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Jeremy Barris

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Abstract

The paper argues that dreams (or the recollected experience of dreams) consist partly in an awareness or experience of the conceptual fabric of our existence. Since what we mean by reality is intimately tied to the concepts given in our experience, dreams are therefore also partly an awareness of the fabric of what we mean by being itself and in general, that is, by objective as well as subjective reality. Further, the paper argues that this characteristic of dreams accounts for several other, more specific aspects of dreams and their possible interpretation, and that it allows us to see how these aspects are related to each other. These more specific aspects are the peculiar types of conceptual or logical relations and transitions that occur within dreams, dreams' distinctive feeling texture, and some dimensions of the grounds and nature of suitable methods of interpreting dreams.

Key words: dreams, logic, existential, feeling, dream interpretation

Dreams As a Meta-Conceptual or Existential Experience

Jeremy Barris

I shall try to show that dreams, or the recollected experience of dreams,¹ consist partly in an awareness or experience of the conceptual fabric of our existence. Since what we mean by reality is intimately tied to the concepts given in our experience, dreams are therefore partly also an awareness of the fabric of what we mean by being itself and in general, that is, by objective as well as subjective reality. To be clear, I am not reducing dreams intellectualistically to concepts, but proposing that concepts themselves must be understood as organic, inseparable aspects of substantial reality and life, and so also of the feelings and images that occur in both our waking lives and our dreams.

I try to show, further, that this conceptual experience that partly characterizes dreams accounts for several other, more specific aspects of dreams and their possible interpretation, and allows us to see how these aspects are related to each other. These more specific aspects are the peculiar types of conceptual or logical relations and transitions that occur within dreams, dreams' distinctive feeling texture, and some dimensions of the grounds and nature of suitable methods of interpreting dreams.

¹ Malcolm (1959) argued influentially that we cannot meaningfully refer to dreams themselves. But see, for example, the essays revisiting his argument and defending this possibility in Dunlop (1977).

1. Dreams As a Meta-Conceptual or Existential Experience

I have argued elsewhere that dreams consist partly in a movement or comparison between views or interpretations of reality in general, or between understandings of the same particular thing in terms of wholly incompatible sets of concepts (Barris, 2010). To sketch that argument briefly here, one reason for thinking of dreams in this way is that we can plausibly understand them as participating in the deep perplexities and transformations that occur in waking life. In turn, we can plausibly understand these deep transformations and perplexities as often involving a comparison or shift between mutually exclusive general outlooks on things, or between mutually exclusive ways of understanding the same concern in our lives.² So, for example, when I am depressed, the whole world is bleak, and even positive events are experienced in the light of that bleakness: they may make me feel, for instance, isolated in being unable to appreciate them. But when I am contented with my life, even depressing events are experienced as manageable and perhaps as background against which the good things of life stand out. As Wittgenstein noted, ‘the world of the happy man is a different one from that of the unhappy man,’ and in moving from one to the other it ‘becomes an altogether different world’ (1961 [1921], p. 72, prop. 6.43).

² That there are such mutually exclusive general outlooks or conceptual frameworks is familiarly argued in philosophy of science (Feyerabend, 1993, especially chapter 16; Kuhn, 1970; Wittgenstein, 1979), political philosophy (Lyotard, 1988 [1983]; MacIntyre, 1988; Taylor, 1985, especially chapters 3-5), and in discussions of the relations between philosophical systems (Collingwood, 1940; Hall, 1960).

Again, as we mature, or undergo life crises, or come to appreciate perspectives or cultural frameworks very different from our own, the values and priorities in terms of which we make sense of our lives may change so that we can no longer identify with our previous standpoint. The same events, things, and ways of conducting ourselves and relating to others no longer have the same significance for us. For instance, being assertive of our goals may strike us as a symptom of shamefully misunderstanding our place in the world and of failing to appreciate the reality of others and of the environment, where before it seemed to us to express an admirable and realistic awareness of these same things.

Since we can plausibly understand dreams as participating in these shifts, it is at least arguable, then, that the content of dreams often consists partly in a movement or comparison between incompatible conceptual orders.

A second reason for thinking of dreams as in some respects this kind of movement between incompatible conceptual orders has to do with the relation between a dream as a whole and our waking life. Dreams are capable of including everything that exists or occurs in waking life, in such a way that no part of a dream need establish that it is different from waking life. This is why the skeptical problem of knowing whether we are dreaming or awake is so hard and perhaps impossible to answer. Nonetheless, the elements of the content of dreams are not the same things as their equivalents in waking life. Since the elements of dreams can all be indistinguishable from those of waking life, dreams and waking life can therefore in the end only be distinguished each as a whole, or with respect to their framing of the sense of the whole of things. In Fechner's words, a dream is an altogether "different scene" from waking life (Freud, 1976 [1900], p. 112): it

doesn't fit into or directly belong in our waking world, even when its own internal content is entirely consistent with that world. As a result, the process of recollecting and working with dreams—in other words, the process by which dreams have meaning for us—itself involves a movement or comparison between mutually exclusive conceptual orders, and often between conceptual orders that each re-situate in their own context the “same” things, events, and concerns as the other.

I shall give further support for this view of dreams in the course of trying to justify my suggestion that it helps to account for the various aspects of dreams I outlined above. In addition, that it does help to account for these various dimensions of dreams is itself, in turn, another kind of support for this view.

If dreams are partly this kind of movement or comparison between different conceptual orders, they consist partly in our awareness of what makes these conceptual orders and overall frameworks different. As a result, they consist partly in an awareness of these orders' or frameworks' structuring categories or concepts themselves, which are the source of the difference. This is what I mean by dreams as a meta-conceptual experience.

If this kind of awareness of overall conceptual orders is possible, we can also achieve it more directly, by simply reflecting on our view of things as a whole and so on its structuring concepts. These two forms of this awareness are two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, as I have noted, the comparison between different frameworks necessarily involves awareness of the frameworks themselves. On the other hand, awareness of our framework as a whole necessarily means that we are no longer situated within it, that we are no longer governed by its structuring concepts and categories. As a

result, we are moving between or comparing a conceptual order and an order incompatible with it. When dreams involve this kind of awareness, then, they involve both kinds of experience: movement or comparison between frameworks and reflection on our own framework as a whole. A particular dream may be concerned more specifically with one rather than the other, or may be concerned with both of them equally.

