

# **Report on Dornburg Conference on Psychology Education and Training**

## **Dornburg PET Conference, May 23 – 26, 2012, Altes Dornburg Schloss, Germany**

### **Background**

Based in part on a survey of more than 40 countries undertaken by the Work Group on Education of Psychologists, the main aim of the conference was to address how PET is handled in many countries across the world, and to examine the international regulation and standards concerning curricula and accreditation.

### **Organisation**

In conjunction with some of the members of the Workgroup on Education of Psychologists and its Chair, organisation of the conference was undertaken by a team based in Jena under the overall guidance of the President, Rainer K. Silbereisen.

The conference was planned to be held in May 2012 at the conference centre of the University of Jena, Schloss Dornburg (see [www.schloss.uni-jena.de/](http://www.schloss.uni-jena.de/)) with accommodation provided in Jena. Arrangements for the conference, development of the programme, communication with potential participants, and work with actual participants concerning their presentations was carried out by the Jena team.

Seven topics covering major aspects of PET (see later in this report) were selected for discussion at the conference; the format was for each topic to have two presenters and one discussant, for each topic to end with open discussion, and for the conference as a whole to conclude with a review session, which was to include small group work and presentations by the Union organisers, the President, Rainer K. Silbereisen, the Secretary General, Pierre Ritchie, and the Chair of the Workgroup on Education of Psychologists, Janak Pandey.



**Dornburg PET Conference Participants**

A 22-strong international faculty was recruited for the conference (see participants list in Annex 2). Following confirmation of attendance, presenters were asked to submit an abstract and a draft chapter on which their presentation would be based. These were to aid organisation and general preparations for the conference, but also so that potential publishers could be contacted prior to the conference in relation to a proposed conference book.

In addition to the speakers, discussants, and Union and Jena University representatives, four young scholars were invited to attend the conference as observers: Martin Obschonka, Post-doctoral Fellow of the Pathways to Adulthood programme and member of the Center for Applied Developmental Science, University of Jena; Maria Pavlova, Post-doctoral member of the Jena Graduate School of Human Behaviour in Social and Economic Change, University of Jena; Sheriffa Mahama, member of the Jena Graduate School of Human Behaviour in Social and Economic Change University of Jena, Germany; and Moé Kishida, visiting student from Pennsylvania State University. These young scholars were chosen for several reasons: from the perspective of PET, these four observers represented Germany, Russia, Ghana, and Japan, respectively; they were all local and thus could be included at limited cost; and they were all attending postgraduate and postdoctoral programs at the University of Jena.

### **The Conference**

The conference on Psychology Education and Training (PET) took place in the Altes Dornburg Schloss Conference Centre of the University of Jena, Germany, May 23 – 26 2012. For the full program, please see the Conference Program in Annex 1. The conference itself started with a welcome address by the Rector of Jena University, Professor Klaus Dicke, in which he referred to the university's guiding focus of 'Light, Life, Liberty' and to how the topic of the conference related to each of these aspects. He noted that the world is experiencing many macro-ecological changes, such as climatic, demographic, and economic change, as well as change related to sustainable development and health, but that despite great increases in the number of students in social and behavioral sciences, these global challenges are not high on the scientific agenda: less than 2% of the papers currently published in the social sciences focus on these topics. He concluded by supporting the need for a reform of the content and procedures of education and training to better equip scientists with the tools and knowledge to tackle global issues more competently, and for recent scientific developments, such as in the fields of neuroscience and molecular genetics, to be included and made more relevant for psychology and other disciplines.

This address was followed by an introduction by Rainer Silbereisen, as President of IUPsyS, which gave the background to and provided a rationale for the conference and its topic. He began by addressing the question of why we should concern ourselves with Psychology Education and Training (PET) – primarily, because we need to educate and train the young generation of psychologists in accordance with the changes that are all around us and which affect psychology in its constitution and outreach – and concluded by saying that the Union was in an ideal position to be effective in this regard, especially by denoting it as a strategic priority for future planning. The text of the Introduction can be found in Annex 3; the final list of topics, their presenters and discussants are given below.

