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Fieldwork Planned and Begun

Fieldwork was planned, on behalf of the American University at Cairo, in the western desert of Egypt early in December, 1965. Under the supervision of Dr. A. Boujra of the American University and Dr. A. M. Abou-Zeid of Alexandria University, two teams were to investigate such problems as tribal organization, land tenure, customary law, modernization, and urbanization among the Bedouins, etc. The study is mainly concerned with the problems of nomadism and sedentarization and it is expected that the results will be of use to competent authorities as a guide in planning sedentarization projects.

A. M. ABOU-ZEID
Ramlleh, Egypt

Scholars As People

Dreams, Idle Dreams

by Robert H. Lowie

All my life I have been a chronic and persistent dreamer. Not only do I dream, as it appears to me at least, continually throughout every night, in addition, I often hear voices or see visions when I am lying with my eyes half-closed, just resting. It has always been so with me. From a boy I have been, in doze or sleep, a visionary. At various times in my life I have kept a "dream diary," writing down each morning those dreams that I could remember from the night before. Since dreaming is of interest as a psychic phenomenon I shall venture presently to describe a few of my better efforts.

It is odd that I should be the one to lapse into dreaming. Awake I am a matter-of-fact person with an orderly mind and—by repute, at least—little imagination. I know several people who are full of fanciful notions and others who are not a little fey, but their dreams are neither as frequent nor as gaudy as mine. Since I seem to have been chosen as a dreamer par excellence, perhaps it is my scientific duty to put on record some of my somnic experiences.

I should first like to make a few comments about the general nature and characteristics of my dreams and about their effects upon me. Perhaps the oddest thing about them is that they almost never have an emotional accompaniment of any sort. They are dramas that unfold themselves upon a stage. Even when I am a participant, I am also a spectator. It is probably this play-like quality that robs them of this stage. Even if I think in a dream that an experience is somewhat unpleasant, I have no feeling of revulsion or disgust. The bizarre associations which my unconscious mind presents me are merely entertaining, whatever their nature. My only feeling is one of delight at the quality of the dream that I have had. To me dreaming is great fun.

A second point I should like to mention is the extreme specificity of my dreams. I do not dream that a man is going down a street looking for a house number, but that a clearly-seen, elderly man with white hair and a reddish scar on his left cheek is walking with a pronounced limp along East 78th Street in Glendon, Utah, looking for number 408. There is rarely anything vague about either the action of the plot or the dramatis personae.

A third point which has always intrigued me is the rather casual participation in my dreams of those to whom I am actually most devoted—my parents, my sister, and my wife. To be sure, they appear fairly often but I rarely see them; they are simply there, perhaps accompanying me, perhaps merely looking on. They may have a minor role in the drama, but they are not often important.

By contrast there is the frequent intrusion into my dreams of completely unknown individuals, whose features are clear and unmistakable. I would recognize them should I see them again. If I were an artist, I could draw them in complete detail. Yet to the best of my knowledge I believe I have never seen them before. I have always wondered why, when I already know hundreds of people, I go to the trouble of inventing new ones. Even when I dream of an authentic historical character or of a real acquaintance I am as likely as not to clothe him in Japanese occupation, and the influx of U.S. culture and should reveal many interesting and complex cultural features. The archaeological data will be compared to the ethnographic data in such ways as: (1) the ratio of shards to utensils made of other materials found in the dump compared to the ratio in use in the community; (2) the ratio of unusual to common pottery types in the dump contrasted with the ratio in use in the community; (3) a theoretical reconstruction of the history and circumstances of the accumulation of the dump tested against the data obtained through community study; and (4) the significance of stratification as determined by the history of the community and reconstructed by the excavation team.

Won-Yong Kim
Seoul, Korea

This article was written in 1957, about 6 months before my husband died. I added only the last dream. Luella Cole Lowie.

This reputation was without foundation. My husband had plenty of imagination, but it was of an unusual type and he rarely gave it free rein. L.C.L.
flesh that is utterly unlike any picture or waking remembrance of his actual appearance.

