the speech of a visual theatre that both represents and veils thought. The syntactical forms of this Other are the dream, the joke, the fantasy, the symptom, the intrusive gap in the subject's discourse, and the meta-discourse of all object relating.⁴

Just as Freud asked his patients to achieve a 'negative capability', to suspend assumption and prejudice and to report the thoughts that came across the mind, free association suspended the narrative structures of secondary process thought and permitted the analyst and analysand to witness the patterns of thought (metathought) and the gaps in the reportage. Through the patient's suspension of criticism and the analyst's recognition of the recurrent resistances to this suspension, traces of the discourse of the Other could be identified through a critical activity similar to literary criticism. Most importantly, lacunae in reporting came to be seen as a synecdoche of resistance to speaking the repressed. The poetics of the unconscious demonstrated a Wordsworthian insistence that the ordinary was invested with mystery, that the immediacy of explicit meaning yield to the hermeneutic of the underlying theme; that imagery, syntax and aesthetic of organization be taken as another (repressed) discourse. Utilizing this literary criticism, the subject discovered a thematics and poetics of self that had been veiled from him. Indeed, the neurotic symptom, which comprises an idea with a new form, is a salient example of the interplay of thematics and poetics, so the analyst functions as someone attending to the dialectic of meaning and form in the person.

Because the manifest dream text is considered to be an encoded representation of the dream thoughts, many psychoanalysts have been misled into thinking that the dream seeks mute privacy, that it intends to defy comprehension. Veiled in enigma, the dream invites curiosity! Precisely because of its 'allegorical structure, its discontinuous ideational imagery, bizarre

juxtapositions and surrealistic faces', the dream compels the dreamer to fill in the gaps within its text. What Fletcher writes of allegory, we may say of the dream: 'the art of allegory will be the manipulation of a texture of "ornaments" so as

to engage the reader in an interpretative activity' (Fletcher, 1964, p. 130).

The veil deceives. It also tantalizes.

The dream text is a primordial fiction. What Freud discovered and then neglected was the notion of the dream space as a night theatre involving the subject in a vivid re-acquaintance with the Other. He did acknowledge that a person is capable of being profoundly affected by the dream – 'We know from our experience that the mood in which one wakes up from a dream may last for the whole day' (1915, p. 85) – but he did not fully recognize that the fundamental contribution of the dream to human sensibility was its offering a place for this interplay of self and Other. I say that he did not fully recognize this because although he discovered it, indeed founded a clinical space which framed this dialogue, he established this as a scientific rather than aesthetic event. However fruitful the theoretical contributions of chapter 7 of the *Interpretation of Dreams* have been to psychoanalytic metapsychology, they have obscured the aesthetic discovery of the dream space as theatre.

There was a kind of sleuth-like sensibility about Freud. Give him a text and, as Ricoeur (1970, p. 32) has pointed out, he would regard it with suspicion. Like Ahab in Melville's novel *Moby Dick*, Freud wanted to break through 'the pasteboard mask of all outward presentiments'. 'The conception of dream-elements tells us,' he writes, 'that they are ungenuine things, substitutes for something else that is unknown to the dreamer (like the purpose of a parapraxis), substituting for something the knowledge of which is present in the dreamer but which is inaccessible to him' (1915, p. 113). This leads him to regard the dream text as a pernicious and deceitful representation that hides the "genuine" thing behind' (p. 151). In one of his last statements on the dream he proposes that

what has been called the dream we shall describe as the text of the dream or the manifest dream, and what we are looking for, what we suspect, so to say, of lying behind the dream, we shall describe as the latent dream thoughts. (1933, p. 10, author's emphasis)

Even though he has paid homage to the dream work, Freud says of its created text that

it is bound to be a matter of indifference to us whether it is well put together, or is broken up into a series of disconnected separate pictures. Even if it has an apparently sensible exterior, we know that this has only come about through dream-distortion and can have as little organic relation to the internal content of the dream as the façade of an Italian church has to its structure and plan. (1915, p. 181)

He warns us that we must not be impressed with the literary function of the dream work since it 'can do no more than condense, displace, represent in plastic form and subject the whole to a secondary revision' (1915, p. 182). Yet, we may justly say that such processes are indeed the seed of fiction and may be an aesthetic necessary to induce the ego's participation in and recollection of the dream.

