

A self-based phenomenological approach to Gilgamesh's dreams

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Summary. The epic of Gilgamesh is one of the world's oldest known epics. The aim of this study is to interpret Gilgamesh's dreams using the phenomenological method and, through this, reveal Gilgamesh's experiences and the intentionality of his self. The theoretical resources and stages of the Phenomenological Dream Self Model (PDSM) as well as imaginative variation, which is a phenomenological technique, were used for the interpretation of the dreams in the epic of Gilgamesh. While we examined Gilgamesh's dream self and wakeful self experiences in the first two stages of our PDSM interpretation, we compared the experiences of both selves in the third stage. In the fourth stage, we revealed the existence and the process of change and development of the feeling of omnipotence at the core of our two chosen dreams of Gilgamesh with using the narrations in the epic. As a result, we contend that both the phenomenological method and PDSM can be utilized in addition to real persons' dreams with respect to understanding the dreams of the characters in the literary text.

Keywords: Epic of Gilgamesh, dream, phenomenological dream-self model (pds), phenomenology, literary criticism

1. Introduction

The epic of Gilgamesh is one of the world's oldest known epics and is recognized as the roots of the cultural history of the Ancient Near East. The epic is generally built around the meeting and friendship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu (Tigay, 2002). We can clearly see in the epic that dreams and the act of dream interpretation has significant influence on Gilgamesh's subjectivity, as well as the entire flow of events in general. We believe that the most important factor that makes the analysis of the dreams in the epic of Gilgamesh significant and easier is that Gilgamesh's dreams are impressive in terms of content concerning the life of himself, unlike that of many Near East epic kings (Bulkeley, 2008), and he conveys these dreams with his emotions.

As of the early 1950s, Gilgamesh's dreams were started to be interpreted by the researchers of various disciplines. A review of these researchers' attempts to interpret Gilgamesh's dreams showed that three different methods were used: psychoanalytical, cultural, and integrative.

Psychoanalytical method. Though the psychoanalytical dream method might have differed later with the views and interventions of following researchers, it is fundamentally based on studies by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Before leading in how the psychoanalytical method interprets Gilgamesh's dreams, it would be appropriate to remember the principle assumptions of Freud's (2010) dream study: 1) Dreams are the result of an out-of-reach, foreign spiritual

topography, i.e. the unconscious; 2) Objects in the dreams are considered as symbols, yet the symbols do not represent themselves; 3) Dreams have latent content underlying manifest content.; 4) A dream work is conducted to reach the latent content, i.e. the latent content is revealed with the analyst's free association in the context of the mechanisms forming the dream, and with the analyst's interpretation.

After close examination of the forms of interpretation used by Ninsun and Enkidu in the epic of Gilgamesh, we see that 1) Dreams come from the Gods, outside the personal conscious, 2) The facts and objects in dreams do not represent themselves, 3) Dreams contain covert, secret information, 4) In order to reach the secret information, the symbols need to be interpreted. While the causalities relied on by the psychoanalytical dream interpretation method and the method used by Ninsun and Enkidu to interpret Gilgamesh's dreams – which we call as “traditional dream approach” – are different, we see that they bear certain formal similarities. Basically, manifest dream images do not represent themselves for either method. Dream images have hidden meanings behind them, and interpretation is required for this hidden meaning to be revealed.

Though Freud did not take dreams as basis directly, he made a symbolic interpretation for the relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, in a letter he wrote to Jung in 1911, as the first indirect reference to the topic. (McGuire, 1979).¹ (see “Deepnotes” at the end). The first example of a detailed psychoanalytical study on Gilgamesh's dreams was found in Pruyser and Luke's (1982) article. Pruyser and Luke studied the contents of every dream seen by Gilgamesh with using a Freudian method and the dream series with using Erikson's development theory. They interpreted the meteor which Gilgamesh had difficulty lifting in one dream as the feeling of guilt for taking over the position of the father that was killed. In another dream, the axe he saw in the marketplace was interpreted as oedipal phallic object and castration anxiety.

