

Indigenization and the History of Psychology

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This article argues for the development of a historical perspective to help understand the process of indigenization in psychology. The indigenization of psychology in both the United States and India is shown to be part of larger social, economic, and political processes. A center and periphery model of knowledge production and praxes is deployed to show how practices of scientific imperialism are used to maintain the hegemony of the center. It is argued that historical approaches may be useful to challenge and counter such practices. Finally, the authors call for a polycentric history of psychology that will correspond to the emerging polycentrism exemplified in indigenous psychologies.

Keywords: American psychology, Globalization, History, Centre and periphery, India, Indigenization, Resistance, Western social science

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Under colonialism indigenous peoples have struggled against a Western view of history and yet been complicit with that view. We have often allowed our histories to be told and have then become outsiders as we heard them being retold (Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 33).

One cannot dispute that the twentieth century was the century of American dominance of psychology. For reasons that still need further documentation and explanation, psychological science and practice flourished in America well beyond what happened elsewhere. By the onset of World War Two, psychology had been completely indigenized in the US (Danziger, 1985). With the economic and military ascendancy of the US after World War Two, this thoroughly American psychology was exported around the globe. It became redundant to use the modifier, American, before psychology. The accompanying history of psychology by North American textbook authors reflected

this domination; historians of psychology appeared to take it for granted that the history of psychology was identical to the history of American psychology.

Now, we are in a moment of transition. The globalization process, for better or worse, is at the crux of our present-centered concerns. It is clear that unless psychologists in traditional centers of psychological knowledge and practices, in North America, Ireland, UK and elsewhere, become cognizant of, and responsive to, the incredible impact that globalization is having on every aspect of people's lives around the world, then we run the danger of becoming irrelevant. Concurrent with globalization is the indigenization of psychology in many cultures and countries. Indigenization takes many forms, from incorporation of Western norms that are then refigured with local content to rejection of Western approaches in favor of methods and subject matter that are native to the culture at hand. Not only is indigenization of psychology important and interesting, there is also a great deal of liberatory and revolutionary potential in many indigenous psychologies (Martín-Baró, 1996). It now seems more evident that the 21st century is unlikely to be another American century in psychology.

What role might the history of psychology as a specialty field of knowledge play in this new era? In what follows, I propose a center and periphery model of the relationship

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of knowledge and praxis to frame the ensuing discussion. I then explore the concept of indigenization of knowledge/praxis, first in the American, then in the Indian context. I then focus on the ascendance of American psychology in the post-World War II era and the accompanying historical accounts to examine developments of theory in Western social science that sought to manage the concurrent liberation and independence movements in formerly colonized countries. This provides a context for examining accounts of the development of psychology in India in the postwar era and to explore how the impetus for modernization and liberation came together in the postwar world. This may help us understand indigenization processes in social science, especially psychology. Finally, I turn to a critical approach to the history of psychology and ask about the role that historical accounts play in defining identity and asserting place in a globalizing world. In doing so, I propose that a polycentric history of psychology will enrich our understanding, even as it complicates history.

Center and Periphery

Historian of psychology, Kurt Danziger, has proposed the concept of *intellectual geography of center and periphery* as a metaphor for the power/knowledge relations of scientific disciplines in diverse geographic locales (2006). For psychology, Danziger has posited that before World War II (WWII) there were multiple centers of psychological knowledge and practice. These were places characterized by distinctive intellectual, institutional, and economic resources that marked the kind of psychology produced there. From the late 19th century until WWII, various centers emerged, such as Berlin, Leipzig, Cambridge, Chicago, etc. For each of these centers there were peripheral locations where the scientific practices of the center were reproduced. For India, according to this model, the center was primarily Cambridge, with much replication and imitation of the work of Bartlett and his laboratory (D. Sinha, 1986, 1998). In this pre-war period, this meant that there were, in fact, multiple psychologies, with each one more or less functionally incommensurate in epistemology, methods, and practices with the others. However, each of these psychologies proclaimed universality. Histories of this period have attempted to mask this incommensurability by labeling them as schools or systems of psychology.

After the end of WWII, the resources available for the growth of psychological science and practice in the US were disproportionate to resources available elsewhere in the world (Danziger, 2006; Rice, 2005). This had the effect

of making the United States the primary center for postwar psychology, as well as for other sciences. Even accounting for the influence of the Soviet Union, the US became the destination of choice for higher education and professional training for millions from around the world. In this context, American psychology became the norm, so when the term, psychology, was deployed, it meant, by default, *American* psychology. It is worth noting that when a word or phrase becomes normative, it passes out of conscious reflection so that people no longer examine it critically. It becomes, in the language of theorist Raymond Williams, a keyword.

