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METHOD OR MADNESS? THE TRANSPERSONAL ANTHROPOLOGIST IN THE FIELD

by **Leslie Conton**, Fairhaven College, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington

Last summer, I returned to the Usino area of the Upper Ramu Valley, Papua New Guinea, to continue field research focusing on indigenous concepts of disease causation, diagnosis, treatment, and the social organization of traditional practices. The Usino people have had access to rudimentary Western medicine since 1967, but in 1981 still exhibited resistance to its use, favoring traditional healing procedures. Between 1978 and 1987, the last three traditional medical practitioners within the Usino culture group died, leaving the Usino people with two medical options: traditional healers from outside the culture group, who are also feared as sorcerers, and Western medicine, as available at the Aid Post several miles away. I wanted to understand the expectations, attitudes and beliefs about Western medicine held by the Usino people and to learn how they conceptualized introduced medical practices. How did they define medical options, and were they integrating newer practices or beliefs? As applied anthropologist, I was concerned that the results of my research directly benefit the Usino people in their quest for culturally-appropriate and improved health care, and that my ethnographic knowledge and skill facilitate a more effective and culturally-sensitive integration of Western and traditional therapies. This research focus on disease etiology and treatment, led me directly into the realms of

shamanistic healing and sorcery, the first of which I have explored extensively, academically and experientially as a state-specific researcher, the second of which I had only known academically.

I originally conceptualized this paper as an academic overview of Usino healing traditions, a formal paper on "what I learned," but considering the nature of this publication, I opted to risk another approach, to share with you some methodological thoughts and quandaries I experienced, working within a transpersonal paradigm in the field. I do so more in an attempt to elicit feedback and discussion, than to present research findings, which are explicated elsewhere. Although I explored a variety of emotional states related to healing, here I restrict my focus to emotional states, especially fear.

This was my third research trip to the Usino region. In 1974-75, I lived there for a year, pursuing general ethnographic research, with a focus on the anthropology of women and male-female relations. In 1981 I returned, completing a district-wide survey of reproductive decision making, the value of children, and traditional practices affecting fertility. This was part of a collaborative cross-cultural study for the Papua New Guinea Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research. In neither case did I adopt a transpersonal perspective, partly because the research topics did not lend themselves easily to this treatment, but largely because I had not yet fully integrated this perspective into my academic life. Over the next several years, however, my personal quest for spiritual and psychological growth and my exploration of non-ordinary states of consciousness gradually transformed my academic persona, so that in 1987 I formulated research questions that would lend themselves to a transpersonal perspective. I hoped to study the experiences and knowledge derived from alternate states of consciousness, as they related to my topic. One of my working assumptions was that *experience* of the transpersonal state being studied is crucial to scientific understanding, and that subjective experience is a significant ingredient in our scholarly and scientific understanding of culture. Although standard academia does not train anthropology graduate students in subjective field methods, and our culture does not honor or cultivate somatic, kinesthetic or proprioceptive intelligence, it is still possible to tune oneself, psychologically and somatically, to perceive in a relatively

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accurate and disciplined way. The goal to experience non-ordinary realities for ourselves, to transcend realities when culturally appropriate, is corollary to the traditional role of anthropologist as participant-observer, and it is necessary to derive understanding of a culture on its own terms, in terms of its own assumptions and perceptions about reality.

I was especially interested to examine, scientifically and experientially, the emotional or intuitive content of Usino culture, as it related to the health belief system. I wondered if my intellectual, left-brained approach to Usino culture had obscured other kinds of understandings or communication that might be derived from emotional or proprioceptive channels. Since my 1981 visit to Usino, I had fine-tuned my emotional and sensory faculties sufficiently to trust them as part of my research equipment, consciously using my somatic responses as part of the data-gathering tool kit. The primacy of self as anthropological referent, trusting ourselves as informants in state-specific research, is one of the underlying principles of transpersonal anthropology as I understand it.

I sought to enter the consensus consciousness of Usino culture, to whatever extent I could escape my own cultural conditioning, and what I experienced was a constellation of emotions quite unlike my ordinary cultural reality, one in which fear figured predominantly and where the acceptable volume of expressed emotion was far greater than that in American mainstream culture. Recognizing that strong emotional states constitute alternate states of consciousness, and that cultural perceptions may be shaped by predominant emotional states, I opened myself to the experience of those feeling states. Inquiries about Usino concepts of health and illness taught me that humans and spirits were the main agents of illness, through various forms of sorcery and spiritual punishment, respectively.

This tropical lowland environment is rife with disease. Infant mortality is approximately 28%; malaria is endemic, and respiratory disorders and intestinal infections are ever-present threats to life. In this culture group of 400, someone is usually gravely ill or dying. Very few attain adulthood without a close brush with death. Illness is directly or indirectly attributed to social transgressions, disharmony, grievances between people, or between people and spirits, bush or ancestral spirits. If not redressed directly, grievances are rectified through sorcery or spirit-inflicted illness. Most serious illness and death are attributed to sorcery, which may be procured by Usino people but is actually executed by outsiders from the neighboring uplands. Because this is a primarily endogamous, face-to-face culture, where relationships are multi-stranded and deeply embedded over generations, occasions for conflict and disharmony are many. Consequently, no one is free of fear of sorcery, and this ever-present fear is reinforced by the frequency of illness and death.

