

Dreamlike Narratives: Dreaming as a Social and Political Composition

Narrativas Oníricas: O Sonho como Composição Social e Política

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Récits Oniriques : Le Rêve comme Composition Sociale et Politique

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Abstract

This article first presents a bibliographic review of conceptions of dreams and dreaming across different historical periods and cultures and, based on this review, proposes a model of group work grounded in the collective composition of dreams. The aim was to examine dream manifestations recorded over centuries by diverse civilizations and peoples, unpacking dreams that, despite their elements of strangeness, maintain a close relationship with human reality. From the emergence of human self-awareness, dreams have registered, in countless ways, customs and everyday life. To this end, the study draws on scientific articles from neuroscience, anthropological studies of Indigenous peoples from different continents, artistic production, and approaches to the unconscious informed by psychoanalysis and philosophy. The analysis first examines texts addressing the oneiric experience and then focuses on the dream as a collective and political act, a concept that Brazilian psychoanalytic authors have termed oniropolitics. Based on the idea of dreaming as a collective and political act, the article proposes a methodological framework for a group-based modality of care and study centered on the oneiric experience. In this framework, records of group encounters are produced through a field diary referred to as a dream journal. This group modality is presented and examined in detail, operating from the perspective of the collective composition of dreams, both for therapeutic purposes and for the development of future research that interrogates the social bond and the narratives through which a given historical moment is expressed.

Keywords: dreamlike narratives, dreamlike politics, dreamlike journal, dream group.

Resumo

Este artigo, em um primeiro momento, propõe um levantamento bibliográfico das concepções sobre os sonhos e o sonhar em diferentes épocas e culturas para, a partir disso, sugerir um modelo de grupo forjado em uma composição coletiva dos sonhos. Objetivou-se, dessa forma, trabalhar as manifestações oníricas registradas ao longo dos séculos por diversas civilizações e povos, destrinchando os sonhos, que, mesmo atravessados por estranhamentos, mantêm uma íntima relação com a realidade humana – desde a tomada de consciência de si pelo ser humano, os sonhos que registram, de infinitas formas, seus costumes e cotidianos. Para isso, pesquisaram-se artigos científicos trabalhados pela neurociência, pelos estudos antropológicos de povos originários de diferentes continentes, pela arte e pelo campo do inconsciente a partir da psicanálise e da filosofia. O estudo, então, analisou textos sobre o onírico, e, na sequência, o objetivo em destaque abordou o sonho como ato coletivo e político, o que autores da psicanálise brasileira nomearam como oniropolítica. A partir da ideia do sonho como ato coletivo e político, foi proposta uma metodologia para uma modalidade grupal de cuidado e de estudos sobre o onírico, na qual os registros dos encontros se dão a partir de um diário de campo intitulado como sonhário. Tal modalidade grupal

é apresentada e detalhada no artigo e operada por uma perspectiva de composição coletiva dos sonhos, tanto para fins terapêuticos quanto para desenvolver futuras pesquisas que interroguem o laço social e suas respectivas narrativas que dizem de seu tempo.

Palavras-chave: narrativas oníricas, oniropolítica, sonhário, grupo de sonhos.

Resumen

Este artículo, en un primer momento, propone un levantamiento bibliográfico de las concepciones acerca de los sueños y del soñar en diferentes épocas y culturas para, a partir de ello, sugerir un modelo de grupo forjado en una composición colectiva de los sueños. El objetivo fue, de esta manera, trabajar las manifestaciones oníricas registradas a lo largo de los siglos por diversas civilizaciones y pueblos, desentrañando los sueños que, aun atravesados por extrañamientos, mantienen una íntima relación con la realidad humana – desde la toma de conciencia de sí por parte del ser humano, los sueños registran, de infinitas formas, sus costumbres y cotidianos. Para ello, se investigaron artículos científicos elaborados por la neurociencia, por los estudios antropológicos de pueblos originarios de distintos continentes, por el arte y por el campo del inconsciente desde la perspectiva del psicoanálisis y de la filosofía. El estudio, entonces, analizó textos sobre lo onírico y, en secuencia, el objetivo destacado abordó el sueño como acto colectivo y político, lo que autores del psicoanálisis brasileño nombraron como oniropolítica. A partir de la idea del sueño como acto colectivo y político, se propuso una metodología para una modalidad grupal de cuidado y de estudios sobre lo onírico, en la cual los registros de los encuentros se realizan a partir de un diario de campo denominado sonhário. Dicha modalidad grupal es presentada y detallada en el artículo y operada desde una perspectiva de composición colectiva de los sueños, tanto con fines terapéuticos como para desarrollar futuras investigaciones que interroguen el lazo social y sus respectivas narrativas que expresan su tiempo.

Palabras clave: narrativas oníricas, oniropolítica, sonhário, grupo de sueños.