The effects of my dreams upon me may also be of interest—and they have always had effects. At an age when my friends were all violently opposed to religion in all forms and I too was inclined to be an atheist on strictly logical and scientific grounds, I could never quite believe that there were no psychic forces in the world because I could not shake free from strictly logical and scientific grounds, or waking remembrance of his actual existence. Although I often gave lip-service to the opinions of my friends, I could not become the hardboiled rationalist that I certainly wanted to be when I was young, largely because my eerie nocturnal experiences did not seem to my logical waking mind to belong to a wholly mechanical world. In later years my dreams were a great help to me in understanding visionary experiences of primitive peoples. I too hear voices and see visions. For instance, as I sit dozing over a book, I catch sight of the brilliant-eyed head of a woman, no larger than a penny; or I hear a fellow-student's wife speaking French, which, even in the dream, I am aware that she cannot speak; or I hear words strung together in defiance of common sense, as when an elderly, clearly-seen Viennese explains in slightly accented German how his son migrated to the United States and became not quite as a one-hundred-and-twenty-year-old boy. The difference between me and an Eskimo shaman who has heard a meaningless jumble of sounds or a Crow visionary who has seen a strange apparition is that I do not regard such experiences as mystic revelations: we both dream them. But I can understand the underlying mental and emotional experiences a good deal better than most other ethnologists can, because I have identical episodes every night and almost every day of my life.

I have tried at various times to classify my dreams, but I have never been successful, although certain common types may be mentioned briefly and then dismissed. Like most other people I have had many dreams that resulted from physical stimuli. When I was a young man, erotic fancies thrust themselves forward; at various ages, grave difficulties brought about disturbed and confused dreams; just before my prostate operation, I had frequent dreams about searching for a toilet. On one occasion I dreamt that I was winning a foot-race but was cheated of victory because my left foot went to sleep—whereat I woke up, and my left foot was asleep.

Another large group of my dreams centers around my occupation. As a very young man I tried teaching in elementary school and proved a dismal failure. The experience evidently went deep, for decades later I was still fairly often haunted by somnic images of myself vainly trying to stay the din of unruly youngsters in a classroom. Pleasanter and even more enduring in their influence were my 14 years at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Periodically I still wander at night through its endless corridors, go up and down its elevators, talk with its personnel, or sink out by its rear exit.

Typical anxiety dreams—but without the feeling of anxiety—disturbed me before my oral examinations for the doctorate. One night I passed through a hall where my major professor, Franz Boas, was talking to a tall, cadaverous-looking individual who was entirely strange to me, and I overheard their conversation: "Will you let him (me) pass?" asked the unidentified stranger, and Boas answered, "No, he's too blond." This remark did not in the least upset me in the dream, although at the time I felt during my waking hours the usual anxiety and uncertainty of a doctoral candidate whose hour of doom is approaching. A few nights later I had a typical anxiety dream of so vivid a nature that I still recall it almost as I recorded it the following morning. The setting was essentially realistic—the west side of Schermerhorn Hall on the Columbia campus, where a flight of steps leads down to the level of Amsterdam Avenue. One staircase was immensely high, and several moving vans were poised at the top, about to drive down the stairs. I asked the drivers in my most polite Austrian manner to allow me to go down first and, taking their permission for granted, I began to descend the steps. The wind was blowing so hard. Without receiving any instructions, the barber shaved my face clean. His armchair was crowded with Italians, whom he tried to eject, waving a revolver in his left hand. When some of the intruders continued to linger, he scared them off with an immensely long arquebus. Oddly enough, I bought a railroad ticket at the very same shop—and of course I bought it without knowing what place I was headed for. When I examined the ticket it was, much to my surprise, marked "Niagara Falls." Quite recently, in one night, I witnessed a series of peculiar occurrences, all of which I have to take place to me. First, at a Shakespearean performance two ladies in the audience began suddenly to sing so loudly that they drowned out the actors entirely. Next, I entered a large hall, in one section of which about a dozen little Indian
children were lying on classroom benches set in solid rows. Then, situated upon a beautiful boulevard, I found a never-never restaurant; memory of a divine meal there still lures me thither, but I shall never again find it.

In my dreams I often meet people whom I know only by reputation or historical characters long since dead. In my student days I read Karl Pearson's *The Grammar of Science*; on one night the great biometrician appeared and we engaged in a wholly rational talk about statistics. Curiously enough, however, he was trying to retrieve some object that had fallen into a chink, while I was recovering fragments of a soft hat and a derby. On one of my nocturnal railroad jaunts a Mrs. Vanderbilt was a fellow-passenger. She got off at a station and walked bareheaded down the middle of the street. I followed her until she suddenly halted before a medieval-looking structure. There she exchanged greetings with a tall, thin female wearing a coronet and a cross on her breast, while a man in period dress was standing nearby.

