Modulative and Generative Orientations in Psychology: Implications for Psychology in the Three Worlds

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Psychology in the United States and the other industrialized nations, as well as in Third World societies, has tended to be modulative in orientation, in that it "reacts to" rather than instigates societal change. The urgent need in Third World societies to achieve fundamental change and modernization has led some psychologists to show interest in generative psychology, which attempts to initiate and influence macrolevel change. A greater emphasis on a generative orientation will have important implications for psychology in all three worlds, particularly with respect to "despecialization," the relationship between psychology and power elites, the role of psychological factors in national development, and the relationship between the speed of change in psychological, economic, and other spheres.

Inequality in the distribution of resources is a central feature of relations between nations. The capacity of different nations to influence the domain of psychology is an example of such inequalities. Moghaddam (1987) has argued that, in the field of psychology and in terms of power to shape psychology around the globe, the United States now constitutes the First World and enjoys a supreme level of influence, with the other industrialized nations constituting the Second World and having less influence, while Third World countries have the least influence. Using this distinction between the three worlds as a point of

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departure, the objectives of this paper are twofold: (1) to introduce the concepts of "modulative" and "generative" psychologies, and to discuss some of the historical factors that have led the psychology of all three worlds to be predominantly modulative; and (2) to examine the potential for indigenous Third World psychology to become generative and the implications of such a development for psychology in all three worlds.

The distinction between modulative and generative psychologies is important because these concepts can serve to clarify the relationship between psychology and macrosocial processes, such as large-scale social and economic changes. Modulative psychology is not directly concerned with large-scale economic, technological, social, or political change, but deals with the consequences of such changes. In terms of historical development, modulative psychology has taken shape mainly in response to the needs created by societal processes. For example, industrialization and urbanization are macroprocesses that have led to new demands, particularly in terms of personnel selection, human-machine interactions, and work stress. In turn, these demands have led to the development of industrial and organizational branches of Western psychology (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974; Kalleberg & Berg, 1987).

Although modulative psychology is not directly concerned with influencing societal changes, it tends to react to societal changes, and to act as a mechanism for achieving greater stability and cohesion in the social system. This function is served, for example, through the efforts of clinicians, who guide individuals toward better adaptation and coping in their life situations. While the causal factors underlying certain types of mental illness may lie in the social context, the concern of clinicians generally has been to bring about changes within the individual so that he/she will be better adapted to the larger society, rather than to create better harmony between society and the individual experiencing mental problems by influencing the larger society (Laing, 1965, 1967, 1971; Szasz, 1961, 1970). This emphasis on guiding individuals toward better adaptation to the larger social environment helps maintain social stability.

Another example of how modulative psychology acts as a mechanism toward greater social stability is found in the area of conflict resolution (Billig, 1976). Both research and practicing psychologists in this domain work with the assumption, often made explicit, that peace and stability are better than conflict and instability. Through research and more direct intervention, such as mediation, psychologists help resolve conflicts between minority and majority groups in industrial and other settings (for examples of this literature, see the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*). In this way, psychologists act to increase stability in the sociopolitical system.

In terms of political orientation, modulative psychology tends to be supportive of the status quo. This orientation means that modulative psychology helps in the maintenance of the existing power structure, with its unequal distribution of

resources. It is in this context that we can better appreciate critical discussions of the ideology underlying mainstream psychology, and the claim that mainstream psychology is supportive of majority groups (Billig, 1976, 1982; Sampson, 1981).

Thus mainstream psychology is modulative and reacts to, rather than instigates, societal change. But there exists the possibility for development of an alternative type of psychology, a generative psychology, that directly and explicitly attempts to induce societal change. There already have been attempts to evolve a generative psychology in the First and Second Worlds. For example, some aspects of current feminist psychology are generative, attempting to achieve macrosocial change and alter power relations between sex groups. However, it is probably in the Third World that the promise of generative psychology has the greatest potential for being fulfilled.

Some psychologists concerned with developments in the Third World have moved toward a generative psychology, in order to try to rectify what is perceived as a *lack of change* by helping speed up economic and technological development. This is reflected by the move toward an indigenous Third World psychology, which attempts to use psychological knowledge to help advance industrialization and modernize agriculture (Blackler, 1983). In this discussion the term "indigenous Third World psychology" refers to psychology that addresses the needs of Third World societies, be these needs purely intellectual, applied, or any other kind.

