

pimozide ($n=20$) and sulpiride ($n=12$) were the most prescribed. Most patients ($n=82$) had used the same neuroleptic for between one and five years.

Thirty-five patients (37.6%) complained about their sleep in general. Early insomnia was reported by 26% of the patients, middle insomnia by 23% and early morning awakening by 16% of the patients. Hypnotics were used by 33 patients (35.5%) of whom 14 still complained about their sleep, while 21 patients (23%) complaining about their sleep did not receive sleep medication. It might be concluded that hypnotics are not very effective in this group of patients.

In accordance with the results of Benca *et al* (1992), patients with a diagnosis of affective psychosis had significantly more sleep problems (46.2%) compared to patients with a diagnosis of schizophrenia (30.4%). Sleep problems seemed to be more related to diagnosis than to the kind of neuroleptic used. This study shows that subjective sleep disturbances are common in schizophrenic patients, a finding that receives little attention in the literature.

Development and research of antipsychotics (D2-antagonists) in combination with sleep-improving properties (5HT-2 antagonism) is necessary and might prevent long-term misuse of benzodiazepines. In particular, depot forms of such drugs are needed.

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P.M. JUDITH HAFFMANS

ERIK HOENCAMP

HENDRIKUS J. KNEGTERING

BAS F. VAN HEYCOP TEN HAM

Psychiatric Centre Bloemendaal

Monsterseweg 93

2553 RJ The Hague,

The Netherlands

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The psychological significance of tattooing

Tattooing among criminals has excited considerable attention of late years. In a recent number of the "Archivio per l'Antropologia" (Vol. xxii., fasc 2), Prof. Berté has a paper on its psychic significance ("Il Tatuaggio in Sicilia in Rapporto alla Resistenza Psichica"). At Milazzo, in Sicily, tattooing is exclusively practised by the masculine sex, and only during youth. It usually coincides with sexual development; no one is ever tattooed after 20–25 years of age. It is among maritime occupations that tattooing chiefly flourishes. The impulse to tattooing, Dr. Berté considers, is always a momentary whim (*bizzarria momentaria*), favoured by imitation and the prolonged idleness of the sea, the barracks, the prison, and the hospital. The impulse seems to become almost irresistible, as tattooing is often prohibited and sometimes punished by official superiors. It is here compared to sexual aberrations, which the subjects only confess to with shame, and as belonging to a remote past. They always seemed rather ashamed of being tattooed, and wondered why the Professor wished to study "these stupidities." "The psychological cradle of tattooing," Dr. Berté considers, "is constituted by a certain degree of general nervous excitability. In the cases studied by me the phenomenon appears in intimate and constant relation with the psychic

resistance of the individual, in the sense that the more excitable the tattooed person, *i.e.*, the less his psychic resistance, the greater was the number and variety of his tattoo-marks." Individuals rich in tattoo-marks were always found to be restless and neurotic when their character and history became known. (In the Italian army, I may mention, tattooed men are found to be frequently insubordinate.) The tattooed criminals examined were found to be individuals with exaggerated excitability, although the mere instinct of imitation is sometimes sufficient. Both in criminals and in non-criminals the phenomenon is the same and may be explained by feeble psychic resistance. Tattooing was studied in Catania and the results reached in Milazzo confirmed. In Catania it was found to be very common, and this fact is associated with the marked religious fanaticism and superstition (involving psychic weakness) to be found in that town.

It may be added that Dr. Batut, an army surgeon, has recently published a paper of considerable length on tattooing as it exists in France and in Algeria, and also summarises some of the more recent studies of the subject ("Du Tatuage exotique et du tatouage en Europe," "Archives d'Anthropologie Criminelle," Jan., 1893).

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