It sometimes happens that distinguished acquaintances turn up at night in atypical situations. In 1930 I had attended a scientific gathering at the Ethnographic Museum of Hamburg and made the acquaintance of its director, Professor Thilenius. A year or two later I met him in a dream, standing at the side of his horse, within a stone's throw of the since demolished McCown's Tavern in upper Central Park, New York City. He was holding a volume of Edgar Allan Poe's tales and asked me if I had ever heard of anyone named Calixtus—a title which seemed so improbable to me that I could not be sure it really was nonexistent until I looked up Poe's writings. The central point of the plot was that the director, Professor Thilenius, a year or two later, had invented a German system of notation, and had jumped through the window of an antiquated auto. On the ground was a large and clumsy-looking saddle that the Dean intended somehow to stuff into the small luggage compartment. He wanted us to help him, but I refused upon the grounds that my companion was a nonagenarian. The Dean finally put the saddle on top of the vintage-1920 Ford and drove off in a huff. Von Humboldt and I decided to take a walk. I was wondering just what would be the proper mode of address for me to use in speaking to him and finally decided upon "Herr Baronchen," which seemed hardly felicitous. I asked him how he felt towards the several languages in his polygot repertory, but Morpheus would not tarry for an answer. Very casual were my contacts with Dr. Samuel Johnson years ago. I ran into him at a bookshop resembling Bretano's in New York, but he soon disappeared without a word through a swinging door. Oddly enough, the meeting at the time left me with a sense of gaining a much better understanding of the sanitary arrangements in 18th-century England. His French contemporary Voltaire was slightly more articulate, although his question was hardly to have been foreseen: he pointedly asked me just why American anthropologists felt as they did about Paul Radin, at the time one of my fellow travelers. With Friedrich Schiller, the German poet and dramatist, I became really chummy—in fact, I took him under my wing. It seems that he was greatly smitten with a young lady of quality, whose haughty mother discouraged his attentions. I infused spirit into the shy lover, and we jointly crashed a party at the dowager's house. By way of recommendation I told her that Schiller had invented a German system of shorthand. Notwithstanding these credentials she snubbed both of us and prevented the poet from dancing with her daughter. When I heard my friend speak English, my mastery of the language mysteriously raised her notions of our social status. Relenting, she asked me to dance with her. This precipitated a quandary that ended the dream. "What kind of step shall I dance with her?" I asked myself: "I'd like to waltz, but I can't because the waltz has not yet been invented!" Apparently my critical faculties do not slumber altogether.

For whatever use they may be to those who are interested in the nature and structure of dreams, I will present a few culled from my notebooks. They are in order, but they are not of any particular type. They have been selected merely as representative of what might be called my run-of-the-mill dreaming. Some psychologist may be able to use the material for whatever purpose he or she has in mind; I submit, however, that the casual reader may find some of the experiences of interest and very likely similar to incidents in his own dreams.

1908. I was standing with Professor Edmund B. Wilson in a classroom. He was examining me on what purported to be a red cedar. He asked me why certain leaves were differently shaped from others, and whether or not a member of the genus was to be found in my part of the country. In the meantime the class was having a written examination. Some pupils turned in their inkwells, but I made them put them back again. Suddenly a Dr. Tower came in, leading a strange-faced man whom he introduced as Prof. Xerxes. The class was to address the class on Maracas, Tinamos major, while the class was still writing the examination. I protested that the pupils would be too disturbed by the lecture to do their best work. Prof. Xerxes then sent for what appeared to be a navy officer, named Dulaphous, who made me stand in a corner for incompetence.

March 18, 1908. Mamma, Risa (my sister, and I were entering a strange city in an open vehicle that seemed to be a kind of toboggan. It slid down a track which was on an inclined plane, and on the way down we nearly ran over an oldish man with bright red hair and spectacles; also, he carried the white cane used by blind persons. Mamma and Risa started for the ladies' room, but on the way Risa fell into a hole in the floor, and I had to pull her out. Suddenly I discovered that I was left alone only an undershirt, which I pulled down as far as I could. I then looked up from the floor. I wanted to buy both clothes and a ticket at the ticket-office, but of course had no money, having left it in my coat and trouser pockets. However, the ticket seller gave me a handful of coins amounting to $3.75, among which was a Canadian five-cent piece, which I identified because it had a squatish hole in the middle! With this money I stepped into the men's room and bought an entire outfit of clothes—with $3.75.

May 25, 1908. I dreamed that I was standing by watching a Paiute medicine man examining Abraham Lincoln, who appeared to be ill. The comparison in height between Lincoln's 6 feet and 4 inches and the Paiute's 4 feet and 1 inch was ludicrous. Lincoln finally had to kneel so that the medicine man could listen to his heart. The Indian was explaining the merits of his race, emphasizing their use of a certain zigzag ornamentation, which I saw distinctly in the dream. Then I overheard someone behind me saying that Lincoln was really a coward and jumped through a train during a railroad accident at 8th
Avenue and 116th Street in New York. Suddenly I found myself in the elevator of the same station. I seemed still to have the Paiute with me. On the way down, the elevator began to fall; so the Paiute built a fire on the floor, made incense from sagebrush, and by this means brought the elevator to an orderly stop at the usual place.

