Decolonizing Moves

Beyond Eurocentric Culture, Narrative, and Identity

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter discusses how globalization through the mechanism of neoliberalization shapes spaces, places, and identities. It is argued that a "decolonial perspective" on Euro-American psychology provides specific conceptual frameworks to excavate its cultural origins; allows the colonial and postcolonial structure of the discipline to be analyzed through the lens of history, identity, power, and culture; and highlights the ways in which the Euro-American version of psychology is exported, reiterated, and reproduced in the era of neoliberal and global capitalism. The chapter contextualizes and clarifies the larger aims of the book by embedding them within the interrelated theoretical frameworks of culture, narrative, and identity. It explains in detail how globalization as a discourse creates asymmetrical and hybrid narratives among urban Indian youth culture.

Keywords: coloniality, Eurocentric psychology, decolonization theories, identity, culture narrative and identity

The move to decolonize psychology is a political move and part of the larger "decolonial epistemic turn" (Grosfoguel, 2007) that entails calling attention to the discipline's colonizing effects in the past and the present contexts of globalization. The power to represent the non-Western "Other" has always resided, and still continues to reside, primarily with psychologists working in Europe and America. The idea that Euro-American psychological science is being exported by First World psychologists for the consumption of indigenous

populations in Third World societies points to a different kind of Orientalism that Said (1993) described as cultural imperialism. He explained:

> The term "imperialism" means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory ... In our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism, as we shall see, lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic and social practices.

> (Said, 1993, p. 9)

Euro-American psychology lingers on in the cultural sphere of non-Western, postcolonial contexts in varied forms. Although Euro-American psychology has come a long way from describing the non-Western "Other" in 19th-century Orientalist terms, the core theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are used to represent and study the non-Western "Other" continue to emerge from the bastions of Euro-American psychology (Bhatia, 2002). Thus, it is important to delineate the historical role of psychology in creating Orientalistic representations of non-Western others to show how contemporary concepts **(p. 2)** such as adolescence and youth identity are inextricably linked to the legacy of colonialism, Orientalism, and Eurocentric assumptions.

I consider the move to decolonize psychology as part of a larger project of critical psychology (Teo, 2015); my attempt to rethink the contours of psychology is obviously not new. There are growing numbers of psychologists, located in various subfields of psychology throughout the world, who have employed a critical lens to emancipate psychology from its universal, scientific, and Eurocentric tenets. The critical rethinking of psychology has occurred in various disciplines and from different areas of the world (Fine & Sirin, 2007; Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Gough, McFadden, & McDonald, 2013; Morwaski, 1994; Parker, 2005; Teo, 2015). There are a large number of subfields in psychology that have not just provided a critique of Euro-American psychology but also made efforts to reconstruct and reimagine the discipline through varied theories, methods, and vocabularies (Marsella, 1985, 1998).

Such critical efforts have been undertaken in developmental psychology (Burman, 1994; Nsamenang & Dawes, 1998), social psychology (Fine, 2006; Hammack, 2011; Walkerdine, 2002), social constructionism (Danzinger, 1990; Gergen, 1999), subjectivity and identity theories (Hook, 2012; Parker, 2005), hermeneutic-oriented psychology (Christopher, Wendt, Marecek, & Goodman, 2014; Cushman, 1990; Martin, Sugarman, & Hickinbottom, 2010), feminist psychology (Lykes & Moane, 2009; Macleod, 2011; Swartz, 2005), and globalization and international studies (Arnett, 2008; Brock, 2006; De Vos, 2012; Pickren & Rutherford, 2010).

Those who use a critical psychology approach employ diverse theories and concepts in their intellectual inquires, but what unites most of the critical psychologists is

> an understanding of society based on intersectionalized societal power differences with consequences for human subjectivity in the conduct of one's life… . Critical psychologists intend to challenge societal structures of injustice, ideologies, psychological control, and the adjustment of the individual. Instead of making individuals and groups into problems, CP attempts to work on problems that individuals and groups encounter in a given society.

> (Teo, 2015, pp. 3–4)

Critical psychology is committed to undertaking a critique of psychology, but it also provides robust frames for the reconstruction of psychological categories through history, theory, narrative, action research, and political action.

The movement to redefine psychology is embedded in several distinct but related critical and cultural theories, perspectives, and methods: liberation theology (Martín-Baró, 1994), indigenous psychology perspectives (Bulhan, 1985; Enriquez, 1992; Sinha, 1984; Tripathi, 2011), narrative psychology (Brockmeier, 2014; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007; McAdams, 2006; Freeman, **(p.3)** 2014; Schiff, 2013), and dialogical psychology (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). The cultural psychology movement now consists of a wide variety of theoretical perspectives that represent many areas of the world (Bruner, 1986; Chaudhary, 2004; Gregg, 2005; Mahalingam, 2012; Paranjape, 1984; Rogoff, 2003; Shweder, 1990; Sinha, 1986; Stetsenko, 2015; Wertsch, 1991).

The previously mentioned psychologists may not use the term "decolonize" to describe their efforts to remap and reinterpret psychology, but in essence what these theorists have done is given us alternative ways to reimagine the discipline of psychology. A "decolonial perspective" on psychology is part of a broader critical psychology movement as it draws on several perspectives to rethink the substance, relevance, and future of psychology. However, what is different or distinct about using a postcolonial or decolonizing perspective on Euro-American psychology is that it gives us specific conceptual frameworks to excavate its cultural origins; allows us to analyze the colonial and postcolonial structure of the discipline through the lens of history, identity, power, and culture; and highlights the ways in which the Euro-American version of psychology is exported, reiterated, and reproduced in the era of neoliberal and global capitalism.

