

Appreciation of Historical Events and Characters: Their Relationship with National Identity and Collective Self-Esteem in a Sample of Public School Teachers from the City of Lima.

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This study analyzes the relation between national identity and the appreciation of the characters and events of Peruvian history in a sample of public school teachers from the city of Lima ($N = 99$). Adapted versions of the NATID Scale (Keillor et al., 1996) and the CSES Scale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) are used as measures of national identity. National pride and interest in knowing about Peruvian history are variables also included in this study. The study shows that appreciation of historical characters is more positive than appreciation of historical events. There is a positive association between national identity and appreciation of Peruvian historical characters. A multiple linear regression model is proposed; this model shows that appreciation of cultural heritage and national pride has a positive impact on the appreciation of characters of Peruvian history.

Keywords: appreciation of history, national identity, collective self-esteem, national pride.

Este estudio analiza la relación entre la identidad nacional y la valoración de los personajes y eventos de la historia del Perú, en una muestra de profesores de escuelas públicas de Lima ($N = 99$). Como medidas de identidad nacional se utilizan versiones adaptadas de las escalas NATID (Keillor et al., 1996) y CSES de autoestima colectiva (Luhtanen y Crocker, 1992). También se incluye el orgullo nacional y el interés por conocer sobre la historia del Perú como variables de estudio. Se encuentra que la valoración de los personajes históricos es más positiva que la de los eventos históricos. La identidad nacional está asociada positivamente a la valoración de los personajes históricos. Se propone un modelo de regresión lineal múltiple en el que la valoración de la herencia cultural y el sentimiento de orgullo nacional ejercen un efecto positivo sobre la valoración de los personajes de la historia del Perú.

Palabras clave: valoración de la historia, identidad nacional, autoestima colectiva, orgullo nacional.

Social Identity

Regarding the concept of *identity* one can mention two attempts, amongst others, to bring together the different definitions of the term. First of all, Fearon (1999) claims that the underlying concepts common to the different definitions of identity are: *self-definition*, differentiation with respect to others, and creation and conservation of an image or representation of oneself. In second place, Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Gollidge, and Scabini (2006) define identity as the subjective concept of himself that an individual possesses. According to these authors, identity belongs to the realm of subjective experience and does not refer to an objective *essence*. The importance of belonging to a group in the conformation of identity has been made explicit by the theory of social identity (Tajfel, 1984; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In so far as belonging to a determinate social group is an important part of the self-concept, individuals will seek to maintain or raise a positive *social identity* (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In this context, *social identity* is defined as that part of the self-concept of an individual that derives from the knowledge of his belonging to a social group. Brewer (1991) argues that social identification is the result of two different processes: *in-group identification*, that is, the need for inclusion, the need to feel as a member of some definite group; and *intergroup differentiation* which is the need to establish differences with other groups to which we don't belong. The need for a feeling of belonging to a group, for a collective identification, may be considered as a universal motivation of the human species (Pérez, 1999; Vignoles et al., 2006). Social identity, understood as a subjective construction, is built through the interaction of cognitive, affective and social processes, within a certain cultural and local context (Vignoles et al., 2006).

National Identity

According to Pérez (1999), the feeling of *national identity* would be only one of the multiple forms of collective identification generated by humanity throughout history. National identity only appears when a system of political and social organization denominated *nation-state* is constituted. The state apparatus *uses* the human need for collective identification to generate national identification in individuals (Billig, 1995; Pérez, 1999; Torsti, 2004). In this manner, Durán-Cogan (2001) claims that national identity exists in two different poles of culture. On the one hand, it exists in the public sphere in the form of articulated and highly selective speech produced *from above* by several social agents and institutions (intellectual elites, media,

state institutions, etc.). On the other hand, national identity is expressed through a number of socially shared life styles and feelings, which, sometimes, are not appropriately represented by the public versions of identity. Keillor, Hult, Erffmeyer, and Babakus (1996) proposed the NATID scale to quantify national identity. This scale presents four aspects: a structured and shared system of beliefs, the appreciation of national heritage, the level of cultural homogeneity and the degree of ethnocentrism. According to Keillor et al. (1996), in order to be able to claim that a person is strongly identified with his or her country, that person should achieve a high score in these four areas. It is necessary to point out that the *level of ethnocentrism* of the NATID scale measures the preference for the acquisition of national products and has been used in international marketing analyses (Keillor & Hult, 1999). This subscale has not been used in the current investigation.