Résumé

Cet article propose dans un premier temps une revue bibliographique des conceptions sur les rêves et l'acte de rêver à travers différentes époques et cultures afin de suggérer ensuite un modèle de groupe élaboré sur une composition collective des rêves. L'objectif était ainsi d'explorer les manifestations oniriques enregistrées au fil des siècles par différentes civilisations et peuples, en disséquant les rêves qui, bien que traversés par des étrangetés, gardent une relation intime avec la réalité humaine - depuis la prise de conscience de soi par l'être humain, les rêves reflètent, de façons infinies, ses coutumes et son quotidien. Pour cela, on a examiné des articles scientifiques abordés en neurosciences, des études anthropologiques sur des peuples autochtones de différents continents, ainsi que des travaux portant sur l'art et le domaine de l'inconscient à travers la psychanalyse et la philosophie. L'étude a donc analysé des textes sur l'onirique et, ensuite, l'objectif mis en avant a abordé le rêve en tant qu'acte collectif et politique, ce que des auteurs de la psychanalyse brésilienne ont appelé « oniropolitique ». Partant de l'idée du rêve comme acte collectif et politique, une méthodologie a été proposée pour une modalité en groupe de soin et d'étude de l'onirique, dans laquelle les enregistrements des rencontres sont réalisés dans un journal de terrain intitulé sonhário. Une telle modalité de groupe est présentée et détaillée dans l'article et mise en œuvre selon une perspective de composition collective des rêves, aussi bien à des fins thérapeutiques que pour développer de futures recherches qui interrogent le lien social et ses récits respectifs qui témoignent de leur temps.

Mots-clés : récits oniriques, oniropolitique, registre de rêves, groupe de rêves.

This article is one of the outcomes of the research project *Dream Group Narratives: Dreaming as a Social and Political Composition* and presents the bibliographic review conducted to support the development of the study and its conceptual framework on dreaming. It delineates the theoretical orientation of the research and proposes the structuring of a group model grounded in the collective composition of dreams. The text initially aims to survey readings on dream manifestations as they have been recorded and theorized over centuries and across different cultures. It seeks to explore the world of dreams as one that moves in close connection with the shared reality of human life, even when dreaming, as an integral dimension of existence, often goes unnoticed.

To this end, the study examines scientific articles from neuroscience, anthropological research on Indigenous peoples from different continents, artistic practices, and theoretical approaches to the unconscious drawn from psychoanalysis and philosophy. The article first analyzes texts addressing the oneiric experience and subsequently advances a broader objective: to conceptualize the dream as a collective and political act, akin to the unconscious, understood within psychoanalysis as the primary source of dreaming. Guided by this central thread, the dream as a collective and political act, the article moves

toward the construction and proposal of a methodological framework. This group-based modality of care operates on the premise of the collective composition of participants' dreams, both for therapeutic purposes and to foster listening and inquiry into the social bond and the narratives of a given historical moment as articulated by members of dream groups.

When understood as a collective oneiric activity, the dream becomes a political effect, shaped by crossings and processes of subjectivation within the social context in which dreaming takes place. Rather than expressing an individual interiority, dreaming emerges as an event produced by a machinery of collective assemblages that generate becomings, create tensions, and invent worlds. Throughout the text, the potency of the oneiric realm and its intimate relationship with what psychoanalysis and schizoanalysis describe as the unconscious are examined. Although these approaches differ, their divergences are also discussed in detail, constituting a productive ground for the present analysis. The discussion centers on readings of the unconscious and dreaming, their trajectories and bifurcations, and the distinct possibilities they offer for understanding both individual and collective dimensions of experience. The article also contrasts a psychoanalytic clinic focused on familiar and repetitive dreams with clinical perspectives in which dreams exceed the individual scene, opening onto the social bond and the political-collective machinery.

From this perspective, the article converges on the idea of assembling collective circuits for the composition of the oneiric through dream groups. This proposal is grounded in experiences derived from the research project *Dream Group Narratives: Dreaming as a Social and Political Composition*, which in recent years has conducted experimental group interventions centered on the collective management of dreams. During this experimental period, the project worked with diverse and singular populations who sought out the groups due to forms of suffering and distress characteristic of their time. These groups included university students during the COVID-19 pandemic, the first to experience the proposal, conducted virtually between March 2020 and August 2021, LGBTQIAPN+ populations (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual/aromantic/agender, pan/poly, non-binary, and others), immigrant refugees, and users of mental health services. These experiences were fundamental for developing expertise in working with collective dream narratives and enabled the formulation of a methodological synthesis presented at the end of the article. In preliminary terms, the groups conducted between 2020 and 2024 typically began with the narration of dreams by each participant. This was followed by a collective effort to relate and analyze the dreams within the group, seeking possible lines of connection among them. Subsequently, artistic devices were employed to create compositions between the oneiric narratives, with the aim of problematizing and analyzing the social bond and the production of suffering articulated by participants throughout the meetings.

