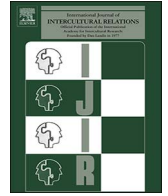
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Review

Introduction to the Special Issue: Colonial past and intercultural relations

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ABSTRACT

The consequences of colonialism are important not only because they shape our “world of nations” at the level of international relations, but because their contemporary repercussions are also present in the psychosocial dynamics at work among former colonized and former colonizing peoples, such as identity building, collective emotions, traumatic processes, intergroup relations, prejudice, discrimination, and acculturation processes. However, there is still a scarce amount of cultural and social psychological studies dealing with the current implications of colonial history and memories in contemporary societies. This Special Issue aims to fill this gap. The main focus here is on the relevance of historical representations and collective memories of the colonial past with regard to contemporary intercultural relations. In this vein, this Special Issue includes eight papers that shed light on the content and structure of social representations of colonial history; the emotional and cognitive impacts of the colonial past; and how colonial past is shaping contemporary acculturation processes and intergroup attitudes and relations. This Special Issue hosts original empirical research employing different methodologies (e.g., interviews, questionnaire surveys, experiments, and case studies), as well as theoretical papers that rely on a systematic review of the empirical literature. Together, the contributions in this Special Issue stress the importance of considering colonial legacies in the study of contemporary intercultural relations. We call for dialogue and interdisciplinary work in this domain between social and cultural psychology and other social sciences, such as history, anthropology, and political science.

Introduction

“It’s a crime. It’s a crime against humanity. It’s truly barbarous and it’s part of a past that we need to confront by apologizing to those against whom we committed these acts.”

Emmanuel Macron, February 14, 2017, from a broadcast on Algerian television channel Echorouk

During his visit to Algeria, at that time French presidential frontrunner, Emmanuel Macron described colonization as a “crime against humanity.” His words sparked outrage among conservative and far-right parties in France, a country which has never officially apologized for its more than century-long colonization of Algeria. This example illustrates how collective memories of colonialism can power the dynamics between minority and majority groups all around the world: both between immigrants from the

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former colonies and the former colonizing nations who today are their host societies and between indigenous populations and the majority groups in former settlement colonies. In parallel, the social integration of ethnic minorities is today one of the primary concerns of political leaders and governing bodies. However, the link between colonialism and present-day relations between cultural majorities and minorities has been constantly and repeatedly overlooked, ignored, or denied. This historical amnesia often serves the aims of the majority groups to legitimize the existing “post-colonial” social order that has persisted even after decolonization (Licata, 2012).

Surprisingly, cultural and social psychology has only recently attempted to deal with this sensitive and important topic (see among others, Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Bonnot, Krauth-Gruber, Drozda-Senkowska & Lopes, 2016; Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010; Figueiredo, Valentim, Licata, & Doosje, 2013; Haas & Vermande, 2010; Leone & Mastrovito, 2010; Marques, Páez, Valencia, & Vincze, 2006; Okazaki, David, & Abelman, 2008; Pereira de Sa & Oliveira, 2002; Valentim, 2011; Volpato & Licata, 2010). This Special Issue aims to draw the attention of the field of cultural and social psychology to the obvious but oblivious link between the colonial past and current intergroup relations. The main focus here is on the consequences of social representations of the colonial past on identity building, collective emotions, prejudice, discrimination, and acculturation processes in contemporary multiethnic societies. First, we provide an overview of existing research in the field of social and cultural psychology on the colonial past and intercultural relations. Next, we give a summary of the eight papers included in this Special Issue.

The colonial past and intercultural relations: the state of knowledge

Social representations (Jodelet, 2006; Lo Monaco, Delouvé, & Rateau, 2016; Moscovici, 1961; Sammut, Andreouli, Gaskell, & Valsiner, 2015) help people understand and give significance to diverse social phenomena, including their own history (for examples, see Liu et al., 2005, 2009). These social representations of the past, or more widely, collective memories, are necessary to preserve a sense of group continuity and to cultivate values and norms that prescribe behaviors within a group and between an ingroup and outgroups (Bobowik et al., 2014; Licata & Mercy, 2015; Liu & Hilton, 2005; Páez, Bobowik, De Guissmé, Liu, & Licata, 2016; Páez, Liu, Bobowik, Basabe, & Hanke, 2016; Pennebaker, Páez & Rimé, 1997; Pennebaker, Páez, & Deschamps, 2006; Sani, 2008). From this perspective, the colonial era fulfills a variety of necessary conditions for being integrated into a group’s collective memory (see Páez, Bobowik et al., 2016; Páez, Liu et al., 2016 for more details on these conditions). Namely, colonial historical experiences 1) were and continue to be central for social identities, both of formerly colonizing and of formerly colonized nations; 2) they have provoked a significant social change for the groups involved, including a threat to the group identity of the colonized peoples; 3) they are emotion-laden because they evoke, for instance, group-based guilt and shame among the formerly colonizing peoples, and group-based anger but also feelings of shame and inferiority among the formerly colonized; 4) they are transmitted, for instance, through history teaching or celebrations of such events as October 12, commemorated as Columbus Day or Hispanic Day by the formerly colonizing nations or majority groups but also as the Day of Indigenous Resistance by the formerly colonized; and 5) their collective remembrance still serves current needs and goals among members of these groups.

