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Creative Stories of the Night. Neglected Dreams

I

The individual worldview perspective is influenced by the individual manner in which the world is understood and imagined. Although, to a large extent, we use stock formulas, stereotypical thinking, and symbols with unchanging, culturally ingrained meanings, it is we who are the creators of culture and imaginaries- and a special place among the creators of individual and collective symbolized imaginaries is taken by artists.

However, the imaginary worlds are not solely developed as a part of artistic work, since we all fantasize and dream, creating our own fiction, our own personal myths.

Dreams happen to everyone and should be of interest to all individuals caring about their own psyche and imagination, and they probably are of interest, although only in passing and for a moment. It is enough to mention the discipline of science dealing with dream studies, to have our interlocutors immediately look at us with scepticism (something along the lines of an esoteric perspective in research methodology, etc.) and, after feeling doubt, feeling the need to tell us about their own dreams. This behaviour is all the more interesting in that it refers us to the perception of dreams or the attitude to them of the majority of dreamers. It seems that the irresistible willingness to share one's oneiric experience is related to the sense that the often illogical night stories may have some meaning. On the other hand, the entire intimacy present in dreams is protected and hidden by an army of metaphors, symbols, or simply figurativeness, owing to which the dreaming may liberally discuss the very private world of imaginaries of which they do not feel like the owners or creators, and which they do not identify with. Only, they are still sort of theirs.

In this article, I shall remind the readers about dreaming as the basic symbolic activity of the mind. Showing theories concerning places of collective dreams and artistic fiction, I shall ask whether the disregard of our own dreams could be understood as ignorance of our personal imaginaries, and experience and understanding of the world. One is tempted to say: dreams are lies that may whisper a certain truth and contribute to self-discovery.

I shall show several foci of the extensive topic of the relation between the symbolic dreaming (representing) and artistic creation against the background of self-discovery and I shall also reflect on how the knowledge of persons connected with literature and art may influence the exploration of dreams, and whether we may ap-

proach our own profile of dreaming if we treat dreams as works similar to artefacts. This article aims at relieving the interpretation of dreams from the burden it acquired from psychoanalytic theory. I shall compare literary works and artefacts as such with dreams to show that self-discovery trips can be commenced by means of play. In this game playing, we may use relaxation instead of fighting or wrestling with the heavy veils of censorship or defensive mechanisms in dreams. The bibliography used in the paper is not exhaustive, and the text itself is preliminary – it is a sketch rather than a finished whole. After all, dreams are sketches themselves, and this paper is aimed at intoxication with the freedom from fear of our own “demons” – therefore, I allow myself this nonchalance.

This publication concerns imaginary worlds – can we suggest a more general topic for the humanities, when we assume after Schopenhauer that we have nothing else than that?

There are many theories concerning literature and art – likewise, dream research perspectives also abound, starting from psychoanalysis, existentialism, phenomenology, Calvin Hall’s quantitative approach, and ending with parapsychology or esotericism. All the theories understand the functions of dreams in their own ways, although the symbol is a significant notion almost to all of them. Here, I shall focus mainly on psychoanalytic theories of dreams and the relations between artistic creativity and dreaming.

There are many links between psychoanalysis and art. Sigmund Freud interpreted literature – he used it to explain mental processes. It is there that he found complexes on which he built his basic theses. There are different varieties of the psychoanalytic interpretation of art. Extreme simplification may boil them down to two forms of work with texts: structural and genetic ones (Fiała 1991). The first method is like psychocriticism (Mauron 1976) – it focuses on obsessive fantasies and motifs repeated in various artefacts. The second method bases its analyses of a literary work on its author’s actual biography.

Let us begin with fantasies. It seems that we all have them: we picture ourselves aboard a plane during a trip to the unknown, we see ourselves as successful, ruling, happy, and we design soothing hypotheses, which most often concern future events and alternative solutions. This type of daily fantasizing refers us to the classical interpretation of Freud’s pleasure principle and the fulfilment of wishes. But what makes ordinary fantasies different than literary works and dreams?

