

Report from Europe: Psychohistory in the French Speaking Community

Marc-André Cotton—Int. Psychohistorical Association

This article was published in *Psychohistory News*, volume 37, No 4, Fall 2018

Abstract: One of IPA's most important challenges is helping educate a wider audience about the childhood sources of adult psychopathology. The relevance and urgency of this agenda is underscored by the psychological state of Donald Trump and right-wing Republicans, as well as the resurgence of fascism in Europe. Our International VP is part of this common effort, as explained in this report.

Since becoming IPA's International Vice-President four years ago, I've been educating French-speaking audiences about psychohistorical issues, especially the importance of supportive parenting. This has been done mainly by means of regular publications, lectures, and interaction on the Internet and social networks. Thanks to this effort, psychohistory has gained in visibility within a still-too-small community of concerned adults and dedicated professionals.

My regular contributions to the quarterly magazine PEPS have played a hefty part in this process. With more than three thousand subscribers, this 68-page print publication is one of the leading voices of the positive parenting movement in France and its editor Catherine Dumonteil Kremer is quite a supporter of our field (<https://pepsmagazine.com>). Psychohistory-related articles have recently covered topics such as Obama's multicultural heritage, the untold link between Brexit and British childrearing violence, the infancy of Sigmund Freud, positive parenting and guilt, use of Bowlby's attachment theory to understand the Weinstein sex scandal, and Donald Trump's European roots. "I love to read such stimulating perspectives," one of PEPS's subscribers told me at the last Lyon's annual Eco-Fair. "It widens my comprehension of current events."

These articles are available on my website *Regard conscient* (<http://www.regardconscient.net>) whose viewing audience has risen to an average of one thousand daily visits in the past year. Some of them have simultaneously been published in *Clio's Psyche*, *The Journal of Psychohistory* or *Psychohistory News* and are also accessible on my English homepage (<http://www.regardconscient.net/edefault.htm>). Such improved visibility owes a great deal to my regular use of Facebook for weekly updates and comments on supportive parenthood for the benefit of my 3500+ FB friends. Likewise, before the French presidential election in May 2017, the eco-parenting magazine *Grandir Autrement* ("Growing up differently") published an extensive article on psychohistory with links to resources such as deMause's *Foundations of Psychohistory* (<http://www.regardconscient.net/archi17/1709psychohistoire.html>). To this day, it has scored nearly three hundred shares on Facebook.

I have also been lecturing at an annual summer university organized by PEPS magazine. These meetings enlist about sixty adults (plus children) for a three-day residency program on positive parenting issues, emotional awareness, and personal development. This year's conference was dedicated to Trump's family heritage, but I always stress the importance of applying psychohistory in the lives of participants. Topics I addressed in past years include the intergenerational transmission of trauma and *Regard conscient's* perspective

on the therapeutic process. All these sessions have been video recorded and can be viewed on my website (<http://www.regardconscient.net/videos.html>).

This spring, I began close cooperation with *La Maison de l'enfant* (“The Child’s Home”), an organization dedicated to the training of professionals to be parenting coaches. Among other things, I offer a psychohistorical perspective on Freud’s own childhood traumas and their impact on psychoanalysis. In France, Freudian concepts are influential among academics and child welfare professionals, and my contribution elicits considerable interest. (For more on my treatment of this topic, see my recent *Clio’s Psyche* article, “Sigmund Freud, Son of Amalia” <http://www.regardconscient.net/earchives/1802sigmundandamalia.html>). I expect this partnership to progress over the following months.

In February 2018, for the fourth year now, I maintained a psychohistory booth at Lyon’s annual Eco-Fair, one of France’s biggest gatherings of environmental and social activists. Through this venue, the IPA is reaching a large and vibrant audience about the social impacts of punitive parenting. The relevance of psychohistory for a sustainable future is evident, for example, in the Trump Administration’s denial about climate change. With your renewed confidence, I will be honored to keep up with this important endeavor. All the best from Europe!

Marc-André Cotton, MA, the International Vice President of the International Psychohistorical Association and an International Member of the Psychohistory Forum, is a teacher, independent scholar, and co-director with therapist Sylvie Vermeulen of the French website Regard conscient (www.regardconscient.net), dedicated to exploring the unconscious motivations of human behavior. He may be contacted at contact@regardconscient.net.

© M.A. Cotton – 2018.08/www.regardconscient.net