

LIFE PATTERNS OF WOMEN ACTIVE IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY

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Life patterns of women active in parapsychology have not yet been studied comparatively, longitudinally, and cross-culturally. My concept of women in parapsychology includes female mediums and shamans as well as female scholars who study parapsychology.

To start with a country outside of the United States, we find in Russia, for example, Bogoras (1907, p. 414) telling us that until the end of World War I, most of the Chukchee shamans were women. He reports that women seem to fall into trance more easily than men and that therefore male shamans enjoyed greater prestige. (Although no reliable statistics are available to corroborate this opinion, the same "attitude"—and it is an attitude!—is still upheld by most male researchers around the world.) When Russia fell under Communist rule, both male and female shamans were persecuted, and shamanism consequently went underground. With recently increasing tolerance toward so-called "folk traditions," Communism has apparently removed the stereotypical opinion about the weaknesses of women, and gender is no longer a reason for discrimination. Parapsychologists in the USSR today are respected according to their faculties and not their gender.

To give another example from Asia, early Korean kings were shamans (this fact is documented by the symbolism of their crowns). For the last 500 years, however, "dignified scholars" in Korea openly declared themselves "the shaman's adversaries," but the wives of these same scholars "have continued to patronize shamans" (Kendall, 1985/1987, p. 30). A recent study sponsored by the Korean Institute for Research in the Behavioral Sciences still maintains that "a process of regression starts with marriage," and women are thus "an easy prey to superstitious beliefs" (cited in Kendall, 1985/1987, p. 34), reconfirming the Confucian stereotype of the weaknesses of women.

Ironically, shamanic rituals are still predominantly performed by women, but they "are now avidly recorded precisely because they were never Confucianized" (Kendall, 1985/1987, p. 35). Indeed, it was the Korean women who had the courage and the stamina to keep shamanic

traditions alive. Some of them are now even proclaimed to be "Human Cultural Treasures" by the Korean government (Chungmoo, 1991, p. 53).

Returning to the psychological aspects of our topic. Korean psychiatrists describe

the ancestors' appearance in kut [shamanic ritual] as effective psychodrama.... [because there are] various psychotherapeutic elements at work....: catharsis, abreaction, suggestion, hypnotism, and transference. A kut is good "group therapy," well suited to Koreans "basic orientation of mutual cooperation and interdependence." (quoted in Kendall, 1985/1987, p. 36).

Looking closer at this process, we are told that "the role of shaman [was] one of the four professional roles officially permitted to women, the other three being those of *kunqnyo* ("palace woman"), *uinyo* ("female physician"), and *kisaeng* ("courtesan")" (Harvey, 1979, p. 3). The shaman's role was the only one

that permitted women access to all levels and spheres of the society, making it potentially the most powerful role through which women could exert influence in a society where they had no authority, which belonged first to their father, then their husbands, and finally to their sons. The shaman served royalty as well as commoners, males as well as females, and had access to both the public and the private domains. (Harvey, 1979, p. 3)

So far we have dealt with the advantages for women to become shamans, but we also have to consider aspects that demand an involvement that exceeds that of any other profession. Although shamanism is one of the few potentially lucrative occupations, the woman who willingly or easily becomes a shaman would be suspect. Her extreme reluctance and suffering testify to those who will judge her that her calling is sincere and her gods are strong (Kendall, 1985/1987, p. 65). In other words, shamanic as well as parapsychological activities elsewhere in the world ask for a life-long commitment and the willingness to make sacrifices, that is, complete submittal of the "ego" to a higher authority. Professional shamans as well as parapsychologists agree to "serve" unconditionally.

We have to take into consideration the belief that is upheld all over Asia that

spirits in search of human victims to possess are particularly attracted by those whose souls have been "fractured"—however, slightly—by personal tragedies or exploitations others have cause them to suffer. (Harvey, 1979, p. 79)

Possession, then, provides a coping mechanism that is psychological as well as social. Indeed, Harvey (1979, p. 237), a Korean anthropologist, suggests that these women seized possession sickness and the *mansin's* (shaman's) career as a way out of the impasse "between social expectations of them as women and their personal goals and interests as individuals."

