

# La Revue Diplomatique

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## EXPLORING THE CENTRAL ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**PATRICK LEMOINE**

Understanding Key Factors of  
Psychology

**JEAN-FRANÇOIS FIORINA**

Leadership & Management Styles of Foreign  
Affairs' Leaders

**JEAN-LUC HEES**

The Psychology of Dictators : Sheer  
Complexity, Structural Diversity

**Magomed BELTOUEV**

**Lucile DEVULDER**

**Allie HAWKES**

**Yeonhwa KIM**

**Faye LAMRANI**

**Ester MOLINAROLI**

● **Benedetta BENZONI**

● **Pierre DEYRIES**

● **J.P. HERZBERG BARREDA**

● **Georgios C. KOSTARAS**

● **Chiara LONOCE**

● **Manon ROBIN**

● **Monica CELORIO SOTO**

● **Nicolas DRIOUECH**

● **Jean-Michel HUET**

● **Mira KOVACOVA**

● **Isabella LOPES-MURPHY**

● **Raphaël SOULIER**

● **Chloé-Alizée CLÉMENT**

● **Aude GREGORY-BILLET**

● **Kaitlyn JEON**

● **Jitka KRANZ**

● **Zackary LYONS**

● **Georgios ZACHARIAS**



# ATLAS GÉOPOLITIQUE

## du monde contemporain

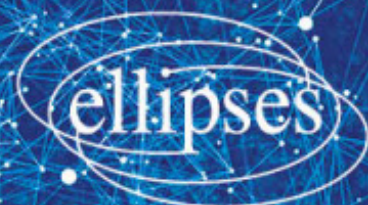


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À commander depuis ce lien





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*Exploring the Central Role of Psychology in International Relations*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Exploring the Central Role of Psychology in International Relations*

Patrick LEMOINE – Understanding Key Factors of Psychology **P. 1**

Gülseren KOZAK-ISIK – Psychological Dimensions of International Relations **P. 4**

Romain BERTOLINO – Why Psychology is a Key Factor of International Relations **P. 7**

Jean-François FIORINA – Leadership & Management Styles of Foreign Affairs' Leaders **P. 9**

Jean-Luc HEES – The Psychology of Dictators: Sheer Complexity, Structural Diversity **P. 12**

Ester MOLINAROLI – Trump's Psychology through the Iranian Nuclear Deal **P. 15**

Juan Pablo HERZBERG BARREDA – Psycho-rhetorical Analysis of Fidel Castro's "History Will Absolve Me" **P. 19**

Raphaël SOULIER – Understanding the Populist Phenomenon through Neuroscience and What it Means for Global Political Stability **P. 24**

Faye LAMRANI – Decoding the 2016 U.S. Election: How Russian Leader Meddled with American Democracy **P. 30**

Isabella LOPES-MURPHY – The Importance of Culture in Foreign Policy: A Retrospective Analysis on the Role of Culture in the Iranian Hostage Crisis **P. 34**

Georgios Christos KOSTARAS & Georgios ZACHARIAS – Psychological Perspectives in International Politics: Greek Perceptions and the Macedonian Name Dispute **P. 38**

Lucile DEVULDER – Application of psychological insights into the issue of the return of cultural artefacts to former colonies **P. 43**

Chiara LONOCE – The Role of the Italian ex-Minister of Interior, Matteo Salvini, in the Management of the Mediterranean Migration Control: Populist Personality and Cognitive Structure **P. 49**

Manon ROBIN – The Role of Emotions and Memories in the Response of European Union Member States to the Afghan Migration Crisis **P. 54**

Jitka KRANZ – The Role of Large-Group Identities in Post-Conflict Mostar **P. 58**

Kaitlyn JEON – Loss, Legacies, and Large Group Identities: A Psychological Analysis of the Korean War **P. 65**

Zackary LYONS – Forging Otherness: Poland, the European Union, and LGBTIQ Rights **P. 69**

Monica CELORIO SOTO – Scapegoating as a Defense Mechanism in the Burmese Context **P. 74**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Exploring the Central Role of Psychology in International Relations*

Pierre DEYRIES – Belief Systems and Intelligence Failures **P. 78**

Yeonhwa KIM – From Historical Trauma to Rehumanization **P. 85**

Benedetta BENZONI – Answering the Kurdish Question in Syria: Identity, Negotiation and Conflict **P. 91**

Allie HAWKES – Legitimacy and the Psychology of Exclusion Regarding Palestine in Normalization Deals Between Israel and Arab Countries **P. 96**

Aude GREGORY-BILLET – How Emotions Shape the European Union **P. 100**

Mira KOVACOVA – Bridging Western and Islamic Psychology: Moving Towards an Understanding of Non-State Armed Actor Behavior **P. 104**

Magomed BELTOUEV – Religions and States as Competing Psychologies **P. 108**

Nicolas DRIOUECH – Psychology and soft power : why sports work as a link between these two concepts ? **P. 112**

Chloé-Alizée CLÉMENT – “Wise”, Discreet and Omnipresent: Japan’s Presence at UNESCO. A Study of How to Invest the Institution to Shine **P. 117**

Jean-Michel HUET – “ Nation Branding: When States Use Psychology Through Marketing Tools **P. 121**

## ***Introductory Words***

# **Understanding Key Factors of Psychology**

Patrick LEMOINE (interview with). Translated by Aude GREGORY-BILLET

Page | 1

Patrick Lemoine is a French doctor & psychiatrist. He wrote « La Santé psychique de ceux qui ont fait le monde » (i.e. "The psychic health of those built the world" ; Odile Jacob, 2021) & « La santé psychique des génies - génies du bien, génies du mal : quelles différences ? » (i.e. "The psychic health of the geniuses - geniuses of good, geniuses of evil : what difference ?" ; Odile Jacob, 2022).

Besides experts in human psychology, this field is often overlooked. Yet, it lies at the heart of self-acceptance and of our relationships with others. Thus, human psychology seems to be at the core of any social mechanism: in family settings, in a company, between a State leader and his or her citizens, between two negotiators, etc. How do you argue this approach?

Psychology is at the very heart of the way we function. Take, for example, an individual who is well-acquainted with finance: many – sometimes well-known – economists tend to interpret the figures they rationally and mathematically deal with, and translate them in the light of their political ideologies, no matter the political side of the fence. Thus, even a man of figures, of science, is influenced by his own psychology.

One should not imagine that decisions, whether economic or legal, for example, are not also based on psychology. There is no such thing as an objective decision or an objective subject. Even A. Einstein's discovery of relativity is based on his own psyche, which he experienced as a child<sup>1</sup>.

Let us discuss the case of a ruler, like V. Putin. Just like any dictator, he very likely has a paranoid profile. This profile can be balanced. Although he may not necessarily be following a logic of persecution, he

may be more rigid than a regular human being. All in all, there are different degrees of paranoia. On the physical level, it also appears that V. Poutine's face has swelled up, which is a distinctive sign of cortisone treatment. Cortisone tends to make people delusional and aggressive. Therefore, the war in Ukraine could be at least partly a collateral unwanted side effect of cortisone. These data have to be taken into account.

Angela Merkel is also interesting to analyse from a psychological point of view. Her decisions are most likely influenced by her family and cultural history (catholic, former East German citizen). Her decision to let migrants in while she was chancellor was predictable in this regard. There may be a sense of revenge deriving from her complex childhood that would also be worth studying.

In your publication "The psychic health of those who built the world " (ed. Odile Jacob, 2019), an experienced reader may notice that the wording is important. For example, after indicating that you have attempted a psychological analysis of several historical leaders, you conclude that only two "seemed" psychologically sound to you. Here, using the word "seem" reminds your readers that making a diagnosis of someone that you have not met in person requires expertise and

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick Lemoine, "La santé psychique des génies - génies du bien, génies du mal : quelles différences

?", Odile Jacob editions, 2022.

additional vigilance while making assumptions about a person's mental health. In general, how would you raise awareness of the fact that psychology is a field that cannot be treated without discipline and rigour? For instance, integrating a 'psychology' variable into a geopolitical approach requires an upfront extensive study of psychological variables.

The study of psychology raises a sheer number of mistaken beliefs, fantasies, rumours and even conspiracies, which can be detrimental to a study. Non-experts tend to embrace a role that does not belong to them. However, there are objective data to analyse in order to qualify the mental health of an individual. Psychology is no exception to this statement. There may be intuitions, the so-called "clinical intuition", which allows an expert to find the pathology of a patient very quickly. Yet, there is no magic wand, as this psychological practice is based on several years of experience.

The training of experts in psychology is eminently important, and varies from country to country. In France, it is not ideal. Two schools of thought are opposed. On the first hand, 'chemists' value the use of drugs and on the second hand, 'psychotherapists' are to be found. In France, these two approaches are impervious to one another, while in other countries such as Switzerland, they are perceived as complementary.

The assessment of metalanguage, which enables the study of individuals, is also a practice that can be mastered.

**One might assume that the figures at the head of a State are purely rational – while dismissing the idea that the emotional process would be rational –, and therefore that they are psychologically flawless. For instance, one could think that they would not**

**seek to compensate for a personal complex in a major international decision. After all, as citizens of a democracy, could we have consciously and consistently elected a mentally unbalanced person? And as citizens of a dictatorship, could we doubt that an individual could have risen to the top without being a genius? As a practitioner, what can you tell us about this topic?**

Humans are social creatures by nature, and this feature has become increasingly important with social networks. In this sense, the idea that only reasonable people could be elected in a democracy seems to me to be wrong<sup>2</sup>. Without getting too contemporary, let's remember that Hitler was elected democratically.

So was Boris Jonson. While analysing his current behaviour and his family history, pathologies of a disturbance are obvious. As for the second element, few people know this, but it turns out that he is in open conflict with his father (who has just become a French citizen and was against the Brexit). It is obvious that such a dispute has influenced his decisions.

Coming back to the first element, we know that he has a need to be controversial. Imposing a strict barrier policy in the first place and then hosting parties at his housing on the second hand shows his ambivalence, if not his submission to his impulses. He potentially has a personality disorder, and examples are not lacking.

There are two types of psychological disorders. The first category comprises biological and genetic diseases such as bipolarity and schizophrenia. The second category includes personality disorders for which we don't have many hypotheses yet, and for which stress after birth plays an important role. For example, pregnant women who experienced trauma during the Rwandan genocide in average gave birth to more disturbed children.

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<sup>2</sup> Next year, Patrick Lemoine will publish a book

listing the heads of State he considers 'disturbed'.

It is also interesting to bear in mind that while schizophrenia genes can run in a family, an individual can carry these genes without contracting the disease. Eventually, due to life's misfortunes (through trauma, etc.), the genes can be triggered and will ultimately spread to the offspring.

**Let's try a bit of forecasting: do you think that certain mental disorders in particular are likely to develop in the next few years among present-day humans (be it a leader or not)? For instance, could disorders become variables to be analysed by any geopolitical analyst, as they would affect populations or leaders?**

**In addition, in your opinion, are there universal disorders, both in time and in space?**

Some conditions are timeless, such as bipolar, paranoid and schizophrenic disorders. During Hippocrates' times, the latter were already pictured as they are now.

Paranoia is a disorder that leads to the assumption of power. People with paranoia do not show doubt; they just know, and impose what they know. They also tend to be sexist, as it is mainly a man's disease.

New pathologies are real. Is it the product of social networks, the proliferation of gossips, conspiracies, etc? There is also an increase in paranoia. Paranoids are potentially extremely dangerous, because they make interpretations. Now, when it comes to conspiracy theories, paranoia falls just right in. Victims of paranoia only hear what is line with their ideologies or ideas.

If a paranoid person is "extremely dangerous", what use is there in arguing with someone who won't be able to trust you? Moreover, if the paranoid person does not doubt, the healthy person does. They can therefore be destabilised by the former.

We are also seeing a rise in collective paranoia, fuelled, once again, by social networks that sometimes are fed by paranoid dictators thus creating a sort of vicious circle. This phenomenon is terribly concerning.

## ***Editorial of Gülseren Kozak-Işık***

# **Psychological Dimensions of International Relations**

Gülseren Kozak-Işık is a sociologist, psychologist, and politician (a former member of the Turkish National Assembly). Dr. Kozak- Işık works on organizational psychology/sociology, political psychology, and emotions. Currently, she is a professor at Sciences Po and teaches “Application of Psychological Insights into International Relations and Diplomacy” at the Paris School of International Relations.

The idea of this special collection was born when Romain and I first came together in September 2021 to discuss my upcoming talk on Psychology of International Relations at the Institut d'études de géopolitique appliquée. Romain has a keen interest in psychology and asked many questions about the graduate course I teach at the Sciences Po Paris School of International Relations (PSIA), “Application of Psychological Insights into International Relations and Diplomacy”. I mentioned to Romain that the students submitted an impressive array of papers covering a wide range of international issues from various psychological perspectives and told him of my wish to see these published on a platform. He quickly expressed his interest in undertaking such a project. After further discussions among ourselves and with the current and former students of the class, Romain and I agreed that a special issue of the *Revue Diplomatique* would be a suitable venue to make these papers available to the larger community. In line with the earlier work of the institute, the edited collection aimed to benefit both the practicing diplomats and scholars of international relations alike.

Selecting the papers among many qualified ones proved to be a hard task. The designated authors adapted their papers to fit into the current format and diligently made every deadline. Meanwhile, Romain recruited other names who work/write on the intersection of international relations and psychology and conducted the interviews included in this special issue. We thank all the contributors for making this special issue possible. We believe that this collection makes a significant contribution to the long neglected

and recently revitalizing the field of psychology of international relations.

The pieces included in this collection successfully demonstrate how incorporating the theories and practical application of psychology into international relations can benefit the discipline and improve our ability to understand, successfully manage, and resolve international issues. To achieve this purpose, the authors deeply engaged with the scholarship in cognitive psychology, psychoanalysis, emotions and emotional intelligence, psychology of leadership, neuropsychology, psychology of terrorism, psychology of negotiations, conflict resolution and mediation, and discursive psychology, etc. and applied the insights they gain from it to various international issues, such as the European immigration crises, the nuclear deal agreement between Iran and the US, the Korean War, negotiations between Arab countries and Israel, Russia's Meddling in the US elections, the dispute between France and ex-colonies regarding cultural artifacts etc. to improve our understandings of these international issues or to offer alternative solutions.

The collection starts with Patrick LEMOINE's interview that directs the attention to the fact that psychology is at the core of every social mechanism, including the relationship between leaders and their followers. Patrick also underlines the correlations between rising contemporary psychological disorders and recent political and social developments. This piece is followed by Jean-François FIORINA's interview on the leadership and management style of leaders and the social, cultural,

and psychological roots of these choices. According to Jean-Francois, as the ideological aspect takes over in populist leaders' decision-making process, the rational economic part vanishes with significant implications on international relations. Jean-Luc HEES, in his interview, responds to the questions on his research on the psychology of dictators and the characteristics of their thinking style. Ester MOLINAROLI and Chiara LONOCE continue to explore the psychology of leadership theme in different contexts. Ester examines psychobehavioral patterns in President Trump's dealing with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), while Chiara writes on the significance of leaders' personality and cognitive structures in shaping international events by focusing on Matteo Salvini and the management of the Mediterranean Migration Crises in Italy.

Juan Pablo HERZBERG BARREDA provides a psycho-rhetorical analysis of Fidel Castro's famous speech "History Will Absolve Me", with the intent of providing diplomats with the examples of how to use rhetoric and psychology for better articulating a defense, gaining the upper hand in negotiations, or forming the groundwork for a successful mediation process among parties to a violent conflict. Juan Pablo demonstrates psycho-rhetorical strategies Castro employed, such as invoking different identities, figure ground reversals, and conceptual juxtaposition to attack his opponent's ideology while carefully differentiating individuals -even soldiers who are fighting for the government against communist rebels- from the ideological enemy; a tactic which makes it possible for these people to later identify with and join the revolutionary forces. The article also briefly touches on some of the key issues in the psychology of leadership.

In the following paper, Raphael SOLULIER shifts the focus on populism and examines the recent electoral success of populist leaders from a neuroscience perspective, and what it means for global political stability. For that purpose, he also writes about how manipulative technologies exploit the growing sense of mistrust among citizens for political elites during the election processes in a way to benefit of populist

movements. Faye LAMRANI provides another angle on the electoral success of populist leaders and technology within the context of Russian Meddling in the 2016 US election. Faye pays a particular attention to the emotional setting the elections had taken place. The paper also discusses the implications of voter polarization and ediplomacy on the U.S. democracy and elections while at the same time providing an analysis of Trump's personality and leadership profile. Aude GREGORY-BILLET's article, on the other hand, focuses on the role emotions play in the construction of European project. For this purpose, she studies how and why emotions are capitalized at times, manipulated to serve to the European project.

Georgios Christos KOSTORAS and Georgios ZACHARIAS's paper focuses on the unresolved name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia. Adopting a psychoanalytical approach, the authors successfully demonstrate how incorporating psychology can improve our understanding of the conflict and its resolution.

Next, Isabella LOPES-MURPHY's article brings culture and cognition to our attention. With specific references to linguistic, communicative, evaluative and interactive dimensions, Isabella explains how the unique characteristics of Iranian and American cultures and prevailing standards shaped the outcomes of the negotiation process between these two nations during the hostage crises. In the following article, Manon ROBIN engages with the scholarship on cognitive psychology and emotions to reach a better understanding of EU immigration crises. Her analysis focuses on the role of perceptions, biases, perceived threats, and powerful emotions in European Unions' dealing with the Afghan refugee crisis. Pierre DYRIES 's article is another piece demonstrating the benefits of incorporating psychological insights, particularly cognitive psychology, into our understanding of international affairs. Bringing forth examples of wellknown intelligence fiascos from different historical areas and geographies, he sheds light on how international and national intelligence agents process information and use heuristics devices

influence the interpretation of the information they have about other nations and their actions. The subsequent three papers deal with large group identities in different contexts. Jitka KRANZ's paper explores the role of Large-group identities in Post-Conflict Mostar. Adopting a psychological perspective, she offers explanations for the persisting ethnic divide in the region. Kaitlyn JEON's article analyses the Korean War through psychological concepts of loss, living legacies, and "border psychology". The piece provides valuable insights into the never-ending Korean War and the significance of large group identities at different stages of international conflicts. Kathlyn ends her paper with specific recommendations for the international community and diplomats. Last, Zackary LYONS's paper explores large group identities with a focus on the LGBTIQ Rights Movement in the European Union within the Polish context. Related to the above articles, Monica CLERIO's paper focuses on scapegoating in international conflicts as a defense mechanism. She explores the meaning of these important psychological concepts within the Burmese Context, providing valuable information on the effects of Scapegoating on both the aggressor and the targeted groups meanwhile not ignoring the significance of leader psychology in the handling of conflicts. Magomed BELTOUEV's article criticizes reductionist understanding of religion in the field of international relations and argues that modern nation state itself constitutes a quasi-religious paradigm creating a psychology that produces conflicts with the over-all mentality of religions such as Christianity and Islam.

The following three papers focus on international negotiations. Benedetta BENZON's article on the Kurdish question in Syria provides new insight regarding how to use psychology in negotiations and conflict resolution. Similarly, Allie HAWKES provides a psychological intake into the normalization deals between Arab countries and Israel on the Palestine

issue. She particularly focuses on cognitive-psychological implications of legitimacy/ rhetoric of delegitimization, psychological exclusion, and "trust-breakdown" in negotiation processes. Mira KOVACOVA's paper intends to bridge Western and Islamic Psychologies in dealing with NonState Armed Actors. In doing so, she writes about different approaches of Western and Islamic psychology on emotions and the notion of obedience. Mira's piece provides specific recommendations on how to understand and use these diverging approaches in reaching successful negotiations between Islamic and Western groups.

Next, Lucile DEVULDER writes on cultural artifacts and their role in diplomacy and foreign policy, focusing particularly on France. She discusses the significance of history, identity, and the "original meaning" with specific references to collective trauma, collective guilt, and shame. Similarly, Yeonhwa KIM's article focuses on historical trauma and dehumanization and their manifestation in cultural media.

Nicholas DRIOUECH's piece addresses another important concept in the intersection of psychology and international relations: soft power. He explores the relationship between the soft power of states and their participation in international sports. Chloe-Alizee CLÉMENT's piece continues the soft power theme with its focus on Japan's diplomatic work within UNESCO. Finally, the last piece of the collection, Jean-Mihel HUET's interview, highlights the significance of psychology in international relations by focusing on the parallels and differences between nation branding and consumer marketing strategies. Overall, we hope that this rich collection will benefit diplomats, international organizations, international relations scholars, and ordinary citizens alike by adopting a psychological perspective in the analysis of a wide range of international issues from around the world.

## ***Editorial of Romain Bertolino***

# **Why Psychology is a Key Factor of International Relations**

Romain Bertolino is the General director at Institut d'études de géopolitique appliquée, and co-author of "Atlas géopolitique du monde contemporain" (Ellipses, 2022). He is passionate about psychology, and *inter alia*, about psychology of organisations and management. His enthusiasm about psychology in international relations is also the root of his interest for softpower.

Psychology has always been a key variable in international relations, through all of its components, be it military strategies, diplomatic relationships, geoeconomic disputes, or more. As Sun Tzu pointed out: « If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant ». <sup>3</sup>

Glimpses of persuasion, or even manipulation, can be caught through different, if not unexpected, lenses. For instance, the concept of 'culinary diplomacy' has been a major French asset for centuries while conducting negotiations. Great food has a power of winning hearts and minds through stomachs, which French diplomats have been capitalising on when negotiating with their counterparts. <sup>4</sup>

Elements such as the mindset or emotions influence people's and groups' behaviour. Crowds, for example, have their own ways of behaving. <sup>5</sup> They can even be used, if not manipulated, by public speakers in order to achieve political goals. Revolutions, such as the French or Bolshevik ones, often change the course of international relations. Revolutions reach their aim due to many reasons: the necessary leadership to rally a massive population is one of them. Yet, the concept of groups goes beyond this mere example. Communities, such as religious groups, nations or ethnies, are entities of their own.

They share an identity, which can feel threat, suffer from traumas, etc.

Despite its impact on decision-making, psychology is often considered as the poor sibling of international relation studies. In France for example, psychology is almost absent from foreign affairs courses. Therefore, practising international relations in a psychology-compliant manner can almost only be done through self-teaching. Unsurprisingly, it may lead to an oversight of the 'psychological variable' or worse, to the induction of misconceptions in decision-making or analysis. A recent yet relevant event tells a lot: prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, numerous analysts tended to qualify the attack as « impossible », since according to their own interpretation, it would have constituted a "lunatic move" from Putin.

In light of this major challenge, came the idea to compile a collection of thoughts about the management of international relations activities through a psychologically-aware lens. Therefore, the focus of this special issue is to show how, through concrete and hands-on topics, psychology can be used when one is an actor of international relations.

Following this line of thoughts, the diversity of such topic has become central in this issue, so that each reader can use and apply these principles in their

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<sup>3</sup> S. Tzu, *The Art of War*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> L. Kihlgren Grandi, *La diplomatie culinaire des villes face à celle des États : entre rayonnement et*

*développement durable* (conference), Institut EGA (presenter : Romain Bertolino), 16 September 2020.

<sup>5</sup> G. le Bon, *Psychology of Crowds*, Sparkling Books Ltd, 1 October 2009.

own foreign affairs-linked activities. While introductory words meant to deconstruct one's preconceived ideas about psychology, other contributions are meant to plant new seeds in one's virgin reflexion, freed from groundless past influences.

First, the said contributions tackle psychology for an individualistic perspective. Negotiations for example, beyond offering a platform for the meeting of different national interests, remain the interaction of two or more people who bring on the table their cultural bias, their personal fears, etc. Leaders' personalities (and their roots, stakes, etc.), as shown in multiple articles of this *Revue diplomatique*, are also one of the key elements to understand international relations. Through their management and leadership styles they drive a population's behaviour. Moreover, the relation between leaders and their peoples cannot be forgotten. As such, the concept of populism will be analysed, through cultural disputes between neighbouring countries or the governance of immigration. Words convey powerful ideas, and the art of rhetoric is more than ever important while seducing a population. Thus, it is all the more natural that this issue encompassed this topic. Similarly, war, as an advanced form of dispute between groups, is tackled in this corpus.

Unsurprisingly, identity as a topic has received a lot of attention. Indeed, identity lies at the core of each individual, and defines one's mindset or needs, etc.

Additionally, identity draws people with similarities closer, therefore creating groups of influence and power. Finally, identity implies intergroups relationships: concepts such as 'perceived legitimacy' are studied in that matter.

This issue attempts to assess as many areas as possible: Europe, Africa, Latin America, Northern America and Asia. Studying the Middle East was also crucial, as most of its conflicts (the Israeli-Palestinian relations, the Kurdish asserting, the American-Iranian relations, etc.) have as one of the core reasons psychological factors, and especially -but not solely – self-esteem or even pride.

Finally, this issue wanders off the beaten track, with topics such as sport diplomacy (sport being a driver of emotions), new technologies (used to spot our psychological weaknesses), or even nation branding (how to use marketing, therefore psychology, to promote a country).

Even though this issue is abundant in its research topics, it would be misrepresentative to assert that it is exhaustive. Indeed, psychology frames international relations on every aspect, and not a single publication could deal completely with each specificity. Thus, this issue provides the reader with hands-on applications of psychology in international relations, but also tools to develop one's own awareness of psychology. Therefore, may this issue be used as a handbook.

# Leadership & Management Styles of Foreign Affairs' Leaders

Jean-François FIORINA (interview with). Translated by Aude GREGORY-BILLET

Deputy General Director and Director of the programs at Grenoble École de management (GEM), inter alia hosting the « Festival de Géopolitique de Grenoble ».

There are many styles of leadership and management. Which ones do you find most prevalent among the world's (State) leaders? How would you describe these styles, and which international (State) leaders would you say best exemplify each style?

A head of state, like a head of a company, can adopt one or more leadership approaches, depending on the context.

Among the most frequent approaches in political systems, there is the "participative" approach, whose main characteristic is to take into account the different voices of each stakeholder (citizens, institutions, etc). Scandinavian countries often illustrate this approach.

