

Phenomenon Of Dreams: An Analysis Of Historical, Religious, Scientific And Psychological Perspectives

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Abstract

To define the phenomenon of dreaming, this study focuses on the evolution of distinct perspectives across time. Examining the significance of rapid eye movement (REM) in human body during sleep, science has probed the depths of dreaming. However, religious, and psychological research offer a very different image of the dreaming experience. It shows that while people appear to be sleeping, their thoughts are actually engaged in creative problem-solving and development. Numerous studies in the subject of dream psychology begin with the assumption that dreams are symbolic representations of real-life events. A proper interpretation of dreams could help in avoiding negative outcomes in humans. Scientists believe that the dreamer's own interpretation is the result of a process within brain based on fundamental predispositions such as pleasure, power, love, spirituality, etc. This descriptive study aims to shed light on these diverse perspectives on dreams by analyzing the existing literature. The paper has been concluded developing own perspective on dreams.

Key Words: Dreams; Types of Dreams; Historical, Scientific, and Religious Explanation of Dreams; Psychology of Dreams; Interpretation of Dreams

Introduction

Dreams, which everyone has at some point in their lives, are a type of altered consciousness that involve sensory, mental, and emotional experiences while sleeping. The dreamers have a more difficult time controlling the flow of the dreams, the images they see, and the memories that are triggered. When it comes to mental states, none has been studied as thoroughly as dreaming, yet it is the most misunderstood phenomenon. The neuroscientific method and the psychoanalytical method of dream interpretation are diametrically opposed. Neuroscientists are interested in the neural mechanisms that underpin

dream formation, structure, and narrative. Psychoanalysts, on the other hand, focuses on interpreting dreams and placing them within the context of the dreamer's previous interactions.

The phenomenon of dreams dates to ancient Egyptians, then the Greek myth was added to explain this phenomenon. Even, various religious texts reveal the hidden truth behind dreams. In recent times, the psychologists made a rich contribution in explaining this intrigued and complex phenomenon. This paper will try to put together all these perspectives, and present conclusion based on available literature to answer following research questions.

Research Questions

- Who were the first to explain the phenomenon of dreams historically?
- How various religions tried to unravel the complex phenomenon of dreams?
- What does Islamic literature reveal regarding dreams?
- How modern-day science outline dreams?
- What is the psychological explanation of dreams?

Methodology

This is a descriptive study. To provide a more comprehensive explanation, dreaming has been studied from a variety of perspectives; including history, religion, science, and psychology. Evidence from Islamic literature regarding the dream phenomenon has been emphasized. Finally, the authors' views on this complex phenomenon are summarized in conclusion.

Historical Perspective

• Egyptians on Dreaming

Dreams were once thought to be a manifestation of the afterlife or another realm of the supernatural state. The villagers believed that dreams were divine warnings, delivered either before a catastrophic or joyful event. In fact, the term “dream incubation” dates to ancient Egypt. A person in need of divine intervention would spend the night in a temple and then consult a priest known as a “Master of the Secret Things” to learn the meaning of their dream (Amanullah, 1998, p. 17).

• Greeks on Dreaming

The Greeks were the first to take dreams seriously in the 8th century BC. Homer recounts a dream in which Agamemnon receives advice from a Zeus messenger in the Iliad. The Greeks, like the Babylonians and Egyptians, believed that dreams conveyed heavenly messages that could only be deciphered by a priest. Many occult

practices in Greece can be traced back to these two beliefs. While treating patients, Greeks used dream interpretation to direct them to temples dedicated to local “gods of the body”. Early historian Herodotus claimed that the people of Telmessus, in Southwestern Asia Minor, were experts at deciphering dreams. According to legend, the “Final Monarch of Lydia”, Croesus, sought their assistance in deciphering a significant dream (Harmon, 1968, pp. 67-90).

Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher who lived in the 5th century BC, proposed that a dream world is something created by the dreamer itself. Plato recognized the profound impact that dreams can have on the human character and its journey through life. According to the Plato, Socrates studied music and the arts after being told to do so in a dream. Aristotle demolished Heraditus' belief that dreams conveyed divine messages. He began systematically researching the nature of dreaming. He claims, among other things, that “Despite the fact that most so-called prophetic dreams are to be classified as mere coincidences, especially those that are extravagant”, and “the most skilled interpreter of dreams is one who has the faculty of absorbing resemblances. Neither of these statements is correct. That is, the way a dream is presented to the dreamer is analogous to how a mirror reflects an object.” According to Aristotle's *Parva Naturalia*, dreamers believe their dreams are a replay of the previous day's activities (Celia, 1968, p. 134).

Aristotle also advanced the notion that one's dreams can provide insight into one's physical well-being. It implied that a doctor could determine a patient's health status simply by asking them to describe their dreams. Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, believed in it, and some doctors still do. Galen of Pergamum, a Greek and Roman physician, carried on Aristotle's work. According to his findings, a man who had a recurring nightmare in which his left thigh turned to marble developed palsy and eventually lost the ability to move that leg. He once treated a wrestler who imagined himself standing in a pool of blood above his head. Galen deduced from this man's dream that

his pleurisy required bloodletting. This method of treatment was successful for the man (Hutchins, 1982, p. 137).

- **Romans on Dreaming**

Even though the Egyptians created an early record on dream interpretation known as the Chester Beatty Papyrus, the first full book on dream interpretation was written by the Roman Artemidorus around 150 AD and titled "Oneirocriticon" or "The Interpretation of Dreams". In this five-volume treatise, Artemidorus argued that each dream is as unique as the dreamer who experiences it. He believed that the interpretation of a dream was determined by factors such as the dreamer's profession, social standing, and health. Despite being a very knowledgeable, his interpretations were often very astute. The second Oneirocriticon, written by Astrampsychus, is like Victorian dream dictionaries. Some of the beliefs in this book were a little bizarre, such as the adage that "wearing a purple robe warns of a long disease" and the belief that "holding or eating eggs represents vexation". Some axioms, such as "Sitting naked means loss of property", have survived into modern times with equally relevant meanings (Cartwright & Webb, 2022).

Religious Perspective

- **Bible on Dreams**

The supernatural component of dreams was reintroduced by Christianity. The "Old Testament of the Bible" contains numerous visions. Jacob's dream, in which he saw a ladder leading to the heavens, was perhaps the most well-known of these dreams. The "Book of Daniel recounts Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon from 605 to 562 BC, having a fascinating dream. He saw a magnificent tree with lush green leaves in his dream, where birds built their nests and animals found safety. However, a messenger from Heaven eventually had the tree cut down and the King shackled to the remaining stump. It was decided that the King should be left alone to graze on the grass like any other wild animal. Daniel, a dream interpreter,

was summoned by Nebuchadnezzar and explained the symbolism of the tree in terms of the King's authority and prestige. He was reduced to a savage who could only survive on grass. The dream's purpose, according to Daniel, was to impress upon him the importance of recognizing the divine force that stood above him in the same way that he stood above the animals in the field. It was discovered that people believed the dream predicted the future. Preaching that God communicated with people through dreams became popular among Christians. Martin Luther, Protestantism's namesake, believed that dreams were the work of Satan. Sin, as Luther put it, is "the confederate and father of evil dreams". Because the church was in charge of explaining the Bible, any personal revelations received in dreams had to be from the devil (Injeel-e-Muqadas, 1995, 1:19:24).

- **Qur'an on Dreams**

There are numerous references to dreaming in the Qur'an. Each verse is significant in its own way. The verses below are excerpted to show how Islam regards dreams as proof of Allah's existence and a window into the spiritual realm.

"It is He Who doth take your souls by night and hath knowledge of all that ye have done by day. By day doth He raise you up again; that a term appointed be fulfilled; in the end unto Him will be your return then will He show you the truth of all that ye did (Qur'an, 2004, 6:60)."

Several major events are described that are solely based on Holy Prophets' (PBUH) dreams, such as when Joseph told his father, "Behold,"

"O my father! I did see eleven stars and the sun and the moon: I saw them prostrate themselves to me!" Said (the father): "My (dear) little son! Relate not thy vision to thy brothers lest they concoct a plot against thee: for Satan is to man an avowed enemy! (Qur'an, 2004, 12:4)"

"And We granted the vision (ascension to the heavens) which We made you see (as an

actual eyewitness) was only made as a trial for the people (Qur'an, 2004, 17:60)".

