

CHAPTER THREE:DOUG BOYDAND THE CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES PROGRAM:An Integration of Ages and Traditions

In my fieldwork and travels I have observed incidents of prophetic vision. I have watched varieties of traditional healings and invocational rituals. I have seen the honest and purposeful use of true magic. I have witnessed omniscience. Behind the myriad creations of costumes and customs found in all the contrasting cultures lies the same perennial wisdom. I have come to learn of that cosmological arrangement that accounts for the magnificent works and ways of the mystics, magicians, and medicine people. I have learned the simple secret of the shaman, the sorcerer, the seer- and I have come to see that it is in fact no secret at all. It is that all things are alive and all life is related.<sup>1</sup>

Doug Boyd is a social activist, a writer, a lecturer and a master storyteller devoted to the study, development and facilitation of processes to promote cross-cultural understanding and communication. He has been engaged in an empirical study of healers, yogis, monks and medicine people from various cultures for the past twenty five years, through the Cross-Cultural Studies Program (CCSP), a non profit organization he founded in 1970.

I met him in 1985 at Shared visions, a cultural center in Berkeley, California, when I participated in a ten-week class conducted by Doug Boyd called "The Course in Natural Powers"--a cross-cultural overview of traditional practices in healing and human potential.<sup>2</sup>

Through the years I have become considerably familiar with his work, having participated in many events associated with him and with CCSP. Because of his work and his message of compassion and of collective self regulation and empowerment, I consider him a prototypical planetary activist.

His own background is interesting and, perhaps, unique, reflecting an aspect of history that has come to be called the Easternization of the West.

#### Early Childhood and Background

Doug Boyd was born in Minneapolis in 1935. His parents and his paternal grandparents as well practiced yogic disciplines, he recalls, and thus were participants in what was called "New Thought" or "the New Thought movement" in the 1930s and 1940s. This "New Thought movement" was perhaps the social antecedent of the more contemporary "New Age movement," but it lacked any visible degree of group organization or public profile. Even those within the early movement who were aware of one another's existence pursued their interests and held their concepts mostly in isolation and secrecy.<sup>3</sup> His paternal grandparents founded, in Minneapolis, the Life Science Publishing Company which was established to publish a broad spectrum of philosophical works of a practical nature, such as on actualization, or on the "art of thinking". Among them were the works of Dr. Erwood, a scholar with whom his paternal grandfather had studied and who had become a sort of "family teacher". Doug warmly remembers him as "a cheerful, almost mischievous, kind of person--but very wise too:"

In my childhood days, I spent many an afternoon and evening on the lap of our family teacher. Though I perhaps could not then grasp the cosmological concepts that came from his lips nor the metaphysical discussions he evoked among my parents and grandparents, I had free and total access to his abundant love and constant cheerfulness. I was the one who shook with his laughter as I sat on his lap....

... He was the one who was always talking about God and Divinity, and the whole business felt to me like a tremendous lot of fun. If I had any notion of God at all, it was that since we are all a part of God, God is life- full of play and full of love- and love is absolutely everywhere. I

was fortunate. These ideas were endorsed for me again and again throughout my childhood and my ongoing adventures.<sup>4</sup>

Doug's parent's library was filled with the words and thoughts of China, Tibet and India, and the various cultural sources of insights that can be described as the perennial wisdom. While his parent's influence in terms of values and guidance was significant, Doug and his siblings were never pressed to follow any specific practice or religious pursuit. Instead, they were always encouraged to do their own self exploration--which they did as soon as they reached the age when they could venture out and explore all types of churches and settings--and emphasis was placed on respect for and congeniality with all types of people, regardless of their ideological or philosophical orientations. So, for example, while they were vegetarians at home, his parents' regard for flexibility allowed Doug, as a young teenager to "hang out at hamburger joints" as was the way of the youth of the time.

There is nothing that Doug recalls in his childhood that could be called a "daily duty" of worship or related practices. Though his parents systematically pursued a practice of meditation, this was never an activity required of the children. There was at home a balance, Doug contends, between practical affairs, a scientific outlook, and a calm and contemplative atmosphere.

Doug's parents, Elmer and Alyce Green, were not only colleagues in life and in philosophical interests, but professionally as well. They had originally met while studying sociology and psychology in a metaphysical center in Minneapolis. Alyce was an actress at the time, and Elmer (Doug's step father since he was three years old), was a physicist. He worked for Minneapolis Honeywell, where he was part of the team that developed the automatic pilot during the Second World War, and he also became involved in optics, particularly in the area of lenses used in telescopes. From the time they met, the Greens were engaged in joint research in science, human sciences, and philosophy,

and eventually became well known as pioneers in biofeedback--a technology which is playing a significant role in revolutionizing medicine and health care as well as a basic understanding of healing mechanisms.

In the 1930s and 1940s, and even in the early 1950s, there was no publicly noticeable interest in this country in the areas of yoga, meditation, Hinduism and oriental philosophies; but the Greens, especially when the family moved to California (around the mid forties), became acquainted with the Vedanta society--one of the earliest organized conduits of Eastern thought in the Western world- and with some of its well known members such as Aldous Huxley, Krishnamurti and others who shared the same interests and insights from Eastern philosophies and from the esoteric cores of Western religions.<sup>5</sup>

During his school days, Doug refrained from discussing with his friends these interests and insights that were so easily discussed at home--for he learned that most Westerners, including his peers, were either uncomfortable with such concepts or uncomfortable in openly sharing them.

One of the phenomena I realized as I grew up and became involved in this consciousness movement or whatever we call it, is that topics my parents openly discussed at home were not appropriate in my own social settings but would appear, in fact, rather superstitious, bizarre or flaky. I had never thought myself that any of these concepts were flaky. I grew up with parents who were scientists--very logical and rational and very grounded--but who were also practicing yogis. But words like "meditation" were not even around, or at least not spoken in public. I still remember the sense of regret I felt knowing that ideas or aspects of life that seemed to me most pertinent and most interesting and important to share with friends were sort of off limits. At times, I tried to step carefully over those boundaries to discuss with my friends things that perhaps I should not have--but I was never coercive nor argumentative.