In the following sections, we will review the existing literature in social and cultural psychology that analyzes the colonial past as a “historical charter” (Liu & Hilton, 2005) in the representations of the national history of both formerly colonizing and colonized peoples (see a section on “Collective Memories and Social Representations of the Colonial Past”), that considers the role of group-based emotions that the colonial past constantly evokes (see “Group-Based Emotions and the Colonial Past” section), and that examines how the colonial past shapes current intercultural relations and determines peoples’ lives (see the “Colonial and Post-colonial Ideologies” and “Prejudice and Colonial Past, Acculturation, and Adjustment of Minorities” sections).

Collective memories and social representations of the colonial past

Depending on the role that a group played during the colonial era, the historical narratives assimilated and transmitted by the formerly colonizing powers and formerly colonized peoples may be contrasting (see Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010; Klein & Licata, 2003; Licata & Klein, 2010). The colonial past and its polemic social representations (Moscovici, 1988) are therefore a controversial topic in the present-day public debate (see Licata, Khan, Lastrego, Cabecinhas, Valentim, & Liu, forthcoming). They fuel tension not only in international but also intercultural relations between majorities and minorities within multicultural societies. Below, we offer an overview of the existing research on how the colonial past is being perceived by formerly colonizing and formerly colonized groups.

The colonizer’s perspective

It is only relatively recently that social representations of colonialism have become polemic among the formerly colonizer nations. Over centuries “the discoveries of the New World” were generally depicted as the civilizing of the “wild” peoples and as golden times. According to these benevolent representations, the colonizers are commemorated as national heroes, and good-natured and moral people. Existing research confirms that there is still support for the narratives that legitimize the past colonial rule. For instance, in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, Columbus was usually presented as an adventurous, yet faithful and self-disciplined, entrepreneur, who helped to globalize the world (Schuman, Schwartz, & D’Arcy, 2005). A section of Portuguese public opinion still idealizes “the voyages of discovery,” while minimizing the violence that accompanied colonial expansion (Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010; Pereira de Sá & de Oliveira, 2002). Studies on luso-tropicalism (Vala, Lopes, & Lima, 2008; Valentim, 2011; see Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming, for definitions) have pointed out that benevolent representations of Portuguese colonial history are still endorsed in the present. In Australia, institutional narratives of colonization still perpetuate the story in which the British populated an “empty” territory, to which they brought technology and culture (Mellor & Bretherton, 2003). In the same vein, Italians share the myth of the “good

Italian” to portray their ancestors who colonized Africa (Cajani, 2013; Leone & Sarrica, 2012). Furthermore, a sizeable percentage of Belgians still agree with the view of colonial times as being an opportunity for advancement of the colonized indigenous populations, and hold a positive view of King Leopold II (Klein, 2005, 2010; Klein, 2005, 2010). Overall, these positive memories of colonial times focus on the civilizing mission of the “Old World” as well as on the development of the colony in such domains as infrastructure, health, or education.

In recent decades, however, these representations of the colonial rule, predominant in earlier centuries, have been to a great extent marginalized by the post-colonial or anti-colonial discourse. Around the 1970s and 1980s, the colonial past became part of the public discourse in France and Belgium, and a topic commonly addressed in movies and literature (Blanchard, Bancel & Lemaire, 2005; Haas & Vermande, 2010). Representatives of some countries, such as the Netherlands (for a discussion of the Dutch colonial past see Scagliola, 2012), Belgium, or France (Blanchard et al., 2005; Lastrego & Licata, 2010), even offered apologies for colonial crimes, which were expected to improve intercultural relations between colonial-origin minorities and the host majorities in these countries.

Critical approaches of the colonial past call for recognizing the colonial era as a period of cruel and violent exploitation of the native inhabitants of former colonies, and in some cases of genocides that led to the disappearance or endangering of native peoples (Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010; Licata & Klein, 2010). Today, these representations seem to be shared by growing portions of the majority groups in formerly colonizing countries, although they coexist with more benevolent memories of colonial times. Indeed, empirical research in the Netherlands (e.g., Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998), France (e.g., Bonnot et al., 2016; Haas & Vermande, 2010) and Belgium (e.g., Licata & Klein, 2010) found that young adults in the formerly colonizing countries to some extent acknowledge the dark and violent side of colonization, probably – as some authors discuss – because they grew up in a more critical ideological environment compared to older generations. Thus, for instance, young Belgians tend to depict the colonial king – Leopold II – as a cruel megalomaniac, contrary to the older generations that stress his positive traits. Nevertheless, although acknowledged, these colonial crimes are not necessarily being associated with the present intercultural dynamics because dominant majority groups tend to deny that the disadvantaged situation of colonial-origin minorities in the present is the consequence of these historical wrongdoings (see “Colonial and Post-colonial Ideologies and Prejudice” section for more on this topic).

The colonized’ perspective

From the perspective of the colonized, resistance and critical representations of colonial rule are not new at all. For instance, the so-called Black Legend (*La Leyenda Negra*) of cruel Spanish rule had already emerged during the colonial period and served to legitimize the struggle against the Spanish during those centuries. On the other hand, it is only until recently that October 12 has begun to be celebrated as the Day of Indigenous Resistance in some Latin American countries, defending the claim that the discovery of America was an example of ethnic cleansing and a socio-cultural genocide. From this viewpoint, Columbus is a conqueror obsessed with gold and responsible for the extermination or enslaving of indigenous populations (Kubal, 2008).

