

Interpretation of Dreams,  
Interpretation of Facts

**Harold N Boris**

# **Interpretation of Dreams, Interpretation of Facts**

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e-Book 2016 International Psychotherapy Institute

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# Interpretation of Dreams, Interpretation of Facts

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This essay goes to the question of whether Being precedes Consciousness or Consciousness precedes Being—whether belief creates reality or reality belief. Vaclav Havel in his February 1990 address to a joint session of Congress spoke of his “one great certainty” that the latter was true. It is not merely, then, a problem in epistemology; people have died to assert each position against the other. The implication of the debate is that worldmaking is an activity from which several features are derived, among them myth, reason, fiction and fact. Can any one of these lay claim to a status superior to another? In “Interpretation” I wrote as if there were a reality which people distort and to which interpretation in a cordial context might return them. I thought the secondary process, consensual validation, and the like represented a kind of reality that could be resurrected and restored.

Here I take an alternate view, namely, that facts are one rendition of experience, fictions another. Music might be a third. Thus if dreams are open to interpretation for the meanings concealed and expressed by meaning, so too are facts. A knife, that is, cuts two ways. It may be a symbol of a penis, but a penis may be a symbol for a knife. Science may represent the world, so may myth. For some time I had put forward the idea that narrative was spurious in that it lent an order to events which those events may not in fact have; now I should say that narrative orders events in one way, dreams, because of the particular simultaneities open to visual representation, another. (A narrated dream is a probably a horse designed by a committee.)

In the social nexus people in groups talk about how many differences they have in common. (Wilde wondered, “What is the world coming to when we talk about our similarities instead of our differences?”) Can discoveries be made before the nexus can stand them; or must discoveries be invented for a while? Sulloway argues that his data support a contention that younger siblings are less conservative than older and more prone to make scientific discoveries that break with tradition. Perhaps primogeniture inherits the earth as we know it and latter-geniture must find new worlds to conquer.

Falstaff, it has been remarked, is realer than any living man: he is so aburst with life that he seems to complete a prefiguration of what was meant to be. Is that what beauty is: the convex wall of the mold?

More than once Bion remarked that now we have *Interpretation of Dreams* we should have its companion volume: *Interpretation of Facts*. He felt this would provide “a two-way street.” In this wish he was not alone. Winnicott, too, thought that now we know what the symbols of the penis are we might wonder what the penis symbolizes:

Incidentally, it rather amuses me to make an exercise by saying “what is the penis symbolical of?” To some extent the penis is symbolical of a snake or of a baby’s bottle or of the baby’s body as it moved in the womb before the arms and legs became significant and before there were oral and anal zones. I think that in regard to the one way in which the idea of a penis develops where it is gradually constructed out of certain properties of the mother, then we have to think of a very fundamental concept, and have to say that the snake is symbolical of a penis. When we come, however, to the other extreme such as your son’s observation of his penis and his mind-work on the subject, then I think we can look at it the other way and talk about the penis as symbolical of other more fundamental objects as, for instance, the tooth-brush or some other toy or, as I have said, of the fish or

reptile that is understood because it is like the infant was at the dawn of impulse. [Winnicott 1956]

Regarding this matter of the symbol, Green (1986) quotes *Robert's Dictionary* to the effect that a symbol is, "an object cut in two, constituting a sign of recognition when its bearers can put together the two separate pieces." Let us take a leaf from Bion and Winnicott and suppose that there is a penis which is itself and at the same time symbolizes and is symbolized by other things. The latter idea is established: the familiar phallic symbols. But the former? What does a fact symbolize?

Psychoanalysis is about representations: about images, signs and signals. We say: there is a world in which things and events are as they are: they are actual; the secondary process can be trained and disciplined to perceive these accurately, to remember them clearly and to recall them faithfully. Using his secondary process, a person can learn to think dispassionately and in a cordial relationship to consensual or empirical traditions.