East-West Bridge

It was at some point during the fifties, Doug recalls, that interest in Eastern thought and esoteric philosophies and practices first became apparent. Eventually this interest began to spread--even among much of the general population. He himself had been involved in East-West bridge work since his teens. In his early twenties, he spent nearly a decade (initially with the Army) in Korea becoming somewhat functionally fluent in the language. He had assumed that in Korea things would be different and that, as long as they could communicate, regular traditional people would be happy to discuss Asian thought with him. But these Asian people, he discovered, were mostly interested in Western technology.

Doug Boyd co-founded a center for western-type training (The Language Arts Training Program, Seoul Korea, 1962-present) and became involved as an instructor of English, stenography, typing, and office practices, as a sponsor of student groups and consultant-adviser for several universities, trading companies, and hotels; and there was little time left for Eastern pursuits in Asia.

It thus became apparent to Doug that the *Westernization of the East* was inevitable, a "simply irreversible fate or the natural flow of history or, perhaps, part of some divine plan"--an intermediate step toward an eventual synthesis of East and West--and it felt useful to him to be playing a part in helping it go smoothly and appropriately.

After nearly ten years in Asia, Doug returned to the United States and to the home of his parents, then in Topeka, Kansas, to work with the Voluntary Controls Program (which was established and directed by his father) in the Research Department at The Menninger Foundation.

Alyce and Elmer Green had long been interested in the integration of the insights of Eastern philosophies and the practical applications of Western science and technology. Through their research and training at Menninger, an association that eventually lasted over thirty years, they achieved a number of breakthrough developments in biofeedback

and the study of psychophysiological self regulation and voluntary control of states of consciousness.

Biofeedback is based on the simple principle (however incredible it may have sounded at first in conventional Western scientific circles) that people can learn to control previously considered *involuntary* autonomic physiological processes, such as heartbeat or brain-wave production, by learning, through observation (feedback), to shift attention to those processes. <sup>6</sup>

In Eastern cultures this idea was neither new nor novel. In fact, yogis have long been able to demonstrate such voluntary control gained through the feedback provided by years of practicing and becoming conscious of these subtle processes.

As Nature did not endow us with "built in" feedback devices for monitoring "inside-the-skin" phenomena, the Greens developed biofeedback instruments--built to Dr. Green's specifications in the Biomedical Electronics Laboratory of the Research Department of the Menninger Clinic.

An example of such biofeedback instruments are the temperature trainers--lightweight, sophisticated, sensitive thermometers with tiny thermistors that are taped on the skin and meters that can be calibrated to reveal even a fraction of a degree of temperature change. With one of these simple trainers a person can sit at home or in the office and practice increasing the skin temperature of the palms or the fingertips through increasing bloodflow to the periphery. (Many migraine sufferers who were subjects in the Menninger Clinic Migraine Research Project had successfully used these temperature trainers first to ward off or prevent headaches but finally to achieve a "way of life" in which headaches didn't occur.)<sup>7</sup>

By learning to recognize the appropriate signals in the electronic devices, any person, the Greens showed, can learn to produce them (and their desired effects) at will. The actual physiological process that takes place in such a situation is very complex, and it relates to some rebalancing of the operational levels of the sympathetic and

parasympathetic functions of the autonomic nervous system. But, as Doug says, the wonder of biofeedback is that it works as well for subjects who understand nothing more of the complex psychophysiological processes than simply how they feel, to begin with and, eventually, that they can exercise an impressive degree of volition and self direction.

If we attach electrodes to the body, it is because the body is the reflector of the psyche, and when previously hidden physiological information is fed back to the cortex, the mind, or psyche, becomes aware of significantly correlated relationships in mind/ emotion/ body. The psyche thus learns to choose, to implement, and to modify (when useful) the homeostatic levels of neurohumoral functioning.<sup>8</sup>

Through their work, Elmer and Alyce Green have helped toward the revolutionizing of Western medicine--demonstrating, in scientifically verifiable ways, the organic interaction of the body, emotions/mind continuum and its relevance to personal and societal well being--both generally and spiritually.<sup>9</sup>

This work provides a fundamental demonstration of the application of human potential to intentional change--even social change--and even in areas that appear beyond our control. Doug's life work is devoted to the transferring and application of these same insights from biofeedback and psychophysiological research to social and collective self-regulation:

People were asking me what I see as the connection between biofeedback and self regulation and social, environmental, or planetary activism. My response to that is that *it is the same thing*. Whether you are looking at it as a personal endeavor or as a planetary endeavor we are talking about getting more control over what seems to be involuntary or unwilled phenomena that is occurring. It was in that sense and out of that idea--and out of wanting to make clear that connection that we created this topic we called: "From Biofeedback to Self-Regulation to Collective Self-Regulation, to Planetary Consciousness to the World We Choose" I have seen this connection and I have seen that the basic and essential principles in the area of

psychophysiological self regulation are principles that can be effectively applied in the area of social change and planetary transformation. It is a matter of scale, a matter of perhaps the more personal on the one hand and the more interpersonal or collective or mutual on the other hand—but the principles are the same.

This is because of the fact that in learning to self-regulate the so-called "involuntary," one learns the relationship between what one images or visualizes and what happens—or what actually becomes manifest. So we tell people now if you are working on issues such as hunger, the homeless, crime and violence, the rain forest issue, ecology issues, nuclear issues, whatever, first learn to see what works—what makes things happen, what makes things work. And to learn what makes things work, work first with yourself and gain your experience (and your confidence) on your own self. This is self-regulation—so work first on your own physiology. Learn how to warm your hands, how to relax, how to increase blood flow, learn—actually experience the relationship between visualization and what happens, between image and form, between visualizing and what comes to be.

