

Daniel: psychological development of a master biblical dream interpreter

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Abstract: This article describes the growth and development of Daniel as a master Biblical dream interpreter. In his clinical use of dreams, he is compared to a contemporary Jungian analyst who faces difficult clinical dilemmas such as interpreting a dream that is forgotten, understanding the difference between a ‘big dream’ and a personal dream, as well as the situation when a dream is interpreted within a dream. Daniel’s technique is compared to traditional Jewish dream rituals. Although the Book of Daniel is usually considered as a series of disconnected episodes, the author argues that the sequence of chapters reveals the process of Daniel’s individuation as described by Neumann’s concept of centroversion.

Keywords: Bible, big dreams versus personal dreams, centroversion, Daniel, dream incubation, dream interpretation, dream rituals, Neumann, Talmud

In this article, I describe the growth and development of the Biblical figure of Daniel as a dream interpreter of ‘big dreams’ of the King and subsequently his own dreams. I argue that such prospective, objective, big dreams can at the same time be understood as subjective, personal dreams, which provide insight into contemporary clinical dilemmas. Daniel lived during a time of severe national catastrophe. The Kingdom of Judea had been conquered and ceased to exist, its inhabitants had been massacred or exiled. The destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem further created a theological, religious, ritual and moral crisis. As we shall see, Daniel played a pivotal role in reconstructing a Judaism based on prayer rather than animal sacrifice. The Book of Daniel opens in the initial period following the Exile to Babylon.

Dreaming and dream interpretation are human universals found in every culture. The role of dreams and dream sharing, however, varies from culture to culture. Specific religious and dream traditions take very different attitudes toward dream sharing. Therapists universally encourage patients to tell their dreams but it is not so for all dream traditions. For example, in Islam, a hadith tradition argues that a good dream should be shared but a bad one should not. Certain other traditions take the opposite view. Good dreams

should remain secret until such time as their goodness is fulfilled. Nightmares and bad dreams must be told in order to disperse their bad 'karma'. In the Ancient Near East, dreams played a central role in these cultures, as is known from the many dream books that archeologists and epigraphers have discovered. Typically, these dream books in the Ancient Near East use dream imagery to predict the future. The earliest dream book that has been discovered is a papyrus dated to the early reign of Ramesses II (1,279-1,213 B.C.E.). Drawing on Jung's well-known distinction between signs and symbols, it can be said that, in these compilations, dreams were exclusively interpreted as signs indicative of good or bad fortune, and never as symbols. For example, it is written: 'If a man dreams of looking out of a window, good; for his voice will be heard' (Karp 2016).

Dreams also play a decisive role in the *Bible*. But Biblical dreams all involve symbols and symbolic interpretation. Although the Old Testament contains only 12 dreams, each one is of exceptional significance (Shalit 2009). What is remarkable is that some dreams speak for themselves and require no interpretation, such as Jacob's own dream of angels ascending and descending. Still other dreams are in a symbolic form but their meanings are immediately clear to those who hear the dream, if not to the dreamer himself; there is no need for interpretation. Such is the case of Joseph's own dreams of sheaves, and then stars, all bowing down to him, which his father and brothers immediately understand as Joseph's grandiose will to power. Other 'royal dreams' are deeply disturbing and defy standard attempts at dream interpretation by court 'experts'. Biblical dreams can therefore be understood in terms of Jung's distinction between *personal* dreams and *big* dreams (Jung 1945/1948, paras. 555 & 559). Personal dreams deal with the dreamer's own psychological issues, while big dreams come from deeper levels and have a broader, collective significance. Joseph's own initial dreams are a dramatic instance of how what seems to be at first a purely personal dream, becomes understood only much later as a big dream, revealing how it is his destiny to save his family and people. As a result, it may be helpful to consider big dreams and personal dreams not as a dichotomy, but as overlapping, or even on a continuum.

The dreams of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar that defied the understanding of the court magicians are classic types of 'big' dreams that affect not only the royal dreamer but also his entire kingdom (Jung 1945/1948, paras. 554-5; Bulkeley 2016). In contrast, the absence of dreams may be equally significant. When, on the eve of a decisive battle, King Saul (1 Sam 28:15) realizes he has had no dream, he knows his cause is lost. Biblical dreams, although few in number, reveal how profound the impact of a big dream can be and how important it is to find the correct interpretation (Almoli 1998).

In the *Bible*, there are two outstanding dream interpreters: Joseph and Daniel. Joseph's dreams always appear in pairs. His own initial dreams of stars and sheaves bowing down to him; the pair of dreams he interprets to Pharaoh's

officials, the baker and cupbearer confined with him in prison, and the pair of dreams Pharaoh tells him. While these three pairs of dreams associated with Joseph are well known and well-studied (Zeligs 1955; Wax 1998; Husser 1999; Holowchak 2012), Daniel and his dream interpretations are relatively neglected, with the possible exception of Frieden (1990) and van der Zwan (2018). One possible reason may be because Joseph's own dreams and his dream interpretations form part of one of the most compelling narratives in Scripture; these dreams play a crucial role in pushing the story forward.

In contrast is the episodic structure of the Book of Daniel, where each chapter, with its own dream, stands on its own. Despite the differences between these two dream mavens, the parallels between the two Biblical dream interpreters are striking. Both Joseph and Daniel had been taken as prisoners to live in a foreign land; both rise to positions of great power and prestige in the Royal Court through their unique talent as interpreters of dreams; both are inadvertently called upon to interpret the ruler's dream, which had baffled all the wise men and magicians of the royal court; both intuitively understand the dreams as 'big dreams' and are able to understand their symbolism and practical implications.

