

OUTSIDE AND INSIDE THE PARANORMAL.

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It is now exactly twenty years ago that the Parapsychology Foundation invited a number of well known researchers in the field of parapsychology to express their opinions on the future of this science. This conference is dealing with the same topic. Therefore, I found it particularly interesting to flip through the pages of the *International Journal of Parapsychology* in which the answers of the researchers were summarized. Several striking features can be noted. One is that there were remarkable differences as to what the respondents considered suited to the framework of psi research and what is not suited. Such a variance points to the fact that even then our field was not guided by one generally accepted paradigm. Another interesting aspect of the parapsychologists' statements was the strongly differing, sometimes bold proposals for potential future research. Art and creativity were mentioned as fields to investigate in attempting to understand more about the workings of psi and Ducasse suggested that parapsychologists try themselves to develop psi abilities.

Looking back over the past two decades of investigations into the paranormal it seems that only a few of the ambitious proposals have been adequately met. Somehow I have the feeling that, were we to repeat such an opinion survey today, the answers would still differ considerably from each other and might indeed be very similar in content to the ones from twenty years ago. Though the idea of changing our nine-to-five attitude towards our subject (only psi that happens in the lab during work-hours is "in") seems to have been always prevalent, behavioral consequences can only seldom be observed. It seems as if the paranormal causes a strong attraction, coupled with the fear of "getting too close to it" if one were to leave the position of an outside observer. Charles Tart referred to this conflict as the "religion of the .05 level."¹ It is safe for parapsychologists to accept psi studies that show statistically significant results at the .05 level or so, and the attractiveness of the phenomena keeps them busy hunting for such results, but they back away when confronted with strong manifestations of psi and react with intense criticism. In view of this fact it is interesting to note that in the survey of

twenty years ago the idea was expressed that psi researchers will turn towards qualitative investigations, because they can relax about the existence of psi, since the experimental evidence presents massive support for their claims.

Anxiety about the paranormal is still an issue with which parapsychologists themselves have to deal. The question of whether or not psi phenomena exist is not the basis of the researchers' reactions when confronted with massive paranormal phenomena; the roots must be looked for at a different level.

The paranormal in its expression has a tendency towards the "un-focused," the impish, the evasive. From an anthropomorphic perspective one could say that it exhibits trickster-characteristics. The paranormal is always surprising in its triviality, its meaningfulness, its evasiveness and its "exhibitionism." Seemingly the only rule that can be sustained for the paranormal is that it defies every rule. "Always the same, but always different."² This is certainly not true only for psi phenomena, but since they escape integration into mainstream scientific frameworks most persistently, they are outstanding representatives of the unknown, of the "other"; a "conspiracy of events" that do not conform to expected behavior and hence represent a threat to classical rationality, a model of security.³ This model says that only when ways can be found to describe the unexplained phenomena in relation to known ones can a part of the fear-provoking territory be integrated into our body of knowledge.

In trying to bring order into paranormal phenomena, to make them part of our scientific knowledge of the world, parapsychologists act as track readers searching for circumstantial evidence until the foreign phenomena are described as being part of the order of the known world. Naturally, the better skilled the hunter is, the better he can understand the tracks of his prey. He might even be able to read from the tracks if it is worthwhile to hunt for this specific animal. He is the one who has specialized in interpreting the slightest unintentional gesture for his own benefit. He learns the secret ways of the wild animal; as a scientist he studies the secret ways of wild phenomena in order to capture them. The basis of the scientific method is indeed to maximize the difference between the chaotic, wild, unconscious, impulsive, dirty and the ordered, confined, conscious, rational, clean. The scientific realm of the analytic and objective, whose symbol might be the observatory or the microscope, dictates the order and provides the means to map unknown territory. (Of course the map is not the territory, as the menu is not the meal.) If parts of the unknown territory are extremely hard to explore, because conventional tools do not render expected results and a conquest would imply too many casualties, then often the territory in question is declared

nonexistent. This is the way a considerable number of mainstream scientists deal with the difficult territory of psi phenomena. This is like saying the upper Amazon does not exist because it is hard to get there.