The 'paternalistic' approach is also widespread. Rodrigo Duterte, for example, embodies this approach, claiming to be the father of his homeland and his people, the Philippines. It is characteristic of this approach to have some sort of proximity between the ruler and the people while having the ruler in charge of all decisions.

The paternalistic approach can be compared to the "authoritarian" one, the latter being rather frequent. Communist China's leaders are an example among others. This approach is about being strongly directive.

Needless to say, these labels have to be nuanced: there are, for example, more or less intense forms of

authoritarianism, while some participative systems do not appear to be so... participatory-like.

D. Trump is intriguing as he is one of the first heads of State with a business background. Interestingly enough, his approach as President of the United States remained the same as the one he used while being a business leader.

The study of management styles is an interesting area of research and it would potentially be interesting to delve further into it. As vice Dean of a business-school, I cannot help but think that this raises questions about the shaping of political elites. Beyond teaching students public policy or geopolitical challenges for example, how should we teach them management and leadership? It is also the role of the technostructure (without it becoming a Soviet-style central administration). How should State officials and elites be trained so as to avoid autocratic drift? Finally, how can counterpowers be put in place to avoid these pitfalls?

The book " Les mandarins 2.0: Une bureaucratie chinoise formée à l'américaine ? " (i.e. "The Mandarins 2.0: a Chinese Bureaucracy trained the American way ?") directly recalls in its title a fundamental question, along with the existence of paradoxes and other complexities. Furthermore, the challenge of training students is all the more important as each individual has his or her own convictions and may be subject to increasing pressure which may cause him or her to 'lose it'.

Ethics is important. During a training course, no student would say that he or she would accept bribes,

for example. However, once they are in office, there is always a risk. The European Union can also play a role in raising awareness on ways a politician can uphold his or her convictions and preserve his or her dignity when making decisions.

**Is there a correlation, or even a causal relationship, between a leader's management style and his or her success precisely as a leader of a State? Under the assumption that the authoritarian leader has a greater capacity to remain in power, without this implying effectiveness in terms of public policy.**

No, I don't think so, primarily because a head of State is under increasing pressure and his or her style evolves over time.

On the one hand, the head of a company is elected or sometimes appointed by a board of directors, a limited number of people sharing similar views. The head of State is in a different position : she or he may start with a willingness to be attentive to different voices because he has obtained power following an election, and therefore the expression of a large population. But this population is often multi-faceted (with different expectations depending on the category of voter): being elected must therefore involve the ability to compromise. However, the reality of the compromises may catch up with the leader, and several promises may no longer be respected. The 'participatory' approach can therefore run out of steam.

This phenomenon can be exacerbated when the need for compromise is institutionalised (through a system of parliamentary alliances, etc.). The succession of Germany's Angela Merkel illustrates this point. There are convictions at the outset, and then there is a return to reality. All the more so as current events encourage responses (i.e. quick decisions, without necessarily a great deal of consultation), and there are sometimes over-reactions.

It also seems important to me to specify that a head of state can be progressively cut off from the reality of the population, from the "field", because his function requires by essence another vision. This is all the more true because there may be a technostucture in which he/she is immersed, which does not necessarily benefit from telling all the truths, etc.

Counterpowers (parliaments, sanctions during elections, etc.) thus have an important role to play in avoiding authoritarian drifts.

**A State and a company have similar dynamics: the need not to go bankrupt, the need to protect the physical integrity of its human capital from going elsewhere, etc. However, as you have already briefly demonstrated, the situations are not identical. Therefore, what are the main differences between the leader of a company and the leader of a State?**

I would answer by further nuancing your words: please note that an entrepreneur has an economic purpose. He or she has to make money. Yet, more and more governments do not ultimately care about this economic purpose (such as the Russian government). As the ideological aspect takes over, the rational economic part vanishes (such as the Russian government suffering from sanctions, following the invasion of Ukraine). In this respect, the scope is not the same and therefore the responsibility differs.

A politician is also in a state of permanent survival because his or her ability to bounce back in the political world is fragile. Where a company director can, for example, find another similar job in another company if he is ever dismissed from his position, a politician cannot. Thus, the stakes are different.

A company director is also assessed on a yearly basis, through very factual elements (release of accounts, certifications, etc). Highly precise indicators are used. Every year, he or she is evaluated on his/her efficiency. Moreover, for very

large companies, there is additional pressure from the stock market and the evolution of its price. A fall can lead to the immediate dismissal of the head of the company. As for politicians, the large time span between elections can let public discontent grow due to poor results, without necessarily witnessing direct sanctions. Save in a few cases, provided that the counter-power is well orchestrated or that there is an effective impeachment procedure.

### **What role does culture play in the acceptance of style? Can you illustrate again with country leaders and their populations?**

Indeed, the culture of a given country is key. Latin American countries, for example, would, on the whole, perhaps find it difficult to live with more participatory, not to say less 'strong', approaches. In contrast, other countries such as in Northern Europe, which we have mentioned earlier, are naturally more inclined towards compromise and sharing: it would therefore be very surprising to see them adopt a more authoritarian approach.

While it is known that a Swedish minister cannot even use his professional credit card for a chocolate bar (with all possible justifications: hunger, unavailability of his personal credit card, etc.), his counterpart in another country can embezzle large sums of money without it even being mentioned in the media.

**What can be said about the approaches of leader-population relationships that are particularly prone to generating international disputes? One suspects that the 'paternalistic', but above all, the 'authoritarian' approach tends to cause greater international frictions. But is it that simple? Or conversely, what are the intricacies of this statement?**

Page | 11

Still comparing with the business world, a business leader has no interest in creating friction in his work environment. A politician, on the other hand, may have an interest in adding fuel to the fire. He may seek to hide his incompetence or distract the attention of public opinion, etc. For instance, Russia's attitude towards Ukraine illustrates this point, with the creation of spurious justifications for an invasion that distracts the Russian public debate from various issues, or even failures of the government.

It is also in the interest of an autocrat to radicalise things to justify his presence. However, it can all change with social networks. In the past, communications were the exclusive attribute of the State. During a coup, or any form of insurrection, the first decision to be made is usually to turn down the internet, to prevent any voices rising against the official discourses from gaining visibility.

# The Psychology of Dictators: Sheer Complexity, Structural Diversity

Jean-Luc HEES (interview with). Translated by Aude GREGORY-BILLET

Journalist, Former President of Radio France Group, Author of "Ces psychopathes qui nous gouvernent" (ie. "The Psychopaths Who Rule Us"; Plon, 2018).

You argue in your book "The Psychopaths Who Rule Us" that the cruelty of dictators is not necessarily fuelled by a simple thirst for barbarism, that is, a simple end in itself to inflict harm, but may be more of an extreme mean that they deem necessary to achieve various ends. Could you elaborate on this approach?

The notion of cruelty itself is difficult to establish. Hitler, for example, abolished hunting with hounds as soon as he came to power, for his love of animals. While one often associates cruelty with animal mistreatment, this example proves that it is not so simple.

In the (non-exhaustive) study I conducted, what struck me about tyrants, dictators and other psychopaths, is that there is an indifference to the suffering of others, but always in line with goals and ambitions. What I mean is that, if there is an urge to fulfil this or that goal (e.g. grabbing wealth), then this urge annihilates one's instinctive affect for others. One's ambition, fantasies, obsessions or even degeneracy can prevent any forms of mercy.

Besides, since humans dislike obedience, if one wants to reach his goals, actions must be undertaken! Moreover, the psychopath, the tyrant, has goals that he considers legitimate, while others don't. In this regard, power requires a certain level of cruelty. It reminds me of Machiavelli, who said that

the ideal is to be loved, but that this being rare (especially when one governs), then it was preferable to be feared. As such, it is not simply a display of brutality, barbarity or the pleasure of causing pain, but rather the "rules of the rulers". At the end of the day, one may not be left with any other choice<sup>6</sup>.

Putin certainly has no intention of doing evil, he does what he does according to his own conception of "good"<sup>7</sup>.

Another characteristic of dictators is that they don't understand that we don't understand them. Thus, they can certainly enter into negotiations, but the probability of an agreement is low.

**You also make a difference between "rational psychopaths" and "irrational ones". Can you further elaborate on this analysis of yours?**

Putin's case is very interesting in this respect. I thought for a long time that he was rational, and I still do. A rational psychopath is someone who is able to explain his goals, and generally acts upon what he says. Which can be dangerous.

Putin is smart. He has made it all the way to now because he has been able to plan the journey all along. He has been seductive. Strategic in gaining power. It takes a lot of cleverness to worm your way into the arena of power like he did.

One of the things that dictators have in common, whether they are rational or irrational, is that they are

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<sup>6</sup> It is how the dictators think. This sentence is not a way to justify their actions.

<sup>7</sup> Again, this sentence is not a way to justify his actions.

not interested in the truth. The truth of others has no place in what they say. Distrust from the population would therefore stand as a sort of embarrassment. A disturbing embarrassment<sup>8</sup>.

Trump is the perfect example in this respect. It has been proven that Trump cannot concentrate, and has no general knowledge. Yet he feels that if he says something, it must be true because it comes from him.

The rational pervert still seems, to me, less "nuts" than the enlightened lunatic.

Finally, we must remember that one can have a different rationality from another person. Someone acting differently is not necessarily irrational. Prior to the invasion of Ukraine, most experts argued that it was unthinkable for Putin to attack, given that it would have been a stupid decision. Yet, nothing tells us that the conflict is not beneficial to him with regards to goals that he, and only he, has in mind to consolidate.

**Megalomania, selfishness, caprice, paranoia, ... Many psychological traits are common to psychopathic dictators. How do you read them?**

A psychopath is a sick person. A number of more or less pronounced deficiencies are associated with psychopathy by the WHO. For instance, impulsivity, some sorts of instabilities (linked with relationships), aggressiveness and the lack of affect can be attributed to psychopathy. These conditions are characterised by an inability to follow rules and an absence of guilt.

A penchant for lying is also a sign. It is remarkable that such conditions stem from deep within, as some people were born this way.

**More specifically, what role do factors such as youth, social class and corruption play in the development of these traits?**

Belarus is only 500 km from the coast of Norway. What makes a psychopath, who has told historical inaccuracies, made anti-Semitic statements, and who has been in power for a long time, able to live so close to such a democracy?

Bashar al-Assad crystallises many questions. How can we explain that a man so cultivated, refined, Western-style, with a good education, is today nicknamed "the butcher"? He has killed far more people than his father.

Education matters. Al-Assad's father was a dictator, like Trump's father and grandfather were pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic. They've undoubtedly framed their children's mindsets. As far as Kim Jong-un is concerned, this mindset has been disseminated to now a third generation.

Putin's situation seems to be more nuanced. It appears that his childhood was tough, with repeated humiliations and a taste for a stiff balance of power. There could be some sort of narcissistic wound, although he remains someone with a large ego.

Finally, power naturally corrupts. Power corrupts at different degrees and levels, and our Western societies are far from exempt of it. Though regarding us, brutality and tyranny are obviously not part of the equation. Yet power naturally corrupts. Even Michel Debré, who had the privilege to back General De Gaulle and actively led the foundations of the French Fifth Republic's Constitution, admitted in one of his books to feeling a lack of satisfaction not to have power any longer.

**Male dictators can also be studied through the prism of gender. Many of them need to display their virility, and their passionate love for their companions, wives, or even their relationship with their mothers, play an active role in their mental construct and decisions. Can you elaborate on this?**

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<sup>8</sup> Again, it is how the dictators think. This sentence

is not a way to justify their actions.

There are not many women who were identified as dictators, which actually gives them credit. On the other hand, dictators' wives prove to be very loyal to their husbands in their discourse. Mrs Ceausescu for instance, did not realise that her husband was a dictator. She did not seem to understand what he potentially could have done wrong. The case of Ortega's wife from Nicaragua is also interesting, as she espoused Ortega's changing views and ideas, which switched from a democratic shade to something completely different over time.

Relationships with women are, in general, a real issue for dictators. Trump's indecency with women, for example, goes further than misogyny. However, it does not seem to be set in stone. Hitler had no inclination for sex, Stalin did not seem to have much interest in it, while Mao was known for his high libido.

As far as virility is concerned, Mussolini is an interesting case study. He wished people see a stallion in him. He liked to be seen horseback riding. Putin is also a case in hand when it comes to displaying virility: shirtless on horseback, practising judo, etc.

The role of mothers is also not to be forgotten, such as Bashar Al-Assad's mother. At the outset of the revolution, clueless about what to do, it is said that Bashar al-Assad's mother told him to "think about your father". He would have answered back "yes, mummy", while retaliating with his father's style. Yet, it cannot make a general example of dictators. For instance, it remains difficult to assess Hitler's relationship with his mother.

### **What do you believe dictators fear?**

I knew "Baby Doc" in Haiti, for I was a reporter there. I saw him flee. I remember seeing him drive off with his wife Michelle in a big grey BMW. I still have this image of them leaving in fear, in panic. Dictators are afraid of losing power, and usually their money. Deep down, they are afraid of being tried in a court of law, as they think of themselves as always being right. They don't want to disappear either. On another note, they often cherish sumptuous architecture (they build large palaces, etc.), as if they wanted to live on after death, leaving a visible, admirable trace.

# Trump's Psychology through the Iranian Nuclear Deal

Ester MOLINAROLI

Page | 15

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The incendiary nature of Trump's political rhetoric has always been arduous to rationalize despite being the focus of close public scrutiny since his early political campaigns. Although he has attracted harsh criticism from academia and journals, little effort went into understanding what drives decision-making beyond his political ideology. Upon considering the existing literature on international relations, one notices a fundamental absence of the psychology related to individuals' interactions, also known as social psychology. Therefore, drawing from a history of heinous events between the US and the Islamic Republic of Iran, this article examines behavioral patterns in President Trump when dealing with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA.). By understanding the hidden mechanisms related to his cognition one can identify a history of trauma and emotional fragility and the subsequent need for protection behind a shield of aggression.

## Impacts of Cognitive Openness in Conflicting State Relations

Effective and peaceful negotiations have long been undermined by hostile communication imbued with a colorful language. Iranian governmental officials extensively used figurative language when referring to the US. Drawing on recurring metaphors spread in the Iranian media, the US is portrayed as a "world-

eater," "America criminal," and "Satan big."<sup>9</sup> The negative force of these derogatory comments contributed to profound distrust and ultimately "slows down progress and eventually hinder the emergence of real commitments."<sup>10</sup> On the other side of the globe, the US certainly did not abstain from similar detrimental language. However, with the advent of the Obama presidency, the US shifted from perceiving Iran as an "empire of evil" to initiating diplomatic talks.<sup>11</sup> Such predisposition to overcome fears and distrust showed the cognitive complexity of President Obama. More precisely, his conducive approach to the Iranian nuclear issue revealed the multiple judgement dimensions pertaining Obama's structure of thoughts, which subsequently enables alternative interpretations of a situation.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, a complex cognitive system favors the revision of one's schema or beliefs, thus demonstrating more adaptive behavior. The openness of Obama and his propensity to overcome pride to heal the deleterious relations with Iran gave impetus to negotiations which culminated with the signing of the JCPOA in October 2015.

It is specifically about the drafting of the agreement that social psychology offers an innovative insight into the dynamics of reconciliation between the two leaders. Although psychology is a limited component in the literature on international relations it fosters the

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<sup>9</sup> F. Sharifian, "Figurative language in international political discourse", *Journal of Language and Politics*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2009, p. 416–32.

<sup>10</sup> L. Batalha and K. Reynolds, "ASPIRING to Mitigate Climate Change: Superordinate Identity in Global Climate Negotiations", *Political Psychology*, vol. 33, no. 5, 2012, p. 743–60.

<sup>11</sup> A. Telnaes, "Opinion | Enemy of the People", *Washington Post*, 9 December 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/12/09/enemy-people/>. Accessed January 1, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> G. Ziv, "Cognitive Structure and Foreign Policy Change: Israel's Decision to Talk to the PLO", *International Relations*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2011, p. 426–54.

understanding of the ethos pertaining to diplomatic parties. It thus facilitates the interpretation of shifts in behavior and how they correspond to alternative ways of self-definition and self-categorization. Such a change was observed during the negotiations for the Iran nuclear deal, whereby achieving a mutually satisfying goal requires downplaying the separate two group identities to encourage the idea of belonging to one larger, superordinate group. Identifying a shared or “higher-order” goal is a valuable mechanism to reduce animosity between the two parties as it enlists cooperation, tolerance, and trust.<sup>13</sup> While the two years leading up to the conclusion of the JCPOA did not erase sentiments of anger about past misbehaviors, face-to-face interactions helped alleviate fears. As a result of the meeting of August 2013 in Oman, diplomats of both sides engaged in casual conversations, setting a new tone for negotiations.<sup>14</sup> Although the encounter happened in secret, the positive outcome reveals the willingness to work cooperatively to turn a new page and strive towards a superordinate identity. However, these efforts were compromised when President Trump took a seat in the oval office.

During his presidency, Trump gained the reputation of a reckless man, iconoclastic and mad as hell.<sup>15</sup> It is with such attitude that he withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018, vouching his ability to persuade, or rather force, Iranians back to the bargaining table to make a much better deal.<sup>16</sup> An impulsive conduct saturated with pride reveals the nature of Trump’s approach to the Iranian nuclear issue, and to international affairs in broader terms. Therefore, in opposition to Obama, Trump displays cognitive closed-mindedness as the failure to listen to his inner circle of informants drives him to make

decisions based on personal preconceptions. Behind bold actions is the constant search for recognition and respect, which can be traced back to his family life.<sup>17</sup> The need to validate self-esteem while refusing blame is a habit developed during his childhood, a mechanism to protect himself from a ruthless father and his withering criticism. Hence, the concern for earning respect as a politician as much as a real-estate magnate echoes the desire to obtain his father’s approval in his private life. Bash, crude, and by his own admission nasty, Trump is endlessly belligerent and constantly self-promoting. Indeed, once Israeli PM Netanyahu revealed incriminating information on Iranian plans for nuclear armament, Trump did not hesitate to proudly announce: “I’ve been 100 percent right.”<sup>18</sup>

### The Hyperbolic Stance of Trump

Stepping into the political arena bellowing “nobody, nobody will be pushing us around” to Iran, Trump disinterred those worries that the international community had allayed just the year before. As his famous motto “Make America Great Again” reverberated worldwide, it wanted to be a message that Trump was a force not to be reckoned with. It, thus, mirrors his personality and behavior. Because he believes to have the strength and the skills that will lead the US to triumph as the ultimate superpower, he reveals narcissistic tendencies. The constant self-praising attitude inflates a grandiose perception of himself, boosting his confidence in using unabashed language. In compliance with his need for validation on numerous occasions, he claimed: “I’ve been making lots of wonderful deals, great deals, that’s what I do.”<sup>19</sup> As such, under his guidance Americans: “might get bored with winning,

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<sup>13</sup> L. Batalha and K. Reynolds, “ASPIRING to Mitigate Climate Change: Superordinate Identity in Global Climate Negotiations”, *Political Psychology*, vol. 33, no. 5, 2012, p. 743–60.

<sup>14</sup> S. Ritter, *Deal Breaker. Donald Trump and the Unmaking of the Iran Nuclear Agreement*, Atlanta, GA.: Clarity Press, Inc., 2018.

<sup>15</sup> D. Von Drehle, “Donald Trump’s Wild Ride”, *Time*, 3 March 2016, <https://time.com/4246108/donald-trump-2016/>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>16</sup> S. Ritter, *Deal Breaker. Donald Trump and the Unmaking of the Iran Nuclear Agreement*, Atlanta, GA.: Clarity Press, Inc., 2018.

<sup>17</sup> S. Renshon, “Donald Trump’s Fight Club Presidency”, *The Real Psychology of the Trump Presidency*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> S. Ritter, *Deal Breaker. Donald Trump and the Unmaking of the Iran Nuclear Agreement*, Atlanta, GA.: Clarity Press, Inc., 2018.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

believe me.”<sup>20</sup> From the constant craving for attention, therefore, derives the colorful and outrageous rhetoric appearing in his speeches and online tweets. In this regard, the intensive use of hyperboles characterizes his vision and description of the JCPOA, which in his opinion was a “*disaster*,” “*the worst deal ever negotiated*,” and “*the worst deal in history*.”<sup>21</sup>

Throughout Trump’s political campaign, he often proclaimed: “My number-one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran,” claiming: “I have been in business a long time, I know deal-making.”<sup>22</sup> As he pridefully declared to have studied the issue in “great detail” even “greater by far than anybody else,” he subsequently triggered an aggressive response from the Iranian counterpart. Irritated by Trump’s spiteful superiority complex, the Iranian supreme leader stated: “The American government’s manner of behavior and speech on the nuclear issue [...] demonstrates their chain of spiteful hostility against the Islamic Republic.”<sup>23</sup> The dramatic intensification of angst further eroded the already precarious relations and approached a breaking point. Indeed, the feeling of betrayal prevailed on the Iranian side, as President Rouhani affirmed on the occasion of the 72<sup>nd</sup> General Debate Session at the United Nations on September 19, 2017. President Rouhani continued claiming that abandoning the deal would have ruined the credibility of the US and undermined international confidence in negotiations.<sup>24</sup> Hence, Iran insinuated that if the US was to abandon the agreement, Iran would have permanently closed its doors. Since then, a wall of pride supported by the fear of possible international humiliation launched a war of insults on Twitter, where leaders of both countries call each other “child,” “clown,” and “disgrace.”<sup>25</sup>

The offensive discourse filled with invectives and personal attacks distinguishes populist candidates from mainstream political figures. The infantile attitude and the overall bad manners displayed by Trump toward Iran reflect low agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability.<sup>26</sup> High extraversion characterizing the personality of Trump imbued with spectacular and outrageous language is a vehicle to capture the attention of the audience. Furthermore, this constant desire to be at the center of the attention for self-promotion underlines a grandiose narcissism. Such personality disorder entails an inflated sense of one’s own importance, a deep need for admiration, and a lack of empathy for others.<sup>27</sup> Wanting to flaunt an image of presidential greatness to the public, ultimately led Trump to engage in unprovoked aggression. The frequent public fights are important in the psychology of Trump because fighting back is a form of self-respect in his quest for political validation.<sup>28</sup> Such ostensibly provocative behavior, however, ignites conflict and thus critically undermines the promotion of social and communal interaction. In other words, the figurative yet imposing wall raised between the US and Iran is not so much representative of America’s might and dominance, rather it is a protective shield in whose cover Trump finds comfort.

### Conclusion

Dissecting the psychological dimension of President Trump through the case of the Iranian nuclear deal revealed the hidden forces driving his decision-making. From attempting to understand Trump’s behavioral patterns derives an insightful case about the underlying psychological mechanisms which contribute to shaping his personality. Therefore, this article intended to break persisting taboos linked to

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> A.Nai and F. Martínez i Coma., “The personality of populists: provocateurs, charismatic leaders, or drunken dinner guests?”, *West European Politics*, vol. 42, no.7, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> P. Mitra and D. Fluyau, *Narcissistic Personality Disorder*, Treasure Island, US, StatPearls Publishing, 2022.  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32310461/>  
(accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>28</sup> S. Renshon, “Donald Trump’s Fight Club Presidency”, *The Real Psychology of the Trump Presidency*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020.

the human mind and its functions with the hope of opening the literature for the broader inclusion of psychology studies. Psychology can provide a comprehensive understanding of conflicting relations and thus seeks to facilitate the adoption of appropriate strategies for peaceful resolutions.

Hence, the way Trump's style of politics reflects his emotional instability invites us to rethink how we study international relations both as a practice and as a discipline.

# Psycho-rhetorical Analysis of Fidel Castro's "History Will Absolve Me"

Juan Pablo HERZBERG BARREDA

Page | 19

Juan Pablo Herzberg Barreda is a second year Masters student at Sciences Po's Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA) studying Human Rights and Humanitarian Action. A Cuban-born German citizen, his passion for linguistics, rhetoric, and languages led him to study multilateral diplomacy, international relations, and political science throughout his academic career. This would inspire his subsequent interests in humanitarian diplomacy, advocacy, and capacity building, in particular following periods of sociopolitical change or armed conflict.

This paper analyses the speech "History Will Absolve Me" by Fidel Castro, and how the rhetorical strategies therein make salient psychological elements applicable to diplomacy. This speech is particularly significant as he delivered it in a court of law as his own defense, which inevitably brings in moral and subjective concepts pertaining to justice and morality. Also worth noting is that it was given in defense of a violent attack against a totalitarian regime, which equally brings up themes of bravery, subversiveness, identity, and leadership whose importance will later be examined.

The speech is Castro's defense to charges brought against him by the Fulgencio Batista regime that enjoyed military and financial American support, when a group of revolutionaries under Castro's leadership unsuccessfully attempted to overtake the Moncada Barracks from Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953<sup>29</sup>. There were 60 deaths among the 135 members of the revolutionary forces present, and Fidel was captured and held in isolation until his trial months later on October 16. The speech, which he delivered at that time, would subsequently become the manifesto of the Cuban revolution through the 26th of July Movement.

This paper is of relevance to any diplomat looking to wield the power of rhetoric and psychology in order to better articulate a defense, negotiation, or mediation. Worth noting is that this is a psycho-rhetorical analysis of a work originally written in Spanish; therefore, the focus will be on rhetorical strategies without diving into translation analysis, using the work of Pedro Álvarez Tabío & Andrew Paul Booth<sup>30</sup>. Equally important is that this analysis is not meant as a political or ideological commentary, neither for Castro nor Batista, but some elements can be used to those ends from the subsequent analysis of various levels of emotion, figures of speech, identity, blame, economy of language, and power relations. These elements can in turn provide frameworks to know which strategies to utilize, and in what manner, for effective and skillful communication.

Last but not least, it is necessary to note that the speech was given in a court of law, but it is not far-fetched to conceive of it more as an "attack" against the existing regime than a "defense" of the charges brought against him. This mental framework (and, notably, his indifference in the face of conviction) gave him much freedom in his rhetorical style, which makes this particular case worth analyzing.

