

AFRICAN PSYCHOLOGY: DIALOGUES WITH THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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This work aims to find out the production on African Psychology³ in a context of cultural scientific productions of the Global South. Hence, we will urge dialogues that are due to be articulated among the referred area of investigation and other southern⁴ perspectives of Human Sciences and Psychology, such as Critical Psychology, Latin American Liberation Psychology, Decolonization of Psychology, Indigenous Psychology and African Studies.

It is interesting to observe that each of these references have been produced in different social spaces and times, in the five continents. It exposes a diversity of proposals and contexts which, however, can be interlinked by guiding lines of reflection. One of these guiding lines, which permits the dialogues between these different perspectives of science, is the critical posture related to Eurocentric, racist and white-centric hegemony of/in colonial/modern western science (Cunha Jr. 2013; Ferreira & Hamlin 2010; Quijano 2005; Santos 2002). Another guiding lines are the ethic-political postures grounded in the pursuit of liberation, decolonization and

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3 This article is an outspread of doctor's thesis entitled "African Critical Psychology and Decolonization of Life in Angolan Capoeira Practice", advocated in the Program of Post-Graduate Studies in Psychology of Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo in 2013. (Nogueira 2013)

4 The term 'southern', adopted by Paulo Freire (1987), denotes that the orientation this thought assumes comes from a southern hemisphere deriving perspective, historically marginalized and oppressed. It is an attitude of resisting to the application of terms such as northern, which contains in its origin a meaning that can be related to domination processes, once it makes references to geographical or symbolic North.

knowledge production that attends to urgent local demands, despite the colonial/modern western capitalist domination (Adams et al. 2015; Parker 2015, 2009; Paredes-Canilao et al. 2015; Dargenos et al. 2013; Santos & Menses 2010; Darfenos et al. 2006; Lander 2005; Martín-Baró 2009a, 2009b, 1996, 1998).

In this sense, this work is condensed in the *Epistemologies of the South movement*, formulated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006) and shared by/with other Global South thinkers (Santos & Menses 2010; González-Rey 2009). This movement critically denounces the Eurocentric, racist and white-centric epistemological paradigm crisis, formulated since the 16th century and consolidated in the 19th century (Lander 2005). According to this analysis, the referred paradigm produced, and still produces, an epistemicide, that is, the destructing suppression of some local wisdoms by a logic of exclusion, which depreciates and hierarchizes wisdoms, “what led to the waste – in the name of colonialist desires – of the rich variety of present perspectives in cultural diversity and in many ways shaped cosmovisions produced by them (Gomes 2012, 45)”.

This positioning can be related to the philosopher Charles Mills (2007) when he refers to *epistemologies of ignorance*. According to him, despite the fact that we think about ignorance as a lack of knowledge (and we imagine that the work of the educators is conceived to fulfill this gap), it can be more productive thinking about ignorance as a type of knowledge (alienating one), that is, ideas that promote the incapacity of recognizing things – as the diversity of local wisdoms – which could be obvious, yet they are silenced and/or deleted from the social imaginary by institutionalized sovereignty and epistemic monopoly of science (Adams 2014; Gomes 2012). In the same orientation, Parker (2014) exposes the knowledge that alienates as an ideological tool.

Notwithstanding the denounce of the Eurocentric, racist and white-centric epistemological paradigm crisis, the *Epistemologies of the South movement* announces as well the emergence of a new paradigm of science, which recognizes a “plurality of new forms of knowledge beyond the scientific knowledge” (Santos 2010, 54). According to Gomes:

What one does proposes, starting from world’s diversity, is the dealing of an epistemological pluralism that recognizes the existence of multiple visions which contributes to the enlargement of horizons of human experience in the world, of alternative social experiences and practices. (Gomes 2012, 49)

This epistemological pluralism can be described by four orientating principles, which contain an ethic-political posture that corresponds to

an including logic, which are: 1) all the scientific-natural knowledge is scientific-social; 2) all the knowledge is local and total 3) all knowledge is self-knowledge; 4) all the scientific knowledge aims to constitute itself into common sense (Santos 2010). Such principles lead to a new understanding mode of the historic dimension of knowledge production. They counteract the idea of a linear history and base themselves in the proposal in which contemporaneity is simultaneity. In other words, colonial/modern scientific knowledge is not, necessarily, the best nor the most advanced, yet it is contemporary, simultaneous and as much important as the other knowledge/wisdoms that have been historically disqualified, devalued, silenced, wiped out from global social imaginary (Adams et al. 2015; Parker 2015; Paredes-Canilao et al. 2015; Santos & Menses 2010; Lander 2005).