In my former incarnations as anthropologist, I neither felt this pervasive fear (presumably because I was not receptive to it), nor did I believe that sorcery could affect someone who did not believe in its destructive potential to me, sorcery was essentially a "psychosomatic" phenomenon. In this recent incarnation, however, as a

result of training in shamanic healing, I had adopted a personal world view that admitted of the possibility of misuse of power; that is, misdirected anger or negative thoughts could cause harm to those not spiritually empowered. Because of these personal beliefs, I practice several shamanic techniques for maintaining spiritual power, as preventative medicine against sorcery. Despite this, my own consciousness was still altered by the fear of sorcery in which I was embedded, and to which I had opened.

The Usino people have few techniques for spiritual protection and none for prevention of sorcery; small wonder they see themselves as victims. Their fear manifests in myriad ways -- they generally avoid walking outside village perimeters at night, but when events transpire to make it necessary, caution is required. Deadly snakes (which are sorcerers turned into snakes) strike in the shadows, and *sangguma* men (spiritual assassins who project magical darts) do their work under the cover of darkness, and may be encountered on the trails. Any unusual sound at night, or the daytime appearance of a stranger on the trail or in the village brings all activity to a dead halt. Women and children huddle, and men move to the perimeter with their weapons. Stark silence reigns until the sound or stranger is identified; the fear is palpable, children whimper and cry. As I delved deeper into Usino knowledge and belief about sorcery, and my understandings of that system grew, so did my experience of fear. Although I had no cause to fear strangers, and only slight cause to fear *sangguma*, my body would respond empathetically to such situations with tightness in my solar plexus and jaw, my stomach would knot, and my breathing would become shallow or non-existent.

This brings me to the "method or madness" part of the paper. One of the characteristics of a transpersonal experience is a transcendence of spatial boundaries, in which you encompass what is outside yourself in ordinary reality and feel a oneness with the group, or a sense of individual boundaries melting as the unit becomes the group. Usino culture engenders this kind of transpersonal experience, in many ways, to an extent greater than in our consensus consciousness. A characteristic group laugh exemplifies this unity; after a comical comment or incident, the group will join together in collective crescendo, in unison, "hey, HEY, HEY!" Transpersonal accounts typically portray transcendence of personal boundaries following a very loving or positive unifying experience. My experience suggests that collective emotional experiences of fear, sadness, or grief may have similar effects.

The methodological issues crystallized around these encounters with collective fear. Fear is not one of my ordinary-reality specialties, so until I grew accustomed to the physical symptoms of fear, I sometimes lay awake, crying and shaking, letting the feelings manifest somatically. This insomniac state, compounded with the normal physical and psychological stresses of fieldwork, further contributed to my altered consciousness and sensitivity to the emotional milieu, but it also gave rise to ferocious self-examination. Was the fear I was experiencing *really* theirs, or was it of my own fabrication, or both? I could find little personal content to it, yet the

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FROM THE EDITOR . . .

In this issue we have three short papers dealing with methodological issues. The question of method is often taken for granted in anthropology, but takes on more importance when dealing with problems of the mind and consciousness. The anthropology of consciousness must deal with at least three issues: (1) The experiential aspects of altered states of consciousness and how an anthropologist learns to experience and empathize with the conscious states of other groups; (2) The experimental field methods which can be used to quantify and verify the abilities of magico-religious practitioners; and (3) The problem of comparing the variety of magico-religious practitioners cross-culturally and how best to form typologies based upon socioeconomic, political, and consciousness criteria.

The first of these issues is raised in Leslie Conton's thoughtful paper about her experiences with the Usino people of Papua New Guinea. The second question of experimentation in the field is raised in Patric Giesler's reply to James Donovan's charisma paper (See *AASC Newsletter*, 4(2):4-9). Although Giesler discusses his methods in far greater detail in other published works, his paper here touches upon the problems inherent in parapsychological research and how he carefully adapted parapsychological lab techniques for the field. The final problem of comparison is presented in the concise results of Michael Winkelman's cross-cultural study of trance practitioners. Winkelman's findings are the result of a complex statistical analysis of cultural material drawn from the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample and his methodology is detailed in his cited works. Each of these papers represents differing aspects of the anthropology of consciousness which are united by the ongoing efforts of the researchers to find valid and meaningful ways to describe and understand the social and psychological processes surrounding consciousness.

AASC NEWS

New AASC Logo

The *AASC* would like to extend special thanks to *AASC* member Carol Patterson who designed the new logo last March. Ms. Patterson, who is researching and analyzing Indian petroglyphs and sign language, writes that the logo has the following meaning: The upraised arm position means "to pray" while the double set of arms or open arms means "good". The center of the figure's body means "receiving in the heart area" signifying intuition. The antennae on the head mean "emerging out" giving a meaning of "emerging out of the head into higher consciousness in a good way."

ORGANIZATIONS

Beyond the Doors of Perception -- A recent program in Los Angeles launched the **Albert Hofmann Foundation**, designed to provide a research center for the study of human consciousness. The foundation, founded by Oscar Janiger, is named after the discoverer of LSD, Albert Hofmann, who accidentally discovered this powerful mind altering substance almost five decades ago. The program featured music by George McMillan and entertaining and informative presentations by seminal researchers in the field such as Timothy Leary, Ram Dass/Richard Alpert and Ralph Metzner.

"The Albert Hofmann Foundation is a California non-profit Public Benefit Organization. The primary objective of the organization is to establish and maintain a world information center and research library devoted to the study and exploration of human consciousness, including related areas such as psychiatry, psychopharmacology, ethnobotany, anthropology, theology, art and creativity.