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<sup>29</sup> Castro, F, *History will absolve me: the Moncada Trial defence speech, Santiago de Cuba, October 16th, 1953*, Carli Digital Collections, 1968, [https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collectio/n/uic\\_car/id/159](https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collectio/n/uic_car/id/159), (accessed 1 May 2022).

<sup>30</sup> Castro, F, *History Will Absolve Me*, trans P Tabío, & A Booth, Fidel Castro Internet Archive, 2001, <https://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castr/o/1953/10/16.htm>, (accessed 1 May 2022).

## Blame-shifting and targeting identities

Castro's speech was not designed to alienate potential allies, but rather to highlight the moral depravity of the regime and specific individuals (leaders) within it. This means that he was very tactful in talking not only about the soldiers that engaged in direct violence against revolutionary forces, but also the average Cuban citizen that supported the army's actions and even the Court itself.

At one point, for example, he states that "[the] soldiers ... defeated us because of their superior numbers ... [but] there was a high degree of courage on both sides."<sup>31</sup> While reminiscent in contemporary political climates to Trump's assertion that there were "very fine people on both sides" when referring to domestic terrorists and white supremacists, the idea of not wanting to curtail support remains comparable<sup>32</sup>. In both cases, the long-term possibility for cooperation becomes more important and salient than immediate political condemnation. Moreover, we have seen that one of the most popular tools, especially amongst authoritarian leaders, to create social cohesion is dehumanization: separating an enemy from human qualities that may otherwise result in empathy or sympathy. However, Castro does not do this. In fact, he highlights that "a soldier is made of flesh and blood; he thinks, observes, feels."<sup>33</sup> This allows him to subsequently make the claim that "soldiers endure a worse tyranny than the civilians" since they "are under constant surveillance and not one of them enjoys the slightest security in his job", and that he "can't blame all the soldiers for

the shameful crimes that stain a few evil and treacherous Army men"<sup>34</sup>.

The reason this is so important is blame-shifting. A study by Howard Levine, a faculty member of the Psychoanalytic Institute of New England East, stated that, "group leadership...often in the service of supporting the leader's own political ambitions... can encourage a process of demonization and dehumanization of the group's enemies"<sup>35</sup>. The fact that the political regime at the time put emphasis on Cuban citizens caring for Cubans as a collective in an effort to engender patriotism while demonizing the subgroup of revolutionaries gave Fidel the ammunition he needed to attack existing loyalties. Ultimately, all Castro had to say on the matter was, "I deplore only the fact that valiant men should fall for an evil cause"<sup>36</sup>. These strategies of blame shifting, whereby Fidel still recognized positive qualities in the enemy soldiers but not in the regime, could potentially be useful when engaging in negotiations with terrorists or radicalized individuals, by accentuating what separates them from a larger group (in this case, soldiers' bravery vs. the cowardice of the regime) instead of what unites them thereto. Equally important here is his statement to the Court in what can be described as a reductive assessment of its impartiality. According to him, "each Court is nothing more than a cog in the wheel of [a] system" and must "move along the course determined by the [political] vehicle", shifting the blame to the oligarchy as the main holders of power<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Drobnic Holan, A, *PolitiFact - In Context: Donald Trump's 'very fine people on both sides' remarks (transcript)*, PolitiFact, 2019, <https://www.politifact.com/article/2019/apr/26/cont-ext-trumps-very-fine-people-both-sides-remarks/>, (accessed 1 May 2022).

<sup>33</sup> Castro, F, *History Will Absolve Me*, trans P Tabío, & A Booth, Fidel Castro Internet Archive, 2001, <https://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castr-o/1953/10/16.htm>, (accessed 1 May 2022).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Volkan, V, 'Psychoanalysis, international relations and diplomacy', *A Sourcebook on Large-Group Psychology*, Routledge, 2018, chapter 1.

<sup>36</sup> Castro, F, *History Will Absolve Me*, trans P Tabío, & A Booth, Fidel Castro Internet Archive, 2001, <https://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castr-o/1953/10/16.htm>, (accessed 1 May 2022).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

### Identity hierarchies to build solidarity

Closely related to the element of blame-shifting is the effort to engender societal inclusion and strengthen institutional cohesion. In his repudiation of blame from most soldiers, he is not exclusively drawing attention away from the identity of “soldier” but highlighting that of “Cuban”. At one point, he explicitly states that “We are Cubans and to be Cuban implies a duty” to respect values whose importance is inculcated in the population from infancy, namely those of “freedom, justice and human rights.”<sup>38</sup>. This essentially creates an identity hierarchy, where Cuban is paramount, followed by other identities like soldiers, judges, leaders, etc.

In fact, he deliberately includes names like Maceo, Céspedes and Martí as examples of soldiers, artists, and poets that exalted the values he was trying to weaponize, saying that these “heroes” were the “first names engraved in [Cubans’] minds”<sup>39</sup>. The fact that Cubans were inculcated these ideas relating to freedom only strengthens the juxtaposition between them and the fact Castro was kept imprisoned for 76 days before his trial with limited contact to allies or legal aids<sup>40</sup>.

### Image reversals and juxtaposition

Another rhetorical strategy that becomes salient is that of image reversal. This kind of strategy can be seen in the way that he addresses the judges, especially when tying in elements of fear and power dynamics. At one point, he calls attention to the “incredible situation” of a “regime literally afraid to bring an accused man to Court; a regime of blood and terror that shrank in fear of the moral conviction of a defenseless man” and goes on to proclaim, “What unbelievable crimes this regime must have

committed to so fear the voice of one accused man!”<sup>41</sup>.

In this scenario, he not only brings to the forefront his own innocence, but in making his own allegation turns the accuser into the accused. This is relevant for diplomacy as it shows how easily a change in the offense/defense dynamic can follow the right language. In fact, near the end of the speech he reminds the court that “today you are judging an accused man, but that you yourselves will be judged not once, but many times... as these days are submitted to scrutiny in the future.”<sup>42</sup> Another important image reversal occurs with relation to Batista, when he says that “it matters little that these valiant and worthy young [revolutionary] men have been condemned, if tomorrow the people will condemn the Dictator and his henchmen.”<sup>43</sup> This is echoed in the ideas of psychologists like Anzieu and Chasseguet-Smirgel, who stated that people choose leaders who promote illusions of gratification, leading groups to potentially “try to destroy an external reality that it perceives as interfering with this illusion”<sup>44</sup>.

Another strategy closely related to figure reversal is juxtaposition, used to highlight the differences that Castro thinks lend him moral superiority. In talking of himself and the conditions in which he and his men fought, he states that there was no justice for either side from Batista and company, who instead enjoyed “living well-protected on their luxurious estates, surrounded by all kinds of security measures, while [Castro] ran a thousand risks with neither bodyguards nor arms.”<sup>45</sup> As for society at large, he once again uses a common Cuban identity, stating that “politicians spend millions buying off consciences, whereas a handful of Cubans who wanted to save their country's honor had to face death barehanded for lack of funds”<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup>Volkan, V, ‘Psychoanalysis, international relations and diplomacy’, *A Sourcebook on Large-Group Psychology*, Routledge, 2018, chapter 1.

<sup>45</sup> Castro, F, *History Will Absolve Me*, trans P Tabío, & A Booth, Fidel Castro Internet Archive, 2001, <https://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castr/o/1953/10/16.htm>, (accessed 1 May 2022).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

This is of course related to the idea of the “underdog”, and Castro indeed paints himself as a quasi-David figure in the face of a Goliath regime rather skillfully. This is reminiscent of a book by Malcolm Gladwell titled “David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits and the Art of Battling Giants” in which he problematizes the assumption of strength's importance in an adversarial relationship<sup>47</sup>. The central premise of the book is that David had the advantage of being a skilled slinger, while Goliath had the disadvantage of being a slow and easily identifiable target. The idea is that underdogs have more freedom not only in being able to subvert expectations of societal conventions, but also in the skills that may not initially seem relevant (in this case, Castro's skills as an orator).

Finally, Castro juxtaposes revolutionary actions with a sense of duty he says is innate in every Cuban, and in doing so attacks the very legitimacy of the regime through problematizing the word “revolution”. He does this with three consecutive rhetorical questions: “Can this state of affairs be called a revolution? Is it or is it not legitimate to struggle against this regime? And must there not be a high degree of corruption ... when these courts imprison citizens who try to rid the country of so much infamy?”<sup>48</sup> Both rhetorical questions and groups of three are persuasive strategies used widely in psychology and negotiation, and combining them with an appeal to logic makes his points all the more irrefutable. Castro ultimately

denounces Batista's regime as anti-Cuban, and in exulting universal principles elicits empathy from the Cuban people and shames the government, alienating it from the average citizen.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it is interesting that Castro targeted the regime through strategies like identity as well as figure ground reversal and conceptual juxtaposition to attack ideology and spare individuals. In this sense, his speech was also remarkable because it ends with the words “History Will Absolve Me”: it is not until the end that we learn his goal is not to be declared not guilty, but will instead accept “guilt” alongside those who share his ideology. This strips the court of its power, as it becomes clear that Fidel used his trial as a platform through which to spread his ideas.

Also, by saying that the court is merely a product of the political machine, Castro both sympathizes with those who will judge him (or at least refrains from antagonizing them) and exalts the importance of his truths. Thus, ideological superiority becomes the most crucial factor for the longevity of the moral foci he highlighted, and serves as the backbone to his more emotional or logical appeals in his legal defense.

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<sup>47</sup> Gladwell, M, *David and Goliath: Underdogs, misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*, Back Bay Books-Little, Brown and Company, 2015.

<sup>48</sup> Castro, F, *History Will Absolve Me*, trans P Tabío, & A Booth, Fidel Castro Internet Archive, 2001, <https://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castr o/1953/10/16.htm>, (accessed 1 May 2022).

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Page | 23

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# Understanding the Populist Phenomenon through Neuroscience and What it Means for Global Political Stability

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In July 1990, the President of the United-States, George Bush, declared that the nineties should be regarded as the: «Decade of the brain», since he believed that it was of public interest to further study the causes and possible treatments associated with neural diseases.<sup>49</sup> The strong impulse given to the field of cognitive sciences research, at that time, built the foundation for the emergence of modern neuromarketing. During this era, early connections were made between the neuroscientific and commercial fields.<sup>50</sup>

The study of consumer's decision-making processes is one of the main pillars of what constitutes neuromarketing: the science of understanding what resonates best with consumers' minds, in order to achieve better commercial results.

In 2016, two major elections, in the United-Kingdom and the United-States, not only caused a global upset, as they led to spectacular populist victories, but also shed light on how political strategists could rely on neuroscience-based approaches to lead electoral campaigns. While some consumers expressed their concerns in the early 2000s, as early forms of neuromarketing studies and campaigns

were underway, fearing that marketers could develop extremely persuasive ads, reactions remained limited. On the other hand, witnessing politicians using similar tools to gather popular support, in order to change the course of an election, legitimately raises more questions.<sup>51</sup>

With the rapid development of new digital technologies, through which users share immense amounts of valuable personal data, from which can be extracted cues allowing for accurate psychological profiling; and following the recent wave that brought populist leaders to power across the globe, often causing important geopolitical disruptions, it seems important to assess whether political neuromarketing has the potential to determine the results of elections and if, as a result, it could jeopardize political stability on a global scale.<sup>52</sup>

## Neuromarketing and how it can be used for political purposes

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<sup>49</sup> Jones, E. G., & Mendell, L. M. (1999). Assessing the decade of the brain. *Science* (New York, N.Y.), 284(5415), 739. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.284.5415.739>.

<sup>50</sup> Fisher, C. E., Chin, L., & Klitzman, R. (2010). Defining neuromarketing: practices and professional challenges. *Harvard review of psychiatry*, 18(4), 230–237.

<sup>51</sup> Dooley, R. (2015). Do neuromarketing and politics mix? *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine. Retrieved

June 6, 2022, from <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/rogerdooley/2015/11/20/do-neuromarketing-and-politics-mix/?sh=6d64e8756307>>.

<sup>52</sup> Hegazy, I. M. (2019). The effect of political neuromarketing 2.0 on election outcomes. *Review of Economics and Political Science*, 6/3: 235–51. DOI: 10.1108/reps-06-2019-0090.

### *What is neuromarketing?*

Only in June 2002 was the term: « neuromarketing » used for the first time by BrightHouse, an advertising firm located in Atlanta. The company had developed a new department that would rely on fMRI (Functional magnetic resonance imaging), as well as the expertise of a psychiatry Professor, in order to help clients develop compelling marketing strategies.<sup>53</sup>

The following year, a study published in *Neuron*, one of the most influential journals in the field of neurosciences, defined what added value neuromarketing could bring to the table. Respondents had to drink Coca-Cola and Pepsi while being monitored in an fMRI. When the brands were anonymized, brain imagery showed an equal level of appreciation between the two soft drinks. When the respondents knew the brand of the beverage they were drinking, they demonstrated a preference for Coca-Cola.<sup>54</sup>

This study highlighted the complexity of human decision-making processes.

Moreover, it shows that depending on the area of the brain met by an information, consumers will not behave in the same way. In this case, when the instinctive brain was targeted through the sense of taste, as Pepsi was being delivered in an anonymous way, respondents could not express their preferences for a particular drink. However, when the names of the brands were disclosed, another area of the brain was responsible for the decision, taking in

consideration cultural influences, and as a result respondents chose Coke.<sup>55</sup>

In comparison, often in vain do companies dedicate a lot of energy, financial means and time, trying to understand consumers' behaviors, desires, and thought processes, in order to deliver successful marketing and consumption experiences, using rationality-based assessment methods (surveys, discussions, focus-groups...).<sup>56</sup> Since following research works have shown that human beings process the majority of the information they receive unconsciously, neuromarketing's value then lies in its capability to help design products, services, and promotional campaigns that will inspire consumers more effectively.<sup>57</sup>

Historically, neuromarketers have relied on the idea that our physiological and neural responses to an information could translate our emotions and opinions with more accuracy than verbal descriptions<sup>58</sup>.

Today, the ever-growing scope of technologies and methods used for neuromarketing purposes makes it harder to grasp the discipline's whole essence.<sup>59</sup> As an example, marketers now include psychology and psychiatry as reliable ways to evaluate personalities and feelings. Furthermore, technical evolutions as well as the extensive research that took place, throughout the past two decades, have made it arduous to assess neuromarketing's real potential, since it now seems to be exploitable for more than just understanding and predicting an audience's behavior.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Fisher, C. E., Chin, L., & Klitzman, R. (2010). Defining neuromarketing: practices and professional challenges. *Harvard review of psychiatry*, 18(4), 230–237.

<sup>54</sup> McClure, S. M., Li, J., Tomlin, D., Cypert, K. S., Montague, L. M., & Montague, P. R. (2004). Neural correlates of behavioral preference for culturally familiar drinks. *Neuron*, 44/2: 379–87. DOI: 10.1016/j.neuron.2004.09.019.

<sup>55</sup> Morin, C. (2011). Neuromarketing: The New Science of Consumer Behavior. *Society*, 48/2: 131–5. DOI: 10.1007/s12115-010-9408-1.

<sup>56</sup> Agarwal S, Dutta T. 2015, Neuromarketing and consumer neuroscience: current understanding and

the way forward. *Decision*.;42(4):457-462. Accessed May 15, 2021.

<sup>57</sup> Morin, C. (2011). Neuromarketing: The New Science of Consumer Behavior. *Society*, 48/2: 131–5. DOI: 10.1007/s12115-010-9408-1.

<sup>58</sup> Narayanan, S., & Raj, P. (2020). Neuromarketing: The Science of Consumer Behavior. *Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode*, 1–4.

<sup>59</sup> Oliveira, J., & Giraldo, J.D. (2017). What Is Neuromarketing? A Proposal for a Broader and More Accurate Definition. *Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal*, 9, 19-29.

<sup>60</sup> Wu, T. [TedxTalks]. (2019, June 6). Neuromarketing: The new science of consumer

Indeed, Richard Thaler, a founding father of behavioral economics and Nobel prize recipient in 2017, worked to understand the mechanisms of human decision-making processes. In his 2008 book called « Nudge », Thaler stated that small and subtle alterations made to an environment, or an information, could influence a person's behavior in a desired way.<sup>61</sup>

According to the author, nudges take advantage of instincts and deeply rooted psychological traits. Daniel Kahneman, also a behavioral economist, wrote a book called « Thinking fast and slow », in 2011, in which he explains that the brain can be divided into two systems.<sup>62</sup> The system 1 brain is the instinctive and impulsive one, while the system 2 brain accounts for the rational one. Kahneman states that our system 1 brain is responsible for 95% of the decisions we make. On the other hand, he states that the system 2 brain is only in charge of the remaining 5%. Neuromarketing can take advantage of Thaler's and Kahneman's ideas and look at the concept of nudging as a potential way to, not only understand consumer's behaviors better, but also inspire their actions. Targeting the subconscious brain, by making small changes to the way information is delivered, could then help businesses influence consumers' decisions without them even realizing.<sup>63</sup>

### *The use of neuromarketing for political purposes*

Just like a business, political actors can use neuromarketing to address their target audiences in more engaging ways.<sup>64</sup> For the past twenty years, neuromarketing has been used in politics to serve two different purposes: political branding and the promotion of specific behaviors.

When it comes to branding, parties rely on advertising to gather popular support. Some early forms of political neuromarketing research can be traced back to the mid-2000s. As an example, during the electoral campaign opposing J. Kerry to G. W. Bush, studies were conducted by neuroscientists in California in order to compare the different levels of engagement associated with campaign ads.<sup>65</sup> Two decades later, this approach is now widely being used across the world.

In Mexico, Turkey, Poland and in many other countries, viewers' reactions to political ads have been monitored using Electroencephalography analysis (EEGs), fMRI and other eye tracking methodologies. This way, political neuromarketers can design appealing campaigns that fit viewers on an emotional level. For instance, as he was running for office in 2012, former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto used cameras, hidden in a campaign billboard, and capable of detecting facial expressions. The data collected was then analyzed to estimate the general feeling associated with the ad. Analyzing voters' subconscious minds has even been used by political parties to select the candidates that had the most chances of winning elections.<sup>66</sup>

If political neuromarketing can be used for predictive purposes, it is important to emphasize that, just like commercial neuromarketing, it can be used by political actors to influence behaviors as well. When one of South-East London's neighborhoods dealt with a serious vandalism issue in 2011, local authorities partnered with an advertising agency specializing in the field of neurosciences to find a solution. The agency suggested to paint baby faces on store fronts subject to vandalism. This strategy,

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decisions | Terry Wu | TEDxBlaire [Video]. YouTube.

<sup>61</sup> Wintermeier, B. N., Nikole Wintermeier Nikole is a content copywriter at Crobox in Amsterdam., & Yusuf. (2020). Nudge marketing: From theory to practice. *CXL*. Retrieved June 6, 2022, from <<https://cxl.com/blog/nudge-marketing/>>.

<sup>62</sup> Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

<sup>63</sup> Renvoise, P. [TedxBend]. (2013, May 21). Is There a Buy Button Inside the Brain: Patrick Renvoise at TEDxBend [Video]. YouTube.

<sup>64</sup> Hegazy, I. M. (2019). The effect of political neuromarketing 2.0 on election outcomes. *Review of Economics and Political Science*, 6/3: 235–51. DOI: 10.1108/rep-06-2019-0090.

<sup>65</sup> Tierney, J. (2004). The 2004 campaign: advertising; Using M.R.I.'s To See Politics On the Brain. *The New-York Times*.

<sup>66</sup> Skvortsov, A. Turkarlan, A. (n.d.). Iyna. *International Youth Neuroscience Association*. Retrieved June 6, 2022, from <<https://youthneuro.org/journal/article/215/>>

meant to stimulate our instinctive brain, helped reduce the number of incidents by 18%.<sup>67</sup>

While an extensive use of neuromarketing techniques, for commercial or political purposes, has been documented these past twenty years, there is still an ongoing debate regarding their capability to reduce humans' autonomy when making decisions. On one hand, some experts, such as Patrick Renvoise, one of the field's most popular consultant, claim that neuromarketing research can help us determine: « buy buttons » within consumers' minds.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, several scholars seem to mitigate neuromarketing's real potential for predicting and influencing behaviors. They claim that, at the end of the day, consumers are conscious beings and simply altering an information (nudging) cannot always trigger specific actions. Furthermore, to them, the vast number of parameters that come into play when humans make decisions, such as their general mood, makes it impossible for neuromarketers to predict or influence their reactions with certainty.<sup>69</sup>

However, knowing that in recent years, several high-stake elections around the world were overturned by populist candidates, who had incorporated neurosciences within their campaign strategies, it seems essential to evaluate whether political neuromarketing played a part in the populist phenomenon.

### **Can the recent populist phenomenon be explained by the use of political neuromarketing?**

Technology has evolved since the early stages of neuromarketing and since consumers' behavioral data are becoming more widely available. The

widespread access to the internet and the multiplication of connected objects allow companies to collect vast amounts of information.

Donald Trump's election, in November 2016, had not been predicted by the polls.

A key component of his strategy caught political scientists' attention: the participation of Cambridge Analytica, a British consulting company specializing in data-mining. The company used data from up to 50 million Facebook accounts in the United-States to develop micro-targeted ad campaigns.<sup>70</sup> Cambridge Analytica used the Big 5 personalities theory to assess the psychological profiles of all the users it drew information from. This way, the company managed to evaluate, with a high level of accuracy, the instinctive mechanisms of millions of Americans.<sup>71</sup> Once this had been determined, they used an artificial intelligence to tailor ad campaigns that would fit each of these citizens' unique system 1 brains.

It was then revealed that Cambridge Analytica, as well as companies such as AggregateIQ (AIQ), had used similar methods during other major political events. Mainly, the two were accused of helping the *Leave* camp win the Brexit referendum, which could be considered as the other most important populist victory of the past ten years.

Following Donald Trump's election, Cambridge Analytica's website stated that the organization had allowed the candidate to take over the White House. Such claims must be mitigated.

First of all, scholars who were questioned regarding neuromarketing's real potential expressed that, even though a large part of the human decision-making process relies on instinctive and subconscious impulses, humans cannot be influenced over a certain extent because rationality tends to take over,

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<sup>67</sup> Hooker, L. (2017, October 9). Have you been nudged? BBC News.

<sup>68</sup> Renvoise, P. [TedxTalks]. (2013, May 21). Is There a Buy Button Inside the Brain: Patrick Renvoise at TEDxBend [Video]. YouTube.

<sup>69</sup> Wieckowski, A. G. (2019). When Neuromarketing Crosses the Line. *Harvard Business Review*, 76–81.

<sup>70</sup> Hegazy, I. M. (2019). The effect of political neuromarketing 2.0 on election outcomes. *Review of Economics and Political Science*, 6/3: 235–51. DOI: 10.1108/refs-06-2019-0090.

<sup>71</sup> Ghuman, P. [TedxTalks]. (2020, March 30). Neuromarketing and the Future of A.I. Driven Behavior Design | Prince Ghuman | TEDxHultLondon [Video]. YouTube.

especially when making important choices.<sup>72</sup> While tailored ads, designed using in-depth psychological evaluations, have proven that they could lead to 40% more clicks (and as a result more purchases) than traditional ones, when it comes to selling products such as cosmetics, making electoral choices is different from buying conventional goods.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, as very few studies have addressed whether political neuromarketing had worked for electoral campaigns, no clear evidence shows that such tool could change one's opinion. A 2017 meta-analysis of 49 experiments, conducted on Americans' voting behavior, even found that political campaigns had almost no power of persuasion on the electorate, when it came to general elections like presidential ones.<sup>74</sup>

The fact that Ted Cruz was also working with Cambridge Analytica, during the Republican Primary, and was not voted as the party's candidate at the end of his campaign, constitutes another example that should be considered. Members of Mr. Cruz's team also openly criticized the company's performance. Based on the work published by different scholars as well as the primary research I conducted while writing my master's Thesis on neuromarketing, it seems like using neurosciences tends to help build more engaging electoral messages, but only to reinforce a population's pre-existing political stance.<sup>75</sup>

### Neuromarketing's potential impact on global political stability

Even though the neuromarketing campaigns led during the 2016 American election and the Brexit referendum could be regarded as the most accomplished so far, it is still not clear whether they

truly helped Donald Trump and the *Leave* party win. To this day, scholars seem to agree on the fact that political neuromarketing's true potential has been overestimated. Cambridge Analytica's own claims of being capable of overturning major elections, as well as the scandal involving Facebook's use of personal data, which also erupted following 2016, potentially contributed to the general sense of fear surrounding the use of neurosciences for political purposes.

However, neuromarketing's potential impacts on global political stability should not be taken lightly. First, while the recent populist wave translated a sense of mistrust for traditional political elites among an important share of western populations, using tools that could be perceived as manipulative, and doing so with a lack of transparency, might further deteriorate the essential trust relationship which binds citizens to their governments. Moreover, since neuromarketing seems to reinforce pre-existing political stances, it could lead to the accentuation of divisions within societies that are already highly polarized, potentially leading to excessive social tensions.

Finally, even though present-day neuromarketing technology does not allow for striking results, progresses achieved in the field of neurosciences, paired with the rapid development of new means, such as artificial intelligence, and resources, particularly the vast amount of data collected on the internet, could be used by some governments to launch massive, microtargeted influence campaigns affecting rival countries. In this sense, Herve Le Guyader, an engineer who works at the Ecole nationale supérieure de cognitive, in Bordeaux, as a delegate for the relations with NATO, calls for the creation of a sixth operational domain within the

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<sup>72</sup> Wieckowski, A. G. (2019). When Neuromarketing Crosses the Line. *Harvard Business Review*, 76–81.

<sup>73</sup> Resnick, B. (2018). Cambridge Analytica's "psychographic microtargeting": What's bullshit and what's legit. *Vox. Vox*. Retrieved June 6, 2022, from <<https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/23/17152564/cambridge-analytica-psychographic-microtargeting-what>>.

<sup>74</sup> Kalla, J., & Broockman, D. (2017). The minimal persuasive effects of campaign contact in general

elections: Evidence from 49 field experiments. *American Political Science Review*, 112/1: 148–66. DOI: 10.1017/s0003055417000363.

