



Colonialism and Psychology of Culture

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Abstract

There has long been a criticism that scholarship devoted to the study of cultural variation in psychology has too easily ascribed the observed differences between different societies to essentialized notions of ‘culture’ while paying less attention to historical forces that shape these differences. In this paper, we argue that the conceptual frameworks of cross-cultural and cultural psychology should allow for analysis of how major geopolitical events and historical processes bear on people’s lives. Specifically, we point to colonialism, a discussion that has been less attended to in psychology, and argue that colonialism and its legacies exert a powerful influence on many worldwide populations. Analysis of colonialism and its legacies necessarily calls for attention to its prominent ideological cornerstones: race and ‘culture’, which are also central concepts in psychology as a global discipline. In psychology, colonialism has primarily been engaged in two ways: the study of the colonial impact on individuals; and the consideration of the colonial impact on the discipline and practice of psychology in formerly colonized nation states. We review this engagement and introduce examples of scholarship from each. This paper challenges the field to pay greater attention to sociopolitical discourses and historical contexts and, in turn, to theorize culture in ways that are responsive to the fluidity and complexity of social lives.

Amidst the dizzying rate of globalization and increased intercultural contact, psychology is working hard to keep pace. Some view the recent name change of the American Psychological Society to the Association of Psychological Science as a nod to the increased consciousness of psychology as an international project (Chiu, 2007). Psychology journals sponsored by the American Psychological Association with high-impact indexes (e.g., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* and *American Psychologist*) routinely publish conceptual and empirical articles that pay attention to cultural factors, and a number of other psychology journals have also published special issues devoted to culture and ethnicity (e.g., *Child Development*, *Developmental Psychology*, *Journal of Community Psychology*).

However, scholarship devoted to the study of cultural variation in psychology has long been criticized for being simplistic, ahistorical, and

decontextualized. More specifically, culturally focused research has been criticized for its tendency to ascribe observed group differences to East–West binaries (e.g., individualism–collectivism, Judeo-Christian versus Confucian, etc.). Moreover, there is little attention paid to the larger historical and contemporary contexts that shape – and reshape – the social lives of these so-called ‘traditional’ cultural variables such as Confucianism or collectivism. Paranjpe (2002, 35) characterized cross-cultural psychology publications as displaying ‘a distinct disdain for history’. Similarly, Gjerde and Onishi (2000, 216–217) charged that the culture and psychology approach suffers from ‘lack of attention to the historical and ideological sources of “culture”’.

There are, of course, many historical and ideological forces underlying cultural values and cultural identity; namely, societies elaborate cultural narratives to various ends at particular moments in time. In particular, the relationship of these cultural elaborations to historical and contemporary legacies of colonialism have received scant attention in psychology, perhaps because most active scholarship on colonialism has taken place outside the disciplinary boundaries of psychology. Because we draw from discussions in colonial and postcolonial studies, which may be unfamiliar to some psychologists, we begin with a brief review of some key-relevant arguments. We then proceed with an examination of the link between colonialism (and postcolonialism) and psychology in two ways. First, we examine various ways in which colonial pasts continue to matter to the psychological experiences of individuals in the present, particularly with respect to identity-related struggles and social functioning. Second, we consider the relevance of colonial legacies to the practice and study of psychology in formerly colonized states. In this vein, we consider the significance and social life of hegemonic Western-centered psychologies in former colonies. We make note of current efforts in various areas of social and cross-cultural psychology to build a knowledge base of the psychology from the perspectives of the individuals and groups with historical legacies of colonialization, as well as some of the ways in these efforts fall short because of their overreliance on the East–West cultural binaries to frame the indigenizing efforts. We end with a discussion of the challenges that lie ahead.