#### The Easternization of the West

When Doug returned from the Far East to the United States in 1968, he observed what in his view were the beginnings of the *Easternization of the West* - as manifest in the pursuit of yoga and meditation, for example, and in the growing interest in Eastern philosophies and in what could be loosely termed "metaphysics" and the "occult." Doug saw this new emerging consciousness or awareness in contrast to the "Westernization" trend that he had observed in Korea and knew to be occurring in other parts of Asia; and he came to think of this as part of an overall trend or movement towards *planetization*, or integration of East and the West.

... the changes that I could see here now were just what I had been longing for. I now could see that I had not been alone in my longing. Thousands of my peers, unknown to me, had been longing for the circumstance that had at last begun to arrive. I came to believe that many of the Westerners I was now able to identify and communicate with were really Orientals. They were Easterners with Eastern pasts who for the purpose of the eventual synthesis had been born to live their current lives in their bodies of the West.<sup>10</sup>



While Doug was staying with his family in Topeka, Ram Dass' came to spend a few weeks at the Green's home. In his discussions with Doug, he expressed the view that the preservation of the Eastern traditions depended in part upon their successful transplantation in the West. A significant indication of this transplantation (transplantation not only across continents but also across eras) comes, in Doug's view, in the form of the "New Age movement." With its advent, even the average householder knows words like "yoga," "meditation," and relaxation.

Doug sees this phenomenon, however bizarre or glamorized it may be in some of its exploratory expressions, as an important indication of a major change in society itself. It seemed inevitable (and appropriate), in his view, that the "new people of the West" should turn from the systems and ideologies that had built the military-industrial establishment to seek new and different truths and ways. Through the doorways of this inevitability, explains Doug Boyd,<sup>11</sup> were coming, and would continue to come, yogis, swamis, lamas, and monks bringing the seeds of their ancient traditions. Professional people who, like his own family, had been quietly pursuing their esoteric ideologies and practices were encountering and would continue to encounter one another--and to gather together in new forums. (The annual Council Grove Conferences, founded by the Greens, is an example of such gatherings.)<sup>12</sup>

But, being well-versed in Eastern philosophies and practices, Doug Boyd was aware of the often distorted manner in which these were presented as they became popularized in the West. He felt, however, that some initial confusions or inappropriate interpretations were to be expected at the initial cross-cultural encounter of unprecedented concepts. Orientals, says Doug, have always been more concerned with duties and responsibilities than with freedoms and rights; they don't share our concept of "self" as an isolated, individual identity. Westerners dislike a sense of duty and they misinterpret Eastern philosophy and reword it in a way that feels comfortable to them,

giving personal connotations to spiritual concepts--and so Westerners take a very different sense of the meaning of self-awareness and self-development.

... it seemed to me that everyone is on the path to the highest consciousness. How could it be otherwise?. Yet obviously great numbers of people were doing all sorts of specialized things to hasten the process for themselves. I wanted to believe that the process could not be a personal one... I wanted to believe that the only way was through sharing and giving. I could not believe that it was appropriate, or even possible, to *race* along this path, or that it was important to reach the end in a minimum number of years. I could not believe in a quest for cosmic consciousness which was simply a more spiritual form of a personal ambition to get ahead... Now in America there are all sorts of new systems, all kinds of yogas and meditations. Soon there will be millions involved, just like it is here. Maybe some of these people are aiming for self-realization, but I think most of them are just working on their bodies and their personalities. In any case, they don't seem to be working on life or on the condition of the world. Many of these pursuits seem to decrease people's natural gregariousness and their capacity to care because they increase the illusion of a separate individuality. <sup>13</sup>

To overcome such an illusion is, in fact, according to Doug, the core of a spiritual life--namely, the attainment of nonseparateness, nonindividuality, selflessness. The discipline of yoga, Doug continues, the control of mind and its modifications, the state of meditation, the achievement of self-realization--all this is the discrimination between the *nonsel*f and the *Self*, the *knowing* of the Self, "and nothing more." To realize the true self is to realize its basic mutuality and to achieve *selflessness*.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed, according to mystics (as Dr. Harman, as well, has so clearly expressed<sup>15</sup>), when one comes to truly know oneself, the pull of the material body and ego personality become greatly decreased and one finds that one's deepest motivation is to participate fully, with conscious awareness, in the evolutionary process and the fulfillment of humankind.

But such a concept, and its incentive to caring action, is still very difficult to grasp in the contemporary West: it is a pursuit radically different from the self-

...serving, interests and pursuits which are really diverse forms of "psychic" or pseudo-spiritual one-upmanship or materialism which abound in the so-called New Age movement. The concept of guru, for example, has, according to Doug, become completely reinterpreted in the West. (Actually, the term refers to a teacher who knows his or her very few destiny-selected disciples very intimately.) Much of the "guru" phenomena in the West amounts to a radical departure from the fundamental Eastern concepts of the "higher self" self-directed spiritual unfolding. Furthermore, the concept of *karma*, popularly oversimplified in the West--as the fate or retribution of an autonomous individual--has little relevance to the complex, collective, and interrelated phenomena that the word implies in its original use in Eastern tradition. Without this collective implication, the concept of karma is misapplied, often blaming the individuals who are involved in a collective circumstance or process.

The essential, or transpersonal, *self*, is a collective; and self-realization, therefore, says Doug, is realization of the interconnected, interactive whole that is the "One Self."

