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Structural dream analysis
Manual and case illustration

The aim of this research project is to create and apply a scientific method for identifying archetypal patterns in dream series from analytical psychotherapies. In Jungian psychology it is assumed that dreams appear as a product of the individuation process to guide the person towards greater wholeness. In psychotherapeutic processes it is assumed that dreams give hints from the unconscious on the central inner psychic problems and/or conflicts, but they also contain elements to cope with these problems. During the course of a psychotherapy the Jungian psychotherapist assumes that the series of dreams follows an inner structure of meaning. Structural dream analysis is a scientific method which tries to identify this inner structure of meaning from the series of dreams alone without referring to additional information about the dreamer, the psychodynamics or the course of psychotherapy. As a scientific method it aims at realizing as much objectivity as possible, a systematic and transparent application of a detailed manual of interpretive steps. As the dreams can only be understood in their meaning by the use of interpretation there is no alternative to using an interpretive method. In qualitative research systematic and objective methods of using interpretive steps have been developed and the method of structural dream analysis makes use of this development. It draws especially on narratological methods. In this sense the dreams are understood as narratives which makes the application of narrative interpretation possible. A detailed manual for the method has been developed which makes the process of interpretation transparent and independent from the interpreter. Earlier methods of narrative analysis have been incorporated into the method, especially the structural analysis/functional analysis of fairytales developed by Vladimir Propp (1974) and the narratological method JAKOB developed by Brigitte Boothe (1994) of the University of Zürich for the analysis of patient narratives from analytical psychotherapies.

So the method of structural dream analysis focuses on two central topics of analytical psychology, namely the understanding of archetypes and their role in psychotherapy as well as the meaning of dreams for the course of psychotherapies. The proposed method aims at defining the research process which makes it possible to describe dream series and their relation to the course of psychotherapy with as much objectivity as possible and to try to pin down the appearance of archetypal structures in dreams/psychotherapies in the way as concrete as possible. For the application of the research method the interpretation of the dream series should be clearly separated from using additional information about the dreamer, his/her psychodynamics and the course of psychotherapy, which is only included after the completion of the research process.

Criteria for choosing dreams from analytical psychotherapies for research

The proposed method is capable of analyzing series of 10 to 20 dreams from analytical psychotherapies in an economical timeframe. For this reason there has to be made a choice from the dreams documented in the course of an analysis. In the ideal case this choice should be made by the analyst having done the treatment. Here are some considerations informed by earlier publications from analytical psychology (Diekmann 1972) on how to do this choice. Diekmann proposes to choose dreams from different phases of the analysis. Here those dreams are to be chosen that represent core points of the analytic process. A core point is defined as a point in the analysis when there is a clear change in the inner world and/or behavior of the analysand. Already Jung points out that a series of dreams is not a linear development but has to be imagined as a more radial one. Dreams are centered around core topics and illustrate these from different perspectives more or less again and again in the course of psychotherapy (Jacobi 1986). For the application of the method it therefore makes sense to choose the dreams from core points where central topics are manifested and in some cases transformed. The dreams should cover the whole course of the therapy. Ideally the choice of dreams for application of this method includes the first dream or initial dream of an analysis as well as the last dream or completing dream of the process.

Overview of the steps of the research method

1. Dividing the narrative into segments
2. Episodic models (see below)
3. Fate of the protagonist: the dream narratives are analyzed from the perspective of the position of the ego, whether the ego is actively involved or a passive observer, is marginalized etc.
4. Functional analysis (following Propp)
5. Including the above steps into a framework of the whole dream series
6. Amplification of central symbols of the dream series: symbols that appear in several dreams or have a central position to the dream series are analyzed using symbol dictionaries and translated into a hypothesis of their psychological meaning.
7. Amplifications are included into the framework of the dream series
8. Formulation of a hypothesis of the meaning of the whole dream series in psychological language.

Dreams are treated as narratives
For the application of the method structural dream analysis it is very important to understand that dreams are understood as narratives. Of course the original dream as an inner world phenomenon has to be differentiated from the told form of the dream for example in the context of psychotherapy. But from a research point of view it is also important to realize that this original form is never accessible for scientific research. The only way we can deal with the dream is it's told form so that as material for the application of this method here we have texts. From a linguistic point of view the genre of these texts is narrative. In narratology a narrative is defined as a development from a starting point which often is a problem (in narratological terminology: an expectation is broken and has to be repaired in the course of the narrative); the narrative goes through ups and downs generally to the solution of the problem or the valued endpoint of the story. For other general topics in narrative analysis and more methods of narrative analysis we refer to the narratological literature.