However, it has also been confirmed by Harvey that the six shaman women she included in her research show "a high level of intelligence," "above average capacity for creative improvisation," "above average verbal skills and persuasiveness," and "a strong goal orientation." They are "self-centered, self-reliant, and self-directed" and have a "keen sensitivity to intuitive cues of others." They are "calculating and manipulative" and master "interpersonal skills which enable them to manage social situations strategically." They demonstrate a "sharp sense of justice in terms of their own standards" and

an above average repertory of aptitudinal and/or achieved dramatic and artistic attributes such as singing and dancing. In addition, all but one were exceptionally attractive in appearance . . . it seems clear that the shaman role has been traditionally filled by superior women. (Harvey, 1979, pp. 235-236)

Carmen Blacker (1975, pp. 256-263, 279-297) made similar observations in Japan. She said that

historical shamans and blind mediums are women and village oracles, associated with folk Buddhist traditions, tend to be men. . . . Female mediums (*miko*) . . . were associated with Shinto shrines or were semi-itinerants who served a small range of villages. Sometimes a female *miko* was paired with a male Shugendo priest who synthesized Shinto Buddhist practices (quoted in Kendall, 1985/1987, p. 171).

From the above, we can deduce that accepting the role of a shaman/medium was and is one way for Asian women to assert themselves. However, accepting such a role depends not only on certain predispositions but also on a call from the spirit world and one's readiness to "serve" (see Heinze, 1988, p. 155; 1990, pp. 146-156).

I will illustrate this with an example from my own fieldwork in Singapore, where I spent a year (1978-1979) in the house temple of a 44-year-old medium. In 1973, while the family was sitting around the dinner table, Mrs. Y., a Chinese housewife (at that time she was 39 years old and mother of five children), became possessed by a deified general from the Three Kingdoms (ca. 300 A.D.). She had been British-educated (Baffles Girl School), had been converted to Catholicism, and had been working as a fashion model and salesgirl.

How unexpected was this "possession"? The family of seven was living in close quarters with in-laws. There had been health problem and difficulties with her and her husband's jobs. She had consulted mediums and had also sought help in Chinese and Indian temples as well as Christian churches until she became resigned to the fact that she would have to cope with the situation herself.

During these years, she had been taking care of a house altar her father-in-law had brought from China. (Her father-in-law was Hokkien and her parents Straits Chinese.) Her father-in-law had been a devout worshiper of the deity. When, after his death, the altar, which stood in the family's room, was left neglected, she had taken it on herself to clean it and occasionally put some flowers in front of the picture of the deity.

The deity, Kam T'ien Siong Teh, an emissary of Kwan-Yin (the *bodhisattva* of Amitabha Buddha as well as the Goddess of Mercy for Taoists), began to advise the family and to give instructions as to what services were expected from Mrs. Y. The wife's position within the extended family changed with her being visited by a deity. The sister-in-law, who had scorned her in the past, brought the first clients. Because the advice, protection, and assistance of the deity proved to be effective, the word spread fast among relatives, friends, and colleagues, and the number of clients kept growing. Within a year, the family was able to move into a house of their own, and after four more years, into an even larger house where the altar room takes up most of the first floor.

Mrs. Y.'s husband became her assistant. He translates what the deity (who allegedly speaks medieval Hokkien) has to say. Most clients are

too awed to understand what is going on anyway. The other members of the entourage are recruited from regular devotees. They not only relieve the husband from translating and wiping the altar clean during sessions but establish the waiting order, explain how *joss* papers have to be used (e.g., the papers are affixed to the entrance of the clients' houses or burned and their ashes mixed with water for drinking or bathing), and how the deity should be addressed. The entourage sells *joss* sticks and accepts the offerings. It was also the entourage who began to codify the rituals when they had to coordinate their answers to the clients.

The medium does not employ the traditional drumming or chanting to get into an alternate state of consciousness (i.e., to call the deity into her body). She simply meditates silently in front of the altar until the deity "arrives." She practices each weeknight and twice on Saturday and Sunday, but clients may drop in at any time.

Medium, entourage, and most of the clients belong to the lower, middle, and working classes. However, representatives of other socioeconomic groups (e.g., lawyers, physicians) come too.

Everybody plays a double role. While the deity is speaking through the medium, her husband is kneeling in front of her. During the day, however, she is a good housewife and mother, and her husband asserts himself as head of a Chinese household. The entourage and the clients, representing different socioeconomic groups, accept the authority of the deity and transfer their respect to the medium even when she is not in trance because one never can know whether the deity is present or not.

The medium's advice is sought in a wide range of matters—health, inter- and intrapersonal problem as well as career and business issues. She gained a reputation for successfully fighting mischievous spirits who "possess" susceptible individuals. She goes frequently on "spirit hunts" and attacks demons with her sword. During such battles, spots may appear on her clothes that look like blood.

