

Perestroika of the Self: Dreaming in the U.S.S.R.

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Dreams both reflect and transcend culture. A culture's approach to dreams reflects its understanding of personhood, which is constructed in a socio-cultural, political and historical context. A comparison of Soviet and American treatment of dreams illumines how totalitarian collectivism and secular individualism can affect a culture's understandings of dreams and imaginal experience. Certain qualities of dreams can be used to help the practice of a more interdependent construction of the self: dreams' opening of reality to a multiplicity of characters' perspectives, their free and autonomous arising outside of the heroic ego's conscious, rational control, their spontaneous moments of sympathetic identification with others which release one from local identities and social roles, their openness to the world and nature.

After the crowded flight from Boston to Frankfurt, the plane from Frankfurt to Moscow felt oddly empty. Fleetingly I thought that the difficulties now of being in the Soviet Union must account for the empty seats. Before my departure I had been cautioned to bring extra food, antibiotics, aspirin, a pot for boiling water, toilet paper, even paper and pens because of the scarcity of everyday things.

As I rode on the bus from the Moscow airport to Golitsyno, a village on the outskirts of Moscow, I was surprised to see so many army vehicles and even tanks on the highway. Many had broken down and were on the edge of the road. Other disabled tanks were being drawn by a simple rope tow attached to a fellow tank. I saw their mirror images in the American army's frequently disabled helicopters, as well as the high percentage of army machinery in need of repair at any point during our war with Iraq.

These bedraggled dusty, tanks-in-tow also resonated with the bleak apartment houses we were passing, the potholed highways without dividing lines, the cottages on the edge of the road further out whose paint seemed to be older than the Russian Revolution, the boarded up petrol stations and the long lines at the open ones,

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the number of cars pulled over at each truck that was selling simple melons. Even the neighborhood gardens seemed overgrown, as though seeds had been unattainable this year.

As this was my first visit to the Soviet Union I supposed the integration of military and civilian traffic was the everyday norm, one more sign of the presence of the power of the state—albeit decaying—at every level of human life. Only on arrival at the conference site where I was to teach did I realize that I had happened to enter the Soviet Union on the first morning of the coup, August 19, 1991.

I had been invited by Robert Bosnak, a Jungian analyst, to teach depth psychology and how to work with dreams at a conference called “Dreaming in Russia,” co-sponsored by the Association for the Study of Dreams and The Center for Non-Traditional Medicine in Moscow. I had been excited to make the trip as I was convinced that our psychologies—Soviet and American—needed each other. A culture’s psychology and modes of psychological healing reflect, and usually support, the culture’s dominant idea of selfhood. American psychology has largely been created by the forces of radical individualism, often minimizing the impact of the socio-cultural context on the formation of mind and theory. Soviet psychology has reflected its culture’s emphasis on the collective, paying scant attention to the individual. Writers such as Lev Vygotsky (1962, 1978) and Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) have focused on how the socio-historical context shapes human thought and experience (Wertsch, 1985; Clark & Holquist, 1984).

For a more complete understanding of our humanity we need to find a way of weaving together the insights which each side of this polarity gifts us with. American psychology, despite notable critics such as Horney, Sullivan, Fromm, Sampson, Lasch and others, has clung to the implicit conviction—the illusion really—that the individual virtually surpasses culture, is more capable of creating culture than being created by culture. Our American dedication to thinking of ourselves as free and autonomous, obscures our ability to see how our culture shapes us, even in the most intimate areas of our thought and everyday life. Likewise a culture—such as the Russian—where individuals have been forced to think of themselves primarily in relation to the larger group, needs the theory and methods through which one becomes grounded in the experience and authority of one’s own being.

Before my departure I knew from Russian therapists who had visited America that many Soviet psychotherapists have an interest in learning about how to work with individuals and their imaginal life. During the communist period therapy was often used as a tool of the state to help individuals adjust to the group and their work role within it. The intense hunger for learning about working therapeutically with “inner life” only became clear to me as I watched the political events of this historic week unfold with my new Russian, Armenian, Estonian, and Lithuanian colleagues.

