The Dream Self and the Waking Self

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The self is the main character in one's life and an important theme in the philosophy of mind. The concept of self is multifaceted and notoriously ambiguous, and philosophers debate about the definition of self.[1] In this paper, I approach selfhood by examining dreaming and ask, how the study of dreaming can contribute to the definition of self. Or in other words, what can the dream self reveal about the waking self? Dreaming is an altered state of consciousness, which often involves extensive alterations in self-consciousness, and as such it provides an attractive way to the research of self. I start the paper by viewing the concepts of selfhood in terms of a pattern theory of self and drawing the most general distinction within the self, that is the distinction between the experiential and reflective self. Then, I consider dreaming and the methodology of using altered states of consciousness in the study of self. After which, I examine the character of the dream self and how it differs from the waking self in terms of both experiential and reflective self. The idea is that the study of dreaming can function as an instrument to distinguish different aspects of self from each other, and to bring out the connections between them and the necessary features of self. While I mainly focus on defining the most fundamental aspect of the experiential self, I also briefly consider the opportunities to study the reflective self through dreaming.

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[1] For an overview see e.g. Gallagher (ed.) 2011 or Siderits et al. (eds.) 2011, the last mentioned involves also comparisons between eastern and western notions of self.

1. Concepts of self

Self is of the utmost importance in one's life. *Self* is the subject of experience, thinker of thoughts, and agent of action. As such 'self' or 'selfhood' is an umbrella term that comprises numerous features of self and self-consciousness. [2] In order to bring together and combine different theories of self, Shaun Gallagher has developed a *pattern theory of self* (Gallagher 2013; Gallagher & Daly 2018, see also Newen 2018). According to the pattern theory, an individual self is constituted of a complex pattern of characteristic features or certain aspects of self. Gallagher argues that the pattern theory is a useful way to organize the multidisciplinary discussion of what constitutes a self. This is because within the pattern theory, various interpretations of self can be seen as compatible or commensurable rather than being in opposition. Gallagher (2013, Gallagher & Daly 2018) presents a tentative list of significant features that contribute to the constitution of self. These aspects can be seen as variables that take different values and weightings in the dynamic constitution of self. Gallagher emphasizes that an individual self may lack a particular characteristic feature and still be considered a self. Gallagher's (2013, 3-4) list includes the following aspects:

(1) *Minimal embodied aspects*: core biological aspects, which allow the system to distinguish between itself and what is not itself.

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[2] It can be noted at the outset that the concept of 'experiential self' used in this paper (Section 1.1.) entails the idea that self and consciousness are intertwined. This idea is denied in theories which claim that there can be experience without self. For instance, according to Pylkkö (1998), aconceptual and asubjectivist experience is fundamental and self is a construction. Or generally, the so called no-self-theories, which are advocated in many Eastern philosophies, argue that the self is illusory (see e.g. Albahari 2006; Metzinger 2009, for discussions about no-self theories, see Siderits et al. 2011). Some of the dispute between the theories highlighting the experiential self and no-self can be considered terminological; they simply mean different things with the notion 'self' (see e.g. Zahavi 2011; 2014, Ch. 4). Thus, it can be noted that an endorsement of a no-self view would not undermine the general idea of differentiating between the layers of self that is conducted in this paper, but it would entail specifying concepts for some features of the 'experiential self' without reference to 'self'. See also fn. 5.

This is an extremely basic aspect of all kinds of animal behavior, and include the aspects that define the egocentric body-centered spatial frame of reference.

(2) *Minimal experiential aspects*: to the extent that the bodily system can be conscious, it will pre-reflectively experience the self/non-self distinction in the various sensory-motor modalities available to it. Such aspects contribute to an experiential and embodied sense of ownership (the "mineness" of one's experience), and a sense of agency for one's actions (Gallagher 2000).

(3) *Affective aspects:* reflect a particular mix of affective factors that range from very basic and mostly covert or tacit bodily affects to what may be for her a typical emotional pattern or mood.

(4) *Intersubjective aspects*: humans have the innate capacity for attuning to intersubjective existence, and after language learning, this intersubjective aspect is internalized and takes the form of a dialogical process that helps to constitute the self.

(5) *Psychological/cognitive aspects*: traditional theories of the self focus on various psychological and cognitive aspects. These range from explicit self-consciousness to conceptual understanding of self as self, to personality traits of which one may not be self-conscious at all. In addition, there are strong arguments for psychological continuity and the importance of memory in the literature on personal identity (e.g. Shoemaker 2011). One can also include representational aspects here, meaning, approximately, one's ability to represent oneself as oneself.

(6) *Narrative aspects*: the basic idea is that selves are inherently narrative entities and that our self-interpretations have a narrative structure (Schechtman 2011). For some theorists, narratives are constitutive of selves.

(7) *Extended aspects*: self may include physical pieces of property, such as clothes, homes, and various things that we own. We identify ourselves with the items we own, and perhaps with the technologies we use, the institutions we work in, or the nation states that we inhabit.

