

## THE 'BLUEBEARD' DREAM – THE AFFINITY BETWEEN FEMALE DREAM NARRATIVES AND FAIRY TALES

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**Abstract:** This article presents the affinity existing between the female dream narrative and the fairy tale genre. Although a large body of material has already been written about the connection between fairy tales and dreams, it has never been examined empirically using the tools and methods with which fairy tales have been studied. This article focuses on one dream narrative, documented in the framework of a PhD dissertation, in which seventy-eight dream narratives were recorded, told by fifty-two single women. This article presents typological, formalistic, structural and esthetic approaches. In addition, this work compares how characteristics relating to time and space function within both dream narratives and fairy tales. The dream narrative is compared to tale type AT 311, called *Bluebeard*. From the focal point of this affinity, this work relates to the question of the feminine voice in fairy tales and the gaps between the female dream narrative and the masculine versions of the *Bluebeard* tales.

**Key words:** dreams, fairy tales, female narratives

This article presents the affinity existing between the female dream narratives – that is, the story a woman tells about a dream she had – and the fairy tale genre. In order to present the methods and ideas at the center of this article, I chose to focus on one dream narrative only, which should help to make the affinity between dream narratives and fairy tales clearer in a more general manner. The dream narrative presented in this article was taken from the framework of my doctoral thesis, which deals with the affinity between feminine dream narratives and fairy tales.<sup>1</sup> Even though the article deals with only one narrative, it is important to note that many of the other dream narratives gathered during the research possess characteristics similar to those presented in the chosen dream narrative regarding their affinity with fairy tales. This affinity, as it is discussed regarding the dream narrative, focuses on tale type AT 311, called *Bluebeard*. From the focal point of this affinity, this work relates to the question of the feminine voice in fairy tales and the gaps between the female dream narrative and the masculine versions of the *Bluebeard* fairy tales.

A large body of material has already been written about the connection between fairy tales and dreams, beginning with the psychoanalytic school of thought and up until today.<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud was one of the first to claim that although folklore adopted different analytic methods from psychology, it achieved similar conclusions, and that in order to understand dream symbols, it is possible to use symbolic representations from folklore (Freud & Oppenheim 1958). Like dream language, the language of fairy tales occurs in accordance with 'primary thought processes'. These processes are ruled by the world of fantasy, where the laws of time and space that govern the world of reality do not apply as they do in the realistic world. For many years, other researchers and scholars agreed that an inter-relational affinity existed between dreams and fairy tales (Róheim 1953; Jung 1974). However, despite the agreement that this affinity exists, it has never been examined empirically using the tools and methods with which fairy tales have been studied. Alan Dundes noted the phenomenon whereby psychoanalysts find it difficult to relate to the tale as folklore, while folklore researchers find it difficult to accept the Freudian claim that places fantasy at the center of the tales (Dundes 1975). He tried to encourage researchers from both fields to engage an inter-disciplinary research. In an attempt to create an integrative link between the fields, this article relates to the issue of the affinity between fairy tales and dreams from a new point of view: instead of examining the fairy tale as a 'psychological product', through psychological theories, I attempt to relate to the mental experience of the dream by examining the narrative's qualities and their affinity to the fairy tale genre. Therefore, I will apply the methods and concepts normally applied to folk literature and use them to relate to dream narratives. The article presents typological, formalistic, structural and esthetic approaches. In addition, this work compares how characteristics relating to time and space function within both dream narratives and fairy tales. The dream narrative presented here is told by a 22-year-old Israeli woman, whose mother tongue is Hebrew. The decision to examine female dream narratives stems from the choice to compare them with fairy tales that center on a heroine figure. The decision to discuss the stories of single women of an age when most Israeli women are concerned with finding a mate stems from the fact that many fairy tales describe plots where young women faced with conflict are looking for mates. Many of these stories are resolved and end with the heroine marrying her savior.