According to psychoanalytic theories, imagination, creative impulse and dreams have the same source, i.e. broadly understood unconscious fantasies. Freud believed that the creative impulse was recreated in the plot of literary works. Therefore, it seems that regardless of the type of work (surrealistic, naturalistic or poetic ones), unconscious fantasy may be ordered by a conscious creative thought and presented with the help of narration, which in such a reference is always symbolic¹ in consist-

¹ We must remember that Freud, Fromm and many others used the word “symbol” primarily in reference to constant, archetypical – similarly as in the thematic criticism approach – images in dreams such as the sun, fire, water, etc. I use the notion of a symbol in a broader meaning, where the displacement-metonymy is a type of symbolic representation. If, for example, I easily break a golden

ence with the dynamics of the so-called displacement – where the symbol replaces mental content.

Apart from being sources of aesthetic experience and cognition, literature and art may also be incentives for self-discovery. Non-scientific treatment of dreams overlooks their self-analytical function. When dreams are perceived as “a special form of our thinking” (Freud 1913) and, after all, a creative activity of the mind, the absence of interest in dreams is an insult to imagination.

The creative process of a writer or artist is related to their contact with their own imaginaries and with ordering them. According to Freud, “the artist’s phantasy must lose its egocentric character to become compatible with art” (Freud 1959),² i.e. be worked with tools of a conscious creative act. At the same time, “The psychological novel in general probably owes its peculiarities to the tendency of modern writers to split up their ego by self-observation into many component-egos” (Freud 1925) – into heroes.

Since artists tend to touch unconscious thinking in a creative impulse, why do they not present their feelings in a direct way and write psychological papers, lecture us on theory? First, not every work is a description of deep psychological content or is such to everyone. When artists touch upon the psychology of these issues, their work resembles a reconstruction in memory of something that emerges only briefly and hazily to boot – being an impulse, it is intense, but vague. Perhaps in consistence with psychoanalytic interpretation, artists aim at creating whatever has already taken place in the artistic impulse, taken place “as if”,³ and which can only emerge with the help of the language of art, since only the artistic tongue – symbols, displacements, metaphors – may present something which remains not entirely clear to the subject-author. It is only matter which can be a way of telling about it – the matter which is always open to the polysemy of interpretations. It is a kind of a gift for readers, who sometimes also experience the pleasure which “proceeds from the release of tensions in our minds” (Freud 1925). The unconscious thought initiating the creative process may therefore remain uncalled directly, although it calls into being a world of artistic plot and results in the liberation from tension – just like in the case of dreams, where the content, not yet expressed in words, becomes the material for images.

In a classical psychoanalytic approach, the dream is a fulfilled wish beyond the super-ego principles, and it originates from the work of the dream thoughts. “For it is entirely correct that the dream can represent [...] a resolution, a warning, reflection, preparation, an attempt to solve a problem [...] but [...] all these things are true only of the latent dream thoughts, which have been changed about in the dream” (Freud 1974: 195). And it always expresses the fulfilment of dreams, as Freud assumed on the basis of his practice and by placing the main attribute of children’s dreams to the dreams of adults.

chain in my dream and I connect it in my interpretation with a similarly finished relationship, such a representation also has a symbolic, metaphorical nature.

² Hence, Segal claims that the creative process requires a rejection, a “modification of the pleasure principle” and “some facing of the depressive position”. This makes the plot more complex. She also states “What is the essence of what Freud so beautifully, I think, calls ‘the dream thought’? I think Freud originally had in mind simply the repressed wish, disguised in the dream”.

³ In the context of dreams, Segal discusses the “as-if” reality.

Freud offered a thesis that the process of symbolization and the creation of a dream as such results from defensive mechanisms, which displace, distort and move away the intention of the dream thought. This overnegative approach possibly requires a delicate weakening, because since the unconsciousness is for us entirely abstract, but it still wants to take a voice in dreams, then it must use some means, some language. Obviously, we may imagine that dreams (I am focusing on metaphorical, creative, symbolic dreams) could be less confusing and easier to explain.

Challenging Freud's concept, Calvin Hall, a cognitivist and a dream researcher, understood dreams as simple rather than complex processes. He believed that all dreams are simply a series of symbolic images which express concrete ideas, concepts, and imaginaries (Hall 1953: 184–186), and that the symbolic nature of dreams results from the way of imaging, something similar to the Adlerian "style of life", rather than censorship and resistance.

