

nature of life in these lines:

My life is nothing but a dream
From which I will wake into death,
Which is nothing but a dream of life. (19)

But before taking an explorative probe into Divakaruni's *Queen of Dreams*, a fair analytic understanding about the nature and kinds of dreams in the light of the views of eminent scholars of the field is essentially required. Dreams reflect our real self as E. R. Pfaff rightly asserts, "Tell me your dreams for a while and I will tell you what you are really like". (Pfaff 192, Freud, 57) Sigmund Freud, a trained doctor and practicing therapist, descending into the deeper regions of human psyche not only invented a new discipline and medical mode—psychoanalysis, but also generated concepts and ideas that have laid an enormous impact on literary criticism. According to him language conceals, reveals and modifies hidden desires, anxieties and fears. Moreover, desire can not express itself fully and spontaneously due to cultural and social constraints, therefore, the need is to pay attention to language and other forms of symbolic expression—gestures, sounds, facial expressions, writing—to discover it. In other words Freud explored a link between language and the unconscious which might be considered a core to psychoanalytic practice, therefore, "The psychological approach is an excellent tool for reading beneath the lines". (Guerin et. al. 153) In literature this approach has also been used by the Romantics with their theories of the imagination as romanticism is related to the unconscious as opposed to classicism which is oriented towards conscious with its emphasis on order and restraint. The conscious self projects images which are culturally and socially acceptable but the unconscious also has ways and means to express itself in a different way as we see in literary texts, language and dreams. Pramod K. Nayar regards it "Freud's greatest insight: the mechanisms of the unconscious, of desires and fears also required and acquired a language of their own." (Nayar 64) Thus psychoanalytical approach explores the language of the unconscious, of repressed, suppressed or hidden desires and traumatic events. The unconscious is also a serious threat to the identity of the rational beings in the society. What is repressed in the unconscious doesn't always stay repressed but the unconscious continues to reflect it in particular moments as images, dreams, jokes and even in art which may be termed as *Freudian Slips or Para praxis*; hence Freud opines that 'art draws upon the unconscious' for its themes and images. (Nayar 65) Freud regards dreams as 'the royal road' to unconscious as they reflect the contents of the unconscious when the conscious is shut down during sleep. Thus according to Freud:

Dream is a state of tension between the power of the impulse or instinctual desire and the power of the repressing force. Dreams are codes presenting themselves as complex images so that the repressing force is bypassed. They are the distorted expression of desire that have to be decoded by the analyst in order to understand where desires and prohibitions exist in the person's unconscious. Dreams are, therefore, the expression of a repressed desire, they show us the unconscious.

For Freud – and this is the link to psychoanalytic criticism--dreams are a language, the language of unconscious. (Nayar 67)

Freud believes, as Peter Barry writes, that “ dream is an escape-hatch or safety-valve through which repressed desires, fears, or memories seek an outlet into the conscious mind.” (94) In dreams material or things are turned into images, symbols and metaphors, hence dreams don't say things, they show things. Freud suggested a tri-model of the psyche dividing it into three psychic zones-id, ego and super ego roughly corresponding to unconscious, consciousness and conscience respectively. Id is governed by the pleasure principle whereas the ego is governed by the reality principle. Super-ego is the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride. It is, says Freud, in “The Anatomy of the Mental Personality”, the representative of all moral restrictions, the advocate of the impulse toward perfection. With the help of it we are able to apprehend the “higher things in human life.” (Freud 1965, 95) Discriminating between the levels of conscious and unconscious mental activity Freud says that “ We call a process unconscious when we have to assume that it was active *at a certain time, although at that time* we knew nothing about it”(1965: 99-100) The actual content of unconscious is *Latent dream content* which gets expression or reflection in the form of images and events in dreams termed as *manifest dream content*. The main problem is that the latent dream content is not clearly visible within the manifest content as it remains concealed inside complex structures and codes, therefore it requires a thorough analysis of the manifest dream content. Freud has described the four stages of latent dream content before expressing itself in the manifest dream. They are—condensation, displacement, representation or representability and secondary revision. Taking dreams as the reflector of the self and the culture, Freud in his seminal work on dreams *The Interpretation of Dreams* also states that “Dreams are central to psychic life , and therefore central to the theme of human culture” and further asserts that “ all psychical activity is determined by the pursuit of an unconscious purpose.” (Freud 1965 Introduction, xiv, xv) Carl Gustav Jung, a philosopher and psychoanalyst, is also of the opinion that 'Some dreams at least may be like imaginative creations restoring our psychic balance and helping us towards wholeness'. (Jung 1970, 281-97) Aristotle thinks that dreams have physiological rather than divine origin, therefore presenting a meager and narrow definition of the dream he says that ' dream is the process of thinking continued into sleep—in so far as one is sleeping'. Lucretius and Cicero are also of the opinion that people dream about the things that concern them in waking life'. (Freud 1965 Introduction, xii) But the ancients prior to Aristotle were not wrong who took 'dreams not as a product of dreaming psyche but as an inspiration from the realm of the divine'(Freud 1965, 8) They regarded dreams as divine inspiration—a gift of gods directing man. Later Freud was also to declare that “Psychoanalytic treatment could never really reach a final conclusion. Similarly, the implications of an imaginative work reach down into the buried regions of our imagination, so that the meaning of a literary masterpiece is inexhaustible.” (Freud 1965, Introduction xxxiv-xxxv)

