Studying Emotions in Security and Diplomacy

Where We Are Now and Challenges Ahead

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Studying Emotions in Security and Diplomacy:

Where we are now and challenges ahead

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Introduction

Emotions experienced by politicians - in their making of political decisions that affect so many citizens on a day-to-day basis - play a very important role in shaping public perceptions and framing debates. It has thus been the core/guiding objective of this Special Issue of *Political Psychology* to shed light on emotions as i) *frames* that shape interpersonal diplomatic relations, ii) as key *tools* that are used as part of the statecraft's toolbox and iii) as *formative/productive dynamics* with real effects on human beings – that, in turn, often construct and maintain conflicts. This is a timely intervention, in a period when we witness ever growing perceptions of insecurity, an increase in extremism, and resurgent populism. It is therefore the more pertinent that we interrogate the political psychology of individual, collective, mass and communal emotions and how these are often used and misused in diplomacy and security narratives to legitimize politicians' decisions and practices. By security we understand the measures taken by states (and international organizations, such as the United Nations, the European Union and others), to ensure survival and safety of their populations. This is a "rationalist" reading of security as defined in the field of International Relations (IR). These measures include military action and diplomatic agreements such as treaties and conventions. The contributions in this special issue unpack this narrow, "rationalist" notion of security to explore the myriad workings of emotions as these are experienced by policy-makers, communicated with their counterparts and broader society, and enacted while (re)drawing affective, cognitive, and physical borders between the self and the other.

Emotions, diplomacy and security

The academic debate on emotions in the field of Politics and IR in general has been a vibrant one with the latest edition of a special issue on "Emotions and the everyday: ambivalence, power and resistance" published in the *Journal of International Political Theory* (Beattie et. al, 2019). It is acknowledged that there has been a significant delay in the entrance of emotions into the IR discipline, especially in comparison to other disciplines and sub-disciplines including sociology (West, 2008), social psychology (Kelley & Johnson 1948/2010), and political psychology (among others, Lane, 1969; Davies, 1980; Cash, 1989; Bilali, 2010; Mitzen, 2018; Renshon & Renshon, 2008). Social psychologists, for instance, developed several theories for explaining the ways in which the psychology of a crowd differs from and interacts with that of the individuals

within it. Major theorists in crowd psychology include Gustave Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde, Sigmund Freud and Steve Reicher. Thus social psychology relates to the behaviors and thought processes of both individual crowd members and the crowd as an entity. In this context, crowd behavior is heavily influenced by the loss of responsibility of the individual and the impression of universality of behavior, both of which increase with crowd size. In sociology, James M. Jasper coined the term moral shock to explain why people may join a social movement in the absence of pre-existing social ties with members (in Kingston et al, 2017). The centrality of affect was also dominant in Adorno's postwar work (see Parkinson 2014) and Hannah Arendt (1958; 1996)'s study of the darkness that resides within the heart underlines the inherently uncertain nature of emotions.

Once emotions arrived in IR debates, a flourishing analytical focus on emotions and their affects led to a pluralistic set of agreements and disagreements. For instance, IR scholars do not always refer to the same phenomenon when they study emotions. Conceptual disagreements are aggravated by methodological differences, which are deeply related to whose emotions we should be studying (Hall and Ross, 2015), how we should study emotions (Solomon, 2017), and with what purpose.

An increasing number of IR studies examine emotions as a way of delving into "micro-politics" or "everyday IR" as per JIPT SI mentioned above (Beattie et. al, 2019; see also, Ahall, 2019). Others focus on state-level emotions, the institutionalization of emotions, and / or the study of emotional dynamics of and between decision-makers (Crawford, 2004; Pace and Bilgic, 2018). In security studies more specifically, emotions are investigated as instruments for security practitioners to govern subjects (for example Eroukhmanoff, 2019) and / or as ways to resist such affective practices and explore new paths for security (Bilgic, 2013; Duffield, 2014). IR researchers broadly agree that emotions have something to do with individual and collective identities and that they have political effects (among others, see Hutchison, 2016).