Official History, Collective Memory and Appreciation of History

The term *official history* has been used to refer to the version or narrative of history that is defined as legitimate by powerful social groups, the state institutions and the academic and intellectual elites (Mendoza, 2004; Wertsch, 2002). Van Oers (2004) holds that *official history* is a part of the production of narratives and *civic truths* approved of by the state apparatus. According to some authors, official history is affected by *historical errors* and it is then transmitted through school as *school history* (Mendoza, 2004; Portocarrero & Oliart, 1989; Wertsch, 2002). The term *historical error* is understood as the voluntary omission of events and characters, or the attribution of a lesser or greater importance to them within a historical narrative. This *historical error* is produced by those groups that control the production and representation of knowledge within a society (Liu et al., 2005; Wertsch, 2002). The concept of *collective memory* was introduced into the study of Social Sciences by *Maurice Halbwachs*¹ and it refers to the social process of reconstruction of the past lived and experienced by a certain group, community or society (Aguilar, 2002; Halbwachs, 1950; Juárez, 2004). According to Regalado (2007), while history refers to scientific knowledge of past events, *collective memory* refers to people's perception of the past. Despite the idealization of the intersubjective character of collective memory, the tendency of official and formal history to impose a vision as true over others has also been described (Valencia & Páez, 1999). Thus, we can understand collective (or social) memory as the remembrance of past social events, influenced by social

¹ The book *La mémoire collective* (Collective Memory) was published in 1950 as a posthumous work. Halbwachs wrote between 1941 and 1944 a series of notes and essays that were compiled and published under this title after his death in 1945.

factors located in the present or past of a group. In the case of *informal forms* (Páez & Basabe, 1999) of explanation of historical change, a continuum from *nomotetic* explanations, based on laws or general change processes, to *person-based* explanations which emphasize the role of public leaders as leading characters of historical change, has been proposed. The people with a greater tendency to a conservative political ideology would prefer person-based explanations (Rosa, Travieso, Blanco & Huertas, 1999). In the case of Perú reference has been made to the “authoritarian tradition” (Basadre, 1983; Flores Galindo, 1999), a phenomenon described as the focus on the leading role of public figures, usually political or military leaders, in the collective remembrance of historical facts.

This study attempts to analyze the *appreciation of history*, which is not equivalent to the concept of collective memory. Anyhow, the appreciation of history would only be a part of that which makes up collective or social memory. The concept *appreciation of history* may be understood as a significant evaluation that a person undertakes of the past events or occurrences, in positive as well as negative terms and influenced by social factors (Bellelli, Leone & Curci, 1999; Condor, 2006).

Relationship between Appreciation of History and National Identity

Even when the relationship between the positive evaluation of the history of a country and the national identity of its inhabitants seems obvious, there are few empirical studies that have analyzed this relationship from the social psychology viewpoint. Páez, Basabe and González (1997) found a strong bond between a negative memory of past political events and a negative attitude towards society in the present. Herranz and Basabe (1999) hold that social identity is associated both to the free remembrance of historical facts as well as to diffusion and inhibition processes of the communication of historical facts of the past. Espinosa and Calderón (2007) found, in a study undertaken amongst university students of the city of Lima, that appreciation of history has a positive association to collective self-esteem. On the other hand, some studies have found that social groups reduce the negative character of the events of their past in *defense* of their collective identity (Marques, Páez, Valencia & Vincze, 2006; Valencia & Páez, 1999). In a previous study (Rottenbacher, 2008) a conceptual framework for the relation between

appreciation of history and national identity was set forth: official history is socialized or spread in the form of school history, both exposed in a narrative information format. These narratives function as an input for the subjective and social elaboration of a *historical collective memory*. *Historical collective memory* influences the construction, reconstruction or protection of national identity. In the same study, undertaken with a sample of Lima inhabitants, a positive association between national identity and appreciation of characters of Peruvian history was found. It was also found that *collective self-esteem*, an important part of national identity (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Sánchez, 1999), was positively affected by the positive appreciation of characters of Peruvian history. The study also enabled to identify a less positive appreciation of events in comparison to the appreciation of characters.