April 17, 1946. I dreamt last night that I was at a banquet table and had to deliver two speeches. For the first one I raised my glass and said, "Take." For the second I also raised my glass and said, "Take." The queer thing about this dream was that these "speeches" gave me an inordinate sense of satisfaction with myself, plus a feeling that I had at last mastered Hungarian!

May 8, 1911. Last night I dreamt that I was in a hospital but without being ill. I wandered upstairs, very lightly-clad, when a physician approached me, so I fled back to the corridor, we met a complete stranger, who, at which, he walked out of the car and completely off the train, although I felt that I was much too big for the car and too clumsy to use this method effectually. Finally I managed to climb halfway down, but with a good deal of slipping and stumbling. At that point I discovered to my joy a sort of chute such as one sees in children's playgrounds, seated myself upon it, and was down in a twinkling, where I found Mother and Risa, who applauded me.

July 16, 1946. I was traveling across Mexico with various people, including Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) who did not look in the least like his pictures and was very funny. I had to open the window for him, but I told him I was no mechanic. Later on, I discovered that the straps which were supposed to go around the window for him, but I told him I was no mechanic. He answered, "No window, no straps." At which, he walked out of the car and completely off the train, although I estimated the speed (on the same dream) as being about sixty miles an hour. As my car went past the next station platform I was surprised to see him standing there unhurt and smoking an enormous cigar which was, however, bright blue instead of brown in color.

July 12, 1946; August 30, 1946. I was in a room at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Bella Wetzner and two men were there, all of us ready to start for a party. As we proceeded down the corridor, we met a complete stranger, who, however, immediately left us to enter one of the offices, but he was hauled back in this intent because the stranger who had come off the door, and the mechanic who was fixing it said the room couldn't be entered till a week from Tuesday. Miss Wetzner explained that the stranger was a foreigner who had come to New York, and the mechanic who was fixing it said the room couldn't be entered till a week from Tuesday. Miss Wetzner explained that the stranger was a foreigner and spoke only English! This remark prompted me to tell her that I had invented an imaginary phrase in Spanish and should use it in a Spanish speech that I was presently to deliver. She turned out to be "imagenes hermanas," which so far as I know is no invention. As we approached the elevator we were joined by Nelson, who has his own method of riding in an elevator: he climbed up and sat on the roof.

August 7, 1953. Risa, Mary Haas, and I were together, walking down a University building and peeping into classrooms and laboratories. Mary talked of going to Chicago to meet someone named Lukas Longevon whom she had just described as having a face that was "unangenehm und fein" (unpleasant and refined). For some reason I was expecting that Risa would meet Mary Haas, but not me. Risa and I were walking along in front of a large estate. Coming towards us was a little boy. I explained to Risa that he was extremely mischievous. He was crying and told us that his teacher had spanked him, whereas I also spanked him. Outside the grounds we met a man I had consulted as an officer, but he wore the kind of gaudy uniform that was familiar to me in my Viennese childhood. We walked on to the rear entrance to a little park in Vienna (it was the park that I really was in). I have often walked. We both thought the scene indescribably beautiful. At the far end of this park was a low monument I can remember seeing. I said to Risa, "Unless my memory fails, that is the Grillparzer Monument." (There is such a monument in Vienna but not in this park, nor is it of this shape.) I might add that this entire dream was carried on in German; I dreamt impartially in either language, German or English, but never in a mixture of the two.

August 31, 1946. I dreamt that I had been appointed as head of the Anthropology Department at Columbia (where I had been teaching during summer school) with Bogoras, Strong, Esenwein, and an unknown Diamond under me. The entrance to my office was on the east side of Broadway and one went up an interminable flight of stairs to reach it, but upon arrival found a tiny lavatory just inside the entrance. I complained to Krober that it was not suited out for the younger men if I needed to, but that it would be embarrassing to call down any one with the age and fame of Bogoras. I seemed to be quite certain that there would be frequent need for discipline and that I would be incapable of administering it.

September 27, 1946. I dreamt that Cora DaBoos—did not look in the least like herself but was a round, roly-poly, red-faced, and rather noisy woman—had challenged a male athlete to a boxing contest. A crowd assembled, including the people with whom Cora usually stayed when she visited in Berkeley. There was much excitement. I bought a ticket, after an argument with the ticket-seller as to whether the cost was $2.30 or $3.40. Cora disappeared to make herself ready for the bout. When she came back the whole matter reduced itself to the reading of a letter written by her adversary, in which there were remarks supposedly detrimental to his reputation. Apparently, even my subconscious mind would not accept Cora as a boxer.