In spite of these important debates, when it comes to the study of diplomacy in international relations – that is, the study of the daily interaction between states and their representatives, often through the use of negotiations and discussions – emotions are almost completely silenced. Many of these discussions center around the issue of state security. Diplomacy – as a social institution (Neumann, 2019) entails international diplomats communicating and speaking in person or through electronic exchanges. Yet, surprisingly there has been very little by way of nuanced discussions on emotions and the manner in which we can study these – methodologically speaking – in the context of diplomacy (with the exception of Gienow-Hecht 2009; Hall 2015; Wong 2016; Markwica 2018 and Jones & Clark 2019). The existing debates therefore fail to adequately gauge the weight of emotional work on diplomatic relations. This is one of the gaps that some of the contributors of this SI of *Political Psychology* aimed to fill.

Recognizing that the study of emotions in security and diplomacy is a rather challenging affair, the first introductory contribution to the Special Issue framed methodological considerations that add complexity to our understanding of the role and psychological effects of emotions in international politics. Kennet Lynggaard (2019) in our SI's Introduction focused on methodology as relating to 'the principles and procedures guiding research designs and on the research techniques used for specific research purposes'. In his contribution Lynggaard highlighted the logic of how we go about conducting emotional research - including ontological and epistemological questions - and the foundations of our conceptual choices. He claimed that, while choices of methods may follow from a particular methodological position, our choice of methods are not determined by such positions. While categorising emotions is an extremely difficult business, Lynggaard offers a series of continuums as a typology for distinguishing between individual and collective emotions, emotions and reason, and involuntary emotions and the strategic usage of emotions. He thereafter uses the other contributions to this SI as illustrations of ideals / typical endpoints on these continuums.

A case in point on the strategic use of emotions is the contribution to this SI by Barbara Keys and Claire Yorke. Keys and Yorke (2019) undertook the challenging task of excavating how diplomats and decision makers themselves make sense of feelings generated by relationships that have both individual and state-level implications. In a first systematic effort at addressing and conceptualizing these issues empirically, they focused on the case of Henry Kissinger's experiences during a single set of negotiations with China in October 1971 and the period immediately after. Drawing on social psychology, they thereby investigated the interplay between the experience of being an individual (diplomat) with personal emotions on the one hand, and the practice of evaluating performative emotional cues relevant to the state, on the other. To distinguish between these emotional dimensions, they examined archival materials for linguistic and behavioral markers that can indicate when diplomats are relaying on primarily personal or state-level appraisals of emotion-laden information. The evidence suggests that it is easiest for diplomats to experience group emotions when they are appraising standard forms of diplomatic protocol. But these emotional bonds can also create a deeply felt personal urge to impress that led to distortions in assessing US interests in the Indo-Pakistani conflict and elsewhere.

The potential consequences of diplomats / political decision makers' emotional bonds extend beyond the state level into the level of citizens on the receiving side of these decisions. This is clearly exemplified by Alex Edney-Browne's (2019) contribution who focused on the severe and wide-ranging psycho-social and political effects of the US-led drone program on people in targeted areas. Drawing upon her extensive interviews with people living under drones in Afghanistan she argued that drone surveillance

and bombardment disrupt people's daily life routines and cause social isolation and self-objectification: by the latter meaning that civilians are frequently made to think of how they look to drone operators and change their behaviour accordingly. Afghans report how social gatherings or any activities that involve night-time travel, have been shortened or avoided out of fear that drone surveillance will spot so-called "suspicious behaviour" and bombardment will follow. Edney-Browne termed this mode of surveillance a form of psychological colonisation. Western narratives of "precision" warfare thus permit and legitimize those in power (to lead drone programs) to avoid psychologically confronting the effects of such warfare, while people living under drones face relentless everyday human insecurities.