As an outcome of this analysis, the article proposes a methodology for group-based intervention focused on the collective composition of dreams, grounded in both the bibliographic review and the experiences already undertaken. From this standpoint, and based on the reflections developed throughout the text, at least two guiding questions emerge: what relationships can be conjectured between the oneiric world and the social bond within a specific historical moment and context? How can a group-based composition of dreams be conceived and applied across diverse populations within the psychoanalytic field, both for therapeutic purposes and for social analysis in future research?

To address these questions, the article first examines how certain peoples, from ancient, Indigenous, and contemporary societies, have understood dreams within their cultural frameworks. It then problematizes, within psychoanalysis, perspectives that approach dreaming as an activity internal to the subject and therefore individual. From this point, alternative perspectives are presented that align with the notion of dreaming as a collective and political process. Finally, drawing on the dream as a political-collective process, the article outlines a methodology for the formation of dream groups based on the collective composition of dreams, as well as a means of refining the rich oneiric material produced in these settings. Such material is understood as constituting narratives traversed by the social bond, imbued with the historical moment and political context in which they emerge.

Peoples, Histories, and Cultures: Narratives of the Oneiric

Dreaming is an activity that has accompanied human beings since the most ancient times. Ribeiro (2019) revisits the history of dreams and points to this longstanding relationship between humanity and the oneiric world. Across centuries, it is possible to observe the multiplicity of interpretations that different cultures have attributed to dreams. Early peoples regarded dreams as guides for hunting, as premonitions of future achievements, or as omens of impending tragedy. It is also speculated that dreams fostered spirituality through a possible mediation with deceased ancestors, enabling communication between the living and the dead. This gave rise to the belief in another world inhabited by forebears.

Over time, these readings of dreams persisted. Among the Greeks and other ancient peoples, such as the Egyptians, dreams were also understood as tools for self-care. Historical records refer to a dream analyst, a Greek sage and interpreter named Artemidorus, who wrote a classic treatise called *Oneirocritica* (Ribeiro, 2019, p. 23). Even so, in both Egypt and Greece, dreams retained a prophetic dimension, associated with oracles and their enigmatic, divinatory art. In Greek mythology, Morpheus conveyed messages from the gods to rulers through dreams, becoming a central symbol of the oneiric world. Greek mythology also describes sleep as a "small daily death, represented by the god Hypnos, twin brother

of Thanatos, the god of death, both sons of Nyx, the goddess of night” (Ribeiro, 2019, p. 14). Hypnos, as sleep, played a fundamental and therapeutic role for the Greeks.

These ancient cultural interpretations of dreams continue to reverberate in contemporary thought, whether in neuroscience, psychoanalysis, and psychology, or in anthropological studies that recover the ontologies of Indigenous peoples. In Brazil, for example, the Yanomami people cultivate the idea that dreams are messages from someone who wishes to communicate with the dreamer. Whether a living person, a deceased ancestor, or even animals and plants of the forest, dreaming of them is understood as giving voice to something the dreamt entity wishes to convey to the dreamer. This is the dream as the desire of others (Limulja, 2022). Dreams also signal future dangers and can shape the dreamer’s actions on the following day. For the Yanomami, the space-time of dreams and myths is contemporaneous with the space-time of waking life, in the sense that both can mutually affect one another (Limulja, 2022, p. 13). Among the Yanomami, those who know how to dream and interpret dreams hold great power, for dreaming is understood as the ability to see the invisible, what in everyday life appears absent, hidden, or elusive, yet remains present for those attuned to the world of dreams.

In Australia, desert Aboriginal peoples known as the Warlpiri were studied by Glowczewski (2015). They characteristically gather as a community upon waking to share their dreams, using the oneiric messages received during the night to plan the day’s activities. The author argues that, by organizing life around dream messages, these Aboriginal groups, even after becoming sedentary, have been able to resist English colonization in Australia. They sustain a nomadic mode of existence through oneiric journeys. As Glowczewski notes:

One possible answer lies precisely in this specific way of conceiving space and dreaming which, even when sedentary, allows them to continue traveling. Even when forced to remain in one place, through their ceremonies, songs, and nocturnal dreams, they can continue to practice their famous journeys (Glowczewski, 2015, p. 46).

For the Warlpiri, dreaming encompasses all that is possible, such that what is dreamed can occur in waking reality. Dreaming has neither a specific point of departure nor a specific point of arrival. It is the condition of life and of all transformations (Glowczewski, 2015, p. 62).

Returning to Western interpretations of dreams, it is also evident that at the height of Christianity, following the decline of the Roman Empire, dreams acquired connotations of haunting and temptation, insofar as they might indicate encounters with the divine. Saint Augustine expressed concern about “erotic dreams,” which, according to Ribeiro (2019, p. 75), he could not avoid despite celibacy, attempting to explain them through the autonomy of dreams, images beyond the control of consciousness, even in the case of a saint. This illustrates how, in highly repressive cultures, dreams may reveal markers of issues that are ordinarily avoided. In medieval Christian culture, intense pressure surrounding sexual desire likely produced a proliferation of erotic dreams among the population, as reflected in Augustine’s anguish over sinful dreams. Not coincidentally, even toward the decline of the medieval period, those who dared to publish literature promoting sensuality and sexual fantasy risked imprisonment and persecution. Donatien Alphonse François de Sade, known as the Marquis de Sade, was persecuted for his political-philosophical positions and for writings filled with sexual and revolutionary fantasies that challenged Christian norms of the time. He was ultimately imprisoned, accused of libertinism, and confined to prisons and asylums for a total of 32 years.