This logic, inclusive and plural, is associated to an ethic-political posture of inseparability between knowledge production and a world transforming action. Insomuch, it would be set as praxis. According to Gomes, “knowledge has as one of its most important validity criteria no longer the paradigms of modern science but its effectiveness capacity in a given local reality (2012, 52)”. The author says more:

One of the biggest challenges will be, then, on thinking the South beyond a product of empire. “ So, one only learns from the South in so far as one does conceive it as resistance to North domination and search in it what hasn’t been entirely disfigured” (Santos 2004, 18). (...) Learning from the South will only achieve success to the extent that one contributes in order to stop it being a mere imperial product of the North. (Gomes 2012,52)

It is important to highlight that more than a critical attitude and posture of denouncing racist and white-centric Eurocentrism, the perspective of appreciation of the epistemological pluralities across the world, that is, the recognition of resistances to domination of the colonizing North and the pursuit of wisdoms and practices that haven’t been totally disfigured by coloniality, do configure themselves as an announce of renewed possibilities of liberation of/in/to the Global South. The paradigm of inclusive plurality opens a path to the development of African Studies in Psychology, as well as to the other references with which will be object of dialogue in this work, as to be considered: Critical Psychology, Latin American Liberation Psychology, Decolonization of Psychology and Indigenous Psychology. This work will be presented from the critical, liberating, decolonization and indigenization perspectives; and finalizing with a short presentation on African Studies in the world and the appearance of African Psychology.

Insurgent Psychologies in the scope of Epistemologies of the South

In a very short and illustrative manner, some perspectives of Psychology will be presented here that can be confined to the range of Epistemologies of the South and that corroborate to localize and support the development of African Psychology in the context of Global South.

Critical Psychology

The term “Critical Psychology” was first used in Berlin during the 70’s, associated to Critical Theory. Other terms are also related to this, such as: Radical Psychology, Anti-Psychiatry, Critical Psychiatry. During the 90’s, this perspective gains more consistence with a wave of publications regarding Critical Psychology, bounded by the publication of the book *Critical Psychology* by Dennis Fox and Isaac Prilleltensky and researches in the United Kingdom. From 2000, Ian Park boosts even more this movement by means of the Journal of Radical Psychology and the organization of the Annual Review of Critical Psychology. According to Parker (2009), Critical Psychology is not a theoretical dimension nor a branch of psychological science, yet, an ethic-political attitude upon the task modern western psychology has been providing to the maintenance of the power of minorities to the detriment of social inequalities lived by majorities in the world. For the purposes of this work, it is important to outline dimensions of Critical Psychology that can be correlated to or be sustainers of African Psychology as an Epistemology of the South.

Parker (2009, 3-4) points out that Critical Psychology “is the systematic exam on how some varieties of psychological action and experience are privileged in contrast to others, and on how dominant speeches of psychology operate in an ideological mode to benefit power”. This field investigates “the manners in which all the varieties of psychology are historically built and how alternative varieties of psychology can confirm or resist” to the dominant models. As so, this perspective can be related to the first guiding line of the Epistemologies of the South.

However, Parker (2009, 5) indicates that Critical Psychology goes beyond, and studies “modalities of vigilance and self-regulation of everyday life and the manners in which psychological culture operates beyond the limits of professional and academic practice”. In this sense, Critical Psychology is concerned with everyday life, with people and groups’ day-to-day and the way they resist to domination. According to the author, “it

structures professional and academic work of Psychology and on how daily activities can provide the basis to resist against contemporary disciplinary practices". In other words, this psychological perspective is concerned with the oppressive processes of domination and colonial/modern exploitation, and so, we can say, characterizes itself by an archeology of local knowledge that aims being consistent and coherent towards cultural diversity of groups and folks in the world. It is as from these dimensions that the dialogue between Critical Psychology and African Psychology can be developed.

Liberation Psychology and Decolonization of Psychology

The term "Liberation Psychology" was used for the first time by Ignacio Martín-Baró in 1976 in El Salvador City. This theoretical perspective has been developed in the Latin American context of the 70's, by social psychologists preoccupied with the oppression of majorities of the populations. They criticized, and still criticize: 1) the conception of science as neutral, 2) the affirmation of universality, and 3) the social irrelevance of psychology to attend the necessities of oppressed majorities. Among his main contributors are Maritza Montero (Venezuela), Ignacio Dobles (Costa Rica), Bernardo Jiménez Domínguez (Colombia/Mexico), Jorge Mario Flores (Mexico), Edgar Barrero (Colombia) and Raquel Guzzo (Brazil) (Guzzo & Lacerda 2009).

Prior to Liberation Psychology there was Franz Omar Fanon's work. As a matter of fact, he inspired liberation movements in Latin America, in the African continent and around the world, affecting Paulo Freire's work in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Orlando Fals-Borda's methodologies on participative research-action and, consequently, Martín-Baró's Liberation Psychology.