"With the materials already promised the Albert Hofmann Library is assured of being the most complete collection of its kind anywhere in the world. The library will house books, papers, correspondence, tape recordings, news clippings and research reports as well as a unique, valuable art collection. The

initial collection has been donated by Oscar Janiger, who has done extensive research on L.S.D. and creativity.

"The library will also serve to educate the public about human consciousness through lectures, seminars, workshops, conferences and newsletters, and by making archives of the Foundation available to scientists, scholars and the public.

"Financial support will come from contributions, donations from public lectures, symposia, etc...grants from private charitable foundations, donations from use of the library, and admission to the art gallery. The organization will become fully operational when we receive sufficient funding to lease a facility to house the collections and begin library operations.

"The Albert Hofmann Board of Advisors brings together most of the pioneers in consciousness research. [The] library and art gallery...will be the only center of its kind in the world, and will serve to further understanding of human consciousness." (Reprinted from *Beyond the Doors of Perception* Program with permission of Executive Producer Robert Zanger.)

For more information, contact: **Albert Hofmann Foundation**, 1328 Westwood Blvd. #36, Los Angeles, CA 90024, (213) 281-8110.

AASC CONFERENCE INFORMATION CORRECTION

The *Association for the Anthropological Study of Consciousness (AASC)* will be holding its Fifth Annual Conference in Pacific Palisades, California on March 1-5, 1989. Please note that conference registration fees were incorrectly quoted at last year's rates in the recent "Call for Papers" mailing. The correct fees are \$35 (not \$20) for members and \$45 (not \$35) for non-members. If you have already sent in the wrong amount we would appreciate your cooperation in sending the remainder due. We apologize for the inconvenience. Members must also submit 1989 membership dues with their \$35 conference fee. For more information contact ***AASC 1989 Conference, 336 Blue Ridge Drive, Martinez, CA 94553, (415) 935-4463.***

Deadline for paper and session abstracts has been extended to November 1, 1988

A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF TRANCE PRACTITIONERS

by **Michael Winkelman**, Cross-Cultural Consultants, Irvine, California and Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

A cross-cultural study based upon a subsample of the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample has determined the incidence, types, nature, function, activities and trance states of magico-religious practitioners (Winkelman 1984, 1986a&b), and has empirically identified different etic types of trance based practitioners. The different types of trance based magico-religious practitioners have been labeled utilizing the most commonly used terms: Shaman, Shaman/Healer, Healer, and Medium. Table 1 reports the different types of trance based magico-religious practitioners found in the different societies of this study. The associated social conditions represent the findings of a test of a cross-cultural evolutionary model of magico-religious practitioner types and their development under socioeconomic change (Winkelman 1986).

These different trance based magico-religious practitioner types correspond to traditional distinctions in anthropology and have strong and regular relationships to different socioeconomic conditions: Shamans are found in hunting and gathering societies, and Healers and Mediums are found in societies with political integration beyond the level of the local community. The following sections describe the different trance based magico-religious practitioners; Table 2 (p. 6) summarizes the most important distinctions among these practitioners.

Shamans are the only type of magico-religious practitioner found in nomadic hunting and gathering societies, and are the charismatic political leaders in these societies with political integration limited to the level of the local community. The Shamans are selected and trained through procedures such as involuntary visions, signs from spirits, illness, deliberate vision quests, and the induction of trance states labeled as soul flight, journeys to the underworld, and transformation into animals. Shamans form the basis for the universal distribution of practitioners who utilize trance states and engage in healing and divination. Evidence that Shamans derive from an ecological adaptation of biologically based trance potentials includes: the universal distribution of Shamans in hunting and gathering societies, their distribution throughout the world without evidence of diffusion, and their greater empirical similarity to each other than to other types of magico-religious practitioners in their own regions.

Shaman/Healers develop from Shamans in the process of socioeconomic change from hunting and gathering societies to sedentary agriculture communities, with political integration beyond the level of the local community. Analysis of the data of this study and a review of relevant literature illustrate the factors involved in the transformation of the Shaman. Shaman/Healers differ from Shamans in several respects: they have a higher degree of social organization and group activities, including collective ceremonies and training; their roles are more specialized, in that the Shaman/Healer might only cure certain diseases or specialize in particular types

of rituals; their trance states do not involve experiences labeled as soul flight or journey; they utilize impersonal sources of power such as mana; they are found in societies with agriculture as the principal subsistence base and in which Priests are also present; and they have a lower relative social status than a Shaman, reflecting the social dominance of the Priests in societies where Shaman/Healers are present.

The **Medium** is a distinctive type of trance based practitioner, found in societies with political integration beyond the level of the local community. Mediums are predominantly females and are generally of low social status. Mediums are selected for their positions on the basis of possession trance experiences, involving culturally defined episodes of possession by spirits. These spontaneously induced trance states characteristic of the Mediums show symptoms of lability in the central nervous system such as compulsive motor behavior, tremors, convulsions, seizures, and amnesia which have been linked to discharges in the temporal lobe (Winkelman 1986b); these characteristics are not associated with the other types of magico-religious practitioners.

The **Healers** are generally found in societies with political integration beyond the level of the local community and where Mediums are also present. Although involved in healing and divination, Healers differ strongly from Shamans. The Healers generally do not engage in trances, but learn spells, formulas, rituals, and manual techniques for divination. The Healers are generally of above average economic status, restrict access to their profession through expensive training fees, and exercise political, legislative, and judicial power. The integration of the Healer's positions within the institutional structure of society is illustrated by their participation as officiants in life cycle rituals such as naming ceremonies and other post-birth rituals, marriages, and funerals.

