

Historic-Political Education In Multinational/Multicultural Societies Stocktaking And Prospects For The Future

Tutzing, September 6-10, 1993

It is not without reservation and only at the urgent request of the meeting organizers and participants that I make available the following résumé given on September 10, 1993.

At the above-mentioned meeting, organized by the Academy for Political Education in Tutzing and the International Society for History Didactics, I had been asked to give a résumé spontaneously.

Despite possible reservations against individual classifications it met with explicit approval, particularly because of its systematic approach. Therefore the wish was repeatedly expressed to make it available in writing and if possible in three languages. I considered it inappropriate to make major amendments afterwards. Regrettably printing of the proceedings cannot be expected before long.

Thus the status of this paper is provisional - it is an interim statement, nothing more. I would be glad if it served its purpose as a reminder for the attendees, as orientation for the readers of the "INFORMATIONS" and predominantly as a means which helps to further the work on this explosive topic. Professor Pellens, President of the International Society for History Didactics, would appreciate it if statements of the speakers regarding controversial points of the résumé could be published in the "INFORMATIONS".

The **Meeting Schedule** was as follows (the presentations of Mr. Moniot and Mr. Szabolcz were canceled due to illness):

Monday, September 6, 1993:

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| 05.00 p.m. | Introduction/Welcome |
| 05.20 p.m. | Karl Filser (D): Historisch-politische Bildung in multinationalen/multikulturellen Gesellschaften - Defizite und Perspektiven (Beispiel Kalifornien) |
| 07.15 p.m. | Masayuki Sato (Japan): The imaged peripheries. - The world and its people as Japanese have seen them and as Europeans should see them too (brief report) |

Tuesday, September 7:**Multiperspectivity of Historic-Political Education Overseas**

- 09.00 a.m. Christian Laville (CDN): Deux civilisations et leurs minorités - quelle est l'identité de Canada?
- 10.30 a.m. Nikita Harwich Vallenilla (Venezuela): Different groups of languages and or peoples in Latin American curricula and textbooks.
- 03.30 p.m. Gordon Mork (USA): Teaching the Holocaust in multicultural Societies - Experiences in the USA.
- 04.30 p.m. Chaim Schatzker (Israel): Nationale Identitäten und historisch-politische Bildung in Israel.

Wednesday, September 8:**Multiperspectivity of Historic-Political Education in Today's Europe - I**

- 09.00 a.m. Henri Moniot (F): Le modèle français: L'histoire comme potion magique pour ne pas avoir à penser le "multi".
- 10.30 a.m. Martin B. Booth (GB): England: a national curriculum in a multi-cultural society?

Thursday, September 9:**Multiperspectivity of Historic-Political Education in Today's Europe - II**

- 09.00 a.m. Barbara Kubis (PL): Historisch-politische Bildung in multikulturellen Gesellschaften - am Beispiel Schlesien
- 10.00 a.m. Raphael de Keyser (B): Sprachen und Staatsnation in Belgien. Quellen und Literatur zu einer gegliederten Identität.
- 11.00 a.m. Luigi Cajani (I): Dialog über das Selbstverständnis der italienischen Staatsnation und der deutschsprachigen Minderheit in Südtirol in Lehrplänen und Schulbüchern.
- 03.30 p.m. Keijo Elio (SF): Die schwedische Minderheit in Finnland. Geschichtsunterricht für Minderheit und Mehrheit im Dienste der Verständigung.
- 04.45 p.m. David I. Poltorak (GUS): The one nation and the many nationalities in the nowadays Russian instruction of history.
- 05.30 p.m. Silvia Oispuu (Estland): Nationale und multikulturelle Akzente im Geschichtsunterricht Estlands.

Friday, September 10:

- 09.00 a.m. Panel discussion of the participants from overseas on facts and desiderata in their countries.
- 10.00 a.m. Panel discussion of the European participants, including a brief report by Szabolcs Ottó (H). Head: Walter Fürnrohr.
- 11.00 a.m. Karl Pellens (D): Theses and outlook; afterwards: plenary discussion.

