



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF BEHAVIOURAL DEVELOPMENT

Newsletter

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Editor

Joan G. Miller

ISSBD Newsletter
Institute for Social Research, RCGD
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA 48106-1248
email: jgmiller@umich.edu

Associate Editor

Xinyin Chen

ISSBD Newsletter
Department of Psychology
University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada N6A 5C2
email: xchen@julian.uwo.ca



Indigenous approaches to developmental research

An overview

Joan G. Miller

Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, USA

e-mail: jgmiller@umich.edu

and

Xinyin Chen

Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario, Canada

e-mail: xchen@julian.uwo.ca

This Special Section is devoted to an examination of the role of indigenous perspectives in developmental research. Indigenous psychological approaches share a concern with understanding developmental processes in terms of the concepts, norms, values, practices, and life circumstances found in particular cultural settings. Holding importance not only in developmental psychology but also in related social science disciplines, indigenous approaches have particular relevance to the concerns of ISSBD, as an international society focused on understanding life span human development in socio-cultural context.

In recent years, increasing weight is being given to cultural considerations in developmental psychology. Such a stance may be seen, for example, in efforts to sample more culturally diverse populations and to enhance the cultural grounding of psychological measures and constructs. Such a focus is also reflected in the growing body of work from cultural psychological viewpoints.

Central issues are raised, however, regarding the role that should be accorded to indigenous perspectives in these efforts. Questions arise, for example, concerning whether it is possible to broaden developmental theories to accommodate indigenous cultural perspectives or whether giving greater weight to indigenous viewpoints requires the development of concepts, theories, and methods that are specific to local cultural and linguistic groups and that preclude comparison. A consideration of indigenous approaches also gives rise to challenges regarding how to increase the relevance of developmental theories to real world problems and to bring a greater concern with power relations into psychological inquiry. Raising questions about the nature of basic psychological theories, issues also arise concerning whether to consider psychological perspectives as indigenous only if they differ from the mainstream North American cultural viewpoints that have tended to dominate psychological research, or to consider all psychological theories as indigenous, in that they invariably reflect historically grounded socio-cultural assumptions, concerns, and practices.

Offering contrasting perspectives on these and related issues, the authors of the target articles include investigators who have been closely identified with indigenous psychology themselves or who otherwise have been engaged in working to increase the cultural sensitivity of developmental psychology. These theorists, along with the commentators, present a critical analysis of indigenous approaches to developmental research and of the promises and pitfalls that such approaches hold. The authors examine

the goals, nature, strengths, and difficulties of indigenous work and the relationship of indigenous perspectives to related cultural approaches.

Issues in Indigenous Approaches to Developmental Research in sub-Saharan Africa

Bame Nsamenang

Human Development Resource Centre, Bamenda, Cameroon

e-mail: AlliedBda@cs.com

Psychologists in Africa face the challenge of transforming the discipline into a relevant, locally informed field that is sensitive to African needs and patterns of development. African societies lay a claim to indigenous psychology, which predates scientific psychology. Certain considerations motivated my approach to indigenous work. First, by limiting its scope to "aspects of behavior conveniently available to investigators in highly industrialized nations with a history of scientific endeavor" (Triandis & Brislin, 1984, p. 1006), the discipline has excluded some humans. Further, minority people have been objectified rather than studied as creators of meaning in their own right. The discipline of psychology has cumulated its database largely from small studies of unrepresentative Euro-American samples of mostly white college students (Lamb, 1992). Second, psychologists are aware that the discipline could be different if it was crafted from the image of the non-Western child. Third, when Western psychologists elect to listen to African views on childhood or to observe African children, they decide *a priori* what to hear or see and how it should be said or seen (Tangwa, 1996). Thus, the voices of non-dominant psychologists are suppressed and they must cope with their exasperation (Murayama, 1997). Fourth, it is difficult to

come to terms with a scientific discipline that does not attend to “95% of the world’s children” (Zukow, 1989, p. 3), yet claims scientific status and purports universality. Fifth, it is not clear whether the notion of mainstream psychology refers to mainstream researchers, research participants, or humanity, to which it legitimately should apply. It is necessary to clarify that mainstream psychology today is a variant of Wundt’s discipline that was selectively imported into the United States to fit the realities and interests of the European immigrants (Valsiner, 1987). In addition, several paradigms and key concepts originated elsewhere, but the American versions now dominate the field. Sixth, the Euro-American image of childhood that emerged from the Enlightenment now enjoys considerable social power internationally. There is equally considerable “resistance to questioning its underlying values and assumptions, even among agencies and rights advocates who daily work with a very different reality” (Boyden, 1999, p. 1) in Africa.

My position regarding the relationship between indigenous and modern psychologies is necessarily constructivist, in that it is incidental to the “behavioral shifts” Africa’s “acculturative stress” imposes. Accordingly, I believe that a relevant developmental psychology for the continent should emerge from a discourse within the hermeneutic circle of endogenous and exogenous mentalities. The way to proceed is to acknowledge the achievements of mainstream psychology, accept it as indigenous Western psychology (Greenfield, 1999; Rudman, 1987), but hybrid and nurture it into a science that truly captures human diversity. I also acknowledge the contributions of cultural and cross-cultural psychologists to the spirit of indigenous psychology, but regard both as limited and limiting in effectively addressing the emics of non-dominant cultures. For example, a “comparative approach has contributed little insight into our understanding of human development in non-western contexts” (Nsamenang, 1994, p. 3) in their own terms, and the referral values, epistemologies, and logic of discourse are essentially Euro-American.

Indigenous psychology can lend itself to comparison, on the proviso that there exists a common baseline. For the moment, systematic baseline developmental data exist mainly for Western societies. An equitable motive of comparison would be to assign equal significance and weight to the target phenomenon, then chart its similarities and differences in the contexts of interest. This differs fundamentally from the current approach, which sets out to validate, extend, or expand Western theories or concepts. This approach trivializes and masks the real nature of target phenomena in the non-Western context. Without similar baselines for other parts of the world, it is difficult to find scientific justification for cross-cultural psychological comparisons. Indigenous researchers are essential to this project. Taken together, they can more sensitively draw on ethnotheories and life-journeys from diverse cultures to integrate the full range of markers of development that cannot possibly be observed in a single culture (Saraswathi & Dasen, 1994). They can equally describe the variations in cultural curricula for human development as well as cultural supports and constraints to development. Because a devel-

opmental database is conspicuous by its non-existence in sub-Saharan Africa, it seems plausible to first establish one as a secure base for comparison. Unless, at least, a typology of development and key psychological attributes come into existence, scientific rigor does not seem to favor comparison with that context. Given that every culture reproduces, socializes children, stimulates cognition, fosters competence, etc., systematic indigenous psychology worldwide will promote “the gradual, cumulative emergence of unifying concepts, norms, and principles” along these and other developmental themes (Nsamenang, 1992, p. 212).

Indigenous Developmental Work

I regard indigenous developmental work as the study of changes in the biological and psychological attributes that define individuals during ontogeny in a particular context, and the processes and principles pertaining thereto. Culture is central to this work and process in two respects. First, humans are biologically disposed to acquire, create and transmit culture. Second, development is mediated by the curricula cultures offer to their offspring.

Indigenous work emphasizes understanding rooted in the ecology and culture and demands the cultural grounding of psychological theory (J.G. Miller, in press), the culturization of methods and assessment tools (Nsamenang, 1994), and sensitivity to and assessment of contextual conditions (Craik & Feimer, 1987). It necessarily has to apply the rigors of science to development-in-context. In this sense, indigenous work is neither a project of cultural essentialism nor a feature of a particular setting, but an account of how human attributes are constructed and canalized by an interacting system of influences in cultural context.