The research suggests that the loose usage of terms like shaman and medium be replaced with a careful assessment of the relationship of particular practitioners to the patterns and differences found cross-culturally. The particular trance based adaptations for healing and divination found in hunting and gathering societies differ considerably from the types of trances associated with possession in more complex societies. Although there are important similarities in terms of the commonalities of trances induced by diverse conditions (Winkelman 1986b), the distinctive features of these diverse practitioners deserve recognition. An expanded data set on these practitioners is available on computer disk (Winkelman and White 1987).

References Cited

Winkelman, M. (1984). *A Cross-Cultural Study of Magico-Religious Practitioners*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine. (Available through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan)

_____ (1986a). Magico-religious practitioner types and socioeconomic conditions. *Behavior Science Research*, 20:17-46.

_____ (1986b). Trance states: A theoretical model

HUNTING AND GATHERING
NO POLITICAL INTEGRATION

AGRICULTURAL SUBSISTENCE AND
NO/LOCAL POLITICAL INTEGRATION

AGRICULTURAL/PASTORAL SUBSISTENCE
POLITICAL INTEGRATION BEYOND COMMUNITY

HEALER AND MEDIUM

Trukese nanonu, wanonu (M)
Trukese souroo (H)

HEALER (OR MEDIUM)

Lesu healer, magician, knower
Atayal sikawasai (Medium)
Pentecost private magician- nimesian,
mwelnggel, malanggil, niman
Pentecost clan magician- nibatin, nowor,
neerew, ngor
Jivaro wishinyu (Shaman)
Jivaro whuea (Healer/Priest)

HEALER COMPLEX

Mbuti molina (male society)
Siriono lay magical practices

SHAMAN

!Kung N/um master, n/um kxoa-si
Samoyed butode, 'dano, sawode, tadibey
Semang hala
Chukchee ene nilit
Montagnais) manitousiou(okhi)
Kaska meta, nudita
Twana biswadas
Paiute puha, puhaba
Cayua pa?i, paye

SHAMAN/HEALER

Nama Hottentot gai aogu, gebo aob
Sea Dyak (Iban) manang
Kiman undani, warrewundu
Hidatsa bundle holders
Zuni theurgist, medicine man, doctor
Bribri jawa

SHAMAN

Callinago boyez
Tupinamba pay, pagis

HEALER AND MEDIUM

Igbo curer dibea (M)
Igbo oracle aghara, igwe, kamaia, ibini (H)

Wolof M'Deup or lefohar (M)
Wolof ya bopa (H)

Fulani mo keni or kenado (M)
Fulani bokajo or ndarnowo (H)
Fulani moodibbo, modibbe (Islamic) (H)

Amhara zar, balazar (M)
Amhara dabbara, debbtera (Catholic) (H)

Tuareg freinds of Kei Asouf (M)
Tuareg marabout, shofra, amekelleou,
Insiliman (Islamic) (H)

Babylonia oracle- ragintu (M)
Babylonia exorcist ashipu, mashmash (H)

Toda teuol, teuodipol (M)
Toda utkoren, utpol (H)

Kazak baqqa, baski, bagsha (M)
Kazak molah, iman (Islamic) (H)

Vietnamese Dong (Thay Dong, Phu Dong, Ba Dong, Qng Dong) (M)
Vietnamese Thay (Thay phap, Thay phu thuy, Thay nagi, Thay boi) (H)

Tanala ombiasy, manangatra (M)
Tanala ombisay nkazo (H)

Marquesa taua paea, taua umoko,
taua hiko etua (M)
Marquesa tahuna o'ono (o'oko) (H)

Japanese miko, kyoso (M)
Japanese ascetic kitosha kannushi (SH)

Saramacca gadu, gadu ma bu (M)
Saramacca obia, obiame,
man negge obia (H)

HEALER (OR MEDIUM)

Ovimbundu ochimbanda, chongo, chouti
Fur magician (Shaman/Healer)
Fur puggee (Islamic)
Kafa ekko, eggo, egg (Medium)
Garo kamal
Alor seer (Medium)
Mapuche machi

SHAMAN/HEALER

Roman sorcerer, witch, necromancer
Roman "Eastern or Oriental" cults
Kurd dervish, shaika, sayyid (Islamic)
Aztec tlapouhqui, ticitl
Creek alektca, hilis-haya, owala, kilas (Shaman/"priest")

FIGURE 1

	SHAMAN	SHAMAN/HEALER	HEALER	MEDIUM
CHARACTERISTICS				
SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS	Hunting & gathering Nomadic No/local Political Integration	Agricultural subsistence	Agricultural subsistence Sedentary Political Integration	Agricultural subsistence Sedentary Political Integration
SOCIOPOLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS	Charismatic leader Communal & War leader High social status	No or informal political power Moderate social status	Judicial, legislative and economic power High socioeconomic status	No or informal political power Low socioeconomic status
	Predominantly male, female secondary	Predominantly male, female secondary	Predominantly male, female rare	Predominantly female, male secondary/rare
	Part-time Individual Practice	Part-time Collective/Group Practice Specialized role	Full-time Collective/Group Practice Highly specialized role	Part-time Collective/Group Practice
SELECTION & TRAINING	Vision quests, visions, dreams, Training involving trance Status recognized by clients	illness and spirit's requests Trance and ritual training Ceremony recognizes status	Payment to other practitioners Learn rituals and techniques Ceremony recognizes status	Spontaneous possession by spirit and healing/training in trance group Ceremony recognizes status
MAGICO-RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY	Healing and divination Hunting magic Malevolent acts	Healing and divination Agricultural & hunting magic Minor malevolent acts	Healing and divination Agricultural magic Minor or No malevolent acts Life-cycle rituals	Healing and divination Agricultural magic and Propitiation No malevolent acts
POWER	Animal spirits/allies Spirit power controlled Physical and empirical medicine- massaging & herbs	Animal spirits Impersonal power (mana) Spirit power controlled	Superior gods Impersonal power (mana) Spirit power independent Ritual techniques and formulas	Possessing spirits Spirit power dominates
TRANCE STATES & CHARACTERISTICS	Shamanic soul flight/journey Isolation, austerities, fasting, hallucinogens, chanting and singing, extensive drumming and percussion, frequently resulting in collapse and unconsciousness	Shamanic/Mystical	Limited trances Social isolation, fasting, minor austerities, limited singing, chanting or percussion	Possession trance Spontaneous onset, tremors, convulsions, seizures, compulsive motor behavior, amnesia- temporal lobe discharges