Exemplary dream series
To illustrate the application of the method structural dream analysis the steps of the method are exemplified on the following dream series:

1. I walked down the street in the darkness on both sides fences and little houses. Lots of barking dogs jumped against the fences. I was frightened but then I became brave. I barked at a dog myself aggressively and the dog fell silent.
2. I am on my way with my bicycle up a hill. It is demanding. Around me are large trees, it's like in the mountains. Arriving on top there is a little white poodle, it barks, it is on a leash. I'm driving home downhill in sharp curves. Doberman dogs are behind me, I cannot get rid of them because of the curves. They run besides me and bark at me. Then it is light and sunny, arriving on the pass it's beautiful. There is a restaurant, like in Italy, beautiful houses. On top of the pass the black dogs are coming.
3. There is a stillwater, the river? There is a little bridge, somebody on the other side. He falls into the water. He has somehow slipped as if under a log. I pulled him out, but only after hesitating. He is like dead. But that guy has a sharp knife and he cuts the others helpers throat. I flee.
4. In black and white: at the train station, which has five bridges crossing the tracks. A girl and another person, which seems masochistic, and the very energetic black dog. The dog pulls the other person into the little pond, then pulls the person out of the water and up the hill. The person oes oral sex to himself, then to the dog. Then I am at a tall building. I say: the dog must be put on a leash. The masochistic person says: you have to stroke the dog. I say: no it must be put on a leash and then removed. The masochistic person is angry and goes into the tall building. The other person says: you have to follow him, he is sad. The dog smells, I put him on a leash but felt disgusted about that.
5. An elderly, badly smelling dog is with me and my girlfriend in Paris. He just found us. We get on the bus, the badly smelling dog could not go with us, we left him outside of

the bus. We are already outside of the city limits, but will return to the city on the highway. The dog would not have been able to come along behind us.

6. I was the manager of a café in the house. I was promoted like Joseph in the house of Potifar. Everybody says goodbye to a father with his small son, he's in the backyard. There is an elderly man with a pit bull terrier. He says: I can show you how evil the dog is. But I just had to go. I walked into a vineyard. The dog runs from its leash and goes behind me, but I jump over fences and walls. The path goes uphill through the yard and back down on the other side.

7. In a country restaurant. Two Romanians come in and are begging . I remember: the last time the two of them were masked and did a robbery. I drive away with the motorcycle. I want to give message to the police, because now I know their faces.

8. A little baby is in danger. I wrap it into the newspaper and carry it with me through a system off plumbings. Then I forget about it and leave it somewhere. But then I realize that the baby is missing and go back and find it again. I have carried it with me and fed it. I think: the baby is so small, it should get mother's milk, but I could just feed him hard food.

9. I'm sitting on the couch in the garden. A man with two bottles of beer is by my side and offers one to me, maybe my father? I get the feeling that I do injustice to the other person. We are having a beer together.

10. My father dies at 49 years of age. I'm not moved at all. It was strange that he died so young. We don't have such a long life as my grandma, became 102 years of age.

11. I have seen a giant toe. The skin on the nail was grown very wide. I thought: this has to be cut off. It could be moved back easily. There was another level of skin below, this one could be taken off easily, too. I was surprised that it did not hurt. Below the skin were very small black worms, everything was rotten, but you could remove it without difficulty. Below that everything was new.

Step 1: Segmentation
Each dream is separated into its segments before further steps of analysis are applied.