### **Final Programme of Topics and Associated Faculty, and Closing Session**

#### **Topic 1: International Framework for Psychology Education and Training (PET)**

Speaker 1: Ingrid Lunt, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Speaker 2: Merry Bullock, American Psychological Association, USA

Discussant: Rainer K. Silbereisen



### **Introduction to the Conference by IUPsyS President, Rainer K. Silbereisen**

#### **Topic 2: Curricular and Teaching Resources for Emerging Fields in PET**

Speaker 1: Rocio Fernandez-Ballesteros, Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain

Speaker 2: Wolfgang Miltner, University of Jena, Germany

Discussant: Andreas Beelmann, University of Jena, Germany

#### **Topic 3: Results of the IUPsyS Survey on PET Worldwide**

Speaker 1: Martin Pinquart, University of Marburg, Germany

Speaker 2: Oscar Barbarin, Tulane University, USA

Discussant: Allan B. I. Bernardo, De La Salle University, Philippines

#### **Topic 4: Bridging Scientific Universality and Cultural Specificity in PET**

Speaker 1: Kwang-Kuo Hwang, National Taiwan University, China

Speaker 2: Bame Nsamenang, University of Yaounde, Cameroon

Discussant: Pascal Huguet, Aix-Marseille University, France

#### **Topic 5: Balancing Basic and Applied Research with National Needs in PET**

Speaker 1: J. Lawrence Aber, New York University, USA)

Speaker 2: Cheryl De La Rey, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Discussant: Buxin Han, Chinese Academy of Science, China

#### **Topic 6: Models for Quality Control in PET**

Speaker 1: Judy Hall, National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, Washington D.C., USA

Speaker 2: Victor Karandashev, Leningrad State University, Russia

Discussant: Ava D. Thompson, School of Social Sciences College, Bahamas

#### **Topic 7: Roles & Responsibilities of International Psychology Organizations in Improving PET**

Speaker 1: José Peiro, University of València, Spain

Speaker 2: Regina-Maria Maluf, Pontifical University of São Paulo, Brazil

Discussant: Tea Gogotishvili, D. Uznadze Institute of Psychology Tbilisi, Georgia



**Presentation by: Ava D. Thompson, School of Social Sciences College, Bahamas;  
Discussant for Topic 6 - *Models for Quality Control in PET***



**Participants J. Lawrence Aber and Buxin Han**

**Breakout groups and Plenary:** - five most important issues from the conference

**Closing Session: A Sense of the Meeting**

**Rainer K. Silbereisen**, President IUPsyS: *A tentative synopsis of what we have learned concerning PET*

**Pierre L.-J. Ritchie**, Secretary-General IUPsyS: *Where to now?*

**Janak Pandey**, Chair, IUPsyS Work Group on Education of Psychologists: *Implications of findings from the PET Conference for the Workgroup*

**Remarks**

The conference was extremely well attended. Only one participant was unable to attend at the last minute for serious health reasons. In this case the presentation that was to have been made was sent by email and given by the second speaker for the topic.

Although no formal evaluation was carried out, informal remarks during the conference and messages sent by email following the conference have been very positive, especially concerning the value of the conference and its organization.