Below is the dream narrative:

[--] I dreamt this dream a couple of days ago, and it was really impressive. I'm walking. [--] I am supposed to walk to Anna Frank's house, which has been locked up for many years. There are lots of locks on the door. Entering the building has always been forbidden and for the first time people want to forcibly break into the building and open it up to the general public. Well... it's in the basement, not the attic. You have to go downstairs and walk along a path in order to get there and there are many military forces, police forces and me together with them... They burst in through the first door and then there are many, many hallways and we walk on and look around. I'm always one step ahead. I glance at the door and one policeman tells me "hurry, go back". I try to understand why and ask what has happened, and he tells me that they have figured out that somebody is already in there. I was terribly curious about who is there because it is a totally closed place and I try to glance at the door but I can't see anything. He tells me: "don't look" and I ask: "why not?", so he answers: "because it's someone who kidnaps women, rapes them and cuts them up into small pieces and puts them here". Despite everything, I glance in again. Looking inside, I see a huge man, a colossus, something like four meters tall. I understand that in order to rape the women he must have to stretch their bodies; he is so much bigger than they are and I wonder how it is possible. And then... behind him... he stands in the entrance trying to understand what all the curiosity is all about and behind him I see very long stretched beds, the linen is stretched, and I see body parts and people tell me: "don't look...don't even try". I hide and people try to get inside. All the police and military forces try to get inside and he drives them away because he is much bigger... he is pink, naked, huge, with a very round face, not clear at all, there are no real eyes or nose, and maybe he is not really a human being. In my eyes he is, but he doesn't have any clear features. Something huge, some kind of a baby, a huge baby. He drives them away and... somehow they try again, overcome him and tie him up completely. Somehow he manages to lie down on the floor and I glance in again. He looks at me and at the very moment he looks at me, my teeth start falling out. He shuts his eyes and lies down as if dead – perhaps he is dead or maybe he has just fainted, it's not clear, but that's it. I catch my teeth as they fall, trying to put them back, but they fall out one by one and that's the way I wake up [--].

## FAIRY TALE CHARACTERISTICS AND THE DREAM NARRATIVE

### Supernatural Beings

A salient component that appears in the dream narrative is the supernatural being, which is part animal and part human (F530 in the Thompson Motif-Index; see Thompson 1955–1958). This figure also frequently appears in fairy tales as a ‘beast-groom’. Some fairy tales that focus on this type of character are *Beauty and the Beast* (AT 425) and several versions of the *Bluebeard* tale (AT 311). Although these supernatural beings often appear in fairy tales, they do not belong to this genre only. They also appear in sacred legends, myths and other genres. However, it is only in the fairy tale genre that they act within the same dimension as human characters (Lüthi 1982). For this reason, the hero expresses no surprise or fear when he encounters these beings. This is in contrast to saints’ legends, where supernatural beings are perceived as gods or spirits and where a meeting with one of them is considered to be extraordinary and exceptional (Bar-Yitzhak 1987).

In dream narratives, many times, the teller makes comments such as “it wasn’t logical” or “how can this be?” (as in the example presented here). There is a sense of wonder or amazement, which we do not find in fairy tales. However, it is important to remember that in these cases, the teller is not really the dreamer, but rather the dreamer awakened and marveling at her own story. The dream heroine takes part in the plot as a matter of course, the same way as the hero acts in fairy tales. Although the dream scenes described are horrifying (long beds containing severed body parts), the only reaction we see on the heroine’s part is that of burning curiosity. There is no mention of any feelings of terror or confusion. This fact closely mirrors the formalistic principles described by Max Lüthi as being characteristic of the fairy tale genre: ‘one-dimensionality’, ‘depthlessness’, and ‘sublimation and all-inclusiveness’.<sup>3</sup>

### Time and Space

Except for the figure of the heroine, from whose point of view the story is told (and which significantly differs from the way fairy tales are told), the other dream narrative characters are presented as possessing M. Lüthi’s ‘depthlessness’ principle; or, as Shenhar, calls it ‘a lack of psychological depth’ (Shenhar-Alroy 1986). This sense of lack adds to the unrealistic aspect of the fairy tale. The marionette-like aspect of the characters and their transparent, automatic actions are all part of the way fairy tales are disconnected from reality. More

specifically, Shenhar relates to this lack as it appears within the context of *Beauty and the Beast*. She claims that the character's conventionality is expressed, among other things, by the very brief description of the character that serves to draw only very general lines. This expression appears in many of the rich and varied tale motives connected to the 'beast-groom' figure. The dream narrative described here presents a beast-groom of supernatural proportions who interacts with the realistic human characters.