History speaks loudly here. There was an interest in psychoanalysis in Russia in the early 1920’s, with several of Freud’s works translated into Russian. In 1926 Lenin pronounced that the class consciousness so necessary to the progress of communism was absent in the writings of Freud—as, indeed, it was (Rahmani, 1973). The first and only psychoanalytic institute was closed and psychoanalysis was banned. After this, psychoanalysis was increasingly seen as subversive and mislead-

ing, unscientific. However, there were some psychoanalytic books available until the early 1930's. Then, however, according to Sergey Cherkasov, a historian of psychoanalysis, all books dealing with psychoanalysis were removed from the shelves of libraries and bookstores, because they were seen as unscientific. Only with special permission, gained by the rare privileges of academic hierarchy, could one gain legal access to these books, including Freud's classic, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Through various underground and illegal means one could gain access to banned books, but open discussion of them was not possible, allowing the party-line opinions to go publically unchallenged.

But then one was not led by the dominant culture to particularly desire access to these books. In elementary school one was taught the school-child's version of Pavlov, the famous Soviet psychologist, with entertaining stories of his behavioral experiments with monkeys and dogs. This Soviet psychology was lauded as scientific, and with this elevation of Pavlov the image of man in psychology was often reduced and narrowed to a biological man, the man of stimulus and response.

The writings of Vygotsky and Bakhtin yield richer, more complex pictures of human functioning, with important implications for the treatment of the imaginal. Vygotsky argued that in the two-year-old child the development of thought and language intersect, with the dialogues of speech gradually moving from their function of communication with an actual other to silent communication with one-self—speech becomes thought. Speech begins to serve intellect, and thought begins to be spoken. The imaginal dialogues of play—where the child speaks for dolls, stuffed animals, trucks—Vygotsky (1962) said, could be seen as “speech on its way inward.” As speech moves inward, he says, it becomes increasingly elliptical, as though the dialogue were between lovers, who know so much about each other that full sentences are superfluous. I would argue that as different voices of the self speak, it is their intimacy with each other that makes dialogue sound more monological. Within speech and thought we find many shifts in voice and perspective. If these are highlighted they break open into the multiple voices of the imaginal, akin to the multiple figures in dreams (Watkins, 1986).

Mikhail Bakhtin, a Soviet interdisciplinary scholar of literary theory, psychology and social theory, emphasized that the essence of thought and inner speech—talking with oneself—is the dialogical relationship. In his book, *The Dialogic Imagination*, he says that “the voices that come into contact in dialogue are not those of isolated, ahistorical individuals; they are ideological perspectives or axiological belief systems.” These ideological perspectives can only be understood in terms of a specific socio-historical setting. The voices of inner figures are always, according to Bakhtin and Vygotsky, socio-historically situated. American depth psychologies do not fully grasp the profundity of these insights. Often imaginal figures are looked up to, as though they can yield some timeless wisdom, when in truth, they often parrot and reflect the dominant ideologies of our culture, and need to be looked at critically in order to be properly understood.

When psyche is seen as being composed of speech with others, grounded in a socio-historical context, the imaginal cannot be seen as capable of surpassing culture. Because of its derivative nature, the imaginal is then granted a secondary status to social reality; imaginal work is seen as inferior to direct action in society,

for society. From this perspective, the importance of the imaginal lies in its instrumental use, in helping us plan and execute actions in the 'real, external' world. Importantly, however, Vygotsky (1978), in his discussion of children's play, transcended these limitations in his own theory. Vygotsky maintained that the ability to play is the power which the child has to make another reality. This power is made possible by the ability of the child to subordinate action to meaning. Play releases the child from the dictatorship of the visual realm and the "incentive supplied by external things" and allows the child, freed from these situational constraints, to act with meanings, to rely on internal tendencies and motives. In these ideas Vygotsky opens the door for the imaginal to create and liberate culture, not just to reflect it.

In their rare treatment of the development of imagination, Soviet psychologists gave clear and consistent priority to external, social, and material reality. Novel images were seen as merely the restructuring of previous experience in the external world. In 1971, Repina, a Soviet psychologist, stated that the observed richness of images which departed from a focus on realism was a sign of weakly developed critical thinking, of "an inability to differentiate the possible from the impossible," and of a lack of knowledge about "what and how things exist in reality." The child was seen as innately concerned with realism, rejecting elements in fantasy that did not correspond to material and social reality.