My résumé covers the following points:

- A. Preliminary remarks
- B. Definition problems (multicultural, multinational, multiperspective)
- C. The term "multicultural"
- D. Typology (morphology) of the term "multicultural"
- E. Genesis and Factors of the Type Formation
- F. Pragmatic approach: What can be achieved through history didactics ?

A. Preliminary Remarks

I would like to start off by giving some hints regarding the topics the following statements will cover. When the meeting organizers asked me yesterday to give a brief résumé, it was clear that, due to the short time of preparation available, this would not be a balanced and objective statement but a summary from the viewpoint of a single attendee. I would like to stress this, mainly because I believe that all speakers have presented the respective case examples plausibly, vividly and convincingly.

However, despite all subjectivity I did not proceed entirely arbitrarily when drawing up the résumé but endeavored to develop a comparative-objective perspective when giving my personal view, i.e. to consider the deductive-systematic question of what typology determines multicultural concepts and which conditions and factors have an impact on the development of such a typology. This includes a certain unfairness towards the speakers which now are put into a systematic, abstracting context which was not available to them when preparing the presentation of their case examples. However, as matters now stand, there is no other possibility but to proceed in this way if the objective is to avoid that the case examples presented are not to be understood as separate items but are related to a joint conceptual network. Thus a joint basis for further systematic work in the field

of history didactics can be established. As Mr. Pellens outlined in the introduction, in the initial stage of the meeting the speakers should develop their case examples vividly and present them, if possible, without notes. In a second step, which was even taken by several speakers in the discussion, the systematic-deductive level should be reached. If this level is not attained it is not possible to relate the various previously presented case examples to each other. However, this determination of interrelationships is essential to reach a history-didactical understanding on an international level and indirectly this is also important in order to reach a political and cultural understanding in a democratic sense.

I don't want to conclude my preliminary remarks without expressing that I feel guilty that a German, of all people, approaches this subject in this detached and abstract manner - particularly because I not only attend this meeting as a member of the "International Society for History Didactics" but also as 2nd chairman of the German "Conference for History Didactics". As Mr. Filser has already pointed out, Germany, the host country, has excluded itself from the case examples presented at this meeting. And yet everybody knows that the German people, of all people, currently has big problems with multicultural ideals. Thus I have to ask for your indulgence also with respect to this point.

B. Definition Problems

1. In the past few days we have not systematically treated the interrelationship between the terms "multinational" and "multicultural" which appear as a combination in the title of the meeting. Stemming from the notion of a "national culture" we have most frequently used the terms as if there was no difference in meaning, although particularly in big countries like Canada, USA, Russia or Latin America not all ethnic groups who demand or are to be granted cultural autonomy, must be treated as nations. As has been documented by the speakers, in some cases these ethnic groups are rather "tribes" than nations, with a population of a few thousand or ten thousand people.

Only in the final discussion did Mr. Jensen point to the indisputable fact that even mononational societies can have a multicultural structure (cf. e.g. regional, milieu or sub cultures). Thus the terms "multinational" and "multicultural" cannot be used as synonyms. Mr. Fürnrohr took a similar view. In an initial stage of the preparations for the meeting he had announced a presentation entitled "Multinational is not synonymous with multicultural", and just now in the discussion he outlined the complex concept of historic-political education in which the dominance of a national culture is relativized by competing regional cultures and a European culture. Mainly due to this argumentation I would like to suggest to abandon any implicit or explicit use of the terms "multinational" or "multicultural" as synonyms. The multinational character must be understood as a particularly striking and politicized variant of the multicultural character. I have the impression that some of the speakers have - at least implicitly - presupposed this classification of the two terms.

Apart from this, an interlinking of the terms "multinational" and "multicultural" has served a major pragmatic purpose in the concept of this meeting: This interlinking rendered it possible that some contributions focused on the problem of minorities and of protection of minorities and this is the field where the most extensive historical experience with problems of multiculturalism has been gained.