Thus, indigenous developmental work in sub-Saharan Africa becomes an account of the discourse of how the sub-Saharan ecoculture imprints onto human psychological development. The account portrays a different image of development because a West African worldview (Nsamenang, 1992) ordains a psychological frame that differs from that which informs contemporary developmental psychology (Serpell, 1994).

An Indigenous West African View on Human Development: Social ontogeny draws on African life-journeys (Serpell, 1993) and conceptions of personhood in terms of its “becoming” (Erny, 1968) to posit three phases of the life course: spiritual selfhood, social selfhood, and ancestral selfhood (Nsamenang, 1992). While newborns are entering a mundane world, those dying are at the threshold of a spiritual world. This viewpoint extends the human life course to an afterlife. Developmental psychology has focused primarily on social selfhood, the experiential self, which itself is divided into seven stages (Nsamenang, 1992). Each stage faces a distinct developmental task conceptualized in terms of important transitions between patterns of social participation that define the culture’s perceptions of the family and children.

Socialization is organized to gradually integrate children into pivotal roles and responsible behaviors through guided participation in valued cultural and economic activities at different stages of life, beginning at an early age. It is subtly modulated to mesh with children’s emerging abilities. The desired endstate is not cognitive competence, but responsible social development, which subordinates

a science that truly captures human diversity

cognitive and biological maturation. Thus, parents assign tasks to children whom they perceive to be physically and cognitively ready to perform these tasks. In characterizing development as a cumulative process of integration within the family and community, African social ontogeny "differs in theoretical focus from the more individualistic accounts proposed by Freud, Erikson, and Piaget" (Serpell (1994, p. 18).

Theoretical and Methodological Directions

Kuhn (1970) described examples as the core of theory. A science's content does not exist until exemplars are provided for identifying and abstracting it (Tyler, 1998). Exemplars teach scientists how to recognize their subject matter and what meaning to assign to it, but the exemplars for developmental psychology exclude the bulk of its subject content. Even human diversity and the differing ethnotheories that organize development worldwide get lost in current paradigms that assume a homogeneity which does not exist (Tyler, 1998). This situation invites an opening up to diversity, but poses the methodological challenge of accessing and assessing diversity and how it is expressed. Meeting this challenge requires an inclusive frame of reference and a new understanding of theory-in-context.

The human being as biology fuses with the context as ecosystem and culture. The interface is the *zone of developmental change*. At the biological level, the interface is that point inside an individual's "skin" where environmental (sensory) inputs interplay with biological imperatives to output developmental change. Ontogeny constitutes the environmental interface that affords cultural mediators from which children abstract the knowledge, competencies, and cognitive markers that humanize the human animal. This is the sense in which ontogeny fits as an emerging, but not yet a completed, paradigm that can unify a science whose subject matter is the development of the individual. It also holds the potential to thread together as phenomena-in-context facets of psychological being that current theorizing dichotomizes.

Because some phenomena are inaccessible using current research tools, a preference for quantitative or qualitative methodology does not seem advisable. A more plausible approach would be a collaborative interdisciplinary framework that permits several disciplines to cross-fertilize and enrich the research process. Because many questions on human development in Africa are unanswered, or, worse yet, not asked, a learning posture can inspire innovation and creativity to adjust theory, method, and practice to the situativity of development. In so doing, it is essential to shift conceptualization of development from "states" of being to "processes", in which we find "becoming" (R. Miller, 1984), as in the ontogeny of social selfhood (Nsamenang, 1992). The necessity to incorporate research participants as creative agents and knowers (Tyler, 1998) compels interpretive and participatory research which acknowledges the difference between data *about* participants and data *by* them.

Concluding Statement

Developmental psychology deserves a vision that transcends that of mainstream psychology, cultural psychology, and cross-cultural psychology. Indigenous work serves as a starting point for a vision that is sensitive to the discipline's diverse subject matter. It can contribute emics and ethnothe-

ories that can be formalized into developmental theories (Greenfield, 1999; Kim & Berry, 1993). My expectation is that, while ISSBD reinforces efforts to give voice to psychologists from non-dominant cultures to contribute to human knowledge, it ought to consider leading the psychological community to evolve a truly unified science of human development. Psychologists in the modernizing world lack the power, resources and organizational framework to do so.

Research framed by social ontogeny, through resonating with African life-journeys, can fill an important gap. It can inform scholars, practitioners, and development agents about how African communities will relate to interventions for their children.

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On the Nature of Cultural Research*

Madelene Sta. Maria

Psychology Department, De La Salle University
Manila, Philippines
e-mail: clamasm.CLA.DLSU-MANILA@mail.dlsu.edu.ph

A more interpretative, symbolic approach to the investigation of psychological phenomena is leading many of us to re-examine our research practices. There is a need to integrate cultural experience, which is now seen as fundamental to the study of psychological functioning, into the process of arriving at knowledge. It may now also be necessary to incorporate into the process of research a people's ways of confronting their world so that their goals are achieved and their needs are met.

* My preference to use "cultural" instead of "indigenous" signifies my response to the questions raised by those whom we labeled as "indigenous." Some of these questions are the following: "Who is indigenous? What is that which is indigenous? What label would you then use for yourselves, if you choose to label us as 'indigenous'? What is your purpose in labeling us as such?"



In the attempt to define cultural research in human development, focus should be given to the problems and solutions that have been raised by non-Western social scientists in their efforts at contextualizing the research process. It is from arguments that emphasize cultural knowledge and identity that alternatives to the traditional ways in which research is conducted are being explored. Although a re-examination of the accommodation of culture (that is, particularity) within developmental theory (that is, universality) is now being undertaken (see, e.g., Saarni, 1998; Bukowski and Sippola, 1998), one is invariably led in this re-examination to the issues that have to do with definitions of culture and universality in the discipline, and not so much to the nature of the knowledge produced when a specific research practice is to be undertaken. Still to be resolved are issues of how abstraction is conditioned by the researcher's choice of particularities to arrive at understanding, or of how much significance should be given to the possibility that knowledge is constitutive of a given research activity.

An examination of discussions and ideas concerning the significance of culture in Western-based and in more local, non-Western literature reveals that the importance accorded to culture in research investigations is partly dependent on the perceived task of the scientist/researcher. The Western-based or Western-oriented researcher is still in the search for a grand narrative and is still engaged in a constant debate about how and where to find that narrative. The local researcher involved in the problems and issues in his or her own society is concerned about the relevance of his or her discipline within society. The issue of societal and cultural relevance is that which characterizes the problem of research in non-Western experience. The issue of universality, on the other hand, is that which characterizes the problem in Western experience. Questions concerning cross-cultural variability as they relate to human developmental theory touch on the universality issue. Cross-cultural variability and comparability across cultures on certain stable dimensions are therefore what characterize the problems that confront the Western or Western-oriented researcher. In contrast, questions regarding benefits, representation, and legitimacy of knowledge are raised by those whose participation is requested in a culturally alien activity called research. These questions concern issues of cultural relevance. These questions are local concerns and are rarely addressed in publications on culture and human development. Neither are these questions given much importance in other areas of psychology that seek to integrate culture and/or context in investigations, i.e., cross-cultural psychology or cultural psychology. It is not recognized that these local concerns about research activities may greatly influence the outcome and impact of any investigation.