Joseph understands that dreams dreamt in the same night should be treated as one dream, much as current analysts would do. For both Joseph and Daniel, a personal dream is included in their narrative. But here there is a difference. Joseph's dreams of sheaves and stars bowing down to him occurs at the very start of his career, when he is apparently an adolescent. Moreover, his brothers and father immediately understand the dream. No interpretation is needed. Joseph, a naïve narcissist, does not seem to understand the implication and impact of his dream sharing. Only years later, is it revealed that this early dream was a prospective 'big dream'. Such retrospective understanding is not unusual, as on those occasions when the true, deeper meaning of an initial dream is only revealed toward the end of the analysis.

Daniel's complex dreams, in contrast, occur when he is at the height of his powers. The angel Gabriel appears within the dream and gives him insight concerning the meaning of the dream. He says: 'I have come down to teach you how to understand' (9:22). Interestingly, the Talmud states that dreams interpreted within the dream are signs of their validity: 'R. Johanan also said: Three kinds of dream are fulfilled: an early morning dream, a dream which a friend has about one, and a dream which is interpreted in the midst of a dream. Some add also, a dream that is repeated, as it says, and for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice' (Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b)¹. Most

¹ The Talmud is composed of a number of Tractates. Berachot is one of these Tractates which deals (mostly) with Blessing, the meaning of Berachot. There are two versions of the Talmud: Babylonian Talmud and the more incomplete Jerusalem Talmud.

importantly, both Joseph and Daniel attribute their hermeneutic skill not to their ego abilities but to Divine inspiration, to the power of the Self.

One of the difficulties with the Book of Daniel is that while half of the book is in Hebrew, the other half is in Aramaic. Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of the Persian Empire, is the language of the Talmud, the kaddish prayer for the dead and, most probably, the language that Jesus spoke. But Aramaic is a language known today only to scholars and Talmudists, making the work inaccessible even to Hebrew speakers. Although the story of Daniel in the lions' den is the best-known part of the book, most chapters of the Book of Daniel reveal him as a master dream interpreter.

How did Daniel (and Joseph) learn to become dream interpreters? After all, there were no psychoanalytic training programmes, no dream seminars, nor case supervision. However, Daniel did undergo an experience which helped him connect with his inner self that provided the psychological grounding from which his ability as a dream interpreter would emerge. In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar asked that a certain number of boys of noble or royal descent, without physical defect, of good appearance, trained in every kind of wisdom, well informed, quick at learning, be chosen to be trained to serve in the palace of the King. These cadets were taught the language and literature of Chaldeans and given a daily allowance of food, meat and wine. Because the food and wine were not kosher, Daniel refused to consume them. The Chief Eunuch in charge of Daniel was very concerned for his health and even more about the anger of the King. But Daniel told him that he would eat only vegetables but would nevertheless be healthier than the rest of the cadets. Daniel and his friends ate only vegetables and, at the end of the week, they were healthier than all the other cadets. The Biblical text says that, following this experience, Daniel was given the gift of interpreting every vision and dream. What connection is there between Daniel's vegetarianism and the gift of interpreting dreams?

The connection, I believe, does not lie in the spiritual value of vegetarianism *per se*, but rather in the inherent ego strength to be true to one's values and truth, especially in a hostile environment. To persevere in one's own true way, is a sign of individuation and a deep connection with Self. When Daniel did become a full member of Nebuchadnezzar's court, the text relates that on whatever points of wisdom or information, Daniel was found to be ten times better than the magicians and enchanters of the entire kingdom.

Chapter 1 of the Book of Daniel presents his biographical transformation from an exiled refugee to a wise man of court. Chapter 2 presents his debut as a dream interpreter and elucidates one of the most difficult and paradoxical clinical situations: how to interpret a forgotten dream. Nebuchadnezzar, the King, had a series of disturbing dreams. He called all of his dream experts, magicians and enchanters and commanded them to interpret his dream. They asked him to tell them his dream, but he refused. It

is most likely that he had forgotten the dream but it is possible he did not want to tell them, perhaps because he was ashamed or traumatized by the dream, or even because he unconsciously understood its meaning. The text only states he did not tell them the dream but insisted they interpret it without him telling it. He went into a fury and demanded they interpret the dream that he had not told them. He threatened them with execution and the demolition of their houses if they could not do so. Daniel, although not even present, was included in the mass execution order.

This strange situation of being forced to interpret a dream which is untold or forgotten is a common occurrence in psychotherapy. Often, patients will say, 'I had a dream, but I don't remember it'. The forgotten dream, like the presence of an absence, may have strong reverberations in the session, highlighting the interface between known and unknown and the knowledge of the thing unknown. It is true that sometimes it is important to analyse the experience of forgetting or hold what cannot come to light until a capacity for reflection has been developed. But at other times there is a psychological urgency to grasp and understand what is forgotten, similar to that which Nebuchadnezzar felt. In my clinical work I have experienced such urgency in dealing with the case of a repressed trauma, or a replacement child (Abramovitch 2014; Schellinski 2019). In the case of repressed trauma, the therapist must urgently interpret what the patient does not remember; like the King, if the therapist is unable to uncover what is hidden, the patient, like the King may execute them, i.e. fire the therapist, or worse, commit suicide. Similarly, in the case of a replacement child, the therapist must urgently understand the ghostly inner figures, death motifs and lack of inner wholeness that are reflections of the incomplete grief of the parent for a dead child, stillborn or foetus, which inhabits the inner world of the patient. Daniel asked the King, via his chief Eunuch, for a stay of execution for the magicians so that he might reveal the dream and its interpretation. Interestingly, the Talmud deals explicitly with the issue of the forgotten dream.

