

TOWARDS A SPIRITUAL WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY

IS IT FEASIBLE GIVEN CURRENT PARADIGMS?

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CULTURE OF PSYCHIATRY

Mind-body dichotomy

Mechanistic view of life

Materialistic concept of mind

Segmental approach to the individual

Illness=biomedical change

'Natural' causes of illness

PARADIGM OF WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY

BELIEFS

POSITIVISM

Reality is rooted only in what can be observed

OBJECTIVISM

Feelings, thoughts etc. regarded as objects

RATIONALITY

Reason superior to emotion

All assertions are verifiable by logical proof

CAUSALITY

Nothing occurs randomly

Natural causes for all events and effects

APPROACHES

MECHANISTIC

Newtonian physics, purposeless machine

LOGICAL REASONING

Intellectual exercise

REDUCTIONIST

Sum of the parts equals to whole

SELF / EGO

EMPHASIS IN 'WESTERN' THINKING

***SEPARATE
AUTONOMOUS
IMPORTANT***

REFLECTED IN PSYCHOLOGY AS:

**SELF ESTEEM
INTEGRITY
EGO-BOUNDARIES**

REFLECTED IN PSYCHIATRY AS:

**SELF-DEPRECIATION
HOPELESSNESS
GUILT
PASSIVITY FEELINGS
DEPENDENCY
ENMESHED**

IDEALS OF MENTAL HEALTH

EASTERN

HARMONY

**BETWEEN PERSONS
BETWEEN FAMILIES
WITHIN SOCIETIES
SPIRITUAL VALUES**

INTEGRATION

BALANCE

MODESTY

WESTERN

SELF SUFFICIENCY

PERSONAL AUTONOMY

EFFICIENCY

SELF ESTEEM

ACTION AND CONTEMPLATION

Aldous Huxley (1947) argues:

IN ALL RELIGIONS

Contemplation of truth is the end

Action is the means

(STEAM ENGINE REVOLUTION)

IN WESTERN CULTURE

Action is the end

Contemplation of truth is the means

Reference

Huxley, A. (1947) 'Introduction' in S. Prabhavanda and C. Isherwood (eds.) *Song of God Bhagavad-Gita*. Phoenix House, London.

PARADIGM SHIFT?

Erich Fromm (1960) argues that:

(a) Psychoanalysis emphasises:

Knowledge as transforming the self

Limitations of conscious thought

Free association superseding rational thought

Etc.

(b) Developments in psychoanalysis promote:

‘A more direct and positive affinity with Zen Buddhism’

Reference

Fromm, E. (1960) ‘Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism’ in E. Fromm, D. T. Suzuki and R. de Martino (authors) *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis*. Allen & Unwin, London.