2. A major terminological problem was the attribution of the term "multiperspectivity" to one of the subject areas of the meeting schedule. Admittedly the term does not appear in the title of the meeting, however it appears at a central position in the titles of the three sections. In the final discussion Mrs. Becher stressed this point as well as the specific importance of the concept of multiperspectivity in the German discussion of history didactics in the 70s (socio-specific versus national-specific orientation in historic-political education). Under the current, changed conditions, i.e. after dissolution of the traditional social milieus in Germany, an unreflected combination of the concept of "multiperspectivity" with "multiculturalism" poses major problems.

Today it must be discussed whether or not the term "multiperspectivity" - irrespective of its development - can also be used to describe a fundamental, historic-political basis for the analysis and evaluation of economic, social, political and cultural conditions and processes, conflicts and tensions. If this turns out to be possible, then the term "multicultural" could be conceived as a special variant of the term "multiperspectivity".

C. The Term "Multicultural"

1. In the individual oral presentations and discussions it became clear that the term "multicultural" was - at least partially - conceived differently. On closer inspection this is not surprising because each of the cases presented was different: Every nation has its own understanding of culture (this difference became well known through the Franco-German discussion of the terms "culture" and "civilization") and thus each nation has its own conception of "multicultural" so that every speaker, male or female, had to see to it that the term fit into his/her topic.

The differences in the conceptions of the term were additionally increased by the fact that some speakers **empirically** and **critically** reported on long-lasting multicultural processes in their home countries; this particularly applied to the western oriented case examples, while other speakers presented, interpreted and assessed initial stages of transformation processes on a **normative-prospective** level. This particularly applied to the contributions from the former Soviet-Communist area of influence.

2. Regardless of these different conceptions of the term, all speakers, male or female, proceeded from a very positive meaning of the term "multicultural", regardless of whether the respective speaker believed that the multicultural ideal had been realized entirely, partially or not at all in his/her native country. For an analysis and evaluation of the conditions prevailing in the respective country this ideal was nevertheless considered an undisputed norm. Apparently most of the speakers attributed the same importance that is given to civil rights and democracy to the multicultural concept. This impression even increased when the **Counter Concepts** mentioned in the presentations and discussions were included: the Melting Pot of people, national monoculturalism or the armed conflicts, fomented by foe images, which recently broke out in Bosnia and Caucasia. Nobody actually wanted this.

3. On closer examination, however, this unanimous positive impression is somewhat relativized. In his contribution Mr. Filser talked about historic-political education and history books in California and also mentioned the doubts that Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. (*The Disuniting of America*, New York-London, 1991) had about subdividing the "common roof" too much as a result of multicultural differentiation. In fact it would be impossible for any western democratic society to advance multicultural tolerance to such a degree that e.g. Sharia which stands for draconian measures of corporal punishment and which is demanded by Islamic fundamentalists, is again considered acceptable. In his contribution entitled "The imaged peripheries - The world and its people as Japanese have seen them and as Europeans should see them too" Mr. Sato presented historic maps and explained that in Asia the question of multiculturalism was not at all a matter of discussion as it is here in Europe. In the final panel discussion Mrs. Kuroda, representing Japan, and Mr. Ma, representing Korea, pointed out that in both countries the term "multi-culturalism" has a negative connotation. They also gave plausible historic reasons for this, namely that in both countries the concept of monoculturalism has been widely undisputed and that only recently a gradual change has occurred due to an economic upswing and an extensive succession of generations.

D. Typology (Morphology) of the Term "Multicultural"

The variability of the multicultural case examples presented necessitates the sketching of a classifying typology in order to facilitate an elaboration and specification for comparative historic-political didactics.

Against the background of the oral presentations given so far, I would like to suggest a typology comprising three types, which progresses on the scale of relative homogeneity to constantly increasing complexity.

1) Concepts tending towards Integration

These concepts only provide a limited number of realistic possibilities of development for the various cultures, nations and ethnic groups; a strong monocultural tendency towards assimilation is unmistakable. At our meeting two very different case examples of this type were presented, namely the Estonian one outlined by Mrs. Oispuu and the Latin-American one presented by Mr. Vallenilla. Mrs. Oispuu tried to raise understanding for the Estonian policy of the handling of different nationalities in her country by putting forward historic arguments; particularly she mentioned the fact that her country had been suppressed and raped for fifty years by the communists of the Soviet Union. This resulted in a 40 % share of Russians in the total Estonian population. Particularly due to the objections raised by Mr. Jensens who put forward that political principles are unrenounceable, it remained an open question in the discussion if the Estonian case falls into the category of multicultural examples at all. In my view the Estonian case really is a multicultural example, mainly because Mrs. Oispuu resolutely presented the Estonian example as a multicultural concept and put forward convincing arguments for this, even though clear statements regarding the protection of the Russian section of the population were lacking.