These ideas were not simply left as theory, but were used to create pedagogical practice. The young child became trained in this way of exercising the realistic imagination, and discouraged from images which contradicted it. Repina stressed, "The realism of a child's imagination requires an active upbringing. It is imperative that the child's imagination be developed in connection with enriching his experience by knowledge of reality, and that it not turn into an unfruitful fantasy that serves as an escape from reality." Imagination was to remain linked to action in the material world. At the end of the preschool period, the child can imagine without acting, but this imagining is to function as a plan for action, i.e., to guide or regulate future actions in the material world. Children who sought out the company of an imaginary friend when actual children were available were often interrupted in their fantasy play and directed toward interaction with an actual child.

Surprisingly, despite Soviet psychologists' harsh critiques of psychoanalysis this dominant view of the imaginal turns out to be not unlike Freud's view (Watkins, 1986). For Freud also had painstakingly plotted out ways in which the imaginal was derived from the real; tracing dreams back to day residue, representations to perceptions, and fantasized scenes to actual events. Side by side with psychoanalytic concern about the imaginal as a flight from reality, there was ample acknowledgment of the ways in which the image prepares one for action in reality (Hartmann, 1939). Some psychoanalysts also encouraged parents of children with imaginary playmates to shift these children's attention to actual peer interaction, valuing the 'real' relationship over the imaginal one (Harriman, 1937).

In contrast to Freud, however, Soviet psychology condemned the notion of the unconscious as unscientific and irrational, undermining of class struggle and consciousness. Mainstream psychology and popular culture saw the dream according to Pavlov as reflecting a state of impure rest of the mind, as a biological substrate

of physical man with no meaning or function, no purpose symbolically. In a totalitarian society where the state desires control over a man's existence, the notion that there is that in a person which is free, autonomous, outside of rational control is a threat. The Bolsheviks could not control an unconscious, therefore there was none in academic study. At the conference, Alexander Asmolov, the Vice-President of the U.S.S.R. Psychological Association, argued that in a totalitarian society there is no use for depth psychology, since such a psychology is interested in making individuals.

The similarities between Soviet and American psychological views of the imaginal point to beliefs held in common in our mainstream psychologies about the priority of objective, external, material reality, and the derivative nature of images. The underlying commitments of mainstream psychology in both countries have been to a scientific, physicalistic, materialistic and secular definition of reality and to scientific, logical, abstract thought. With these commitments the nightly dream and its poetic, dramatic representatives in daily thought become seen primarily as inferior modes of thought. In America, however, there are many kinds of psychology alive outside of the mainstream, borrowing from traditions around the world, celebrating the dream and imagination. This has not been so in the Soviet Union. Only in the last few years with psychological "missionaries" appearing on their doorstep, did they begin to taste some of the banquet of approaches we have enjoyed: Lacanian, psychoanalytic, psychosynthesis, gestalt, Jungian.

In the Soviet Union something even further was implied by the worship of rational man: a man you could know, predict, control. It was this man who would subordinate his personal life to the collective good, sacrificing daily ease for the abstract goals of communism. From this point of view psychologies which indulged in a view of man as divided, as partially hidden, as unpredictable even to himself were seen not only as bourgeois and idealistic—but further still, subversive.

In 1956 when Krushchev risked speaking of the truths about Stalinism that had been suppressed in the culture and repressed by many individuals, he revealed some of the hiddenness of the culture that had been strongly defended against. In these revelations there was an enactment of the psychoanalytic view of reality: that is, that truth is not lost in psyche, but often falls out of consciousness, being replaced by a form of consciousness that is distorted by its dissociation from the fuller psychic reality. This crack in the hardline Soviet view of man and reality, allowed a brief period where psychoanalysis could be more studied and where exchange of ideas between Russian and other psychologists could transpire. These five years came to an abrupt halt with the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, which further sealed both of our countries into the Cold War from which we have only now begun to escape. For students of psychoanalysis and the dream the door was again shut tight.