For parapsychologists the situation looks somewhat different. They do believe (or at least I've heard they do!) the territory of psi exists and usually accept that it is a particularly hard one to explore. They also hold the tacit assumption that the methods and tools of the hunter reading the tracks will eventually lead them through the jungle of strange events. This implies the basic idea that, provided you follow certain rules, you will eventually conquer all the unknown territory. Kuhn's concepts⁴ have made it all the more explicit that scientists need not fear the unknown, since before they even cross borders they know that the virgin soil is not new territory at all; it is part of the "self-evident" that just has to be questioned in the right way. Such an attitude had the advantage of preserving the adventurous feeling of being a discoverer and conqueror, while at the same time preventing one from getting lost in a scandalously strange land.

The attitude towards the unknown hence is marked by an approach-avoidance conflict that certainly does not disappear through justification. Rather it is maintained by sticking to methods that support rationalistic security. The methods cover the conflict temporarily and justify the means. They handle the scientists' frustrations of wanting to give themselves over to the seductive appeal of the unknown—obviously an object of desire that is able to elicit the wildest fantasies because it is new, strange and untouched—as long as they know that in "reality" it is not foreign at all.⁵ Why this behavior and where do the fears come from that render the scientific method such a seemingly exclusive device for gaining knowledge about the world?

Tart argues⁶ that the process of enculturation in our society, whereby each of us becomes a "normal" citizen, involves dynamics which repress psi functioning and create strong defenses against paranormal events. Infants learn to accept and mirror the world views of their parents in order to grow up in accordance with a model of "normality." They are trained to accept a loving image of their parents, but by means of their innate psi abilities that image is undermined and creates a conflict for the child. To secure parental love, psi functioning is inhibited, which later results in ignoring or attacking psi phenomena as a consequence of not dealing with deeply repressed material which, for parapsychologists themselves, turns into the above-mentioned "religion of the .05 level."

I believe that there is more to the picture of repressing psi and actively holding on to *models* of security than can be explained by a strictly psy-

chological and social-psychological interpretation. We might have to view paranormal phenomena as belonging to a part of nature that is characterized by uncertainty and surprise; some might say by chaos. This part of nature belongs to the ancient stratum in the history of hominization; it survives in rituals and magic of so-called "primitives" that are associated with the savage, impulsive and, in psychoanalytic terms, with the *id*.⁷ The process of civilization, which saw man coming out of pathless forests and caves into the geometry of cities, has declared the conscious *ego* to be the important aspect of rendering a man what creation has meant he should be. Control over the world, control over one's own impulses. The main achievement seemed to be the triumph of having found a way out of the scandalous kaleidoscope of change and transformation that characterized the archaic form of existence—the possibility of living "the other" without culturing it out, repressing it.

I believe there is good ground for change in our attitudes toward parapsychology and psi phenomena in parapsychology's second century, if we look back and learn from ancient ways, not just by studying a history of ideas. It is difficult to make clear that this kind of perspective sees knowledge as intrinsically connected with working on our own personality. Today psychologies of the unconscious have completely taken the lead in describing the part of ourselves that I called the "other." According to rationalistic thinking this fact might have its roots in the idea that the unknown, the unexpected, the unexplainable cannot be part of the physical world—since this is the known and at least potentially explainable world—and hence represents only psychological realities. The discussion about the "other" as a repressed and cultured-out part of nature is transferred to a meta-level of discourse and dealt with by schools of depth psychology, which, in the view of conventional rationalistic science, try to describe psychic events with "irrational" methods. Very subtle strategies of immunization prevail among scientists and strengthen the position of a kind of rationalistic ideology that obviously is very touched by the fear-provoking aspect of the "other." The paranormal becomes part of the abnormal, the insane.

To some extent psychologists themselves, as a tribute to rationalistic science, have tried to explain the "other" in a purely rationalistic way. I think about Jacques Lacan, for example, who by means of his structuralist-phenomenologist approach toward the unconscious has intellectually obscured our understanding of the "other" rather than elucidated it. By the way, this tendency was already visible when Frederick Myers, one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, put forward his theory of the subliminal self, which includes isolated conscious events

(he called them "streams of consciousness") which occur in connection with one's organism, but which do not form part of one's habitual (or supraliminal) consciousness. His theory was poor as an explanatory model, though his original thoughts looked promising in regard to understanding more about the "other" in its diverse forms of paranormal events and unconscious psychological processes.