Mr. Vallenilla clearly pointed out that the situation in Latin America is totally different: In most Latin-American countries the Europe-centered perspective has been dismissed from historic-political education. It has been replaced with a mestizo culture which is fed by various races, ethnic groups and nations, in which, however, characteristically enough, the heritage of the black population is underrepresented. Just like the Europe-centered culture at an earlier time, the respective mixed culture now claims a dominant position among all the races, nations and ethnic groups from which it originates. After their contribution to the overall cultural identity of a country the function of the various races, nations and ethnic groups is exhausted. In principle they cannot put forward further claims. This concept still comes relatively close to the melting pot theory.

2) Complex Concepts

They stand at the other end of the scale. Their dominant feature is an extremely distinct multicultural ideal. In contrast to the "common roof" which is mainly restricted to an accentuated constitutional patriotism, this ideal is independent and just as important as the "common roof".

In the contributions to this conference two variants of the complex concept were considered: The first variant which refers to the state as a whole was presented by Mr. Schatzker, Mr. de Keyser and Mr. Poltorak. This variant applies to Israel, Belgium and Russia. The second variant of a complex concept, which is just as important, applies to restricted regions in larger, dominant national-cultural federations of states. I rate e.g. Silesia, Southern Tyrole and Southwest Finland among them, the regions which were presented by Mrs. Kubis, Mr. Suchonski, Mr. Cachani and Mr. Elio. The speakers also covered extensively the rights of minorities. Such regional concepts which are

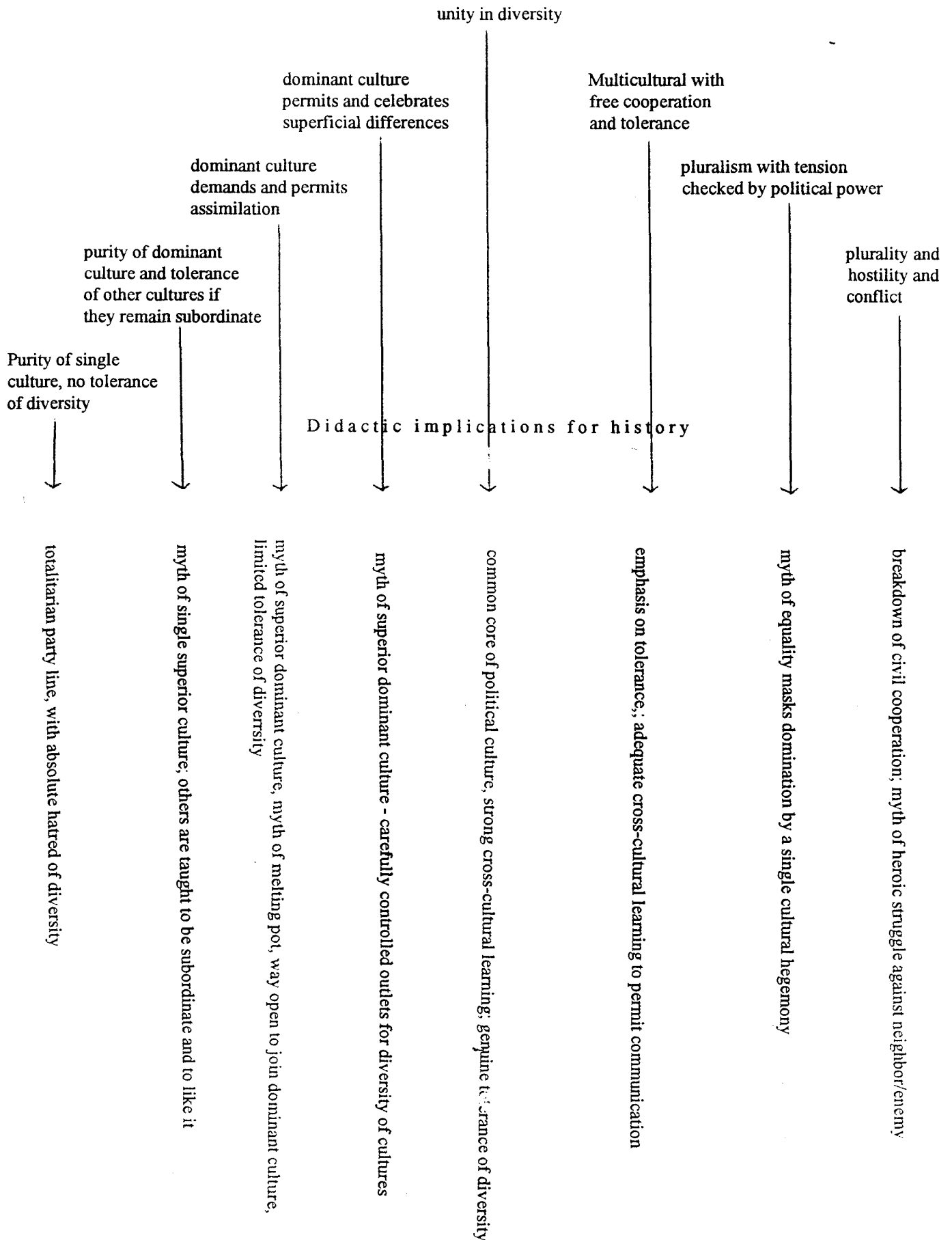
also applicable to other minorities, provide good chances for reducing conflicts among nationalities. However they can only be realized through the establishment of a complicated parallel connection between a de-ideologized domestic and the foreign policy of the respective countries. In the final discussion Mr. Schatzker pleaded for this option (motivated by the conclusion of the spectacular agreement between Israel and the PLO regarding the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which had become known during the conference).

