
Freud's Dream Theory In Dostoevsky's Crime And Punishment

Sigmund Freud was a pioneer in psychoanalytic dream interpretation which is the process of explaining the way unconscious thoughts and emotions are processed in the human mind during sleep. Freud's theory says that dreams represent a hidden gratification of a repressed wish. Part of his theory states that dreams consist of two different parts, the manifest content and latent content. Manifested content is what humans remember after waking. The Latent content is what is not remembered and is considered part of the unconscious. Dostoevsky uses these two aspects of Freud's theory to show how the main character, Raskolnikov, has several dreams that relate back to his conscious action in the real world. There are clear signs of Freud's theory that Dostoevsky used to further analyze dreams in the novel, Dostoevsky seems to have been aware of Freud's studies on dreams. The dreams in the novel are subject to gratify Freud's Theory of Dreams as they are able to be dissected in a way that is parallel with the theory. In Dostoevsky's novel Crime and Punishment, Raskolnikov, the main character, has multiple, meaningful dreams that reflect Freud's theory of latent and manifest content.

In the entirety of Crime and Punishment, Raskolnikov has several dreams that manifest and latent content that appears in his behaviour, action or emotion. His first dream is sparked by deep feelings of hatred he has for the old pawnbroker. His repressed desire of murdering her is evident in his first dream. In his dream, a young Raskolnikov is on his way with his father to a church service. As they walk to the church they see a mare that is unable to pull the cart that is attached to it. The owner of the cart calls his friends to beat the mare to death. As soon as terror overcomes young Raskolnikov, the dream is over. This dream plays in hand with his desire of murdering the old pawnbroker to whom he despises. His action depicts those of the men who saw the mare as disposable just as Raskolnikov saw the old pawnbroker as disposable and a "...louse."(Dostoevsky, ...). The dream has an underlying meaning of Raskolnikov embodying these men and he loses all value of self and has now become a murder. Part of Freud's theory is his idea that "The dream is the (disguised) fulfilment of a (suppressed, repressed) wish." (Sigmund Freud, Dream Psychology: Psychoanalysis for Beginners). The latent content of this dream is the murder of the mare by the hands of these men who beat it to death, Raskolnikov fails to recognize that his urge to murder has overshadowed the innocence of his young self in the dream. Yet the manifested content was a desire of murder that had been repressed in his conscious world but came to light in his dream which leads to the fulfilment of his wish soon after the dream.

The second dream experienced by Raskolnikov is the death of his landlady. By now, he has already murdered the old pawnbroker and has great levels of paranoia about the police confronting him with the evidence of his crime. In this dream, He is awakened by the loud sounds of screams and resistance coming from outside his room. He realises that the screams are of his landlady being murdered by the policeman Ilya Petrovich. This dream as somehow evolved from Raskolnikov's first dream to one that he is now just a standby to the murder, he is neither involved in it nor a witness to it. There are many moments of fear and relief throughout the book and all build up to a monstrous unbearable tension. Elements of foreshadowing appear greatly in this dream. The constant fear of being caught rises in his conscious world by questioning from Porfiry Petrovich and his moment of a mock confession to Zametov at the

tavern. Freud wrote in his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, that “dream is the dreamer's own psychical act.” (Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*). The latent content of this dream is murder but it seems to have not have appeared from the dream of the mare but from his own act of murder in the conscious world. Also, Freud came to the determination that “ Dreams are constructed from the residue of yesterday.” (Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*). Raskolnikov's dreams have now been influenced by his conscious actions that will continue to leave their stain on every dream he has.

In his third dream, Raskolnikov's worst nightmare of accusation comes to life. The dream brings in two moments, one is the moment of the real murder and the second if his return to the home of the old pawnbroker after the murder. The heightened moment of this dream is the stranger in the long coat on the street says the words “ you are a murderer”(....). Raskolnikov has revisited the murder but has unconsciously placed the stranger there to find out what evidence the stranger has against Raskolnikov. The addition of adding the stranger provides a change in the direction of Raskolnikov's opinion on his crime as a more shameful approach. This dream changes from a self-motivated action containing anger to being driven by the stranger which internally is his inner conscious reminding him of his brutal deed. The dream is a hidden meaning of motivation toward the old pawnbroker's murder, Raskolnikov is able to convince himself that he could not possibly have committed the murder.

Raskolnikov's fourth and final dream is after he has confessed to his crime and is in a prison hospital in Siberia. In the dream, a plague has swept through and caused everyone to think they were a higher power. The people affected are not able to understand one another and they go so far as to mention creating a new race. This symbolises Raskolnikov's own theory about himself, that he has a higher power of anyone and a higher class than anyone else since he was able to murder the old pawnbroker without getting caught.

All four of these dreams relate to the running theme of crime throughout the book. It shows that initially, it looks like things like poverty, failure, loss of personal values etc. are the things that plague a man, but actually, it was his intelligence, anger-driven will, cockiness, and his ever-increasing guilt was really what plagued Raskolnikov. The bases of all of Raskolnikov's dreams stem from his violent actions. His mind went in and out of unconscious and conscious thought which lead to his actions. In his conscious mind, he kept trying to convince himself that he was completely incapable of his horrific actions and tried to suppress his inner thoughts of what he really did. Yet his unconscious mind never thought about the latent content of his dreams, all four of his dreams contained key images of what really was happening, all the four images were tied with each dream. It is not until he awakes from his final dream that he notices that he recognizes the murder in its entirety and puts together that his last dream was awaking from the dream of murder.