In the archaic tradition, to come back to my line of thought, knowledge/experience of the "other" was gained through initiation, the process of becoming the "other." This was the synchronic and, at the same time, diachronic apprehension of the world. Later when the hunter learned that he could develop an amazingly accurate model of observation which allowed him to trap the "wild," the process of demarcation between the self and the "other" began. He discovered that outside of the savage, the unknown, the unconscious, the uncontrolled, everything could be assigned a place and that the relations between the objects of knowledge were clear-cut and could be subjected to analysis. He *learned* about the magic of nature, whereas his ancestors had *experienced* it. In the archaic way of perceiving, objects lost their anonymity, their "objectivity"; the archaic perspective allowed events (that in our usual state of mind would not mean anything to us) to reveal secrets, to become *signs* and *omens*, to "show" that the "other" is part of us, part of our body and part of our experiences.⁸ The world was not just a collection of elements that fill up space and change with time, but more it was a world of magical interrelatedness. This understanding of magic permitted stone-age men and women to experience connections and identities where modern man would see nothing but delusions.

Once man started to move out of the forests, knowledge through initiation fell out of favor. There were religious movements; but the cults of mysteries from Phrygia to Eleusis, where the initiate would experience the unity of the self and the "other," were no longer considered to represent acceptable ways of gaining wisdom. Thus the cults became elitist; they were forced to withdraw from the mainstream. Because they had as their main characteristic (to the analytically-minded) the *arreton*, the ineffable, the description of the mysteries in the early scientific works was reflected in the science of *arretology*, which tried to make exoteric what by its very nature cannot be analyzed without destroying this very nature. If the atmosphere of the *mystikon* disappears, we might be left with a philosophical system or a history of events, but not with the essence of the initiatory experience. A similar effect would be observed if one were to take away the magical from parapsychology. One could talk in metaphors and allusions; poetic forms say more than the written words

reveal. This is the adequate form for talking about magical relations and was intentionally employed by the quick-responding (*artiepēs*) oracles from Delphi to Dodona.

Certainly, approaching the unknown in an archaic way elicits fear of losing strict boundaries of self and the fear of losing one's mind. Quite a few scientists seem to know that in the magical realm of Castaneda's nagual lies nothing else than insanity or death. The usual arguments against Castaneda-type assumptions of man-animal communication, flying shamans, etc., reveal an incredibly unimaginative, unpoetic attitude toward the world. If an animal talks with a human being, then its language must be a known human one. And if a shaman or a witch flies they must be up in the air like hang-gliders on a sunny afternoon. Otherwise the animal wouldn't talk and the sorcerer wouldn't fly (the discussion would be displaced into the realm of the psychologist and his knowledge about "strange" mental events). The usual comment, not unknown to parapsychologists dealing with skeptics, runs something like: "I haven't seen any shaman fly." What does this mean? It means that he or she did not see a shaman fly. Nothing else. (Remember what I said about the place that is hard to get to, but certainly not less real than Victoria Station in London.)

Part of this attitude towards the "other" is the "civilized" idea that psi must be something extremely "far out," something totally different from our everyday experience, something belonging—if it were to exist—to a completely different reality than our everyday one. Yet, even in times when civilization already had a long history and religion was based on initiation into mysteries, there was a distinctive knowledge about psi as part of our reality and indeed it was always present in one form or another. The Latin version of a Delphic response says: *Vocatus atque non vocatus deus aderit*—sought or unsought, a God will still be present.⁹ But she does not reveal her presence to telescopes or measuring tapes. The traces she likes to leave are only sometimes visible from the "outside," but clear if one knows how to get rid of boundaries and to "enter into the world where everything is known," as the Mazatec *curandera* Maria Sabina put it. In the classical world the *mantis*, the seer, was not just a psychic with formidable precognitive abilities, like Cassandra, Priam's daughter who, in one of the most moving and terrifying passages in Greek tragedy, in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, correctly senses the murderous history of the Atreidae, describes in great detail the murder of Agamemnon and foretells her own death. The *mantis* was more than someone who possessed unusual psi abilities. In addition to being a poet he or she was an artist and a *sophos* whose divine inspiration revealed the truth about the world. This gift was a special form of