Recovering lost dreams

Most dreamers have the experience of waking from a dream, only to have it slip through their mental fingertips. The more we try to recover the dream, the more it fades from view, back into the ocean of sleep. On the other hand, most people have had the experience of suddenly remembering a dream in the middle of the day. This suggests that dreams are registered somewhere in an inaccessible dream space until they become magically de-repressed. Is it possible to recover lost dreams? Some Rabbis claimed it was. They said it was possible to recover lost dreams at the time of the reciting of the Priestly blessing in the synagogue. Here is the text:

If one has seen a dream and does not remember what he saw, let him stand before the priests at the time when they spread out their hands, and say as follows: 'Sovereign of the Universe, I am Yours and my dreams are Yours. I have dreamt a dream and I do not know what it is. Whether I have dreamt about myself or my companions have dreamt about me, or I have dreamt about others, if they are good dreams, confirm them and reinforce them like the dreams of Joseph, and if they require a remedy, heal them, as the waters of Marah were healed by Moses ...

(Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b)

The priestly blessing, 'May the Lord bless you and keep you ...', is the oldest part of the Hebrew prayer ritual. The priest holds a prayer shawl aloft, with fingers separated like a cloven hoof so that they are covered, hidden by the prayer shawl. Each priest repeats the blessing, word by word, in an ancient chant led by the prayer leader. Since it is a moment of transmission of the divine blessings, traditionally, one is forbidden from looking directly at the priests while they are giving the blessing, when the divine channels are most open. The Rabbis understood that at this special moment, dreams might resurface from the ocean of the unconscious.

The need to stay in touch with the unconscious and the Self is highlighted by another saying: R. Ze'ira said: 'If a man goes seven days without a dream, he is called evil...' (Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b). In a more symbolic vein, losing touch with our dreams may be equated with losing touch with ourselves and our inner life. Once we are so de-centred, we are prone to psychic possession and that is, according to Jung, the root of evil. It is important to stress that the Rabbis were deeply ambivalent to dreams and their interpretation. On the one hand, remembering dreams was seen as a key aspect of mental health, where dreams in the Bible had a dramatic life-changing impact when properly understood. On the other hand, Rabbis, as rationalists, were suspicious of the non-rationality of dreams, and the danger and difficulty of discerning prophetic dreams from deceitful ones (I Kings 22:22-3). One dream doubter argued that dreams have only a sixtieth part of prophetic truth.

The Rabbis, significantly, were post-modern in the sense that they could happily hold diverse interpretations simultaneously, and this was especially true of dreams. Consider this delightful story: R. Bana'ah: 'There were twenty-four interpreters of dreams in Jerusalem. Once I dreamt a dream and I went round to all of them and they all gave different interpretations, and all were fulfilled, thus confirming that which is said: All dreams follow the mouth' (Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b). This last line, 'All dreams follow the mouth', is the most famous line in the entire Talmudic dream book. The *mouth* refers to the spoken interpretation, which determines the significance of the dream, and not the dream itself. This view is relational, in that the dream experience is situated within the context of a relationship in which the interpretation takes place.

How did Daniel discover the dream and its interpretation? The Bible says it was through a night vision. This seems like a form of dream incubation, in which Daniel was able to call forth the King's dream (Bilu & Abramovitch 1985). In a sense, Daniel understood the King's dream because he had dreamed the King's dream in his own bed. It is possible he used a ritual similar to that described in the Talmud.

Dream question ritual

There is a traditional dream practice, mentioned in the Bible (I Samuel 28:6), the Talmud (*Baba Metzia* 107b) and still practised today, called 'dream question' (in Hebrew: *She'elat Halom*). It is a form of dream incubation whereby a person attains a wonderful prophetic-like state while dreaming, receiving a divinely-inspired answer to a question meditated on before sleep. In Jungian terms, we might say that the idea was to activate the Self, which would then provide a symbolic response to the concerns of the ego. As with so much in Judaism, there is no standard, accepted way of initiating a dream question. The early medieval master, Hai Gaon, notes one method for attaining a dream question involving fasting, purification, mystical weeping and meditation on a text such as Exodus 14:19-21, or Ezekiel 1:1, or Deuteronomy 29:28. Each verse contains 72 consonants alluding to a mystical series of Hebrew letters said to represent the true name of God. One may also say before sleep the following: '*Master of Dreams, before I enter your world of healing and visions, I place myself in your hands. I need your guidance. Help me find my path. May this question in my dream be answered*' (Ochs & Ochs 2003). The great Kabbalist, Haim Vital, proposed a visualization reminiscent of Jungian active imagination or even Jung's *Red Book*:

Visualize that above the firmament, there is a very great white curtain, upon which the Tetragrammaton [four letter Divine name] is inscribed in [colour] white as snow, in Assyrian writing in a certain colour ... and the great letters are inscribed there, each one large as a mountain or a hill. And you should imagine in your thought that you ask your question from those combinations of letters written there, and they will answer your question, or they will dwell their spirit in your mouth, or you will be drowsy and they will answer you, like in a dream.

