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Rapaport, David. Consciousness: a psychological and psychodynamic view. In H. Abramson (Ed.), Problems of Consciousness, New York: Josiah Macy, Jr., Foundation, 1951, pp. 18-57

Consciousness, in psychodynamic theory, is seen as a function of the ego or as "an apparatus in the service of the ego" (20). "Let us for a moment assume that consciousness is somehow a superordinate sense organ; what happens on the receptors, and much of what happens intrapsychically, is relayed to it and is re-represented by it in a certain code. From the point of view of this 'superordinate sense organ,' both the intrapsychic happenings and those on the receptors constitute an 'external world.'" (20).

There is a difference between a "dream consciousness" and a "waking consciousness." In the state of sleep, very little of what impinges on the receptors is relayed to this sense organ of consciousness, but dreams testify to the fact that much of what happens intrapsychically is relayed to it. Rapaport gives examples of three variants of consciousness in ~~xxxx~~ this paper. First, he speaks of a case of amnesia (a 'loss of personal identity'), then he gives some observations of his own which he made of himself as subject ~~xxxx~~ trained himself to write down dreams, hypnagogic reveries, daydreams, and various thoughts which occurred while he was falling asleep or while asleep, and finally some observations of the Korsakow's Syndrome (which is characterized by progressive forgetting of recent experiences, confabulations when asked to recall experiences, and emotional lability. At one time, this syndrome was thought to be ~~the result of~~ one neurological side effect of chronic alcoholism, but it became clear, as evidence was gathered, that it could accompany almost any condition associated with organic brain damage.)

"It is worth pointing out that the manner of re-representation in dream consciousness differs from that in waking consciousness." What seems implied here is the difference between secondary process and primary process (with the use of condensation, displacement, substitution especially evident in the latter).

What seems most pertinent is Rapaport's discussion of his own experiences ~~xxxx~~ in investigating varieties of consciousness while falling asleep and while asleep. He trained himself to awaken as much as possible after each dream, reverie, and hypnagogic hallucination and to write them down. Usually, he was in a state of drowsiness and he wrote in the dark without disturbing himself from the position in which he was when he awoke. The writing became more or less automatic, as though the hand wrote without any subjectively experienced decision that it should write. He was able to collect two sets of these recordings; one covering a period of seven weeks and another a period of one week. "The study of these records show that: a) they contain thought fragments which do not seem to differ from waking thought; b) they contain segments which I noted while recording were just like the daydreams into which I drift off occasionally, interrupting my regular work, in the daytime, and their character, as recorded, bears this out; c) they contain material which is introduced by comments to the effect that I am unable to continue recording and the sleepiness is catching up with me. I am apparently 'falling off' to sleep, but I 'come to' soon and record what passed while 'falling off.' These are usually called reveries or some of them 'hypnagogic hallucinations.' They vary greatly in length, and in character: some of them are like dreams, some quite unlike the latter. d) These records contain dreams, but these also vary greatly in character: some of them are accompanied by the awareness 'this is just a dream'; others seem quite 'real.'" (27-28).

Rapaport then presents several continua ~~which~~ on which each of these four states, i.e., thought similar to waking, daydream, reverie, and dream, thought, can be



distinguished.

"First of all progressing from waking thought to dream, the reflective awareness decreases. It is a commonplace that waking consciousness is characterized both by being aware of a content and by the possibility of becoming aware of this fact of awareness. This is what I call here reflective awareness. Now, in the common dream there is little or no such possibility present. Where there is some of it preserved, the dream is of the sort in which we are aware that 'this is just a dream.' Daydreams and reveries, too, have many varieties in this respect. They range from those which are so automatically recorded that there is no more trace of them but the awareness that there was an experience, to those which are clearly recognized to be translations into the language of ^{the} reverie or daydream of the thought at which the 'falling off' began..... There is a continuum here ranging from waking thought to dream, and in the progression toward the dream the reflective awareness, the awareness of awareness, progressively fades out" (28).

The second continuum (Rapaport calls these 'parameters,' not continua, although in the body of his remarks, he refers to some of them as 'continua') is the ability to exert effort, to will. The more closely the dream state is approached, the more difficult it becomes to exert voluntary effort. One indicator of this in Rapaport's notes made during these states of consciousness, are such comments as 'this is not important material, it need not be recorded.'

The third, and final continuum, Rapaport presents is that concerned with "...formal characteristics of thought, that is in the form in which intrapsychic and external perceptions are represented in these various forms of consciousness." (29). He then goes on to mention a few of the formal characteristics of thought in which these forms of consciousness differ. The first is concerned with verbalization versus imagery. "The closer the thought to the waking form, the more verbalized it is; the closer it is to the dream form, the more its medium becomes visual imagery. I do not mean to imply that there is no visual imagery involved in waking thought, or that there is no verbalization in dream thoughts: both are common, yet the preponderances are so striking ~~that the dream of the waking thought is more verbalized than the waking thought is verbalized~~...." (29). The second is concerned with explicitness versus implicitness. "As one proceeds from the waking toward the dream forms of thought one find that in the waking form the thought is explicit, in the dream forms it becomes implicative." (29). An example of this ~~is~~ would be a dream in which "I know that my father is satisfied with me." There is nothing in the dream to indicate why I might know this, no external expression on the part of my father or the like.. ..this is an implicit experience. Such forms are common in dreams, but absent or rare in waking thought. A third difference is found in the use of logical vs. primary process thought. In dreams, the mechanisms of the primary process: condensation, displacement, and substitution, prevail. The outstanding characteristic of waking thought is its logic. "It is not that we do not find in waking thought such aberrations of logic...nor is the dream free of waking logic, as represented by 'secondary elaboration,' but progressing from the waking state to the dream state, the role of logic becomes less, and that of the above mentioned forms increasingly greater" (30). Rapaport here is implying "continuous transitions" where one cannot draw hard and fast dividing lines. I cannot say that up to here these are hypnagogic hallucinations and here begin the daydreams, because I have records where daydreams shade in their middle into hallucinations, to become at the end again like daydreams. In other words, what was described by Freud as the contrast between the primary and the secondary process is clearly present in these observations, but with a continuous transition between these two forms. It is always a question of more or less....just for the sake of those who might wonder, it so happens that Freud was aware of this" (39). (Reference is to Freud's Interp. of Dreams. In Basic Writings. Modern Library Edition. 1938. p. 459 & 536).