awareness, shamanic awareness, a matter of communing with the forces of nature by communing with oneself. In the *Iliad* Achilles says about Calchas: "And amongst them stood up Calchas son of Thestor, far the best of bird-augurers, who knew what is and what is to come and what has been before, and led the Achean ships to Ilium through his mantic art which Phoebus Apollo gave him." Calchas is not only a forecaster, a bird-augurer, but most strikingly he knows the present and tells the truth as opposed to the appearance of things. Through his sensitive awareness he knows, in the *Iliad*, why Apollo is angry. He knows this art because he knows himself. Like the shaman, the true seer is one who has gained an insight into his own psyche (in Lacanian terms, one who is able to read the language of the "other," the unconscious) and existence that enables him to perceive and interpret the hidden reality of our everyday consciousness.

The Eskimo shamans have to master *quamaneq*—the ability to see through themselves. Actually they have to seek solitude and pain, so that the psyche can break open, as one Eskimo shaman put it,¹⁰ and in doing so they become able to literally see through their body, perceive their own skeleton and insides. This immediate, literal and figurative insight into oneself, the understanding of one's psyche is the understanding of the "other." In the very moment of *quamaneq*, in which the shaman's perspective about himself alters totally, he experiences the gift of clairvoyance. His eyes pierce through darkness and space as they pierced through his own self-evident being. Again, it is as if he would reenact the archaic ways of the paleolithic shamans whose consciousness extended all through nature and whose visions always told them something hidden about the world as well as about themselves. A shaman of the Teton-Dakota once said about a vision seeker: "The vision may come to him, either when he is awake, or when he is asleep. It may appear in the form of anything that breathes or as some inanimate thing. If it communicates with him, it may speak intelligibly to him, or it may use words that he does not understand, or speak in the language of beasts and birds. By something it says or does it will make known to him that it is the vision he seeks."¹¹

According to *how* the eagle or the rattlesnake appears to him he will know things about himself that previously he might have vaguely sensed, but never was really clear about. The vision makes them clear. Like in countless incidents where a face is seen in a cave and, shockingly as well as surprisingly, recognized to be one's own, the Australian aborigine will recognize during his initiation that "that thing there," a wallaby or a kangaroo, *is himself*. The habit of cutting the urethra open as part of a special initiation among Australian aborigine males is but one manner

of visibly rendering themselves similar to opossums, kangaroos or koalas, all of whom have slit penises. Similarly Piaroa men in the Venezuelan rain forests make holes in their tongues to render them similar to the tongue of the pekkari. Once the Thonga broke their upper incisors during initiation to become similar to their oxen, and the Fali in northern Cameroon laminated their teeth to look like crocodile teeth and made holes in their ears, lips and noses to resemble toads and turtles.¹² The novice experiences that "this thing," which in our everyday consciousness is different from other things and certainly from oneself, in reality is himself. For the initiate it does not make a difference if we say the self is the world or the consciousness is expanding into the world or if we say the world is everything and hence—nothing. Inside and outside are not different in the archaic perspective. It is the *tat tvam asi*—this is you—of Indian philosophy that expresses the radical simplicity of the shamanic consciousness.

Western rationality is going the other way; more boundaries and more indirect experiences of the world. Whereas the shaman silently listens to the soft voices of nature, scientists generally ignore the soulful aspects of things and reduce them to concepts and processes.

Fear of getting "inside" the world to experience and understand those phenomena that pop up as surprising anomalies of models and theories, has a strong connection to a historical burden. This was brought on by the process of civilization, the glorification of the *ego*-functions in connection with the condemnation of the savage and uncontrollable primordial states of constant ecstatic transformation, as well as through establishing a sort of supernorm of rationality believed to exist apart from man as a given of addressing the world "properly." Accepting strong manifestations of psi, allowing oneself to be touched by them and affected in one's outlook upon the world, does not permit us to hold on to models of security and drives us to recognize the intimate relationship between gaining knowledge about the "outside" world and at the same moment gaining insight into oneself, and vice versa. This is a kind of poetic approach which does not accept the world as being only like our senses and apparatus register it. It clearly represents a continuation of the shamanic perspective. The shaman has eyes which see the world not as commonplace, or as scientific scrutiny sees it; he sees it transformed beyond measure, as it really is. As Roszak put it: "Instead of rushing to downgrade the rhapsodic reports of our enchanted seers, to interpret them at the lowest and most conventional level, we must be prepared to consider the scandalous possibility that wherever the visionary imagination grows bright, magic, that old antagonist of science, renews itself, transmuting our workday reality into something bigger, perhaps more