The self is not just you or me, it's humankind. Humankind has to become aware of itself- on a down-to-earth, whole-world, international level. ...I think the way to enlightenment is through awareness of the earth- caring about the condition of the world. It seems to me that a personal desire for personal liberation is a lowering of the consciousness to the selfish domain. The spiritual path is raising the consciousness to transpersonal levels: self-consciousness, group-consciousness, community-consciousness, social-consciousness, humankind-consciousness, planetary-consciousness, cosmic-consciousness. It seems to me that these are the logical steps to enlightenment--not the increasing self-interest of the individual person. Buddha didn't gain enlightenment just sitting under that tree. He must have had dozens of lifetimes of study, service, and sacrifice, following his eightfold path--compassion and right action and so on.<sup>16</sup>

But the confusions in New Age circles regarding Eastern philosophies and their terminologies were, according to Doug Boyd, only exacerbated by the proliferation of

ashrams and teachers who were rather out of context in the West. Although sufficiently versed in their Eastern doctrines, many of these teachers did not really understand the mind-set of their Western audiences and tended, therefore, to increase the prevailing assumed dichotomy between the material and the spiritual worlds.

This was not the case with Vivekananda, nor with Aurobindo who had a very sophisticated, in-depth understanding of the West--the Western culture--and of the differences between the West and the East. But many of the teachers who came from the East and, certainly many of the people who gathered around them, were a little bit simplistic. They were sort of trying to package something for public consumption here. What they saw here was the surface of our culture. They saw the materialism--what we now call "left-brain dominance" or "rational-mind dominance." And they saw this culture's preoccupation with the pursuit of worldly accumulations. So this was the framework or the context within which they tried to communicate. Those who were here to be helped, they assumed, were all stuck in materialism and purely mechanized thinking.

But their generalizations were erroneous: they were not attracting or reaching those people. They were not talking to people who were stuck in rational-mind dominance or in materialism, they were talking to people who were already far removed from those rudimentary elements of their own culture and did not know what to do about it--did not know, in fact, how to integrate their experiences and their insights with the business of living in this physical world. So these teachers made things worse, in a way. In effect, they validated the dichotomy between the business of right living and spiritual seeking. It became customary for these students or seekers to think: "Nothing in this world really matters or makes any difference if you can just find that bliss inside". This is now a popular idea--and a gross misgiving or misinterpretation which is owing largely to the fact that those 'teachers' misread the circumstances and perspectives and the needs of the people with whom they were communicating.

Ram Dass seemed to Doug to be a more valuable initiator and interpreter of these "new" concepts than most of the teachers who had as yet appeared from the East, extremely skillful in the articulation of Eastern concepts and remarkably effective in communicating with Westerners. (see Ram Dass, following).

In 1970, shortly after Ram Dass' visit, Swami Rama arrived to live with Doug and his parents and to work with them as an "official consultant" to Voluntary Controls Program" at the Menninger Foundation. Swami Rama was a yogi adept who performed extraordinary feats of psychophysiological self-mastery which were examined and recorded in the psychophysiology laboratory of the Voluntary Controls Program.<sup>17</sup>

Hired by the Research Department to become Swami Rama's personal assistant, Doug Boyd spent close to two years full-time with the Swami, and became thoroughly acquainted not only with his high level of psychophysiological self-regulation, but with his ideas about the body-mind connection, yogic philosophy, meditation, and his general manner of interacting with the world.<sup>18</sup> Accompanying Swami Rama in many talks and various events, Doug found himself now involved, in a sense, with the Easternization of the West.

In 1973, Doug Boyd participated in a trip to India as part of a team of researchers and documenters working with Greens and, their Voluntary Controls Program. With their very sophisticated portable psychophysiological laboratory, they investigated yogis and adepts throughout India. They also presented lectures and demonstrations on biofeedback and biofeedback instrumentation. Interestingly, the scholars and professionals to whom they presented were not particularly impressed with the data on volition and self-regulation--phenomena with which they were already familiar, but were completely engrossed by the ingenious technological devices that this Western team presented.

On this trip, Doug met many adept yogis and swamis, many of whom devoted their lives to their disciplines, some living in seclusion in Himalayan caves. This provided him an opportunity to widen his direct contact with Eastern philosophies and practices, and reinforced his recognition of the fundamental difference between the Hindu practice of renunciation, which was a liberation from material and sensory distractions, and the

Western "new age" concept of "dropping out," which was an abandonment of social responsibility.<sup>19</sup>

#### Native American Renaissance

Soon after he completed his official work with Swami Rama, and while still in association with the Voluntary Controls Program at the Menninger Foundation, Doug met Native American medicine man, Rolling Thunder, when the latter was invited as a guest speaker to the 1971 Council Grove Conference. As one of the Conference participants became completely immobilized and quite ill (he had days earlier been kicked in the shin in a soccer game and had developed a serious infection) and was about to be taken miles away to the nearest hospital emergency room, Rolling Thunder offered to perform a healing on him. In front of the entire conference, most of whom were health-care professionals including medical doctors, Rolling Thunder performed a traditional healing ritual which eliminated the discoloration, fever, and swelling of the infected area and completely alleviated the patient's pain. His procedure included inducing from his patient an articulation of intent--an objective or purpose warranting the healing. He also invoked, as he prepared his tobacco, his pipe, and his paraphernalia, a disposition of support and participation among those present. After his ritual, which involved prayer, invocations, and then sucking the injured area and purging, the change was confirmed by several doctors who examined him, and he was soon engaged in a fast-paced game of ping-pong with one of the doctors.<sup>20</sup>

At the same occasion, Rolling Thunder also told his Western audience that this was his first association in spiritual matters with white people, as most healing and other traditional wisdom was maintained hidden up to this point. He related his openness to the contemporary situation, in which, in accordance with Indian prophesies, there were "new whites" with good hearts interested in the Indian ways, in restoring the natural order of things, who could also help them in their devastating contemporary

circumstances. At Council Grove, Rolling Thunder thus spoke to whites for the first time about his long and difficult path of spiritual pursuit and training from birth through apprenticeship to becoming a healer, about the process of self-realization, of seeking and knowing one's own identity, about self-purification and cleansing. And he talked about nature- about plants, animals and all the inhabitants of the earth--how mankind's strength and ultimate survival depends not upon an ability to manipulate and control, but upon an ability to harmonize with nature as an integral part of the system of life.