After the so-called Dark Ages, during the Romantic period (17th century), dreams, often associated with the use of intoxicants, became sources of inspiration for artistic and philosophical works. They served as means of interiorization, a turning inward in search of an essence of the soul (Figueiredo, 2012). In the arts, and later under the influence of Freud’s so-called “plague,” early 20th-century surrealists drew inspiration from the unconscious and the oneiric world to produce their works. With the advent of the unconscious as theorized by Freud, a new way of approaching dreams became possible. Salvador Dalí and his contemporaries used this framework as an aesthetic resource to create their art and to transform the artistic field.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 1900/1996a), one finds a foundational work for the advancement of studies on the unconscious. Through it, Freud democratized the unconscious: if dreams are the royal road, then all human beings are traversed by this domain beyond the control of reason, since dreaming is a mental activity common to all. Freud (1932–1936/1996f) further indicates that dreams are structured by the core dynamics of the unconscious: condensation and displacement. Through condensation, a single element of the manifest dream corresponds to multiple latent dream thoughts. Displacement, in turn, refers to the shifting of affects away from their primary meaning, producing dream distortion.

With Freud, although he did not fully elaborate the relationship between dreaming and the political dimensions of social reality, it remains evident that the oneiric world investigated by psychoanalysis admits multiple layers of interpretation. These encompass both the individual level and the political-social layer, since institutional structures and the social bond constitute the foundation for the formation of the unconscious and, consequently, of dreams. In this sense, Freud (1913/1996c, p. 159) states that he conceives the human mind primarily as a collective mind, in which mental processes occur, much as the individual is constituted through relationships with others, with society, and with its prevailing structures. This collective mind forms the unconscious and what is subsequently dreamed, such that, when narrating dreams, the subject unfolds a chain of signifiers open to innumerable interpretations and an infinite array of constructions from a single dream.

With Lacan (1964/2008, p. 32), following the Freudian tradition, dreams can be understood, like jokes and slips of the tongue, as a stumble, a moment in which “something else seeks to be realized, something that appears intentional, certainly, but with a strange temporality.” The dream thus emerges as a text endowed with a logic — namely, that of the signifier — and capable of expressing meaning.

Jung also contributed significantly to reflections on dreams in his writings. Despite his separation from the psychoanalytic field, prompted by his move beyond libido toward what he conceived as a spiritual form of energy oriented toward an encounter with the true self, his reading of dreams remains highly stimulating. For Jung, dreams were manifestations of the unconscious, whether individual, with its shadows, or collective, with its archetypal legacies. These archetypes were understood as symbolic inheritances constructed by diverse cultures over centuries, offering pathways to the dreamer through ancestral symbols (Jung, 1928/1987).

Still within psychoanalytic thought and its reverberations in other thinkers, it is particularly relevant to highlight the critical observations made by Frantz Fanon regarding universalizing psychoanalytic interpretations of dreams. When discussing the Malagasy people, Fanon emphasizes how colonization and the culture of terror imposed upon colonized populations were reflected in their dreams. He argues that dreams must be situated in their historical time and related to the social structures of a given period, rather than evaluated through European or Oedipal parameters, for example (Fanon, 1952/2008). In another work, when addressing the colonial world and the confined native subject, Fanon comments on the dreams available to this exploited population:

(...) apartheid is nothing more than the compartmentalization of the colonial world. The first thing the native learns is to stay in his place, not to cross boundaries. Therefore, the native’s dreams are muscular dreams, dreams of action, aggressive dreams. I dream that I jump, that I swim, that I run, that I climb. I dream that I laugh loudly, that I cross the river in a single stride, that I am pursued by fleets of cars that never catch me. During colonization, between nine in the evening and six in the morning, the colonized never cease to free themselves (Fanon, 1961/2022, p. 48).

In resonance with this understanding of dreams as shaped by the cultural and political conditions of a specific historical context, Charlotte Beradt, a German Jewish journalist, experienced deeply disturbing dreams in the period leading up to Nazism in Germany. In her dreams, or rather nightmares, she was tortured, persecuted, and shot. She developed insomnia to avoid confronting these terrifying visions, which seemed to foretell the Holocaust. Exhausted by this catastrophic oneiric production, Beradt intuited that she might not be alone in her dreaming. Her dreams spoke of a collective political atmosphere in formation; they were dreams entwined with social production and marked by a strange temporality yet to come. Guided by this intuition, she began collecting dream reports from Germans between 1933 and 1939. She observed that the Nazi experience was lived collectively and gestated within dreams. Traces of a dark and terrifying world haunted the Germans who wrote to her. Commenting on dreams traversed by Nazism, Beradt (1966/2017, p. 40) notes that they “seem like mosaics, often composed in a surrealist manner, but each of their pieces comes from the reality of the Third Reich.” Whether women or men, bourgeois or proletarian, young or old, dreams were permeated by the political events unfolding in Nazi Germany. As Kehl (2017, p. 3) observes in reflecting on Beradt’s book, when the terror instituted in social life reproduces itself in dreams, the State has fulfilled its totalitarian objective.