There is a real out there; a historical real and a current real, consisting of actual time and space of actual people and doings and of defined ways and procedures for apprehending them—for example, the methods of logic and experimentation.

We also say that there is a primary process at work whose relationship to the real and the actual is imaginative. It doesn't record, it represents; it doesn't discover, it invents; it doesn't recollect, it re-presents its old duplicitous images, images shaped by longing, tailored by fear. Wishful thinking, wishful dreaming, wishful perceiving, and wishful remembering.

We go on to speak of the tension between these processes and the forces that drive them—between the self-preservative and self-actualizing forces that edge us toward things as they are and the self-protective, pleasure-seeking forces that take us toward matters as we would wish them to be. This tension, we say, consists of a dialectic; at one and the same time what is, what we wish were, and what we feel ought to be coexist in uneasy proportion and in temporary compromise. Thus at any given moment truth exists only approximately.

But we never doubt there is a truth nor do we doubt that it is superior to the rather grossly self-serving shadow plays of the primary process.

Suppose further, however, that the world of facts were no more really real than that of representations of those facts. Or to put it another way, that the Real as a category was filled merely by representations of the real and that

these representations were as tangential to what they represented (or claimed to represent!) as are the imagos and phantasms of the unconscious and its dreamlife.

If we suppose that, then we have a world represented by the canonical letter X of which we are of two (or more) minds. The superiority of the one mind to the other doesn't come into question any more than the superiority of French to English or Latin to Russian comes into question as a way of communicating between people about experience. What does come into prominence as mentocentrism recedes are the nature and characteristics of the various ways of apprehending X which cannot be known any longer, but to one another.

We are dealing then with not one but two mental constructs, which I propose to regard as functionally reciprocal. Together they constitute a duality, each portion of which serves as an alternative for one another—as one might say sleep and wakefulness do. I will go further: I will propose that the construction of these worlds provides definition for one another; they, so to say, tell each other apart, by providing comparison and contrast.

This means that a fact helps us to know what is fictional about a fiction as a fiction helps us to know what is factual about a fact. At the same time, however, the status of both fact and fiction require protection from one another. It is only partially useful to know our fictions are fictional; we need illusion, dream, make-believe, hope, play, metaphor—all the as-ifs, and we don't want to have them exploded by facts. The same holds true of our facts. As I have been suggesting, we have gone so far to protect them as to regard them as nearer to truth and so-ness—X—than fictions are. Indeed it is possible to suppose that this very cozening we provide to fact—the naive identity we give it with and to verity—suggests its innate fragility. For we well know how approximate are our scientific approximations to truth; how this month's fact is next month's fallacy; how even mathematics, the very language of nature, as some regard it, is but a rendition, neither truer nor false, neither closer to nor further from X than the fictions of the plastic arts or the abstract representations of music.

Facts, then, also need to be protected. Fictions cannot be permitted to explode them. Between fact and fiction exists an equipoise, an equilibrium in individual and cultural homeostasis. Each depends on the other's particular weight of means or force, to complement it and to distinguish it. Another metaphor might involve the idea of an ecosystem in which a delicate balance must be maintained. In this allegory, facts and fictions prey upon one another, competing for conviction; yet for each to survive, the other is required. Neither can grow too large, fierce, or greedy, for its ultimate fate depends upon the survival of the other.

In this respect, we might say that the very young—the infants and toddlers—need a heavy lading of illusion and fiction. They are too vulnerable to know what life is all about. We might suppose that if babies knew what fate awaited them, many would lose heart and give over. Thus we might think that if dreams do spin the web of illusion and wish, as they seem to, babies would need more of REM sleep than grown-ups. But we might equally suppose that dreaming becomes too dangerous after a while—that when the mother crossing the busy thoroughfare with her child gives it a sharp jerk on the hand, saying “stop dreaming and hurry up!” she might be reflecting this change in status.