(8) *Situated aspects:* include, for instance, the kind of family structure and environment where we grew up, and cultural and normative practices that define our way of living.

Different theories of self emphasize different aspects, and the pattern theory provides a framework in which the complexity of self can be endorsed. However, the pattern theory as such does not explain how the aspects are connected or what kinds of relations prevail between them. Crucially, it does not take a stand on whether some aspect or combination of aspects is necessary for self. Thus, the pattern theory does not provide answers to the quest of self, but the character of self still requires elaboration and clarification.

An advantage of the pattern theory is that it assists in distinguishing between various features of the self and in seeing how the connections between these features contribute to self. Since the list of aspects is rather long, I condense the features down to a distinction between the experiential and reflective self. This generic distinction is generally accepted and often made, although it is conceptualized differently in different theories.[3] For the purpose of this paper, the experiential self consists of embodied, experiential and affective aspects, and the reflective self consists of the psychological-cognitive and narrative aspects.[4] I elaborate these notions briefly below, and

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[3] The distinctions has been drawn in terms of, for instance, intransitive and transitive self-consciousness (Kriegel 2004), minimal and narrative self (Gallagher 2000), nonconceptual and conceptual self-consciousness (Bermudez 2001), and pre-reflective and reflective self-consciousness (Zahavi 2005).

[4] That is, I exclude intersubjective, extended and situational aspects from the scope of this paper. These aspects are interesting for the distinction of two forms of self, since they seem to be incorporated in both experiential and reflective self and thus, might be used in investigations of the interconnections of the two forms. However, they are beyond the scope of this paper.

In addition, it can be noted that in more recent version of the pattern theory (Gallagher & Daly 2018), Gallagher has also added behavioral, reflective and normative aspects. Of these aspects, the two last mentioned can easily be included in the reflective self. However, neither of these aspects are necessary to discuss in order to present the idea of this paper and, for simplicity and brevity, the original (2013) version of the pattern theory is applied here.

then proceed to the argumentative part of the paper. In that part, I propose that the examination of the dream self is useful in revealing different layers of the self and can be used to elicit the necessary aspects of self.

1.1. The experiential self

The *experiential self* refers to the most fundamental form of selfhood, which is the basis for the cognitively more demanding and complex reflective self (Bermudez 2001; Gallagher 2000; Kriegel 2004; Zahavi 2011, 2014).[5] This concept of self emphasizes that self is always present in experience. In this elementary sense 'self' is connected to the *subjectivity* of experience. Even when one is not thinking about or focusing on herself at all, there is a subtle awareness of herself in that mental state: she is aware of herself as the owner or *subject* of the experience, and this holds true for all of her experiences. In other words, the experiential self does not refer to self as an object or content of consciousness, to a *what* of experience. Instead, it refers to the *how* of experience that is to the first-personal presence of experience. It refers to the fact that the experiences I am living through are given differently to me than to anybody else. Thus, the experiential self is an integral part of our consciousness and can be identified with the ubiquitous first-personal character of experience.

In terms of the pattern theory, the experiential self seems to include the experiential aspects by definition. In addition, many theories highlight that our basic sense of self is essentially embodied and affective (see e.g. Bermudez 2001; Colombetti & Thompson 2008; Gallagher & Zahavi 2008; Varela et al. 1991). All the experiential, embodied, and affec-

[5] The term 'experiential self' has been used by Zahavi (2011; 2014) synonymously with the terms 'pre-reflective self-consciousness' and 'for-me-ness'. Zahavi has developed a sophisticated phenomenological theory of self, and the characterization of experiential self in this paper follows Zahavi's ideas, which underline experiential self as the most fundamental form of selfhood and a constitutive feature of consciousness. However, I elaborate the notion of experiential self in terms of pattern theory which Zahavi himself does not. It also can be noted that the ideas presented in this paper are not depended on or restricted only to Zahavi's conception of self, but can be applied to others notions of self too, see fn. 3.

tive aspects of self are present in experience already without being objects of reflection. Many times self-consciousness is described as a first-person perspective (1PP in brief), and this description involves a spatiotemporal perspective that specifies a viewpoint on the environment (Metzinger 2013; Windt 2015). However, as Zahavi (2005; 2011; 2014) underlines, the essence of the notion of 1PP is that the perspective is *personal*; it is subjectively experienced.

These considerations show that although the experiential self is the most elementary form of selfhood, it involves several aspects of self that intertwine together in experiences. The richness of embodied 1PP can be noticed in a simple example of experiencing perceptions of the environment during walk. When I am walking on a sea shore, I can see the cliffs, waves and forest. All these things have a certain location in relation to my body. I can also hear the waves on the shore and the singing of birds in the forest. Further, by means of proprioception, I can sense my movements and the positions of my body that maintain its balance when walking; I need to adjust my steps to the perceived shape of the rocky shore. I can feel the excitement of being in a new place and joy when I manage to see a rare bird. Overall, the experiential self involves embodied, experiential and affective aspects, and is present in experience without any explicit thinking of self.