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In their analysis of Gilgamesh's dreams as a series, Pruyser and Luke conveyed that Gilgamesh was initially unable to control his impulses like a "child king", he was in puberty while going to battle with Humbaba, and in the following period, his personality matured and integration took place, as can be understood from his dreams and life.

Attempts to study Gilgamesh's dreams with the psychoanalytical method continued with Liu (1998). Liu tried to interpret the dreams together with references of various texts by Freud and certain theoretical inferences. For example, according to Liu, in the meteor dream which was mentioned earlier, the interpretation by Gilgamesh's mother Ninsun as, "the arrival of a brother", indicated to a different meaning when evaluated with a Freudian view. According to him, the meteor in the dream was the reflection of Gilgamesh's deep down fear of Enkidu which was a being as strong as himself, rather than a beloved brother.

Another more recent psychoanalytical interpretation was made by psychoanalyst Nayla de Coster (2012). We can suffice to say that Coster's interpretation of the meteor and axe as symbols possessing the same castrative function perfectly corresponds to Pruyser and Luke's views. Badalementi (2017), another psychoanalyst interpreter, interpreted three dreams Gilgamesh saw when going to kill Humbaba. Badalementi stated that despite Gilgamesh's concern being approved through dreams in the unconscious, Enkidu was oblivious to Gilgamesh's increasing concern and his efforts to relieve him supported his grandiose aspect, hence, as is clear from these attitudes, Enkidu was in conscious denial.

Cultural method. The first and important interpretation attempt based on the cultural aspects of Gilgamesh's dreams belongs to Oppenheim (1956). Oppenheim emphasized that in the general sense, the dreams in myths had literary functions alone and as most of them were not seen by a real person, their interpretation was unnecessary. Oppenheim based on the cultural patterns in Gilgamesh's dreams rather than their content. According to Oppenheim, dream-telling in epics from the Near East culture was typically based on four schemas: 1) A king that sees dreams; 2) Holy venue where the dream is seen; 3) The dream itself; 4) The interpretation of the dream. Hughes (2000), another cultural interpreter, stated that the symbolic dreams seen in epics required a master interpreter and the best example in this case was the epic of Gilgamesh. Ninsun interpreted Gilgamesh's dreams with wisdom. Also, according to Hughes (2000), looking at Near East epics such as Gilgamesh, we can see that the people in that period developed the belief that dreams could foresee future events.

Noegel (2007) claimed that dream interpretation had no universal value, yet it might have some significance when examined culturally with a certain frame. For example, according to him, the axe in Gilgamesh's second dream was associated with Sumerians' birth customs. Sumerians gave a hairclip to newborn girls as a symbol of womanhood and a weapon to boys as a symbol of manhood. According to Noegel, the axe in the dream could be interpreted as the sign of the birth of a child (Böck, 2014). On the other hand, Assyrian historian Kilmer (1982) believed that the axe (*haššinnu*) in Gilgamesh's dream represented Enkidu, the word *haššinnu* was also similar to the word *assinnu* which means a person of the third gender that is a member of Goddess Ishtar's cult, and although not certain, the axe implied a sexual relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu.

According to Lambert (1992), even though Gilgamesh described the axe as, "I loved it as if it were a woman", this statement indicated the power of the love between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, rather than a sexual relationship between them. Lambert said Babylonian texts did not avoid open language, thus, until new evidence would emerge, any speculative connections which would be made would have no significance. Hence, North and Worthington (2012) did not find the connection which Kilmer made through the play on words, meaningful due to the fact that there was no clear evidence for it and claimed that the transformation of the meteor in the first dream into an axe in the second dream should be interpreted as Enkidu's civilization process.