Doug considered that he had found in Rolling Thunder the same sense of "total, unwavering focus on the moment" that he had witnessed in Swami Rama. After the conference, he frequently reflected upon this first encounter with a traditional Native American healer. Suddenly, he found himself absorbed by a desire to see more of Rolling Thunder and set out for Carlin, Nevada, the medicine man's home town. Thus began a new adventure, one which was to become pivotal in his ongoing work and in the development of the Cross-Cultural Studies Program.

As with true healers and shamans, as Doug Boyd had come to know them, Rolling Thunder was intensely involved in the affairs of his people, deeply concerned with the plight of Native Americans and of all traditional and oppressed peoples. The broken treaties, the deprivation of basic human rights and of land and water rights, the contempt for and repression of traditional spiritual practices, the forced adoption and Christianization of Indian children were all signs, in Rolling Thunder's vision, of the spiritual crisis in America:

Man's inner nature is identical with the nature of the universe, and thus man learns about his own nature from nature herself. The technological and materialistic path of contemporary Western society is the most unnatural way of life man has ever tried. The people of this society are farthest removed from the trees, the birds, the insects, the animals, the growing plants. They are therefore the least in touch with their own inner nature. Unnatural things are so commonplace to the modern mind little wonder natural things seem strange and difficult to

face. The important perennial truths will seem like new learning for modern Americans. This learning must come, however, before people can begin to work successfully in groups rather than as disconnected individuals, and before they can begin to deal with snowballing social problems- problems like ecological ones that challenge the potential of individuals, societies, nations and the planet to function as a single entity.<sup>21</sup>

The significance of Rolling Thunder's views rests, according to Doug, in his unitary vision. Man-nature relationships and all natural laws, principles of health and healing, personal and social well-being and values can be understood and manifest only when they are seen *collectively*. Central to Rolling Thunder's vision is that the earth is one being, a living, evolving organism of which we are all part, and he sees "modern" society's blindness to the nature of our world manifest in its failure to recognize that as we harm the earth we harm ourselves. Only through *involvement* in Earthly affairs and Earthly cares--through honoring and respecting the Earth, the Mother, and all of life--can one carry out ones true spiritual work and spiritual evolution:

Such respect is not a feeling or an attitude only. It's a way of life. Such respect means that we never stop realizing and never neglect to carry out our obligations to ourselves and our environment.<sup>22</sup>

This, in Doug Boyd's view, is perhaps the most fundamental discovery for the contemporary aspirant and for modern Western culture as well.

#### Marriage of wisdoms

In the current renaissance of Indian wisdom, Doug Boyd sees the beginnings of what might be called a marriage of wisdoms. Swami Rama's method, in Doug's experience, was to work internally, to withdraw the senses and the mind's attention from external perceptions, and thus to identify with the self within--the Atman, the cosmic mind. Rolling Thunder's way was:



...to work externally, to sharpen the senses, to embrace the world. In every step of his growth, just as in the purification process, man works from the outside in. Man is in and of nature- a microcosm of that universe that he can see around him. Through his environment man learns about the natural world and then comes to understand his own nature. He becomes one with nature, one with himself, one with the great Spirit. I had seen Swami Rama control his pulse and breathing. I had seen Rolling Thunder control the weather. These were perhaps simply different expressions of the same self-regulation--of the same self-knowledge and self-will in the widest sense of *self*.<sup>23</sup>

Doug Boyd's association with Rolling Thunder was the beginning of a long-term and intense acquaintance and involvement with numerous traditional Indians and medicine men including Mad Bear (a traditional Tuscarora spokesman and medicine man), Philip Cassadore (a traditional Apache leader and medicine man), and this involvement, as well as continuing association with representatives of others diverse cultures, led to the formation of the Cross Cultural Studies Program (CCSP), a not-for-profit organization for intercultural liaison and the promotion of inter-cultural and trans-cultural understanding. The ongoing work of CCSP continues to strengthen Doug Boyd's awareness of the fundamental similarities among all enduring traditions of the world.

What typifies traditional Indian ways, he says, is that they observe, live out, or practice the principle of connectedness or collectiveness in their almost external relationship with the natural environment. American Indians have obliterated that illusion of separateness between themselves and the whole of nature around them in which they dwell and to which they belong:

...they don't distinguish between "here I am" and "here is nature outside of me" like is typically the case in our contemporary society where we may have contact with nature and yet not feel connected with it. The identity distinction between humans and all the other kingdoms (plants, etc) disappears and there is that unitive, collective consciousness as expressed in the

constantly repeated, "all my relations." The secret of their power lies in the awareness that *all things are alive and all life is related.*

This unitive consciousness is expressed or manifest not only in their relationship with nature but also in their relationship with one another. There is a sense of kinship in which the boundaries of the individual seem nearly to fade away.<sup>24</sup> There is a sense of mutuality, of oneness, of a social sharing that doesn't really distinguish between "mine" and "yours" or, often, even between "me" and "you." Thus, interestingly, traditional Indians seem to exhibit the same degree of profound renunciation of the personal self, the same degree of personal non-attachment, the same union, or merging as the yogis and swamis, and sadhus meditating in their Himalayan caves or hermitages--only this personal renunciation and sense of unity is expressed through their collectivity and mutuality, in their involving themselves within the community and sharing rather than withdrawing.