Could it be that the members of a culture which produced a writer such as Dostoyevsky, whose work included more than fifty dreams (many more in his drafts), lost a sense of the dream and the imaginal in their literature and in daily life? Apparently the answer is "yes." The official (non-underground) literature of the Communist period was starkly realistic. Dostoyevsky's work was not even taught; some was banned. When friends mentioned dreams, they did so with a smile or a smirk, as it was commonly agreed that dreams were nonsense. Even in intimate

relationships dreams were spoken of as though they were a "joke." Perhaps, they reflected, one had overeaten, drank too much, was too hot or cold—nothing more profound.

In 1979, in Georgia, away from the center of Soviet power, there was the first conference in the Soviet Union on the unconscious, an opening which has now birthed four volumes on the unconscious. This effort contributed greatly to the nourishment of depth psychology, which under perestroika is now able to begin to catch up with the West. Many people deeply interested in depth psychology have not been able to get books after Horney and Fromm, and are unaware of such influential writers as Winnicott and Kohut.

On the night of August 19th, my first night in Russia, we gathered around the television set for the news. We discovered that there was only one channel—the "official" channel of the coup. The others had been seized. Here in a parody of censorship we were told that the Union was on the brink of famine and demise, and that to restore order and stability martial law would be in effect for six months. With a straight face the newswoman stated that Gorbachev had worked so hard during the past six years that he was now exhausted and ill and residing in the Crimea. The Soviets and Americans laughed briefly, erupting from the gravity of the moment. This was to be but the first of several coup illnesses to be described to us. The laugh was important as it signalled our common sense of being lied to and manipulated by those in power and the media they control.

In his lecture Adolf Harash, a Russian psychologist dedicated to the survivors of Chernobyl, was to describe this broadcast as "an appeal to that which is dead within us." For seventy years, he said, one has needed to accept things without knowing their truth from the inside. This dead one the coup appealed to chooses external authority, continuity and rigidity over freedom and possibility. The dead one conforms in order to sustain an illusion of a collective. Otherwise life is experienced as too frightening. Others described the coup as a political Chernobyl; one more apocalyptic moment for Soviets to endure.

The next morning Americans unfamiliar with Russia set about to make phone calls to the American Embassy in Moscow and to home. First we discovered that the phones in the lobby were as ineffective in calling Moscow (35 minutes away), as they were in reaching America. Some travelled into Moscow to use the Intourist phones, buying forty dollars of coupons and reaching nobody. Faxes were not going out, or being received. We had been asked to surrender our passports upon arrival at the conference site, a usual practice in the Soviet Union. By midday, we Americans realized we had no access to news unengineered by the coup, no way to call or communicate with our families, no way to call the embassy, no way of leaving even if we wanted to because we had no passports. There was talk of a general strike and of civil war, both with uncertain effects on the airport and where we were staying.

The principal virtues to the American character—autonomy, control, freedom—were not possible in our circumstance. Anxiety and distress increased. Lithuanians arriving that day were our only link to the way the outside world viewed the events we were caught in. But even here indirection ruled: "My father heard

from a neighbor who had a radio that got Radio Free Europe that Americans are advised to return home; that fighting has broken out in Moscow with eight casualties"—neither 'fact' correct.

I had thought the sixty Soviets scheduled to arrive would not appear and that our function would be over before it had begun. Some thought plans to return home might be prudent. But then, with some difficulty, they all arrived. When they realized some Americans were thinking about going home and that this might threaten the conference, the Soviets were irritated and some were angry. One Russian dreamt he had to take care of a group of children, who were attempting to do something new for the first time! Indeed, since our usual way of interacting with the world had been usurped, each person resorted to a makeshift mode that had little or no experience behind it. The Soviets, on the other hand, denied being frightened. They were resigned to the difficulties ahead, tutored by those of the past. In coming to the conference at such a chaotic time they were wanting to live a perestroika that might be being stolen from them. Beyond international fellowship, they desired a relation to their own dreams, their friends' and patients' dreams—a relation that had been denied them by the propagandistic uses of psychology. Once I saw this desire, beneath their irritation, I wanted to teach everything I had ever learned about dreams and images.

The daily dream groups of ten people worked on dreams that had occurred during the crisis. Here the experience of "local people"—a term they preferred to being called "Soviets"—spoke loudly. There were dreams of being threatened by a dark force, and attempts to deal with it in a new way. In Russian one does not say "I dreamt," but rather, "To me it was dreamed" (Visson, 1991). A recurring dream with a new conclusion was dreamed to a thirty year old Russian woman:

It is as if I wake up and see something black in the corner of the room. I feel anxiety for all the people around me. In the dream I decide to invoke an image of a clear blue sky. And in the end the black receded, and that corner of the room cleared.

