

Scientific Report

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

Historical Trajectories and Nested Identities: Content and Process in the Representation of History and its dynamic Relationships with National, Supranational and Ethnic Identities

Goldegg (near Salzburg), Austria, 15 - 18 March 2007

**Convened by:
Janos Laszlo**

Department of Social Psychology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Co-sponsored by:

1. Executive summary

The meeting was held at Goldegg near Salzburg in an Alpin inn from March 15 to 18. Participation numbered 22 people from 12 universities in 11 countries. The picturesque and fairly isolated location of the meeting not only permitted but facilitated additional informal interaction between participants. Given that most of the participants have had a rich previous record of mutual cooperation, informal discussions started from the very first day. Local organizers, particularly Prof. Wolfgang Wagner were eager to serve individual needs of the participants. A good example of this helpfulness was organizing the trips of each participants from the airports and railway stations to the hotel. General atmosphere was extremely good. Young and more experienced scholars communicated with mutual respect. There was a high level of openness to each other's ideas.

The basic idea of the conference was that while the study and teaching of history is the responsibility of historians, understanding how history is appropriated and used to construct identities is a task addressed by social psychologists. We aimed at proposing a project, which is original in that it will provide a suite of detailed quantitative and qualitative empirical investigations that examine how history is represented by Europeans and used to construct social identities. This represents a theoretical challenge for social psychological theories of identity construction, which have for the most part ignored the role of history in this process (e.g. see Capozza & Brown, 2000; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000 for representative approaches), no doubt because many social groups (e.g. social classes, professions, gender etc.) do not generally make use of history to construct their identity. This is manifestly not the case with "peoples" that constitute nation-states and other groupings, and it is no accident that social psychologists concerned with European identity have begun to address this question (see the collection in Breakwell & Lyons, 1996). In this way in the frame of the conference, we wanted to extend existing social psychological theories of identity construction to describe how history is used to construct national, European and ethnic identities.

Our plans are multidisciplinary in nature. It requires combining the kind of experimental approaches used to test theories of social identity and identity-related emotions such as collective guilt with quantitative and qualitative approaches such as survey research and focus groups to identify the social representations of history that are used to construct relevant identities. Linguistics and computerised text analysis will also be used to analyse how history is represented in relevant texts such as school textbooks. Fundamental research of

this kind will help identify how conflicts within and between current European partners are represented and can be resolved. It will identify the conceptions of nationhood and history that are associated with the construction of a meaningful European identity, and a sense of Europe's responsibility to the wider world, ranging from the environment in general to its former colonies in particular. The project will also enable us to address more specific questions such as how minority immigrant groups appropriate and use social representations of history held by dominant groups, and the role of these representations in social and political integration within European countries.

2. Scientific content of the event

There is surprisingly little known about the interplay between representations of history (collective memory) and identity construction of real groups. The aim of the conference was to elaborate a research plan which integrates different theoretical and methodological perspectives on historical representations, national identity and inter-group relations. This research could lead to an empirically based social psychological theory on "how the past weights on the present". The focus of this theory is on collective elaboration of historical conflicts in relation with different courses of the development of national identity in different European countries. The project also will offer methodological innovations: content analysis programs, standardised interview techniques, new questionnaires and scales. Each presentation and the subsequent discussions contributed to these goals.

Below we give a brief summary and conclusion of each paper:

March 16 morning session

History and present state of the project (Janos Laszlo)

The presentation gave an historical overview on the social psychological work in history and identity and articulated the aims of the current conference.

Cajani, L.: Historical trajectories in Europe

The presentation gave an overview on the changes in history teaching in Europe. It also gave a theoretical analysis on historical facts and historical constructions.

Laszlo, J, Bigazzi, S., Vincze, O., Szabo, Zs.: Nested identities, national identification, and nationalism questionnaires

The authors presented the first results of the development of a combined questionnaire on social identity, nationalism and national identification.

After each presentation there were questions and short comments. At the end of the session a very thorough discussion took place. Participants freely challenged the statements of the presenters. In the discussion of the questionnaire study several suggestions for improving the device were made.

March 16 afternoon session: Conflicts and reconciliation

Valencia, J: Effects of presenting history from different perspectives

The presentation

Leone, G: Italian studies on the aftermath of historical conflicts

The presentation emphasized the importance of using qualitative content analysis in reconciliation studies. The author suggested using focus groups and media analysis. She presented the results of her research group's study on the French-German reconciliation

Bilewicz, M: Polish studies on inter-ethnic relations and collective memory

The presentation contained four studies by researchers at the Warsaw University. These studies concern collective memories for places, social psychological correlates of group-based guilt, reconciliation in inter-ethnic conflicts, and everyday explanations of in-group history

Hilton, D.: Social representations of history and historical characters

The presentation presented the rationale and the questionnaire of a world-wide cross-cultural study on historical representations. It outlined also a theory how national historical charters shape collective memory and identity.

A 90 minute discussion followed the presentations. Most of the participants actively and critically contributed to the discussion.

March 17th morning session

Licata, L.: Social representation of colonization

The author presented the results of a series of studies he carried out on the Belgian colonial past. Data on colonial memories and emotional responses were related to different forms of national identification.

