

J. Gackenbach and S. LaBerge (Eds.), "Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain. Perspectives on Lucid Dreaming. New York, London: Plenum Press, 1988.

Reviewed by Jack Reis¹

This work, edited by Jayne Gackenbach and Stephen LaBerge, fills a gap that has long been painfully felt by many dream researchers: *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain. Perspectives on Lucid Dreaming*, a compendium of lucid dream research, has finally made its appearance after 5 years in the making. It provides a comprehensive survey of the present-day state of affairs in this branch of research that has seen such a rapid expansion in the last few years.

As the title suggests, the book presents both the results and perspectives to be found in the investigation of dream phenomena during which the dreamer is (physiologically speaking) in a sleeping state, while still maintaining a clear sense of his conscious condition. In a lucid dream state (as defined by Tholey), the dreamer - or dream ego - is aware of the fact that he is dreaming and is also conscious of the possibilities for acting within the imaginary scenario of the dream. Throughout the Gackenbach and LaBerge book, the English expression "lucid dream" is used synonymously with the German term "Klartraum."

By emphasizing the importance of the content of the sleeping person's actual dream experience, *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain* makes an important and invaluable contribution to the field in opposing the ever-spreading tendency to treat dream processes in purely physiological terms; a trend which believes it possible to forgo any particular phenomenological orientation through a one-sided physiological method of observation. The book by Gackenbach and LaBerge makes it clear that dream phenomena can only be comprehended in adequate fashion through intensive inter-disciplinary studies from various types of research perspectives. Thus, the editors feel that the circle of people likely to be interested in this book would include clinical and experimental psychologists, physiologists and neurologists as well as philosophers, anthropologists and theologians. The book is also highly recommended for specialists in literature, sociologists and educators. Fortunately, a major part of the essay ought to be comprehensive to the interested layman. In this regard, the editors should be commended for ensuring that the striving for "lucidity" and clarity within the individual articles was not lost sight of while maintaining the necessary scientific rigor.

Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain is divided into four large parts. Part 1 treats historical-scientific and cultural-anthropological questions. Part 2 deals with diverse empirical investigations of the phenomenology and physiology of lucid dreaming as well as the question of various techniques for learning and inducing lucid dreaming. In the third part, therapeutic applications are presented and supplemented by personal accounts of individual dream researchers. The fourth part - the academic rigor of which, in the opinion of this reviewer, does not equal that of the preceding sections - is devoted to the evaluation of the farther reaching theoretical implications of lucid dream research.

Altogether 28 noted scientists contributed to the book, the majority from the United

State and Canada (22). Only 6 contributors are from countries outside North America: 4 from England and one each from Australia and Germany. This ratio clearly demonstrates not only the dominance of Anglo-American research in this sphere, but unfortunately the neglect of this important branch of research by continental Europe, particularly German scientists who long ago handed over the mantle of leadership in dream research to their "foreign colleagues."

All the more fortunate then to see that one of the more important contributions to the book was written by Paul Tholey, founder of continental Europe's lucid dream research. Tholey develops an extremely compressed and conceptually differentiated approach to the clinical applications of lucid dreaming as a method for self-treatment as well as to the further unfolding of personality development. Tholey's article is especially distinguished by the fact that his studies are carried out with recourse to the field-theory approach of the Berlin School of Gestalt theory, an approach which has up to now been unjustly neglected by Anglo-American researchers as a theoretical framework for understanding lucid dream phenomena. With all due respect to Sue Blackmore's pioneering work in scientifically documenting so-called "out-of-body experiences" (OBEs), her approach to the theoretical classification of altered states of consciousness found in Part 4 of the book comes across more or less as an "eclectic minuet" of arbitrary models of reality ultimately stuck in the cul-de-sac of a constructivist "laissez faire."

The indisputable strengths of *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain* undoubtedly find their most pronounced expression in the compilation of research carried out up to the present time. Particularly noteworthy in this connection would be the two articles by Stephen LaBerge on the psycho-physiology of lucid dreaming as well as lucid dreaming's place in Western literature; the articles by Robert F. Price and David B. Cohen on the evaluation of various techniques for the inducement of lucid dreams; and the article by Jayne Gackenbach on the analysis of the contents of lucid dreams in comparison to non-lucid dreams. Likewise of great significance is the article by Thomas Snyder and Jayne Gackenbach on the relevant personality correlates during lucid dreaming from the standpoint of differential psychology. Judith R. Malamud's exposition of her program for extending lucidity from the sphere of dreams to waking life should also be pointed out as a complementary piece to Paul Tholey's article. In this context, the very instructive article by Harry T. Hunt and Robert D. Ogilvie must be mentioned. Hunt and Ogilvie do not look upon lucid dreams as isolated phenomena of consciousness. They draw explicit connections to other altered states of consciousness, for example meditation, OBEs, near-death experiences, hallucinations and hypnogogic autosymbolism.

Aside from the authors already mentioned, the book offers numerous other articles from noted researchers in the consciousness and lucid dream fields: Patricia Garfield, George Gillespie, Morton Schatzman, Charles Tart and Alan Worsley. An article by Gayle Delaney, Ann Faraday or Celia Green would certainly have been welcome, but ultimately one could hardly in good conscience demand more than what the editors and individual authors have actually accomplished with this book. They have produced a book which will undoubtedly offer a peerless and precise survey of the findings and perspectives in lucid dream research well into the 1990s. One result of this will hopefully

be that the enduring and unreserved desire for the book's speediest possible translation into German finds even broader support.

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