The categories or concepts in terms of which we understand the world, however, cannot simply be separated from the world and set over against it as an object of awareness on their own. There is no world for us without the concepts that organize it into meaning for us, and there are no concepts without the features and details of a world that make up their content.³ Consequently, our most basic or world-structuring concepts are part of the substance of our world. In fact, since they structure the world, they are what we might call an anatomy of the world. This is the thesis, for example, of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1929 [1781/1787]), and is also part of the point of Wittgenstein's (e.g., 1958) idea of the "grammars" of concepts as, to put it crudely, the structures of our concrete activities in the world and of the content of what those activities make of the world. Consequently, Wittgenstein argues that "the *truth* of certain empirical propositions belongs to our frame of reference" (1969, p. 12e): the conceptual

³ Kant (1929 [1781/1787]) famously argued that "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. It is, therefore, just as necessary to make our concepts sensible, that is, to add the object to them in intuition, as to make our intuitions intelligible, that is, to bring them under concepts" (A51, B75). See also, for example, Winch (1958) for a Wittgensteinian discussion of the same point.

frame in whose terms we interpret the world is partly given as the direct, empirical truth of the world itself. To say that dreams are a meta-conceptual experience, then, is also to say that they are an experience of the anatomy, fabric, or structure of our experience itself and therefore of what we experience as and mean by the world or reality itself. This is not just subjective: it is the structure of everything we mean and so everything we refer to by our concepts “reality” or “world.” Dreams are an existential or metaphysical experience, an experience or awareness of the nature of existence itself.

There are a number of dream theorists who also think of dreams as at least in some respects a reflection on the nature or structure of our lives as a whole and even of reality as a whole. Jung (1974 [1934]), for example, sees the analysis of dreams as a process that “finally reaches completion in the restoration of the total personality” (p. 108). States (1993) argues that dreams allow us to see how the meanings of our world blend, so that in contrast with grasping “local meaning” we experience “the condition of meaningfulness that pervades experience in the form of a felt unity” (p. 192).⁴ As a result, in dreaming “one is always in a state at least slightly outside the world” (p. 191). And elsewhere he writes, ‘my dream . . . is the pulse and direction of my existence. . . . the dreamer cannot detect the beginning of his dream because for that interval the dream is all of his consciousness that exists. The dream is the center and the horizon of his world’ (States, 1988, p. 85). Valberg (2007) in fact focuses on the all-embracing “horizon” of dreams to help establish the necessity in waking thought of the idea of a view of the world or of one’s life as a whole (e.g., pp. 69-70). Binswanger (1963 [1930]) insists that

⁴ States argues here that this is an experience of *felt* unity that concepts do not do justice to, but I am proposing that concepts are really part of feelings and vice versa.

“the dream . . . is nothing other than a particular mode of human existence in general” (p. 227), and that “our whole existence moves within the meaning matrix” of the dream (p. 223). Finally, Boss (1957 [1953]) argues that a person’s dreams involve “relationships with things and with people” that “go to make up his entire existence” (p. 122), and that express “the total and original essence of things as such” (p. 101).

There is a contradiction in the idea of our becoming aware of our interpretation of reality in general and as a whole. If what we are talking about is truly our interpretation of reality as a whole, our framework for the meaning or sense of everything, then we cannot step outside it to gain a vantage point that allows us to register it as a whole and still be capable of making sense. And yet, as we grow as human beings, we do move from one overall view of things to another; and we do learn to understand views that are globally different from our own and unintelligible in the terms of our own, and consequently to recognize what characterizes our own framework as a contrasting whole. Let me suggest baldly, then, that the deeper dimensions of human insight do therefore work in a way that is partly contradictory.

As I have discussed elsewhere, however, it is no longer uncontroversially the case that contradiction is always unacceptable (e.g., Barris, 2010, 2014).⁵ And it is a recurrent theme of philosophical thought that a full account of things requires us to account for sense itself: in other words, that making sense itself requires us to reflect on sense and so

⁵ On the admissibility of contradictions in formal logic see, for example, Priest, 2001; Bremer, 2005, esp. pp. 16, 19ff. For discussion on both sides of this debate, see Priest, Beall, and Armour-Garb, 2004. For the acceptability of contradiction in informal contexts, see, for instance, Johnstone, 1978, p. 45.

to a greater or lesser extent to remove ourselves from it or at least from taking it for granted (in addition to the long tradition of metaphysics both west and east, see, for example, Derrida, 1981 [1972], p. 6; Jaspers, 1997 [1935], p. 111; Wittgenstein, 1961 [1921]; and, on the need to account for the whole, if not to step outside sense, Nagel, 1979). There are, again, well-known objections to the legitimate sense of the idea of a “whole” of our sense-making that we can get a grasp of (e.g., Davidson, 1984; Rorty, 1991), but, like the comprehensive rejection of contradiction, these objections are not uncontroversial (see, for instance, MacIntyre, 1988, p. 374; Putnam, 1990, p. 104).

The particular contradiction I am proposing is limited in its consequences. It does not affect the sense of the world as we experience it when we are not reflecting on it as a whole, but only arises in the limited context of this particular kind of experience. And it is manageable: once we are caught up in the contradiction, it resolves itself. The idea of being outside all sense includes the sense of this idea itself: as we think it through, it cancels its own meaning. Consequently it returns us to familiar sense (to the “inside” of our framework), to a position of being able to start again from the beginning in thinking about the issues of sense.⁶

Like our basic sense-making categories, this contradiction that sense requires is not just a conceptual structure simply separated from the world. As a structure of sense, it is also a structure of the reality of which this is the sense. Reality itself, I am proposing, includes moments or elements of (self-resolving) incoherence.⁷ Encountering and

⁶ On the logic of this process, see, for example, Barris, 2003, 2012, 2014.

⁷ As Dewey, for example, argues, “indeterminate situations . . . are disturbed, troubled, ambiguous, confused, full of conflicting tendencies, obscure, etc. It is the *situation* that

undergoing this contradiction is therefore also both a meta-conceptual and an existential or metaphysical experience.

As I shall argue, this limited and manageable contradiction helps us to make sense not only of the recurrent themes of human experience and thought I have mentioned but also of a variety of puzzling aspects of dreams. It therefore seems that there is good reason at least to explore ways of working with this contradiction and see where they take us. Part of what I shall be trying to do in this essay is to identify and map out some of the details of how this contradiction operates and of how it may manageably be worked with.

