*PINS 68 (1), 2026, 31 – 47, **DOI:** https://doi.org/10.57157/pins2026Vol68iss1a6797*

Psychology in black: An analytical concept for centring blackness in psychology

Abstract

The implications of colonisation on the psyche of black people have been a focus of analysis for decades. Black scholars like Frantz Fanon and black psychologists from various regions have developed different interpretations and methods for engaging with the psyche of black people. Their theoretical contributions include examining the phenomenology of oppression, the psychology of oppression, and African conceptions of psychological inquiry. This paper builds on these theories and proposes a new mode of analysis that interprets the psyche as an assemblage of intersecting forms of antiblackness, termed psychology in black. Psychology in black offers a perspective that accounts for the construction of the black psychic structure as a result of antiblack colonial violence. Its mode of analysis and tools of abstraction are rooted in the experience of blackness. Blackness is engaged as an epistemological register of psychic enclosures or scripts. Furthermore, it is understood as constructed by colonial metaphysics, producing a set of ontologies and existential realities that inform the development of the black psychic structure. Thus, psychology in black is presented as a praxis of investigation that aids a systematic mode of thinking that holistically locates black psychic development within the arrangements of colonial power.

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Keywords

Blackness, epistemology, ontology, colonial metaphysics, psychology

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Introduction

The will and need to understand the black subject have been at the centre of colonial governments and academic entities. Psychology became key in the endeavours of colonial governments because it is an essential variable in human functioning, determining whether one is conscious of oneself and one's surroundings. Psychology provides

an important case for subjugation due to its ability to capture indoctrination and ideals on a metaphysical level. This means it forms part of the matrix of colonial indoctrination, whereby it can be colonised and is susceptible to psychological determinism, which refers to particular psychological dispositions/results arising from colonial-induced ontologies and epistemologies. The latter articulates what subjection and subject-making from a psychological perspective. A psychological perspective can be understood by engaging the aftermath of colonial violence and the role of psychology as a discipline, especially since the black subject is either constructed theoretically and empirically through forged and misleading information. In this case, misconstrued theories and research define forms of humanity that black people could be classified into. Theories related to black intelligence (Fick, 1929), psychopathological constructions, and developmental malfunctions (Lin strum, 2016) are some of those that have structured the world's perception of black people. Ultimately, these theories have become naturalised to define and represent a black being, while informing a particular type of metaphysics.

In attempts to capture misconceptions and eradicate misconstrued ideas about black people, there is a liberatory stance in psychology that has sought to account for the psychic damages caused by colonial violence and provide solutions toward a new way of understanding the black psyche. These new ways include the conceptions of Black psychology, African psychology, and decolonial psychology. Through these new ways of knowing, the black psyche has understood from various ontological locations, such as cultural perspectives and narratives of violence (Fanon, 1986; Akbar, 2003; Nwoye, 2015). Nonetheless, this paper aligns itself with the same horizon of thought; however, it seeks to track the arrangement of power in the development of the black psyche by introducing a perspective termed psychology in black. It locates blackness as the key foundation for unpacking the psyche of black people because its description encompasses the black experiences as ontologised. Ultimately, psychology in black asks one to think beyond disciplinary boundaries to address questions of being and thought.

Mapping the lenses of analysis of a black subject

In psychology, as in any field of knowledge, black people have assumed a bystander position, forced to observe white psychologists constructing their understanding of the world from their own reality. In the name of defining and understanding the black subject, black people were subjected to physiological and psychological abuse (Linstrum, 2016; Fick, 1929) for the sake of knowledge. In both academic and political spaces, black people have often been represented as mere shadows of white people. With a history marked by misrecognition, torture, defacement, pathologisation, and the ontological and epistemological construction of black identity, psychology has created a framework that undermines the genuine understanding of black people's psychology, as it continues to perpetuate a pathological perspective. For example, Biesheuvel (1958) established research precedents that prioritised questioning African people's behaviour.