Yet the foregoing is misleading because it deals in quantity, and it is the quality of fact and fiction and their relationship that I wish to examine. Quantity as an indication of equipoise is more useful as an illustration than an advertion.

The quality, then, of the twin constructions we make of X has to do with each one’s robustness vis-à-vis the other. A delusion represents an experience of life. As Adelaide Johnson and others (e.g., Leston Havens) have supposed, delusions are not made up of whole cloth. No matter how idiosyncratic a delusion may seem, it often also seems to have a germ of historical or contemporary fact to it. A fact may in like manner have a germ of fiction to it. Is there anything, except accidentally, like pure fact or pure fiction? A fact such as the fact that the human personality exists has a dubious status. Exists? Exists where? Is it comprised of mind, and if so, of what is mind comprised? Brain? And brain tissue? Neuronal and synaptic activity? Molecules? Atoms? Particles? Waves? Is the human personality made up of subatomic waves? Yes, well.... And waves? At some point the fact seems no longer true, no longer a goodish approximation of X from the factual point of view. It might be more like science fiction than scientific fact. But is a Rembrandt portrait a better or worse approximation of the human personality than subatomic theory?

These are Philosophy 101 questions and points and hardly worth pursuing save to put forward the notion that for functional purposes fictions should not be too fictional and facts not too factual and that where one moves in one direction so must the other.

If fact and fiction function so as to provide alternatives for one another, and fictions are created by wishful or fearful thinking, what impels the creation—the discovery or invention—of facts? Is there a different motive force or do facts also fulfill (or seem to) wishes and allay fears?



The traditional argument is that if facts do have such functions, they serve the ego's wishes for self-preservation, for which a respectful knowledge of the real is necessary. The reality principle, that is to say, needs its reality.

This, on the face of it, would appear to be unexceptional. But we have already seen that reality is as relative as fiction—that the preservation of the self may, indeed, require unreal realities. Unreal realities are different from fictions because the latter are known to be unreal but the former are not. Indeed the former are decidedly not to be thought to be fictive (to think so would be as frightening in its way as to think that movie or television images are “true”). That is, facts concerning reality must be thought to be real and true even if they are not. How then are unreal facts to be distinguished from realer ones?

In the end, each individual arrives at something like the amount of reality he can bear. At the same time, the status of the fact is organized and mediated consensually—the truth of a fact is a matter of agreement. We need look no further into this than the matter of psychoanalytic facts—indeed psychoanalysis itself! For some benighted souls, psychoanalytic discoveries are science fiction. Oddly, they may spare those of us for whom the Oedipus complex, say, is a fact some passing sympathy. But within the ranks of those for whom the Oedipus complex is a fact are some for whom the death instinct is a fact—and happily? sadly? oddly?—those for whom it is not. Those for whom the Oedipus complex is a fact say: looked at psychoanalytically, these feelings, attitudes, behaviors reveal the presence of what we allusively call the Oedipus complex. We may feel that it is as much there as quarks or molecules, if people would only look properly—at the right data through the right instruments. But this argument is the same one made for the factual status of the death instinct, yet to many who find the argument persuasive of the Oedipus complex, it is as unpersuasive as theirs for the Oedipus complex is to those who see neither as a fact.

Yet psychoanalysts share with other workers in the vineyards of fact the same abiding belief—that there are facts to be found: that for questions there are true answers, one for each question, arrived at by a correct method of investigation, so that these answers will combine to form in the end an overarching field theory reflecting the X-ness of the universe. That is more than a hope; it is a conviction: there are timeless truths and finding them is therefore only a matter of time. This conviction is held to be just such a truth, though how it differentiates the astrologer from the astronomer is a difficult question. For as we take up the study of methods for arriving or knowing “truths,” these begin to look rather less august and impeccable than their adherents believe and claim.

