



Looking back on Chile, 2013

Réplicas: ISTP Chile Aftershock

Every once in a while, the world tends to remind us of the great movements we are submerged in, whether it is because of nature or social processes. Here in Chile, one of the most seismic countries in the world, earthquakes are the most common way nature has to remind us of how we are part of something greater than ourselves. And with regards to social processes, we have had our share as well. This year we commemorate 40 years of the coup de etat our government experienced in 1973, leaving a great wound in our historic memory. Fortunately, there are other social movements that have not ended in tragedy. One of the most important ones, and related to the academic world was the student movement held on 2011, fighting for a better education.

“As every telluric movement produces an aftershock, we organized the ‘Réplicas event’ to the ISTP 2013”

Other occasions of great academic movements in which we undergraduate students had the chance to be part of, include the ISTP meeting in Santiago last May. For us this event meant a major shaking of the way we are used to experience knowledge, usually without the direct experience of international state of the art discussions. Some of us were even invited to present, which was a great challenge given our little experience with speaking to such a

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From the ISTP Executive

It was wonderful to participate in the ISTP conference on the occasion of this being the first time it was held in South America. A consistent aspect of this biennial conference is that there is always an interesting combination of attendees who regularly participate in the conference regardless of where it is held and those who

come from the local region. This ensures that ongoing theoretical conversations carry on, but importantly, new threads are introduced. The excitement and synergies that are created by this are enabled by the hard work and dedication of the local conference organizers! Many thanks to Antonia Larraín and Andrés Haye (and the many who assisted them) for their efforts in bringing this to fruition.

Lorrie Radtke, President Elect, University of Calgary, Canada

VIDEO: Listen to the Attendees!

“[Other conferences] don’t have this intensity in terms of ideas and philosophy” **Susan Opatow, City University of New York, USA**

“That we could hear different perspectives and how people do psychology in Latin America—that was very very impressive”

Ernst Schraube, Roskilde Universitet, Denmark

“All the presentations that I have listened to have a lot of reflections about how psychology can be integrated with social action—and I think that is very important” **Jorge C. Sepulveda, Universidad de Santiago de Chile**



<http://tinyurl.com/istpvideo>

Presidential Address



When academics reach a certain age they have the tendency to reminiscence: Let me begin with a personal note. The *International Society for Theoretical Psychology* has not only influenced me intellectually but also personally. I attended my first

ISTP conference in Saclay, France (near Paris) in 1993. It was my 9th presentation at an academic conference but my first presentation at a theoretical conference, and more importantly, I met my future partner, Angela, at this event. ISTP, so-to-say, made me move from Germany (no, I am not German) to Canada, where I assumed a position at York University in the History and Theory of Psychology Program. Thus, ISTP was instrumental in the conduct of my academic and personal life ...

Let me mention a few other issues briefly. A very successful conference in Santiago de Chile, the first time ISTP met in South America, is still on our minds. I would like to thank the organizers and the program committee for their outstanding work. Indeed, collaborations and friendships that were formed during this time continue to inspire theoretical psychology around the world. On this background I would like to toot our own horns: ISTP was committed to internationalization before it became a buzzword in some of the major national organizations of psychology.

Taking ISTP's international history into account, I would like to suggest thinking about "contact topics" for future collaborative endeavors. I refer to themes that are shared

around the world, even if, or because, we have differing views, and I encourage us to work on them from various indigenous, postcolonial, or meta-theoretical perspectives. I also urge our members to actively seek out colleagues that live in parts of the world other than their own, and to invite those colleagues and students to participate in future symposia for the next ISTP conference (or any other conference). Keep in mind that during the next meeting we will celebrate ISTP's 30th anniversary. I also hope that ISTP members and conference delegates will consider involving international members in their grant applications. Indeed, ISTP can and should be used as a source for finding those partners and as a catalyst for working on content of shared interest. This may mean leaving the comfort of our own immediate collaborative environments, but our work will be better for it.

One of the more mundane tasks for the executive will be to increase membership to a degree that we have enjoyed in the past. The health of any organization depends on the commitment of its members, and includes time or passion, money or labor. Sometimes it is difficult to manage an international organization, and local situations may make it even more difficult to follow up on certain tasks; but it is imperative to increase membership, and I hope that we can all work on this goal (please sign up for a membership!).

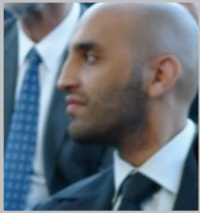
Finally, I ask you to imagine the future of theoretical psychology – not to envision what will be "my or your" next theoretical presentation but to conceive of how will theoretical psychology and ISTP look in another 30 years. I think that such imaginations allow us to assess our long-term visions and goals for ISTP and indeed for this subdiscipline of psychology.

Thomas Teo, ISTP President, York University, Canada

"Taking ISTP's international history into account, I would like to suggest thinking about 'contact topics' for future collaborative endeavors."

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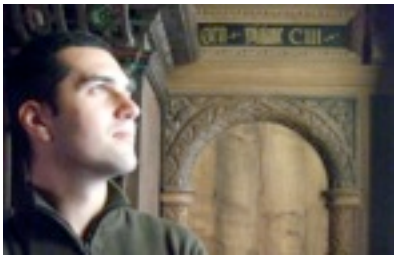
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NEW CENTRE FOR CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

By Brady Wagoner and Vlad Glaveanu



Why did the cultural psychologist cross the road?
To get to Aalborg University.

The Department of Communication and Psychology at Aalborg University in Denmark has recently received 3.3



million dollars from the Danish National Research Foundation to create a new Centre for Cultural Psychology, which will be directed by Professor Jaan Valsiner, who moved to Aalborg this September.

Valsiner has been one of the leading cultural psychologists for two decades though his own original contributions to the field and his editorship of key journals and books. For example, he is the editor of the journal *Culture & Psychology* and the two most important handbooks in the field, *The Oxford Handbook of Culture & Psychology* (2012) and *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociocultural Psychology* (2007, with Alberto Rosa). But what is this new field of research which Valsiner has been so instrumental in shaping?

Cultural Psychology is the future of the science of psychology in the 21st Century. It looks at how persons and social-cultural world mutually constitute one another. Humanity prides itself on creating operas, writing books, organizing art galleries and exhibitions, and even creating the economic exchange worlds of stock markets. All of these require the understanding of the highest forms of human creativity, such as in art, education and the capacities to invent new technologies and economic practices. Cultural psychology studies precisely these complex psychological functions, through an idiographic analysis of individuals and groups as they navigate their world. Globalization and social changes of contemporary societies have increased this complexity even further. As we are in close contact with "cultural others" our social-psychological adaptations to these changes acquire a cultural accent.

The new Centre will lead to theoretical refinement of cultural psychology in general and to the advancement of three concrete empirical research projects in cultural psychology: (a) construction of user-friendly urban living environments in the reconstruction of a city; (b) creating novelty and innovation in everyday life and (c) looking at the processes of globalization and the intervention of international helping agencies. Each one of these areas is an active interest at Aalborg University and will serve to bring together members of different disciplines (viz. psychology, communication, architecture, urban planning and global studies). Valsiner will provide theoretical and methodological insight from cultural psychology to transform these pursuits into major research programs, with the help of a fourth project on (d) epistemology and methodology.



Vlad Glaveanu and Brady Wagoner

These projects will also be closely linked to the new International Masters Program on 'Cultural Psychology and Social Practice,' starting September this year. The program takes two years to complete and involves immersion in research activities based on Aalborg's distinctive Problem Based Learning method. Students will be introduced to the latest developments in cultural psychological theory and methodology by leading cultural psychologists from all over the world. Thus, the program is international in that (1) students from all over the world will participate, (2) it draws on an international network of cultural psychologists who will teach in the program, and (3) it investigates the complex and distinctive lifeworlds of people living in different societies around the globe. Denmark might not be the warmest place but things are looking bright up north. So, come join us here as a student, visiting lecturer or academic tourist.

Knock - knock.
Whose there?
Aalborg.
Aalborg who?
Aalborg U.



What's it like to 'do psychology' in Latin America?

In an effort to commemorate our ISTP conference in Santiago, Chile, a call was sent out to all Latin attendees, inviting them to write about how they practice psychology. With the format of the contributions left open, here's what some psychologists had to share.

Making Psychology through the Making of Psychology: A Personal Account from Chile

Rodrigo Farías Rivas

P. Universidad Catolica de Chile, Chile

For all the Latin contributors to this ISTP issue, the major issue to discuss was 'what is it like to do psychology in South America'. Yet, for myself, a *Chilean psychologist*, it was first and foremost the notion of psychology as something that needs to be *made* that called for meditation—psychology as something that, in whatever context houses its existence, is always in the making.

Let us ignore for a moment that there is an academic discipline called "Psychology". Let us ignore that it is also an academic major. To *do* psychology is to suppose that it is not already done, but always being reinvented in each concrete

instance in which we—circular argument—make psychology. Contrary to the idea that psychology is then executed, as



if it were an already finished discourse in need of an application in an atheoretical world, we can conceive of psychology as the concrete activity that is the *making of psychology itself*. The subject of psychology's discourse, then, would turn out to be nothing but that subject that never ceases to create discourses, or better yet, that never ceases to be created by a discourse that itself lacks termination. In this way, psychology as an activity

always in the making forces us to accept the responsibility that its permanent creation implies, that is, the rejection of the very possibility that it can be finished.

To do psychology is to make psychology, whether it is in the clinic, the workplace, the academy, or the classroom—whether it is on an analyst's couch or in a researcher's lab. On the other hand, to *use*, to *apply* psychology, to participate in any kind of activity that implies it as an already finished discourse about the psyche, can easily stop that very same movement that constitutes psychology as a living discourse.

I spoke of a responsibility that forces an acceptance fully aware of the naivety of such a notion, as naive as the very idea that psychology operates as a subversive practice. On the contrary, the history of

psychology—with its countless leasings and serfdoms—reminds us every day that, as Michel Foucault put it not so long ago, the psychologist can proliferate as a minor civil servant of moral orthopaedics. Putting Foucault aside, the idea of “moral orthopaedics” as a hidden, seductive goal of psychology is a constant possibility, and one against which I believe we should try to rebel constantly. To do otherwise means to suppose that our discipline is but a body of knowledge that can be *used* according to the other’s interests. However, even in this case psychology is not truly completed but is instead reconstituted as a socially accepted, academically-validated control mechanism, as an agency of reproduction of that same order that continuously creates new discontents in civilization, new uneasiness in culture. In contemporary culture, and Chile is no exception, this happens through the systematic neglect of the fact that human subjectivity does not fit in the static categories of normality, even—and especially—when it is forced to.

Once we accept the idea of the psyche as a perpetually problematic movement, however, we can begin to rethink our concepts. For example, in my view, the psychoanalytic *monopoly* of the notion of “symptom” needs to be rethought—unlike the truth lying in the notion itself—, precisely because the psyche itself is endlessly

symptomatic. In other words, the very notion of ‘symptom’—which implies a specific psychic phenomenon—needs to be generalized, for the psyche itself operates as a symptom, as it is the on-going effect of conflicting forces, and as such, a continual instance of potential subversion. From this perspective, one could say the psyche *demand*s justice from the discourse that claims to speak about it: it

demand
psychology
as another
instance of

subversion, as a discourse that does not try to force the symptomatic nature of the psyche to become static, measurable and ready for ideological consumption.