This approach investigates from a standpoint of abnormality while determining the best methods for researching Africans. Meanwhile, Fick (1929) set a precedent for comparison that positions white individuals as the standard and black people as a contrasting reference point. This has led to a theoretical stagnation, where the analysis of Black lives struggles to move beyond the epistemological lens of abnormality and inherent difference, presenting a significant challenge. The capacity to theorise the epistemological, ontological, and metaphysical foundations of psychological knowledge for black people becomes obscured by misrepresentation. This is not merely a stagnation of psychological knowledge; rather, it reflects how the psychological sciences struggled to understand psychology from the metaphysical perspective of colonial oppression. Colonial metaphysics encompasses all doctrines, experiences, ideologies, actions, behaviours, symbolism, thoughts, emotions, societal rules, morals, and values that constitute everyday life, becoming naturalised. Engaging with colonial metaphysics is crucial because it plays a powerful role in inscribing and facilitating the formation of a black psychic structure.

Nonetheless, the pitfalls of psychology towards black people have consistently included the tendency to overlook their psychological dispositions and characteristics as they relate to an oppressive system that impacts them. This tendency effectively relegates the psyche to a distinct phenomenon, isolated from external influences. For instance, Biesheuvel (1958) acknowledges the significance of environmental factors, which he associates with cultural, climatic factors, and briefly with contact with Western civilization. However, understanding this contact is not solely about how black people are affected; rather, it concerns what they have assimilated and whether that assimilation influences their behaviour. Manganyi (1973) reiterates this point and critiques the research conducted on black people by whites as paternalistic, offering a naive interpretation of black people's personalities. He further contends that the inability of white scholars to fully grasp the black experience stems from their existential distance from it, leading to inadequate abstraction. Consequently, behavioural patterns among black people are frequently generalized as pathological rather than viewed as reactions to a hostile and violent environment. The compartmentalisation of the psyche, into a distinct category of human functioning as highlighted in Manganyi's critique, has fostered a secluded, totalistic, and deterministic perspective on understanding black people's psyche. In these cases, the foundations of analysis are established, and the discourse surrounding psychological practice is predetermined.

Psychology uses various intellectual apparatuses, such as reason, to advance a totalistic and determinist view of the black psyche, misplacing the black experience. Reason is used within the epistemological conceptions and boundaries of Eurocentrism. Furthermore, reason is applied in psychology based on the foundation that sees black

people as a problem, as Du Bois (1903) has mentioned, which means reason adopts a lens of deficiency. How reason is applied is similar to what Du Bois (1903) utters:

> "They approach me in a half-hesitant sort of way, eye me curiously or compassionately, and then, instead of saying directly, how does it feel to be a problem? they say, I know an excellent colored man in my town; or, I fought at Mechanicsville; or, Do not these Southern outrages make your blood boil?" (p. 7).

Du Bois is articulating the gaze of perception, which formulates how black people are reasoned into existence. When the basis of reasoning is viewing the other as a problem, it means the psyche is not just viewed as deficient but as representing a non-human status. This implies that black people are not capable of processing human attributes and, in turn, cannot be thought of as having the same psychological capacity. Psychology functions to define human characteristic that warrants and direct how black people will be treated in colonial societies. As a result, certain psychological subjects/images, while forming subjectivities, are created. This can be said, in reference to what every psychological empirical research study has given the world, which is a 'scientific narrative' that constructs psychic capacities that will define how black people fit into humanity, or rather, continue to be in their non-human stance. One such 'scientific narrative' is that describing intelligence – which functions within a discourse of lack for black people (Fick, 1929; Rushton, Skuy, & Fridjhon, 2003). Lack of intelligence is a psychological mythology that has become a dominant schema and template of association that black people are known for, within psychology and beyond. The deterministic nature of psychology took this psychological mythology under its conceptual boundaries of Western humanism to underlie the basis of all psychological experiences and various existential matters. This poses a challenge to implementing epistemological and ontological conversations in psychology because of the binding psychological phenomena of Eurocentric rationality that have been naturalised as the core of any psychological analysis (i.e. conceptions of basic psychic structure). But also, the challenge comes with removing all the mythologies enforced by psychology that have penetrated multiple academic discourses and conversations, solely because psychology feeds on multiple academic/scientific inquiries.