Beradt’s publication on dreams in the Third Reich subsequently influenced theorists in psychology and psychoanalysis who approached dreaming as a political–collective phenomenon. The British psychoanalyst Gordon Lawrence, along with contemporary Brazilian psychoanalytic researchers, embraced this reading of dreams as expressions of the social bond rather than merely of a universal family structure. In 1982, Lawrence published *The Social Meaning of Dreams: The Matrix Technique*, in which he proposed a conception of dreaming that foregrounded social situations extending beyond individual dream analysis. In his work with dream groups, Lawrence emphasized the dreams themselves rather than the dreamer, since they contain the social, political, institutional, and spiritual aspects of that social milieu (Lawrence, 1982/2010, p. 9). By combining Freudian free association with systems thinking, he developed group methodologies that explored participants’ dreams to foster new modes of thought. His research identified patterns connecting multiple dreams narrated within groups, indicating the social nature of dreaming. Lawrence was widely sought in organizational contexts to work with dream groups aimed at improving workplace relations and analyzing institutional dynamics. His research began at the Tavistock Institute in the United Kingdom and later expanded to countries such as Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, England, Ireland, Australia, the United States, Brazil, and Rwanda.

Within the Brazilian academic and psychoanalytic field, dreaming as a political–collective act gained particular prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, Brazilian researchers proposed the concept of oniropolitics to account for dreams and dreaming as collective phenomena related to the social bond and political implications. As they explain:

(...) oniropolitics does not focus exclusively on the therapeutic dimension of dreams, nor on the construction of specific notions of biography or psychopathology of the subject; rather, it is primarily concerned with thinking about the collective function of dreaming (Dunker et al., 2021, p. 17).

This tragic moment in Brazilian history was marked by widespread collective fear of death and annihilation, driven both by the virus itself and by the political context of the time, when President Jair Messias Bolsonaro and the far right held power. Bolsonaro's administration downplayed the lethality of the pandemic, encouraged the population to continue their lives as usual, and discredited or obstructed investments in and research on COVID-19 vaccines. Beyond this, his government consistently skirted fascism, with a strong discourse of hatred directed toward minority groups. These were times of uncertainty, institutional violence, and deaths resulting from governmental neglect in managing the pandemic crisis, alongside fervent beliefs and moralities that inevitably reverberated in everyday dreaming across Brazil.

In a study of dreams during confinement, Brazilian psychoanalytic researchers collected dream narratives from health professionals working on the front lines of COVID-19 care, revealing how these dreams reflected the historical moment of the pandemic (Dunker et al., 2021). At that time, whether awake or asleep, it was difficult to detach one's thoughts from the lived tragedy; the traumatic specters of that period persisted even in the dreams of those immersed in the pandemic and Bolsonarist context.

To conclude this review of dream interpretations across cultures and historical periods, it is worth highlighting two further Brazilian studies. The first, conducted by Abrahão de Oliveira Santos in Rio de Janeiro, proposes the collective management of dreams, inspired by the collective technology of the Warlpiri, as described in Glowczewski's *Derives Totêmicos* (2015). In mid-2017, Santos organized a dream workshop with 14 participants, designed to exchange dream narratives and, from them, create enactments aimed at producing new life situations with the aid of dreams. As he concludes, the goal of the workshop was to learn how to create new life scripts through the creative use of dreaming (Santos, 2019, p. 34). The second study, conducted in Rio Grande do Norte by neuroscientist Sidarta Ribeiro, conceptualizes dreams as mechanisms that capture and reproduce stimuli, encounters, speech, and situations experienced in the days preceding a given dream, as well as creative tools for problem-solving when the waking mind fails to find solutions (Ribeiro, 2019). Dreams thus emerge as sources of inspiration through oneiric simulations, a privileged space for connecting with imagination and for creating other possible worlds.

The Molecular Revolution of Dreams and their Political Activity in the Clinical Field

This section of the article examines the clinical listening practiced within psychoanalysis through the classical case of the "Wolf Man," with the aim of articulating it with the critique developed by Deleuze and Guattari. The schizoanalytic duo proposes a rereading of this case that links clinical listening to social production, thereby generating a distinct framework for thinking about the unconscious and dreams, the central focus of the present discussion.

In *One or Several Wolves?* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1997), the authors revisit Freud's well-known clinical case. The patient, known as the "Wolf Man," was later identified as Sergei Pankejeff, a Russian aristocrat from a wealthy family in Odessa, in what is now Ukraine. Within psychoanalysis, Sergei was treated by Freud and later by the psychoanalysts Ruth Mack Brunswick and Muriel Gardiner.