The current study aimed to analyze the relationship between appreciation of history and national identity using, in this opportunity, other scales of measurement of national identity and having public schools’ teachers, of the city of Lima, as participants. Furthermore, other variables that allow to explain more accurately the phenomenon were included: the interest in knowing about Peruvian history and the subjective importance of national identity. Teachers were elected as participants of the sample due to the fact that they form part of the state institutions in charge of spreading official history.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 99 teachers of state educational institutions from the city of Lima. 69.9% are women and 30.1% are men. In terms of age ($M = 43.89$, $SD = 11.81$), 79.3% is between 28 and 55 years old. 15.2% are between 56 and 75 years old and only a 5.4% is between 18 and 27 years old². Regarding the participants’ status as teachers³, 68.6% is *appointed* and 31.4% is *hired*. Participants come from, in general, 30 districts of the city of Lima.

Procedure

The teachers answered the questionnaire while attending a training workshop called *The Social and Cultural Values of Caral Civilization in the School Curricula*, offered by

² Only one participant mentioned being 18 years old. One could infer that he/she is an Education student.

³ Teaching categories in Peruvian state educational institutions are associated to labour benefits. Appointed teachers enjoy all the labour benefits offered by Peruvian law. Appointment takes place according to years of experience, public contest or other professional accomplishments.

the *Derrama Magisterial*⁴ in collaboration with the NGO for Development *Tarea*. Previously, a letter was sent to these institutions asking for their collaboration in the study. The people in charge of collecting the information were four students in their tenth semester in the Social Psychology Minor of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. They asked the participants for their consent in order to give them the self-applied questionnaire. Once the questionnaires were filled, they were collected in order to enter the information into the statistical package SPSS 17. The information was collected on September 2008.

Instruments

Besides the scales used for the measurement of the study's variables, the instrument contained a general data section to gather information regarding gender, age, district of residence in Lima and status as teacher. Participants were also asked to report according to their own personal opinion, where did they learn more about Peruvian history, with the following possible answers: a) "In lower school", b) "In upper school", c) "In pre-university training", d) "In university or at an institute"; and e) "By myself, developing an interest in Peruvian history".

a) National Identity

An adapted version of 7 items of the NATID scale of Keillor, Hult, Erffmeyer, and Babakus (1996) was used. The original scale posses 17 items grouped into 4 areas: *National Heritage*, *Cultural Homogeneity*, *Beliefs System* and *Ethnocentrism*. In the present investigation, 7 items of the first two areas were used: *National Heritage* and *Cultural Homogeneity*. The possible answers are presented in a Likert scale of 6 points, where 1 = "Total disagreement" and 6 = "Total agreement". The level of reliability of the 7 items scale turned out to be acceptable⁵ for the sample in question ($\alpha = .773$).

b) Collective Self-Esteem and Subjective Relevance of Identity

An adapted version of 2 items of the *Subscale of Identity* of the *CSES* of Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) reformulated by Lilli and Diehl (1999) was used as a measure of national self-esteem. The original subscale contains 4 items and its possible answers are presented in a Likert scale of 6 points where 1 = "Total disagreement" and 6 = "Total agreement". For the analysis of results only two items that refer to the subjective relevance of belonging to the group of Peruvians,

were included: (1) *Being Peruvian is an important referent concerning who I am*. (2) *Being Peruvian is an important part of the image that I have of myself*. It has been considered appropriate to label this variable *Subjective Relevance of Identity* since it pertains to the importance a person gives to his or her own feeling of belonging to the group of Peruvians. The level of reliability of the 2 items scale turned out to be accepted for the sample in question ($\alpha = .706$).

c) Feeling of National Pride

Only one item was used to quantify the construct *feeling of national pride*. In this item the participant was asked to answer the following question: *To what extent do you feel proud of being a citizen of Perú?* in a Likert scale, with the following options: 1 = Not proud at all, 2 = Not very proud, 3 = Pretty proud, and 4 = Very proud.

d) Appreciation of Peruvian History

The scale of *Appreciation of Characters and Events of Universal History* (Techio, Bobowik, Páez, Cabecinhas, Liu, Zubieta, & Espinosa, 2010) was adapted to the appreciation of characters and events of Peruvian history in order to measure the construct called *Appreciation of Peruvian History*. The 30 events and the 30 characters⁶ were selected according to the results obtained from a qualitative study done by Rottenbacher (2008). In this instrument the participant is presented with the names of 30 characters and 30 events of Peruvian history and is asked to evaluate the intensity of his/her positive or negative feelings towards each, in a Likert scale of 7 points where 1 = "Extremely negative" and 7 = "Extremely positive".

e) Perception of One's Own Interest in Peruvian History

A 4 items scale that gathers information concerning the perception that one possesses of one's own interest in knowing more about Peruvian history was developed. The possible answers are presented in a 6 points Likert scale, where 1 = "Total disagreement" and 6 = "Total agreement". The level of reliability turned out to be acceptable for the sample in question ($\alpha = .783$).