The nature of generative psychology becomes clearer when we consider some contrasting activities of psychologists. Compare, for example, a psychologist engaged in research in a Third World society on locus of control among the poor, with one working on an interdisciplinary team that does research among and consults with local communities attempting to mobilize for better housing and land reform. To take another example, contrast a psychologist studying stress among managers vs. a psychologist doing research among and consulting with workers attempting to organize employees unions. In these examples, the concern to achieve better housing conditions, land reform, and employee unions potentially affects the status quo in society.

The move toward an indigenous Third World psychology that is generative inevitably will be associated with political conflicts at various levels. First, the explicit goal of generative psychology is to achieve fundamental and large-scale changes, and such changes potentially threaten the position of majority groups. Thus, indigenous Third World psychologists attempting to develop a generative psychology may face opposition from governing elites within their own societies, as well as from external forces that support such elites. Second, modern psychology did not evolve in the context of Third World societies, but was exported there "wholesale" from the industrialized nations (Moghaddam & Taylor, 1985). The move to evolve a generative indigenous Third World psychology

involves nothing less than an attempt to alter radically the historical pattern of exportation of psychological knowledge from the First and Second Worlds to the Third World.

In some situations, however, a generative psychology will have a less direct impact on political conflicts. Consider, for example, a psychologist studying communication processes between agricultural engineers and farmers in a Third World society. The agricultural engineers are apt to be modernized, urbanized, university educated, and relatively affluent. In contrast, the farmers are traditional, used to a rural lifestyle, illiterate, and relatively poor. By studying communication processes between these two groups, the psychologist may strengthen the agricultural extension system and thus facilitate the spread of more effective agricultural techniques among farmers. But the resulting increase in agricultural production may itself be associated with both increased resources for farmers and a greater awareness among them of social justice issues, such as land reform. In this case, a psychological study of communication processes may have an impact, albeit indirect, on factions fighting for land and other resources in a Third World society.

The growth of both modulative and generative psychologies should be considered in historical context, and this paper begins by reviewing the historical development of modulative psychology. In the second section, the context of the current interest in a generative psychology in the Third World is reviewed. Finally, the paper examines implications of the development of a generative psychology for psychology in all three worlds.

Such implications need to be discussed in particular because Western psychologists may ask, Why should one try to become a generative psychologist? What would be the rewards from doing this? Simply put, a generative psychology would allow researchers to tackle social issues in a far more effective manner, by dealing with the way macrosocietal changes take place rather than dealing only with the consequences of such changes. Consider the area of unemployment, for example. A modulative psychology may help individuals cope with unemployment, for instance, by studying psychological consequences of unemployment or by helping to train the unemployed (e.g., social skills training for conducting job searches and interviews). In this way, a modulative psychology would help individuals adjust to the social system.

A generative psychology, in contrast, would be concerned with psychological processes associated with macrosocial changes that lead to unemployment. What psychological assumptions, for example, underlie the workings of an economy that "needs" some level of unemployment in order to "remain competitive"? Through what avenues could such assumptions be influenced? What are the psychological processes associated with a "recession economy"? How do psychological processes influence interactions between, for example, political parties and interest groups, financiers, labor unions, and the unemployed? Under what conditions would unemployed individuals perceive themselves as a group,

with a distinct identity and interests? Under what conditions would they take collective action to improve their group position? These are the kinds of questions that may emerge from a generative psychology, intended to influence social change at a macrolevel.

As a further clarification, although this paper describes a historical pattern in which a modulative orientation has dominated Western psychology and claims that the potential exists for indigenous Third World psychology to develop a generative character, I do not mean to imply that Western psychology is purely modulative in form, or that indigenous Third World psychology is actually evolving to be purely generative in character. Clearly, these categories are fuzzy and overlapping, and I shall provide examples to show where overlap occurs.

Historical Development of Modulative Psychology

> History is a part of nature where multiple causation rules and where single effective causes are the over-simplifications, devised to bring the incomprehensible complexity of reality within the narrow compass of man's understanding. (Boring, 1950, p. 744)

The evolution of modern psychology in the latter part of the 19th century was influenced by a multitude of factors (Boring, 1942, 1950; Hearnshaw, 1987; Murphy & Kovach, 1972); among the most important was that this evolution took place in societies already experiencing rapid industrialization and urbanization. The fast expansion of industrialized urban centers, millions of people pouring in from rural to urban areas to find work in modern industries, mass literacy, social welfare and health care systems, the growth of multiparty political democracy, the emergence of "consumerism"—these were all societal trends that influenced the development of modern psychology. Perhaps mainly as a consequence of this context, the challenge facing psychologists has been to help individuals cope with rapid change, rather than to try to initiate or guide such change.

