DREAM AS ART: A MODEL FOR THE CREATIVE INTERPLAY BETWEEN VISUAL IMAGE AND NARRATIVE

Marsha Kinder

Text for the Huichol Yarn Drawing
"This is the house of the deer gods and also where they come down to eat what is on the altar (Caliguey). Also, it is the house of the scorpions because they are the ones who take care of the house. Therefore, they wear the deerheads and the arrows. And the singer, who is the shaman, is blessing the squashes and crops with the corn ears, and the shaman’s woman is lighting the candle inside the altar. Those that appear to be birds and who are tied up come to be the soul of the corn."
Crecencio Pérez Robles
(translated by Nicolás Bautista)
Figure 1.

In the tropical jungles of Jalisco, the Huichol Indians visualize their dreams with bright colored threads, which they set in wax on wooden boards on the back of which they write verbal accounts of the dream narrative. (Figure 1) In the outback of Australia the aborigines draw from Dreamtime—the primary source of their creative expression—songs, dances, rituals, stories and abstract designs for their highly diverse visual and narrative arts. One can find parallel examples of dream adaptation to visual and narrative arts from indigenous peoples of Africa, Indonesia, and the Americas. In all of these cultural contexts, dreams function as a fertile source of artistic creation and cultural innovation. Although new images merge in the dreams of individuals, they ultimately reflect cultural imprinting; the innovation grows out of new combinations of familiar visual images drawn from the natural, social and emotional environment. Once they enter the waking consciousness of the dreamer and the society, these oniric innovations are immediately woven into the cultural fabric of artistic tradition. Among the Huichol, this process is quite literal.

Since the publication of Freud’s pioneering work The Interpretation of Dreams in 1900, our culture has had a compelling psychological theory that establishes dreams as a model for studying the creative process. Despite the fact that Freud did not see dream as art, but merely analogous to it, his dreamwork theory has been widely applied to the conventional arts by critics who are not necessarily Freudian or even psychological in orientation.
I plan to explore the idea of dream as art in an attempt to illuminate two issues that are both foregrounded in dreaming—the kind of control that is operative in the creative process and the relationship between visual image and narrative. Before developing this perspective, I will briefly examine how classical Freudian dreamwork theory might be useful to such a project.

THE CLASSICAL FREUDIAN MODEL

Like Aristotle’s formal analysis of the inherent structure of tragedy, Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* delineates the deep structure inherent in dreams, thereby demonstrating the existence of unconscious control mechanisms. Freud’s dreamwork theory is one of his greatest contributions in that it not only establishes a method of decoding the hidden patterns of dreams, but also proves that the human mind, rather than being a free agent consciously choosing behavior, is actually a vehicle through which a number of unconscious codes are operating.

According to Freud, the unconscious has two systems which collaborate on the creation of dreams. The primary system is the unconscious, which works toward a free discharge of the latent dream thoughts and desires with all of their emotional affect. The secondary system is the preconscious, which works toward inhibition or censorship of the latent dream thoughts and desires by disguising them through codes that appear in the manifest content of the dream (what the conscious mind sees and experiences). In this disguised language the unconscious material is less threatening to the conscious mind. Even if we reject Freud’s emphasis on disguise as the primary reason for coding, as most contemporary dream theorists do, we can still find his description of the four basic dreamwork codes—condensation, displacement, concrete representability, and secondary revision—extraordinarily valuable and influential to all subsequent investigations of the creative process in virtually every medium.

Despite his continued insistence that dream was only analogous to art, Freud encouraged the application of his dreamwork theory to all art forms.

Just as all neurotic symptoms and . . . dreams are capable of being “over-interpreted” and indeed need to be, if they are to be fully understood, so all genuinely creative writings are the product of more than a single motive and more than a single impulse in the poet’s mind, and are open to more than a single interpretation.  

Since most of the critical discourse involving Freud has focused on these four dreamwork codes and has applied them extensively to other art forms, I will not dwell on them here. But this omission should in no way imply a minimizing of their value or influence. What is perhaps most important for my project is that the formal analysis in Freud’s dreamwork theory established the analogy with language, implying that one might develop a semiotics of dreams (contrasting verbal and visual signs), and it redefined dreams as a creative medium of expression that might be approached through structure or style like any other art form.