3) Mixed Concepts

The other case examples presented at the conference may not be clearly attributed to the two main types of concepts outlined under 1) and 2). Mixed concepts put much more stress on the significance of each individual culture than this is the case with the more integrative concepts described under D 1. However, this does not reach the same level as with complex concepts where the individual cultures are equal. With mixed concepts the "common roof" - implicitly or even explicitly - considerably exceeds the level of mere constitutional patriotism; one or two national-cultural components are dominant over the others when it comes to the determination of the overall identity of the community. An example of this is without doubt the USA, presented by Mr. Filser and Mr. Mork: despite the emphasis given to the heritages of the individual cultures, the dominant role of the Anglo-Saxon component is clearly evident. Another example is Canada, treated by Mr. Laville, a country which may be characterized as ambivalent, however, with respect to the mixed type under investigation at this conference, it exhibits the classical feature of being "multicultural, but bilingual"; and if I understood Mr. Booth correctly, England must also be classed into this category.

The above suggestion of a typology is complemented by the following approach which Mr. Mork kindly contributed to this résumé:

goal: common denominator of cultural/political unity,
tolerance of genuine diversity, appreciation of diverse cultures



E. Genesis and Factors of the Type Formation

After the presentation of the three concepts treated here the comparative investigation of multicultural concepts on an international level and with respect to history didactics is, of course, not exhausted. The attempts to attribute multicultural concepts to a type or category are dominated by the question of the causes and the factors determining the development of these different types and it becomes quickly evident that already the initial situations, just as the factors of change in the individual case examples, may be very different.

In principle the number of factors determining the various initial situations and the development of multicultural procedures and concepts is infinite. In most cases, however, they may be assigned to the demographic sector (e.g. migrations, urbanisation), the economic and social sector (e.g. industrialization and - resulting from this - varying levels of affluence in a society), the political sector (e.g. the drawing of new demarcation lines after wars and revolutions) or to the ideological and religious sector (e.g. religion-induced or ideology-induced suppression). Examples of all this were presented during the conference.

