

SUMMARIES IN ENGLISH

Boje Katzenelson: Evolution, anthropological psychology and cultural psychology

The human psyche consists of a connection between (1) nature, (2) the human organism and (3) culture. Nature is the first world, the human organism and the psyche is the second world, and culture is the third world. Culture is the formal aspect of the third world or the manner in which the third world appears at given time and place. The phylogenetic correspondence between the first and the second world is called biopsyché. The sociogenetic correspondence between the second and the third world is called culturepsyché. Biopsyché and culturepsyché develop as a unity dating two-four million years back. They split for perhaps about 40.000 years ago, and since then only the culturepsyché can develop further as the variable unfolding of the biopsyché. Cultural psychology investigates how the second world is synchronously influenced by and carrier of the third world. In addition anthropological psychology investigates the diachronous alternation between the first, the second and the third world including the second world's creation of the third and the species specific determination of the human psyche. A short outline is rendered of the main trends in psychological anthropology.

Preben Bertelsen: Categories, Models and Metaphors in Cultural Psychology

This article deals with real categorical Fallacy within the humanities - first and foremost within the cultural psychology and branches of knowledge taking psychological points of view. A distinction is made between the cognitive discourse (models or concepts of mentality) and real categories of mentality, being the real mentality of the human beings in different cultures and which is the object of the psychological discourses. The following relations exist: different discourses can alternatively/competitively have the same category of mentality as object or they can qualitatively have different categories of mentality as object. A categorical Fallacy arises (for instance), when we ethnocentricly try to extend the psychological discourses, being valid for our categories of mentality to other cultures' categories of mentality not being able to be objectified.

In the article a general psychological concept of categories of mentality is elaborated on basis of the concept of meaning of the theory of activity, i.e. about how the mentality of mankind comes into existence in societal relations to the surrounding world, to others and to itself.

A concept about metaphors is presented based on the same concept of meaning in order to prevent real categorical Fallacy. Such a concept of metaphors can be developed to a form of scholarly depth hermeneutics not only being sensitive to cultural specific variations in the models/concepts of mentality, but also to cultural variations within real categories of mentality.

Peter Berliner: A Model for a Usable Cross-Cultural Psychology

To make modern psychology more useful to people in developmental countries or in different subcultural and ethnic groups, it is necessary to evolve a cross-cultural psychology on the basis of systematical interventions in changes (i.e. developmental processes) in those groups in question. In this article theoretical and methodical prerequisites for such a model are considered. The basis of the model is intervention. Thus the model is a mean of conceptualizing specific situational and contextual conditions and processes. Further more the model focus on resources of actual and future development. The complexity of the context demands a model consisting of a multiple of theoretical approaches. The topic of the model are changes in society, on the group level and on the individual level. Changes mean alterations of particularly elements (i.e. processes) of interpersonal interaction - for instance specific parts of sign systems, of activity concerning labour or other social practices, specific institutionalized forms of communication (schools, trade, political debate etc.).

The model, i.e. this sort of psychological interventions in different cultural contexts, is used on material concerning the cognitive style of children in small Greenlandic settlements. It is shown how cognition in fact is the way, the children use their cognitive skills in interpersonal interactions. The essential point is how the children cope with demands from teachers and parents.

Using the model on a case concerning a young Greenlandic man, it is shown that no simple connection is to be found between personal symptoms and biculturalism. The symptoms may of different courses incorporate biculturalism - and then on the conscious level falsely perceive biculturalism as the main course of the problems.

The aim of the article is to evolve a usable cross-cultural psychology - and thus overcome and integrate the criticism concerning the current cross-cultural psychology in the above outlined model of systematical interventions in changes.

Rom Harré: Grammatical models and the self

The fact that cultures are differentiated as much by the languages with which they are associated as by any other social practice suggest that the study of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics are like to prove powerful entry ports to cross-cultural psychology. Cultures are known to differ on a number of psychological dimensions, such as the available repertoire of emotions. But the most important and the most elusive is surely differences in the sense of self. This is a matter of the way self-knowledge is organized around a logical subject. In this paper a generally Wittgenstein stance to language is coupled with an analysis of the forms of reflective commentary to show how a space opens up for distinctive self-theories to enter into the psychology of a folk. Further research along these lines would tie in these phenomena to other cultural practices such as the assignment of responsibility. It is important to see these differences as located on grammar because it is only in grammar that a speaker finds that basic set of conventions within which there are no linguistic options. In so far as psychological structures are tied to grammar they are a fixed part of the culture.