Allow me now to relay my own experience ‘doing’ psychology in Chile. My specific mode has primarily been that of theory. Any of my moves away from that realm have shown to be only temporary, since ultimately for me, to *make* psychology means to *think* psychology—whereby thought of course implies action. I have had the chance to lead and participate in research activities and study groups wherein I meditated on thinkers who have addressed the psyche in terms of *subversive discourses*: for instance, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Gilles Deleuze, Judith Butler. I am also writing a thesis in philosophy on a hypothetical theoretical continuity between, on

“Whatever the psychological practice, for me ‘doing psychology’ has always implied a responsibility.”

the one hand, Ludwig Wittgenstein and the impossibility of a private language, and on the other, Lacan and the unconscious as the discourse of the Other—a thesis that may be unappealing to Wittgenstenians and Lacanians alike, as it interferes with their respective theoretical fences. Finally, I have worked as a clinical psychologist as well as in recruitment and selection—both

problematic areas in which psychology risks functioning as a willing piece of machinery, complicit in the very cultural and ideological procedures behind socioeconomic inequalities.

Whatever the psychological practice, for me ‘doing psychology’ has always implied a responsibility. Through theory, I have tried to make psychology by honoring authors that have thought of the psyche as something that is always in the making. Through practice, I have tried to make psychology by honoring that which is also always in the making: the psyche itself.

Surely, there are those who talk about psychology like it is already finished and not a living discipline. For them, the psyche is there to be measured and controlled, and psychology is there to be used and sold. And for them, psychology indeed allows all these operations.

In Chile, for example, something interesting has happened with the word “psychologist” itself, as psychologists are sometimes colloquially called “sychologists” (*sicólogos*) by magazines and popular culture. The absence of that first letter isn’t mean-spirited, but it certainly is symptomatic. It *is* after all a psychology that has nothing to do with whatever dynamic, living object the Greek root tries to fathom. These sychologists are typically the ones who go on talk-shows to speak about the dangers of texting in the workplace, on how to control teenage daughters, or whatever number of steps current sychology says is expected in order to overcome a depression. They will write magazine columns on how to deal with whatever psychological buzzword happens to be in fashion, and they will use their sychological knowledge to give vacuous lectures on whatever corporate subject Management thinks is needed to improve productivity.

Some of us, on the other hand, respect the Greek root. Some of us, on the other hand, try to follow the not-so-tautological mission that is making psychology through the making of psychology itself.



Psychology at the ‘Most Socialist University of Mexico’

David Pavón-Cuéllar

Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, Mexico

I am a professor in the Faculties of Psychology and Philosophy at the State University of Michoacán, the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo

(UMSNH), located in the colonial city of Morelia, Mexico. I will speak here of the university, its Faculty of Psychology, current events in the Faculty and what it is like to learn, teach and research psychology in this setting.

The university

The UMSNH is considered the oldest institution of higher

education in the Americas. Its origins date back to a college founded in 1540 by the noted social reformer, Bishop Vasco de Quiroga, who in his last will and testament stipulated that Indians were to receive free education there. The UMSNH still distinguishes itself from other Mexican universities by providing free education, room and board to indigenous and poor students from all over the country.

In addition to its popularly understood mission, the UMSNH is well known for its politicization, radical student movements, powerful unions and frequent

strikes. Many prominent left-wing intellectuals have taught there, and one of them, the Argentinian Marxist psychologist Aníbal Ponce (1992), described the UMSNH in 1938, as ‘the most socialist university of Mexico’ (p. 41), a description that may still be true. The ideological atmosphere of the UMSNH is rather leftist, open-minded and progressive. Marxism and radical perspectives are studied intensively in some departments, many students are active in far-left organizations, and dormitory buildings bear the names of Rosa Luxemburg, Vladimir Lenin and Che Guevara.

The UMSNH is widely perceived as a ‘red’ university, especially by right-wing Mexicans. This is actually one of the main reasons why I dreamed of working here in the 1990s, when I was a ‘red’ student in Mexico City. After more than ten years in Europe, I returned to Mexico with my Ph.D. and realized my dream by obtaining a position at the UMSNH in 2009. However, at least in the Faculty of Psychology, I did not find exactly what I had come for.

The Psychology Faculty

Separate from the UMSNH’s central campus, the Faculty of Psychology is composed of four two-story buildings and a brand-new library with some 10,000 books. It has over 2,000 undergraduate students and around 100 professors. It offers undergraduate and graduate

programs, and includes six areas of specialization in psychology: clinical, social, educational, developmental, organizational and neuropsychological. Virtually all conventional perspectives are represented: behaviourist, cognitivist, psychoanalytic, humanistic and systemic, among others.

“ . . . the UMSNH is well known for its politicization, radical student movements, powerful unions, and frequent strikes.”

As in other faculties of the UMSNH, the average student comes from a deprived background. Some have access to benefits such as room and board in dormitories furnished with bunk beds for 8-to-20 students in narrow bedrooms, while others have to work long hours, seldom earning more than 200 Mexican pesos (12 Euros) per day, barely enough to survive. Most professors are not much better off. Those without a Ph.D. cannot aspire to permanent positions and so suffer precarious working conditions, while having to pass competitive examinations each semester. They may be given as few as 4 hours of class per week and be paid less than 150 pesos (9 Euros) per hour of teaching.

The ‘privileged’ professors are those with a Ph.D. and tenure. They earn \$20,000-to-\$50,000 pesos per month (1,200-3,000 Euros). We may say that they belong to a social class different from that of most

professors and students. They do not use public transport, dress and think differently, and yearn—in their words—for a ‘more modern and selective university’, with ‘better students’ and ‘healthier budget management’, that is, an institution without poor students, who are so expensive to maintain. In a sense, these professors are isolated from ‘the reality’ of the popular

university. While they may claim to be leftist, they could hardly be deemed ‘radical’. Rather, their ideology reflects a liberal and ‘apolitical’ pragmatism that coincides with the vision of the organizations responsible for accreditation in higher education.

Thanks to accreditation organizations and their unconditional defenders in the UMSNH, the liberal pragmatist ideology has become hegemonic, especially in new faculties like Psychology. I immediately felt this hegemony four years ago, when I first set foot in the Faculty, even before I discovered its complex internal structures.

2009-2010: A Boring Faculty

In 2009, I was shocked by the ‘entrepreneurial environment’ at the Faculty of Psychology. There were no political posters on the walls, but only institutional information on the Faculty’s achievements.

Everything had to be clean and efficient, and everyone was obsessed with the recent accreditation process and how to improve 'rankings' and 'performance'. Neither the students nor the professors were interested in radical politics. Most opinions remained conformist. No one was really involved in critical psychology or alternatives to conventional perspectives. Mainstream psychology reigned supreme throughout the Faculty. The few contradictions that surfaced related to procedures, not political or theoretical perspectives.

In short, the Faculty was boring, especially in contrast to the Faculty of Philosophy at the same institution, where I was teaching Marxism to restless, ungovernable students who presented themselves as feminists, anarchists, Zapatistas and Leninists. How was I to explain this significant difference between the two faculties? First, we must ask whether psychology as such, as a discipline, spontaneously favours tameness, submissiveness and conservativeness. Second, this Faculty of Psychology admits only candidates who studied the health speciality in high school, which favors empiricist and positivist epistemologies. Third, as I mentioned above, the UMSNH's Faculty of Psychology, created just 15 years ago, has been particularly influenced by the rising liberal pragmatism of this university. Worse yet, the newborn faculty was

forced to recruit many of its professors from an older department of psychology at a conservative, private Catholic university.

These circumstances suffice to explain what I found in the UMSNH's Faculty of Psychology four years ago. What is more difficult to explain is the subsequent deep transformation there. Yet it is thanks to this transformation that the Faculty of Psychology is providentially becoming what I originally expected from the UMSNH.

2011-2013: the transformation

Rather suddenly, three years ago, things began to change. First, in 2011, several students who pronounced themselves 'indignados' occupied the Faculty to manifest their vehement inconformity with mainstream psychology and its role in the capitalist-liberal system. That same year, a group of professors founded a journal of critical and theoretical psychology entitled *Teoría y Crítica de la Psicología* (Theory and Critique of Psychology), which has become an important forum that receives papers from around the world, particularly Latin America.

Then, in 2012, after violent clashes between the police and residents at the UMSNH's dormitories, hundreds of students of the

Psychology Faculty became involved in the #yosoy132 youth movement that called for the democratization of the country and the mass media, and spoke out against the return of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), long a symbol of repression, corruption and electoral fraud in Mexico. We formally constituted a group of professors who supported the movement and attended its demonstrations and interminable

“... ‘indignados’ occupied the Faculty to manifest their vehement inconformity with mainstream psychology.”

assemblies. We also extended our solidarity to students who were simultaneously supporting the self-governing Amerindian community of Cherán.

Both the Cherán and #yosoy132 movements had plenary sessions at the Second Conference on Marxism and Psychology, which was organized by our Faculty and held at the UMSNH in August 2012, with over 100 speakers and 700 attendees from 15 countries. After the conference, and probably inspired by it, a number of students enrolled in courses on Marxism in other departments at the UMSNH. Some also joined a radical Marxist organization, the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), and are currently involved in intense political activities in the Faculty,

“... students recently began to paint the Faculty’s walls, which are now adorned by the naked body of a woman masturbating, quotes from Beatriz Preciado and the faces of Marx, Engels, Luxemburg and Che Guevara.”

constantly questioning institutional decisions and ideological orientations.

Present and future

The UMSNH’s Faculty of Psychology now has a Student Assembly where participants discuss political and institutional matters, vote on important decisions concerning the Faculty and exert permanent pressure on both the Faculty head and officials. They have questioned how budget expenditures are decided, the prevalence of mainstream psychology in the Faculty, the rising liberal pragmatism, and the way in which higher education accreditation organizations influence curriculum design in psychology. The Assembly shows a clear tendency towards critical psychology, and has enabled the formation of study circles on liberation psychology and other alternative or committed perspectives.

More and more students and professors identify themselves with

critical options such as Marxism, feminism, queer theory, Foucaultian thought, etc. They have been diagnosed with ‘criticomania’ by those still devoted to diagnosis, the group of ‘normal’ psychologists who denounce the ‘polarization’ of the Faculty and the recurrent questioning by students in ideological and political terms. To make matters worse, in addition to ‘bullying’ their professors, these ‘unmanageable’ students recently began to paint the Faculty’s walls, which are now adorned by the naked body of a woman masturbating, quotes from Beatriz Preciado and the faces of Marx, Engels, Luxemburg and Che Guevara.

Some professors are afraid that these painted walls will affect the Faculty’s upcoming reaccreditation process. But several students oppose this evaluation and plan to mobilize against it. Thus the gap between the two sides of the Faculty grows wider by the day.