Furthermore, for the indigenous populations or minorities descended from colonized nations, the colonial period tends in the present day to be represented as a history of oppression to a greater extent than for the majority groups (e.g., Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010; Cabecinhas et al., 2011). For instance, colonial crimes are very salient in Mozambican memories, which stress the most oppressive aspects of the colonial period, associated with the slave trade and brutal repression (Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010). African students living in Portugal do not endorse the benevolent luso-tropicalist representations of the Portuguese colonial past (Valentim, 2011). Finally, Aborigines in Australia also transmit a narrative of disposessions, genocide, and cultural oppression (Augoustinos & Lee Penny, 2001; Augoustinos, Hastie, & Wright, 2011; Mellor & Bretherton, 2003).

Nevertheless, positive, paternalistic representations of colonial times persist not only among the formerly colonizing but also among the formerly colonized populations. The colonized may also exhibit a *colonial mentality* (David, 2008, 2009; David & Okazaki, 2006a, 2006b), that is, they may internalize and legitimize some of the less positive images of their own group relative to the formerly colonizing outgroup. David and Okazaki (2006a) demonstrated that among Filipino Americans, a colonial mentality is a multi-faceted construct covering such dimensions as the tendency to discriminate against less assimilated ingroup members, to perceive ingroup physical traits as inferior to the colonizer physical traits, to feel fortunate for having been colonized and to feel indebted toward one’s past colonizers, the feelings of shame and embarrassment toward ingroup culture, and feelings of inferiority toward one’s ethnicity and culture. Utsey, Abrams, Opore-Henaku, Bolden, and Williams (2015) found similar dimensions of colonial mentality among young adults in Ghana (except for feelings of shame and embarrassment and feelings of ethnic and cultural inferiority, which emerged as one factor).

Importantly, these contrasting depictions of colonialism may have important consequences in terms of: a) prejudice and discrimination between the formerly colonizer and colonized populations, b) group-based emotions elicited by collective memories of colonization, and c) integration or adjustment of the formerly colonized. In the following sections, we address each of these three possible products of colonialism in the collective memories of contemporary societies.

Colonial and post-colonial ideologies and prejudice

The way in which both formerly colonizing and colonized peoples remember the colonial past serves different current needs and goals and thus determines their collective identities and intergroup behavior in the present. Research has indeed shown that collective memories may hinder or improve present-day intergroup relations, depending on the way the past is remembered or framed (e.g., Bar-On & Kassem, 2004; Bilewicz & Jaworska, 2013; Jetten & Wohl, 2012; Klein & Licata, 2003; Kus, 2013; Lastrego & Licata, 2010; Sibley, 2010; Sibley, Liu, Duckitt, & Khan, 2008; Smeekes, Verkuyten, & Poppe, 2011; Vala et al., 2008; Valentim, 2011).

In the context of colonial legacies, for example, past research regarding Portuguese colonial history suggests that luso-tropicalism is associated with prejudice (Vala et al., 2008; Valentim, 2011). In the same vein, in his dark duo model of post-colonial ideology, Sibley (2010) argued that two central ideologies – historical negation (vs. recognition), i.e., the belief that colonial history is irrelevant to contemporary inequalities, and symbolic exclusion (vs. projection), i.e., a belief that indigenous cultures are irrelevant to national identity – mold intergroup relations in post-colonial societies, and mostly serve to legitimize inequality and dismiss reparations for disadvantaged indigenous peoples (Sibley et al., 2008; for a review see Sibley & Osborne, 2016). Empirical evidence has confirmed that, among the dominant majority, both historical negation and symbolic exclusion were associated with less support for using governmental funds to create a Maori television channel (Sibley, 2010) and with less support for collective action on behalf of the disadvantaged indigenous population among both the dominant majority and the indigenous themselves (Osborne, Yogeewaran, & Sibley, 2017). However, in other studies it was mostly historical negation that was associated with opposition toward (or less support for) resource-specific or symbolic aspects of policies of cultural recognition (Sibley, Wilson, & Robertson, 2007; Sibley et al., 2008) and predicted reduction in support for these policies over time (Sibley & Liu, 2012). Furthermore, Sengupta, Barlow, and Sibley (2012) showed that post-colonial ideologies are shaped by ingroup and outgroup contact. These authors found that symbolic exclusion (but not historical negation) was related to both ingroup and outgroup contact among both the dominant majority and indigenous minority (Sengupta et al., 2012). Outgroup contact decreased symbolic exclusion among the dominant majority but increased symbolic exclusion among the indigenous Maori. For ingroup contact, in turn, the pattern was exactly the opposite. Thus, for indigenous peoples, it was found that intergroup contact with the majority group may increase system-favoring ideologies.

Overall, existing empirical research on colonial and post-colonial ideologies suggests that they not only shape intercultural relations in the present or in the future (Sibley et al., 2008; Sibley & Liu, 2012; Vala et al., 2008; Valentim, 2011) but that existing intercultural dynamics do also contribute to the maintenance of these ideologies.