Mrs. Y. was in a crisis situation when she received the "call." Serving the deity has not only changed her life but the future of her family. Her services are sought now by a larger community of several hundred people from different walks of life in Singapore and neighboring countries (e.g., Malaysia and Indonesia). She accepted a role the culture of her ethnic group was still able to provide her and she continues to cultivate her gifts.

Next, I present profiles of two Western women who live in California and have devoted their life to parapsychological work.

J.M. first communicated with other dimensions in San Francisco in 1955 when the spirit of her grandfather came to her. She immediately called Wabuska, NV, and was told that her grandfather had been taken to a hospital in Reno, NV. When the long-distance operator found the right hospital, the hospital operator said: "He just expired." Her mother asked her: "How did you know to call just now?"

When no other communication is available, she has always had strong communication at the subtle level with her mother and her daughter. In an interview with J.M., she observed that they learned "the hard way how to remove the mental debris of preconception," and they have been "able to make important decisions telepathically."

J.M. also reports:

When I walked into the hospital room and saw the grey aura around my father, I knew he was dying. He could not speak at that time, and he was in pain. But he could communicate through his hand that he could hear me. I guided him into the light in the center of his pain, and I went with him as he left the body temporarily. He saw his mother, his father, and all of his grandfathers. It surprised him to find himself among light beings and he came back. . . . The second time he left the body, I went with him again into the light. We basked in the radiance of transition for a long time before I realized that he had stopped breathing.

I also was honored to serve my mother in her final days before she passed from the body into the light. . . .

From time to time over the years, I have been called upon to do an exorcism or to hold a séance. (Personal communication, May 19, 1991)

In 1965, J.M. coproduced a 20-minute movie, "The Psychedelic Experience," which won a Zellerbach award for "Film as Art" at the San Francisco International Film Festival. During the winter of 1969-1970, she spent some time at the Dream Laboratory at the Maimonides Medical Center of Brooklyn where Stanley Krippner conducted research on telepathy during sleep by measuring the sleeper's EEG. When the subject experienced REM (Rapid Eye Movements), the sender would be alerted because this was a signal that the sleeper was dreaming. The sender, whether in the next office, in a house across the street, or in distant Manhattan, would then begin to "send" an image to the dreamer

who would be awakened shortly after and asked to report on the content of her dream (see Krippner, 1975).

In 1971, Dr. T.S. and J.M. designed and built the world's first Stereo Brainwave Light Sculpture. It consisted of eight layers of plexiglass, each with a different—but compatible—mandala design. Each layer would light up in the respective color, depending upon which of the slow, medium, or fast brainwaves for each hemisphere of the cerebral cortex was dominant at the time.

Between 1972 and 1980, J.M. taught parapsychology first at American River Junior College and then at Santa Rosa Junior College. (In those days, she felt it was more prudent to hold class sessions on séances off campus.) In 1975, she participated in remote viewing between a powerful shaman attending the Congress of Sorcery and a group directed by Stanley Krippner at the AHP (Association for Humanistic Psychology) National Meeting in Estes Park, Colorado. In 1977, she was invited again to a conference in São Paulo, Brazil where she witnessed the participation of mediums in the treatment of schizophrenics.

J.M. received her Ph.D. in Human Science from Saybrook Institute in 1978. Her Ph.D. project involved training participants to synchronize brainwaves between right and left hemispheres and also to synchronize brainwaves with each other. The ratio of synchronization scores compared with scores of success at telepathy reached statistical significance ($p < .001$). Between 1974 and 1982, she participated in and conducted over 500 experiments in remote viewing and telepathy at Stanford Research Institute with Russell Targ and Hal Puthoff.

Currently, J.M. is president of the Parapsychology Research Group in San Francisco, an organization founded by Russell Targ, Charles Tart, David Hurt, and others over 20 years ago. J.M. says:

We feel that we have learned some solid and important things about human consciousness and the nature of psychic activity during the last 20 years, and we are in the process of creating a book out of a series of recent lectures at our monthly meetings. . . .