2. The Peculiar Logical Relations and Transitions in Dreams

Insofar as dreams consist in a movement or comparison between two comprehensively different sense frameworks, or between a framework and its “outside,” where the framework’s sense-making categories comprehensively no longer operate in the same way, they consist in a transition from one kind of sense or logic to another, incompatible kind. One and the same experience or thing is now construed according to an incompatible logic, and therefore means something incompatibly different. In other words, in terms of the possibilities for sense in either framework or context, this

has these traits. *We* are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful. . . . The notion that in actual existence everything is completely determinate has been rendered questionable by the progress of physical science itself. Even if it had not been, complete determination would not hold of existences as an *environment*. For nature is an environment only as it is involved in interaction with an organism, or self” (1938, pp. 105-6).

transition or comparison consists in a logical error of some kind: a contradiction, a non sequitur, or a conceptual confusion. Since, however, each framework is global and so, in its terms, exhaustive of all possible sense, there are no relevant alternative possibilities for sense. As a result, the logical error is an objective and necessary part of the sense of the situation.⁸

It might naturally be objected that if the frameworks are truly globally different, then it is not a case of one and the same thing becoming incompatibly different, but that, instead, we are simply not discussing the same thing at all. As a result, there is no logical error or confusion: it is not the case that one thing means incompatible things, or is being understood in incompatible ways. But this is exactly the point. It is true that it is not the same thing at all. And yet, in the case of movement or comparison between frameworks, it is *also* true that we have moved into understanding the new framework on the basis of beginning with the old one or, in the case of comparison, on the basis of the context of the old one—since the frameworks are global, there is no other basis on which to have begun and no other context in which to begin to construe. Consequently what we meant by the one experience or thing in the first framework has *itself* transformed into or become taken as the incompatibly meant experience or thing. It both is the same thing and yet is not in any way the same thing.⁹ Correspondingly, in the case of perspective on

⁸ In Barris (2010), I argue more fully on this basis that these kinds of violations of logic in dreams are sometimes legitimate. In this section of this essay, I explore in more detail the nature and variety of these legitimate logical anomalies we find in dreams.

⁹ On the sameness of the thing construed in these incompatible ways (although without thinking of it as involving the logical paradox that I argue it does), see also, for example,

one's own framework as a whole, the sense of the framework has *itself* required movement beyond the purchase of that same sense. In other words, the principles of sense that established the framework's contents as meaning what they do have themselves produced the movement beyond themselves. As a result, the principles that make each thing what it is no longer apply in consequence of their own application: that is, they both apply and do not apply. (Alternatively expressed, the new sense is a result of the *self-transformation* of the old sense: the new thing is in some sense continuous with—though nonetheless also wholly incompatible with—the old thing.) Consequently, one and the same thing that made sense no longer does. This is a consequence of exactly the particular contradiction that, I have argued, sense itself requires us to accept and explore in this kind of context.

Since in this kind of context logical errors are part of sense itself, then, insofar as dreams involve this transition between different logical orders the peculiarly illogical relations and transitions that we find in them make sense, or at least they make what we might call a logically legitimate inadequacy of sense. Dreams typically involve and are often largely structured by non sequiturs of statement, inference, and setting; by contradictions as, for example, one thing becomes another, incongruously different one; and by conceptual confusions as one category of thing seems naturally to operate as another (say, one's own sensation of a sweet taste can be directly inspected and explored

MacIntyre (1989): “each community, using its own criteria of *sameness* and *difference*, recognizes that it is one and the same subject matter about which they are advancing their claim; incommensurability and incompatibility are not incompatible” (p. 190). For further discussion of this issue, see Barris, 2014, e.g., chapter 3, section 6.

by others, as though it were a publicly accessible object). If a dream consists in an overall movement or comparison between incompatible logical orders, it makes sense that many of the events within it would consist in immediate relations or transitions between logically incompatible elements like these.

It also makes sense that the specific character of the overall transition or comparison in which the dream as a whole partly consists would govern part of the nature and sequence of the particular transitions or relations within it. (Similarly, the specifics of the overall transition or reflection in which a series of dreams participates and partly consists would account for part of the nature and sequence of the experiences from dream to dream.) So, for example, in the case of a movement between frameworks, it would make sense that one phase of the movement involves a process well expressed by journeying, and doing so through, say, a desert without a visible sun in the sky, because in this kind of transition there are no orientation clues or “landmarks” to tell what the appropriate direction of travel is. We are between frameworks, and so without a consistent criterion for how to proceed in making sense of our situation. But once a new framework has crystallized for us, there are then consistent ways of orienting ourselves, of making sense of the issues. What is more, there is only one ultimate way of doing so: when we are simply within a framework, the “outside” of sense simply has no sense or meaning at all; that idea itself is outside the conditions that structure sense. This situation would then be well expressed by images and concepts to which both journeying and fundamental disorientation are entirely irrelevant: say, an image of stirring one’s tea at home and simply enjoying its swirl and color. A dream that expresses both these phases

of the transition would appropriately involve an abrupt shift of context from one set of images and concepts to another, wholly incompatible set.

In between these two phases, while the new framework is still crystallizing but is not yet established, is still fragmentary and uncertain, it would make sense that this situation is well expressed by images and concepts that combine in themselves the incompatible states of being inside and outside a framework of sense: say, feeling relieved at having arrived and yet still being preoccupied with trying to find one's way, or simply being in a state of having arrived and yet not having arrived, all at once.

On this conception of dreams, then, because the overall movement by its nature violates logic and conceptual integrity, the direction and sequence of the transitions and relations must necessarily often be in some ways logically "wrong." Belonging to neither framework (or to both), they must violate the criteria for progress and appropriateness that belong to both. It would make sense, therefore, if they consisted partly in going off at tangents, or even in the opposite direction to the one that leads to their goal, or in going in more than one direction at the same time, and if they sometimes carried out their goal by performing activities completely unrelated to that goal. In other words, it would make sense if genuine progress and appropriate connection themselves within dreams consisted partly in non sequiturs, contradictions, and category confusions.

In this kind of context, for example, there are logical peculiarities in the nature of sequence itself. For instance, in the case where we are moving between incompatible comprehensive or global conceptual frameworks (again, this "movement" includes our simply coming to understand a new framework in order to compare the two), we have to enter the new framework of sense before we can begin to see the sense it makes. The only

way we can get to the new framework, however, is on the basis of the resources of sense we already have in our current framework. We therefore need to begin by construing the elements of our experience in a way that approximates those of the new framework. But because our current framework and the new one are globally different, all the relevant elements or materials for construal in each mean something different in the other, and in fact exclude the meanings of the other. As a result, there is no common ground, no basis in our current framework for entering that other kind of sense. We can therefore begin to re-construe our current sense only by already being within that new framework. In other words, in order to take the steps that will get us to the new framework, we have to be there already. And yet, we do get into new frameworks of this kind: which means that this oddity of sequence, or something like what it describes, must in fact take place. In this context, then, orderly sequence itself becomes disordered.