The theme of shared emotions by members of a group reappeared in the contribution by Hall and Ross (2019) who critically examined claims about "popular emotion"— referring to specific emotions purported to characterize a group — to argue that these are not innocent descriptors but products of often intensely political processes of framing, projection, and propagation. They illustrated the analytical value of this approach to studying popular emotion by examining a paradigmatic twentieth century case namely, the "mood of 1914" and "war enthusiasm" on the eve of World War I. By doing so, they have shown how actual affective experience and expressed emotion was much more diverse and contradictory than previously claimed. Moreover, they have shown how the dominant tropes of popular emotion were manifest both in elite fears and tactics vis-à-vis potential mass reactions, as well as the ways in which popular responses were constructed at the time and retrospectively through historical narrative. Importantly, Hall and Ross demonstrated the political significance of popular emotion and its enduring relevance for understanding perceptions of insecurity and contemporary nativist populism.

The theme of and interplay between socio-psychological processes of insecurity and agency-making are brought to bear in Umut Can Adisonmez's contribution to this SI which also explored the particular national context in which traumatic memories are shaped and how these are articulated through emotional performances. Focusing on Turkey's fraught relationship with the Kurds (which dates back to the late Ottoman Empire times), Adisonmez (2019) argued that this relationship evolved into an intergroup conflict as a consequence of Turkish oppressive policies. The decades-long PKK insurgency has seen over 50,000 people lose their lives which has, in turn, deeply impacted upon the Turkish state and its citizens alike.

The issue of traumatic memories reappeared in Gal Ariely's (2019) account of how national days impact national identity and collective memory. Using quantitative data collected two months prior to and again during/after Holocaust Day commemorations Ariely explained how this day impacts on Israeli Jews' perceptions of the 'lessons' of this unique type of national day. During and after Holocaust Day, respondents expressed increased levels of nationalism. This insight tells us a lot about how national elites' believe that

official celebrations/commemorations of national days help create a meeting point between the nation as symbolic entity and the individual, thus strengthening national identity. There is thus a lot of political investment in resources geared towards the celebration/commemoration of national days based on this strongly held conviction. This is important because national days evoke a lot of emotional labour across the nation and its collective memory. Therefore, how politicians handle these emotions and the consequences of what they do in the name of national identity is paramount.

The utilization of collective emotions by the political elite was taken up by Yuri van Hoef and Ryan O'Connor's contribution on the Erdoğan-Obama friendship. Van Hoef and O'Connor (2019) introduced Sentimental Utility Theory (SUT) to explain Erdoğan's utilization of maintaining the appearance of a friendship with former US President Obama. Contextualized against the backdrop of Barack Obama's 2009 visit to Turkey - which resulted in an "Obama-Mania" in Turkish media and which was depicted as having converged into a friendship between Obama and Recep Erdoğan, (and as such widely reported in the media, and emphasized in their rhetoric), this contribution deconstructs the Erdoğan-Obama friendship narrative to reveal that in reality, no actual political friendship existed. They interpreted this relationship through five key components of political friendship (affect, grand project, altruistic reciprocity, moral obligations, equality), and argued that, despite a strong friendship narrative, their histories, leadership styles and political goals, diverged to such an extent that a friendship never existed. Their adoption of SUT revealed how Erdoğan utilized the Obama-mania in Turkey to create a personal bond with Obama which linked Erdoğan and his policies to Obama and his "progressive" policies.

This also speaks to the contribution by Jakub Eberle and Jan Daniel (2019) who focused on the broader question of why narratives succeed. By framing their argument on the basis of Lacanian psychoanalysis as well as narrative scholarship and affect/emotions research in IR, Eberle and Daniel argued that narrative success is facilitated by two interrelated factors: i) the embeddedness of narratives within broader cultural contexts and ii) the potential of narratives to incorporate and reproduce collectively circulating affects. They used the case of the Czech narrative on "Russian hybrid warfare" (RHW), and developed a methodological framework for encircling unobservable affects within discourse via "sticking points," that is, linguistic phenomena infused with affective investment. They then focused on a narrative based around the notion that Russia waged a "hybrid war" against "the West" and that this should be faced with quasi-military measures, which was successful in changing the Czech national security discourse. This narrative was successful because it utilised valued signifiers, such as "the West", "the Kremlin", "agents" and "occupation", weaved them together into an imagined threat to the nation's "Western" identity, and intertwined this with biographical narratives of history as a lens for world politics and East/West geopolitics.