I believe that if we are to talk about cultural research in the discipline, we should integrate and address both issues of cultural comparability and cultural relevance. However, the present emphasis on one rather than the other remains, in my opinion, a function of the context in which the discourse on the problem of contextualization is taking

Mothers and children participating in a discussion held at a Philippine Peace Zone area.



place. That is, when the issue of cultural relevance is discussed in the more dominant Western discourse, the problem is transformed into one of cultural comparability. As a consequence, the questions of relevance are made peripheral.

This situation is maintained by the practice of confining the discussion of issues regarding cultural relevance within centers of discourse outside the community, without first developing and enhancing discourse within the local community in which the research activity is taking place. Banpasirichote (1986) notes a growing desire among peoples in the Third World for self-determination in setting the process and agenda for research. This desire for emancipation was described by Banpasirichote as the longing among "the common people ... to have their knowledge systematized, objectified by their own collectivities, advanced consciously by their own sage, while being aware of other knowledge so that their wisdom is seen and respected as any other" (p. 39). Indigenous knowledge, which reveals for us a people's ways of living, has been reproduced and transmitted primarily through apprenticeship and verbal communication, but has not reached a scientific status because of the limitations present in the "system of trust, legitimacy, and reward of knowledge predominant in the Third World" (p. 43). What indigenous knowledge needs to have, according to Banpasirichote, is a systematic means of production and an institution with which to identify itself.

Filipino social scientists, for example, who are involved in efforts toward the systematization of indigenous knowledge, articulate as a goal the development of an indigenous social science that is socially and culturally relevant, responsive, and meaningful — a social science that is expected to have impact and reflect change in culture and society (see, e.g., Enriquez, 1976 and Salazar, 1976). Two important aspects in the definition of "indigenous" are emphasized in more recent efforts to develop a discipline that embodies cultural knowledge. These are an enhanced discourse within the culture on matters in the discipline that are meaningful to the members of that culture (Salazar, 1985), and a continued effort toward achieving increased relatedness among various indigenous bodies of knowledge (Ho, 1985).

Cultural research should involve an attempt to bring the discipline closer to the lives of the people so that, in the end, it becomes part of their cultural reality. This effort is being undertaken in research activities of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, an indigenous psychology movement that seeks to bring an orientation to the teaching of, and research in psychology that is reflective of Filipino cultural experience. In these research activities, the participation of community members is requested in some or in all phases of the research process. This type of research strategy is reminiscent of participative research in sociology. The difference, however, lies in the use of indigenous methods in Sikolohiyang Pilipino research. The community members who participate in data gathering are not trained in the use of Western methods but use instead the ways by which information is commonly obtained in the community. With the use of indigenous methods of information exchange, value is given to the quality of the relationships among participants in the

research process (Santiago and Enriquez, 1982). An open system of gathering data is likewise created. Artificiality in the conditions for responding is avoided, resulting in an atmosphere in which expressions are freely given. The researcher is not given the sole responsibility of determining the questions for research or the procedure for gathering information. Interpretations from data are either formed together with the other participants, or are validated through a discussion meeting with the participants.

In my own preliminary observations of investigations that use indigenous methods and involve community participation in the process of data-gathering, the research activity consists of the following phases: 1) a determination of the nature and responsibilities of collaboration among participants (the researcher and community members) in the research process; 2) a systematization of knowledge in the community regarding the research theme; 3) a community reflection process, or discussion and formation of a consciousness within the community about the theme of research; and 4) a discussion of future possibilities for self and the community regarding that area of life which relates to the research theme.

Cultural research is to be viewed as a form of cultural activity. Like any activity that is undertaken by a collective, the goal is to preserve and protect the survival of succeeding generations. This goal is achieved when the continuity of other significant activities of the community is safeguarded, and when relationships within the community are not destroyed but enhanced. Cultural research should serve this goal; the researcher should be one with the community in consciously working toward the achievement of this goal through the research act.

Cultural research in human development will therefore entail bringing inquiry into areas of human development that are meaningful to the community. We may at this point envision a strategy of research in which members of a community determine for themselves the research focus and the manner by which the research activity may be conducted. The process becomes a collective undertaking. The researcher and the respondents share the same purpose and cooperate toward that which would benefit the community.

The nature of the discourse that is currently being undertaken in determining comparability across cultures on human development themes will consequently have to be changed. Comparability is not to be achieved by identifying general explanatory principles. To subscribe to a singular explanation is to move away from the diversity of cultural contexts. Comparability is also not to be achieved when procedures of establishing validity are done outside the cultural community. To do so is to remove cultural meaning from that event or action that form the basis of one's interpretation. When cultural researches are to be undertaken in human development, discourse on cultural comparability should center on shared values and commitments that are fundamental to our collective existence.

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Indigenous Psychology and Indigenous Approaches to Developmental Research

Cigdem Kagitcibasi

School of Arts & Sciences, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey
e-mail: ckagit@ku.edu.tr

The so-called indigenous psychology movement has emerged rather recently, after the establishment of psychology as a discipline outside the West. It was further stimulated by the rise of cross-cultural psychology, particularly in the 1980's (Adair & Diaz-Loving, 1999; Kim & Berry, 1993). An impetus for the trend toward indigenous psychology has been the search for relevance, mainly stressed in the non-Western 'majority' world (Sinha & Holtzman, 1984). The Western domination in psychology has been rejected, and culturally meaningful new conceptualizations have been called for (Sinha, 1992, 1997).

One perspective on indigenous psychology has been theory-driven, with its goal that of reaching universals. Indigenous psychological knowledge is considered important because it is commonality in indigenous patterns which points to potential universals (Berry, 1989). This is inherent

to a cross-cultural comparative approach, which questions the *assumed* universality of psychological patterns studied in one (Western) context and requires that such universality be demonstrated empirically. From such a perspective, the apparently contrasting trends in cross-cultural psychology toward indigenous and universalistic points of view are, in fact, complementary approaches.

Another perspective has emphasized the role of culture in providing meaning and has led to a more radical view of indigenous psychology. From such a viewpoint, indigenization involves the cultural construal of psychological knowledge (Enriquez, 1990; Kim, Park, & Park, 2000). Since each cultural context creates its own psychological reality, universals are not relevant, and the concept of "psychic unity" is rejected (Shweder, 1991). When taken to its logical extreme, this standpoint leads to radical cultural relativism.

These two contrasting metatheoretical perspectives have been defined respectively as *indigenization from without* and *indigenization from within* (Enriquez, 1990). The main methodological issue is whether the phenomenon under study is unique, as it derives its meaning from a specific (cultural) context and therefore has to be studied "from within", or whether it may have some commonality with other phenomena and therefore may be compared with them. Kashima (1998) adds a temporal dimension in differentiating between "system-oriented" and "practice-oriented" views of culture. The former view treats cultures as systems that have some stability over time so that they can be compared. It highlights the enduring aspects of culture but cannot handle its concrete, changing aspects generated by individual activities. In contrast, the latter view examines short term, situated, and changing patterns of practices that cannot be generalized or compared.

Another way of looking at these perspectives is to distinguish an *indigenous orientation* (a methodology aiming to discover indigenous reality) from *indigenization as a goal* (establishing indigenous psychologies) (Kagitcibasi, 1992; Kagitcibasi & Poortinga, 2000). The former is an approach that seeks to discover the diversity in human reality in order to enrich and improve psychological conceptualizations that



An unschooled peasant girl from a remote village in Turkey carrying a baby on her back.

explain the diversity. The latter involves developing a psychology for each diverse cultural reality. When indigenization is seen as an orientation, there is only one psychology which benefits from indigenous knowledge; however, when it is seen as a goal, there are many local psychologies, producing an unwieldy and basically incomparable body of knowledge.