frightening, certainly more adventurous than the lesser rationality of objective consciousness can ever countenance.”¹³ I would not support Roszak’s argument that magic is an old antagonist of science. Science rather grew out from a magical substratum, from the shaman’s curiosity about nature and its ways. But it has estranged itself from its roots, from the art and poetry of knowledge which allowed an inner view of magic, and repressed this possibility of the solitary knowledge of the fence-sitter who is estranged from the self-evident world of the talking animals as well as from the world of talking parapsychologists. The scandalous possibility of an intimate connection between the outer and the inner, the possibility of not only observing, but also experiencing psi, brings forth all the negative images and feelings that in the historical process of civilization have become so closely connected with the realm of the uncontrollable, the impish, the savage and the crazy! A whole kaleidoscope of primordial forces of the dark, unconscious and animal-like becomes associated with (at least unconsciously) the possibility of strong psi manifestations. Behind the fact that enculturation in our society might act as an ontogenetic factor in creating fear and suppression of psi, a very similar, I might call it “phylogenetic,” factor accounts for the tendency to avoid dealing with the fact that we have the possibility of letting go of models and rationalistic security and still staying alive and sane and—*horribile dictu*—experiencing something about ourselves and the world that we have not thought possible before.

Certainly this represents a challenge to parapsychology. Although I see nothing negative about a scientific inquiry into the field as such, I do see a great likelihood that psi investigations will remain limited to such approaches.

Nowadays there is a great deal of interest in shamanism and shamanic world views. It looks as if quite a number of people are willing to take the risk of experiencing themselves “inside” the world without thinking about it as a kind of awareness that at some point has to be corroborated by scientific standards. I do not mean that we should adopt shamanic styles and techniques in the literal sense, like beating the drum and climbing the *axis mundi* to the upperworld (though this might be necessary for some), but rather I mean adopting a certain style of existence. The shaman is not only a shaman when he proceeds to cure someone at a special ritual, just as psi does not happen only when a psychic is wired to special devices in a parapsychology laboratory. We must be ready to encounter psi at any time and accept it outside our laboratory walls and outside all of our expectations if we are to learn something.

Since psi phenomena are among the most representative events pointing towards the “other,” the unknown and unconscious, they present

us with the inestimable opportunity to forget everything we have ever known about this ordered world, to temporarily become, at least partially, blind to it. This is similar to the initiate in the Eleusinian mysteries; his head was covered so he could not see anything any more. The word "mystery" goes back to a root that means "closing the eyes and mouth." The novice enters the dark, leaves the world as he knows it, to actualize the ability that only the dark has—to generate light. "Every shaman has to feel a glow of light in his body," says an Eskimo shaman referring to the light cast upon the world which makes it look entirely different than before. Once we experience the magic, let a part of us become open again, everything will become different than we knew it before. When Don Juan taught Castaneda to fly, the flying itself was not the important part, but rather the surprising experience afterwards of what it meant to walk. The same is true about his learning to talk with the coyote, which resulted in a new consciousness about what it means to talk with people.¹⁴ In a similar sense, experiencing the paranormal might teach us what it means to live in the world of the self-evident *normal*; it might also teach us what it means to conduct experiments with a seemingly self-evident method in order to understand the phenomena.

Unfortunately, it seems that there is a new trend among some parapsychologists at the end of this first century of organized inquiry to state, after all, that we do not really know if psi exists. This is somehow that most extreme position asking for strict and unambiguous scientific corroboration of something that most probably has been experienced by all parapsychologists. I wish we could enter the next century of research with a more open and accepting attitude towards the surprising and the unknown. The challenge is not to be worried about the correctness of one's perceptions and feelings in the sense of their objective reality, but rather to develop a sense of its inner "correctness," and its significance for understanding ourselves and nature.