Similarly, to a Lithuanian man was dreamt a recurring dream of a huge, black spider attacking him as he lay in bed. For the first time he was able to get his hands around the neck of the monstrous bug, and began to throw it off himself as he awoke.

In the daily large group meeting it was striking to hear the Russians speak of communism as though they had been ruled by an imperialistic foreign regime. The Russians' sense of being aggressed upon by an internal force sounded much like the non-Russian Soviets' experience of oppression. There was no mention nor claiming of how totalitarian communism had emerged from the Russian experience. The darkness of the party/state was felt as utterly "other." Some spoke of having breathed fresh air for the first time in their lives with the onset of perestroika, despite the lack of sufficient changes in their daily lives. Several nightly dreams spoke of people's awakened love and desire for the freedoms they were freshly tasting. One 25 year old Russian woman, a translator, dreamt that all the small newspapers which had burgeoned under perestroika were now outlawed. In desperation she went to her kitchen crying, and began printing her own small newspaper.

Each of our cultures is undergoing a perestroika—a reorganization, a crisis—of the self. Such a reorganization occurs as a culture reaches a dead-end with respect to how the self has been constructed. In America, many feel that the pursuit of radical individualism has left us without a sense of community or common purpose. It has splintered our families, as partners each seek their own self-fulfillment. It has placed our children under great stress as they begin to compete against each other at an early age, filling their psyches with invidious comparisons between themselves and others. Since one's well-being and fate are seen as one's *own* responsibility, one is driven to distinguish oneself from others, in order to gain security. Failure is seen as personal inadequacy. One's worth is too frequently measured by what one has amassed—material possessions, achievements, accomplishments. Beneath the facade of mastery and control, one secretly fears not being good enough. Dependency is both longed for and defended against, as one struggles to be intimate with others one must also outshine. We are expected—have the obligation and the right—to become independent, self-sufficient, self-fulfilled. Living within the heroic ego necessary to such a definition is often felt as imprisoning, isolating, defensive, false. Many are so excluded from adequate education and opportunity because of race and poverty that failure is almost inevitable.

For us, the individual—not the family or the wider community—has been the central unit of society. We have taken this for granted, as though it were obvious fact, instead of conceptual construction. Human development, in this individualistic way of conceiving things, entails the gradual differentiation and separation of the person from those around her, and encouragement to feel independent, autonomous, and separate from one's environment.

Psychotherapeutically, the imaginal was incorporated into psychologies comfortable with the status-quo ideas about selfhood. Images were used for personal betterment, for the establishment of firm ego boundaries, for controlling one's symptoms through behavioral techniques. Controlling dreams and "using" dreams have been very popular, reflecting our attention toward mastery, control, utilitarianism.

In America we have tended to grant to the imaginal an independent status that reflects our own view of ourselves as independent of culture. There has been a sense of the imaginal as a preserve from reality, that can surpass it. Turning to the imaginal has most often been seen as turning inward, away from the world, in order to work on oneself. The leisure it requires, does indeed, often associate it with a bourgeois, affluent lifestyle—a frequent Soviet critique of western psychodynamic approaches. Until recently, when images from the world clearly suffused a dream, our modes of interpretation attempted to return the dream to the realm of the personal—by interpreting a nuclear explosion as one's rage, dreams of pollution as reflecting concerns with sulliedness. In interpreting images the world was taken as symbolic of the personal, the private, the individual.

In the Soviet Union one has been encouraged not to see oneself as outside the society, but as formed by it and responsible to it, as parts of a community held together by commonly held purpose. Standing out, being different, have been felt not to enhance one's chances of well-being (as in America) but to jeopardize them. Material success has been held suspect, rather than the object of admiration (Smith,

1990). According to Peeter Tulviste (1991), an Estonian psychologist, and James Wertsch, the principal American psychologist responsible for bringing the work of Vygotsky to America, in Russia life meaning has not been sought through a turning inward—as in studying dreams—but in aligning one's life with external causes that supercede the individual, causes that require sacrifice by and subordination of the individual—be it for communism, saving the Motherland in World War II, or “preserving a set of spiritual values uncorrupted by the banality and emptiness of Western capitalism.”