Integrative method. Bulkeley (1993), a psychologist who conducted research on dreams, wrote an interdisciplinary article on Gilgamesh's dreams and made both a cultural and psychological interpretation in this article. According to Bulkeley, solely cultural or psychological interpretations were incomplete. In this respect, after evaluating Oppenheim's views in a critical tone and analyzing Gilgamesh's dreams in the cultural context, he focused on the dreams in the epic as being in the nightmare category with references to Hartmann, Jung, Freud and Erikson, and the functions which the nightmares expressed on behalf of Gilgamesh's psychology. Bulkeley found Ninsun's interpretations successful, while he found those of Enkidu's incorrect. Because the validity of Enkidu's interpretations of Gilgamesh's mountain dream was destroyed with a more severe third dream seen by Gilgamesh. According to Bulkeley, seeing a third dream was extremely rare in dream records of Near East. In this respect, seeing a third dream is an indication that the message in the first two were not understood. In the final analysis, it could be said that as Bulkeley used the cultural and psychological dimensions together, his interpretation is integrative.

We believe that the approaches we classify as psychoanalytical, cultural and integrative contained certain limitations with respect to interpreting Gilgamesh's dreams. As the psychoanalytical method is based on the unconscious, sexual drives and symbols, it gives rise to certain speculative interpretations, causing us to move away from the dream text. The cultural method focuses on cultural codes rather than Gilgamesh's subjectivity. Due to the fact that the integrative method attempts to combine various types of interpretation and to synthesize them, hence have to take into consideration many different views, this method makes it difficult to understand Gilgamesh's self. In this study, we are attempting to interpret Gilgamesh's dreams through the phenomenological approach, a first in literature, by utilizing the theoretical and practical basis of the Phenomenological Dream Self Model (PDSM), which a dream model developed within the psychotherapy practice. Our aim is not to cast any doubt over the value and success of other dream interpretation models or to trivialize them, but rather to show that it is indeed possible to reveal the psychological essence of Gilgamesh's dreams with phenomenological method.

2. Methodology

In this study, Gilgamesh's dreams are interpreted with the phenomenological approach. With this purpose, Phenomenological Dream Self Model (PDSM) was used. PDSM is a model developed in psychotherapy with a phenomenological orientation for dream studies. The primary assumptions of PDSM largely correspond with the primary principles and

assumptions of the phenomenology that is a philosophy tradition founded by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938).

Contrary to research types that go beyond our experiences, phenomenology is a type of conscious-focused philosophical research aimed at directly describing our experiences (Husserl, 1982). Phenomenology aims to allow the individual to turn towards his/her self directly and to expose his/her self in the purest form by excluding presuppositions, approaches based on assumption, all sorts of obscuring or manipulative forms of interpretation that would allow speculation (Langridge, 2007; Spinelli, 2005).

In the history of dream studies, Otto Binswanger (1852-1929) and Medard Boss (1903-1990) are the first practitioners to approach dreams in an existentialist-phenomenological manner by weakening the importance attached to the unconscious, with inspiration from Heidegger's existentialist-phenomenological philosophy. We can define this detachment as, "going back from the interpretation in the analyst's mind to the dream itself and the one who saw it". Boss (1958, 1977), criticized Freud, saying that the psychoanalytical dream perspective tried to adapt the dream images to the foreseen theory without any observable data and transformed Freud and Jung's intra-psychic perspective into a conscious- and self-focused interactional style. The theoretical and practical opportunities provided by the phenomenological dream method continue to be researched in the following years (Craig and Walsh, 1993; Zippel, 2016). Additionally, psychoanalytical and cognitive dream theories are seen to have reduced their theoretical burden throughout time and approached a phenomenological line (Fosshage, 2007; Hartmann, 2011; Hill, 2004).