In my view it is important not to focus on a mere classification and enumeration of individual factors but to give special attention to their specific constellation and the significance they have in an actual case. Further investigations in this direction may help to discover certain types or mechanisms.

Thus it is obvious that the problem of multiculturalism which has arisen in Latin America was in the first place induced by religious and economic objectives pursued by Spanish and Portuguese monarchs, whereas in the USA the religious and economic motives of the immigrants themselves were decisive. Obviously multiculturalism in today's Israel is decisively determined by religious and ideological preferences and differences. Regrettably, for reasons of time and preparation, I cannot elaborate on this any further, however, it seems very likely that this will become a major field for further research.

F. Pragmatic approach: What Can Be Achieved Through History Didactics ?

Of course, multiculturalism as well as its systematic-historical analysis and differentiation do not represent an end in itself for history-didactical research. Mr. Karlegård particularly stressed this point in the final discussion. All efforts undertaken should serve to help many people and groups of people to achieve cultural self realization. However, in order to achieve something in this respect, it is essential to consider "successful" realizations of multicultural concepts as well as the necessary preconditions.

After the oral presentations it became clear that examples of an entirely successful realization of a multicultural concept have only been rare so far. Israel seems to have succeeded in this, at least if one looks at the numerous Jewish groups originating from countries all over the world and if one

acknowledges the good chances for reaching a settlement with the Arabs. A major step towards an achievement of this goal has recently been made. In Belgium, Swedish-Finland and Southern Tyrole former and difficult nationality and speech conflicts have recently been solved by applying balanced regulations with exactly coded minority rights. By contrast, multicultural concepts have not in the least been implemented optimally in Canada, the USA or in England. Currently the beginning of major changes can be observed in Poland (regional example: Silesia), in Russia as well as the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania). These changes will have an impact on the multicultural framework of the societies in these countries, however it cannot be predicted where this will lead to.

Particularly if one has a closer look at historically successful examples that were presented in the case studies, scepticism arises about the question whether it can be anticipated that in the big Western countries or in the countries that have just been freed from Soviet communism multicultural concepts can be implemented rapidly and extensively. Really successful realizations of multicultural concepts only occurred after long and difficult discussions. Mainly, however, this occurred and occurs in countries with relatively small groups of people and with stable democratic and economic conditions where the question of power has been settled and a basic political consensus is not doubted any more (as has been described very impressively by Mr. Schatzker for competing Jewish groupings in Israel). If there are many and at the same time large groups of people, as this is the case in the Anglo Saxon and Latin American countries, also in India, then a convincing solution is much more difficult to achieve, even if sound and democratic traditions prevail in these countries. If perhaps even democratic conditions are lacking, as in large parts of the former Yugoslavia, in China, and in many African countries, or if those conditions have only recently been introduced, as in the area of the former Soviet Union, then the possibility of a future success - if judged realistically - seems very uncertain.

It is not at all my intention to spread resignation and pessimism by presenting this sceptical outlook. Despite all the difficult frame conditions I think that in all the countries treated at this conference there is scope for maneuver in the field of historic-political education and it would be irresponsible not to use it.

Thus it is crucial - also for future history-didactical research - to identify the opportunities for action as precisely as possible and without illusions. The situation in Canada, for example, where historical education only plays a minor role in social scientific studies, is totally different from the one in those countries of the formerly Soviet-Communist block where historical education played a major role and where it is still just as important even after democracy was established.

In this context another question must be tackled: What significance is attributed to the cultural, educational and school sector in the respective societies? Particularly the contributions which treated the formerly Soviet-Communist area of influence clearly showed that people have great confidence in the society-oriented and society-shaping potential of culture and education. Considering the fact that these countries are currently undergoing radical changes which not only

reveal economic problems but particularly point to wide-ranging aversions against political-ideological overstraining in the Soviet-Communist system, this confidence is understandable. And moreover: Anyone who, from the very beginning, does not believe in the chances that culture and education provide, deprives himself - as a didactician - of a motivating, meaningful prospect of action.