This fact is also true for another character that is only hinted at in the dream narrative: that of Anna Frank. Although Anna Frank does not actually appear as a real character in the story, her house serves as a spatial context. The story takes place in a realistic space that is unfamiliar to the Israeli teller. Lüthi notes that despite the fact that in fairy tales, the supernatural beings act along parallel lines with the realistic human characters, they actually belong to another, 'other', plane – for example, the forest or subterranean regions, from whence they come and to whence they finally return. This is in contrast to the space inhabited by supernatural beings in the legend genre (Lüthi 1982). As regards this spatial aspect, fairy tales and dream narratives are very similar. In the following dream narrative, the space inhabited by the supernatural figure is unfamiliar to the teller and she tries to enter this space by force. In the end, all of the spaces become one realistic space, centering on the internal-external, entering-exiting duality. The well-known 'breaking into the forbidden chamber' plot becomes apparent. In other words, there is a room to which the heroine is forbidden entrance, but to which the supernatural figure has access. We should also note the importance of 'ownership' issues regarding this space. At the beginning of the story, the space is said to belong to Anna Frank – a historical heroine, with whom the teller, as a Jewish woman, shares an affinity. However, when the heroine finally reaches this space, it 'belongs' to another character entirely, one who is 'other' and which the teller cannot relate to. Therefore, the space appears to symbolize the struggles and conflicts existing between the opposing forces in the narrative. This struggle is also a common component appearing in fairy tales.

Another spatial quality found in fairy tales that also appears in dream narratives is that of the subterranean or underground spaces, where 'meaningful' events occur that have the power to change the existing order of things. An example of these types of events occurring in such a space appears in the fairy tale *The Three Feathers* (Grimm 1992: No. 63). In this fairy tale, the King promises his kingdom to the son who can bring him the most beautiful carpet, ring and maiden. Only the youngest son, who ventures underground, brings back the requested treasures. Supporters of both Jungian and Freudian psychological schools of thought perceive this underground space as representing

the realm of subconscious thought. Therefore, 'going underground' is mandatory in order to develop one's self-awareness. Bruno Bettelheim explains that within the fairy tale context, descent into a subterranean space represents the hero's journey into the recesses of his subconscious mind, the source of all beliefs and insights (Bettelheim 1976).

Marie-Louise von Franz (1978) associates this space as having a feminine quality. She states that the prelude to the story *The Three Feathers*, presents an imbalanced family, comprised only of men. This situation symbolizes a patriarchal society lacking any feminine principles. Only by descending into the subterranean regions can the unconscious feminine principles be regained for the benefit of the individual and society as a whole, without which a healthy, integrated existence can never be attained. In the dream narrative, the heroine clearly points out that the events of the dream are occurring in the cellar, not the attic, as they were said to have occurred in reality in Anna Frank's house. The heroine repeats this fact twice, thereby emphasizing that her dream journey is a journey into the realm of unconscious elements. This fact coincides with the way the dream is perceived – as an unconscious agent. In reality, events take place in one place, but in the dream they occur in another place. In this way, the dream narrative reveals important elements indicating its affinity with other narratives: the hero is not satisfied with the indicated scene of action, repeating the fact that the space in which the action appears is unexpected and differs from the accepted, social and cultural conscious space regarding Anna Frank's house. Seeing as the fairy tale is the folk genre most closely related to the unconscious because of the way its fantastical components function; the spatial issue in the dream narrative, including the descent into an underground space, serves to strengthen its affinity with the fairy tale genre.

