



## **Anthropological Perspectives on Lucid Dreaming**

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**Hillman:** I want you to understand our situation. We're about the most unrehearsed panel you're going to witness today because we did not meet each other or communicate with each other until about 20 minutes ago, and I had not had any communication with either of the others who intended to be here. But for-tunately, it seems that we are able to interweave the remarks each of us had individually prepared, and are now going to attempt to do that...

I'm going to begin by raising the question, Is "lucid dream" a valid phenomenological category for cross-cultural research? I think that we have to be careful

not to impose this Western category of experience on non-Western cultures whose phenomenological systems may be very different from our own. One of the ways that anthropologists can contribute to the study of lucidity is to provide classical ethnographic descriptions of dream experiences as they are defined and understood by other cultures. By “ethnographic descriptions” I mean studies which use traditional anthropological fieldwork techniques of participant-observation and open-ended interviewing. This involves either literally or figuratively living with the people of a culture, or subculture, and learning to understand the way in which they live, and experience their world, from their own point of view.

One of the current debates in our own effort to define lucidity is whether the cognitive dimension - that is, the knowledge that one is, in fact, dreaming - or the experiential dimension - the heightened state of consciousness that can be, and often is, achieved in lucid dreaming - should be the primary criterion for calling a dream “lucid.” I think it’s conceivable that, in another culture, the significant factor in an experience involving both of these characteristics might be the particular content of the dream itself. For example, an experience of meeting an ancestor could be what is culturally defined as the significant or important factor. Being conscious in a dream, or aware that one is dreaming, might not be considered remarkable, but the information imparted by the dream figure who is encountered might be regarded as important. These are just speculations on what is possible. The less ethnocentric we are in approaching the inner worlds of people in other cultures, the better able we are to gain insight into the cultural influences that shape and define those worlds. And cross-cultural insight is a valuable means of better understanding our own perspective.

**Giesler:** I agree and would like to chime in with a few other points. In an article in the last *Lucidity Letter* (LL, 4(1), 12-14), Walter and Denton point out the same, or a similar, difficulty that Deborah is talking about. That is, you go to a culture, and you want to do an ethnographic description of a particular series of dream experiences. You are especially interested in lucidity. But they may only have had non-lucid dreams, yet they may describe their dreams in terms that are very much like lucidity - because of something like sub-cultural demand characteristics. For example, if they belong to a cult, or are of some institutionalized belief set, it may be very important to have that kind of experience or to narrate the experience in that fashion. Thus, there may arise a formation of local narrative around certain interpretations, certain ways of describing dreams even if you haven’t had those dreams you describe. Now that might sound like lying or deceiving to you, but if you are in another culture and you are totally absorbed in a movement, or cult, or some ritualistic context, then there ensues an extreme pressure to fit the format and a concomitant unconsciously directed dismissal of the process. Hence, the researcher may obtain considerable data pertaining to out-of-the-body experiences, lucid dreams, and so forth, but these may represent the ideal and not the real. They may well be dictated by “subcultural demand characteristics.”

In addition to the Walter and Denton article about the Hung Chinese, I understand that Joan Walls, who will be reporting later at the conference on her work with Chinese students (mainland China), encountered very similar methodological issues. There is an air of modernization in China, a kind of ambiance of “we mustn’t talk about things that aren’t practical” - the “mystical” things. “That was the old way, that was the Old China. So why are you interested in dreams; why do you want to ask about that? That’s ridiculous!” Whether or not that attitude could in fact alter the dream experience would be a different question. But in terms of collecting data about it, it certainly does influence or bias the collection process and that should be taken into account.

**Hillman:** I think that’s very important. Furthermore, not only is it possible that the characteristics of lucid dreaming, as we define it, could occur and yet not be considered important, but it’s also possible that a report could be given in which the characteristics that we define as lucid dreaming appear to have been present but in fact, experientially, did not occur.