We can see the same thing by considering the relations between global conceptual (or sense) frameworks and particular meanings or concepts. If we are not attending specifically to the meaning or concept of a thing, but only to the thing's role in our immediate concerns, we tend to see it only in the terms that most easily make sense, that is, in the terms of our current framework. In that kind of context—simply within a framework—particular things and events are unequivocally what they are, and as a result are also simply and straightforwardly situated in relation to each other in (among their other relations) space and sequence. But if we attend to the meaning or sense or concept of the thing or event, beyond its immediate place in our concerns, we can relevantly recognize that there are conflicting possible general contexts that can frame its sense, and that as a result the appropriate concept or sense of the thing is at some points undecided.

These are the kind of “border territory” contexts that conceptual analysis often deals with. (For example, in the early stages of a child’s learning language, there may be a phase when we cannot decide definitively whether she is uttering words whose meaning she grasps or whether she is still merely imitating sounds: our criteria for both may apply. Or, more sharply, a physical entity may behave both definitively as a particle, having clear boundaries, and also definitively as a wave or process, without clear boundaries: our criteria for both of mutually exclusive properties may definitively apply to it.) As a result, in this kind of context the thing is not unequivocally what it is, and so is not unequivocally situated in its relations to others with respect (among other issues) to where each is and to which thing or event depends on which, and in what way. In that kind of context, therefore, the thing is not unequivocally situated in relation to others with respect to spatial connection and sequence.

Now dreams, as I have suggested, do in fact register conceptual structures, and therefore concepts or sense themselves, and not only the particulars that are constituted and structured by that sense. And they do so in a context in which conflicting sense frameworks are not only relevant but salient. As a result, it is natural for dreams, given this kind of context, directly to register and portray the disordered sequence (or spatial relations) occurring at the level of the concepts or meanings of things and events, and not only the sequence as it appears in the context of the immediate, simply-within-a-framework functioning of the things and events. For example, in this light it makes sense for a dreamer both to experience an arrival as occurring before the departure that got the dreamer there, and yet still also to understand and experience the arrival as dependent on the departure and so as coming after it. This is not simply a mistake in logic and sense

(although it is that too). Instead, as I have argued, it is an expression of a logical error or confusion required by sense itself in this kind of sense-conflicted context, and therefore inherent in and part of the real situation.

Again, in general, the logical errors I have discussed in this section are not just a matter of dreams' being unreal and therefore exempt from the laws of logic. Because this movement between incompatible orders of sense is real, it is a movement in which sense itself genuinely changes. As a result, the logical errors that are part of this movement are also part of reality, of sense as it is actually functioning in this situation. In other words, these logical errors are logically legitimate or valid.

As I mentioned in the first section of this essay, this kind of movement, comparison, or reflection between or on sense frameworks as a whole is also part of the deep growth and perplexities that occur in our waking life. Or, rather, it is partly because it occurs in our waking life that it also occurs in dreams. In these contexts, the odd logic of dreams is therefore not really peculiar to them, but belongs equally to the deepest dimensions of waking life. Rather than being peculiar to dreams, it is peculiar to depth of meaning and sense. In this respect, dreams are not privileged as a source of insight.

In the next section, however, in discussing the feeling texture of dreams, I shall argue that their expression and enactment of this transition or comparison between overall frameworks of sense or of reflection on our overall framework is often more pure, and so in a sense simpler, than the equivalent experiences in waking life. And in this respect dreams *are* privileged as a source of insight. In addition, as I also suggest in the next section, in dreaming we also often give ourselves over more unreservedly to our experience than we do in waking life. For both of these reasons, the dream experience

shows its anatomy or logical structure with less clutter and so more clearly than the waking life versions of the same deep experience do.

There is a different kind of paradox in the relation and movement between incompatible conceptual orders that, although it does not necessarily involve meta-conceptual awareness, is a consequence of the character of conceptual structures and has many of the same effects on the logic of dreams (and also, in fact, of waking life) as the ones I have been discussing. It therefore seems worth mentioning here. This paradox results from the relation between the mutual exclusiveness of concepts and, in contrast with the meta-conceptual case, the ways in which they are embedded in (as it were, the face they turn to) the particularities of the world as it is *within* our sense framework and within the relevant conceptual orders. Because concepts acquire and have their meaning within complex forms of life (to use Wittgenstein's term), these meanings are constituted in interaction with those of very different concepts. In other words, they are internally dependent on their relations with concepts whose content, considered on its own, is external to theirs. For example, the concept of "emotional progress" or "emotional health" has different content depending on whether the concept of "vulnerability" is connected with or disconnected from the concepts of "weakness" and "failure" or, alternatively, say, those of "strength" and "courage."

As a result, in order to gain a new concept and then also to consolidate our competence in working with it, we often need to spend time absorbed in the issues connected with very different concepts, issues that are in themselves irrelevant to those connected with the concept we are aiming towards and that may even involve movement in opposite directions from those relevant to that concept. So, for instance, learning to

regard uncomfortable feelings of helplessness as unqualifiedly acceptable may be necessary preparation for learning to feel at ease: it may be necessary so that, for example, we can feel confident that we can handle feeling helpless should it happen, and therefore need not keep ourselves rigid in order to ward it off or deny it. (This kind of preparation may be necessary even if at some level we have already learned and come to accept the relevant insights and so taken up their concomitant attitudes. We can be in conflict with ourselves, even to the extent of grasping or accepting at one level what we do not at another.)

Like the paradoxes arising from meta-conceptual awareness, I suggest, these logically surprising relations between concepts are expressed in dreams, and account for some of the odd relations and transitions in them. While this kind of paradox is important and interesting in its own right, however, it expresses a different phenomenon from that of meta-conceptual awareness. I mention it mainly because of the interesting overlap of effects. It is also worth noting, however, that there may be more than one kind of reason why some types of logical errors in dreams (and elsewhere) are, although genuine errors, also logically legitimate. In this case, the logical paradox lies in the internal constitution of concepts by other concepts that are nonetheless external to them. This paradox shares with the meta-conceptual paradox the violation of boundaries of sense, but where the meta-conceptual paradox consists in a direct interaction of the incompatible concepts themselves, in this case the direct interaction and conflict is between the consequences, for our particular issues and experiences, of separate and independent explorations of each concept. In fact, the presence of a paradox only becomes evident if we trace the source of the conflict to the mutual dependence of the incompatible concepts that makes

it necessary. As a result, its actual expression in experience and practice is not immediately paradoxical, but on the face of it is just a conflict between different concepts that are relevant at different times or in different respects.