Nonetheless, for a long time his work has been disqualified as political activism abroad the limits of activities of the very science. Fanon was concerned about issues such as how colonialism engendered psychopathology and the human, social and cultural consequences of decolonization. Nowadays, critical psychologists are resuming Fanon's work in order to develop the perspective of Decolonization of Psychology. One important publication that brands this recovery of Fanonian work is the Special Thematic Section on "Decolonization of Psychological Science" in the *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* from 2015. In Brazil, the research group "Psychosocial Evaluation and Intervention: Prevention, Community and Liberation" is also committed in this perspective by developing the mother-research project 2015-2020 "Decolonizing Psychology: processes of

participation at school and community (Guzzo 2015)".

Back to the referred special thematic section, it points out important conceptual resources for the work of Decolonization of Psychological Science: the perspective of Liberation Psychology and the Studies of Cultural Psychology. According to Adams, Dobles, Gomez, Kurtis & Molina, liberation psychology contains a central feature which is a manner that privileges the epistemological position of people in conditions of oppression or marginalization. "Another central feature is a participative process in ethics in research that emphasizes praxis over sterilized theory" (2015, 216, t.a.).

In this sense, one is concerned about the de-ideologization of everyday realities, about the historical memory, privileging a perspective of marginalized majorities. The de-ideologization of everyday realities "implies the utilization of empirical investigation to collaborate so that people can reveal the everyday truth of their experience (Adams et al. 2017)". According to authors:

The recuperation of historical memory neutralizes institutional negation or the collective forgetfulness of historical violence; augments the conscience of viable alternatives to colonial violence in modern world order; and promotes the construction of an identity that provides a sense of unity and a purpose around these alternative ideas of history and progress. (Adams et al. 2017)

So that this work can be developed, Adams et. al. (2015, 218) suggests we should give "emphasis to local knowledge as an epistemological tool to contradict universalizing speeches of hegemonic science". It is in this point that the perspective of Liberation Psychology shares efforts towards perspectives of Cultural Psychology. The authors draw the attention to different visions and theoretical positions inside this last one, and point out the most consistent one for the purpose of the decolonization of psychology.

In contrast, the version of analysis of Cultural Psychology that informs our approach to the theme of decolonization of psychological science reflects a compromise towards the configurations of the majorities of the world and the perspectives of conscious knowledge of identity such as those of *African Studies* (for instance, Bates, Mudimbe, & O'Barr 1993; see as well Adams 2014), *Critical Racial Theory* (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; see as well Adams & Salter 2011) and *Decolonial Feminisms* (for example, Mohanty, 1988; see as well Kurtis & Adams 2015, this section). (Adams et al. 2015, 219) [italics by the authors]

What these slopes of knowledge have in common are the same guiding lines of the Epistemologies of the South, to be considered: 1) a concern

towards the forms of epistemic violence that feed the sovereignty of global institutions, strengthening the powerful geopolitical centers in contrast to the relatively powerless peripheries, maintaining the systems of exploitation and domination; 2) attention backed to the problems of local social groups, with emphasis on local knowledge as an epistemological tool to generate innovative manners on problems resolution aiming the transformation and the overcoming of colonial/modern oppressive processes. In this proposal of Decolonization of Psychology, it is highlighted that the references to African Studies, to Critical Racial Theory and to Decolonial Feminisms can introduce substantial contributions in fruitful dialogue with psychologists that have this intentionality. In other words, working under dialogue with African Psychology can be very fruitful to the whole critical psychology attending decolonization claims. According to Adams et. al.:

The intersection of perspectives of Cultural Psychology containing the epistemological point of view regarding the communities in the Global South offers a platform in which scholars and critically conscious scientists can submit/adhere to reveal and resist to those forms of epistemic violence. (Adams et al. 2015, 219)

In other words, in the paradigm of epistemic plurality in the world, ruled by the logic of inclusion, as proposed by the movement of Epistemologies of the South, we can figure out fecund partnerships and approximate critical postures towards the coloniality of power and wisdom (Quijano, 2005); as well as join forces to yield more freed and liberating knowledge, guided by necessities of everyday life of oppressed majorities in the world and informed by social, cultural, political and geographical experiences of each place.

Indigenous Psychologies

The *Handbook of Critical Psychology* edited by Parker (2015) is a fertile reference to the development of Psychologies within a critical, plural and inclusive paradigm, as proposed by Epistemologies of the South. We consider that this collective work represents a tendency of Global South production in the referred area of knowledge. Many investigative works arising from the five continents characterize what is being called as *Indigenous Psychologies*.

