



## Radicalizing Psychology; Embodying Decoloniality

Tiffeny R. Jimenez and Gordon Lee

### NOTES

1. This article does not reflect primary and secondary authorship. Instead, it is a co-creation of both authors, individually and collectively. We also want to acknowledge that we are both part of dialogue circles that, while not directly working on this article, had significant impacts on the authors' perspectives. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Ramy Barhouche and Christopher Sonn in the development of the ideas that shaped this writing.
2. We reject legitimization and authority based on a politics of citation reflective of euro-modern epistemology in the context of articulating decolonial concepts, ideas, and practices. As such, we recognize that knowledge arises from multiple sources not subject to traditional academic biases. This includes all references to people, websites, and images in this article.
3. "ABPsi was formed in the wake of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King and the rise of Black Nationalism of that era. ABPsi intended to create a psychology of the Black experience focused on improving the circumstances of Black people. Their initial purpose was to help Black psychologists in a time of discrimination and to provide psychological resources to the larger Black community. The founding psychologists believed that a psychology created mostly by white middle-class men could not explain the situation of people of African descent, and moved to incorporate African philosophy and cultural experience into the creation of a new understanding of Black psychology. The principles of ABPsi's creation were "to organize their skills and abilities to influence necessary change, and to address themselves to significant social problems affecting the Black community and other segments of the population whose needs society has not fulfilled." The founders

actively chose to remain independent of the American Psychological Association, decrying that body's complicit role in perpetuating White racism in society and the prevalence of studies featuring only White male participants. Instead, the ABPsi took a more active stance, seeking "to develop a nationwide structure for pooling their resources in meeting the challenge of racism and poverty" according to a statement released at their founding in 1968. Ebony Magazine's publication of "Toward a Black Psychology" by Joseph White in 1970 was a landmark in setting the tone and direction of the emerging field of Black Psychology" (Wikipedia, n.d.b)

4. "*The Radical Therapist* was a journal that emerged in the early 1970s in the context of the counter-culture and the radical U.S. antiwar movement. It was an "alternate journal" in the mental health field that published 12 issues between 1970 and 1972, and "voiced pointed criticisms of psychiatrists during this period". It was run by a group of psychiatrists and activists who believed that mental illness was best treated by social change, not behaviour modification. Their motto was "Therapy means social, political and personal change, not adjustment".<sup>[2]</sup> Why have we begun another journal? No other publication meets the need we feel exists: to unite all people concerned with the radical analysis of therapy in this society. It is time we grouped together and made common cause. We need to exchange experience and ideas, and join others working toward change. The other "professional" journals are essentially establishment organs which back the status quo on most controversial issues... We need a new forum for our views. In the midst of a society tormented by war, racism, and social turmoil, therapy goes on with business as usual. In fact, therapists often look suspiciously at social change and label as 'disturbed' those who press towards it. Therapy today has become a commodity, a means of social control. We reject such an approach to people's distress. We reject the pleasant careers with which the system rewards its adherents. The social system must change, and we will be workers toward such change" (Wikipedia, n.d.e)
5. "Frantz Omar Fanon, also known as Ibrahim Frantz Fanon, was a French West Indian psychiatrist and political philosopher from the French colony of Martinique. His works have become influential in the fields of post-colonial studies, critical theory and Marxism. As well as being an intellectual, Fanon was a political radical, Pan-Africanist, and Marxist

humanist concerned with the psychopathology of colonization and the human, social, and cultural consequences of decolonization. In the course of his work as a physician and psychiatrist, Fanon supported the Algeria's War of independence from France and was a member of the Algerian National Liberation Front. For more than five decades, the life and works of Frantz Fanon have inspired national-liberation movements and other radical political organizations in Palestine, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and the United States. He formulated a model for community psychology, believing that many mental-health patients would do better if they were integrated into their family and community instead of being treated with institutionalized care” (Wikipedia, n.d.d).