Dream thoughts cannot engage us, only the dream experience can. Indeed, Freud himself suggests this:

Here we have the most general and the most striking psychological characteristic of the process of dreaming: a thought, and as a rule a thought of something that is wished, is objectified in the dream, is represented as a scene, or, as it seems to us, is experienced. (1900, p. 534)

Freud did not adequately distinguish the dream experience from the dream text; at times we are explicitly led to believe that the subject's experience of the dream is not important. Freud restricted himself to an analysis of the dream text – specifically to identifying the dream thoughts that sponsored the dream – in order to translate the image back into the word.

Freud's idea was to bring a repressed idea into consciousness – to the word. I think we must search for the presence of the unthought known which refers to the unrepressed unconscious. We must search for an entirely new experience to

find representation of the unthought known. I suggest here that the ego's management of the subject in the dream setting represents some aspects of the infant-child's early experience as subject and object. Later I will examine how analysis of the transference and countertransference reveals another system of representation of the unthought known.

The dream text, then, is nothing more than the awakened subject's transcription of the dream experience into language, a narrated tale of a dramatic experience. In a way, it is the subject's narrative of the Other's fiction, or, more accurately, a reversal of the dream experience: whereas the subject was inside the Other's fiction – without memory of any alternative existence – in the dream experience, the Other is inside the subject's narrative when he fashions a dream text. This process of emerging from a dream through different layers of fiction complements a similar process of entry into the dream experience. As Freud conceived it, we begin with thoughts that occur to us during the day. We might term this our conscious day narrative. As we sleep, this narrative evokes earlier experiences, specifically infantile desires – a process that occurs because sleep is regressive to the hallucinatory stage of thought. Our day narrative meets with the regressive transformation of the night discourse. This discourse of the Other transforms our conscious thoughts into emblematic theatre and is guided by the culture of the dream experience: a space where the Other's desire is to be gratified, where the subject's conscious thoughts are not to be violated, and where the Other takes the subject's day narrative and transforms it into a night fiction, so that the subject is compelled to re-experience his life according to the voice of the unconscious.

It is the art of the ego's invention of the dream setting that provides us with the possibility for a dream experience, and this setting is the accomplishment of what we might justly call the aesthetic function of the ego: that facility to synthesize wish and

thought, and to transform the synthesis into a dramatic mask, along with the induction of the subject to the experience. The term dream work belongs to the individual features of this synthetic process – to condensation, displacement, symbolization and secondary elaboration. The notion of the dream aesthetic belongs to the use of these functions in the composition of a dream setting that will lead the subject into a dream experience.

Dream thoughts do not constitute a dream experience. The dream experience is a conditional event, it cannot occur without the creation of a dream setting. The setting is the world of thought and wish transformed into imagery of place. The dream experience is the dreamer's subjective experience of being while inside the dream theatre, an experience of being that will be contingent on the nature of the theatre and the possibilities of setting within that theatre.

Of any dream that induces a dream experience we may ask: 'What kind of world does the dream provide for the dreaming subject?' 'How does it handle the dreaming subject within the dream?'. This handling is beyond the synthetic function of the dream work. It points towards the dream aesthetic as the expression of an ironic style of object relating – specifically, the style whereby the subject (as dreamer) relates to himself as object (as the dreamed).