Staying on the level of state narrative vis-à-vis imagined, dangerous Other, the contribution by Ali Bilgic, Gunhild Hoogensen Gjorv and Cathy Wilcock (2019) critically examined discursive examples of social trust building in Norway to show how "the (constructed) self" can move the community away from "the other (the immigrant in this case)" through normalization of "homogeneity" (as a condition of social trust). This helps us understand how states often manipulate identity dynamics, in line with Eberle and Daniel, in order to create a strong trust-building narrative that centers around securing the state and the nation.

This brings us to Joshua Baker's (2019) contribution which unfolds the security dilemma to show how the development of specific empathic capacities of key US officials played an important and unrecognised role in the de-escalation of (security dilemma) dynamics between the United States and Iran during the 2009-2016 period. This is a highly poignant insight at a time of escalating and mounting tensions between Iran and its mostly non-state allies in the Middle East region on the one hand, and the United States and its close partners Saudi Arabia and Israel on the other (Behravesh, 2019).

Keeping us within the discussion on emotional diplomacy, Asli Ilgit and Deepa Prakash outlined the theoretical and methodological contours of uncovering the emotional content of naming and shaming as experienced by human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Their contribution highlights how a combined IR and Political Psychology conceptual frame can result in a thicker account of shame as it helps us highlight the individual and social origins of the concept, appreciate different varieties of shame, as well as distinguish between emotions that are often conflated with shame. This leaves us with a deeper appreciation of NGOs as emotional agents and with a solid toolkit to examine their engagement in emotional diplomacy.

Staying on the broad theme of human rights, NGOs and emotional diplomacy the contribution by Shannon Houch, James McFarland, Laura V Machia and Lucian Conway (2019) tackled the issue of when beliefs lead to (im)moral judgments by a thorough investigation of efficacy beliefs in regard to the use of torture. Through the use of a multi-method approach across 6 studies, they provide converging evidence that efficacy beliefs can help increase our understanding of individual differences and situational influences on torture support. These findings are quite timely in our current political climate where governments allocate a significant amount of resources to intelligence-gathering on terrorist activities. It is therefore pertinent that we understand why torture garners public and political support in spite of the general ambivalence regarding its use.

By shedding light on how historicized emotions in security and diplomacy impact on the contemporary political psychology of individuals and communities, this special issue not only contributes to the literature on memory in IR debates (Bell, 2006; Zehfuss, 2007; Resende and Budryte, 2013), but it also broadens debates on political psychology in international relations in two directions. On the one hand, it

promotes a deeper appreciation of the psychological consequences of political/diplomatic decisions made in the name of national security. On the other hand, some contributors to this special issue advocate a relational approach to history, which takes into account the perceptions, strategies and actions of states towards an Other (for the Holocaust Day vis-a-vis Nazism; Turkish state security apparatus against Kurds etc.), in order to assess the extent to which these are shaped and structured by emotional entanglements of some states. In doing so, the Special Issue explores the nexus between contemporary diplomatic practices, and how these are embedded in, and transmitted through asymmetric power relations with a clear historical lineage. The key claim of this SI is thus that, using a tree metaphor, *emotions are the roots which make politics tick*.