3. The Feeling Texture of Dreams

There is a distinctive texture of feeling that is common in dreams. Within a dream, we often experience our feelings as unqualified or pure. For example, we experience unmitigated delight or unqualified horror, or a naked and vulnerable poignancy of feeling, in which we are caught up without reserve for moments or for the entire dream. Even when this intensely pure aspect of dream feeling is not part of our awareness of the experience during the dream, it often becomes evident when we remember the dream after waking because of the contrast of the dream experience with our typical waking experience.

Another characteristic of the experience of dreams (related to the first characteristic, as I shall argue below) is that they often feel uncanny: we are undergoing the dream experience, and yet somehow it does not fit into what we can conceive. The experience is made of elements that make sense to us, since we can react to and engage with them. And yet these same elements seem deeply unfamiliar, do not seem part of the world as we are accustomed to it. The same elements both fit and do not fit with our familiar world. In addition, the way the elements connect with each other follows a logic that does not make sense in our waking context, and yet seems unexceptionable in the context of the dream. When we remember the dream after waking, this dimension of the dream experience too makes sense and yet does not make sense. (Towards the end of this

section I discuss the possibility of registering our intact dream experience within the context of our waking experience—despite their consisting in wholly incompatible frameworks of sense, as I argue they do.) This is the uncanny: not what is simply weird or unintelligible, but what is simultaneously and in the same respects both weird and familiar, intelligible while at the same time it cannot be.

I suggest that these two characteristics of dream feeling, its unreserved or unqualified character and its uncanniness, are related in that they are opposite dimensions or effects of the same thing. It will be easiest to show why this might be so by beginning with the uncanny dimension of dream feeling, and showing how the meta-conceptual character of dreams accounts for it.

I have suggested that dreams consist partly in a movement outside the framework in whose terms we make sense of the world as a whole, of things in general. In fact, for the same reasons, this can also be a movement outside a particular, more limited conceptual order within the whole, a movement that reflects on that conceptual structure itself, compares it another, or moves from it to another. The same considerations apply to both cases, and so for convenience I shall take discussion of either to stand in for discussion of the other as well.

I proposed, further, that this movement is either part of a comparison with or transition to a different general outlook, or of a metaphysical or existential reflection on one's life as a whole or on reality as a whole (or on a particular structure within these, itself as a whole). In either case, however, in reflecting on our sense-making framework as a whole, the dream consists partly in stepping outside of that framework. But if it were simply a step into nothing, we would not have the resource of any categories for making

sense, and would have no meaningful experience at all. (Or, in the case of particular structures, we would have no experience that is relevantly meaningful.) Instead, it is a stepping to the specific outside of that particular framework: we are aware of the categories in which the world makes sense to us, but that awareness involves a distance from them and so is no longer simply structured and guided by them. We have, as it were, one foot inside the framework and one foot out.

This directly describes the experience of the uncanny. The world makes the same sense it always did; all the same elements of sense are exactly as they have always and familiarly been; and yet it is not the same sense, we have an unfamiliar orientation towards all of it. And because it is our sense of things in general and as a whole (or, in the case of particular structures, our sense of relevant things as a whole) that we have distanced ourselves from, there is no simply familiar ground, left out of this distancing from familiar sense, on which to stand and get a clear perspective on the experience and so separate what makes familiar sense from what does not. As a result, everything indistinguishably both fits and does not fit with familiar sense: in other words, everything fits and does not fit familiar sense all at once and in the same, or indistinguishable, respects.

Where the movement in which the dream consists involves a comparison between more than one general outlook, we also have our “outside” foot inside a specific different framework, with different, incompatible categories for the sense of things. Here, in addition to being both within and outside sense simultaneously, we also have a conflict and confusion between incompatible ways of making definite sense of the same things. As I discussed in the previous section of the paper, this is part of what accounts for the

peculiar logical relations and transitions in dreams. Here, though, it gives a second part of the explanation of the uncanny feeling texture of dreams. The elements of the experience, in this way too, make familiar sense but at the same time and in the same respects do not.

I suggested above that this same meta-conceptual character of dreams also accounts for the unreserved nature of dream feeling. More specifically, I suggested that this characteristic of dream feeling is the opposite effect of the same basic meta-conceptual structure. In discussing the uncanny aspect of dream feeling, I drew on the idea that this perspective on or experience outside of the sense of the whole of things is in contradictory conflict with itself with respect to its own sense. Another aspect of this perspective or experience, however, is that its content is detached from any of the particular issues within the whole, and so from all the conflicting and mutually qualifying variety of considerations that they involve. As Ortega y Gasset (1960 [1929]) argues, “the Universe, or all there is, is not *each one* of the things there are, but only the universal aspect of each thing, therefore only a facet of each thing. In this sense, but only this, the object of philosophy [that is, all there is or the whole of things] also is partial, in that it is the part through which each thing is inserted into the whole” (p. 105, my insertion). The perspective or reflection in which dream experience partly consists is, then, essentially one-sided in a way that regular within-the-whole experience is not. It is not subject to all the variety of possible relevant partial perspectives that the surrounding detail of additional contexts brings.¹⁰ (Similarly, reflection on a particular, more limited

¹⁰ This theoretically motivated suggestion fits nicely with Rechtschaffen’s empirically based observation that the manifest content of dreams is characteristically “single-minded” or “isolated” in the sense of showing a “strong tendency for a single train of

conceptual order or structure as a whole within the larger whole is essentially one-sided in a way that reflection on the detailed content within that particular structure is not. So, for example, reflection on the concept of color in general is indifferent to many of the considerations involved in reflecting on redness, on greenness, on the contrasts and complementarities between the two, and so on.)

Further, although the dream is an awareness of the sense of the whole of things (or of a whole if more limited conceptual structure), it is typically this whole conceived and therefore experienced only in terms of its relation to and bearing on one or a few particular issues within it. We exist as parts within the whole, and so we initially conceptualize the whole in terms of issues that arise in connection with our experiences among and with its particulars. And, for the same reason, we also think of the difference the achieved conception of the whole makes in terms of its meaning for particular issues within the whole. In addition, since the dream is nonetheless a perspective on the whole and not on the details within the whole, it separates, as I have noted, the particular issues in whose terms this overall perspective is conceived from all the alternative kinds of considerations that reflection on within-the-whole issues, being embedded in and connected with a wider context, might bring.

