The ontological status of culture and emotions in politics and IR
Tartu, Estonia, 21–22 April 2017

Call for papers

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Emotions and culture have always been present in the study of politics and IR, but their presence has mostly been implicit: either as the silent 'other' of rationality – the big 'R' of mainstream International Relations, or the black box where anything left unexplained by other concepts gets shuffled in as 'ideational extra'. 'Culture' as a generic category has fared better as a central notion (next to 'norms' and 'identity') in constructivist IR[1] as well as in a variety of approaches in comparative politics, from classical works[2] to contemporary research on strategic and organisational cultures,[3] cooperation and conflict[4] and the like. Nevertheless, we feel there has been not enough reflection on how both emotions and culture relate to other fundamental categories of social theory, such as structure, norm, identity, discourse and power.

For the three main strands of IR theory, fear, trust, and affection/friendship have figured most

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[1] For distinct approaches to culture in the study of world politics, see, in particular, Yosef Lapid, Friedrich Kratochwil (eds) *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 1994); Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Jutta Weldes et al. (eds), *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities and the Production of Danger* (Minneapolis, MN & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), and Richard Ned Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[2] E.g. Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934); Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metraux (eds), *The Study of Culture at a Distance* (University of Chicago Press, 1953); Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton University Press, 1963); Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba (eds), *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton University Press, 1965).

[3] E.g., Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Ming China* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995); Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996); Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Ken Booth and Russell Trood (eds), *Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998); Jeffrey W. Legro, *Cooperation under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint during World War II* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995); Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine between the Wars* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); and Lynn Eden, *Whole World on Fire: Organizations, Knowledge, and Nuclear Weapons Devastation* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003).

[4] David Laitin, *Nations, States and Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

prominently in the respective foci of Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. While there have been plentiful applications of emotional categories in the analysis of comparative and international politics,[5] this engagement has generally been either relatively a-theoretical or focusing on specific phenomena in foreign policy analysis[6] and world politics (such as conflict,[7] trauma,[8] identity, and security community[9]), at least until recently. An important forum aimed specifically at theorising emotions in world politics appeared in *International Theory* in 2014,[10] taking stock of the disciplinary developments up until that point and outlining the main theoretical difficulties related to the systematic analytical engagement with emotions in IR. The literature on emotional states in (international) politics has positively burgeoned in recent years,[11] notably in relation to the intensified scholarly interest in the study of ontological security of states and other collective political bodies.[12] It is now commonplace to suggest that states operate with emotions, frame their actions and reactions in emotional terms on everyday basis. The study of emotional states and their political consequences has

[5] For earlier takes on emotions in (the study of) world politics, see Neta C. Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships,' *International Security* 24(4) (2000), pp. 116-56; Andrew A.G. Ross, 'Coming in from the Cold: Constructivism and Emotions', *European Journal of International Relations* 12(2) (2006), pp.197-222; Jonathan Mercer, 'Human nature and the first image: Emotion in international politics', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9(3) (2006): 288-303, and 'Emotional beliefs', *International Organization* 64(1) (2010), pp. 1-31; Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics', *Review of International Studies* 34(S1) (2008), pp.115-35; Oded Lowenthal and Gadi Heiman, 'Revenge in International Politics,' *Security Studies* 17(4) (2008), pp. 685-724; Paul Digeser, 'Friendship Between States', *British Journal of Political Science* 39(2) (2009): 323-44

[6] E.g., Paul Saurette, 'You dissin me? Humiliation and post 9/11 global politics', *Review of International Studies* 32(3) (2006), pp.495-522; Brent E. Sasley, 'Affective attachments and foreign policy: Israel and the 1993 Oslo Accords', *European Journal of International Relations* 16(4) (2010), pp.687-709.

[7] Khaled Fattah and Karin Fierke M. 'A clash of emotions: The politics of humiliation and political violence in the Middle East', *European Journal of International Relations* 15(1) (2009), pp.67-93.

[8] Emma Hutchison, 'Trauma and the politics of emotion: Constituting identity, security and community after the Bali bombing', *International Relations* 24(1) (2010), pp.65-86.

[9] Simon Koschut, 'Emotional (security) communities: The significance of emotion norms in inter-allied conflict management', *Review of International Studies* 40(3) (2013), pp.533-58; Simon Koschut and Andrea Oelsner (eds), *Friendship and International Relations* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[10] See, in particular, Emma Hutchinson and Roland Bleiker, 'Theorizing emotions in world politics', *International Theory* 6(3) (2014), pp.491-514; Jonathan Mercer, 'Feeling like a state: social emotion and identity', *International Theory* 6(3) (2014), pp.515-35; Neta C. Crawford, 'Institutionalizing passion in world politics: fear and empathy', *International Theory* 6(3) (2014): 535-57.