Some caveats are necessary before we proceed. First, we do not intend to provide a comprehensive discussion of the global history of colonialism – nor do we advocate that psychologists become amateur historians. Rather, we – as authors who trace their disciplinary roots to clinical psychology, community psychology, and anthropology – hope to further the discussion within psychology and related disciplines of the dangers of ahistoricity in our work. Second, while appreciating the excellent work of postcolonial studies on the effects of European colonization of nations in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, we are also interested in considerations of the particular effects of the Japanese colonization of other Asian states as a non-European

power. Although there is little literature in psychology regarding the impact of Japanese colonialism and imperialism on the psychology of people from other Asian nations, active scholarship in anthropology and history is applicable and relevant to the discussion.

Colonial/postcolonial discourses

Analysis of colonialism and its legacies necessarily calls for attention to its prominent ideological cornerstones: race and 'culture'. For psychology, it is important to underscore that colonial discourses engage the psychological, taking up questions of the human capacity, pathology, and identity of the colonized. Colonialism is a specific form of oppression. An increasingly rich literature explores how the colonial subject is made through elaborate systems that measure, compare, and explain human difference; these are the processes that justify that radical imposition of the colonizer on 'inferior' people in need of intervention. Colonial regimes are elaborated discursively by differentiating between the colonizer's 'superior' or 'more civilized' ways of life and the colonized people's allegedly 'inferior' or 'savage' ways. Scholars look to a wide range of domains to observe this subject-making: from medicine, to city planning, to exhibition, to ethnography, to science, to history writing – and of course to more obvious arenas of social control such as schools and the military (Anderson, 2006; Chakrabarty, 2000; Mitchell, 1991; Young, 1990).

The psychiatrist and noted postcolonial theorist Franz Fanon's (1965) writings were influential particularly because of their emphasis on the dehumanizing aspects of colonialism, pushing beyond labor extraction and exploitation to the realm of the psychological, which is often elaborated by racist biological and psychological theories of the 'native's' character (cf. Memmi, 1967). Foucault's (1970, 1977) theoretical apparatus has also been central to much of this work, enabling analysis of the discursive exercise of power through the very emergence of particular kinds of 'modern' selves. Scholars thus examine the ontological and psychological coordinates of this selfhood (e.g., Anderson, 1991). Building on Foucault's elaboration of the nexus of power and knowledge, Said's (1979) *Orientalism* is a foundational text in postcolonial studies. In *Orientalism*, Said detailed the various ways European colonial powers created and justified the image of the Orient (more precisely, the Arab and the Middle East) as primitive, exotic, uncivilized and in need of Western civilization. Said also argued that Western scholarship's complicity with Western colonial and imperial hegemony (particularly in its representation of non-Western cultures and subjects as 'the other') served the European exercise of power.

Some scholars engage *postcolonialism* to refer to the study of sociopolitical conditions that exist after colonialism is formally ended. Many observe that some of the conditions of colonialism persist long after a once-colonized

country's formal independence. That is, the political, social, and economic institutions of the now former colony often still continue to benefit the former colonizer and subjugate the formerly colonized subjects (Said, 1979). Some scholars use *neocolonialism* to index persistent imperialistic relationships between former colonies and their colonizers, be they economic, political, or even military.

Psychology's longstanding concern with the social dynamics of power imbalances have much to contribute to the discussion on the legacies of colonialism on one's identity and subjectivity. In particular, there is a large body of literature in social psychology on the effects of societal discrimination and prejudice on self-worth and attitudes toward in-group members among those who are members of the targets of discrimination (e.g., Bobo & Fox, 2003; Major & O'Brien, 2005), although there does not appear to be a consensus on the effects. Some have argued that the targets of prejudice internalize the societal devaluation and consequently hold negative attitude toward self and in-group members (e.g., Allport, 1979) while others have argued that perceiving oneself as being targets of prejudice can – under certain condition – be protective of self-esteem (e.g., Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003). There are many ongoing efforts to understand this paradox. For example, a recent study of Latino Americans by Major, Kaiser, O'Brien, and McCoy (2007) suggests that the link between perceived discrimination and self-esteem among this minority group may be moderated by one's worldview. In this particular instance, Latino Americans who held a meritocracy worldview (e.g., a belief that anyone can succeed in America by working hard) were more likely to have lower self-esteem and to blame other Latino Americans when exposed to discrimination against Latino Americans than those Latino Americans who rejected this worldview.