(Vital 1998, p. 7)

The dream question might be asked in the cemetery, at the grave of a parent or Spiritual Teacher, or at home, after purifying one's home especially of any smells. In some other cases, friends would promise to appear to the other after death and give a full account of life after death. Rabbis would ask religious, legal or mystical questions of long-dead scholars. On occasion, such dreams resolved a difficult controversy. It is as if we could ask Jung or Marie

Louise Von Franz (1998) to appear in a dream and help us understand some difficult, contemporary, psychological dilemma.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream

Daniel appeared before Nebuchadnezzar, the King, and told him his dream. In the dream, there was a great statue. Its head was gold, its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs bronze, while its legs were iron and its feet part iron and part earthenware. While the King was gazing at the statue in the dream, a stone broke away and struck the iron-earthenware feet and shattered them. Then the whole statue broke into tiny pieces, 'as fine as the chaff on the threshing floor in summer'. The wind blew the pieces away, leaving not a trace. The stone which had struck the statue grew into a great mountain, filling the whole earth.

Daniel gave a prospective, political 'big dream' interpretation of the dream as representing the succession of four kingdoms and their relative strengths, until God will raise up a kingdom that will last forever. Despite the fact that Daniel's understanding of the dream predicts Nebuchadnezzar's dynastic downfall, the King was so impressed he prostrated himself before Daniel. He had sacrifices offered in his honour, gave him presents and high office. Nebuchadnezzar's reaction is similar to the idealizing transference of patients toward their analyst. What is paradoxical, is that Daniel's interpretation specifically predicted the King's downfall, symbolized by the golden head of the statue shattering. One can only assume that the relief and authenticity that the interpretation provided was received with enormous feelings of gratitude.

Without denying the power of Daniel's interpretation, how might a contemporary Jungian psychoanalyst approach this vision as a subjective personal dream? The giant statue is a representation of the unbalanced state of the psyche, with overvaluation of the head (gold), and devaluation of the feet (iron & earthenware). The stone which struck the statue represents the repressed aggression turned against the self, leading to fragmentation of the personality ('like chaff in summer'), perhaps a psychotic disintegration. The sequence of kingdoms evokes the stages of the lifecycle itself, culminating in a grandiose state. This interpretation echoes with a subsequent dream in the Book of Daniel which he interprets as foreseeing the King's madness. Much of the Book of Daniel is given over to praise poems to God, such as those companions of Daniel who survive the fiery furnace, although in following chapters, Daniel faces further dream challenges.

The next dream of Nebuchadnezzar is reported in Chapter 4. The dream came to him and again tormented him. Even though the King told the magicians and enchanters, they could not understand the dream. The King,

then, told the dream to Daniel: the visions that passed through my head as I lay in bed were these:

I saw a tree
 In the middle of the world;
 It was very tall.
 The tree grew taller and stronger,
 Until its top reached the sky,
 And it could be seen from the ends of the earth.
 Its foliage was beautiful, its fruit abundant,
 In it was food for all.
 For the wild animals it provided shade,
 The birds of heaven nested in its branches,
 All living things found their food in it.
 I watched the vision passing through my head as I lay in bed.
 Next a watcher, a holy one came down from heaven.
 At the top of his voice he shouted,
 ‘Cut the tree down, lop off its branches,
 Strip its leaves, throw away its fruit;
 Let the animals flee from its shelter
 And the birds from its branches.
 But leave the stump and roots in the ground
 Bound with hoops of iron and bronze
 In the grass of the field.
 Let him be drenched with dew of heaven,
 Let him share the grass of the earth with the animals.
 Let his heart be turned from mankind,
 Let a beast’s heart be given to him
 And seven times pass over him!...

(Daniel 4:7-13)

Jung was fascinated with this dream and used a 15th century woodcut as frontispiece of Volume 8 of his *Collected Works*. In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, one clearly sees that the tree is a symbol of a person, in this case the King himself. Trees display characteristics of strength, endurance, protection and shelter. Trees are indeed natural symbols of humans. Trees have toe-like roots, arm-like branches and stand upright from root to crown, between earth and heaven. In fairy tales, people are often turned into trees or the trees themselves have human-like souls. In Scripture, trees play a crucial role, such as the fig tree in the Garden of Eden and the tree from which the cross was made. However, one of the most significant is the cedar tree, mentioned 72 distinct times in the Old Testament, and in the interesting apocryphal text, the Apocalypse of Baruch, written around 100 C.E., in which cedars appear in dreams. The cedar tree is a tree planted by God (Psalm 104:16; Isaiah 41:19). It is considered to be the first of trees (1 Kings 4:33). The Bible describes the cedar tree as strong and durable (Isaiah 9:10), graceful and beautiful (Psalm 80:10; Ezekiel 17:23), high and tall (Amos 2:9; Ezekiel 17:22), fragrant (Song of Songs 4:11) and spreading wide (Psalm 80:10-11). The eagle makes its nest

and perches in the high branches of cedar trees (Jeremiah 22:23; Ezekiel 17:3-5). The ability of the cedar to tap deep-flowing waters, inaccessible to other trees, and to therefore become 'exalted above all the trees of the field', again alludes to the cedar tree as a symbol of wisdom. But perhaps the most impressive account comes from Ezekiel (17:24): 'And all the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD; I bring low the high tree, and make high the low tree, dry up the green tree, and make the dry tree flourish'.