<sup>75</sup> Resnick, B. (2018). Cambridge Analytica's "psychographic microtargeting": What's bullshit and what's legit. *Vox. Vox*. Retrieved June 6, 2022, from <<https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/23/17152564/cambridge-analytica-psychographic-microtargeting-what>>.

## Exploring the Central Role of Psychology in International Relations

international defense organization: « the human mind »,<sup>76</sup>

Considering that, in 2019, China mentioned the creation of an innovative military concept focusing on

human cognition, notably relying on A.I, it seems likely that further attention will be drawn towards neurosciences and their application to politics.

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<sup>76</sup> Le Guyader, H. (2021, May 6). Le domaine cognitif de la manipulation est devenu un terrain de conflit. *Le Monde*.

# Decoding the 2016 U.S. Election: How Russian Leader Meddled with American Democracy

***A profound analysis of how psychology, technology and history are key elements to understand the turbulent Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election***

Faye LAMRANI

Faye Lamrani is a Sciences Po Paris student, who completed her Bachelor degree in Economics and Society. She discovered the exciting world of the ongoing regulation of crypto-assets during her internship in the Moroccan Central Bank. After her exchange semester at Yale-NUS in Singapore, she will return to Sciences Po Economic Law Masters program in the upcoming fall. Dynamic, curious, and interested in many subjects, she was fully committed to numerous student organizations. From being the Head of Junior Consulting in her campus, writer in the student economic journal *The Quarterly*, and Head of Events in Bureau des Arts, she enjoys to constantly be challenged and connected to her school's culture.

During the polarized political stage dividing the Reds and the Blues in 2016, Moscow initiated a threat when meddling with American Democracy. A wave of fake news and democratic drama with the release of private information led Trump to win his place in the Oval Office. This act was paired with targeted advertising that had ultimately disturbed the process of a democratic election in the United States, influencing and polarizing the American voters more than ever. This was later on called the "information warfare against the U.S.," having as an aim to place "distrust towards the candidates and the political system in general."<sup>77</sup> Russia, through massive propaganda on social media, commented on political content, created fabricated news and designed targeted ads that reached at least 126 million Americans.<sup>78</sup> The Kremlin's attack amplified existing social and political polarization by using emotionally provocative and evocative narratives by exploiting

the modern media environment. These "ads" drove the viewers' minds outside their original rational perspective, narrowing their understanding of the full political spectrum - thus influencing their ballot choice. The impacting Russian interference caused numerous sentiments from the American public: they were stressed and suspicious of their government's ability to organize democratic elections. The distrust towards the government was blatantly evident when 75% of Americans believed it was likely to witness a Russian or foreign influence again in the 2020 elections.<sup>79</sup>

## Emotional settings at the center of the meddling

Social scientist Marcus Holmes explains that stress "has long been believed to be harmful for decision-making and detrimental to pro-social behaviors,"<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - Document 1 Filed 02/16/18 <https://www.justice.gov/file/1035477/download>.

<sup>78</sup> M. Isaac and D. Wakabayashi, 'Russian Influence Reached 126 Million Through Facebook Alone', *The New York Times*, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/30/technology/facebook-google-russia.html>.

<sup>79</sup> H. Hartig, '75% of Americans say it's likely that Russia or other governments will try to influence 2020 election', *Pew Research Center*, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/18/75-of-americans-say-its-likely-that-russia-or-other-governments-will-try-to-influence-2020-election/>.

<sup>80</sup> M. Holmes, 'Fight-or-Flight or Tend-and-Befriend? Stress and the Political Psychology of

and now is considered to have other surprising outcomes such as building trust and a deeper understanding of intentions. In the stressful environment of the elections, U.S. politics were more divided than ever.<sup>81</sup> This made the population already open to highly propagandistic forms of communication, making the U.S. an easy target for Russian Hackers. In this situation, stress - with the release of oxytocin in the body - increased pro-social behaviors and formation of trust (such as befriending) hence creating a sharpened bipolarity of the electoral spectrum. In that sense, policy-makers need to invest and put more effort in educating the population on the dangers of nefarious foreign propaganda. Understanding human behavior and large-group cognitive psychology has become a necessity. Sigmund Freud's legacy in the application of the principles of psychoanalysis is significant in the understanding of the conscious and unconscious meanings.<sup>82</sup> The direct actors in this Russian-American scandal used psychoanalysis strategies in order to influence the unconscious minds of American voters in order to polarized their views (according to the famous saying "divide and conquer"). This provides us an explanation about human behavior, rather than a rationalization of the causality of the events<sup>83</sup>.

### **With E-Diplomacy comes new codes...and new dangers**

The meddling demonstrated the important place of technology and social media in international relations as new tools of manipulation at an important scale - essential to reach specific goals. Professor Godson specified that their aim was to "distort the target's perception of reality." It is now possible to influence millions of minds because of the rapidity and

efficiency of transmission of information through the Internet. Since present time is filled with new technological advances and accelerated modern globalization, it forces humans to face and experience a new type of civilization that includes the recognition of the fact that "old-type diplomacy under the influence of realpolitik is no longer effective in many areas of international relations and conflicts." During his testimony in 2018, Mark Zuckerberg even stated in front of Congress that "one of [his] greatest regrets in running the company is that we were slow in identifying the Russian information operations in 2016."

True power lies in this new way of doing diplomacy, using digital tools and virtual collaboration in contrast to traditional diplomacy with face-to-face encounters that dominated diplomatic activities.<sup>84</sup> Holmes defined e-diplomacy as a "strategy of managing change through digital tools and virtual collaboration." The U.S. are the leading country in technological advances, with a world-class educational system endowed with the best research universities. As Zuckerberg said in front of congress, the meddling started "an ongoing arms race." There is a great need in investing, creating and building new technological tools to help enhance national security. These technologies will enable better equipped administrations to exploit the data of its citizens, in order to change the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and international relations. It is necessary to bear in mind, while creating new technological gems, data privacy and national security.

### **Is History repeating itself?**

It remains primordial to study U.S.-Russian relations throughout history to elucidate the events of an

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Crisis Diplomacy', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 10(1), 15-21, 2015.

<sup>81</sup> The effects of stress on diplomatic crisis was also written about in :

P.J. Carnevale, and D.W. Choi, 'Culture in the Mediation of International Disputes', *International Journal of Psychology*, 35:2, 105-110, 2000.

<sup>82</sup> H.B. Levine, 'Psychoanalysis and Political Conflict: Is Psychoanalysis Relevant?',

*Psychoanalysis, International Relations, and Diplomacy*, London, Routledge Press, 2014.

<sup>83</sup> Reference to what Prudence Gourguechon said in 2011 during her lecture at the American Psychoanalytic Association's Winter Meeting in New York.

<sup>84</sup> C. Bjola and M. Holmes (eds.), *Digital Diplomacy: Theory and practice*, 1st edn, Routledge, 2015.

interference. As Eric Haseltine wrote in his book *The Spy in Moscow Station*, it is important to be effective in the process of punishing the harmful source. He explains the set of circumstances surrounding Russian penetration of security at the U.S. embassy in Moscow from 1976-1984. Haseltine described that the “get caught spying to make Americans fight themselves” was a well thought process used by Russians.

The various emotions felt by the American population are deeply anchored in the past wounds of the McCarthy period and the Cold War. In the 1950's America, the government summoned a considerable amount of U.S. citizens (free of guilt concerning felonies), constantly questioning them about their political views, accusing them of disloyalty and demanding to incriminate their close environment. McCarthyism was a plan to detain suspected communists and marked a long period of political repression in American History. When not cooperating, American citizens could either risk jail time or losing their job. Many lives and careers were destroyed - in an environment where, in the name of protection, democratic leaders muffled democratic freedoms. It all started with the presence of a small communist part in the United States that supported the Soviet Union. This led to the commonly known “espionage” practices during the Cold War, increasing the distrust and fear in the respective superpowers. Domestic communism was then considered as a menace to national security. The division between Republican and Democrat was sharp: then president Nixon participated in the accusation of democrats being tolerant on communism. McCarthyism was a historical period that narrowed the American political spectrum. This is fundamental in the comprehension of the shared feelings of distrust in 2016, and we can conclude that this similar situation of political division is harmful for the country.

During the 2016 Russian meddling, some techniques of “espionage” resurfaced, which explains the necessity to look back at history and detect previous efficient methods to prevent them from happening again. It is useful to create even better tools to counter the previous systems. Putin is constantly using public diplomacy with strategic purposes in mind. When looking back at the methods deployed during Soviet times, we could observe that “behavioral patterns from the Cold War period” resurfaced nowadays.<sup>85</sup>

### **Populist leaders: behavioral profiles to decrypt**

The Russian interference case was mainly handled by Robert Mueller, FBI special counsel for the Department of Justice, through the “Mueller Report.”<sup>86</sup> It described the conclusions drawn from the Russian interference and allegations of obstruction of justice. The indictment against the Russians accused them of stealing American identities, designing fake social media accounts and propelling fake news into the Web - to sway the decision of voters particularly in favor of a Trump victory. In 2017, the FBI, CIA and NSA released a report confirming that Putin had personally ordered the cyber-attacks and was undoubtedly in favor of a Trump presidency. Later on the Washington Post reported that Mueller's office was investigating the possible implication of Trump for obstruction of justice. That same year was marked with charges filed against Trump's former campaign chairman Paul Manafort for conspiracy. The Republican candidate was the ideal counterpart to his massive ego and rejection of the rules. We can even speculate that the Kremlin wanted to de-legitimize, and disrupt American democracy so that “freedom-oriented Russians” could not perceive the U.S. as an example. Putin's seeks to replace western freedom with an authoritarian example and absolute government control.

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<sup>85</sup> M. Kragh and S. Åsberg, ‘Russia’s strategy for influence through public diplomacy and active measures: the Swedish case’, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 40:6, 773-816, 2017.

<sup>86</sup> Correctly titled “Report on the investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Elections”.

Throughout the whole electoral campaign and even in its aftermath, Trump continued to actively downplay and deny all allegations of a Russian interference and the role played of his counterpart - that claim that his campaign colluded with Russia. American People had to wait until July 17, 2018 to finally hear their president acknowledge Russia's meddling in the elections: "I accept our intelligence community's conclusion that Russia's meddling in the 2016 election took place," he said – also precisising later on "Could be other people also. A lot of people out there." Trump-Russia ties were exposed in plain sight. Whereas Trump expressed his emotions on his Twitter feed, the Kremlin members wore their ultimate poker face. Their similar personalities of "populist leaders" and how they reacted to the allegations against them showed that - in their own unique manner - they succeed to incorporate particular psychological insights. Foreign policy decision-making is justified through cognitive psychology research on leaders' personalities. Trump openly spoke warmly of the Kremlin many times before and during his presidential campaign. Both Trump and his Russian counterpart present similar personalities. The meddling put into light the two leaders' relation with power, more specifically how their emotions affect the way they see power. They believe that they do not live by the rules: they can make their own. Alessandro Nai and Ferran Martínez i Coma explained that the "style" or "personality" of populists can be classified.<sup>87</sup> Their results demonstrated that populists have indeed the

same characteristics: a lower score on agreeableness and emotional stability, and a higher score on extraversion, narcissism and psychopathy. Both Trump and Putin are labelled as populists; and are also specifically characterized by their unusual character.

This meddling has serious consequences on present-day America: a breach in the steady electoral system was initiated by a foreign influence, impacting the trust of American voters. The cyber schemes and propaganda campaign showed a true premeditation and opportunistic perspective, playing with the minds and emotions of American citizens. We have to bear in mind that the risk is not limited to the powerful Kremlin – be it foreign or domestic, measures need to be implemented for the sake of U.S. national security. The propagation of discordant narratives over the Web are used to highlight the need for an improved response capability, engaging the entire society, building cognitive defenses, and install means for an alert mechanism to warn American people of the threat. During his first inaugural address, 34<sup>th</sup> American President Dwight D. Eisenhower delivered : "Whatever America hopes to bring to pass in the world must first come to pass in the heart of America." Has the *heart of America* been compromised in the hands of Russian agents? The interference called for a questioning of the very foundation of seemingly unmovable American principles, rooted in freedom and democracy.

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<sup>87</sup> A. Nai, and F. Martínez i Coma, 'The personality of populists: provocateurs, charismatic leaders, or

drunken dinner guests?', *West European Politics*, 42:7, 1337-1367, 2019.

# The Importance of Culture in Foreign Policy: A Retrospective Analysis on the Role of Culture in the Iranian Hostage Crisis

Isabella LOPES-MURPHY

Having lived part-time between the United States and Brazil and inspired by seeing first-hand the differences between her American and Brazilian homes, Isabella Lopes-Murphy has been fascinated by the cultural and social constructs that separate the world. Since her graduation from Sciences Po Paris with a Bachelor degree in Economics and Sociology, she hopes to continue uncovering and deconstructing the social norms that govern the world to create a more culturally conscient global community.

For much of the history of the discipline of International Relations, culture, traditionally associated with the emotional and private sphere and thus opposed to rationality, a trait highly valued within much of the discipline, has been seen “either as a nonfactor...or a negative factor”<sup>88</sup> in the international arena. However, international relations, both as a discipline and a practice, has begun to include more nontraditional factors, such as emotion, psychology and culture; thus, it is vital to reevaluate international diplomatic crises through a cultural lens to improve understanding of the interplays between culture and diplomacy to better handle tensions between nations with two disparate social backgrounds.

The Iranian Hostage Crisis – beginning on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1979, after a group of Iranian students invaded the U.S. embassy in Tehran, and ending 444 days later on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1981 – provides a pertinent case study of the role of culture in both creating and solving an international crisis. By utilizing a cultural analytical lens, this article will first evaluate the cultural differences between the United States and Iran that ultimately complicated diplomatic relations. It will then discuss Algeria’s function as a political and cultural relief through its role as a mediator in the latter half of the crisis.

## The cultural background to the hostage crisis: the U.S. and Iran as opposing cultural powers

Iran and the United States have been characterized by two distinct styles of negotiation, both of which stem from their respective culturally and socially valued characteristics and attributes. One of these attributes is their languages—Farsi and English—which play a large role in how negotiations and diplomatic requests are crafted and interpreted. Farsi, Iran’s predominant language, is nuanced and context-based, with each phrase or message loaded with meaning, as opposed to English, where words are taken at face value in diplomatic settings. For example, the words “concession” and “compromise”, common to the English diplomatic vocabulary, do not exist in Farsi; the closest comparison translates to “surrender” and is considered humiliating to Iran’s honor-based society<sup>89</sup>. This discrepancy is clearly seen when UN General Secretary Kurt Waldheim once said while in Tehran in 1980 that he “came as a mediator to work out a compromise”; this phrase was seen as an insult, pushed back negotiations, and

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<sup>88</sup> P. Carnevale and D.W. Choi, ‘Culture in the Mediation of International Disputes.’ *International Journal of Psychology* vol. 35, no. 2, 2000, p. 105.

<sup>89</sup> C. Landsberg, ‘An Analysis of Iranian Negotiating Style as Evidenced from the 1979 US Hostage Crisis and the Iran-EU Nuclear Negotiations from 2003 to 2006.’ University of Pretoria, 2009, p. 84.

resulted in the stoning of his delegation<sup>90</sup>. These discrepancies in diplomatic languages thus created difficulty in communication between Iranian and American diplomats, as attempts to create compromise, a notion highly disregarded within the Iranian diplomatic context, were seen as insulting.

Beyond language-based difficulties in communication, the United States and Iran are characterized by differing socially valued individual characteristics. Within the Iranian context, one shared cultural attribute is that of being “pessimistic, insecure and suspicious”<sup>91</sup>. This can be attributed to one of Iran’s religious foundations: that of the distinction between *baten*, or internal, and *zاهر*, or external elements<sup>92</sup>. The differentiation serves to protect *safayi batin* or inner purity against *bad-bin*, which describes negative characteristics such as suspicion, cynicism, and pessimism, typically attributed to the external world<sup>93</sup>. This religious dichotomy, and its importance in Iranian diplomatic strategies, was exacerbated by Iran’s history of constant invasions and external attempts to colonize the nation. With continued efforts of interference by outside forces, the United States included, the concept of inner purity and external evil became applied to the international arena, and conflicts were framed to be “a struggle between the destructive forces of external invading conquerors and the reproductive growing forces of the internal core of Iranian civilization”<sup>94</sup>. These pessimistic and untrusting characteristics ultimately impacted the Iranian negotiation strategy, including concepts such as *taqiyyah* or *kitman*, *tanfih* and *khod’eh*, which can be described as “techniques of deception”<sup>95</sup> and include “aloofness that entails one is ‘judiciously

doing nothing” and “tricking one’s enemy in order to benefit from them”<sup>96</sup> as diplomatic strategies.

On the American side, traits such as forthrightness and compromise are highly valued<sup>97</sup>, especially within the diplomatic arena. Similarly, the bureaucratic structure of American diplomacy is defined by an adherence to “normalcy”, including notions that the world is made up of nations, power is the ultimate form of struggle, economics and power are the roots of relations between nations, a small number of elite individuals rule nations, and, by extension, diplomacy and negotiations are to be done by those in the higher echelons of society<sup>98</sup>; anything outside of this scope is considered “abnormal”. These notions are highly linked to the United States’ cultural and diplomatic history that values individualism and a hierarchization of society, stemming from the notions of the Enlightenment, including capitalism and liberalism.

These differing cultural values ultimately translated themselves into differing negotiation styles and created difficulty and stress between American and Iranian leaders and diplomats, resulting in a deadlock in negotiations for the first year of the crisis. It created high levels of mutual distrust between the two parties, detrimental to expediting negotiations, as according to Seanon Wong, trust is a “prerequisite for...a behavioral impact...in a negotiation”<sup>99</sup>. This sense of suspicion on both sides was exacerbated by an accepted us versus them dichotomy that further differentiated the United States and Iran from each other. Each party labeled the other in opposition to itself, with the United States perceived as the “Great Satan” to Iran and Iran as a “crazy outlaw” to

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, p. 72.

<sup>93</sup> W. Beeman, ‘Iran and the United States: Postmodern Culture Conflict in Action.’ *Anthropological Quarterly* vol. 76, no. 4, 2003, p. 685.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p. 686.

<sup>95</sup> C. Landsberg, ‘An Analysis of Iranian Negotiating Style as Evidenced from the 1979 US Hostage Crisis and the Iran-EU Nuclear Negotiations from 2003 to 2006.’ University of Pretoria, 2009, p. 88.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>97</sup> N. Ghaemi, ‘The Psychology of Iranian-American Relations.’ *Psychology Today*, 2009. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mood-swings/200902/the-psychology-iranian-american-relations>.

<sup>98</sup> W. Beeman, ‘Iran and the United States: Postmodern Culture Conflict in Action.’ *Anthropological Quarterly* vol. 76, no. 4, 2003, pp. 677-680.

<sup>99</sup> S. Wong, ‘Emotions and the Communication of Intentions in Face-to-Face Diplomacy.’ *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 22, no. 1, 2016, pp. 144-67.

American diplomats<sup>100</sup>. This labeling, substantiated by cultural values and misconceptions about the other, created a hostile environment for negotiations, which would not have been solved without the inclusion of Algeria as an emotional and stress reliever.

### Algerian mediation: a political and cultural relief

Joining the hostage crisis as a mediator on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1980, Algeria proved to be a crucial actor in expediting negotiations, both because of their historical experience with mediating regional conflicts within Africa and the Arab world, which gained the attention and praise of American diplomats during crisis, and their cultural closeness to Iran, as both these countries share similar cultural experiences through language, religion, and their lack of recognition as “Arabs by the rest of the Arab world”<sup>101</sup>. Algeria, geographically, lies at the intersection between Western, Middle Eastern, and African cultures and, historically, has been a product of Roman, Berber, Arab, and French involvement<sup>102</sup>. Similarly, “Algerian people by nature are more sensitive to cultural subtlety and nuance”<sup>103</sup>. They thus served as a suitable median in between two opposing cultures, as “its Islamic and revolutionary history made it acceptable to Iran while its educated foreign service elite... [was] acceptable to the US”<sup>104</sup>. Additionally, Algeria’s principal method of mediation—reviewing and transmitting messages between the United States and Iran<sup>105</sup>—proved to be a successful tactic, as it reduced miscommunication that had previously stemmed from the differing

diplomatic and cultural practices between the U.S. and Iran.

Although the literature on psychology and emotions within international relations highlights the importance of face-to-face negotiations in facilitating and expediting compromise<sup>106</sup>, Algeria successfully acted as mediators despite the refusal of face-to-face negotiations by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Iranian leader at the time of the crisis, and enabled negotiations in a time of high emotional stress amplified by cultural misunderstandings and disagreements. Without a third party with a cultural understanding of both the U.S. and Iran, these very slight but impactful cultural differences may have, on their own, deterred Iranian-U.S. relations in the light of the hostage crisis and increased chronic stress, which results in aggressive behaviors, and subsequently, sub-optimal decision-making<sup>107</sup>. Thus, the role of Algeria as not only political, but cultural mediators, should not be understated when analyzing the Iranian hostage crisis from a cultural perspective.

### Conclusion

As seen through the example of the Iranian hostage crisis, culture within foreign diplomacy and international relations can play a decisive role in the methods, mechanisms, and effectiveness of negotiations, especially when conflict arises between two opposing cultural powers. Thus, the inclusion of mediators should not be seen as solely a political tactic, but a cultural one. The Iranian hostage crisis should be used as an example in future negotiations

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<sup>100</sup> W. Beeman, ‘Iran and the United States: Postmodern Culture Conflict in Action.’ *Anthropological Quarterly* vol. 76, no. 4, 2003, pp. 671–91.

<sup>101</sup> R. Slim, ‘Small-State Mediation in International Relations: The Algerian Mediation of the Iranian Hostage Crisis.’ In *Mediation in International Relations*, edited by Jacob Bercovitch and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, London, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1992. p. 219.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, ed. *Collected Courses of the Xiamen Academy of International Law*. Leiden; Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2008. p. 267.

<sup>105</sup> B. Beber, ‘International Mediation, Selection Effects, and the Question of Bias.’ *Conflict Management and Peace Science* vol. 29, no. 4, 2012, p. 401.

<sup>106</sup> M. Holmes, ‘The Force of Face-to-Face Diplomacy: Mirror Neurons and the Problem of Intentions.’ *International Organization* vol. 67, no. 4, 2013, pp. 829–61.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

and diplomacy crises to consider the importance of culture in the onset of a conflict. Through this strategy, consensus or compromise may be reached much quicker, and nations that appear to be

culturally opposed may be able to sit face-to-face at the negotiation table to create culturally sensitive and culturally salient agreements.

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Wong, S., 'Emotions and the Communication of Intentions in Face-to-Face Diplomacy.' *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 22, no. 1, 2016, pp. 144–67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066115581059>.

# Psychological Perspectives in International Politics: Greek Perceptions and the Macedonian Name Dispute

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For more than three decades, the unresolved name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia has been a focal point that defined – to a large extent – the bilateral relations between the two countries. Especially in Greece, it was one of the most discussed and disputed topics, draining enormous amounts of diplomatic resources since the late 1990s. Eventually, in 2018, the Prespes Agreement put an end to the name dispute resulting in large demonstrations and the electoral meltdown of the Greek government. In this regard, our paper seeks to explore the psychological dimension of the dispute through the conceptual lens of psychoanalysis, combined with the captured emotions of the citizens of the two countries. The methodology follows a qualitative approach applying certain theoretical contours, inspired by the current literature review and initiated discourse analysis. Nevertheless, the analysis does not aim to be an exhaustive or complete one; it is rather an effort to showcase the vast complexity of international politics and underscore the importance of psychological approaches in the comprehension and deconstruction of international issues and by extension to use this “cognitive springboard” to inspire and bolster further research overtures.

## The Contribution of Psychoanalysis: Explaining the Name Dispute

Psychoanalysis has long been neglected in the literature of political sciences and international relations. Nonetheless, it is still crucial in order to explain the personality of leaders, observing their habitual behaviors that they consciously or unconsciously utilize.<sup>108</sup> The main counterargument appears to be that it could not possibly be applicable to states, as they do not possess an ego, a superego or an identity.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, unconscious dynamics exist in decision and policy makers, since states are formed by human beings. Nevertheless, views are still contested on the role of psychoanalysis. For example, Morgenthau firmly supported the psychoanalytic role of international relations, while Wilhelm Reich kept a moderate position in the explanatory role of psychoanalysis towards the external irrational.<sup>110</sup> In this part of the paper, there is an effort of applying psychoanalytic theories to our case study, taking as a fact that it can effectively provide us with safe results, better understanding of the negotiations and the conflict issue as a whole.

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<sup>108</sup> V. D. Volkan, *Psychoanalysis, International Relations, and Diplomacy: A Sourcebook on Large-Group Psychology*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014, p. 20.

<sup>109</sup> K. Jacobsen, ‘Why Freud matters: Psychoanalysis and international relations revisited’, *International Relations*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2013, p. 397.

<sup>110</sup> J. Goldgeier, and P. E., Tetlock, *Psychological Approaches*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p.36.

Before reaching out to psychoanalysis though, it would be helpful to describe the main tenets of the Greek nationalism. According to the Greek academic Marina Petronoti, as she described in her research regarding the *Greek Cultural Nationalism* (2013), the Greek society is highly considering its culture as an “uninterrupted continuity of its homogeneity and legacy.”<sup>111</sup> That means that Greek nationalism, as it often happens to the nationalism of other countries, is based on the notion of a “real” Greek and the notion of purity, while is also heavily linked with territorial elements. Therefore, the denomination of “Greekness,” is not only dependent on the ethnic origin, but one also needs to have direct “ties with the Greek land.” This is also one of the cultural reasons that are significantly swaying the political decision of the Greek state not to recognize ethnic minorities. An example could refer to a part of the Greek population who fulfills the first criteria, that of ethnic origin, but they have no connection to a certain region of the country or they possess somehow different traditions and values (e.g., the Vlachs).