Notably, past psychological literature on stigma, prejudice, and stereotypes tended to study the phenomenon as a black–white intergroup effect from the dominant group's perspective. However, recent advances have come from minority perspectives that go beyond merely pointing to the psychological damage inflicted by systems of oppression; they also suggest the potentially transformational effects of the search for positive social identity despite systemic oppression (Bobo & Fox, 2003). These trends, as well as the new application of implicit prejudice research to colonized subjects (e.g., David & Okazaki, forthcoming), hold promise as ways for psychology to contribute to the study of psychological effects of colonialism.

Colonialism beyond the East–West divide

In his comments on the future of Asian social psychology, Matsumoto (2007) bemoaned the current state of affairs in which scholarship generated based on individuals from developed nations in East Asia (e.g., Japan, China, including Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan) are homogenized and

generalized to represent 'Asians' and 'Asian culture'. Such generalizations elide not only important national and historical specificities but also the legacy of intra-Asian colonial discourses that differentiated among Asian peoples both within and between nations, even as it referred to cultural continuities as well. The colonial legacy is thus complex, interwoven with both othering and homogenizing discourses (i.e., of the 'Asian'). Particularly, we note that postcolonies bear the difficult identity task of searching for 'authentic' cultural selves against these histories. Adding to this complexity are the different geopolitical and colonial histories of each nation-state in Asia that constitute a major vector of national difference that must be considered by psychological research of the self in Asia.

The colonial past is thus not only a historical legacy but a vivid memory and a lived reality for many contemporary individuals in Asia and the Asian diaspora. Public expressions of these historic resentments and anger abound in the daily news cycle in East Asia, as witnessed by the outraged sparked inside/outside Asian nations in response to Japanese government's move to revise its history textbooks; Japan's role in sexual slavery of Asian women during World War II; North Korean abduction of Japanese citizens; Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan (1895–1945) and in Korea (1910–1945); Japanese occupation of Manchuria (1931–1945); the aftermaths of the return of Hong Kong's and Macao's sovereignty to China (they were former British and Portuguese colonies, respectively); the unresolved political tension between Taiwan and China, and so on.

When it comes to the question of intra-Asian colonialisms, the question of race is necessarily complicated: while white–non–white colonialisms did variously exact culturally assimilationist policies, racial divides inevitably made for the easy exercise of biologically based assertions of cultural difference (although intermarriage is a very important site of analysis). In the case of Japanese colonialism, however, theories of racial proximity or even uniformity crisscrossed discourses of radical difference, making for colonial regimes with ambivalent elaborations of race and culture (Pai, 2000). 'Western' modernity (i.e., conceptions of social, economic, and cultural 'progress' in a global system) was mediated by or translated via Japan to parts of Asia colonized by Japan; such a push toward modernity was made all the more thorny by Japan's eventual Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which mobilized aggression in the name of vying for power against the Western hegemony. Historian Stefan Tanaka's (1993) work reviews precisely these odd convergences, examining the way in which in the early 20th century Japan developed an image of other Asian societies, notably China, in order to construct Japan's own history and identity as equal to the West and as distinct from the rest of a 'backwards and barbaric' Asia.

These histories have profound implications for the postcolonial search for cultural/national identity: when, as is often the case, the modernity and colonial project overlap, it is hard to demarcate a 'national' postcolonial

modernity for both states and individuals – namely, to identify that which is authentically cultural. As is the case with most states, the domain of culture is best thought of as an internal cultural debate that in the case of postcolonial states is encumbered in particular ways. This is further complicated by the vector of class; it is well understood that colonial eras foster elites who mimic the colonizer; postcolonial political power and systems of stratification again have colonial period echoes. It is often the case that social elites are benefactors of colonial pasts, making for difficult internal debates about power and culture.