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DISCUSSION

SERVADIO: The difference between the two lines of approach has so clearly come up in this conference and has already been very nicely exemplified by a discussion that I heard myself, during a conference, between Mircea Eliade the famous scholar and student of religion and Ernesto De Martino, who was the number one of Italian cultural anthropologists. It all started with the discussion between Castaneda and Don Juan about whether or not Castaneda, after having swallowed some drug, had really had a flight experience. Castaneda objected that this is a typically Western question. De Martino and Eliade discussed this point at length, because Eliade contended that what was important was the idea of the flight, the principle of the flying. De Martino, more materialistically oriented, said, "if I heard that some shaman somewhere flies, I would go there with photographers, camera men and so on in order to have proof and evidence of the flight." Now who was right? I remember that our old friend Eric Dingwall was in favor of De Martino's ideas, whereas I and others were rather inclined toward the approach of Eliade. Both lines of approach can be defended, because after all even the most mystically oriented man or initiate does not deny that phenomena exist, so an approach to phenomena as we experience them everyday is quite correct. But thinking of that discussion that occurred many years ago, I am still more and more in favor of Eliade's ideas.

GRUBER: De Martino in one of his books, *Il Mondo Magico*, discusses magic from a perspective that is really closer to Eliade's ideas than it would seem. On the other hand, I can assure you that shamans do fly in the air. There are stories that Eskimo shamans collided when flying, but I am sure there was no one there with a recorder or with film equipment to get an objective document of this event.

BELOFF: I think, Mr. Gruber, that I caught the drift of your argument which wasn't, I might say, very easy because you were so discursive, you

ranged so far and wide. What you were saying essentially was that psi phenomena have more in common with primitive magic and with shamanism than they do, say, with the phenomena of physics as we understand them. I think I would be inclined to agree with this and to go along with you. But what rather disappointed me was that you didn't go on from there to spell out what the implications are for us and by us I do mean serious parapsychologists. Now, as our Chairman reminded us when he opened this conference, the Society for Psychical Research was founded one hundred years ago and it's the tradition that we still pursue, to apply the methods and the objectivity of the sciences to these peculiar phenomena to try to understand them from a system of thought that we, with our scientific background and traditions, have inherited. Now, it seems to me once we abandon this, once we adopt what I suppose you would call the insider's point of view, we no longer serve a useful function. We might just as well decamp and leave the field to occultists and other students of esoteric traditions. I mean parapsychology as this Foundation understands it, as the SPR understands it, would no longer play any part. I wonder whether you really want us to draw those conclusions from what you're saying or whether you kept up your sleeve ways and means by which, despite the evasiveness and the extraordinary nature of the phenomena, we might nevertheless come to grips with them, if necessary with photographers there when the shamans take to flight and whatever else may be necessary.

GRUBER: I think one thing is that the scientific perspective and scientific pursuits in regard to paranormal phenomena are perfectly acceptable. I also think other pursuits are acceptable though they might not share the point of view of scientists. If we were to look at what I term archaic ways or shamanic ways of seeing the world, we could learn from that, as scientists or as "normal" people, and draw conclusions for ourselves as to how we want to proceed in researching psi phenomena. I don't say that every parapsychologist who gets involved with shamanism should drop his scientific scrutiny and go out and beat the drum, or experience what shamans experience, but he might be able to learn something from their *perspective* that might alter his ways of looking at psi, alter his ways of inquiry and maybe help him find new methods that apply better to these phenomena that seem to escape the methods that we usually apply to them as scientists.

SARGENT: There is a very unfortunate little slip in your paper. It rather gives the game away. It says that "The shaman has eyes which see the world not as a commonplace sight or as scientific scrutiny sees it, he sees it transformed beyond measure *as it really is.*" Now, I take very strong objection to that comment because I don't believe that there is any world as it really is. I think there are various views of the world