"Nay, say they, (these are but) muddled dreams; nay, he hath but invented it; nay, he is but a poet. Let him bring us a portent even as those of old (who were God's messengers) were sent (with portents) (Qur'an, 2004, 21:5)".

"And among His Signs is the sleep that ye take by night and by day and the quest that ye (make for livelihood) out of His Bounty: verily in that are Signs for those who hearken (Qur'an, 2004, 30:23)".

"It is Allah that takes the souls (of men) at death: and those that die not (He takes) during their sleep: those on whom He has passed the decree of death He keeps back (from returning to life) but the rest He sends (to their bodies) for a term appointed. Verily in this are Signs for those who reflect (Qur'an, 2004, 39:39)".

- **Prophets' (PBUH) Sayings' (Ahadith) on Dreams**

Dreams of men who were close to Allah's Apostle (PBUH) and were able to share their visions with him were documented as occurring throughout his lifetime. If Allah so desired, He would explain them through His Prophet (PBUH). More than 48 Ahadith in Sahah-e-Sithah discuss the significance of dreams and how they should be interpreted. The Prophet of Allah (PBUH) would frequently instruct His followers in dream interpretation.

The Prophet (PBUH) is quoted by U'bada Bin As Samit as saying, "The (good) dreams of a faithful believer is a part of the forty-six parts of prophetism (Bukhari, 2004, 9.116)".

The Prophet of Allah (PBUH), as related by Abu Huraira, said, "Nothing is left of the prophetism except Al-Mubashshirat." They asked, "What are Al-Mubashshirat?" He answered, "The true good dreams (that conveys glad tidings) (Bukhari, 2004, 9.119)".

Sufyan informed 'Amr that he had heard people quoting, "The eyes of Allah's Apostle sleep but his heart does not sleep." 'Amr replied, "I heard 'Ubaid bin 'Umar saying that the dreams of Prophets were Divine Inspiration (Bukhari, 2004, 1.140). And then he recited the verse: 'I (Abraham) see in a dream, (O my son) that I offer you in sacrifice (to Allah) (Qur'an, 2004, 37:102)".

Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said, "When the Day of Resurrection approaches, the dreams of a believer will hardly fail to come true, and a dream of a believer is one of forty-six parts of prophetism, and whatever belongs to prophetism can never be false (Bukhari, 2004, 9.11)".

Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said, 'The good dream is from Allah, and the bad dream is from shaytan. When you see what you dislike, spit to your left side three times when you wake up and seek refuge with Allah from its evil. It will not harm you then, Allah willing.' Abu Salama said, "I would see dreams which weighed on me more heavily than a mountain. When I heard this Hadith, I was not concerned about it (Al-Mu'atta, 524)".

Ayesha (RA) recounts what the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said (to me), "You have been shown to me twice in (my) dreams. A man was carrying you in a silken cloth and said to me, "This is your wife. I uncovered it; and behold, it was you. I said to myself, if this dream is from Allah, He will cause it to come true (Bukhari, 2004, 7.15)".

Ibn e Umer recounts that Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said, "The worst lie is that a person claims to have seen a dream which he has not seen (Bukhari, 2004, 9.167)".

All these Qur'anic and hadith passages demonstrate how seriously Islam takes the spiritual life and the significance of dreams. Simply put, what exactly is sleep? When an animal dies, its nervous system shuts down, but other life processes, such as digestion, development, and blood circulation, are likely to continue, albeit at a slower rate. In this sense,

humans, animals, and possibly even plants all sleep (if plants have a neurological system, which seems likely). There is a belief that when humans are closer to Allah, their soul or personality exists on a spiritual level comparable to death. In poetry, sleep is frequently compared to the grim reaper (Ibn-e-Khaldun, 2001, pp. 112-127).