Sergei was 18 years old when he began treatment with Freud, which lasted approximately four years (1910–1914) during an initial phase in which Freud set a definitive end date for the analysis. Prior to psychoanalysis, the young man had been diagnosed with manic-depressive psychosis; under Freud's care, this diagnosis was revised to severe obsessive neurosis. In Freud's account, the Wolf Man was surrounded by childhood fantasies that were analyzed at each stage of his psychosexual development, with particular emphasis on the famous dream in which he saw five, six, or seven white wolves through the window of his bedroom. This dream was interpreted as pointing toward the Oedipal problematic and, more fundamentally, to the primal scene — the parents' sexual intercourse — that Sergei Pankejeff was presumed to have witnessed in early childhood. The gaze of the wolves toward him was in fact his own gaze directed at the primal scene, and the immobile wolves indicated his terror in the face of a sudden and violent movement such as the parents' coitus (Freud, 1918/1994, pp. 27–31). For Freud, Sergei suffered in adulthood from a neurosis originating in an infantile neurosis that had emerged around the age of four. Based on the Russian patient's psychosexual development, Freud formulated a diagnosis that began with anxiety hysteria, manifested as animal phobia, and evolved into a religiously inflected obsessive neurosis that persisted until the patient was ten years old (Freud, 1918/1994).

After 4 years of analysis, Freud considered Sergei cured and proceeded to write and publish the case, focusing primarily on the patient's infantile neurosis. At the time, Freud was concerned with consolidating psychoanalytic theory and establishing its foundations in distinction from dissident approaches represented by Adler and Jung (Chemama, 2007).

Chemama (2007) notes that after Sergei was deemed cured, at least theoretically, and discharged from analysis, he returned to his hometown and married Teresa, a nurse he had met while hospitalized in a sanatorium. For a time, life proceeded without major difficulties, until the outbreak of the First World War and the Russian Revolution. As a consequence of these events, Sergei lost his fortune following the invasion of his city by the Red Army and the confiscation of his property (Chemama, 2007).

In 1926, Sergei returned to Vienna to work for an insurance company and requested a new course of treatment with Freud, which lasted six months. Freud subsequently referred him to Ruth Mack Brunswick, who continued the treatment for

an additional five months. At that time, the Wolf Man was suffering from hypochondria and from the conviction that there was a hole in his nose, a belief that caused him intense distress and led him to carry a mirror compulsively to inspect his face. He later developed persecutory mania, blaming a physician for the supposed nasal defect and accusing Freud of having treated him poorly. Mack Brunswick diagnosed him with hypochondriacal paranoia, based on his delusions of mutilation.

More than a decade later, Sergei entered analysis again, this time with Muriel Gardiner, from 1938 to 1949 and later in 1956. He continued to present persecutory delusions, albeit with different features, believing that others were talking about him and watching him. Gardiner initially considered that these persecutory delusions had been triggered by the Bolshevik invasion, when Sergei lost his fortune. Even so, she did not fully grasp the extent to which the unconscious was linked less to familial scenes than to crowds and social production.

Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1997), particularly in relation to Sergei's delusions, formulate a critique of the psychoanalytic reading of the case, which interpreted the symptoms manifested throughout the Wolf Man's life as responses to a primal fantasy associated with the witnessed parental sexual scene, symbolized in the wolf dream. They question the failure to listen to the social upheaval of Russia that Sergei experienced and that stripped him of all his possessions. They also introduce a second dream, from the period of Muriel Gardiner's analysis, in which Sergei dreams of a street, then of a wall with a closed door and, to the left, an empty cupboard. Sergei stands before a large woman with a small scar who seems to want to move around the wall, while behind the wall wolves are eager to push the door open (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1997, p. 48). Although Gardiner suspected that the wolves represented the Bolsheviks, the revolutionaries who destroyed Sergei's fortune, she ultimately interpreted the Red Army as being related to his father, who had been one of the leaders of the Liberal Party that fell after the Russian Revolution. This led her to conclude that the dream "satisfies the patient's sense of guilt" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1997, p. 48).

From the schizoanalytic perspective, Sergei's delusions and persecutory manias did not narrate traumatic family scenes but rather an entire social production operating within his existential territory. How could the Russian Revolution not be embedded in Sergei's delirious and persecutory discourse? His unconscious did not speak of parental coitus, but of a social context, of a political process installing a new regime and dethroning a particular elite. With the case of the Wolf Man, Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1997) demonstrate how the Oedipal framework fails to account for an unconscious saturated by social production. Delirium, the unconscious, and dreams are historical, social, and political rather than familial; they speak of packs of wolves and of populations.

This section revisits the history of the Wolf Man in order to elaborate the concept of oniropolitics. In recent years, a wide range of psychoanalytic research in Brazil has expanded the scope and significance of dreams as privileged elements for accessing not only the discourse of the subject in analysis but also the narratives circulating within the social bond of a given socioeconomic, political, and cultural context.