There have been, of course, some exceptions to this general trend (e.g., Hager, 1962). The more important of these have been researchers whose interests extended to the study of behavior outside the First and Second Worlds (e.g., Beaglehole, 1957), to include cultures of the Third World and societies of other historical periods (see Nisbet, 1969; Schneiderman, 1988). Classic examples include the work of McClelland on achievement motivation (McClelland, 1961, 1971; McClelland & Winter, 1969), and that of Triandis (1971, 1973, 1984) on attitude change and economic development. These researchers extended their studies to societies in which rapid sociotechnological change was not taking place, and addressed the question of how psychology might help achieve macrosocial change. In this way, they moved outside the modulative orientation that dominates mainstream Western psychology and adopted a more generative orientation.

Another possible exception to the trend among Western psychologists to

neglect social change is the research on intergroup relations generally (Tajfel, 1981; Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987) and minority–majority influence specifically (Moscovici, 1976; Moscovici, Mugny, & Van Ameraet, 1985). It could be argued that the goal of this research is to help achieve structural changes in society, leading to a more just relationship between minority and majority groups (Billig, 1976). However, this research is still on the periphery of mainstream psychology (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987).

Although mainstream Western psychology has not adopted the generation of societal change as a major concern, it has been influential in enabling change to take place more smoothly and perhaps at a faster pace. For example, rapid industrialization has produced many social and psychological problems. Insofar as psychology has applied itself explicitly to these problems, it has been perceived as an important means for correcting the negative consequences of industrialization. For example, industrialization has been viewed as creating psychological stress, and one of the goals adopted by psychologists has been to identify effective strategies for coping with stress (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974).

Rapid sociotechnological change has also led to new demands in terms of the selection and management of large numbers of personnel. Psychology has met this demand in important ways and perhaps through this route accelerated macrochange. In this connection, note the role that the demands of modern warfare have had in shaping psychology. For example, modern warfare created a demand for large-scale group testing of military recruits in terms of ability and emotional functioning. The Woodworth Personal Data Sheet (Woodworth, 1920), which was the first personality inventory (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 1983), and the Army Alpha and the Army Beta, two early mental tests, are important examples of psychological tests that were developed as a result of military needs during World War I (Samelson, 1977; Yerkes, 1921).

Western psychology with its modulative orientation took shape in relation to processes that do not exist as major phenomena in most Third World societies. For example, educational psychology in the West is in large part geared toward a literate population, with particular emphasis on the needs of minority groups, such as the specially gifted and the handicapped. This is a logical development for a psychology that functions in societies that have almost achieved full literacy. But in Third World societies, illiteracy rather than literacy is the norm, and the processes that dominate the lives of the masses are affected by the everyday experiences of living as illiterate rather than literate individuals. However, despite these fundamental differences in the needs of developed and developing societies, psychological knowledge has been exported from developed to developing societies with little or no consideration for such issues as "appropriateness" (Moghaddam & Taylor, 1986).

Psychological knowledge exported from developed to developing countries has historically served two main purposes. First, it has helped maintain the

dependence of Third World societies on industrialized powers. Second, it has helped support the growth of a Westernized elite in the modern sector of Third World societies—an elite that is culturally similar to, and politically dependent on, industrialized powers.

These purposes have been served through processes that are in some ways circular (Moghaddam & Taylor, 1985, 1986). Members of the modern, affluent sector in Third World societies are trained as psychologists in industrial-world academic centers. Having received their training in New York, London, or Paris, through procedures designed for work in the industrialized world, Third World psychologists return to work in the modern sector of their own societies. The population of this modern sector is generally Westernized, and in many ways has more in common with the populations of industrialized societies than with the poverty-stricken and illiterate masses of the traditional sector in Third World societies. Thus the "inappropriate" training received by Third World psychologists in industrial societies severely limits their possibilities for working in the traditional sector of their own societies. Consequently, modern psychology in the Third World has few links with the traditional sector of Third World societies, but much stronger links with psychology centers in the industrialized world. These links lead the next generation of Third World psychologists to look to the industrialized world for training and direction.