The field of postcolonial or decolonial psychology is rather new, but it has taken steps to unsettle and interrupt the Eurocentric narratives about culture, self, and identity inherent in psychological science. There have been several

relatively recent contributions to the postcolonial psychology literature, mainly under the critical psychology perspectives (Bhatia, 2002; Hook, 2012; Painter, 2015; Staeuble, 2005). Also, in the past decade, a growing number of books have analyzed the construction of the psychological realm in relation to postcolonial theory (Bhatia, 2007; David, 2011; Desai, 2013; Hook, 2012; Macleod, 2011; Moane & Sonn, 2015). Despite these contributions, postcolonial or decolonial psychology is far from being an established or significant subdiscipline of psychology. The growing interest and positive reaction to this scholarly work (Desai, 2013; Parker, 2012) must, however, be viewed as an important step in illustrating the promising potential of applying postcolonial approaches to psychology, especially given the social and political conditions in the 21st century (Macleod & Bhatia, 2008). Let me cite another example of a collective effort undertaken by psychologists to decolonize psychology. Recently, the *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* devoted a special issue to the theme of "decolonizing psychological science." Writing in the introduction to this special issue, Adams, Dobles, Gómez, Kurtis, and Molina (2015) state that they draw on postcolonial theory of Fanon and the liberation and cultural psychology of decolonial theorists such as Walter Mignolo, Anibal Quijan, and Martin-Baro to counter the hegemony of Euro-American psychological science. Adams et al. argue for the creation of a "decolonial psychology" (p. 230) that speaks to not only the lives and concerns of the privileged minority who reside in Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) **(p.4)** societies but also the lives of the global majority of the world—especially those who live in marginalized cultures of the Global South. The larger goal of decolonizing psychology becomes clear in the following explanation offered by Adams et al.:

> In contrast to the idea of the modern global order as the leading edge of intellectual progress and pinnacle of human development, references to coloniality emphasize the extent to which the modern global order—and the ways of being or habits of mind that are attuned to it—are the product of racialized power that continues to reproduce violence. From the epistemological standpoint of Majority World communities, the tendency to produce knowledge without reference to the coloniality of everyday life obscures more than it reveals about the "basic" psychological tendencies that modern science proposes as natural standards for human experience. Instead, the situation of everyday life makes understanding colonial violence—and its relationship to mainstream or hegemonic psychological science—a matter of critical importance. (p. 214)

The contributors to the volume are psychologists, and their central concern is that we need a decolonial psychology that can foster new ways of producing alternatives to the domination of Euro-American psychological science. Theorizing about multiple axes of oppression such as racialized violence, poverty, economic injustices, and unsustainable development is an important goal of this project. Several international authors who contributed to this issue

address various sites of injustices that are occurring throughout the world (Bulhan, 2015; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Segalo, Manoff, & Fine, 2015; Watkins, 2015). Decolonizing psychology means not just engaging with academic scholarship but also paying attention to the stories people narrate from the ground and finding meaningful ways to understand how they make sense of their lives.

A decolonizing perspective brings into focus those naturalized and normative cultural texts and readings in psychology that tend to overlook colonial history and current postcolonial conditions that are shaped by transnational power relations. It also identifies ways in which psychology becomes complicit in neocolonial and neoliberal forms of exploitation and makes invisible or exotic particular identities or histories of people. It theorizes how discrepant sociohistorical conditions shape the local and global power dynamic and how individual lives and their stories are shaped by these global–local intersections.

Thus, the effort to decolonize psychology is a constructive program and not just a critique of psychology; it aims to reimagine a psychology based on invisible and marginalized stories and theories. Neoliberal forms of globalization have altered the cultural dynamics in many postcolonial nations such as India and have reconfigured meanings related to culture and youth identity. Today, many youth around the world live in imagined worlds that allow them **(p.5)** to subvert and contest deeply entrenched local beliefs about family, work, and marriage (Larson, 2002). The interactions between global and local flows challenge Eurocentric assumptions about development, identity, and youth cultures.

Shifting our gaze to the "Global South" compels us to study how those American cultural flows of media, commodities, and consumerist practices are being refashioned or reimagined in non-Western cultures, especially formerly colonized countries.[1] It also raises questions about how specific American psychological discourses of self and identity are now part and parcel of the workforce in globalizing economies such as India. These discourses reveal how both Euro-American psychological science and "American culture" as such continue to play a crucial role in how Indian youth are reimagining their "Indianness."