When the subject experiences the dream setting we may say that he is being handled by the dream aesthetic, that the ego (an unconscious organizing process) arranges the place where the Other speaks, a fantastical environment that will be either favourable or unfavourable to the subject's desire. This ego process will manifest itself through the dream imagery of the setting, for the nature of this setting may influence the subject's capacity to experience the dream, specifically to yield to the dream imagery or to resist it, to be gratified or to be horrified. The decision about the nature of the dream setting – that moment when the ego chooses how it will populate the dream space – is what Khan (1976a) means by the dream experience, an experience that he takes to be prior to the subject's experience in the dream setting,

when what we might call the ego attitude is settled. In the unremembered climate of this attitude, the ego transforms thought into setting and the dramaturgy of the subject dreamed by his ego is enacted.

It is this settling of an ego attitude that is crucial to the dreamer's dream experience, since it is the moment when the ego 'decides' how to invite the subject to experience the dream, a curious moment that has vast implications. Were we to study a subject's dream world systematically we would certainly discover how each dreamer's ego handles the subject and what this reveals of the person's relation to himself as an object. We may ask how the ego transforms the subject's desire. Is it made reachable in the setting or unreachable? The ego's 'attitude' towards the dream theme and the subject to whom the theme will be presented constitutes an aesthetic choice. We are talking essentially of the handling of different themes (instinctual, memorial, etc.), of especially recurrent styles of processing particular themes, and, when we talk of such idioms, I believe we are noting what we might term ego memories derived from basic ego structures. It is an occasion when the thought known (the subject) is encountered by the unthought known (the ego), a recurring moment of being transported back through time into the dense dialectic of our inherited being and the logic of the environment.

As I have said in the previous chapter and in the introduction, ego structures emerge in the earliest months and years of life when the ego develops 'rules' for processing intrapsychic and intersubjective experience. These rules are developed as mother and child negotiate paradigms for processing all of life's experience. This is the 'grammar' of the ego, and this deep structure generates the forms of the self's existence-structure, or what we might call the character of the subject. The structure of the ego is the self's shadow, a silent speech that is unheard by the subject until he enters the echo chamber of psychoanalysis. There the person discovers this densely structured grammar of the ego that speaks in the psychoanalysis through dreams, parapraxes, phantasies, and most especially through the nature of the transference, where the subject attempts to set up what for him is the

trace of the basic paradigmatic situation, where basic ego structures have been established (the unthought known). Needless to say, the patient is often embarrassed by this and may come to regard his unconscious self, or his true self, as aggravating.

In the dream, ego structures express themselves primarily in aesthetic rather than thematic ways, that is, through the processing of the instinctual and memorial themes, and this is most obvious in the choice of the dream setting. How does the ego represent desire or aggression to the subject? Does the dream aesthetic represent dream thoughts in impossible (nightmare) settings or, obversely, does it condense so many thoughts into archetypal images that the subject feels he is among symbols of a culture that transcends his idiom of representation? Does the ego give the subject time to experience the dream imagery, or is it so hurried as to make perception or recognition of the imagery impossible, thereby truncating the experience of the dream? Is the ego so obsessional that the dream imagery is inevitably a kind of ruminative collation of highly abstracted landscapes of thought: the so-called problem-solving dream experience which belabours the subject during the night?

CLINICAL EXAMPLE

I will briefly outline a clinical example to illustrate this way of considering dreams and dreaming. Jonathan is a bisexual youth of twenty-three. He is the eldest of four children and the child of distinguished parents. He was born while both parents were graduate students and was placed with a nanny who looked after him while his mother attended classes and worked on her dissertation. He appears to have complied with this split parenting and to have developed a precocious self that left both parents pleased both with his progress in school and with what they took to be a beguiling personal character. In fact, Jonathan was able to develop in this manner only by splitting off from his character those aspects of his phantasy life that expressed desperate need or acute rage. In the first weeks of his analysis he 'confessed' homosexual phantasies and homosexual events. After this he was at a

complete loss for words. He had no thoughts. Of course I knew that he was thinking and phantasmizing, and I thought these were transference thoughts too frightening for this compliant person to report. The analysis would have been