The colonial past and group-based emotions

Another line of studies addresses group-based emotions elicited by collective memories of colonization. According to intergroup emotions theory and existing empirical research (Doosje et al., 1998; Mackie & Smith, 2002; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Ray, Mackie, & Smith, 2014), people experience group-based emotions in response to events that affect the group the person identifies with. That is, emotions such as fear, anger, guilt, or compassion may be experienced individually, without face-to-face interaction with the ingroup or the outgroup, as a result of the exposure to events that are relevant to one's ingroup. Research has examined both negative group-based emotions, such as anger (e.g., Figueiredo, Doosje, & Valentim, 2015; Figueiredo, Valentim, & Doosje, 2015; Halperin, 2011, 2014), or guilt and shame (e.g., Doosje et al., 1998; Dresler-Hawke & Liu, 2006; Klein, Licata, & Pierucci, 2011; Marques et al., 2006; Páez, Marques, Valencia & Vincze, 2006), and positive ones, such as hope (e.g., Cohen-Chen, Halperin, Crisp & Gross, 2014; Halperin, 2014; Moeschberger, Dixon, Niens, & Cairns, 2005) or respect (e.g., Leonard, Mackie, & Smith, 2011). It is argued that these emotions are equally intense as the emotions related to personal experience and predict evaluations of the others (outgroups) and action tendencies toward the others in the same way personal emotions do (Mackie & Smith, 2002). Thus, these emotional responses are expected to affect intergroup relations (Giner-Sorolla, 2012; Iyer & Leach, 2008).

One specific area of interest in research on group-based emotions is how people emotionally respond to reminders of ingroup transgressions in the past (see Branscombe & Doosje, 2004; Iyer & Leach, 2008), which may evoke feelings of collective guilt, i.e., a feeling that the ingroup did not behave as it should have (Branscombe & Doosje, 2004; Doosje et al., 1998; Páez, Marques, Valencia, & Vincze, 2006) and/or collective shame, i.e., the concern about the damage that ingroup transgression causes to the ingroup's image (Lickel, Schmader, & Barquissau, 2004). Negative memories of colonialism may therefore be an important trigger for experiencing group-based emotions within formerly colonizing groups, as they can feel collective guilt or shame for colonial crimes committed by the ingroup. In turn, remembering positive aspects of colonial times may reduce these moral group-based emotions.

Existing research has shown that reminders of past colonial crimes or the way the victimized outgroup is perceived can indeed activate feelings of collective guilt or other negative emotions among the members of the colonizing country (Doosje et al., 1998; Figueiredo, Doosje, Valentim, & Zebel, 2010; Klein et al., 2011; Leone & Sarrica, 2014; Licata & Klein, 2010; Zebel et al., 2007). Importantly, experiencing collective guilt may depend on the strength of ingroup identification. In the context of colonial legacies, some studies have indicated that high-identifiers react defensively with lower collective guilt compared to low-identifiers (Doosje et al., 1998), while others showed that the effect of identification on collective guilt may be curvilinear because for low-identifiers their national history and associated collective guilt is not relevant (Klein et al., 2011). Finally, there is also empirical evidence that the effects of identification on collective guilt may depend on the source of information or previous reparations (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 2006). Finally, family involvement in a nation's colonization past may be another important determinant of experiencing self-conscious group-based emotions (Zebel et al., 2007).

Furthermore, group-based emotions, including collective guilt and shame (Allpress, Barlow, Brown, & Loius, 2010; Branscombe, Slugoski, & Kappen, 2004; Figueiredo et al., 2010; Figueiredo, Valentim, & Doosje, 2011; Klein et al., 2011; Lickel et al., 2004), are known to influence collective behavior, e.g. the willingness to offer reparations for ingroup's wrongdoings (Augoustinos, Hastie, & Wright, 2011; Brown, González, Zagefka, Manzi, & Čehajić, 2008; Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003; Mari, Andrighetto, Gabbiadini, Durante, & Volpato, 2010). On the other hand, the levels of guilt, shame, and taking responsibility for colonial crimes tended to be low across different studies (Allpress et al., 2010; Doosje et al., 1998; Klein et al., 2011; Marques et al., 2006; see also Leach, Zeineddine, & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013 for a general review on self-criticism for mass violence). As Branscombe (2004) concluded, collective guilt is a fragile emotion.

Colonial past, acculturation, and adjustment of minorities

Finally, whereas sociologists have been interested in such topics as resistance, collaboration, and other practices of the colonized (see [Steinmetz, 2014](#) for a review), research in social or cultural psychology has only rarely addressed such psychocultural constructs as acculturation, ethnic identity, or the psychological wellbeing of colonial-origin minorities in the context of colonial legacies ([Bhatia & Ram, 2001](#); [Okazaki, David, & Abelman, 2008](#)). This is surprising, considering the tremendous consequences colonialism has had for indigenous populations across the world, starting from territorial disposessions and the exploitation of natural resources and ending with the collective traumatizing of the formerly colonized communities and eventually contributing to the emergence of a colonial mentality.