Coloniality in Euro-American Psychological Science
My colleagues and I have extensively analyzed how several forerunners of modern psychology played an important role in indirectly providing philosophical and "scientific" evidence to the European colonial empires to justify their Orientalist program in non-Western countries (Bhatia, 2002, 2014a; Macleod & Bhatia, 2008; Shields & Bhatia, 2009). Some pioneers of psychology unknowingly or knowingly cultivated Orientalist images of the non-Western "Others" as inferior, primitive individuals, and this legacy of the West defining the "Other" continues to impact us/the field today. Said (1979) defines Orientalism as a discourse, as a configuration of power, as knowledge, and as

representation. He notes, "I shall be calling *Orientalism*, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience" (p. 1). Said argues that European scholars created the structures or references about the Orient—their language, history, society, and way of life—by employing highly specific discourses and systems of representations. These discourses were created and managed by European cultures to colonize and regulate the natives and their "civilization, peoples, and localities" (p. 203). An army of scholars, travelers, government workers, military expeditions, and natural historians brought the Orient to the archives of Western learning by creating an elaborate system of representations about the natives living in the Orient. These discursive representations were deeply integrated in the "European *material* civilization and culture" (p. 2). Western scholars transformed Orientalism into a field of study, an object of investigation, and a cultural apparatus that was "all aggression, activity, judgment, will-to-truth, and knowledge" (p. 204). Orientalism was based on the asymmetrical power relationships that existed between the Occident and the Orient. The power of the Occident was so formidable that Western **(p.6)** armies, archaeologists, merchants, and anthropologists were flowing in massive numbers from Europe to the East, and approximately 60,000 books were written on the near Orient between 1800 and 1950. In comparison, very few people traveled from the East to Europe, and even when Easterners traveled to Europe, they were either there to admire the Western civilization or to work as servants and laborers.

For more than 100 years, Euro-American psychology has essentially provided the raw material from which the psychological portraits of the non-Western "Other" have been drawn. Key forerunners of psychology professionals, such as Darwin (1871/1888), Hall (1904), and Spencer (1851/1969), played an important role in implicitly providing philosophical and "scientific" evidence to demonstrate the innate mental inferiority of non-Westerners and the essential mental superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race (Bhatia, 2002). Such evidence was used by the political leaders of Europe to justify and rationalize the colonial oppression of their non-Western subjects. For example, Thomas Babington Macaulay (1972), a colonial British statesman, essayist, and policy reformer, wrote the following in the "Macaulay Minute" regarding Indian education:

> I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the valuation of Orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of Western literature is, indeed, fully admitted by those members of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of education. (p. 241)

Psychology's indirect role in providing justification for fulfilling the imperialist agenda begins with the rise of scientific racism. The beginnings of psychology are linked to a time when many European and American intellectuals had

conceptualized the non-Western "Other" as an inferior and "primitive" savage (Richards, 1997). Such Orientalist depictions are consistently found in the work of important pioneers of psychology, such as Darwin (1859/1958) and Spencer (1851/1969).

The call for decolonizing psychology rests on the claim that contemporary psychological science bears some resemblance to the structure and mechanisms of colonization. What is the colonial form or the coloniality implicit in psychological science? The "decolonial turn" involves understanding how "coloniality" as a way of thinking continues to embody the current power relations *between* the Global North and the Global South, as well as the diverse relationships *within* the various geographies of the Global South and the Global North (Mohanty, 1991, 2003). The decolonial movement is different from postcolonial theory and postcolonialism in terms of its intellectual genealogy and specific colonial history. The field of postcolonial studies came into being largely **(p.7)** through Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak's engagements with poststructuralist scholarship (e.g., Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Jacques Derrida, and Jacques Lacan) and their understanding of colonization and imperialism that was conceived within the contours of British colonization of Asia, especially India. In contrast, the "decolonial turn" is mostly rooted in understanding the European conquest of the Americas since 1500 and through the indigenous movements in Latin America. Mignolo (2010) explains,

> We highlight the decolonial projects that emerged in intellectual debates from the critical foundation established, in Latin America, by Jos. Carlos Maritegui, in Peru (in the 1920s), and by dependency theory and philosophy of liberation, in the 70's, and that spread all over Latin America. (p. 16)

In any case, despite the differences in intellectual genealogy, both postcolonial and decolonial projects have shared goals of social transformation and social justice (Richards, 2014).

In the "decolonial turn," coloniality, along with systems of capitalism and particular forms of domination, emerges out of the "discovery" and the conquest of the Americas (Mignolo, 2007). Coloniality does not merely refer to the colonization of indigenous culture in the Americas but, instead, refers to a whole system of thought—a mentality and a power structure that constructs "the hegemonic and Eurocentered matrix of knowledge" (Mignolo, 2010, p. 11). The "decolonial turn" does not reflect a single theory but, rather, incudes a family of scattered positions that share the view that coloniality poses one of the central challenges for a vast majority of the people in the world who are living in the age of unequal globalization and neoliberalization and thus decolonization is an important unfinished undertaking. One of the main features of decolonial thinking that is relevant for psychology is the emphasis on how coloniality, in its

many forms, shapes the foundation of psychology as discipline but also how it impacts our everyday lives (Maldonado-Torres, 2007):

> Coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day. (p. 243)

 (p.8) Coloniality is seen as a product of European modernity and reinforced through racial hierarchies, gender oppression, and oppressive forms of labor, and it also shapes the current processes of globalization. Postcolonial theories and the "decolonial turn" may have different intellectual and geographic roots, but both provide important interpretive tools to understand how coloniality is deeply embedded in contemporary psychological science.

Decolonization involves understanding the concrete experiences, stories, and narratives of people who confront poverty, racism, and gender discrimination in their daily lives. Decolonization, according to these scholars, has been occurring in various forms for centuries or since colonization began, but it became an increasingly self-conscious, collaborative global project in the 20th century. What is now known as the decolonial project is also inspired by the decolonizing struggles of leaders such as Waman Puma de Ayala, Ottabah Cugoano, Gandhi, Cesaire, Fanon, W. E. B. Dubois, and Anzaldua (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2010).