For even as we are “at work” at what the philosopher Nelson Goodman (1978) calls Worldmaking, we encounter what may also be a fact: namely, as Goodman puts it:

With multiple and sometimes unreconciled and even unreconcilable theories and descriptions recognized as admissible alternatives, our notions about truth call for some reexamination. And with our view of worldmaking expanded far beyond theories and descriptions, beyond statements, beyond language, beyond denotation, even, to include versions and visions metaphorical as well as literal, pictorial and musical as well as verbal, exemplifying and expressing as well as describing and depicting, and distinction between true and false falls far short of marking the general distinction between right and wrong versions. What standard of rightness then, for example, is the counterpart of truth for works without subjects that present worlds by exemplification or expression? [p. 109]

With this I should like to juxtapose the strange bedfellows in minds like Newton’s, whose ventures into the inferential formulations of the laws of thermodynamics were paralleled by inferential formulations concerning the nature of God which strike most physicists—but not Newton—as being crackpot. Newton appears to have regarded his work in both fields as equal in quality and validity. One can think that people like Newton (Alfred Russel Wallace, Darwin’s cohort, is another example) sense out the holes in the fabric of knowledge and fill them one way or another. These fillings are confabulated in much the same way that split-brain people who must operate with each hemisphere of the brain necessarily working independently from the other do. The “right brain” sees or does, and the left brain rationalizes to “explain” activity of which it has no direct knowledge. (There is a school of thought of which Francis Crick, of DNA-double helix fame, is a prominent member, which holds that the dream as “remembered” narratively is equally spurious. In this school dreaming is a matter of random neural firing used to refresh, or a function of refreshing, synaptic chemical baths during sleep. Images flare as a by-product of this operation; and the perceiving brain, at the dreamer’s behest, organizes these incoherent images into a structure that has a beginning in lieu of a prior, a middle in lieu of a subsequent, and an end instead of a last. If this were the case there might turn out to be a style of “remembering” or, at any rate, narrating dreams as unique as each individual is unique or as attuned to cultural fashions as, say, dreams recounted in novels or tribal myths. Surely dreams told prognosticators like Joseph by Pharaoh or told Jungian analysts differ from dreams told Freudians.)

Such confabulation, if it is that, arises out of the same processes of mentation and cogitation as “good” science. Bion’s Grid drew particular attention to the possibilities of this kind of method for studying methods. Every mental product could be looked at not for its value in terms of fact or fiction, but for the use to which the thinker puts it. Thus a theorem might be used to fill a hole—or a dream might, or a hallucination might.

The “hole” must therefore occupy us for a while now. What manner of experience would one have if one lived in a “world” in which Mother Nature was unfathomable—was irrational, random, and devoid of meaning, fact, truth? Was, in fact, X-less? Where astrology and astronomy were equally baseless, and alchemy and chemistry equally confabulatory? Quite apart from producing drastic unemployment in universities and laboratories, libraries and schools, such a world would quite probably be intolerable. We can tolerate not knowing in some proportion to the expectation that there *is* something to know. The idea that we know nothing because there is nothing *to* know must be akin to the feeling that we have nothing now and, moreover, there is nothing there to have ever. Quite apart from what it might be filled with, such an absence and lack might be unbearable. A world so empty and cold, so barren and interminable a void would not be allowed.

Beckett captures something (but rather little considering the enormity of scale) of this in *Godot* and other plays. In these he takes matters to the point where there is no reason to do anything, even move from one place to the next, if there is no reason to do anything. One is propelled, in so far as one is impelled at all, by distant messages from the brain or gut. Survival—not as an idea or a *raison d’etre*, but as a dimly sensed irritation, a plasmic itch—takes us from one action to the next, after which we await, without knowing we are awaiting, the next signal, if it ever comes.