Even though the two perspectives appear mutually exclusive, this is bound to change and integrative syntheses are bound to emerge as psychology ventures further to integrate culture into its analyses (Kagitcibasi & Poortinga, 2000). Some examples are the "autonomous-relational self" (Kagitcibasi, 1996 a), "socially-oriented achievement motivation" (Agarwal & Misra, 1986; Yu & Yang, 1994), "nurturant-task leader" (Sinha, 1980), and "relationship harmony" (Kwan, Bond & Singelis, 1997). What is common among these construals is the integration of some indigenously derived insight/knowledge into psychological theorizing that promises to enrich our understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Such efforts can bridge the gap between the two perspectives, which is particularly important in developmental research.

Developmental research was culture-blind for too long a time, largely missing the opportunity to consider the child in the cultural milieu, which is the *sine qua non* of the developmental completion of a human nature (Schwartz, 1981). However, particularly since the 1980's, contextual approaches have emerged. These have been informed by the socio-historical theory of Vygotsky, which stresses the interactive nature of the learning process. Behavior is seen as adapted to fit the context, and the context as structured to support the behavior, a process that derives basically from the adaptations of humans to their environments throughout cultural history. As reflected in the work of theorists such as Scribner,



Low income urban Turkish children attending an early education program at a poorly heated community centre.

Cole, Greenfield, Rogoff, Lave, Carraher, Schliemann, and others, there has been a focus here on everyday cognition. From this perspective, learning is considered to be context-dependent and goal-oriented action, that is functional for adaptive problem solving.

This research has helped lead to a recognition of "indigenous" concepts of competence. As seen, for example, in the focus on social intelligence (e.g. Berry & Bennett, 1992; Dasen, 1984; Harkness & Super, 1993; Mundy-Castle, 1974), it has pointed to cultural conceptualizations of "intelligence" that differ from Western views that stress school-like cognitive competence. This functional perspective sheds light on how children's competence and behavioral orientations are promoted in culturally valued domains, whereas development in other domains may lag behind (e.g. Dasen, 1984; Harkness & Super, 1993; LeVine, 1988; Serpell, 1977).

The increasing acceptance of indigenous approaches in developmental research has, however, brought up some metatheoretical and ethical issues on which psychologists holding universalist and relativist views have contrasting perspectives. One basic issue is whether searching for or using common (universal) standards of human development is valid. How this issue is resolved has significant theoretical and practical implications. More specifically, at issue is the legitimacy of a question such as, "Is there an optimal fit between societal values/practices and children's 'developmental trajectories'?" (Kagitcibasi, 1996b; Nunes, 1992).

Focusing on the situated everyday patterns of learning and practice which are adapted to contextual requirements, the relativist perspective of "indigenization from within" treats the above as a non-issue. It is maintained that whatever is valued in a culture is reflected in child rearing, and child rearing socializes the human infant to be a competent member of a society. A problem with this stand, however, is that, since it focuses only on the particular, it cannot provide insight into the nature of general cultural systems or the changes that occur in them. All societies change, often in response to technological innovations, contacts with other societies, and social-structural shifts involving urbanization. However, the established patterns of family cultures, for example child rearing values, may not follow suit, creating tensions. Misfits may also emerge between the different demands that significant social institutions, such as the family and the school, put on individuals. For example, obedience-oriented child rearing may no longer be adaptive to changing lifestyles where, in school and specialized urban tasks, autonomous decision making and cognitive skills above and beyond "social intelligence" are required for success (e.g. Kagitcibasi, 1996b, 1998; Nunes, 1992; Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993).

If the pendulum is swung too far and we reject all culture comparative analysis, we run the risk of getting stuck in cultural relativism, which is limited in handling the complexities underlying societal changes. This path also runs the risk of degenerating into double standards, as, for example, in considering cognitive standards of competence to be relevant in industrial societies but not in pre-industrial societies.

A more integrative comparative perspective considers the above question legitimate and proceeds to study the possible misfits between traditional cultural practices and changing environmental demands. Within such a perspec-

tive, again great significance is attributed to the context, and a functional perspective is retained. However, there is also an acknowledgement of a possibly optimal development of human potential, which points to common (possibly universal) patterns of human development. The basic issue here is how a contextual approach can be made compatible with generalization and comparison, or how to achieve indigenization and contextualism without complete relativism (Kagitcibasi, 1996b, 1998).

This is a challenge that requires an integrative approach which is difficult and complex, but that represents a necessary undertaking, if we indeed aim to surmount the metatheoretical divide discussed above and really benefit from indigenous knowledge in our study of human development. A convergence may already be emerging (Kashima, 1998; Smith, in press). It can be achieved, at least to some extent, when we recognize that contexts are not necessarily unique; they can be compared (Eckensberger, 1990; Price-Williams, 1980) and that we can have both a contextual and a comparative orientation (Kagitcibasi, 1996b, 1998).

What is indigenous about such an integrative approach involving possible common standards of human development? It is in conceptualizations and methodological approaches, such as construing culturally valid and relevant standards of possibly universally shared attributes; in depicting what is adaptive (functional) and what is not and the changes in these with changing environmental demands; in conducting culturally sensitive research, involving local experts informed by indigenous knowledge and research subjects as participants sharing in the decision making; in using culturally sensitive and valid assessment; and in considering contextual factors in the interpretation of research results. An indigenous approach to developmental research is a valuable conceptual and methodological tool; it need not and should not cause a schism, but rather can serve a much-needed integrative function in better understanding both the diversity and the commonality in human development.

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Commentary: Indigenous to What?

Hiroshi Azuma

Department of Psychology, Bunkyo-Women's University, Japan
e-mail: azumah@shirayuri.ac.jp

At the beginning, I would like to describe my position. It is already a consensus that any mind grows by assimilating the culture and adapting to the culture. We should further note that every known culture is hybrid, that any mind develops through interacting with a multiplicity of cultures, and that the mind further hybridizes those cultures and weaves out a new culture around and inside it. This 'personal culture' gets fed back to the wider culture (Kitayama, 1997). Whereas I respect the achievements of cultural research in which a culture is treated as a structured entity belonging to a sociological group, for me a culture is a rather amorphous system of sub-cultures. Certain constellations of sub-cultures may be shared by members of a social group as the common denominator and identifiable as the culture of that group. But even this shared system of sub-cultures may not be identical in the 'personal culture' of each individual member, because it interacts with residual components of the personal culture.

Turning now to the issue of indigenous psychology, the three target articles have eloquently pointed out that the science of psychology has been parochial because the problems, concepts, theories, and methodologies have been Euro-American and the people studied to establish the knowledge base have also been Euro-American. I agree with the authors on this point, in line with what I have written elsewhere (Azuma, 1984). This parochialism may be tolerable in physiologically oriented studies, as there is evidence showing that many basic physiological processes are universal across mankind. In the study of human development, however, the problem is serious as the growth of mind takes place in the culture and by the culture.

The positions taken within each of the three articles differ, however, regarding how to proceed after acknowledging the partiality of Western psychology. The viewpoint of Dr. Sta. Maria is represented in her statement that cultural research is to be regarded as a form of cultural activity. Its goal is to be of service to the survival of the succeeding generations of the culture and the focus of research is to be

determined by the members of a community. I agree that this is a good, probably the best, approach for knowing how people of a community think and behave under given circumstances. How to accumulate and structure knowledge to come up with generalizations, however, is still an open question. A radical relativist may refuse to generalize. This type of position would yield the chaotic effect of producing mutually independent context bound knowledge. Dr. Sta. Maria does not go to that extreme. She is critical of conventional cross-cultural comparisons, involving mono-culturally-developed tools and general explanatory principles. However, she expects that studies that are based on genuine intercultural discourse will establish a new sort of comparability.