In summary, Western psychology evolved in the context of societies already experiencing rapid sociotechnological change, and researchers have taken it for granted that such change will continue to take place in the First and Second Worlds. In contrast, the pace and extent of change taking place in the Third World has been seen as inadequate. Consequently, the challenge to generate macrochange has generally been adopted by those researchers whose interests have led them to study Third World societies. This process has not, however, resulted in generative psychology being exported to Third World societies. Instead, the exportation of psychological knowledge to the Third World can best be appreciated in the wider context of economic and political relations involving the dependence of Third World societies on industrial powers.

The Context of Current Interest in a Generative Psychology in the Third World

The growth of modern psychology in the Third World can be usefully conceived as comprised of two phases. The first phase involved the exportation of a modulative psychology from developed to developing societies, and was to some extent influenced by past colonial ties between nations enjoying greater and lesser power (Altback & Kelly, 1978; Kumar, 1979; Moghaddam & Taylor, 1985). The second phase, which exists only in promise in most Third World societies, involves the indigenization and strengthening of a generative psychology.

The transition from the first to the second phase of the growth of modern psychology in the Third World has been marked by a critical questioning of the appropriateness of Western psychology for meeting the needs of Third World societies (Blackler, 1983; Connolly, 1985; Moghaddam & Taylor, 1986, 1987; Sinha, 1986; Sinha & Holtzman, 1984). More broadly, researchers have questioned whether the central findings of Western psychology are replicable in other cultures (Bond, 1988). Amir and Sharon (1987) have demonstrated, for example, that key findings from "landmark" studies in the areas of person perception, interpersonal attraction, group dynamics, attitudes, and attributions do not replicate across cultures. This was so even when (1) the non-Western society chosen for comparison purposes (i.e., Israel) was fairly industrialized and more similar to Western societies than most Third World societies, and (2) the subject samples selected for comparison were the same (i.e., students).

A positive feature of this discussion of the questionable relevance of Western psychology is that it also involves representatives from psychology's First World (Cole, 1984; Russell, 1984; Wagner, 1986) and Second World (Connolly, 1982; Jahoda, 1983), and this may help avoid isolationist tendencies. The critical questioning of Western psychology currently underway in many Third World societies, and the current interest in a generative psychology in the Third World, are part of larger processes that involve, among other things, a reassessment of the universality of the social sciences, a reexamination of the role of education in national development, and more generally, a reevaluation of the concept of development itself.

Reassessing the Universality of the Social Sciences

First, reassessment of the universality of social sciences and concern about the dominance of the First World in the production and dissemination of social science knowledge are not unique to the Third World. Many Second World societies share similar concerns. For example, this concern is reflected in attempts by Canadian researchers to establish an anthropology (Sweet, 1976), a sociology (Cairns, 1975), and a psychology (Meyers, 1970) that in important respects are indigenous and independent of the United States. A review of this literature suggests that the dominance of the United States in the production and dissemination of social science knowledge is being challenged for political reasons, rather than purely scientific reasons (e.g., see Symons, 1975).

Education and National Development

Second, the current debate concerning the relevance of Western psychology in the Third World context should be viewed in light of the critical questioning of the relationship between education and national development (Blaug, 1968;

Dore, 1976). The traditional belief that more education necessarily leads to greater productivity is being seriously challenged (Little, 1983). Indeed, as suggested by the main title of Dore's (1976) important monograph, *The Diploma Disease*, as well as by the findings of studies stimulated by this work (e.g., Oxenham, 1980), the building of educational systems in the Third World according to Western models seems to be acting as a hindrance to constructive Third World development. Given the pivotal role that psychology plays in the educational systems of all three worlds, it is inevitably that a reassessment of the relationship between education and national development should reflect upon the discipline of psychology in the three worlds.

Toward a New Concept of Development

Third, and most important, the critical questioning of Western psychology should be viewed in the context of the development experiences of Third World societies and of recent explorations toward a new concept of development (UNESCO, 1982). The implications of this emerging concept of development are potentially of fundamental importance for all psychologists, because it places psychological processes at the center of development activities. However, it is social scientists outside the domain of psychology who have been mainly responsible for the new emphasis on psychological processes in development. Therefore, it is important for psychologists to understand the role that psychology is sometimes explicitly being asked to play in development, and the subsequent effect of this on the evolution of a generative psychology.