The above historical analysis of psychology and the black subject indicates that any form of analysis should be located within two forms of critique or modes of analytics, which explain subject-making within psychology. Firstly, it has to identify empirical studies and their theoretical and social implications in defining and setting the plane field for describing and understanding black people in relation to white people and other races. For example, if one sets their eyes on the Carnegie Corporation Poor White Study in South Africa: Report of the Carnegie Commission (1932), research conducted in

South Africa from 1927 to 1932 which included psychologists such as R.W Wilcocks and E.G Malherbe. The scope of the Carnegie report is quite vast; however, my interest is in the psychological research done and what that meant for black humanity. Willoughby-Herard (2007) argues that the poor white study does racial formation through scientific knowledge production practices. On a political level, the poor white study solidified not just mythologies of whiteness but also of what blackness is. The poor white study consolidated Afrikaner nationalism through the proliferation of scientific movements and academic leadership, as Willoughby-Herard (2007) argues. In addition, a silent proliferation of blackness is constructed, and the consolidated image of a non-being who falls below the human line is created. In such circumstances, psychology functions beyond scientific knowledge but leads society, policy, legislature, legality, and even the economy. It is, therefore, crucial to investigate what it does on an ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological level for black lives. Tracing the line of thinking in psychology, through its scholarship, can assist in identifying how psychology denotes social problems while setting the scene for social and political interactions.

The second mode of analytics is that which looks at subject-making as informed by living through colonial oppression. Fanon (1986), Biko (1978) and others have articulated the type of individuals that colonial oppression makes black people become. Both Fanon (1986) and Biko (1978) have described how a black subject is made to feel and behave inferior to white people. In addition, black people have to make way for whiteness as an overarching ontology that structures their personal and political spaces. Hence, Smith et. al. (2025) argue the relevance of understanding the role of whiteness in psychology, especially since it structures and constructs relations of being. The construction of blackness by Apartheid psychologists (such as Fick and Van Rensburg), as articulated in Foster (1991), adds the narrative of black inferiority in terms of culture and intelligence. These narratives are also signified through the neglect of black people by subjecting them to poverty. Manganyi (1973) attests to this by emphasising how hostile and violent colonial conditions necessitate black people to adapt and produce modes of living that will make living bearable. Living in colonial oppression constructs a subject through various modes of violence given to experience and to embody, but also through a process of self-location, which is a process the oppressed engage in to assess their reality for self-identification purposes. Thus, in looking at the analytics of self-making, we can engage the signification of the psychological system, that is, how psychological processes are established. The consideration of the signification process becomes a way to understand how black people internalise colonial subjectivity. This extends to understanding the intersections between subjection, ontology and identity making, and how they form one's consciousness.

To consider, the modes of subject-making permit one to dislocate Western rationality of the psyche by locating the construction of the black psyche from the perspective of

human functioning- that means various perspectives focusing on the black experience can be utilised to account for the intricacies of the psyche. Since black people are conceptualised and constructed under Western humanism and modernity, they are inversely forced to embody a psyche that is against themselves, which is a psyche based on anti-blackness. Anti-blackness, as Gordon (1995) iterates, explains how black people are categorised in conceptions of inhumanity and inferiority. Hence, the concept of sociogeny by Fanon (1986) becomes essential, particularly Wynter (1999) extension of it, as it considers social systems and colonial socialisation as key to subjection, but also sociogeny as a sociodiagnostic tool that expands the multiple dimensions in which concepts should be understood, based on how individuals perceive and experience them. The development of psychological processes as a result of social systems and biological systems that function within colonial socialisation gets unearthed and understood as onto-epistemological.