FIGURE 2

MAGICO-RELIGIOUS HEALER TYPES AND CHARACTERISTICS

and cross-cultural analysis. *Ethos*, 14:174-203.

Winkelman, M. and D. White. (1987). A cross-cultural study of magico-religious practitioners and trance states:

RESPONSE TO DONOVAN: RIGHT POINT, WRONG SUBSTANTIATION

by **Patric V. Giesler**, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts

Donovan's (1988) thesis that laboratory psi research, card and "die guessing," is not externally valid (i.e., inadequate laboratory modeling of what happens in real life) and that laboratory researchers do not justify the leap from life to lab or give a rationale for their models is a right point, albeit an old point (e.g. especially Giesler 1983: 6-13, 19-31; 1984a:304-315, 330 and 1985c:114-120, but also 1985a:334-37, 362; 1985b; 1986:125-26; 1985d; 1987; and many others before such as Ian Stevenson 1970:9-10; etc.), but there is no need for him to distort the portrayal of, or irresponsibly misinform the reader about, others' research to enhance or "substantiate," wrongly substantiate, the point. The thesis stands strong on its own merit and there are scores of reports from the *Journal of Parapsychology* where no justification or rationale is given for the models employed which Donovan could cite to rightly substantiate his point.

The reason I have chosen to voice some response here is that Donovan cited one of my studies as a classic example of the parapsychologist making the leap from life to lab without justification or rationale, when, not only is this untrue, but, and surely unbeknownst to Donovan, the fact is, my whole research program (see above references) has been dedicated to the methodological exploration of the problem of external validity in parapsychology! I have offered alternative strategies such as "psi-in-process" (Giesler 1984; 1985c) and proceeded to carry out research in the field from each of the methodological angles I reviewed and assessed, carefully outlining the caveats with each approach and the rationales for them in the respective published reports. Psychic, Donovan is not: this is a miss!! **Wrong substantiation!** Donovan writes:

Why, for example, does Giesler (1985a) test for PK healing ability by requiring his subjects to light bulbs? He does not justify this leap, as is unfortunately typical of the field (Donovan 1988:4).

If he read the actual report at all, he missed pp. 334-37, 362, where I present not only the justification or rationale, but also discuss the fundamental assumptions of the method and what is problematic about it re: external validity (ritual healing vs. PK testing with trance significant symbols). Also, by offering a brief caricature of the protocol of the research, Donovan aims to enhance the impact of his "revelation," but as I say, his thesis is easy enough to support without resorting to distortion and misinformation.

Quoting from that *Journal of Parapsychology* report (Giesler 1985a):

1. The Actual Protocol (pp. 335-36):

Data base. In David Levinson and Richard Wagner, (Eds.). *HRAF Research Series in Quantitative Cross-Cultural Data: Vol. 3*. New Haven, CT: HRAF Press, Inc., 106 pp. with floppy disk.

All subjects were tested under two conditions: *with* and *without* a significant cult symbol (deity figure) as a target. In the *with* condition, a small spirit or deity statue, selected by the subject, was placed behind one of two protruding light bulbs, which were lighted randomly when the subject initiated a trial by pressing an extension microswitch. The subject's goal was to illuminate the deity target by the one bulb as frequently as possible. In the *without* condition, the goal was to light the bulb alone as often as possible.

2. Clear Acknowledgment of the Leap, Justification, and Rationale (p. 36):

Although the PK task was substantially removed from the ritual healing contexts, the actual PK machine's display of the protruding lights and the use of a deity statue were closer to the cultist's experience than one might suppose. Caboclo and Umbanda cult altars are filled with pictures and statues of the deities and entities of the cults' pantheons. Usually, one or two of the deities are singled out by a little candle or light bulb inside or in front of the statue, which serves to illuminate that figure and thus accentuate its significance for that cultist. The particular figure illuminated in such a manner represents that cultist's principal possessing spirit. In other words, the statues of the deities or entities are important symbols for the cultist's subconscious since the spirit personalities they represent control the medium during the possession trance of the healing sessions. Thus, the PK machine's display of a small light bulb in front of a selected deity statue was analogous to the arrangement on the cultist's own altar. The symbols might also assist the cultist in eliciting the kinds of healing "forces" or processes (i.e., some form of PK) purportedly functioning in the possession trance ceremonies. It seemed reasonable, then, to assume that if PK processes are fundamentally linked to subconscious psychodynamics, these "trance-significant symbols" (the deity figures), when used as PK targets, could improve PK performance.