PDSM is a phenomenological and self-based dream model. PDSM does not approach dreams through the unconscious; on the contrary, dreams are an experience like the state of wakefulness and a phenomenal self is at the center of this experience similar to the state of wakefulness. The dream self resembles the wakeful self in terms of its irreducible phenomenological characteristics (Kara and Selvi, 2017).² Hence, a dream as an experience should try to be understood, not through the speculative interpretations of the wakeful self, but through the experiences of the dream self. It is necessary to make the experiences of the dream self as clear as possible and describe it. PDSM's basic working method is similar to the method Husserl calls "epoché".

Epoché, or bracketing, has multi-layered meanings in philosophical literature. In terms of its use in Husserl's philosophy, epoché is the suspension of natural behavior, our premises regarding reality (Zahavi, 2019). In this study, we prefer the operational definition of epoché, which is "the suspension of assumptions". Accordingly, both the psychotherapist and the client, whose dream is being studied, bracket their daily beliefs, and assumptions about dreams during this process, and focus solely on the dream experience itself. No emotion, thought and image that has not been experientially revealed in the dream self can be added to the dream work through interpretation (Kara and Özcan, 2019). PDSM approaches the events and objects in dreams not as what replaces other things, but as themselves. For example, the bull Gilgamesh saw in his dream was not the god Shamash or a castrating father – it was only a bull. Gilgamesh's dream self perceived it in his dream experience as a bull and produces emotions and thoughts about this bull perception.

PDSM is a four-stage model. In accordance with this model, in the *first stage* of the dream work, the experience of the dream self, as stated above, is described in terms of their emotions, intentionality and behaviors only, without allowing any interpretation. The fundamental principle of this effort to describe is to not add anything that does not exist in the dream experience to the dream, and additionally, to make everything that exists in the dream experientially as clear as possible. In the *second stage*, the kind of intentionality in which the wakeful self will be – or is likely to be in – in situations similar to the dream experience is examined. In the *third stage*, the dream and wakefulness selves are compared through the descriptive information/data derived from the first two stages. In the *fourth stage*, the description in the first stage and the past wakeful experience of the person who saw the dream are taken as basis to examine the likelihoods of new and different meaning layers of the dream experience. The model requires that the person interpreting the dream remained loyal to the phenomenological descriptive approach in the first three stages. Yet, the fourth stage allows an interpretive approach. In addition to this, this interpretation is not a theory-based speculative interpretation; there must be a phenomenological interpretation in the correlativity with the description in the first stage (Kara and Özcan, 2019). When approached in four stages, it could be said that the PDSM is not only a dream model, but also an integrative self model.

We know that dreams are generally told through events and objects. While in dream-telling, the general approach is to emphasize strange, interesting, extraordinary events and objects, many experiential elements and emotions are usually skipped as they are considered unimportant compared to the events and objects. One other aim of the phenomenological dream work is to reveal these skipped elements, which are – or can be – extremely important in terms of the individual's psychology. Such phenomenological work is possible only by discussing the dream face-to-face with the one who saw the dream. In terms of PDSM, the dreams in the epic are the experiences of Gilgamesh's dream self. Conducting a phenomenological work on these dreams requires us to ask questions regarding the details of his emotions and thoughts during the dream experience to Gilgamesh and to get his answers. As there is no Gilgamesh currently alive to answer these questions, what sort of method might be followed in order to get Gilgamesh's answers? The best thing to do in the face of this procedural dilemma is to take the primary self-intentionality told in the epic of Gilgamesh as a corner stone and foresee his likely answers in an imaginative dialogue. Thus, we can hope to reveal the elements that were skipped in the dream experience by remaining as close as possible to Gilgamesh's dream experience. In a sense, this kind of a work is similar to the imaginative variation³ technique in phenomenology. If we are able to conduct such a study, we are confident that it can expand the phenomenological field of the dreams in the epic, and thus provide a better understanding of both Gilgamesh and the epic.