And yet I think that one must take care not to be too optimistic about the opportunities which culture, education and historic-political instruction provide. Without a certain economic level and without adequate political frame conditions culture and education will only produce little or nothing at all. What the countries of the formerly Soviet-Communist block predominantly need to avoid illusions and subsequent frustration is to deal openly and honestly with their 50-70-year-old past, the aftermath of which has not disappeared automatically along with the collapse of the system, but is still present in the minds and hearts of the people, regardless of whether they were doers, fellow-travellers or victims of the system. Apart from this, political and economic factors, namely in those countries where these are still instable, must be consciously considered in cultural, pedagogical and didactical calculations. In the Western democratic industrial societies we are currently experiencing that culture and education only have little impact in times of economic crisis or political desorientation. Particularly the German example of the humanity-oriented didactics during the years of crisis at the end of the Republic of Weimar shows how dangerous and irritatingly illusive it can be to restrict one's efforts to cultural and pedagogical backwoods. Didactical concepts, such as the one of multicultural education can only be successfully realized if the political and economic frame conditions are known in their entirety and taken into consideration.

In addition to this rather restrictive analysis of the initial situation in the various countries I would now like to state some future-related points regarding further didactical work. Looking at the presentations at the meeting and the subsequent discussions, I would like to stress three issues: tolerance (1), double identity (2) and the problem of transferability (3).

1. **Tolerance** as the basic element of constitutional patriotism which comprises the various cultural groups, excludes all forms of religious and political fundamentalism and integralism if these are aimed at the physical or moral crushing of competing beliefs and cultures. However, a demanding goal like tolerance is difficult to achieve. In historic-political education this cannot be done at one go, but requires a subdivision into easily attainable partial goals. In this context Mr. Schatzker stressed that only self-confident people who are aware and sure of their own identity, are able to develop a multicultural conscience and act accordingly. Mr. de Keyser stressed that the ability to achieve a democratic compromise is a major precondition, particularly in countries which are deeply split on a cultural-linguistic level, e.g. Belgium, and it is obvious that only a self-confident citizen or a self-confident ethnic group is strong enough to live with a compromise. Mr. Gies mentioned the ancient

term "**reason of state**" (Staatsraison). Particularly in countries which are in a tense situation multiculturally, this term - if deprived of its absolutistic meaning - is able to raise among all groups competing with each other an interest in a continuance of the state they share. All this requires intensive theoretical, practical and empirical work in the field of history didactics. It stands to reason that education at school alone does not suffice to teach students such demanding educational goals like tolerance, individualism, ability to compromise or reason of state. What is more important is to include them into concepts of historic-political **adult education** which still is in an initial stage in most countries.

2. In some of the case studies presented (Estonia, Silesia, Southern Tyrole) the concept of a **double identity** seems to have proved successful in efforts to ease tense multicultural situations. Anyone who feels that he is accepted as a member of the German minority in Silesia, Poland, will describe his relationship to the Polish state as much more positive than someone who considers a union with Germany as the only possible solution to maintain his German identity. Mrs. Oispuu supported this view by quoting the Baltic-German dictum: "Estonia is my home country, Germany is my fatherland." Unless, however, these double identities have been clarified in each individual case and are accepted on all sides, they may result in further tensions - as history has shown. This is another new large field where historic-didactical research is necessary before general statements can be made.

3. In principle the question arises whether or not successful examples of a multicultural living-together are at all **transferable** to other 'cases' that have not yet been solved. In the discussion Mr. Schatzker stressed that he considers the "Israel model" not transferable. The other case examples presented, particularly the successful ones, are likely to meet with similar scepticism. Thus the question that is most important to historians and history didacticians, i.e. what can be learnt from history, has been tackled. It is not predominantly about a plain transfer of successfully realized multicultural concepts to other countries but about learning to act creatively and independently by comparing various situations. With respect to this goal we can learn something from all case examples presented, however, only if this has been preceded by problem-oriented, historic-scientific and historic-didactical research on a comparative and interdisciplinary basis. I would like to conclude by quoting the great German historian and historiographer of the 19th century, Jacob Burckhardt, who said: "Learning from history does not mean to become clever for the next occasion, but to become wise for ever."