We consider that these colonial legacies are in fact part of a larger transcultural and historical project, namely, East–West distinction-making – and the practice of claiming the unique non-Western aspects of national culture that marks the East Asian modern self, which some scholars have called self-orientalizing practices (Gjerde & Onishi, 2000; Ong, 1999). Moreover, this project has taken shape as a cultural coproduction between the East and the West (Hay, 1970). For example, anthropologist Aihwa Ong described how – in the post-Mao era – the Chinese state and media began to revive Confucianist ideology as a moral force that can serve to maintain cultural and ethnic continuities between mainland and overseas Chinese and to reign in the Western dangers of economic individualism and cultural excess. In her work with the Chinese parents (who grew up with the anti-Confucian Maoist rhetoric during China's Cultural Revolution) and their children born under the one-child policy, anthropologist Vanessa Fong (2004) details the complex and contradictory cultural and national identities of contemporary Chinese adolescents. From these perspectives, which situate the cultural discourse within the modern historical and political context, the notion of Confucianism or collectivism as 'cultural' characteristics of 'indigenous' non-Western cultures begins to lose its meaning. Importantly, these works show that there is more complexity to the discourse of the modern Asian selfhood beyond the idea of a power relationship typified by Western domination and native resistance.

Thus, the sense of cultural self throughout the world is necessarily a conversation that is held in relationship to hegemonic Western ideas/ideologies: the collectivistic/individualistic distinction is as such best appreciated as one born in interaction. For example, Liu (1995) showed through her analysis of translanguaging practice (e.g., translation and introduction of terms such as 'self' and 'individualism' into the Chinese language) that the ideology of individualism in China evolved in the context of China's violent encounters with the West as well as Japan. In the case of former colonies, then, this matrix is further complicated. In summary, the vocabularies of cultural and psychological selfhood have long histories that intersect power relations, racial regimes, and colonial/imperial discourses. By now, it makes little sense to think of enduring cultural differences unmediated by these processes.

Psychology and Colonialism

Psychology's engagement with colonialism and colonial discourse has been twofold. On the one hand, there are emerging efforts within psychology to examine the hypothesis that the legacy of colonialism continues to matter in the psychology of the formerly colonized. Research projects that can be understood in this context include research on internalized oppression and colonial mentality. On the other hand, there have been discussions of colonial legacies to the practice and study of psychology in formerly colonized states. This discussion has pointed to the practice of Western-centered psychologies in former colonies and has given rise to countermovements in the form of indigenous psychologies. We see these projects as moving the discipline of psychology in a productive direction. At the same time, we shall also note that some of these efforts to indigenize local psychology risk essentializing indigenous cultures by relying too heavily on the East–West binary framework to distinguish their efforts from those of the mainstream psychology.

Colonial impact on individuals

Although psychocultural constructs such as acculturation, ethnic identity, and collective self-esteem have become foundational concepts in cultural and cross-cultural psychology, discussions about how larger sociopolitical conditions, especially oppressive or colonial ones, may play a role in shaping such cultural constructs have been scarce. This is especially surprising because even leading scholars of acculturation (Berry, 2003), ethnic identity (Phinney, 2003), and collective self-esteem (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Taylor, 1997) have stressed that such cultural constructs are not located in a vacuum and that all such culture-related variables are influenced by larger sociopolitical and historical contexts. To be sure, we are not advocating that psychology discard these constructs but rather that psychology builds on the existing rich empirical data collected in their names and to refine them.

As reviewed above, there is enormous social, psychological, and infra-structural work in producing the colonized person. Thus, a postcolonial consideration of contemporary individuals needs to consider the effects of that psychological and institutional infrastructure into the present day. Here, we can think of the often wholesale degradation of the 'native' culture or practices, or again, of what it means that concepts of the 'modern' often entail the dismissal of local practices and ideas. In this way, it is critical for psychology to be attentive to colonial discourses and their legacies in order to appreciate the effects of the discursive regimes that made postcolonial subjects.

