

“Introduction to an unpublished manuscript entitled Selected Dreams”

Daymares: Selected Fictions on Dreams and Time (Vancouver: CACANADADADA Press Ltd., 1991)

By Robert Zend

Someone says: “I dreamt about you...”

Why do your eyes light up, why do you so eagerly want to know about that dream? Why are you so interested in what happened to you in that non-existing world? Why do you want to see yourself doing something that you never did, to hear yourself saying something that you never said? Why does hearing about your imagined sexual performance in someone else’s dream excite you so? Why do you become anxious, if something sad, or hopeful, if something happy, was dreamt about you? When asking, “What did I do?” why do you identify yourself with a phantom that isn’t you? Knowing all about their fleeting, subjective irrelevance, why do you relate other people’s dreams to your own iron reality?

There is a mysterious world stretching somewhere below the surface of the Earth (or below the upper layer of the cortex) that constantly whispers images, plots and words to us; as many worlds as heads sitting on human shoulders – heads which during the day function according to the radiant commands of the golden god, Sun. But as soon as He sinks below the circular line of the horizon, another ruler takes over, Darkness, through whose empire the spiraling-straight lines hurled by the fiery sphere cannot penetrate. Darkness, floating and amorphous, vast and expanding. Her law is entirely different from that of the temporarily dethroned king: falling-apartness instead of coherent concentration; obscurity instead of distinctness; spaciousness instead of linearity; dispersion, instead of fusion; overlapping instead of separateness; indefinity, instead of explicitness; womb-like roundness, instead of erect angularity. The three billion heads on the surface of our revolving rock cease to stretch upward, sharpening themselves toward the throbbing Lord who sails Westward, only Westward, always Westward. Instead, they bend down and wither into an enigmatic state of noisy silence and regularly recurring chaos which fully remembers, but playfully regroups, the collective happenings of former radiance, repeats them inarticulately and confusingly, inexpressibly in—and untranslatably into—the public language. Everyone dreams in privacy rather than interacting with the collective, and yet, during the night, all fuse with the common-in-all more than during the day, when all of us are our separate, impregnable selves.

Although the Sun declared it a false doctrine, we still secretly accept the creed of Darkness which teaches us that the land of dreams is common for everybody: it is not three-billion individually enclosed lands, but one. It obeys not three-billion personal laws, but one. It is a common land where we all meet each other, and these meetings will be unremembered during the linear Sun-time by the vertically erected individuals who intermingle on the curved, collective male-plane. We all believe—though we know it isn’t true—that the land into which we submerge (while our horizontal bodies rest, tossing and turning about) is real, as real, if not more, than that from which we sank down. Originally we were all the sons and daughters of Darkness: that was our prenatal land, the Atlantis-womb before the ejaculating rays of the aroused Sun-lord fertilized it, generating us who grow and pop out into the light. We never lose our nostalgia for the cool, dank, soily shadow-shapes of the womb.

This is the world of dreams from which, at the very beginning of our personal lives it was so hard to be torn away. This is where we spent most of our early time, sleeping. Gradually, as the duration of our sojourns in that world decreased, our time in the clear, collective, articulate world correspondingly increased. The sword of merciful death finally liberates us forever from the task of wasting even short hours in this male-reality, so that we can return completely to virgin mother-existence. Death allows us back to the land of time-spacelessness; to the tiny centre point of our individual self which strangely coincides with the three-billion other human centre-points, with those of the dead ones, with those of our more ancient ancestors; swimming, crawling and flying creatures, rooting-stretching plants and perhaps even with the center-points of other alien-living-units, of agitatedly swirling atoms and majestically rotating galaxies.

The real difficulty, for both the individual and the race, is not to learn the language of Darkness, but rather to learn the language of the Sun. Only the minuscule peak of our iceberg-soul uses Sunspeech. Its bulky expanse hidden under the surface still speaks the ancient language of Darkness; we consist mainly of dreams and only negligibly of wakefulness. By collective agreement between the Sun-ruled ego-peaks, which engage themselves in labyrinthian sociopolitical mythologies, this original language is marked with the stamp of insanity. This “insanity” lurking in all of us, even at high-noon, never stops giving whispered suggestions to our seemingly sane, wakeful structures. That is why we periodically grow sick of them and, through bloody revolutions, try to change them back to the original Utopia which had existed in the Atlantean womb-past, and not, as is erroneously hypothesized, in the Sun-like, glowing erection-future. All these attempts are, of course, futile. It is impossible to convert rocks into clouds, father into mother, iron into fantasy. We don't have to learn to speak the language of dreams because we never forgot to speak it; we practise it a third of every day; we all come from it, persons as well as species. It is our real mother tongue: translations *into* it are impossible. Everything else: literature, communication, institutions, law, family, society, love, cities, technology, religion, art and science, is already a translation *from* it – and unsuccessful translations at that: like ruins disintegrating in an alien environment.