Castro, P. Colonization and collective memory

The author presented the methodology and the results of a large scale empirical study on the Portugal colonization of Brasilia. Among other methods, she analysed the text and procedures of commemorations related to the colonisation.

Matauschek, Isabelle: History's impact on families

The author presented the results of an interview study with victims and perpetrators of the Austrian Nazi past. She observed the phenomenon of the agency-shift as well as the steps in the process of trauma elaboration

Holtz, Peter: Essentialism in inter-group relations

The author presented a series of experiments, which investigated the social and psychological conditions underlying essentialist thinking about groups. In his theoretical framework he drew upon Wolfgang Wagner's theory on hybrid categories or monstrosity in forming social representations

Laszlo, J.: Computer aided analysis of historical narratives

The presentation gave a detailed overview on the theory and methodology of the narrative psychological content analysis and on its application to historical texts.

Varadi, T. Language technological tools for analysing historical texts

The author presented a flexible language technological device which have support in almost each language of the project. A major advantage of the device is that it is amenable for writing local grammars so as to map psychologically relevant linguistic patterns.

Afternoon session I:

In the first part of the afternoon session, four discussion groups were formed under the leadership of Sandra Jovchelovitch, Paula Castro, Alberta Contarello and Giovanna Leone so as to plan pan-European, multilateral and bi-lateral work packages to the FP 7 project. Members of the groups have continuously changed, because participants moved from one group to another so as to learn the research ideas and discuss their potential contribution.

Afternoon session II:

In the second part of the afternoon session, working group leaders reported on the commonly accepted suggestions. The plenary planning session arrived at a coherent research plan consisting of four inter-related work packages.

3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

Social psychologists increasingly attempt to include history in their theoretical models and historians acknowledge the role of psychological factors in their explanation. The project proposes a research design at a European scale that will uncover social psychological processes of coping with traumatic experiences of the past that may contribute to elaborating potential identity strategies relevant to European integration.

From the perspective of social practice, the research design would give a general overview on how people in different geographical and historical regions in Europe cope with their past. Introducing the historical dimension into the study of changing ideologies and values would lead a better understanding how a sense of European identity can emerge and develop. The project will open new communication channels between social psychologist and historians, and can give advice to historians for writing textbooks that would facilitate peaceful inter-group relations within the EU and between European countries and the rest of the world. The project will contribute to the implementation and support to reconciliation initiatives in post-conflict contexts (e. g. Truth and Reconciliation Commission and similar initiatives), and will increase public consciousness on issues of tolerance and reconciliation.

The participants have established a consortium of 11 universities representing 11 countries and outlined a proposal for the EU FP 7. The proposal consists of 4 thematic units. 1. collective representations of the European history (principal investigator: Denis Hilton University of Toulouse), 2. Representations of history in school books (principal investigator: János László Institutes of Psychology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences), 3. Bilateral and multilateral conflicts and reconciliation (principal investigator: Wolfgang Wagner, Johannes Kepler University Linz), 4. Collective memory ad consequences of colonialisation (principal investigator Paula Castro, ISCITE, Lisbon). The deadline of submitting The proposal is May 10.

The ppts of the conference are available at the

<http://www.mtapi.hu/index.php?mi=378&lang=hu> & URL.

If you press 'Goldegg', the system will ask for logging in (Sorry, but it's in Hungarian).

The user name is (Felhasználó): ESF

and the password (Jelszó) is: history

4. Final programme

March 15th

Arrival day

21.00 Social dinner

March 16th

09.00 Welcome address (Wolfgang Wagner)

Address of the ESF representative (Berry Bonenkamp)

History and present state of the project (Janos Laszlo)

Morning session: Nationalism and supranationalism in terms of identity and historical representations. Chair: Wolfgang Wagner

9.20 - 10 Cajani, L.: Historical trajectories in Europe

10 – 10.45 Laszlo, J, Bigazzi, S., Vincze, O., Szabo, Zs.: Nested identities, national identification, and nationalism questionnaires

10.45-11 Coffee break

11-12.30

Discussion of the national identification and nationalism questionnaires

12.30-14 Lunch break

Afternoon session: Conflicts and reconciliation

Chair: Giovanna Leone

14-14.30 Valencia, J: Effects of presenting history from different perspectives

14.30-15 Leone, G: Italian studies on the aftermath of historical conflicts

15-15.30 Bilewicz, M: Polish studies on inter-ethnic relations and collective memory

15.30-16 Coffee break

16-16.30 Hilton, D.: Social representations of history and historical characters

16-30-18 Discussion

March 17th

Morning session:

Chair: Paula Castro

9-9 20 Licata, L.: Social representation of colonization

9.20- 9.40 Castro, P. Colonization and collective memory

9.40-10 Matauschek, Isabelle: History's impact on families

10-10.20 Holtz, Peter: Essentialism in inter-group relations

10.20-11 Coffee break

11- 11.45 Laszlo, J.: Computer aided analysis of historical narratives

11.45-12.15 Varadi, T. Language technological tools for analysing historical texts