However, when we notice that – as is common knowledge – the unconscious is not conscious of itself, we are after all aware of the fact that it is unfamiliar to the consciousness and wants to express the thoughts/impulses which the consciousness no longer remembers, which it has not yet thought or which it still considers "unthinkable". Trying to communicate its own intention, it uses images that are symbolically associated with the intention, putting them together to form coherent plots. Additionally, the unconscious not only uses the material which has been seen, heard and experienced, but it can also create (if it is not just an illusion) new worlds, places, persons, and events. We might think that dreams choose symbolic rather than literal representations to clothe in meanings the things which often have not yet simply been thought, contexts that are new to the consciousness or are unfinished thoughts. And as a part of this attempt, being *de facto* not understood itself, and having no necessary representations and mediations, the unconscious uses not only defence mechanisms, the work of a censor, resistances and instances limiting the flow of messages, but also simply innate, pure, prototypical creativity, the basic, creative imaging. Is this because it is not too easy to agree that newspace in dreams is only a product of resistances? Do we have to defend ourselves so much against ourselves in every dream⁴? Is it not often a style and form of representation, a type of metaphor, rather than censorship? It would seem that it is only a new, semantically softened version of the ego's defence against the contents that have been repressed – with the help of defence mechanisms or creativity (perhaps only as a way to express them). What is strongest in the theory of distortion is the moment when affective accents are shifted during a dream, which is aimed at censorship and the effect of not understanding (Freud 1995).

Going back to the egoistic nature of phantasies, smoothened by the symbolism of the creative process, we may wonder whether the phantasy itself may concern mental properties of the entire communities (since it is the communal aspect which seems to provide works with the quality exciting the readers beyond the boundaries of cultures and epochs, i.e. making it a masterpiece), or whether artists reach the communal nature solely through the quality of the elaboration of the phantasy.

⁴ Cognitivists also believe that the symbol discloses rather than hides.

It is probably a union of the two elements: something very significant in the supra-individual context and the genius intuition of the artists, who clothe their experience of the creative impulse in spotless aesthetic representations. Masterpieces – offering messages beyond the time and individuality⁵ – were also of interest to the father of psychoanalysis – let us recall for example his analyses of the output of Leonardo da Vinci or Dostoevsky.

The plot of a literary or artistic work is therefore more complex than that of the nature of the phantasy itself. This is because the creative process wraps it with decorations, and extends, deepens, and stretches, developing the primary thought, while a strong participation of the consciousness in the elaboration of dream messages is not possible (clear dreams are a rarity). Here, it is not the artist who works through the content of unconscious phantasies, but the dreams⁶ and only later can the latter become the subject of analysis. Freud clearly differentiated between the work of dream thoughts and the dream as such, which resembles the relation between the creative impulse and the literary plot.

It is not literature which is like a dream, but the work of the artist experiencing a psychoanalytically understood creative impulse⁷ which resembles the work of the dream: especially when we take into account the natural impossibility of literal representation. From the perspective of psychoanalysis the goals here are different though: the artist tries to detail, to give structure to the thought contained in the creative impulse, while through its impact on the dream thoughts, the censorship of the dream conceals and “distorts” – as Freud put it rather negatively – their original meaning, offering a symbolic representation. The artist wants to come closer through the representation, to conceal the dream. In this approach, psychoanalysis assumes a certain self-control, self-awareness of the censorship, which is to function in consistence with the intention identified by Freud.

And can it perhaps be that the psychic apparatus really needs to reflect on experience during one’s sleep, that it wants to offer solutions, sooth, make wishes come true, acting like artists or writers from the model presented? The dream intentions appear at the gates of the dream as impulses, and their author – the unconscious – is not aware of them, since it is unconscious of its own existence. With a partial participation of consciousness – a bit like an artist – it tries to express the content of experience through images and, above all, to express the accompanying emotional values. This is because, as Freud put it, “the robbers, to be sure, are imaginary, but the fear of them is real” (Freud 1913), “the affective content [of a dream]

⁵ Jung writes about works created on a subconscious impulse in the following way: “[...] we should have to conceive of something of a supra-personal character that transcends the range of conscious understanding in the same degree as the author’s consciousness is withheld from the development of his work. We should expect a certain strangeness of form and shape, thoughts that can only be apprehended by intuition, a language pregnant with meanings, expressions that would have the value of genuine symbols, because they are the best possible expressions of something as yet unknown – bridges thrown out towards an invisible shore (Jung 1976).