By engaging with oniropolitics and with Deleuze and Guattari's text on Freud's Wolf Man, the aim is to foreground the collective dimension of the oneiric, its historical and collective imprint, and its inventive, critical, and political force in social production. It is worth recalling that, despite Deleuze and Guattari's critique of the psychoanalytic reading of the Wolf Man case, psychoanalysis itself, already in Freud, addressed the political and collective dimensions of dreaming by emphasizing that dreams emerge from and are traversed by the social formations to which they are bound. In this sense, no dream is purely individual or familial; all are permeated by the everyday events of a given culture.

Freud's socio-anthropological writings, such as *Totem and Taboo* (1913/1996c), *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920/1996d), *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921/2011), *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930/1996e), and *Moses and Monotheism* (1934–1938/1990), offer important clues for understanding how the psychic field is both a product and a producer of the social bond, its institutions, and its culture. Even so, why do Freud's clinical case studies, such as the Wolf Man and many others produced over the years within psychoanalytic institutions, so often marginalize this articulation between the subject and the social bond? How did Muriel Gardiner filter the Red Army to the point of arriving at Sergei's father?

The texts discussed thus far, including Freud's socio-anthropological writings, the schizoanalytic critique of the psychoanalytic unconscious and of Sergei's second dream, Fanon's (1952/2008) insistence that dreams must be listened to in relation to the culture and modes of life of those who narrate them, the perspectives of Indigenous peoples who conceive dreams as communal and embedded in reality, and the notion of oniropolitics, all provide compelling indications for saturating psychoanalytic clinical listening with what belongs to the political–collective order. The unconscious, driven by a politically collective social production, whether enacted individually or in groups, is the central concern of this article and will be further developed in the following section, serving as the foundation for thinking about, analyzing, and creating oneiric narratives.

The Assembly of Collective Circuits for Oneiric Composition: A Methodology to be Dreamed

Research involves thinking about what is not yet known. In this sense, there is nothing more intrinsic to psychoanalysis, since its mode of listening is oriented toward the unconscious, that which belongs to the order of the unknown. Guided by this premise, the methodological proposal for the creation of dream groups is grounded in the ethical stance of psychoanalytic

listening, which preserves a learned ignorance or remains attuned to the register of the real, as Lacan (1964/2008, p. 55) states: no praxis is more oriented than analysis toward that which, at the heart of experience, constitutes the kernel of the real. Furthermore, as a fundamental basis of research in psychoanalysis, it must be emphasized that the investigation of the unconscious, clinical listening, and the body of psychoanalytic concepts are always intertwined and continuously reformulated through the singular experience of each intervention and listening encounter (Freud, 1912/1996b).

At this stage, it is possible only to outline a method — to sketch future interventions that, in fact, will only be fully created through concrete experiences with dream groups. Nevertheless, certain foundational principles can already be proposed. The method of Freudian evenly suspended attention will be employed in combination with the Benjaminian *flâneur*, based on the principle of listening to what would otherwise be discarded or denied, what opens space for stumbling, the unthinkable, and the detail (Pires & Gurski, 2020, p. 3).

Accordingly, the researcher and facilitator of the group intervention must remain attentive to the listening of dreams narrated within the groups, occupying this problematic field through the figure of the Benjaminian ragpicker, the *flâneur* who wanders through modern cities in search of what most of society considers useless: garbage, scrap, crumbs, discarded materials (Gurski & Strzykowski, 2018, p. 411). The proposal is to rummage through this refuse, through what appears disposable, dreams themselves and what they narrate about the unconscious, culture, and the contemporary social, political, and economic context, by attending to the fabric that encompasses these messages emerging from the remainder, and to the listening of the net in which, eventually, something may be caught (Lacan, 1964/2008, p. 51).

As participants move through their dream narratives, the proposal includes making written notes, both by the group facilitator and by the dreamers themselves. These records will initially take the form of a field diary (Barros & Kastrup, 2009) or an experience diary (Gurski, 2019).

The field diary is a device for producing cartography and draws inspiration from the *hypomnemata* discussed by Foucault in his analysis of Greek practices of the self. It supports the production of research data and functions to transform observations and statements captured in field experience into knowledge and modes of practice (Barros & Kastrup, 2009, p. 70). The experience diary, in turn, refers to:

(...) a written compilation produced by the researcher–psychoanalyst concerning their experiences, lived situations, and reflections within research activities. Methodologically, these diaries are characterized by a form of writing guided primarily by the movement of free association, which may initially cause a certain estrangement for readers. This is because, in general, these records resemble fragmented texts, apparently unfinished, at times lacking clear articulation between successive paragraphs or sentences (Gurski, 2019, p. 181).