Because sleep is the identical twin of death, human's spirits are temporarily untethered from its bodies while they sleep. Allah has them, at least for the time being. Every morning, humans get up and go to work until their time on Earth is up. Then there's the "other sleep (death)", which keeps a more detailed record of humans "day (life)", and finally the "resurrection" and "Judgment", where humans finally see everything in its true, non-imaginary state (Ibn-e-Sireen, 2014, pp. 47-54).

- **Middle Eastern Views on Dreaming**

It is believed that some other cultures sought to understand the meaning of their dreams long before the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and Christians. According to an unnamed Persian author, dreams can only be correctly interpreted on the day they occur. This theory was held by the Zoroastrians, who established rules for each day of the month, such as, "the second day is that of Bahman... Events dreamed on this day will occur in next four days but hopes which may be cherished will be disappointed". Gabdorrhachamn, the first and most famous dream interpreter in Arabia, was adamant that "only someone with a pure heart, chaste morals, and the word of truth could properly interpret one's dreams". The aphorisms he allegedly derived from his dreams, on the other hand, are more likely to reflect his own emotions than any actual knowledge of dream (Van de Castle, 1971, p. 179).

- **Europeans Views on Dreaming**

Dreaming piqued Europeans' interest in the early 19th century. Robert Cross Smith was a pioneer in this "dream frenzy", and one of the first to write about it. He achieved phenomenal success with his book "The Royal Book of

Dreams", which he published under the pen name "Raphael". However, modern dream interpretation did not begin until the arrival of the French physician Alfred Maury. It was believed that his research had included over three thousand dreams. The current perspective on dream interpretation was founded on the concept of the unconsciousness, but this was later proven to be insignificant. However, Maury's prognosis was not entirely incorrect. It was later discovered that these external influences only served to reactivate a previously occurring dream of night time (Diamond, 1962, p. 371).

Scientific Perspective

Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung are most well-known modern philosophers to study dreams scientifically; however, most of their work have psychological explanations and discussed later in this study under psychological perspective. The scientific discoveries were made in observing the movement of eyes during sleeping.

- **Sleep and Dreams**

Sleep is essential for recovering from daily stresses, promoting physical development, and maintaining chemical homeostasis. At the turn of the century, chemicals such as lactic acid, carbon dioxide, and cholesterol were thought to accumulate in the brain while awake and be eliminated while sleeping. Fredrick Van Eeden coined the phrase "rapid eye movements" in 1952. Van Eeden discovered that people's eyes moved even when their lids were closed while conducting sleep research. He noticed them pacing up and down the court, as if they had just finished a thrilling tennis match. Scientists were able to distinguish two distinct phases of sleep from that point forward: REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep and NREM (Non-REM) sleep. Compared to those who awoke from REM sleep, only 6% of those who awoke from NREM sleep reported having dreams. In fact, REM sleepers have higher brain activity than awake people. People in NREM sleep, on the other hand, show more signs of the unconscious brain. REM sleep appears to have more psychological benefits than physical ones. People who do not get enough

REM sleep one night are more likely the next day to be easily irritated, forgetful, and unable to focus. Those who do not get enough NREM sleep, on the other hand, are awkward, slow, and obviously exhausted. People who lose REM sleep have more difficulty dealing with stress over time and are more prone to irritation than those who lose NREM sleep, who only experience temporary discomfort (Hong et. al., 2018).

- **Stages of Sleep**

The sleep cycles that comprise an average night are made up of 90-minute bouts of rest and activity. Each cycle consists of four phases: the hypnagogic phase (in this phase, human bodies are transitioning from wakefulness to sleep); the deep sleep phase (relaxation of body and decrease in heart rate occur in this phase); pre-sleep deeper phase (the body stop responding to immediate triggers, such as, humans usually do not pay attention to something as obvious as a door slamming although it is so loud; delta-sleep phase (the body deactivates and remains unconscious for at least 30 minutes in this last phase) (Kirsch, 2022).

- **Dreams in Series**

Dreams usually come in groups, usually called as 'recurring dreams'. Each dream, like a course in school, can teach humans something about themselves and the world. Humans can break the cycle if it takes the dream theme's lessons to heart and adjust their actions or worldview accordingly. The recurring dream may appear several weeks or months later. In most cases, waking behaviors and reactions mirror the ideas human have in its dreams. One would think it would be as simple as remembering one's breakfast or a recent movie. Perhaps this is due to the waking mind's reluctance to allow humans to fully comprehend its dreams. The most common explanation is that our conscious minds struggle to make sense of the irrationality of dream experiences (Franklin & Zyphur, 2005, pp. 7-35).