Dr. Nsamenang is basically for psychology as a unified science, but believes that it should transcend the present 'mainstream' psychology. To him, Western psychology is one of the indigenous psychologies. As other indigenous psychologies develop, they will merge into a unified system of psychology. The task of encouraging indigenous psychology outside the West is therefore urgent. In relation to developmental studies, he describes indigenous West African views of human development that focus on the development of social selfhood through guided participation. This contrasts with the bias of Western developmental theories centering on cognitive competence and independence. This West African way of socialization, as described by Dr. Nsamenang, impressed me as representing a feature that is common to many non-Western cultures, including pre-modern Japan and perhaps pre-individualism Europe. Instead of being indigenous, it may have been a universal practice which Western individualism has outgrown under particular contingencies of history.

Dr. Kagitcibasi refers, among other issues, to processes of cultural change. This is particularly important since every culture is changing in response to contact with other cultures, ecological shifts, and changes of the people. Often cultural studies describe a culture like a fossil, being solid and stable. The word 'indigenous' connotes traditional, circumscribed, fixed, and internally homogeneous. Actually, however, any culture involves some fluidity. The recognition of this fluid aspect of culture backs up the thesis of Dr. Kagitcibasi that contextual approaches can be made compatible with generalization and comparison.

The fluidity of culture is most obvious in what I called the 'personal culture'. The border of a culture is rather arbitrary. There certainly are Christian, Moslem, Chinese, or African cultures. They are big units. But we can think of smaller units like community culture, school culture, and family culture. Can we further think of a personal culture? A sociologist friend of mine said that we could not because for him a culture is a sociological concept, which presupposes a society. But if we define a culture as the universe of artifacts that interact with us (Cole 1996), it is unlikely that a person does interact with an unbiased sample of artifacts. One can interact only with a part of the universe. The person is an active agent in determining what from the universe comes into interaction with them. Not merely being shaped by the culture, the person selectively and purposefully structures artifacts to create a unique system of artifacts around them. The relationship between a person and their culture should be characterized as cross-fertilization, and that is the essence of psychological

development. So, I dare to conceptualize personal cultures and start from there.

The majority of cross-cultural and cultural studies have adopted a strategy of beginning with the circumscription of one or several cultural groups. This implicit assumption of intra-cultural homogeneity trivializes the power of growing personal cultures in producing constant change in the group culture. An alternative approach would be for us to start from a careful emic study of 'personal culture' and work up to the more comprehensive group culture. Then the complementary nature of indigenous and universal points of view will be obvious as any personal culture consists of components of varying degrees of universality or individuality.

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Commentary: Indigenous Theories' Failure to Flourish

Harold Stevenson

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan, USA
e-mail: hstevens@umich.edu

The quest for understanding human behavior has taken many forms in the social sciences. Among these is the current discussion concerning what we can learn from theories indigenous to particular societies as contrasted with theories that are more broadly applicable.

It can be argued that we need both kinds of theory and that separation of the two approaches is a result of economic and linguistic factors as well as cultural ones. The positions taken by the writers of these three papers as they summarize their views vary greatly, but underlying all the three discussions is the question of why indigenous theories have not exerted a stronger influence on the social sciences. There are several practical reasons why this has been the case. First, research requires money, but the government of relatively few developing societies have been willing to provide the resources necessary for advancing this field of inquiry.

A second, related reason for the lack of development of the field is that the prestige motivating a great deal of theorizing in the social sciences has tended to come, not from the construction and elaboration or influential indigenous theories, but from the pursuit of topics and research methods of more universal interest. Potential social value, a common justification for pursuing indigenous theories, has infrequently been a guiding principle in selecting topics for theoretical consideration.

Another important impediment to the creation and dissemination of indigenous theories lies in the difficulty of translation in the social sciences because in addition to terms

with technical definitions, others have been borrowed from everyday speech. Great problems are inherent in such a situation, for few persons possess the linguistic skill and the background of everyday experience necessary to translate with clarity and sensitivity and to preserve the nuances of meaning in each language.

Another impediment to easy communication among investigators in different societies is the common reliance on instruments that were initially constructed for use in Western cultures and are now being translated and used with participants from different cultures. It should be understood that unless instruments are developed from the beginning that are applicable to participants from the cultures being studied, data derived from the instruments run the risk of being viewed through a bias-creating lens whose degree of distortion is difficult to discern.

The modest progress in the development of indigenous theories also lies in the newness of the considerations. There simply have not been sufficient numbers of major studies to permit the clarification and elaboration of the indigenous approaches. As a result, it is not always easy to understand what is being proposed.

Finally, although there is value in the pursuit of both indigenous and universally applicable theories, proliferation of indigenous theorizing may convince members of some societies that they must develop their own theory and discard those that attempt broader application. The consequences of such a situation would be chaos, rather than productive advance. Indigenous theories can act as correctives for over-zealous acceptance of the culture-specific bodies of data. At the same time, universal theories serve a similar purpose in distinguishing between those that are comparable cross-culturally and those that are confined to narrow categories of humans. With patience, it seems very likely that the growth of indigenous theories will dispel any notion that cultural phenomena will fail to have a strong and pervasive influence on research in the social sciences.

Commentary: Indigenous Approaches: Heuristically Useful But Not Without Problems

Uwe P. Gielen

St. Francis College, New York City, USA
e-mail: ugielen@hotmail.com

More than 200 years ago, the German philosopher Gottfried Herder postulated that different cultural and national groups had each their own mentality and spirit which were considered by him to be incommensurable with the spirit of other peoples. Herder opposed the universalistic and rationalistic tenets of Enlightenment philosophy. In time, this position would be taken up by the German romantic movement where it was frequently accompanied by an appeal to the priority of emotion over reason, the unique role of language in constituting the mind, and nationalistic rebellion against the Western (e.g., France, England) political powers of the day.

The modern indigenous psychology movement is a spiritual descendent of *Völkerpsychologie*. Similar to it, there is an emphasis on cultural uniqueness, opposition to "scientific colonialism," experience-near methodologies, skepticism



about universalistic and rationalistic approaches such as those advanced by Piaget and Kohlberg, and the special advantages of being culturally an inside observer and participant. The movement stresses to varying degrees both scientific and political goals.

The movement also displays a tendency to emphasize differences between Western and non-Western perspectives and researchers. This stereotypical juxtaposition of Western and non-Western approaches tends to neglect fundamental differences existing within the two categories ("leveling" of within-group differences), exaggerates differences between the two categories ("sharpening" of between-group differences), and mistakes present-day American mainstream psychology for the quite varied traditions adopted in other western countries. For instance, Nsamenang, citing Valsiner, claims that "mainstream psychology is a variant of Wundt's discipline" (Nsamenang, this issue). This is historically misleading: Neither Wundt's preferred methods (systematic introspection by highly trained specialists and the loose comparative approach adopted by him in his *Völkerpsychologie*) nor his overall theoretical approach have left noticeable traces in modern American developmental psychology. Similarly, when American developmentalists began to adopt Vygotsky's approach, they conveniently divested it of its Marxists underpinnings and purposes that formed the center of his outlook and his existence.

Nsamenang feels that "psychologists in the modernizing world lack the power, resources, and organizational framework" to help "evolve a truly unified science of human development." This seems to me to be more applicable to sub-Saharan Africa than to Latin America, India, China, and Egypt where thousands of psychologists are now teaching, practicing, and (sometimes) conducting research. In each of those regions or countries, there exists now a critical mass of psychologists potentially able to exert a major impact on the course of psychology in the 21st century. Will they be able to do so?