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Trajectory in Social Psychology: A Means toward Creative and Inventive Ways of Life

Jaquelina M. Imbrizi
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The Campus Baixada Santista, founded in 2005 at the Universidade Federal de São Paulo, offers six graduate courses: Physical Education, Physiotherapy, Nutrition, Psychology, Occupational Therapy and Social Service. As outlined officially in its Pedagogical Political Project, the university distinguishes itself

through its focus on teaching activities, which set out a defined professional profile and prioritize interdisciplinary education aimed at inter-professional performance both in the Brazilian health system and in the Social Assistance. In this process, we valorize the experiences shared by different knowledge areas. My story highlights the importance of a left-wing government, which, through an expansion process in new campuses, increased the number of vacancies offered to professors as well as to students in the federal universities in Brazil. My decision to work at this university—which included moving out to another city—was connected to this democratization process in higher education in my country. In 2006, I took a position as professor in charge of the Social and Labor Psychology discipline. The atmosphere created by this campus favored the theoretical and practical production of Social Psychological knowledge, which has become part of my professional trajectory in education, research, and projects developed in partnership with the local community. Here I summarize how these are incorporated into the program via three perspectives:

The production of narratives of life stories

In the second year of the graduate program there is a module in which pairs of students, from different graduate courses, visit other

persons' and families' homes with the aim to produce a narrative of the participants' life story. Here the objective is to favor the exercise of listening and contextualizing the experiences of subjects within their culture and society, their existential

“My story highlights the importance of a left-wing government, which, through an expansion process in new campuses, increased the number of vacancies offered to professors as well as to students in the federal universities in Brazil.”

and geographical territory and their professional and affective choices (Imbrizi et al., 2009a). This activity has been reproduced in the learning-teaching process not only in education but also in the supervision and creation of projects for the graduation final papers, scientific research at graduate level and extension projects.

In the graduate course - mainly in the module Psychology, Ideology and Culture - instead of doing the traditional test, the students are invited to narrate their life experiences, relating them to the concepts studied in the module. The objective for students is to exercise a cultural critical

Psychology. With regards to the final graduation papers, one of our graduate students who has completed the course, Fernanda Aguiar (2010), mapped the narrative production process and reflected upon the impacts of this experience over her own cultural formation. Another student, Beatriz Garcia (2012), produced two narratives with educators from an NGO and connected them to the following question: throughout a subject's life, what encounters with people and objects would enable one to be sensitive to social matters and to construct a dignified, creative and inventive life?

In the graduate course, current research carried out by students focuses on the narrative productions of 3 to 5-year-olds (Viana, 2013) and graffiti creators (Massucato, 2013). Here the objective is to deconstruct certain conceptions regarding childhood and the street art in contemporary society.

The University Extension Project (Costa, Kurka, Imbrizi, 2012) works in partnership with inhabitants, workers, and visitors to the surroundings of the University with the objective to construct spaces where these groups can express their social memories, aiming to valorize their experiences of life strategies and resistance in the region. The narratives are used as a means to produce data and to bring people together. In order to support the project, a study group

was created, whose objective is to discuss and share ideas about philosophical texts (Benjamin, 1994a, 1994b, 2002; and Gagnebin, 2006), literary texts (Pamuk, 2007) and texts connected to cultural studies (Sarlo, 2007), all of which problematize the role of the narrator, the connection between the memory and the city, the dictatorship testimonies in South America, and the fact that remembering the past enables us to invent the present.

In this sense, the life narratives problematize one of the greatest tasks in the production of social psychological knowledge: valorizing the uniqueness of subjects in their articulations amid culture, society and varied ways of life.

Groups and workshops as action and care strategies

From this perspective, we relate our activities to education, supervision of research, extension and supervision of practical internship.

In the fourth term of all the courses (since 2007), and in the Psychology course internship (since 2010), group work has been made into an integral part of the program (Imbrizi et al., 2009b; 2012; 2013). Instead of having prescriptive activities and lectures wherein the roles of students, professionals, and equipment users are clearly defined and hierarchically set, the graduate students are encouraged to create and invent situations in which such

fixed roles are interchanged. This encourages the hierarchical deconstruction of the relationships in health care, the exchange of experiences and the creation of new strategies in life and self-care. According to these proposals, the space is open to all participants so that it does not prevent the contradictions and the conflicts and enables the creative acts that emerge from the collectivity.

As for the supervision of scientific research projects and graduate final papers, several groups and workshops were used as tools for the education and health care: Brenda Bocchi (2010), a student who has already graduated, analyzed a discussion group with workers about films related to labor in contemporary society; another student, Larissa Finocchiaro (2010) researched the innovations in health education emphasizing the impact of five on-campus art workshops on graduate students; Breno Ayres (2013), who is still studying at the university, discussed the importance of offering creation and music workshops for the reception and care of suffering workers kept away from work; finally, Raísa Peixoto (2013), another student, put together a discussion group with women to talk about ideology and beauty patterns, aiming to motivate resistance to the values connected to the crystallization of the attributes attached to the feminine.

In these studies the practice of social psychology is linked to group interventions to enhance experiences in which the exercise of creativity serves as an important factor for the promotion of health, the education of professionals and the production of life. In short, the workshops and groups are seen as devices which—given that they are unpredictable and ephemeral meetings—produce subjectivity and

“Our aim is to broaden the perspective of art in relation to social and revolutionary movements as well as to bring art closer to life.”

new ways of life.

Art and the creative processes

The connection between contemporary art and creative processes—especially as they are associated with cultural formation, health education, social insertion, the questioning on the contemporary cultural rules, and the production of subjectivity—have all become part of our research. In 2012, we created with graduate students a study group called Art, Health and Society, which reads and discusses authors in relevant areas. Our aim is to broaden the perspective of art in relation to social and revolutionary movements as well as to bring art closer to life. These discussions have generated the above mentioned scientific research projects and the

graduate final papers; the presentation of papers in congresses; the creation of two new courses entitled “Social Psychology and Art” and “Art as a cultural fact: the production of affirmative, creative and participative technologies in the care among subjects,” both of which are going to be offered in 2014; and finally, a post-doctorate internship project in 2013.

The new modules aim to cover the following themes: the exercise of creativity as a factor for promoting health and for the social and cultural insertion of people without access to fundamental rights; life as work of art; connections between art, the clinic and madness (Lima & Pelbart, 2006); the creation of new sensitivities to the production of art in institutions; sharing the sensitive and the aesthetic regimes of art (Rancière, 2005, 2009); aspects of the history of art which lead to the tendency toward

“... in this theoretical trajectory there is a certain inclination to art, which refers to the belief that, if there is an alternative so that the subject is able to exercise his freedom, it would be connected to certain artistic languages.”

dislocations between art and life (Favaretto, 2013).

Our presentations at meetings and international congresses have focused on how the cinema and the literature contribute to the production of subjectivity (Imbrizi, 2013b, 2013e, 2013c) and the importance of the idea of life as a work of art to education and care in health (Imbrizi, 2012, 2013a, Finocchiaro & Imbrizi, 2013).

The internship project at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo in the post-graduate program in Social Psychology explores the connections between Art and Psychoanalysis, focusing on the cultural conditions that favor

the creative powers of subjectivity (Imbrizi, 2013d).

To summarize, the social psychological practice that I have delineated here values the experience and uniqueness of subjects in their culture, and aims to contribute to the production of more creative and inventive ways of life. Thus, in this theoretical trajectory there is a certain inclination to art, which refers to the belief that, if there is an alternative so that the subject is able to exercise his freedom, it would be connected to certain artistic languages. It is a matter of defining certain forms of art as critical and transforming alternatives to the constructions of

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‘Our Group’

Lívia Mathias Simão, Hernán Sánchez, Juliano Casimiro de Camargo Sampaio, Larissa Laskovski, and Paula Franciulli

Institute of Psychology at the University of São Paulo, Brazil

As may be the case all over the so-called “Academic World”, in our research group we call ourselves “Our Group”. It seems that people who come and stay in “Our Group” are specially devoted to interactions with other people, especially if these other people captures us as others, challenging us and allowing themselves to be challenged by us, kindly dwelling with us and allowing us to dwell with them. Among these special others, from Brazilian and other cultural fields, are our colleagues, our professors, and—last but not least—the participants in our research. Some of these interactions are developed at the Laboratory of Verbal Interaction and Knowledge Construction, at the Institute of Psychology of the University of São Paulo, Brazil, which has a kind of interactive extension at the “cafezinho”. We hope that these and other features can be recognized in the more formal description below. To help others recognize us, we also added a couple of pictures. We are

thankful for the opportunity of participating in this Newsletter.

RESEARCH LINES

The following interrelated research lines are under coordination of the Associated

Both research lines belong to the main areas of History and Philosophy of Psychology and Methodological and Theoretical Problems of Psychology.

Briefly speaking, both lines focus on the subjective processes of



Professor Dr. Lívia Mathias Simão at the Laboratory of Verbal Interaction and Knowledge Construction (LIVCC) of the Department and the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology of the Institute of Psychology at the University of São Paulo (IPUSP), Brazil:

- *Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism in Psychology*
- *Verbal Interaction and Knowledge Construction.*

human cultural development, in which I–Other interactions, unfolding from the sociocultural field, as well as forming it, have a prime role. I–Other relationships are understood as creating and channeling opportunities for knowledge construction during human socialization processes. Here a multiplicity of reflexive reconstructions of messages may happen: On the one hand, each actor actively transforms the communicative messages made by his/her interlocutor; on the other hand, each of them tries to

integrate those communicative messages into his/her own cognitive-affective basis, which may also be transformed during this same process. Such a symbolic interplay can allow each actor to experience their I-Other-World relationships in momentary coherent ways, and as tensional moments.

From the above perspective, the research lines as a whole are situated at the intersection of the following three areas, which seek:

- new psychological understandings of contextually situated processes in human knowledge construction, especially those that take place at the core of I-other-world relationships, giving the other a primary role in self construction
- further reflections on the historical-philosophical foundations that inform theoretical and methodological approaches to these processes (item a) in semiotic-cultural constructivist psychology
- understanding the relevance and ethical implications of these processes (item a) for research and professional practice in psychology, as well as for allowing new and critical

possibilities for dialogue between psychology and other areas of knowledge

ONGOING RESEARCH BRANCHES

These branches are directed by Livia Mathias Simão at LIVCC and supported by the Brazilian Council of Scientific and Technological Development

the theoretical-methodological potential of some propositions by articulating the notions of Tradition and Bildung (Gadamer) and symbolic past-future relationships to make more explicit the temporal dimension of the triadic processual structure of self-other-culture, connecting this with her previous work on the



Jaan Valsiner and Livia Simão

(CNPq); the development of these branches is the central task behind Livia's supervision of her students.

- *I-Other Relationships, Temporality and Culture: Possible Articulations between Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism in Psychology and Gadamer's Hermeneutics.* Within this research branch, Livia aims to investigate the epistemological precedence and

topic.

- *Alterity and Dialogue in the Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism.* With this research branch Livia aims to focus on the role of I-other relationships in the affective-cognitive development of the self. I-other dialogues emerging from, as well as forming the subject's symbolic action field

(Boesch, 1991) in particular contexts and situations.