- **Cayce's Experience**

When compared to other theories on the meaning of dreams, Cayce's was unique. He saw dreams as the body's attempt at "self-edification," or improving one's emotional, intellectual, and spiritual health. The dreamer may become more aware of their full human potential sooner. A good night's sleep allows anyone to gain wisdom, expand their mind, and put themselves back together. Cayce believes that the purpose of a dream is to either assist the dreamer in adapting to new circumstances outside of the body or to awaken untapped abilities within the body (Stumbrys et. al., 2016, pp. 146-150).

- **Lucid Dreaming**

Even though the practice of lucid dreaming has been around for a while, it has only recently gained mainstream attention. St. Augustine made the first written mention of lucid dreaming in a letter written in 415 A.D. Around the eighth century, Tibetan Buddhists recorded their own lucid dreaming experiences in the Tibetan Book of the Dead. Buddhists described a type of yoga that could keep humans awake and aware even while they are sleeping. It is thought that the ancient dream yogis knew more about dreams than they do now. People began to look past strange dream practices in the nineteenth century, such as trying to conjure spirits from the past through dreams or discovering another world within the dream state, and accepted dreams as a natural part of life. This sparked a wave of curiosity about the science behind lucid dreaming. The most well-known of the new breed of scientists was the Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denys, also known as "Hervey." In 1913, Stephen LaBerge's stunned the Society for Psychical Research with a presentation on lucid dreaming titled 'A Study of Dreams', which detailed 352 of his lucid dreams recorded between 1898 and 1912. All modern research into lucid dreams can be traced back to him, as he was the first to provide satisfying explanations for the phenomenon's mysteries. The essence of lucid dreaming is simply being aware that human is dreaming. Nonetheless, there is a range of degrees of clarity. When human lucidity is at its

peak, they know that everything in the dream is mental. Humans are free to do whatever they want while asleep (Freud, 1913, pp. 81-114; Hunt & Ogilvie, 1988, pp. 389-417; LaBerge, 1980, pp. 1039-1042). Lucid dreaming can help humans in real life. There have been numerous reports of people using lucid dreams to help them mentally prepare for something. This could be a practice run for a new behavior, the solution to a problem, a source of creative inspiration, the key to resolving a societal issue, or the key to accepting the loss of something or someone dear to them (Rotenberg, 2015, pp. 1-6).

- **Hypnagogic Images**

The hypnagogic state of consciousness occurs between the waking and sleeping states of thought. This sleep stage separates humans from its surroundings before the body enters REM sleep. Still images, like photographs, appear in human minds and they may or may not be aware of them. Listening to music usually transports humans back to a time when they witness a particular event. Instead of a radio song, it was the event that kept playing in human heads. In such cases, humans stop paying attention to music and their focus diverts towards images. Please do not imagine that by viewing the hypnagogic images, humans will intentionally induce this state. It happens to all the humans every night, but most of them either do not notice it or do not think much about it (Nardi, 2021, pp. 1-6).

- **Recurring Dreams**

Although it is common to believe that recurring dreams will always be the same, this is not always the case. Dreams frequently differ slightly from one another. These particulars may hold the key to understanding the significance of the dream. The emotional fragility that causes such a nightmare also contributes to the pain we feel as we age. When this occurs, we may have the same dream repeatedly, and while the dream itself may not change, it may be applicable to a variety of situations in our waking lives that cause us to act in the same vulnerable manner. We shouldn't have any more dreams like this after

we've fixed the real problem (Valli & Revonsuo, 2006, pp. 464-469).

