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Report of the XX International Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology

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Melbourne, Australia

The 20th International Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP) took place from the 7th to 10th July 2010 on the campus of the University of Melbourne. It was close to the Central Business District of Melbourne, Australia, a multicultural hub where more than 150 languages are spoken and new immigrants arrive



daily from all over the world. Against the backdrop of the global financial crisis and other disruptions to flight schedules from Europe due to volcanic activities, together with the tyranny of distance to Australia from the IACCP's traditional strongholds in Europe and North America, there was some nervousness about the conference's financial and academic viability. Nonetheless, the IACCP's support for this Congress was extraordinary; not only did it provide intellectual and moral support, but also helped financially. Together with additional assistance from the Australian Psychological Society (APS), the University of Melbourne, the Melbourne Medical School, and the Department of Psychology, the Association's President Heidi Keller, its Secretary-General William Gabrenya, and Treasurer Sharon Glazer gave us unwavering support for the Congress throughout the highs and lows of the conference preparation. The Organizing Committee, led by Amanda Gordon, a former President of APS, and the Scientific Committee, which I had the privilege of chairing, are grateful for their commitment and help.

Delegates Staff Numerous Sessions

In the end, the Congress attracted 44 symposia, more than 120 oral presentations distributed across 33 thematic sessions, and more than 40 poster presentations in three poster sessions. There were 456 delegates from 54 countries around the world; Australia (with its local advantage) topped the chart with 126, followed by the USA (61). Also notable was participation from New Zealand (12). There was a very strong presence from Asia, in particular, Indonesia (23), Japan (21), Singapore (18), and China (13), perhaps reflecting its relative geographical proximity



Amanda Gordon
Organizing Committee
Chair.

and financial strength. There was also traditionally strong participation from Europe—Germany (15) and the Netherlands (14)—as well as other North American—Canada (17) and Mexico (13). The pattern of delegate participation underlined the strength of commitment by members of the IACCP to cultural research in psychology.

Welcome at the Immigrant Museum

In the crisp morning of the Southern Hemisphere winter, the first day of the Congress began with a mixture of workshops and symposia. Despite some delays at the time of registration (and some difficulties in locating the venues), participants were off to a good start for the day. Some symposia had to be scheduled in parallel with workshops due to better than expected symposium submissions, and because some late arrivals were expected from other conferences held elsewhere in Australia. But by the end of the first day, most delegates were present and ready for a welcome reception, which was held at the Immigration Museum, located an easy tram ride from the conference venue. A modern museum filled with the history of immigration to Australia from all over the world provided a poignant occasion with a moving speech by the Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser, who is himself an immigrant and has made a significant contribution to a multicultural society that is Australia.



Prof. David de Kretser Governor of Victoria state.

Opening With a Didgeridoo

The Congress proper began in the morning of the 8th of July with a traditional welcome from the Elder, Uncle Reg Blow, and his didgeridoo performance. Professor Trang Thomas, a cross-cultural psychologist and former commissioner of the Multicultural Council, gave an opening speech about her experience as an Australian with an immigrant background. Amanda Gordon, the Congress Chair, welcomed all and introduced the members of the Organizing Committee. Heidi Keller, the President of the IACCP, officially opened the 20th Congress and introduced the first Keynote Speaker, David Matsumoto. With his contagious enthusiasm, memorable visual presentations of Olympic athletes'



Aboriginal opening The Congress is officially opened with the blowing of a didgeridoo by Elder Uncle Reg Blow.

emotion displays, he delivered his powerful message on how universal and culturally specific processes intricately interact in human experiences of emotion.

Trying Something New

Several new attempts were made in this Congress. First, we planned a special session on psychological and human rights perspectives on Indigenous Australians, consisting of presentations by Dennis McDermott (indigenous psychologist), Harry Minas (transcultural psychiatry), and Jeremy Jones (human rights commissioner). In Australia, we need two kinds of cross-cultural psychology. As in many “new world” countries, the past 200 years of immigration, mainly from Europe and also from other parts of the world such as Asia, have displaced Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the peoples who had settled in Australia for more than 40,000 years. In contrast to the cross-cultural psychology of comparisons between peoples from different parts of the world, the other cross-cultural psychology involves not only cultural and psychological issues, but also a fundamentally political and moral issue because of the political, economic, and social inequalities that mark the relationship between majority Australians and the indigenous peoples. The session was an attempt to shed light on this critical and complex issue from multiple perspectives.

Second, we organized a set of workshops that were designed to give well respected researchers and practitioners an extended opportunity to disseminate their theoretical knowledge, empirical findings, and practical skills, while building the research capacity for the delegates at the Congress. A number of keynote speakers of this and the past Congresses were invited to take up these opportunities; many enthusiastically accepted our invitations. Altogether eight workshops were run (in the alphabetical order of the first listed organizer’s surname): C.-Y. Chiu and Y.-Y. Hong on globalization and cultural dynamics, Alan Fiske on relational models, Patricia Greenfield on social change and human development, Steven Heine on self, Ida Kaplan, Yvonne Stolk, and Alan Tucker on psychological assessment, David Matsumoto on emotion, and Fons van de Vijver and Ronald Fisher on quantitative methodology.

