



The 39th World
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www.iisoc.org/iis2009

REGULAR SESSION INFORMATION

Title of Session: European Identity or Identities? Evolving views of 'Europa'

Name of Session Convener(s): (a) Robert L. Miller (b) Markieta Domecka

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Comments: -

Session Abstract (up to 250 words):

The research into European identity has been mostly driven by a 'top down' elitist perspective. This session, however, will focus upon research and/or conceptualizations that can provide wider insights into the evolution and meanings of a European identity or identities from the 'bottom up' perspective of the individual.

The first decade of the twenty-first century is a crucial point for Europe. On the one hand, the demise of the division between 'capitalist' West and 'socialist' East and the need to act together as a single economic and political entity can be seen as powerful centripetal forces. On the other, the revival of ethnic, nationalist and religious fundamentalism are centrifugal forces that could fragment the continent. Whether real or 'imagined', contrasts between communities of identity can be either a source of reaffirmation to one's own standpoint or a source of xenophobic reaction to the 'incomprehensible alien'.

Identity, neither solely solid and fixed nor completely fluid and contingent, functions as an internalized cognitive schema of stored meanings and modes of reacting to the world that enables one to maintain continuity. At the same time, identity is a process in which one's self-conception is (re)formed over time during the course of life within a changing grid of multiple groups, interests, loyalties and responsibilities. The retention of a balance between these two can be seen as an ongoing biographical process of identity work. We welcome proposals that deal with the question of evolving European identity or identities within these contexts.

General information

During each afternoon of the congress, there will be room for a large number of parallel regular sessions. Each session is 90 minutes long and consists of an oral presentation of 4 to 6 papers. Session conveners are expected to administer and chair their session at the 2009 IIS World Congress.

Starting in mid-December, calls for papers to participate in approved sessions will be posted on the website. Interested participants will contact the session convener (you) directly with an abstract no later than February 28, 2009. The session convener should take in all submissions and select the best 4 to 6 papers to be presented and forward this information, including e-mail addresses of accepted authors, to the IIS Secretariat no later than March 15, 2009.