The issue of time is more complex. The period of events is seemingly a known entity – sometime between the period following WWII and the time when the narrative is being told. From the teller, we understand that the heroine arrives at the place 'years' after the death of Anna Frank. Even though we can more or less calculate the time when these events occurred, we still experience a sense of 'going back in time', a sense of 'once upon a time' as is the tradition in fairy tales. This is not a direct result of the time of action in the dream narrative, but is merely hinted at in the plot – in other words, WWII. This veiled plot sequence does not actually occur in any concrete manner, but rather serves as a contextual framework. A gap is created between the time the teller begins telling her narrative (she states that she dreamt the dream 'a few days ago') and the beginning of the veiled plot. The contrast between 'a few days ago' and 'many years' reveals how parallel time periods

are at work in the narrative: the time when the dream takes place and the time in which the **events** of the dream take place. This type of parallelism is a clear reflection of the multiple voices and signs that appear within the dream narrative.

The reported dream time, or as Lubomír Doležel (1976) calls it, the 'time of action' – that is, the time period when the plot actions take place – is interesting as regards the affinity between dream narratives and fairy tales. According to William F. H. Nicolaisen (1984), although no specific day or other time period is indicated, the quality of the characters and the space helps define the chosen time of action: the space where the dream events take place is Anna Frank's house. The diary that unveils the historical story, which serves as a contextual framework for the dream narrative, tells a coming-of-age story, a story of childhood, youth, growing up and falling in love. This is also the typical time of action in fairy tales. The heroine examines this period from the perspective of another time period – our own time, the present time. In this way, as was the case with the spatial issue, we see the progression of two parallel timelines. Parallel time periods also stress the multiple voices within the dream narrative and this similarity also serves to enhance the narrative's affinity with fairy tales, while at the same time, examining it from a continuously shifting point of view.

### **Examining the Affinity between Dream Narratives and Fairy Tales through Morphological Characteristics**

Vladimir Propp's (1968) essay *Morphology of the Folktale* is the most complete and systematic essay presented by the formalistic school regarding the researching of folk literature. In this essay, Propp differentiates between two types of components found in fairy tales: *constant components* (which are analytical concepts including narrative-roles and functions) and *variable components* (such as *dramatis personae* and actions). V. Propp identified seven narrative-roles: the hero, the false hero, the dispatcher, the villain, the donor, the helper, the magical agent, and the princess and her father the king. Out of these seven roles, we can identify three in the dream narrative presented here: the teller, who fulfills the role of the heroine sent out on a journey; the man-beast who fulfills the role of the villain, who poses a threat to the heroine's life; and the policeman, who may be considered to fulfill the role of the helper. Although the teller describes a certain amount of struggle in her confrontation with the policeman, who tries to repress her curiosity; on a plot level, the policeman possesses savior qualities. He protects the heroine and

the others who try to fight against the villain. Out of the 31 functions identified by V. Propp, we can clearly identify several in the dream narrative presented here:

The primary situation – a lack (abstinence): This is a typical fairy tale situation, which usually opens with a description of a family scenario, where one of the family members is leaving the home, i.e. the parents travel to a far-off place or die; the children go out into the world alone. Shenhar relates to this aspect in fairy tales that deals with the issue of coming-of-age and growing up. Folk tales most often begin with introductions depicting perfection and harmony, but this type of tranquility is never a fundamental principle in fairy tales. As soon as a peaceful family framework is presented, it is quickly shattered as the opposing forces of the different characters' personalities become apparent (Shenhar-Alroy 1986). Aliza Shenhar-Alroy notes that this struggle is often hidden from the reader's view – we are not witness to the conflicts that exist among the family members, but they are nevertheless expressed: the youngest son leaves home; his complete disconnection from his parents and family members; and his long wandering journey. The youth who leaves his family is no longer able or no longer wants to continue living within the family framework he was born into. He strives for a new and different life. Usually, there is no evidence of the son being rejected by his family or society (for example, by a stylized ceremony or a coming-of-age ritual). Rather, it is the son who chooses to go out into the world on his own initiative because he prefers to disconnect from his parents' authority or from an oppressive familial framework.