These are only a few life experiences that qualify me as a parapsychologist on the planes that are important to me. The formal research and published papers that identify me as a parapsychologist to the outside world represent only the written communication to those who must read to know something. Beyond reading and measurements, there is an

unwavering scientific unwillingness to become aware of the many mansions of human consciousness that we might visit during our travels through life as well as through death. (Personal communication, May 18, 1991)

The field of parapsychology and its phenomena never presented a serious problem for J.M. She is aware that society in general is not providing any model for her life style, and she learned to live, so to speak, in both realms. She switches back and forth with ease, according to expectations arising from the situation she has to face. Over the years, she has become more outspoken about her activities, which, one would have to admit, is easier in California. She has, for example, been invited by a travel promotion corporation to communicate with a ghost in a San Francisco hotel, and she puzzled skeptical participants in the séance with the voice of the ghost seemingly talking through her. Some of these remarks related to experiences that were later confirmed by a member of the audience.

My second example is L.K.Y. Her Hawaiian name, Kealoha O Na Ka Puna, was given to her by a Hawaiian priest when she was 12 years old. It means "the love of the grandparents is within you." As L.K.Y. related to me (personal communications, during several meetings in 1991), her grandmother

was a *kahuna* who interpreted dreams by opening the Bible, reading whatever passage she came upon and then, once she had induced trance in this manner, took off on her own interpretation. I believe she started from the Bible in order to ground herself and to call in the pure White Brotherhood Lighted Christ Consciousness. She was not referred to as a *kahuna* but people would always come to her in times of need.

There is a story about healers. Some see the spirit of sickness and remove it before it takes shape, so their name hardly gets out of the house. Some cure sickness when it is still extremely minute, so their name hardly gets out of the neighborhood. Some do all sorts of cures when people are very sick, and they are known far and wide.

My grandmother was hardly known to cure, and certainly never wanted credit for doing so. Yet people came to be near her, sometimes not even knowing why, and they always left feeling better.

This is the more receptive and feminine role model I was presented with—very gentle, patient, kind, humble, loving, generous. My grandmother died when I was seven. She told me before she died that she

would always be with me, but someday she would return to help play a major role. Then she breathed into me and that was the last time I saw her alive. This was an anchor for me, and when she made contact with me 26 years later it triggered a lot of memories. She guided my studies, [and] the research and writing of my first book (Yardley, 1991). (Personal communication, and several meetings in 1991)

When she could not find a woman *kahuna* to whom she could apprentice herself, she turned to Max Freedom Long and Daddy Bray:

Long was a scientific investigator, while Bray had the combined gift of intuitive knowledge and spiritual power which enabled him to heal. The difference in the scientific and intuitive types of knowledge is a long-recognized dichotomy. (Yardley, 1991, p. 19)

She compares this dichotomy with the split between the conscious and unconscious knowledge and understanding:

Both [Long and Bray] had very masculine energy. They represented the reflections of a male dominated society and world view. Ten years ago when I wrote, I saw Huna more through their eyes. However, there is happening now a shift we are experiencing from the masculine energy to the feminine energy. This I see reflected in my own growing awareness of gender. (L.K.Y., personal communication, May 31, 1991)

As an example of the subtle change she experienced, she notes that 10 years earlier she talked about God in terms of "He." She doubts that she felt that way, but she nonetheless expressed it that way. She is now using the term "Universal Spirit"; nongender specific, this term makes a small but telling difference for her.

One advantage I can think of to what I consider this more feminine approach is that I have been able to sit back more and observe, to take in things and, in this way, learn a tremendous amount about myself and the world. The disadvantage is I feel I have been constantly held in check, waiting for the time to come to speak out. I realize this balance is both inner and outer and one is an expression of the other, but as we are individuals, we are also part of a larger whole. However, as a result of going inward, I connected at a very deep level with the essence of who I am and the source of the universe. The connection with this source

inspires universal co-creation. (L.K.Y., personal communication, May 31, 1991)

The traditional role of a *kahuna* was familiar to L.K.Y., and although she did not expect "to be called," she felt drawn to explore this role more closely when the spirit of her grandmother came to her. She was 26 years old at that time, a fact which corroborates my own findings in Asia that most shamans and mediums receive the "call" in mid-life, that is, after they had married and had children or after they had become established in life professionally. A certain maturity apparently is one of several prerequisites for becoming a shaman and a parapsychologist.

L.K.Y. represents an age-old Hawaiian tradition at a time when most of its representatives have already died. L.K.Y. blends easily into the New Age scene in California. She conducts workshops and publishes books, but she talks about her mission cautiously, that is, only to like-minded individuals, because the larger society only hesitantly seems to move away from the materialistic stance toward awareness of other, so far not officially recognized, dimensions.