Also, anthropological fieldwork methods lend themselves to studies in the context of Western culture, including American society. This, too, is an area in which anthropology has a very important contribution to make to dream research. Research on dreaming in Western culture, and certainly in American culture, has been virtually ignored in the ethnographic literature, and there’s a very good reason for this. Anthropologists are products of their own culture, just like everyone else, and the low status of dreams in our culture has meant that anthropologists simply have not thought of dreams as very important. However, there are many societies in which dreams do have a central, social function to fill. And anthropologists, in the course of their fieldwork, pay attention to dreams in those cultures because anthropologists pay attention to whatever is important, in a particular culture, to the people of that culture. But in American society, anthropological dream research is an area which is wide open and barely touched at this point. I think that a great deal needs to be learned about the phenomenology of lucid dreaming in America, and there are many other questions that lend themselves to an ethnographic inquiry, such as: How is the phenomenon of lucidity handled in dream group settings?, and, Does lucid dreaming play a role in the development of personal philosophies or world views?

**Giesler:** You mentioned that the anthropologist is influenced by his or her own culture, and that this influence extends into the research domain (i.e., when he or she goes into another culture to do a study). That amount of influence is going to be of methodological importance in terms of how reliable the data are that you collect, because if you influence the object of your study, imposing, for instance, your own theoretical constructs, then of course you will only be collecting certain kinds of data. If dreams are not so important in anthropological literature, or there is a question as to how one connects dream studies to maintain anthropological theories, then when anthropologists go out to the field setting, it

is likely that dreaming will be very secondary or tangential to their research aims. This is understandable; one cannot research everything. But problems do emerge later on in cross-cultural studies and should be taken into account in any assessment of such studies.

For example, an anthropologist by the name of Dean Sheils from the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse wrote quite an extensive article on a cross-cultural survey he did about out-of-the-body experiences. It was published in 1978 in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*. He took samples of ethnographies of different cultures from a very large collection of ethnographies of cultures all over the world, called the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF). With HRAF you sample 100 or 200 ethnographies so that you are catching various world areas, and then you compare the reports of certain phenomena or assess the relationship of socioeconomic or other variables to the phenomena of interest. It is a helpful tool, but there are several problems involved with it. Sheils was interested in the incidence of OBE's reported. In his analysis, for instance, one must ask if the ethnographer of each culture sampled was interested in out-of-the-body experiences? How much research energy did he put into it, if any? In one case in his survey, for example, that of the Isnag tribe, the particular anthropologist whose ethnography was chosen for the HRAF collection doesn't report any instances of out-of-the-body experiences at all. Most other cultures did and that was the main point of the article. And he goes on to make other points regarding the presence/absence of OBEs. A few years ago a colleague of mine (Murray, 1981) went to study the Isnag tribe. It's a very isolated group and there have been few cultural changes over the years. She went specifically to study out-of-the-body experiences with the Isnag and to compare these with various control tribal groups in the outlying areas. She obtained a very high incidence of out-of-the-body experiences among the Isnag. I'm not trying to say that she's right, and that the HRAF ethnographer was wrong, or anything of that kind. We have to analyze what she might have been imposing, how she was phrasing questions, or what demand characteristics were involved in her procedure for interviewing. But as far as I know from her particular technique, it was well done and organized, and was very sensitive to translation problems (i.e., how to present her survey questions). At any rate, the highly divergent reports from the HRAF ethnographer and from my colleague underscore the issue I am presenting here - that you can't rely on a lot of anthropological material in areas of secondary interest such as dreams or OBEs. One must be cautious with cross-cultural studies or comparisons of such phenomena. It's a complex issue, and ultimately depends on the research intentions and interests of the particular anthropologist going out to study a particular culture.