Doug Boyd suggests that the living expression of traditional Indian wisdom offers a particularly pertinent contribution to our modern society's contemporary dilemmas and the challenging circumstances with which we struggle on a planetary level today because it offers living example of how to relate to and get along with "others," including with nature, with all beings, and with Earth herself:

I think it's up to us to work out our own collective karma. The spiritual leaders and teachers who are real and meaningful for the people born here and who are supposed to be working with this land, this circumstance and this karma are people like Martin Luther King, Rolling Thunder, Mad Bear, and others. No yogi or monk from far away will ever arrive here with a spiritual message that is complete or sufficient in itself for the people who are living here. In fact, I believe the most immediately pertinent or appropriate sharing and guiding of *The Way* for the people of this land might best come from Native Americans.<sup>25</sup>

### Cross Cultural Studies Program (CCSP)

In 1970 Doug founded CCSP (originally in the San Francisco Bay area and eventually incorporated and chartered in Topeka, Kansas) which he has directed since its inception, carrying out his long-term interest and involvement with the process of East-West bridge work as well as the integration of ancient traditions and modern technologies.<sup>26</sup> CCSP conceives that all contemporary issues are essentially planetary issues--that individuals, communities, nations, and economies are influenced more by planetary conditions than by their "separate" circumstances. It is therefore fundamental to the welfare of all people that they be able to work interculturally.

CCSP has been effective in a liaison capacity in facilitating communications and direct encounters among representatives of various cultures on numerous occasions and in a variety of settings. An example of this is the Cross-Cultural Roundtable Conference Project it organized and sponsored in 1979. This 10-day, closed-door, conference brought together nearly one hundred representatives of the world's major religious and spiritual traditions to spend time together and to discuss contemporary human issues and the prospect and processes of collective, cooperative endeavor regarding mutual human concerns. Further expansion of the multi-culture roundtable format is a major objective of the organization.

Over the first nearly two decades of CCSP's activity, its major focus was its close association with various tribes of American Indians and support of Indian projects regarding contemporary Indian issues. These endeavors reflected Doug Boyd's recognition of the importance of survival of the Native American traditions and culture and of the value of their contribution toward the solution of contemporary planetary (particularly environmental) crises. All these Native-American projects were carried out in intimate personal association with traditional Indians, only at their request, and always under their direct guidance. In this context, CCSP's function was entirely that of

facilitator--there was never an intent to push a CCSP-agenda, or a non-Indian agenda upon the American Indian tradition.

The scope and impact of CCSP's work with traditional Indians is impressive--particularly for this mostly voluntary staff of usually not more than 10 or 12 people. Following is a brief presentation of only a few selected projects in this area:

"The Apache Report" Support Project: a weekly 90-minute Apache language radio program featuring traditional songs, chants, news, and viewpoints. Philip Cassadore, a traditional Apache medicine man and custodian of ancient Apache teachings, produced and hosted the program on KIKO radio in Globe, Arizona. CCSP also recorded traditional chants for Apache people themselves to assist them in learning their own language and their traditional ceremonial and social songs.

Cross-Tribal American Indian Research And Liaison project: Logistical support and financing for Philip Cassadore to travel to Peru to meet traditional people in several different locations, and for Tuscarora (Iroquois) medicine man, Mad Bear,<sup>27</sup> to travel extensively, mostly to Indian reservations throughout the United States.

American Indian Recorded Prophecy Research. Under the guidance of Mad Bear, medicine people and traditional custodians of Indian prophecy from several tribes were contacted and invited to help communicate, transmit, and thus share and preserve the oral traditions and prophesies and to act as guides and interpreters of rock writings and other recorded prophesy.

Self Reliance Center Support: Establishment of the "Eagle's Nest Tutoring School" at the Salt River Pima Indian Reservation near Scottsdale, Arizona,. Young Pima Indian children were here taught the Pima way of life, including the traditional sweat lodge and other ceremonies, as well as Spanish, English, and the Pima language, and were tutored in their regular studies.

Spiritual Summit Conference, coordinated by Margaret Mead and Jean Houston, and held at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine and at the United Nations in conjunction with United Nations Day, 1975. CCSP Coordinated and help funding the presence of the American Indian delegation in it.

"The Longest Walk:" In 1978, CCSP helped with funding, facilitation, and logistical support for hundreds, and eventually thousands, of American Indians who made their way, mostly on foot, from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. in a sacred-pipe prayer ceremony in response to the threatened "abrogation," by Congress, of all remaining Indian treaties and the "termination" of remaining Indian reservations.

American Indian Speakers Project: Sponsoring of traditional Native American speakers in both public and private lecture and conference formats in Topeka, Kansas City, Wichita, Phoenix, Tucson, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, New York City, and the San Francisco Bay Area.

#### Big Mountain Sun Dance Support Project

This was one of the most intense and extensive projects undertaken by CCSP in the service of its relationship with and support for American Indians and their causes, and certainly merits a study on its own.<sup>28</sup>

These sundance events were both a spiritual "in-a-sacred-manner" response of traditional people of both tribes to an imminent threat of government-forced relocation (into hastily-constructed settlements in nearby urban areas) of Dine(Navajo) families who had been living peacefully with Hopis at that site. The first of these sundances occurred in 1980 and, as traditional protocol dictates, the event was held each year for four consecutive years in the same area. On the fourth year, the last of the series of sundances at Big Mountain, the event was timed to coincide with the stipulated relocation deadline for more than two-hundred remaining Dine families who had refused to relocate--vowing to stay on their ancestral lands even at the cost of their lives. In this

way, the sundance events were also a strategic response: since the ritual (though once outlawed by congress) had become a recognized religious practice of an acknowledged "religion," it appeared that the Dine families would at least be protected for the ensuing four years by the "Religious Freedoms Act."<sup>29</sup>

At the request of traditional elders among both these nations, CCSP helped to raise funds to enable the sundance events as well as to enable communication to promote public support and understanding. For each of the four years, CCSP raised the money for sundance events at Big Mountain--\$6,000 per year (which was most of what was needed to transport the spiritual leaders, medicine people, drummers, food supplies and provisions for the 4-day camp, gas-money for people to return to their homes, etc).<sup>30</sup>

Though CCSP's statutory headquarters remains in Topeka, Kansas, CCSP now maintains a branch (its currently most-active center) in New York City where its activities are focused mainly on its communication and education goals. In New York, CCSP helped to create the Media Production Group (now an independent not-for-profit entity) to produce educational and training films and, most recently, established the Cross Cultural Institute to conduct classes and sponsor presentations by representatives of various cultures.