- *Alterity and Temporality in Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism in Psychology.* With this research branch Livia aims to focus on the relationships among the notions of alterity, temporality and affective-cognitive development of the self, aiming to incorporate epistemological and ethical issues into the Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism in Psychology.

ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS

These research projects are being carried out under Livia's supervision at our laboratory by the master and doctoral students in our group:

Inferential processes in Nonam Children: A Challenge for Understanding Self-Development in the Cultural Field of Symbolic Action

Hernán Sánchez

Professor at the Universidad del Valle, Colombia; Doctoral student at the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology, IPUSP, Brazil; supported by CNPq

In the past three decades, advances in developmental research led to significant changes in the conceptual and

methodological frameworks for studying inferential processes in small children. The contemporary debate on the role of inferential changes as a developmental process for accessing knowledge can be briefly summarized as polarized by three main psychological approaches. The first takes a structural, discrete and cumulative view of the developmental process of knowledge construction (Piaget, 1990); the second approach observes the inferential process as a continuously unfolding one, characterized by variability and non-linearity of paths that may even involve regression (Karmiloff-Smith, 1994; Siegler, 1996; van Dijk & van Geert, 2007); the third approach views

the process in terms of relationships among self-other, subject, and culture (Boesch, 1991; Valsiner, 2007). From the latter perspective, Hernan's research focuses on the analysis of the origin myth of "Madre Ñame" in the oral tradition of Nonam people—an indigenous community inhabiting a small portion of Colombia's Pacific rainforest region. The theoretical-methodological framework of the research is based on the following postulations of Boesch's Symbolic Action Theory: the culture-individual-culture cycle of knowledge, and the role of the action-object relationship in particular symbolic cultural fields. The first theoretical-empirical phase of the research involves

analyzing the myth of "Madre Ñame", as told by one of the community savants, and trying to apprehend its tensional and conflicting aspects from the inferential reasoning and affective-emotional interpretations made by the narrator. The second theoretical-empirical phase of the research involves the analysis of five episodes of narration and re-narration of the "Madre Ñame" myth by children aged from 4 to 6 years old, aiming to apprehend if and how they deal with tensional aspects of the Myth. The results are expected to give a basis for deeper



Livia Simão, Juliano Casimiro de Camargo Sampaio, and Hernán Sánchez

understandings of the presupposed ambiguity of the “Madre Ñame” fantasm (Boesch, 1991) as a path to deal with the alterity in the semiotic-cultural development of Nonam children.

Consensual Dramaturgies: The Verbal Interaction in the Creative Act

Juliano Casimiro de Camargo Sampaio

Professor at the Federal University of Tocantins, Brazil;
Doctoral Student at the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology, IPUSP, Brazil;
Artistic-Pedagogical Director of the I-Other Group of Scenic Research

Juliano’s studies lie on the border between Scenic Arts and Psychology, particularly the Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism perspective. His central problem has been to understand how the study of allegorical narratives builds on intersubjective scenic spaces and how the construction of these spaces could inform new teaching strategies, whether in classroom or in the rehearsal room (theater). His project, entitled ‘The Consensual Dramaturgies Project’ required children to prepare a dramaturgical text and a theatrical show by children and adolescents between 8 and 14 years of age. He derived his empirical data from two different sources: video

recordings of the rehearsal encounters and notes from the research director’s field diary. Here, the role of consensus was studied as it problematized the interactive-creation action—and in this context, it has a positive effect. The analysis of the empirical material was informed by semiotic-cultural constructivist approaches in psychology, leading to results at the level of intra and intersubjective negotiations and their tensions, constructions of intersubjective spaces, illusions of completely seizing the others’ intentions and expectations, and knowledge plurality.

The Scenic Arts and the Semiotic-Cultural Constructivism in Psychology: Frictions for a Theory of the Subject of the Creation

Juliano Casimiro de Camargo Sampaio

Professor at the Federal University of Tocantins, Brazil;
Doctoral Student at the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology, IPUSP, Brazil;
Artistic-Pedagogical Director of the I-Other Group of Scenic Research

In this research Juliano focuses on the process of formation and knowledge building in aesthetic-bodily experience. Our hypothesis concerns the aesthetic-bodily experience that exceeds the artistic context and can occur in

ordinary life experiences. The work addresses three questions: What is understood as an aesthetic experience by the research subjects? How does the relationship between body and world in the perception process and aesthetic configuration develop in them? What is the role of ordinary aesthetic-bodily experience in the ‘formation’ (in the sense of Bildung for Gadamer) of the subject-artist and the building of symbolic action potential (Boesch, 1991)? The empirical data is derived from two different sources: the theatrical records of actors and those of the director about their experiences in two spectacles, “Favores da Lua – o prólogo” (“Favors of the Moon – the prologue”) and “O Touro Branco” (The White Bull), both directed by Juliano and held by the I-Other Group of Scenic Research).

Why should they attend to Physical Therapy? A micro genetic study of expectations of patients and the adherence to the treatment

Larissa Laskovski

Professor at the University of North Paraná-UNOPAR, Brazil;
Doctoral Student at the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology, IPUSP, Brazil;
supported by CNPq.

Larissa’s research is situated on the interface between the field of

psychology and physical therapy, as she analyzes the potential interferences with the patients' decisions to undertake physical therapy. Her research goals have been:

1. to investigate the reasons that led patients to attend physical therapy sessions;
2. to comprehend the role of the physiotherapist for the patient, viewed as an empathetic process that is shaped in their relationship;
3. (3) to investigate the tensions arising from ruptures in expectations coming of both sides;
4. (4) to analyze temporality as the experiential process unfolding for the patient with him/herself and others;
5. to identify positive and negative values assigned by patients both to themselves and others.

This study followed the semiotic-cultural constructivist approach, and accordingly, physical therapy was taken as a symbolic action field of persons who desire to overcome a difficult situation. Therefore, the activities carried out in physical therapy were taken

as actional symbolic wholes (Boesch, 1991) concerned primarily with addressing participants' desires. The physiotherapist, in his or her turn, was studied as the other with whom the patient is constantly



Larissa Laskovski and Livia Simão

interacting.

The project involved interviews with four patients who previously attended physical therapy sessions in a multidisciplinary rehabilitation clinic. The interviews were recorded at two different times, both during the course of the physical exercises. The micro genetic analysis of the interviews aimed to apprehend how patients constructed knowledge about their I-Other-World relationships, as demanded by the new life situations, which might bring "disestablishing novelties" (Simão, 2010). During the sessions, while interacting with the physiotherapist, each participant came up with particular symbolic constructions

of their actions. Temporality was clearly evident when the participants tried to integrate their memories of the former condition into their present wishes, fears, and expectations towards the future, trying to organize this transformation into a new personal whole.

This research carries implications for therapeutic programs, especially for enticing patients' desires to continue treatment sessions. These desires will depend on how physiotherapists themselves are able to direct their aims in accordance with those of others; patients may increase their desire to take part in the sessions when they recognize that the attitudes of the physiotherapist are streamlined with their own aims.

Undergraduate Formation in Physical Therapy: the contribution of academic and everyday personal experiences

Larissa Laskovski

Professor at the University of North Paraná-UNOPAR, Brazil; Doctoral Student at the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology, IPUSP, Brazil; supported by CNPq.

Following the above mentioned research framework, Larissa is also studying physiotherapist-patient relationships to understand academic professional

development. She departs from the presumption that the path and accomplishments of the treatment depend on the interplay between two kinds of symbolic events: the patient's satisfaction regarding his initial claims and expectations, and the physiotherapist's feeling of fulfilling a duty, thanks to his/her academic formation and professional experience. In this respect, for many physiotherapists, a detachment—one that is not always conscious—from the relationship with the patient becomes a requisite for a successful treatment, which is usually accompanied by a feeling of professional accomplishment. Getting “too much involved” with the patient's claims, expectations, hopes and fears is here assumed as diverting the professional from the “real focus” of the treatment, which may in turn put the success of the treatment and the professional reputations at risk.

Research on the frontier between the physical therapy and psychology can contribute to new ways of thinking about how the professional role of the physiotherapist is being academically formed. The theoretical- methodological design of the present research aims to create semi-structured opportunities for dialogue with undergraduate students in physical therapy about their reasons, expectations, hopes,

projects, likes and dislikes regarding their professional choice, and their imagined future relationships with their patients. The results are expected to contribute to better understandings of the relationships among personal values, formation, life history and expectations in professional training in physical therapy that may channel the physiotherapist-patient relationships at their earliest formations—even before the physiotherapist “has met a real patient”.

The dialogue between R. Steiner – W. Goethe: A Semiotic-Cultural Constructivist Analysis

Paula Franciulli

Professional Psychotherapist, São Paulo, Brazil; Master level Student at the Graduate Program of Experimental Psychology, IPUSP, Brazil; supported by CAPES

Paula's research takes as starting point the human cultural activity of knowledge construction (Simão, 2010). From this perspective she seeks to understand some dimensions of R. Steiner's construction of knowledge in relation to the cognitive-affective experiences in his life, which he himself reports in autobiography to have influenced the development of his theory of knowledge. Among those influences is his very intense

and close dialogue with Goethe's ideas (Steiner, 1925/1999), and it is these that form the focus of Paula's research.

At the same time, and from a meta-methodological view, the process of researching itself requires some imbalance movements, including approximation – distancing, subjectivation – objectivation, on the part of the researcher who studies Steiner and his theory of knowledge. The ongoing research thus examines two levels of I-Other relationships, creating two dyads in dialogue, so to speak: “Steiner-Goethe” and “Researcher-Steiner”.

Overall, Paula is examining Steiner's early ideas, which include the period of his early childhood, schooling and youth years, his entrance into academic circles, and the period in which he worked in the Goethe-Schiller archives in Weimar. The period focused on is thus from 1861 (his birth) to 1897, and is studied through the analysis of his autobiography. It is during this period that Steiner produced his fundamental works about Goethe's science, which provided important guidelines to the epistemic streams to his theory of knowledge. In Steiner's later years, he states in his autobiography, his soul was faced with deeper psychological strokes.

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Theoretical and Methodological Issues in Cultural Psychology: A Brazilian Research Group

Danilo Silva Guimarães,
Suara Bastos, Djalma Freitas,
Francisco Moraes, Marcel
Lopes, Melina Bertholdo,
Marília Benedito, Kleber
Nigro,
Eloisa Leão

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Our research group in cultural psychology is located at the Institute of Psychology of the University of São Paulo. Currently, our team is composed of



Members of Cultural Psychology research group. From the left to the right: Kleber Ferreira Nigro; Maria Eloisa do Amaral Leão; Marcel Ferreira Lopes; Danilo Silva Guimarães; Francisco Moraes Júnior; Melina Bertholdo; Djalma Francisco Costa Lisboa de Freitas; Suara Bastos; Marília Benedito.

two researchers working on Ph.D. projects, three researchers producing Master dissertations and three undergraduate students working on projects of Scientific Initiation. Other students and

researchers participate in the group meetings, aiming to develop novel projects based on our weekly discussions. Our topics of study are theoretical and methodological issues in

psychology, focusing on the semiotic-cultural constructivist field of investigation. The group is coordinated by Professor Danilo Silva Guimarães, and our activities are intimately connected with the Laboratory of Verbal Interaction and Knowledge Construction, belonging to the Institute of Psychology of the University of São Paulo; this laboratory is coordinated by Professor Lívia Mathias Simão, Ph.D. (see pages 14–20, this issue).

