

Past Life Dreamwork

by Sabine Lucas, Ph.D.

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Review by Paul Von Ward, author of *The Soul Genome: Science and Reincarnation*

Pioneer psychologist Carl Jung, near the end of his life, wrote "I could well imagine that I might have lived in former centuries and there encountered questions I was not yet able to answer; that I had been born again because I had not fulfilled the task given to me." He went on to speculate that he might have to be reborn again in order to find the answers still left undiscovered, or someone else would have to assume the task.*[pp. 318-19]

While not precluding another reincarnation by the soul genome that animated Carl, I would suggest that Jungian analyst Sabine Lucas has taken on his unfulfilled task of substantiating the role of dreams in the continuity of individuated consciousness. With a central space in the life of the mind, dreams help maintain the coherence of unique personalities through the evolution of consciousness.

Sabine's beautifully and sensitively written book provides valuable evidence that our nightly dreams preserve memories from previous lives that clearly influence our emotions and behaviors today. Her personal and professional story, buttressed by the cases of four people with dreams historically grounded in individual previous lives (not generic archetypes), graphically supports the theory that an individual consciousness transcends a single lifetime.

From my perspective, as the proponent of an integral model of reincarnation, her book addresses the central issue of reincarnation research: whether the experience and learning from previous lives play a significant role in one's present lifetime. Her carefully documented work clearly adds to growing evidence that personality traits developed in earlier incarnations persist and provide the foundation for each person's ongoing psychological development.

Sabine's therapeutic skill gives considerable credibility to her posited connections between past life experiences and the individual's current personality. Consistent with others' research, her cases suggest past-life experiences, whether constructive or destructive in personality terms, influence today's emotions and behavior. She demonstrates the value of integrating insights from several lifetimes in order to make constructive choices if individuals wish to seek opportunities for further experimentation and learning. Her cases demonstrate that the recognition and resolution of pre-disposed destructive tendencies helps clear the path for such growth.

Sabine's work is clearly the logical extension of Carl's tentative, end-of-life musings about the possibility of reincarnation. Her discoveries can be seen as a continuation of the research direction that he was finally ready for, but had no time left to explore. Her book should be read in this Jungian intellectual context, revealed sporadically in his personal life review described in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*.

Jung End-of-Life Views

Many of Carl's childhood dreams are reminiscent of what we now consider to be past-life dreams. They are filled with clear historical detail and appeared at an age before he could have acquired the information through normal channels. Even had he been exposed to relevant texts and images prior to his dreams, that form of acquisition of knowledge could not account for his emotional responses when recounting them. In his analytic practice, consistent with his own experience, he found three- and four-year olds whose psyches were filled with content, rich in historical detail and meaning.

At the time he attributed them to a general level of collective-unconscious memories (his concept of archetypes). However, later he struggled with whether some of these memories (in his own dreams and others) might be personal rather than collective. His notion of the individuation process (as his own is characterized in the opening paragraph) suggested a personal continuity might be responsible for specific emotions and abilities.

Sabine's therapeutic technique, involving the search for real-world corroboration of dreams, provides powerful evidence for the individualized nature of such childhood and adult dreams. As summarized below, her selected cases make a compelling argument that the individuals involved manifest today emotional patterns and personality traits that can be identified with specific historical personalities. It is clear that those lives provided the content of present-day dreams.

My book *The Soul Genome*, based on empirical evidence, posits the existence of a psychoplasm (a genome embedded in an information-rich, biogenetic field) that provides for the process that Carl called "individuation" or the transformation of the psyche through the relationship between the ego and the contents of the unconscious (including the collective unconscious). Thus, the concepts of linear reincarnation and the collective unconscious are not mutually exclusive. The individuation process can evolve personal material from previous lives as well as archetypal material from the collective unconscious.

Using Carl's terminology, we now would say that reincarnation involves the personal component of the unconscious. He seems to have recognized that possibility, as it relates to artistic gifts and other exceptional characteristics. He writes of "meager hints of dreams and similar spontaneous revelations from the unconscious." And then describes them as giving "the probing intellect the raw material which is indispensable for its vitality."*[p. 316] Sabine's work supports the hypothesis that cognitive functions and other personality aspects can be predisposed by the accumulated experiences of many uniquely-personal lifetimes.

Illustrative Lucas Cases

One of Sabine's cases involves a Christian monk whose exploration of the implications of past life dreams enabled him to move from his cloistered life to an independent one in the heterosexual world. Through a process of identifying possible past-life sources that appeared to be the origins of his inner conflicts, he was able to integrate his warring feelings and needs into a fulfilling life and marriage. To arrive at that point, he faced the past-life traumas of being gassed as a young girl, serving as an executioner and revolutionary, and periods of learning to balance the sacred and sexuality as an American Indian and African.

A troubled gay, single scriptwriter and professor "rediscovered" a past filled with political and military lives that also involved being royalty and serving royalty. Two of those contributed to his current skills as a writer and artist. His most recent life as a German woman exercised the most powerful emotional influence on this one. As an artist shaped by Hitler, she became a staff member at one of the infamous concentration camps, only to be executed when she began to sympathize with its victims.

One case romantically intertwined with one of Sabine's own past lives, involved a King of England with incarnations as a Viking warrior, Roman and American soldier, and an African woman. The love transference and counter-transference that developed between Sabine and her client provides persuasive evidence of the interpersonal carry-over from one lifetime to the next.

A fourth case also linked the pasts of the client and the therapist. The dream material from both people and their replay of powerful emotional patterns from an historical father-son relationship led to the empirical corroboration of the previous lives. They felt compelled to take on the necessary biographical research that validated the historical facts in their dreams. That previous relationship was one of tragedy and alienation that was never healed until their dream work, active imagination, and use of the historical record made possible a mutual understanding of their multiple-lifetime connection.

Sabine's personal thread of posited previous lifetimes for her soul genome reads as a historical thriller that should be experienced without my giving away any clues. It will take you through sex changes, cultural divides, positions high and low, and across continents and the millennia.

In his co-created "autobiography" *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Carl, before his death, mused that his life often seemed like a story that has no beginning and no end. He spoke about the feeling that he was a historical fragment, like an excerpt for which the preceding and succeeding text was missing.*[p. 318] He goes on to say "When I die, my deeds will follow along with me—that is how I imagine it. I will bring with me what I have done." The book *Past Life Dreamwork* demonstrates the value of his speculations that he did not live to appreciate. In a future lifetime, he will discover that people like Sabine have helped fulfill this uncompleted task.

[* *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Carl G. Jung and Aniela Jaffe, editor. (New York: Vintage Books. 1965).]

(Paul Von Ward, MSc & MPA, author of *The Soul Genome: Science and Reincarnation* and other books, created the Reincarnation Experiment involving public input at <www.reincarnationexperiment.org>. His personal email and website are: paul@vonward.com and www.vonward.com.)