In the postwar world with American psychology as the primary center, most of the communication with the periphery became one-way, that is, information about methods, theories, practices, etc, flowed from US psychologists out to peripheral locations and very little information was wanted or received from those sites. This meant that American trends, methods, and models increasingly became the norm, with American journals the premier sites of publication. It became and remains difficult for a psychologist in a Third World country to publish in a First World journal. As a result, there was created a significant imbalance in scientific communication. The implications of this imbalance differed for American and non-American psychologists. For example, there was no penalty if an American psychologist was not aware of recent research published in India. However, lack of awareness of the latest developments in American psychology by an Indian psychologist confirmed the peripheral status of Indian psychology. In the remainder of this article, an historical account of these events is given. I begin with the concept of indigenization.

Indigenization of Psychology: The United States

Indigenous psychology or indigenization has many expressions and multiple meanings. Among historians of psychology, Kurt Danziger was among the first to write about indigenous psychologies and indigenization (1985, 1994). The definition of indigenous psychology he used in his chapter in the recent volume, *Internationalizing the History of Psychology*, was: “a self-conscious attempt to develop variants of modern professional psychology that are more attuned to conditions in developing nations than the psychology taught at Western academic institutions” (2006, p. 215).

Psychologists who are actively working to develop indigenous psychologies offer different definitions,

depending on their context (e.g., the chapters in Kim, Yang, & Hwang, 2006). Typically, indigenous psychologists refer to their approach as one that seeks to develop a local psychology thoroughly grounded in the language, history, and culture of their own society. Some are radical, such as Bame Nsamenang in Cameroon, who rejects the notion of the individualized, materialistic self so central to Western psychology. The work in the Philippines of Alfred Lagmay and Virgilio Enriquez also represented an attempt at radical reworking of psychology. By and large, those who are developing indigenous psychologies reject the hegemony of mainstream Western, or US psychology, terming it an indigenous psychology that should have no more privileged status than their own.

In the period between the two world wars, Psychology became fully indigenized in the US. What began as a borrowing or importing of a science that originated in a German context with the purpose of providing support for the foundations of rational knowledge was localized to the American context. Much of what has been written about the early years of American psychology, whether in textbooks or in specialist articles, is really about the process of indigenization, although not many authors seem to be aware of this.

As Danziger wrote more than twenty years ago, American psychology developed from models of practice that originated in studies of the normal mind in experimental laboratories in Germany, in medical studies of clinical problems in France, and statistical metrics of difference in populations from the work of Galton and Pearson in Britain (Danziger, 1985). But, American psychology also grew from a synthesis of moral philosophy, New Thought, phrenology, boot-strap ideology, and other influences, including religion (Coon, 1992; Fuchs, 2000; Fuller, 1982; Pickren, 2000; Schmit, 2005; Taves, 1999; Taylor, 1999). All this was melded together under the rubric of science. Perhaps this was the genius of psychology in America, the ability to somehow fantastically blend so many disparate elements into something distinctively American. While the idea of the melting pot as an assimilationist model of immigration and naturalization may not hold up under close scrutiny, it is tempting to apply the term to what happened in American psychology, at least for 50 or so years.

Americans, as so many people have pointed out, are a pragmatic people. Its psychology has certainly reflected that. From the beginning, it was usefulness that Americans wanted in their psychology. As William James wrote in 1892:

What every educator, every jail-warden, every doctor, every clergyman, every asylum-superintendent, asks

of psychology is practical rules. Such men care little or nothing about the ultimate philosophic grounds of mental phenomena, but they do care about improving the ideas, dispositions, and conduct of the particular individuals in their charge (1892).

Once the discipline of psychology was established in America, its real growth was due to application. The Army psychological testing program of World War I, in which 1.7 million recruits were tested, put psychology on the map (Samelson, 1977). It was the rapid expansion of psychological services in the period between the world wars that was the “naturalizing” force in the indigenization of US Psychology. This is not the received view of the history of psychology because most historians, especially psychologist-historians, tend to focus on psychological sciences in this period. American psychological science up to the beginning of World War II was parochial in its interests and small in its influence (Pickren, 2007). What was looming in American psychology as the US entered WWII was the very real threat that application would overwhelm laboratory science. According to historian John O’Donnell, a major reason for Boring’s 1929 *History of Experimental Psychology* was his fear that the rapid growth of applied psychology would overwhelm scientific psychology (O’Donnell, 1979).