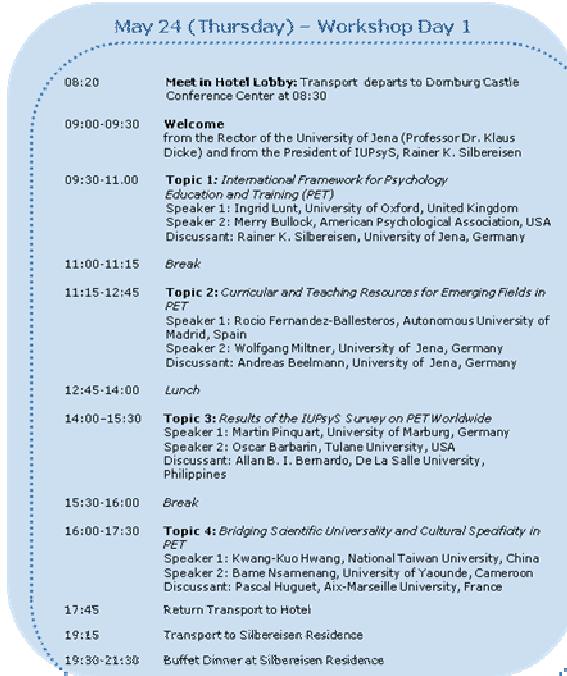
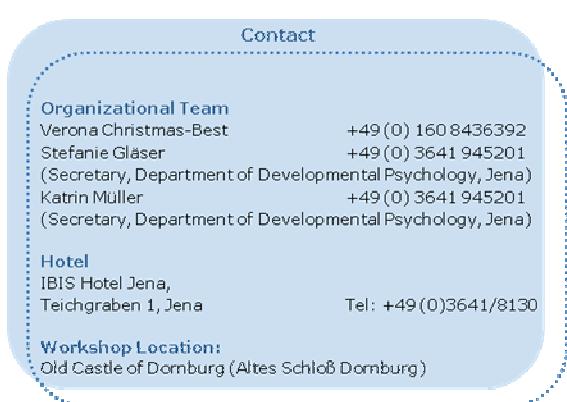
A positive response was received from Psychology Press regarding publishing the conference presentations as a book and formal contract negotiations are underway. The papers presented will all be revised in light of the conference: some will also be shortened and some enriched versions of the conference presentations. The time-line envisaged for book production would mean publication sometime around the middle of next year. Editors of the book will be Rainer Silbereisen, Pierre Ritchie, and Janak Pandey.

The conference proceedings will inform the future work of the Workgroup on the Education of Psychologists, and will assist the drafting of the Strategic Plan for the next quadrennium (20012-2016) with regard to the development of international standards and/or guidelines.



**Relaxing after Day 1: From Left to Right, Participants Wolfgang Miltner, Kwang-Kuo Hwang, Janak Pandey, Pascal Huguet, Rainer Silbereisen, and Bame Nsamenang**

## Annex 1: Conference Programme Booklet



## Workshop on Psychology Education and Training: A Global Perspective (PET)

**May 23-26, 2012**  
**Jena / Dornburg, Germany**



Friedrich Schiller University of Jena



## May 25 (Friday) – Workshop Day 2

08:20	<b>Meet in Hotel Lobby:</b> Transport from Hotel to Dornburg Castle Conference Center at 08:30
09:00-09:15	<b>Review of Day 1</b>
09:15-10:45	<b>Topic 5: Balancing Basic and Applied Research with National Needs in PET</b> Speaker 1: J. Lawrence Aber, New York University, USA Speaker 2: Cheryl De La Rey, University of Pretoria, South Africa Discussant: Buxin Han, Chinese Academy of Science, China
10:45-11:00	<b>Break</b>
11:00-12:30	<b>Topic 6: Models for Quality Control in PET</b> Speaker 1: Judy Hall, National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, Washington D.C., USA Speaker 2: Victor Karandashev, Leningrad State University, Russia Discussant: Ava D. Thompson, School of Social Sciences, Bahamas
12:30-14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00-15:30	<b>Topic 7: Roles and Responsibilities of International Psychology Organizations in Improving PET</b> Speaker 1: José Peiro, University of Valencia, Spain Speaker 2: Regna-Maria Maluf, Pontifical University of São Paulo, Brazil Discussant: Tea Gogotishvili, D. Uznadze Institute of Psychology Tbilisi, Georgia
15:30-16:00	<b>Break</b>
16:00-16:45	<b>Break-out groups</b>
16:45-17:15	<b>Presentation of groups' results</b>
17:15-17:45	<b>Closing Session: A Sense of the Meeting</b> Rainer K. Silbereisen, President, IUPsyS, University of Jena, Germany: A tentative synopsis of what we have learned concerning PET Pierre L.-J. Ritchie, Secretary-General, IUPsyS, University of Ottawa, Canada: Where to now? Janak Pandey, Chair, IUPsyS Work Group on Education and Training, Central University of Bihar, India: Implications of findings from the Conference for the Workgroup on Education for Psychologists
18:00	Return Transport to Hotel
19:00-21:30	Dinner at the restaurant "Haus im Sack"