1.2. The reflective self

In order to do justice to human selfhood, the notion of the experiential self needs to be supplemented with the notion of the *reflective self*, which is higher in the cognitive hierarchy (Bermudez 2001; Gallagher & Zahavi 2008; Kriegel 2004; Zahavi 2005, 2014)[6]. The reflective self is capable of language use and introspection; it deliberates actions, and is shaped by its values, beliefs, commitments, goals, and decisions. This form of selfhood involves reflective self-consciousness that is

[6] The term 'reflective self' is derived from Zahavi's notion of 'reflective self-consciousness' that is used in contrast to the 'experiential self' or 'pre-reflective self-consciousness'. In addition, the notion 'reflective self' aims to take a neutral stance towards theories that highlight narrativity, although the notion embraces the narrative aspects as a significant feature of self.

the capacity to take oneself as the object of one's reasoning and to think of oneself as oneself. Reflective self-consciousness is essentially linked to our general conceptual capacities and reasoning skills. Thus, it involves at least the psychological-cognitive aspects of self. By means of reflective self-consciousness, one can focus her attention on herself, and evaluate and direct her action. Reflective self-consciousness is a necessary condition for moral self-responsibility, normative evaluation and self-critical deliberation and for that reason many theories of self find it essential (Moran 2001; Korsgaard 2009; Schechtman 2011). In addition, philosophers have been interested in the unique features of self-knowledge and self-conscious thoughts, which refer to the subject by the use of first-person pronoun 'I' and have specific epistemic and motivational features (Gertler 2011; Perry 1979; Shoemaker 1968).

Further, the reflective self has the capacity to formulate narratives and thus, involves narrative aspects of self (e.g. Gallagher 2000; Gallagher & Zahavi 2008; Schechtman 2011). This highlights the wide time-perspective of the reflective self; it is not limited to the immediate experience but extends from past to future. With these reflective and narrative capacities, one can engage in a meaningful life as a part of a community. For instance, I exercise my reflective-narrative dimensions of selfhood when I ponder about what I should do on the weekend. Should I visit an old friend in another town, or finish a work project that is significant for my future career, or take time for myself and renew my energy? Altogether, the reflective self is connected to certain ways of thinking and acting that are frequently considered characteristically human; to be a person with memories and future plans, and a deliberating moral agent.

2. Dreaming as a research tool in the study of self

A number of the recent approaches to the philosophy of mind endorse a multidisciplinary methodology and strive to be empirically informed (e.g. Gallagher 2013; Mandik 2007; Metzinger 2013; Thompson 2015; Windt 2015). In terms of self, these multidisciplinary approaches entail forming a theory of self that is conceptually coherent and empirically plau-

sible at the same time. In order to formulate such a theory, it is important to test the concepts of self against at least some (atypical) empirical examples of self-experiences, since these 'test' cases enable a more detailed evaluation of the concepts. A theory of self should be fine-grained enough to grasp self in all of its varieties: if a theory does not accomplish this, it should be developed further in order to provide an exhaustive account of the whole phenomenon. Thus, a theory of self that fails to embrace all forms of selfhood is weak: the concept of selfhood cannot be accurate enough if it cannot be applied to cases that deviate from the exemplar. Instead, a theory or conception of self that can also account for rare cases has more strength: its explanatory power is widened and the reasons to endorse it obtain support. Thus, empirical constraints are relevant for philosophers of mind. On the other hand, the conceptual analysis and theoretical knowledge from philosophy can contribute to the development of empirical theories and paradigms.

One promising methodological invention in the research on the self is to study it through different altered states of consciousness. The idea is to provide an analysis that uses an *altered state of consciousness* (ASC in brief) as a contrast condition that can elicit the features of normal self-consciousness. In other words, ASCs can be seen as a methodological tool that assists in sorting out the aspects and functions of self-consciousness. An ASC can be defined as "a temporary change in the overall pattern of subjective experience" (Farthing 1992, 205), and the strategy of examining ASCs seems highly relevant for detecting the layers of self-consciousness and the dynamics of the aspects of self.[7] The contrasts between altered and normal experience can reveal the tacit features of self that we do not normally pay attention to: only when these features change or are absent, is it possible to understand what they originally were. Thus, a profile of an ASC

[7] For a definition of an ASC see e.g. Revonsuo et al. 2009. ASCs have been useful in the examination of self; the wide range of these ASCs include: (i) meditative practices (Thompson 2015), (ii) experiences under psychedelic drugs (Carhart-Harris et al. 2012), (iii) induced illusions (Blanke & Metzinger 2009) and (iv) pathological conditions such as schizophrenia (Sass & Parnas 2003) and Depersonalisation Disorder (Ciaunica et al. 2021).

may disclose the intricacy of self-consciousness better than the normal experience.