Many heroines begin their narrative journeys after losing their mothers and/or being forced to suffer at the hands of an evil stepmother. They are often sent away from home or forced to suffer from hunger, poverty or all of the above. In the case presented here, the heroine goes to Anna Frank's house. That is, she goes to the house of a girl who was taken by force from her home and brutally killed together with her family. Anna Frank is a symbol of the victimization of an entire people. From this aspect, even before the real plot begins, we are indirectly introduced to the embodiment of human evil, with the heroine in the role of the victim, as she is part of the people who were destroyed. This plot detail is similar to those of fairy tale princes who lose their kingdoms and must set out on long journeys. Even more, it is reminiscent of those good mothers who die, leaving behind valuable objects for the heroine to take away with her on her journey. The mere mention of the words: 'Anna Frank', bring to mind the other missing words: 'her diary'. It is impossible to talk about Anna Frank without talking about her diary. Anna Frank's diary is a valuable object, which resides in the collective memory of the Jewish



people, and is ultimately connected to the development of the dream heroine. The dream teaches the heroine about her past: it reveals the secrets, anxieties and desires of a young girl on the verge of becoming a woman, a girl who was on an emotional journey with a young man. At the height of this emotional journey of young love and passion, her very existence was threatened. This danger finally brings about her complete destruction. The heroine of the dream narrative, who is also on a journey fraught with hidden dangers and possibilities, knows that within the pages of this diary are important truths about life and love. From the perspective of the Anna Frank story as a contextual framework of the dream narrative, we can assign each dream character with an historical, archetypal parallel, which lends additional meaning to both the characters and the plot: In the dream, the kidnapped, raped women are found in the place where years before atrocities took place, atrocities which raised serious questions and doubts about human nature. For the Jewish people, the Nazi enemy was akin to a monstrous beast, whose humanistic qualities were extremely doubtful, similar to the man-beast in the narrative. Therefore, the much-emphasized lack attributed to fairy tales receives a great deal of expression in this dream narrative. Like fairy tales, it expresses a plot-based power, a driving force, which compels the heroine to investigate her past. Through this journey, the heroine discovers her own determination, curiosity and courage.

Functions 2–3 are the existence and breaking of forbidden taboos, which always appear together. In the dream narrative presented here, the heroine is denied entrance to a forbidden room, but she refuses to be denied. Functions 4–9 are only hinted at in the narrative. These functions describe the way in which the villain hurts the hero or his family. In the dream narrative, the sorrow and sufferings of the heroine's family members as victims of atrocities are only hinted at. One function, which is clearly represented here; however, is Function 10, which reflects the hero setting out upon a journey. In the narrative, this role is fulfilled by the heroine, who goes to Anna Frank's house. Although the dream narrative does not provide us with a specific reason for this action or explain how the heroine arrives at this space, since the space has become a tourist site, we can assume the heroine goes there as a tourist. Like many others before her, she goes to Anna Frank's house to learn something about her past. The curiosity and passion for discovery that characterizes her strengthens the assumption that she sets out to discover something, which supports the claim that Function 10 is operating here. An additional function appearing in the dream narrative is Function 16: when the hero and villain meet face-to-face in battle. In the dream narrative, the heroine comes face-to-face with the 'giant', who fulfills the role of the villain as a result of certain

atrocities he committed upon the women he kidnapped. Differently from fairy tales, this lack fails to be fulfilled and is never put to rights. The heroine fails to save the other women, as happens in some of the *Bluebeard* versions. We also have no information regarding whether or not the heroine saves herself. Quite the opposite seems true, in fact, as the heroine loses her teeth at the end of the dream narrative. This is very different from the way fairy tales end and has great significance, which will be discussed further on in this work.

