

European Federations and APS Unite to Advance Psychological Science

European and U.S. scholars are engaged in a unique new effort to advance psychological science across geographical as well as disciplinary boundaries. This initiative was launched when representatives from nine organizations met in Paris this past summer to discuss the international promotion of research and education in psychology.

The meeting, organized under the auspices of APS, included subdisciplinary societies whose membership spans all of Europe. Diverse in their research perspectives and nationalities, there was a strong consensus among the participants that a global effort is needed to address the scientific, cultural, and political hurdles facing the discipline of psychology.

“To me, the meeting felt like a long overdue reunion with old colleagues, although most of us had never met before,” said Walter Mischel, APS Past President. “We quickly saw we shared common professional and scientific goals, with similar frustrations, challenges, and needs, and we recognized that a sustained connection at many levels promises to be of mutual benefit and is worth pursuing.”

APS Executive Director Alan Kraut sees this new effort as a milestone in the continued progress of scientific psychology. “The whole idea of breaking down barriers in psychological science is fundamental to the future of our discipline, whether they be barriers of geography or among subfields,” said Kraut. “In Paris, we broke both kinds.”

“The occasion was historic,” noted Gün Semin, chair of the APS International Committee from Utrecht University in The Netherlands. “It brought these European psychology associations together for the first time.” In the past, meetings tended to be organized around national psychology groups.

Previously, APS organized another historical effort, working with psychological scientists in China to increase exchanges between scholars in both nations and address issues of mutual concern. Among other things, this

Standing: Shane O’Mara, Dan Zakay, J.F. Démonet, Christiane Spiel, Frosso Motti, Jane Riddoch, Axel Cleeremans, Sergio Della Sala, Jens Asendorpf, Gün Semin, Carsten De Dreu, Willem Koops, Alan Kraut.
Seated: Nuria Sebastian Galles, Walter Mischel, Beatrice de Gelder, Xenia Chryssochoou.

resulted in the establishment of program that connects APS Fellows and Chinese graduate students. (See June/July 2008 *Observer*).

The Paris group identified several broad goals, including:

- Advancing the internationalization of psychological science across geographical boundaries.
- Furthering public interest in and awareness of psychological science and its policy implications.
- Furthering cross-talk between sub-fields within psychological science.
- Influencing agenda-setting and funding policy at supra-national levels (e.g., the European Union).

“This was indeed the overall purpose of the meeting,” said Semin, “to bridge the Atlantic by bringing together the APS and European Associations of Psychology in pursuit of joint and integrative goals for psychological science.

“Moreover,” he added, “the meeting underlined the necessity for a supra-disciplinary body that would have better chances of representing scientific psychology as a whole to European institutions and enhance a dialogue between disciplinary visions and build bridges between these visions towards a more systemic psychological science.”

“A shared feeling emerged that psychological science in Europe would benefit from further cross-talk and collaborative action,” added Carsten K.W. De Dreu, University of Amsterdam, representing the European Association of Social Psychology. “We decided to organize follow-up meetings to develop more specific and concrete initiatives. The Paris



Photo credit – S. Brookhart

meeting may well turn out to be an important step towards an integrative psychological science in Europe.”

Suggestions Welcome

With the above goals as a framework, the group is in the process of planning specific activities that will be conducted jointly. Ideas and suggestions are welcome: Please send your comments to aps@psychologicalscience.org.

“We’re still in the early stages of this,” Kraut said, “but we all are committed to seeing this through. Who knows where we’ll end? The possibilities are enormous.” ♦

Participating Organizations

Association for Psychological Science
 European Association of Personality Psychology
 European Association of Social Psychology
 European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology
 European Brain and Behaviour Society
 European Society for Cognitive Psychology
 European Society for Developmental Psychology
 Federation of the European Societies of Neuropsychology
 Israeli Psychological Association

Representatives

Jens Asendorpf

Humboldt University of Berlin (Germany)
 European Association of Personality Psychology

Arnold Bakker

Erasmus University, Rotterdam (The Netherlands)
 European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology

Sarah Brookhart

Association for Psychological Science

Xenia Chryssochoou

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (Greece)
 European Association of Social Psychology

Axel Cleeremans

Universite Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium)
 European Society for Cognitive Psychology

Carsten De Dreu

University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)
 European Association of Social Psychology

Beatrice de Gelder

University of Tilburg (The Netherlands)
 European Brain and Behaviour Society

Sergio Della Sala

University of Edinburgh (UK)
 Federation of the European Societies of Neuropsychology

J. F. Démonet

Hôpital Purpan (France)
 Federation of the European Societies of Neuropsychology

Willem Koops

Utrecht University (The Netherlands)
 European Society for Developmental Psychology

Alan Kraut

Association for Psychological Science

Walter Mischel

Columbia University (US)
 Association for Psychological Science

Frosso Motti

University of Athens (Greece)
 European Association of Personality Psychology
 European Society for Developmental Psychology

Shane O’Mara

Trinity College, Dublin (Ireland)
 European Brain and Behaviour Society

Jane Riddoch

University of Birmingham (UK)
 Federation of the European Societies of Neuropsychology

Nuria Sebastian Galles

Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Spain)
 European Society for Cognitive Psychology

Gün Semin

Utrecht University (The Netherlands)
 APS International Committee

Christiane Spiel

Universität Wien (Germany)
 European Society for Developmental Psychology

Dan Zakay

Tel-Aviv University (Israel)
 Israeli Psychological Association