Trees have extremely positive associations and yet in both dreams the tree is considered an embodiment of hubris and narcissistic grandiosity, even a dangerous inflation. How can one understand this apparent contradiction? In dream interpretation, often a dream image can represent a thing and its opposite. That is the case here. The tree does represent the King in his majesty: strong, upright, incorruptible, giving protection, acting as a font of wisdom. But the King must always remember that he is the servant of a Higher Power and the agent of true justice. He is to be the ego in the service of the Self. But when the King, like so many contemporary dictators, believes he is not the servant of the Self, but the Self itself, then ego-Self inflation results. As Jung wrote, 'the great psychic danger, which is always experienced with individuation or the development of the self, lies in the identification of ego-consciousness with the self' (1940, para. 254). In the dreams this is represented by the giant tree that has grown too high and needs to be brought down to earth and destroyed. 'The classic case of megalomania', says Jung in reference to Nebuchadnezzar (Jung 1916, para. 163; Jung 1945/1948, paras. 554-58).

With this understanding, Daniel hesitated to give his interpretation of the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, but the King insisted that he proceed. Thus, Daniel explained: the tree was like the King, which has become so tall and strong that his fame could be seen to the ends of the earth. The prophet-like watcher (a symbol of all-seeing Self), commands that tree-King be cut down and the King be driven from human society to live as the animals, feeding on grass, drenched with dew. Seven periods of time will pass over the King until he has learned that the Most High rules over kings and men. The stump, bound by metal hoops, symbolizes that the Kingdom will be kept for the King until understanding is achieved. Twelve months later, in a moment of grandiose boasting, King Nebuchadnezzar fell into a psychotic state, living as a wild beast, eating grass, as Daniel had predicted. Later, when the King achieved sufficient self-awareness, he returned and regained his Kingdom and ruled with even more wisdom and majesty. In Kabbalistic terms, this might be a case of so called, *tikkun olam*, 'repairing the world'; in Jungian terms, this transformation has elements of that of a *wounded healer*.

Now we can see the connection between the two dreams of Nebuchadnezzar. The first predicts the instability and the second of imminent psychosis. Living as an animal is akin to what some Native Americans call 'bush therapy'. In certain native American tribes, such as the Cree, a disturbed person is sent off to the

bush to attain self-healing and self-reliance and is only then welcomed back into the community. The deep immersion into the bush, nature, and the Great Mother provides the locus of restoration. More recently, contemporary bush therapy has been adapted especially for the treatment of disturbed young people, for example:

Bush Adventure Therapy (BAT) aims to help young people discover their potential, build self-efficacy, resilience, confidence, be challenged and to develop teamwork, healthy relationships, learn helpful behaviours and positive/protective life skills. Young people discover who they are and what they are able to achieve when they choose to set their mind and heart to their own goals and re-authoring of their lives within a 'safe space'. Bush Adventure Therapy is a practical way to develop skills and confidence in a challenging outdoor setting within a safe, temporary therapeutic community.

(<http://www.yaft.com.au/bush-adventure-therapy.html>)

The writing on the wall

Chapter 5 describes a successor to Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, meaning 'May Bel protect the King', who gave a great banquet using gold and silver vessels stolen from the Jerusalem Temple. As the King, nobles, their wives and singing women drank from these vessels, the fingers of a human hand began writing letters on the palace walls. The King, shocked, pale with alarm, cried out 'if anyone can read and interpret the writing they shall be dressed in purple and become third in the kingdom'. The Queen, recalling Daniel's previous successes, suggested that he come to interpret the vision. This famous 'writing on the wall' reiterates the impossible task given by Belshazzar's father of interpreting a dream you have never heard. In this case Belshazzar can see the finger writing but cannot comprehend what is written.

Scholars have debated why the letters were incomprehensible. Is there something wrong with his vision? Are they the 'new' Assyrian letters that Ezra introduced after the return from Exile? Segal (2016) in his brilliant essay, 'Rereading the writing on the wall (Daniel 5)', convincingly argues that courtiers could not read the writing because only Belshazzar could see it as it was the King's private, personal, dream-like, dream image. The King knows it is a powerful message from the unconscious about his fate. Daniel's interpretation is, again, as one might interpret a big dream but it also being a personal dream. Daniel says that the King is revealed as suffering from psychic inflation, like his father before him. The dream acts as a compensation; being too high leads to falling very low. The King will be weighed and measured and found guilty. From the perspective of objective interpretation, the dream predicts the King's fall from power and murder. From a subjective perspective, the dream might foretell a deadening depression. In fact, Belshazzar that night is murdered by Darius the Mede, who takes over the Kingdom.

The task of the contemporary analyst is often to read the writing on the wall in our patients. This task is twofold. On the one hand, the analyst must see the warning signs of any impending psychic danger; as we have seen, the ancient Egyptians and many other cultures view dreams as warning. Each culture provides ways to avoid or resolve the impending decree. On the other hand, the unconscious material is often unintelligible to the patient, who cannot grasp how it reveals their inner subjective state. I recall a very elderly patient who dreamed of meeting his long dead parents. To the patient, the dream was baffling. To me, it was a clear indication of his impending death, being received into the arms of welcoming ancestors.

Despite the regime change, Daniel maintained his high position as one of the three 'Presidents'. His high position and ethnic status invoke envy in others. They have King Darius pass a law limiting freedom of worship, which Daniel, as a Jew, is unable to accept. He is discovered by the envious bowing down not to the King, but praying to God. It is the first time recorded in Scripture of a Jew praying three times a day in the direction of Jerusalem, which remains the Hebrew tradition 'unto this very day'. As punishment he was sent to the lions' den, which is sealed. In straightforward meaning, the text shows how a believer suffers for his beliefs as a 'witness', which is the original meaning of the word 'martyr' in Greek. But in a psychodynamic sense, we can view the lions' den symbolically, as where Daniel must confront and come to terms with his own highly aggressive instincts within that sealed temenos.