1	I walked down the street
2	in the darkness
3	on both sides fences and little houses
4	lots of barking dogs jumped against the fences
5	I was frightened
6	but then I became brave
7	I barked at a dog myself aggressively
8	And the dog fell silent

Step 2: Episodic models
As described above, a narrative can be described as consisting of a starting point, a development and the results. This understanding is used to differentiate between different dynamic models of narrative. In structural dream analysis we differentiate between 10 different episodic models (Boothe 1994) in which the dream narrative can be described. In the graphic models below the following abbreviations are used:
Start (S)
destabilizing momentum (DM)
end point (Z = Ziel)

1. Continuity: a static image, no destabilizing momentum
2. Climax: a process of steps of growth and optimization
3. Anticlimax: a process of steps of decline
4. Restitutio ad integrum (after deintegration): after the integration there is a return to normal conditions
5. Restitutio ad integrum (after climax): after positive happenings there is a return to normal conditions
6. Approbation: there is a validation after denigration, by successfully passing an examination or test
7. Frustration: after a short gradation there is strong degradation
8. Chance: positive development; the protagonist adapts to conditions and stabilizes
9. Anti-Chance: negative development; the protagonist adapts to negative conditions and stabilizes
10. Unexplainable changes: the normal course of the narrative is disrupted, something unexpected happens

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Continuity
S → (DM) → Z

Climax
　　　　　　Z
　　DM →
S →

Anticlimax
S →
　　DM →
　　　　Z

Restitutio ad integrum (after deintegration)
S →　　　　　Z
　　DM →

Restitutio ad integrum (after climax)
　　　DM
S →　　　→　Z

Approbation
　　　　　Z
S →
　　DM →

Frustration

　　DM →
S →
　　　　Z

Chance
　　DM →　Z
S →

Antichance
S →
　　DM →　Z

Unexplainable changes
　　　　Z
S →　DM →
S →　DM →
　　　　Z

Step 3: Fate of the protagonist

The dream narratives are analyzed from the perspective of the position of the ego, whether the ego is actively involved or a passive observer, is marginalized etc.

1. Only Ego initiative: in all phases of the narrative the ego has the initiative; the ego is always in the subject position
2. Only other's initiative: only other actors have the initiative throughout the narrative; the ego is never in the subject position
3. Loss of initiative: initially the ego has the initiative, maybe parallel to other figures, but at the end is in a passive position
4. Regain of the initiative: the ego is at the beginning and at the end in the initiating position; during the course of the narrative the ego loses the initiative to other actors
5. Embedded in others' initiative: the ego is from time to time in the course of the development in the initiative position, but not at the beginning and not at the end.

Applied to the above dream series we get the following structure:

	Episodic Model	Fate of the protagonist
Dream 1	Restitutio ad integrum (after Deintegration)	Regain of the initiative
Dream 2	Anticlimax	Loss of initiative
Dream 3	Anticlimax	Regain of initiative
Dream 4	Not definable	Embedded in others' initiative
Dream 5	Continuity	Embedded in others' initiative
Dream 6	Frustration	Regain of initiative
Dream 7	Approbation	Regain of initiative
Dream 8	Chance	Only ego initiative
Dream 9	Antichance	Loss of initiative
Dream 10	Continuity	Not definable
Dream 11	Approbation	Only ego initiative

Step 4: Functional analysis (following Propp)

Vladimir Propp was a Russian linguist and fairytale researcher who developed the so-called functional analysis of fairytales in which he gave abstract symbols to every element of the narrative. For example: the beginning passage of the fairytale goes like: the King is ill and needs the water of life. This element gets the Symbol: X. The fairytale continues: the King sends his son to get the water of life and the son departs on his journey. This element gets the symbol: Y.

In this way Propp was able to write a fairytale as a sequence of abstract symbols and to reduce all the fairytales of Europe to their structural elements and make them comparable.

The following graph shows the functional analysis for all the dreams of the above dream series. In this step the researcher tries to pin the dream narrative down to its structural elements.

	Function I	Function II	Function III	Function IV	Function V	Function VI	Function VII	Function VIII
Dream 1	0 Initial Situation	BD Threat	S Constructive strategy					
Dream 2	0 Initial situation	↑ Way up	BD Threat	↓ Way down	V Prosecution	F Flight	↑ Way up	BD Threat
Dream 3	0 Initial situation	W Water	WT Experience death/harm	H Help/support	BD Threat	F Flight		
Dream 4	0 Initial situation	VSCH Verschiebung	& sexual act	KS CONFLICT	KL Demand for conflict solution	EK Disgust		
Dream 5	0 Initial situation	V Prosecution	EK Disgust	O Change of place	V-end Prosecution			
Dream 6	0 Initial situation	‖ Gradation	VE goodbye	BD Threat	V Prosecution	F Flight	V-end Prosecution	
Dream 7	0 Initial situation	BH Pledge for help/support	BD Threat	S Constructive startegy				
Dream 8	BH Pledge for help	H Help/support	VG forgetting	HW Taking up again	IH Inadequate means			
Dream 9	0 Initial situation	UH Unjustified act						
Dream 10	WT Experience death/harm							
Dream 11	GM Modification wished for	M Modification	RE renewal/ Regeneration					

recurrent structural elements are marked in the frame.