Results

Channels or Sources of Information about Peruvian History

Table 1 shows that 32.5% of participants declared to have learned more about Peruvian history through means

⁴ The *Derrama Magisterial* is the Social Security and Welfare System of Teachers (*Magisterio*). The *Derrama Magisterial* administrates the social funds of the teachers of Peruvian state educational institutions.

⁵ The reliability of the instruments was considered acceptable when $\alpha \geq .60$, according to Cohen's (1998) criteria.

⁶ The list of the 30 events and the 30 characters of Peruvian history evaluated in this study are shown in appendix 1.

of their own personal interest. 29.2% declared to have received more information in university or in an institute and 27.5% in upper school.

Factorial Analysis of the National Identity Adapted Scale

We sought to find dimensions within the *National identity adapted scale*. Based on the *Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin* measure of sampling adequacy and *Bartlett's* test of sphericity, we can claim that the *National identity adapted scale* presents, for the present study, an acceptable factorial structure ($KMO = .754$, $\chi^2(21) = 179.025$, $p < .001$). For this reason, an exploratory factorial analysis, which's method of extraction was the analysis of main components and which's method of rotation was the *VARIMAX* normalization, was undertaken. Likewise, the items which presented a factorial charge lower than .5 were eliminated in order to obtain a more parsimonious factorial structure. This analysis produced 2 factors which explain the 64.85% total variance; they appear in table 2:

Based on the related items, the factors obtained were labelled as follows:

- Factor 1 (F1): *Attribution of national identity and pride*: This factor groups 3 statements which attribute Peruvians, in general, feelings of pride and belonging to a national and cultural common origin. The level of reliability of this factor turned out to be acceptable for the sample in question ($\alpha = .780$).

- Factor 2 (F2): *Appreciation of cultural heritage*: This factor groups 3 statements that refer to the positive appreciation of the cultural and historical heritage of Peru. The level of reliability of this factor turned out to be acceptable for the sample in question ($\alpha = .690$).

Normality and Asymmetry in the Distribution of the Study Variables

Table 3 shows the results of the normality and asymmetry tests. We can hold that the Appreciation of characters, the Appreciation of events, the Perception of one's own interest in Peruvian history, and the Attribution of national identity and pride, possess a normal distribution and present symmetry in their distribution. On the contrary, the Appreciation of cultural heritage, the Subjective relevance of national identity and the Feeling of national pride, show a high degree of asymmetry, thus, not showing a normal distribution. For this reason, a *logarithmic transformation* of the gross scores was done. The transformed scores were used for the comparison of means, analysis of correlation and analysis of regression.

Differences between the Appreciation of the Characters and the Appreciation of the Events of Peruvian History

The Appreciation of the characters and the Appreciation of the events of Peruvian history are variables obtained

Table 1
Where did you learn more about Peruvian history?

| Sources of information | % |
|--|--------|
| By myself, developing an interest in Peruvian history. | 32.5% |
| In university or at an institute. | 29.2% |
| In upper school. | 27.5% |
| In lower school. | 5.8% |
| In pre-university training. | 5.0% |
| Total | 100.0% |

Table 2
Factors of the National Identity Adapted Scale and Associated Items

| Items | F1 | F2 |
|--|------|------|
| Peruvians feel proud of their nationality. | .870 | |
| Peruvians often practice activities that identify them as Peruvians. | .870 | |
| Peruvians, in general, feel that they share a common historical origin. | .686 | |
| Peru possesses a valuable historical heritage. | | .820 |
| One of the strengths of Peru is that it possesses plenty of events of great historical importance. | | .762 |
| Peruvians possess certain cultural attributes that people from other countries don't. | | .747 |

from the arithmetic mean of the individual appreciations of the 30 characters and the 30 events respectively. Both appreciations are in an appreciation range that goes from 1 to 7. In appendix 1, the average appreciation of each one of the 30 characters and the 30 events presented can be observed. According to the *Student t* test results for related samples ($N=48$) we can claim that the Appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history ($M = 4.69, SD = .61$) is more positive than the Appreciation of the events of Peruvian history ($M = 4.37, SD = .60, t(47) = -6.194, p < .001$).