Rabbinic Dream Book: Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b-57b

Belshazzar's fear of not knowing the meaning of a dream reflects the Talmudic view of dreams: 'R. Hisda also said: a dream that is not interpreted is like a letter that is not read' (Berachot 55a). For Rabbi Hisda, dreams are coded messages that require interpretation. They speak in what Erich Fromm (1951) called 'the forgotten language'. This symbolic view echoes the Jungian view that dreams are messages from the Self to the ego, from the unconscious to the conscious mind. Not to understand a dream may be compared to receiving an urgent telegram, but not bothering to open it. All cultures make a distinction between good dreams and bad dreams. Judaism has a formal ritual of 'making a bad dream better' called *hatavat chalom*. Here is the Talmudic source:

If one has a dream which makes him sad, ... he should have it turned into good in the presence of three. Let him bring three and say to them: I have seen a good dream; and they should say to him, 'Good it is and good may it be. May the All-Merciful turn it to good'

(Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b)

This ritual is still practised today. A person with a bad dream will assemble three caring friends and recite prayers asking for the bad dream to be turned round to the good. For Rabbis, a bad dream was understood as an evil decree from heaven. To overturn the decree a person is urged to pray, fast and to give charity, since 'charity saves from death' (Proverbs 10:2). Dreaming that your teeth are falling out, or your house collapsing, or praying at the very end of the Day of Atonement were all considered such dire dreams, indicating an impending death. Rabbis took such dreams so seriously that they allowed the dreamer to fast even on the holy Sabbath in an attempt to overturn the evil decree. In Jungian terms, these frightening dreams would be considered 'warning dreams' of such danger, actual or psychic, which the dreamer ignored at their peril.

In Chapter 7, Daniel has the first of his own archetypal dreams. It is significant not only for its content but because it is the first recorded case of a dreamer writing down his dreams. It begins with four beasts emerging from the unconscious, here, symbolized as the 'Great Sea' from which they emerge (Daniel 7:2-28). The content of Daniel's dream is very reminiscent of Nebuchadnezzar's first dream. There, as here, the dream represents the succession of four kingdoms and their destruction in turn. Unlike the static imagery of the statue, in this dream the kingdoms are represented as terrifying beasts: a lion with wings, a bear with three ribs in his mouth, a leopard with four heads and birds' wings, and a monstrous creature with iron teeth and ten horns. Each beast undergoes a change or transformation: the lion's wings are torn off and it is given a human heart; the bear, rearing up, is told to eat quantities of meat; the leopard is given authority; and, for the monstrous creature, 'While Daniel was looking at these horns of the beast: "I saw another horn sprouting among them, a little one; three of the original horns were pulled out by the roots to make way for it; and in this horn I saw eyes like human eyes, and a mouth full of boasting"'. Then Daniel describes a most dramatic turn of events: the Ancient of Days, dressed in white robes, his head pure as wool sits on throne of flames with wheels of fire, judging the beasts. Then the son of man arrived and was given everlasting rule. Daniel asks someone about this vision and was told the beasts represent the succession of kingdoms. And the fourth beast? Daniel inquired. He is told that the kingdom will devour the world and crush it but ultimately will be destroyed and reduced to nothing (Daniel 7:2-28).

It is intriguing that Daniel does not tell anyone the dream but decides to keep it a secret. The overt interpretation of the dreams presented in the Book of Daniel describe a kind of psychohistory predicting the rise and fall of kingdoms as governed by the archetype of death and rebirth or renewal. Because it highlights the limits on what appears to be absolute power, it is profoundly a dream about hope. One can imagine a German dreamer during the 20th century having a similar dream series of surviving the First World War, Weimar, Nazism and finally Communism, only to finally emerge into a saner democracy (Beradt 1985). That is an archetypal interpretation and an objective

level meaning of his dream, but for Daniel himself, we can also see his dream as furthering his individuation process. These dreams come after Daniel's time in the lion's den, in which he had to confront aggressive aspects of himself. Looking at the dream subjectively, one can understand how confrontation with intense, monstrous aggression, symbolized by the lion, bear, and leopard is taken to a higher level. Each beast is confronted but also humanised. The lion is given a human heart; the bear is told to eat his fill; the leopard is given authority; while the horns of the 4th beast acquire eyes, like human eyes. These changes might be said to represent the way in which he begins to confront these autonomic bestial complexes. As a result, the Self, in the form of the Venerable one, is constellated. It creates a new kind of ego-Self axis.

Dreams of the end of days

In the next three dreams Daniel had apocalyptic dreams of the end of days in which the angel Gabriel appears and interprets the dream within a dream. In Daniel's dream of 70 weeks, recorded in Chapter 8, the angel Gabriel comes down to teach Daniel how to understand this dream. Daniel had a vision of an archetypal battle between a ram, who grew very powerful with uneven horns, and a he-goat with one majestic horn; the he-goat charged, breaking the ram's horns. But then the majestic horn snapped, and four more grew in its place. From one of these sprouted a new horn, which grew to great size, overwhelmed the stars and armies of heaven and abolished the perpetual sacrifices of the Temple. A Holy One asked, 'how long will this iniquity continue?' and the answer came back: 'until two thousand evenings and mornings have gone by: by then, sanctuary shall have its rights restored'.

