

Are dreams meaningful essay



**ASSIGN
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Dreams and Humanity Since the beginning of time, the interpretation of dreams has been used as a means to provide guidance for future actions or as warnings. Some dreams are so bizarre that they have often been ascribed to the soul having an out of body experience (Tedlock, 1987). While dreams are often defined as successions of random visual images, these images are only a complement to the feeling of being absorbed into a fantasy world in which things happen, actions are carried out, people are present, and emotions are felt, a mimicry of the sensation of being awake in every way. While elaborate, mystery still surrounds the meaningfulness of dreams and how they relate to humanity in this universe.

Many reputable scientists, philosophers, and renowned therapists such as Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud tried to find the hidden features of personality and gain an understanding of an individual's hopes and conflicts (Oxford University Press, 2004). Despite the symbolism and captivating array of ideas to be found in dreams, Fredericks (1999) states that there is no hard evidence to prove that dreams are any more effective in understanding a personality than observing it while the individual is fully awake . Even though there is a lack of scientific data relating to the " meaningfulness" of dreams, the question of their meaning must be more closely scrutinized in light of the spiritual understanding and awareness within a human being. In the Summa theologica, Aquinas questions, " Can a created mind realize God's essence? " To truly answer the question, it is important to first define " realize". To realize is to understand perfectly and to understand perfectly is to understand a thing as well as it can be understood.

Having mentioned that, the negative answer to the question above would be that God is incomprehensible because God is infinitely comprehensible.

Kelsey (1974) emphasizes that Aquinas does not claim that the inability to understand is entrenched in a part of God that is denied to the limited intellect, in its quest for spiritual understanding. Incomprehensibility results not so much from a lack of *lumen gloriae* (divine light), but more from its purity which is overwhelming to the limited intellect. Thomas approaches this idea with due foresight. In stating that the difficulty in understanding God lies in God's unlimited ability to be comprehended, he effectively avoids alternatives objectionable to the Christian faith. The same idea may be used in coming to a decision on whether dreams are meaningful or not.

To humanity, the entire universe is revealed as one extraordinary order. It comprises an indefinitely great number of substances, each one related to the other in a variety of ways. Above all, however, each one has a certain objective as a result of which, it is inferior to some and superior to certain others. To achieve these purposes they each have their own metaphysical structure. Therefore dreams must have a purpose and structure, which then, plausibly points to the need for them to be meaningful. As an added result, because all things interact more or less immediately with everything else, the process of dreaming is part of the process or sensation of being alive.

Such a precise and established order can be understood only by humanity, which has been gifted with intelligence and free will. Humanity, though a part of the cosmic order, also aids in resolving what that order is. Every atom of every individual substance contains the interpretation of each and every

cosmic and social order. In each of them man can see the hierarchy and interrelation of parts.

Dreams form a part of human functioning that may be critical to our greater understanding of the universe, but just like God's comprehensibility is too "boundless" for the limits of our intellectual capacity. Taking it a step further, it is important to remember that the idea of awareness is basic to existence, since all things are part of the same universe. Due to the core nature of awareness, whether a person is awake or participating in a dream, he or she is still aware (Flanagan, 2001). It is therefore not possible to diminish the meaningfulness or value of awareness in a dream unless the meaningfulness of being aware while awake is also dismissed.

In conclusion, though there has been found to be no empirical evidence to suggest that dreams share any link with an individual's personality, dreams are an advanced part of the individual, something that is there but from which no meaning can be derived as of yet. Also dreams are as much a part of our awareness as is the sensation of being awake and its importance should therefore not be diminished. The proper interpretation of dreams will probably be possible the day humanity is able to better understand itself and have a deeper understanding of the workings of the universe. BIBLIOGRAPHY
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