Ferreira da Silva (2007) describes onto-epistemology as a process of reconfiguration of knowledge bases that configure a racial subject according to its epistemological extracts to postulate a subject's ethical attribute, such as self-determination. This can be extended to how ways of being constructed to survive colonial oppression become naturalised, becoming an epistemology, or a way individuals are known or know themselves. Onto-epistemology lays a foundation for unpacking the development of a particular set of metaphysics and eventually the psyche. Hence, the psyche should be understood as constructed within human defining conditions and imposed knowledge by Western psychology to misconstrue black subjectivities. Mudimbe (1988) calls this a process of reformation of "natives" minds. In essence, psychology created a new epistemological order to describe black people. This epistemological order becomes abiding and has productive power, which naturalises the colonial schemas derived to explain how we know the psychological. Rationality is one such epistemological narrative, it is a descriptive determinant of being that brings a psychological component into the discussion, through questioning of cognitive abilities. The latter is seen in mental capacity comparison studies done by the likes of Fick (1929) and Rushton et al. (2003). Besides rationality being a category specifying defectiveness amongst blacks, it is a strong psychological determinant that produces particular metaphysics, which regulates and enhances certain acts and behaviour, making it a psychological determinant with a productive power that regulates cognitive and behavioural elements of functioning.

With that being said, the injustice, alienation, and dehumanising practices of psychology transcend time and space as they continue to guide models and techniques that prescribe "black behaviours/personalities" based on the trends and frameworks of Western life or experiences. Currently, the black experience in psychology is shaped by the ideology of a neo-colonial society, as well as by the discourses of coloniality and modernity. This situation indicates that the lenses of analysis have not changed, and

the black psychic experience is still equated with the white psychic experience. The argument here is that while psychological perspectives are intertwined with the current political landscape, they also dismiss what political moments and eras instil in one's mind as structures of being/existing.

Even though over the years, there have been great attempts and movements towards understanding the black psyche; whereby black psychologists such as Naim Akbar (2003), Wade Nobles (2013), Augustine Nwoye (2015), Kopano Ratele (2017), etc. have been conceptualised and articulated black people's psychological states in colonial societies. This transition or shift in the conception of the psychology of black people, has resulted in the development of a sub-discipline, Black psychology, African psychology, and decolonial psychology – which seeks to understand black people's behaviour as it has been affected by their historical, social, economic, cultural, and political context (Akbar, 2003). Black and African psychology are often used interchangeably, and their differences are based on locality, meaning black psychology is often located within black American positionality, while African psychology is based within an African positionality. Black psychology identifies the impact of colonial acts by locating various psychological effects caused by colonial acts in various ways. It also focuses on ways/strategies to heal colonial wounds, through acts that can restore the African mind, identity, and consciousness and deduce healing practices, while focusing on psychological analysis of African realities, cultures, and epistemologies (Nobles, 2013). It is a psychology of liberation that seeks to provide teaching tools that unpack the psychological problems of black people – done through inciting critical consciousness, developing black social theories, culturally relevant methodologies, and critiquing racist methodologies (Jones, 1980). African psychology engages the psychology of black people using African cosmologies to understand the psychology of black people (Baldwin, 1989). It does the latter while also considering power dynamics and liberation politics, which brings critical consciousness to theory-making and provides solutions to contemporary conditions African people experience (Jamison, 2008). Nwoye (2015) describes African psychology as a "systematic and informed study of complexities of human mental life, culture and experience in the pre- and post-colonial African world" (p. 57). The conceptions of Black and African psychology are within the analysis of the aftermath of colonisation in the psychic world, which is essential for understanding black people. However, a step further needs to be taken in this analysis, which is to go into the metaphysics of colonisation to unpack what frame of reference the black psyche is constructed under and the outcome of that frame of reference. The latter is seen as formulating a psychological experience by virtue of their socialisation. It is within this argument that I am positioning the argument of the paper along conceptions of construction of being, productive power, and colonial determinants structuring reality, espoused by Wynter (2003) as constructing being human. In this way, the focus becomes on that which structures the psyche along racial markers.