Not only did Freud establish dreaming as a medium, but he also laid the groundwork for a stylistic analysis of the individual dream, which could allow for individual variation. In the 1909 edition, he added this comment. “The form of a dream or the form in which it is dreamt is used with quite surprising frequency for representing its concealed subject-matter.” (p. 367) Although Freud does not really develop this idea, he suggests elsewhere that the unconscious has a choice of
forms. These remarks could lead to the establishment of a dream stylistics—an analysis of the style of individual dreamers which might provide a new access to meaning as it does in other art forms, one that is not so heavily concentrated on content. One might ask of an individual dream style: how do the dreams typically begin and end, what is the shape of the narrative, how are the shifts in scenes handled, how do the dreams use sound, color and space?

Freud also establishes the foundation for a theory of dream genres. Although he distinguishes between individual dreams (those that are peculiar or unique) and "typical" dreams, he decides not to call the latter universal since he himself never experienced two of the most common types—flying and falling dreams. He complains that "our art" is weakest on this material, for these typical dreams do not seem to evoke sufficient associations for interpretations but have to be interpreted by collecting many examples from different dreamers—exactly the process that Jung was to pursue with great enthusiasm. Yet Freud does provide valuable paradigms for the genres he has experienced—especially dreams of nakedness and the death of loved ones—narrative paradigms that are similar to those developed by Frye, Propp and Levi-Strauss in their structural study of literature, fairy tales and myth. Freud traces the dream of nakedness to the myth of the Garden of Eden and to the fairy tale of the Emperor's New Clothes, suggesting that dream genres have the same roots as literary genres and that whatever we discover about the former may illuminate the latter.

In assuming that the "typical dream" precedes the myth or literary variations, Freud also lays the groundwork for a theory of dream adaptation—in which dreams provide resonant images, stories and genres that are later combined and adapted in our most powerful conscious art. He observes:

There can be no doubt that the connection between our typical dreams and fairy tales and the material of other kinds of creative writing are neither few nor accidental. It sometimes happens that the sharp eye of a creative writer has an analytic realization of the process of transformation of which he is habitually no more than the tool. If so, he may follow the process in a reverse direction and so trace back the imaginative writing to a dream. (p. 279)

In this context, then, he acknowledges the combination of conscious and unconscious control mechanisms in some of the most highly developed art. His discussion of this process is richest and most specific when he deals with the theme of Oedipus.

There is an unmistakable indication in the text of Sophocles' tragedy itself that the legend of Oedipus sprang from some primaeval dream-material which had as its content the distressing disturbance of a child's relation to his parents owing to the first stirrings of sexuality. At a point when Oedipus, though he is not yet enlightened, has begun to feel troubled by his recollection of the oracle, Jocasta consoles him by referring to a dream which many people dream, though, as she thinks, it has no meaning: [Freud quotes from Sophocles]

Many a man ere now in dreams hath lain
With her who bare him. He hath least annoy
Who with such omens troubleth not his mind. (p. 297)

Freud continues: "It is clearly the key to the tragedy and the complement to the dream of the dreamer's father being dead. The story of Oedipus is the reaction of the imagination to these two typical dreams" (pp 297-298).

Jung carries this idea of dream adaptation much further, arguing that dreams draw on universal archetypal images, of which the Oedipal theme is merely one example. He claims these archetypes are visualizations of human instincts that are
inherited through a collective unconscious, and that the best art must draw on this same reservoir of images. In this way, he introduces an evolutionary perspective on dream adaptation.

The impact of an archetype, whether it takes the form of immediate experience [as in a dream] or is expressed through the spoken word, stirs us because it summons up a voice that is stronger than our own. Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices; he enthralls and overpowers... He transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind, enabling humanity to find a refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night. That is the secret of great art, and its effect upon us. The creative process... consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest springs of life. Therein lies the social significance of art.³

Jung goes beyond Freud in suggesting a more specific connection between the individual visual image and narrative. Whereas Freud distrusted the narrative aspect of the manifest content and focused instead on free associations to visual images as a method of discovering the latent dream thoughts, Jung implies that the dream narrative is actually generated by the visual image.