Doug Boyd, under the auspices of CCSP, conducts workshops and long-term classes and presents lectures and seminars at the Cross Cultural Institute in New York and throughout the United States. These presentations draw from Doug Boyd's empirical cross-cultural research--his association with traditional shamans, healers, teachers, and adepts of many cultures--and cover such topics as esoteric healing, shamanism, and the development of consciousness control and psychophysiological self-mastery. They are intended to promote "deep ecumenism," understanding of the ideology, discipline, and practice that Doug refers to as "cultural essence" and to offer instruction and training in the development of effective tools for personal growth and social change.

Commentary:

Doug Boyd is an example--a model-- of the expression of this new consciousness. His biography shows his early exposure and developing insight into this perennial wisdom and his eventual awareness of its pertinence to the contemporary human-and-planetary condition--as well as his belief in its compatibility with Western culture and science. Along with the words and works of others presented in this thesis, the ongoing efforts and effectiveness of Doug Boyd and the Cross-Cultural Studies Program provide an example of the developing climate in which this emerging consciousness has begun to become popular in the West over the last thirty years or so.

It is significant that most new perspectives and endeavors regarding human potential and volition and equitable, mutual governance of shared human circumstances were generally opposed and oppressed--even in research--not more than thirty or forty years ago. This suggests that the increasing interest in and awareness of concepts of interpersonal, intercultural and human-and-nature interconnectedness and planetary (Gaia) consciousness do indeed imply a transformation and an emerging new social/scientific paradigm.

At the same time, Doug Boyd's unusual family background illustrates that the emerging and so-called "new spirituality" or "new spiritual consciousness" is not actually new at all. It may be a newly reemerging interest or awareness within the movement itself; but the interviewees with whom I spoke (as well as others I observed and writers whom I researched) related concepts that are basic to ancient religions and traditions that have existed for centuries. My interviewees were, for the most part, aware of this; but it is interesting that, for many of them, the confirming investigation of ancient philosophies was induced by *personal experience* that was completely *internal*. Contemporary interest in, and familiarity with ancient spirituality is owing to three phenomena or processes that I have been able to observe:

First, a philosophical and religious continuity that has endured (though more or less invisible to the mainstream population) throughout the history of this country and throughout the development of our contemporary society. This continuity has been maintained most notably, or visibly, perhaps, by articulators such as H.P. Blavatsky, Younghusband, and Bessant and the research and writings of the Theosophical Society as well as by the Vedanta Society. As long as six decades ago, these societies were influential among a population in the United States (and elsewhere) that was loosely organized through the country and called itself "the New Thought Movement" (though, here again, it was not "new" at all in planetary terms).

Second, the high-profile presence (particularly from the 1960s) of an abundance of spokespersons, teachers, literature, and documentaries from the Far East as well as from indigenous traditions of the Americas, previously less visible or less noticed, and the eventual appearance of numerous ashrams, schools, seminar centers, etc.

Third, experiences and insights of ancient spiritual truths-- which will be expanded in the following section on Ram Dass).

Doug Boyd is also a skillful articulator of the contemporary trend towards planetization as a social movement. Not in the sense of a political or a radical change, protest or pressure to change, but more in the sense that it articulates new values in the sense of transition-- of a new direction, and even of a Divine plan unfolding. This movement, in Doug's view, is leading us in the direction of a new and different social/scientific paradigm--but this is a potential and not an inevitability. He sees the key to its unfolding in relentless and committed activism, as a profession. Doug himself is devoted full-time to the support and facilitation of planetization, with very little financial remuneration.



Finally, Doug's life and interests provide an excellent example of the sociological gestalt, among different areas of "consciousness exploration" of the 1960s and mid-1970s. As we observe the unfolding of his life, it is possible to intuitively grasp the convergence between the areas of Eastern spirituality and philosophies, body-mind, holistic health and nutrition, ecology, peace, feminism, civil rights, human potential, native american traditions, and shamanism. Also in this areas Doug and his family were pioneers, understanding many decades ago that there was no real split between the interest in and development of human potentials and spirituality and work for socio-political change. On the contrary, he suggests, they tend to enhance and reinforce each other as they actually work together towards a greater effectiveness in expressing one's will and visions. Like other planetary activists described here, Doug also understands that even to suggest a concept of "within" versus "without" is indicative of the dualistic nature of our language and, therefore, our ideology. Indeed, this dualism produced, even as early as the 1960s, a split in this new consciousness population.

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<sup>1</sup> Doug Boyd, *Prologue, Mystics, Magicians, and Medicine People. Tales of a Wanderer.* (New York: Paragon House, 1989). pp. xi- xii.

<sup>2</sup> Here Doug Boyd presented his sophisticated view of the principles of human potential in the areas of attention and volition (the use of will in determining the course of events), and the uses of ritual and of image making, or visualization, for the facilitation of both personal and social change. The workshop, designed, in part, to help participants develop latent natural powers, was not only theoretical but also practical. It offered numerous practical exercises drawn from years of practice and from various disciplines and cultural sources.