The movement of the Indigenous Psychologies begins as resistance spots in old colonies from the western empires since the 60's. They have been and still are developed by indigenous people of relatively free and

economically stable nations. As Paredes-Canilao, Babaran-Diaz, Florendo, Salinas-Ramos & Mendoza describe, despite being sub-represented in literature when compared to mainstream western Psychology, even so, they are legitimate, plural, contemporary, simultaneous:

Indigenous Psychologies have “roots” in Africa (Cameroon, Zambia); the Americas (EUA, Canada, Latin America, Mexico, Venezuela); Asia (Hong Kong, India, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan); Europe (France, Germany, Scandinavia); Middle East: (Iran, Turkey), e Oceania (Fiji, Papua New Guinea). (Paredes-Canilao et al. 2015, 356)

As it has been described about the Epistemologies of the South, the term Indigenous Psychologies embraces a plurality of world visions from an inclusive logic. It is operationalized from guiding lines similar to the ones previously described, in this case Decolonization and Indigenization. In the dimension of decolonization, indigenous psychologists censor the irrelevance of western academic-scientific Psychologies, which have been colonially implemented, in order to attend the necessities of colonized/local groups and peoples. Paredes-Canilao et. al. summarize this critique as following, highlighting they might be taking the chance of simplification:

Western psychology detains questionable assumptions regarding premises or orientations towards world and human being's nature (ontology), towards regarding what is accounted as true knowledge and on how acquire it (epistemology), and regarding what does have value or what is devalued (ethics). Western Psychology is incorporated in: (1) an alienating world vision (mechanistic atomistic), that mows the world in distinct parts, and sees totalities as reducible to the parts (methodological individualism) or the parts as nothing beyond the totalities (methodological holism, functionalism); (2) an epistemology not integrated to the context (objectivist, rationalist empiricist) that denounces only two sources of valid knowledge – algorithmic reason and/or sensorial experience; and (3) a calculative system of values (economistic materialistic), which is hidden in appeals of the value of neutrality. (Paredes-Canilao et al 2015, 358) [italics from the original]

As a result of this process of knowledge production, Western Psychology is characterized as a colonialist, racist and cultural imperialism project. It fit, and still fits, as an apparatus of Neocolonial Social Sciences to promote the *mental captivity, the academic dependence or the blind imitation*. These characteristics have been analyzed by Alatas (2006) in *Alternative Discourses in Asian Social Science: Responses to Eurocentrism*. According to Paredes-Canilao et. al. (2015, 358), “many times these are worst ways of

power loss than those that have been experienced during the colonization itself, which occur in the context of formal education, considered the biggest legacy of colonial regimes, what makes them more insidious/treacherous/disloyal". This positioning is close to what Quijano (2005) denominates in Latin America as Coloniality of Wisdom.

Another critique of Indigenous Psychologies regards the value of neutrality in Western Sciences, in the sense that this value permitted Western Psychology to become an academic-scientific apparatus of the empire to classify natives as genetically, behaviorally and mentally poorer, through the practices that automatically pathologize non-white people. Among these practices are: the counseling (Naidoo 1996), and the instruments as IQ tests. African Psychology researchers also share these and other critiques about colonial/modern western professional practice (Durojaiye 1993; Akbar, 2005; Nobles 2006; Nsamenang 2007).

In contraposition, the second guiding line that unifies the plurality of world visions in the paradigmatic proposal of Indigenous Psychologies is the movement of Indigenization. In the context of the Philippines, Mendonça (2002, 2006) used the native concept of *Pantayong Pananaw*, for a reconstruction of psychological science informed by the local world vision. This means, 'we talking-between-us, using our own categories and for our own purpose'. She argues that the pluralities (of subjectivities, the cultural and ethnical differences, as well as political interests) start to appear and need an involvement and contestation (Paredes-Canilao et al. 2015).

Corroborating with this proposal of knowledge production, from the Sub-Saharan African context, Nsamenang aims a manner of empowerment by the overcoming of psychology colonially received by them. As mechanisms of empowering people and groups, indigenization perspectives develop psychologies that "make sense in their own cultures and through which they can acquire understanding of their socio-emotional subjectivities, experiences and social emotional functioning" (2007, 19). These perspectives are in sharp contrast to Eurocentric racist and white-centric Western Psychology ruled by the logic of exclusion and difference. Those affirm that the objects of programmatic recovery in Indigenous Psychology are: the indigenous dynamic, its complexity and its relating forms of life, knowledge and appreciation that were marginalized or eliminated under the judgment of colonization (Paredes-Canilao et al. 2015).