These diaries constitute a fundamental tool for accompanying the processes of narrative construction that the groups aim to foster. They enable future analyses from which fragments of sentences, compositions between dreams, inventive events produced by the group throughout the meetings, and residues of dreams and thoughts can be extracted. To further refine this proposal, the term *dreamary* (*sonhário*) is introduced as a more fitting designation. The dreamary has a broader scope, as it is intended to be handled both by researchers or facilitators and by group participants, while simultaneously guiding experiences, elaborations, and reflections on the oneiric field. It thus functions not merely as a researcher's tool, but as a collective writing activity that invites all participants in dream groups to risk wandering into writing or drawing their dreams and the creative acts generated through group encounters.

In this way, the collective composition of dreams will be documented through the creation of dreamaries as the groups unfold. These records will serve as material for analysis within the research framework that underpins this article, offering insights into the relationships between dreams and the social events that mark a given historical moment and culture. As Sousa observes in relation to the listening of collective dreams that help illuminate a specific social temporality, dreamaries seek proximity to the oneiric reverberations of a culture, opening a space for listening by giving voice to this unconscious seismograph that can become a precious instrument for reading an era (Sousa, 2023, p. 3).

With this psychoanalytic methodological foundation, open to listening to the unconscious and oriented by an ethical–conceptual framework, and with this means of extracting analytical material from dream groups for research purposes through the dreamary, the article now advances toward a proposal for assembling groups devoted to the collective composition of dreams. The aim is to conceptualize the care practice enacted through group-based oneiric narratives, detailing its potential functioning and phases.

To understand the care practice offered by the collective composition of dreams, it is first important to emphasize how the oneiric world, when narrated, shared, and analyzed, promotes a process of self-analysis for each participant who undertakes the narration of dreams. Gurski and Perrone, in discussing oniropolitics, comment on the potency of dream narration as follows:

As a psychic function, dreams elaborate what psychoanalysis refers to as the traumatic, i.e., what the subject cannot represent or symbolize and which remains as a disturbance in the psyche in the form of anguish, malaise, and other symptoms. The possibility of figuration, that is, translating what is diffuse and threatening into an image, implies an elaborative operation that transforms a passive and terrifying experience into an active one, potentially opening space for different possibilities

both in understanding and in action (*Oniropolítica: pesquisadores de universidades públicas recolhem sonhos durante a pandemia*, 2020, p. 1).

In this sense, the groups formed may serve as spaces of reception for populations that share something in the order of the traumatic, such as LGBTQIAPN+ communities, immigrant refugees, and users of mental health services experiencing diverse forms of psychological suffering. Within each group, defined by a specific population with shared forms of suffering and anguish that may emerge in dreams and be collectively narrated, it becomes possible to gather and explore oneiric elements in order to analyze, problematize, and reinvent ways of perceiving particular forms of distress. Through the collective composition of dreams, each participant's narrative may awaken resonances in others, while simultaneously opening creative alternatives for confronting shared pain. For this process, the group facilitator must remain attentive to the narratives and to the possible assemblages that may emerge. As Lawrence (1982/2010, p. 104) notes, the group facilitator should focus on the dream narratives, encouraging associations, seeking links between them, and making connections, so that the oneiric work gains movement and becomes both problematizing and inventive.

The dream is a creator of scenes and images, enabling the continuous creation of subjectivation (Santos, 2019, p. 27). From this perspective, the groups aim to map the anxieties and pains that traverse the collective of participants so that, through dream narratives, conversations, interventions involving theatrical enactments, painting, dance, and poetic writing can be developed. These artistic practices simulate experienced suffering in inventive ways, with the intention of forging new subjectivities for each participant.

This process involves both welcoming collective pain through the bonds established among narratives and actively confronting suffering through composition and invention, with the support of art and psychoanalytic listening, in order to create alternative ways of inhabiting and experiencing the world.

To conclude and synthesize how the groups for collective dream composition are expected to function, the following operational sequence is proposed for group practice. First, there is a *Reception Phase*, involving arrival, informal conversation not centered on dreams, and possible relaxation exercises. Second, the *Opening of Dream Narratives*, in which participants are invited to share their dreams. Third, an *Analysis of Relations Between Dreams*, where narratives are woven together and similarities, shared situations, and common forms of suffering are identified. Fourth, a phase of *Aesthetic Composition and Assembly* of related oneiric contents, using theater, painting, writing, dance, music, and, above all, group improvisation to produce new subjectivations from the dream material. Finally, an *Evaluation and Collective Introspection Phase* is proposed, in which participants reflect on the work undertaken and engage with their dreamaries to record lived experiences, later sharing them with the group.

This proposal does not claim to establish a single or definitive formula for constructing groups devoted to the collective composition of dreams. In the realm of the unconscious, invention always remains possible. What has been presented here reflects prior experiences tested within specific groups and organized through this systematization, yet these pathways are never exhausted. On the contrary, with each group and each encounter, the tools for producing collective formations are enriched, perhaps like the Warlpiri Aboriginal peoples, who sustain their nomadism no longer by traversing physical geographies, but by drifting through collective oneiric territories, always bound to infinity.

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