This paper adds a theoretical lens to unpack the black psyche through the conceptualisation of psychology in black. Psychology in black engages the psychological life of black people from multiple intersecting points of colonial impact, looking at a variety of theoretical engagements outside psychology, to gain a holistic understanding of the psychology of black people. The premise of this concept is that theoretical engagement in psychology should include any theorisation of humanity because the mind will always form a template and encrypt daily experiences. Psychology in black introduces an additional element to those introduced by African and black psychology, and that is wrestling with the idea that black people are forced to live within an ontology of anti-blackness. Assuming an ontology of anti-blackness means the formation of one's psychology is infused with a structure informed by anti-blackness. Psychology in black will be positioned as a way of seeing, or rather as a method of excavating black psychological reality. It focuses on the formations and processes of the psyche using blackness as a point of direction. Unpacking and understanding blackness becomes key because it covers the embodiment of various colonial metaphysics enforced onto black people.

Theoretical basis of psychology in black

Psychology in black, is a riffing from More (2019), who coined the term philosophy in black. In that riff, the mode of psychologising is executed from similar conceptions. The conceptions of philosophy in black are within the mode of articulating the black experience from various locations and orientations. The foundation More sets that form the structure of philosophy in black requires a mode of thinking through the black experience from that which may not be immediately evident. Philosophy in black is born out of More's exposure to black consciousness, negritude, Manganyi's existential phenomenology and the emulation of the critiques of the Western canon. As Sithole (2022) argues, philosophy in black is a philosophy from the point of view of those who are philosophising, a living philosophy, and a philosophy of experience. Most importantly, it philosophises from the perspective of being black in an anti-black world. Psychology in black, therefore, follows this epistemic tradition, accounting for the psychic experience of the black, from the perspective of being black in the world. To psychologise, this means the black psyche can be excavated from various modalities outside the bounds of psychology or beyond the disciplinarity of the current canon. Rather, psychologising is synonymous with an analysis of human functioning in its totality. Psychology in black is developed within the black radical tradition, which means it is a point of intersection or synthesis of all forms of black subjective experiences in their diverse nature. In this way, the psychological is read as a point of signification of colonial signifiers. It then forfeits being an outcome of forces of influence, but rather a centre for interpretation of the black experience. That means psychology in black refigures how psychology is read, analysed and conceived. At most, psychology in black accounts for the conception of psychic structures amid an assembly of colonial experiences.

Therefore, psychology in black is introduced as a shift in reason. It is psychology from a black point of view, a means of psychologising from a black perspective. That means the theoretical foundations of psychology in black are within the black radical tradition. In a nutshell, psychology in black argues for "teleological suspension of disciplinarity" (Gordon, 2014, p 87). This means transgressing and moving beyond psychology disciplinary lines or known psychological theories by merely advancing a new perspective on reading the black psyche that privileges the theory of blackness. Here, blackness becomes an ontological position that allows for the excavation of the psychological experience. The change in the locus of reference regarding experience and ontologies becomes critical because it allows the black experience to be fully enunciated in psychological terms. This also means building new thoughts of analysis in psychology that address the analytics of reason, which considers the metaphysics of black psychological experience.

Psychology in black looks at the process of the signification of colonisation, situating the manifestation of multiple psychic economies, particularly power economies that construct psychological dependency, despondency and malfunction. The process of signification is a crucial foundation for theory building of psychology in black because one can capture the dynamics, acts, and terrain of racialisation as it internally captures human functioning. Signification also gives a direction to possible colonial signifiers of the mind. In addition, it is possible to analyse the creation of the subject – which translates to knowing the psychology of a created subject, not as an effect but as a foundation of being. Ultimately, psychology in black does a process of linking and de-linking of the signifier and its signification properties.