An ASC that is interesting for the study of self is dreaming. Philosophers have argued that dreams can be used as an instrument that leads to a deeper understanding of consciousness, self-consciousness, and subjectivity (e.g. Metzinger 2013, Thompson 2015; Windt 2015). This paper follows this argumentation line and proposes that the study of dreaming can assist in dissociating different aspects or layers of self-consciousness and thus, make decisive contributions to the philosophical project of defining the concepts by which the richness of self-consciousness can be grasped.[8] The following analysis focuses on self-consciousness since it concerns the consciousness of self in dream experiences. In addition, self-consciousness provides a good general starting point for the study of self; in order to answer metaphysical questions concerning the nature of self, we need to know what the self is assumed to be, and in order to establish this, we should investigate self-experiences in self-consciousness (see e.g. Strawson 2000).

Generally, *dreaming* refers to subjective experiences during sleep.[9] Dreaming is a fully "inner" or "offline"[10] experience in

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[8] In addition, this philosophical project to conceptually describe the layers of human self-consciousness is significant for multidisciplinary fields since it can give proper explananda for empirical research programs and assist in developing empirical theories (see e.g. Metzinger 2013; Windt 2015).

[9] In more detail, dreaming has been defined in terms of simulation (Revonsuo 2005; 2006), hallucination (Windt 2010; 2015), and imagination (Thompson 2015). The claim that dreams really are conscious experiences is also indicated in experiments with lucid dreamers (see e.g. LaBerge et al. 1981; Windt 2015; Revonsuo 2015). However, it can be noted that empirical information on dreaming and research on dreaming is still incomplete (see e.g. Windt 2015).

[10] The conceptual distinction between online and offline is used in the discussions of embodied cognition. 'Online' refers to experience that involves actual coupling with the environment. Instead, 'offline' experiences are self-generated and independent of concurrent stimulation of the senses and thus, "disconnected" from the environment. In addition to dreaming, offline sensory experiences occur during mental imagery, mind-wandering and hallucinations (Fazekas et al. 2021).

the sense that it occurs without a sensory or motor encounter with the environment but is generated by brain-activity while the body is at rest. Considering dream experiences is relevant for the study of selfhood since dream experiences involve alterations in the organization of a pattern of self and thus, different aspects of self can be more easily prominent in dreams than in waking consciousness. Further, some kind of *dream self* is present in the great majority of dreams (see e.g. Revonsuo 2005; Thompson 2015; Windt 2015). Roughly, a 'dream self' is the protagonist of the dream with whom the dreamer identifies herself. The core feature of dreaming is the immersive experience of being a self in the world, which also denotes the waking state.[11] Many times the dream self resembles the waking self, for instance, has the same kind of body and memories, although not necessarily. Despite the resemblances, typically the dream self differs from the waking self at least in its (meta)cognitive skills; the central characteristics of the dream self is a lack of the full mental capabilities of the waking self.

Because dream self and waking self differ from each other, one needs to be cautious about drawing a too straightforward relation between the dream and waking self or too simple conclusions about the complexity of selfhood. The methodological idea here is not to consider the dream self as a conclusion to philosophical questions on the nature or constitution of the self. Instead, the idea is that a careful analysis of the features of the dream self can provide premises for the arguments about the nature of self and relationships within the aspects of self (i.e. this is an application of the general methodology of neurophilosophy, see e.g. Mandik 2007).

3. The experiential self in dreams

Although the dream self can be strange, it remains as the subject of the dream experience and dreams are subjective experiences. Thus, at least the experiential self is present in dreams. In point of fact, dream research seems to be especial-

[11] But diminishes in the hypnagogic state between wake and dreaming, see e.g. Thompson 2015; Windt 2015. In addition, it is interesting that there are dreams that involve a double representation of self (e.g. Occhionero et al. 2005; Revonsuo 2005; Thompson 2015; Windt 2015).

ly relevant for the examination of the experiential self. In typical waking consciousness, minimal self-consciousness is a tacit feature that involves several aspects of self and is intertwined with the contents of experience, which makes it difficult to grasp. However, in dreams the experiential self can take less complex forms which may disclose its components more easily.

The study of dreaming is especially useful in solving a specific question about the necessary features of self. It is important to define the necessary, most minimal and fundamental forms of self since it is the starting point for a conceptually systematic account of selfhood (as e.g. Metzinger 2013; Windt 2010, 2015; Zahavi 2014 argue). Below I approach the problem of defining the minimum required for self-consciousness in terms of the pattern theory of self, and ask whether some of the aspects of self are necessary. I examine the dream self and elaborate on how the aspects of self can be omitted from it, proceeding from the cognitively higher layers of reflective self to the cognitively lower layers of experiential self. A lack of an aspect or feature of self reveals that the feature in question is unnecessary for self-consciousness. The aspect that can be found even in the cut off forms of self-consciousness has a special status in the pattern of self, since it is the most fundamental form of self-consciousness that is also the basis for other forms of selfhood.