The central theoretical question posed by the indigenous psychology movement is this: Are specific cultural mentalities so unique that each cultural group needs its own psychology, or will it be the main contribution of indigenous researchers to develop culture-sensitive insights and theories that will enrich a truly international psychology of the future? Kagitcibasi's contribution revolves around this question, and she proposes that a comparative but integrative account of the contributions of indigenous psychologists is most likely to lead to theories both balanced in character and practically useful. I suspect she is right in this.

As noted by Sta. Maria, one important contribution by Filipino social scientists lies in their efforts to develop a more participative research methodology. Such an approach is, for instance, appropriate for tracing emergent group behavior and belief systems such as those reflected in focus groups, community meetings, etc. Developmental questions might fruitfully be posed in such settings. Such methodologies may also help move cross-cultural psychology away from its present excessive reliance on questionnaires. In addition, an increased use of "collectivistic" methodologies can divert cross-cultural psychology from its present individualistic emphasis, which fails to sufficiently take into account the impact of social structures and processes on individual development and behavior.

One question not raised by the three contributors concerns the role of those psychologists and social scientists in the non-Western world who implicitly or explicitly claim to represent the indigenous voices of "their" people. Frequently, they have adopted a bicultural or multicultural identity based on more or less contradictory worldviews. Economically, politically, educationally, and culturally privileged, they may be separated by a cultural gulf from the rural populations of their respective societies. My encounters with psychologists and villagers in countries as different as Haiti, Pakistan, and northern India have convinced me that "indigenous" researchers are frequently outsiders and divided by sharp occupational, social class, linguistic, religious, and gender differences from the villagers they attempt to study and understand. In other words: Psychologically relevant differences between Westernized "Majority-World" researchers and their poor, rural research participants frequently prove larger than differences between those same researchers and their Western colleagues. For these and other reasons, I often prefer sensitive ethnographies (whether written by Western "outsiders" and or by compatriots of the villagers) to the generalized accounts of indigenous psychologists who offer artificial and partially ideological constructions such as "Indian worldview," "Afro-centric perspective," or "Islamic psychology." (For a good ethnographic account of how Toraja farmers in Indonesia perceive their life cycles, see Hollan and Wellenkamp, 1996.)

In the future, I would like to see more of the following: developmental accounts of the whole life cycle co-constructed by both cultural insiders and outsiders; multimethod approaches including "collectivistic" methodologies but displaying less reliance on questionnaires; studies based on non-Western theories that have been translated into specific, medium-range hypotheses (e.g., Buddhist theories of the nature and formation of the self); developmental studies among populations poorly represented in our journals (e.g., nomads, soon-to-vanish foragers, illiterates, the rural poor, religious specialists, native artists such as Balinese dancers, adolescents living in theocratic societies such as Iran, etc.); and studies combining demographic approaches with life-cycle theories (e.g., Sharma, in press). In all these areas, psychologists favoring indigenous approaches could make valuable contributions. These might include contributions by non-American psychologists from other Western countries willing to mine their own, quite diverse traditions for "new" insights. German and Russian psychologists, for instance, should not give up their own valuable traditions (e.g., Remplein, 1963) in order to be more acceptable to American psychologists.

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Commentary: Culture and the Relativism of Knowledge

Carolyn Saarni, Ph.D.

Department of Counseling, Sonoma State University,
California, USA

e-mail: saarni@sonoma.edu

I find that I am caught between a rock and a hard spot. On one hand, if I situate my knowledge about developmental psychology in a Western/European-American tradition, then I can more readily lay claim to minimizing threats to internal validity *and* get my papers published in journals published in the USA and Western Europe (Sue, 1999). On the other hand, if I truly believe in a constructivist and context-sensitive position toward processes of inquiry, then I am going to be faced with the slippery surface of cultural relativism and must engage in a risky discourse that at first glance seems to produce more obfuscation than genuine understanding of how children change and adapt in societies as diverse as those found in Africa, Asia, or Latin America. Needless to say, global immigration patterns have contributed to the United States itself becoming a culturally diverse nation, and much of Western Europe, Canada, and Australia are following suit (see related arguments on globalization by Hermans & Kempen, 1998).

In thinking about the ideas raised by Kagitcibasi, Sta. Maria, and Nsamenang in their respective essays, I found myself already engaging in that discourse, struggling to understand from my Eurocentric standpoint how their arguments might advance my understanding of human development — short of my actually having to go to live for a while in their respective countries in order to acquire any sort of meaningful insight. Kagitcibasi provides us with an important clarification in that she distinguishes between scientific endeavors that look for *cultural patterns* (her “indigenous orientation”) versus those that seek *local practices and applications* (her “indigenization as a goal”). The former will be characterized by relatively broad and *encompassing constructs* and the latter by much more specific and delimited *description*. The kinds of knowledge generated by these differing approaches have equal value and, indeed, can mutually inform and enrich one another. The essays by Nsamenang and Sta. Maria provide guidance for how research that has indigenization as its goal might be productively accomplished (e.g., African life journey description or Philippine community participation in developing research questions and measures).

I will restrict my comments here to the search for cultural patterns. Our existing methodologies appear to fall into two general approaches: (a) One applies the same method to samples from two or more different societies and looks for whether the different samples subjected to this standardized procedure respond differently or not (as an illustration, see Camras, 1998). If we expect our research participants to reveal their cultural patterns (whether artifacts, scripts, beliefs, or unique representations) in their responses to our standardized procedure, I think we will obtain limited information, for that very approach does not attempt to make sense of the cultural pattern from their perspective. We will simply be applying our culturally-biased classificatory system to their behavioral response, and we will be none the wiser

as to their cultural interpretation of their responses to our standardized procedure (see also Lock, 1981).

(b) The second approach is to look to each participating society for its tenets of social-psychological folk theory and from within the folk theory inquire about the meaning of some behavior, recurring context, or other phenomenon (as an illustration, see Cole & Tamang, 1998). If we utilize this second approach, emphasizing description from within a particular culture’s folk theory, we may more readily access cultural meanings, and also importantly, be able to gauge whether our research questions are interpretable and relevant to the societies we seek to understand, a point raised by Sta. Maria in her essay. If we are to aspire to validity in our research undertakings, then I think we will have to acknowledge the significance of cultural perspective in establishing our measures, procedures, and, indeed, in the very questions we pose, a perspective eloquently addressed by Nsamenang.

Critical thinking tell us that bias is inherent, for point-of-view cannot be separated from the pursuit of knowledge. We can be ignorant of bias, in which case bias operates unilaterally and maximally. Or we can sensitize our methodology to bias such that we seek to include as many perspectives as feasible, thereby diluting the effect of any single source of bias on our outcomes and maximizing our ability to generalize those outcomes. The latter sounds like more productive science to me.

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Commentary: An Australian Perspective on Indigenous Psychology

Ann Sanson

Department of Psychology, University of Melbourne,
Melbourne, Australia

e-mail: anns@aifs.org.au

The three target articles provide a wealth of thought-provoking material about what an indigenous developmental psychology might look like, its nature, concerns, and methods. For Kagitcibasi, Nsamenang, and Santa Maria, an indigenous psychology (or cultural psychology, for Santa Maria) is one which reflects and has relevance for the people of their respective nations (Turkey, Cameroon, and the



Philippines). In other words, such a psychology would pertain to people of non-Western, largely non-industrialized nations, who have often experienced colonization and domination by a Western power; but who nevertheless form the majority in their own country.