⁶ Hence, a clear gap in the giving of meaning to valuable day-dreaming and night dreams of little importance in Gaston Bachelard’s writings.

⁷ A relation of the creative impulse needs to be connected with the content coming through from the unconscious to the conscious level.

has remained free from the distortion which has befallen the conceptual content" (Freud 1913).

Not all theoreticians of dreams, or the source and form of dreams, are so "poetic". After all, the reasons behind non-banal dream stories do not have to be that lofty. Some researchers see the reason behind the bizarreness and absence of logic in dreams in the limited participation of thought dynamisms. For example, Jan Mazurkiewicz divides thought processes into lower, pre-logical ones, and the better developed frontal-logical ones. He tries to show that the logical thinking based on reason and effect is "inactive" when we dream, and that dreaming is "the only state in which pre-logical dynamisms can be found in all their purity" (Mazurkiewicz 1980: 84). The muffled frontal lobe would be responsible for the inconsistency of the tale. It seems that the rightness here lies in the fact that the logical processes are really switched-off or lowered. The full bloom of creativity, artistic work, is often possible owing to the fact that the rational, concrete, standard thinking is moved aside. The place for free phantasy appears to lie away from reason-and-effect actions and terror.

Alfred Adler provided a slightly different view, perceiving the metaphorical and non-logical quality of dreams a result of our moving away from the communal experience, from the "common sense", for the benefit of our own expression. Adler says that "imagination expressed in metaphors, on the sidelines of logic, solves problems in line with the dreamer's lifestyle" [translated from the Polish language] (Adler 1994: 229)⁸. Here, responsibility for the shape of night dreams is attributed to our lifestyle, ways of thinking, quality of reflection, and creative potential in imaging and calling.

At the same time, Erich Fromm associated dreams with a suspension of activity and with freedom: "In sleep the realm of necessity has given way to the realm of freedom in which "I am" is the only system to which thoughts and feelings refer" (Fromm 1977). For Fromm, there are three types of symbols of dreams (and not only dreams). The first one is located in the relation between a word and the object it signifies (conventional), the second one takes its beginning in concrete experience such as that related to a phobia (accidental), while the third one concerns everyone, involving a soothing closeness of feelings and thoughts.

The majority of classics talk about the symbolic language of dreams. Combining this language with any other tongue, as well as with mythology, Calvin Hall shows the language of dreams in the context of poetic speech, pointing out that we use non-literal meanings in various slangs on a daily basis. According to him, metonymy, synecdoche, metaphor and irony are the main means of expression of dreams (Hall 1953: 172).

So perhaps it is in dreams that we involuntarily experience ourselves, our own individual imagination, and the creative activity of our minds, which is attracted to weirdness, finesse, circuitousness, hyperbole or originality. It is a "meeting" to which the observer of the dream (the ego?) comes as if it was a lecture – an often surreal, poetic, illogical presentation on experiences, thoughts and feelings. Although again imperfect, perhaps a metaphor of a virtual game, in which, controlling our own char-

⁸ Adler understood "style of life" as one's view of one's life, which most often is unknown to the thinking subject since it has not been the subject of reflection.

acter in a limited way, I stay in a created, imposed world that determines the roles I adopt, would be more accurate than a lecture given by a part of oneself, about oneself and for oneself. The awkwardness of comparisons shows all the more the unique position of the Self in dreams and the problem with the detailed determination of the function and presence of consciousness.

According to Fromm, the unconscious is tantamount to the unavailable to the non-availability of understanding. After accepting psychoanalysis or postmodernity, all the cognition is in a sense integrated with the unknown, but the difference lies in the degree of the unawareness, the scale of which begins with the bottom-lying ignorance.