## **Annex 2: Participants List**

Aber, J. Lawrence	New York University, USA
Barbarin, Oscar A.	University of Tulane, USA
Beelmann, Andreas	University of Jena, Germany
Bernardo, Allan B.	De La Salle University-Manila, Philippines
Bullock, Merry	American Psychological Association, USA
Christmas-Best, Verona	University of Jena, Germany
De La Rey, Cheryl	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Fernández-Ballesteros, Rocio	Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain
Gogotishvili, Tea	D. Uznadze Institute of Psychology, Georgia
Hall, Judy E.	National Register of Health Service Providers, USA
Han, Buxin	Chinese Academy of Science, China
Huguet, Pascal	University of Provence, France
Hwang, Kwang-Kuo	National Taiwan University, Taiwan
Karandashev, Victor	Leningrad State University, Russia
Kishida, Moé	Pennsylvania State University, USA
Lunt, Ingrid	University of Oxford, United Kingdom
Mahama, Sheriffa	University of Jena, Germany
Maluf, Maria-Regina	Pontifical University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
Miltner, Wolfgang H. R.	University of Jena, Germany
Nsamenang, A. Bame	University of Bamenda, Cameroon
Obschonka, Martin	University of Jena, Germany
Pandey, Janak	Central University of Bihar, India
Pavlova, Maria K.	University of Jena, Germany
Peiró, José M.	University of Valencia, Spain
Pinquart, Martin	University of Marburg, Germany
Ritchie, Pierre	University of Ottawa, Canada
Silbereisen, Rainer K.	University of Jena, Germany
Thompson, Ava D.	College of The Bahamas, Bahamas

## **Annex 3: President's Introduction to the Conference**

### **A Blueprint for the Workshop**

Why do we concern ourselves with Psychology Education and Training (PET)? Primarily, it is because we need to educate and train the young generation of psychologists in accordance with the changes that are all around us and which affect psychology in its constitution and outreach.

We have all experienced dramatic changes in the world and in our discipline, and many share the view that we should improve the way in which we prepare our young generation for future developments to psychology as a science and a profession. What are the changes in the world? We have globalization, which encompasses unprecedented international exchange in all aspects of the economy and communication, and there is extensive world-wide migration. We also have widespread disasters, natural and man-made and a seemingly growing risk in this regard; we have recession and great economic uncertainty; and world demographics are changing rapidly, especially concerning the young and the old. Globalization and borderless communication are involved in the diffusion of ideas, such as free market economy and democracy, and have also played a role in the shake-up of established political regimes, whereby many people living in formerly oppressive circumstances have found a new voice.

All this implies challenges for psychology when it comes to understanding the causes of such changes, the role of human groups and individuals in the process - both concerning how they are affected and how they become agentic - and how science can inform and support policy-makers in dealing with the negative and positive fallout. All these phenomena are large-scale and highly complex, and consequently no one traditional scientific discipline can shoulder the demands of formulating explanatory concepts, providing methodologies, and planning interventions. Instead, new inter-and trans-disciplinary research is required, including new research paradigms that push established disciplines to their limits because new players entered the field.

Concerning psychology, this does not refer to the "usual suspects," such as sociology and economics with their similarity to us in worldviews and research tools, but to other recent research fields that are increasingly becoming coherent disciplines of their own, such as molecular genetics and epigenetics, or the many facets of neuroscience. These fields refer to the micro processes that ultimately produce behavior, which is our specialty but which is also influenced by the layers of ecology around us, ranging from families to societies and cultures. In actuality, it is all interaction, and individuals play an active role in it. It is true – without psychology our own and new allies (or hostile adversaries) would not know which human behavior the conditions and processes in their realm bring about: we have the categories and diagnostic tools.

Nevertheless, many traditional topics of high scientific and practical impact changed rather dramatically in terms of what are the forefronts of research, what are the best research paradigms and methods, and what interventions are suitable for remedying problems and optimizing potentials.

Certainly PET is a complex system, with a lot of inertia delaying change, even when necessary. But more recently, and parallel to changes in the world and in science, there is movement that calls for action. Societies and governments want to see their investments in science and higher education pay off, both in terms of scientific products and in terms of qualifications. In the past, we were satisfied by somehow reflecting the structure and content of our science as input in PET, but today there is a growing push towards accountability, comparability, and consumer protection. This is reflected in the set of competences and skills students acquire through PET - something about which we will learn a lot during the workshop. Such features can be assessed and compared within a country and across countries.