**Hillman:** You again raised a complementary issue that is important. Not only is there a lack of research on dreams in American culture (and in Western culture generally), for the reason that I mentioned, but there has been a lack of research on dreams in non-Western cultures where dreams are not "obvious" in the social pattern. We have a phrase which is probably familiar to all of you because it appears in the popular as well as the anthropological literature - more so in the popular literature, I think - and that phrase is

“dream culture.” Often those cultures which have a very high regard for dreams - the American Indian cultures, for example - are referred to as “dream cultures.” This is a reference to their degree of involvement with dreams, and yet it’s really an ethnocentric point of view. They are “dream cultures” by comparison with Western culture in which dreams have such a low status. But from the point of view of those cultures, dreams are not outstandingly significant in their lives - no more so than many other aspects of social and cultural life. In other words, although dreams play a significant role in many aspects of their ritual and social life, these are not “dream cultures,” per se, except by our standards; that is, from a Western point of view.

I also want to mention another reason for carrying out interdisciplinary collaborations in studying dreams, lucid or otherwise, in our society. That is the fact that there are some populations which, for one reason or another, are not going to be tapped by questionnaire survey methods, or they’re not going to fit into what you might call the “culture of the dream lab.” The very elderly, for example, may have special needs that preclude spending a night in a sleep lab. Furthermore, there is a need for bilingual researchers, or for interpreters, at least, in our ethnically diverse society, so that non-English-speaking people are included as informants, or subjects, in dream research. In addition, there is a need to understand cultural norms of communication, and of dream sharing, that differ from one’s own. In order to gather the kind of data that anthropologists, and other dream researchers, are interested in, it is necessary to develop rapport with an informant or a subject, and in order to develop rapport, one needs to be sensitive to cultural norms which may differ from one’s own in terms of styles of communication and questioning, etc. Anthropologists can help by addressing these issues.

**Giesler:** I don’t have any further comments on that. Perhaps we could present some ethnographic data at this point. Do you have other issues you would like to bring up first?

**Hillman:** As you can see, I’m prepared to speak primarily about some of the methodological and theoretical considerations involved in creating an “anthropology of dreams,” and I think it’s wonderful that Patric is going to complement that with some actual ethnographic data. Another point I want to raise concerns theory. In the 19th century, the anthropologist, E. B. Tylor, thought that the widespread belief in the wandering of the spirit during sleep was inferred from the nature of dream imagery. He thought that because dreams often involve encounters with persons who have died, and visits to faraway places, this widespread belief must have come into being as a result of logical deduction, based on these common features of dream experience.

I would like to suggest that, in light of contemporary knowledge of lucid dreaming in Western society, a new question arises; namely, might this widespread belief in the spirit’s autonomy during sleep - in its separation from the physical body - have a basis in the direct experience of becoming “awake,” or conscious, within the dream? That

is, might it have an experiential basis rather than a deductive one? I merely suggest that as a theoretical possibility. And in general, I want to suggest that anthropology can make contributions to dream theory, as well as to dream research methodology and to the growing body of data on the experience of dreaming. And I think that Patric has quite a bit to say about some of the data he has collected.

**Giesler:** I have not done any research on dreaming or lucid dreams. My work has been primarily concerned with certain initiatory and divinatory mediumistic practices amongst three prominent Afro-Brazilian shamanic cults, called the Candomble, the Caboclo, and the Umbanda Cults. Before coming to the conference, I jotted down a few ideas about the trance experiences in the cults that may pertain to lucid dream or OBE research. Here, my focus will be on the Umbanda Cult research. I simply want to throw out some ideas and possible connections. Remember that all of the methodological cautions that we have just outlined apply to my data as well. Although I was sensitive to these issues in my research, far more thorough study will be needed to support the observations and the kind of information I will present here.

I think that it is useful to compare the phenomenological characteristics of altered states, such as these trance states I am about to discuss, with lucid dreams (cf. Harry Hunt's article in *Lucidity Letter*, 4(1), pp. 1—2, where he compares the perspective of the lucid dreamer with the perspective of the Theravada Buddhist during insight, or mindful-ness, meditation). Although it is pulling cords and stretching things a bit to make these connections, I think it can stimulate some questions regarding the mechanism or dynamics underlying both states. The two basic points that I want to bring out with these data are: (1) that there is a certain similarity between mediumistic trance states in the Umbanda (and probably in other possession trance cults as well), hypnotic trance states, and the lucid dream state; and (2) that the "inconsistency" element so often reported in lucid dream onset may have a counterpart in both certain possession trance states, and phenomenologically comparable, hypnotic trance states.