The Cultural Psychology Research Group is involved in academic fields such as history and philosophy of psychology; the cultural construction of meaning; dialogue and perspectivism in cultural psychology; the relation between aesthetics and cultural identity, psychology and Amerindian peoples. Our international network includes the recently founded Niels Bohr Professorship Centre of Cultural Psychology at the Aalborg University (see page 4, this issue), Denmark and the University of Salerno, Italy. We are in close contact with researchers from South America, Europe and United States. In recent years we have experienced fruitful academic visits from international scholars, including Jaan Valsiner (Aalborg University, Denmark), Carlos Cornejo (Pontifical Catholic University Chile), Giuseppina Marsico (University of Salerno, Italy), Luca Tateo (Aalborg

University, Denmark), Kenneth Cabell (Clark University, USA), Ramiro Gonzales (PCU, Chile).

Our academic network in Brazil involves professors

from different universities who participate in the Dialogical Psychology group from the Brazilian National Association of Research and Post-graduation in Psychology (Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Psicologia [ANPEPP]).

Our investigations in cultural psychology incorporate the complexity and diversity of topics encompassed by the area. In a broad sense, we explore the cultural fabrics that give shape to meanings and actions of participants in concrete and specific life trajectories. We understand that all cultural fields are actively built by their participants, encompassing verbal and embodied processes of meaning construction. Such a semiotic-cultural and constructivist approach to cultural studies in psychology is grounded in the dialogicality of self-other-world relationships (cf. Marková, 2006; Valsiner, 2007; Simão, 2010) and in the symbolic action theory of Ernst Boesch (1991). The notion of dialogism, as a theoretical and methodological option, instructs

us to approach self-other-world relationships in diverse situations.

Suara Bastos' Master's project,

"[Suara's] double position—as a researcher and as a circus artist—now guides her access to the circus universe."

for instance, examined a series of affective and cognitive exchanges between researcher and the participants in fieldwork. Suara developed research concerning the daily life of an itinerant social group: circus inhabitants. Her interest in studying the psycho-cultural processes of participants of a circus community comes from her personal experience of living in three different circuses in Mexico for four years before she started her studies in psychology. Having become a researcher, she faced a novel dialogical position in relation to the circus that demanded a set of intrasubjective and intersubjective confrontations. Her double position—as a researcher and as a circus artist—now guides her access to the circus universe, allowing the production of knowledge that is affectively and cognitively situated.

Suara has conducted interviews with six circus inhabitants about their daily life and her subsequent analysis has exposed aspects of their particular life style. Narratives of the participants revealed concerns about the future of the circus tradition in Brazil and the peculiar and subtle border

between the public and private life of the circus artists. Additionally, Suara has studied photographs taken by the participants as a device that could aid the exploration of relevant aspects of the circus perspective. At the present, her Ph.D project addresses conflicts and tensions emerging from the conviviality in the circus, aiming to understand possible psychosocial vulnerabilities and identify the ways inhabitants of the circus elaborate conflicts emerging from the itinerancy and intense conviviality of the social group.

Djalma Freitas is developing an experimental Ph.D. project in the field of cultural psychology that also aims to refine his previous studies (cf. Freitas and Guimarães, 2013). During his Master's project, he focused on the process of cultural transmission. Djalma first asked his participants at three different times (labeled phases A, B and C) to draw a 'boat,' and interviewed participants in short intervals between each phase. At phases A and C, participants were allowed to use the materials available on the table. At phase B the experiment focused on three processes that contribute to cultural transmission: the observation of others solving a similar task, the observation of products made by a previous generation, and co-participation. The collected data included both

observations of the interactions of the participants and the products of their actions, as well as participants' answers to a semi-structured interview, which asked for their point of view about the conducted experimental process.

Djalma's analysis of the drawings and dialogues with the participants demonstrated that the ways of acting and understanding the activity in Phases B and C are influenced by the previous experiences that took place during the experiment. Although many reports of the participants expressed that observation and imitation were the major cultural transmission mechanism, it was evident that the contact with the artifacts previously produced, the co-participation, and the sequence of experimental arrangement exercised a forceful effect on participants' symbolic actions. In order to understand the cultural process of change and maintenances in the artifacts production, Djalma now aims to explore the articulation of the previous categories developed in his Master's research, adding an analysis of how the researcher influences the participants in an experimental setting, and the effects exerted by the

experimental arrangement in the task understanding and actions of the participants.

The issue of continuities and discontinuities of cultural

"Francisco seeks to understand how inhabitants of the Brazilian cultural region Paulistânia transform symbolic elements into symbolic resources to signify disquieting experiences."

processes is also a focus for

Francisco Moraes, an undergraduate student currently developing a project on scientific initiation. Francisco seeks to understand how inhabitants of the Brazilian cultural region Paulistânia transform symbolic elements into symbolic resources to signify disquieting experiences. Caipira is the Portuguese term to denote people from this region, whose culture resulted from a syncretism between Amerindian peoples, Afro descendant slaves, and Catholic Portuguese people. In this cultural field, the presence of storytellers is typical. These are elder people who are known by the community and maintain a broad immaterial patrimony: traditional fairytales orally transmitted from one generation to another. Elements from these tales are used by people from the community to understand usual life situations such as marriage,

parent-children relationships, religious experiences, illness, and so on. Yet, since the fifties, the culture of Paulistânia has been invaded by the industrialization process and the technological appropriation. Francisco's investigation is demonstrating that many psychological conflicts are emerging with the impacts of the tradition's transformation. His study aims to understand how different generations deal with the "death of the tales," and the psychosocial implications of this process.

Another participant in our research group is **Marcel Lopes**, a Master's level graduate student who is investigating the human process of 'transition into a new state' that follows the meeting of an alter—that is, he is investigating the process of personal transformation as it unfolds with one's connections with the world. To study this, Marcel has selected two notions from different frameworks: the notion of rhizome from Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis (Guattari, 1988; Deleuze and Guattari, 1995; 2010) and the notion of open-ended system (Valsiner, 1998, 2001, 2007) from a semiotic-cultural perspective. Both notions—rhizome and open-ended system—address the connections between human beings and the outside world and their transition into a new 'state'

after meeting the other. This research suggests that both frameworks ground their propositions in unique approximations with different organic metaphors aimed at understanding the interaction between open systems: on one hand, the schizoanalytical approach observes the opposition between rhizomes and trees; on the other hand, the semiotic-cultural constructivist approach observes the opposition between machines and living beings. Marcel also identified some important shared backgrounds, forerunners and interlocutors to these frameworks in the human sciences and philosophy, including those of Bergson and Bakhtin. Among the differences between the frameworks, in the schizoanalytical there is a strong emphasis on the process of the emergence of multiplicity, that is, heterogenesis; whereas this contrasts with the integrative focus of the semiotic-cultural constructivist view in psychology.

Another branch of studies strongly represented in our research group concerns the approach of cultural psychology to issues involving Amerindian peoples. Psychology as a science and profession experiences many difficulties in dialoguing with the

cultural conceptions and practices of non-western people (cf. Guimarães, 2012, 2013). Although we observe many advances with investigations that take place in India, China, Korea, Japan and Arabic countries, few studies have deliberately focused on people belonging to segmentary lineage

"Another branch of studies strongly represented in our research group concerns the approach of cultural psychology to issues involving Amerindian peoples."

societies.

In Brazil, segmentary lineage societies are represented by the autochthon peoples that are still resisting the colonial process, although they usually live in vulnerable contexts of marginalization. The indigenous population in Brazil has largely decreased since the 15th century to the end of the 20th century, after the European invasion of their lands. A population estimated once to comprise several million persons and more than a thousand ethnic groups was over time reduced to 200 000 persons belonging to around 220 different groups, now speaking 170 different languages. Among the many reasons responsible for the extermination of these peoples lie armed conflicts, epidemic diseases, social and cultural disorganization and assimilation policies (IBGE,

2005). Each society was differently affected by the process of colonization and nowadays it is estimated that more than 80 indigenous groups remain isolated in Brazil. In the last decades, demographic censuses show small population growths in most of these communities.

An important challenge for indigenous societies remains: how to dialogue with the Brazilian national society without losing one's ethnic-cultural integrity?

This issue is the focus of the scientific initiation project developed by

Melina

Bertholdo, an

undergraduate student. Her project examines the contradictory conceptions of land and territory in the discourses and practices of an indigenous ethnic group, the Mbya Guarani, and the nation state; and in this she has demonstrated the strong obstacles to effective dialogical interaction. Analyzing audiovisual data offered by some documentaries about this topic, and articulating it with anthropological and historical investigations, Melina has identified the heterogeneity of voices (Wertsch, 1992) involved in the discussions between ethnic groups and nation-state actors

Further, the investigation of **Marília Benedito**, an undergraduate student also working on a scientific initiation project, examines solutions to the interethnic challenges proposed by Amerindian undergraduate students living in the urban context. Through interviews with people from the indigenous academic community, Marília aims to explore contemporary transformations in the Amerindian identity, aiming to generate a psychological debate about the

"Melina's project examines the contradictory conceptions of land and territory in the discourses and practices of an indigenous ethnic group, the Mbya Guarani, and the nation state."

notion of cultural preservation and the static conception of identity.

The investigation on the Amerindian cultural frame opened our mind to the issue of aesthetics and cultural identity. **Kleber Nigro**, a Master's level graduate researcher, joined the group with a project focused on the boundary between cultural psychology and theater. He chose to analyze a contemporaneous theatrical play called "Cybernetic Jaguar" or "Cannibal tetralogy" (Almeida, 2011), from the Amazonian playwright Francisco Carlos. This play, like others from the same author, realizes a complex

aesthetics and theoretical synthesis involving philosophical, anthropological, historical and political issues that disclose the problematic interchanges between the cosmology of Amerindian peoples and the Brazilian national society. Nigro aims to show how different and even contradictory discourses are incorporated in the creative process, making explicit dialogical tensions between interethnic conceptions.

A similar but not identical path is developing in **Eloisa Leão's** research. Eloisa is a lyric singer with a noteworthy professional career: she worked many years in two of the most outstanding choirs in Brazil (the Symphonic Orchestra of São Paulo, and the Choir of the Municipal Theater of São Paulo). Additionally, she is an experienced actress and performer that has worked for many years with the Amazonian playwright Francisco Carlos. Currently, as a Master's level graduate student, Eloisa is interested in understanding I-Otherness relationships through two trajectories concerned with the question of alterity: first, a conceptual, psycho-philosophical path to this topic—the philosophy of difference; and second, the poetic path to the other as differentiated from the I. Situated in the dialogical boundary between reasoning and affection, Eloisa took up a momentous

assertion from Arthur Rimbaud's *Lettres du voyant* (Letter of the visionary), into the main question of her research: "is I another?" (Rimbaud, 1995).