Bobby Zachariae: Psychotherapy as Cultural Clash

The following article describes the meeting of the western therapist and the client with a non-western cultural background as a »cultural clash«. It is among other things a clash between the therapist and the clients views on »psychotherapy«, »illness« and »healing«. These opposite views are not necessarily explicit but express themselves on the subconscious level. The western therapist must try to become aware of these differences, if the therapeutic process is not to take place »behind his back« and beyond his control. The second half of the article tries to list some of the consequences of this view on cross-cultural psychotherapy, and also some of the remedies. The general scope of this article is to show that not only the client, but also the therapist and the therapeutic process must be influenced by this cultural clash, if it is to become a cultural meeting and not a cultural conflict.

Libby Tata Arcel: Psychological counseling and psychotherapy

Psychological counseling and psychotherapy of minorities necessitates a culture-mediating process based on explicit reflection on the minority's cultural frame as well as our own.

The article describes the differences between the individualistic and the collectivistic ways of life and their impact on the concept of the individual. A therapeutic session with an Iranian refugee illustrates a concrete culture-mediating process.

Shyam Cawasjee: Psychology - Culture, Mind and Self

The low level of conceptual analysis and validity in our theories, and subsequently the use of methodological-statistical devices to cover up for conceptual deficiencies, can be traced to the manner in which psychologists, consciously or unconsciously, have embraced the philosophy of essentialism. That this unholy alliance gave rise to instrumentalism and constructivism under the overarching framework of positivism is not surprising. What also followed, unfortunately, was that various psychologies attempted to develop theories that were ahistorical and context-free. This neglect of the cultural normative dimension is being rectified in some circles, but it appears that the confrontation will have to be much more radical in light of the strongholds being developed in other circles.

Developing the themes of culture, mind and self has been taken up in the process of a struggle with certain basic assumptions in psychology, and in a tentative search for more wholesome theories. It points the way to some interesting avenues of study in which both relativistic and universalistic perspectives can be accommodated.

Kirsten Hastrup: Self-destruction. An Icelandic case of cultural devastation

Collective self-destruction is a kind of »catastrophe« in the theoretical sense of representing a non-linear logic of change. The historical situation in 17th and 18th century Iceland was catastrophic in this sense. All social domains were marked by disintegration and disruptive development. Old technologies were »forgotten«, economic rationality was repressed, and hunger was a commonplace. A demographic crisis was an imminent threat to the population. The marriage ratio was extremely low, and the mortality rate was high. Mothers gave up breast feeding and the infants died from the raw cow's milk they were given instead. The sexual organization disintegrated. Incest was frequent. Briefly, there was a remarkable negligence of all cultural standards; chaos and disorder ruled the social space.

Generally speaking, it was a case of achieved helplessness connected to a collective depression. It may be read as a cultural psychological reaction to increasingly difficult historical conditions. Apart from natural catastrophe and political submission, the Icelanders also found themselves with no symbolic exchange with »others«, and the only mirror of self-identification was their own past. The illustrious ancestors made the Icelanders acutely aware of their own powerlessness - and their reaction was one of cultural destruction.

Peter Elsass: Separation or Isolation. Culture and psychology in the Jonestown Massacre.

When a community separates itself from society, its survival depends on a delicate balance between separation and isolation. The case to be presented here is the Jonestown Colony in Guyana, visited by the author shortly before its collective suicide. The self-destruction is analyzed in terms of the psychology of large groups. Within the camp, incestuous relationships flourished, and there were unresolved conflicts between individuation and assimilation. It developed to a »greedy institution«, with the leader as the absolute power centre. Isolation, an apocalyptic ideology, and a loss of history, all contributed to the destruction of the cultural Matrix.