This rationale applied clearly to the Caboclo and Umbanda cultists. They are well known for their public or semiprivate healing rituals, and these are enacted by "possessed" shamans and mediums. Their altars are filled with pictures and statues of entities from their pantheons, with candles or small lights illuminating those figures that they believe possess them during the healing ceremonies.

3. Problems and Assumptions with the Leap Here and in all Laboratory Research (pp. 334-35 [emphasis added]):

To investigate these hypotheses [listed earlier], I assumed that the ostensible *macro*-PK effects of healing were on a continuum with the *micro*-PK

effects of REG [Random Event Generator] testing, and conducted three experiments with a Schmidt REG especially designed for PK testing in the field setting (described in the Methods section). Cultists were tested in NEA and outside of the healing contests. My assumption was that although the trance states (defined phenomenologically) and the psychosocial context of the healing rituals may have nurtured their PK functioning, PK could be elicited without them by using healing- or trance-significant symbols in the PK task. *These are certainly problematic assumptions. In fact, they apply to all laboratory forced-choice ESP and micro-PK tests, in which the researcher assumes that he or she is investigating the ESP and PK phenomena of everyday life but "under the controlled conditions of the laboratory."* Ordinarily I favor direct approaches to the study of acclaimed psi-functioning in the field, such as the spontaneous case and ethnographic methods, or in the psi-in-process approach (Giesler 1984). After all, no cultist has claimed that he or she can have an influence on the generation of a random sequence of electronic events. But the REG had the obvious advantages of easy transportability and controlled testing, the automatic recording of many trials, and the adaptability for culturally relevant test displays. Also, successful work had been done with Brazilian Spirits using a Schmidt REG, albeit for precognition testing and comparisons with ESP experiences and attitudes (Pantano 1972). *Consequently, I thought it worthwhile to explore the methodological value of using such a micro-PK testing device to investigate ostensible macro-PK functioning, taking into account the concomitant assumptions.*

Now, to argue that this rationale or justification is dubious or that it entails too many assumptions about the role of trance-significant symbols in eliciting whatever healing PK there might be in the healing sessions or to argue that one should not assume a macro-PK (healing) -- micro-PK (significant REG deviations) continuum is another matter, one which has concerned me and certainly many others (e.g., Braude 1986) and is worth discussing. Rather than address these critical contentions, Donovan contends that I didn't do what the above quotes detail I did do.

I do not intend to undermine Donovan's efforts or desire to make a contribution. His suggestion that we try to operationalize a definition of charisma and examine it as a variable that he hypothesizes will correlate strongly with the results of some kind of telepathy testing is a perfectly viable and interesting hypothesis and design. It may be a new personality or psychosocial variable, but his method or "approach" is hardly "new" (See Palmer 1978).

And I certainly can comprehend Donovan's frustration with the psi research literature -- the contradictions in the results, all of the difficulties obtaining consistent replication of results, and his bewilderment over the many experimental designs to study psi that seem so removed from the everyday life anecdotes of psi. This a right point, certainly, but it is wrongly substantiated in his opening, unqualified remarks concerning the epistemological, theoretical, and empirical status of parapsychological research by his polemical reference to the recent

evaluation of the field by an entirely ill-advised committee (the National Research Council [NRC] committee: Druckman & Swets 1988). Even a quick glance at Braughton's (1988) or Palmer, Honorton, & Utts' (1988) review of the NRC report with description of the NRC committee members, their backgrounds, history of extreme scepticism, no participation by parapsychologists, selective analysis of particular studies ignoring whole major lines or research, etc., etc. is enough to immediately dissuade one from embracing the NRC's conclusions uncritically!

Donovan must keep in mind that psi research is a most extraordinary domain of inquiry, that therefore by its very nature it is difficult and frustrating to study, at least under the dominion of a reductionistic scientific paradigm, and that it requires a team effort, one which will rely on constructive criticism amongst us, but will only be set back by polemical distortions, quick judgments, and superficial readings of the literature. It wastes time and energy to say: please reread pages such and such for the exact point you are making, especially when in the case of external validity in psi research, reports where no rationale is given for the leap from life to lab abound!

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Palmer, J. (1978). Extrasensory perception: Research findings. In *Advances in Parapsychological Research 2: Extrasensory Perception*, pp. 59-244. New York: Plenum Press. (Note: telepathy included and the range of variables explored are reviewed)

BOOK REVIEWS

On Dreams and Death: A Jungian Interpretation by Marie-Louise von Franz (translated by Emmanuel Xipolitas Kennedy and Vernon Brooks). (Boston: Shambhala), 1987, 193 pages, illustrations, references, bibliography, index. \$12.95 paper. Reviewed by **Rene Lawson**, Ph.D., Redlands, California.

Psychophysical reality. Physical energy and psychic energy. The union of the ego and the resurrected body. The union of the self with the cosmos. "Sooner or later all the dead become what we also are" (Jung). Therefore, a single energy and one reality; wholeness.

In this intense volume, Marie-Louise von Franz interrelates the dreams of those facing death, what their unconscious prepares them for, with becoming whole throughout and within a universal human structure. She begins with the oldest text of Graeco-Egyptian alchemy, the *Komaros*, and goes to Bohm's conception in modern physics of an indivisible whole. She posits that the archetypal structures of the unconscious come *to light* (italics, mine) during the second half of life and during the process of dying. She delivers specific examples of archetypal death dreams, the symbolism of death rituals, and the alchemical symbolism related to each example. It is important to note that von Franz staunchly regards the dreams of the dying to be akin to alchemical-mystical symbols because these psychic images are not yet dogmatic. At the same time she increasingly leads us to physics (and states that "The reader who does not appreciate [nuclear physics] may safely put them aside. For me they are important...."), in which we see one reality, or wholeness.