You can dream of a lion which is as harmless and cute as an Easter Bunny, or of a motionless pillar which is as menacing as a rapist. You can dream of lovemaking as unpleasant as slavery, or of bland, grey flower-pots as warm and sensuous as rosy-hued flesh. Translating them with Sun-lit words gives rise to impenetrable jungles of misunderstanding in which sameness means difference; nearness, distance; flux, solidity; consecutiveness, simultaneity and repetition, comparison. This language knows no word, its events do not provoke emotions, its objects do not lend themselves to symbolization. On the contrary, it informs us of the bankruptcy of words: its emotions provoke events and its abstract objects are expressions of solid symbols.

It is a diagonally reversed world to which, ultimately, we owe our deepest gratitude. Its fragmentarily remembered messages may mean consolatory revelation for their true decipherer: an escape from a monomorphic reality in which the impossibility of both the finiteness and the infiniteness of the material world locks the answer-seeking intellect, the son of the Sun, into the wall-less prison cell of the agnostic paradox. But in the true—and the only true—world of Darkness, the Sun-problems ought not to be solved, for they do not exist. Dreams are not dreams, but reality; insanity is not insane,

but sacred norm; darkness is not dark, but rather brightness without paradoxical ambiguity. On the other hand, reality is not real, but merely a dream; public sanity is not sane, but an abnormal nightmare (daymare), and clarity is not clear, but obscure chaos. According to the messages coming from this underworld, finiteness or infiniteness are no longer paradoxically interchangeable alternatives but illusory dazzles in one, single layer of that one, single, ubiquitous, never-ending, dreaming consciousness which, in our daytime-madness, we alternately refer to as “self” or “god” or “universe” or “the Moving Finger” or “the Chess-Player, beyond” or the “Great Watchmaker” or “a Higher Dimension” or “the Supreme Being” or “the High Dreamer” or “the Collective Consciousness.”

Along and around the circular borderline of the horizon, where twilight looms and where the two worlds merge (similar to the tree trunk, positioned between the downward-branching root and the upward-stretching leaves) extends the “horizontally shared”: A narrow strip-domain of unsuccessful translations where wakefulness attempts to remember and express wakelessness and, failing that, merely stutters and stammers comically. It is an area where prenatal, death-womb-like Darkness attempts to remember and express sinfully-sunfully erected life, and failing that, awkwardly jumbles, confuses and overlaps time and geography in the process. Here, in the stripe-shaped no-man’s land between the two borderlines, another, a third god rises to existence, He who is an alien in both the land of Light and that of Darkness. His name is Humour. When He speaks to the Underworld about the Upperworld, his description emerges ridiculously distorted, since he is unable to describe the very light that characterizes that world. His description of the Underworld is similarly rendered senseless, since he describes the land of Darkness in the language of graduated articulate brightness. This is the zone—His domain—in which I, pushed-around wanderer of depths and heights, decided to settle. This is the land into which I both ascended and descended, in an attempt to save face in both worlds, so that in the lower kingdom I would not be considered a meticulous collector of cold and rigid cubes, while in the upper kingdom I would not be marked as an insane purveyor of shady hoaxes. While an alien in both worlds, in each I try to make myself at home. Thus, when I am approached with inquiries from either kingdom about the other, or about my true identity and idiosyncrasies, or about my loyalties and allegiances, or about my views of the universal nature of things, I can reply to all with just one, single, identical, common answer: laughter. I hope to be respected as a citizen of this no-man’s land, and my chances are good: my visitors from both lands seem to surmise that laughter is the only language of communication. What we call existence, including the two lands and a million others so far untackled, is nothing but the never-ceasing concentric circles still ringing and reverberating from a gigantic central laughter which broke out once, many eternities ago—a laughter following a joke which was itself, and ever since, the infinite number of worlds swarming in its wake are but miniature bubble-jokes in the tissue of that laughter.

This book—as all my others—stems from the narrow region of this third kingdom, it can only be taken seriously by not being taken seriously.

by Robert Zend, June 18, 1975, published in *Daymares* (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 1991), pp. 3-8,
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