From an Australian perspective, indigenous psychology has a somewhat different meaning. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia form only 1-2% of the population. The remainder represent a rich mix of people from British, European, Asian, Middle-Eastern, and other backgrounds. The term 'Indigenous' applies singularly to the original inhabitants, whose occupancy of the land can be traced back at least 60,000 years. Since white settlement just over 200 years ago, the Indigenous people have suffered a broad range of genocidal policies and practices. These include a deliberate policy, practiced until the 1970s, of forced removal of so-called "half-caste" children from their Aboriginal mothers, to be brought up in institutions or fostered into white families, breaking all connections with their families of origin. Those who suffered from these policies are now known as the "Stolen Generations" (Wilson, 1997). The resulting despair and dislocation, and continuing institutionalized racism are reflected in appalling statistics on all social indicators, including education, health, imprisonment, and employment (Sanson, Augoustinos, Gridley, Kyrios, Reser, & Turner, 1998).

Indigenous people only gained citizenship rights in their own land in 1967. Since that time, there has been a powerful wave of cultural renewal. From 1988 (the bicentenary of white settlement), there has been growing acknowledgement that psychology is not immune from issues of social justice (Gridley, Davidson, Dudgeon, Pickett, & Sanson, in press). This has involved soul-searching on the part of white psychologists. For example, no psychology association spoke out against the policies of removal of children from the families of Indigenous people. Yet these policies were being enacted at the same time that Bowlby's attachment theory, arguing for the primacy of the child's bond with her/his mother, was becoming widely accepted. As might be expected, the few developmental studies on Indigenous children typically suffered from what Kagitcibasi terms "cultural blindness". In common with much research on minority groups (Coll, Crnic, Lamberty & Wasik, 1996), the research principally sought to document so-called genetic or cultural "deficiency" (Lawrence, Smith, & Dodds, 1998).

A forthcoming issue of the *Australian Psychologist* (Vol. 35, No. 2, July 2000) is the first compilation of some of the ways in which Australian psychology is attempting to confront its past regarding Indigenous issues and to negotiate a more positive relationship with Indigenous people, perhaps creating space for the emergence of an Indigenous psychology (Gridley et al., in press). This process has been guided and supported by the insights of the few Aboriginal psychologists.

Several of the themes in the three key articles resonate with emerging strands in this process. The needs for empowerment and self-determination, as well as for

relevant and meaningful research, are emphasized by Santa Maria, Nsamenang, and Kagitcibasi. In Australia, to enable a psychology that reflects Indigenous experience to emerge, the call has been for a "directed partnership" (Dudgeon & Pickett, in press) between Indigenous research participants and non-Indigenous researchers – for a research process which is truly participatory, addresses questions of concern to communities, uses culturally sensitive methods, and leaves ownership of research findings with those from whom the data were drawn. Nsamenang speaks of "hybrid" research and theory development. This process of "picking and choosing", formulating new models and methods from a mix of Western knowledge and traditional cultural knowledge, is also proving relevant in Australia. It is well-illustrated by Koolmatrjie (Koolmatrjie & Williams, in press) who describes the "hybrid" therapeutic process that she has developed to work with Aboriginal people who were "stolen", to help heal their loss and grief.

It is too soon to know where this process of change will go. However, there are promising signs that it may lead not only to an enlarged understanding of human development (Kagitcibasi, this issue) but also to a strengthened capacity to achieve a true reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It is clear that continuing to give voice to those who are leading these developments, such as the three authors here, will remain an important part of the process.

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Notes from The President

In this report, I describe the activities of the Society and its President since the publication of the second issue of the *ISSBD Newsletter* in 1999.

From the outset, each of our members can bear witness to two striking changes in both of the Society's publications. The *Newsletter* now appears in glossy format with major stylistic changes. And our flagship journal, the *International Journal of Behavioral Development (IJBD)* begins the millennium with its own alterations in format. I do hope that the membership appreciates these changes; they certainly are most pleasing to the eye.

With this issue of the *Newsletter*, we begin the terms of Joan Miller, Editor (U.S.A) and Xinyin Chen, Associate Editor (Canada). The editors promise us a slate of interesting lead topics including that which is included herein on indigenous approaches to developmental research. Given the strong cultural and cross-cultural emphases of the editors Miller and Chen, we can look forward to a series of excellent contributions on life-span development from a cultural perspective.

The journal, too, brings with it more than just a new look. Beginning with the March 2000 issue, *IJBD* Editor Rainer Silbereisen has initiated "an essay for the millennium" series. This series of essays is being edited by former ISSBD President Willard Hartup and includes contributions in the March issue by John Flavell and Rudolph Schaffer. Personal state-of-the-art essays will appear throughout the 2000 volume of *IJBD* and will include pieces by Robert Plomin, Richard Lerner, and many other eminent Developmental Scientists.

For those attending the Biennial Meetings of the Society in Beijing, indeed, for all of our members, a second highlight of the March 2000 issue of *IJBD* will prove significant. Twila Tharp and Xiao Chun Miao have organized a special section of seven empirical papers in which the focus is on *Developmental Psychology in China*. This special section of the journal provides us with a nice lead-in to the conference itself.

The Beijing 2000 meetings are in the good organizational hands of Meng Zhao Lan and her colleagues. I have had the privilege of reading most, if not all, of the submitted abstracts and can offer the opinion that this will be a first-rate meeting. The meetings, which take place from July 11-14, comprise over 25 poster symposia, over 70 paper symposia, and 21 keynote addresses.

Opening ceremonies will take place just after the Executive Committee of the *Society* completes its own annual meeting, at 5 p.m. on July 11th. The *General Business meeting* is scheduled to convene at 7:30 P.M. on July 13th. This is *your* meeting; it represents that once-every-two-years time during which *all* members of the *Society* can offer input to the Executive and Steering Committees of the *Society*. Thus, I strongly urge you to attend the business meeting, and to cast your votes for or against *Society* initiatives that will be proposed. Typically the business meeting takes only 2 hours; I sincerely encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to lend your input to the *Society* ... and I thank you in advance for your attendance.

Of course, the meetings bring with them our most recent election results. I am pleased to inform the membership that our new President-Elect is Rainer Silbereisen (Germany).

Rainer's term of office as President will begin in July 2002. Our new Executive Committee members are Suman Verma (India), Avshalom Caspi (United Kingdom), and Patricia Greenfield (U.S.A.). On behalf of the entire membership, I congratulate our new elected officers of the *Society*; I am very much looking forward to working with them during the coming years.

I might note, at this time, that it will be during the Beijing 2000 meetings that we will hear our first reports from the organizing committee for the next conference. Ottawa 2002 is being chaired by Barry Schneider (Canada). His most capable co-chairs are Robert Coplan (Canada) and Xinyin Chen (Canada). The Program Committee of the *Society* will meet on July 10th and will report its progress the following day to the Executive Committee. I might add that we are now entertaining proposals to host the 2004 meetings. Given that the typical sequence is a North American meeting followed by a European meeting, I would be pleased to hear from our European colleagues if there is interest in hosting the biennial meetings of the *Society* in 2004.

The *Society* typically sponsors at least two Workshops in any given year. This year's workshops will be held in Beijing, China and Kampala, Uganda. The Beijing Workshop will precede the Biennial Meetings. A large group of attendees from the world over will attend a series of lectures by eminent senior scholars. The participants will also have the opportunity for discussion with their peers during sessions organized for precisely that purpose. Then in Kampala, Uganda in September 2000, Peter Baguma will chair the Fifth African ISSBD Workshop. The focus will be on "Life course in context: The application of cross-cultural methodologies". Those interested in participating in this exciting workshop should get in touch with Dr. Baguma at: uparipari@Mulib.ac.ug

Future workshops of the *Society* are planned for Peru and the Middle East in 2001. If any of our members would be interested in sharing workshop ideas for 2002 and beyond, please feel free to contact me at: krubin@rubinlab.umd.edu. I will look forward to hearing from you.