Von Franz incorporates four themes to explain the internalization of the cosmos, the wholeness, into "Jung's New Hypothesis." The four themes, a) current death experiences and death dreams, b) Jungian psychology concerning later life and death, c) the Western alchemical tradition of death and resurrection symbolism, and d) parapsychological research, support the conclusion that physical energy and psychic energy are "two aspects of one and the same energy." The symbolism of the death dreams corroborates the notion that physical and psychic energies are one. By using the dreams, Jungian psychology, and symbolism, she proposes that energy changes from "the physically measurable to the psychically immeasurable." To make this point, she quotes Jung decisively:

Palmer, J., C. Honorton., and J. Utts. (1988). *Reply to the National Research Council Study on Parapsychology*. Research Triangle Park, N.C.: Parapsychological Association, Inc. (Reprinted in the *Proceedings of the 31st Annual Convention of the Parapsychological Association, 1988*).

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It might be that the psyche should be understood as unextended intensity and not as a body moving with time. One might assume the psyche gradually rising from minute extensity to infinite intensity, transcending for instance the velocity of light and thus irrealizing the body.

...In light of this view the brain might be a transformer station, in which the relative infinite tension of intensity of the psyche proper is transformed into perceptible frequencies or 'extensions.' Conversely, the fading of introspective perception of the body explains itself as due to a gradual 'psychification,' i.e., intensification at the expense of extension. Psyche = highest intensity in the smallest space (Jung, Letters, Vol. 2, p. 45).

For the purpose of this book review, I would now like to offer a partial explanation of this hypothesis in terms of the "new physics." To begin, however, we are immersed in quantum mechanics of space-time location. This follows as classical statistical mechanics:

$$P(B,A) = \int dx' dp' dx dp$$

$$X p_B(x',p') U_{subBA}(x',p';x,p) P_{subA}(x,p)$$

What this colossal equation states is that weight function (mass) is transformed into an efficiency function and then calculated into propagation function which changes another function from the space-time location to the site of the space-time location of the detection such that we ascertain the probability that a response will satisfy all the specifications. So much for quantum mechanics. The salient issue is that David Bohm's model dispenses with such gobbledygook and uses our consciousness as a unification process. Such an interpretation relegates these equations as superfluous. The new physics would deal with the psyche as that which is in close relationship with the body and maintains mass and exists in space-time.

- Mass is not merely material, but is energy.
- Energy is not static, i.e., three-dimensional
- Energy exists in space-time.
- Energy is dynamic: space gives it objective appearance and time gives it subjective process.
- A material substance, such as a body, is an energy.
- When a body is considered as material, "then the idea of a body passing into an intensity, a concentration of energy no longer extending in space and time would not

be unthinkable" (von Franz, p. 145).

- Intensity is related to thought, and intensity is, in physical terms, frequency.

Jung: "Thought has no quality in common with the physical world except its intensity, which in mathematical terms may be considered as frequency. You observe a distinct heightening of this intensity or ... the unconscious comes actively into the foreground as in visions of the future, ecstasies, apparitions of the dying..." (Jung, Letters, Vol. 1, p.433).

From this we apprehend the following:

- In dreams there is a faster flowing of time (for von Franz and Jung and the New Physicists this is an increase in intensity).

- Increases in intensity keep time moving faster which increases the flow of energy which forces more intensity.

- Everything increases simultaneously.

- The least of the universe is the largest of the universe and the largest contains the least. ("The 'smallest space' of psychic intensity would therefore be no less a point than the universe itself -- perhaps a kind of *omnipresent point*" (von Franz).

The well-known equation, $E = mc^2$, is that energy equals the speed of light squared. Von Franz shows that light imagery abounds in the literature. She adds that "Jung has expressed the assumption that psychic reality might lie on a supraluminous level of frequency, that is, it could exceed the speed of light" (von Franz, p. 146).

- Light is the last transitional occurrence and is found frequently in parapsychological reports.

From von Franz: "It is obviously not only our experience of space and time that ceases at the threshold of death but also the connection between the psyche and brain activity. As a result the psyche is no longer extensity, but only intensity. Perhaps this is what is suggested by all

METHOD OR MADNESS? (continued from page 2):

self-doubt continued. Was I unconsciously using this as the occasion to work through repressed fears from my past? Or perhaps I had "dreamed-up" these experiences, to borrow a concept from process-oriented psychology (Goodbread 1987:87, 145, 222, 224; Mindell 1985: 65-67, 74, 76). Perhaps I carried an unconscious dream which refers to my personal process into Usino, where this individual dream took on collective characteristics, which I then experienced as fear. Was I projecting my own unconscious fears? Did I question my own spiritual protection and my ability to thwart sorcery? In ordinary reality, it was a dangerous time to be a single white woman in Papua New Guinea, but I felt protected in the bush, away from the cities, among people I knew well. Because I could posit no rational justification for my fear, I wondered if I were experiencing belated culture shock. If so, why after seventeen months in the field, when Usino had become familiar and not-shocking to me?

