

Episode Sixty - Dreams and the Mind's Use of Images

Post by "Cassius" of March 3, 2021 at 8:39 AM

Diskin Clay on "An Epicurean Interpretation of Dreams. My comment on this one is that Diskin Clay impresses me a lot but I sense a pattern in his writing that he takes a very winding path to get to the important parts of an article. You probably need to skim over the first sections before you get to what is of interest here. As indicated on the first page, he starts off talking about Sigmund Freud and takes his time getting to the good stuff.

Diskin Clay

AN EPICUREAN INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS

You may be an unspiced bit of beef, a bit of
meat, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an undigested
peanut.

Savage to Wally's ghost.

Freud began his *Interpretation of Dreams* with a look back-
wards from Vienna to classical antiquity and a clear narrative,
which he gradually and imperceptibly strengthened in later edi-
tions of his book, of how dreams were regarded by the Greeks
and "the people of classical antiquity." The dream was a message
from the gods (the Romans). The survey of ancient interpretations of dreams
which Freud offered was based on Dr. Theodor Ribot's *Essays
and Explanations on Dreams* (Paris 1886), a work which
was then still and is now very aged. He took the notions of the
ancient conception of dreams clearly and rendered them
clearly. "They took it as axiomatic that dreams were con-
nected with the world of experience things in which they
believed and that they were revelations from gods and
demons. They could be no question, moreover, that for the
dreamer dreams had an important purpose, which was as a
rule to benefit the dreamer." "This view did not actually hold for
all Greeks or Romans who reflected upon dreams, but it is fair
enough for all but our earliest attitudes towards dreams—the
notion which was unique in assuming that dreams could
have a cause within the dreamer and the Epicurean, which
granted them the external source almost all ancient con-
ceived dreams, but which explained them as the impressions
made by those leaving off all solid bodies. But these were dif-
ferent from our waking visual impressions in the fact that our

1. The Interpretation of Dreams. The Standard Edition of the Complete
Works of Sigmund Freud, IV, London 1923, 2, from: www.britainonline.com