To be overly brief, the growth of the application of psychology to schools, industry, and a variety of practical domains was remarkable in the 1920s and 1930s. From 1926 until the US entered World War II, one can track the growth of applied psychology through the membership directories of the APA and, a little later, the American Association for Applied Psychology. By 1940, the number of psychologists devoting much of their time to applied pursuits far outnumbered the traditional experimental psychologists. With the evolution of the American Association for Applied Psychology (AAAP) by the late 1930s, applied psychology was enough of a threat to APA that the latter was reorganized to incorporate applied psychology. The indigenization of psychology in America was complete.

The Cold War Context for Development

The center and periphery model articulated above can now serve as a frame for understanding indigenization of psychology in the non-Western world. In the first two to three decades after 1945, the export of American psychology to countries that did not have the resources to compete with American scientists was part of the global expansion of American economic, military, political, and

intellectual might. The reception and influence of American psychology in non-European countries, such as India, had a powerful impact due to a complex array of factors having to do with post-colonialism, poverty, and local politics and social customs. Yet, by the 1960s in some countries, and only a few years later in other locations, resistance to the American hegemony in psychology began to grow. This resistance was central to the emergence of a psychology in India that reflects Indian cultural values. Before we turn to that emergence, I place it in a larger historical context of the Cold War, the postcolonial liberation movements, and the development of the Non-Aligned Movement that began in the 1950s.

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union that began not long after the end of WWII was characterized by constant pushing and pulling for influence over the rest of the world in every sphere: military, economic, political, and social. French social scientists coined the phrase, Third World, to refer to these “developing” nations (Escobar, 1995; Westad, 2007). The term was meant to honor oppressed people and nations’ struggles for self-definition in a postcolonial world.

In the Cold War, a major challenge for American social scientists was how to deploy their theoretical and methodological expertise in the service of gaining influence over these emerging nations. In the 1950s, one of the key approaches developed by social scientists was referred to as *modernization theory*. This term was used to describe four aspects of development. 1) Traditional societies anchored one end of the development continuum with “modern” societies at the other end. 2) Social changes must be considered as part and parcel with political and economic changes. 3) Development always moves toward modernity from traditional beginnings and does so in a linear, rather than a dialectical, manner. 4) This movement toward modernity is usually marked by phases from the traditional to the transitional to the proto-modern to the modern. Key to this movement is the influence and impact of the resources deployed by already modern societies. Always, the final goal was to become modern, like the West, especially the United States (Latham, 2003). Homogenization was the end product, with a consumer ethic woven deeply in to the fabric as the process of modernization occurred.

Building on this model, the US and its Western allies developed agencies and institutions to extend Western influence. This was the context for the Marshall Plan, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (now the World Bank). In 1961, American President John F. Kennedy

instituted the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Central to modernization theory and the agencies it gave birth to were efforts to manage, if not control, a dynamic changing world and to direct that change toward Western or American ends.

Development of the Non-Aligned Movement and Indigenization

In about a 70-year period, between roughly 1850 and 1920, more than 450 million people in Asia and Africa came under colonial rule by both European and American powers (Westad, 2007). An implicit and, frequently, explicit, goal of imperial rule was to diminish and destroy the world view and ways of life of the colonized people. As Lord Macaulay, member of the Supreme Council of India, wrote in 1835,

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.

Resistance to this imperialism began early on in the colonial period, then accelerated after World War I. By the end of WWII, there were many active resistance and liberation movements within colonized nations. After 1945, wars of liberation broke out in many places, while in other sites, such as India, the effort to end colonial rule was characterized by non-violent resistance. In the first 15 years of the postwar era alone, 40 nations won independence from their colonizers and the process of decolonization continued for many years. These new countries were wooed by the two superpowers (Westad, 2007). In the West, strategies based on modernization theory were developed to gain control and influence in these countries through a variety of means: loans, aid, threat, and even less savory forms of persuasion.

