



 [IP--German IP - by Thomas Teo](#) by Louise S. [2013, Feb 27]

Louise, I would like to draw your attention to an article that might be of interest to the IP group:

Teo, T. (2013). Backlash against American psychology: An indigenous reconstruction of the history of German critical psychology. *History of Psychology*, 16(1), 1-18. doi: 10.1037/a0030286

What happened to German psychology after 1945?

“... after 1945 (beginning in 1933) German psychology moved from the center to the periphery, which represented a unique historical and cultural situation for German psychology. North American psychologists or historians of psychology appear not to know much about German psychology after WWII as it is assumed that no worthwhile psychologies have existed in Germany since that period, or it is believed that only those psychologies that contribute to mainstream American psychology are of interest. I intend to show that German critical psychology can be reconstructed as a unique indigenous psychology, and more precisely, as an indigenous German response to the Americanization of German psychology after WWII, on the background of distinctive historical, social, and cultural developments. ... Indigenous reconstructions are possible and useful in psychological historiography and in critical psychology. Because psychological theories and concepts are of a human and not a natural kind, they reflect the culture and history from which they emerge. I attempted to highlight indigenous dimensions in the development of German critical psychology and proposed some ideas on how an indigenous reconstruction could be extended ...”

Article can be downloaded from [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu)

Best wishes, Thomas.

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 [Comment by Dr. Lutz H. Eckensberger](#) by Louise S. [2013, Mar 01]

Dear Louise,

The information is interesting. I unfortunately can not download the article. But the topic is in a way plausible. Whether this is an "indigenous" story is, however, unclear to me. In that sense any history is at the same time indigenous. The main point is: What is "german" with these movements, and what is scientifically based. This is the reason, why I also doubt that WASP is an indigenous western Psychology. The western "culture" is exactly (intentionally) missing, because it aims at universality. But on the other hand, to link critical psychology to indigenization is plausible in the sense that IP is also based on criticism of WASP.

Due to the Nazi regime and the IIWW the history of German Psychology is quite difficult. German Psychology was in fact quite rich before the IIWW. During the war test based clinical psychology and experimental Ps. gained importance (also in military services) after the war basically behaviorism was taken over by psychologists educated in the US. But (a) some Psychologists really were sceptical about this development (there was a big debate about using English in publications/Journals), and particularly in the 60s "critical psychology" was founded in Berlin (Holzkamp) which was very much motivated by critique of the society, and which rather early was influenced by Vygotskian thinking. But it was heavily criticized by main stream Ps. This was also due to the fact that they called themselves not only critical but also emancipatory. This was just frightening. This movement still exists also because it gained international attention for instance by Cole. I never was part of that movement, but I should have been.

But a second aspect makes it complicated to relate critical psychology to indigenous P. During the war many (Jewish) scholars left to US and in that sense had a great influence on US Psychology (Lewin, Wertheimer, Katz, Stern, Selz, Köhler etc.) they all emigrated. So US Psychology is partly imported from Germany.

If you could download the article and send it to me, I would be happy to read it. I read some stuff from Teo with benefit.

Cordially  
Lutz



 [Comment by Joseph E. Trimble](#) by Louise S. [2013, Mar 01]

Good day friends and colleagues. The attached article appeared in the Pacific Standard Newsletter (February 26, 2013). In the event you haven't read the complete article referenced in this piece it's worth looking into and passing along to your colleagues and students. I realize many of us in the social and behavioral sciences have known about the WEIRD concept (maybe not that acronym) for some time; indeed many of the researchers in our discipline are most guilty but there's hope for them if they truly want to understand the effects that culture and ethnicity have on the human condition. In response to the article my friend and colleague, Walt Lonner, reminds us that, "Deregowski's description of 'highly psychologized world', Jahoda's seminal articles long ago, Berry's et al.'s 'W.A.S.P.' (Western Academic Scientific Psychology), the old idea of imposed and derived emics, and so on were the so-called 'cutting edge' at the time. In their writings I have yet to see references to the 1980 HCCP and the revised 1997 edition. Henrich et al. are cleverly beating exactly the same drums. A much more detailed report by the same authors and using the same title, made available through the German Data Forum (RatSWD), is downloadable: <http://ssm.com/abstract=1601785>. It is Working Paper No. 139." I'm not sure, as my memory is a bit fuzzy at this time of my life, I believe I raised the "WEIRD" concept (not phrased in that manner) in a graduate seminar long ago in Cambridge, MA one snowy February evening in a seminar on "personality theory" taught by someone who never caught on to the idea that, "culture matters." And, as a few of you can relate to, he wore khaki chinos, a dark blue sport coat, an Oxford button down shirt, and a tie that signified his academic affiliation— indeed that was his "preppy" culture.

In spirit,  
--Joseph

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 [We Aren't the World](#)



 [Comment by Anand Paranjpe](#) by Louise S. [2013, Mar 06]

Hello Lutz:

This is Anand Paranjpe from Canada. Remember me? I am the (strange) fellow originally from India and then Canada, quoting German authors like Kant and Mannheim. We met at IACCP meetings.

Welcome to the IP group.

I was interested to read your comments about psychology in Germany. I know

Thoms Teo; we are both naturalized Canadians, he in Toronto and I in Vancouver. I am somewhat familiar with German "critical" psychology, mainly through my friend Charles Tolman. I appreciate Teo's comment as Critical P being "indigenous." Behaviorism is indigenous, too, reflecting American culture with a Protestant tilt, mainly at the hands of Skinner. Behaviorists ignored culture not only because they "aimed" at universality - which is consistent with your remark quoted below.

"The western "culture" is exactly (intentionally) missing, because it aims at universality."

I met many universalists at the IACCP meetings: Berry, Poortinga, Triandis among them. I was always suspicious of their concept of universality, at some time Walter Looner tried to explain what that meant. My own take on it is that the so-called universalism comes from the idea of physics as ideal for the search for knowledge: an idea jointly promoted by a group of behaviorists from the US and most members of the Vienna Circle. There is a lot of physics-envy here, and many of the IACCP members were, in my many contacts, unwilling (or unable?) to look at the metaphysical and epistemological foundations of their so-called universalism. Intending to produce (or sometime presuming to already have) a universal science of psychology, they often tended to run rough shod over some of us trying raise a voice based sometime from our own, non-Western cultural background, and sometimes based on the understanding of critiques of positivism from the likes of Popper, Quine or Rorty and even the social constructionists like Berger and Luckman. Most big shots at the IACCP would have nothing of it.

The shortform IP has been a symbol for some of us seeped into the Indian culture. For us it stands for INDIAN psychology. The intellectual tradition of India has been essentially pluralist for long; its roots are traced literally back to the ancient Vedas.

There is recent trend in thinking which tends to like universalism of psychology to the universalist claims of various other types" religious, imperialistic, commercial and so on. The convergence of such trends may as well be unintended, but powerful nevertheless.

Emancipatory, you say? Yes, the voices of people from the formerly colonized cultures are indeed seeking emancipation from colleagues proclaiming universalism in the name of "science."

I am part of a group that is bringing out an approach to psychology grounded in the Indian cultural, intellectual, and spiritual tradition. Our Handbook of Indian Psychology published by Cambridge U Press, India, is going onto a second edition. It is edited by KR Rao, myself, and Ajit Dalal. In the IP group we are finding "emancipatory" voices from other parts of the world.

So, hearty welcome. Good to be connected once again.



--Anand Paranjpe