In other words, then, dream experience is structurally simpler than any of our experiences within the whole.¹¹ It is therefore essentially more capable of being wholly

related thoughts and images to persist over extended periods without disruption or competition from other simultaneous thoughts and images” (1978, p. 97).

¹¹ Boss also argues for the structural simplicity of dreams, but gives an account of it that is the reverse of my own. Where I try to account for the intensity of feeling in dreams on

and unequivocally absorbing than those within-the-whole experiences, which are more typical of waking life.

Even more than this, however, as I mentioned above in discussing the uncanny dimension of dream feeling, because dream experience is partly of the whole of sense or the whole of things, there is no contrasting ground on which to stand and get a perspective on this experience in turn. During the course of the experience, it is the only conceivable experience and set of feelings. In this more radical respect too, then, the meta-conceptual character of dreams explains why feelings in dreams can be absorbing in a peculiarly unqualified and unreserved way.

the basis of dreams' simplicity, he accounts for dreams' simplicity on the basis of the simplicity and intensity of feeling. He notes that "dreamers so frequently perceive only a single person or very few people and only a very limited number of objects," and suggests that this is because "the dreamer . . . is frequently, and intensely in a very definite mood. Corresponding to this unequivocal mood, only those objects and people are allowed to enter the respective dream world whose essence and being correspond exactly to the behaviour patterns in which the dreamer himself happens to be moving. . . . Corresponding to his concentrated mood the dreamer can enter into these realms of existence and behaviour all the more vividly. It is for this reason that he feels closer to their things and people, and that they can all be united in a single dream world of the moment, however far removed in time and space they may be in his waking life" (pp. 111-12). I do argue in the next section, however, that feelings are the privileged avenue for interpreting dreams.

It is true that some contrast is necessary for an experience to occur at all. But as I have suggested, “stepping outside” a whole sense framework really means having, as it were, one foot in and one foot outside the framework. As a result, in this contradictory situation of being “outside the whole,” there is both no contrast, since it is the exhaustive whole and nothing is left over to contrast the experience of it with, and yet there also is a contrast with either the “inside” (despite the fact this is *also*, nonetheless, where we already are) or with another global framework of the sense of things (despite the fact that each framework is completely and so exclusively exhaustive of the whole). Again, as I pointed out in the first section above, it is sense itself that requires us to reflect on and so partially to distance ourselves from sense itself in general and as a whole, and as a result to come upon and work with this kind of contradiction. The contradiction is part of the working of sense itself in this kind of context.

I argued at the end of the first section that this contradictory idea of being outside all sense cancels its own sense and consequently returns us to familiar sense, “within” our framework. In this connection, another way of expressing this simultaneity of no contrast and yet contrast in reflection on the whole of things is that, in the context of that reflection, we are, as it were, wholly “inside” the “outside” itself, and so have no perspective on it; as a result, it is not yet truly a perspective on the whole of things. That is, on its own, this reflection does not yet fully make its own sense. It is only the comprehensive reflection which it is, that is, it is only completely itself, when it has also “stepped outside” *itself* and so returned us to the unreflective “inside” of our framework (which is all that is left out of that reflection on the whole and so is its own “outside”). Its

contradictory cancellation of itself, then, is not just a negation of it but is genuinely part of it, of what it successfully is.¹²

This contradictory simultaneity of global and therefore mutually exclusive frameworks also explains why, in remembering the dream after waking, we can register the wholly “other” nature of the experience of the dream, its nature as wholly excluding our waking sense and region of things (and vice versa), while nonetheless also being able to experience it in contrast with and so in the context of our waking sense of things.

There is another element of this movement partly outside the constraints of sense as a whole that helps to account for the often unreserved absorption in dream feelings. This movement partly outside familiar sense means that not grasping the sense of the experience, not understanding, is an inherent part of the dream experience. This gives a further explanation for the lack of tempering perspective and so for the open vulnerability to impressions and the untempered absorption in feelings we often experience in dreams.

Again, as I pointed out in the first section of this essay, this kind of reflection on or movement or comparison between different senses of the whole of things is also part of the deep growth and perplexities that occur in our waking life. Both this kind of waking experience and this kind of dream experience deal with the whole of things (or the whole of a particular conceptual order or structure), and so are detached from the complicating variety of particulars “within” our framework and the multitude of

¹² Ortega’s description above of the whole of things that is the object of philosophy as itself partial is therefore true but, because the sense of or what we mean by this object is self-canceling in this way, incomplete. Perhaps this is the burden of his qualification that the whole of things is partial “in this sense, but only this.”

considerations and perspectives they bring to bear. We might ask, then, how this view of dreams accounts for the difference in the feeling texture of the waking and dreaming versions of this kind of experience.

I do think there is some overlap: the waking experiences are in some ways overwhelming and in those respects absorb us wholly in them, without perspective. It is also hard to be clear about their validity or reality. But there are also differences in the two versions of the experience. I suggest that in waking life, when we are caught up in the view of the whole, we are nonetheless at the same time substantially aware of the multitude of everyday issues within our lives and world, even if our attention is not or is only vaguely on them. In dreams, by contrast, we are more wholly and unreservedly caught up in the experience of the whole, and much more or entirely oblivious to the competing details of the experience simply “from within” our framework.¹³ As a result, the dream experience is a more pure version of that experience of the whole. And, further, because of that purity, as I have argued, we also give ourselves over more unreservedly to the experience than we do in waking life.

4. Some Dimensions of the Grounds and Nature of Dream Interpretation

I have suggested that dreams are partly an expression and undertaking of a movement beyond our structuring categories of sense. This is a movement that necessarily also begins in and is based on those structuring categories, since they structure all the sense that exists for us, including the sense of all movement and change. These categories are

¹³ Compare again Rechtschaffen’s (1978) discussion of the “single-mindedness” of dreams.

consequently the basis and means of moving beyond themselves. As a result, dreams are partly a movement and process *of* those foundational categories. That is, the experience in which dreams consist, in all its intimate subjectivity, is not just a reflection on our fundamental structure of meanings, but partly *is* that structure itself in process. The dream experience is we ourselves, or, more precisely, the essentials or anatomy of us ourselves—the basic truth of us—in process. It is an activity of our being.

Now, our subjective experience of our dreams upon waking, as the experience we remember and recount, and our further honest subjective reactions (such as associations) to them are also more or less essential parts of our make-up or substance, of who we are. And in this context they are responses to and therefore directly connected with the activity of our being in which our dreams partly consist. They are therefore expressions and developments of that same activity of our being. As a result, these subjective reactions are objective guides to the meaning of our dreams. What is more, because dreams are not merely a reflective awareness but a process of our being, our subjective reactions to them are *indispensable* or necessary as objective guides to their meaning. Since their meaning partly consists in an activity of our being, we miss that meaning if we replace it with the kind of reflective observation that is not part of that particular activity. (This is not to say that our subjective reactions are the *only* important guide to the dream's meaning. I shall return to this below.)

