



10-1-1990

# Alan Roland, *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Toward a Cross-Cultural Psychology.*

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### Recommended Citation

Kopf, David (1990) "Alan Roland, *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Toward a Cross-Cultural Psychology.*" *Comparative Civilizations Review*: Vol. 23 : No. 23 , Article 12.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr/vol23/iss23/12>

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livelihood from those environments, and then also producing cultural artefacts of lasting value. To accomplish this for East Asia within a manageable number of pages would mean greater selectivity with regard to poems, pictures and literature, perhaps, but to do so would provide such material with greater meaning, interest, and significance.

One should not leave consideration of this work without commenting upon the high quality of the numerous maps (18) so well designed by Jean Paul Tremblay. They are an improvement over the extremely rudimentary cartography that historians often deem sufficient. We are reminded that maps as a means of efficiently conveying historical events and processes are still much neglected.

Laurence Grambow Wolf  
Roger Mark Selya

#### THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY OF INTERCIVILIZATIONAL ENCOUNTER

Alan Roland. *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Toward a Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988. Pp. xxxii, 386.

This is a very special kind of book in the history of comparative Asian studies, derived from what may well be a unique intellectual orientation and written by an unconventional practitioner of the art and science of mental therapy who decided—for the sake of professional integrity, truth, and his patients' health—to undertake, in his own words, a "psychoanalytic odyssey to India" (p. x). For the benefit of his Indian and Japanese patients, Alan Roland, a psychoanalyst in New York City, systematically studied Asian culture and history, took a journey to the patients' countries of origin and intelligently used his newly-acquired knowledge to formulate an innovative, culturally-sensitive therapy. I know of no other practicing head-shrinker who, after publicly admitting to the Westerncentric limitations of his professional training and its therapeutic value, enrolled as a student at the Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University, then went off to Asia as a research scholar and returned with a fresh perspective on the undeveloped field of cross-cultural psychology.

It is not that Indian studies lacked a body of psychological literature which asked probing questions. Carstairs's work on *The Twice-born, A Study of High-Caste Hindus* (1957), Spratt's on *Hindu Culture and Personality: A Psychoanalytic Study* (1966), Erickson's *Gandhi's Truth* (1969), and Kakar's *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* (1978) were among the best of many studies of Hindus in search of themselves in unstable modern Indian society and culture. Roland acknowledges his debt to these valuable studies but his concern is with the Indian who takes up residence abroad in a city like New York. The individual inevitably suffers a large degree of radioactive exposure to Americanization through love, marriage, and career. It is not simply a

clash between the security of joint family ties left behind and the new sense of individual freedom or between inherited spiritual values and Western materialism. The problem seems to appear when Indian traditions are held to be backward and American values are held to be progressive or modern.

Interaction with patients of Indian and Japanese background raised questions for which he originally turned to psychoanalysis for answers. But he found nothing because "psychoanalysis as it is constituted today is largely an elaborate ethnopschoanalysis of Western man (and to varied degrees Western woman) . . ." (p. xxv). Ultimately, Roland turned to historical and social science literature to find evidence of identity disorders in persons unable to cope with the stresses and strains that invariably accompany episodes of inter-civilizational encounter. Historically, at one point, he turned to Bengalis during the British period in the nineteenth century and wrote brilliantly on the search for a new identity by the Bengali intelligentsia in a chapter called 'Indian Identity and Colonialism.' Utilizing my own work on *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1969) which deals with the acculturation process of Bengalis in contact with the British in the last century or so, Roland has been able to identify patterns of impact and response between the colonialist overlord and his Bengali cultural mediator. In terms of psychological well-being, the Bengalis responded positively to modernization if transmitted by British Orientalists who knew Indian languages and were favorably disposed to Hinduism. In this case, modern ideas, techniques, and technology from the West were incorporated into indigenous institutions and traditions creating a new cultural syncretism. The psychological difficulties or identity crises developed when "Utilitarians and Anglicists increasingly viewed Indian culture so disparagingly that they believed reform and modernization could take place only by completely Anglicizing Indians" (p. 19). Then came Thomas Macaulay, who totally denigrated everything Indian and convinced the governor to divert education funds for English-medium education with the aim of "turning Indians into Englishmen" (p. 19). "The reverberating effects of this educational system," Roland concludes, "are still felt today, and greatly affect Indian identity" (p. 19).

After weighing the evidence provided by area studies of historians and anthropologists, and after considerable research and consultation abroad, Roland has come up with a conceptual framework which will most certainly anger the busy horde of deconstructionists who rallied around Edward Said some years ago and are still trying to pull down the great monolith known as the Orient. Oblivious to these people who write discourses to one another condemning the West for oversimplifying and distorting the East, Roland divides conceptions of self into Eastern and Western categories. Roland believes that the Oriental self is familial and spiritual whereas the Occidental is individualized. By the 'familial self' Roland means "a basic inner psychological organization that enables women and men to function well with the hierarchical intimacy relationships of the extended family, community, and other groups. . ."

(p. 7). By 'spiritual self' Roland means "an inner spiritual reality . . . usually expressed in India through a complex structure of gods and goddesses as well as through ritual and meditation and is deeply engraved in the preconscious of all Indians . . ." (p. 9). But in Japan, Roland feels that "the avenues toward realization of the spiritual self are different, tending toward a more aesthetic mode such as the tea ceremony, flower arranging . . . and communion with nature" (p. 9).

It is the individualized self which Roland views as "the predominant inner psychological organization of Americans" (p. 8). The individual self seems to be the mischievous source of the identity problem in Asians because it functions as the destabilizing, seductive and even villainous force that ultimately undermines the collective harmony and equilibrium of the familial self, compelling many an Indian and Japanese person to seek psychoanalytic help. The characteristics of the individualized self that are most damaging to the Asian immigrant are I-ness, narcissistic structures of self-regard, and ego-ideal saturated with competitive individualism and self-actualization and "modes of cognition and ego-functioning that are strongly oriented towards rationalism, self-reflection, efficiency, mobility and adaptability to extra-familial relationships" (pp. 7-8). Here, then, in the struggle between the security of the human family, the fulfillment of the human spirit on the one hand, and the irresistible appeal of individual freedom on the other, lies the source for the pain and suffering of many Asians trapped rather than liberated by the acculturation process.

*David Kopf*

#### A CIVILIZATIONAL GENERAL PEACE?

Matthew Melko, *Peace In Our Time*. NY: Paragon House, 1990.

Matthew Melko predicts peace in our time (at least in Europe) on the basis of the rhythms of modern European history, which began in 1485 with some 13 decades of relative peace, followed by the 30 Years' War. Then some 14 decades of peace, followed by three decades of the World Wars. Now some four decades of peace *so far*. According to this pattern, some 60-100 more years of peace might be expected in the Western World, including North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Maybe Russia and the Far East. Melko calls the peaceful decades "normal periods" and the decades of war "crisis periods." His prediction assumes that the patterns of the past will be repeated in the future (p. 169).

Melko establishes the rhythms of modern European history (since 1740) primarily on the basis of Bouthoul & Carrere's fatality estimates, which the author was converted into fatalities per year and annual fatalities per 100,000 population (p. 56). Both measures show many more fatalities in crisis periods than in normal periods, leaving no doubt about the difference between these two kinds of historical period.

Why the current remission of violence in the West? Melko wonders. He