These new nations were caught between the suasion of the US and the Soviet Union. By the mid 1950s, some of the postcolonial nations sought a neutral ground between the two superpowers. The Bandung conference, held in Indonesia and organized by five Asian countries---Indonesia, India, Burma, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan that together represented more than 1.5 billion people---was a move to establish neutral ground. Guiding principles of the emerging movement included cooperation among these countries and an effort to develop their own internal resources. In 1961, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was formed. The term, Non-Aligned Movement, was coined by Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Its members’ commitment to develop their own resources proved important for the development of psychology.

Higher education was perceived as critical for the development of most of these countries. Because domestic educational systems were often underdeveloped, in large part due to the deliberate strategies of the previous colonial administrations, there was a need to send students elsewhere to receive training. Even very poor countries sent thousands of students abroad to gain expertise in Western sciences and educational models, including in psychology (Nsamenang, 2004). Psychology graduate programs in the United States and in the United Kingdom and Europe trained many students from Third World countries, many of whom returned to their homelands. It was in this context that indigenization of psychology occurred. I take as a salient example, the indigenization of psychology in India.

Indigenization of Psychology in India

Indigenous psychologies have arisen in many places around the world in the postwar period. As psychologists trained in Western, primarily US, universities returned to their home country, they began to discover the limitations of Euro-American psychology. For many, the discovery that Western psychology did not match the cultural context of their home country led to dissatisfaction with their training and for many it gave rise to a determination to develop a psychology that would provide a cultural match (Bond, 1997; Kim & Berry, 1993). Accounts written in the last 15 years have told of such efforts in the Philippines, India, South Africa, Mexico, Korea, China, and elsewhere. In India, these historical accounts have told of efforts to develop a psychology that reflected the richness of Indian culture, while not necessarily abandoning aspects of Western psychology.

How did psychologists in India respond to “development” and modernization? The Indian sociologist, M. K. Srinivas, in his 1966 book, *Social Change in India*, gave a good example of how so called recipient societies respond to modernization. Far from Indians just embracing efforts to modernize or Westernize them, what Srinivas recounted was how Indians absorbed what worked for them and incorporated it into their usual practices. Srinivas indicated that Indians did not overtly reject modernization or even Westernization. Rather, it was subverted to Indian, rather than Western, ends. According to Srinivas, Indian society was not following the modernization script of moving from a traditional society to a modern one in a linear fashion, neither were their scientists. In part, this was because it became clear that many of the imported social and psychological technologies were not successful.

For example, the Indian government brought in the well-known American personality psychologist, David

McClelland and later, his student, David Winter, to find a solution for India’s poverty and lack of Western style economic success. In addition to government support, McClelland and Winter were supported by the Ford Foundation, the USAID, Carnegie Corporation, and others. Their work was based on modernization theory, that is, that the way to be a modern country was to adopt Western methods and attitudes (McClelland & Winter, 1969). From a Westerner’s perspective, McClelland believed that he had found the “problem” with India or with Indians. They needed more achievement motive and training programs were developed to help bring at least some of the business population to a higher level of achievement motivation. The intent is not to question McClelland’s motives in this. Others who knew him will testify to his genuine desire to help. But, his lack of success was due in large part to the fact that McClelland ignored Indian cultural traditions and ways of relating.

Psychological research by Indian psychologists in the period after independence in 1947 has been characterized by Durganand Sinha as replicative and imitative of Western methods and studies. This would be expected in the center and periphery model. Because this approach largely failed to produce useful results, some Indian psychologists began to seek other approaches. This came at a time when Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, a leader of the NAM, began to ask social scientists in India to address problems in Indian society, such as problems related to caste, rural poverty, and the impact of Westernization (e.g., Srinivas, 1966). This corresponded with the realization by leaders of countries in the nonaligned movement that solutions to local and national problems would need more than just expertise from the West or from the Soviet Union.

In the field of social psychology, Durganand Sinha (1922–1998) and Jai B. P. Sinha, led the development of indigenous approaches (D. Sinha, 1998; J. B. P. Sinha, 1995, 1997). They drew on their training in Western psychology but melded it with knowledge and insights gained from their deep understanding of Indian culture. Along with a few colleagues they began to develop an Indian psychology that could be applied to Indian life. The result was an Indian psychology oriented to Indian problems (D. Sinha, 1994).

