The symposium explores the relationship between memory, culture and dialogical self. Contributors use the heuristic concept of centre-periphery dialogical relationship to account for the way negotiating memory constitutes a fundamental dimension through which the Self relates to Culture and Culture constitutes the I-positionings dynamics. The centre-periphery dialogical relationship (Hermans 2001) is elaborated at the theoretical level drawing on 4 empirical studies in different cultural contexts. The rationale of the symposium is to trace a trajectory that goes from the centre-periphery at the level of macro cultural events to the elaboration of I-positionings in individual narratives. The session is organized in 4 individual presentations of 10-15 minutes. Andersen explores the movement from periphery to centre of collective and individual identities in the process of its making during the separation of Greenland. Saint-Laurent, on the other hand, presents some case studies in Switzerland, in which the centre-periphery relation in memory plays complementary role of making sense of continuity and discontinuity dialogicality. Carré uses the centre-periphery concept to discuss the dialogue between I-positionings as it develops during the process of becoming member of a scientific community in Chile, beyond the existing participation theories. Finally, Nedergaard proposes an original specimen of the centre-periphery and memory relationships in the elaboration of Self based on the study of scars. They can be considered as bodily signs at the interplay of culture, memory, self and I-positioning in the sense making. The discussant will propose a theoretical synthesis about borders of Self, providing new potential applications for the centre-periphery concept.
I explore and discuss how people living in Greenland relate narratively to the effects of the ongoing process of Greenlandic separation from Denmark, which seems to shift Greenland’s position from colonized and peripheral into a central, sovereign one. I do this through narrative interviews of around 20 individuals, drawing upon their narratives of what it means to be a Greenlander, seeing this process as affording new possible self-positions, since it might change the existing I-Other relations (Marsico et al., 2013) between Greenlanders and the world and Denmark. This enables an active re-negotiation of the social borders that have guided the relationship and the understanding of Greenlanders’s place, role and future in the world through it thus far (Marsico et al, 2013). Using Baldacchino’s (2010) standpoint on how some colonies remain peripheral instead of becoming central sovereign states, it is noteworthy how people use the supposed benefits, deficits and challenges that each I-position presents to negotiate their daily lives as Greenlanders, with an emphasis on a possible clash between personal positions and the social positions available and actively organized by institutions, e.g. current government (Hermans, 2001). Throughout, I discuss this process from an individual point of view, portraying how people narrate and negotiate their position in this dialogic tension between centre-periphery, hoping to further the understanding of this process; stressing how their positions change according to context and available voices. Thus, I also explore the range and role of socio-cultural factors in constructing and negotiating these narratives (Carretero, 2011).

Keywords: Center, Periphery, Post-colonialism, I-Other positions, Social positions

The Janusian Function of Collective Memory: Co-Constructive Meanings of Past, Present and Future.

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Collective memory gives meaning to the present by organising the past along culturally shared story lines (Wertsch, 2002), a characteristic that I propose to conceptualise as the ‘Janusian function’ of the memory of the collective past. Indeed, like the god of time and transitions looking simultaneously at the future and at the past, the person who remembers reconstructs from a specific context (Wagoner, 2012). By doing so, she gives meaning to the present and the future, providing a sense of continuity in spite of the changes, discontinuities and ruptures experienced (Zittoun & Grossen, 2013). Such a conceptualisation of the function of collective memory offers the possibility to look at remembering as an especially powerful semiotic tool: it allows for a dialogue between
different moments of time, where each temporal modality can be given a new meaning though what may be called ‘temporal heteroglossia’. A set of case studies where collective memory is used as a symbolic resources – namely as cultural tools in order to produce new meanings (Zittoun & Grossen, 2013) – will be used to illustrate such a process (de Saint-Laurent, 2013; Favero, 2010; Zittoun et al., 2008). The aim will be to highlight how, in these different studies, the symbolic resources that are used by the participants demonstrate such temporal dialogue.

Key words: collective memory, meaning-making, symbolic resources

From Periphery To Center: Dialoguing Into Economics

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In this work I discuss on the process lived by novice, emerging economists in order to become acknowledged as full-fledged members of Economics’ community. The participation in communities, and the knowledge/practice appropriated this way, has been largely studied (e.g. Wenger, 1998). However, the social, dialogical process of becoming a valid member for a particular scientific community –like economics– has been considerably less addressed. As Kullasepp (2008) pointed out, most of existing studies have focused on acquiring roles through pre-established paths; thus assuming that roles are ‘imported’ into the self as pre-packaged ways of relating, thinking, acting, etc. Therefore, these studies have neglected the unique, developmental and dialogical nature of these transitional processes (Zittoun, 2006). In this vein, becoming-a-scientist is understood here as a dialogical process, guided by meaning-making persons oriented towards others (Marková, 2003). This process not only entails the active construction of novel I-Other positions, but also the meaningful re-construction of multiple previous I-positions. Hence, I look to advance existing dialogical approaches on this topic by exploring the notions of Center/Periphery. As Hermans (2001) proposed, center and periphery are not fixed ‘I-positions’ of the self; in this vein, these notions are explored as relevant theoretical tools for addressing the developmental trajectories involved in the construction of scientific identities. In sum, the present work looks to discuss on how this transitional process might be understood as a dialogical movement of the self from the periphery of an economics community (‘a student’) into a full-fledged member of it (‘a fellow colleague’).

Keywords: Center, Periphery, Scientific communities, I-Other positions
Memory Written on the Skin: Creating an Identity Through a Dialogical Self
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Human body is the arena for dialogical construction of the self. The skin is both an expression of a culture and a means of communication – both with others, and with one’s inner self (Farr, 1997). My focus is on scars, which are also a border between center and periphery of the body, and serves as a means of personal memorization. The personal-cultural memory is, so to speak, written on the skin, and creates both negative and positive feelings in the person who has them, and hereby is a foundation of different I-positions when the individual tries to construct an identity with these memories as a part of a narrative (Brown et al, 2009).

To focus on how people relate to their own scars 8 participants are interviewed and asked to show, on a drawing, where they have scars and rate these scars from insignificant, ambivalent to very significant and ask them to specify the tensions between various I-positions the scars represent. The severity of the scars rate from small scars, e.g. a scratch, to large surgery scars, scars from shootings or from war actions. The scars are both new and very visible, and older either visible or almost invisible to detect on the skin surface.

Social roles and the individual’s feelings and characteristics are all included in creating an identity through dialogue between different I-positions (Hermans, 1996, 2001). The focus is on which positions in the dialogue are either in opposition or in relation and how they are organized hierarchically.

Keywords:
Skin scarring, Borders, Center-Periphery, I-Positioning, Memory