[11] Brent Sasley, 'Theorizing States' Emotions', *International Studies Review* 13(3) (2011), pp. 452-76; Janice B. Mattern, 'A practice theory of emotion for international relations', in Emmanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot (eds), *International Practices* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.63-86; Torsten Michel, 'Time to get emotional: Phronetic reflections on the concept of trust in international relations', *European Journal of International Relations* 19(4) (2013), pp.869-90; Ty Solomon, '"I wasn't angry, because I couldn't believe it was happening": Affect and discourse in responses to 9/11', *Review of International Studies* 38(4) (2012), pp.907-28; Neta Crawford, 'Emotions and International Security: Cave! Hic Libido,' *Critical Studies on Security* 1(1) (2013): pp.121-3; Karin M. Fierke, *Political Self-Sacrifice: Agency, Body and Emotion in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Todd Hall, 'We will not Swallow this Bitter Fruit: Theorizing a Diplomacy of Anger,' *Security Studies* 20(3) (2011), pp.521-55; Renée Jeffery, *Reason and Emotion in International Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Andrew A.G. Ross, *Mixed Emotions: Beyond Fear and Hatred in International Conflict* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Eric Van Rythoven, 'Learning to feel, learning to fear? Emotions, imaginaries, and limits in the politics of securitization', *Security Dialogue* 46(5) (2015), pp. 458-75; Todd H. Hall, *Emotional Diplomacy: Official Emotion on the International Stage* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

[12] For a comprehensive overview of the respective literature and related debates, see the recent special issue of *Cooperation and Conflict* (2016), guest edited by Catarina Kinnvall and Jennifer Mitzen.

become legitimate in IR as the links between emotions, personal and social identities and structures are explored with increasing depth and theoretical sophistication in the discipline.

When it comes to culture, it would certainly be incorrect to say that this concept is not sufficiently developed in political science and IR, or that it is not properly conceptualised. However, in spite of the existing critical reflection,[13] there still seems to exist a tendency to essentialise cultural difference both as a variable and an ontological category. This issue was brought to the fore, in particular, by the recent rise of decolonial scholarship, postulating the need to overcome Eurocentrism and cultivate sensitivity to cultural difference.[14] In our view, this and other considerations make it imperative to revisit culture both as a foundational ontological category and as a variable affecting political outcomes.

The proposed workshop brings into focus three core themes that the conceptually innovative and empirically rich scholarship on emotions and culture in politics and IR have highlighted as particularly challenging: **(1) the individual-collective nexus of political emotions**, **(2) the agency-structure problem as applied to the study of emotions and culture,** and **(3) the methodology of researching emotions and culture in politics and IR**. We bring these major concerns to a particular focus on our empirical research area of Russian and East European studies, but equally welcome contributions with purely theoretical and/or methodological emphases, or those situated empirically elsewhere. We are particularly interested in the emotional legacies in the politics of transitional justice, as well as in the critical analysis of (hidden) essentialism in the use of culture as an explanatory category in IR. The EU's communication of its emotional state(s) after the major upheaval created by Brexit provides rich material for comparative case studies with post-Soviet Russia and contemporary Turkey. What kind of behaviour gets justified on the basis of emotions and culture in contemporary politics? What legitimizing value is attributed to them by various actors in the international stage? Can emotions and culture be researched as anything but discourses and practices at the level of political collectives and their complex interactions?

The workshop will take place at the University of Tartu on 21–22 April 2017. Paper abstracts (no more than 300 words) are due by **1 March** by e-mail (viacheslav.morozov@ut.ee). Limited financial support is available from the UPTAKE consortium, but participants are encouraged to secure their own funding to cover travel and accommodation expenses. **Workshop agenda will include the discussion of possible joint publication**.

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[13] Most prominently, by David J. Elkins and Richard E. B. Simeon, 'A Cause in Search of its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?', *Comparative Politics* 11(2), 1979, pp. 127–145.

[14] Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity* (New York: Continuum, 1995); Aníbal Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America', *Nepantla: Views from South* 1(3), 2000, pp. 533–580; Walter Mignolo and Madina Tlostanova, *Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the Americas* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012).