Relation between the Appreciation of History and National Identity

In order to describe the relation between appreciation of history and the components of national identity that were quantified, a *Pearson* correlation analysis was used in the

first place, and then a multiple linear regression analysis. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in the following table 4.

It can be observed in table 4 that the Appreciation of the characters and the Appreciation of the events show a positive correlation of great magnitude between each other⁷. On the other hand, the Appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history has a positive correlation with all the variables related to national identity and with the Perception of one's own interest in Peruvian history. The Appreciation of the events of Peruvian history only shows a significant, and positive, correlation with the Appreciation of cultural heritage. The Appreciation of cultural heritage has a positive correlation of small magnitude with the Attribution of national identity and pride and with the Subjective relevance of national identity. The Feeling of national pride shows a positive correlation of medium magnitude with the Subjective relevance of national

Table 3
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test and Asymmetry Test for the Gross Scores of the Study Variables

| Variables | Normality | | | Asymmetry | |
|--|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| | <i>D</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | Statistical Value | <i>TE</i> |
| Appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history | .094 | 42 | .200* | -.645 | .311 |
| Appreciation of the events of Peruvian history | .088 | 42 | .200* | .612 | .287 |
| Appreciation of cultural heritage | .224 | 42 | .000 | -2.428 | .255 |
| Attribution of national identity and pride | .139 | 42 | .041 | -.192 | .257 |
| Subjective relevance of national identity | .253 | 42 | .000 | -1.451 | .254 |
| Feeling of national pride | .493 | 42 | .000 | -2.077 | .250 |
| Perception of one's own interest in Peruvian history | .089 | 42 | .200* | -.600 | .250 |

*This is an inferior limit of the true significance.

Table 4
Correlations Matrix between Study Variables

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| 1. Appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history | ----- | .642** | .377** | .516** | .377** | .623** | .320* |
| 2. Appreciation of the events of Peruvian history | | ----- | .242* | .237 | -.052 | .213 | .193 |
| 3. Appreciation of cultural heritage | | | ----- | .266* | .261* | .040 | -.018 |
| 4. Attribution of national identity and pride | | | | ----- | .091 | .238* | .052 |
| 5. Subjective relevance of national identity | | | | | ----- | .548** | .129 |
| 6. Feeling of national pride | | | | | | ----- | .199 |
| 7. Perception of one's own interest in Peruvian history | | | | | | | ----- |

** $p \leq .01$

* $p \leq .05$

⁷ In order to interpret the correlation coefficients, Cohen's criteria (1988) were used, where the magnitude of correlation is great if $r \geq .60$, medium if $r \geq .30$ and small if $r \leq .30$.

identity and one of small magnitude with the Attribution of national identity and pride.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

In order to analyze the effect of the variables related to national identity, on the appreciation of Peruvian history, two multiple linear regression analyses were undertaken. The selection of independent variables method of these analyses was to introduce all the variables at once. It was verified that both dependent variables had a normal distribution and that the remainder had a normal distribution with a mean of .

Model 1

The first model has the Appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history as its dependent variable. This model turned out to be significant and explains the 48.3% variance of the Appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history ($R^2 = .483^8$, $F(5, 44) = 8.985$, $p < .001$). The standardized remainder showed a normal distribution ($D(50) = .047$, $p = .200$). The summary of this model appears in the following table 5.

Table 5

Summary of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for the Variables that Influence the Appreciation of the Characters of Peruvian History

| Variables | B | SD of B | β | t | p |
|--|------|---------|---------|------|------|
| Feeling of national pride | .99 | .34 | .40 | 2.90 | .006 |
| Appreciation of cultural heritage | 1.30 | .62 | .24 | 2.09 | .043 |
| Attribution of national identity and pride | .11 | .06 | .22 | 1.88 | .066 |
| Perception of one's own interest in Peruvian history | .12 | .06 | .21 | 1.94 | .059 |
| Subjective relevance of national identity | .09 | .24 | .05 | .38 | .707 |

Table 6

Summary of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for the Variables that Influence the Appreciation of the Events of Peruvian History

| Variables | B | SD of B | β | t | p |
|--|------|---------|---------|-------|------|
| Appreciation of cultural heritage | .63 | .30 | .30 | 2.15 | .036 |
| Subjective relevance of national identity | -.48 | .33 | -.21 | -1.45 | .154 |
| Feeling of national pride | .58 | .48 | .17 | 1.21 | .232 |
| Perception of one's own interest in Peruvian history | .09 | .08 | .15 | 1.08 | .284 |
| Attribution of national identity and pride | .03 | .07 | .06 | .42 | .675 |

Model 2

Model 2 has the Appreciation of the events of Peruvian history as its dependent variable. This model did not turn out to be significant ($R^2 = .139$, $F(5, 53) = 1.706$, $p = .149$). The standardized remainder showed a normal distribution ($D(59) = .080$, $p = .200$). The summary of this model appears in the following table 6.