When Daniel was trying to understand this numinous vision, Gabriel appeared and said: 'the vision shows the time of the End', whereupon Daniel fainted. Gabriel raised him up and explained the political symbolism of the dream: the ram represents the kings of Mede and Persia; the he-goat symbolizes Greece. Upon which Daniel fainted again, and was ill for several days. It is likely that Daniel was familiar with the tradition stated in the Talmud (Berachot 55b) that a dream which is interpreted within the dream will be fulfilled, as mentioned above. In Chapter 9, Gabriel appears again telling Daniel that he is specially chosen and to know that Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

Chapter 10 contains a further, private vision, similar to the way that the 'writing on the wall' was understood. At the Tigris river, Daniel, alone, sees a man dressed in linen with a girdle of gold and eyes like fiery torches: eyes like lightning, legs like bronze, and a voice like the noise of a crowd. Daniel was so overwhelmed by the vision that his strength deserted him. When the man began to speak, Daniel once more lost consciousness. Daniel is again told that he is specially chosen. The man touches Daniel's mouth to give him strength and the ability to prophesize; then he gives a long discourse on future events and wars. He prophesizes unparalleled times of distress for people and shame

for the wicked, but resurrection of the dead and reward for the learned. However, Daniel hears one man ask another man, dressed in linen, 'how long until these wonders take place?' The man replies, but Daniel does not understand his answer. Once again, he is told the details are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the End.

In Judaism, Daniel is not considered a prophet but rather a man of wisdom and piety, similar to another Daniel mentioned in the Book of Ezekiel. Christianity and Islam do consider him a prophet. Yet these numinous dreams, which overwhelm his ego, clearly do reveal the future: the ultimate downfall of successive evil kingdoms and the Redemptive Return of the Hebrews to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, Daniel is not a prophet because he cannot speak of his visions since 'the details are to remain secret and sealed'. Although the manifest meaning of the dreams deals with apocalyptic events in the future, it is also possible to see them as a clinical analogue in the treatment of extremely difficult patients. Such patients, victims of multiple abuse, or those with severe borderline personality, with their intense, destructive transference often make the therapeutic space feel like a war zone. The therapist is overwhelmed, like Daniel was, and may feel trapped and hopeless. One knows there is apocalyptic-like suffering ahead for both patient and therapist. And yet, even within such despair, there is a voice like Gabriel's reassuring the therapist that despite the struggle and destructiveness, the patient will eventually come home to his or her Jerusalem. But of this encouraging future, the therapist must not speak, even as it sustains him or her during the long phase of exile. Regular patients may benefit from the therapist's encouraging words, but for these disturbing and disturbed souls, any premature hint of optimism in the therapist constellates its shadow twin, pessimism and despair.

Although most scholars see the Book of Daniel as a series of discrete episodes, I believe we can now argue the opposite, namely, that the book reveals, through his dream work, a developmental sequence of Daniel's individuation. Through the Book, one can discern the process of centroverson in Daniel. Neumann, who coined the term, wrote that when the ego experiences itself as an organ of centroverson (and not mere ego) it becomes an offshoot of the Self. He continues to say that then, the ego experiences itself with a numinous openness related to the numinous power of the Self (Neumann 1989, pp. 369-70). Or, in *The Origins and History of Consciousness*:

The development of personality proceeds in three different dimensions. The first is outward adaptation, to the world and things, otherwise known as extraversion; the second is inward adaptation, to the objective psyche and archetypes, otherwise known as introversion. The third is centroverson, the self-formative or individuating tendency which proceeds within the psyche itself, independent of the other two attitudes and their development.

(Neumann 1973, p. 219)

Forced into exile, Daniel must learn to adapt to the rigorous demands of a foreign environment and yet remain true to himself; that is the challenge of extraversion. Next, he must learn from his inward orientation to know what is impossible to know, namely, the dream which Nebuchadnezzar does not tell; that is the introversion phase. Finally, in the later part of the book, he becomes the dreamer, in both senses of the word. His individuation and powers as a dreamer go beyond introversion and extraversion and, as Neumann says, proceed within the psyche itself. That is the culminating experience of centroversion. Daniel experiences the psyche itself and the archetypal imagery in pure, timeless form. Perhaps this is why at the end of the final vision, Daniel is told: 'Blessed is he who stands firm. ... But you, go away and rest; and you will rise for your share at the end of time' (12:12-3). It is as if Daniel is being told that having stood firm and completed the journey, he can now rest until his time will come.

Conclusion

Daniel experienced many traumatic events in his life. These include the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple which, in Jewish consciousness, is often compared in its intensity to the Holocaust; exile and a crisis of assimilation; threat of arbitrary execution by an enraged ruler seeking an accurate dream interpretation; regime change and the destructive envy of co-workers, leading to the ordeal in the lions' den; and finally being overwhelmed by his own dream encounters. His life course, therefore, has parallels to the hero's journey and the descent to the underworld. On the one hand, his survival and creative responses are testament to his resilience and deep connection to the Self. On the other hand, he was always an outsider, a foreigner, and I believe that this sociological-psychological status gave him a unique perspective, as it did for Joseph. As the 'other', he was able to understand the King's dreams when the local dream experts could not. His interpretations, while often catastrophic for the dreamer, are given with directness, even empathy. In the first half of his life, his attitude was extravert, focusing on the dreams of others. In the second half, his orientation was introvert, focusing on his own extraordinary dreams. The situation may be compared to what Jung called a 'psychic infection'. Entering into the archetypal space of the royal dreams brought about a constellation of his own archetypal dreams. Daniel's experiences show how dreams may reveal an archetypal perspective of the future while at the same providing a deep understanding of ourselves. From this perspective, it may be argued that Daniel, the master Biblical dream interpreter, embodies the archetype of individuation.