- **Nightmares**

Every human sometimes encounters worst nightmare that is unavoidable. In simple words, these bad dreams are unconscious signals from the brain alerting the body that it is going to face an undesirable situation. Nightmares turn out to be barriers to stop humans from achieving its goals. In order to deal with it, humans need to create a strategy to achieve its goal, and face the problems heads on and win. Film depictions of this technique are also not uncommon. A situation like this would never happen in real life, but it is this aspect of the film that makes it so entertaining. The point is that, just like in the movies, humans must try to overcome its nightmares by not being afraid of them, and that humans will continue to have them until they begin to live up to their dreams (Siclari et. al., 2020, pp. 849-859).

- **Out of Body Experiences (OBE'S)**

What distinguishes an OBE from a regular dream? Nothing compares to having an out-of-body experience (OBE) when the astral body completely separates from the physical body, this is referred to as death. Spirits are said to leave the body briefly during an OBE. As the astral body separates from the physical, a burst of energy occurs, and because the body is still connected to the astral matter by a thin thread, this burst of energy is conveyed to the mind as "sound". However, once the astral body reaches a higher vibratory frequency level, the sound disappears and is replaced by sensations of speed, increased clarity of vision, hearing, and sight. The most important thing to remember is that an OBE is not the same as a lucid dream, and if humans have had one, they will be aware of it when they regain consciousness (Bünning & Blanke, 2005, pp. 331-350).

- **Extrasensory Perception (ESP)**

Extrasensory perception (ESP) is the ability to see and respond to stimuli from the

outside world without using any of the five traditional senses. Many people claim to have dreamed of foretelling the future, gaining insight into a topic they were unfamiliar with, or even meeting a friend in a dream only to discover, upon waking, that their friend had a similar dream. All these events are examples of ESP while dreaming. There are three types of ESP dreams; precognition, psychometry and synchronous. Precognition is a popular type of ESP in dreams. Surprisingly, it appears that they dream of future events long before they occur. Some people are unaware that their dreams are prophetic until something from their dream occurs in real life. While the concept of ESP in dreams may seem far-fetched, if proven to be true, it would lend credence to those who hold it despite a lack of experience with precognitive dreaming (Storm et. al., 2017, 120-140). Psychometry occurs in dreams the least frequently of the three types of dream ESP. Humans may be able to learn details about an object in its dreams that they would not be able to learn in the real world. One simple way to accomplish this is to memorize the characteristics of a stranger before falling asleep. Then, when humans wake up, they write down their dreams and interpret them considering the image's possible meaning (Lee et. al., 2021, pp. 471-472). Synchronous dreams involve the dreamer interacting with a known figure in the dream world, followed by the dreamer waking up and recounting the events of the dream to another person. If it can be demonstrated that dream sharing is possible, the astral projection theory of OBEs may be validated (Ibid, 2021, pp. 473-474).

- **Having Some Fun**

Dreams are clearly the mind's way of creating alternate realities. But if humans put in the effort, they can learn a few skills on its own. These would allow humans to experiment with their imaginations while also providing them with the opportunity to learn new things. Even if humans do not fully understand how dreams work, they can be useful on occasion (Bulkeley, 2019, pp. 1-5).

- **Saving Some Time**

Lewis Carroll's dream is one of the most well-known examples of creative dreaming. Carroll had a dream in which the entire plot of Alice in Wonderland was detailed. Even though Carroll's dream occurred during a period of illness, every human is capable of having a dream that develops in a similar manner. The one who experiences it will have to write down the vivid imaginations. What does this mean for those of us who believe in the power of dreams? This has the potential to relieve us of the burden of constantly searching for the next big idea for a film or book. Humans need to keep their dreams in mind, and perhaps one of them will be outrageous enough to become a true urban legend. The point is that because human's subconscious mind picks up on a few of the minor details that its conscious mind overlooks. Humans dreams are usually more accurate than they imagine (Bulkeley, 2019, pp. 6-11).

- **Solving Problems**

Dreams at times are helpful in solving complex problems. Most of the dreams do not provide clear answers or solutions. However, the vivid fantasies night before sleep if decoded properly can provide major breakthroughs. Humans choose whether they want their ambitions to serve a practical purpose or merely provide entertainment. The best-case scenario is that when the brain reaches an agreement to decide between the two scenarios (Barrett, 2017, pp. 64-67).

