

 [IP--Columbusing by Maharaj Raina](#) by Louise S. [2014, Jul 16]

The write up by Brenda Salinas on "'Columbusing': The Art Of Discovering Something That Is Not New" is revealing in that it indicates in an interesting manner how inputs from various civilizational sources, used in different disciplines opportunistically, remain unacknowledged. One has to realize that the traffic of knowledge both before and immediately after the voyages of discovery proved to be an important factor in the development of various disciplines. It has been documented how the development of some newer sciences, such as biological and human sciences, were helped by the new knowledge of a variety of life and social forms revealed in the newly discovered worlds. In fact, one can draw several parallels between the possible uses of metaphors and knowledge on fundamental issues, from various civilizational stores, with those in modern science. In sum, one has to realize that a large reservoir of both empirical knowledge, as well as metaphors and theoretical constructs is present in various civilizations which has been and can be further used fruitfully in a variety of disciplines. One has to appreciate that inputs from different civilizational sources has occurred in bigger way because of globalization but some people have unfortunately shied away from acknowledging such original sources. Sometimes one does oversee, though not deliberately, the significance of such sources that I was amazed to read William A. Blanpied's (1974) review of Yukawa's book on creativity when he wrote "a physicist with as deep a love of classical Oriental scholarship as Yukawa can speak of originality of Democritus without reminding the audience that atomism was current in Indian philosophy as early as 6th century B.C., and can hold up to Pythagoras as a model without noting that that philosopher owed much of his own inspiration to lessons he had learned while sitting at the feet of Hindu Pandits!" In a similar fashion, it was revealing to read Joseph Needham (1985) that " modern science arose only in Europe in the seventeenth century when the best method of discovery was itself discovered; but the discoveries and inventions made then and thereafter depended in so many cases on centuries of previous Chinese progress in science, technology and medicine." There is no harm in borrowing but it is also morally prudent to acknowledge and not give a short shrift to such sources of knowledge. Read more on this in Brenda Salinas's npr blog:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/codeswitch/2014/07/06/328466757/columbusing-the-art-of-discovering-something-that-is-not-new>

Maharaj Raina

 [Comment by Louise Sundararajan](#) by Louise S. [2014, Jul 16]

This link reminds me of the witty remarks of Einstein:

"The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources."

On a more serious note, not acknowledging non-Western sources has contributed to an imbalanced view of science and creativity, East and West. Maharaj and I touched upon this problem in our forthcoming article:

Sundararajan, L., & Raina, M. K. (in press). Revolutionary creativity, East and West: A critique from indigenous psychology. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*.

Stay tuned,

Louise

 [Comment by Miraj Desai](#) by Louise S. [2014, Jul 16]

Dear Louise:

Thank you for your email! I wanted to send along a piece I presented at APA, which was recently published in JHP and may be relevant to this discussion. In it, I attempt to demonstrate that travel is a qualitative method in psychology, using the case of Medard Boss/India as an example of respectful travel-based inquiry. I also document the historical role--and numerous instances--of intercultural engagement in psychology, which, as you state, has often been unacknowledged or forgotten. I argue that, in many ways, the history of psychology is a history of the exiled, the dispossessed, and the traveler.

Cheers,

Miraj

Desai, M. U. (2014). Travel as qualitative method: Travel in psychology's history and in Medard Boss' sojourn to India. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, DOI: 10.1177/0022167813517942

Abstract:

This article details the history, possibility, limits, and ethics of cross-cultural travel as a qualitative method in psychology. The article provides a brief overview of the ambiguous relationship between psychology and culture and develops an account of the history of travel methods in psychology. It then analyzes an exemplary case of travel research involving Medard Boss' sojourn to India and his encounters with Indian sages. This article argues that the history of psychology is, in many ways, a history of the exiled, the dispossessed, and the traveler (e.g., Freud, Fromm, Fanon, Jahoda, Rogers, Jung, and others). The article concludes with reflections on using travel methods in an increasingly globalized world and in an ecologically sensitive way.

 [Desai \(2014\) Boss India](#)

 [Comment by Joan Koss](#) by Louise S. [2014, Jul 16]

Just a note: Travel (by persons such as missionaries, traders, naturalists, etc.) began Anthropology as a discipline when it mated with the new sciences in the later half of the 19th Century!

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