

tions of psychology in both the West and India, the problem of person, self, and identity. This is a significant book, not only for the field of the history and theory of psychology but also for psychology in general. In its attempt to fuse the different horizons of Western and Indian psychology, it not only deepens "our understanding of issues of common interest" (p. 3) but also humbles us to recognize the limitations of Euro-American psychology. It allows a critical self-reflection on how we – in the West – conceptualize psychological themes, on the methodologies we apply, and on the practices we endorse. It opens our awareness that psychological concepts are widely not natural but social, historical, and cultural.

Paranjpe's comparison between Western and Indian psychology does not follow a cross-cultural investigative practice. On the contrary, Paranjpe is critical about current cross-cultural psychology "where researchers seem to be obsessed with the methodological minutiae to the neglect of the 'big picture'" (p. 15). Cross-cultural psychology often assumes, implicitly or explicitly, that it represents a superior form of psychology while statements about other cultures and psychologies are recurrently "based on appalling ignorance of the concerned subject matter" (p. 18). Paranjpe provides, using philosophical, theoretical, and historical means of reflection, and without invoking ideas of superiority or inferiority, an informed exposition of his subject matter: "The long histories of ethnocentric tendencies on both sides must be overcome if we aim at genuine mutual understanding" (p. 21). Accordingly, we can understand the studies in the book as the transcendental basis from which cross-cultural studies of the self can be executed in a meaningful manner.

But the focus on these critical issues is misleading and reflects more the concerns of the reviewers. Paranjpe's intentions are much more constructive than deconstructive. After laying open the context of his inquiry, discussing the concepts of person, self and identity in both traditions, and following the classical differentiation between cognition, emotion, and conation (trilogy of mind) as basic aspects of consciousness or as psychological conditions of personhood, Paranjpe discusses the self-as-knower (cognition), the self-as-enjoyer-sufferer (affect), and the self-as-agent (action). It may surprise the reader to learn that this "tripartite designation of the person as one who knows, feels, and acts (jnata, bhokta, and karta) repeatedly appears in numerous Indian texts" (p. 66). This trilogy of the mind provides a constitutive framework for Paranjpe's detailed comparative analyses.

Paranjpe's comparisons are not forced but always sensitive to the problem. They take parallels as well as specific differences into account, and they are aware of

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This book is without a doubt an exemplary philosophical-psychological achievement, the result of extensive, sophisticated, and enlightened research. Paranjpe analyzes and compares, based on knowledge of the epistemological, ontological, and ethical founda-

the intellectual diversity and vastness of the literature within each culture and the lack of a common framework within which meaningful comparisons may be made. He points out that the denial of the self (Hume, Skinner) and its opposite framework, the affirmation of the self (Kant, Piaget, Erikson), find their parallel in Indian thought with its assertion in the Upanisads and its rejection in Theravada Buddhism. It is fascinating to know that James's "stream of thought" and Reid's description of the mind as flowing like the water of a river find a parallel in the mind-river (*citta nadi*) in the work of Vyasa in India over a thousand years earlier.

Paranjpe also provides a detailed and historically informed discussion of the concepts of person, self, and identity in both traditions. It may surprise some readers to learn, for example, that "the traditional Indian conception of personhood is essentially individualistic" (p. 65). The difference regarding the concept of person can be found elsewhere: While the West stresses individual rights in the public sphere, the Indian tradition focuses on obligations in the ethical and spiritual domains. In addition, the idea of personhood is interconnected with the concept of *dharma*, a term with varied meanings, but which often refers to rules of conduct. The discussion on self and identity includes, among other Western scholars, James, Cooley, Mead, and Freud.

As concrete case examples, Paranjpe compares the ideas of Erikson with those of Advaita Vedantic thought. Advaita Vedanta, a *darshana*, or vision or philosophy, is one of the major perspectives in Indian thought. It includes, in contrast to European counterparts (excluding some psychotherapies and technologies of the self), a theory and a practical program of the self that should transport the person to a different state of consciousness. He identifies "some remarkable commonalities" (p. 177) and demonstrates that the "Advaita Vedanta presents ... a conceptual model of a human being no less comprehensive and rigorous than any of the contemporary theories of personality" (pp. 175-176). Both Eriksonian and Vedantic systems aim at self-transformation through insight into the nature of selfhood, though the means and the desired states may be different.

In comparing modern psychological perspectives on cognition (e.g., Piaget, Kelly, Hazel Markus, Greenwald, Harre) with Advaita Vedantic ideas, Paranjpe points out that the idea of personal transformation is received with reservation in the West, whereas for Indian philosophy and psychology (Sankhya, Yoga, Vedanta) liberation is seen as essential. While Western thought (from Brentano to Harre) emphasizes the intentional character of the mind, Indian thought has developed the idea of a fourth state of consciousness, in which intentionality is transcended and Brahman is experienced in its

undifferentiated form. Brahman is knowledge and the knowledge to be pursued in the Vedanta is knowledge of the self. The Advaita Vedanta recommends meditation, a method that is – to use a contemporary notion – "a form of cognitive 'deconstruction' of the ego" (p. 212). Paranjpe points out that therapies developed by Beck and Kelly share some features with this type of meditation.

Paranjpe suggests that "it is more difficult to converge Indian and Western approaches to emotion than those to cognition and action" (p. 243). This is mainly due to the fact that Indian conceptualizations of emotion were performed in connection with aesthetics and religious devotion. The erotic sculptures in the Hindu temples of Khajuraho are just one superficial example of the differences in the social meaning of emotions. After discussing the various theories of emotion in Western context, Paranjpe points out that nearly all Indian systems suggest that insatiability of desire is the cause of human suffering. Accordingly, humans experience unhappiness because they always want more than they have, an idea that was also expressed by James. For Sankhya, the end of suffering is to move beyond pleasure and pain and Patanjali's Yoga provides a method for doing so.

Concerning action, Paranjpe discusses the question of whether humans are free or determined in their actions. This problem has a long history in the West, and he discusses various and contradicting ideas, from Democritus, Aristotle, Epicurus, the Christian tradition, Bacon, Hobbes, and Kant, to Rogers, Skinner and modern existentialism. In Indian thought a central concept in this discussion is *karma*, which refers to lawfulness in the material and moral world and is probably well known in the West. However, in contrast to common misunderstandings, the law of *karma* does not involve fatalism, and freedom is not only compatible with it but also demanded by it. Freedom is not understood as unlimited freedom, as one always acts within the constraints of time, space, and causality. Whereas the concept of *karma* includes the notions of causal explanation, ethical guideline, and final liberation, the West focuses on the first. Too, it is important to point out that *karma* is conceptualized differently in the Unpanishadic, Jain, and Buddhist traditions. The *Bhagavad-Gita* describes various approaches to liberation and some of these diverge sharply; whereas one may recommend disengagement from action, the other may suggest active engagement. The yoga system comes closest to accounting for human behaviour in psychological terms: "The Yogic concept of *samskaras* resembles the contemporary Western notion of traces, and the Yogic view of the way they operate resembles the behaviourist notion of reinforcement, insofar as both recognize the role of pleasure

and pain in the shaping of future behavior" (p. 334).

Paranjpe, who provides a wealth of knowledge unknown to most Western psychologists, demonstrates that the presumption that Western and Indian psychologies are basically incommensurable is wrong. Psychologists who are genuinely concerned with a science that goes beyond the connection of variables, who believe that incorporating a multicultural perspective into psychology will strengthen the discipline, and who talk about globalization but are interested in the generic meaning of this concept, cannot ignore this masterpiece.

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