This study is not directly based on PDSM. PDSM is a model that crystallizes the phenomenological method. We chose PDSM as it facilitates the study of Gilgamesh's dreams. The phenomenological method is used by literary critics as an orientation of literary criticism, and numerous texts are analyzed using this method (See: Eagleton, 1983; Natanson, 1998). As an orientation of literary criticism, the

phenomenological method is the effort to understand the subjectivity of entirely fictional literary characters through their conscious. Though Gilgamesh is a collective cultural personality, as far as we can understand from his experiences in the epic, we think that the collective culture personifies him in a way. When interpreting the lives and dreams of literary characters, we are aware that psychoanalytical literary analyses discuss and analyze them as a person, even though they are fictional (Freud, 2003). Considering Gilgamesh's dreams as the depiction of the subjectivity of a personified character, using PDSM, we were able to imagine him as a person, and establish a dialogue with him within the limits provided and allowed by the phenomenological method by applying the imaginative variation technique. While the imaginative variation technique does not present the same clarity of a dream study conducted through a face-to-face meeting with Gilgamesh, we are confident that the simple and deep approach of the phenomenological method will help us understand his subjectivity.

The epic contains six Gilgamesh's dreams. In this article, we are going to make a phenomenological work on two of these dreams. The first dream we discuss is the dream Gilgamesh saw at the beginning of the epic, before Gilgamesh met Enkidu and set out on the journey. The second dream is the one Gilgamesh saw while on the journey with his friend Enkidu to kill Humbaba. We chose these two dreams for the work as they contain evident psychological essence and belong to different thematic stages of Gilgamesh's life.

3. Application

Dream One. Gilgamesh saw this dream at a time he persecuted the people of Uruk with his selfish and reckless behavior, and as a result the people complained about Gilgamesh to the Gods. At the time Gilgamesh saw this dream, Enkidu was not yet created by the God Aruru. According to the epic, upon the people's complaint, the God Aruru created Enkidu out of the sky God Anu's essence to balance the destructiveness in Gilgamesh's character. The epic tells us that Gilgamesh was aware of Enkidu's existence through the first dream. There are different versions of the narrations of the dream. In the version translated by George (2000) Gilgamesh told this dream to his mother as follows:

"The stars of the heavens appeared above me, like a rock from the sky one fell down before me. I lifted it up, but it weighed too much for me, I tried to roll it, but I could not dislodge it. The land of Uruk was standing around it, [the land was gathered] about it. A crowd [was milling about] before it, [the menfolk were] thronging around it. "[Like a babe-in]-arms they were kissing its feet, like a wife [I loved it,] caressed and embraced it. [I lifted it up,] set it down at your feet, [and you, O mother, you] made it my equal." (p. 10)

If we wanted to work on the first stage of PDSM, our imaginative dialogue with Gilgamesh would have been as follows (in this dialogue, we foresee Gilgamesh's likely answers based on the information given in the epic with respect to Gilgamesh's subjectivity/personality and the structure of the dream):

Interviewer: Gilgamesh! Was there any reason to the joy you felt at the start of the dream, and was there any change in your initial feelings towards the depths of the night?

Gilgamesh: I was overfilled with the power of my kingdom. I was the sole ruler of Uruk and there was nothing that could stop me. These thoughts created intense joy and happiness in me. Towards the depths of the night, I was walking fearless like a victorious king.

I: You said that you knew the meteor that fell in the dream was made of Anu's stuff, what did this information make you think or feel at that moment? Also, how did you understand that meteor was made of Anu's stuff?

G: Anu is the God of the sky and stars. The meteor being made of Anu's stuff made me feel that it was not ordinary and it contained a special power. Great curiosity arose in me towards it. I did not understand that the meteor was made of Anu's stuff based on any reason, I just knew it.⁴

I: What did you feel when you could not lift the meteor?

G: At first I thought I could lift it even if it was difficult, because I had confidence in my strength. When I could not move it out of its place, also because the people of Uruk were watching me, I felt bad. The joy and happiness I felt at the start of the dream decreased. A thought that my strength had a limit formed at that moment, and this idea disturbed me.