April 25, 1953. Several nights ago I dreamt that I was in New York City at the 59th Street Station, not the subway. A spiral staircase led into it, and there was sumptuous decoration inside, suggesting an opera house. The passengers were seated in something like a theatre lobby, where an elderly Irish woman had laid out numerous crackers with caviar and the like, also pieces of cake, I had to content myself with the latter because, the caviar was all gone, much to my annoyance—although when awake I don't even like caviar.

April 27, 1953. I was walking in a Coronation Parade alongside of Winston Churchill, who looked like his picture. I told him that the pageantry was far superior to that of the Fourth of July Parade in New York City. I had an uneasy feeling that at some point in the ceremonies he would have to take a special position and would therefore leave me without a partner, something that once happened to me at a Uni-
Collected a great throng of people. I sat in thought we should have been nearer the front of the procession. I had some dates in a little pouch, similar to the one in which I carry my Zurich knife, and I handed them to Churchill, requesting him to return the pouch, but I had a pre-sentiment that he would not do so.

May 5, 1953. I was a captive in the home of an elderly, bewhiskered enemy. His face was entirely clear to me but completely unknown. First, he subjected me to a written examination and then hinted that I should do some work in my clear vision. He then walked away, accompanied by my host, a little, agile, leaffish-looking man with a monocle in his left eye.

Suddenly Paul appeared balancing several bowls of soup, so the three of us sat down in the middle of the elevated platform and were waiting on an apartment in New York when I saw Paul Radin walking below me on the street. I ran down the stairs and overtook him. I asked him if he knew I was there, and he evidently did but made very little of it. He was headed for a secondhand bookstore, whither I accompanied him. He went through several rows of books and then called my attention to an autobiographical book in German by Jacques Loeb and his wife. As frontispiece for the volume there was a picture showing me in the University of California and wanted to talk to me. I explained to him that I was leaving Copen­hagen on an early train the next morning, where he countered by proposing to meet me on the ferry, since he lived near the Danish end of it, and to talk to me during the crossing. I had never seen him, and he had never seen me, but he felt sure that he would be able to find me, so we did not bother with descriptions. During the night after this telephone conversation I dreamt that I saw a young man approaching me on the ferry and recognized the character of the dream. The resemblance was not one hundred per cent, but it was sufficient for identification.

September, 1956. Radcliffe-Brown and I were both going to take a train from Grand Central Station and were waiting on an elevated platform for transportation to the Station. He told me that a certain Muenter had been "mitrotteerd." I didn't understand the word and asked him to repeat it, which he did, but I didn't understand it any better the second time. I also wondered whether or not Muenter lived in Muenchen. At that moment Paul Radin arrived, having been sick; he had been troubled to send the package to him by the throat, and threw him down on the floor.

I was unable to finish even that part of my claim. I kicked a picture showing both of them before the one in which I carry my Zurich knife, and remarked that it was a picture showing both of them before the one in which I carry my Zurich knife. I had never seen him, and he had never seen me, but he felt sure that he would be able to find me, so we did not bother with descriptions. The resemblance was not one hundred per cent, but it was sufficient for identification.

September 19, 1957. I was leaning out of the third or fourth story window of an apartment in New York when I saw Paul Radin walking below me on the street. I ran down the stairs and overtook him. I asked him if he knew I was there, and he evidently did but made very little of it. He was headed for a secondhand bookstore, whither I accompanied him. He went through several rows of books and then called my attention to an autobiographical book in German by Jacques Loeb and his wife. As frontispiece for the volume there was a picture showing me in the University of California and wanted to talk to me. I explained to him that I was leaving Copen­hagen on an early train the next morning, where he countered by proposing to meet me on the ferry, since he lived near the Danish end of it, and to talk to me during the crossing. I had never seen him, and he had never seen me, but he felt sure that he would be able to find me, so we did not bother with descriptions. During the night after this telephone conversation I dreamt that I saw a young man approaching me on the ferry and recognized the character of the dream. The resemblance was not one hundred per cent, but it was sufficient for identification.

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It is adventures such as I have re­lated above that make dreams a joy. One shakes off the fetters of prob­ability and glides through the centuries as though astride a Wellsian time machine. Events of the highest in­credibility become commonplace, and there seems to be no limit to the bizarre juxtaposition of normally unrelated ideas. It is no wonder that when I turn in at night I feel that I may be launched upon the most ex­citing part of my seputsgenarian exist­ence.