First of all, a characteristic feature of the dream self is an unstable and disintegrated self-reflection. The dream self typically suffers from a lack of rationality and deliberation, and acts in incoherent and potentially morally dubious way. Instead of being an effective metacognitive subject of experience, the dream self has difficulties in conceptualizing and experiencing herself as a thinking, attending or deciding subject (i.e. the dream self has only weak cognitive, attentional and volitional 1PP, Windt & Metzinger 2007; Windt 2015). Further, the dream self has deficiencies of both short- and long-term memory and rather is amnestic; it does not have full access to the waking self's memories and instead can confabulate narratives. However, the dream self is not bothered by the discrepancies in its surroundings and own actions. This can be illustrated by a dream report of Evan Thompson (Thompson 2015, 136):

> I'm on the subway in Toronto. The train is above street level, and I see Paris streets below me through the window. I'm with a former girlfriend from many years ago. I'm anxious waiting for the stop, where I know I have to get off. Then the stop is past and she's out in the street. I'm more anxious and look for my suitcases. One is missing. Maybe she took it, but the train's moved on and she's gone. I wake up feeling anxious and thinking I need to find my suitcase.

The report involves a number of discontinuities, all of which the dream self fails to pay attention to. For instance, the dream self is at the same time in a subway and above street level, and in two cities. The dream self is traveling with a friend, whom the waking self has not seen in years. The dream self is waiting for the next stop, but then it is already past. The dream self remembers some important suitcases, although had not thought about them before.

Thus, it is clear that in dreams one has a sense of self but lacks the typical waking reflective self-consciousness. Many times the dream self is unable to think critically and exercise self-deliberation. In addition, the self-narrative of the dream self is often discontinuous and fragmentary. This indicates that psychological-cognitive and narrative aspects can be severely diminished in dream experience and thus, they are not necessary for self-experience. The self can be experiential without being reflective.

Further, the experiential self assumes altered forms in dreams. Thus, the dream self provides an opportunity to elaborate on the structures of experiential self, which involves the experiential, embodied and affective aspects. The dream self can involve alterations in all these aspects. The experiential aspect of the waking self many times involves the sense of agency that is "The sense that I am the one who is causing or generating an action" (Gallagher 2000, 15). This sense of agency can be missing in dreams in which the dream self remains as a mere passive observer without active participation in the dream events. This kind of dream experience shows that the sense of agency is not a necessary feature of self.[12]

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[12] This possibility is recognized in the pattern theory (Gallagher 2013). In point of fact, it was one reason to initially draw the distinction between the two features of the minimal self (or the experiential aspect), i.e. a sense

However, maybe a more interesting feature of the dream self is that it does not lose the experiential aspect of self altogether. The experiential aspect is present as the subjectivity of consciousness or as a first-person perspective; even if the perspective is unstable and the self-experience altered, the dream self does have a perspective and undergo experience. In other words, the experiential aspect includes both the sense of agency and sense of subjectivity (that is also called 'sense of ownership', Gallagher 2000). Although a sense of agency can be lacking in the experience, the subjectivity does not disappear even in highly altered dream experiences.

With regard to the affective aspect of self, dream research indicates that the dream self cannot be considered a fully affective subject that commands a variety of emotions in the same way as the waking self (e.g. Thompson 2015; Windt & Metzinger 2007). Very often the dream self does undergo affects, and dreams can involve especially strong emotional experiences.[13] For instance, nightmares are characterized by such intense feelings that the dreaming self is woken up by them. However, the variety of affects experienced by a dream self is typically much simpler than the affects experienced by the waking self. For instance, a dream can be dominated by a single feeling, such as anxiety as in the dream report above (e.g. Thompson 2015; Windt & Metzinger 2007). In addition, some dreams can lack affectivity altogether and instead are characterized by a neutral observation of a dream scene. Since affectivity can be lacking in a dream experience, this indicates that the affective aspects are not necessary for self-consciousness.

In a similar way, the embodied aspects of self can diminish in dreams. Dreaming has been described to be phenomenally embodied only in a weak sense (Windt 2015, 339). This weak embodiment is predominantly associated with movement sensations of individual body parts. In addition, the dream

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of agency and a sense of ownership. According to Gallagher's (2000) original idea, the sense of ownership can remain even in ASCs that lack the sense of agency.

[13] The great majority of dreams involve affects in self-rated questionaries, however, the number of affects is presented as being smaller when the affectivity in dream reports are rated by external raters. For dream affects, see Sikka 2020.

self has disturbances in multisensory integration, for instance a body part may be seen but not felt or vice versa. Moreover, the dream self only rarely has sensory experiences of pain, temperature, smell, or taste. However, the most striking example of deficiencies of embodied aspect is the dream experience in which the dream self does not have a body at all.

Metzinger (2013) and Windt (2010; 2015) have used the phenomenon of bodiless dreams as an example of a minimal phenomenal selfhood (MPS in brief). MPS refers to the simplest form of selfhood and as such the strictly necessary features of self and consciousness. According to Metzinger (2013), bodiless dreams are the best global contrast condition for isolating MPS.[14] Bodiless dreams are a rare, but well-known phenomenon in which a dreamer identifies with an extensionless point in perceptual space. Metzinger explains that in these cases the dream self has an "abstract self-representation", which does not contain any perceptual or spatially extended features of bodily content. This experience of bodiless subjectivity involves a stable sense of selfhood and an "asomatic 1PP", although the body representation is absolutely minimal. According to Metzinger (2013) and Windt (2010; 2015), bodiless dreams can reveal MPS, which they define as a "transparent self-location in a spatiotemporal frame of reference" (Metzinger 2013, 7). Since this self-location, or 1PP, only includes a point in space and a point in time, it also encompasses a highly atypical dream experience.