Classic authors in cross-cultural psychology have highlighted that identity processes and related acculturation do not take place in a socio-political vacuum but rather depend on multiple socio-structural conditions and power relations between social groups (such as the formerly colonizing and colonized) (e.g., [Berry, 2006](#); [Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997](#)). However, to our knowledge, the question of how collective memories of colonialism influence acculturation responses and/or the adjustment of ethnic minorities or indigenous populations has not been addressed in a systematic way (but see [Figueiredo, Oldenhove, & Licata, forthcoming](#)), except for research on colonial mentality and mental health ([David, 2008, 2009](#); [David & Nadal, 2013](#); [David & Okazaki, 2006a, 2006b, 2010](#); [Utsey et al., 2015](#); [Woods, Zuniga, & David, 2012](#)). In this line of reasoning, the former forced submission of the colonized is considered as an enduring source of suffering and mental illness ([Fanon, 2008](#)).

Both qualitative and quantitative empirical research has indeed corroborated that colonial mentality is a significant correlate of adjustment or mental health ([David & Nadal, 2013](#); [David & Okazaki, 2006a](#); [Utsey et al., 2015](#)). Colonial mentality was associated with depressive symptoms, and lower personal and collective self-esteem among Filipino Americans, and especially related with depressive symptoms among first-generation Filipino American immigrants ([David & Nadal, 2013](#); [David & Okazaki, 2006](#)). In turn, [Utsey et al. \(2015\)](#) provided, to our knowledge the first, empirical research that corroborated that colonial mentality also has detrimental consequences for the psychological wellbeing and health of the contemporary inhabitants of the former colonies, and more precisely young adults in Ghana.

Overview of papers in the special issue

Together, existing literature in social and cultural psychology has provided a significant amount of empirical evidence showing the dualism of social representations of colonialism among both the formerly colonizing and the colonized. However, research demonstrating how these representations translate into current intercultural relations is only just emerging. In the following section, we present eight papers included in this Special Issue, each of them representing one of the three research areas in the topic of colonial past and intercultural relations (see [Table 1](#) for an overview).

The research presented in these papers forms a relevant contribution to the advance in knowledge on the relationship between the colonial past and current intercultural relations, filling in missing gaps in several ways. In this vein, papers addressing the topic of colonial and post-colonial ideologies and prejudice cover diverse outcome variables simultaneously, ranging from context-specific resource-related policies of cultural recognition ([Newton, Sibley, & Osborne, forthcoming](#)) to multiple measures of attitudes toward immigration and legitimization of social inequality, perceptions of colonized and colonizer, or colonizer's self-descriptions ([Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming](#)). Thus, these papers provide new and sound evidence that post-colonial ideologies may damage intercultural relations between the formerly colonizing and the colonized on different levels. In the domain of group-based emotions, this Special Issue goes beyond measuring self-reported group-based emotions by examining observed and thus objective emotional reactions to the reminders of colonial past ([Leone, d'Ambrosio, Migliorisi, & Sessa, forthcoming](#)), as well as collective guilt norms among the formerly colonizer populations ([Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming](#)) or collective guilt assignment by the citizens of formerly colonized countries ([Licata, Khan, Lastrego, Cabecinhas, Valentim, & Liu](#)). Besides, research on collective memories of colonialism and acculturation of colonial-origin minorities is practically non-existent (but see [David & Okazaki, 2006a](#) who showed that colonial mentality was related to the stronger adoption of the host culture and the weaker preservation of the culture of origin among the colonial-origin minority), and this Special Issue links the colonial past and the acculturation of indigenous populations or colonial-origin immigrants ([Bennet & Liu, forthcoming](#); [Figueiredo et al., forthcoming](#)). Finally, [Adams, Estrada-Villalta, and Gómez Ordoñez](#), along the lines of criticism regarding the lack of interest in colonial legacies in cultural psychology ([Bhatia & Ram, 2001](#); [Okazaki, David, & Abelman, 2008](#)), go one step further in explaining how cultural psychology (among other fields) may contribute to further fueling the colonial hegemony (or “coloniality of being”) among us psychologists. Importantly, this Special Issue includes the perspectives of both formerly colonizing nations ([Adams, Estrada-Villalta, Gómez Ordoñez, forthcoming](#); [Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming](#); [Leone et al., forthcoming](#); [Licata et al., forthcoming](#); [Newton et al., forthcoming](#); [Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming](#)) and formerly colonized nations ([Adams et al., forthcoming](#); [Bennet & Liu, forthcoming](#); [Figueiredo et al., forthcoming](#); [Licata et al., forthcoming](#)), with the papers of both [Licata](#) and colleagues and [Adams](#) and colleagues referring simultaneously to both perspectives. Existing research has so far done this only scarcely (e.g., [Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010](#)).

Another relevant contribution of this Special Issue is the variety of samples and methods used in the study of collective memory of colonial past and its present-day consequences. This Special Issue brings together eight papers also covering diverse and understudied historical contexts (colonization of Algeria, Congo, Ethiopia and the African continent in general, as well as the colonization of the Māori in New Zealand) and data collected across eleven countries (Angola, Belgium, Burundi, Cape Verde, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Guinea-Bissau, Italy, Mozambique, New Zealand, and Portugal), as well as diverse samples, including not only university students ([Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming](#); [Leone et al., forthcoming](#); [Licata et al., forthcoming](#); [Valentim & Heleno,](#)

Table 1
Overview of papers presented in the Special Issue.