For example, Sinha led a government sponsored study to understand why villagers were finding it so difficult to transition to more modern approaches to farming, education, and communication (D. Sinha, 1969). Sinha and his colleagues suggested that the villagers’ difficulty lay in lack of exposure to new influences that led to resistance to have new approaches imposed on them. Sinha argued that this

was a social psychology problem and that psychologists had to learn how to apply social psychology to such problems. This study and those that followed, on such macro level problems as population control, health practices, and poverty, reflected the effort to make psychology socially relevant. To encourage dialog on these matters and to further the development of Indian psychology, Durganand Sinha started the journal, *Psychology and Developing Societies*, which published its first volume in 1989.

Jai B. P. Sinha was trained as a social psychologist at Ohio State University. He has recounted how upon his return to India that he tried to simply extend what he had learned there to the Indian work and organizational context. He found, too, that some of the concepts he had learned in the US simply did not apply in the Indian context. In his frustration, he began to find insight in Indian psychological and philosophical traditions. He then was able to develop the work on leadership for which he became widely known. He proposed that the Nurturant-Task Leader model was the best fit for most Indian work settings. He and his colleagues showed that effective work organizations were reliant on the relational character of Indian life, the tendency for Indians to personalize all relationships, as well as the dependency of Indians. An effective leader, Sinha argued, was one who was able to nurture his staff, while also expecting them to acquire new skills and experiences that would keep them current.

The work of Durganand Sinha and Jai B. P. Sinha represent two examples of the indigenization process in Indian psychology. D. Sinha in his history of post-war Indian psychology saw its development as a dual process: indigenization from within and indigenization from without. Indigenization from without meant that principles and methods learned in American, British or European graduate programs were not just discarded wholesale, rather they were reevaluated and modified to fit the Indian context. In a parallel process of indigenization from within, some Indian psychologists began to look to more ancient traditions, the Vedas, and Upanishads, which are the texts that gave rise to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, for insights into human nature (e.g., Misra, 2006; D. Sinha, 1998). These psychologists then sought to fashion an Indian psychology that relied, in part, on these texts as a source for contemporary research and application. The recently published *Handbook of Indian Psychology* represents the most current expression of this movement (Rao, Paranjpe, & Dalal, 2008).

In his autobiographical and historical accounts, D. Sinha has argued that the cultural traditions of India provided a firm foundation for a nuanced and subtle psychology more

suitable for understanding Indian life than the imported Western psychology. This led him to argue that for Indians, relationships are key to meaningfulness in life and this relational orientation means that life's goal is to live in harmony with others and the natural world (D. Sinha, 1998). Only if psychology takes this into account can it be relevant in India. A corollary to this is that Indian identity is primarily relational, defined by family, caste, community, nation, and so forth. Reliance on this foundational truth, Sinha has argued, is what makes psychology Indian, not just fidelity to an imported set of methods, principles, and practices.

To keep this in historical perspective, I close this section by referring back to the center and periphery metaphor. Imperial powers knew that the way to keep the empire's peripheries dependent was to keep them reliant on the center for resources. In psychology, as long as the periphery, such as India, depended on US or other outside sources for legitimacy or validation, then psychology in India could never be more than an outpost. It would continue to be a recipient of the intellectual and methodological resources of the center, thus it would continue to validate the worth and the priority of the center and its reliance would only make the center that much more influential. Historically, it is this that has kept the hegemony of the methods and theories of the center. However, in India and elsewhere, there was a movement at the end of the twentieth century to abandon the center of the Western ideal in psychology. Some suggested that the need was to "outgrow the alien framework" and reconceptualize the basic assumptions of psychology. Only by doing so, some argued, would India free itself from the periphery (J. B. P. Sinha, 1995).

The Role of the History of Psychology

How is the history of psychology relevant to these issues? In the discussion so far, I have drawn on historical and autobiographical accounts written by Indian psychologists about the process of indigenization. Such historical accounts give us a way of understanding the postwar development of Indian psychology and help us see how this has fit within a much larger political and social context. I would argue that such an historical account is the best way to understand indigenization or any other process in social science, especially psychology.

In this last section, I turn to a description of history of psychology as a specialty field. I do so in the belief that history is inextricably linked with culture and that history and culture form our identities, both singly and collectively. It is my contention here that understanding and deploying

historical scholarship is an important tool for understanding ourselves. That is, historical knowledge is at the crux of psychological knowledge.