Findings and contributions

This Special Issue has undoubtedly added to the flourishing pluralism in emotions research across disciplines and enables additional alternative entry points and ways of studying affects/emotions/feelings in the study of diplomatic relations and security narratives more specifically. It brings to the fore the pervasiveness of emotions without prioritizing any one specific level of analysis, any one definition of emotions, or any one method of studying emotions over another. It was a conscious decision of the guest editors not to limit the analytical focus on the study of emotions in diplomacy and security but rather to reflect on the "challenges" that emotions research raises. As guest editors, we consider the contributions to this SI as complementary in the ways in which they studied emotions through the addition of a social / political psychology orientation to their existing IR approach.

While endorsing the existing pluralism of emotions research, there is still an overarching finding that binds the contributions of this SI together: emotions are "power-full". This does not mean that *all* emotions are powerful - in the sense that *all* emotions are integral elements in relations of power and government (Burkitt, 2005) - as this highly depends on socio-cultural and institutional contexts and whose emotions are under study. What our contributors have demonstrated is that emotions - which run through relations of power in diplomacy and security narratives - are complex and often ambivalent, sometimes motivating resistance and opposition to government(s) while, at other times, triggering compliance. This special issue identifies three entry points to the long-narrated story of power in global politics in the area of security and diplomacy:

First, there exists a broad consensus in IR/security studies that, once it is invoked as a word, security reflects and reproduces power dynamics between the political actors who employ and identify themselves as practitioners of security and referents who are meant to be secured, and between the identified referents of security and those who are constructed as threats to these referents. Emerging from contingent historical contexts, traditions, habits, norms, and institutions, these power dynamics define and

redefine boundaries: be these material, geopolitical, cognitive / affective boundaries between an alleged I/us/we versus "the other"/them. However, on the one hand, not all security discourses and narratives (about the self and other) become successful and are short-lived. For example, the German reunification at the end of the Cold War was identified as a source of insecurity in some policy and academic circles alike (Mearsheimer, 1990). However, such a (in)security narrative, based on fear derived from the past was quickly disproven, in large part because of the peaceful project of the then European Community. Moreover, on the other hand, some security discourses can be prominent and appealing. Emotions play an important role in the success or otherwise of security discourses and diplomatic practices. They can lead to a redirection of foreign policies (as exemplified by the contributions by Keys and Yorke,2019; Eberle and Daniel, 2019; Baker, 2019), investments in morally questionable practices conducted in the name of security such as torture or drone warfare (Houck et al, 2019; Edney-Browne, 2019), and conflicts and wars (see Adisonmez, 2019 and Ariely, 2019). The boundary drawn between the assumed self and the imagined other is so embedded in emotional labour and so engrained in politics, and social and economic relations that even challenging these narratives becomes politically unimaginable (Bilgic et. al 2019). A way to render these power relations questionable is to make sure that diplomatic practices and security discourses embedded in perceived emotions are challenged. In other words, our contributors have provided a toolbox to problematize and eventually challenge the foundations of affective politics of security and diplomacy by unravelling their emotional appeals. It must be noted that such practice does not aim to "correct" or "replace emotions with rationality" but to reveal and unpack how emotions work and what emotions do politically. What is being challenged eventually is not emotions but power relations imbued with emotions.

Second, our contributors have shown that when emotions are collectively felt and expressed, they can bring about an elusive notion of security and stability in the manner in which "the self" is defined in contrast to an/"the other". This stability is, of course, open to challenges. However, continual emotional appeals of security discourses enable political actors to reproduce this sense of stability (see Adisonmez, 2019; as well as Eberle and Daniel,2019, Ariely,2019, Bilgic et al., 2019). At the same time, emotions offer a way of cracking this seemingly insurmountable challenge. On the one hand, while emotions in IR, diplomacy and security studies are mainly studied as collective phenomena, they also carry the potential for enhancing individual agency and changing the way security and diplomacy are practiced in myriad ways, in line with the continuum Lynggaard (2019) produced in the Introduction (See Keys and Yorke, 2019; van Hoef and O'Connor, 2019). The way in which individuals feel and enact their emotions cannot be separated from the social, cultural and institutional settings in which these same individuals operate. However, on the other hand, this does not make individuals "prisoners" of collective and embedded emotional structures. Rather, they have the agency to interpret, negotiate with, and even negate these collective dynamics through the