What have we learned so far? Although Confucianist practice was never introduced into America, public opinion is still ruled by male-oriented principles and rules. Historically, male-oriented societies tended to put "matters of state" before "sound reason" while they ignored their own "gut" feelings. Indeed, male-oriented societies tend to ignore not only feelings but other dimensions of experience as well. The hypocrisy becomes visible when we look at the "hostage crisis" in the Middle East. Human beings are held hostage for over six years because the government refuses to negotiate with the hostage takers; negotiations, however, are going on behind the scenes. To keep up appearances is more important than the alleviation of human suffering.

Since time immemorial, the female gender has not only opted for the preservation of life but upheld spiritual traditions regardless of societal retributions. Female parapsychologists have been and still are rewarded by the gratitude of their clients, and in the Korean case, even belatedly by the state.

The female gender never forgot the interconnectness of the dynamic forces of the Universe. Jean Houston (1991), for example, met an Australian aboriginal woman whom she considers to be

one of earth's last practitioners of ancient wisdom's way of living off the land, guiding our blind urbanity to touch again a world we thought we had lost—a world in which one learns to communicate with the inner life or the natural world and discovers that, whereas the simpler forms can survive the elimination of the more complex forms, the more complex forms cannot survive without the simpler forms. (p. 17)

I have presented Asian and Western examples to illustrate the point of gender differences in the field of parapsychology. Stereotypical views about women have been discontinued so far only in the USSR. I strongly believe that in the West, women in parapsychology are more and more becoming aware of their mission and through their work will continue to remove these stifling stereotypes. As Jean Houston (1987) expresses it:

If the earth is indeed a living organism and its nervous system is nearly in place, then women's roles must necessarily be greatly expanded in all fields of human endeavor, both to allay population growth and to make women available for the complex requirements of the emerging planetary culture. The "noosphere" of Teilhard de Chardin may be more real than mythic. The global mind-field may be closer than we think. And essential to its happening may be the rich mind style of woman, now ready to emerge after centuries of gestation in the womb of preparatory time. This emergence is perhaps the most important event of the last five thousand years, and its consequences may well have an immense, unimaginable effect on cultural evolution. The emergence of the genius of female sensibility and potential is as critical to the issue of human survival as it is confusing to the traditional styles and standards of most cultures. . . . The feminine principle expresses itself as an unfolding of levels of existence, not as the conquests of facts. (1987, pp.15-16)

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DISCUSSION

SCHLITZ: I'm really compelled by this Korean example and the cooption of folk practices by the government. I would like to hear you expand about that a little bit. It is sort of paradoxical in the sense of women's assertion of power through the spiritual realm while the government is controlling that process.

HEINZE: I think it should not be seen this way. Government needs legitimacy, especially in Asia. And over the centuries it has been religious legitimacy. In Southeast Asia all the kings were god-kings. During coronation they were transformed into gods. You find remnants, for example, in the coronation ceremony of British queens. When the archbishop anoints the Queen, the divine essence is installed in her. This is an echo of what is still going on in Asian countries that are ruled by kings (e.g., the constitutional monarchy in Thailand). Thus, the leaders of the country were also spiritual leaders. But when the weight shifts away from religion, for example, in Confucianism (one may call it a religion, although in fact it is not), religion has to survive on a different level; and it is usually tolerated by the government for the simple reason

that it needs the cooperation of the people. In Singapore, for example, animism is still practiced among the Muslims, which the *Koran* does not tolerate at all. When I asked the Mufti (the highest-ranking Muslim) for his opinion, I got the same answer you get from Buddhists—these are useful means. Governments in general want to keep the people satisfied so they don't enforce strict religious rules that only can be understood by educated people. They absorb the contradictions. It is a political decision of the government, which no longer represents religion exclusively any more. In order to seek the votes of the people, to keep the people satisfied, and to recognize their customs, they stay flexible. In Korea, the government had a terrible time to reestablish itself after the Korean War. They had nothing to legitimize their existence and nothing to prove their concern for the people, so they launched this large campaign to revive customs to show that they were really representing the people and were supportive of them. They use old customs for their own legitimacy. That is the way I see it.

SCHLITZ: You don't see that as a co-option?

HEINZE: You are using Western thoughts. It is, of course in Western terminology, a co-option, but Asians are more utilitarian. They are much more pragmatic; put it that way. They would use any means that is useful for the situation, and it would not be interpreted as a co-option. Why should you use the co-option label, which has a negative implication, to interpret their situation? I would not interpret it this way. They are more utilitarian; they are more pragmatic. It is what is practical at this point in time. These customs are very much alive; they satisfy the people's needs. The shamans in Southeast Asia cater to very pragmatic needs. They handle family and professional problems as well as spiritual needs, so the government allows these needs to be fulfilled. They possibly cannot satisfy the people with legalities, so they enlist help from the spiritual realm.