As I have argued in this article, we are living in a time of transition when many psychologists are becoming aware that we now live in a rapidly globalizing world rich in cultural contact zones that requires new approaches and perspectives (Hermans & Kempen, 1998). Standard historical accounts may not suffice, either for us or our students. Ours may be a time of transition like that of some forty-odd years ago when Robert Young called for serious, critical scholarship in the history of the behavioral sciences (Young, 1966). Young urged psychologist-historians and historians of psychology to go beyond the celebratory, descriptive, and/or hagiographic approach then dominant. Partly in response to Young, a new scholarly specialty of the history of psychology emerged. Since the 1960s, the history of psychology as an active scholarly field within the discipline of psychology has become well-established in North America, the United Kingdom, and in the Netherlands and Germany. The success of the field is marked by a graduate program at York University in Toronto, (http://www.yorku.ca/health/psyc/graduate/history_theory.htm), archives (e.g., <http://www3.uakron.edu/ahap/>), and scholarly societies. The latter include the Society for the History of Psychology (APA Division 26: <http://www.hood.edu/shp/>), the CPA History and Philosophy of Psychology Section (<http://www.cpa.ca/HPP/>), Cheiron, the History and Philosophy Section of the British Psychological Society ([http://www.bps.org.uk/sub-sites\\$/history/](http://www.bps.org.uk/sub-sites$/history/)) and the European Society for the History of the Human Sciences. Currently, there are three English language journals devoted to the history of psychology broadly conceived. More recently, the history of psychology as a specialty has developed an institutional and intellectual presence in Argentina, Brazil, Australia, Spain, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, and South Africa.

At the time of Young's writing, as he pointed out, there was little serious scholarship in the history of the behavioral sciences to serve as resources for textbooks and coursework. The situation has changed since 1966. Over the intervening forty-plus years, serious scholarship from Europe, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia, Canada, and the United States has created a large corpus of insightful, critical literature that has wide range both chronologically and topically.

With this growth in the field, what has been the role of history of psychology, whether in courses, textbooks, or specialist publications? Many different purposes have been served. One function is to delineate the intellectual and

disciplinary boundaries of psychology (Graham, Lepenies, & Weingart, 1983). Disciplinary histories may also serve to keep alive the master narrative of the science or profession: to articulate who the heroes or authorities have been, to trace how a scientific finding emerged from careful experimentation, or to show how barriers to development of practice or techniques have been overcome. For some authors, the purpose has been to show the essential unity of the science, despite its apparent dissimilarities. At times the function has been to advance the field or to write a synthetic history that stands on its own as scholarship (e.g., Smith, 1997). All of these are part of the discourse of the history of psychology.

Sociologist Nikolas Rose has also articulated two other facets or uses of the history of psychology. One he terms "history as critique." This approach, Rose argues, uses history to "de-legitimize the present of the discipline by exposing its past, and hence to write a different future (Rose, 1991, p. 4)." When this history is written from within the discipline it is intended to show how an "ideal or moral" psychology was derailed or blocked by various forces: political, economic, etc. When history as critique comes from outside the discipline, then it may take one of several forms: It may show that psychology is best understood as representing the social and cognitive interests of scientists, used to advance their professional turf or authority. The strong version of this approach argues that psychological knowledge is a servant of power and the role of history is to reveal this power relationship (e.g., Baritz, 1960). In this approach, psychology is a tool of domination.

Rose also has proposed an alternative to all of the above. He terms this alternative a critical history of psychology. This approach is critical in that helps us see the present differently by leading us to question our assumptions about the present and about the self and how psychological practices have shaped our sense of self. It would also lead us to ask questions about the power relations we live in that are framed by our subjectivity and the social world (Gergen, 1992; Rose, 1998). Rose locates the foundation of his approach in liberal democratic societies. What makes the current situation in the history of psychology interesting in this regard is that now we are seeing the field develop in societies that may be outside this intellectual and political tradition.

History of psychology, then, can take multiple forms and serve multiple purposes. And it has done so in places where it has grown as a field of specialty knowledge, whether within disciplinary psychology or in the fields of history of science and science and society studies.

Conclusion

Given these developments, it may be that a case can be made that a historical perspective can serve as an aid to the development of an Indian psychology. Such a historical approach would further challenge the center and periphery model and help create a polycentric history of psychology, so that the standard account and perhaps even the standard purposes articulated in the previous section would be moved from the center and different emphases would take their places. I would argue that we need such a polycentric history in a globalizing world. It would help us move toward the day when we have, in Kurt Danziger's words, "a history of modern psychology that actually contributes to the further development of psychological knowledge" (2006, p. 223).

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