As of this writing, I am awaiting a report from Carolyn Zahn-Waxler, Chair of the Publications Committee. The Executive Committee is planning to select a new Editor for *IJBD* at its forthcoming meeting. Rainer Silbereisen's term as Editor ends in 2001; further, he will now be faced with the responsibilities of *Society* President. Thus, the name of the new Editor should be announced in the next issue of this *Newsletter*.

Lastly, I do hope that you have had an opportunity to examine our new web page. The site is: issbd.org and on it you will find all manner of interesting material including the names and addresses of the executive members, a history of the *Society* authored by Willard Hartup, a web-issue of the *Newsletter* that you can download, access to *IJBD* and to the *Membership Directory* of the *Society*, and on-line membership forms. You can use the latter to encourage your colleagues to join the *Society* ... or you can use it to renew your own membership. Of course, the web-site links to other, relevant information including that pertaining to the upcoming conference in Beijing.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our biennial meetings!



Welcome from the Newsletter Editors

In beginning our term as ISSBD Newsletter Editors, we are pleased to extend an invitation to Society members for their input. We welcome suggestions for future articles and for new directions for the Newsletter. In terms of feature articles, it is our intention to explore a wide range of theoretical and applied topics that relate to understanding life span human development in social and cultural context. It is also our hope that the Newsletter can serve increasingly as a forum for Society members to exchange ideas and information. Thus, we strongly encourage submissions of Letters to the Editor responding to past Newsletter articles as well as submissions of requests for information and for international collaborations. As always, the Newsletter will post announcements regarding both ISSBD sponsored activities and events as well as international conferences of interest to Society members. Please direct all Newsletter related correspondence to the editors at either jgmiller@umich.edu or xchen@julian.uwo.ca.

Information about the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development can be found at our new ISSBD web-page, which is located at:

www.issbd.org

This web-page keeps you up-to-date with the activities of ISSBD, its Executive Committee and its members.

The Fifth African Regional International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) Workshop

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, KAMPALA, UGANDA, 25–30th SEPTEMBER, 2000

Theme of the workshop

The theme of the workshop is "Life course in context: The application of the cross-cultural methodology". The sub-themes and topics will center on contexts of development, e.g., family settings and roles, peers, media, school, health, and wartime crises. Further, the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP) through Prof. Segall will hold a symposium on the history of the concept of race in social sciences.

Participants

Participants will include psychologists, other social scientists and other academicians from all over Africa and beyond. Travel (economy class) by air to and from Kampala for one person from African countries only will be provided plus reasonable accommodation and food for 5 days.

Abstracts and papers

Abstract must be 250-300 words long including name, title, and address of author(s), institution of affiliation of the presenting author. A full paper for each abstract must be deposited with the workshop organizers. Participants whose abstracts are selected should be informed by 31st May 2000. Conference papers should be not more than 25 pages, A4 and double-spaced and should follow the APA format and should reach the organizers by 31st July 2000.

Contact address

For more information regarding this workshop, please, contact:

Dr. K. P. Baguma (Ph.D.) Chair Organizing Committee
Institute of Psychology, Makerere University
PO Box 7062 Kampala, Uganda
Tel + 256 41 531908 Office, 543740 Home
Fax + 256 41 531061
E-mail: uparipari@Mulib.ac.ug

Editorial

Editor

Joan G. Miller

Correspondence Address:

ISSBD Newsletter
Institute for Social Research, RCGD
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48106-1248
email: jgmiller@umich.edu

Associate Editor

Xinyin Chen
ISSBD Newsletter
Department of Psychology
University of Western
Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
N6A 5C2
email: xchen@julian.uwo.ca

Production:

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International Conference

Healthy Children for the 21st Century

How can well-being be promoted in early childhood?

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE CENTRE, LUXEMBOURG, 16–17 NOVEMBER 2000

Co-sponsored by:

Healthy Children Foundation, Luxembourg

World Health Organization, Geneva

Themes:

Keynote topics

- ❖ Healthy childhood: the foundation for a healthy life
- ❖ Psychosocial and cultural determinants for healthy child development
- ❖ Healthy childhood and the development of the human brain

Practice related topics

- ❖ Basic sense of security
 - ❖ Attachment theory (according to John Bowlby) and its importance for children's wellbeing. Topics such as infant-caregiver interaction, secure attachment and intergenerational transmission of optimum development potential will be presented and discussed in a workshop setting.
 - ❖ Haptonomy: an approach to prenatal, perinatal and postnatal care based on a psycho-tactile interaction method known particularly in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Germany (by childbirth practitioners). The Haptonomy session will include lectures, a demonstration with a pregnant woman (in about the 6th month) and with a newly born infant (less than one month old), a panel discussion and a slide show.
- ❖ Infant well-being and support for parents
 - ❖ The new crèche in the light of today's scientific knowledge on healthy child development
 - ❖ Responsible parenthood and work
 - ❖ Canadian experiences with parental education
- ❖ Conference recommendations

The Conference will formulate a set of practical recommendations on healthy child development that should be useful to parents, practitioners and policy-makers

Speakers:

The speakers are: Ann Crouter, Pennsylvania State University; Karin Grossmann, University of Regensburg; Clyde Hertzman, University of British Columbia; Heidi Keller, University of Osnabrück; Ilona Kickbusch, Yale University School of Medicine; Charlie Lewis, Lancaster University; Allan N. Schore, UCLA and the following practitioners: Emilce Bleichmar, Madrid; Sir Richard Bowlby, London; Dominique Décant-Paoli, Paris; Nicola Diamond, London; Catherine Dolto, Paris; Mary Gordon, Toronto; Tirril Harris, London; Mario Marrone, London; Mel Parr, London and Frans Veldman, Oms, France

Information/Registration

Healthy Children Foundation, B.P. 1027, L-1010 Luxembourg;
www.healthychildrennetwork.org (from 1st March 2000); Fax: +352 448105;
E-mail: admin@healthychildrennetwork.lu

IVth International Workshop on Latin American and Caribbean Psychology

FIRST CALL

November, 2001

Sponsors

Department of Psychology, Universidad de Oriente.
Cuban Psychologist's Society, Santiago de Cuba branch.

Objective

To enable the scientific exchange among psychology specialists and those other related sciences concerning the challenges that globalization poses for psychology both as a science and profession.

Participation

Psychologists, Sociologists, Psychiatrists, Sexologists, Anthropologists, Education specialists, Social Workers, Physicians and other related specialists can participate.

Topics

- ❖ *Subjectivity and Globalization.*
- ❖ *Psychology, Globalization and Culture.*
- ❖ *Effects of Globalization on Human Groups.*
- ❖ *Impact of Globalization on Working Organizations.*
- ❖ *Education and Globalization.*
- ❖ *Impact of Globalization on Human Health, the Way of Life and the Quality of Life.*

For more information, address to:

María del Pilar Soteras del Toro
Departamento de Psicología
Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Humanísticas
Universidad de Oriente
Ave. Patricio Lumumba S/n
C.P.: 90 500
Santiago de Cuba
Cuba
FAX: 53 226 43186; 53 226 32689
Teléfonos: 53 226 32004 ó 33011 ext. 215
E. mail: taller@csh.uo.edu.cu
psico@csh.uo.edu.cu