SCHLITZ: I guess my concern is that this sounds very functionalist.

HEINZE: Of course, it is.

SCHLITZ: But that does not give room for the subversive aspects of these kind of shamanistic practices, or that the challenge that these practices offer to some of these ideological...

HEINZE: None of the shamans are political. They are wise enough to stay out of politics.

SCHLITZ: Maybe not overtly political, but there is at least some kind of subversive activity at a symbolic level.

HEINZE: They would not think this way. They are so much occupied with their daily needs. If you want to locate subversive purposes, you will recognize first philosophical Taoism, which you know from Lao Tse's teaching; and then you have the Folk Taoism, which is based on revelations. This started in 400 AD, and the revelations have continued. Now the Taoist Canon consists of over 14,000 books, with more revelations added every year.

SCHLITZ: That subversion was not a phenomenon.

HEINZE: Oh yeah, of course, it can be utilized by people who have political ambition, and it has been utilized in China, for example. The White Turban insurgency and some other revolutions in China were religiously motivated. It can be used; but in most cases it is not.

SCHLITZ: I guess I'm thinking of James Scott's work with peasants in Asia and how there were, through daily practice, means of trying to overcome the dominance of the established system through very passive means. It strikes me that shamanism is an important tool for not only maintaining the stability of the culture but also attempting to integrate change within that system. You know, it is very powerful because it does integrate the material and the spiritual, and to just view it within a purely functionalist framework seems to me to be denying other important components of the practice.

HEINZE: Well, I think you have to live in Asia a long time. In Asia, people mostly know their place. They are born into a hierarchy—a natural hierarchy. Just to take Thailand, you are the youngest daughter, and there's an older brother and then there are your parents, then come relatives, then come government officials, scholars, the king, and the monks. So if you are born into a peasant family, you more or less accept your status. If you work hard you can become a scholar, if someone is sponsoring you. You know your place, and you are more or less satisfied with your place in the hierarchy. It is the same in Hinduism, though the class system has been abolished. You know the caste into which you are born, and you accept your fate. You live according to the responsibilities of your status. So, the Western democratic ideal of balancing government power just does not occur in the minds of the people. They are born into a certain status and know the steps to reach other levels. They can make efforts—become a mystic or get an education—this is

their decision; but not many people do it. They would not even attempt to balance government power by it. The shamans and mediums provide them the presence of divine energy. When a medium calls divine energies into his or her body, the people may come into the presence of God. We don't have this opportunity in Western society. Maybe we do when we go to a mountaintop and meditate. The presence of a divinity is produced for Asians, and this fulfills their direct and also other pragmatic needs. So, only by politically ambitious people is it abused; but it rarely is.

BISCHOF: Just a short contribution to this: I know, especially from Indonesia, but also Nigeria, that magic, which is maybe a different thing there than what you are talking about, is very heavily used in politics. For instance, it is said in Indonesia that the president, the present one, has come to power precisely by magic, and this is very well known in Indonesia. Magic is used also for preservation of power and to overthrow a government or to replace a person.

HEINZE: Yes, you're right, but I think we don't have the time to discuss it thoroughly. Magic is a part of what I am talking about, because if you have access to the power you can use it both ways. You can use it benevolently, and you can use it also for egotistic reasons. It certainly works. We have to distinguish people who accept responsibility for what they are doing and use it only to help the community, from those who promote egotistic reasons, which would be political, to bring somebody to power. It's the same kind of power. It's the kind of ethics which motivate you, the way you want to use it, which counts.

SCHLITZ: I think we need to adopt a broader conceptualization of the term *political*, just because political is more than governments and more than politicians. It is an ongoing process that is embedded in the whole way we think and the whole way reality is structured. It seems to me shamanism and magic and a lot of these esoteric practices fulfill a very important means of redefining some of those daily experiences in a way that is not overt.

HEINZE: It depends on your ethics. I was using political in a wider sense, not just to get a political position. The shamans don't need power to establish themselves; they never advertise. People come to them naturally. There's no politics going on even in a wider sense. Because they serve clients who come in large numbers, it happens naturally. But if you are egotistical, it can be used for purposes of political power.