Let me begin with a brief word about the cults. All three are called "possession trance" cults by anthropologists - "trance," because one observes an altered state (i.e., behaviorally it looks like an altered state or it is believed to be an altered state by the experient), and "possession," because the actors or experients believe that they are possessed by a spirit or deity. In other terms, I am talking about ritual trance mediumship: some alternative personality (or what appears to be an alternative personality) "takes over" the medium in the ritual context and manifests. Proficiency in the trance experience and knowledge of cult matters is distinguished by neophyte ("initiate"), advanced ("full medium"), and expert ("shaman") levels. The cults were derived from the slave trade, much like the more well-known "Voodoo" cults in Haiti.

In the Umbanda, three types of trance states are distinguished by adherents. They call them "unconscious," "conscious," and "semi-conscious" trances. In the unconscious

trance, the medium is ostensibly unconscious or amnesic to the whole possession trance experience, the whole event of the spirit personality taking over, controlling the body, giving consultations, dancing, or whatever else the spirit personality does in the ritual, context. The mediums do not have control of their vocal musculature, and hence do not have control over the content of the “spirit’s” speech or other behavior. When the “unconscious-trance mediums” or shamans awaken from trance or become fully conscious (when the spirit “departs”), they report that they had been dreaming, or in some cases, that they had been having what we would call an out-of-the-body experience (OBE). In the conscious and semi-conscious forms of trance, Umbanda cultists assert that one is aware that one is in trance, as one is aware in lucid dreams that one is in a dream, and the awareness often resembles normal waking consciousness.

Lucid dreamers report a degree of control over the content of their dreams, ostensibly without a diminution of the “depth” of the state. That is, they are not more awake or closer to waking consciousness than an ordinary dreamer (That is, most lucid dreams occur in REM. But some do not, and of these, a few may reflect a shift toward waking). However, the conscious control that Umbanda Cultists are able to exercise over their conscious and semi-conscious possession trance states, appears to be due, in the case of initiates, to a lack of trance depth. This is because these forms of trances ordinarily represent developmental phases before the full unconscious trance stage of mediumship. At the later stages in their development, when they are functioning as advanced unconscious-trance mediums and shamans, they may learn to shift from their unconscious possession trance into conscious or semi-conscious forms of trance without jeopardizing depth. Thus, here, the similarity to the lucid dream state is stronger. Some Umbanda shamans and advanced mediums attest that they are then able to attain an awareness that resembles waking consciousness with (a) a recognition that they are indeed in trance; (b) a degree of influence or control over the trance activity (i.e., the spirit personality’s speech or behaviors); and (c) a trance depth comparable to that of unconscious trance, since the spirit personality manifestation proceeds equally stably with or without their conscious input.

Another interesting characteristic of these conscious and semi-conscious trance experiences is that they may be sustained or caused by the recognition of an inconsistency much like the recognition of an inconsistency that seems to generate a great many lucid dreams. For instance, the initiate’s impression of possession trance when he or she first experiences it is dominated by an inconsistency between, on the one hand, being so aware or conscious, and yet on the other hand, suddenly not having complete normal control. “If I can feel aware as I normally do, then how can I be possessed,” they ask? Most often they are participating in a ritual ceremony when they first experience the “inconsistency” or “bizarreness” element of conscious trance. They are observing, clapping, and chanting while the developed mediums are entranced and perhaps their possessing spirit personalities are giving consultations or divinations. The initiate watches the mediums, somewhat removed, and then suddenly, experiences one of his

arms moving in a way that is culturally prescribed for a particular type of spirit possession. The initiate exclaims to himself, "My god, that's ridiculous; I'll just put my arm down!" But, he finds that he cannot. Although he is totally aware of what is going on, his arm is in the position taken during spirit possession. "I can't be possessed, because I'm aware. But then I can't be fully aware (i.e., in control) because I can't move my arm." Hence, for the initiate, like for the lucid dreamer in the lucid dream state, the perception of an inconsistency is a concomitant of the early trance experience and may play a role in its induction.