This is considered unimaginably bleak, this stimulus—response—rest—stimulus... world. There must be something more, more to it, meaning, purpose, order, significance. And indeed, I believe, it is unimaginable even to glimpse, much less contemplate, a life, world, universe, past, present and future, devoid of something—as unimaginable as what an amoeba’s life might be like. We are bound to anthropomorphize, to read our selves into, as if, were we not to fill the holes and gaps and ultimately interstices of being, we would be sucked out of ontologic existence into the vacuum with a whoosh. And be no more.

To preclude this we painstakingly construct a mental skin, cell by cell, dermis upon dermis, to sheathe and clothe and contain us. To this end fact and fiction do equally well. The creationist explanation and the evolutionist explanation both serve equally well to explain our origins, as do the origin myths of all the various peoples who populate the planet. These theories explain how and where and who and in doing so they explain us by defining us and distinguishing us from them. It is not, thus, the theory itself so much as its use. A so-called factual or scientific theory, such as the primal soup plus lightning theory and a so-called mythic theory such as the Genesis theory have no difference in status when considered as theories to provide meaning and direction in the temporal flow→from

left to right spatially, from before to now →. Each theory is the functional equivalent of the other in saying there was a beginning and a perfecting and a direction. Each says that better is yet to come—that we are evolving or devolving to a better, richer, fuller, more complete plane, planfully, comprehensibly, and with some deeper purpose, some guiding principle.

That there is more than one explanation makes each righter and less right than they might seem if there were only one. Thus theories regarded as facts serve the same comparison-contrast competitive balance function as fictions and facts provide to one another. This means of adducing confirmatory validity through contrast makes each man's facts seem more factual and the other's fictions seem the more fictional. That in turn serves to keep one's own facts from being too hard and jeopardizing necessary fictions—for they are comparatively substantial without being too painfully true.

The skin contrived to sheathe and shield, so to keep us from being sucked into the nameless void, also, however constrains. Today's facts stand between us and yesterday's, but also tomorrow's. Semi-truths guard us from whole truths which are nothing but the truth, but also keep us from them. Psychoanalytic theory informs, but it also conceals what might be knowable beyond it. It is said, and with, I think, some truth, that the world has not been the same since Freud. But not only is there no going back to the world before Freud, there is the problem of how to go forward—how to see matters afresh. Freud's great light throws a great shadow. We have then the possibility of increasing the light, of extending it in all directions, of attempting more, seeing more, and getting better at it. But amiable as such increments are, do we know more of the truth, if there is one—more of the X—or only more of the psychoanalytic truth? If we know more of merely the psychic truth, we increase the light, but also the density of the obscuring shadow. The void is held at bay by the cheerful light of the campfire, but so too is what else might be out there. Paradoxically facts hide truths as well as fictions do, and sometimes better; even, as we saw earlier, fictions reveal and illuminate truths as well as or better than facts.

Both are equal in their potential for conveying pain and hence fight—and for protecting us from it. When one piece of either feels too menacing, it needs to be replaced so that the experience can be reconfigured. Either can replace whatever bit is being excised or needing transfiguration. The only requirement is that it fit seamlessly into the fabric in order that its counterfeiting presence go unnoticed. Once again, it is the use of the idea that must engage us. Fact or fiction, one no less than the other, can transform an unbearable experience. Each can be used truthfully or otherwise.

One of the more fundamental decisions the very young must make has to do with whether Mother could but won't or would but can't. (There are, to be sure, also question of can't, but wouldn't if she could; or, can't but would if she could, etc. But these are variants, and the simpler alternative will serve well enough.)

One reading provides hope, the other despair. Out of hope, the child will continue to try. Out of the despair, the child will abandon hope and go on to other things or other people. But before either of these courses can be taken there is the moment (though it might be years) of decision—a time of crisis (though the crisis may be chronic rather than acute). Can she or can't she—or is it will she or won't she?