Although Freud and Jung both argue that the unconscious creates coherent patterns and that the best art draws on these unconscious designs, they still accept the assumption that art must have a high degree of conscious control. Freud says it must be reworked by the “imagination” while Jung claims it must be “elaborated and shaped into a finished work.”¹ For this reason, neither sees dream as an art form, but merely analogous. Although both illuminate the idea of dream adaptation, they focus on only one side of the process—from dream to art. But conscious art, whether visual or narrative, can also shape the dreams of the audience—not just as an echo of past archetypal experience that takes us back to the deepest springs of life, but as raw material for the cultural dreampool, the reservoir of images both in the individual and society that provides new creative possibilities for the future.

Within the psychoanalytic framework, two recent writers have carried the analogy with art and the analysis of dream adaptation much further in very fruitful ways. In The Emerging Goddess, Albert Rothenberg presents a fascinating in-depth study of the creation of a single poem and its relation to dreams experienced right after the poem was begun—probably the most detailed analysis of this kind ever done.¹ Yet, Rothenberg retains the Freudian assumptions that have been so widely challenged—that all dreams are wish fulfillments and that dreamwork is controlled by censorship. He finds dreams to be creative but not art, primarily because art uses censorship so differently: “The creative process functions to reverse censorship, while dreams depend on it.” (p. 32). In striving to make his analysis support these questionable Freudian assumptions, Rothenberg distorts both the art and the dreams and fails to develop the richest implications of his material.

Charles Rycroft in The Innocence of Dreams is bolder in challenging some of Freud’s major assumptions. For example, he argues that Freud’s concept of the primary and secondary processes should be replaced by that of discursive and non-discursive symbolism, particularly as developed by Susanne Langer. Instead of treating all dreams as wish fulfillments or seeing them as analogous to abnormal psychic phenomena, Rycroft compares dreams to waking imaginative activity. He assumes “that imagination is a natural, normal activity of an agent or self, and that dreaming is its sleeping form.”¹⁶ Yet the psychoanalytic (rather than the cross-cultural) context still leads him to distinguish between dream and art because “in
general the imagery used by the dream imagination is too private, too idiosyncratic, too ephemeral, and too dependent on the dreamer's intimate biography for dreams to be convertible into works of art of universal or even wide appeal.” (p. 165) Still, his argument moves away from the issues of censorship and conscious control, which makes his analogy between dreams and art much more compelling than in any previous discussion, and he also extends Jung's evolutionary perspective.

To conclude, dreaming and waking imaginative activity resemble one another in that they both create "novel results" (Darwin's phrase) by uniting, condensing and fusing images and ideas already present in the mind, in that they do so independently of the will, and in that their meaning, when they can be seen to have one, is always multiple and manifold. Furthermore, the self or agent that creates them is not the "I" or Ego that opposes itself to the rest of the universe but some wider, less personal self to which the "I" has to abandon itself, in the case of dreaming by falling asleep, in the case of waking imaginative activity by attainment of that receptive state of mind which Keats called Negative Capability. (pp 166-167)

AN EXPLORATION OF DREAM AS ART

Following the creative strategy of dreams, this speculation recombines images and ideas from various other theories and contexts, the juxtaposition of which builds new patterns to make new interfaces. By moving beyond the classical assumption that dream is merely analogous to art and by accepting dream as the prototypical art form, this project attempts to generate new insights into the creative process and more specifically into the relationship between visual image and narrative.

The artistic process that emerges from the new neurophysiology of dreams is one that features the selection and recombination of images stored in the memory. This double articulation immediately raises the analogy with verbal language—more specifically, the paradigmatic and syntagmatic functions discovered by Saussure in the process of inventing structural linguistics. In dreams the process of selection may be at least partially random and the units being selected are sensory images or iconic signs (or in Freudian terms, concrete representations) rather than culturally coded abstract symbols like phonemes and morphemes in verbal language. Although we do not really know the basis of the paradigmatic groupings (as in film, there are no equivalents to categories like nouns and verbs), the selections may be related to emotional affect or wishes (as Freud argues), or to basic human instincts (as Jung assumes), or they may be purely random (as neurophysiologists like Hobson and McCarley suggest). In the syntagmatic combinations of these images, the dream generates not sentences, but narratives. Freud implies that the narrative element is introduced by the preconscious through the code of secondary revision, as a disguise mechanism. But if we reject his emphasis on censorship, then one could just as readily see the narrative element as growing out of simple juxtaposition. Whether in dreams, myths, or conscious fictions like novels or films, stories may have an evolutionary function: to combine sensory images based on recorded experience in as many ways as possible in order to design new patterns of transformation and new strategies for survival.