By engaging with European history, the colonial framework, and its vast repository of knowledge and thought, both decolonial and postcolonial theory "provincialize" and "localize" the universal principles that have embodied much of European knowledge. The postcolonial project does not necessarily discard or reject European thought, but instead it proposes that "European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate" in helping us understand the diverse forms of living, thinking, and being in non-Western, postcolonial nations (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 16). Situating key American psychological concepts within a decolonial framework allows us to trace their lineage and examine their usage in the present day.

I have mentioned the decolonizing impulses originating from postcolonial theory and decolonial frameworks, but there is a third decolonizing framework that is deployed in indigenous studies that shares some of the goals with other frameworks mentioned previously, but in many respects its efforts are for different ends. Decolonization within the broader field of indigenous studies is anchored in the the framework of settler colonialism and is primarily concerned with issues of land, sovereignty, and territory (Coulthard, 2014; Grande, 2015). The experience of settler colonialism with the United States is much different from other forms of colonialism. The settlers came with the intention of "homemaking" and "settler sovereignty," and when the settlers colonized indigenous land and converted that land for making new homes and for generating economic capital, it marked a profound act of violence (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Settler colonialism occupation resulted in epistemic, ontological, and cosmological violence (Tuck & Yang, 2012), and it continues until the present; this is why Patrick Wolfe (1999) argues that settler colonialism is a structure and not an event. Tuck and Yang (2012) explain,

> Many indigenous people have been forcibly removed from their homelands onto reservations, indentured, and abducted into state custody, signaling the **(p.9)** form of colonization as simultaneously internal (via boarding schools and biopolitical modes of control) and external (via uranium mining on Indigenous lands in the US Southwest and oil extraction on Indigenous land in Alaska) with a frontier (the US military still nicknames all enemy territory "Indian Country"). (p. 5)

Similarly, Coulthard (2014) notes that the the principles of "politics of recognition," grounded in liberal multiculturalism and accommodation, have been an ineffective means of negotiating decolonization around land claims, Aboriginal law, and sovereignty between the nation state and indigenous communities in North America. He further argues that over four decades, Indigenous people's attempts to participate in the legal and political process in Canada have failed to secure their rights but instead have served to subtly "reproduce the forms of racist, sexist, economic, and political configurations of power" that were being challenged (p. 179). Thus, Coulthard reminds us that indigenous communities must continually find new ways to unsettle the settler state. He states that the struggle to decolonize must adopt

> a resurgent politics of recognition that seeks to practice decolonial, gender emancipatory, and economically nonexploitative alternative structures of law and sovereign authority grounded on a critical refashioning of the best of Indigenous legal and political traditions. (p. 179)

Grande's (2015) book, *Red Pedagogy*, provides a concrete example of how decolonizing moves in the area of education and schooling require translating and working across contested and different research paradigms. Her book

provides a vigorous and intellectual channel between the field of American Indian education and critical pedagogy. The archive of knowledge in critical pedagogy has focused on issues of equity and social justice, but it has overlooked the struggles of American Indian history and context of schooling and education. Grande argues that American Indian scholars of education have largely neglected to engage with critical discourses of education and instead have been preoccupied with issues of identity and authenticity, historiography, tribal education, and site-based research. Her scholarship is an attempt to reimagine democratic education in the United States without demanding that Indigenous scholars adopt or completely embrace the critical pedagogy discourse.

The three decolonizing frameworks discussed previously—postcolonial theory, decolonial theory, and indigenous studies—can provide us with important conceptual tools to reimagine, renew, and build a new psychology that forges a common intellectual ground between diverse intellectual traditions and geographies.

(p.10) The Modern American Subject: Adolescence and Youth Development

One of the most influential psychologists in the field of psychology is G. Stanley Hall. He played an important role in the founding of American psychology and also coined the term "adolescence." Hall was one of the first psychologists to suggest that adolescence is a separate developmental stage. Hall (1904) argued that the study of adolescence must be understood against the backdrop of colonialism, in which one-third of the human race occupies two-fifths of the world and controls 136 colonies. The process of colonization, Hall explained, had been swift and rapid since the "great competitive scramble" (p. 649) for land began in 1897. One paragraph later, he wrote that "most savages in most respects are children, or, because of sexual maturity, more properly, adolescents of adult size" (p. 649).

What is significant is Hall's emphasis that both "soldiers and thinkers" in Europe were preoccupied by the idea of exterminating other races and expanding the dominion of the West. Of course, it will be of no surprise to many readers that the political powers of imperialism had recruited armies of soldiers to "domesticate" or wipe out the resistant indigenous populations in Asia and Africa. In summary, Orientalist ideas about non-Westerners have consistently echoed in the writings of the pioneers of developmental psychology such as Darwin, Galton, Hall, and Spencer (Richards, 1997). Psychology may have moved away from representing the non-Western "Other" in stark Orientalist language, but the legacy of "coloniality" and cultural imperialism in Euro-American psychology in still alive (Adams et al., 2015).