I: You said that you were drawn to the meteor like the love of a woman. What kind of a feeling was this? For example, was it like a sexual attraction?

G: No, it was not a sexual attraction, I said this to express that it was a very strong attraction. Because the most powerful attraction I know in life is the attraction of a woman.

I: Why did you take the meteor to your mother?

G: Because my mother is wise and I knew in my dream that my mother is wise. She was the only one that could possibly tell me exactly what this strange meteor which is made of Anu's stuff is.

I: Well, what did you think or feel when your mother said this meteor is your brother?

G: I felt confused. I was the sole ruler of my kingdom; I did not want to share my power with anybody, even if with a brother. Meanwhile, with the joy of that attraction, I could feel how happy a brother, a friend would make me feel, and I felt a longing towards him.

The second stage of PDSM asks us to determine what one would feel, think, and how to behave in the case that an experience similar to the dream experience took place in the state of wakefulness. Then, our imaginative dialogue with Gilgamesh would be close to the following:

I: Gilgamesh! What you have told is your dream experience. Had all these events taken place in a state of wakefulness, had a meteor made of Anu's stuff fallen, had you tried to lift it and failed, and then lifted it with the help of the people and taken it to your mother, and she told you that this meteor is the sign that you will be getting a brother, what would you have felt and how would you have behaved throughout this entire process?

G: The meteor would made me feel surprise and curiosity. Had I known it was made of Anu's stuff, it would have both pleased me and increased my curiosity. Had I felt

drawn to it, this emotion would have appeared strange and incomprehensible to me. Had I not been able to move it out of place and lift it with the aid of the people, like in my dream, I would have felt bad. I would have taken it to my mother again like in my dream. Because only my mother can understand and figure out such mystical matters. Had my mother told me this meteor is sign that I would have a brother, I would not have liked it very much. Because I like being one and I would have thought I did not need a brother.

The third stage of PDSM asks us to compare the experiences of these two selves lives. The similarities indicate more settled intentionalities in one's self. Differences indicate self-intentionalities that are more conflictive and open to change. For example, in this study, Gilgamesh's perception and feelings towards his mother are very similar. Despite this, his feelings regarding a brother are different.

In the fourth stage, PDSM allows interpretation as long as it is associated with the descriptions in the first two stages. Therefore, we can expand the meaning of the dream as: Gilgamesh's self is closed off to sharing and relationality in the feeling of omnipotence. Omnipotence is an illusion that does not allow personal development. The scene in which Gilgamesh was unable to move the meteor in his dream experience weakens the illusion of omnipotence in a degree. Thus, the interpretation of his mother, the idea of a brother would be more acceptable for him. This positive sensitivity that was formed in his dream experience continues in Gilgamesh's wakeful self as well, and when he met with his brother (Enkidu), it allowed him to become friend with him despite all his conflictive emotions and getting into a big fight with him at the start. In this sense, it becomes meaningful that Gilgamesh first found out that he would have a brother in his dream – as stated in the epic.

A careful phenomenological observation shows a core experience in most dream experiences. The other factors in the dream exist as a preparation for this core experience or to complement it. The core which other elements turn around, gives us the essential feeling (Hartmann, 2011). The core experience in this dream is the information that Gilgamesh would have a brother.

As mentioned earlier, PDSM considers the objects in dreams not as the representation of something else, but as themselves. For example, the meteor in this dream was what Gilgamesh's dream self perceives, in other words was a meteor. In addition to this, there is an interesting aspect in this dream narration. In his dream, Gilgamesh took the meteor to his mother and his mother told him that this meteor was his brother. Therefore, in terms of PDSM, this meteor is both a meteor and an object that Gilgamesh believed to refer to his brother because Gilgamesh's dream self perceived it as a meteor in the dream experience and his mother's interpretation also made him consider it as his brother. Of course, we are saying this with the assumption that Gilgamesh's dream self relied on his mother's interpretation and believed her. At this point, in terms of PDSM, the important thing is what Gilgamesh's dream self felt and thought when his mother told him the meteor is his brother. Taking into consideration the general phenomenological structure of dreams, we can propose that in that moment of the dream experience, certain emotions and thoughts most likely showed up in Gilgamesh's dream self, but these were not transferred during the dream telling.