In addition to the above, it is important to highlight that symbols and history can become highly contestable when two entities come into loggerheads for the habituation of the same ones. In this respect, the more important the symbols are, the greater is the potential trauma to be occurred from one side to the other and vice versa. With that being mentioned, it is easy to understand how the Macedonian identity is linked to the Greek national imaginary and the notion of purity, thus pitting both countries into direct conflict based on their self-perceptions for each other. As a result, during the negotiations for the name dispute, what seems “rational” for the Greek side was perceived as “irrational” for North Macedonia and vice-versa. The dispute for the name contained a juxtaposition of cultural and historical narratives, which is depicted by the emotional continuum that perfuses the psychology of the people of both States.

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<sup>111</sup> M. Petronoti, ‘Disguising the sense of insecurity in ‘multicultural’ Greece in Dangerous Others’, in M. Lianos, (ed.), *Insecure Societies*, Ashgate, 2013, p. 60.

Nevertheless, the issue with the processes of national identity construction is that when it clashes with some other cultural elements or external stressors (e.g. financial or refugee crisis), it can cause negative sentiments such as fear and insecurity and indignation. At this point the field of psychoanalysis and its theories can contribute by complementing social-system explanations and deepening our understanding of how states negotiate, take decisions or even go to war.<sup>112</sup> The average Greek citizen is heavily possessed by high levels of anxiety, insecurity and indignation, sentiments that can be explained by two main factors: Firstly, because of the long financial and migration crises of the last decade; and secondly, the fear-factor of being threatened by external aggressors. For years, the main practice of both the media and the political system was to focus on Manichean discourses bound for demonizing North Macedonia, therefore nurturing and aggravating these sentiments within the Greek society.

On the grounds of the previous, the cultural imaginary is intrinsically linked to symbols and traditions of the nation, as it happens for every nation state since its very foundation. For Greece two symbols-national myths were at stake during the dispute with its neighbors; first the emblem of the Sun of Vergina, which symbolizes the king dynasty of Macedonians; second the national myth existing that the northern part of Greece is the main region where the ancient kingdom of Macedonians was situated. Both of them symbolize the historical continuum and preserve national traditions and myths, which remain deeply embedded in the relevant region of Greece until today. With the adoption of the same traditional symbols and values from North Macedonia, there was a severe trigger of the abovementioned feelings creating a sense of a life threatening environment in Greece that was further ignited by the media.

Bearing in mind the Modern Greek history, it is fairly easy for one to understand how these insecurities

<sup>112</sup> W. R. Caspary, ‘New Psychoanalytic Perspectives on the Causes of War’, *Political Psychology*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1991, p. 425.

have been created or enhanced at the Greek mindset. The country had been dragged into a number of conflicts throughout the last century, paying a heavy price and losses in order to safeguard its independence (e.g., two Balkan Wars; two World Wars; the Asia Minor catastrophe; the Turkish invasion of Cyprus). As a result, it was not difficult for these traumatic experiences to reveal and created a new sentiment, that of the threatening environment. Based on the experienced past traumas Greek residents of the Macedonia region, feared losing and ceding a part of their identity and realized that one of their national symbols, along with the historical continuum and the reassuring role it does represent, has been taken away. This national sentiment of the majority of the population, made the name dispute unsolvable for around three decades, with Greek governments reverberating this approach. According to an extensive quantitative survey on Greek public attitudes in 2017, a large majority of participants (71.5 per cent) rejected any reference to the term "Macedonia" as a part of any future solution; only 22.5 per cent responded that they could accept a composite name that would include the term "Macedonia."<sup>113</sup>

Continuing with the psychological "deconstruction" of the Greek position, the name dispute consisted as a de facto security dilemma which created additional fear for Greece.<sup>114</sup> This predication was based on the fear that Greek history and cultural heritage could be expropriated and resulted in Greece leveraging its political sway and advantageous position in international organizations (i.e., Greece's institutional membership in NATO and the European Union), thus incrementally paving the way for a

Greco-North Macedonian stalemate. Essentially, the ethno-cultural strife between both sides became increasingly confrontational through reparative policy maneuvers aiming to re-establish the chosen glory of each state and gain the trust of the masses. Hence, the accession efforts of North Macedonia - at that time coined as Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) - to join NATO were shattered by the Greek veto in the NATO Summit of 2008 in Bucharest under the slogan "Macedonia is one and is Greek". The same reparative patterns were also followed by North Macedonia's former Prime Minister Nicola Gruevski who initiated the antiquization policy by 2015 in various instances.

These high-risk policy gambits were closely aligned with the identities of both States and their unconscious fear of survival, therefore establishing a hardline psychological reciprocity. This reciprocity can be found in the collective trauma, which according to Volkan is "the mental representation of an event that has caused a large group to face drastic losses, feel helpless and victimized by another group, and share a humiliating injury."<sup>115</sup> However other opinions do depict trauma differently giving additional perspectives. For Brunner, as an example, trauma is a key identity marker in deep-rooted violent conflicts for large groups and communities.<sup>116</sup>

In any case, both Greece and North Macedonia used at times the tactic of instigating and escalating their dispute by diffusing its intensity in their respective societies. Essentially, the objective of both sides to impose their red-lines on each other could also be attributed to their type of leadership. In other words, leaders can exercise reparative leadership, aiming to

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<sup>113</sup> I. Armakolas, and G. Siakas, 'What's in a name? Greek Public Attitudes towards the "Name Dispute" and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2018', *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)*, 2018, p. 18, <https://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Whats-in-a-name-Report-poll-on-name-issue-2018.pdf>, (accessed 1 March 2022).

<sup>114</sup> K. Jacobsen, 'Why Freud matters: Psychoanalysis and international relations revisited', *International Relations*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2013, p. 395.

<sup>115</sup> V. D. Volkan, 'Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity', *Group Analysis*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2001, p. 89.

<sup>116</sup> M. Brunner, 'Criticizing Collective Trauma: A Plea for a Fundamental Social Psychological Reflection of Traumatization Processes', in C. Barrette, B. Haylock, and D. Mortimer, (eds.), *Traumatic Imprints. Performance, Art, Literature and Theoretical Practice*, Oxford (Inter-Disciplinary Press), 2012, p. 207.

restore the chosen glory of the state; however, the existing outcome allows us to distinguish a second type of leadership, which is the narcissist-destructive one.<sup>117</sup> For example, North Macedonian's former Prime Minister Nicola Gruevski initiated the antiquization policy until 2015, in order to fanaticize the country's masses. In the meantime, Greece's veto in the NATO Summit of 2008 in Bucharest along with an intense nationalistic rhetoric, summed in the phrase "Macedonia is one and is Greek," followed the same patterns as a locomotive to achieve the same objective.

Lastly, the final resolution of the dispute in psychoanalytic terms was difficult to manage, since both sides and especially Greece, acted as the wounded party during the negotiation process.<sup>118</sup> By leveraging the sentiments of people, Greece shaped its political narrative and in turn achieved two desiderata; the first was to avoid international pressure (i.e., according to the International Court of Justice, the Greek objections of 2008 resulted in violation of the Interim Accord of 2005), nevertheless its self-victimized rhetoric allowed the country to escape from controversy by the international community; the second was that the Greek government cultivated a well-protected reasoning that justified its sometimes hardline decisions during the name dispute. Despite these developments, one of the cardinal takeaways that authors want to focus is that the relations between States are like those between people; in essence, they can be forged via trust-building and the exercise of goodwill by both subjects.

### Conclusion

To conclude, psychoanalysis can indeed contribute to our understanding of the process of negotiation around disputes. It can also help us understand the interaction between leaderships and between societies. In our case, collective trauma combined with fear, insecurity and nationalism hindered the process for decades. One could argue that, during the last decade, the unresolved dispute began to act against Greece's national interests taking into account the wider, regional, geopolitical context.

It is also evident that psychoanalytic analyses need to be combined along with other psychological aspects such as the cognitive one, and the specific role of emotions. The latter, emerge from a series of different factors in international politics. At a certain extent, individual and group emotions are socially constructed. This is why each society and state entity has different perceptions on an occurring event. If these events happen to have large societal implications, they will potentially invoke common group-reaction from its members. This was the case during the final part of the negotiation of the Prespes Agreement where large, and very emotionally-charged, demonstrations were organized in different parts of Greece.

Hence, the above psychological aspects and perceptions were one of the reasons that the aforementioned dispute remained unresolved for decades. It raised the political costs for each subsequent government significantly and the most convenient solution was to mainly stick with the status quo. However, it is not the only reason. National and regional interests, pure cost-benefit calculations of political leaderships, and backstage bargaining cannot be ignored. Psychological analysis is only a piece of the puzzle and further research is necessary in order to assess its role.

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<sup>117</sup> V. D. Volkan, 'Narcissistic Personality Organization and "Reparative" Leadership', *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, vol. 30, no. 2, 1980, p. 141.

<sup>118</sup> K. Jacobsen, 'Why Freud matters: Psychoanalysis and international relations revisited', *International Relations*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2013, p. 399.

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Page | 42

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# Application of psychological insights into the issue of the return of cultural artefacts to former colonies

Lucile DEVULDER

Lucile Devulder recently graduated from Sciences Po Paris, where she pursued a master in International Public management. Her academic interest lies in cultural diplomacy as well as the role of art in international relations. In September 2022, she will start a master in cultural heritage and museum studies at Panthéon-Sorbonne University.

“The acquisition of cultural objects and resources and their transfer to the capitals of Europe were at the heart - and not at the margins - of the colonial enterprise”<sup>119</sup>. Since their independence, many countries, on all continents, have issued (formal or informal) requests for the return of cultural artefacts. At first completely ignored by Western governments, these claims started to receive attention from a part of the international community in the 1970s particularly. A major shift occurred in 2017 when French president Macron announced that he wanted the temporary or permanent return of African heritage to Africa<sup>120</sup>. Subsequently, the debate has reached an unprecedented scale; concrete actions have been taken by several European countries and returns have been carried out: these are still isolated acts but they reveal that things are moving forward.

This issue has now been widely studied and the psychological dimensions of the issue have been acknowledged (from UNESCO’s work in the 1970s<sup>121</sup> to recent and current research<sup>122</sup>). However, these

psychological aspects have not in themselves been much studied. It should be noted that some of the psychological processes discussed below may vary from one region to another and from one appropriation context to the next, but this paper aims to identify common psychological mechanisms that are essential to understand the issue.

## Cultural artefacts, identity and history

Cultural artefacts are not like other objects. They have “a unique status” and “they are irreplaceable and priceless”<sup>123</sup>. They bear witness of the people’s creativity, knowledge and customs. According to Amadou-Mahtar M’bow, these objects “bore witness to a history, the history of a culture and of a nation whose spirit they perpetuated and renewed. The peoples who were victims of this plunder (...) have not only been despoiled of irreplaceable

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<sup>119</sup> F. Sarr and B. Savoy, *Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle*, 2018, p.10.

<sup>120</sup> Discours d’Emmanuel Macron à l’université de Ouagadougou, Elysée, 2017, <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2017/11/28/discours-demmanuel-macron-a-luniversite-de-ouagadougou> (accessed 30 April 2022)

<sup>121</sup> “There are certain psychological difficulties which are linked to the incriminating aspects of the act of restitution”. G. Fradier, ‘Return to the

Homeland’, *The UNESCO Courier: a window open on the world*, XXXI, 7, 1978, p.1 11.

<sup>122</sup> “The (historical, psychological, and political) responsibility of this past which indeed has not yet passed, remains one of Europe’s greatest challenges for the 21st century”. F. Sarr and B. Savoy, *Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle*, 2018, p. 2.

<sup>123</sup> C. Roodt, ‘Restitution of art and cultural objects and its limits’, *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, Vol. 46, No. 3, November 2013, p. 291.

masterpieces but also robbed of a memory<sup>124</sup>. Individuals get attached to personal objects, but they also get attached to shared objects of their group. Cultural artefacts are thus linked to the very identity of a people, as well as to their history and memory.

Mercer shows that “culture influences cognition” and “influences feeling and thinking”<sup>125</sup>. He explains that through shared culture, people do not just associate with a group, but become that group<sup>126</sup>. Moreover, large-group and individual identity are inextricably intertwined and damage to the one can have important consequences for the other<sup>127</sup>. Lazali’s research on post-colonial Algeria shows that up to the present day, “the relationship between the individual and the collective is suffering”<sup>128</sup>. Thus, the acquisition of cultural objects by colonial powers affects “both the individual and the group as part of the foundation of their humanity (their spirituality, creativity, transmission of knowledge)”<sup>129</sup>, as well as their very identity and history, and the link between their individual and group identity. Furthermore, their loss does not only engage the generation that suffers them, but also the following generations.

### The loss of the original meanings

Cultural artefacts often lose their original meanings and roles when exhibited in European museums. According to Ben Okra, “the people themselves are (...) in exile from the highest significance that years

of ritual evolution and social evolution and artistic evolution have given rise to”<sup>130</sup>. Therefore, how can formerly colonised communities today fully construct their identity as a group and as individuals, when those cultural objects are far from their territory, in European museums where they have lost their original meanings?

The issue of amnesia is also important here because while the memory of objects is often still vivid following violent events, other objects have disappeared from the memories of new generations: “the absence of cultural heritage can render memory silent”<sup>131</sup>. Thus, research shows that for the despoiled populations, “it’s about accomplishing a twofold task of the reconstruction of their memories and one of self-reinvention, through a re-semanticization and a re-socialization of the objects of their cultural heritage”<sup>132</sup>.

### The reappropriation of artefacts in European ‘universal’ museums

Europeans reappropriated cultural objects coming from the colonies to their museums. According to Giquello: “when artists at the beginning of the century rediscovered the details of African art, it is also the creation of our own 20th century Western art that is at stake”<sup>133</sup>. In this way, Froggett and Trustram show how museum visitors make personally significant links with objects, and Roodt shows that “humans

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<sup>124</sup> A-M. M’bow, ‘A Plea for the return of an irreplaceable cultural heritage to those who created it’, *The UNESCO Courier: a window open on the world*, XXXI, 7, p. 4-5, illus., 1978, p. 4.

<sup>125</sup> J. Mercer, Feeling like a State: social emotion and identity, *International Theory*, 2014, 6(3), p. 523.

<sup>126</sup> J. Mercer, Feeling like a State: social emotion and identity, *International Theory*, 2014, 6(3), p. 523.

<sup>127</sup> H. B. Levine, ‘Foreword. Volkan Vamik Psychoanalysis’, *International Relations and Diplomacy*, 2014, p. 4.

<sup>128</sup> K. Lazali, ‘Le trauma colonial, Une enquête sur les effets psychiques et politiques contemporains de l’oppression coloniale en Algérie’, *La Découverte*, 2018

<sup>129</sup> F. Sarr and B. Savoy, *Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle*, 2018, p. 6.

<sup>130</sup> *Restitution? Returning artworks to Africa* [documentary], Director N. Philippe, Arte, France, 2021.

<sup>131</sup> F. Sarr and B. Savoy, *Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle*, 2018, p. 30.

<sup>132</sup> F. Sarr and B. Savoy, *Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle*, 2018, p. 27.

<sup>133</sup> *Restitutions d’oeuvres d’art africaines : si simple, si complexe* [podcast], Les Échos, 2021 <https://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/services-conseils/restitutions-doeuvres-dart-africaines-si-simple-si-complexe-1369153> (accessed 30 April 2022).

tend to have a deep sense of personal attachment to these objects, even if the objects are unaffected by the distance that may exist between the observers and the creating culture<sup>134</sup>. Cultural objects, through their displacements, adopt new meanings<sup>135</sup>.

Moreover, European 'universal' museums gather 'cultural heritage of all mindkind' to make it accessible and benefit more people. Yet, in practice, accessibility is limited, as only an advantaged minority can get visas and access these museums. It is also clear that behind this rhetoric, there are power interests (museums contribute to national prestige, influence and soft power) as well as an ethnocentric bias. Why couldn't the 'universal' also be experienced on other continents? Discourses are important: Kuusisto argues that "our reality is forever being created in and through discourses"<sup>136</sup>. In this way, European museums seem to have had a monopoly on discourse, but "a story can never be complete if it is told from the perspective of a supposedly omniscient narrator"<sup>137</sup>. Finally, following on prospect theory, Taliaferro<sup>138</sup> argues that leaders particularly have an aversion to losses in their state's relative power, international status or prestige. This may partly explain the reluctance of Europeans to return objects.

### Collective trauma and the impossibility to heal

For the former colonised populations, the question of trauma and collective trauma is central, that is an "harmful or overwhelming phenomena which are believed to have deeply harmed collective identity"<sup>139</sup>. The loss of cultural objects in colonial context and their absence to the present day thus contributes to and re-enacts a collective trauma for the former colonised populations. In this case, it is transgenerational, as it "persists beyond the lives of the direct survivors of the events" and continues until the present day<sup>140</sup>: psychological growth is then impossible for the communities living in trauma. Therefore, it seems that the return of significant objects to their place of origin is needed for the populations to start healing from the colonial trauma. It also seems crucial for the nations or communities' collective memory. Research shows that cultural artefacts, as "publicly available symbols maintained by society", shape and maintain collective memories, and thus "involve an active past that forms a community's identity". According to the Sarr-Savoy report, memory work accompanied by the return of emblematic objects "can function as an operator for the reconstruction of the identity of subjects and communities".

### A psychoanalysis of Western reactions to restitution claims

On the Western side, these objects in public collections bear witnesses of a colonial past that

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<sup>134</sup> C. Roodt, 'Restitution of art and cultural objects and its limits', *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, Vol. 46, No. 3, November 2013, p. 291.

<sup>135</sup> "What the ensemble of displaced objects constitute is in fact a "diaspora", according to the specialist of Modern African Art, John Pepper. Once they have been displaced, the objects endure a variety of processes and experiences of successive re-semanticization, and have undergone an excessive imposition of several layers of signification." F. Sarr and B. Savoy, *Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle*, 2018, p. 25.

<sup>136</sup> Kuusisto, R. (2002) 'Heroic tale, game, and business deal? Western metaphors in action in Kosovo', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 88:1, pp. 52.

<sup>137</sup> Welcome Speech of Senator Dr. Carsten Brosda, Opening of the exhibition "Benin. Looted history", 16 December 2021, <https://www.hamburg.de/bkm/wir-ueber-uns/15711276/benin-bronzen-ausstellungseroeffnung-englisch/> (accessed 8 May 2022).

<sup>138</sup> Welcome Speech of Senator Dr. Carsten Brosda, Opening of the exhibition "Benin. Looted history", 16 December 2021, <https://www.hamburg.de/bkm/wir-ueber-uns/15711276/benin-bronzen-ausstellungseroeffnung-englisch/> (accessed 8 May 2022).

<sup>139</sup> Cited in I. Visser, 'Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects', *Humanities*, 2015, p. 15.

<sup>140</sup> I. Visser, 'Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects', *Humanities*, 2015, p. 15.

Europeans sometimes wanted to forget. They create a “tension between the desire to view the group in a positive light and the acknowledgment of severe moral transgressions in its past”<sup>141</sup>. Psychoanalysis helps us understand Western reactions to restitutions claims. First, Europeans turning a deaf ear on those requests - or refusing to engage in negotiations under the guise of the inalienability of public collections - was a way to deny the very occurrence of the events, that is refusing to take responsibility. Secondly, Hirschberger shows that “more often than not, reactions to an uncomfortable history will take on a more nuanced form with group members reconstructing the trauma in a manner that is more palatable”<sup>142</sup>. It seems that a rationalisation mechanism (that is: a logical, moral or rational explanation to justify one’s behavior) was used when some museums argued that it was too risky to send the artworks to countries that do not have adequate means to conserve them properly (misperceptions of Europeans about other countries’ skills are also here at play). Thirdly, the argument of the 'cultural heritage of all mankind' mentioned above seems to be a sublimation mechanism (that is, a way of channelling potentially negative feelings or impulses into socially acceptable behaviours), as European museums make beauty, cultural diversity and human creativity accessible to the world. Finally, the fear of museums being emptied seems like an anxious anticipation strategy, according to which the subject anticipates the consequences of a possible future event and considers realistic alternative responses, and because of the anxiety, tends to exaggerate the problems.

### Collective guilt and shame and the recognition of past wrongs

Western societies' reactions mentioned above must be understood in a context of collective guilt and shame. Psychological research shows that those group-emotions can arise “even if those experiencing the emotions were not directly implicated, or may not even have been alive at the time”<sup>143</sup>. Moreover, research shows that “collective guilt and shame, as feelings related to collective and not personal behaviour, are more probable in new generations unconnected to historical crimes”. It thus seems that these group emotions, with regard to the issue of colonization and keeping cultural objects from colonial times, are higher in recent generations than in older ones.

The difference between collective guilt and shame can be summarized this way: “I feel bad about what I did,” (guilt) versus “I hate myself” (shame)<sup>144</sup>. Research shows that “guilt is strongly related to reparation and apology and shame is usually associated with tendencies to escape, hide or distancing motivation”<sup>145</sup>. Defense mechanisms, as analyzed above - such as denial as a way of escaping responsibility or distancing oneself from past events - could therefore be related to shame. In this way, feelings of collective guilt - rather than collective shame - would lead to a greater acknowledgement of responsibility and to a greater willingness to return objects. Yet, other research also shows that shame can have positive implications in terms of apologies and reparations, as “in a guilt apology, the act rather than the self is despised” and “in a shame apology, the self is more completely implicated and the abasement more profound”<sup>146</sup>.

It seems that there is a need for Europeans to consider these group emotions. French President Sarkozy saying in 2016 that post-colonial guilt must

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<sup>141</sup> G. Hirschberger, ‘Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning’, *Front Psychol.* 2018, p. 2.

<sup>142</sup> G. Hirschberger, ‘Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning’, *Front Psychol.* 2018, p. 2.

<sup>143</sup> J. A. Allpress et al, ‘Atoning for Colonial Injustices: Group-Based Shame and Guilt Motivate Support for Reparation’, *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* : Vol. 4 (1) 2010, p. 78.

<sup>144</sup> P. Grzanka, K. Frantell, R. Fassinger, ‘The White Racial Affect Scale (WRAS): A Measure of White Guilt, Shame, and Negation’, *Couns Psychol.* 2019;48(1), pp. 47-77.

<sup>145</sup> D. Páez et al, ‘Dealing with collective shame and guilt’, *Psicología Política*, No 32, 2006, p. 60-61.

<sup>146</sup> R. Giner-Sorolla, C. Kamau-Mitchell, E. Castano. ‘Guilt and Shame Through Recipients’ Eyes: The Moderating Effect of Blame.’ *Social Psychology.* 41, 2010, pp. 88-92.

end<sup>147</sup>, or Nigel Biggar's article 'Don't Feel Guilty About Our Colonial History' are evidence that this is not always the case. From the analysis above, it seems that for the West, recognising collective guilt could help understand the need to return some objects ; and that recognising collective shame could facilitate a good reception of the apology. According to Roodt, "restitution is central to the reconciliation process as it recognises past wrongs and reconstitutes identity"<sup>148</sup>.

### Conclusion

On 6 May 2022, an agreement was reached between the Centre Pompidou in France and four German

museums, the first focus of which is "provenance research and treatment of collections acquired in a colonial context". The historiographical work that must be carried out on the contexts of appropriation is thus crucial in the processing of restitution requests. The point is indeed not to say that all European museums should be emptied, but it is about starting to move beyond a still bitter common history, to heal, in order to be able to build healthier relations between countries. The debate is particularly thorny because it involves questions of individual and collective identity, history, emotions, trauma and the repression of a distressing past. It is therefore essential to consider the psychological mechanisms that are at play.

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<sup>147</sup> M. Koda, 'Nicolas Sarkozy veut en finir avec la "culpabilité post-coloniale"', *France Info*, 2016, <https://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/nicolas-sarkozy-veut-en-finir-avec-la-culpabilite-post-coloniale-394265.html> (accessed 24 May 2022).

<sup>148</sup> C. Roodt, 'Restitution of art and cultural objects and its limits', *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa* , Vol. 46, No. 3, November 2013, p. 304.

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# The Role of the Italian ex-Minister of Interior, Matteo Salvini, in the Management of the Mediterranean Migration Control: Populist Personality and Cognitive Structure

Chiara LONOCE

Chiara Lonoce has been committing, during her various degrees, to the topics of migration and intercultural relations. She will further research on the protection of migrants' rights. She is currently involved with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and with Amnesty International, organizing awareness-raising campaigns in Italy.

The Mediterranean migration emergency refers to the humanitarian crisis, caused by a failure of migration management by Mediterranean countries, since late 2004. Ever since, people risk their lives in the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe on a daily basis, escaping from war, discrimination, political persecution, and economic inequalities. Furthermore, the Mediterranean migration flow is composed of the Western, Eastern and Central European routes, seeing the latter being the deadliest route of migrants coming from African countries, departing mostly from the Libyan coast. In addition to Greece, Cyprus, and Malta, Italy is one of the "first-arrival" countries that have seen migration escalate into a humanitarian crisis during the past decade. Moreover, this escalation is going to be explained in the following paragraphs, through the analysis of anti-immigration policies enacted by populist leaders, such as Matteo Salvini, as part of a more general Italian approach to migration, that prioritizes national security over human rights protection. A further explanation of the Italian failures in the migration management can be traced back to the Italian colonization past in Libya, and how it has shaped current Libya-Italian relations. This paper shows how the populist personality and cognitive structures of Matteo Salvini, together with the

memory of the Italian colonization past, have shaped Italy's attitude toward migrants departing from the Libyan coast, resulting in important implications within the Libya-Italian bilateral agreements.