Catherine Driscoll (2002) argues that Hall's concept of adolescence personifies the qualities of a modern subject, where individuality, agency, and biology come together to create a unified and coherent identity. Driscoll also goes on to state that "the role of adolescence as psychological crescendo, as a psychosocial crucible for becoming a Subject, is specific to late modernity" (p. 50). The linking of the stage of adolescence to becoming autonomous, self-contained, mature, rational, and unique lays out a Eurocentric cultural trajectory of psychological identity that becomes central in shaping both historical and contemporary research in adolescence and identity formation in youth in developmental psychology in the United States.

Similarly, Lesko (2012) aims to shine light on the cultural and political notions of development that have given rise to particular conceptions of youth identity or youth development in the Euro-American context. She locates the conception of adolescence as a cultural construct that was created in the late 1900s as American society was becoming modern, urbanized, and socially regulated. Youth identity then came to be defined historically and politically as a public problem, through three sets of interrelated anxieties and worries: "1) worries over racial progress; 2) worries over male dominance; 3) worries over **(p.11)** the building of a nation with unity and power" (p. 5). Lesko argues that the concept of adolescence as a cultural construct made sense at the turn of the 20th century because it was built on the assumption that the teen years were the formative years during which White boys could be instilled with particular ideas about national and international order—which was viewed as the responsibility of the young American citizens to uphold. Thus, the concept of youth and adolescence in the United States answers a particular need at a particular time when there were deeply prevalent discourses about the *civilizing process* of youth development, sexual constraints, and the large anxieties about social disorder (Lesko, 2012; Maira & Soep, 2005).

Contemporary views of youth identity in psychology, especially as theorized in Euro-American psychology, are deeply connected to and shaped by the American historical context (Lesko, 2012). Adolescence enacts modernity as a central principle of "developing" or "becoming" as youth are always located in the discourses of "growing up" according to the proper order of development. Lesko writes,

> Adolescence re-enacts the supremacy of the West over primitive others in its psychologized (internalized) progress from (primitive) concrete operational stages to (advanced) abstract ones. Adolescence continuously enacts Western progress carried in the oppositional positions of past and present and ever points towards even greater futures. (p. 137)

The idea of adolescence that Lesko defines played an important role in shaping Erikson's Eurocentric stage- and age-based theories of youth identity in American psychology. Erikson (1963) was particularly concerned with how modernization in the West brings about a culture of mass-produced norms and a mechanized society in which standardization and centralization "threatens the identities which man has inherited from primitive, agrarian, feudal, and patrician cultures. What inner equilibrium these cultures had to offer is now endangered on a gigantic scale" (p. 413). Thus, he argued, that identity formation during adolescence becomes all the more critical because the premodern notions of community have dissolved and individuals have to seek and fashion an identity for themselves. Identity formation during adolescence turns into a *developmental task* in which all the previous identifications that have occurred during childhood have to be brought forward or assimilated in new configurations of identity.

Undoubtedly, Erikson's conceptual framework for understanding identity formation was important because it highlighted the complex interactions between the individual and society. By situating adolescent and youth identity development within a life span approach, Erikson also brought attention to social practices and rituals associated with coming of age and recognition from the community. Erikson (1968) stated that identity formation involves **(p.12)** a process in which the society (often through subsocieties) and the individual develop a reciprocal and mutually shared relationship. However, several questions arise about identity in contexts in which there is "mutual dissonance" between the adolescent and the larger community—especially in which immigrant youth, youth of color, and queer youth often face social exclusion and discrimination (Maira & Soep, 2004, p. 249). Erikson did propose an alternative identity formation in adolescence through the concept of subsocieties that was further reworked into the theory of ethnic identity development and assimilation (Phinney, 1989). However, Erikson's influential psychosocial model of identity development is largely based on Eurocentric concepts of development, and it does not adequately speak to the realities of youth who are growing up with hybrid and conflicting cultural discourses that are made of fragments of the global, modern, traditional, national, local, and postcolonial.

The concept of hybrid narratives not only challenges linear, stage-based theories of developmental psychology but also locates young Indian lives in transnational networks that connect the cultures of the "West" and "East," and "here" and "there," in various forms of intersecting flows. Theories of identity that are based on an Eriksonian approach follow culturally specific notions of development that are constructed through a linear stage theory and are always following a teleological process. The phenomenon of globalization through neoliberalization has drawn attention to the new and creative ways in which youth imagine and reimagine the narrative of self, others, nation, and family.

Neoliberal globalization is indeed altering the landscapes of youth identity, and it challenges Euro-American conceptions of adolescence, youth studies, values, attitudes, tastes, and lifestyles (Arnett, 2002; Nilan & Feixa, 2006; Saraswathi & Larson, 2002).

One of the effects of globalization is that it produces hybrid identities (Arnett, 2002). The global–local dynamic, however, is always specific to the culture, and this is why Jensen (2003) argues that cultural identity formation in the context of globalization takes specific developmental pathways and is largely dependent on the various intersections of the global flows and local culture norms. Bame Nsamenang (2002) observes that "adolescent psychology is a Eurocentric enterprise" (p. 61), and its ethnocentrism is deeply overwhelming. He states that the majority of key scholars in the field of adolescent, youth psychology and laypeople are "unaware that the field would have been different had adolescence been 'discovered' within the cultural conditions and life circumstances different than those of Europe and North America, say, in Africa" (p. 61).