Dream Two. Gilgamesh saw this dream on the journey he set out with his friend Enkidu in order to kill the ferocious monster Humbaba, the guard of cedar forests. In the epic, it is told that Gilgamesh was possessed by fear and lost all his confidence from time to time during this journey. This dream is phenomenologically different from the first dream and is a typical anxiety dream. We understand from the epic that this dream awoke Gilgamesh with the fear in the first stage of his sleep. This is one of the typical characteristics of anxiety dreams.

"My friend, I had a dream: how ominous it was, how desolate, how unclear! I had taken me hold of a bull from the wild: as it clove the ground with its bellows, the clouds of dust it raised thrust deep in the sky, and I, in front of it, leaned myself forward. Taking hold of enclosed my arms . . . he extricated [me] ... by force . . . My cheek ... , my ... , [he gave] me water [to drink] from his waterskin." (p. 37)

If we wanted to study this dream based on the first stage of PDSM, our imaginative dialogue would have been as follows:

I: Gilgamesh! What did you feel or think when you saw the bull that beat up the dust in your dream?

G: It was such a wild and strong bull that I was terrified. I felt weak, powerless and desperate against the bull.

I: Well, did Humbaba come to your mind during the dream?

G: No, I was so affected at that moment that I could not think about anything other than the bull.

I: If you thought over the last part of the dream and shared everything you felt and thought at that moment?

G: For a moment, I felt my strength was drained, the bull had defeated me and my end had come. Whatever happened, someone came at that moment. I cannot remember who it was. But his arrival gave me confidence. He gave me water and I felt I came alive. However, I continued to be afraid and woke up with fear.

We can continue to apply the second stage of the PDSM as follows:

I: You experienced all this in a dream. What do you think you might feel and act if you had come across such a wild and strong bull in the wakeful state?

G: Had I come across such a strong bull, I would still be terrified. I knew no fear in the past, now I am not sure how much I could fight in such a situation. Perhaps I would have wanted somebody to come and help me so much. I feel as though my dream is going to come true when I meet with Humbaba.

Now, in the context of Gilgamesh's this dream, we can compare the dream self and wakeful self in the third stage. In relation to a challenging monster, Gilgamesh's dream and wakeful self possess similar emotions and behavioral patterns. This parallelism allows us to understand to what degree the emotion of fear is embedded in Gilgamesh's subjectivity and to what degree he desires help.

We can expand the meaning of this dream in the context of the fourth stage of PDSM in light of the information provided in the epic without moving away from the phenom-

enological structure of the dream. Gilgamesh, who set out on a journey to kill Humbaba, is no longer the old reckless Gilgamesh that felt omnipotent within the borders of Uruk. For example, now there is a Gilgamesh in fear whose feet almost backtrack, rather than the Gilgamesh that walked fearlessly in the first dream towards the darkness of the night. It is not surprising at all that Gilgamesh saw himself fighting with a wild bull that terrified him in such a horrific journey. The dream nicely describes Gilgamesh's psychological state at that moment. Considering that the bull represents something other than a bull would twist this clear description and obscure it. On the other hand, phenomenological description shows us that Gilgamesh's dream self had faith that he would receive help despite all the challenges. Phenomenologically, dreams are more like conversations one has with themselves in a visual language (Kara, 2014). In this sense, it is possible to say that Gilgamesh's dream self balanced his wakeful self and instilled in him the belief that he would receive help despite all the challenges.