One of Rycroft's most important contributions is in introducing Susanne Langer into the psychoanalytic discourse on dreams. She is particularly central in developing the relationship between visual image and narrative, and in suggesting a connection between dream and the photographic arts. In Philosophy in a New Key, Langer describes the human reliance on visual sense images:

The "sense-image" is not a direct copy of actual experience, but has been "projected," in the process of copying, into a new dimension, the more or less stable form we call a picture. It
has not the protean, mercurial elastiveness of real visual experience, but a unity and lasting identity that makes it an object of the mind's possession rather than a sensation. We can call up images and let them fill the virtual space of vision between us and real objects, or on the screen of the dark, and dismiss them again, without altering the course of practical events.

This passage makes the visual image sound very much like a photograph or a cinematic shot; she suggests elsewhere in this work that humans had been relying on these basic visual signifiers—in waking thought and in dreams—long before photography and cinema were invented. She also defines these visual signifiers as the basic units of narrative.

Presentational symbolism... grows from the momentary, single, static image presenting a simple concept, to greater and greater units of successive images having reference to each other; changing scenes, even visions of things in motion, by which we conceive the passage of events. That is to say, the first thing we do with images is to envisage a story; just as the first thing we do with words is to tell something, to make a statement. Image-making is, then, the mode of our untutored thinking, and stories are its earliest product. (p. 145)

Langer's statements imply that the still image or photograph is essentially linked to narrative, but without really explaining why. There might be many ways to develop this connection with specific references to the art of photography. A photograph may imply a narrative because it selects a particular moment or image to be frozen; then we would want to ask where that moment occurs in the latent narrative. Is it at the center, implying both a beginning and ending, a visual media res? Or is it at the beginning, a germinial image out of which the whole story is spun—the kind of structure that Robbe-Grillet uses in his film Eden and After, opening with a series of fragmented still images, which are combined and recombined in a variety of ways to generate the narrative that follows? Or does it evoke the end, the final outcome that determines the interpretation and meaning of everything that preceded it, as the nature of our death reshapes our life? Or does it frame the film, like the powerful image of the young boy reaching out his hand to touch the huge close-up of a woman's face which opens and closes Bergman's Persona? These questions seem to lead us away from photography toward cinema, for in the former the narrative issues are raised primarily in the mind of the spectator rather than in the work itself. But usually in a photographic exhibit, the spectator sees a series of images, whose mere juxtaposition, whether randomly arranged or controlled by some conscious pattern, already implies a narrative dimension. Perhaps, then, the relation between image and narrative in dream lies somewhere between that found in photography and cinema.

The photographer can also be engaged in narrative issues. Perhaps the photograph implies a narrative because it forces the photographer to reframe the object in a new pattern that assigns human meaning. If the photographer avoids conscious selection in the shooting or exhibiting process, then perhaps the artistic choice comes when confronting the proofsheet, which already implies narrative continuity through juxtaposition, a kind of comic strip or unedited footage. To what degree is the choice affected by the surrounding alternatives? The rejected shots may leave traces on the image that is finally selected. Though Langer describes the process of converting visual images into stories and defines it as an essential characteristic that helps distinguish humans from other animals, she does not really explain the function of narrative.

In Mind and Nature, Gregory Bateson also discusses the human capacity for image formation in an evolutionary context. Though he acknowledges that we know very little about this phenomenon, he nevertheless speculates about its function.
The fact of image formation remains almost totally mysterious. How it is done, we know not—nor, indeed, for what purpose. . . . Speculation suggests that image formation is perhaps a convenient or economical method of passing information across some sort of interface. Notably, where a person must act in a context between two machines, it is convenient to have the machines feed their information to him or her in image form. . . . It would be reasonable to guess that mammals form images because the mental processes of mammals must deal with many interfaces.

When Bateson describes some of the experiments using image formation, they sound surprisingly like the process of dream production described in J. Allan Hobson and Robert W. McCarley's activation-synthesis model, which challenges the Freudian model.