Discussion

First of all, it is necessary to acknowledge that the sample was intentionally chosen with the aim of evaluating those people who have the role of *socializing* the contents of the nation's official history. Considering the conceptual revision, these teachers are part of those institutions which spread the official version of a country's history (Mendoza, 2004; Portocarrero and Oliart, 1989; Wertsch, 2002). It stands out that 32.5% of the participants claim to have learned more about Peruvian history by themselves because of their own personal interest. The validity of the teachers' answers is not questioned, but it is nonetheless necessary to take into account the possible effect that the social role of the teachers could have had on the positive

⁸ In both models the corrected R^2 coefficient is presented.

answers related to the appreciation of history and to national identity. However, we must pay attention to the fact that the results do not differ greatly from those obtained from other populations of Lima, such as the population of private university students (Espinosa & Calderón, 2007; Rottenbacher, 2008). We should then interpret the results considering the latter and the small sample size ($N = 99$).

National Identity

The adapted NATID scale (Keillor et al., 1996) presented a factorial structure in the present study; we were able to identify two factors: Appreciation of cultural heritage and Attribution of national identity and pride. These factors presented a positive correlation of a small magnitude between each other. The Attribution of national identity and pride also has a positive correlation with the Subjective relevance of national identity, which as we have seen is part of the national collective self-esteem (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Sánchez, 1999). Thus, one can suggest that the national identity measures used are coherent with the results obtained in previous empirical investigations and conceptual revisions which propose that collective self-esteem and feelings such as the *pride of belonging* are associated to the collective identity of individuals who consider themselves members of a nation (Espinosa & Calderón, 2007; Lilli & Diehl, 1999; Rottenbacher, 2008; Sánchez, 1999; Vignoles et al., 2006).

Appreciation of National Peruvian History and Identity

It is important to notice that, for the present study, the appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history is more positive than the appreciation of events. On the other hand, a positive association between the components of national identity and the appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history has been found. This is not the case for the appreciation of events. These results indicate that the construction of national identity in the Peruvian case would be related to a greater extent to the positive consideration of the characters of its history than to a positive appreciation of important events. Previous studies have shown similar results (Espinosa & Calderón, 2007; Rottenbacher, 2008). We have mentioned that groups tend to reduce the negative nature of the events of their past to *protect* their collective identity (Herranz and Basabe, 1999; Marques, Páez, Valencia & Vincze, 2006). One can suggest that, lacking positive events to reconstruct the past with, Peruvians have gone to *personifying* their history, relying on their historical characters to positively reconstruct the past and raise collective self-esteem in the present. The importance assigned to characters in the *social construction* of Peruvian history has been made explicit by Peruvian historians

(Basadre, 1983; Flores Galindo, 1999). According to these authors, the phenomenon that leads to a stronger identification with attractive public figures (Presidents, caudillos, generals, etc.) than with significant social processes, has been known in Perú as “the authoritarian tradition” (Flores Galindo, 1999).

Overall, the results support the relation *appreciation of history-national identity*. However, the directionality of this relation is left unclear. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis suggest that a strong national identity reflected in a positive appreciation of Peruvian cultural heritage and in the feeling of national pride, influences in a positive manner the appreciation of historical characters. What is open to discussion is the directionality of the proposed model. In a previous study, a different directionality was found. In the former, the appreciation of characters influenced the *collective national self-esteem* (Rottenbacher, 2008). In order to propose the regression model, we have based ourselves on the theoretic proposals that hold that the human need for social identification is at the basis of the construction of a national identity constituted from the internalization of official contents (Durán-Cogan, 2001; Mendoza, 2004; Pérez, 1999). Previous studies that have tried to define a relation of influence between these variables have not been found in other countries. What we can establish from the results is that there is a strong positive association between the appreciation of the characters of Peruvian history and variables such as national pride, subjective relevance of belonging to the group of Peruvians and the appreciation of cultural heritage. This investigation could serve as a starting point to lead future investigations with more representative samples of the Peruvian population that allow to establish relations between the same variables with a greater degree of generalization.