So, I sought to escape my cultural programming and to transcend my graduate school training in order to entertain and somaticize the (for me) nonordinary aspects of Usino culture related to the health belief system. Once I

those experiences of light, since light is still virtually the highest perceivable limit of extensity (p. 150)

Finally, Bohm's hypothesis comes into view. At any level the universe is an indivisible whole because the observable matter is what is "unfolded" or explicated, and the underlying essence of the universe is enfolded, that is, the "implicate order." The explicate order and the implicate order exist simultaneously in the ground of everything that is; what is is the "holomovement," an "undivided wholeness." The explicate order is what is "manifest" or what our senses can perceive, which is based upon the implicate order. "For the psychologist it is clear that in his idea of an 'implicate order' David Bohm has outlined a projected model of the collective unconscious, so that in his theory we have before us an attempt to outline a psychophysical model of the unity of all existence. The background of this existence, as Bohm expresses it, is an infinite reservoir -- a 'vast sea' -- of energy which lies deeply behind/under our consciousness, which is unfolded in space-time" (von Franz, p. 153).

Hence, from the *Komaros* to Bohm's new physics, there are dreams, symbols, traditions, and psychology to explain death and a timeless, spaceless existence. In keeping with the light imagery, von Franz chooses to conclude by writing that "... the scientific investigation of dreams based on the discoveries of C.G. Jung is able to bring to light many more *illuminating realities*" (p. 157, italics, mine). I would like to add that Marie-Louise von Franz' book is a beacon for new questions to be asked, new frequencies which will generate answers to generate new energies for yet more questions to come to light.

N.B.: Von Franz and Kennedy are in the process of researching more dreams. They have accumulated 2,500 dreams to date. They can be reached at Speerstrasse 42, 8738 Uetliburg SG, Switzerland.

succeeded, however, could I be completely confident that those feelings were not internally-generated projections of some sort? Lacking an external reality check, I tottered between faith that my sensory faculties were reflecting the external situation accurately, that my somatic-emotional-intuitive experiences approximated those of the Usino people, on the one hand, and certainty that I was losing my mind, on the other. In retrospect, I think I was doing just that, intermittently "losing my mind," in order to attend to sensory channels, where a kind of transpersonal data-gathering rarely documented in the ethnographic literature was occurring. But what do you think? Do any of you relate to the methodological dilemma I experienced? How might you interpret such experiences?

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READER'S EXCHANGE

(Editor's Note: This column is set aside for *Newsletter* reader's to exchange information about themselves, their research interests and projects, and their publications and other activities. Reader's addresses are printed only with a reader's permission.)

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Steven G. Herbert, M.A. -- Occupation: Geologist/anthropologist. Research interests: Shamanism; possession; nature of good and evil; the transformative process; psychic and spiritual "anatomy". Research projects (past): The mysticism of light and sound; evolution of the stereotypic image of the Halloween witch from a psychological and historical perspective; (current): the metaphysical symbolism behind the "Wizard of Oz" story; multiple souls; the transpersonal psychology of prejudice, persecution, and discrimination. Experiential training: Basic workshop with Michael Harner. Address: RFD #1, Box #84, Belmont, H.H. 03220.

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CONFERENCES

The **Second International Conference on Paranormal Research (ICPR)** will be held June 1-4, 1989 at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. Papers are invited on research into psychology -- theory general; parapsychology and altered states; paranormal energetics/information; channeling and mediumship; prophecies; reincarnation; UFO's, aliens, extraterrestrials, walk-ins; alternative healing modalities; non-standard science; philosophical issues. Interested authors should send a one page abstract (max. 400 words) by November 1, 1988 to **Dr. Maurice L. Albertson**, ICPR, Room 203 Weber Building, Department of Civil Engineering, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523, (303) 491-0633.

PUBLICATIONS

"Guide to Sources of Information on Parapsychology" is available from the Eileen J. Garrett Library of the Parapsychology Foundation, Inc. The multi-page Guide is revised annually and contains sections on major organizations, journals, books and research. The 1988 Guide is available at a cost of \$1.00 by writing or visiting the **Parapsychology Foundation, Inc.** at 228 East 71st Street, New York, N.Y. 10021.

Parapsychology Abstracts International (PAI) is a semi-annual journal covering all aspects of the field of parapsychology from earliest times to date. Each issue includes 260 abstracts of articles, books, book chapters,

monographs, dissertations and theses, and conference proceedings from all over the world, including the United States, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Brazil, England, Italy, Germany, South Africa, Japan, India, Poland, and the U.S.S.R. Besides comprehensive coverage and lengthy abstracts, *PAI* offers an in-depth index based upon the full text of the original article abstracted. The *PAI* is available from Parapsychology Sources of Information Center and is edited by Rhea A. White, past president of the Parapsychology Association and well-known parapsychologist. The Center also offers a computerized database search service called *PsiLine* which covers the same literature as the hard copy *PAI*, but in greater detail. For information on *PAI* and *PsiLine* contact **Rhea A. White**, Parapsychology Sources of Information Center, 2 Plane Tree Lane, Dix Hills, N.Y. 11746.

Anabiosis, a semi-annual scholarly journal and **Vital Signs**, a quarterly general interest, are published by the International Association of Near-Death Studies, Inc. (IANDS) which provides and collects information on near-death experiences (NDE) as a means of understanding "the relationship of human consciousness to the life process and the possibility that some aspect of consciousness may continue beyond physical death." The Association also sponsors research conferences and workshops and offers supportive services to near-death experiencers, their families, and professionals. For more information on these publications and other Association activities, contact **IANDS**, Box U-20/Psychology #258, 406 Cross Campus Road, Storrs, CT 06268, (203) 486-4170.

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* * *

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