In accordance to the logic of inclusion in the paradigm that recognizes the epistemological plurality in the world, from a critical perspective, Paredes-Canilao et. al. (2015) outlines the emerging friendly attitude or posture of equality relations that are pursuit to be established between the target and the origin of Western Psychology, that is, the pursuit

for recognizing the European Indigenous Psychology, if it's even possible. This implies the very European indigenous psychologists to recognize themselves as producers of more than one Indigenous Psychology in the world, giving up the universalizing imperialism and the fallacy of scientific neutrality so to adopt a horizontal dialogic attitude, inclusive, plural and of social justice. This way, as other Indigenous Psychologies, the European one would have adopted the auto-critical processes of decolonization and indigenization regarding its knowledge production, research modalities and professional practices.

Eventually, indigenous psychologists highlight that “by emphasizing the ‘intellectual diversity’, and alternatives to linear models, the focus shifts into a more appropriate way for what is “relative”, but relevant, useful, applicable and adequate in understanding the behavior and mental processes of determinate subjected populations (Paredes-Canilao et al. 2015, 361)”. Being so, there is a clear preoccupation to maintain a unity inside Psychology, no longer on imperialist, dominating, racist, but on renewed shapes basis. There exists a paradigm model that is being built in Asia and is being called *methodological relationism*, which considers relations, instead of individuals, as a primary datum (Ho et al. 2001). According to Paredes-Canilao:

Methodological relationism is not only a new approach of social personality and psychology; it is defying psychology as a whole, which has been traditionally supported on methodological and ontological individualism. To demonstrate how powerful the methodological relationism is as a paradigm, it makes intelligible a class of indigenous concepts in eastern Asia that emphasizes the human relation, utilizing the Chinese, Japanese and Korean word for “human being”, literally translated as “human among” (Kim e Park em Allwood e Berry 2006: 250). (Paredes-Canilao 2015, 361)

The indigenous psychologists have already incorporated and developed theories with countless native concepts that collaborate to an understanding and resolution of problems faced by local people in a more consistent manner and coherent to their cultural experiences and world readings. It is in this same perspective of methodological relationism that African Psychology can and is being developed, as for instance, in the use of the concept “Ubuntu”, that means “I am because we are, and because we are, so am I” (Bono 2015; Nogueira 2013; Ramose 2010; Nobles 2006; Akbar 2004). Following the proposal of this work, now come some historical dimensions and characteristic postures of African Studies and of African Psychology that male dialogue possibilities with all the references

here presented.

Historical Context of Appearance of African Studies in the World

“Now we give back the stubborn ‘white’ segment of the Brazilian society its lies, its ideology of European supremacy, the brainwash that intended to take our freedom. Proclaiming the collapse of Eurocentrist mental colonization, celebrating the advent of quilombist liberation”. (Abdias do Nascimento 2009, 206)

The quilombist liberation celebrated by Abdias do Nascimento represents the African resistance against colonization of power and of wisdom enforced by Europeans during the slavery colonialism. This political resistance has been changing itself and strengthening itself as academic and political knowledge in the entire world. This work describes part of this process from a Global South Perspective and some of these impacts on Psychology.

Since the 60's and 70's African researchers from the continent and from the diaspora have been systematically producing a culturally consistent multi-inter-transdisciplinary science with an African world vision, that is, the way of very feeling, thinking and acting of a people. This science has been collecting some names that identify better the schools of thought than properly significant differences of content, among them: African, Afrocentric, Afrocentered or *africana*⁵ studies. According to Karanja Keita Carroll (2010), these studies are organized in an area of interdisciplinary knowledge concerned about developing a precise description of life conditions of African peoples in the continent and the diaspora, while prescriptive solutions for changing African reality are sought. In other words, African Studies can be considered as part of Epistemologies of the South for possessing an interdisciplinary academic dimension that considers the inseparability between theory and practice; as well, a social dimension, working themes such as access to power, wealth distribution, identity and alienation, self-image, mental health, educational opportunities, family and gender relations (Silva & Silva 2006).

Despite the fact this scientific movement has taken shape and

⁵ The term “African” always refers itself to the set composed by Africa and its diaspora. The word *Africana*, underlined in italics, is linked to everything that regards to that set, seen from the inner. The sentence “*africana studies*” indicates the field of knowledge that studies what relates itself to the set composed by Africa and its diaspora in a multidisciplinary way and from an African point of view (Nascimento E.L., 2009).

consistency since the 60's⁶, its beginning is far prior to this date and happened in diverse parts of the African continent and the diaspora. Elisa L. Nascimento & Charles S. Finch III (2009, 38) outline that "the tradition of Afrocentered thought developed in western intellectual context, consists, with effect, as an act of resistance." For the authors, the starting point of this intellectual movement dates in the Afrodescendant uprising in Haiti, in the entire Caribbean and in the Americas. They are reppeted in the quilombos, in the *cumbes*, in the *palenques* and in the *marroons* of all the region and are characterized by the "presence of African pattern of religious philosophy inspired by the struggle against Eurocentric colonial domination."