Psychology in black predicates and argues for a different way of knowing, doing and thinking about the psychology of black people. This is an outlook that seeks to account for the psychological basis of colonial powers and their signifying abilities. Psychology in black is an argument that synthesises history and its functional mechanisms. That means an analysis of psychological historicity and its functionality, which locates colonial psychic manifestations and their residuals, becomes imminent. This is to position history that cuts across varied dynamics of oppression, using Gordon's (2013) historical nexus, which refers to putting together various historical events, such as the history of violence, freedom, repression, servitude, symbolism, capitalist labour and modernity, to foreground the construction of being and inversely the psychic structure that emanates in the face of tumultuous historical events. A functional historical analysis allows dialectical arguments to uncover paradoxes and contradictions of being black, centered on how the psychological structure makes sense of the experience of oppression. Based on this, psychology in black seeks to demonstrate that the present as it happens is not disconnected from history and that when it comes to matters of being and the psyche, the past is present.

The basis of this theorisation is based on the mode of thinking that prioritises the psychological as an intricate part of the everyday functioning order of being influenced by the colonial system and its modes of subject construction. As a mode of thinking, it prioritises being black in the world, as a starting point, as Manganyi (1973) predicates. Understanding what being black in the world requires in thought and being is possibly a start to making sense of the black psychic experience. Therefore, thinking through psychology from an onto-epistemological lens. That means if we are to know the psychological as an epistemology, we must think of it as an epistemology based on lived experiences – this positions being black in an anti-black world while thinking through signifying properties of the black mind/psyche. Nonetheless, sociogeny (Fanon, 1986; Wynter, 1999), as the productive phenomena of the psychological, gives a holistic onto-epistemological interpretation of the black psyche. Sociogeny as a way of knowing-an epistemological multifaceted explanation of the black social experience, has the potential to identify the social signifiers of the psychic realm. In this way, it is possible to extract psychological apparatus/functions/structure/process grounded in the productive power of colonial socialization. This particularizes the need to see the psychological as an amalgamation point, and in a sense, assemblages of ontologies enacted and the embodiment of epistemologies. By doing so, one gets to understand that the psyche cannot be understood as one-dimensional but as multiple connecting systems of being. As Weheliye (2014) notes, an assemblage represents a complex political, social and economic relation constituting the black experience. I am arguing here for a psychology that epistemologically centres black people, that understands their ways of knowing, being and thinking as they intersect with other areas of human function. This traces black existence from the position of exteriority or alterity to interiority. Hence, understanding the episteme of black existence is a route to understanding the black psyche/psychology of the experience of blackness.

This predicates certain sets of apparatus that theorise the psychology of black people, by associating the constructs of humanity/being and the racial making of the psyche, to argue that the psychological is not only produced and inscribed but can also become a genre of being or an association of certain forms of humanity. Based on this utilising ontology, epistemology, ideologies and metaphysics functioning under colonisation becomes key to understanding the signifying tool of the psyche. Thinking of the psyche as something that can be signified under colonial rule is engaging signification and subject-making of not just the black subject but subject-making under subjugation. When arguing for psychology in black to represent a way of thinking, thinking through metaphysics governing black people becomes essential as a structuring component of the psychic structure, so that the theory to extract the psychological is not just relegated to a theory of human behaviour but rather as a theory of human functioning. Here, I refer to human functioning because colonisation as a set of laws governing humanity imposes specific human conditions that establish mentally distinct human beings.