Psychological Perspective

It is true that science made a significant contribution in explaining dreams; however, this phenomenon is not only related with the REM phase of sleep, but also information processing, memory formation, and the replenishment of depleted neurotransmitters such as serotonin. Even while the significance of sleep has been acknowledged for a very long time, it wasn't until lately that anyone contemplated the notion that dreams could be advantageous in some way. It

was right time for the psychologists to step-in and explain this complex phenomenon.

In the past two centuries, four significant psychological perspectives on dreams have emerged.

- **Sigmund Freud's Theory of Wishful Thinking**

Well-known psychotherapist Sigmund Freud was the first to suggest a scientific function for dreams. According to the American Psychological Association, his research led him to conclude that dreams frequently depict the realization of desires. The dream state permitted the dreamer to act out fantasies that could not be pursued in reality. Other dreams, such as those involving punishment or trauma, did not fit this framework well. Freud concluded from these data that dreaming could aid patients in overcoming guilt and trauma. All these concepts contributed to Freud's groundbreaking theory of dreaming, which posited that dreams reflected unconscious brain processes (Welsh, 1994, pp. 4-16).

- **Carl Jung's Language of Dreams**

Dreams are merely our minds talking with us, according to Carl Jung. Freud and Carl Jung notoriously and publicly differed on the nature of dreams despite living at the same time. Freud believed that dreams always conceal their true significance. Jung, on the other hand, believed that dreams were the mind's direct means of self-communication. He viewed dreams as a symbolic language that revealed the subconscious thoughts and emotions of the dreamer. This "language" was difficult to decipher because it was so significantly different from waking language, but common for the unconscious state. Notably, Jung perceived this language as a reservoir for archetypes (or visions) shared by all human consciousness. According to him, dreams served two purposes: they helped dreamers cope with emotional suffering and provided glimpses of the future that helped them prepare for what was to come (James, 2016, pp. 1-5).

Even though dreams can be triggered by a variety of factors, Freud hypothesized that wish fulfillment was at the heart of most of our nocturnal musings. For Freud, no dream was just for fun; they all had deep symbolic meaning. Carl Jung, a long-time Freud student, disagreed with the notion that sensual content drove human dreams. Humans subconscious desires, according to Jung, can be made conscious through dream recall, which in turn helps humans achieve its goals. Dreams have nothing to do with our subconscious, contrary to Freud's theory, which held that humans create dreams to cover up urges that they find too repugnant to admit. As a result of the rivalry between Freud and Jung, numerous new perspectives on sleep and dreaming have emerged and are currently being developed. Many people, however, believe that attempting to formulate a theory on dreams is pointless because they are simply a part of life. Contrary to this, other however, argue that pursuing one's dreams is necessary to feel fulfilled. There is no way to know how dreams work or where they come from, the humans can only choose which hypothesis to believe that is told by the interpreters (Jones, 1970, p. 76).

- **Allan Hobson and Robert McCarley's Activation-Synthesis Theory**

The discovery of REM gave rise to a new theory. According to Joe Griffin of the Human Givens Institute, Allan Hobson and Robert McCarley of Harvard University created the Activation-Synthesis Theory in the 1970s. According to Hobson and McCarley, electroencephalogram (EEG) recordings reveal the flow of electrical signals throughout the brain during REM sleep. They hypothesized that the brain's natural response to strange input would be to attempt to make sense of it. As a result, dreams had no hidden significance; they were merely the outcome of the brain's usual operation. Even though this concept was groundbreaking at the time, it has undergone considerable changes as technology has improved (Hobson & McCarley, 1977, pp. 1335-1368).

- **Antti Revonsuo's Threat Simulation Model**

Antti Revonsuo, a Finnish psychologist, is one of the most recent experts to give a persuasive explanation regarding the function of dreams. According to Revonsuo's research, the amygdala (the brain region responsible for the "fight or flight" reaction) reacts equally during REM sleep and in response to a real-world danger. According to him, "the major role of bad dreams is rehearsal for similar real-world events," enabling faster and more instinctual threat assessment and avoidance in similar real-world situations. Thus, dreams have developed to assist humans prepare for probable danger so that they can avoid it in real life (Revonsuo, 2000, pp. 877–1121).