6. “Césaire's ‘Discourse on Colonialism’ challenges the narrative of the colonizer and the colonized. This text criticizes the hypocrisy of justifying colonization with the equation ‘Christianity=civilized, paganism=savagery’ comparing white colonizers to ‘savages.’ Césaire writes that ‘no one colonizes innocently, that no one colonizes with impunity either’ concluding that ‘a nation which colonizes, that a civilization which justifies colonization - and therefore force—is already a sick civilization.’ He condemns the colonizers, saying that though the men may not be inherently bad, the practice of colonization ruins them. He also examines the effects colonialism has on the colonized, stating that ‘colonization = “thing-ification”’, where because the colonizers are able to ‘other’ the colonized, they can justify the means by which they colonize” (Wikipedia, n.d.a)
7. Carter Godwin Woodson (December 19, 1875 – April 3, 1950) was an American historian, author, journalist, and the founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. He was one of the first scholars to study the history of the African diaspora, including African-American history. Carter G. Woodson was born in New Canton, Virginia on December 19, 1875, the son of former slaves, Anne Eliza (Riddle) and James Henry Woodson. His parents were both illiterate and his father, who had helped the Union soldiers during the Civil War, supported the family as a carpenter and farmer. The Woodson family were extremely poor, but proud as both his parents told him that it was the happiest day of their lives when they became free. Convinced that the role of his own people in American history and in the history of other cultures was being ignored or misrepresented among scholars, Woodson realized the need for research into the

neglected past of African Americans. Along with William D. Hartgrove, George Cleveland Hall, Alexander L. Jackson, and James E. Stamps, he founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History on September 9, 1915, in Chicago. Woodson described the purpose of the ASNLH as the "scientific study" of the "neglected aspects of Negro life and history" by training a new generation of blacks in historical research and methodology. Believing that history belonged to everybody, not just the historians, Woodson sought to engage black civic leaders, high school teachers, clergymen, women's groups and fraternal associations in his project to improve the understanding of Afro-American history" (Wikipedia, n.d.c).

8. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (February 23, 1868 – August 27, 1963) was an American sociologist, socialist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author, writer and editor. Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Du Bois was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. Racism was the main target of Du Bois's polemics, and he strongly protested against lynching, Jim Crow laws, and discrimination in education and employment. His cause included people of color everywhere, particularly Africans and Asians in colonies. He was a proponent of Pan-Africanism and helped organize several Pan-African Congresses to fight for the independence of African colonies from European powers" (Wikipedia, n.d.f).
9. The film, the Truman Show, is a good illustration of the principle of horizons. See also *Constructing the Self, Constructing America* (Cushman, 1995).
10. The film, The Matrix, provides one depiction of what how our experience and perspective on the world can shift through increased consciousness of the structures embedded within these ideologies and what it means to "delink".
11. See a recent interview with Walter Mignolo here: [https://www.e-ir.info/2017/01/21/interview-walter-mignolopart-2-key-concepts/?fbclid=IwAR0gyRhaOBAkwT2kcEaeqnxREYuftssWYmT\\_F83JQQQLpwUJdb9RAWLuBcY](https://www.e-ir.info/2017/01/21/interview-walter-mignolopart-2-key-concepts/?fbclid=IwAR0gyRhaOBAkwT2kcEaeqnxREYuftssWYmT_F83JQQQLpwUJdb9RAWLuBcY)
12. This includes: racial justice, environmental justice, disability justice, epistemological justice, sociolinguistic justice...etc.