Activation-synthesis asserts that the basic energy and the basic information stimuli for the dream process are automated, stereotyped, and of low, precognitive order. This is our key point in contesting Freud's view of dreaming as driven by ideas (cognition as energy) and shaped by censorship and disguise (meaning as obscured). In our view, the synthetic processes that bind our peculiar dream perceptions into a seamless fabric indicate cognitive and even creative process of high order. Indeed, activation-synthesis should be quite attractive to humanists since it contests Freud's much more demeaning disguise-censorship account of dream bizarreness, an account which attributed these elaborate and sometimes beautiful elements to purely defensive maneuvers. As a corollary, activation-synthesis views REM sleep and dreaming as having a very positive functional significance for the brain and mind. For Freud, the dream-work was a process of meaning transformation only and most transformations were degradations. Activation-synthesis frees the investigation of dream cognition (including both meaning attribution and even symbol construction) from the Freudian straight jacket of historical and pathogenic determination by viewing dream synthesis as both original and conflict-free.

It is precisely the function of dealing with interfaces through visual images that has led many recent dream theorists, especially those who are attempting to reconcile neurophysiological and psycholinguistic models, to conclude that dreams must be an evolutionary development that helped to further the dominance of brains over genes as the primary storehouse of information. In Dragons of Eden, Carl Sagan speculates:

Somewhere in the steaming jungles of the carboniferous period there emerged an organism that for the first time in the history of the world had more information in its brains than in its genes. It was an early reptile. . . . Much of the history of life since the carboniferous period can be described as the gradual (and certainly incomplete) dominance of brains over genes.

I would suggest that dreaming sleep, which was an evolutionary development in mammals, is a mechanism of processing information that helped to further this dominance of brains over DNA. As the dreaming mechanisms grew increasingly complex in primates and in humans, the brain developed new ways of processing data from the past and present and generating and testing new possibilities for the future. Physiological psychologist Edmond Dewan offers a reprogramming theory, comparing the brain to a computer and suggesting that the purpose of sleep is to reprogram the brain by sorting memories and motor routines according to drives and goals. Several recent evolutionary theories are summarized by Richard M. Jones in The New Psychology of Dreaming, which favors the evolutionary approach as the most compelling and promising contemporary theory and concludes with this statement:

It may be that once Nature committed Man to his point of no return, his capacity to make his own culture. . . . she then equipped him with the means to make the most of it. . . . By making
it not merely possible but necessary that he *Dream*—every night—about every ninety minutes.10

From this perspective, one might speculate that dreams developed in mammals to handle the interface between past and future, tradition and innovation, inner and outer experience, biological programming and cultural imprinting.

According to Bateson, both genetic change and human learning are stochastic processes, combining randomness and control.

In each case there is, I believe, a stream of events that is random in certain aspects and in each case there is a nonrandom selective process which causes certain of the random components to “survive” longer than others. Without the random, there can be no new thing. (p. 163)

In defining this nonrandom selective process, he claims that new ideas in evolution must fit the organism’s internal demands for coherence and the external requirements of environment. These two components function as a conservative form of *rigor*, which Bateson assumes is missing in dreams: “Dream is a process, uncorrected by either internal rigor or external reality” (p. 246). Yet these are precisely the components that are introduced in dream interpretation and also in what Freud calls *secondary revision*. Although he labeled this process “secondary” and defined it as a censorship mechanism, Freud claimed that it occurred in the dreamwork itself as well as in the subsequent dream report. The dreamer and/or analyst decode or create an internal coherence based on the dream, transforming the fragmented visual images into a narrative that is read in the context of waking reality. The dream model suggests that interpretation or the reading of juxtaposed images, plays a key role in the creation of narratives. Although the random component is crucial for generating new creative possibilities, the human mind is apparently incapable of accepting any series as a purely random combination. We seem to be programmed for narrativity—both for creating and reading stories as projected interpretations of how individual sense images fit together.

All of this speculation suggests that the traditional opposition between conscious control and unconscious randomness, which has been one of the primary objections to the consideration of dream as art—this opposition must be reconceived in one of two ways: either as an opposition between selection and randomness, which function together as essential components of any creative system as Bateson argues; or as an opposition among various kinds of control, including conscious vs. unconscious control, which was implicit in Freud’s dreamwork theory and in his conception of over-determination. Moreover, the unconscious systems are not limited to Freud’s notion of the id. For example, in the context of literary scholarship, unconscious stylistic traits have traditionally been used as the most reliable basis for identifying anonymous manuscripts. The same principle is used in handwriting analysis and voice prints. In her influential essay “On Style,” Susan Sontag—a phenomenologically-oriented critic who has been highly censorious of psychoanalytic criticism and the Freudian search for latent meaning—argues that the role of the random component of style has never been sufficiently acknowledged. In insisting that what is inevitable in a work of art is the style, she explains why the unconscious stylistics have been used to identify anonymous texts.