Finally, in relation to the topics of investigation developed by the members of the research group, we undertake diverse academic activities, such as conferences, communitarian interventions and cultural diffusion courses. For instance, this year we organized three main activities in order to share the knowledge constructed through research at the University:

Conferences on the Theatrical Residence *Bandeirante* Ghost Sonata

We invited researchers and professionals from different disciplines (e.g., anthropology, philosophy, arts) as well as representatives of indigenous peoples who suffered the impacts of the Brazilian colonial process, to discuss the history of the *Bandeirantes*—slave hunting 'followers of the banner'; discussions concerned both their expeditions and their aesthetics-cultural influences, which permeate the cultural identity of people from the State of São Paulo/Brazil. From the 16th to the 18th century, the followers of the banner comprised groups of adventurers' descendant of the Europeans who came to South

America (Brazil) to undertake the colonial project. Their original purpose was to capture and force Amerindians into slavery. Among other consequences, *Bandeirantes'* expeditions were responsible for destroying many Guarani indigenous communities, expanding the limits of the Portuguese America beyond the Tordesilhas line, and intensifying the Brazilian syncretism between Amerindian peoples, Afro descendant slaves, and Catholic Portuguese people.

Amerindian Support Network

This activity consists in organizing a series of meetings with people from the indigenous communities of São Paulo in order to identify the psychosocial vulnerabilities faced by them, aiming to find possible strategies to overcome the impacts of the colonial process. We argue that cultural psychologists have a central role to play in developing theoretical-methodological strategies for intervention and knowledge construction, addressing the mediation of hard and conflictive intergroup and multicultural meetings. Our work with the communities is revealing the importance of holding the experience of differential trajectories in the relational process, regarding traditional conceptions and practices of the ethnic group. We believe that the notions of "observant

participation" (Albert, 2002) and "dialogical multiplication" (Guimarães, 2011, 2012, 2013) are on the path to breaking down the walls of a rigid multiculturalism at the same time as they respect the point of view of each culture in this process.

Free Academic Course: Psychology and Amerindian Peoples - Introductory Notions

This work develops the project of the Amerindian Support Network through a partnership with the workgroup Psychology and Amerindian peoples, from the Regional Council of Psychology, São Paulo. The fourth Brazilian National Congress of Psychology in 2001 agreed that Brazilian psychology had to approach indigenous peoples from our country. Following this recommendation, in 2004, the Conselho Federal de Psicologia (CFP, Federal Council of Psychology) and the Conselho Indigenista Missionário (CIMI, Indigenous Supporters Missionary Council)—a Catholic organization whose explicit target is "to strengthen the process of autonomization of indigenous people through the construction of an alternative, multiethnic, popular and democratic project" (CIMI, 2004)—carried out the National Seminar on Subjectivity and Indigenous Peoples (CRPSP, 2010). Fifty indigenous representatives were

present and collaborated in the event. They were from thirty-seven communities, belonging to twenty-three ethnic groups, distributed in eleven Brazilian states. Many actions were undertaken as outcomes of the Seminar, culminating in the creation of a workgroup in March 2008, at the Conselho Regional de Psicologia (CRP, Regional Council of Psychology), state of São Paulo. Additionally, since 2007, psychologists of the CRP (São Paulo) started to organize a series of meetings between indigenous representatives, psychologists and representatives of other professions such as anthropologists, caseworkers, teachers, historians, doctors and allied health professionals. The objective of these meetings was to gain a broad understanding of multi-professional and interdisciplinary strategies concerning the social situation in focus, through the participation in a dialogue with invited people. One result of this work was the elaboration of recommendations for psychologists working with indigenous people (CRPSP, 2010). The course 'Psychology and Amerindian Peoples - Introductory Notions' is an effort to articulate the knowledge constructed in the meetings of CRP with current research projects conducted by our cultural psychology group.

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...Continued from page 1
'Réplicas: ISTP Chile Aftershock'



Cristóbal Kauak

specialized audience. But it turned out to be great; we had the chance to exchange opinions and criticisms with the best academics of our discipline around the world, and even share in other informal contexts with them.

The impact of the ISTP meeting organized by professors Andrés Haye and Antonia Larraín was so great on us, we felt selfish keeping the experience to ourselves, the lucky few who were able to find a place for a brief dissertation. Therefore, as every telluric movement produces an aftershock, we organized the "Replicas" event to the ISTP 2013. The name came up as a play on words, given that the Spanish translation for aftershock is "réplica". And even though it also stands for a reproduction of a work of art or

craft, it can as well mean response or reply. And that is how we took it, as a reply to the great intellectual work we witnessed at the ISTP meeting.

The event itself was organized in a way that sought to keep coordination work at a minimum. We contacted the participants by email, proposing a possible date for them to present at lunch recess any day in June. Professors were contacted first, mainly because their schedule was more likely to be the busiest. We invited professors and students who presented at the ISTP

meeting in May, but we also extended the invitation to undergraduates who had not participated in the ISTP and who felt like presenting their work if they felt that they had something to share. The program consisted of two daily lectures at lunchtime in one of the campus' empty classrooms. The entrance was free and open to anyone that wanted to join. Each presentation time was 20 minutes for lecture and 10 minutes for questions or discussion; the idea was to maintain the ISTP 2013 presentation format. We ended up having 4 professors, 4 psychologists, 3 postgraduates and 6 undergraduates ready present during the month of June this year. Some presenters even asked other students to discuss their work specifically after their

presentation, similar to what Professor Carlos Cornejo did for Professor Eugene Matusov at the opening of the ISTP meeting in Chile. After preparing the program, we published the event on several Facebook pages, including the faculty group page, every cohort's unique group page, and our own personal walls. We also sent an email to the entire staff of academics, encouraging them to enjoy the work of their students during lunchtime.

The psychological topics addressed during the Replicas had to do with affection, learning, constructionism, identity, psychoanalysis, creativity and cognitive sciences, amongst others. To mention a few of the new titles, in "Talking without words: Improvisation on Contact Dance," Ph.D. student Paloma Opazo applied language theories to a specific form of dancing in which physical contact provides the starting point for exploration through movement improvisation. In "Language and Subject: the place of Ideology on the Psychoanalytic Device," undergraduate student Hernán Noguera took the chance to identify the importance of language already in Freud's metapsychology and its relation with the ideological subject. The most Chilean related lecture we had heard was postgraduate student Ramiro Gonzalez's "Reconsidering the notion of Ethnicity in light of the context and the social practices of Mapuche' weaving", which discussed participative fieldwork

with Mapuche weaving women in the south of Chile. This presentation was also featured during the ISTP meeting. Other presentations that were imported from the meeting included Rodrigo Farías' "Darwin, Lacan, Butler: Evolution and the Problem of Human Sexuality" and Manuel Torres' "Psychology of Will: intelligent activity on the struggles of impulses", amongst many others.

With each lecture involving an audience of 15 to 25 people, the event offered a chance to present the works shown at the ISTP meeting to the undergrad students who did not have the chance to attend. Furthermore, it helped to show undergraduate students that they also could develop their own theoretical analysis, which sooner or later could be presented in similar events. Toward other ends, Replicas motivated students to organize their own lecture events, seeking to connect their professors' research with the interests of undergraduates. This latter initiative gained strength as it was promoted during the Faculty's Inner Encounter in which discussions were held between professors, staff and students regarding the curriculum.

People seemed to enjoy the activity, both the presenters and the attendees, as it promoted the contact among students with similar interests, and several study

groups about the topics were formed afterwards. Professors Andrés Haye and Antonia Larraín were of course invited to present, but humbly they chose to leave space for the students. However, they attended several presentations and did not fall short in speaking highly of the event. Among other comments, Chilean Ph.D. student Paula Cavada, who is currently



studying at the University of Copenhagen, and was also a presenter during the ISTP meeting, said when she heard of the project: "it is a great contribution to the democratization of knowledge. Offering undergrad students the possibility of participating in instances that are most likely reserved to the 'academia world' is priceless. In that sense, I am impressed about this initiative and on how easily you guys arranged it".

So, every now and then the world hits us with major events that break our routines. These events sometimes mean tragedy, as our country knows well by its own

experience. But there are other times when these events bring beauty and astonishment; they have such power that it is impossible not to be mesmerized by them. And that is what we felt during the ISTP meeting in Chile. Its energy was so great that we undergrads did not feel capable of keeping it to ourselves, and had to do something about it. We had to materialize our

reply, so we tried to create a worthy aftershock for our fellow classmates. The experience was incredible and it felt like contributing to those great movements we started describing in this article. Therefore, we keep a strong will for organizing similar events until we reach our grade, and would like to encourage all academics and students,

graduate or undergraduate, to do so. And who knows, maybe in the future we will get to see all the great people we met during the ISTP 2013 again in one of these events around the world. We will be looking forward to it.

Cristóbal Kauak, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Replicas Facebook page:

<http://tinyurl.com/fb-replicas>

Replicas program on Google docs:

<http://tinyurl.com/docs-replicas>

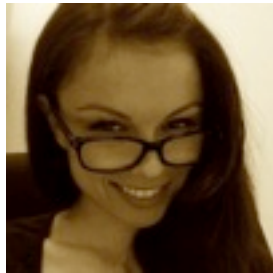
Interview with Zhipeng Gao

Sigmund Koch Student Award Winner

Zhipeng Gao is a first-year PhD student in the History and Theory of Psychology program at York University, Toronto, Canada. At the ISTP conference in Chile, 2013, he was awarded the Sigmund Koch Award for his paper, "Subjectivity, Culture, and Power: A Critical-Dialogical Approach to Reflexivity in Psychological Research." As his work is concerned with interview practices, we took the opportunity in *this* interview to talk about Zhipeng's reflexive approach, allowing it to guide our discussion of his unique life history.

Basia Ellis, University of Calgary, Canada

Congratulations on winning the Sigmund Koch Award for the best student paper at the ISTP conference in Chile!



Thank you very much Basia for the interview. And many thanks to the ISTP for the Sigmund Koch Award. I am truly honored and humbled by this.

Let us talk about your winning paper, "Subjectivity, Culture, and Power: A Critical-Dialogical Approach to Reflexivity in Psychological Research." Therein you recommend a set of practical guidelines for reflexive research practice, arguing that such guidelines may help psychologists reduce problematic interpretations of participants who are of a different gender, ethnic, cultural, class, etc. background. Could you clarify here the purpose of your project?

My project is an attempt to complement the classical empiricist epistemology with social epistemology in psychological research. When mainstream psychologists shy away from the issues of subjectivity, culture and power, I urge them to consider: what roles do their

subjectivities play in research? In what ways do their subjectivities embody cultural impulses, often produced within and reinforcing power relations?

Unlike many critical and qualitative programs that propose alternative approaches that compete with mainstream methods, my approach seeks collaboration. It is an "add-on" component that is primarily responsible for monitoring and improving the application of traditional methods, in order to make psychological research more culturally sensitive and socially responsible.