Although still rare, there are emerging efforts to identify and examine ways in which the psychological functioning of individuals have been

affected by their own – or their nations’ – colonial pasts. By and large, psychological literature that examines the impact of colonialism on individuals are concerned with the former colonies of Western powers, such as the Philippines – with its long history of domination by first the Spanish, then the American rule – India, a former British colony, various nations in Latin America, as well as indigenous communities in North America, Pacific Islands, and Australia. Attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that reflect ethnic self-hatred and futile desires to emulate the dominant group at the expense of their heritage culture and ethnicity have been documented among Puerto Ricans (Varas-Díaz & Serrano-García, 2003), Mexicans (Codina & Montalvo, 1994; Hall, 1994), Native Americans (Brave Heart, 1998; Duran, 2006; Duran & Duran, 1995; McBride, 2002), southern Africans (Richards, Pillay, Mazodze, & Govere, 2005), and other historically colonized groups.

This scholarship has also extended to the psychological study of diasporic communities of formerly colonized nations. For example, scholars of Filipino America, for example, have described a *colonial mentality* as being ‘characterized by a perception of ethnic or cultural inferiority that ... involves ... uncritical rejection of anything Filipino and ... uncritical preference for anything American’ (David & Okazaki, 2006b, 241). Colonial mentality is theorized to have stemmed from classical colonialism and reinforced through generations by internal colonialism (i.e., contemporary oppression) in the USA and the continued Americanization of the postcolonial Philippines. In fact, in various Filipino American community forums, the term ‘colonial mentality’ has become a common parlance for discussing observations that many Filipino Americans use skin whitening products, desire to be white, discriminate against nonwhites, have superior perceptions of whites and Western culture, and prefer anything white or Western (Bergano & Bergano-Kinney, 1997; Revilla, 1997); as well as for explaining the high rates of depression among Filipino American adults (Tompar-Tiu & Sustento-Seneriches, 1995).

In their efforts to document colonialism’s impact on the psychological functioning on contemporary Filipino Americans, David and Okazaki (2006b) devised a questionnaire measure of colonial mentality and found it to be negatively correlated with enculturation, ethnic identity, and collective self-esteem, and positively correlated with assimilation and depression symptoms among multiple samples of Filipino Americans (David, forthcoming; David & Okazaki, 2006b). In a more recent series of studies using the semantic priming and implicit association test paradigms on multiple samples of Filipino Americans, David and Okazaki (forthcoming) sought to examine whether attitudes and emotions associated with colonial mentality could be detected at the subconscious level. They found that Filipino-related stimuli have been associated with ideas of inferiority, unpleasantness, and undesirability whereas American-related stimuli have been associated with ideas of superiority, pleasantness, and desirability. Based on these findings,

David and Okazaki concluded that cognition consistent with colonial mentality may operate automatically and without one's conscious control.

In another example of this line of scholarship, Bhatia and Ram (2001) outlined the ways in which postcolonial research is relevant to scholarship on acculturation and immigrant identities in the field of human development. They draw on postcolonial scholarship's emphasis on understanding the construction of the self and identity in the context of colonial histories, and on the ongoing power imbalances between the former colonists and colonized, to comment on the research on psychological acculturation among non-European immigrants. Bhatia and Ram contend that a full understanding of an immigrant's identity requires a conception of selfhood that is inextricably tied to – rather than separable from – sociocultural factors such as colonialism, language, and racially discriminating immigration laws. Moreover, they argue that universal models of acculturation popularized by scholars, such as John Berry (e.g., Berry & Sam, 1997), underestimate the powerful effects of inequities and injustices faced by many non-European immigrants because of race. Citing historical examples of US immigration, naturalization, and citizenship laws in which immigrants from Asian nations were specifically excluded or barred, Bhatia and Ram contend that such historical legacies continue to shape the identity and acculturation process of Asian immigrants today. As such, a universal theory that proposes similar acculturative processes for contemporary immigrants from Asia and from Europe risk denying the 'inscription' of colonial history onto the selfhood of formerly colonized.