However, the notion of an experiential self implies that minimal selfhood should not be only defined in terms of spatio-temporal location or geometrical perspective. A robot equipped with a camera might also be said to have a geometrical perspective and locate itself in a functional sense, although it does not experience anything. Instead, the crucial feature of being a self is that 1PP is experienced subjectively; it has a subjective character that can be associated with the experiential aspects of self. Whereas, in terms of the pattern

[14] According to Metzinger (2013), in addition to dreams, there are two other experiences of bodiless subjectivity: out-of-body experiences (OBEs in brief) and meditation. However, Metzinger notices that both asomatic OBEs and "pure consciousness" experiences in meditators are rare phenomena and thus, more difficult ways to investigate MPS. See also fn. 7.

theory of the self, the geometrical perspective of the subject might be considered as an embodied aspect. Thus, the dream self can lack embodied aspects of self to the extent of lacking a representation of a body. In other words, these are not necessary for self-consciousness, since there can be self-experience without consciousness of a body at all.

Overall, these lessons from dream research make a significant contribution to the (pattern) theory of self by dissociating different layers of self-consciousness, and revealing the most fundamental aspect of self. The above examination of the dream self showed that self-experience can lack psychological-cognitive, narrative, affective and embodied aspects of self, and the sense of agency. However, the shared feature across dream experience is the presence of the experiential aspect. This indicates that the experiential aspect of self is the most fundamental level of self-consciousness: it can occur in the absence of other features of self-consciousness but not the vice versa. The experiential aspect is present in all dreams regardless of the combination of the other aspects. That is, the experiential aspect is necessary in a way that other aspects are not.

3.1. Theoretical implications of the necessity of the experiential aspect

The necessary status of the experiential aspect strengthens the idea that the experiential self is the most fundamental form of selfhood, and that it minimally involves only a subjective first-person perspective. This undermines theories of self that deny the fundamental character of the experiential aspects or claim that some other feature(s) of self is equally necessary. These theories include at least those theories that consider self as strictly narrative or reflective, claim that a representation of the body is necessary for self-consciousness, or make a too strong claim about the self's sensory-motor coupling with the environment. The shortcomings of these kinds of theories are briefly elaborated on below.

First, the manifestations of the dream self question the theories of self which claim that narratives are a constitutive necessity for being a self. For instance, according to Schechtman's (2011) Narrative Self-Constitution View (NSCV

in brief), we constitute ourselves by understanding our lives in narrative form. The narrative structure of selfhood does not require explicit narratives, but the idea is that we experience and interpret our present experience as a part of continuous narrative that gives meanings to events and experiences. The NSCV (Schechtman 2011, 405) places two constraints on self-constituting narratives: 1) the articulation constraint "involves the capacity to articulate one's narrative locally where appropriate", and the 2) reality constraint, which "demands that our narratives fit with the basic conception of reality shared by those in our community" (it probably cannot e.g. involve being able to get from Helsinki to Tokyo in one minute). Although a dream self many times participates in events that can be described with narratives and dream reports can have narrative structure, the above-mentioned two constraints are too strong. The possible narrative that a dream self would articulate would contradict the logic of the waking self's narrative and also the reality of the dream world does not meet the reality constraint in the waking world. This does not entirely refute the theories that emphasize cognitive-psychological and narrative aspects of self, but highlights the point that these aspects are not the most fundamental form of selfhood, and that the concept of a reflective self should be complemented by the concept of the experiential self (see e.g. Zahavi 2014). However, the experience of a dream self does refute the theories which claim that self-consciousness is necessarily reflective and does not recognize the significance of the experiential self (e.g. Carruthers 1996). The dream self can have vivid experiences without coherent self-reflection and does not even seem to question the lack of a continuous narrative.

Second, the theories that consider body-representation as constitutive of self-consciousness can be criticized in the light of dream experience. For instance, Blanke and Metzinger (2009) presented a theory of MPS in terms of three central defining features: 1) a globalized form of identification with the body as a whole, 2) spatiotemporal self-location, and 3) a 1PP (in the weak sense of a purely geometrical feature of perception, targeted in empirical studies investigating visuospatial perspective-taking). However, as Windt (2010, and Metzinger 2013 agrees) argues, bodiless dreams show

that this minimal form of self-experience or MPS does not require "a passive, multisensory and globalized experience of 'owning' a body" as Blanke & Metzinger (2009) present. In addition, Windt (2010; 2015) argues that the distinction between a sense of spatiotemporal self-location and a spatiotemporal 1PP is unnecessary; the subjective sense of presence involves only the sense of immersion or location in a spatiotemporal frame of reference. Thus, dream research is useful in elaborating the notion of minimal selfhood and abandoning too complex formulations.