<sup>3</sup> The *New Thought* is a rather loose term that refers to people of primarily Judeo-Christian backgrounds who were generally interested in the "other philosophies" which were not so prominent in the US at the time, and were mostly influenced by some of the tenets of Buddhism and by the Upanishads in the Hindu Vedic scriptures, and ideas that are basic to most Eastern religions and probably to the more mystic forms of Western religions as well (such as yoga, the belief in karma or rebirth, reincarnation, in an afterlife other than heaven and hell, the idea of the cakra system, the astral self or the causal self, and others).

<sup>4</sup> Doug Boyd, *op. cit.*, pp xii- xiii.

5 The Vedanta Society was actually founded in Chicago in the 1920s by the hindu Swami Vivekananda ( of the hindu lineage of the well known Swami Ramakrishna), whom Doug Boyd considers "one of the early bridge makers, or envoys, or ambassadors of Eastern philosophy in this country", and a true teacher. People who saw themselves as part of the *New Thought* may not all have been members of the Vedanta society but they were engaged in similar pursuits or studies, which-- of course-- were nothing "new" in the history of civilization.

6 Willis Harman, Ph.D., and Howard Rheingold, *Higher Creativity. Liberating the Unconscious for Breakthrough Insights*. An Institute of Noetic Sciences Book. (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, Inc. 1984). pp. 134- 5.

7 Doug Boyd, "Introduction", *Swami. An American's Lively Personal Exploration into the Lives, Teachings, Methods and Mental Powers of the Swamis of India*. (New York: Random House, 1980). zpp. xvi-xvii.

8 Elmer and Alyce Green, "Biofeedback and Transformation", *The American Theosophist*, p.143.

9 On an even more fundamental level, the basic assumptions of biofeedback reflect, according to the Greens, the guiding principle of the Patanjali system of Yoga, that everything in the cosmos consists of mind and its modifications. This is, in their view, the genesis of the concept of "planetary field mind", within which all bodies (organic and inorganic) and emotions, and thoughts, are forms of interrelated real substance. Within such concept and its ramifications within the Green's framework the overall approach of the perennial wisdom are highlighted, as it seen by them as also representing (with appropriate translations ), for ex, Sri Aurobindo's concepts of mind, substance and states of consciousness; the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy of substances and consciousness; Madame Blavatsky's theosophical postulates; Bailey's detailed review of states of consciousness; Hall's outlines of metaphysical thought down the ages, and Assagioli's and Wilber's modern syntheses. Parallels can be found, they say, also in Sufi teachings of Islam, in the Kaballah of Judaism, in the American Indian Medicine tradition and in many shamanistic traditions and symbols from around the world. (Green & Green, *ibid.*)

10 Doug Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. xiv.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. xiv-xv.

12 During the late 1960s, professionals, mostly from psychology, psychiatry, medicine or medical-research fields, who were interested in the new science of consciousness began gathering with the purpose of providing support for each other and collectively sharing their cutting-edge ideas. The Council Grove Conferences, held each year in a rustic, remote facility in the Kansas plains, was initially (and for more than two decades) sponsored by the Research Department at Menninger and is now sponsored by The Life Sciences Institute. (Doug Boyd, personal communication.)

13 Doug Boyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-248.

14 *Ibid.*, pp.237-238.

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15 Harman, op.cit., p.135.

16 Doug Boyd, loc. cit.

17 There he demonstrated his ability to voluntarily control the production of beta, alpha, theta and delta brain rhythms, to control peripheral blood flow (autonomic control) and even demonstrated producing a ten-degree temperature differential between the right and left sides of one palm. He was able to speed and slow his heart at will, and once stopped his heart (for seventeen seconds) from pumping blood while "wired up" to the electroencephalograph, cardiometer, respiration gauge, and other electronic devices for measuring psychophysiological processes. Doug Boyd, *Rolling Thunder: A Personal Exploration into the Secret Healing Powers of an American Indian Medicine Man*. (New York: A Delta Book, Dell Publishing Co., Inc. , 1974), p. 14.

18 For example, Swami Rama had the telepathic ability to register incoming phone calls before the phone rang or the switchboard light turned on and would pick up the phone before such a signal. After a careful assessment to why it was so hard to get through to Swami Rama by phone, as his line tended to be busy, Doug had to tell him to pick up the phone... *after* it rings!! personal communication, Doug Boyd.

19 Boyd, 1980, p. 213.

20 For a detailed description of Rolling Thunder's healing procedure see Boyd (1974), ch.2.

21 Ibid., pp. 81-82.

22 Ibid., p. 52.

23 Ibid., p. 117.

24 In this they are similar, according to Doug Boyd, to Tibetan, Ladak, people.

25 Boyd, 1974, op.cit., p. 152.

26 It truly started for Doug during his activism during the World war II, when he participated in the formation of a group of people in southern California that collected food and sent it overseas. Their guiding principle was then that hunger is a planetary issue.

27 About whom Doug Boyd writes in his latest book, *Mad Bear. Spirit, Healing, and the Sacred in the Life of a Native American Medicine Man*. (New York, London, Toronto: A Touchstone Book, Simon & Schuster, 1994).

28 It also turned out to be one of the culminating activities of CCSP's center in Tucson, Arizona, and one of that center's final projects with native tribes of the Southwest.

29 For that event, CCSP coordinated a large-scale prayer vigil at the request of, and in cooperation with, Dine elders. Thousands of people—in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, St. Paul, Madison, Tucson, and Kansas City, as well

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as people in Canada and Europe, joined in the Big Mountain Support Prayer Vigil. The New York group held its vigil at the U.N. and representatives of six nations participated. In addition, countless churches, individuals and smaller community groups across the nation sent their prayers. This was truly a cross-cultural sharing of great magnitude. It generated much empathy and concern for the Native American spiritual traditions--a development essential to the continuing welfare of the Mother Earth.

<sup>30</sup> Tim Ballingham, CCSP Project Coordinator, personal communication.