Nascimento & Finch III (2009) indicate historical documents and actions that trace and represent these processes prior to the 20th century, some of them are: the resistance of the quilombo of Palmares in Brazil around 1624; the poetry of Phillis Wheatley, enslaved Senegalese in the USA around 1761; Afro-American poet Jupiter Hammon born a slave in the USA in 1711; the letter of enslaved Esperança Garcia of Piauí; the writer, educator and composer's voice of Maria Firmina dos Reis, born in Maranhão in 1825; the Haitian revolution in the 19th century; the struggle for liberation of Afrodescendants in Cuba in the 19th century; the appearance of Pan-Africanist thought, notably in the Caribbean and the United States in the 19th century. The latter with an important historical role that reconnected Africa to the diaspora, strengthening the struggle for colonialist liberation in the world.

The 20th century definitely branded the development of African Studies with Afrodescendant intellectuals and Africans from diverse parts of the world. Among the most remarkable and influential intellectuals of African perspective appointed science one finds out: W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Richard Wright, Martin Luther King, Malcon X, from the USA; Kwame Nkruma from Ghana; Amilcar Cabral from Guine-Bissau; Abdias do Nascimento from Brazil; Marcus Garvey from Jamaica; Jean Price-Mars from Haiti; Aimé Césaire and Albert Memmi from France; Lamine Senghór and Cheikh Anta Diop from Senegal; Frantz Fanon from Martinica; Carlos Moore and Gustavo Urrutia from Cuba; Nnamdi Azikiwe from Nigeria; Théophile Obenga from Congo; among others (Nascimento & Finch III 2009).

The Senegalese physicist, historian and anthropologist Cheikh Anta Diop (1991), for instance, contributed in a consistent and definitive way to the reconstruction of African and world history from an Afrocentered

6 The 60's were stamped by African insurgence movements in the mother-continent with struggle for liberation and independence, in Europe with Blackness movements, in the USA with struggle for civil rights, among others.

perspective. His last work *Civilization or Barbarism* – an authentic anthropology, published in 1981, outcome of 30 years of research, offers a critical challenge to the orthodox academic interpretation of Egypt as a white civilization. An interpretation emerged in the 19th century to reinforce European racism and imperialism. Diop gathered linguistic, archeological, historical, mathematical, and philosophical, among others, evidences that testify that Egypt was a black civilization and that the blacks are the legitimate heirs of Egypt's pride legacy. Moreover the true name of this civilization was KMT or Kemet, which signifies "Black Earth". Egypt was a name imputed to Kemet by Greeks centuries later.

Furthermore, Diop shows through a superbly detailed documentation that Greek civilization, much revered as the "cradle of western thought", has a substantial depth regarding Egyptian ideas, thought and achievements. He reports detailed historical marks and knowledge that date from 2,600 BC and proves that Greek thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Herodotus, Pythagoras, among others, were initiated in Kemet (ancient Egyptian) and employed the knowledge they acquired there to make their famous theories, without making references to the original source or in many cases this reference has been cleared from the 19th century. This researcher confirms what South American Guyanese mathematician, linguist and historian George G. M. James wrote in 1954 in the polemic book *Stolen Legacy*. In this work, James (2010) also demonstrates that important doctrines of Greek philosophy have been based on kemetical antique theology.

This is only an example that represents the power and the impact that African Studies centered on historical and cultural processes since kemetical antique can achieve on production of world scientific knowledge, in any area of knowledge. By refuting the very spread idea that Greece has been the "cradle of western thought", and by unveiling that this history begun as a matter of fact in kemetical civilization that dates over two thousand years before Greek civilization, provokes at least a review and probably a reformulation on what is believed to be humanity and modern science's history nowadays. This is an example of disruption towards linear history, which appreciates contemporaneity and simultaneity of other knowledge and wisdoms in the last five centuries, according to the proposal of Epistemologies of the South.

In this sense, it is indispensable to highlight that African studies, in all areas of knowledge, have a particular historical dimension and a universal dimension in its propositions. The particular historical dimension relates itself to the successive processes of Arab and European colonization that inflicted genocide strikes towards African peoples and their knowledge. In that, one includes the intellectual thievery denounced by James and Diop

besides disqualification and dehumanization of everything that is native from Africa. Due to this particular dimension, there is the necessity to delimitate the original and historical place of African Studies, as a process of resistance and political affirmation against ethnic-racial oppression in the pursuit of liberation. In other words, African Studies are knowledge that has been historically particularized by ethnic-racial attacks and disqualification, hence the necessity of claiming them as so.