Third, the dream self discounts theories of strong sensorimotor enactivism which claim that interaction with the environment is necessary for self-consciousness. According to sensorimotor enactivism, experiences are constituted by sensory and motor couplings with the environment.[15] In the strong version of sensorimotor enactivism, this interaction is claimed to be a necessary feature of consciousness, and this kind of general theory of consciousness can be criticized by using the dream argument (Revonsuo 2015; Loorits 2017). The dream argument points out that dream experiences are as rich and complex as the waking experience (or sufficiently similar to waking experience), and fully internally constituted. The implication of this is that necessary constitutive conditions for experiential states can be constituted only internally and thus do not require a relationship with the environment. The proponents of strong sensorimotor enactivism can answer this argument by denying that veridical and dream experiences share the same phenomenological status: It is irrelevant how dreams are constituted since they

[15] Enactivism (originating from Varela et al. 1991, for different version of enactivism, see e.g. Ward et al. 2017) is a relatively novel approach in the philosophy of mind and cognitive sciences, which proposes that cognition is a form of embodied action, and that "the human mind is embodied in our entire organism and embedded in the world, and hence is not reducible to structures inside the head" (Colombetti & Thompson 2008). Enactivism emphasizes that consciousness is central to the understanding of a cognitive system, and the concept of experiential self is significantly linked to consciousness. Thus, the enactivist theory of the nature of the conscious cognitive system can roughly be considered as a theory of self. For an enactivist view of self that also utilizes dream research, see Thompson 2015.

are not real experiences. For instance, Noë (2009, 179-180) uses this strategy and argues that: "[D]ream seeing is not really seeing at all. […] [W]e ought to think of perceiving as an activity of exploring the environment." However, this answer is rather unsuccessful since the claim that dream experiences are not real experiences is highly unintuitive and contradicts the dream research presented above. Thus, the dream argument shows that an online active interaction with the environment is not necessary for self-consciousness.[16]

4. The reflective self in dreams

As the above characterizations have shown, the dream self typically has a defective self-reflection and –narrative (Revonsuo 2005; Thompson 2015; Windt 2015; Windt & Metzinger 2007). Often the dream self does not succeed in critical thinking, makes mistakes in reasoning and acts irrationally. Even if the dream self would resemble the waking self, it suffers from difficulties in directing attention, thinking and decision making. Thus, at first sight, it seems that the study of dreaming cannot be as relevant for the examination of the reflective self as it was for understanding the experiential self and its necessary features. By contrast, the deficiencies in the reasoning of the dream self make one question as to whether it could it be considered equal with the waking reflective self at all (this seems to be the idea e.g. in Descartes' dream arguments which function as skeptical arguments, see. e.g. Windt 2015).

However, there is an interesting exceptional case of dreaming – lucid dreaming – which highlights the reflective capacities of self. In a lucid dream, a dreamer knows that she is

[16] Instead, weak versions of sensorimotor enactivism can offer more efficient strategies to answer the dream argument. The weak versions do not require an active online relationship with the environment in order to explain experiences, but propose that knowledge of the sensorimotor interaction (i.e. sensorimotor contingencies) is enough for constituting experiences (Telakivi 2020). In terms of self, it might be argued that the deficiencies in self-consciousness of the dream self actually support the enactivist idea that rich self-experiences involve interaction with the environment. However, an elaboration of the enactivist conception of self is not within the scope of this paper.

dreaming (Metzinger 2009; Noreika et al. 2010; Thompson 2015). A stronger definition of lucid dreaming (or definition of full lucidity) also highlights the following features.[17] 1) Cognitive insight and overall mental clarity that is at least as high as during normal waking states. 2) Agency is fully realized, involving the control of attention and behavior in the dream events; the dream self can do whatever she wants to – walk through walls, fly, or engage in conversations with dream figures. 3) The autobiographical memory is intact, involving full access to past waking life as well as in previous dreams. 4) The dream self's all five senses function as well as in a waking state. 5) Lucid dreaming involves more positive emotions and emotional control than non-lucid dreaming. Altogether, the experienced quality of cognition and agency is especially high in lucid dreaming; the dreamer has sharp self-reflection and perceives the environment even more intensively than when awake. Here is a famous example of a lucid dream report that does not contain all features of the strong definition of a lucid dream but presents the cognitive insight and quality of lucid dream experience (Fox, 1962, 32; quoted in Thompson 2015, 152):

> [...] Then the solution flashed upon me: though this glorious summer morning seemed as real as real could be, I was dreaming! With the realization of this fact, the quality of the dream changed in a manner very difficult to convey to one who has not had the experience. Instantly, the vividness of life increased a hundred-fold. Never had the sea and sky and trees shone with such glamorous beauty; even the commonplace houses seemed alive and mystically beautiful. Never had I felt so absolutely well, so clear-brained, so inexpressibly free! The sensation was exquisite beyond words; but it lasted only a few minutes and I awoke.