skillful use of their own affective prisms. In the politics of security and diplomacy, such agency can be instrumental to stimulate new ways of thinking and practicing diplomacy and security. Moreover, studying and understanding security affectively reveals harm that goes unnoticed in dominant security narratives, including those presented as "ethical" (Edney-Browne, 2019; Bilgic et. al., 2019; Adisonmez, 2019). These contributions bring the overlooked and emotional dimension of harm into both analytical and political view and explore how harm deeply suspends even banal, daily practices. This, we argue, can be a strong moral basis for a thorough re-evaluation of bordering, debordering and rebordering practices between the/a presumed stable self and what it presumably does to secure "us" against an/the other.

Third, another finding of this special issue is the question of time and how political actors utilize emotions *when* they do. The concept of trauma has been very important in discussions about emotions and time. Edkins (2003), for instance, (but see also Hom and Steele, 2010; Hutchings, 2013;) argues that trauma challenges the modernist conception of linear time because traumatised individuals experience and live in "trauma time". Thus, their present is interrupted by the trauma time of the past in ways in which they cannot experience a linear flow (of so-called modernist time). In other words, traumatized individuals go back and forth in time. This is useful and important for us to think and analyze how political actors (for example, in our contemporary political context, far-right populist parties) generate and capitalize upon emotions about the "past" - which is now either long gone or did not ever exist - with the promise that the future of "the self" is in this past that is loved, missed, and longed for (van Hoef and O'Connor, 2019; Hall and Ross, 2019; Ariely, 2019). Similarly, fears and anxieties about the past can be instrumentalized for shaping the present and future of the collective self (Eberle & Daniel, 2019; Adisonmez, 2019) and what is legitimate to do in order to secure "the self" (Houck et al., 2019). In both cases, political actors empower themselves by interrupting the linear time of the imagined "self" and by invoking emotions about the past and calling for a re-imagination of that same, mythologized past to shape a (presumed) better future.

The questioning of time in this SI builds on existing debates within IR and helps unravel further ways in which modern conceptions of time are used to discipline and order individuals and societies and produce a certain modernist subjectivity from a macro-political perspective. What our contributors add to these discussions is a clear focus on how IR can fruitfully benefit from a conversation with social psychology and sociology in order to shed light on how political actors invoke emotions that have to do with a glorified past in order to legitimize present political narratives about a threatening Other: be this the EU, Russia, immigrants, or another constructed and securitized Other. As Mattley (2002: 374) aptly points out: "control of mythical past emotion is an indispensable element of political power".

Challenges ahead

The contributors of this SI have dealt with emotions in at least one of the three ways in which we conceptualized emotions namely, as i) frames that shape interpersonal diplomatic relations (van Hoef and O'Conner, 2019; Keys & Yorke, 2019; Baker, 2019), ii) as key tools that are used as part of the statecraft's toolbox (Eberle and Daniel, 2019; Bilgic et al., 2019; Ilgit and Prakash, 2019; Houck et al., 2019; Hall and Ross, 2019) and iii) as formative/productive dynamics with real effects on human beings (Hall and Ross, 2019; Edney-Browne, 2019; Adisonmez, 2019; Ariely, 2019) – that, in turn, often construct and maintain conflicts.

As the multiple disciplinary backgrounds of our contributors show, the SI highlights the urgency of developing a multi-perspective – combining social sciences, natural sciences and humanities – for a nuanced study of the role of emotional work in state, diplomatic as well as security narratives and practices.