The fact that dreams are actually dreamt may be considered a kind of the self's speech on topics that are significant for the subject or the spirit, or simply necessary for the psychic apparatus. People and science insult phantasies and dreams, and the insult takes its beginning in the lack of knowledge and/or cognitive intuition concerning ourselves. The absence of the drive to self-discovery may result from a strong blockade, a certain limitation of the mind, which does not prevent one's very good functioning at the highest levels of education. It is harder when such a life is connected to frustration, anger, sense of guilt, disastrous overprotectiveness or hysterical infantilism, which becomes an integral trait of personality. And although it is the reason for problems in relationships and frustration, it remains a part of the Self.

In the absence of self-analytical reflection and attempts at becoming familiar with one's own imagination (not necessarily psychoanalytic attempts), dreams carry out metawork on the imagination, relationships, and style of thinking. And they can do it with great discretion – if we continue to stay solely within the circle of symbolic, metaphorical dreams. In compliance with Freud's thought, representations remaining away from open meanings may result from censorship, but such a structure of power also simply provides a possibility to choose – an attempt at reflecting on the metaphor of dreams or ignoring them. Although away behind the horizon of the day, dreams anyway work through the contents of experience no one focuses on. The power of resistance – both the resistance present in dreams, and the one present in the attitude to dreams – may express the state of readiness or perhaps unpreparedness to accept and integrate some contents.

Due to the discretion of the symbolic dream, dreams often (with the exception of anxiety dreams and "grand" dreams⁹) escape the memory almost unnoticed. This is to some extent a result of the first light of the day: the clash between the work of the dream thought and the day thinking, a sceptically understood difference between the orders or even their "untranslatability" – as well as the fact that dreams most often happen just once.

Perhaps the elusiveness of dreams is also a protective coat for those who do not want to embark on the often difficult journey of self-discovery. Dreams can almost imperceptibly knock our consciousness and day memory. This is because the knocking is often so delicate that it is perceived as an illusion or (in a different view) as a meaningless buzz, unworthy of coming to the door for and asking "who is that"?

⁹ A concept originating from Jung's thought.

II

We often encounter an analogy between literary works and dreams, and hence the psychoanalysis of literature, where analytical tools are applied to explain the plot. It is equally important to reverse the relation and examine dreams recorded in journals and told by our contemporaries, using the knowledge provided by the humanities and the tools of literary critics.

Artistic works are interpreted in various theories as incomplete, which means that – as Ingarden put it – artefacts serve not only insufficiently determined places, which are not important or else they would have been filled in. The work of phantasy and individual perception of a concrete subject are really important here. The artist gives whole spaces for individual reading – in particular owing to symbolism, which becomes different in various meetings of two experiences – the experience written out in the work or text, and the experience living in the person who comes to the meeting and takes part in the dialogue.

I would like to compare the symbolic potential of works of art and dreams. If the work of art is incomplete, is then the dream unfinished? – unfinished both when it was stopped by an alarm clock and when it did not exhaust the topic which it surely began? Additionally, we may ask in this place whether a conscious meeting with a dream must by necessity end with a phenomenological reaction, a reproduction of the intention of the unconscious as the most important and the least approachable dream provider?

In Hanna Segal's book *Dream, Phantasy and Art* we may feel that the important inspiration with psychoanalysis affecting the humanistic perspective needs the liberations and revaluations of the orthodoxy, which is a natural consequence of the fact that psychoanalytic grassroots theories are not based on healthy or relatively happy individuals. Segal presents many inspirational thoughts concerning the relation with the dream and the relation with art, but finishes, placing the creative impulse in depressive anxiety. Let us start, however, with inspirations.

Segal shows that the style of dreams reflects a broad range of our relations (Segal 1991). I think that this speaks in favour of the attractiveness of styles of dreaming in persons living in a larger number of worlds: persons who discover, read, learn, fantasize, and work with their imagination. Persons who develop intellectually and spiritually have more metaphorical dreams. This may be related to creativity and the level of abstract thinking. Since indeed – as Segal writes – people are provided with identical drives, the richness of imagination depends on the ego.

The author says, quoting Melanie Klein, that unconscious phantasies lie at the base of dreams, symptoms, perception, thoughts, and creativity (Segal 1991). What is worthy of attention is that Klein identifies a single source giving rise to dreams and creativity. And here returns the question whether the plot of dreams is an expression of creativity rather than an organized armed defence of the ego, preventing us from the free expression of the unconscious?