Dreams and art bypass consciousness to surface reality and truth. Psychoanalytical approach is used to discover an 'unconscious' buried in the text what Ellmann in her introduction to *Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism* (1994) terms the 'textual unconscious'. Reader Response Theory also plays an important role in locating and finding the meaning of this textual unconsciousness because when a competent reader approaches a text with certain expectations, the reader with the creative insight perceives deeper and hidden meaning from metaphors, figural language and ambiguities as Norman Holland in *The Dynamics of Literary Response* (1968) asserts that the "skilled reader also gives the text meaning by making connections between all the parts of the text". (28) There are many desires and fears in our unconscious about which we don't know. Literature and art appeal to us in some unconscious way for their realization. In his subsequent work *5 Readers Reading* (1975) Holland writes that every reader has a 'core' identity that generates a particular kind of reading when it interacts with the text. He writes : "Readers respond to literature in terms of their own 'lifestyle' (or character' or 'personality' or 'identity' (8) Holland makes it more clear by stating :

A literary text after all, in an objective sense consists only of a certain configuration of specks of carbon black on dried wood pulp. When these marks become words, when these words become images or metaphors or characters or events, they do so because the reader plays the part of a prince to the sleeping beauty. He gives them life out of his own desires. When he does so, he brings his life style to bear on the work. He mingles his unconscious loves and fears and adaptations with the words and images he synthesizes at a conscious level.. (1979,9)

Wolfgang Iser terms it a 'creative process' as he puts it, "the literary text activates our own faculties, enabling us to recreate the world it represents. "(Lodge & Wood 192) Stanley Fish as he talks of 'interpretive communities' substantiating the point asserts that he does not want to know what the text intends or means: he is interested in what the text does when the reader opens and consumes it. In the light of it we see that the formal and structural feature of a literary work do not exist independent of the reader's use of them. Divakaruni, a well-known feminist and spiritualist, reflects truth and reality in her seminal writings in the light of cultural evolution with the help of her divine gift of creative imagination. With her remarkable penetrating insight, she not only scans the world we live in from the feministic perspective but also descends into the hidden world of Unconscious to reflect the truth and spiritual reality. In *Queen of Dreams* she surfaces this reality by dilating on the nature of the different kinds of dreams-waking dreams, sleeping dreams and spiritual dreams. She particularly focuses on the spiritual dreams by taking a deep dive into the Unconscious which reveals the truth of a hidden world. Her narratology with feministic touch taking history, myth and magical realism in its fold brings the undercurrent of reality to the surface for the rational and logical realization of the truth in a scientific way.

Dreams also bear witness to superior kind of knowledge and recollection

which the waking person does not believe he possesses. In this light it is evidently clear that the main source of the dreams is unconscious though the initiator is the conscious as Freud showing the intimate reciprocal relationship between them says, "I imagine that the conscious wish becomes the initiator of a dream only if it succeeds in wakening an unconscious wish constant with it, and drawing reinforcement from this" (Freud 1965, 362) and further emphasizing on the unconscious he says that "The theory of all psychoneurotic symptoms culminates in the proposition that they too have to be conceived as wish fulfillment of the Unconscious". (Freud 1965, 372) Now it becomes crystal clear that the unconscious wishes always remain alive and active, therefore on this ground both the physicians and the philosophers agree as they recognize that, 'Unconscious psychical processes' is 'the most appropriate and considered expression for a well-established fact' (Freud 1965, 404) Unconscious is assumed as the basis of the life of the psyche as Freud describes:

The Unconscious is the greater sphere that includes the smaller sphere of the Consciousness; everything conscious has a prior stage that is unconscious whereas the Unconscious can remain at this stage and still claim to have the full value of a psychical function. The Unconscious is the true reality of psyche, its inner nature just as unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and just as imperfectly revealed by the data of consciousness as the external world is by the information received from our sensory organs" (Freud 1965, 405)

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud also shows the relationship between the Conscious and the Unconscious. The Pre conscious system stands like a partition-screen between the Unconscious system and consciousness. Sometimes thoughts refuse to enter into consciousness or force their way into it, the whole system points to the intimate reciprocal relationship between censorship and consciousness. C. G. Jung rejecting Freudian theories of '*libido*' as restricted to sexual desires, modified it by projecting the human self as the totality of all psychic processes. Introducing a new concept, he provided a new dimension by proposing a new model that libido was energy that could be channeled into any field. He postulated that human psyche draws upon a set of 'primordial images' that are often cross cultural and exist in the '*collective imagination*' of the human race. Jung suggests that human imagination draws upon images and ideas from myths and legends that are across cultures and time-spans. These archetypes emerge from a 'collective unconsciousness' common to all mankind. Jacques Lacan links language with desire and unconscious as he thinks that in the unconscious desire is structured like language. He writes that "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other" (2003 (1977), 197) and "the unconscious is structured like language" (1981 (1977), 20). Lacan giving emphasis on the unconscious regards it as 'the nucleus of our being'. Further he gives a new turn to Freudian theory by stating as Barry writes that "the unconscious is not a chaotic mass of disparate material, as might formerly have been thought, but an

orderly network, as complex as the structure of a language: what the psychoanalytic experience discovers in the unconscious is the whole structure of language'. (Barry 106) In Western philosophy the conscious mind has been taken as the essence of the selfhood as encapsulated in Descartes words "I think, therefore, I am" but Lacan reverses it by stating that 'I am where I think not' (Lodge & Wood 101) that is in the unconscious, where my true selfhood lies. Lacan sees its reflection in Imaginary stage of a child in which there is no distinction between self and Other and the child finds a kind of idealized identification with the mother. It may be regarded as Lacan takes it as the sovereignty of the unconscious.

In *Queen of Dreams* Rakhi, from the Dream Journals of her mother, discovers her mother's divine identity which provides a new color to the dream world. Divakaruni seems crossing the boundaries of Freudian dream world confined to *libido* as in her *Dream Journal*, through Rakhi, she presents her reflection by writing that "She (Rakhi) started Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* but lost interest because it focused too much on Western methodology." (49) An explorative insight shows that Divakaruni has classified dreams into three categories—waking dreams, sleeping dreams and spiritual dreams. Stating that "In troubled moments, the elders would recite from the *Brihit Swapana Sarita*" she beautifully sums up all three kinds of the dreams in the following lines:

The dream comes heralding joy. | I welcome the dream. | The dream comes heralding sorrow. | I welcome the dream. | The dream is a mirror showing me my beauty. | I bless the dream. | The dream is a mirror showing me my ugliness. | I bless the dream. | My life is nothing but a dream. | From which I will wake into death, | which is nothing but a dream of life. (19-20)

The first four lines speak about the nature of waking dreams which may bring joy or sorrow as they are interwoven in the text of life and both of them are acceptable in this life, hence are welcomed. The next four lines reflect on the nature of sleeping dreams as they are related to wish fulfillment, and work as mirror showing beauty or ugliness of the dreamer. The last three concluding lines wherein Devakaruni surpassing the boundaries of the Western dream world reflects on the spiritual nature of the dreams which are related to "inner realm" and seem "so Indian". (35) Life itself is a big dream whose waking is death that again leads to a dream of life. Rakhi also realizes that her mother innately knew that "A dream is a telegram from the hidden world" and she heard her mother say once that "Only a fool or an illiterate person ignores it". (34) Exploring the reality of the hidden dream world, Divakaruni concentrates on the spiritual character of the dreams which are rooted in altruism as Rakhi's mother articulates "I dream the dream of other people, so I can help them live their lives". (7) The *Dream Journals* of Rakhi's mother contain these spiritual dreams in abundance and the tale of Neehar also shows them. Neehar who was "in the trance of seeing, with a care for nothing but the truth" (128) presents a shift from ordinary dream to spiritual dream as the tale of Neehar the Unfortunate from the Dream Journal records it:

Neehar began to read the dreams of the dead. She went from home to grieving home and kissed the newly dead on their foreheads, or sat with their heads in her lap... people who had the ability to see such things said that a current of white would leap from the forehead of the corpse to her forehead. After a time she would open her eyes with a sigh and say, 'Ah, so it is'. But she never spoke of what she saw . . . Only once . . . when asked what she had seen, she could only remember a sweet scent, as of lotus flowers.” (129)

Neehar's tale culminates into the spiritual climax when she comes to know about the announcement of the great saint, Vishnu-pada that he is about to leave his mortal embodiment. She goes to his ashram where all his disciples are gathering around him and makes a request to him to allow her to touch his head at the time of his death. Looking towards her with compassion, Vishnu pada giving her permission secretly gives a clue to her by saying “Child, the secret that you seek is not to be known in this way. It is only by looking inward that you will find it.” (129) It is the interior journey moving towards spiritual ascendancy. It is reported that at the time when Vishnu pada died, Neehar was sitting near his head touching his skull with her fingers. Neehar witnessed the glory and greatness of the spiritually awakened soul of the great saint with her inner eye which the ordinary world does not recognize as Divakaruni's mother records it in the Dream Journal, “And when his spirit left his body, it passed through Neehar and exited from her forehead in the form of a shaft of lightening.” (130) She remained unconscious for three days and when she came to her senses, she laughed or cried often. Some thought that she had gone mad as a powerful spirit passed through her body but some others who were sane and wise observed that “the light in her eyes was one of the serenity” (130) and from that moment onward Neehar turned her back towards materialistic world and 'did not tell a single dream' (130) as they are the concern of the common people in this world. Understanding the reality of life and concentrating on the spiritual reality she disappeared from the world in a mysterious way. “Dreams continue to affect the waking life.” (148) Highlighting the importance of the spiritual dreams her mother states in her journal “All of you, she said, are blessed because you possess the gift of dreaming, but unless you know what the dream is, whence it comes and what its purpose can be, the gift is useless”. (208) Waking and sleeping dreams are not so important as they create some hindrance to the spiritual self as she tells Rakhi, “They will only impede you in your path.” (208) Further issuing a warning against these ordinary kind of dreams she advises through Elder Samyukta in her journal:

It is true that often times a dream is stitched together from images thrown up by an agitated mind, worries that surface when the body is still. But those are the dreams of ordinary beings and need not concern you, though much of your life will be spent in explaining them. (208)

Stressing on the transformative nature of the spiritual dreams she further comments:

The dreams that are most important come from another reality-you

might call it another *time*, for want of a better term in our limited speech. This is the time of the dream spirits. I lack the capacity to describe it. All I can say is that even an instant of being in that time will transform you the way the philosopher's stone transforms base metal into gold. But I stumble ahead of myself. As you progress in this path, you will realize that each of you has a guardian spirit. If you are fortunate and careful, the love between you and this spirit will grow into a great and wondrous thing. Through dreams the spirit will tell you who you truly are, although it might have to speak many times before you learn to listen. unless you observe a life of service and compassion and cultivate the six treasured virtues, you may never learn this skill. But when-no, if- you finally hear, you will see the intricate web of love that binds existence together, and you will never need anything else in order to be happy. The more fortunate among you, blessed by the dreams, will live long in the world after, and help many souls. But for others the message will come at the moment of death, and will be inseparable from it. For those who need extra guidance, a messenger may appear at the time. Do not lose him or her- it will be your last chance to grasp the truth of the dream time. (208-9)

Elder Jahnvi also reveals the nature of dreaming and its relationship to waking lives through the dream of Tunga-dhwaja. The dream of the king Tunga-dhwaja from the Dream Journals as described by Jahnvi is an eye-opening transformative illustration that brings a change in the behavior of the king with repentance. The king who is a lover of hunting enters the magical forest and sees in the distance a white boar-the rarest of creatures. He rides after the boar to hunt it but the boar disappears mysteriously. The king realizes that he is lost. He sees a group of dwarfish wildlings performing worship by offering porridge in leaf bowls to the stone god. The king, having sword in his hand and displaying his power arrogantly, snatches porridge forcefully from them and eat it. The woodsmen disappear and the king sleeps after eating. When he wakes up in the morning, he retraces his steps and makes his way to the gate of his palace but he is stopped by the guards by calling 'beggar' and 'mad man'. The king is taken aback when he sees that his kingly garments are gone and he is clad in tree bark. Even his queen wife "stares at him in distaste and without recognition". (148) Aniruddha, the righteous king issues order to "throw the mad man and see that he never returns." (149) Tunga-dhwaja realizes that this calamity is due to his unholy and unkind behavior towards the woodsmen and their deity, therefore, he resolves to go back to the forest to beg their forgiveness. He makes a search for them for many days but does not find them. At last he decides to commit suicide by drowning himself in a forest lake. But when he is about to drown, he sees the same white boar. The boar leads him back to the same place where the wild ones- the sages- were performing their worship. He prostrates before the stone-god and humbly accepts the blessed food after the ceremony is completed. He falls sleep and sees dream and finds himself dressed once more in his royal dress. Having left the magic forest, the king goes back to his palace and finds everything as it was before the hunt. He is a changed man now as the Dream Journal puts it: "No longer arrogant, he lives out