	Function I	Function II	Function III	Function IV	Function V	Function VI	Function VII	**Function VIII**
Dream 1	0 Initial situation Situation	BD Threat	S Constructive strategy					
Dream 2	0 Initial situation Situation	↑ Way up	BD Threat	↓ Way down	V Prosecution	F Flight	↑ Way up	BD Threat
Dream 3	0 Initial situation Situation	W water	WT Death /damage	H Help/support	BD Threat	F Flight		
Dream 4	0 Initial situation Situation	VSCH deference	& sexual act	KS conflict	KL Conflict solution	EK disgust		
Dream 5	0 Initial situation Situation	V Prosecution	EK disgust	O Change of place	V-end Prosecution			
Dream 6	0 Initial situation Situation	‖ Gradation	VE goodbye	BD Threat	V Prosecution	F Flight	V-end Prosecution	

Dream 7	0 Initial situation Situation	BH Pledge for help/support	BD Threat	S Constructive strategy			
Dream 8	BH Pledge for help/support	H Help/support	VG neglect	HW Taking up action	IH Inadequate measures		
Dream 9	0 Initial situation	UH Unjust act					
Dream 10	WT Death/ Damage						
Dream 11	GM Wish for modification	M Modification	RE Renewal/ Regeneration				

Repetitive structures that were marked are now extracted:

	Markierte Function I	**Markierte Function II**	**Markierte Function III**	**Markierte Function IV**
Dream 1	BD Threat	S Konstruktive Strategie		
Dream 2	BD Threat	V Prosecution	F Flight	BD Threat
Dream 3	etc			
Dream 4				
Dream 5				
Dream 6				
Dream 7				
Dream 8				
Dream 9				
Dream 10	No marked functions			
Dream 11				

Step 6: Amplification of major symbols of the dreams

As to combine the above structural elements of the dreams with content in the next step, meaning of central symbols of the dreams will be analyzed by using Jung's original method of amplification. To gain a scientific approach in the interpretation of symbols via amplification in the application of the

method of structural dream analysis this step is clearly defined. To apply amplification to symbols in this context is restricted to the use of a set of symbol dictionaries which give information about the cultural background of symbols in the sense of their use and understanding in the religious traditions, mythology, cultural beliefs etc. This is to certify that interpretation of the symbols is done in an objective way as possible.

This step of interpretation is applied only to a very restricted number of symbols, ideally those which appear repeatedly in the dreams or are of central value to the series of dreams.

Symbol	Appearing in	Amplification
Dog	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	In a number of cultures the dog is related to death. In old Egypt and Greece the dog guards the underworld and is then medium between the world of the living and the dead. Those gods living in dark, night or ambiguous figures often appear in form of dogs. The symbol of the dog has clearly ambiguous meaning: on the one side it is connected with wisdom, grace and religious things, especially the white dog, on the other hand the dog is connected with primitive affects, impurity, vice and envy, especially dark dogs. Also the dog is related to sexuality. In some cultures the dog appears as ancestor and Creator of man and of civilization because of the wisdom and the sexual power that is related to him.
Child	8	The child is symbol for impeccably clean purity and innocence. It also represents the original and therefore is related to an abundance of possibilities.
Foot/toe	11	The foot/toe is that part of the body which is closest to the Earth. Therefore symbolically as an organ of movement it is in a strong relation to the will. In the context of psychoanalysis the foot is also connected with the phallic meaning. Related to this aspect of the symbol naked feet can have a decisive role in rituals of initiation and generativity.
Worm	11	The worm is a being that lives below the earth and in the dirt. Therefore in a couple of peoples this animal is connected with the snake and with the devil. Also the worm is related to darkness and death and also to new life coming out of that.

Step 7

The above reconstructed meanings of the symbols just give information about the field or context of meaning. Now in the next step this has to be integrated in the above structure of the dreams. This is clearly the more psychological step within the interpretation which can also use concepts from analytical psychology. Still this step of interpretation tries to remain as objective as possible, therefore the aim here is not to formulate definite interpretations of the dreams but to translate the above structures into a psychological language.