The initiate's early trance experiences, or "stage" of trance, if viewed developmentally, are comparable to the early stages of hypnotic trance induction. In heterohypnosis, for instance, suggestibility tests or techniques are often used at the beginning or before the formal induction. In one most common suggestibility test, called "arm raising," it is suggested that the subject's arm is getting lighter and lighter. The subject is fully conscious, and if the test is successful (the arm raises as if by itself), the subject is appalled: "My God, that's incredible! I can't be hypnotized, because I am fully conscious; yet how could this happen?" The subject is conscious, but with a certain lack of control. Thus, it is a situation analogous to what happens to the Umbanda initiate, and is again reminiscent of the lucid dreamer's state and experience of an inconsistency.

Also, in both the contexts of Umbanda ritual and hypnosis, there is a second party who validates these early trances and assures the experient that his experiences are perfectly normal and expected. In hypnosis the second party, of course, is the hypnotist, or operator, who reassures the subject: "Yes, you're doing fine; all is going well; and you are responding well." In the Umbanda rituals, the second party is the shaman or other advanced mediums in the context, who knowingly affirm to the initiate that, "Yes, that is how the spirit first takes hold. Don't resist him and he will come more strongly each time."

The initiate, as with the hypnosis subject, comes to understand that his experience is not an "inconsistency," but rather just a beginning in a process. As the initiate (and similarly the subject) comes to perceive his experience less as "inconsistent" or "bizarre" and more as "consistent" with another way of viewing his experience, he enters into an unconscious form of possession trance. In time he may learn to be reflective, to be able to come out of the unconscious trance to a semi-conscious or conscious form of trance, as many Umbanda shamans report that they can do.

It is here that I find another connection with lucid dreams. When the shaman is in unconscious trance, he is unconscious to the spirit personality's activities and experiences meanwhile a dream, or dream—like state. Some even report having OBEs at this time as I said earlier (This simultaneous operation of two consciousnesses, the spirit's and the medium's, may be analogous to other, more familiar, dissociative states such as "automatic writing," where while one hand writes eloquent poetry about the universe, the



writer chit chats with a friend about a baseball game without giving the writing his slightest attention). When the shamans, who are dreaming during unconscious trance, move from that state to a conscious, or semi-conscious trance, they essentially pass from a dreaming state to a "lucid trance" state, since, as I mentioned earlier, they become not only aware of their trance state and the manifesting spirit personality, they are also able to exact some influence, inhibitions, or direction to the spirit's speech and other behaviours. Hence, the shaman's shift from dreaming in trance to lucidity in trance resembles the dreamer's shift from ordinary dreaming in sleep to lucid dreaming in sleep. Usually, the shaman will return to unconscious trance and continue dreaming.

I do not know what it is in the shaman's dreaming at this time that instigates his entrance into lucid trance; nor do I know if there is any kind of relationship between the content of the dreams and the content of the possessing spirit personality's speech or activities in the ritual context. In a few instances, I knew that a shaman was concerned about certain clients who were to consult his spirit (i.e., consult his spirit personality). Perhaps these concerns left him "on edge" as he entered his unconscious possession trance, and thus "awoke" him occasionally to a lucid trance, somewhat in the same way that pressing concerns or worries will awaken anyone periodically during the night from normal sleep. Only that in this case the shaman did not awaken to normal consciousness. Also, I have no data on an element of "inconsistency" arising during the shaman's trance dreaming that could engender his "false awakening" into semi-conscious or conscious trance. Rather, it appears that in most cases, the shamans have simply learned how to move between the Umbanda forms of trance, as needed. Hence the element of "inconsistency" played a role in their early experiences of conscious or semi-conscious trance (as initiates), but eventually that element became one of "consistency." This also appears to be the case for experienced lucid dreamers, who have learned how to enter into lucid dreaming, but without reliance on the startling recognition of an inconsistency.