Colonization of psychology and indigenous psychology

The historical dominance of so-called Western psychology has been read as another instance of Western hegemony in the field, although its relationship to colonial regimes is not always named in these discussions. It bears noting that in many cases psychology's rise as a modern social science and community of professionals coincided with colonial regimes and the conceptualization of the non-Western 'other' as inferior. In his essay on Orientalism in Euro-American and Indian psychology, theoretical and cultural psychologist Sunil Bhatia (2002) analyzed the historical role played by European and American psychology (notably, the pioneering figures in psychology such as Francis Galton, Herbert Spencer, and G. Stanley Hall following Darwin's evolutionary theory) in constructing the psychological representation of the formerly colonized non-Western 'others' as inferior and primitive. Bhatia situates the source of the British empire's scientific racism in the mid- to late-19th century and points to the Orientalist ideas present in the writings of psychology's pioneers. Bhatia argued that these European and American psychology's colonialist portraits were carried out by elite Indian intellectuals in the early 20th century with the importation of psychoanalysis as a science in colonial

India and continues to the present through the firm establishment of Western psychology in all major psychology departments in India. Bhatia's solutions to remedy this state is to call for the acknowledgment by both Euro-American and 'Third World' psychologists of the historical role of psychology in perpetuating the Orientalist representation of non-Western others and a renewal of indigenous psychologies in India.

And indeed, some of the most vocal critics of a Western-centric form of cross-cultural psychology have aligned themselves with the indigenous psychology movement. In fact, the indigenous psychology movement gathered steam in the 1970s due to the dissatisfaction of many psychologists in non-Western societies with American psychology's adherence to logical-positivistic, natural science-patterned, highly quantitative, universal-seeking, and Western-centric research paradigms (e.g., Church & Katigbak, 2002; Enriquez, 1977, 1993; Kim, 2000; Kim, Park, & Park, 1999; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Shams, 2002; Sinha, 1997; Yang, 2000). Indigenous psychology scholars have critiqued the comparative paradigm in cross-cultural psychology – and its mission to find the 'universal principle' across cultures (Segall, Lonner, & Berry, 1998) – as replicating the imposition of American or Western beliefs and assumptions on the practice of psychology among non-Western, nonwhite peoples. Critics assert that the imposition of Western (but ill-fitting) psychological theories and methods have hindered a holistic and accurate understanding of the psychology of non-Western individuals and groups (Poortinga, 1999) and that such practices constitute a form of scientific imperialism, scientific ethnocentrism, or 'colonization of the mind' (e.g., Bhatia, 2002; Diaz-Loving, 1999; Enriquez, 1993; Kim; Shams).

Ideologically, indigenous psychology strives toward developing a 'system of psychological knowledge based on scientific research that is sufficiently compatible with the studied phenomena and their ecological, economic, social, cultural, and historical contexts' (Yang, 2000, 245). Proponents of the indigenous psychology movement believe that such a system of indigenously derived and applied psychological knowledge equally recognizes and values the complexities and differences of psychological experiences throughout the various cultures and countries of the world. However, Adair (1992, 62) has pointed to the tacit agreement among some indigenous psychology efforts that 'it should resemble the North American discipline, although its variables and theories will reflect the local culture'.