The fourth difference mentioned by Rapaport are the changes in syntax as one progresses toward the dream state. "It seems that conjunctions tend to fall out more and more and the position usually accorded to what is syntactically important



when in dire deprivation (starvation, dehydration), when sick (delusions, hallucinations), or when in special states (drugs, hypnosis) etc. this primitive prototypic form of conscious experience appears again. One of the ~~the~~ salient characteristics of this form of conscious experience is that something intrapsychic (the goal of motivation) appears in consciousness as if it were a perception of external reality. Another salient feature ~~ix~~ of it is that the perceptions (and thoughts) which become ~~thos~~ conscious do not abide by logic but by a ~~xxx~~ prelogic (such as that described by the dream mechanisms: condensation, displacement, substitution, symbolization, etc.) based on the syncretic, diffuse, and undifferentiated character of primitive perception (and memory trace). In fugues we see one manifestation of this type of consciousness: the drive-need is imperious and the ideas expressing it monopolize consciousness.

"Later on in ontogeny, the delay of drive discharge does not result in hallucinatory ideation monopolizing consciousness. Intrapsychic controls develop, and not only the object of the drive but objects which lead in reality to the gratifying object, or facilitate getting to it, also enter consciousness. Delay of discharge and detour from the direct ~~xxx~~ path to gratification becomes possible. This is a slow, gradual development, which parallels the differentiation of external perception and is to a great extent dependent on it. This development establishes a harmonious relationship and unity between the consciousness of external perception and the consciousness of the gratifying objects and those leading toward it. The cathexes, which originally were drive cathexes, become bound in the organizations controlling drive discharge. Function of delay has given rise to delaying structures. The controlled motivations are still directed toward discharging their cathexes, but they can be delayed in doing so. The controlling structures have cathexes bound up in them. These cathexes, termed hypercathexes or attention cathexes, play a crucial role in relation to consciousness. The 'sense-organ' consciousness regulates the distribution of these attention cathexes. Without a 'cathecting' by these, ideas do not become conscious. The study of the phenomena of repression has amply demonstrated this. The attention cathexes are allocated to external perceptions and to memory traces, and thereby these become conscious. A drive-tension which rises to discharge-threshold intensity will attract attention cathexis to the memory trace of its representation. From there the attention cathexis will spread to memories of objects and experiences related to the drive object. The relationships themselves thus become conscious, and through them an experiment (we call it thought process) occurs which establishes the best avenue to the goal (gratification). The drive-discharge is in the meanwhile delayed until this experiment is completed; then 'the sluices of motility are opened,' as it were, and discharging action guided by the completion^(sic) thought process takes place.

"The gradual development to thought as 'experimental action' from thought as 'hallucinatory gratification' reflects the gradual development from monoideic consciousness of the drive-gratification to polyideic consciousness of the relation of perceived external reality, internal need, and memories of past experiences. This gradual development corresponds to varieties of forms of consciousness in which various balances are struck between the perception of internal and external reality, in which internal experience is to various (ever decreasing) degrees experienced as external reality, and in which the differentiation between internal and external perception (thought and perception of reality) are differentiated with increasing clarity. Correspondingly, the thought-forms consciously experienced change gradually from prelogical to logical, from syncretic to abstract, from idiosyncratic to socialized. (The role of interpersonal relationships, communication, and socialization in this process is grossly underplayed here, for the sake of simplicity of presentation.) This gradual development is reflected in those forms of conscious experience which I have described in reporting on the preliminary studies of my recordings of dreams, reveries, daydreams, etc.



"When thought has reached the differentiation where it appears as experimental action and explores reality for the safest and most feasible path toward gratification, it has attained a complex organization of safeguards guaranteeing a correct appraisal of reality and a sharp distinction of wish and reality, certainty and uncertainty, etc. It is this complex organization that is reflected in those varieties of conscious experience which I have described above in connection with the Korsakow syndrome, in which these safeguards are to a considerable extent put out of action by the pathological process" (40-42).

[An aside: in the discussion of this paper, a Dr. Mead, whom I take to be an anthropologist—it could possibly be Margaret Mead, but no identifying data is given in the body of the paper itself—refers to societies in which the idea of suicide is not present. "There are such societies. There are societies in which we have no record of anyone ever having committed suicide, where the idea of suicide is not present...." (p. 46)]