acutely uncomfortable for him had he not been able to report his dreams, which were inevitably vivid and complex. Since they were dissociated from his conscious life he would rarely provide any association, and only eventually did I use this dissociation in the analysis. We began to regard the dream as the utterance of an unknown speaker, the split-off self which we acknowledged to be like an other to him. In this way, although he could not associate to his dreams, he became curious about them, and accepted that by engaging in a dialogue with this other he was hearing from himself. Since I could rarely interpret the thematic meaning of the dream without associations, I was compelled to see if I could use the structure, or aesthetic, of the dream to work towards interpretation. Since I could not break down the parts of the dream to find their associative links, I looked at the dream as a totality and studied the dreams over time to see if the placing and replacing of recurrent imagery, settings, personages, etc. could reveal basic paradigms. I am not going to trace that enterprise here, but it was through this practice that I noticed how he lived inside his dream world, and I began to pay attention to the recurrent dream settings and the way he was handled by them.

In one common set of dreams, for example, he was in a desert and next to a lake. Sometimes his wife was there with him, sometimes he was alone, once he was there with his mother and his sister. In one dream the lake was surrounded by a brick wall. He never seemed to take any notice of the lake. He reported its presence, but he never drank from it, for example, and it was the absence of this action which seemed to me more important than what was present in the dream. My observation yielded one potential interpretation which I put to him: that as wife, mother, sister were next to the lake, perhaps his not taking nourishment from the lake reflected the way he split off his needs from potential environmental gratification. This was one way of looking for a theme within the dream. I was equally struck by the fact that his

ego continually provided him with potential nourishment, as if the dream setting was offering him something that he could not turn into a dream experience: in this case to drink from the lake. The usefulness of this distinction (how the ego handles the subject) became more important when he reported another dream.

He took a broken antique object, enclosed it in a cellophane bag and placed it gently in a pool of water. This was done in his garden. After this act he felt that the seeds he had planted in the garden would grow and that he would be included in his family. We knew from previous dreams that he often represented himself as broken down. By linking this dream to previous ones, I said that I thought he wanted to place his broken-down self into a womb-like container that would heal it. This was one of the themes of this dream, but what struck me more was the autistic-like act within the dream, an act that was not supported by the dream setting. The bag would not heal the broken pieces of the self. As I noted this, I realized that one feature of his dreams was that he was dissociated from his desire, that the Other offered him a good setting for succour but he could not participate, or that he symbolized his need in an unsupportive setting. This fault in the structure of the self – itself an aesthetic flaw of being rather than a theme of specific phantasy – emerged in the dream setting as an aesthetic problem: his dream experience was out of synchrony with his dream setting. Thus the aesthetic utterance of the dream contradicted the thematic message: 'you wish to actualize your needs, but you can't fit into an environment where this can be done.' Such a contradiction of the thematic by the aesthetic was like the use of ironic delivery (form) contradicting message (theme): 'of course I just know you were about to apologize to me,' for example.

If the subject cannot make use of the dream setting, it is equally important to see how the dream setting makes use of the subject, the other side of the issue of how the subject is handled by the ego. Whenever Jonathan dreamed about his family in a domestic setting, the events of the dream became inordinately complicated, and the action speeded up so quickly that the setting

made it virtually impossible to have any dream experience other than one of bewilderment and confusion. In what we called the squirrel dream he entered his parents' flat and quickly noticed the new shag carpet on the floor. He was almost yielding to the pleasure of this discovery when his mother pointed to the door in alarm and before he knew it hundreds of squirrels came swarming into the flat through the front door. He tried to chase them away, and there was considerable confusion. Mother screamed and father – apparently in an effort to drive them away – set the curtains on fire, whereupon the entire flat caught fire. To escape, he fell out of a window and seemed to fall for a long time. It was the only moment in the dream thus far when he seemed to have time for thought or being. As he fell past one of his neighbours' windows, he noticed a cake left on the ledge to cool. He grabbed a piece and devoured it hungrily, and the lady thanked him for bringing to her attention that the cake was now ready to eat. Suddenly he noticed he was falling towards the intersection of two cars about to collide. The cars were driven by his sister and brother and one car was followed by a large van that was transporting a house. Eventually we understood the themes of the dream (that the ravenous squirrel represented his desire for his mother counterbalanced by his father's consuming and enraged passion for her), but I will not focus on the themes as utterances but the aesthetic as voice. When the Other presented him inside the setting of the family it created confusion, and it only threw him into peace if the family was away. In dreaming of his family, the complexity and speed of the activities prevented him from completing his experiences, and he wound up merely a reactive mechanism of the madness.