As I understand your proposed program, you recommend that researchers begin their dialogues with participants by asking them to provide biographical narratives that relate to the research topic (e.g., researchers interested in parenting ought to ask participants to discuss their experiences as parents, what contexts are involved, etc.). These narratives can then be interpreted for different kinds of information (i.e., thinking, feeling, action, and context), and at the same time can generate three kinds of reflexivity: descriptive, analytic, and ethical.

This is correct. The purpose of the biographical narrative is to let in information concerning subjectivity, culture and social context that is often excluded from research. It is precisely this information that has the potential to expose researchers' cultural situatedness and to resist a universalistic discourse.

In this case, I would like very much if we could weave your research proposal into this interview, without

bringing out the deconstructive effect of the genealogical method that you mention. After all, here too we are practicing psychological research and with this engaging in intercultural dialogue! We can thus take your ‘critical dialogical approach to reflexivity’ as guideline for our discussion, following its tripartite reflexive formulations to address the development of your academic research practice.

This sounds like a fun way to proceed. Let’s do it!

Great! So the first reflexive practice that you outline—descriptive reflexivity—requires the researcher to address the question, *How am I different from the participant?* You take from Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960/2004) the incentive to deeply understand the other in dialogue, but stress with Hans-Herbert Kögler (1999) the need to recognize unassailable cultural and historical ruptures in the interlocutors’ symbolic orders. In an effort to ‘understand’ the participant, then, descriptive reflexivity requires that researchers deliberately focus on interpersonal differences, exposing their unique cultural assumptions so as to minimize their potential for misrepresenting others.

In the spirit of this descriptive task, could you say something about your cultural background, especially in connection to how it informs your experience as student in Canada and perhaps most importantly, your present interest in reflexivity?

My pleasure. I was born in a small town in China that can be characterized as agricultural, traditional, and economically less developed. I did farm work, I had a friend who fainted in class due to hunger, and I was taught about the conservative, unitary culture where “birds standing out get shot”. When I was fifteen I went to a city for middle school education. This transition made

me aware that people can have a different mode of life in so many aspects: housing, working, public service, food, clothing, entertainment, etc. When I returned to my hometown for a visit, I was disappointed when some old friends started to treat me as an “Other” whom they no longer identified as belonging to the same social class. I was alarmed by the cruelty of social classification.

My second voyage three years ago brought me to Canada, where I had a further cultural adventure. It was beyond my



expectation that Canadian people are so kind; they always bear with my broken English with extreme patience and encouraging smile. I also did not expect that culture plays such a critical role in interpersonal communication. In countless occasions I had difficulty understanding others, or have myself misunderstood, due to cultural differences. I felt frustrated but also realized that I was in a perfect first-person position to investigate reflexivity, which is much needed and much difficult to practice in cross-cultural encounters.

I live in the city of Toronto, which I consider as both multicultural and Euro-centric. The government endeavors to create an environment friendly to new immigrants, and most people are considerate of others’ ways of living and reflexive of their own cultural origins. This multiculturally oriented ethics greatly motivates me

to engage with issues of ethnicity, culture, as well as other intersecting categories. At the same time, the mainstream Canadian culture has a strong European heritage. This is barely surprising to psychologists informed by Gadamer's hermeneutics. Good will alone is insufficient for accomplishing multiculturalism; people still encounter epistemological difficulties in understanding and appreciating other cultures. Similarly, good-willed psychologists run a chance to problematize people, if they are unable to reflect on their sociocultural situatedness and produce universalizing discourses. This is another cultural experience that motivates me to engage with the topic of reflexivity in relation to culture and social justice.

What a fascinating (inter)cultural journey, Zhipeng! Let us then turn from the task of descriptive reflexivity to that of analytic reflexivity, which asks, *Why am I different from the participant?* Your idea here follows Michel Foucault's (1977) genealogical method and requires that researchers reconstruct their own power-laden socialization (i.e., revealing the specificities, struggles, contradictions, etc. that constitute their unique sociopolitical positions) in an effort to resist producing research that blindly dominates others' subjectivity. In contrast to Foucault however, you draw upon Hans-Herbert Kögler (1999) and recommend that analytic reflexivity be practiced not in solitary contemplation but in dialogue with the participant; the dialogical approach is less challenging in that it makes use of the other's history as concrete contrast for the researchers' developmental trajectory.



Mandy Morgan awarding Zhipeng Gao the Sigmund Koch Award, 2013

Let us take from these recommendations for analytic reflexivity the incentive to dialogue about some of the specificities and struggles unique to your intellectual development and academic experience in Canada. Perhaps, then, you can say something about

'why' you think that you have developed your unique academic trajectory and interests, and how you find yourself to differ from your colleagues in psychology?

Ok, so let me begin with my experience of struggle. I applied for a psychology major for undergraduate study, hoping it could help me better understand myself and humanity. And soon I learnt the "Janus head" of psychology: its scientific face that maintains objectivity is in

the opposite direction to the humanistic face that is usually portrayed in popular culture. I was puzzled, so I skipped some classes to go to library for an answer. Philosophy suggested new ways of conceptualizing human existence; sociology encouraged me to reflect on the role of the psychological discipline in society; and anthropology offered a greater flexibility in choosing research methods. My aimless roaming was ended with a few articles that introduced me to a new concept, "theoretical psychology". I was thrilled! I felt this research program would meet all my curiosity.

In 2009, I attended the thirteenth ISTP conference in Nanjing, China. Others might consider this event enjoyable or exciting, but to me it was utterly enlightening. At that point I received no supervision on theoretical psychology, and had limited access to Western literature. I was amazed to see the real persons behind those familiar names, to listen to their presentations, and sometimes to have dinner together! I also met my current supervisor, Thomas Teo. Attending this conference made me determined to further my study abroad.

The next year I was lucky enough to be accepted by York University. York University has a strong liberal, progressive tradition and emphasizes interdisciplinary study. The History and Theory of Psychology program in particular provides me much intellectual resources and methodological training. I remember the first time I met Thomas in his office, I mentioned my thoughts on the plurality of ways of living. Thomas quickly found a word for me, “reflexivity, you should check this concept out”, and he suggested a number of articles to me as entry points. It took me a long time before I decided on reflexivity as my thesis topic. I had a few topics in mind, among which reflexivity was probably the most difficult one, not only because there exist so many different versions of reflexivity, but also because reflexivity demands you to bring into light your implicit cultural assumptions, negate your taken-for-granted cultural knowledge, and go beyond your limited cultural experience. It’s close to a paradox. It was only after reading Kögler’s work when I made up my mind to write on reflexivity.

Thank you for that, Zhipeng. You make clear how your personal struggles and unique journey have informed your interest in reflexive psychological practice. Let us then turn to the final aspect of your tripartite approach, ethical reflexivity. Here the question is, *What are the implications of my research for the participant?* The task is for researchers to evaluate their research aims, seeking to determine whether the research produced contributes to participants’ well-being. To determine the ethics of research practice, you turn to Thomas Teo’s (1998) framework, which suggests that knowledge is ethical when it succeeds at addressing the major needs of those involved. Thus, ethical research can have varying aims depending on the group being addressed: the goal may be to overcome material domination, create egalitarian speech situations, or promote aesthetic development.

Drawing on these ethical considerations, could you say something about how you evaluate your own work thus far, and perhaps how you see your research fitting within your vision of psychology and society?

I’m happy with my work so far, though for sure I shouldn’t be too optimistic until it survives my theoretical

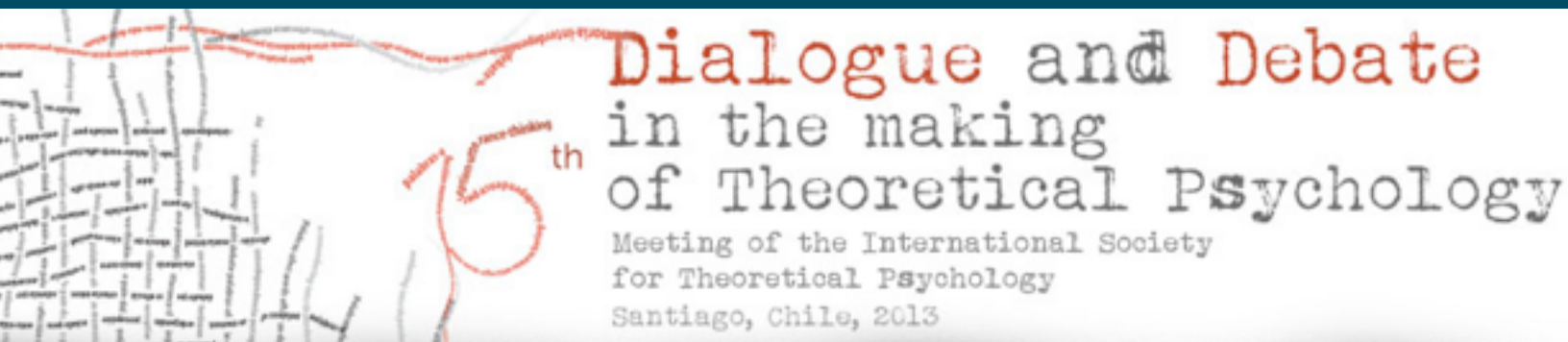
colleagues’ critical evaluation and empirical test in concrete research. I am currently writing papers to introduce my proposal to not only theoretical psychologists but also psychologists in other areas who may apply my method and fulfill its purpose. I am also writing a proposal to apply the method myself in qualitative research, and integrating it into the scholarship of cross-cultural studies and area studies. In addition, I have a few side projects concerning reflexivity from perspectives of linguistics and political economy; I will decide how far to go depending on circumstances. Beyond the above activities, I am exploring new intellectual territories for my PhD dissertation. The ideas contained in my reflexivity project will accompany my future research, of course. In general, I think my work fits my academic aim of becoming a theoretical psychologist.

I think my work also fits my vision of psychology and society in a few ways. In my program at York, I receive much training in history of psychology, which informs me that psychology and society are inseparable and co-constructive. It is better to acknowledge than to deny the fact that psychologists are involved in sociopolitical projects in one way or another, deliberately or unwittingly. Psychologists are not ethicists but they are not exempt from social responsibility, either; they are citizens. That is why I close my proposal with ethical reflexivity.

Informed by a few historical, cultural and minority political movements, personally I’m favorable to pluralism in psychology and in human conditions. Relativism becomes the new challenge to scholars who decide to move away from foundationalism and universalistic discourse. In my proposal I make an attempt based on Kögler’s “regional ontology”, let’s see how it works!

Thank you, Zhipeng! It has been a pleasure to learn about your current research and historical background. I wish you all the best in your pursuits, and I look forward to meeting you again at the next ISTP conference!

Thank you very much Basia! I look forward to meeting you and everybody at Leeds Metropolitan University in 2015!



CALL FOR PAPERS ISTP 2013 PROCEEDINGS VOLUME

In the tradition of ISTP conferences, an edited, peer-reviewed book will be produced with papers based on presentations to the ISTP 2013 meeting held in Santiago. We encourage all participants who presented papers at the conference to submit proposals to be part of a volume entitled:

**DIALOGUE AND DEBATE IN THE MAKING OF THEORETICAL PSYCHOLOGY.
Proceedings of 15th Biennial conference of The International Society for
Theoretical Psychology (ISTP), Santiago, Chile, May 3-7 2013.**

Papers in the proceedings will be peer reviewed and not all submissions are guaranteed to be published. However, we want ESPECIALLY to encourage early career and student participants to submit their papers.