The story of African and other non-Western youth has largely been reproduced from the images, scripts, and stories of Euro-American notions of adolescence and youth identity. Most of the developmental studies on youth identity in Euro-American psychology continue to be based on theories of **(p.13)** identity formation as linear and age- and stage-based—these theories are largely devoid of the historical and political context or are disconnected from contexts of power and social inequalities (Burman, 1994; Hammack, 2008). Furthermore, there is scant research on how neoliberalization as the guiding principle of globalization shapes youth identities in non-Western countries. Thus, examining how neoliberal forms of globalization shape youth identity in postcolonial nations or non-Western societies is an important decolonizing move that allows us to confront long-held Orientalistic or ethnocentric images that have defined Euro-American psychological science. Thinking about culture and identity through the framework of globalization also highlights how urban Indian youth are engaging with new psychological discourses and vocabularies of self and identity in their everyday lives.

Culture, Narrative, and Identity: A Synthesis in Psychology
Given that culture is dynamic, contested, and relational and is not rooted or fixed in physical location, nations, or geographic regions, then culture in psychology should not be considered in terms of essences or something that we possess or own. Instead, we must theorize culture as a process and practice that is also shaped by material and discursive realities of power, history, and social practices. Following Hammack, I argue that we should study culture to understand how individuals make sense of their participation in cultural practices. Hammack (2011) argues that "culture, thus, is not something we *have*; it is something we *do*. And it is something we *talk about* doing—both to ourselves and to others—thereby reproducing the material and discursive conditions of a

society" (p. 22, emphasis in original). What follows from these observations is that we must not only study culture through its rituals and social practices but also go further and examine how individuals make sense of their life in the realm of culture. Furthermore, there is no single universal idiom, symbol, or set of practices that constitutes the makings of a fixed "global" or "local" culture. Rather, individuals who are embedded in their specific cultural and postcolonial locations mediate with global–local flows and give them new meanings. Transnational connections and relations are specific to postcolonial societies given their unique colonial histories. Thus, call center work shifted to India, as Patel (2010) argues, due to access to cheap labor, differential time zones, and having millions of educated youth who were fluent in English. The call center worker is now part of a transnational service economy due to its colonial history and because of the neoliberal forms of policies that were enacted by the Indian government in the 1990s. The stories of urban Indian youth, or narrations about their asymmetrical engagements with neoliberal forms of globalization, shed light on how their identities are **(p.14)** being refashioned in places that Cindy Katz (2004) has called the new "topographies of global capitalism" (p. xv).

Identity and Power

My concept of identity emerges out of the interdisciplinary frames of cultural and narrative psychology, postcolonial and diaspora theory, and globalization studies (Bhatia, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2010a, 2011, 2013; Bhatia & Ram, 2001, 2004, 2009). By locating identity within a field of fluid, asymmetrical, and intersecting histories, Stuart Hall (1996) encourages us to focus not so much on identity but, rather, on the processes of identification. He describes "identification" as an interaction or an encounter between different practices that ascribe to us an identity or "interpellates" us into becoming subjects. As Hall further argues,

> The notion that the effective suturing of the subject to a subject-position requires not only that the subject is "hailed," but that the subject invests in this position, means that suturing has to be thought of as an *articulation*, rather than a one-sided process, and that in turn places *identification,* if not identities, firmly on the theoretical agenda. (p. 6, emphasis in original)

Subjectivity and identity are both crucial to the process of identification. In Hall's viewpoint, it is not enough to examine how identities are represented in discourses but, rather, we have to go further and analyze how the subject is called upon and hailed by specific cultural discourses and why identities take up or attach themselves to certain subject positions and not others. The idea that individual subjects are invested in and are constantly interacting with their subject positions then opens up the space for examining the dynamic and multiple tensions and relationships between the psychological world (which already is constitutive of the social) and the social worlds. An individual's subjectivity or the "I" then emerges in this encounter between how identities are

assigned to her and how in turn she articulates, identifies, or repositions this assignation.

Hall's (1996) notion of "articulation" is useful because it conceives of identity as an incomplete, fluid, contradictory, and dynamic site of production that emerges out of asymmetrical cultural encounters. The intersections of global–local cultural encounters have created hybrid identities across racial, ethnic, and linguistic lines. Hybridity is one of the most widely circulated and debated ideas to have emerged from the discourse of globalization (Bhatia, 2013; Kraidy, 2005; Pieterse, 2004). This term has given rise to the new configurations of multilayered identities that are described as "hyphenated," "creole," "mestizaje," "diasporic," and "syncretic." The term hybrid has evolved **(p.15)** from being used to describe agricultural seeds, then later a doctrine that proscribed the biological mixing of races, to its contemporary usage in which hybrid now refer to gas–electric cars, architecture, music, food, clothing, and cultural mixing (Kraidy, 2005). The term hybridity captures the swirling zones of fusion and contact, difference and conflict, compatibility and rupture, location and dislocation across geographical, national, and linguistic boundaries (Cancilini, 1995).

Hybridity challenges essentialist conceptions of culture. The notion of culture as embedded within a certain, confined space becomes problematic when we consider the people who dwell on the border. How does one define the culture of the borderland or of migrant workers who live in both Mexico and the United States? Why do borderlands force us to reconceptualize received notions of culture? Anzaldua (1987) explains:

> Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. *Los atravesados* live here: the squint eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulatto, the half dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the "normal." (p. 25)

Beside the culture of borderlands, there are cases of migrants, refugees, and expatriates who move from one settlement to another, putting down their roots and carrying their "culture" with them to new places of belonging. This group represents a rupture or a clear physical break between culture and nation because these people take their culture to the new homeland and reinvent and reimagine it in their new diaspora (Bhatia, 2007).