It is only in one place that Segal reflects on the people who are on good terms with the unconscious, people who “have actual *communication* with their uncon-

scious phantasies [...] they can be consciously aware and in control of *symbolic expressions* of the underlying primitive phantasies" (Segal 1991: 32). They are in control through their understanding, with which it is worthwhile to befriend oneself also at the level of relations with our own dreaming. Psychoanalytic books on dreams provide spectacular examples showing how a thorough interpretative activity may reveal our most important conflicts disturbing the psyche in the development of the ego. But such a show is not necessary on a daily basis.

The contents of unconscious phantasies are revealed by both art and dreams. Freud understood the aesthetic value of art as a facilitation of the liberation of pleasure, a reward for successful attraction, a fore-pleasure (Freud 1925). Owing to their innate creative or aesthetic properties (and this is not about beauty), dreams allure us to engage in a foreplay with the dream imagination. As a result of self-analytical studies, curiosity and pleasure in the ease of the understanding of dreams, familiarity with their metaphors and styles, and treating them as artefacts, may enrich our vocabulary of thinking about our own unconscious phantasies – without the worry that they shall not be immediately clearly distilled from the chaos of representations, but with an awareness that self-discovery is prone to egocentric distortions in reception, to half-truths that will support the domesticated phantasms. Due to resistance on the part of the consciousness, these phantasms may prevent the development of imagination in its integration with the unconscious, i.e. with the not yet internalised.

Calvin Hall, a contemporary dream researcher, was interested mainly in the dreams of larger groups, the quantitative method, the coding of dreams. He reported a hardly contestable assumption about continuity between one's real life and dreams. Studying a cycle of dreams of a single individual, he noticed that a large number of repetitions as a part of a single case study creates the sense of boredom. This thread was well-commented on by Ole Vedfelt, who pointed out that "Hall's material was culled from people who weren't in therapy" (Vedfelt 1999: 125). This is because the absence of changes in the dream thought may indicate a lack of development of individual perception as well as a neglect in the area of the broadening of one's personality or, using the language of the depth psychology – a neglected integration of the shadow. Hall, Adler and neo-Freudianists write that dreams most often feature problem elements about which we dream until we have them, until we have worked through them.

Although generally speaking Hall's idea is actually consistent with psychoanalysis, some of its assumptions are contradictory to it. When specifying the points the dream interpreter should take into account following Hall's method, Ole Vedfelt shows that what needs to be taken into consideration is that "we dream of what we had to think about in the waking life" [translated from the Polish language] (Vedfelt 1999). This invalidates theories about unconscious phantasies present in dreams and the novelty of the content carried by the thought (not yet emerged in the consciousness) the dream may think. And the key evidence proving their existence is the deep analyses of the psychoanalytic perspective.

In our reception of the content of dreams, we may for a moment, following Barthes, assume the author dead, and this shall not be "a suicide as an experience of imagination". This shall be tantamount to the understanding that failure to understand the actual intention of the dream does not have to be a drawback of the work,

i.e. the interpretation of dreams. The free space of comprehension in thinking about oneself may slowly or partially broaden the contexts of understanding one's own experience.

Owing to creative representation, we simultaneously come closer to deeper meanings and we experience a soothing distance of the symbolization or displacements these contents undergo as a part of dreams and as a part of artistic representations. Since this is what the grandness of art is about, why should it not be an advantage of dreaming? What directs the process of the reception of works of art, just like dream interpretation in psychoanalysis, is the efflorescence of associations.

Dreams, although they are sequences, hums, and collections of images, most resemble films. However, what remains of them, is only a tale or its record, a "literary" trace.

Why do literary critics then omit these private stories? If this activity of the mind makes no sense, then literature, aesthetic literary quality and everything it offers through the act of reception are without any sense as well. Although centuries ago Jean-Jacques Rousseau crossed the border of talking about himself, there are still so few dream confessions. If the belief that they do not have much sense was authentic, this sphere would probably have been stripped and deepened long ago in Polish literature, since no one would hesitate to publish their dream journals and their interpretations.¹⁰

The existence of works of art, literature and dreams is not clamorous. Pictures wait in galleries, content awaits among the bindings, and the dream memory silently removes dreams, not transferring them to the long-term memory. Cognition depends on a decision – I shall go to the gallery, I shall open a book, I want to look at my dreams. A picture can be boring, a book can be graphomaniacal, a dream can be insignificant or unnoticed. Some more gaudy experiences also appear. Affective influences do not leave us indifferent. Let us think for example about the first contact with Libera's Lego Auschwitz set. Breakthroughs are not unnoticeable, although it seems that they do not take place without the first interest of the will directed towards cognition.