Lucid dreaming is especially interesting as a means of unfolding the layers of self, since it involves a profound change in self-experience. As Thompson (2015, 140) points out, lucid

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[17] The list here is combined from Metzinger 2009; Noreika et al. 2010; Thompson 2015; Voss et al. 2013; Windt 2015; Windt & Metzinger 2007. For the levels of lucidity, see e.g. Noreika et al. 2010; Thompson 2015; Windt 2015.

dreaming involves two modes of self-experience. In a nonlucid dream, a dreamer identifies with the dream self and can think, for instance, that "I am flying". By contrast, in a lucid dream, the sense of self shifts when the dreamer recognizes that "I am dreaming" and the dream self is only an avatar of the dreaming self. That is, lucid dreaming involves two kinds of self-awareness; one is aware of one's self both as the dream self ("I as dreamed") and the dreaming self ("I as dreamer"). Lucid dreaming therefore involves clear and distinct introspection, the insight of the illusory character of the dream self, and the realization of different modes of self-consciousness. These insights are conjoined with an ability to control the contents of the dream and guide the dream self, and offer an interesting perspective on the self.

Thus, lucid dreaming provides an opportunity to also approach the reflective self and enable further analysis of the functions and structure of self. For instance, it would be interesting to study the transition from nonlucid dreaming to lucid dreaming more closely.[18] As the above descriptions indicate, the characteristics of the sense of self in these two types of dreaming are opposite in many ways. While nonlucid dreaming involves only a highly unstable 1PP and confused thinking, lucid dreaming is related to a stable first-person perspective and cognitive insights. In terms of the pattern theory of self, nonlucid dreaming seems to involve a rather disintegrated and partial pattern, whereas lucid dreams seem to display an integrated pattern in which the aspects are linked together. Thus, tracking the proceeding from a nonlucid to lucid dream could reveal how the layers of self unite or the aspects of self become connected. That is, it is possible that dream research can offer finding about the integration of the aspects of self, not only about their dissociation. The transition from nonlucid to lucid dreaming is also of multidisciplinary interest; experiments that trace the changes in neural activation in the transition could assist in understanding the underpinnings of waking self. On the other hand, the precise conceptualization of different features of

[18] Another useful strategy to employ lucid dreaming in the study of self is to compare self-consciousness in lucid dreaming and other ASCs, see e.g. Noreika et al 2010; Thompson 2015; Windt 2015.

self is of utmost importance in the analysis and interpretation of the experiments and thus, co-operation between philosophers and scientist is encouraged and can be mutually beneficial.

An applicable but more complex future research object could involve the well-being of self. Lucid dreaming is characterized not only by cognitive insight but also by positive emotions, and well-being-oriented studies could benefit from an examination of the pattern of self in lucid dreaming. Based on the comparison between self-consciousness in nonlucid and lucid dreaming, it seems that the less integrated nonlucid dreaming involves fewer positive feelings, or at least the feelings experienced are less controlled. In contrast, the integrated and insightful lucid dreaming involves more positive feelings (Noreika et al. 2010; Voss et al. 2013; Windt 2015). Thus, it seems that a balance and integration within the aspects of self can lead to positive emotions (although lucid dreaming can also involve experiences of dissociation, see e.g. Voss et al. 2013). A better understanding of this integration and the interconnections of the aspects of self could also be used in interventions targeting increased positive affects or well-being of the waking self. However, more studies are needed in order to take full advantage of the phenomenon of lucid dreaming in the study of self.

5. Summary

Selfhood is a multifaceted phenomenon and in need of elaboration. Dream research offers a useful tool for the study of self since the aspects of self are organized differently in dreaming than in typical waking self-consciousness. This opens a novel vantage point from which to observe the structures of self. In this paper, I examined the dream self in terms of the general conceptual distinction between experiential and reflective self, both of which involve several more detailed aspects of self. The main focus of the paper was on the experiential self and its manifestations in dreams. It transpired that a dream experience can basically lack all aspects of self except the experiential aspect, and this was used as an argument for the necessary status of the experiential aspect in the pattern theory of self. That is to say, the empirical evi-

dence from dream research strengthens the concept of the subjective first-person perspective as the minimal or fundamental feature of selfhood. This significance of the experiential aspect undermines theories of self which claim some contingent features of self to be necessary. These features involve coherent self-reflection and -narrative, representation of a body, and online interaction with the environment. Concerning the reflective self, the quality of the rationality and reflection of a dream self varies. Typically, the dream self is characterized by deficiencies in thinking. However, lucid dreaming is an interesting exceptional case of self-reflection, characterized by a stable and integrated first-person perspective and specific cognitive clarity and control. Because of the high quality of self-reflection and integration of aspects of self, it could be useful to target lucid dreaming in more detail in future investigations of self. Overall, dreaming provides an interesting instrument with which to study the self. Although the dream self is not exactly the same as the waking self, it provides a means to learn more about the dimensions of self.[19]

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