his life prayerfully, ruling his kingdom with justice and mercy. He is especially kind to beggars and madmen, and upon his death his subjects mourn the passing of Tunga-dhwaja the righteous.” (250)

What the king did in the forest – a magical dream space- invited a curse upon his waking life, consequently people including his own wife refused to recognize him. He was called 'a beggar' and 'a madman'. He found himself clad in tree bark in place of his kingly garments. Jahnavi explains the dream by drawing a diagram of two ovals with small squares along the circumference of each oval connected by a tube. Pointing to one of the ovals she states “Think of this as waking time, and the other oval as dream time. The connecting tube is called the gateway and allows us to pass from one time to the other. Under normal circumstances, the oval of dream time is always in motion, so whenever you pass through the gateway you enter a different door’ – here she pointed to the squares – 'and thus experience a different dream. The oval of the waking state moves but with infinite slowness. Thus, throughout a human's life span, he or she will reenter the same door and experience the same story, which we have termed reality. “On asking what happens when the balance between the two ovals is upset” (260) Jahnavi told that “when the balance is upset, the oval of dream time comes to a halt and people dream the same story over and over”. (260) In case of Tunga-dhwaja, she explains that the king speeded up his waking time by angering the sages in the forest, therefore he entered through a different door into a different life. Consequently, “he paid for his earlier arrogance by being reduced to the lowest of the low.” (260) Taking a step further Jahnavi goes on explaining the nature of transforming dreams in logical and rational way in the light of the dream of Tunga-dhwaja as she states:

All of us do what we shouldn't, from time to time, in our dreams. But we aren't pushed into other lives in punishment –

It is because, in the magical forest, the king had entered a transforming dream'. Here Jahnavi pointed to one of the thickly outlined squares. 'Transforming dreams are rare. They come to a human once or twice in a lifetime, or perhaps not at all. What we do in these dreams transforms our natures and affects our waking lives in powerful ways. In most cases, the dream erases itself from our consciousness once we have dreamed it, and we can do nothing to change its effects. Tunga-dhwaja was fortunate in that he remembered, and even more fortunate in that he could reenter the same transforming dream, where he was forgiven. Otherwise he would have been trapped in his new life, and doomed to spend his days as a beggar.' (261-62)

Divakaruni through the tale of Tunga-dhwaja suggestively tells us that “there existed, just beyond our perceptions, different realities... The law of reversal had transformed Tunga-dhwaja from a king into a beggar. Couldn't that same law transform me- an orphan and a novice, a beggar girl of sorts-into a queen?” (261) The transforming dreams may take us into a new world. Rakhi visualizing the present chaotic condition of the world thinks “So much hatred unleashed in the world today; where will it end?” (272) She finds no dream teller in America, the most advanced and

civilized nation in the world as she thinks “Perhaps there were none in this land that believed technology to be the cure of all ills?” (281) Her imagination turns from The West to The East as she sees the man in white whose body moves like a young man but his face is weathered and lined. His eyes reflect a special kind of beauty as she describes “I like his eyes. They 're attractive, but not in a sexual way.” (287) The man practicing yoga is a special kind of 'Warrior' as he says “This is one of my favorites, a variation of the Warrior. A regular practice of it leads to balance, poise, vision and fearlessness- not to mention strong legs and a straight back..” (289) It is this yoga that leads to the height of physical, mental and spiritual health. Rakhi wanted to know her mother's innate divinity as her mother writes “She constantly longed to understand who I am, to become who I am.” (297) Physical yoga leads to spiritual yoga and through meditation the self establishes union and harmony with the divine, hence conscious activates unconscious to reflect spiritual dreams which can create happiness in the world and prepare a way for the bright future of the spiritual self in its long journey for perfection.

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