## Psychological insights: Cognitive Structures and Populist Personality

In accordance with the analysis conducted by Nai et al. on *The Personality of Populists* in 2019, it was shown that what defined a candidate as "Populist" was their low scores on Agreeableness (cooperative and pro-social behaviours), Openness, Emotional Stability (detachment and low emotional distress), and Conscientiousness (discipline and responsibility). As well as high scores on Extraversion, Narcissism, Psychopathy and Machiavellianism. In this manner, Matteo Salvini is considered to have a populist personality due to his low score on Emotional Stability (1.10/4) and high scores on Narcissism (2.83/4).<sup>149</sup> Especially on Narcissism, the direct implication can be seen, through how his political campaign was built, that led him to become the most followed and talked about Italian politician in 2019. Indeed, Salvini has constructed an important social machine called "*the Beast*", managed by Luca Morisi and other 35 digital

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<sup>149</sup> A. Nai and F. Martínez i Coma, 'The personality of populists: Provocateurs, charismatic leaders, or drunken dinner guests?', *West European Politics*,

vol. 42(7), 2019, pp. 1337–1367. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01402382.2019.1599570?needAccess=true>

experts, that covered Salvini's life all day every day. The 17 posts on social media per day, 60 million interactions and 40 million likes resulted in 34% of consensus in the European Parliament election in 2019<sup>150</sup>. This social mechanism was and still is based on the so-called *TRT mechanism*, which stands for *Television, Rete* (network) and *Territory*, and consists of a system that puts in relations older and newer forms of communication platforms. Promoting and boosting social media, television interviews, and live and real-time commenting, has created a close relationship between the viewers and social media users, creating an overall increase in public engagement. This vicious circle brought TV shows more audience, increasing Salvini's invitations to intervene in their programmes, all of it as a result of "the Beast" mechanism. Moreover, the social machine is also based on the profiling of voters, by which targeted messages are sent to 1000 loyal supporters, that by sharing them on Facebook pages and WhatsApp group chats, captivate more and more people.<sup>151</sup> By understanding how powerful this social mechanism resulted to be, it is easier to understand to what extent, Salvini's anti-immigration policies, has shaped the public opinion. Indeed, in addition to the targeted messages above-mentioned, targeted slogans and constructed narratives were also used as a tool to pressure the Italian population in engaging with anti-immigration policies. In this context, reference can be made regarding the different hashtags that he has launched on social media such as "#finalapacchia, #primagliitaliani and #portichiusi",<sup>152</sup> (translated in "the end of the free

riders", "first the Italians" and "closure of seaports" respectively), to frame migration as an external damaging force that could have been solved only through the closure of the Italian seaports. From this analysis, it clearly stands out how Salvini's Narcissist personality, has made him through "the Beast" construct an *ad hoc* political machine that needs to turn to profile voters to gain more political engagement with anti-immigration policies. Additionally, to Narcissist traits, we can conduct a comparative analysis with other populist personalities such as Donald Trump or Boris Johnson, that have used similar advertisement machines and *modus operandi*. An example can be made regarding Cambridge Analytica's scandal, that was characterized by the illegal selling of Facebook's data to build voters profiles and target them with specific messages used in favour of Trump presidency.<sup>153</sup>

Similarly, in analysing the populist personality, cognitive structures are an essential tool to explain whether a leader is more or less inclined to change his/her belief on a core policy issue.<sup>154</sup> The implication of two cognitive categories, cognitive openness, and cognitive complexity, is used to explain a leader's inclinations to negotiate and their tendency to change their own political beliefs. In this matter, Salvini's case is a particular case in which a shift from a high to low cognitive openness and complexity can be observed. Indeed, at the beginning of his political career, a higher degree of openness was visible, however, once he reached a

<sup>150</sup> M. Gabanelli and S. Ravizza, 'Matteo Salvini e «La Bestia»: come catturare 4 milioni di fan sui social', *Corriere della Sera*, 20 October 2019, <https://www.corriere.it/dataroom-milena-gabanelli/matteo-salvini-la-bestia-come-catturare-4-milioni-fan-social-facebook-twitter-instagram/a00069d2-f33f-11e9-ad64-4488d500d2a2-va.shtml> (accessed 17 April 2022).

<sup>151</sup> M. Gabanelli and S. Ravizza, 'Matteo Salvini e «La Bestia»: come catturare 4 milioni di fan sui social', *Corriere della Sera*, 20 October 2019, <https://www.corriere.it/dataroom-milena-gabanelli/matteo-salvini-la-bestia-come-catturare-4-milioni-fan-social-facebook-twitter-instagram/a00069d2-f33f-11e9-ad64-4488d500d2a2-va.shtml> (accessed 17 April 2022).

<sup>152</sup> M. Gabanelli and S. Ravizza, 'Matteo Salvini e «La Bestia»: come catturare 4 milioni di fan sui social', *Corriere della Sera*, 20 October 2019, <https://www.corriere.it/dataroom-milena-gabanelli/matteo-salvini-la-bestia-come-catturare-4-milioni-fan-social-facebook-twitter-instagram/a00069d2-f33f-11e9-ad64-4488d500d2a2-va.shtml> (accessed 17 April 2022).

<sup>153</sup> N. Confessore, 'Cambridge Analytica and Facebook: The Scandal and the Fallout So Far', *The New York Times*, sec. U.S. 4 April 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/04/us/politics/cambridge-analytica-scandal-fallout.html>.

<sup>154</sup> G. Ziv, 'Cognitive structure and foreign policy change: Israel's decision to talk to the PLO.' *International Relations*, vol.25(4), p.426–454, 2011.

wide political consensus, this openness shrunk considerably. As an example, this initial degree of openness can be observed in his political shift in the identification of the source of the economic recession, being at first the Southern Italians and then migrants. Including the Southern Italians in his united battle against migrants, constantly discriminated by his former policies, caused a spike in electoral consensus from 14% to 24% in three months<sup>155</sup>. This shift was represented by a parallel swing in slogans from “*First the North*” to “*First the Italians*”, which allowed him to gain trust and votes from the southern regions of Italy which, as the first regions of migrants’ arrival, were the most suffering from a lack of migration policies. Despite his ultimate goal to secure electoral votes, Matteo Salvini has proven to change his political agenda, highly centred around the discrimination of the South and focused on the importance of the Northern industry sector for Italy’s economic development. However, it is visible that, once he gained enough adherence, lower cognitive openness and complexity were implied in the migration management, resulting in a strict approach, prioritizing border control over human rights. Moreover, he started building his popularity around his anti-immigration policy and extreme nationalism. In doing so, he legitimized xenophobia and worked on images of fear and anxiety for the migration narrative. This approach had an enormous impact on the perception of public opinion on migration policies and on his role in negotiations with other European countries for the reallocation of migrants. To illustrate the practical actuation of the negotiation process, the case of the Sea-Watch 3 of June 2019 is analysed. Indeed, in 2019, Matteo Salvini denied the request to dock a rescue ship, until other EU countries had agreed to open their seaports and borders to migrants. Nevertheless, the German ship captain Carola Rackete decided to dock the rescue ship on the Italian coast to rescue the migrants and was arrested. Matteo Salvini, in this case, erected himself as the “breast mother”, since

he constructed the narrative in which he was protecting the Italian citizens from the “outside threat”: the migrants. Indeed, Salvini has shown no tolerance nor openness in allowing the ship to dock unless the other European countries allowed the reallocation of migrants. In the short term, this severe approach has partially worked, because by triggering sentiments such as pity and empathy, different EU countries engaged with the suffering of migrants. Indeed, countries such as Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, and Portugal agreed to take migrants in, but it still was a partial win for Salvini. In fact, in the long term, this strict approach has proved to be unsuccessful, setting barriers for further negotiations in the EU context. Because it has created a sentiment of uncertainty, negotiations have remained in the stage of extreme emotions and mistrust and have not evolved to the communicative content stage of negotiations, enabling the delivery of effective migration policies.<sup>156</sup> This case study has shown how the populist personality traits of Salvini such as openness, agreeableness and narcissism have shaped the Italian response to the crisis. Moreover, it has demonstrated how it has influenced further relations with EU members and set out the premises of other conflict resolutions.

From the analysis of Matteo Salvini’s political agenda, which focused on anti-immigration policies, criminalization of NGOs and closure of Italian seaports, it can be observed how this attitude had a direct impact on migrants’ arrivals, violation of human rights and death rate in the Mediterranean Sea. Moreover, in analysing the timeline of the migration crisis from 2004 to 2019, two spikes of arrivals can be observed, one in 2008 and the other in 2017. A drastic drop in migrants’ arrivals, corresponded to the year after both peaks, due to controversial Libya-Italian bilateral agreements. Moreover, in 2008 under Silvio Berlusconi’s presidency, Italy signed with Libya “*The Treaty on Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation*”, which, even if it was supposed to be

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<sup>155</sup> Bailo, F. ‘Il successo della Lega, i media e le crisi migratorie’, *YouTrend*, 6 Novembre 2019. <https://www.youtrend.it/2019/11/06/il-successo-della-lega-i-media-e-le-crisi-migratorie/>.

<sup>156</sup> S.Wells, P. Taylor and E. Giebels, ‘Crisis negotiation: from suicide to terrorism intervention’, *Edward Elgar Publishing Limited*, 2013,

Italy's colonial reparations, has turned to be used as leverage toward Libya, to ensure migration control<sup>157</sup>. However, these political and economic ties were once again re-established through the "Memorandum of understanding" in 2017 by which, in exchange for the Italian funding of the Libyan Coast Guards, Libya guaranteed the migration management by capturing whoever would have been caught attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea. This resulted in severe human rights violations and illegal incarcerations of migrants in Libyan detention camps. Overall, this demonstrates how Salvini's anti-NGOs policies were incorporated, already in a hostile environment, which was only exacerbated by his "closure of seaports". Indeed, already under the Minister of Interior Minniti, the predecessor of Salvini, following the peak of 2017, a drop of almost 75% of migrants' arrivals resulted from these agreements.<sup>158</sup> However, as can be seen from the table, under Minniti's leadership a drop in arrivals corresponded to a drop in deaths in the Mediterranean Sea, but still, this parallel decrease did not occur under Salvini's leadership. On the contrary, it can be observed that from 2018 to 2019 with Salvini as Minister of Interior, a diverging trend characterized the variation of arrivals and deaths. Indeed, a further drop in migrants' arrivals, with the reach of the lowest point ever of 10,000 migrants a year, compared to 200,000

arrivals/year before 2017<sup>159</sup>, was the result of an anti-NGOs policy<sup>160</sup>. In fact, accused of being a pull factor for migrants that decide to cross the Mediterranean Sea, the activity of Search and Rescuing (SAR) was outlawed. This resulted in an increase in migrants dying in the Mediterranean Sea of 19%, despite the drop in migrants' arrivals of 75%. This meant that a reduction of arrivals did not translate into a reduction in deaths, but on the contrary, the central route became more dangerous with no rescue operations and with a greater role in surveillance of the Mediterranean Sea by returning migrants to Libya. The increase in death rates clearly demonstrated a failure in the migration policies, as well as the groundless argument of NGOs playing a pull factor role. Overall, a direct relation can be drawn between the populist traits, the low score on openness and agreeableness, with the increase in death rates due to a lack of SAR operations and prioritizing of national security, in the Mediterranean migration management. A change of narrative is needed in order to change the migration management towards the prioritization of human rights protection. Until leaders, will continue to use the images of migrants to increase their consensus and gain electoral votes, the population will continue to be responsible for thousands of migrants' deaths every year, in the Mediterranean Sea.

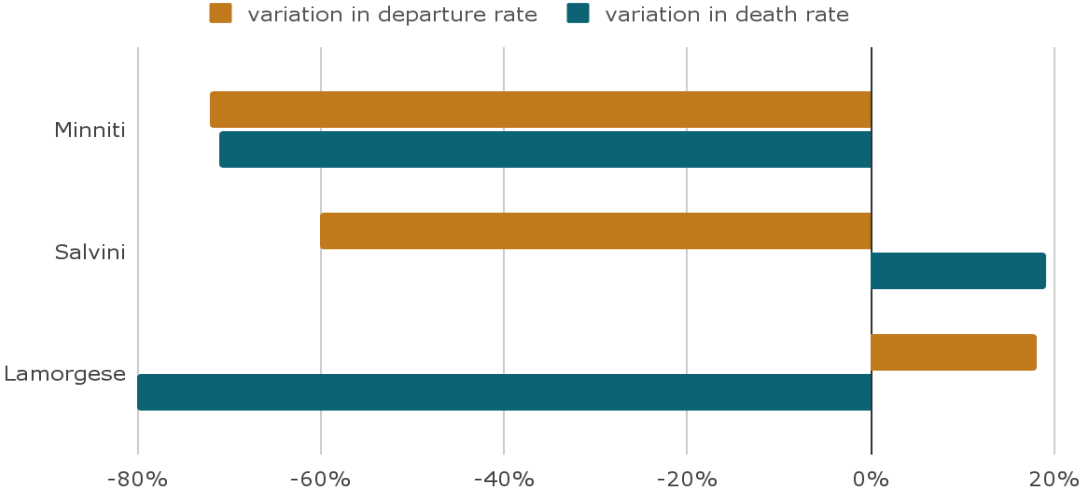
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<sup>157</sup> G. Abbondanza, 'Italy's migration policies combating irregular immigration: From the early days to the present times', *The International Spectator*, vol 52(4), 2017, pp.76–92. [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03932729.2017.1384606?casa\\_token=x5k6pFVa6d4AAA:AA:IAJYaNzZOwARBB0BRvLOwIFsb8PRKzaF-eALtTagAwdR\\_S8iqOL5sHewrYHUc3AxFJ4bw4N0OPg](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03932729.2017.1384606?casa_token=x5k6pFVa6d4AAA:AA:IAJYaNzZOwARBB0BRvLOwIFsb8PRKzaF-eALtTagAwdR_S8iqOL5sHewrYHUc3AxFJ4bw4N0OPg)

<sup>158</sup> M, Villa, 'Migrazioni nel Mediterraneo: tutti i numeri' *ISPI*, 22 February 2020, <https://www.ispionline.it/it/publicazione/migrazioni-nel-mediterraneo-tutti-i-numeri-24892>.

<sup>159</sup> M, Villa, 'Migrazioni nel Mediterraneo: tutti i numeri' *ISPI*, 22 February 2020, <https://www.ispionline.it/it/publicazione/migrazioni-nel-mediterraneo-tutti-i-numeri-24892>.

<sup>160</sup> Decreto Sicurezza bis 2019 (DPC).



# The Role of Emotions and Memories in the Response of European Union Member States to the Afghan Migration Crisis

Manon ROBIN

Manon Robin is a second-year student at Sciences Po. She has engaged within associations for better integration of immigrant populations on the French territory. In parallel, she has developed an interest in psychology as a key to understanding complex political phenomena. In this article, she uses the prism of emotions to shed light on two topics of particular interest for her, namely immigration and populism.

Through this paper, we wish to analyze the role of emotions and memories associated with immigration in the European context. Psychological insights are very relevant to analyze how the Afghan immigration crisis has been apprehended. European politicians and populations are still very marked by the memory of the refugee crisis of 2015. Images and emotions have been associated with the arrival of immigrants. This leads to a general trend of adoption of more restrictive policies that go so far sometimes as even hostile behaviors. Beliefs shape attitudes and decision-making. The question of immigration highlights the salience of emotions in political affairs.

## The Taliban's arrival to power triggering a new immigration wave

During the summer of 2021, the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan and established a government. Fearing the establishment of this new regime, part of the population has decided to flee to Europe. According to the European Commission, in 2020, Afghan people were the second top nationality to apply for asylum (for the first time) with 44, 285 registrations. Afghan people are part of the group that was granted most often protection in 2020 along with Syrians and Venezuelans. Afghan people also represent a significant share of the people crossing the European border in an irregular situation, representing 8.1% of the total share in 2020. Following this major political and diplomatic event, European leaders reacted promptly. On August 5,

2021, six EU countries -namely Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, and the Netherlands- made it clear: the European Union should not open its doors largely, a tight control of borders is necessary. In the letter intended for the European Commission, one can read: "We would like to highlight the urgent need to perform returns, both voluntary and non-voluntary, to Afghanistan (...) Stopping returns sends the wrong signal and is likely to motivate even more Afghan citizens to leave their home for the EU". What triggered such a prompt response is very probably the pressing memory of the 2015 Syrian immigration crisis that shook the European Union. Indeed, the 2015 immigration crisis remains very present in European collective memory. The response by the European Union at the time was marked by confusion and lack of coordination. The different Member States experienced the crisis very differently whether pressure was felt directly at their borders or not. Italy, as well as Greece, have been marked by this episode as entry gates to Europe, they were geographically more permeable to immigration. Germany also developed a particular memory of the crisis. Angela Merkel responded with generosity to the flow of immigration coming to Europe. The mismanagement at the European level of the crisis encouraged nationalist withdrawal. The rise of the populist far-right in Italy rode the wave of immigration control to develop and gain more voters. The United Kingdom left the European Union to "take back control" of borders for various purposes including the issue of immigration. Iain Begg, a

professor at the London School of Economics, highlighted that Brexit had a highly emotional dimension. For AFP, he declared in 2016: « C'est le côté émotionnel qui l'a emporté » (The emotional side won). What is the emotional side that Begg refers to? How does this affect political decision-making and the building of national narratives?

### **The negative perception of immigrants: the portrayal of a threat**

Immigrants are often associated with negative images in the imagination of a certain number of Europeans. Immigrants are represented as a burden to the country or sometimes as violent persons. In a study by the Pew Research Center published in 2018, immigrants were described as a burden by 54% of Italian respondents, 74% of Greek respondents, and 35% of German respondents. This emphasizes the fact that the immigration crisis of 2015 has been experienced more severely in Italy and Greece than in Germany. It explains why Greece and Italy have both fiercely advocated for more restrictive immigration policies since 2015. What is more, immigrants are represented as violent persons. They trigger feelings of resentment and fear. According to the same study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2018, 59% of Greek respondents state that immigrants in the country are more to blame for crime than other groups. This is 52% for German respondents and 44% for Italian respondents. This violent image sometimes goes so far as associating immigrants with terrorists. It is believed that immigrants increase the risk of terrorism in the country according to 65% of the respondents in Greece and 60% in Italy. The question of immigration is associated mainly with right-wing radicals with securitization stakes. The securitization justification is used to legitimize the claim for very restrictive policies.

There is a conflation between terrorism and certain nationality with specific religious beliefs. Syrian migrants as well as Afghan migrants come from countries where the majoritarian religion practiced is Islam. Through erroneous simplification, antipathy is developed towards certain nationalities and religious beliefs. A bit more than half of the Italian and Greek

respondents have an unfavorable opinion of Muslims in their country (Pew Research Center, 2018). This association between immigrants and violence sometimes goes so far as Muslim immigrants and terrorism are instrumentalized by some right-wing populist parties. Playing on these negative emotions that immigrants trigger, they advocate for more restrictive policies and a national withdrawal. The antipathy is exemplified to develop a clear “us” v. “them” distinction.

### **Right-wing radical parties playing on this supposed threat to national security**

Fear, mistrust, and anger are important emotions that play an essential role in identity-building and the development of large-group dynamics. Immigrants are sometimes placed at the center of a fantasy narrative that exemplifies the initial negative emotions to create an image of threat. The psychological fence is sometimes not perceived as enough and therefore strong restrictive policies are proposed to materialize a physical border between groups. An immigrant is perceived as an outsider intruding into a distinct community from its original one. Maykel Verkuyten explains: “The term ‘immigrant’ denotes someone who is from elsewhere and who is an outsider both legally and socially. Legally, a (non-naturalized) immigrant is an outsider because he or she has no citizenship, and socially he/she is an outsider because of not being recognized as belonging to the same imagined national community”. Psychologically, the immigrant is perceived as a culturally “other”. Soon, a nationalist discourse can even create a hierarchy between different groups.

In the case of right-wing populist leaders, the nationalistic rhetoric turns into a form of “large-group narcissism” as coined by Vamik Volkan. This narcissism emphasizes national cultural heritage and practices to oppose them to a foreigner perceived as incompatible with the culture of the nation. Exclusion of foreigners through their stigmatization further emphasizes narcissism by triggering among the members of the group feelings of self-esteem and reinforcing the in-group cohesion. Abrams et al. detail: “Through processes of downward comparison

and derogation, excluding those who are stigmatized may help those who are not stigmatized to feel better about themselves and their group”.

Behind the idea that immigrants can be the source of insecurity, it is also an idea of cultural insecurity. “Affective communities” are defined by Emma Hutchison as “communities produced or preserved at least in part by a host of emotional representations that either implicitly or explicitly preference particular ways of feeling and perceiving of the world”. They can be politicized and emotions become the base on which one can rely for promoting certain values and policies. For an individual, relying on an authoritative figure -a populist leader- to handle a situation that causes stressful emotions is a mechanism of defense. It is called regression.

### **Restrictive policies as a defense mechanism**

The entering of such salient emotions into policy-making can lead to the adoption of defense mechanisms as policies. Restrictive immigration policies can be interpreted as a form of response to the negative emotions that one connects with the idea of a stranger entering one’s “affective community” challenging its cultural principles. Salvini’s lack of empathy towards refugees’ boats stuck in the middle of the sea in August 2019 can be understood as the expression of a defense mechanism. By preventing ships from berthing, he denied the reality of having then to deal with these immigrants.

The stressing of immigration presented as an issue to be solved by right-wing radical populists further

spreads the politicization of the question within the public opinion. According to Krzyzanowski et al. (2018), “the description of the recent migration flows as “crisis” is both stigmatizing -especially for the migrants themselves- and adding an unnecessarily alarmistic connotation to this discourse”. In turn, this encourages mainstream parties to adopt more restrictive policies to tackle the “question of immigration” giving the impression of controlling the situation.

### **‘Controlling’ the Afghan immigration crisis**

The memories of the 2015 crisis are still very present in Member States’ minds. That’s why the Afghan crisis has been dealt with quite differently from the Syrian one. The European Union has tried to organize and cooperate to prevent the confusion of 2015. If Member States did not manage to agree on a common policy at the European level, they tried to give a prompt and give the impression of handling the situation. The EU’s response included sharing the ‘burden’ of an immigration wave with non-European countries. This is what the French President Emmanuel Macron meant by saying that “Europe cannot face the consequences of the current situation on its own”. With this strategy, the ‘burden’ of immigration has been shared with non-European countries and this prevented an uncontrolled wave of immigrants to arrive directly on European soil. This allowed European’s cohesion to be protected, preventing any fierce debate between more ‘vulnerable’ countries on the borders of Europe and more ‘protected’ ones.

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Page | 57

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# The Role of Large-Group Identities in Post-Conflict Mostar

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Page | 58

A United World College Alumni, she recently graduated from Jacobs University Bremen, Germany where she pursued a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations, Politics, and History. In September 2022, she will start her graduate studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science, where she will focus on Conflict Studies. Her academic interest lie in peaceful conflict settlement, conflict resolution, and the role of international organizations such as the United Nations.

The global conflict at hand is the persisting dire situation in the city of Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H). The Bosnian War ended 26 years ago, and yet walking through Mostar one is confronted with numerous reminders of the hot conflict. Beneath the surface of destroyed buildings that have not been removed yet, gapes a deep ethnic division. This persisting ethnic divide lies at the root of the catastrophic governance in Mostar, unable to deal with high unemployment rates,<sup>161</sup> the urban exodus and general infrastructure demands. The people of Mostar, a city with centuries long multi-ethnic history and rich cultural heritage,<sup>162</sup> deserve a sustainable future based on common values and a peaceful yet integrated coexistence of ethnicities.

This paper will analyse the post-conflict situation in Mostar and illuminate possible reasons for the persisting ethnic divide utilizing insights from psychology. While the field of psychology can contribute to conflict resolution in various ways, this

paper will focus on two themes namely on the role of emotions and large-group identities.

## Background

Mostar has been a multi-ethnic city for centuries. Even its name itself, Mostar, meaning bridge, symbolizes the cultural bridge this city embodied in the past.<sup>163</sup> During the post-World War Two era, Mostar was part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with Josip Broz Tito as its leader.<sup>164</sup> Tito's government emphasized the doctrine of "Brotherhood and Unity" which held the country together.<sup>165</sup> After Tito's death however, this multi-ethnic unity started to crumble apart. On April 6, 1992 Bosnia and Herzegovina became an independent state.<sup>166</sup> The same day marked the beginning of a war<sup>167</sup> lasting nearly three years and costing thousands of human lives and involving grave crimes such as genocide.<sup>168</sup> The violent conflict was finally brought to end with extensive UN interventions supported by NATO forces. Finally, the Dayton

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<sup>161</sup> Z. Pavlovic, S. Sarajcic, and R. Phillips. "Labour Market Review of Bosnia and Herzegovina." *European Training Foundation* 2006.

<sup>162</sup> C. Grodach. "Reconstituting Identity and History in Post-War Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina." *City* 2002. 6 (1): 61–82.

<sup>163</sup> L. Naomi. "International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

<sup>164</sup> M. Calic. "History of Yugoslavia" Edited by Dona Geyer. *Purdue University Press* 2018.

<sup>165</sup> A. Hromadzic. "Discourses of Integration and

Practices of Reunification at the Mostar Gymnasium, Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Comparative Education Review* 2008. 52 (4): 541–63

<sup>166</sup> M. Calic. "History of Yugoslavia" Edited by Dona Geyer. *Purdue University Press* 2018.

<sup>167</sup> D. Campbell. 1998. "Metabosnia: Narratives of the Bosnian War." *Review of International Studies* 24 (2): 261–81.

<sup>168</sup> T. Cushman, and S. Mestrovic. "This Time We Knew: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia" New York: *New York University Press*. 1996.