Perhaps the thinking of the creative structure of dreams and entering into a dialogue with dreaming is excessively positive or perhaps just a bit naive, but it results from a subtle and incomplete opposition inspired by how Segal solves, strongly accentuates and finishes her reflections:

[...] throughout this chapter, I have emphasized how the creative impulse arises out of depressive anxieties, and how their expression in a way meaningful to the recipient involves such processes as are mobilised in the depressive position: the capacity to symbolize; perception of inner and outer reality, and ability to bear eventual separation and separateness (Segal 1991: 90).

¹⁰ To the best of my knowledge, descriptions of their own dreams were published by Jan Lechoń, Maria Dąbrowska, Marian Marzyński, Adam Wiedemann and Henryk Bereza. However, none of the above reliably looked at their dreams in the context of self-discovery. In my opinion, the only such attempt was undertaken by Krystyna Sakowicz.

Indeed, the very expression is related to a loss of something which previously was mute, but it is also a separation and a birth of the meaning we can look at. The creative impulses or the impulses from which dreams originate are not based solely on depressive anxiety, but on the need, desire and preliminary readiness to accept a given content. The position of the artist or creator of a dream and the depressive position have their own joint places, but these can be created by various soils, various bases of creation. These bases can include not only anxiety and depression, not only conflict, but also happiness, love, or amazement or only a desire for them, as for instance in the pleasant dreams about flying. Psychoanalytic understanding has its own concrete feature resulting from the sphere with which it is coping, from the perspective of the disease through which it most often looks and from which each of us can take wonderful lessons in our dream attitude, remembering at the same time that these theories can be in various ways “excessively certain”, to be literally translated into dreams from the daily life as such. For Segal, the artistic impulse aims at a reconstruction of a deconstructed harmony. And since it is an attempt, the nature of the work is always open, unfinished. The creative process is coupled with the depressive position: an attempt at a recovery of the lost world. This seems to be integrally connected with a return of the repressed, with the fact that dreams are “the repressed wish, disguised in the dream”, with a rejection of the possibility that the unconscious in dreams is not only the formerly conscious, but also perhaps simply the not yet understood, the not yet thought, new.

Psychoanalysis is hermeneutics, and symbols/representations always refer us outside themselves – to some other meaning, but also to the accompanying emotions – hence the great role of the context and emotions present in dreams. Fromm divided symbols into conventional, accidental and universal ones (Fromm 1977). The conventional ones operate in the language, the universal ones can be compared to archetypes, and the accidental ones refer to individual experience and often provide dreams with idiosyncrasy.

Dreams not always provide extremely significant content directly from the very core of the great unconsciousness, just like not all literary works discuss the supra-individual property of the self. There are grand dreams, there are masterpieces, there are less important dreams, and there is graphomania. “Great work is like a dream, which, all obvious qualities notwithstanding, does not interpret itself and is therefore unequivocal” (Jung 1976: 402). Similarly, an ordinary dream is like a small book making an introduction to our life.

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Summary

Creative Stories of the Night – Neglected Dreams

In the article *Creative Stories of the Night – Neglected Dreams* I compare the formation of dreams to the creative process of an artist. I propose the liberation of the theory of psychoanalysis and interests in dreams as a basic creative function of the mind.

Keywords

dream studies, psychoanalysis, Hanna Segal, autoanalysis

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Tłumaczenie sfinansowano ze środków Ministerstwa Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego na podstawie umowy nr 661/P-DUN/2018 z dnia 13 lipca 2018 roku w ramach realizacji zadania 1 – stworzenie angielskich wersji wydawanych publikacji w 2019 roku.

The translation was financed with funds made available by the Ministry of Finance and Higher Education under contract No. 661/P-DUN/2018 of 13 July 2018 as a part of the execution of task 1: the creation of English-language versions of the issued publications in 2019.