The concept of development that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s is being reappraised today. During that period, development tended to be conceived as involving only economic change, and often it was reduced even further to the idea of growth as measured by increase in the gross national product or in the national income, either in absolute terms or on a per capita basis (David, 1986). This narrow view of development has been severely criticized by researchers from diverse national and political backgrounds (Bernstein, 1973; Bureau, 1978; Latouche, 1986; Robinson, 1979; Roxborough, 1979; Seers & Jay, 1971; Vogelier & de Souza, 1980). In the United States, the current reappraisal of development is reflected in a new series of publications from the Overseas Development Council on the theme of U.S.–Third World policy perspectives (e.g., see Lewis & Kallab, 1986).

Despite widely ranging political orientations (e.g., compare Lapin & Richta, 1982, with Loubser, 1982), critics of development tend to share a common belief that emphasis should be more on people rather than "things" (Goulet, 1968; Harrison, 1980). This belief is reflected in the new development concepts, such as "development centered on people," "self-reliance," and "basic needs" (Alechina, 1982). Increasingly, writers on development are referring to psycho-

logical processes, without necessarily making explicit the potential role of psychologists in achieving national development. Thus, Seers (1972, p. 2) objects, "Why do we confuse development with economic growth?"—and then goes on to propose that "Development means creating the condition for the realization of human personality." Donaldson (1973, p. 80) states that "Development . . . means bringing about basic changes in the underlying social fabric of attitudes and institutions. . . ."

The inclusion of psychological concepts, such as attitudes (Donaldson, 1973), personality (Seers, 1972), and others such as "identity," "pride," "self-respect," and "oneness" in discussions of development (Loubser, 1982), has been coupled with an emphasis on people's participation in development. In a major text, Economics of Development, Gillis, Perkins, Roemer, and Snodgrass (1983) propose that a key element in economic development "is that the people of the country must themselves be participants in the process that brought changes in . . . structures about" (p. 8). People's participation in the context of a Third World country such as India involves diverse political (Arora, 1979), educational (Fernandes, 1981), and practical challenges (Ramder, Lalitha, Kaura, & Verma, 1971). Central to the experience of participation are psychological processes such as those concerning motivation, attitudes, attributions, and perceptions.

In summary, the new concept of development is one in which psychological processes have a central place. By implication, there is a growing demand for psychological knowledge in development projects. This demand has created an opportunity for Third World psychologists to construct a psychology that is more applied, that deals more with general rather than specific aspects of behavior, and most importantly, that is generative rather than modulative in goals, if not yet in actual achievements.

The Case of Psychology in India

The goal of a generative psychology is to initiate, accelerate, and direct societal change. For example, major concerns of generative psychology are to help modernize the agriculture sector in Third World societies and to help integrate the millions of people pouring into urban areas from rural districts. The trend toward a generative psychology is probably most apparent in India.

The case of India is particularly important because among the countries that are traditionally classified as "Third World," India probably has made the greatest progress in strengthening indigenous resources toward producing and disseminating psychological knowledge, as evident from surveys of psychology in India (Ganguli, 1971; Mitra, 1972; Pareek, 1980, 1981; Ramalingaswami, 1980; Sinha, 1986; University Grants Commission, 1982). However, this is not to suggest that the development of psychology in India has taken place in an ideal

manner (Pareek, 1980, 1981). What is particularly important here is that the national development effort has involved an emphasis on the development of people, and thus potentially a role has been created for psychologists to contribute to development. In turn, the involvement of some psychologists in development has influenced psychology itself. "Through its efforts to contribute to the task of national development and social change, psychology came out of the narrow groove in which it had got stuck" (Sinha, 1986, p. 65).

The progress of psychology in India toward indigenization, although still modest (Adair, 1989), is reflected by the attention some researchers have given to questions that arise from the specific needs of the traditional sector in India, such as population, poverty, and social change. The number of studies on family planning and population runs into the thousands (Pareek & Rao, 1974). Almost as much attention has been given to the social and psychological consequences of poverty in India (Muthayya, 1982; Sinha, Tripathi, & Mishra, 1982). Although social change has received less attention, the study of social psychological processes associated with village-level community projects in India (e.g., Sinha, 1974) is leading to findings that have practical applications. A common theme that seems to emerge from studies of community projects in India, South America, and other parts of the globe (see Allen, 1970; Marin, 1975) is that "self-help" projects involving initiative on the part of community members are more likely to lead to positive outcomes, particularly in terms of psychological consequences, than projects where initiative rests with outsiders. This suggests that people's participation in the planning of development projects should be further expanded.