The strongest source for this argument in favor of unconscious control lies in Saussure’s structural linguistics, or more specifically in his discovery of *langue*—the system in which all speakers of a language situate themselves, the knowledge of
which is essential for any individual speech act. Subsequent research with brain-damaged patients has revealed that the double articulation of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations that he discovered in the structure of language (the combination of different kinds of words to form sentences, e.g., subject, verb and object; and the selection of individual words from each category, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.) actually had a physiological base in the structure of the human brain. Thus a person damaged in one part of the brain might have difficulties with combinations, while someone damaged in a slightly different area might have problems with the process of selection. Any individual speech act is therefore controlled, not only by conscious choice and the structure of the particular language, but also by the structure of human physiology.

Individual dreams also appear to be over-determined in this way. From a neurophysiological perspective, the dreaming process is genetically programmed into the human brain; its biological rhythms are as regular and coherent as heartbeat and breathing and are triggered by the primitive brainstem. In humans the forebrain is also involved—it selects, by some unknown process, sense images stored in the memory, processes and recombines them in ways that involve randomness. Yet these images are certainly connected to external reality, for that is their ultimate source. Allan Hobson describes the process.

In dreaming sleep, the loop between the outside visual world and the visual system is eliminated, and the visual system must process a sequence of signals and predict the changes in the visual scene that would result from the internally generated eye movements. But since there is no image signal coming from the outside world, only the efferent copy of the movement command is available as visual “stimulus” information. The jump changes in imagery during the dream may be a function of the visual system’s effort to create a new image to account for the internally generated data.11

This idea is fascinating because it shows how dreams create an interface between inner and outer data and how the creation of dream narratives is rooted in the process of interpretation—i.e., selecting sense images from the memory and using them to create new images that will “account for” or fit the internally generated data. This description also provides a principle of selection or rigor for the randomly generated images in dreams, a principle that would have to be attuned both to the internal coherence of the human brain, and to its previous experience with external reality—the two components that Bateson establishes for evolutionary thinking in Mind and Nature.

In a more recent article, Hobson even questioned the use of the term random in his activation-synthesis model developed with McCarley.

We should never have used the word random because it suggests disorder. What we meant was that, at its root, the activation process was both of informationally low level (pulses) and subject to informationally confusing perturbations (codes) that would render the task of cognitive syntheses difficult and perhaps impossible by the standards of waking mentation. I still believe this to be a refreshing insight. Perhaps the bizarreness of dreams is related to the fact that in REM sleep internally generated pulse codes arise in the absence of externally defined time-space continuum and must therefore be synthesized by the simple combinatorial rules of perception and cognition.12

Hobson related this synthetic process more directly to narrative in the first issue of Dreamworks where he developed an analogy between dream-production and filmmaking.
We may now regard the brain as a camera-projector. During waking, the brain is taking pictures: images are accepted at a rate of about 10-20 per second. . . . Our brains shoot, develop, and edit instantaneously. . . . During dreams, the visual system is activated but images from the outside world are not available. Rather, the images must be called up from memory stores in an effort to fit the internally generated data about eye movement. (pp. 23-24)

Both dream and film are narrative media—the most ancient and the most recent—that rely primarily on visual images and that have tremendous impact on changing consciousness. The evolutionary function of narrative is rooted in dreams, but in our culture it is projected most powerfully on movie and television screens, which have also become the primary transmitters of myth. These visual media generate thousands of prefabricated images that become part of our cultural imprinting and are reprocessed in our dreams. The dream takes the “sense images” based on our actual experience—as if they were the raw genetic material—recombines, restructures and reinscribes these fragments through a process that is partially random and partially controlled, detaches them from their original context, pushes them back to the status of signifiers in order to build another text, another narrative that creates something new and more imaginative. These dream narratives design new strategies of survival for the future, to forestall the death or erasure of the individual, the culture, and the species.

REFERENCES