Agreement was acknowledged November 21, 1995, and subsequently formally signed in Paris on December 14, 1995.<sup>169</sup>

Among the causes of these hostilities was nationalism dividing the three main ethnic groups of the country, all also representing the population of Mostar, namely Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats.<sup>170</sup> Mostar was often described as a microcosm of Bosnia, due to its ethnic make-up. Before the war erupted 34,4% of Mostar's inhabitants declared themselves as Muslims (Bosniaks), 34% as Croats, 18,8% as Serbs and 11,2% described themselves as Yugoslavs.<sup>171</sup> Today the city remains multi-ethnic, but largely ethnically segregated.<sup>172</sup> The most recent data stems from 2013, accounting for the Mostar population being 49,1% Croat, 44,8% Bosniak and merely 4,2% Serb.<sup>173</sup>

In November 1994 the Old Bridge, build in the sixteenth century,<sup>174</sup> was deliberately destroyed by Croat nationals, marking the breaking point of physical segregation in the society.<sup>175</sup> The destruction of the stone bridge also destroyed its

symbolic meaning of unity.<sup>176</sup> 26 Years after the war fire ceased, the Old Bridge is rebuilt, however the ethnic divide marked by its destruction remains. The eastern side, almost entirely destroyed by the war, is inhabited almost exclusively by Bosniaks. The western side on the other hand suffered much less destruction, and while it lacks the old down town scenery it possesses infrastructure such as factories and institutions.<sup>177</sup>

During and after the war, Bosnia received great international attention, aiming at its reconstruction. "By the end of 1996, 17 different foreign governments, 18 UN agencies, 27 intergovernmental organizations, and about 200 NGOs (...) were involved in reconstruction efforts."<sup>178</sup> Mostar received particular attention.<sup>179</sup> The reason for this is that in contrast to many other Bosnian cities, Mostar did not become homogenous in its ethnic population make-up.<sup>180</sup> Unfortunately, Mostar was subject to immense destruction during the war, in fact it was considered the Bosnian city that suffered the most.<sup>181</sup> Additionally, its political significance, being the largest city of Herzegovina, attracted international

<sup>169</sup> "The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina ('Dayton Peace Agreement')"

<sup>170</sup> M. Calic. "History of Yugoslavia" Edited by Dona Geyer. *Purdue University Press* 2018.

<sup>171</sup> A. Hromadzic. "Discourses of Integration and Practices of Reunification at the Mostar Gymnasium, Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Comparative Education Review* 2008. 52 (4): 541–63

<sup>172</sup> G. Wollentz. "Making a Home in Mostar: Heritage and the Temporalities of Belonging." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 2017. 23 (10): 928–45.

<sup>173</sup> City Population 2013. [https://www.citypopulation.de/en/bosnia/admin/federacija\\_bosna\\_i\\_herceg/11410\\_\\_mostar/](https://www.citypopulation.de/en/bosnia/admin/federacija_bosna_i_herceg/11410__mostar/)

<sup>174</sup> M. Armaly, C. Blasi, and H. Lawrence. "Stari Most: Rebuilding More than a Historic Bridge in Mostar." *Museum International* 2004. 56 (4): 6–17.

<sup>175</sup> S. Forde. "The Bridge on the Neretva: Stari Most as a Stage of Memory in Post-Conflict Mostar, Bosnia–Herzegovina." *Cooperation and Conflict* 2016. 51 (4): 467–83.

<sup>176</sup> L. Naomi. "International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case." *Journal of Intervention*

*and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

<sup>177</sup> A. Hromadzic. "Discourses of Integration and Practices of Reunification at the Mostar Gymnasium, Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Comparative Education Review* 2008. 52 (4): 541–63

<sup>178</sup> P. McMahon. and J. Western. "The Death of Dayton: How to Stop Bosnia from Falling Apart." *Foreign Affairs* 2009. 88 (5): 69–83.

<sup>179</sup> L. Vetter. "The Power of Administrative Categories: Emerging Notions of Citizenship in the Divided City of Mostar." *Ethnopolitics* 2007. 6 (2): 187–209.

<sup>180</sup> G. Carabelli, A. Djurasovic, and R. Summa. "Challenging the Representation of Ethnically Divided Cities: Perspectives from Mostar." *Space and Polity* 2019. 23: 116–24

<sup>181</sup> J. Yarwood. *Rebuilding Mostar: Urban Reconstruction in a War Zone*. *Liverpool University Press*. 1999; L. Vetter. "The Power of Administrative Categories: Emerging Notions of Citizenship in the Divided City of Mostar." *Ethnopolitics* 2007. 6 (2): 187–209; C. Cameron. "From Warsaw to Mostar: The World Heritage Committee and Authenticity." *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology* 2008. 39 (2/3): 19–24.

attention.<sup>182</sup> Even though Mostar has seen a degree of improvement, some argue that the peacebuilding efforts have themselves reinforced the ethnic divides<sup>183</sup> and that the over two decade long international involvement cannot be considered a success.<sup>184</sup>

## Analysis

Looking at the Dayton Agreement itself, several shortcomings become evident. The agreement identified and acknowledged “three constituent nations” each possessing individual rights.<sup>185</sup> The language used acknowledges the fact that there are three different, separate and incompatible groups of people. From a psychological standpoint it is evident that such labels will not be conducive to the reconstruction of one overarching large group identity.

The European Union took on the responsibility of administering the city even before the war came to an end.<sup>186</sup> On July 23, 1994 former Mayor of Bremen, Mr Hans Koschnick was inaugurated city administrator.<sup>187</sup> The goals of that administration were clear: the successful return of refugees, the reconstruction of the city, protection of human rights, establishment of a functioning police and the

organisation of democratic elections in Mostar before the end of this administrative period.<sup>188</sup> Financially, the reconstruction itself was funded by over 100 million pounds from EU funds.<sup>189</sup>

Despite extensive international efforts and numerous international agreements, the city found itself in a political deadlock. As a result, vital institutions such as the police as well as the city administration remained divided, parallel structures until 1997.<sup>190</sup> To some extent the international community including the EU fostered this divide by separate financing of institutions and reconstruction projects such as two separate public transportation companies, separate post-offices, and separate city water systems.<sup>191</sup> The emphasis on ethnic division in Mostar in research and policymaking cemented the public perception of ethno-national groups and hence does not aid its overcoming.<sup>192</sup>

Various insights from the field of psychology can help illuminate this despicable failure to reconcile Mostar. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) came to the conclusion that the ethnic divisions within the city and many acts of violence were unnecessarily acerbated particularly by the national as well international media coverage. Reports on the radio, newspapers and television

<sup>182</sup> M. Calic. “History of Yugoslavia” Edited by Dona Geyer. *Purdue University Press* 2018.

<sup>183</sup> A. Björkdahl. “Urban Peacebuilding.” *Peacebuilding* 2013. 1 (2): 207–21.

<sup>184</sup> L. Naomi. “International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case.” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

<sup>185</sup> P. McMahon. and J. Western. “The Death of Dayton: How to Stop Bosnia from Falling Apart.” *Foreign Affairs* 2009. 88 (5): 69–83.

<sup>186</sup> A. Cateux. “European Union Guidelines to Reconciliation in Mostar: How to Remember? What to Forget.” *Europeanization of Memory Politics in the Western Balkans*, January. 2020.

<sup>187</sup> J. Yarwood. *Rebuilding Mostar: Urban Reconstruction in a War Zone*. *Liverpool University Press*. 1999.

<sup>188</sup> A. Cateux. “European Union Guidelines to Reconciliation in Mostar: How to Remember? What to Forget.” *Europeanization of Memory Politics in the Western Balkans*, January. 2020.

<sup>189</sup> J. Yarwood. *Rebuilding Mostar: Urban Reconstruction in a War Zone*. *Liverpool University Press*. 1999.

<sup>190</sup> International Crisis Group. “Reunifying Mostar: Opportunities For Progress” . Sarajevo/Washington/Brussels: ICG Balkans Report N. 90 , 2000.

<sup>191</sup> International Crisis Group. “Reunifying Mostar: Opportunities For Progress” . Sarajevo/Washington/Brussels: ICG Balkans Report N. 90 , 2000.

<sup>192</sup> G. Carabelli, A. Djurasovic, and R. Summa. “Challenging the Representation of Ethnically Divided Cities: Perspectives from Mostar.” *Space and Polity* 2019. 23: 116–24; L. Veters. “The Power of Administrative Categories: Emerging Notions of Citizenship in the Divided City of Mostar.” *Ethnopolitics* 2007. 6 (2): 187–209; G. Wollentz. “Making a Home in Mostar: Heritage and the Temporalities of Belonging.” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 2017. 23 (10): 928–45.

helped creating the image of the enemy and spreading the negative emotions of hatred. Many media outlets intentionally engaged in disseminating propaganda and cementing stereotypes to then harvest emotions such as anger and fear of civilians for their own military purposes.<sup>193</sup> This targeted reporting and the consequent emotions contributed to the formation of new individual as well as group identities. As analysis shows these group identities will lie at the core of the current problem and in fact could also constitute the key to the solution.

Pictures, and photographs always convey messages that cause certain emotions in the viewer.<sup>194</sup> Emotions on the other hand shape our identity and the identity of future generations. It is crucial to understand how emotions shape group trauma, such as the traumata experience by all groups during the Bosnian War, to then address these emotions in a reconciliation process.<sup>195</sup> In the case of Mostar, a 2005 study showed that the work of ICTY was received positively and contributed to the healing process.<sup>196</sup>

As already mentioned, the psychological concept of identity and large group identity is very important when trying to understand and reconcile ethnic conflicts such as the one in Mostar. Large group identities are created and cemented in a child throughout its upbringing in various stages.<sup>197</sup> Volkan describes how young children become subject of

depositing; a process during which adults such as parents or educators, deposit their own perceptions, ideas, fears and also prejudices onto the children's psyche.<sup>198</sup> The new generation of children will then share a similar "psychological DNA" embodying their large group identity.<sup>199</sup>

Looking at Mostar, it becomes clear that certain practices contributed to the building of separate large group identities. During the war itself, schools and pre-school institutions were particularly targeted.<sup>200</sup> This caused two different developments shaping group identities. First of all, most children experienced war trauma, regardless of their ethnic belonging. This shared sentiment was counteracted by the fact that schooling became increasingly ethnically separated during the war. The Yugoslav curriculum was replaced by ethnically motivated curricula from neighbouring states.<sup>201</sup> After the end of the war the Dayton agreement, organizing the country into a federal system, left education to the power of the federal entities.<sup>202</sup> Due to the fact that in the Muslim-Croat Federation education is a matter of its cantons, Bosnia and Herzegovina has effectively 13 Ministries of Education today.<sup>203</sup> Clearly, this segmentation is not conducive in the building of a post-conflict collective large-group identity. Adding to this fragmentation was the fact that in contrast to other sectors, the development of education and its oversight was not assigned to any particular international organization, hence involving many

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<sup>193</sup> M. Calic. "History of Yugoslavia" Edited by Dona Geyer. *Purdue University Press* 2018.

<sup>194</sup> L. Ling. "Decolonizing the International: Towards Multiple Emotional Worlds." *International Theory* 2014. 6 (3): 579–83.

<sup>195</sup> E. Hutchison. "Affective Communities in World Politics | International Relations and International Organisations." *Cambridge University Press*.

<sup>196</sup> D. Mendeloff. "Trauma and Vengeance: Assessing the Psychological and Emotional Effects of Post-Conflict Justice." *Human Rights Quarterly* 2009. 31 (3): 592–623.

<sup>197</sup> L. Sunčana. "Youth as Geopolitical Subjects: The Case of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina." 2016. *In*, 153–69.

<sup>198</sup> D. Volkan. "Refugees as the Other: Large-Group Identity, Terrorism and Border Psychology." *Group Analysis*, 2018. 51 (3) edition.

<sup>199</sup> D. Volkan. "Refugees as the Other: Large-Group

Identity, Terrorism and Border Psychology." *Group Analysis*, 2018. 51 (3) edition.

<sup>200</sup> A. Osler. and I. Husić Pandur. "The Right to Intercultural Education: Students' Perspectives on Schooling and Opportunities for Reconciliation through Multicultural Engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Intercultural Education* 2019. 30 (6): 658–79.

<sup>201</sup> L. Naomi. "International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

<sup>202</sup> P. McMahon. and J. Western. "The Death of Dayton: How to Stop Bosnia from Falling Apart." *Foreign Affairs* 2009. 88 (5): 69–83.

<sup>203</sup> L. Naomi. "International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

different semi-coordinated actors.<sup>204</sup> To state the obvious, curricula are a form of storytelling, that is effectively used to propel its own views on history and hence contributes to the solidification of the “enemy” picture in future generations. In Mostar itself, all pre-schools, schools and even the two universities that were all ethnically mixed prior to the war remain segregated today.<sup>205</sup>

The phenomenon of separate curricula and schooling systems also affects migration patterns in the country. Many internal refugees do not want to return to their original cities because they do not provide the right curricula in the new post-war ethnic alignment.<sup>206</sup> In Mostar, most schools were situated in the western, now Croat dominated, side of the city. After the war, the system of “two schools under one roof” was implemented to accommodate Bosnian students. In practice this means that school buildings are running on two shifts; one for Bosnian students and one for Croat students. Due to recurring violent incidents between the two student groups a break was scheduled so students of different ethnicities would not meet.<sup>207</sup>

It is evident that while the international community invested both monetary resources as well as manpower into the reconstruction of Mostar the outcomes are far from optimal. With the help of psychological insights many shortcomings of the past efforts were detected and can be conducive in future policy making.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis showed that the persistent existence of separate large-group identities perpetuates the administrative problems of Mostar and hinders positive economic and social developments of the city. International aid directed at Mostar contributed to this segregation of identities and hence to the problem at hand.

For successful post-conflict resolution, it is essential that a united large-group identity is restored in Mostar and in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole. This does not mean that the individual groups should lose or give up their current large group identity.<sup>208</sup> The goal is to integrate these sub-identities into a larger common denominator that will then create a sense of unified while diverse community that works together for the common good. Once this overarching large-group identity is created, the government can start tackling the societal issues constructively without negating the efforts of other subgroups.

Ironically, Tito’s regime, the regime that B&H citizens no longer wanted, in fact held the key to peaceful coexistence, recognizing and allowing the existence of sub-identities while emphasizing the uniting overarching large-group identity.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> L. Naomi. “International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case.” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

<sup>205</sup> L. Sunčana. “Youth as Geopolitical Subjects: The Case of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina.” 2016. *In*, 153–69.

<sup>206</sup> L. Naomi. “International Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Lessons from Social Psychology Using the Bosnian Case.” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2014 8 (1): 68–90.

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<sup>209</sup> A. Hromadzic. “Discourses of Integration and Practices of Reunification at the Mostar Gymnasium, Bosnia and Herzegovina.” *Comparative Education Review* 2008. 52 (4): 541–63

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# Loss, Legacies, and Large Group Identities: A Psychological Analysis of the Korean War

Kaitlyn JEON

Page | 65

Originally from South Korea, Kaitlyn Seryang Jeon grew up in a highly international and intercultural context due to her frequent moves across five continents. Consequently, since childhood, she was fully immersed into witnessing and experiencing the interplay between internationalism and psychology at a personal level. This unique experience left a profound mark to compel her to translate her personal reflections into the academic realm. Kaitlyn has now completed her major in Political Humanities at Sciences Po Paris and intends to pursue a major in Psychology at Columbia University.

## A Silent War

The Korean War has been continuing for the last seventy-six years, making it one of the longest lasting ongoing contemporary wars. Despite there being no active warfare, tensions at the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) are constantly high — two powerful militaries, one possibly with nuclear arms and an army of 1.2 million; and one with the backing of the US military industrial complex, an army of 0.6 million, and the 6<sup>th</sup> largest expenditure on military budget; aiming bullets beyond the horizon for the last seven decades. Beyond a military conflict, there has been a profound ideological cleavage that has driven the two further away from their memory of once having been a united nation short of a lifetime ago.

Military and psychological warfare in the Korean conflict have been occurring simultaneously, interacting in a cyclical and amplifying manner. Notably, the psychological differences are distinctly artificial — the two nations and their accompanying culture, genetic makeup, language, traditions, etc. are, or at least have been, generally homogenous until the outbreak of the war in 1950. The examination of the Korean conflict provides highly insightful windows into the power of fabricating effective myths of distinction and division by targeting the psychological. This deeply influential psychological dimension of the conflict clearly demonstrates a need for a psychological approach when seeking solutions to seek progress in this

conflict. This paper thus aims to propose recommendations focused and based on tackling the psychological dimension of the conflict.

## Historical Background: A Dying Ember

Throughout the long history of the ceasefire, the constant threat of possible war at any moment in ROK (Republic of Korea) despite the nation's incredible advancement has been apathetically accepted. Further, those who have separated family members North of the 38th parallel are dying with age. Those born into the normalized state of ceasefire and division are far more numerous, making the need for unification less urgent. Additionally, key political parties in the ROK political landscape have strong support based on anti-North Korea and anti-unification sentiments. These anti-unification and/or apathetic views are increasingly becoming mainstream, and this greater social attitude is reflected at the diplomatic level.

However, despite the general trends that converge towards apathy, there have been some incredibly optimistic developments in recent Korean relations, most notably since the election of progressive ROK President, Moon Jae In, in 2017. Some of the most notable peace talks and amicable acts have been: joint participation in some international events such

as the Winter Olympics (2018)<sup>210</sup>; and the historical April 2018 inter-Korean summit where Moon and Kim Jong-Un met at the DMZ (demilitarized zone) to pledge to work towards definite peace and reunification, the denuclearization of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), the end of military activities at the border, working on connecting railways, ending propaganda loudspeakers, and the North adjusting its time zone to the South<sup>211</sup>. These symbolic advances were resonant and powerful at a psychological level. They became representative of a potential, promising future of reunification. This is the pattern that was present in most recent developments — ambitious promises and grand, symbolic acts of peace and unity that powerfully reshape social attitudes.

Unfortunately, the reality of the deep divisions across the MDL was once again made apparent through a regression into hostility — proving, to some, the fact that the prior promising developments were “for show”. The recent election of conservative President Yoon Seok-Youl in April 2022 has also contributed to a roll back to hostile attitudes.

This pattern of developments can be notably explained through the Freudian conception of *group identities*. Both ROK and DPRK are invested in this notion of *large-group identities* shaped by national membership. All other features of an individual become null at the face of the labels of “North Korean” vs. “South Korean”. This group division can be partially explained by Vamik D. Volkan's theories on depositing and sharing psychological DNA through intergenerational transmission of trauma<sup>212</sup>. For the Korean Peninsula, there was the collective catastrophe of the Korean War which devastated both sides not only in casualties but also emotionally

as communities were torn apart. The war has left “unconscious tasks”<sup>213</sup> of coping with the loss of this war throughout generations, maintaining a sense of resentment towards the enemy.

Further, the idea of *border psychology*<sup>214</sup> clearly manifests itself in the Korean conflict. The physical militarized border at the MDL divides the two nations to result in a visual consolidation of the ROK vs. DPRK difference at a psychological level. With the backdrop of this powerful imagery, overwhelming similarities are irrelevant as both nations fixate on the specific points of difference that drive them apart.

From the ROK perspective, the DPRK is seen as a suitable target of externalization, meaning that the North is essentially, in Volkan's terms, a reservoir of South Korea's own “unwanted parts and memories”<sup>215</sup> — underdevelopment, poverty, authoritarianism, etc.

Thus, one of the greatest faults of the diplomatic engagements that have occurred between ROK and DPRK thus far is that they are overly invested in military actions. These do serve crucial functions, but they are often at the expense of distributing focus onto the deeply psychological nature of this conflict. In the realm of diplomacy, there are no proposals aimed at tackling these notions of *large group identities*, which would effectively provide a powerful root-focused solution.

### Recommendations: Towards a More Psychology-Conscious Age

The goal for this project is not to propose large-sweeping measures that would hastily piece back the peninsula — this would rather be ineffective and

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<sup>210</sup> International Olympic Committee, *Unified Korean Olympic Team to march at Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018*, <https://olympics.com/ioc/news/unified-korean-olympic-team-to-march-at-olympic-winter-games-pyeongchang-2018>, (accessed 17 May 2022).

<sup>211</sup> S. Choe, ‘North and South Korea Set Bold Goals: A Final Peace and No Nuclear Arms’, *The New York Times*, 27 April 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/27/world/asia/no>

[rth-korea-south-kim-jong-un.html](#), (accessed 17 May 2022),

<sup>212</sup> V. Volkan, ‘Refugees as the Other: Large-group identity, terrorism and border psychology’, *Group Analysis: The International Journal of Group-Analytic Psychotherapy*, vol. 51, no. 3, 2018, p. 343-358.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

short-lived. The recommendations will focus specifically on tackling the psychological, *group identity* dimension of this conflict. It would be far more effective, productive, and influential for the ultimate goal of peace and reunification.

The most productive recommendations are ones explicitly focused on tackling the phenomena mentioned in the above section, in reference to Volkan's theses inspired by Freud — the most constructive directions will be towards minimizing the imagined border between ROK and DPRK which would contribute to unraveling the conflict as nations reach mutual understanding and respect.

The first major recommendation for the ROK to achieve the goal of reunification under a liberal democracy is to decrease the sentiment of in-groups and out-groups by disassembling the idea of a literal, permanent division. There must be greater emphasis on the similarities between the two nations, with less attention on the few differences that tend to be amplified in importance — in other words, there must be a dismantling of the idea that ROK and DPRK's people are permanently and rigidly socially categorized into distinct groups. The most effective measure for this to be achieved is through long-term developments in the educational sector. The inheritance of trauma must be halted through greater education on the idea that DPRK's people are not the enemy that every new generation must resent out of a "duty of memory". This link ought to be broken through renewed national education practices that emphasize similarity and shared history. This step of abolishing or at least minimizing a sense of division is crucial, as seen through key studies in the field of psychology, most notably Tajfel & Turner's 1979 study underlining the fact that social categorization is the starting point of intergroup hostilities<sup>216</sup> and Tajfel's 1971 findings on the minimal group paradigm<sup>217</sup>.

Another major recommendation based on Volkan's notions is for the ROK, in cooperation with the DPRK, to organize greater opportunities for exchange across the border. Greater cross-border contact among citizens would expose the people to overwhelming similarities that unite the divided people. This step, however, must be executed with caution with an insistence on the aim being the intermingling of the people, independent of the political regimes that occupy each nation. Involving political differences could not only result in backlash and resentment among the South Korean population but may also put the nation at a vulnerable diplomatic position. If these vulnerabilities are avoided through continuous reminders on the aims of this exchange, this recommendation should be highly effective in reducing a sense of group division, resulting in decreased hostilities.

### A More Peaceful Korea

Based on these recommendations, the ROK should invest in new infrastructure and reform the ways in which it presents itself to achieve the aim of reducing *large group* divisions to ultimately reunify under a liberal democracy. The ROK should introduce reforms to national curricula that would educate on the history of the Korean Peninsula, one that highlight the artificiality of the division and emphasizes on the similarity of the two social groups, to the point that they are no longer identified as distinct social groups and until there is a breakage on the cycle of trauma remembrance.

All the recommendations are arguably quite idealistic. However, their clear basis on psychological texts and studies provides a robust support that make them compelling suggestions to further the progress in this conflict. In some respects, this paper is quite limited in terms of breadth of approaches and focuses as it directly tackles the one issue of *large group identities*. This choice was intentional, out of the conviction that any further progress in the

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<sup>216</sup> H. Tajfel and J. Turner, 'An integrative theory of inter-group conflict', *The Social Psychology of Inter-group Relations*, 1979.

<sup>217</sup> H. Tajfel, 'Social categorization and intergroup behaviour', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1971, pp. 149-178.

specifics, whether it be proper negotiation guidelines or the construction of new symbols and metaphors that would dismantle a sense of division, will occur naturally and far more effectively with the strong basis that is a decrease in group divisions.

To bring this conflict to a peaceful end, the ROK must dedicate itself to disassembling sentiments of hostility rooting from group divisions. There is nothing

to lose — though the DPRK may not be equally as invested nor fully willing to cooperate in the above recommendations, it would still unify South Korea under a single goal that is reunification. This enthusiasm and potential for national unity in wanting reunification should be harvested to the fullest for a more peaceful future in the Korean Peninsula.

# Forging Otherness: Poland, the European Union, and LGBTIQ Rights

Zackary LYONS

Page | 69

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In Poland, the “Prawo i Sprawiedliwość” or “Law and Justice” party (PiS) has been the political majority since 2015. PiS is a conservative party utilizing populist ideology, including Euroscepticism. The party’s opposition to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer (LGBTIQ) individuals is well known. Here, we examine two key psychological aspects of this position: 1) how LGBTIQ people have been carved out as “other” and 2) how emotional messaging and imagery strengthen this otherization.

Once in power, PiS pushed a domestic campaign encouraging municipalities to declare themselves “LGBT-Free Zones,” indicating these communities denounce LGBTIQ people and label pro-LGBTIQ rights as propaganda. As of March 2020, one-third of Poland had declared itself an LGBT-Free Zone<sup>218</sup>. In December of 2020, the European Commissioner for Human Rights noted related concerns of growing violence contrary to the human rights values held by the European Union (EU):

*[...] concerned that Polish society’s increasing acceptance of LGBTI people and rights until recently [...] appears to have slowed down or reversed. It is difficult to dissociate this phenomenon from the promotion of anti-LGBTI sentiment in society by*

*public officials*<sup>219</sup>.

The tension between Poland, an EU member state, and the Union continues to grow. Rather than exploring the morality of the respective positions, this article applies psychological insights that could inform communication and political strategies to address the conflict.

## A Charged and Emotional Background

The EU stance is reinforced with substantial policy and legal footing. Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights forbids discrimination based on several categories, including birth characteristics (arguably gender identity is covered here) and sexual orientation<sup>220</sup>. Furthermore, Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union empowers the Council to “take appropriate action to combat discrimination”<sup>221</sup>.

Therefore, it is unsurprising that the EU has taken direct action against Poland to counter its activities. Even President von der Leyen remarked in her first address to the Union that “LGBTIQ-free zones are humanity-free zones, and they have no place in our

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<sup>218</sup> C. Ciobanu, ‘A third of Poland declared ‘LGBT-Free Zone’, *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network*, 25 February 2020, <https://balkaninsight.com/2020/02/25/a-third-of-poland-declared-lgbt-free-zone/>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>219</sup> Commissioner for Human Rights, ‘Memorandum on the stigmatization of LGBTI people in Poland’, *Council of Europe*, <https://rm.coe.int/memorandum->

[on-the-stigmatisation-of-lgbti-people-in-poland/1680a08b8e](https://rm.coe.int/memorandum-on-the-stigmatisation-of-lgbti-people-in-poland/1680a08b8e), (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>220</sup> Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (adopted 12 December 2000) OJ 2000/C 364/01 (2000).