The level of daily sacrifice was apparent all around me. In Golitsyno there was very little food to buy: some carrots, potatoes, turnips, rice, bread, and flowers. The shelves were 70% empty in the stores, the other 30% filled with a random variety of items, collected together without apparent rationale—simply what was available and left over. My new women friends had no sanitary napkins, no reliable means of birth control. They complained of living in tiny apartments with extended family and no privacy. They could not easily travel outside of the country, because of restrictions and lack of money. Things from electric sockets to plumbing to roads were in need of repair. Adolf Harash (1991) said that even though Russians think of themselves as dependent on the collective, since the collective has not been trustworthy in meeting people's needs each person has had to act extremely self-sufficiently. If you want a car you must know how to repair it; if you want an apartment you must learn the skills of the electrician, the plumber, the wallpaperer, and so forth. The depressive soberness one observes in Moscow is partly because that which has been sacrificed for—the vision of communism and a just society—has been proven corrupt and inept. Yet one is still congratidenned to sacrifice daily.

Perhaps the structure of the dream can shed light on a way of understanding the self that combines some of the insights from both Russian and American culture and psychology. The dream teaches us that each of us is hardly singular. Psyche is composed of a multiplicity of figures and earthly landscapes. While we may cling to a heroic sense of ourselves as authoring our own existence, the dream reveals the autonomy of the psyche, that of us which arises independently of our conscious intention.

Further, while the ego may have turned to the dream as an escape from reality, or as place of wish-fulfillment, the concerns of the world have found their way into our dreams. Just as Adolf Harash in his work at Chernobyl found that the shadow of our common search for boundless energy was reflected in Chernobyl workers' premonitory dreams of their plant malfunctioning, in America we have awakened from dreams of being sickened by radiation illness, of being locked in a synagogue where there will be an explosion, of walking in woods that show us the face of the death of nature, of being an Iraqi mother clinging to her children as she hears bombers overhead.

The experience of the dream asks us to redefine our sense of self. For Americans it asks that we see ourselves as suffused with the cultural and the earthly, that we acknowledge that the reality of ourselves surpasses what we control or know. If we can experience directly that we are made up to the stuff of the world, then our well-being becomes absolutely dependent on the well-being of the world—po-

litically, ecologically, economically. Individualistic pursuits become seen as often defensive, misleading, isolating. Jung said that one function of dreams is that they compensate for our conscious point of view. Indeed, the very structure of the dream in its multiplicity, as well as often in its subject matter, dissolves our identification with individualism. The dream experience contradicts our American sense of being bounded, and contributes to our experience of ourselves as interdependent.

Before my trip I had suspected that for the Soviets the way in which the dream transcends a reflection of the cultural might be the most valuable lesson to take from Western interpretation. Bachelard (1971), the French philosopher of poetic imagination, stressed that it is the imagination's "irreality" function which is so crucial—its departure from representing reality—such that it can bring into being that which has not yet existed.

In presenting my view of the dream and the imaginal as both conserving and surpassing culture I had feared I would be criticized for the latter—that dreams do not merely reflect the real but actively create it through their capacity for new vision. To my surprise, my new Soviet colleagues stressed even more passionately than I the freedom of the imaginal from culture, local time and space, and ego consciousness. Their idealization of the dream as a truth-sayer, as incapable of self-deception, as an indispensable means of self-knowledge, as intrinsically utopic leapt over their own sociocultural psychology, and harkened back to a romantic vision of the imagination. Yurii Karyakin (1991), a distinguished Dostoyevsky scholar and a member of the Supreme Soviet, said that in dreams there is an awakening of conscience that in real life may be asleep. "The laws of nature that oppose murder scream in us at night . . . The resurrected cry of conscience is a piece of heaven, an apocalypse. An apocalypse is frightening, but it is a new heaven . . ."

Opening the door to the dream entails a redefining of man for the Soviets, away from the purely rational and behavioral images promulgated during the communist period; away from a dependence on the external authority of the state and the party. The dream arises autonomously from rational controls, often releasing us from our social roles and local identities. It reveals passions and motivations outside the ones we experience consciously. While the dream reflects culture it also offers a critique of culture, and a realm of relative freedom and possibility; a realm the Soviets at the conference thirsted for.

