Dream Interpretation from Anthropological Perspective (Dreaming in Different Cultures)

Vihra Barova (Summary)

The article presents the development of the theoretical interest in dreaming as an object of anthropological analysis. The focus of attention is on dreams per se, along with dream interpretation, narration of dreams, and perceptions related to dreams in different cultures. Beyond their psychoanalytic interpretation, dreams are examined as a specific type of ethnographic material and a means of communication within the community and between the researcher and the researched. Dreaming is a universal human characteristic, but at the same time, the importance attached to dreams in different societies varies significantly. Based on the ethnographic examples presented in the article, the author have sought to answer the question what factors make dreams in some cultures to be considered an important source of information and even a field of action, while in others they are perceived as imaginary fragments with no relation to everyday life.

Keywords: anthropology; culture; dreams; dream interpretation; reflexivity; voodoo cult

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