Conclusion

Despite significant contribution of Egyptian and Greek philosophers, and input from modern day psychologists, when religious and scientific texts are compared, both accept the reality and significance of dreaming. Science has tried and failed to find a rational solution to the riddle of dreams. Religious doctrines explain spiritual enigmas. According to scientific theory, sleep is nothing more than a temporary cessation of neural system activity. While it is true that when humans sleep, their conscious minds are not actively processing information (and are not likely making any decisions), regular dreams still contain a jumble of memories that vividly convey events that simply do not or cannot occur in nature. Then there is the rarer type of dream in which the dreamer sees things as they actually happen, either in the past or in the future, or in which spiritual truths that would otherwise be hidden from them are revealed to them.

Dreaming is a distinct domain of knowledge for Muslims. The Qur'anic verses emphasize its importance by referring to it as;

“O my Lord! Thou hast indeed bestowed on me some power and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams and events O Thou Creator of the heavens and the earth! Thou art my Protector in this world and in the Hereafter take thou my soul (at death) as one submitting to Thy

Will (as a Muslim) and unite me with the righteous (Qur'an, 2004, 12:101)”

Though fascinating, the puzzle of life and death, sleep and dreams may be too difficult for any human mind to solve. There is a vast body of literature on this subject, both superstitious and otherwise. However, the most fundamental and accurate religious teaching is spelled out in these few words;

“It is Allah that takes the souls (of men) at death: and those that die not (He takes) during their sleep: those on whom He has passed the decree of death He keeps back (from returning to life) but the rest He sends (to their bodies) for a term appointed. Verily in this are Signs for those who reflect (Qur'an, 2004, 39:42)”.

Human spirits temporarily escape the boundaries of its bodies when they sleep. For the time being, Allah has taken them away. If humans choose to die naturally while sleeping, as some do, souls will not return to the mortal coil, and the human body will eventually deteriorate and perish. If Allah has decreed that there is more work for human to do here on Earth, their soul returns to the body and human body resume functioning where they left off.

The topic of dreams is mentioned over 60 times in the Qur'an and Prophet's (PBUH) saying's (Ahadith). The Qur'an contains eighteen, Al Bukhari contains eighteen, Sahih Muslim contains three, Al Muwatta contains one, and Fiqhus Sunnah contains one, with the remaining found in various books of Ahadith. According to Abdullah ibn Umer's account, the dream-reading institution dates to the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). He says: “Men from the companions of Allah's Apostle used to see dreams during the lifetime of Allah's Apostle and they used to narrate those dreams to Allah's Apostle. Allah's Apostle would interpret them as Allah wished.” Then Islam draws into “The (good) dreams of a faithful believer as a part of the forty-six (in some places 43 and 70) parts of prophetism (Bukhari, 2004, 9.87)”. The term "Al-Mubashshirat" refers to pleasant dreams. Ibn-e-Khaldun investigates the relationship between Wahi (revelation) and

dreams. He believes that in both scenarios, the soul and identity are liberated from the body. His definition of revelation as “Divine inspiration” distinguishes it from dreams.

Sheikh Abul Fazal Hussain bin Ibrahim Muhammad Taqleesi compiled “Kamil-ut-tha'beer” in 555 AH, and it is the most reliable book on dream interpretation among Muslims. Six major dream interpreters have existed throughout Islamic history. These holy men include Hazrat Daniyal, Imam Ja'far, Imam ibn-e- Sirin, Imam Jabir, Imam Ibrahim Kirmani, and Hazrat Ismail bin Ash' as. They are all a part of our collective history. Declining interest in technology is a major reason why Muslims' have lagged behind in this exciting field of study. The West has made significant progress in this area, and psychoanalysts now routinely incorporate dream interpretation into their practice.

It is apt to conclude that all the perspectives commonly believe that when humans sleep, their souls or personalities enter a spiritual realm similar to the afterlife. Sleep is a pseudo death condition, and human's dream activates to control brain functions. This commonality entails with Islamic belief which argue that humans die only physically. Souls are transported to another world and humans get closer to God Almighty (Allah) after death – the living phase in this temporary world ceases. On the day of judgement, these souls will be resurrected in heavens that is never ending phase.

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