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APPENDIX 1

MEAN SCORES IN DECREASING ORDER. (ANSWER SCALE: 1 = "TOTALLY NEGATIVE" AND 7 = "TOTALLY POSITIVE").

| Events | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|--|----------|-----------|
| Return of Tacna to Perú (1929) | 6.62 | 0.75 |
| Discovery of <i>Señor de Sipán</i> | 6.60 | 0.91 |
| Tupac Amaru II's Rebellion | 6.41 | 0.82 |
| The organization of the Tahuantinsuyo | 6.21 | 1.12 |
| Construction of Sacsayhuamán | 6.18 | 1.27 |
| Peruvian Independence | 6.16 | 1.29 |
| Emancipation of the Slaves | 6.09 | 1.39 |
| Anchovy Fishing Boom | 5.97 | 1.31 |
| Natural Gas Exploitation | 5.87 | 1.35 |
| Capture of Abimael Guzmán | 5.80 | 1.56 |
| <i>2 de mayo</i> Combat against Spain | 5.39 | 1.59 |
| Battle of Ayacucho (1824) | 5.26 | 1.90 |
| Exploitation of Guano | 5.18 | 1.88 |
| Angamos Combat | 4.85 | 2.00 |
| Appearance of the <i>Vladivideos</i> | 4.70 | 2.26 |
| Arica Battle | 4.62 | 1.97 |
| Juan Velasco Alvarado Administration | 4.53 | 1.59 |
| Operation "Chavín de Huantar" | 4.52 | 1.92 |
| The Agrarian Reform | 4.37 | 1.94 |
| War against Ecuador (1941) | 3.24 | 1.99 |
| 1st. Alberto Fujimori Administration (90 - 95) | 3.02 | 1.88 |
| Cenepa Conflict (1995) | 2.76 | 1.88 |
| The Conquest of Perú | 2.73 | 1.77 |
| War against Chile | 2.59 | 2.04 |
| Extirpation of Idolatries | 2.56 | 1.68 |
| Auto-coup on the 5 th April 1992 | 2.47 | 1.96 |
| 1st. Alan García Administration (1985 - 1990) | 1.88 | 1.34 |
| Attack on Tarata Street | 1.85 | 1.63 |
| Hyperinflation in the late 80's | 1.79 | 1.43 |
| Terrorism from 1980 to 2000 | 1.61 | 1.51 |

| Characters | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Miguel Grau | 6.26 | 1.13 |
| César Vallejo | 6.23 | 0.87 |
| Tupac Amaru II | 6.03 | 1.30 |
| Micaela Bastidas | 6.00 | 1.06 |
| José Carlos Mariátegui | 5.94 | 1.16 |
| José Olaya | 5.88 | 1.13 |
| Andrés Avelino Cáceres | 5.86 | 1.09 |
| Inca Pachacutec | 5.82 | 1.13 |
| Francisco Bolognesi | 5.68 | 1.30 |
| José A. Quiñones | 5.54 | 1.29 |
| José de San Martín | 5.52 | 1.35 |
| Javier Pérez de Cuellar | 5.49 | 1.27 |
| Mario Vargas Llosa | 5.26 | 1.60 |
| Alfonso Ugarte | 5.17 | 1.33 |
| Gastón Acurio | 5.00 | 1.66 |
| Inca Atahualpa | 4.89 | 1.54 |
| Fernando Belaúnde Terry | 4.82 | 1.33 |
| Juan Velasco Alvarado | 4.65 | 1.55 |
| Simón Bolívar | 4.64 | 1.64 |
| Manuel A. Odría | 4.56 | 1.38 |
| Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre | 4.53 | 1.60 |
| Alejandro Toledo | 4.49 | 1.58 |
| Augusto B. Leguía | 4.11 | 1.57 |
| Francisco Morales Bermúdez | 3.58 | 1.45 |
| Cardenal Juan Luis Cipriani | 2.99 | 2.00 |
| Alberto Fujimori | 2.63 | 1.71 |
| Alan García Pérez | 2.61 | 1.56 |
| Francisco Pizarro | 2.59 | 1.62 |
| Abimael Guzmán | 2.02 | 1.55 |
| Vladimiro Montesinos | 1.44 | 1.09 |