The **submission deadline is November the 30th, 2013**, and manuscripts are to be sent as attachments (carefully following instructions on website listed below) to istp2013@gmail.com

Please note that only submissions by participants who presented at the conference will be considered for publication. In addition, the only language of the book will be ENGLISH.

For details about the submission format visit: <http://www.syntagmas.net/istp2013/en/>.

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Andrés Haye (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile)

Mandy Morgan (Massey University, New Zealand)

James Cresswell (Booth University College)

Theory & Psychology Update

As the journal completes its 23rd volume, it continues to seek out new work in theory while traversing some traditional paths and maintaining ties to theoretical work that remains vital. We welcome, for example, the critical work on such topics as consciousness and cognition, brain sciences and evolution but also advances in psychodynamic theories. A brief glance at the journal in the past year will also show the continuing controversies on the topics of measurement and aspects of statistics - these have continued to generate comments and debate. However, we have also continued to encourage manuscripts on topics new to us, including two papers on the use of images in psychological theory which appeared in the August issue. And as always, we have published numerous papers on aspects of psychological theory that cross boundaries of disciplines and sub-disciplines in psychology.



At the moment we have several special issues in the works, including one on "Language and the Self" edited by Marie-Cécile Bertau (Germany) and another on "The Place of Class: Psychological Perspectives" edited by Darrin Hodgetts (New Zealand) and Christine Griffin (UK). In addition, we are looking forward to a special issue recently proposed by Morton Nissen (Denmark) and colleagues on the relationship between the making of subjectivity and processes of institutional, scientific, educational and medical standardization.

As always we welcome inquiries, manuscripts and requests for book reviews. If you would like to review for the journal, please let us know. As always, we are willing to consider manuscripts in new areas of theory and look forward to hearing from any member of the society.

Henderikus Stam, Editor
University of Calgary, Canada

“Aesthetic Subjectivity: Glimpsing the Shared Soul” A Model Book by G.V. Loewen

James Cresswell

Booth University College

At the recent ISTP conference in Santiago, we talked of aesthetics and what it can add to theoretical psychology. Loewen's (2011) “Aesthetic Subjectivity: Glimpsing the shared soul” is such an endeavor that focusses on art in the construction of personal identity. After briefly summarizing some of his generative ideas, I outline why this would be a helpful resource for theoretical psychologists interested in aesthetics.

The book begins with a discussion of subjectivity that illuminates how the realization of identity through art is not a mere matter of subjective preference. Art is described as expressing reality and as ‘extra-real’ in the sense that it interrupts the realities that humans socially constitute, including the reality of one's own identity that one takes for granted. From there, the book introduces the notion of “artism”: an approach to art that involves a concern for art's technical contrivance and manifests as a sort of intellectual exercise interested in art for its own sake without personal engagement. Loewen then contrasts this approach to art with the “autist” approach that involves the pursuit of love of art in a manner divorced from art's meaning in the world. Both of these approaches are described as missing the encounter with art that makes one see the world and oneself differently.

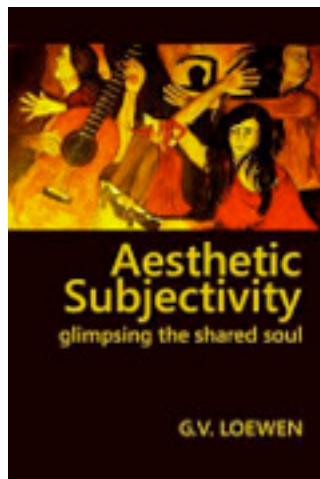
The use of art as a *projection* to create identity is then discussed. Loewen outlines how art can be a means by which people are able to create identity that distinguishes

them as unique: we decorate our walls to project our unique style we wish to be. Loewen then discusses how art can play a role in the constitution of identity by way of *memorializing* the past of who we were. In memorializing the past, art is described as a means by which identity is continued over time. Memorialization combines with projection to enable the introduction of dynamic tensions inherent in one's identity projects of the past, present, and future; we create, buy, and display art to generate a new identity while memorializing the past.

With a discussion of how art is “uncanny”, the book then returns to the ‘extra-real’ where art changes how humans see themselves and the world. Loewen claims that the uncanny norm-breaking quality of art shakes how we see ourselves such that we are able to see a different aspect of the world that was hitherto unknown to us. From this claim emerges a discussion of how art can potentially take us outside of the moral normativity that is generally lived and how our previously held moral commitments can be revealed as foundationless. It is in this manner that art plays a role in the deconstruction of identity and the consequent reconstruction of it.

While such ideas are interesting in their own right, Loewen offers more. For theoretical psychologists interested in aesthetics in relation to psychological phenomena, this book is valuable in three ways. First, the author covers classic theorists in aesthetics: Bachelard, Dewey, Gadamer, Horowitz, Lukacs, Merleau-Ponty, and Schutz. Loewen integrates quotes from such authors throughout the text as opposed to simply citing names in parentheses. The text thereby substantially incorporates the wider discourses in which it is embedded and provides readers with a trustworthy amalgamation of what such classic authors have to say. A benefit of this integrative and comprehensive style is that the book reads as a superbly trans-disciplinary text. It directs attention to a human psychological phenomenon by bringing sophisticated theory to bear on the problem of understanding the phenomenon. ISTP has often cultivated an authentic trans-disciplinary ethos that resonates with this book.

Second, this discussion is integrated with illustrative excerpts from interviews with persons who discuss their own experience with art. The book consequently reads as a dialogue among classic authors, the living phenomenon, and ‘real’ people who engage art. It reads as an intellectually sophisticated piece that does not fall away from the



phenomenon into an abstract intellectual exercise. Without falling into trivial scientism, the book takes a bold step into the genre of meta-narrative with claims such as “[t]he call and response of the aesthetic object is *the* dynamic that navigates *all* existential courses” (p. 316; emphasis added).



A broad trans-disciplinary view on the use of art to constitute identity thereby becomes possible and this view could easily serve as a model for developing theory of other psychological phenomena. It models the development of theory by being philosophically rigorous and delightfully pragmatic.

Third, the book provides a thorough academic discussion about the cultivation of identity through art while ironically prompting the reader to engage the book itself as an aesthetic expression for the cultivation of identity. The personally engaging quality of this book could be seen in the commentary on the ways that art can be engaged. For example, Loewen’s discussion of the autistic and artism establishes a subtext that juxtaposes them to authentic engagement with art. A reader is brought into self-

examination by asking the question of whether or not his engagement with art is artism-like, autistic, or authentic. The personally engaging quality of the book is also evident in the moral commentary that elegantly sidesteps moralism. For example, the book brings to bear a discussion of art and identity in light of morally egregious evils such as the Third Reich. Such discussions furnish the reader with a sense of what aesthetic expression accomplishes and how poseurs attempting to embody such expression can create disastrous situations: “for the ‘destruction of art’ implies the loss of humanity, and where we burn the books of what it means to be human, we next burn ourselves” (p. 253). Statements of this sort could run the risk of irritating the reader with moralist claims, but they do not do so because such claims are situated in a careful discussion that substantiates their merit. Consider further how this moral commentary raises the important issue of authenticity and thorny topics such as ‘truth’ and ‘the good’. Breaching these topics in a sophisticated manner that does not fall into laissez-faire relativism or dogmatism can potentially push readers back into their own engagement with art. That is, the book models rigorous development of theory, pragmatic elegance, and personal engagement, which are all hallmarks of good work in theoretical psychology.

In sum, the topic is interesting and a subtle sub-text of personal engagement runs throughout it. It leaves one with a poetic sentiment that is itself aesthetic. It was a pleasure read in a mode that integrates the emotionally-evaluative human engagement with an intellectual discussion. For those interested in aesthetics in relation to psychological phenomena, this book is valuable for both its content and its model mode of working.

References

Loewen, G. V. (2011). *Aesthetic subjectivity: Glimpsing the shared soul*. Alcoa: Old Moon.

General Announcements



Upcoming Conference: Call for Proposals

EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN ADULT DEVELOPMENT (ESRAD)

Are there enough competencies for survival and prospering? Adult Development IV Annual ESRAD Symposium, Helsinki 2014, Finland, May 21-23, 2014.

See more of the organization: <http://www.europeadultdevelopment.org/>



Job Opening

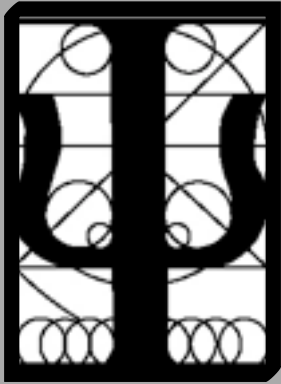
Tenure-Track Position: Social Psychology, Clark University. The Department of Psychology invites applications for the position of Assistant Professor (tenure-track) to begin in August 2014. Clark University offers the advantages of both a distinguished research university and a small liberal arts college. See <http://www.clarku.edu/~psydept>.



Outlines Journal

The open source Outlines journal just issued a special issue on "Transformative Social Practice and Socio-Critical Knowledge." Further information can be found at <http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/outlines>.

ISTP Membership Information



Payment of ISTP Membership is now being invited for 2014!

- Full Membership costs 125USD and Reduced Membership costs 40USD. Full Membership includes 6 issues of the journal Theory & Psychology.

- You can access the Membership Form on the ISTP website at <http://psych.ucalgary.ca/istp/index.html> or email the Secretary-Treasurer, Desmond Painter (dpainter@sun.ac.za).

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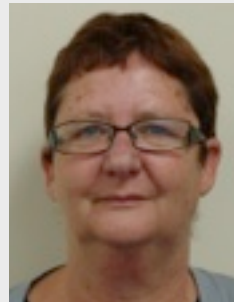
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Note from the Editor

Basia Ellis, M.Sc., Ph. D. Candidate, University of Calgary, Canada.

It has been a real pleasure to collaborate with all the contributors of this issue! As first-time editor, I envision the Newsletter both as an important forum for exchanging current and relevant information about theoretical psychological practice, and as an opportunity for engaging dialogue with internationally situated psychologists.

I thus encourage readers to submit notices of conferences, seminars, or workshops; information about major book publications; and/or updates about recent events relevant to theory and psychology. More than this however, to generate dialogue between theoretical psychologists, I encourage more informal contributions, wherein scholars relate their reflections and/or experiences on the practice of theoretical psychology.

My hope is for the Newsletter to serve as a space where psychologists can dialogue about their practices, revealing what it means to be engrossed in the politics of (theoretical) psychology in various places--including the difficulties, the possibilities, and the directions of our practices. In my view, these stories need to be written and discussed, and I encourage you all to contribute to such ends!

Please contact me at bellis@ucalgary.ca if you would like to contribute to the ISTP Newsletter or have any questions about this and/or future issues.