13. At a mtg. in May, 2018, there was a discussion about oppression, trauma, and what it feels like. There was a sense that it was bigger than just what was in front of one, that it had multiple arms - that it sometimes hit one from not just the front, but from the sides and the back, where one couldn't see it. Someone said "it feels like an octopus!" Then, someone went up to the board and drew an Octopus. When we saw the picture, everyone went "oh yes!" It resonated at a deeper level. There was a collective sense that we had named "something." It was "just a feeling." However, it turned out that this feeling led us towards what has become a central image of a 3-4 year project, and an image that has been used by others beyond our Village to explain similar phenomena. You will find an image of this conceptual octopus as it manifested on a whiteboard in Part 3 of this paper. (See: <https://coco-net.org/white-supremacy-culture-in-organizations/>)
14. Another term used to reference the CMP/Octo. To quote my sister, Anasuya Isaacs, from our "We Will Dance with Mountains" course: "We live in the Patrix disguised as a matrix holding up misogyny sneakily."
15. The cultural injustice that occurs when the concepts and categories by which people understand themselves and their world are replaced or adversely affected by the concepts and categories of the colonizer.
16. This autobiography by Mexican-American writer, Richard Rodriguez, called "Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez" tells his story of cultural loss through language and education. He tells us: "Once upon a time, I was a 'socially disadvantaged' child. An enchantedly happy child. Mine was a childhood of intense family closeness. And extreme public alienation. Thirty years later I write this book as a middle-class American man. Assimilated... It is education that has altered my life."
17. For more information on the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/pablo-neruda>
18. Maori communities and Indigenous scholars in New Zealand have framed it this way. Kupe is a Maori ancestor who knew the world through his own traditions and ways of knowing (epistemologies). James Cook, the English colonizer, knew the world through the European "sciences." These two epistemological systems lead to two very different ways of being. The assertion of hegemony of one over the other was and is part of the project of

coloniality. The reclamation and practice of their non-European epistemology is part of their vision for the present and the future.

19. The concept of “post-activism” was coined by Bayo Akomolafe as “a new form of deinstitutionalized activism, if you will – represents a leap into the dark...embracing the unknown.” See: <https://www.bayoakomolafe.net/post/the-times-are-urgent-lets-slow-down>
20. The Racial Justice Action Group and the Racial Justice in Praxis project; projects developed in 2016-18 as part of PsySR (Psychologists for Social Responsibility), a national group formed in the early 1980s.
21. “I am traumatized. I am oppressed. I am not responsible for nor was I the cause of my trauma. What happened to me, my ancestors, and my community(s) occurred and continues to occur in the context of a larger story.” The trauma is not Who-You-Are; the trauma is what happened to you (M. James, personal communication, July 21, 2021)
22. The world of you (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).
23. Full speech, *parole pleine*, is a term developed by Jacques Lacan in the early 1950s (D. Bell, personal communication, January 12, 2022).
24. The practice requires access to and the use of the non-cognitive. It requires emotional and psychological labor.
25. Discussions with Nahid Nasrat, a transnational feminist, and former president of Division 48, Peace Psychology, of the APA.
26. The canoe as a vessel that holds one and one’s community on a journey, literal and metaphorical; political and psychological, as told by and reflected in many communities of Oceania in the context of their journeying across the Pacific Ocean.
27. For those of us who feel that we are not part of a people or community, we suggest that this is a condition of alienation, of erasure and forgetting, not of our own volition, but rather part of a social and psychological process. That is rooted in modernity and dis-embodiment.
28. “Who taught you to hate the texture of your hair? Who taught you to hate the color of your skin? To such extent you bleach, to get like the white man. Who taught you to hate the shape of your nose and the shape of your lips? Who taught you to hate yourself from the top of your head to the soles of your feet? Who taught you to hate your own kind? Who taught you to hate the race that you belong to so much so that you don't want to be around

each other? No . . . Before you come asking Mr. Muhammad does he teach hate, you should ask yourself who taught you to hate being what God made you. We don't steal, we don't gamble, we don't lie and we don't cheat. You can't get into a whiskey bottle without getting past a government seal. You can't buy a deck of cards without getting past a government seal. Here the white man makes the whiskey then puts you in jail for getting drunk. He sells you the cards and the dice and puts you in jail when he catches you using them" (Malcom X, 1962).

29. It is important to remember that it is the CMP/Octo that is "pulling the strings" behind the perpetrator and the abused. To transform the abuse, it is that matrix of power which must be changed.
30. From a non-colonial perspective, the individual is connected to their past and future. See *interbeing*, Thich Nhat Hanh (Hanh, 2011).