

And Now a Word from Ancient Egypt . . .

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And that word is “rswt.” “Rswt,” or “resut” as it is sometimes written, is an ancient Egyptian word for dream. Its literal translation means “awakening” or “to come awake” and it is depicted in hieroglyphs as an open eye.

Another way the Ancient Egyptians expressed dreams was to combine the word for sleep (qed) symbolized by a bed, with rswt, the open eye symbol.

Some scholars and dream experts suggest that these symbols are interpreted to mean that Ancient Egyptians believed that in dreams, one’s eyes were opened to truths, or to solutions, or to advice – basically, that one could learn a lot from one’s dreams. Certainly, the importance of dreams to ancient Egyptians is evident when we consider the numerous temples that were devoted to dream incubation throughout Ancient Egypt. And, as dream enthusiasts, we know from experience that dreams can reveal, or “open our eyes,” to some pretty amazing things from personal insight (inner-sight?) to precognitive information, with a whole host of information and experience in between.

But what if the Egyptian symbols used for dream were meant to be more specific than how we are reading them? It doesn’t take a stretch of the imagination to interpret:

“rswt” (open eye) (“awaken”) + “qed” (bed) (“sleep”)

to read “awaken within sleep” or “come awake in sleep.” In other words, the symbols may be pointing to a state of consciousness that we today call lucid dreaming.

It also doesn’t take a stretch of the imagination to see the Ancient Egyptian preoccupation with out-of-body travel or “soul travel” depicted as soul (ba) journeying beyond the physical body and in the afterlife.

Many have suggested that the ancient Egyptians, in particular those who were involved in higher learning, or in the “mystery schools,” (sometimes called “Masters of the Secret Things”) had a deeper understanding of various states of consciousness, and perhaps even of reality itself, than we (“modern” man) can now comprehend.

It is thought that Ancient Egyptians believed each person had five bodies. It is not easy to understand their concepts in Western terms, but loosely translated there is: the ka (creative or divine power in all beings), the ba (what some call the soul, able to travel beyond the physical body), the akh (body of the deceased in the afterlife; the union of the ka and the ba), the name (seen as a living part of the person), and the shadow (another living part of the person). I believe that some, if not all, of these aspects of the individual can be interpreted to represent various states of consciousness, or multidimensional levels of the self.

As experienced lucid dreamers we can testify that in not all lucid dreams is our awareness or abilities equal. Perhaps the Ancient Egyptians recognized the reasons for this, and attributed the varying abilities and levels of awareness to differing states of consciousness, depicting them as different “bodies.” (Or is it “modern man” who has thrust the concept of five bodies onto a more sophisticated structure that he does not comprehend?)

It has been said that the hieroglyphs have layers of meaning, even beyond the already “accepted” ideas of object as well as sound. Some believe that the symbols took on an additional meaning to “the masters of the secret things” in a way that the common man, or the uninitiated would not recognise.

I’m certainly no expert on Egyptology, and I know even less about mystery schools and hieroglyphic translation. But in playing around with these ideas, I have to wonder: If Ancient Egyptians were adept at lucid dreaming, at “soul traveling” beyond the physical dimension, how might some tomb and temple inscriptions read if we tried to interpret them in terms of altered states of awareness, of conscious awareness of different dimensions of reality, or of multidimensional selfhood, instead of viewing them as most seem to see them: as pure mythology or as the uneducated belief system of a remarkable, though somewhat primitive civilization?

Any expert lucid dreaming Egyptologists out there have any comments? <g>