I have also argued that the conceptual structure that dreams in some respects express and enact is not just the structure of our personal being but also of what we mean by being or reality in general. Here I want to emphasize only that the categories our dreams express are not just the basics of our subjective views, wishes, and fantasies about

ourselves, but the foundations of our own true being itself. These categories are the foundations of, so to speak, the objective reality of our subjectivity. In this connection, Boss's (1957 [1953]) phenomenological understanding of dreams also sees our subjectivity as, further, fully a dimension of reality in general. In that framework, what we artificially separate as subjective awareness and objective reality are in fact just different dimensions or poles of the same thing and of each other. Consequently, the structures of experience and awareness, including our awareness in dreams, are also the structures of reality in general. As a result, dream interpretation can lead to "a new and true relationship with the essence of all things" (p. 121).

It is true that, as an awareness, our experience is partly a simply descriptive reflection to which participating in process and transformation are irrelevant. But in the case of an awareness that moves beyond our fundamental sense-making categories, the sense of these descriptions itself is shifting, so that in this context simple descriptive statements are themselves already participating in a process of transformation or qualification. On the other hand, this does not mean that their simply descriptive character is entirely eliminated. As I have discussed, this movement beyond sense occurs as a movement outside or a distancing ourselves from a specific framework of simply and stably given sense, and it is therefore based and depends on that stably given sense. We need, then, to respect both sides of the character of our descriptive awareness: detached description or reflection, but at the same time a transformative process of the content of this description.

The structure and resolution of this paradox are the same as those of the contradiction of becoming aware of our framework as a whole that I discussed in the first

and third sections. A movement beyond our sense-categories in general is also a movement beyond the sense of the categories of movement and transformation themselves, and therefore reaches the point of not excluding what they exclude. As a result, it comes to cancel their meaning as movement and transformation. In the end, the very fact that our meanings are shifting turns back on its own meaning and restores our meanings as stable, unchanging descriptions. But this only occurs fully once we are in the new framework or restored to the no longer globally reflective “inside” of our original framework, so that our foundational categories are no longer an issue for the questions we are asking and so are left unqualified. Until then, both sides of the dream experience and of our later reactions to the dream—their character as both simple descriptive meaning and as transformation of meaning and so of being—occur and need to be respected.

To return, then, to my main theme: I have argued, on the basis of the meta-conceptual nature of dreams, that the interpretation of dreams needs to be rooted in and guided by the dreamer’s own honest expressions of and reactions to that experience. It follows that the necessary core method of dream interpretation is the tradition that Freud began (at least in the contemporary Western history of dream interpretation) of privileging the dreamer’s narrative and choice of expressions in describing the dream, and also her spontaneous associations with its elements.

Since the dream is a process of the dreamer’s being in general, its structure is the structure of all of the dreamer’s experience during the dream, including her most immediate experience within it. I suggest that the most immediate aspect of the dream experience for the dreamer, the aspect of the experience that is most direct and in the

forefront of her awareness, is the feeling texture of the dream. If this is so, then the feeling texture is, as it were, the leading edge of the process in the person of whose being the dream is an activity. Or, approaching this same issue in a different way, because this is a process of the sense of ourselves and our world and so (at some level) also of our awareness, and in particular is partly the transforming awareness of our foundational categories of sense, we might say that the feeling texture of the dream is the direct sense (in the sense of “sensation”) of the structure of sense (in the sense of “meaning”) itself. The feeling texture is therefore the most direct access to the meaning the dream has for the dreamer: to its meaning both as activity of transformation and as the simply descriptive content and reflections in which this activity, as an activity of awareness, also consists. The feeling texture, then, is the most basic and so the most important access to the dream’s interpretation.

That feelings are the primary avenue for interpreting dreams is given some support by Boss’ argument, noted above, that “the dreamer . . . is frequently, and intensely in a very definite mood. Corresponding to this unequivocal mood, only those objects and people are allowed to enter the respective dream world whose essence and being correspond exactly to the behaviour patterns in which the dreamer himself happens to be moving” (1957 [1953], p. 112). States, on the basis of exploring how we might construct our dreams, comes to the similar conclusion that “like the poets we dream about things whose meaning we already know in an emotional and preconceptual sense, and that is no doubt why we dream about them and why dreams make a certain kind of

essentialized sense. The dream is the instantiation of a felt meaning” (1993, p. 169).¹⁴

This privileging of feeling texture also fits well with Gendlin’s (1986) emphasis on feeling in his “focusing” approach to interpreting dreams, although he sees bodily feeling in particular as most important. As will become clearer shortly below, his view fits with my own as well in that, as he insists, the relevant feeling is not one that we can initially identify: we “cannot say what it is” (p. 5). It is a feeling whose nature or sense we need to establish.

The dreamer can helpfully engage the feeling texture of the dream in two ways. First, she can dwell with it, allow it to “be there” without interference, without trying to make anything of it one way or another. In this way the process of which it is the immediate expression can carry out its transformative and insight-granting work. The dream is a process of and beyond our structuring categories of sense, and actively trying to make sense of it would necessarily impose the un-transforming constraints of our current sense framework on it. That is, actively trying to make sense of it would miss what is essential to the dream. On the positive side, making attentive and non-interfering room for the feeling texture allows us to register and adjust to whatever shifts occur in the process that it expresses, including the possible emergence of simply descriptive insights.

Second, the dreamer can give the feeling texture priority as the locus or topic of reactions and associations. The dreamer helpfully engages these reactions and associations in turn, too, partly by dwelling with them, letting them work within her as

¹⁴ As I noted above, while States argues here that this is a felt, preconceptual meaning that concepts do not do justice to, I am proposing that concepts are really part of feelings and vice versa.

the sense-emerging process that they are. These reactions, however, are less immediately expressions of the dream process, and therefore do not all consist most directly in a feeling texture. As a result, there are other dimensions of them, such as purely descriptive elements, that become more prominent than they are in the feeling texture, and are appropriately worked with in other ways.

There are, of course, dimensions of the dream experience itself that are not its feeling texture, and that therefore need to be worked with in other ways. But I am proposing that the feeling texture is the most basic and direct access to the dream's meaning and work.