Despite the particular historical dimension, originally the African philosophical, cultural, political, sociological principles and propositions are universal. In other words, African Studies can fit any human being or society, if it makes sense in their respective contexts. It is worth mentioning that the meaning of the word universal in this case is in terms of human potential and not an obligatory determination, it doesn't mean it does necessarily fit in any context. Thus, it differs, fundamentally, from the used sense in the word universal by colonial/modern racist Eurocentric ideology, in which universal propositions must be effectual apart from cultural and historical context it may be applied.

James and mainly Diop were researchers compromised with the development of a scientific operational concept that evidenced the truth about Africa and world's history. Besides that, their works point out the profound interrelations between the varied African nations from north to south, and from east to west of the continent, which form, according to him, Black Africa. For Diop, history of African thought becomes an indispensable scientific discipline to the study of societies' evolution in the world and the means to transition between the ethnological level and the sociological level.

It is not an objective of this work to deepen overmuch, the pointed problem, only to highlight the matter and relevance these studies have for Africans and descendants, as well as for humanity in general. These and other intellectuals constituted and still constitute foundation and philosophical, cultural and political basis to the development of the Africa centered or Afrocentered paradigm and its following science. This paradigm puts African ideas and values in the middle of scientific investigation and the researcher finds himself socio-historically situated, occupying a place as historical subject (Silva & Silva 2006).

Appearance of African Psychology as a Contemporary Study Field

African Psychology starts being thought and structured as contemporary study field since the foundation of the Association of Black

Psychology (ABPsi) in the United States during the 60's, in the context of movements for Civil Rights and of Black Power. According to Nobles (2015), one of the founders of ABPsi and of the very African Psychology as a studying field, this association was composed by black psychologists and had as main objectives: 1) organize its responsibilities and skills to influence necessary changes and 2) approach the significant social problems that affect black society and other segments of population whose necessities society did not suppress. According to the author, the ABPsi was formed as an independent institution apart from the American Psychological Association (APA):

These men and women accused the American Psychological Association of making vindication to the white racist character of North American society and for failing in the offering of models and programs leading to resolution of Afro-American problems due to the oppressive effects of American racism. It is extremely important to point out and highlight that we declare the primacy and the importance of our blackness above our status as psychologists. (Nobles 2015, 400, t.a.)

At that moment, despite having founded ABPsi, these black psychologists still needed to create the discipline of Black Psychology. According to Nobles (2015), during the next two decades many researchers added to the “digging” of African ideas as foundation for emergence and advent of the discipline Black Psychology, among them: King, Dixon, and Nobles (1976); Akbar (1984, 1990); Azibo, (1989); Hilliard (1986); Nobles (1972, 1986a, 1986b, 1997); Myers (1988); Kambon (1992); Wilson (1993); Grills and Rowe (1996).

In the American context of antiracist conflict and struggle for Civil Rights, the African centered paradigm reached fertile ground and constituted itself as a discipline from the 60's. The studies in Psychology done by Afrodescendants, about Afrodescendants and in the perspective of Afrodescendant community, were the ones that mostly generated Afrocentered guidance and researches on systematic mode, contributing to found and cement the “new discipline” on African Studies (Nobles 2006; Karenga 1986).

In the context of the USA both dimensions quoted in the previous topic are still present, as far as the particular historical dimension that determines the origin place and affirms the political resistance of Black/ African Studies, as well as the universal dimensions of its prepositions. But in this historical context, due to severe racial segregation, the particular dimension of African Studies as resistance to racial oppression is highlighted.

It is worth noting that “in the same way that one tries to reach the origins of European thought in Greece and in Rome, the thought, the

history and the experiences of the Black ought to be ransomed in Egypt and in the various cultures of the African continent”, as point out Silva & Silva (2006, 46). In the late 80's and beginning of the 90's, Afro-American psychologists such as Na'im Akbar were producing knowledge that, among other concerns, presented two basic components: one deconstructive component, that criticized the dimensions of western paradigm for social sciences and scientific research, that we can correlate to the proposal of decolonization of Psychology; and the reconstructive one, an approach that started to identify the dimensions of the Afrocentered paradigm, which could be associated to the proposal of indigenization of Psychology (Adams et al. 2015).

These studies in Psychology were denominated as Black Psychology. Maulana Karenga defines this area of science in the following way:

The interests of Black Psychology spin around the development of a discipline that not only studies the behavior of black people, but seeks as well to transform it in conscious agents about themselves and its very mental and political liberation. This is acquired by the means of 1) a critical and severe rejection to white psychology, in the terms of its methodology, conclusions and ideological premises in which it rests; 2) provisions of Afrocentered models of study and therapy; 3) self-conscious interventions in social efforts to promote a more black and human environment. (Karenga 1986, 322)

The perspective of the production of Black Psychology pointed out by Karenga (1986) gets close to the epistemological propositions suggested by social scientists of Latin America, from the movement of Epistemologies of the South, of Critical Psychology, of Liberation Psychology and of Indigenous Psychology. It is possible to detect the first guiding line, which corresponds to the posture of decolonization of Eurocentric thought and logic, by assuming a critical reading and severe rejection towards white Psychology informed by the ideology of racial white supremacy.