Postcolonial scholars such as Stuart Hall (1996) and Homi Bhabha (1994) developed the early theories of hybridity. These theories sought to demonstrate

the structure and patterns of domination and resistance in imperial colonies and in the postcolonial nations that came into being after colonization. These theories have explained how agency and power are enacted in practices of living hybridity in contexts in which cultures are reinscribed, blurred, and become sites of clashes and struggle (Bhatia, 2014b). Bhabha, for example, writes that mimicry was adopted by the "natives" as a form of resistance and a way of subverting the dominance of the colonial culture. Mimicry, in his view, "emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal" (p. 86). Mimicry thus involves appropriating the other "as it visualizes power" (p. 86). Within the context of globalization, individuals mimic and appropriate Western cultural flows and then reframe them to create a "third space" or a "third identity" that is simultaneously/at once ambivalent, liberatory, and hybrid.

 (p.16) The cultural hybridity manifested in colonial times or in globalization reveals a movement between sameness and difference, ambivalence and appropriation, and continuity and discontinuity. Bhabha (1994) writes that "the social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, ongoing negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation" (p. 2). Terms such as "interpellation," "third space," and "hybridity" point to complex processes of negotiation that individuals undertake as they come to terms with cultural change in their localities and as cultures, goods, and people move from "here to there." Such identity negotiations then interrogate and pose challenges to stable notions of originality, essences, or purity of cultures (Bhatia, 2010b; Bhatia & Ram, 2001). Hybridity as a destabilizing category, within contexts of globalization, raises questions about what it means to be an Indian as the global–local cultures are being reworked and reimagined by Indian youth.

The Argentinean–Mexican scholar, Nestor Garcia Cancilini (1995), defines hybridization as a "sociocultural process in which discrete structures or practices, previously existing in separate form, are combined to generate new structures, objects and practices" (p. xxv). For Cancilini, these discrete structures are not pure "points of origin" but, rather, force us to look at how hybridization comes into being as they are being recombined to form cultural heterogeneity. Analyzing the process of hybridity and identification in postcolonial societies becomes central in times of globalization as new identities are formed in the previously colonized nations. Furthermore, the study of these new hybrid identities gives us insights into how traces of power and hegemony are being reproduced within these hybridities. Hybridity therefore raises the "question of the *terms* of mixture, the conditions of mixing. At the same time, it's important to note the ways in which hegemony is not merely reproduced but *refigured* in the process of hybridization (Pieterse, 2004, p. 74, emphasis in original). The people in these previously colonized regions are making and refiguring their own cultural or alternative modernities (Gaonkar, 2001). The Western modernity of their colonial masters, in some form, has landed in the old

colonized localities, and traces of newly inscribed and refigured hybrid identities are part of the Indian urban landscape.

The term identity is elusive and slippery, and it has many different meanings in various subfields in psychology as well as across different disciplines in the social sciences. The notion of identity that I employ in this book is socioculturally constituted, and I further define it by drawing on Suzanne Kirschner's (2015) formulation of identity. She argues that identity refers to the descriptions or attributions that are assigned to individuals who belong to a particular group or who are members of a society. Identities are thus "relational" as an individual is "always implicitly defined in terms of what one is not" (p. 218). Identities are "historical" because we identify people by locating them in their specific historical and sociocultural practices. They are "multiple" **(p.17)** as people define themselves through multiple categories, such as race, gender, and nationality; social roles; and through dominant master narratives. Finally, identities are "dynamic" as people agentively respond and interact to the labels and attributions given to them in varied ways, and in doing so they change the meaning of these culturally grounded labels and categories (p. 218). The definition of identity offered by Kirschner retains the significance of viewing culture in terms of history and multiplicity that postcolonial scholars have pointed to. However, I add that labels or ascriptions given to individual are not just labels, but they can be considered as discourses that carry with them, as Hall (1991b) reminds us, a whole set of histories, of interpellations, that are saturated and reflective of power. The stories that I analyze in this book give us insight into how Indian urban youth make sense of their identities in contexts of transnational mobility, global work conditions, and poverty. I examine their narratives to understand how young people in urban India refashion and subvert cultural norms and discourses and imaginatively reconstruct their identities and subject positions.

Narrative and Social Imagination

My view of culture and identity that I have discussed previously comes to life through the concept of language or, more precisely, narrative. If culture is not something we essentially possess or have and it refers to something we talk about as we reinterpret the material and discursive conditions of society, then cultural meanings about identity become articulated through language. It is here, as Hammack (2011) notes, that culture becomes a *"linguistic production—a production that, in turn, mediates our experience"* (p. 21, emphasis in original). The concept of narrative becomes relevant for us because "culture—including its material elements—is produced through the construction of stories about groups, their relationships, and their values and aspirations" (p. 21).