In various discussions and commentaries regarding the indigenous psychology movement as a reaction to Western scientific hegemony (e.g., Allwood & Berry, 2006), we cannot help but notice that much of the commentary still refers all too easily to the East–West binary. Many efforts at indigenous psychology appear to be satisfied with simply identifying and deploying so-called indigenous psychological idioms (e.g., *han* in Korea, *amae* in Japan, *renqing* in China, *pakikipagkapwa* in the Philippines) in research without situating the ideological sources of each of these

notions within the complex histories of colonialism and colonial discourses. Moreover, it appears that only those aligned with indigenous psychology movements in the Philippines (e.g., Enriquez, 1977) and India (e.g., Sinha, 1986) have specifically attributed the Western character of psychology in the Philippines and India to those nations' colonial pasts. Scholars who identify with indigenous psychology movements in other East Asian nations such as Taiwan (e.g., Yang, 2006), South Korea (e.g., Kim et al., 1999) and China (e.g., Cheung et al., 2001) seem to emphasize the Western hegemony of psychological theories and methods without alluding to colonial discourses. From this perspective, indigenous psychology appears to address the 'colonization of the mind' of the formerly colonized on some level yet falls prey to the dangers of ahistoricity in practice.

Notably, recent writings in psychology have begun to critique the facile characterizations of cultural identities in Asia and elsewhere by situating them in historical and ideological discourses regarding 'culture' in each locale. For example, Gabrenya, Kung, and Chen (2006) make references to the proliferation of indigenous psychology movement in Taiwan as coinciding with modernization, increased wealth, and Taiwanese cultural revival. In another example, Gjerde and Onishi (2000) take issue with the characterization of the Japanese self as 'interdependent'. They contend that it is important to situate this Japanese cultural identity research within the context of the Japanese bureaucrats, state-sponsored intellectuals, and the business elite having historically controlled the representation of Japan and Japanese culture; and in that context, psychological research that continues to portray Japanese selves in this essentialized and homogeneous manner inadvertently aligns cultural psychology research in Japan with ideology in Japan that is politically quite conservative. Bhatia's (2002) historical analysis of the psychology's complicity in perpetuating the Orientalizing portrait of the non-Western others also supports our call for a more historically situated understanding of the psychology of the modern self in Asia.

Liu and Hilton (2005) have viewed socially shared representation of history as playing a critical role in shaping and maintaining people's identity. For example, New Zealand Maori developed a cohesive identity as Maori (versus competing tribes) in 19th century through the process of fighting the British colonization. At the same time, European and Maori New Zealanders alike point to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between the British Crown and Maori chiefs as the most important event in the history of New Zealand. This shared representation of New Zealand's history as centering on an event designed to dismantle colonization, in turn, serve to shape not only the social identities of European and Maori New Zealanders but also national policy and resource allocations. Liu and Hilton's analysis of this and other historical examples illustrate the ways in which social representation of peoples' histories can serve to illuminate many of the general social psychological principles (e.g., realistic group conflict theory, social identity theory and self-categorization theory, group

decision-making) that are at play in various international and intranational conflicts. Similarly, Riggs and Augoustinos (2005) wrote about the ways in which present-day racism in Australia can be best understood in context of its colonial history. In these ways, the use of colonial histories to frame the psychology of indigenous people can contribute to the refinement of psychological theories on modern racism.

Remaining Challenges

In his commentary reacting to Allwood and Berry's (2006) analysis of the characteristics of indigenous psychology, historian of psychology Kurt Danziger (2006) reiterated the irony of the increased emphasis on 'culture' in indigenous psychology in a world that is globalizing and intermixing at the unprecedented rate. Danziger (2006, 274) mused, 'it is not obvious that the reification of culture, in terms of geographically based and essentialist entities, offers the most promising basis for the development of indigenous psychologies.' We echo Danziger's sentiment that psychological research spanning cultures necessitates a more complicated, historically situated understanding of the selves that are emerging in our globalizing – and arguably already long-globalized – world. Within this effort, the conceptual frameworks of cross-cultural and cultural psychology should allow for analysis of how colonial and postcolonial forces bear on the lives of individuals.