As it was mentioned earlier dreams do not represent a linear structure of development but usually take up symbols and patterns again and again which undergo a process of transformation. In this step within the interpretation it should be tried to reconstruct this repetitive use of symbols and patterns in the dreams. The focus here lies on more general topics appearing repetitively in the dreams.

This is illustrated in the table below where the structural elements are combined with a psychological interpretation of symbols and their meanings into an overall description of the dreams he.

1	BD Threat *The ego is threatened by shadow aspects*	S Constructive strategy *The ego takes over forms of expression of shadow aspects and by doing that, succeeds in making these aspects giving up their threatening position*
1	The ego is threatened by shadow aspects in the form of dogs. By taking over the act of barking from the shadow aspects, the ego succeeds in making the shadow aspects stopping their threatening behavior.	

2	BD Threat *The ego is threatened by shadow aspects*	V Prosecution *And prosecuted bythem*	F Flight *And flees from them*	BD Threat *The ego is threatened by shadow aspects"*
2	In reaction to the front and prosecution by shadow aspects in form of dogs the ego goes into flight. But the ego does not succeed and is catched by the shadow aspects.			
3	H Hilfe/Unterstützung *The ego starts actions to give help/support to other aspects of the psyche.*	BD Threat *The ego is threatened by shadow aspects*	F Flight *The ego flees from threatening shadow aspects*	
3	The ego tries to give support to the helpless aspect of the psyche. But this part of the psyche comes out to be threatening and destructive. In reaction to the threat the ego flees into an area in which it is not longer threatened by shadow aspects.			
4	EK disgust *the ego is disgusted by shadow aspects*			
4	The ego is confronted with shadow aspects in the form of dogs. The ego denies and repels these aspects and fields disgust			
5	V Prosecution *The ego is persecuted by shadow aspects*	EK disgust *The ego feels disgusted by shadow aspects*	V- end Prosecution *The prosecution through shadow aspects is disrupted*	
5	The ego tries to flee from the confrontation with shadow aspects in the form of dogs. This is the fact because the ego feels strong denial and disgust towards the shadow aspects. The ego succeeds in getting away from the confrontation.			
6	BD Threat *The ego is threatened by shadow aspects*	V Prosecution *The ego is prosecuted by shadow aspects*	F Flight *The ego flees from threatening shadow aspects*	V- interruption Prosecution *A prosecution through shadow aspects is interrupted*
6	In reaction to the front and prosecution by shadow aspects in the form of dogs, the ego goes into flight. The ego succeeds in getting away from the shadow aspects.			
7	BH pledge for help/support *The ego becomes aware of aspects of the psyche that need help/support"*	BD Threat *The ego is threatened by shadow aspects*	S Constructive strategy *The ego is able to recognize a danger in time, a danger that comes from shadow aspects. It starts out on the way to activate forces of order and security.*	

7			
	The ego tries to give support to a part of the psyche that needs help. But this part of the psyche comes out to be threatening and destructive. The ego is able to recognize the approaching danger in time and activates components of the psyche that are able to reactivate order and security.		
8	BH pledge for help/support *The ego recognizes aspects of the psyche that need help/support*	H help/support *The ego goes into action to give help/support to other parts of the psyche.*	ICH inadequate forms of help the ego is missing adequate forms to give help to other parts of the psyche.
8	The ego recognizes a part of the psyche in form of an infant which needs help and support. The ego already has an idea how to give support. But still it is missing the adequate measures to realize this support.		
9	Nothing marked		
10	Nothing marked		
11	GM wish for modification *The ego realizes the necessity to change a part of the psyche*	M modification *the Eagles starts action to modify a part of the psyche*	RE renewal/regeneration *through activity of the ego a process of regeneration and renewal becomes visible on a part of the psyche*
11	The ego realizes the necessity to give change in modification to a part of the psyche. This is a part connected with willpower and movement through the action of the ego a process of renewal and regeneration on this part of the psyche becomes visible.		

Step 8:

Lastly all the findings from the above steps should be integrated into a general description or summary of the series of dreams from a psychological point of view.