Authors	Short title	Context/sample	Perspective	N	Method	Predictors	Outcomes
Adams et al., forthcoming	Hegemonic psychology as intercultural relations		Colonizer and colonized	-	-	-	-
Newton et al. (forthcoming)	Historical Negation; Symbolic Exclusion; and Bicultural Policies	New Zealand Europeans	Colonizer	15,607	Cross-sectional survey	Post-colonial ideologies (historical negation and symbolic exclusion)	Opposition to resource-based bicultural policies
Valentim and Heleno, (forthcoming)	Luso-tropicalism	Portuguese students	Colonizer	148	Cross-sectional survey	Luso-tropicalist colonial ideology (harmonious past relations, colonial past, ability to adapt, cultural integration)	Prejudice and attitudes toward immigration; Perceptions of the colonized and colonizer; Nationalist self-description; Explanations for socio-economic disadvantage of immigrants
Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, (forthcoming)	Guilt Norms Regarding Historical Violence	French students, colonization of Algeria	Colonizer	93	Cross-sectional survey	Collective guilt norms for ingroup and outgroup	Collective guilt; group-based emotions; conciliatory intentions and behaviors; prejudice
Leone et al., forthcoming	Emotional and cognitive reactions to the colonial invasion of Ethiopia	Italian students, invasion of Ethiopia	Colonizer	42	Experiment with measurement at three time points	Historical narratives about colonial crimes	Observed (facial expressions) and self-reported emotional reactions; Self-conscious emotions (guilt & shame); myths about the ingroup; reparations
Licata, Khan, Lastrego, Cabecinhas, Valentim, & Liu	Social representations of colonialism and guilt	African and European students; Colonization of Africa	Colonizer and colonized	1134	Cross-sectional survey	Social representations of colonialism (exploitation and development)	Collective guilt and shame; Reparations; National identification
Figueredo et al. (forthcoming)	Colonial past and acculturation	Congolese immigrants in Belgium	Colonized	43	Semi-structured interviews; Thematic analysis	Negative and positive collective memories of colonialism and consequences of colonialism	Acculturation strategies; Lack of recognition of prejudice
Bennet & Liu, forthcoming	Historical trajectories for reclaiming indigenous identity in mental health	Māori, New Zealand	Colonized	na	Case study	Historical narratives of the colonial encounter	Identity Acculturation; Mental health

forthcoming) but also immigrants (Figueiredo et al., forthcoming), nation-wide samples of adults (Newton et al., forthcoming), or indigenous populations (Bennet & Liu). Methods applied by the authors of the eight contributions range from experiments (Leone et al., forthcoming), cross-sectional small-scale and large-scale nation-wide surveys (Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming; Newton et al., forthcoming; Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming), both self-reported data (all papers in the Special Issue) and observed measures of facial expression (Leone et al., forthcoming), and a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews (Figueiredo et al., forthcoming) to case studies (Bennet & Liu) or theoretical reviews (Adams et al., forthcoming).

Below, we review the specific contributions of these papers by the area of interest.

Social representations of the colonial past

All eight papers in this Special Issue reflect a concern over the question of how remembering the colonial past is represented among both the formerly colonizing and colonized populations. Licata and colleagues test the two-dimensional structure of social representations of colonialism (exploitation and development) among Europeans (formerly colonizers) and Africans (formerly colonized). In a similar manner, by means of qualitative methodology, Figueiredo and colleagues explore both more critical (negative) and more benevolent (positive) collective memories of colonialism in the Congo among Congolese immigrants, differentiating between social representations of what colonialism was in the past (e.g., exploitation of native inhabitants of colonized countries) and of what the consequences of colonization are for the present (e.g., social inequality experienced by colonial-origin immigrants). Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber (forthcoming) also tap into a critical dimension of beliefs people hold about the ingroup's past through the notion of collective guilt norms. In turn, Valentim and Heleno (forthcoming) focus more specifically on a context-specific colonial system of beliefs, luso-tropicalism. In a similar vein, Bennet and Liu depict historical trajectories of the manner in which people remember the encounter between Māori and European New Zealanders and show how these memories may be elaborated on with a specific socio-political purpose long after an event has occurred. Relatedly, both Leone and colleagues and Newton and colleagues reflect upon social denial or the historical negation of colonial transgressions. Whereas Newton and colleagues study the dangers of historical negation of colonialism and its consequences for the present, Leone and colleagues examine emotional and cognitive reactions to breaking the social denial of the past (indirect or explicit descriptions of ingroup transgressions). Finally, Adams and colleagues critically analyze how this historical negation transformed into colonial hegemony not only in everyday life but also in science and psychology.

Although all these dimensions are certainly dependent upon the historical and contemporary context, underlying this joint classificatory effort across all eight papers is a taxonomy of representations of the colonial past that could range from its historical negation or social denial, through to benevolent representations of what happened (luso-tropicalism; positive remembering and consequences of colonialism; development), to explicit and critical representations of colonialism as a violation of human rights and, in many cases, an instance of genocide. It is also noteworthy that many contributions to this Special Issue consider dualism and ambivalence of the representations of colonialism, showing that people are able to hold simultaneously negative but also positive views of the colonial past (Figueiredo et al., forthcoming; Licata et al., forthcoming).