### **The Heroine Who Poses Questions**

The dream narrative rarely describes speech. Instead, things are described through the subjective world of the teller. In this way, the dream narrative differs from the fairy tale where speech is common and where the plot advances through action (Lüthi 1982). However, when speech does appear in the dream narrative, it appears as it does in fairy tales: in the form of dialog. In the dream narrative there is one dialog which takes place between the heroine and the policeman. Dialog is in keeping with the auditory criteria that tend to appear in fairy tales. According to Axel Olrik (1965), other auditory criteria are the use of the number ‘three’, rhetorical questions and repetition. The dialog between the heroine and the policeman includes three taboos and three questions, thereby fulfilling the aspects of the use of the number ‘three’ and repetition. The policeman tells the heroine to stand back and warns her not to look. He then goes on to tell her about the threat that exists within the house. First, the heroine asks: ‘why?’ Next, she asks: ‘what happened?’ Finally, she asks: ‘why shouldn’t I look?’ Although the policeman’s answers do nothing to dissuade the heroine (they actually increase her curiosity), she stops asking questions. From this, we conclude that her repetitive tri-fold asking is not only plot-related, nor does she really need a reply; her questions rather serve to fulfill formalistic-auditory characteristics of the narrative, similar to the way these things appear in fairy tales.

The dialog between the heroine and the policeman drives the plot forward as the meeting produces tensions that emphasize the polarity between the characters – in this specific case, a polarity based on a sexual- and status-related background. The characters have opposing motivations apparent in the replies elicited by the heroine’s questions. This is reminiscent of the fairy tale heroine who poses riddles (AT 621, AT 851A). These stories depict a young maiden who poses riddles to potential suitors who wish to wed her. If they fail to answer the riddle correctly, they are put to death. Therefore, the struggle is not only to win the maiden’s hand in marriage, but a struggle between life and

death. In structural terms, we may relate to the dual man-woman opposition as a mediating concept for the dual life-death opposition. From this point of view, we can say that the man-woman polarity is a more refined form of the life-death opposition (Lévy-Strauss 1963). Therefore, asking questions relates to survival functions, for both women and men, in opposing directions. The strength of this viewpoint serves to explain the way in which the dream narrative ends – it is unclear whether the ending is good or bad. Most important to the present discussion is not our understanding of the relationships between the characters, but the way in which the narrative reveals the story's hidden, underlying meaning. The conflict between the heroine and the policeman takes place through dialog and, more specifically, by the heroine asking questions. The affinity between the dream narrative and the fairy tale genre is made apparent by these formalistic-auditory elements. The heroine who asks questions – a construct commonly seen in fairy tales – was 'chosen' in the dream narrative as the preferred means of expression for presenting the struggle between the central opposing forces.

### **The Affinity between the Dream Narrative and Tale Type AT 311**

Tale type AT 311, called *Bluebeard* or *Three Sisters Rescued from the Power of an Ogre*, includes six plot stages: 1) the forbidden chamber – the ogre takes the sisters away against their will, housing them in his castle and forbidding them entrance to one room, which they enter despite his decree; 2) the ogre kills the sisters for their act of disobedience; 3) their youngest sister rescues them; 4) the sister deceives the ogre by carrying a bag 5) the sister disguises herself as a bird; 6) the sister punishes the murderer.

An edited version of the Bluebeard tale written by Charles Perrault and published in 1697 (see Perrault 1697), tells the story of a rich man who is so hideously ugly that no woman will wed him. He meets three maidens and the youngest is kind enough to marry him. One month after their marriage, he goes away on a trip, leaving his young bride at home. He leaves her with a ring of keys, warning her not to enter the small chamber in the cellar. She breaks her promise, enters the forbidden chamber and discovers all the bodies of Bluebeard's former wives, with their throats cut. Despite all her efforts to clean the key, she cannot get the blood off. When her husband returns, he discovers what she has done and threatens to kill her, giving her fifteen minutes in which to pray. She and her sisters call their brothers to their aid; they come and kill Bluebeard. The youngest sister shares her wealth with her brothers and marries a kind man who helps her to overcome her hardships. The Grimm

Brothers' version is very similar. According to this version, there is a king with a blue beard; the maiden, despite her fears, agrees to wed the king in accordance with her father's wishes. At the end of the story, the girl's brothers bring her home together with all of Bluebeard's treasures. Perrault derived two morals from this story: the first teaches girls not to be overly curious; while the second, in contrast, states that women have something to say against men's authority. Both relate back to a time when men enjoyed absolute power and women were blamed for bringing about unwanted change. This story has many versions, especially in the 19th century, when the main issue was that of women's curiosity and the object of the key is the central motif. This story was, of course, intended mainly for a female audience.