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 TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT

Cet article décrit la croissance et le développement de Daniel en tant qu'interprète biblique spécialiste du rêve. Dans son utilisation clinique des rêves, il est comparé à un analyste Jungien contemporain, face à de difficiles dilemmes cliniques tels qu'interpréter un rêve qui est oublié, comprendre la différence entre un « grand rêve » et un rêve personnel, ainsi que la situation dans laquelle un rêve est interprété dans un rêve. La technique de Daniel est comparée aux rituels traditionnels juifs concernant les rêves. Bien que le Livre de Daniel soit généralement considéré comme étant une suite d'épisodes décousus, l'auteur soutient que la séquence des chapitres révèle le processus de l'individuation de Daniel telle que décrite par Neumann par le concept de centroversion.

Mots clés: interprétation de rêve, Bible, incubation de rêve, rituels de rêves, Daniel, Neumann, Talmud, grands rêves et rêves personnels, centroversion

Dieser Artikel beschreibt das Wachstum und die Entwicklung von Daniel als biblischem Traumdeuter. In seiner klinischen Verwendung von Träumen wird er mit einem zeitgenössischen Jungianischen Analytiker verglichen, der mit schwierigen klinischen Dilemmata konfrontiert ist, wie der Interpretation eines vergessenen Traumes, dem Verstehen des Unterschieds zwischen einem 'großen Traum' und einem persönlichen Traum sowie der Situation, in der ein Traum innerhalb eines Traumes interpretiert wird. Daniels Technik wird mit traditionellen jüdischen Traumritualen verglichen. Obgleich das Buch Daniel normalerweise als eine Reihe von unzusammenhängenden Episoden betrachtet wird argumentiert der Autor, daß die Reihenfolge der Kapitel den Prozeß von Daniels Individualisierung offenbart, wie er durch Neumanns Konzept der Zentroversion beschrieben wird.

Schlüsselwörter: Traumdeutung, Bibel, Trauminkubation, Traumrituale, Daniel, Neumann, Talmud, Großer Traum versus persönlicher Traum, Zentroversion

Questo articolo descrive la crescita e lo sviluppo di Daniele come un maestro interprete di sogni biblici. Nel suo uso clinico dei sogni, viene paragonato a un analista junghiano contemporaneo che affronta difficili dilemmi clinici come interpretare un sogno dimenticato, capire la differenza tra un 'grande sogno' ed un sogno personale, così come la situazione in cui un sogno viene interpretato all'interno di un altro sogno. La tecnica di Daniele è paragonata ai tradizionali rituali dei sogni ebraici. Nonostante il Libro di Daniele sia solitamente considerato come una serie di episodi disconnessi, l'Autore sostiene che la sequenza dei capitoli rivela il processo di individuazione di Daniele come descritto dal concetto di centroversione di Neumann.

Parole chiave: interpretazione dei sogni, Bibbia, incubazione dei sogni, rituale dei sogni, Daniele, Neumann, Talmud, grandi sogni contro sogni personali, controversione

В статье рассказывается о становлении и развитии Даниила как мастера толкования библейских снов. В клиническом использовании снов Даниила сравнивают с современным юнгианским аналитиком, который сталкивается со сложными клиническими дилеммами: интерпретация забытого сна, понимание различия между «большим сновидением» и личным сновидением, а также толкование сновидения внутри сновидения. Техника Даниила сравнивается с традиционными еврейскими ритуалами сновидений. Хотя книгу Даниила обычно рассматривают как серию несвязанных эпизодов, автор утверждает, что последовательность глав раскрывает процесс индивидуации Даниила, описанный концепцией центроверсии Нойманна.

Ключевые слова: толкование сновидений, Библия, инкубация сновидений, ритуалы сновидений, Даниил, Нойманн, Талмуд, большие сновидения и личные сновидения, центроверсия

El presente artículo describe el crecimiento y desarrollo de Daniel como maestro Bíblico intérprete de sueños. En su clásico uso de los sueños, es comparado con un analista Junguiano contemporáneo quien se enfrenta con difíciles dilemas clínicos, tales como, la interpretación de un sueño que es olvidado, comprender la diferencia entre un 'gran sueño' y un sueño personal, así como también la situación en la que un sueño es interpretado dentro del sueño. La técnica de Daniel es comparada con el ritual tradicional Judaico de los sueños. Si bien el Libro de Daniel es considerado usualmente como una serie de episodios desconectados, el autor argumenta que la secuencia de los capítulos revela el proceso de individuación de Daniel tal como es descrito por Neumann y su concepto de centroversión.

Palabras clave: interpretación de los sueños, Biblia, incubación del sueño, rituales del sueño, Daniel, Neumann, Talmud, grandes sueños versus sueños personales, centroversión

丹尼尔：一位圣经式解梦大师的心理发展

文章描述了丹尼尔作为圣经式解梦大师的成长与发展。在其临床中对梦的使用，可以比拟现代的荣格分析师，面对同样类似的临床困难，如：解释那些忘记了的梦，理解“大梦”和个体的梦的差别，梦中梦的解释。文章把丹尼尔的技术与传统犹太人的梦的仪式进行了比较。虽然丹尼尔之书常被看作是一系列相互不关联的片段，作者认为，章节的顺序显示了丹尼尔自性化的过程，即诺伊曼所说的中心化的概念。

关键词：解梦，圣经，孵梦，梦仪式，丹尼尔，诺伊曼，犹太法典，大梦与个体的梦，中心化
