

Book Review

Consciousness-in-Action: Toward an Integral Psychology of Liberation and Transformation.

Raul Quiñones Rosado. (2007). ile Publications, Caguas, Puerto Rico.

by **Bonnitta Roy**

Raul Rosado's new book succeeds on many levels. He makes an important contribution to integral studies; he describes new ways for understanding group and self identity; he opens new ways for transmuting the processes of fear, oppression and victim-hood into liberation and transformation; he creates a unique synthesis between the highly rational-analytic AQAL model and the native American medicine wheel; and he creates a processural system that overlays and resonates with both models. His writing style is personal and intimate. He allows the reader to feel into his own experiences of oppression, and his own journey toward liberation and transformation. But because Rosado also has worked with various communities on such issues, he is able to put the personal in context with the group—a necessary ingredient of his work.

The main feature of Rosado's process model relies on the metaphor of a cyclone. After Rosado identifies the various patterns of oppression with respect to each of the four AQAL quadrants, he shows us that these factors are not merely inter-related, but mutually inter-*active* and continually reinforcing the system of oppression. When visualized as a process, the system of oppression becomes a cyclone of oppression, "moving" inwards, causing continual contraction of self-identity. He describes two such levels of contraction: 1) the impact of cultural oppression on personal identity and 2) the psychosocial pattern of internalized inferiority. With these system models, Rosado is able to demonstrate how the processes of oppression accumulate tremendous power on the personal, cultural and institutional levels and therefore are highly resistant to change. The systems of oppression, Rosado is warning us, are *active* not static.

In the second part of his book, Rosado puts consciousness in action. Again, overlaying the wisdom of the medicine wheel with the pluralistic methodology of the AQAL model, Rosado identifies positive patterns called "spheres" of action and influence. Rosado argues, if the direction of oppression is inward, toward contraction and stasis, the direction of consciousness is outward, toward liberation and transformation. With this process framework, Rosado is able to explain the possibility of fighting "fire with fire", as it were, by activating the positive, outward momentum of conscious liberation. This momentum requires participation at the same levels that feed the cycle of oppression – and so the active response is multi-layered, multi-leveled, multi-perspectival, and integral.

Consciousness-in-Action is a useful and purposeful manual for people interested in social activism at any level. It is also a wonderful personal narrative, giving us an insight into a caring, thoughtful, and hard-working *integrated* person. Finally, it is a great example for how integral writers can expand the existing models into process versions, into infinite riches of discourse.