The dream aesthetic is a form conveyed by the structure of the ego, a structure that in Jonathan's case internalized an unintegrated experience of relating to the mother or father, so that when need was aroused in Jonathan towards his mother, what was printed was not gratification but a kind of manic interaction with the environment that was out of everyone's control. The ego handling of the dreaming self – its aesthetic – inherits its now internalized structures from the way the self experienced the

early environment and passes this on in the dream setting by the way the ego handles the subject. This is not a memory in the proper sense, a cognitive recollection that becomes available to the subject's psychic or thematic recovery, but is an existential memory, a remembering by being, that is internalized into the ego's structure and is manifested in the dream through the ego's style, or as I choose to denote the phenomenology of its style, into the aesthetic.

I found this aspect of the dream aesthetic very useful in his analysis – as useful as the varying pregenital or oedipal fantasy themes revealed by them – because they helped facilitate him through the negative transference. The unrelatedness to the lake can be seen as a refusal to make use of the analyst (to drink equals to internalize) and a reluctance to relate to the dream itself, to which he has no associations. That is to say, when he produced some material from his life and I interpreted it to him, he very often made absolutely no use of it, just as when by the lake in the dream, he did not use what could help him. On other occasions, when he produced very confusing, abstract or elliptical remarks, he demanded a statement from me which was impossible for me to make, as I had no understanding of his meaning. On those occasions he articulated his need at the one moment when I was fairly useless. We have come to regard these aesthetic problems as the voice of the pre-verbal self, that self who internalizes into the structure of the ego a language of the early relation to mother so that the structure of the ego is the printing of this dialogue.

DISCUSSION

An ego attitude may derive from ego structure, just as in Jonathan's dream we may argue that the agitated representation of events in domestic settings is the ego's attitude towards an actual family setting with which it cannot cope. That is to say, just as Jonathan's ego integration was faulty in integrating actual family experiences, so, too, the ego represented this faultiness in dreams about the family. Or, to take the lake and desert dream, the ego represented its dissociation from partaking in what appears to be available gratification by ignoring the nurturing

function of the lake, or appearing to ignore it. In the dream the subject is made to re-live the nature of the experience that became internalized and structured the early ego, and this remembering by re-experiencing occurs through the medium of the ego's handling of the subject through the dream setting. This primary phantasy of the dream lies dormant in the ego's attitude to the dreaming subject and may help us to understand why in some dream experiences the subject is permitted by the Other to feel at one with the dream experience, while at other times the experience is one of radical alienation and captivity. Experiences in life not only evoke repressed instinctual wishes, they also elicit ego memories: indeed, for each dream that represents an instinctual wish there is also an implicit ego attitude, a memorial record of the ego's handling of the wish. I think that while the content of the dream reveals the instinctual phantasy, the theme of the dream plot, the composition of the dream setting, and the aesthetic organization of the experience, all reveal the ego's handling of the instinctual wish. Just as the ego's task vis-à-vis the instincts, the superego and reality is one of synthesis – a proto-aesthetic function – so too the ego betrays this aesthetic in the dream representation of the play of instincts, superego replies and day experiences. Each time the dreaming subject is made the object of the ego's attitude, the self re-experiences existential attitudes towards instinct and object that were constituted in the earliest years of life, attitudes no longer available to cognitive recollection, but remembered in the structure of the ego's handling of memories or desires.