12.15-14 Lunch break

Afternoon session I:

14-16 Planning pan-European, multilateral and bi-lateral work packages to the FP 7 project in work groups

16-16.30 Coffee break

Afternoon session II

Chairs: Janos Laszlo and Denis Hilton

16.30- 18 Plenary planning session

5. Final list of participants

Convenor:

1. **Janos LASZLO**
Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Dept. of Social Psychology
Institute for Psychology
Victor Hugo u. 18-22
1132 Budapest
Hungary
Tel: +36 1 239 6726
Fax: +36 1 239 4740
Email: laszlo@mtapi.hu

Local organizer:

2. **Wolfgang WAGNER**
Institute of Social Psychology
University of Basque Country
Altenbergerstrasse 69
4040 Linz
Austria
Email: w.wagner@jku.at

Participants:

3. **Michal BILEWICZ**
Institute of Psychology
University of Warsaw
Warszawski ul Stawki 5/7
00-183 Warszawa
Poland
Email: bilewicz@psych.uw.edu.pl

4. **Sára BIGAZZI**
Institute of Psychology
University of Pécs
Ifjúság útja 6/b
7624 Pécs
Hungary
Email: bigazzisara@hotmail.com

5. **Luigi CAJANI**
Dipartimento di storia moderna e
contemporanea
Facoltà di Scienze Umanistiche
Università La Sapienza
P.le A. Moro, 5
00185 Roma
Italy
Email: luigi.cajani@uniroma1.it

6. **Paula CASTRO**
Department of Social and Organizational
Psychology
Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho
e da
Empresa
Av. Forças Armadas
1649-026 Lisboa
Portugal
Email: paula.castro@iscte.pt

7. **Alberta CONTARELLO**
Institute of Psychology
University of Padova
via Venezia, 10
35131 Padova
Italy
Email: alberta.contarello@unipd.it

8. **Vera CUBELA**
Department of Psychology
University of Zadar
Obala kralja Petra Kresimira IV
23000 Zadar
Croatia
Email: vcubela@unizd.hr

9. **Hans-Peter ERB**
University of Bonn
Wilhelm-Raabe-Str. 43
09107 Chemnitz
Germany
Email: hans-peter.erb@phil.tu-chemnitz.de

10. **Denis HILTON**
University of Toulouse II
5 allées Antonio Machado
31058 Toulouse
France
Email: Hilton@univ-tlse2.fr

11. **Peter HOLTZ**
Johannes Kepler University
Altenbergerstrasse 69
4040 Linz
Austria
Email: peter.holtz@jku.at

12. Roland IMHOFF

Department for Social and LEgal
PSychology
University of Bonn
Römerstr. 164a
53117 Bonn
Denmark
Email: rimhoff@uni-bonn.de

13. Sandra JOVCHELOVITCH

Institute of Social Psychology
London School of Economics and Political
Science
Houghton Street
London WC2AE 2AE
United Kingdom
Email: s.jovchelovitch@lse.ac.uk

14. Nicole KRONBERGER

Department of Social and Economic
Psychology
Johannes Kepler University Linz
Altenbergerstr. 69
4040 Linz
Austria
Email: nicole.kronberger@jku.at

15. Giovanna LEONE

Department of Psychology
University of Bari
Via Crisanzio 1
70110 Bari
Italy
Email: giovanna.leone@uniroma1.it

16. Laurent LICATA

Service de Psychologie sociale
Université Libre de Bruxelles
50 avenue F. D. Roosevelt
1050 Bruxelles
Belgium
Email: licata@ulb.ac.be

17. Isabella MATAUSCHEK

Zentrum für soziale und interkulturelle
Kompetenz
Universität Linz
4040 Linz
Altenberger Str. 69
Tel: +43-732-2468-8356
Email: isabella.matauschek@jku.at

18. Tiziana MASTROVITO

Department of Psychology
University of Bari
Via Crisanzio 1
70110 Bari
Italy
Email: tiziana.mastrovito@uniroma1.it

19. Alessio NENCINI

Institute of Psychology
University of Padova
via Venezia, 10
35131 Padova
Italy
Email: alessio.nencini@unipd.it

20. Jose F. VALENCIA

Faculty of Psychology
Dept. Social Psychology
Avenida de Tolosa, 70;
20018-Donostia (Gipuzkoa) España.
Email: pspvagaj@sc.ehu.es

21. Tamás VÁRADI

Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Research Institute for linguistics
Benczúr u. 33.
1399 Budapest
Hungary
Email: varadi@nytud.hu

22. Orsolya VINCZE

University of Pécs
Institute of Psychology
Department of Socialpsychology
7624 Pécs
Ifjúság útja 6/b
Hungary
Email: vinor@freemail.hu

6. Statistical information on participants (age bracket, countries of origin, etc.)

	Senior reseacher	Young reseacher
Male	10	2
Female	7	3

Nations	Participants
Italy	5
Austria	4
Hungary	4
Belgium	1
Croatia	1
Denmark	1
France	1
Germany	1
Poland	1
Portugal	1
Spain	1
United Kingdom	1