However, beyond the significant contribution of all papers concerning the content of social representations of the colonial past and its legacies, this Special Issue sheds light on the processes through which these collective memories and systems of beliefs condition the way groups relate to each other in the present. Below, we outline the way the papers included in this Special Issue respond to this question along the three main themes already proposed in the overview of the state of art.

Colonial and post-colonial ideologies and prejudice

Four papers of the Special Issue address the role colonial and/or post-colonial ideologies play in reproducing, maintaining, and reinforcing domination of the descendants of colonizers over the descendants of the colonized. Hence, among these post-colonial ideologies, the Special Issue covers the coloniality persisting in psychological science (Adams et al., forthcoming), that predominates in the Portuguese way of interpreting colonial past luso-tropicalism (Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming), the historical negation and symbolic exclusion characterizing New Zealand's system of beliefs (Newton et al., forthcoming), and the collective guilt norms regarding past French colonization in Algeria (Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming).

The paper that opens this Special Issue provides an interesting meta-perspective on how we, as psychologists, may be biased and driven by post-colonial ideologies in the manner that we study intercultural relations. In their paper, Adams and colleagues provide a critical reflection on the coloniality inherent in the standards of psychological science, including the study of intercultural relations. The authors not only claim that coloniality (i.e., colonial mentality) is present in power dynamics between the majority (colonizer) and minority (colonized) groups that legitimize persisting colonial domination, but also call for the recognition and acknowledgement of the dark reality of coloniality of knowledge, where individualism and the independent self are favored over collectivism and interdependent ways of being. As a remedy against such a biased way of interpreting reality and generating knowledge, Adams and colleagues propose two decolonial strategies: denaturalizing such tendencies or phenomena that apply to individualistic contexts and are treated as a just-natural standard, and normalizing such tendencies that the hegemonic forms of knowledge portray as deviant.

The following three papers aim to show how post-colonial ideologies, specific to a given context (Newton et al., forthcoming; Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming) or applicable to different post-colonial contexts (Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming), are the grounds for legitimizing inequality between minority and majority groups in post-colonial intergroup relations and for naturalizing and consolidating prejudice toward minorities. These three papers jointly unpack three systems of beliefs that enable the group to

disconnect its negative colonial past from contemporary intercultural relations: a) denying the role colonial history has in shaping current intergroup relations (Newton et al., forthcoming) b) representing colonial history as more benevolent than it was, that is, as a period of friendly relations between the colonizers and the colonized peoples in addition to the absence of violence in the past and the presence of cultural integration in the present (Valentim & Heleno, forthcoming); and c) adopting a no-remorse norm, that is, denying feelings of collective responsibility in the present for the colonial atrocities that happened in a distant past (Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming).

Newton and colleagues put a special emphasis on the specific historical context in which ideologies that predict political attitudes in post-colonial nations develop. In this paper, the authors show that historical negation and symbolic exclusion uniquely predict opposition to four resource-based bicultural policies (regarding Māori ownership of the foreshore and seabed, rates exemptions on Māori land, reserving places for Māori medical students, and free-to-air Māori television channels), after controlling for general ideologies and demographic characteristics. In the same vein, the study by Valentim and Heleno (forthcoming) provides empirical evidence that a belief in luso-tropicalism – namely embracing the ideas that Portuguese people are predisposed to harmonious relations with other peoples, that they were particularly adaptable to the tropics, and that the Portuguese colonial past was generally positive – is linked with general prejudice toward different groups living in Portugal and thus contradicts post-colonial assertions about the absence of prejudice. Finally, Bonnot and Krauth-Gruber's results reveal that injunctive (what should be done) and, to a lesser extent, descriptive (what is done) no-remorse ingroup norms were associated with more prejudice toward colonial minorities and less support for both instrumental (compensations) and symbolic (apologies) reparations (for more details see the following section on group-based emotions).

Overall, these papers highlight the repercussions that post-colonial ideologies among the descendants of the colonizers may have in contemporary societies, such as preventing people from feeling any moral group-based emotions about the ingroup's responsibility in colonial crimes, justifying the expression of prejudice toward the descendants of the colonized, or simply dissociating the colonial past from the present-day intercultural relations.

Group-based emotions as a response to the ingroup's colonial past

Three papers in this Special Issue consider group-based emotions experienced by the descendants of the colonizers. For instance, Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber (forthcoming) not only examine to what extent collective guilt norms are associated with intergroup responses such as prejudice or agreement with reparations but also how these norms actually make people feel such emotions. In their paper, the authors provide empirical evidence that both injunctive and descriptive no-remorse norms for the ingroup prevented French participants from feeling group-based emotions such as collective guilt and negative self-focused emotions (feeling ashamed or afflicted). In turn, only injunctive norms were related to feeling less anger toward ingroup transgressions whereas descriptive norms were associated with feeling less dissonance-related emotions (e.g., discomfort). Licata and colleagues also assess expectations concerning collective guilt among the descendants of colonizers (Europeans) and colonized (Africans). Both ingroup collective guilt norm among Europeans (in line with the results obtained by Bonnot & Krauth-Gruber, forthcoming), and outgroup collective guilt norm among Africans were associated with more support for reparations. Interestingly, although the descendants of colonizers were more critical of colonialism compared to those of the colonized, they were less likely to believe that present generations of Europeans are accountable for the misdeeds of colonialism in the past compared to Africans, who expected Europeans to feel collective guilt and offer reparations. Finally, Leone and colleagues examine emotional (and also cognitive) reactions among the descendants of Italian colonizers to explicit reminders of the colonial invasion of Ethiopia. Their study shows that breaking the social denial of ingroup crimes awakened moral emotions (e.g., moral shame), which were associated with support for reparative actions.