Poverty research is an area in which it would be to the mutual benefit of psychologists from developed and developing countries to achieve greater cooperation and information exchange. Studies on poverty carried out in India increased dramatically in the 1970s, and undoubtedly were influenced by the research on minority groups in North America. However, perhaps partly because of the scope and urgency of the problem in India, poverty research there took on broader dimensions. Beyond identifying the impact of poverty on a wide range of cognitive, perceptual, and motivational processes (see Sinha et al., 1982), Indian researchers have identified situations where simply changing one aspect of the social context for the poor can lead to unexpected and undesirable consequences. For example, Sinha (1977) refers to a "broomstick effect," whereby the performance of disadvantaged children seems to suffer relative to that of advantaged children when they are moved to "better" educational institutions. Apparently, improving one aspect of the lives of the poor children without making improvements in their general life conditions does not necessarily lead to their better functioning, and can even have the reverse effect.

The findings of Indian research on poverty generally underline the need to consider the experiences of the poor in their totality, and to view psychological

variables in relation to the total life condition of the poor, rather than in relation to the formal education sector only. The education sector is only one domain, and very probably not the most important domain, in which the poor experience deprivation. Intervention programs that focus on only this one domain are unlikely to have far-reaching results. This conclusion is consistent with the perhaps disappointing outcomes of the American Head Start program. While evaluative studies (e.g., Westinghouse Learning Corporation, 1969) of Head Start have had methodological shortcomings, clearly the program has not lived up to its initial expectations. Poverty research represents an area in which researchers from developed nations would have benefited from the experiences of their Third World colleagues, but such an exchange of experiences has materialized at a very limited level.

Despite the rapid growth of psychology in the Third World, the transfer of psychological knowledge has remained mainly a one-way process, from developed to developing countries. The only psychological knowledge from the Third World that has had any impact in the First and Second Worlds is information that fits in with the modulative orientation of Western psychology, such as research in the area of psychological therapy. For example, the therapeutic benefits of yoga (Gellhorne & Kiely, 1972) and transcendental meditation (Smith, 1976) have been studied in the context of industrial societies, and psychotherapy in the West has been influenced by Eastern therapeutic traditions. An intriguing recent example is the use of traditional Persian stories as therapeutic instruments, an approach "exported" from East to West by an Iranian therapist working in West Germany (Peseschkian, 1987).

It may seem surprising that Eastern knowledge concerning psychological therapy has had a relatively greater impact on Western societies than has the social psychological knowledge of the East. After all, social psychology dominates the psychological scene in India (Sinha, 1986, p. 89), and probably in most other Third World societies. Thus, it might appear that Third World societies would have most to offer the First and Second Worlds in the social psychology area. However, the move toward indigenization in the social psychology of the Third World is still very recent. Almost all of the social psychology that exists in most Third World countries has been imported from the West, and as yet has little new to offer Western researchers. In contrast, the traditions of indigenous healing systems go back thousands of years in many Third World societies (e.g., see Kakar's, 1982, discussion of healing traditions in India).

There are now promising signs, particularly in countries such as India, that the ground is being prepared for the beginnings of a generative psychology. Furthermore, psychologists of all three worlds are becoming more involved in the debate on "internationalizing" psychology. This is an important trend that should be encouraged, and there are some practical steps that Western psychologists could take to speed up this process. The miniconvention, "Psychology in the

Developing Nations of the World," included in the 1988 APA convention in Atlanta, Georgia, is a sign that U.S. psychologists are moving in this direction, but more programs of this nature are urgently needed. It may be timely to consider the establishment of a new APA division dedicated to psychology in the developing nations of the world.

Implications of the Development of a Generative Orientation in Psychology

The growth of a generative psychology is likely to lead to a greater concern for the role of Western psychologists as initiators and accelerators of social change. In turn, this role has a number of important implications for all psychology.

First, the concern with social change inevitably involves a consideration of power groups in society. This is because any change at the societal level potentially could alter the status quo, and might be perceived as detrimental to the interests of ruling elites. By entering the arena as potential instigators of social change, psychologists are more likely to be perceived as having explicit political aims and to risk being opposed by ruling power groups. This, to some extent, explains the often political nature of debates on psychology in the Third World (e.g., Sinha & Holtzman, 1984), and the extreme repression sometimes faced by psychologists and other social scientists in some Third World countries, such as Chile (Landstreet, 1984). The potential implications of this trend are (1) a keener awareness of the relationship between psychologists and power groups in all three worlds, and (2) a more critical approach to the concept of development and the issue of "what exactly is to be developed."