The decision is as vexing as it is momentous. How does one tell, how can one know? When does one know? When has one had enough experience to decide? If it is true that she can't, why keep reconstituting one's self in the hope that she will? If it's true that she can, why leave off trying? On the other hand, if she can't, who can? Can one stand the idea that no one can provide? Perhaps it is better to think that she won't. Because if it is only that she won't, there's still this to try or that or, then again, nothing to try, because if one tries nothing it won't come clear that the problem is actually that she can't. What kind of knowledge does one want? Know the truth because the truth will set you free? Or elaborate a fiction, since the fiction is the font of hope and possibility?

Each would help—the one to go through hopelessness and on to other things; the second to renewed hope and further trying. If one wants to be Mother's one and only and not merely her child, what's to be done? How does one know when or whether to say to hell with it, and go off and get married to someone else—or when to try getting older or smarter or nicer, or is it less masculine or maybe tougher? Each would help with the frustration inherent in the fact—or is it a fiction?—that Mother isn't, whether she can't or won't.

Which to take, of the two ways out of the slough of despair we call the Oedipus complex, would surely riddle any sphinx, let alone a quite new young man or woman. Poised hard up against the fact (or is it a figment?) that Mother isn't, does one go with the soothing fiction or with the painful fact? (Or does one hedge by "splitting" self or Mother, so there are more possibilities and fewer eggs in one basket?—an inventive solution, which creates more facts or, at any rate, factors.) The epistemological question of how one knows what one knows surely comes into play; for though the child cannot read the future and know what Mother *will* be, he has every reason to know what he knows about Mother so far. Shall he continue to know what he knows or should he doubt it? Should he replace bits of it or give emphasis to other bits, so to change the reading? There are, here, two sources of knowledge. He

remembers Mother, and he perceives her. The two must correspond, or, if discrepant, at least be justified in some way. If he proposes not to know what he knows, what of his perceptions? If he proposes to see Mother differently, what of his memories? The fact that Mother is more cordial when he is good can be used falsely. The look on Mother's face when he stood naked on the edge of the bathtub can be used factually to establish a fiction. The question—how does one know?—can be used to inquire or to cast doubt. Between the two uses there may be no more difference than that between a blink and a wink, but that difference, if mistaken may make all the difference in the world, as Clifford Geertz observes, to the status of one's nose.

We can't stand to know and can't stand not to, and this dialectic is the crucible out of which what we discover and tolerate as facts and what we invent and preserve as fictions is fashioned. When a bit of either sort of knowledge has to be omitted something must fill the gap it leaves. The filling must block out the repressed, but it must not call attention to itself. It must look as it always was.

Let us now turn to the usefulness of fact as generative of the illusion that the truth is known. Answers to questions can be indefinitely postponed in service to the quest for further knowledge. Facts can be accumulated by painstaking research in order to establish that the quest is productive. But looked at with a less cordial eye, these same facts can be seen to rationalize a quest that is itself quite possibly false.

An example might be the entire concept of psychological development and underlying that the view of time as a continuum flowing like a river from a beginning to an ending. With Einstein's theory of relativity out went linear time, as a fixed or singly determinate matter. An anthropomorphic concept of time had to give way as surely as the Ptolemaic to the Copernican view of the universe. Yet there is undoubtedly something pleasing to the old, linear concept of time. In it events could be read from left to right (or up to down). There was an order of earlier to later that suited a wish for progression in which something like lower gave way to something like higher.

Though there have been disputes (and indeed bitter and schismatic disputes) in the psychoanalytic movement, there is scarcely to be found a dispute that there is developmental hierarchy. Whether it is oral → post-oedipal or PS → depressive or psychotic → mature or normal or trust → generativity or.. or.. or →→→ There is a heavy lading of betterness on the right side of the arrow. ("Better" and "right" indeed!) This is consonant, of course, with our ideas concerning cure or getting better. Freudians may and do argue (like the schoolmen of old with their angels and pins) what a post-oedipal genital sexual experience is like. And ego psychologists may argue Kleinian attributions

of ego mechanisms to the infant. And Neo-Freudians may introduce cultural relativism to the Viennese delegation. And the children of the information age and of the neuronal sciences may adduce their new facts and figurations. But all agree (hence the bitterness of the dispute) that there must be a better and a worse and *it must be factual*.