Colonial past, acculturation, and adjustment of the colonized

Together with Licata et al.'s study, the two final papers of this Special Issue reflect the perspective of the descendants of the colonized. The contribution of these papers to the state of knowledge on the colonial past and intercultural relations is of particular importance because they shift the common focus on the descendants of colonizers to the minority group's perspective: the descendants of the colonized. Figueiredo and colleagues and Bennet and Liu link the colonial past with acculturation and adjustment of the descendants of the colonized. Interestingly, these two papers reflect two different realities of the descendants of the colonized. Whereas Figueiredo and colleagues reflect collective memories of colonialism and acculturation of the descendants of the colonized in the context of the former metropole (i.e., immigrants from former colonies), Bennet and Liu examine the implications historical trajectories have for the present-day situation of the descendants of the colonized in their own country (i.e., indigenous peoples). These two papers illustrate the dangers that a colonial mentality (David & Okazaki, 2006a; also see Adams et al., forthcoming) on coloniality of being) poses for the colonial-origin minorities who frequently do not have any other choice than to assimilate the colonial narratives of the dominant group. These processes may serve to legitimize their unprivileged status in the society in the present, impose their assimilation to the mainstream culture, as well as damage their wellbeing and health. In this vein, Figueiredo and colleagues find that, among Congolese immigrants in Belgium, negative memories of Belgian colonialism were positively linked to maintenance of the culture of origin, but negatively with the adoption of the host culture; in turn, positive memories of colonialism were not related to acculturation. Bennet and Liu suggest that, even in such a "bicultural society" as New Zealand, there is still a lot to achieve: the mainstream society still needs to improve in accommodating biculturalism. The authors highlight the need for historical consciousness in understanding the historical trajectories of minorities affected in the present by colonialism of the past. Using the example of the Māori in New Zealand, they show that a contemporary bicultural society may be a social construction of yesterday,

whereas the distant past is far from the discourse based on the peaceful coexistence in respect for the indigenous cultures. In the meantime, the painful history of the colonialism of the Māori people remains reflected only in their disadvantaged social status and the high prevalence of mental disorders or suicide. Together, both papers point to the need for both institutional acknowledgment and room for research on the colonial past and the acculturation experiences and wellbeing of colonial-origin minorities in tandem.

Practical implications and thoughts on future research

This Special Issue is not only a significant contribution to the state of the art in research on collective memories of colonialism and intercultural relations, but it also opens an avenue for practical applications of the findings presented throughout the eight papers.

History education may be a substantial area for applying research on colonial memories and intercultural relations because the way history is taught may already shape the relations between different national, religious, or ethnic groups in the early years of individuals (see Páez, Bobowik, & Liu, 2017). By empirically corroborating the association between social representations of colonialism and diverse psychological processes that affect societies in the present, this Special Issue highlights the importance of teaching descendants of both the colonizers and the colonized to understand the historical continuity of their shared colonial history, and how it affects their relations in the present.

Furthermore, the existing research has demonstrated the hegemony of Western historical representations of the past (Páez, Bobowik et al., 2016; Páez, Liu et al., 2016; Techio et al., 2010). Therefore, as already signaled by Volpato and Licata (2010), future research should above all include the perspective of the colonizers and the colonized simultaneously, which has so far only rarely been done empirically. It is necessary to sensitize history teachers, editors of history textbooks, and policy makers about how colonial history is being narrated and how these narratives, usually framed by the dominant group, may affect contemporary relations between groups who share a history of colonialism (see Psaltis, Carretero, & Cejajic-Clancy, 2017; Van Nieuwenhuysse & Valentim, in press). In particular, practitioners in history teaching should help their students adopt the perspective of the colonized. For instance, they should keep both perspectives in mind when they refer to historical events and leaders related to their colonial history.

Another aspect that is still scarcely addressed in the study of the colonial past is colonization as a source of anger, hate, disgust, and contempt from the colonized toward the colonizers. It is essential to understand the collective emotion of anger and its role in independence wars and collective violence, such as in Algeria and the current situation in the Middle East, and in the reconstruction of colonized social identities overall (see Fanon, 1961). Altogether, more research is necessary to address the perspective of colonial-origin minorities (also see Volpato & Licata, 2010), with a special focus on the consequences of colonialism on the wellbeing and acculturation for these groups but also on group-based emotions and identity processes among them.

Together, the contributions in this Special Issue stress the importance of considering colonial legacies in the study of contemporary intercultural relations and provide a new set of empirical findings that shed light on the link between the colonial past and relations between groups in the present. We believe that the results presented here can be useful in the field of history education and for promoting positive intergroup relations in contemporary societies, where colonial-origin minorities and the descendants of the colonizers live together. However, many questions remain unanswered. We hope that this Special Issue will inspire further research to respond to these persistent issues, as well as dialogue and interdisciplinary work in the domain between social and cultural psychology and other social sciences, such as history, anthropology, and political science.

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