Over the series of dreams there is a process where the ego is dealing with shadow aspects that have at least partly a murderous and destructive character. In the beginning the ego experiences fear and is not capable to cope with the problem or threat but takes a flight. In the further course of the dream series the shadow aspects lose their threatening character. The ego now experiences disgust and rejection towards these parts of the psyche. Now a new thematic field is introduced. It is centered around situations where the dreamer's ego is asked to act in a helpful and supportive way and to be active. Some pledges for help appear to be dangerous, because these parts of the psyche that ask for help are also destructive powers. The ego therefore is in the danger of supporting destructive energies and be destroyed itself in the process. In the image of the infant needing help the ego then meets a pure, positive part of the psyche which points to a new beginning. These parts of the psyche need support and the ego realizes more and more how this support and care has to be done, even though some of the means and strategies to do that are still missing in the ego. Towards the end of the dreams series the dreamer's ego becomes part in a process where some parts of the psyche experience a process of death and renewal. These aspects of the psyche can be associated with willpower and movement.

Case description (delivered by the psychotherapist)

Before starting psychotherapy the dreamer was imprisoned because of severe violence towards people. Now not violent anymore he suffers from feelings of strong tension, unrest and emptiness that are almost unbearable. The only means to deal with these states of consciousness is to consume pornographic media, especially those where there is violence done to women.

The dreamer has a broken home background in his biography. The father was a heavy drinker and tended to be violent against his wife and children. In several occasions the client experienced fear of death and was almost killed by his father. The father also seems to have been suffering from a sexual perversion: he collected pornographic videos in large numbers and stored them in his bedroom. The mother has a migration background from former Yugoslavia and was never able to learn German properly; it might be possible that the mother was lightly mentally disabled.
In adolescence the client was moved out of his family because of the difficult situation and was given into custody. Later he joined a neofascist action group and committed a large number of violent crimes. In adolescence he already committed crimes in the form of setting fire to buildings.
In prison he experienced a religious conversion and became member of a fundamentalist Christian group.
At the point of starting psychotherapy the client was living together with a woman. He always seems to have had good relations to women. In the course of therapy the client married another woman and they got one child. Already before coming into psychotherapy the client received a solid professional training and was working in a restaurant. At the end of therapy the client was living in a very solid social, familial and job situation.

The client seems to have experienced very strong situations of loneliness and anxiety in his childhood. The frustration of basic needs in the client has led to compensatory aggression. Psychodynamically the client seems to suffer from strong states of depression based on a narcissistic disorder connected with a strong sexual drivenness towards violent contact with women. There is a deep contempt in the client towards women. The denigration of women seems to have the function of defense against the depression. The religious conversion has equipped the client with a strong superego which helps him to control himself in social life. Nevertheless this is not able to solve the inner conflicts. There is a very strong and violent destructive complex in the psyche which formerly was dealt with by directing it outwards to other people. Now this complex seems to go against the ego. The complex is apparently connected to the father and the violence but also the sexual perversion experienced with the father.

Diagnosis:
F 34.1 depressive personality
F 63.8 Fixation on violent pronographic videos
exclusion: F60.2 antisocial personality disorder

Course of therapy
In the first years of therapy the focus was on helping the client to formulate his inner needs and feelings and bring them into social relationships. This helped to lessen the pressure of frustration and aggression. In the transference relationship the therapist came into the position of the threatening father. Giving the client the means to control the analyst as well as the situation helped to integrate these experiences and strengthen ego functions. In the course of therapy the relationships towards women changed and the client became capable of building up a marriage and family. When his first son was born the client experienced with panic that he felt aggressive impulses towards the infant. By working through these impulses and their connection to early experiences in life the inner pressure of frustration and aggression slowly receded. From time to time the client still needs to consummate violent pornographic videos to control for his inner states of emptiness and frustration. In social life the client is now fully adapted.

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Comparison between the results of structural dream analysis and the course of therapy
The parallels between the structure of the dream series and the psychodynamics and course of therapy are apparent. The negative father complex leading to aggression and sexual drivenness can easily be identified in the symbol of the threatening dogs, also because the dog symbolically is connected with sexuality. In the course of therapy the dreamer more and more gains control over this complex, gains ego strength and is able to confront the complex aspects. In the end in the symbol of the infant lost parts of the psyche connected with soft feelings and renewal are found and the client is able to care for them.