Lemov, Rebecca: **Database of Dreams**. The Lost Quest to Catalog Humanity. New Haven; London, Yale University Press, 2015. 368 p. \$ 35.–. ISBN: 978-0-30020-952-5

In her recent book Lemov takes as a subject the cataloguing of the inner self, looking at how technologies of measuring, storing and circulating data became major preoccupations for anthropologists and micro-data specialists in the years between 1930 and 1960. Lemov focuses on Bert Kaplan's ambitious *Microcard Publications of Primary Records in Culture and Personality* (1954–1963), an early version of a global database dedicated to the comparative study of the inner lives, displaying and contextualising the psychometric tools used by cross-cultural testers to observe “the effects of the changing outside world on the interior personality” (p. 55). Lemov argues that the underlying ambition was to restore what has been lost within the process of forced acculturation (for instance in Native American cultures).

There is still a lacuna in history in placing a joint perspective on technology and subjectivity within the broader context of Cold War human sciences, in particular anthropology. Lemov intervenes there. *Database of Dreams*, her second book, reads like an alternative for, or complementary history to, her first book in which she focused on behaviourism (the main discipline besides military-affiliated psychiatry and communication theory that characterised Cold War politics and science in the United States). With a focus on field-workers, the historian of science unfolds a hitherto rather unknown history of the processes of interrogation, standardisation and information technology inherent to, and developed within, the human sciences, showing how their cross-cultural quest to constitute an encyclopaedic collection of cultural beliefs anticipated, to some degree, today's “collective-yet-authorless work” (p. 254) of an ever-increasing digital data-world.

The book is divided into ten chapters. It begins with an extensive chapter on the Rorschach test – its use from clinical psychiatry to Nazi trials and fieldwork anthropology –, highlighting the fascinating story of Bruno Klopfer's introduction of the inkblot test in the United States (after the latter had failed to be applied in Switzerland, where it was originally invented by Hermann Rorschach in 1921). Lemov then moves on to discuss the history of personality assessment tools (TAT, House-Tree-Man, Stewart Emotional Response, or Draw-a-Person Test) to emphasise the central role psychodiagnostics played within anthropologists' investigations of the inner life, most notably of Native Americans – their dreams, beliefs, and cultural attitudes. In the following chapter (3), the historian of science makes a substantial contribution to the history of technology, focusing on reader equipment, micro-reproduction systems, encyclopaedic models – emphasising also unrealised, de facto imagined machines, such as *Memex*. She demonstrates how micro-management of data (micro-film, micro-cards) was specifically developed for and applied to the preservation of cultural data, which anticipated the success (and later oblivion) of Kaplan's “database of dreams” – a National Institute of Mental Health-sponsored microcard project. The genesis of the latter is further discussed in chapter 6, where Lemov takes into consideration the institutional and research contexts of Harvard and Yale Universities, as well as the National Research Council. After the focus on the data-driven Ivy-League group of men and their professional ties, Lemov moves on to elaborate the work of an “outsider”: Dorothy Eggan – a non-professional anthropologist yet with strong ties to the established circles of anthropologists – and her collection of Hopi

dreams gathered during the 1930s. Lemov emphasises Eggan's anti-Freudian framework in analysing the cultural content of dreams, as well as her technology-inspired approach (Eggan argues that Hopi dreams had "television qualities of the night life of the mind" (p. 154), meaning that they were dreaming what they were watching and reading in the newspapers, to a similar extent as in Western culture). Lemov then discusses Eggan's work and those of other women dream scholars (Louise Spindler, Elizabeth Colson) within a broader context of anthropological methods, for instance of "life-history" and "expressive autobiographical" interview. Lemov closes the book with a reflection on current discussions on big data and their antecedents, or what she calls "prescient" developments – such as Kaplan's and others "cold war-era look-inside-your-head fantasies" (p. 233) – designating them as proto-versions of data curating.

Database of Dreams is a particularly good read for historians of psychology and mental health, who are interested in a larger context of the human sciences and how it relates to technologies of self and personality assessment. For instance, in Lemov's book, one can discover what a Rorschach test becomes once it is applied to an Ojibwe tribe, rather than to a schizophrenic patient, as it has been classically done, at Burghölzli for example. Or, the importance to study the setting in order to understand the investigative nature of scholars in history, as well as collaborative aspects at stake within a patient-physician or a research-subject relationship.

Lemov is at her strongest when she argues that the "culture- and personality movement" was preoccupied with materials from "illiterate" cultures as a means to catalog what has been "lost" within the process of forced acculturation with the West. As she shows convincingly, this happened not as a result of altruism (even if so), but was rather an attempt (by American scholars) to shape a progressive mind. Here, Lemov makes an interesting link to recent scholarship on the history of the concepts of the "open mind", or the "anti-authoritarian personality" that proliferated after World War II to engineer a democratic society, capable of avoiding fascism and integrating major cultural changes and shifts. Lemov also interestingly emphasises how Cold War fictions of brainwashing and spying within this "preventive war" context were part of anthropologists' investigations (the latter showed how Zunis feared – similarly in extent to Western Americans – infiltration and mind control in their dreams).

While one can certainly appreciate the detailed account on innovative initiatives taken by the renowned and sometimes less known and obscure protagonists, at the intersection of data management and human sciences, one could also expect to have further visual materials or close-up on specific cases to illustrate the otherwise convincingly displayed narrative and network of relations and tools. Lemov's book is an important contribution that gives insight into how dreams were perceived and studied outside of the clinical realm (and Freudian framework). Because of its projective character, the "database of dreams" could potentially be linked to creativity studies, a predominant aspect in pre- and post-World War II studies. In other words: to what extent the very notion of understanding the human nature (with its lost, recovered, simulated or manipulated character) nourishes a utopia for understanding the inner mechanisms in order to innovate society at large.

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