But how do we identify which competences and skills to aim for? This is a complicated issue, but it certainly has two components – one is the scientific frames, theories, and bodies of established knowledge; the other is the practical needs and tasks that a society wants to be resolved, be it through psychology as a science or as a profession. Certainly both aspects interact over time, and there is a steady stream of periods of change and periods of consolidation.

Probably we all agree that a framework would be helpful to identify which competences and skills should be achieved and how, and at what level of qualification. Of course, such a framework also needs to depart from whatever is the current stage of PET and take into account what future achievements are desirable. But - and this is a major “but” – what psychology is and how it is pursued as a science and profession differs quite dramatically around the globe: differences begin with the scale and impact of research and application, and it is fair to say that the global North-West is currently dominating the field, and go on to include the unequal resources for research and for PET. Naturally, differences also entail wide discrepancies in the recognition of the discipline among policy makers and the broader public.

Nevertheless, the fact that differences exist as such may not be the problem. Rather it is the undisputed diffusion of a particular view on psychology to the rest of the world that may or may not match the needs concerning psychological insights for problems of science and application in other regions. More importantly, however, is that the prevailing view tends to generalize its explanatory concepts beyond the possible and perhaps unrecognized constraints of their own culture, and deems them as “universals” that only need some specificity in order to accommodate other groups of people in other regions of the world. I am not arguing that this is so by intention, and I am not claiming that our research results actually tell a different story, all I am saying is that the situation as it is, is in all likelihood a function of inequality in opportunities to build a science of psychology.

It is here that the responsibility of an international organization like IUPsyS comes into play – if we want to have transparency about PET and its quality in the interest of scientific research, its application, and the consumers of psychological services, we have to start not with how things are, but we have to ask why things are as they are – what lies behind the differences we observe. Some differences may be the product of unequal chances compared to other countries or communities of psychologists, others may be a true reflection of momentary or lasting differences in national needs, and others may be just random noise carried from the past. As an

organization that has as its remit the promotion of the science and profession of psychology from a global perspective, and a mission “to foster excellence in standards for education, training, research and the application of psychology,” IUPsyS founded a work group on PET and felt responsible to advance the fulfillment of our own duty by organizing this workshop with leading experts, discussants and observers, from no less than 17 countries, and involving basic and applied scientists of all levels of seniority, scholarly oriented practitioners, post-docs, and graduate students, as well as representatives of other psychological organizations and learned societies in psychology.

The idea for the content was to start with one example from Europe of a framework for standards in psychology education for independent practice as psychologist, meant to act as a sensitizer to pertinent issues on all levels, from psychology to politics, and from content to logistics. This is intended to help put the results of a survey IUPsyS conducted over the last year, which had the aim of understanding better where PET stands globally, into perspective. We also planned for contributions that illuminate responses to challenges from changes in the population and from changes in science, such as geropsychology and neuroscience, but more could be mentioned.

Furthermore, we wanted to discuss a number of apparent dichotomies relevant to PET that in actuality entail the challenge to find new balances and overcome old attitudes. This refers first to the issue of universalities of human behavior and specificities of particular cultures, without any prejudice as to which tradition in psychology can rightfully claim to have dealt with this adequately. Second, we want to debate the adequate relationship between basic and applied research, which is a precondition for a calibration of psychology towards national needs. Next, we will learn about various models for quality control of PET and will think about its building on clearly stated and scientifically justified aims. Lastly, the role of international organizations in promoting a reform and transparency of PET will be discussed.

We will close the workshop by summarizing ideas presented during the workshop, guided by representatives of IUPsyS, in an attempt to make sense of what we have learned thus far. We will also try to present an outline for future action towards a consensus statement about PET relevant for the first decade of our century.

The workshop would not have been possible without the work of our IUPsyS work group, chaired by Janak Pandey, on the survey, and the commitment of the IUPsyS officers, represented here by Pierre Ritchie. My own role was to provide direction and keep things going concerning our efforts at PET, and to offer the support of the CADS and the University of Jena, which as always was supported by Verona Christmas-Best.

A book is planned with Psychology Press, and certainly IUPsyS will stay committed to its role as enabler and stake holder in attempts to improve PET on a global scale. We will work further on a model of PET applicable beyond national and cultural borders.

Rainer K. Silbereisen