Besides that, it becomes evident the intention of producing new milestones and marks from the recuperation of historical memory of African peoples since Ancient Egypt (Santos & Meneses 2010; Martín-Baró 2009a, 2009b), which relates itself to the second guiding line. This implies complex analysis and evaluations from different forms of interpretation and intervention in the world produced by an African world vision and by the experiences of Afrodescendants prior and later to the colonial period in the continent and in the diaspora. Period that labeled the history of modern western societies by the means of a process of globalization and that had different consequences to the diverse involved peoples (Lander 2005).

The posture of developing self-conscious social interventions to promote a “black and human environment” is more related to the concern of repairing consciousness about African history and culture which has been purposely disqualified, silenced and cleared in the last four hundred years, than to a segregationist posture, as we can observe in the description of the second objective of the ABPsi (Nobles 2015). It denotes, in fact, an ethical commitment with the appreciation of the African ethnic dimension that has historically suffered from genocide attacks from anti-African colonial movements. As well, demonstrates the involvement with processes of construction of humanizing and intercultural experiences, through the appreciation of wisdoms that have successfully resisted to the genocide and racist attacks (Santos and Meneses 2010). We emphasize the intercultural posture of these thinkers and researchers of Black Psychology and African Studies in general, because differently from Eurocentric ideology that arrogates itself as the only valid model of humanity, the in Africa centered perspective recognizes and assumes the epistemological plurality in the world. Moreover, it affirms the importance and the necessity of the African world vision to research and work with Afrodescendant peoples in the continent as much as in the diaspora looking forward the promotion of physic, mental and spiritual liberation (Nobles 2006; Akbar 2004; Karenga 1986).

In this way, despite Black Psychology being systematized, more consistently, in the United States, that is, in the northern hemisphere, it still constitutes itself as an Epistemology of the South. Such statement is possible because it is not its geographical location in the imperialistic North that determines its philosophic cultural paradigm, yet African history and world vision since Kemet. This is a southern perspective of this science (Santos & Meneses 2010; Freire 1987, 1992).

Lastly, it is possible to conclude that Black/African Psychology contributes to the promotion of liberation of Psychology as a whole, in the sense enclosed by Martín-Baró (2009a, 2009b). This happens because it assumes to itself the tasks of recuperation of historical and cultural memory of African and Afrodescendant peoples. In this case it contributes to de-ideologization of common sense and of everyday experience that lowers this population in the world; as well, appreciates and potentiates traditional virtues found in African world vision since Kemet that resisted to colonial/modern genocide attacks. Nonetheless, it also characterizes itself as a overcoming from dominant pragmatism, once it does not detains itself only in appointing physical, mental and spiritual losses caused by Eurocentrism in the life of Africans abroad. On the contrary, Black/African Psychology aims to illuminate the negativities in this context, that is, what is not given,

humanity and the humanization of Afrodescendant population from its own history, culture and experience. In Martín-Baró's (2009a, 2009b) words, it compromises itself with "what is to be done" to free the Afrodescendant peoples from physical, mental and spiritual slavery.

In the form of conclusion

It seems to us very valuable to note, highlight and set by way of horizontal dialogue the insurgence of various academic-scientific-cultural movements that appeared during the 60's and 70's in the entire Global South in Human Sciences and the area of Psychology, specifically. Besides, it becomes evident the tension between the dominating North and the insurgent South in the global sphere of academic-scientific production, as to know that these always resisted and still resist in varied contexts, countries and in the five continents of the planet. All of them, Epistemologies of the South, Critical Theory, Liberation, Decolonization and Indigenization can be correlated and set into dialogue by the guiding lines detached along the entire work, the one denouncing western colonial/modern imperialism and the other announcing the renewed possibilities inside a plural, inclusive and social justice contained paradigm. Considering these movements in present, we conclude this work appointing that the 21st century might be the historical milestone of the overthrow of white-centric racist Eurocentrism in Psychology and Social and Human Sciences, and the advent of the construction of an academic-scientific-cultural paradigm ruled by a more inclusive, dialogic and social justice engendered logic.

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ABSTRACT

This work seeks to locate and put into dialogue the production of African Psychology within the context of scientific and cultural productions of the Global South. In this case, the dialogue is established between prospects of Human Sciences and Psychology, they are: Critical Psychology, Latin American Liberation Psychology, Psycholinguistics, Indigenous Psychology and African Studies.

KEYWORDS

African Thinking; Psychology; Global South.

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