depending on how you happen to look at it. But I think that, while you're trying to say we should listen to these disciplines and look at what we may learn from them, in fact you're actually identifying yourself or aligning yourself with them more than perhaps you think you are. I think this kind of slip rather gives it away. On the other side we have John Beloff, who asked what all this means for us *serious* parapsychologists, as opposed to anybody who does anything other than permanent statistical studies; they are obviously the frivolous parapsychologists. You know we have here dichotomies; they're so unnecessary, so unproductive. It's a question of using the shamanistic way of relating to the world as and when it looks like a useful thing to do. That's the individual's decision as to when that may be useful. It's as Feyerabend says, anything goes, depending on what happens to be the most likely looking thing, in an individual's judgment, to get you somewhere and get whatever you want to get. So I think it's rather unfortunate that one has to go and polarize these things this way. The second point that I would like to make is that I'm a little unhappy about this kind of romanticization of what we call, for better or worse, primitive cultures. I think a very good intellectual discipline you can interpose between this kind of thing and Western scientific thought is in the writings of Abraham Maslow. Maslow writes about self-actualization as the high development of human personality. The nature of perception in highly self-actualized people he says, for instance, is quite different from what psychologists term "perception." For Maslow, one cannot divorce perception from value and meaning. They're fused. You could not conduct the kind of pointless and meaningless experiments into the psychology of perception that are normally carried out on people. Values and meanings are directly infused into the objects, as well as their perception. But it doesn't mean that they live in a concrete world of immediate sense objects; that their perception is a fusion of adult and child perception. The child, Maslow says, writing very poetically, experiences the flower as something tactile, as something beautiful, something poetically arranged and smells delightful. A highly abstract adult intelligence sees the geometry of the petals and so on. The self-actualized person sees both at the same time and you couldn't possibly take the two apart for him. I can't help feeling that it's that kind of almost supernormal perceptual development that may be a better way of trying to learn about psi phenomena, than studying shamanistic literatures from allegedly primitive cultures.

GRUBER: To some extent you are right. But still, not only the shamanic world view, but more the initiatory experience or initiation itself is one step beyond what you're saying. The initiate does not only experience at once the smell and the poetic form of the flower, for example, but he experiences *being* the flower. This "oneness" was experienced in

archaic forms. It gave the initiate a totally different perspective on himself, once he wasn't the flower anymore.

RONEY-DOUGAL: It's all very well to try to experience and understand the magical reality, but what parapsychology is doing is, in a way "earthing" this reality. We are using our science to take that other reality and help to bring it back down to ground level, down to earth, to this plane of existence where most people can understand it and where it means something to them. I think in a sense we're becoming translators. We're translating from one language to another and it's very important that we don't get lost in either one side or the other side. We've got to face the bridge and so we must always take what people like Castaneda say, what we read in *The Iliad* and so on and then try to apply it back here and see what our ground rules, in the form of parapsychology as a science, can actually help us to learn and teach us, about reality.

GRUBER: I go along with you only when you say our scientific way to deal with psi phenomena is to be a translator, to make the phenomena understandable to non-scientists. We have heard today from Renée Haynes, for example, that science however may not be the best translator for paranormal phenomena. We have to find other ways to translate it so that it is really understandable to everyone. People who give themselves over to initiatory experiences do understand something. It is not necessary for them to communicate what they understand, but their understanding gets them somewhere, too. So, I don't think we should aim necessarily at a scientific understanding or that translating is the best job we can do. I hope that science as it is will alter its translation job so that everyone can really grasp what is translated.

MAUGHFLING: Eleven years ago, in 1971, I had an experience of human flight and it was only two years later when I read Castaneda's books that I realized that perhaps I wasn't the only one and also ceased to doubt my sanity from that point on. I would be very interested in a scientific explanation of it, although, of course, the scientific explanation is not the same as the experience of human flight.

BIERMAN: I completely agree with Carl's remark that any method goes, even beating the drum, and it might be a good method in the creative part of the scientific process. However, only as long as it leads to somewhere, as long as it gives results, should we measure the method by its results. Now I assume by listening to you that you experienced your other self several times and I should like to know from you where it led you, as a serious or non-serious parapsychologist.

GRUBER: Well, it led me, for example, to this discussion, that seems to separate the serious parapsychologist pursuing an accepted scientific method from others that accept many more ways of approaching the paranormal. For example, I discussed here the Greek notion of the seer,

the *mantis*. This was someone who not only experienced "strange events," but who was very attentive to his own psyche and to the world around him. He had a certain kind of awareness, to which I aspire, so that psi events were not separate, extraordinary happenings, but rather part of his ongoing appreciation of the texture of life. Being open to psi is really being open to oneself, and through that openness becoming attentive to what is outside oneself.