With respect to interpretation of the dream, it is beside the point whether or not the dreamer remembers the dream feeling as it was independently of his current waking state of mind, or whether or not his reactions and associations capture the experience of the dream as it was independently of its current narrative and interpretation. Since the dream is the person's own essential conceptual or existential experience, the same process that is the meaning of the dream is also at work in the person's later attentive experience of and honest reactions to it.

I argued near the end of the previous section that we can make sense of registering the wholly "other" nature of the dream experience even in the context of our waking awareness. I am not retracting this here. The "otherness" remains wholly "other" to our waking experience in the way I have discussed whether it is registered in the context of our waking awareness and narrative or registered entirely within the dream. I am only adding that it is the same "otherness" that we are dealing with in either case. Another aspect of my account here that may also be puzzling is that this complete

otherness is what I have been arguing is an experience and activity of the person's own being. But I have argued this on the grounds that the experience and direct engagement of our being involves "stepping outside" our sense framework and so outside our habitual modes of making sense. As a result, whether in waking life or in dreaming, it is an experience of occupying a conceptual order that is incompatible with sense as it is for us within our framework and so in our typical experience.

The outside interpreter (that is, not the person who had the dream), too, can helpfully engage the feeling texture by giving it priority as the locus of the dreamer's reactions and associations. I insisted above that the dreamer's subjective reactions are indispensable guides to the dream's meaning. The outside interpreter, however, is also extremely important in interpretation of the dream, exactly because she is *not* caught up in the dream's process. The dreamer's experience is characterized precisely by being caught up in a movement beyond her conceptual resources, and by being unusually absorbed in that conceptually disorganized movement. For both reasons, it is very hard for her to get an unconfused grasp of the concepts at issue and their relations to each other. (I should note that "unconfused" here may include appropriate confusion in accurately grasping legitimate logical incoherencies.) The capacity for a clear overview is exactly what the dream is working towards her *attaining* once the work of the dream is done. An outside interpreter, on the other hand, is less caught up both in some aspects of the dreamer's habitual, unreflective framework and in the conceptual disarray in which the dream experience consists. She is therefore in a better position to register and adjust to the complications or transformations of sense that the dreamer's account and reactions communicate.

Whether it is the dreamer or an outside interpreter who is doing the interpreting, however, it follows that he needs to allow himself to be guided not by his already-given ways of making sense, but instead by the unexpected complications in sense that the dream account offers. The kind of attitude that allows this is, I suggest, what Freud described as “evenly-hovering attention,” in which the interpreter makes “no effort to concentrate the attention on anything in particular” (1963 [1912], p. 118). Further, because the dream consists precisely in working towards an overall sense of things (or a relation between more than one overall sense of things) that has not yet emerged, it is also important, as Freud insisted, not to begin with an impression of the overall dream, but first to work with the dreamer’s reactions and associations to isolated elements of the dream (e.g., 1976 [1900], p. 673), and on their basis to build towards a sense of the whole or coordination of wholes. Here too, I suggest, and for the same reasons, the way to let the unexpected whole emerge is by approaching the collection of these elements with the attitude of ‘evenly hovering attention’ or, in other words, by dwelling with them in the way I proposed above in connection with engaging the dream’s feeling texture.

I mentioned in the discussion of feeling texture that, because of the movement beyond the constraints of sense, not understanding is an inherent part of the dream experience. This is another way of talking about the incomplete or confused sense of the dream process, and about the need for the interpreter to focus on and respect what she does not understand in the dream account and not only what she does. Reik (1948), for example, has emphasized this dimension of interpretation in the context of psychoanalytic therapy. In a chapter titled “The courage not to understand,” he points out that an explanation that is “plausible, rational, and comprehensible” often appears so

because of our habitual patterns of thought—including those developed by training in schools of interpretation—rather than because of what the phenomenon, honestly considered, offers (p. 509). Instead, he writes, we should learn “to postpone judgment and put up with doubt” (p. 507).

As I discussed in the first section of this essay, a dream is (partly) a transition between or beyond sense frameworks not only in itself, but also in the relation between the dream as a whole and waking life. The contrast between the feeling texture of the dream and the feeling texture or tone of our experience on waking from the dream is therefore also part of the movement or reflection in which the dream consists and so of the dream’s meaning. So, for example, on waking, a bad dream experience can feel less bad or even good in contrast with or in the context of the waking feelings. One can feel, for instance, relieved that it was just a dream, or pleased to have confronted a fear. And pleasant feelings within a dream can feel bad in the light of the waking feelings. One might, for instance, feel ashamed of having enjoyed behaving unfairly in the dream.

Since this contrast occurs after the dream experience, as its own independent event, has ended, it is not part of the transition or reflection in which the dream’s own content consists. But, as I have argued, part of what belongs to being a dream is that it is a comprehensive shift of sense-framework from that of waking life. In other words, its difference from waking life is part of what makes it internally what it is. In addition, since for the person waking from the dream the contrast with waking life is a transition between wholly different sense frameworks, that contrast is, equally with the dream, an existential experience and process for him, and, what is more, one that is brought about

partly and substantially by the dream. These features of the dream's contrast with waking life therefore situate the dream and its internal content as part of a more general process.

I have discussed the logically legitimate confusions of sense and logic that occur when incompatible sense frameworks are simultaneously relevant. Here I am suggesting another of these paradoxes: that what is wholly and exclusively outside the dream, in the comprehensively different sense framework of waking life, can be part of the sense of what is wholly and exclusively inside the dream. (In the examples I gave, the contrast with waking feelings changed the meaning of the feelings that occurred during the dream.) Given the legitimate simultaneity of contradictory frameworks in this context, we might even want to say that the contrast between dream and waking worlds both is already part of the internal process of the dream itself *and* is simply, entirely, and permanently outside it, or that it is both a result of the process the dream expresses and so continuous with the dream *and* that it is an entirely new and separate context. In fact, in some cases, part of the way the dream moves (of itself and so as part of its own continuous movement) to a different conceptual order, rendering its initial materials irrelevant or no longer meaningful, may be exactly by our waking up and so moving beyond the whole thing. If so, that is, in these cases the dream itself builds to and brings about our waking up, and so produces the shift to its own irrelevance in this way. It is therefore in a sense continuous with its own discontinuity.

A rather neat possible version of this is when we actually forget the dream immediately, and only later remember it and that we had forgotten it. We then experience it exactly as something that had seemed important but then literally lost all meaning: within our current experience, it ceased to have existed at all. Again, in some cases it may

be the dream's own process, as a transition or relation between mutually exclusive sense frameworks, which brings about this result.

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