In hypnosis one may induce a shift from a deep (i.e., amnesic) trance that is perhaps analogous to the shaman's "unconscious trance," to a trance in which the subject becomes aware of his state, is not amnesic to his experience, and begins to take some control, somewhat like an Umbanda shaman's semi-conscious or conscious trance or a dreamer's lucid state. This is accomplished with the introduction of an "inconsistency" during the hypnosis. "Depth," by criteria dependent on absorption in the task, such as hypnotic dreaming, is not lightened, and the spontaneous emergence of control in an otherwise heterohypnotic rapport is striking. For instance, I have induced hypnotic dreams in subjects to deepen their absorption or trance, and this is most successful until I give a suggestion that contradicts their suggestibility level and which they cannot accept at that point. That contradiction is perceived as an inconsistency and either awakens the subject entirely, or induces a type of "lucid trance."

Let me give you a specific example. On one occasion I hypnotized a subject and suggested a dream of a bicycle trip, something he very much enjoyed. This was a

particularly good hypnotic subject with whom I had conducted several previous sessions and achieved deep levels of trance (e.g., hypnotic local anesthesia for the extraction of two wisdom teeth; negative visual hallucinations; etc.) He brought a friend, Paulo, to this session, and Paulo sat either in the same room or just outside it during the hypnosis. As always with this subject, each re-hypnosis brought him more quickly and easily to deep levels of trance, and the dream bicycle trip succeeded in engaging his full absorption. He literally pumped with his legs on an imaginary bicycle and held out his arms to grasp the “handle bars” and to steer through a beautiful countryside.

At one point I said, “Oh look, it seems that someone’s coming up over the hill ahead towards us...” “Oh yes, there is.” he responded, and leaned forward as if straining to see who it was. “In fact,” I added, “it’s Paulo!” But the subject’s response was unexpected. Hearing me say that Paulo was riding a bicycle in his dream, when in reality Paulo was sitting somewhere near us, struck the subject as an impossible inconsistency. He laughed, realizing then that the bicycle trip was only a hypnotic dream, and exclaimed, “Are you kidding?! That can’t be Paulo, he’s here...” I assumed that the subject had come out of the trance, but he continued bicycling. I quickly added, “Yes, you must be right, who is that coming toward us?” He said he wasn’t sure and couldn’t make him out yet. I discovered later that Paulo didn’t ride a bicycle and that the subject knew no one who did. Hence, my suggestion struck the subject as particularly strange. Yet, paradoxically, seeing himself on a bicycle in the country while, in fact he was sitting next to me in a room, did not, on the other hand seem inconsistent to him. Similarly, it is a particular element in an ordinary dream that the dreamer finds inconsistent and that subsequently falsely awakens him to lucid dreaming; whereas other elements of the dream do not seem inconsistent. It appears that it’s a question of what the dreamer feels could or could not happen in an otherwise realistic situation that determines which element will strike him as bizarre. Yet, certainly, many non-realistic or “bizarre” events in dreams do not evoke lucidity.

In any case, my subject continued fully absorbed with the bicycle trip dream, but with an “awakened” consciousness. Now, contrary to our previous hypnotic rapport, he chose which of my suggestions he would accept and which he preferred to alter. Also, he took a greater measure of control over the creation of his dream. It appeared then, that, he had become “lucid” in his hypnotic trance dreaming. He became aware of this hypnotic state and dreaming through the recognition of an inconsistency, and in the alteration of our rapport, he took more control and was able to manipulate his trance experience.