BIERMAN: I understand what you seek, but what I want to hear is the practical consequence, I want to see the results, if there are practical results. Maybe you don't expect practical results, on the level of the serious parapsychologist.

GRUBER: I don't have specific suggestions for "serious" parapsychologists except those that I gave in my paper. I personally think that as a result of having adopted a more open perspective my life has become more interesting.

COX: I just want to comment about the phrase "alternate realities" and a number of others in which we seem to be labeling phenomena, implying that we know how they operate. I wish indeed that we did, but "alternate realities" is a Castaneda concept and this and other quasi-sources of information do leave so many questions unanswered. We've got enough to worry about even in the phenomena. Now may I mention that the levitation you spoke of, or matter penetrating matter and other incredible effects, seem to be a trend that nowadays is occurring, ever since Geller appeared with his spoon bending and metal bending. It even seems to be the fashion. What it is that causes these physical phenomena to ensue among many we still don't know; but there's one fact which should be noted, and this is that Geller has indeed flushed out of the woodwork other potential physical sensitives who have found they could bend metal, too. If D. D. Home in his day had the press that we have now, he might likewise have found a whole lot of little D. D. Homes here, there and yonder who hadn't discovered themselves, but who were imbued by nature with these proclivities.

If you wish to see recondite claims, behind which I stand, however, unfortunately, some may be viewed on film during the ensuing Parapsychological Association Convention, such as matter through matter, levitation and the rest of it. If anyone there present can explain them by simpler terms (to use a little reductionism that we mentioned this morning), I will be the beneficiary.

Whether the quantitative and qualitative nature of psi are related, and I think they are, we probably can find out. I am encouraging some new blood in New York to see to it that Geller is not ignored on the assumption that he is a fraud. I for one have seen Geller and also Girard bend metal in my own hand.

BLACKMORE: I'm very enthusiastic about a lot of things that you said and particularly the idea which I think maybe Serena was referring to when she talked about grounding—that we have or will soon have the ability to start relating our explorations of inner space to psychology. I'm going to be talking about this tomorrow morning, but I'm hopeful that we may be able to start talking about the structure of imagination, of hallucination, so that we can understand why people can get in similar states by doing similar things. And shamans know a lot more about how to do it than we do and we may have a language with which to bring it into the public domain, into science. Now I'm very interested in this from the point of view of the out-of-body experience, from the point of view of my own inner explorations of all sorts of altered states. The question I want to ask you is where is the psi in all this? Now you mentioned it often enough and the shamans mention it often enough and it appears in many altered states to be there, but when you start to look at psi as defined by what John Beloff would call serious parapsychology, psi as defined by the PA, by any of these bodies, it may not be there at all. And I'm rather concerned that perhaps we may get left out. It may be other people who are really going to do valid exploration of these states and start to understand them and in a rather futile search for psi we may be missing the most important thing there.

GRUBER: I don't think that what shamans do is like what you referred to as "exploring inner space." They explore inner space by exploring outer space at the same time and vice versa. I think that's *why* psi comes in. Whether you call it OBE or shaman's flight is unimportant. The anthropological literature is full of psi phenomena. It seems that shamans can really experience those phenomena much more easily than we can.

BLACKMORE: If you don't take the cameras out to actually film them flying, then you're not bringing in psi as it's normally accepted by parapsychologists.

GRUBER: That's true. If I said that I haven't seen a shaman fly, they might still fly. I don't know. But on the other hand if a shaman has an OBE and he reports something seen that he could only know by clairvoyance, for example, you'd say that was a psi experience. But you can't film that because he just tells you about it. You don't have to be able to document everything. Besides, there is a funny story: an ethnographer once visited a North American Indian tribe, in hopes of documenting on film the famous shaking tent ceremony. The shaman told him his efforts were in vain because "the Whites don't capture anything when they photograph." What happens is not something that can be documented easily. But that doesn't necessarily mean that it's all hallucinatory. It just means it cannot be caught on film.