This of course brings us to a second key challenge: a methodological one. Starting with our Introduction, Lynggaard has offered us a typology and argued in favour of methodological pluralism in how we go about with our emotional research – that in turn calls for explicit and reflected methodological and analytical strategic choices. Our contributors have, in their own case, adopted varied methods to shed light on at least one of the following concepts: (1) individual and/or collective emotions (2) emotions and reason and (3) involuntary political emotions and the strategic usage of political emotions. While we acknowledge that emotions and reason cannot always be easily separated, we do believe that Lynggaard's typology offers us a useful toolkit for tracing the impact of what diplomats and other policy-makers that produce and shape narratives of security think and what they feel. But this is a typology, a set of continuums and therefore serves as an ideal model – in reality, any study of emotions in politics finds itself somewhere in between. This is precisely why in this SI we understand emotions as socio-psychological and hence why Lynggaard's introduction (2019) of the role of neuroscience in our understanding of the work of emotions in security and diplomacy is so pertinent. If enacting emotions are embodied performances (Solomon, 2015), a neuroscientific insight can potentially deepen our understanding of the workings of bodies in feeling, expressing, resisting and communicating emotions.

Another challenge ahead for the study of emotions is the issue of time. Some of our contributors (Adisonmez, 2019; Eberle and Daniel, 2019; Ariely, 2019) have brought in a deeper, historicized appreciation of the role of emotions in diplomacy and security. This is the theme for instance of Bilgic et al's contribution (2019), which shows how the discursive construction of a deplorable "other" (the immigrant) underpins the reaffirmation of Norway's moral superiority which has a long tradition of trust that culminated in a trust-based society. Interestingly, this conjures up distrust in any Other especially "the immigrant other". We argue that this respect for a historicized account of how emotional labour has seeped into contemporary political rhetoric - for the explicit strategic usage of emotions for political objectives - has not, to our

knowledge and to date, been given systematic attention in emotions research in Political Science and International Relations. The question therefore arises: How do we conduct a thorough historicized appreciation of the role of emotions in the making of diplomatic and security-related decisions without romanticizing and mythologizing the past?

A third challenge has to do with spatiality: that is, the emotional production of space. For instance, as our previous and forthcoming work shows (see for example Pace, 2006), there is a lot of "geography of emotions" in EU constructions of the Middle East and Africa (see also Fattah and Fierke, 2009; Proglio, 2019). This has to do not least with Europe's colonial past, oral memories and (especially violent) heritages of slavery (see also SI forthcoming and guest edited by Michelle Pace and Roberto Roccu in *Interventions: Journal of Postcolonial Studies*). Furthermore, contributors in this present SI have shed light on the emotional agency of those who are produced as objects of "the self"s emotions. Referring back to Bilgic et. al. (2019), further research questions include how we can recognise emotional agency of certain immigrant groups depicted as the Other in Norway's political narrative of a trust-based society, how the memories of these immigrants can be mobilized through new interpretative perspectives as part of an alternative heritage (actively working inside Europe's borders in order to produce new cultural identities), to reiterate forms of belonging to immigrant communities, and to invent new geographical imaginations/imaginings from their liminal positions. In other words, we argue that emotion researchers can develop self-reflexivity that normatively, and unapologetically, prioritizes emotions of socio-political and economic groups who are almost always objectified in the form of racial, gender, sex, and / or class power hierarchies.

Although this is not uncommon in history (e.g. the USA government's manipulation of public anger - manufactured against Spain - to justify its intervention in Cuba in 1898), in the post-9/11 era, we increasingly witness how collective emotions are involved in shaping foreign policies. Physical/geopolitical borders are, in fact, preceded by affective borders partly constructed by political actors who in the main mythologize the past as the foundation for a "happy" and "safe" utopian future behind walls/fences. New forms of violence inflicted upon an "Other" with historical resonance, shape the present through collective emotions. The walls and fences, whether they are in the Occupied Territories in Palestine or the US-Mexico border, are emotional as well as material. Cracking them requires not only a nuanced understanding of what lies behind their construction but even more importantly, a more sustained engagement with emotions in academia, civil society and policy circles more widely.

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