As could be seen, both dreams were considered as Gilgamesh's self experiences and were not placed in any category other than his wakeful life. Also, the events and objects in Gilgamesh's dream experiences were regarded as it is. For example, the bull in this dream was not something that replaced something else, but simply a bull because Gilgamesh's dream self perceived it as a bull in his dream experience and produced emotions and behaviors about this perception. Saying that the bull symbolizes a castrating father – as in certain psychoanalytical interpretations (Coster, 2012) – has no basis. This can only be said speculatively with a theoretical belief, which will move us completely away from the phenomenal reality of the dream.

4. Conclusion

We revealed two of Gilgamesh's dreams using the means provided by PDSM, without making any theoretical effort, based simply on the dream and wakeful self's experiences, and with phenomenological approach that is a method which can be considered as a new dimension in this field. Regarding the experiences of Gilgamesh's dream and wakeful selves through his dreams, we claimed that these two selves had similar experiences. After studying Gilgamesh's dream self and wakeful self-experiences separately in the first two stages, we compared the experiences of both selves in the third stage and then, in the fourth stage, considering the narrations in the epic, we determined that the core state of both these dreams of Gilgamesh contained feelings of omnipotence.

We believe that we have touched significant points with respect to the interpretation of Gilgamesh's dreams with this new method we are suggesting. As is seen, PDSM can be applied not only on the dreams of clients in the psychotherapy process, but also on the dreams seen by Gilgamesh, whom we consider as a subject in the epic. In conclusion, we contend that in addition to real persons' dreams, the phenomenological method and PDSM can be used with respect to understanding the dreams of characters in literary texts as well. In future studies, we hope to see discussions of different fictional characters' dreams using the phenomenological method and PDSM, and thus the limitations and effectiveness of the method we used in different contexts.

Deepnotes

¹In this letter, Freud stated that Gilgamesh and Enkidu's being a couple was a typical motif in the history of the epic. Other examples he gave for this typical motif were Romulus and Romulus, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. According to Freud, Enkidu was a placenta that undertook the functions of Gilgamesh's being protected and fed. In epics and mythology, the weaker brother dies and the other continues to live as a pattern. In the epic of Gilgamesh, Enkidu who was the weaker brother died first. In our opinion, Freud's contemplation of Enkidu as a placenta does not perfectly reflect the Enkidu's value for Gilgamesh. From our point of view, Enkidu is not Gilgamesh's placenta, but is very dear companion – in Kohutian words, Enkidu is Gilgamesh's self-object.

²What remains if we bracket every quality that we assume to belong to the self when we look deep down into ourselves and that could be bracketed? Our answer to this question is: When we look deep down into ourselves with a descriptive phenomenological method, we find our self through some irreducible basic qualities. These qualities are, "being in a moment", "being somewhere", "to feel", "to perceive", and "to be within an intentionality". We necessarily find ourselves / our self in a place, in a moment, feeling in this or that way, perceiving in this or that way, intending in this or that way within a natural, ordinary consciousness.

³Imaginative variation is a reduction technique in Husserl's phenomenology. Phenomenologists can take a phenomenon out of a natural attitude by creatively varying this phenomenon and describe the conscious experience. The imaginative variation technique, which is used in current qualitative studies differently from its classical definition and in its current form makes it possible to see a phenomenon from different perspectives. In this article, the imaginative variation technique was used to reveal the phenomena in Gilgamesh's dream from different perspectives through imaginative dialogues with Gilgamesh. Please see, Langridge, D. (2007). *Phenomenological psychology: Theory, research and method* (pp. 19-20). Essex: Pearson Education ve Turley, E. L., Monro, S., & King, N. (2016). Doing it differently: Engaging interview participants with imaginative variation. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 16 (1-2), 1-10.

⁴In dreams, many situations generally could not be known within causal associations; at that moment, the individual realized that he/she knows that information. Please see, Kilroe, P. (2013). Inner speech in dreaming: A dialogic perspective. *Dreaming*, 23(4), 233-244.

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