Post-modernist scholars claim that the Paradise of an absolutely patriarchal society was lost when women's curiosity opened the door to a room full of blood (Zipes 1979; Bacchilega 1997). The knowledge gleaned by breaking into the forbidden room is the key to the heroine's salvation. For the heroine, the test is whether or not she can achieve this knowledge and use it to help her overcome her own death. The story presents the survival instinct in the face of the death instinct, represented by the Bluebeard figure. It is interesting to see how the dream narrative can be understood in light of these interpretations and what relationships exist between Perrault and Grimms' masculine versions and the feminine narrative raised in the dream story.

This dream narrative is rich and complex and cannot be discussed fully within the framework of this work. Regarding the present discussion, there are two aspects which may serve to shed light on the relationships between the dream narrative and fairy tales: the first aspect relates to the parallelism between the closed room as a common motif and the dream, as a 'closed room' in itself, which is 'opened' once the story is told. By relating her dream narrative, the heroine reveals details even she was not aware of, products of her unconscious thought processes. While telling the story to a psychological researcher (myself), the teller is apt to be distracted by issues such as how to interpret her dream. These types of questions lead to the act of censoring or editing, which, in turn, may complicate things, but the dream, in its own way, bypasses the censoring. That is to say, the dream action, like the intertextual content, deals with the issues of discovery and concealment. The dream story is the heroine/teller's way of saying things without taking responsibility for them. On one level, she tells the story of one woman to another; and on another level, she sends out conscious and unconscious messages to a wider audience. What is achieved in the end is an interweaving of multilayered speech, a tapestry-like text of voices comprised of the heroine's voice and the teller's voice.

It is important to note the expression of these characteristics, and the experience of the danger of losing control, as they appear in the dream narrative itself: the dream narrative deals with a closed room, which for very many years, was 'really locked'. Whom this room belongs to is a riddle that must be solved, similar to the enigmatic character of the dream itself. The question that arises is 'how can we open the locked room?' The dream story suggests 'breaking into the building and opening it up to the general public'. From the heroine's point of view, she prefers to set out on a private journey of self-discovery, even though it entails danger. If we imagine that the locked room is the woman's hidden world, we see that this is a struggle against society's penetrating into this world. The only option, from the point of view of society, is to enter by force. Society relates to the situation as a military action, which calls for the use of military and police forces. The dream heroine fights against these forces, so the dream narrative presents two ways to approach and solve the mystery: society's way and the personal approach. We can view the heroine's story in a similar manner: on one level, the heroine's story is revealed to the general audience and on another, it remains extremely personal. The masculine narratives present the locked room as belonging to the man. The woman, in her dream narrative, on the other hand, also presents these things on a conscious level. At the same time, on an unconscious contextual level, the locked room – that is to say, the dream – belongs to the heroine and she guards it as her own.

The second aspect is connected to the different ways the dream narrative and the fairy tales end. The *Bluebeard* tales have a good ending, in the tradition of fairy tales. The dream narrative, on the other hand, like many other dreams, ends up having a nightmarish quality. One way to understand this difference is to view the good ending of fairy tales as a compensation for the bitter ending of the dream narrative. The fairy tale is a conscious mental expression, more organized and designed than the dream story. By means of various additions, the fairy tale can control the threatening and chaotic world order expressed in dreams, thereby enabling an illusion of control and order, so necessary to human functioning. In addition, this difference may also express the gaps of interests between the male and female voices: Perrault's male version (as well as the versions written by women under the same influences from within a patriarchal society) and the Grimm version, provide the narrative with a good solution, at the cost of silencing feminine hardships and the feminine questions, which do not get answered in the dream narrative.