Thus, if identities are multiple, relational, and dynamic and are socioculturally constituted (although not wholly reducible to culture), then it is through the activity of narration that we understand how individuals reproduce, reclaim, or

reinterpret the discursive and material meanings of culture. Therefore, it is through the "*practice* of narration that we become cultural beings and, in the process, reproduce the discursive foundations of a culture" (Hammack, 2011, p. 49, emphasis in original). Given the increasing discursive and material emergence of the worldwide phenomenon of globalization, we can no longer insist on thinking about "cultures" as contained by national boundaries or as reified entities. Scholars studying issues related to globalization make us confront questions about how culture undergoes enormous rupture and change. Contemporary global movements and globalization impulses **(p.18)** (variously motivated) force us to abandon such seamless conceptions of similarities and differences between national cultures in favor of hybridized, "diaspor-ized," and heterogeneous notions of culture (Hall, 1993, p. 356). In other words, the relationship between culture and nation should be viewed neither as completely disjointed nor as coterminous. To posit static, immovable, immutable constructions of culture is a convenient fiction that allows us, as Hall (1991a) acerbically remarks, "to get a good night's sleep." For it allows us to believe that despite the fact that history is "constantly breaking in unpredictable ways … we somehow go on being the same" (p. 43). What this book delineates is the material and social conditions in which stories of hybridity are narrated, and it teases apart the various asymmetrical and contradictory components that make up the tales and trails of hybridity (Kraidy, 2005) within the urban Indian youth narratives. Thus, cultural globalization, while it may produce heterogeneity and hybridity, is articulated through the equipment of narrative and process of narration.

I integrate the primary concepts of culture, identity, and narrative to understand how urban Indian youth are both shaped by and in turn are shaping the dynamics of neoliberal globalization in India. What is it that they are narrating when they tell cultural stories about globalization at work? How do conceptions of self, fulfillment, work, and happiness, derived as they are from Euro-American cross-cultural psychology and personality theories, circulate in Indian corporations? How is Euro-American psychological science with its accompanying discourses of self and identity being reproduced in the lives of urban Indian youth? How do Indian youth's narratives about globalization reconfigure cultural meanings about family, romance, marriage, work, and money? What do these stories tell us about how these youth are refashioning their identities?

Thus, my approach to narrative is similar to my approach to culture. I prefer to describe narrative as a verb in which the focus is on " 'narrating,' 'to narrate,' 'to tell,' 'to show,' and to 'make present' " (Schiff, 2013, p. 259). Narration and storytelling take us to the realm of action, imagination, and meaning-making and give us insights into why people, who are shaped by their social locations, tell particular stories to themselves, to others, or to specific audiences. I adopt a

sociocultural and interpretive approach to narrative that I delineate in much more detail in Chapter 3.

By drawing on Leiblich and Josselson's (2012) scholarship, I use the term narrative to refer to a "specific genre of discourse, centered around the narrator and his or her life… . The kind of story or narrative which may be utilized for the study of personhood concerns accounts of events or experiences in the narrator's life" (p. 203). The focus here is on understanding narration as a form of action that reveals "why persons express themselves in a certain fashion" (Schiff, 2013, p. 259).

 (p.19) Questions about how young urban Indians imagine their social and cultural worlds through the equipment of narrative take center stage in this study. Although the focus in narrative psychology continues to be on the self, we know that a person's identity or self is deeply shaped by and connected to the other. One can argue that self narrative primarily derives its meaning from relationship with others (Freeman, 2014).

If we take self and other to be mutually constituted, then the narrative perspective allows me to theorize about the various spheres of otherness, which in the context of this book moves between the individual, local, national, postcolonial, and the global (not necessarily in this order). The sources of deriving meaning and purpose from something that is beyond the self can come from many domains: nature, God, meditation, family, and friends. The discourses of globalization within urban India have given rise to a distinct cultural vocabulary of self and other, and many spheres of otherness have emerged in this context; thus, my aim is to use narrative psychology to capture this fashioning and refashioning of self–other relationships in these diverse and varied cultural settings. An important feature of the stories that young urban Indians tell about globalization is shaped by their social imagination.

Social imagination, according to Greene (1995), is "the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society" (p. 5), and thus the notion of social imagination is a key concept in understanding how globalization produces culture-specific, alternative psychological discourses of self and identity. Just as colonization produced new hybrid psychologies of being traditional, nationalistic, and modern in the cultures of the colonies, contemporary forms of globalization are producing new narratives of "Indianness" in urban India. Imagination continues to be a key component in producing these new identities.

Thus, the world that is imagined and experienced in London and New York by its youth is not the same as it is imagined and experienced by the youth in Pune and Bangalore. We need to study how "Indianness" is being reimagined and refashioned through their stories of globalization and how they are

reconfiguring collective meanings of self, family, romance, relationships, and work. Social imagination is about how people imagine their collective norms of their existence and "how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (Taylor, 2004, p. 23). The story of globalization, then, is always a local story that is told from a particular place, using specific cultural idioms and specific narrative imaginations. Globalization thus does not create universal or homogenized modernities or replicable modern identities but, rather, the phenomenon creates culturally constituted, place-specific identities.

Notes:

(1.) The Global South is usually intended to refer to countries in Africa, Central and Latin America, and many developing countries in Asia, including countries from the Middle East. The Global North refers to the countries in North America, Europe, and a few select countries in Asia. The North–South divide is represented by asymmetrical conditions of economic, political, and financial power. The Global North also refers to the "First World," and countries represented by the "First World" or the G7 (the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Canada) control much of financial assets and capital in the world, own the majority of the manufacturing operations in the world, and are able to shape financial and economic policies through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The umbrella of the rich and wealthy countries that represent the Global North now includes Russia (G8).

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