Perhaps now I could close with an hypothesis concerning all of the states discussed. Let us begin with the hypnosis example above. I propose that the element of “inconsistency” in my suggestion drove my subject into a form of spontaneous autohypnosis. For, there emerged a marked and significant difference from our usual heterohypnosis in terms of the subject’s awareness of his state, his own shaping of his trance experience. If this is true, spontaneous autohypnosis may also more aptly describe

the shaman's phenomenologically similar conscious or semi-conscious trance state, when he has entered it from dreaming during unconscious trance. In this state the shaman is aware of his trance: depth is maintained and he may exert a degree of influence or control over aspects of his trance experience. The Umbanda initiate, although entering conscious or semi-conscious trance from ordinary consciousness, may also be shifting into a state with the autohypnotic attributes of a trance with awareness resembling waking consciousness and a degree of control or influence.

Finally, when the ordinary dreamer shifts into lucid dreaming and experiences both an awareness that he is dreaming and a degree of control over the dream state, he may actually be shifting spontaneously into a "conscious" or "semi-conscious" form of autohypnosis. It may be that the sudden appearance and recognition of a "bizarre" or "inconsistent" element in all of these altered states experiences induces the false awakening and lucidity that generally characterize a deep level of spontaneous autohypnosis. With time and practice, some may learn how to enter these lucid states of autohypnosis more easily and frequently as is the case with expert hypnotic subjects, the Umbanda shamans, and experienced lucid dreamers. In sum, whether or not my hypothesis is valid, or overly speculative, I think that it behooves us to evaluate, comparatively, shifts of consciousness and degrees of control in possession trance and in ordinary and hypnotic dreaming and the role of certain features therein to induce shifts to lucidity.

**Hillman:** I think that it's wonderful that you brought this data out because it illustrates that cross-cultural studies of consciousness - and when I say "cross-cultural" I don't mean just non-Western - can really help us to get a feeling for the "looseness," and overlapping nature, of our own phenomenological categories. They help us get a perspective on the fact that they're really not discreet, "objective" categories of consciousness. I think this is one of the important functions of cross-cultural studies of consciousness: helping us to understand the nature of our own phenomenological categories better.

I want to quickly make one more point about doing fieldwork in American culture. I think it's important to highlight the significance of the dream work movement which is a grassroots social phenomenon currently taking place in American culture, and in other parts of Western society as well. It is a movement to make dreams more important, socially and culturally, and the academic segment of this movement is an outgrowth of the grassroots effort that has been evolving. The dream work movement sets the stage for raising the "dream consciousness" of anthropologists, along with others in the society, and as a result I think that we're going to see a proliferation of anthropological dream research in the next decade.

I think it's a valuable thing for anthropologists doing fieldwork on dreams, particularly in our own culture, to have an experiential background, and that's certainly

something that the dream work movement can provide. Being familiar with the language and meaning of your own dreams, and with the qualitative variations in consciousness that can occur during dreaming (since dreaming is not, in fact, a unitary state but a multi-dimensional one) enables greater sensitivity to the emotional and cognitive aspects of talking about dreams with informants. The result is enhanced rapport with informants and also the possibility of more accurate interpretation of the information that's given.

We did not review the anthropological literature on dreaming, and for those of you who are interested, let me mention that the best survey of current anthropological approaches to dreams is contained in a special issue of *Ethos*, the journal put out by the Society for Psychological Anthropology. It includes a paper by Barbara Tedlock who was to be the chair of this panel but who was not able to be with us today. Her paper is an excellent example of ethnographic fieldwork on a system of dream interpretation in a non-Western culture, in this case the Quiche Maya of the Guatemalan highlands. You may also be interested in knowing about the Association for the Anthropological Study of Consciousness and the Association for Transpersonal Anthropology, both of which are organizations involved in the study of consciousness from an anthropological perspective.

Note: The Winter 1981 issue of *Ethos* (Vol. 9, No. 4), a special issue devoted to dreams, is available for \$6.00 from the Society for Psychological Anthropology, 1703 New Hampshire Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 10009.

For information on membership in the Association for the Anthropological Study of Consciousness (AASC) write to: Priscilla Lee, 145 Grove Drive, Portola Valley, CA 94025.

For information on membership in the Association for Transpersonal Anthropology, Intl. (ATAI), contact: Shirley Lee, 2001 Tibbits Avenue, Troy, NY 12180.

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