Paradoxically, I, an American, stressed the cultural nature of the imaginal, while the Russian presenters stressed a more Western romantic vision of the imaginal. Will there be a bridge created between our psychologies which includes both these aspects? Or will we simply exchange positions, each still enacting a partial view of psyche? Can we use an interdependent conception of the self as a meeting place that blends our sensibilities about how a culture permeates a self and the self creates culture? Can such a conception reflect both the individualist and collectivistic poles of our existence, granting the power of the socio-historical context, while leaving room for the creativity of the individual?

Or will Soviets rush toward individualistic conceptions of the self, just as Americans enter more deeply into critiques of them? My new Russian friends were extremely idealistic about life in America. Throwing off totalitarianism seemed twinned with a rush toward capitalism. I heard no talk of desire to salvage aspects

of socialism that might mitigate against some of the egregious social problems we face in America with respect to the inequities of health, education, and welfare. Throwing off the old seemed to require so much energy that not enough thought is being given to what shall replace it. In our group, the only people visibly mourning the loss of the Communist dream were Americans, particularly those who had been raised by parents who had fervently hoped that communism might yield a more just world.

On the second day of the coup we went to Moscow. There—just as in dreams—citizens had abandoned their given roles and found themselves improvising new ones, created spontaneously to support the people's will. Barge operators strapped their boats together to form barricades on the Moscow River. Bus drivers overturned their buses to add to the mounds of impassable debris protecting the parliament building. Thousands of people arranged themselves around this building, relieving their neighbors in a planned fashion, to insure a constant nonviolent vigil and human barricade.

As we walked the side streets, we found that many were lined by tanks on both sides, forcing one to pass by a narrow pathway. The tank drivers were jovial, extremely young. Shivers ran through me, seeing this coexistence of youthful life with the steely armamentarium of power and death. We saw many people—particularly middle aged and older women—approaching the young men in the tanks. Later we found out that the army had been sent in without adequate food. The women would strike up conversations with the young soldiers, offering them smoked fish and other delicacies, and asking them—with the intimacy of a one to one conversation—to use their tanks to protect their people, rather than to destroy their people's dreams. Gradually more and more tanks displayed the Russian flag, instead of the Soviet, signifying their alliance with the commonly held dream of freedom.

When my lecture was interrupted for "urgent news," sixty hours into the coup, the Americans present feared disaster. Instead, we were greeted with the fact that democracy had triumphed over martial law, nonviolent protest over civil war. Muscovites had acted in accordance with their commonly shared dream of democracy and freedom, things they had only recently tasted in their lifetimes, but had none the less established through their longing. My local friends contrasted the American delegations' fearfulness and expectation of the worst over a protracted time period with their own certitude that the crisis would be resolved in a short period. Such an early resolution of the conflict had not even momentarily occurred to me as a possibility. How often we are disempowered by our skepticism, our fear of the repetition of the past, our lack of appreciation for the power of acting on behalf of our most deeply held understandings of what is wrong, as well as our dreams and visions for our societies!

In pursuing our psychologies with different, at times opposing, emphases—to see the self as apart from the society or to see it as the product of society—we have arrived at a point where these understandings must flow together for a fuller understanding of our humanity. In the dream, the public crosses over into the private, just as the private finds expression in images of the world.

The notion of the interdependent self acknowledges the Soviet sensibility that the structure of thought reflects social existence, that the dialogical psyche is the

distillation of culture. However, in a more Buddhist understanding of interdependence, the self is interpenetrated not just by social forms, but by earthly and spiritual ones, as well. Further, it is not only that we reflect the cultural, earthly and spiritual, but they reflect us. There is a mutual interpenetration, that requires us to suspend our Cartesian dichotomizing language of internal and external, fantasy and reality, and grasp new ways of speaking and apprehending being. One fruit of the rapid globalization and mutual exchange our societies are part of is the increased possibility that through comparing and contrasting our ways of seeing, we can become aware of and then liberated from cultural constructions and constraints that limit our understanding. Sharing our thoughts about dreams opens into a wider sharing of visions about personhood, visions for our societies, and the world we share together.

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