



# **Scarred Communities: Psychosocial Impact of Man-made and Natural Disasters on Sri Lankan Society**

*Daya Somasundaram*

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**Scarred Communities: Psychosocial Impact of Man-made and Natural Disasters on Sri Lankan Society** Daya Somasundaram

**Scarred Communities** is a qualitative, psycho-ecological study of the long-term effects of disasters—both man-made and natural—on Sri Lankan communities. The book studies the effects of war and the 2004 tsunami on families and communities. The concept of collective trauma is introduced to provide a framework in understanding how basic social processes, relationships and networks change due to these disasters.

The methodology employed is a naturalistic, psychosocial ethnography of northern Sri Lanka, drawing from the author's participation in psychosocial and community mental health programmes among the Tamil community. Participatory observation, key informant interviews and focus-group discussions with rehabilitation workers and officials were used to gather data.

The author also analyses the various causes of modern civil war, ethnic consciousness, terror and counter-insurgency operations and their consequences on people. Though the study revolves around Sri Lanka, the phenomenon of collective trauma has an international relevance for communities across the globe caught in civil and ethnic strife.

This book is a sequel to *Scarred Minds* (SAGE, 1998), which deals with the effects of chronic civil war on individuals.

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