Psychoanalysis has long been disposed to regard the voice of the dream as the utterance of a true self, the Other interpreter of our being, and to regard our conscious subjectivity with suspicion. In the inevitable conflict between our conscious interpretation of our meaning and the discourse of the dream, the parapraxis, the symptom or the logic of free association, the analyst is biased towards the verity of the Other's interpretation. The analyst allies himself with that part of the patient that can achieve a negative capability towards the discourse of the Other, in order to be available for the analyst's alliance with the hermeneutic

truth of the Other's interpretation. If our dream professes one thing about our desires, let us say, and we disagree with the dream's representation, it is inevitably the case that the analyst will treat the patient's disagreement as a denial of the truth. It is this struggle between our conscious interpretation of our existence and the Other's discourse which establishes the essential feeling of our being in relation to an other self, a conflict that can lead us to feel vexed by the analyst who agrees with the Other's disagreeable comment on our motivation, as if we have been slighted in favour of the Other.

As I view it, the dream is a unique moment when the person as conscious subjectivity encounters a fundamentally impersonal mental process (the language of the unconscious and the ego's transformation of such language into discourse) which assumes a personal function when the dream experience is created. I realize this is patently obvious, that when we dream we face the representatives of our mental processes in the dream formation, but when we confront night after night the theatre of the unconscious, and when we are the represented object in the drama, we are witness to the ego's processing of our being. I am less concerned with instinctual representation in the dream than with the unconscious ego's re-living of the instinct – a re-living that is re-enacted in the way the ego deals with the wish, a handling of instinct that is typical of the subject's ego style, and that I have called the aesthetic function of the ego. I think this ego memory is as important as the instinctual representation, both because it is more available to the dreamer, for it bears the stamp of the characteristic, the familiar, and because an analysis of the ego's style of transforming memory and desire brings the patient and the analyst closer to the core, the true self, of the patient.

Of course this point of view suggests a different style of dream interpretation, as the ego's transformation of the latent dream thoughts into a manifest text – its aesthetic activity – not only reveals its style of handling memory and desire, but also necessitates that we regard the creative function of the dream. When we analyse a dream for instinctual content, we begin from the manifest text and work towards the latent content, using the

content of the manifest text only for the clues to the latent meaning. The style of the dream is immaterial to us. Now in analysing the ego's experience of the instinct, we must work first in the classical manner (locating the latent dream thoughts) and then we must see how the ego has transformed these thoughts into a dream experience. We must attend to the creativity of the dream experience, since it is there where we will witness the discourse of the ego experience, a discourse that is the ego's utterance of what I have called the grammar of the ego. To fail to do the latter is to suggest that the person is only constituted from the instinct when we know that each person interprets the instinct and that this interpretation manifests itself through the ego's representation of the instinct to the self within the dramaturgy of the dream theatre.

To summarize my point of view, I am impressed that examination of any patient's dreaming life reveals not only typical contents within dreams, but recurrent styles of dreaming. Such modes of handling the varied instinctual and memorial themes of the dream seem to me to be aesthetic accomplishments of the ego, which functions to transform the theme into a dramatic representation where the dreamer will experience the theme. This aesthetic accomplishment reflects the idiom of that dreamer's particular ego attitude towards the theme, an attitude that reveals itself through the way the theme is represented and how the dreaming subject is made to re-experience the dream theme within the dream experience. I am not only struck by the fact that this nightly dramaturgy is an ironic object relation – where the subject is presented with the Other's view of the self. I am also impressed with the fact that such representation is the ego's way of compelling the self to re-experience historical (psychodevelopmental) ego attitudes towards the dream themes. Only attention to what is patterned and aesthetically recurrent (the typical forms of the dream themes) will suggest to the analyst what is fundamentally an historical (memorial) ego experience of the dream and what is not. When we attend to the ego's transformation of dream theme into dramatic fiction, we are indeed acknowledging a creative function in the dream process, and we are wiser, I be-

lieve, if we note that the dream does not simply bring us into communication with instinctual or memorial experiences; it brings us into contact with our own internal and highly idiomatic aesthetic: that aesthetic reflected by the ego style typical of each of us.