



Slovak Academy of Sciences Proposal submission forms of the Centre Excellence SAS-PROCESSES

Proposal full name of Centre Excellence SAS

Collective Identities in Modern Societies. Central European Region.

Akronym of Centre Excellence SAS

Processes of construction, reproduction and transform-ation of collective categories and identities.

Scientific section of SAS

Section III. about Society and Culture.

Scientific institutes of SAS

Institute of History, Institute of Ethnology, Institute of Philosophy, Ľudovít Štúr Institute of Linguistics, Institute of Oriental and African Studies, Institute of Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences

Non SAS Organisations

Philosophical Faculty of Comenius University: Institute of Ethnology, Departement of German Studies, Institute of Slovak History, Academia Istropolitana Nova, Sv. Jur.

Proposal abstract

The proposed project is an interdisciplinary program which associates researchers from fields of ethnology, German studies, folklore studies, history, philosophy, linguistics, religion studies, sociology, social psychology and political science. Trans-disciplinary research is focused on the following topic „Processes of construction, reproduction and transformation of collective identities in contemporary societies“, furthermore it develops current trends in the social studies and humanities, where ‘culture’ (unlike in the 60’s-80’s of the 20th century) became the central paradigm. Research tasks seek to comprehend and understand processes of construction and reproduction of social realities and their context communication. Analysis is concentrated on processes of sign and symbolic coding and decoding, creation, keeping and transforming of collective representation.

Project from the methodological prospective stresses deconstructionalism, polysemanticism, fragmentation and ambivalence of studied phenomena. The project intends: 1. to enter international academic research, 2. to develop comparative research and latest methodological approaches, 3. to approach the topic on the basis of new research material (from broader region of Central Europe), 4. to support less developed sub-disciplines in the framework of existing areas of research in Slovakia (social history, historical and social anthropology, social philosophy, European studies etc.).

Proposal objectives

The region of Central Europe including Slovakia has distinguished and it is still distinguishing by language, culture, ethnic, confession and other (group) heterogeneity. The latter was developing under specific historical, social, political, ideological, demographic and economic and other conditions. Concerned heterogeneity is partially present until today, it has been preserved in collective memory and thus creates mental (cognitive) conditions which enable construction, reproduction and transformation of heterogeneous, identification and categorical frameworks such as nation, gender, region. These frameworks determine (define) social importance of individual and collective behaviour. Processes of

identification and categorisation imply collective cohesion, integrity and differentiation from other group. Moreover, they are only understandable in particular historical context and situation.

Objectives of the proposed project are following:

1. research of construction, reproduction and transformation of collective identification processes, e.g. national, confessional, gender etc.,
2. relations between language and ethnic group, role of ethnicity in identity creation,
3. research of symbolic expressions, activities, communication within groups and towards other groups,
4. research of potential factors of group conflict (comparison of European and Non-European societies and identities).

The team of researchers will be distinctly contribute to teaching of the PhD students of history, ethnology and related disciplines. The research unit will co-operate with the already running 5th Framework program of the EU „European Doctorate in Social History of Europe“, which focuses on education of PhD students from Slovakia (Slovak Academy of Sciences) in co-operation with the 5 universities in the EU countries (the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain and Great Britain).

The research team aims at joining with foreign interdisciplinary centres, which have already been co-operating together with SAS (e.g. Spezialforschungsbereich „Moderne“, Universität Graz, Graduiertenkolleg „Sozialgeschichte von Gruppen, Schichten, Klassen und Eliten“, Universität Bielefeld, GWZO Leipzig etc.)

Description of the work

The team of authors will combine various methods of basic research (archive and field research). The output data will be then used for collecting of new relevant material to which data from previous researches will be added and reinterpreted. Methodology will depend on the research scope of each researcher. In order to provide for comprehensive concept of the project there will be a terminological (methodological) workshop organised with this purpose. The workshop will focus on interpretation, critique and discussion aiming at terminological and methodological accuracy, consistency and comprehensiveness of particular partial research objectives. Participating researchers will concentrate on the whole range of methodological and specific research issues. These are considered relevant in the development process in the following areas: creation and functioning of singular types of consciousness and identities (gender, language-ethnic-national, regional), forming of images, stereotypes and rituals and their place in social stratification and potential or real conflicts (e.g. inter-ethnic, inter-confessional, etc.). These issues will also be studied in relation to political, cultural and social-psychological processes of the 18th and 21st century.

Expected results of the proposal for periods of years 2003-2005

- Parallel running activities: monthly colloquia of the team researchers (terminological-methodological workshop);
- Basic research, publishing of interim results by individual researchers;
- Round table on research issues (including international participation), elaborating of monograph outputs by the team researchers;
- International conference;
- Complex elaboration of the research results in the form of collective work (monographs).

Research outputs will depend on the status and level of research made in particular fields. Therefore, it is expected that there will be also doctoral dissertations published (minimum 3) or monographs dealing with specific research problems, etc.