Third, we set the theme of *Cultural Change: Meeting the Challenge* to signal two kinds of culture changes. On the one hand, culture change as a phenomenon to be investigated from cross-cultural psychological perspectives should be highlighted and encouraged as globalization continues to accelerate. It is ubiquitous in countries that have not only traditionally received immigrants, but also in those countries that sent them out; in countries that have been more traditional, as well as in countries that are undergoing rapid economic and social changes. On the other hand, it was to signal a culture change in the academic area of culture and psychology. The field has experienced an enormous growth over the past 20 years, and with it, multiple perspectives and approaches have emerged, at times generating some discord. The theme was to signal the beginning of a new era,



Lawrence Harrison Delivers Walter J. Lonner Distinguished Lecture Series address.

in which different perspectives and approaches come together to exchange views frankly and constructively, so as to further grow the area of cross-cultural research in meeting the challenge of the ubiquitous culture change. According to a post-conference survey (N = 112), 84% regarded this theme as adequately to very well addressed.

Culture Change in the Scientific Program

From the second and third days of the Congress, the thematic sessions as well as symposia were scheduled to reflect the dual meanings of the culture change theme. Thematic sessions that addressed the conference theme were put together prominently; they included a number of papers that examined how globalization and other events are instigating cultural changes, and what psychological consequences have been experienced around the world. Also, attempts were made so that researchers could attend a variety of symposia that reflect different perspectives. Keynote addresses were designed to reflect the diverse perspectives on culture and psychology. Alan Fiske presented an anthropological perspective in his memorable presentation wherein rich anthropological evidence was amassed to discuss what he regards are universal types of human relations. At one point, he threw himself on the floor to illustrate the embodied nature of the interplay between culture and psychology!¹ The presidential address by Heidi Keller delivered a strong message of unity in diversity—research in culture and psychology is to gain its strength and insight by integrating diverse perspectives in examining the critical process of the culture-mind interplay.



Alan Fiske Who knew relational models theory could be so much fun?

Cultural Psychology Highlighted

On the last day, a state of the art lecture and two keynote addresses were organized to cover multiple levels at which culture and psychology interact. Shihui Han's lecture focused on the neural level of analysis, where he showed cultural differences in self-construal are reflected in neural activities. Daphna Oyserman moved her analysis one notch up to the micro situational level, where she discussed how priming and situational manipulations can produce psychological processes that resemble differences between Western European-based and East Asian-based cultures. Finally, Steven Heine presented a macro-level critique of contemporary psychological research, adding his voice to the IACCP's traditional message, that is,



¹Actually, he was illustrating the abject powerlessness of graduate students.
- Editor

how WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic) samples of much of the psychological research are within the context of world cultures. These keynotes and state-of-the-art presentations were extremely well received by the delegates with 84% of those who surveyed stating they were high to very high quality.

Closing and Dining; Dancing

Immediately after the well attended final keynote, the Closing Ceremony was held to mark the conclusion of the scientific proceedings of the Congress, and the 2012 IACCP Congress was announced by its Co-Chairs, Professors Deon Meiring and Leon Jackson.

The Conference Dinner was held at the Melbourne Town Hall, which is located in the City Centre of Melbourne. As delegates walked up the steps of the Hall, they were greeted by staff and gathered around the entry. A Marcel Marceau impersonator and stilt walkers provided entertainment and added to the festival like atmosphere. A band-Jugularity –played some witty music with special IACCP lyrics while the guests wine and dined, with still more intellectual excitement in their conversations. The fun continued 'till late. (You can hear the IACCP theme song at http://www.iaccp.org/drupal/theme_song.)

Survey Data

Overall, the post-conference survey suggests 84% thought the Congress met their expectations adequately to very highly, and 71% said they planned to attend the next IACCP Congress in South Africa. The Congress was a resounding success.

The Jugularity IACCP Theme Song

Nĩ hǎo, bon fait voir, buenos noches, bon soir, shalom, salamu alay-kum, guten nacht, akbar, dia dhuit, bon dia, namaste, and g'day.

All you delegates here from Brazil to Senegal,
We sure hope tonight that you're gonna have a ... ball.
Yes we hope you are.

Here's a line you can all sing along...
I-A-CCP, just the thing to heighten your SWB,
That's subjective well-being, not secret women's business.

The speakers, you have had the finest.
Fiskey and Heiny, Lankton and Linus.
Not forgetting Matsumoto, Oyserman, Jones and Hamm.

It's so amazingly appropriate that you were able,
To hold a cross-cultural event in Melbourne University's Theatre of Babel.
It's amazing, who thought of that?

With cross-cultural psychology from day one to day four,
I hope it didn't become too much of a bore.
I know, you're just resting your eyes for a little bit.

If in these four days you met all the culture changes be challenges,
You've achieved much, I've found a rhyme for oranges.
It's a win-win situation.

And here's your line, everybody...
I-A-CCP, just the thing to heighten your SWB.
I'm not talking standard white bread, or even soccer without borders.

In the realm of cross-cultural psychology,
There are two types of people I've been led to believe,
Those who divide people into two types of people and those who don't.

So whether you're an etic or whether you're an emic,
Whether Hofstede or Sweeny fits your pholenic,
You're just here to have a good time.

Now you've networked when you've had morning tea.
At lunch you networked over coffee and tea.
You've got more networks than Rupert Murdoch.

And your conference dinner here tonight in Melbourne Town Hall,
If your phone rings I bet you're charged a conference call.
Those telcos, they want every cent.

Here we go, here's your line...
I-A-CCP, just the thing to heighten your SWB.
And I'm not talking shallow water blanket, or even short wheel base.

Amanda, Yoshi, and INS three,
Gave you this great week at Melbourne University.
The song says that you're gonna cheer again, let's hear you cheer. (Yay)

The conference has been so great, my gosh;
You're back in two years in Stellenbosch,
In South Africa, where they play vuvazelas.