Of course this is easier said than done. Psychology has its disciplinary limits and must necessarily ask which questions about the human experience can best be understood using its epistemology. So what might a more historically situated (cross-)cultural psychology look like? To take one example, the aforementioned recent work on colonial mentality among Filipino Americans has contributed a better understanding of how colonialism and its legacies may have shaped the psychological experiences of the formerly colonized people (David & Okazaki, 2006a). However, although this colonial mentality research is historical and contextual in theory, it remains ahistorical and acontextual in its empirical methodology. Future studies utilizing qualitative research paradigms such as ethnography with Filipinos in the Philippines in both urban and rural settings and across various class, gender, and religious lines may yield more substantive and contextualized results. Similarly, colonial mentality research can also be advanced using data collection approaches characterized by researcher engaging the participants using relational norms local to the Philippines (Pe-Pua, 1995; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). We have also reviewed other examples of recent efforts to practice historically situated psychology of formerly colonized individuals. Some of these works have taken discursive analytic approach (Liu & Mills, 2006) and qualitative analysis of identity narratives (Richards et al., 2005), while others have contributed theoretically through the discussion of modern racism through the lens of colonial legacies (Liu & Hilton, 2005; Riggs & Augoustinos, 2005).

We believe that interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration between psychology and postcolonial scholars holds one promising avenue for psychology to theorize and examine culture in ways that are responsive to complexity of social and psychological lives. Furthermore, while appreciating the historical contours of the birth and development of indigenous psychologies, we call for a rich conversation between the very histories that gave rise to the conditions of their birth and their sometimes problematic practices. Clearly, the discipline and practice of psychology, like the peoples it aims portray and serve, are all products of the same histories.

Short Biographies

Sumie Okazaki is currently on the faculty in the Psychology Department at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She received her BS in Psychology from the University of Michigan and PhD in Clinical Psychology from University of California, Los Angeles. Prior to coming to Illinois, she was on the faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is currently serving as an associate editor of the *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* journal. She conducts research on the impact of immigration, community contexts, individual differences, and racial minority status on the mental health of Asian American individuals and families. Her research papers has appeared in psychology journals such as *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, and *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. She is currently serving as an associate editor of the journal *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* and has also coedited two books on Asian American mental health: *American Psychology: The Science of Lives in Context* (with Gordon C. N. Hall) and *Asian American Mental Health: Assessment Theories and Methods* (with Karen Kurasaki and Stanley Sue). With her colleague Nancy Abelmann, she has been working on a study of Korean American teens and their immigrant parents in Chicago, examining the complex ways in which immigrant families manage the psychological and family consequences of immigration.

E. J. R. David is currently a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He is part of the core faculty at University of Alaska's PhD program in Clinical-Community Psychology with Cultural and Indigenous Psychology emphasis. He received his BA in Psychology from the University of Alaska Anchorage, and his MA and PhD in Clinical-Community Psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He conducts research on the psychological consequences of historical and contemporary oppression, with primary focus on the legacies of colonialism among Filipinos, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and other historically oppressed groups. As a graduate student, he was awarded several research awards by the American Psychological Association's Division 45 (Society for the Psychological

Study of Ethnic Minority Issues), including the Distinguished Student Research Award in 2007.

Nancy Abelmann is Harry E. Preble Professor of Anthropology and East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is also currently the Director of the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies at the University of Illinois. She received her PhD in Social Cultural Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. Her primary area expertise is in South Korea and Korean/Asian America; my substantive interests include social movements, class/social mobility, education, immigration, families, and gender; and my theoretical interests converge on culture, history, narrative, memory, transnationalism, and social transformation. She is the author of books on social movements in contemporary South Korea (*Echoes of the Past, Epics of Dissent: A South Korean Social Movement*, University of California Press, 1996); Korean America (*Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots*, with John Lie, Harvard University Press, 1995); women and social mobility in post-colonial South Korea (*The Melodrama of Mobility: Women, Talk and Class in Contemporary South Korea*, University of Hawaii Press, 2003); and film (*Gender, Genre, and Nation: South Korean Golden Age Melodrama*, 2005).

Endnote

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