

Book review for Harvey L. Schwartz (2013). *The Alchemy of Wolves and Sheep: A Relational Approach to Internalized Perpetration in Complex Trauma Survivors* by, Routledge

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The evocative title of this book, *The Alchemy of Wolves and Sheep*, hints at a journey to be taken by readers. Intrigued, I entered this book with curious anticipation in hope of finding a text that integrates our working knowledge of complex trauma alongside the phenomenon of dissociation, while advancing a culturally reliable framework. While this text falls short of delivering an integrated cultural perspective, there are gems scattered across chapters that facilitate in the reader that sense of taking a voyage into uncharted territories. Admittedly, I read the book twice as it was not clear until the last chapter that Schwartz navigated trauma literature through Jungian and archetypal theoretical territories. Having grasped this, in my second read, the theses underlying the earlier chapters made more sense. Regardless of orientation, this book topic is essential to our ongoing debate about the relationship between dissociation and trauma within the fields of counselling and psychotherapy.

While it was not the author's intention to give an historical overview of dissociation, the reader is advised to review the evolution of ideas on consciousness and dissociation before reading this book. Key are the works at the turn of the 19th Century by Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) and his disciple Marquis de Puységur (1751-1825) and their interests in "natural energetic transfer" and magnetism, James Braid (1795-1860), Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893), Silas Weir Mitchell (1829-1914), Otto Binswanger (1852-1929), Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Pierre Janet (1859-1947) who coined dissociation and the subconscious, and the Japanese psychiatrist Shoma Morita (1874 – 1938). This historical overview is essential to the advancement of theory and practice, as there are many sceptics within clinical and counselling psychology who consider dissociation to be a philosopher's fault line. While the author would have benefited from analysing and bracketing his own assumptions fairly in an historical and cultural context, in the end, he is to be applauded for his renegade capacity to push us further into this field.

Overall, Schwartz provides a solid review of key scholars in the field of traumatic studies, such as J. Briere, C. Courtois, L. Terr, N. Nijenhuis, B. Perry, J. Herman, R Kluft, F. Putnam, O. van der Hart, B. van der Kolk, P.M. Bromberg, and G. Liotti. More specifically,

the book is advanced by a review of developmental compromises to the human psyche and spirit that occur when severe trauma is inflicted and endured during early critical periods in one's life. Pointing to research by Main and Hesse (1990), Mann and Sanders (1994), and Liotti (2006), the author shows how carers increase fear and worry in children by offering "intermittent comfort or remorse", which increases confusion in a young person all the more. We see how children are at higher risk for dissociation when a primary carer maintains an attachment style that is disorganised – a syndrome that is exacerbated when excuses are made for the betraying carer by her or him- self and observers. In this regard, the author provides a fine-grained discussion on betrayal and double binding factors that bind (literally) our capacity to function creatively and freely as humans.

The reader is advised, however, that the main premise taken by the author is derived from the point of view of Liotti's theory, wherein dissociation is related strongly to the phenomenon of self-fragmentation. Herein, splits in personality occur from heightened on-going experiences of extreme fright during early childhood years, which is compounded by contexts where children have no dependable support for processing their clashing feelings. Overall, the reader gains a clearer understanding of the myriad of contradictions that accompany and perpetuate complex trauma. In effect: "How can I love someone who does not protect me?"

When extreme trauma experiences are evident, "dissociated states or parts take over the child's functioning, as opposed to functioning through the child" (Weiland, 2011, p. 5). Again, the reader is cautioned that Schwartz assumes a particular orientation to the field of dissociation. The book could have assisted the delicate debate about the construction and enactment of dissociative identities by naming the controversy about whether fragmented personalities or alters exist, universally. Also, the case studies could have illustrated what is most real: that our dissociation theories are inconclusive. Perhaps by analysing case material through varied lenses, the implicit driving assumption would be reformulated as a question for the reader to ponder: Are all on the same universal page about the dissociative process of splitting off aspects of self? The author reifies his supposition by the way he presents his case material to the reader. For instance, "... A female DID patient revealed...", "A polyfragmented female DID patient ... began to have memories ..." (Schwartz, p. 137).

When accounting for trauma literature emerging from Africa and Asia, we simply cannot ignore the possibility that alters and dissociative identity disorder (DID) are psycho-cultural artefacts for those "selves" socialised and/or re-socialised within Judeo-Christian, capitalist-democratic communities where the self is valued as an autonomous entity. In my own fieldwork engaging with clients who have endured torture across the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Cambodia, Nepal, and Lao, PDR, the trauma aftermath and the dissociative spectrum are interpreted through a myriad of lenses across counsellors, psychologists, physicians, traditional healers, monks, and spirit mediums. To date, the experiential nature of "self" and "fragmentation of personality" is inadequately researched transculturally, particularly inside regions of the world where spirit possession, multiple gods, spirit roaming, daily ritual protective practices, geographic sacred sites,

missionary conversion, and day-to-day poverty reign. We note this by turning to literature on the Japanese construct of self or *Amae*, as outlined in *The Anatomy of Independence* by Takeo Doi (1973), or by the *Cambodian Trauma Syndrome, bak sbat*, (Chimm, 2013), we find challenges to our literature on DID. As a reader, once I put the sketchy transcultural discussions aside, I was able to gather better some of the author's wisdom. Indeed, he recognises "what can never be recovered" as the generational cost for trauma survivors, as well as the grave sadness attached to profound loss of "what could have been".

Overall, the book has merit as a whole because the domain of *dissociation* in traumatic studies has yet to gain the funding and research momentum to match *depression* and *anxiety disorders*, globally. Also, most graduate training programs in psychology and counselling in English-speaking countries fail to add "dissociation" into their formative curricula – or to standardise assessment criteria as a way of increasing ethical treatment. (For instance, we find that trauma and dissociation may underlie attention deficit disorder or conduct disorder in childhood, which in turn impacts therapies selected to treat children). Even in the recently released edition of the diagnostic manual of mental disorders (DSM-V), the overlap in symptomology across dissociation, depression, anxiety and certain personality disorders (such as borderline) is sketchy at best.

From a human justice perspective, the topic of dissociation and trauma is an essential one, particularly as suggested above, it is usual for those harbouring dissociative features to be diagnosed initially with manic episodes, depression or borderline personality features before any trauma-related dissociation syndrome is considered. Unfortunately, all too often being diagnosed with "borderline" features places clients at risk for neglect by mental health systems, which sets in motion more confusion from past betraying forces.

In sum, current textbooks on dissociation categorise symptomology into four domains: behavioural, emotional, cognitive, and physical (which includes the five senses). Schwartz brings forth the existential and spiritual domains for the Euro-American reader's consideration. Overall this inclusion has implications for shadowing the spirit-based domain embedded in indigenous communities, globally. For this end, the book is well worth the venture. Most profoundly, the author shows how the vitality of therapeutic outcomes is tied to the strength of the therapeutic alliance between the client and therapist. For this foundational fact, above all, he is to be applauded.

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