On blackness and the black psyche

Blackness has been described from multiple epistemological registers that elaborate various experiences, showcasing different ways of being and knowing oneself. For example, blackness has been engaged through an Afro-pessimistic viewpoint, prioritizing an argument that addresses the arrangement of power structures in analysing blackness, along with its ontological statuses. This perspective epistemologically questions the genesis of the concept (Wilderson, 2021). There is also a black-optimistic/poetic viewpoint that highlights the autopoietic nature of blackness and concerns itself with the intricacies of living in appositionality (Moten, 2008). Lastly, there are existential perspectives that focus on questions regarding being black in an anti-black world, addressing matters such as "freedom, anguish, responsibility, embodied agency, sociality, and liberation" (Gordon, 1997, p.3). These reference points illustrate how black subjects ought to make sense of their existence and can be used to elaborate on black people's psychological activities. Furthermore, these reference points indicate new sets of knowledge apparatuses that can be used to understand the black psyche. This can enable psychology in black to examine the locus of the psyche as it captures "unthought positions and appositions" (Moten, 2008, p. 182). This becomes crucial because these epistemological registers are not necessarily inherent but emerge from self-created ways of living, or rather, survival-based pathways that automatically arise based on the demands posed by the hostile anti-black environment in which black people live. Recognising this reality is essential to understanding the dynamism of black thought/thinking and being, which translates to the precarity of the black psyche. It can be expected that psychic schemas and templates would develop, and that would provide epistemological grounds through which we ought to comprehend the black psyche.

To argue for psychology in black, blackness becomes key for conceptualisation. This means the psyche is framed by the question of blackness while considering various epistemological registers. Through distillations of blackness and anti-blackness, psychology in black can extract the etymology of the black psyche; this enables various forms of interpretation about the psyche, especially regarding how to address formations of psychological enclosures and the creation of psychic scripts or determinants through various colonial endeavours. To achieve this, one must adopt a perspective that situates blackness as ontology, phenomenology, and historicity, as Marriott (2022) articulates. Consequently, blackness would be understood as a psychological position because it underpins one's mode of psychologising. By doing this, psychology in black becomes an ethical imperative, advocating for a corrective approach to situating the black being and their mental state through a "rigorous exploration of the identification" (Jackson, 2011, p. 358) of the black psychic experience.

With a special focus on Marriott's (2022) explanation of blackness as an ontology, phenomenology, and historicity. This means that blackness can be seen as a way

of being, often informed by racial ontology or a response to it, and as an existential condition that continues to define the black experience. Furthermore, blackness in its historicity can be contextualized using Wright's (2015) concept called epiphenomenal time, which denotes that current moments or experiences are not directly caused by previous moments or encounters. This means causality is not always linear or direct, and sometimes it is not given. This emphasizes the need to engage different periods of black oppression to explain current phenomena. Hence, I argue that to navigate blackness, psychological faculties emerge. Thus, psychology in black moves beyond references to disciplinarity and rather privileges an analysis of ways of being in an antiblack world. This mode of analysis synthesizes the psychological along with political, social, and structural inclinations. Inferring black psychological experiences from various phenomenological interpretations is theoretically necessary because a synthesised experience of blackness is provided and identified, allowing for the extraction of psychological referential points. This positions psychology in black as a referential point of analysis inclined to establish a metaphysics of colonisation as a foundation for the conceptual part of liberatory psychology. Psychology in black presents itself as a system of thought because it becomes a conceptual framework aimed at capturing the psyche of black people. Based on this, a conception of blackness becomes not just a referential point but captures the metaphysics responsible for the development of certain psychological faculties.

Psychology in black, as a conceptual framework, is concerned with matters of being, thought and knowing, considers metaphysical, ontological, phenomenological and epistemological outlooks of blackness crucial to engage. One can understand the productive power of colonisation by using the term blackness because blackness is a state of being, an ontological position that signifies the psychic experience of black people. Fanon (1986) becomes key here when he says: "Ontology, once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside does not permit us to understand the being of the black man" (p. 110). Fanon can be understood as directing us to look at the realities of black people in such a way that it points to the development of black metaphysics/colonial metaphysics. This means viewing ontology outside Western lenses so that it becomes possible to expand factors framing black ontological experience, and allowing the complexities and multiplicities of blackness to be easily accounted for. In such a case, one can expose psychology to the metaphysical structuring of being, which allows an intricate analysis of human behaviour that is historical/historically present in its functioning. With the latter, I am inversely arguing that psychology as a discipline is not able to extract colonial metaphysics as it affects psychological know-how and being. Marriott (2022) explains why this is the case when he says, blackness is that which:

> encompasses and situates what seems first to limit black being or overflow it, but which, when questioned, that is, disclosed, or unconcealed, does not

> fit into this logos, nor is ordered by it, even making what is most discernible about blackness in its past, future, or present, seem imaginary, moored in a non-present, and *presence*, but in ways which make the non-being that marks blackness as sign, affect, or speaking being, unthinkable except as an appearing, a manifestation, an identity. (p. 137)

However, with the sentiments expressed by Marriott, I posit that if we take blackness as a subject of knowledge, one can view blackness as defining multiple epistemological registers. However, one would have to accept that blackness is inconceivable, inconclusive, and undiscernible in some ways, and lives in the past and present, as Marriott (2022) argues. The implications would have to be seen in how one studies the black psyche and how one conceives it. Psychology in black, therefore, allows for various forms of interpretation, which will foresee different ways of psychologising.

To further integrate the question of being, psychology in black considers the necessity of engaging with the signification process of the metaphysics of the colonial empire. Here, one can explain blackness as having its own metaphysics and, in return, its distinct subjectivity. This perspective enables one to associate developed psychological schemas and templates with colonial metaphysics. Hence, it is crucial to take into account the concerns of Douglass and Wilderson (2013), who question where black metaphysics originates. Perhaps understanding the foundation of black metaphysics means knowing what is expected of black people in their everyday functioning. Here, psychology in black sees the interconnectedness of colonial metaphysics and the development of certain psychological structures. The point is to argue that psychological processes are also constructed when metaphysics is laid out to be lived. Taking colonial metaphysics as a reference for psychic construction allows psychology in black to be a deductive practice that foregrounds psychological dispositions, practices, foundations, and acts based on colonial foundations. This creates the opportunity to understand the psychological by reading metaphysics as socialised between individuals (i.e., in bodies and minds) and structures of existence (i.e., geography/space), which indicates that the multi-dimensionality of psychic distillations is vast and will likely complicate the phenomenological and existential understanding of being black.

Ultimately, psychology in black can identify and utilise the analytics of raciality by Ferreira da Silva (2007), which explains/identifies the apparatus of knowledge constructed by man and society. For psychology, this relates to how psychological knowledge is conceived, but also how the mind is signified. Psychology in black acts as an analytic of raciality by noting the signifiers of the mind, in relation to social configurations (interiority) and bodily experience (exteriority) to a point where one has to account for the process that actualises the mind (Ferreira da Silva, 2007). The modes of knowing the psyche are what appear as fundamental here because the black psyche is

that which has suffered from misdiagnosis and misinterpretation. Hence, knowing what constructs the human is relevant for how the human being is to be known. This is why Wynter (1992, 2003) speaks about epistemology as a productive power, while Ferreira da Silva (2007) speaks about a productive nomos, as an apparatus of scientific reasoning.

Conclusion

Psychology in black is a knowledge apparatus tethered to unpack the founding structures of psychic development using the black archive/black radical traditions that have identified the state of blackness. It demands a shift in the logic of reason when the psychology of black people is concerned. That means acknowledging the psychological as an intercepting point of various colonial impositions.

Psychology in black does a deconstruction and construction at the same time, by unbundling ontological references and synthesising them to find a working signification model of the black psyche. Simultaneously, psychology in black is a diagnostic tool and a discursive practice that combines advocates for a differential approach or consciousness to black people's psychological problems/dilemmas. Furthermore, it is a systematic mode of thinking that holistically locates black psychic development within the arrangements of colonial power. It is a way to study the psychic modalities of power, or the psychic demands of power. Psychology in black, unearths different segments of black life using different anecdotal references such as objects, symbols, codes, theories, ideas, acts, behaviours/and thought patterns to unpack vectors of black life. Psychology in black outlines modes of psychic integration and psychic alienation. Furthermore, it is a perspective that grapples with what configures the psyche towards new modes of signification, particularly in a violent colonial context.

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