Alternatively, the different endings may also be understood as a struggle not only between the male and female voices, but as a fragmentation of the female voice itself. This voice is at work both in the fairy tales and the dream

narrative and can be identified by the way the characters in the dream story are set up: there are two female and two male characters: *Anna Frank* – the historical figure of a dead girl, *the heroine* – a character driven by curiosity who loses her teeth at the end of the story, *the policeman* – whose character is based on a collective hero type (the police and military forces) and *the man-beast* character. Both male figures are living characters possessing physical or social power. In contrast, the female figures represent death. This situation is in direct opposition to what the fairy tale suggests about Bluebeard. A possible explanation for this significant difference is the fact that both genres express different aspect of women's life. The fairy tale expresses life, while the dream narrative expresses death. This may be explained by the fact that the fairy tale is a social story, which occurs during waking hours and actively functions in shaping society and its messages. On the other hand, the dream narrative occurs during sleep and expresses the feminine experience on a personal level. The woman, as a story-telling entity, close in nature to the life cycle, expresses this in her story by the cyclical nature of day and night, life and death. This is also true for the relationship between the feminine characters: in many fairy tales, the birth of one heroine causes the death of another heroine. After Snow White awakens from the magical kiss, her (step)mother dies; after Snow White is born, her real mother dies (in the later Grimm versions). This fact does not necessarily indicate an expression of competition between the women, but rather serves to express the cyclical ways of nature, growth and renewal, together with the horrors that accompany them. In the example of the dream story, without the death of Anna Frank, the heroine would not have arrived to that specific place. From this point of view, the different endings in the dream narrative and the fairy tales do not express a compensatory element, but rather suggest that we should not relate to the genres as being two separate genres, but rather as one complete entity. Through the narrative communicated to a wide audience and told during waking hours, the heroine tells a story about life, where she struggles against the powers of death and destruction represented by *Bluebeard*. Female curiosity is a dangerous power, but it is also a life-enhancing one. This is also a story about breaking into a locked room or, in other words, women's levels of openness towards society. Alternatively, through the more personal narrative that is the heroine's alone, created during sleeping hours, which does not serve a societal function, the heroine relates a story of isolation and loss. The integration of both of these narratives creates one complete story, which relates a tale of life and death, day and night; the story of a heroine who breaks through into the locked room, but who is also locked within it.

To conclude, this article highlights the affinity between dream narratives and fairy tales and shows how we can approach the dream narrative using tools and methods taken from folklore research. Identifying this affinity and recognizing the similarities between the dream narrative and the *Bluebeard* fairy tales help us to learn about the feminine voice in fairy tales. This action is necessary in light of the masculine versions this fairy tale has undergone over generations. The gaps between the two types of stories, especially the difference in the endings, help us to understand the place of women in relation to subjects like breaking taboos, breaking into closed chambers and encountering male counterparts. The feminine dream narrative, in contrast to fairy tales, does not try to silence female hardships that arise when encountering a threatening male presence. This story reveals the complex possibilities of entering closed rooms.

## COMMENTS

<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on my PhD dissertation, which deals with the affinity between female dream narratives and fairy tales. Within the framework of the study, seventy-eight dream narratives were recorded, told by fifty-two single women at ages 18–30. The research population was chosen on the assumption that these women are occupied with finding a mate, similarly to many heroines in fairy tales.

<sup>2</sup> The second chapter in the PhD dissertation examines various psychological approaches to dreams, including those presenting the similarity between dreams and folk literature (see Raufman 2004).

<sup>3</sup> In the book *The European Folktale*, M. Lüthi mentions five formal principles, characterizing the folktale genre. The 'one-dimensionality' principle refers to a situation in which both worlds – natural and supernatural, exist in the same dimension. This is quite different from the legend, in which apart from the world of daily reality, a totally different reality – that of the supernatural world – exists. The 'depthlessness' principle relates to the fact that characters in the fairy tale genre have no inner life. They are linear, stiff and unchangeable. In the event that they do go through some kind of transformation, it is always mechanical and lacking in any gradual development like the way in which objects change in the legend (for further reading, see Lüthi 1982).

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