The uncordial eye will note the enfolding of psychoanalytic virtue and the Judeo-Christian hierarchies of virtue (I myself wrote a book called, after Socrates, *The (Un)examined Life*). That eye might sardonically note that it is only the so-called factual status of our Jacob's Ladder of virtues that keeps us distinct from our theological brothers.

(Alternative versions such as those involved in field theory have not really survived a theory that has sublimation in it. But what would become of the longing that we are intimately a part of our own and other's betterment?)

That there are facts to support the developmental hypothesis goes without saying. Infants undeniably develop, and so far as I can tell, as they develop they need less overenthusiastic mental activity. But I think infants and children "develop" right out of certain qualities too. Youngsters have certain capacities for abstraction and imagination which some outgrow. Facts for them begin to supplant fictions in piecing together the fabric of an endurable world.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR CONDUCTING PSYCHOANALYSIS

I propose now to look at the foregoing in the context of psychoanalytic treatment. In particular I want to raise or re-raise some questions that seem to me to follow from the consideration of facts I have been so far making.

Let us begin with the analysis itself. We are prepared to offer an experience, to be part of it and to observe it. A big part of our being part of it is to be self-effacing. We want as much as possible to permit the analysand to encounter him- or herself. None of us know how to do this, but we are open to discovering how. We are prepared to take what few facts we know (or imagine we know) into the encounter with us, but equally prepared to abandon them if need be.

We may start, for instance, with the idea of free association in a 50-minute hour that recurs four or more times a week. But what if our co-worker does not care to lie on the couch, put what he experiences into words, spend the time we proposed with us? We might wish to further "orient" our cohort, but to what? It is true that he or she never

conducted an analysis with him- or herself and ourself before, but then neither have we with him or her. Does training come into it? Do we gain an expertise from training and experience? I should hope we do! But is it other than being less afraid and more open, more versatile and less controlling? Do we not therefore reconjure matters so that the selfencounter remains central even though much else changes?

As to that selfencounter, is something to come of it? Can we know? Can we even know the form it will take? Will the encountering spirit be that of a Rembrandt or a Newton or of a Sullivan? (Or, as someone recently dreamt it, a pinkish piglet?)

As for ourselves, we are prepared to act as interpreter, performing the introduction, translating when necessary. That function is so simple it is terribly difficult to do.

Imagine a summit between the President and the General Secretary in which the interpreters subtly or otherwise had agendas of their own. A worse nightmare might be when the interpreters thought their job was simply to make matters lucid but unbeknownst to themselves introduced bias and unintended nuance. Merely calling "hatred" "hostility" or calling "loathing" "anger" could seriously confuse matters. The wink and the blink earlier mentioned applies here too. One hopes that when, indeed, the interpreter is confused as to what the *mot juste* might be, he chat it over with his opposite number until they get it just so.

The self's widening deepening encounter with self is augmented by just such interpretations going in both directions. The observed self needs to know just as much about the observing self as the latter does about it. They cannot be bothered with the interpreter and his needs, particularly when those needs appear to cause him to side with one or another party to the encounter. His so-called neutrality is just that. He is a translucent medium through which light flows but which contributes nothing additional of its own. The personalities of the artist or scientist are invisible to the beholder, and as the analysand becomes reconciled to sharing the experience not with a transference object, self or other, but with a hard-working interpreter, his interest in himself will increase correspondingly. His artistry and his science, his facts and fictions will be open for knowing, and as the jewel ultimately irradiates itself through the refractions from cut to cut and facet to facet, so does insight function (Meltzer quoting Bion, 1986).

The analyst's analysis will tell him much about his fictions. But then we must begin the arduous and inevitably lonely process of interpreting our facts.



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