Discussions on national development inevitably lead to the question, "Develop what?" Different power groups are likely to provide conflicting responses to this question: Power elites tend to focus on development priorities that concentrate power and strengthen their own position, while opposition groups are likely to emphasize development priorities that increase power sharing and resource distribution. The shift from an emphasis on the development of things to the development of people raises thorny issues concerning the treatment of individuals. Should individuals be treated as representing equally valuable resources in the development process? How should we decide about priorities given to particular human talents? Such questions raise fundamental issues of human rights. Consequently, the involvement of psychologists in development programs may mean an end to the neglect of human rights as a topic for psychological research (Moghaddam & Vuksanovic, in press).

Second, concern with social change is leading psychologists to give more consideration to psychological factors that might act as facilitators as well as obstacles to change. This consideration is reflected not only in the work of Third

World psychologists, such as those of Asia (e.g., Sinha, 1986), Africa (Adbi, 1975), and South America (Ardila, 1984; Díaz-Guerrero, 1977), but also in that of First and Second World psychologists (Blackler, 1983). An implication is that the role of psychological factors in accelerating and blocking change in contemporary Western societies may gradually be given more consideration by psychologists. For example, what psychological factors are associated with the "static" situation of a significant portion of the Western, and particularly North American, population that survives as an underclass, living below even the official poverty line? The psychological effects of "tokenism" may be one obstacle to social change for this disadvantaged group. Recent experimental evidence suggests that as long as there is some "token" possibility for escape from a disadvantaged group to an advantaged group, the likelihood of disadvantaged group members attempting social change will be minimal (Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). How may such consequences of tokenism be tackled by those who want to achieve social change? A concern with social change inevitably will lead psychologists to address such questions more seriously.

Third, a generative orientation in psychology implies greater concern for the relationships between change in different spheres, including those involving psychological, social, economic, and political processes. This issue has received some attention on the part of social anthropologists, who have noted that changes in certain spheres (e.g., religious) take place at a slower rate than others (e.g., economic). For example, interpreting Islam as a cultural system, Tibi (1985) has argued that this system has in fundamental ways contributed to the underdevelopment of the Middle East. While change can take place in some economic sectors of Islamic societies, the cultural system of Islam acts as a brake against the modernization of attitudes and values. The differential rate of cultural diffusion has also been highlighted in applied projects designed to achieve cultural change in the Third World (e.g., see the "Barpali experiment," involving community development in India—Fraser, 1968). A major theme in these applied projects has been the challenge of changing the attitudes, attributions, social skills, and group behaviors of individuals in relation to their activities in different social, economic, and political spheres.

In particular, the speed of change in these different spheres is proving to be of vital importance in national development. In some situations, initial steps toward transforming the economic infrastructure of a society seem to be achieved successfully, but fundamental advances are blocked by what appears to be a lack of change at the level of basic psychological processes. For example, many oil-producing countries are finding that they can transform the technological and economic structure of society in important ways, but they do not seem to be able to match the pace of change in the economic sphere with corresponding changes in the psychological characteristics of the population, such as attitudes, perceptions, and values. This disparity in the speed of change in psychological and

economic spheres has been, at least implicitly, the concern of researchers who strive to emphasize changes in people as well as in things during the process of development (UNESCO, 1982). The implication of this trend for mainstream psychology is a greater concern not only for the pace of change in some key psychological characteristics of a population, but also for the relative speed of change at the psychological level compared to changes in economic and other macrospheres.

Fourth, the concern with social change is leading to a focus on disparities between life experiences in modern and traditional sectors of Third World societies. The modulative psychology imported from the West has tended to remain limited to the modern sector and to have very little impact on the traditional sector of Third World societies. The interest in indigenous Third World psychology opens the way for extensions of psychology to the traditional sector, and specifically for more attention to problems such as poverty and illiteracy (Sinha & Holtzman, 1984). This trend inevitably involves comparisons across modern and traditional sectors, and highlights the dominant position of the modern sector, which tends to be more affluent, urban, literate, industrialized, and Western in lifestyle. Such dominance gives the modern sector tremendous power in initiating and influencing social change, but this is sometimes in the face of traditionalist forces that strive to channel change in a different direction (Moghaddam, 1986). The results of these power struggles between forces working toward modernism and toward traditionalism are of fundamental importance to both developing and developed societies; for example, witness the case of Iran, a country whose fortunes in the last decade have had global consequences.

Similar power disparities between different segments of society are to some extent also present in the developed world. In most Western nations, for example, political and economic influence tends to be dominated by power elites (Parkin, 1971). An examination of the networks of such power elites in countries such as the United States (Domhoff, 1967, 1970) and Canada (Clement, 1975; Porter, 1965) suggests that they are different from the nonelites in terms of lifestyle, values, and perceptions of social reality. Psychology as a discipline often reflects aspects of social reality that conform to the views of power groups in developed societies, just as psychology in developing societies is more in harmony with the needs of the affluent modern sector of the Third World. By implication, explorations of differences between modern and traditional sectors of Third World societies can serve as a reminder to psychologists in the developed world of the gulfs that are present between sections of their own societies.

Finally, the move toward generative psychology may lead to some degree of "despecialization" in some areas of psychology in the Third World, and this may have implications for specialization in mainstream psychology (see Moghaddam, 1989). Matarazzo (1987, p. 893) has claimed, "There is only one psychology, no specialities, but many applications." While it may be true that graduate students

in departments of psychology take courses that are highly similar in core content, it is also true that after they graduate they go on to specialize to a great degree in their areas of research and practice—to such a degree that eventually they find it very difficult to communicate on scientific issues with psychologists who are not in their own specific areas of specialization. Thus, we witness psychologists in the same academic departments and in the same hospitals not communicating with each other on research matters, or even attending the same research seminars or workshops.

This kind of specialization is proving to be a hindrance to psychologists who attempt to enter the arena of national development in the Third World. The challenge of development in Third World societies can be best taken up by researchers adopting a broad, multidisciplinary approach (Myrdal, 1968). As Sinha (1986, p. 113) has stated,

> Social change and developmental processes are large and complex human problems and the parameters of their study should not be confined to microcosmic individual processes but should encompass large social, structural and cultural influences. If psychology wants to make a significant impact on the problems of Third World countries it has to adopt a more global orientation, a macrocosmic perspective, and should incorporate structural variables in the very design of its research.

The indications are that many social scientists from different backgrounds, including psychologists, who work in the Third World are now moving toward a broad orientation, rather than the very narrow and specialized approach adopted in the West (for example, see UNESCO, 1977, 1980).

This critical approach to specialization serves as a reminder to Western psychologists that the current trend of increasing specialization within their discipline may not be beneficial to the task of tackling social issues. Poverty, racism, sexism—such major social issues have roots that are multifaceted, in part societal, and that require analysis through broad perspectives. But the trend of increasing specialization is moving researchers into narrower grooves and away from such broad perspectives. An implication of this is that researchers find it increasingly difficult to have any impact on the mechanisms underlying social issues, because their models concern only very narrow parts of such mechanisms. Just as Third World psychologists are having to "despecialize" (Moghaddam, 1989) in order to tackle underdevelopment, Western psychologists may need to despecialize in order to tackle social issues confronting their own societies. Indeed, if Western researchers were to ask, what do we do in order to become "generative" psychologists, part of the answer would be to become despecialized. In doing so, a challenge would be to achieve despecialization while maintaining scientific rigor.

In summary, the move toward indigenous Third World psychology is likely to have important consequences for all of psychology. In particular, mainstream psychology is likely to become more concerned with macrosocial processes and

the role of psychology in relation to different power groups. Moreover, explorations on the part of Third World psychologists, ranging from their potential roles as social innovators to their need to despecialize, could prove to be a valuable source of knowledge for First and Second World psychologists as they consider avenues for meeting the challenges faced by their expanding discipline.

Concluding Comment

The most important challenge confronting psychologists in the Third World is to contribute effectively to the development efforts of Third World societies. The psychological knowledge that historically has been exported from developed to developing nations is not capable of meeting such a challenge, mainly because it is modulative in orientation and neglects the issue of social change. In contrast, indigenous Third World psychology shows promises of becoming generative in orientation, adopting as its main objective the achievement of societal change.

The growth of indigenous Third World psychology might indeed prove to be a fruitful new frontier, where innovations in despecialization are implemented, and the role of the psychologist as initiator and accelerator of social change is explored. This new frontier is likely to remind all psychologists of their relationship with power elites, and to make more explicit the wider implications of their role in society. Such developments can only prove beneficial toward the goal of promoting human welfare. But an essential prerequisite is that psychologists themselves remain open to new explorations in approaches to psychological research and practice in the three worlds. In particular, the United States, as the major power in the production and dissemination of psychological knowledge, should increase its efforts to keep informed about the worlds of psychology beyond its borders.

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