<sup>221</sup> Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (adopted 26 October 2012) OJ 2012/C 326/01 (2012).

union”<sup>222</sup>. Later, in July 2020, the EU denied grant requests from six self-declared LGBT-Free Polish municipalities<sup>223</sup>. Finally, the EU’s strongest rebuke occurred in early 2021, when the European Parliament declared the EU an “LGBTIQ Freedom Zone” and called for increased scrutiny and resources to protect these individuals<sup>224</sup>.

On the other hand, when rising in power in 2005, PiS Chairman Jarosław Kaczyński made the statement that “[t]he affirmation of homosexuality will lead to the downfall of civilization,” vowing to excise moral corruption in partnership with the Catholic Church<sup>225</sup>. With that framing, it is not surprising that the Polish government depicts the country as a victim of tyrants in Brussels disrespectful of their national values. The EU’s actions have not moved the party toward a non-discriminatory position—or even neutral one. Ryszard Legutko, a senior Polish Member of the European Parliament, responded harshly to the EU’s declaration, stating that it was another example of an “ideological action” from Western Europe, where “from the nursery [they] feed infants with gender and gender fluidity...poisoning minds with political correctness”<sup>226</sup>.

## Psychological Dimensions

While the EU is applying pressure on the state to change its policies toward LGBTIQ citizens, Poland does not particularly recognize the EU’s authority on

this topic. The government considers this debate to be ideological and not related to human rights norms. Domestically, PiS continues to fortify messaging that ties Polish identity to anti-LGBTIQ sentiments.

## In-Group vs. Out-Group and Threat Perception

In-group and out-group divisions are a component of the recognized social identity theory, which “proposes that people strive to achieve or maintain a positive social identity (thus boosting their self-esteem), and that this positive identity derives largely from favourable comparisons that can be made between the ingroup and relevant outgroups”<sup>227</sup>.

In this light, the EU’s public and economic pressure represent collective threats, intended to alter the Polish government’s behavior. This creates an accessible cultural *In-Group* tied to self-identified patriotic and religious values along with the *Out-Group* based in Brussels and its representation of ‘liberal’ Europe.

Presently, the EU’s actions are reinforcing its out-group positioning. Furthermore, this perceived distance between shared values exacerbates the view of the Union as a cultural and ideological threat. As part of a re-election campaign, President Andrzej

<sup>222</sup> J. Rankin, ‘Ursula von der Leyen says Poland’s ‘LGBT-free zones’ have no place in the EU’, *The Guardian*, 16 September 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/16/ursula-von-der-leyen-says-polands-lgbt-free-zones-have-no-place-in-eu>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>223</sup> M. Pronczuk, ‘Polish Towns That Declared Themselves ‘L.G.B.T. Free’ Are Denied E.U. Funds’, *New York Times*, 30 July 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/world/europe/LGBT-free-poland-EU-funds.html>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>224</sup> European Parliament, ‘Parliament declares the European Union an ‘LGBTIQ Freedom Zone’, 11 March 2021, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210304IPR99219/parliament-declares-the-european-union-an-lgbtiq-freedom-zone>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>225</sup> D. Murray, ‘Hungary’s Viktor Orbán and Poland’s Jaroslaw Kaczynski defy the EU even as their countries profit from it’, *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, 14 February 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/hungary-poland-eu-1.5912731>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>226</sup> D. Tilles, ‘Whole EU declared ‘LGBTIQ Freedom Zone’ in response to Polish anti-LGBT resolutions’, *Notes from Poland* [web blog], 11 March 2021, <https://notesfrompoland.com/2021/03/11/whole-eu-declared-lgbtiq-freedom-zone-in-response-to-polish-anti-lgbt-resolutions/>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>227</sup> R. Brown, ‘Social Identity Theory: past achievements, current problems and future challenges’, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 30, 2000, pp. 745-778.

Duda leveraged anti-LGBTIQ animus and the EU out-grouping as a component of his strategy. For example, he stated that “they are trying to persuade us that LGBT is a category of people, but it’s an ideology” (emphasis added)<sup>228</sup>.

### Understanding the Religious Nationalism Self & Large Group Identity

A critical component of Poland’s cultural in-group is Roman Catholicism, with around 87% of the population identifying as adherents<sup>229</sup>. Even the most liberal interpretations within the religion still view LGBTIQ as humans with a problematic “lifestyle” to be tolerated. The self-identity ties to religion are strong, and when intermingled with a similarly robust nationalistic identity, a solid ideological framework is forged.

Religious nationalism often has socially conservative features and globalization can cause insecurity here, as traditionalist cultures are faced with confronting more liberal “Western” values. One analysis aptly summarizes that “[t]he spread of democratic values has further affected social dislocation in many parts of the world ... norms of equality and egalitarianism have tended to delegitimize previous hierarchical structures in many societies”<sup>230</sup>. The advancement of these human rights can be interpreted or felt as attempts to overthrow the entire (and familiar) system.

Notably, Kinnvall concludes that “[t]he answer is not only to unmask those hidden power structures ... but

also to recognize and deal with the real structural insecurities for many people as they must learn to cope in increasingly complex and globalized societies” *Id.* Therefore, we see the need to approach this “threatening” social issue with great care. The EU may be more successful by strategically aiming to reduce feelings of insecurity among the Polish people.

### Populist Leaders Leverage the Perception of Out-Group Threats

Populist leaders are often skilled at utilizing these polarized identities and insecurities in service of political goals. A group of researchers examined the identity politics of Polish populism vis-a-vis the elections that put PiS and President Duda into power. The results of that study supported the hypothesis that collective narcissism “would predict voting for the populist Law and Justice party and its leader”<sup>231</sup>. The researchers distinguish between individual and collective narcissism, stating that “[w]hile individual narcissism predicts interpersonal aggressiveness, collective narcissism predicts negative intergroup attitudes, especially toward groups perceived as threatening”. *Id.*

The same study also found that “low material status was a significant predictor” of alignment with populism. *Id.* This socioeconomic status is another tool of populist leaders when defining out-groups to be feared, specifically using the blurry branding of “elitism”. PiS leadership regularly denounces EU officials in Brussels as elitist and condescending<sup>232</sup>.

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<sup>228</sup> G. Adamczyk, ‘Polish president warns LGBT is an ideology that erodes traditional family values’, *Remix*, 15 June 2020, <https://rmx.news/article/article/polish-president-warns-lgbt-is-an-ideology-that-erodes-traditional-family-values>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>229</sup> European Commission, ‘Poland Population: Demographic Situation, Languages and Religions, 2021’, [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/population-demographic-situation-languages-and-religions-56\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/population-demographic-situation-languages-and-religions-56_en), (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>230</sup> C. Kinnvall, ‘Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for

Ontological Security’, *Political Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 5, 2004, pp. 741-767.

<sup>231</sup> M. Marchlewska et al., ‘Populism as Identity Politics: Perceived In-Group Disadvantage, Collective Narcissism, and Support for Populism’, *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2018, pp. 151-162.

<sup>232</sup> M. Santora, ‘The Roots of Poland’s Defiance of the European Union,’ *New York Times*, 25 December 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/25/world/europe/poland-eu-judicial-laws.html>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

This elitist label solidifies the EU and its policies as part of the feared, suspicious, and disrespectful out-group.

Finally, another set of researchers determined that Eastern European anti-LGBTIQ views are fed by disappointment and fear regarding broader subjects. This study posits that “homophobia ... is a cultural compensation for economic disappointment and an expression of the Eastern European opposition to the economic and political expansion of the West”<sup>233</sup>. Populist leaders aim to utilize this transaction of cultural compensation to their advantage.

### Messaging, Metaphors, and Imagery

The us-versus-them mentality can be further entrenched using metaphoric text and imagery. Metaphors are an interesting blend of linguistics and marketing to evoke specific emotional reactions. One succinct description in this realm states that “[c]ognitively speaking, both metaphors and analogies are tools for understanding, forms for ‘mental economics’ which use comparisons to make the unfamiliar familiar ...”<sup>234</sup>.

This intra-EU conflict is rife with this kind of communication and its emotional impact is evident. First, from the aforementioned influential religious community, Catholic Archbishop of Krakow Marek Jedraszewsk inserted a host of damaging metaphors into his remarks during a 2019 homily, stating that “[w]e [Polish] also know that our land is thankfully no longer affected by the red plague, which does not mean that there is no new one that wants to control our souls, our hearts and minds ... not Marxist, Bolshevik, but born of the same spirit,

neo-Marxist. Not red, but rainbow”<sup>235</sup>. By invoking a deadly disease and the dark history of communism in Poland, the archbishop seeks to invoke strong emotional reactions of fear and distrust.

Finally, we examine some relevant imagery. In solidarity with LGBTIQ people, the EU Commission released the first photo below with its declaration of LGBTIQ Freedom. The second image is a social media version of the anti-LGBTIQ logo used by PiS. Individually, the photos have their own impression, but viewed together, the impact is broad and dire: the EU is a figurative and ideological flood seeking to damage Polish families, who need protection from this encroaching disaster.



EU Parliament<sup>236</sup>. © John Thys/AFP

<sup>233</sup> P. Zuk and P. Zuk, ‘Democracy is Not for Everyone: Nationalist Homophobia in Eastern Europe and Opposition to Liberal Democracy in the European Union’, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 53, no. 3, 2020, pp. 1-12.

<sup>234</sup> K.L. Shimko, ‘Metaphors and Foreign Policy Decision Making’, *Political Psychology*, vol. 15, no. 4, 1994, pp. 665-671.

<sup>235</sup> L. Chadwick, ‘Archbishop warns of ‘rainbow plague’ amid LGBT tensions in Poland’, *Euronews*, 3 August 2019,

<https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/02/archbishop-warns-of-rainbow-plague-amid-lgbt-tensions-in-poland>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

<sup>236</sup> European Parliament, ‘Parliament declares the European Union an ‘LGBTIQ Freedom Zone’, 11 March 2021, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210304IPR99219/parliament-declares-the-european-union-an-lgbtiq-freedom-zone>, (accessed 23 May 2022).



PiS politician S. Karczewski Twitter account<sup>196</sup>.

## Conclusion

Strategies to find resolution to this conflict must include steps to diffuse perceived psychological divisions. The voices of LGBTIQ people who are culturally and nationally Polish could be highlighted. Communication plans could include some understanding of nationalist insecurity. In understanding and addressing the psychological components of these tensions, the fissures between the EU and Poland might be diminished and the human rights of LGBTIQ people upheld.

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<sup>237</sup> S. Karczewski (@stkarczewski), *Twitter*, 10 March 2019, <https://twitter.com/stkarczewski/status/1104621361601921024>, (accessed 23 May 2022).

# Scapegoating as a Defense Mechanism in the Burmese Context

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Page | 74

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*A man may fail many times but he isn't a failure until he begins to blame somebody else. - John Burroughs (1879)*

The tendency to blame someone else for one's own problems is called *scapegoating*<sup>238</sup>. Through this process humans try to explain failures or misfortunes, by designating a culprit, in an unfair way in order to maintain one's positive self-image and avoiding self-accountability. Furthermore, it justifies the discharge of aggression considered as self-righteous and results in discrimination and hatred towards the individual or the social group that one is blaming<sup>239</sup>.

Scapegoats have existed throughout history and in the different spheres of society. In some cases scapegoats have been entire groups. This paper will focus on the scapegoating committed against the Rohingya ethnic group in Myanmar by the military, anti-Muslim monks, and their Burman<sup>240</sup> followers. The Rohingya are the largest Muslim community inside a predominant Buddhist country, and most of them have darker color of skins than any other ethnic

group in Myanmar<sup>241</sup>. This group is perceived as traitors by many of the Burman since the Second World War due to the Rohingya alliance with the British colonialists. Nowadays the scapegoating continues and they are mostly assimilated by many as Islamist conspirators linked to ISIS who want to convert the Burmese, and destroy the Buddhist heritage of the country. Since they are perceived as a threat, Myanmar's military in the last decades have had several attacks towards this population specially in the Rakhine State: for example in 1978 the Operation Dragon King caused the fleeing of 200,000 Rohingya to Bangladesh due to the violence and raped committed by the military. Then in 1982, the government passed the Citizenship Act in which 135 ethnic groups were recognized, however the Rohingya were excluded, making them stateless people even though their population in Myanmar amounted at that time to more than 1 million.

Over the past decades, the conflict between the Rohingya Muslims and the Rakhine Buddhist communities has also led to the emergence of extremist movements. For example a

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<sup>238</sup> As a verb, this term is strongly linked to the verb "victimizing".

<sup>239</sup> F. Baumeister; K. Vohs. The Strength Model of Self-Control. Florida State University and University of Minnesota. Sage Pub.com. 2017. <http://www.elaborer.org/cours/A14/lectures/Baumeister2007.pdf> (Consulted on April 12th, 2022).

<sup>240</sup> The term Burman (or Bamar) refers to the largest ethnic group in Myanmar. It is different from the term Burmese which refers to all the citizens of Myanmar.

<sup>241</sup> Hindstrom, H, Burma's favorite scapegoat. Foreignpolicy.com February 26th, 2015 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/26/burmas-favorite-scapegoat/>(Consulted on April 6th, 2022).

Islamophobic movement named Ma Ba Tha<sup>242</sup> was born in 2012. As a sort of contestation, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) which is a Rohingya insurgent group, emerged and in 2016 attacked police stations at the border killing 9 police officers. This incident, made the whole Rohingya community to be considered as perpetrators of this attack and prompted massive violence committed by local Buddhist mobs against them. At least 6,700 Rohingya, including 730 children were killed in the month after the violence broke out<sup>243</sup>.

### What factors have led to the scapegoating process?

#### *The negative attitudes built towards the Rohingya*

A negative attitude that the authorities, the military, monks and Burmese followers of anti-Rohingya movements have had through time towards the Rohingya plays a crucial role in the development of the scapegoating process. Attitudes are composed of a cognitive (beliefs and thoughts), an affective (emotions), and a behavioral component (actions)<sup>244</sup>. The cognitive component is the group's openness and propensity towards believing in the stereotypes about the scapegoated group and its presumed intention to cause damage; these exaggerate certain features and distort the essence of individuals and groups.

One important source of these stereotypes and prejudices are social networks. According to a New York Times report, the Burmese military conducted since 2013 an anti-Rohingya campaign through fake accounts and fake news<sup>245</sup>. A clear example was the publication of *Myanmar Politics and the Tatmadaw*:

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<sup>242</sup> Now this association has been renamed the Buddha Dhamma Parahita Foundation.

<sup>243</sup> Médecins Sans Frontières, Timeline: A visual history of the Rohingya refugee crisis. Doctorwithoutborders.org. August 21st, 2020. <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/timeli-ne-visual-history-rohingya-refugee-crisis> (Consulted on April 1st, 2022).

<sup>244</sup> L. Daffin, & C. Lane, C. Principles of Social Psychology. 2nd Edition. Washington State University. Open Text.WSU.edu January 2021

*Part I* which supposedly showed photographs of illegal immigration of the Rohingya during British control (which was actually a photograph of Hutu refugees arriving in 1996 in Tanzania and Bangladesh) as well as photographs of Rohingya assaulting Rhakine villagers (which was actually a photograph taken during the Bangladesh Liberation War). On September 3, 2018 the Burmese military apologized for the misuse of the photos. This type of propaganda on social media in several cases directly incited discord between Buddhists and Muslims by sending false warnings of possible attacks by both groups.

Negative emotions such as anger, hate, frustration, etc (which are part of the affective component) can arise from a lack of dignity, or security<sup>246</sup> or when the aggressor group feels vulnerable or feeling like they have been treated poorly or unfairly for illegitimate reasons. Fear, which is one of these emotions, is instrumentalized on several occasions to dehumanize and/or demonize the social groups under attack. Emotions reinforce the already existing stereotypes and prejudices and creates a bigger distance between the groups. The association of the Rohingya to ISIS followers, or as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh (even if they have lived in Myanmar since centuries ago) combined with the previously mentioned feelings facilitate a negative behavior such as discrimination and violence.

#### *The Leader's Personality*

Even though the tendencies concerning the personality traits of the members of the aggressor group play an important role (especially if these people tend to believe strongly in punishment for

<https://opentext.wsu.edu/social-psychology/> (Accessed on April 10th, 2022).

<sup>245</sup> A. Slodkowski & N. Shoon, Myanmar army apologizes for mistaken photos in book on Rohingya crisis. Reuters.com. September 3th, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-photos-idUSKCN1LJ19T> (Accessed on May 1st, 2022).

<sup>246</sup> K. Fattah & K.M. Fierke. A Clash of Emotions: The Politics of Humiliation and Political Violence in the Middle East. Research Gate, (2009).

transgressions of social norms, or if they are rigid about change<sup>247</sup>), the truth is that the leaders' personality and their implicit and explicit attitudes toward the scapegoated group, play a much bigger role than the personality characteristics of their followers. Leaders instrumentalized the scapegoating to mobilize their followers for their causes and goals.

In the case of Myanmar there are multiple influential leaders who have scapegoated the Rohingya throughout the years and they come from the different spheres of the society, from the monks, to the military and government. A famous Buddhist monk named Ashin Wirathu, who is the leader of the Ma Ba Tha Movement has been accused of encouraging violence through his hate speeches during his sermons, but also throughout social media like Facebook (from which he has now been banned), and international conferences. *"They (the Rohingya who are Muslims) target women every day and rape them (...) Starting from today, do we need to protect the religion or not? (...) They are not a minority, they are causing harm to Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists."* He describes this ethnic group as "the enemy" and stated that they reincarnated from snakes and insects<sup>248</sup>.

On the other hand, inside the Rohingya there are also leaders<sup>249</sup>, such as Ata Ullah who have instrumentalized the victimization suffered by this ethnic group in order to legitimize the recourse to violence of the ARSA and the interference of foreign fighters (like Talibans from Afghanistan and Pakistan) and the obtention of money and weapons coming from private donors in Saudi Arabia. A vulnerable-felt group being led by a leader like Ashin Wirathu or Ata Ullah who promote hostility rather than conciliation among religious groups of the society

can have severe consequences and a real instrumentalization of the scapegoating process.

### *The General Characteristics of the Targeted Group*

In order for a social group to be scapegoated it must be of lesser power or influence (otherwise it can generate opposition), it must be socially isolated or perceived as distinct from the "inner group", and this group must be perceived as a threat (whether or not this is the case). In the case of the Rohingya, their lack of recognition as an official ethnic group in Myanmar, allows authorities to perceive them more easily as illegitimate to be part of Myanmar's society. Furthermore, the fact that some Rohingya had integrated violent groups like the ARSA, makes the rest of the population to be perceived as their sympathizers, and they are therefore sometimes feared.

That is why factors such as the personality trait-tendencies within the aggressor and targeted group, the personality of political leaders, as well as the prejudices, stereotypes and emotions also play a role in the attitude construction and in the emergence of the scapegoating process.

### **The Psychological Explanation of the Scapegoating Process : Scapegoating as a Defense Mechanism**

Why is there a need for scapegoating? This can be explained from a psychological perspective, since scapegoating can actually function as a collective defense mechanism.

Scapegoating is consistent with 2 defense mechanisms that may be employed by the aggressor group during this process: the projection and the

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<sup>247</sup> Douglas, T. Scapegoats: Transferring Blame. Routledge. 1st Edition, 1995.

<sup>248</sup> Kirby, J. What the Hell Is Happening in Myanmar? Intelligencer. Sept. 15th, 2017. <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/09/what-the-hell-is-happening-in-myanmar.html> (Accessed on April 13th, 2022).

<sup>249</sup> There are other leaders who do completely the opposite, like Mohib Ullah who was a Rohingya leader, chair of the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights completely against the violent actions committed by the ARSA, and which is why he was murdered by them on September 29th, 2021.

displaced aggression defense mechanisms<sup>250</sup>. Projection is the tendency to assign one's own unacceptable feelings onto others, and deny them within oneself. On the other hand displaced aggression is the act of displacing hostility toward unacceptable targets or onto less powerful ones. The displacement mechanism can also encompass situations in which a part of a group is taken for the whole. For example, the attack committed by ARSA on August 25th, 2017 led to the whole Rohingya population to be targeted and become victims of disproportionate attacks by Myanmar's military. In areas like Maungdaw, around 80% of the houses were burned to the ground<sup>251</sup> and more than 120,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh.

The targets of both projection and displaced aggression defense mechanisms serve as scapegoats. However, according to René Girard (1982), the process of scapegoating can be also considered as part of the defense mechanisms itself since the feelings of frustration, shame or fear that trigger hostility and aggressive behaviors are done unconsciously and as a coping strategy. By scapegoating, the feeling of being unfairly treated is counterforced. It is a defense mechanism since it serves to protect the self from social sanctions and avoid unpleasant experiences.

### The Effects of Scapegoating in the Aggressor and Targeted Groups

The scapegoating process serves the aggressor group, to reinforce their identity as a group (in this case as Burman). It reinforces the "in-group" and "out-group" categorization and simultaneously solidifies their group's identity (in this case Myanmar's Buddhist heritage and ethnic identity)<sup>252</sup>.

As for the Rohingya, the scapegoating leads to social isolation, and identity problems since the sense of belonging to a community is taken from them by not being granted a nationality.

Once a social group is used as scapegoat they only have three action plans: either they flee, they assimilate the identity that is being given to them through the scapegoating process (and therefore summon to their discrimination and their exclusion in society), or they may decide to fight back. The type of response to their victimization will determine the future psychological, relational, spiritual, and societal effects.

### Final Recommendations

Psychology insights can be a useful tool in providing solutions to the scapegoating occurring in Myanmar. Anti-Rohingya movement sympathizers should be made aware that the whole Rohingya ethnic group is being unfairly associated with Islamist extremists and insurgent movements who don't represent the totality of the population. The acknowledgement that the scapegoating is occurring diminishes the power of this mechanism. Once this is recognized, the community can work on the root causes of the scapegoating; this starts with tackling the sources of prejudices by increasing contact among the Rohingya and the rest of the Burmese community. The community also needs social equality promotion at the institutional level through the laws, customs, and authorities. Social groups need to work on values such as real acceptance and mutual understanding. Finally spaces for dialogue need to be also open-up so that the collective trauma that the country has been having for a very long time can be tackled. Only then, will the scapegoating come to an end.

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## Belief Systems and Intelligence Failures

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*"Even the best intelligence is not worth much if policy makers refuse to take action<sup>253</sup>."*

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Russian Federation launched a military operation in Ukraine after months of rising tensions, negotiations, and disinformation campaigns. If the US and the UK publicly stated their belief in the Russian will to invade its neighbor, other European governments, such as Italy, Germany and France still believed that President Putin could be reasoned with and that a full-scale conflict was avoidable<sup>254</sup>. European intelligence services fueled the hope for a peaceful conclusion<sup>255</sup> as, in their opinion, *"the conquest of Ukraine would have a monstrous cost and that Russians had other options<sup>256</sup>."* In a way, their analysis was correct; the Russian army failed to achieve a quick victory in Ukraine and is, at the time of this article writing, still unable to prevail over the Ukrainian resistance<sup>257</sup>.

Nevertheless, the surprise of the Russian invasion was real, and a better understanding of Putin's strategy could have helped European governments to better prepare for the consequences of the invasion.

This inability to understand the belief systems of a target and to project one's own views of reality is a common mistake which has already led to other intelligence failure in the past<sup>258</sup>. Cognitive biases and logical fallacies are recurring sources of shortcomings and errors for the intelligence community<sup>259</sup>. This article proposes a short review of this challenge by reviewing three intelligence failures and the impact of belief systems in each one of them. It will start with the Pearl Harbor attack, then move to the operation Barbarossa, and finally end with the Yom Kippur war. Each time, the impact of human psychology will be discussed to understand what the focus of intelligence professionals needs to be in order to avoid future pitfalls.

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<sup>253</sup> Arthur S Hulnick, 'Indications and Warning for Homeland Security: Seeking a New Paradigm' (2005) 18 International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence 593.

<sup>254</sup> Jacques Follorou, 'Comment Le Scénario D'une Invasion Russe En Ukraine a Divisé Les Services Secrets Occidentaux Dès L'automne' *Le Monde.fr* (4 March 2022) <[https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/04/l-invasion-russe-en-ukraine-un-scenario-qui-a-divise-les-services-de-renseignement-occidentaux\\_6116170\\_3210.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/04/l-invasion-russe-en-ukraine-un-scenario-qui-a-divise-les-services-de-renseignement-occidentaux_6116170_3210.html)> accessed 10 May 2022.

<sup>255</sup> Elise Vincent, 'Guerre En Ukraine : Départ Du Chef Du Renseignement Militaire Français Sept Mois Après Sa Nomination' *Le Monde.fr* (31 March 2022) <<https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/31/guerre-en-ukraine-depart-du-chef-du-renseignement-militaire-francais-sept-mois-apres>

<[https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/06/guerre-en-ukraine-le-rouleau-compresseur-russe-risque-de-finir-par-passer-selon-le-chef-d-etat-major-des-armees\\_6116336\\_3210.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/06/guerre-en-ukraine-le-rouleau-compresseur-russe-risque-de-finir-par-passer-selon-le-chef-d-etat-major-des-armees_6116336_3210.html)> accessed 10 May 2022.

<sup>256</sup> Elise Vincent, Interview with Thierry Burkhard, 'Guerre En Ukraine : "Le Rouleau Compresseur" Russe Risque de Finir Par Passer, Selon Le Chef d'État-Major Des Armées' (6 March 2022) <[https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/06/guerre-en-ukraine-le-rouleau-compresseur-russe-risque-de-finir-par-passer-selon-le-chef-d-etat-major-des-armees\\_6116336\\_3210.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/03/06/guerre-en-ukraine-le-rouleau-compresseur-russe-risque-de-finir-par-passer-selon-le-chef-d-etat-major-des-armees_6116336_3210.html)> accessed 10 May 2022.

<sup>257</sup> CNN, 'Live Updates: Russia's War in Ukraine' (CNN10 May 2022) <<https://edition.cnn.com/europe/live-news/russia-ukraine-war-news-05-10-22/index.html>> accessed 10 May 2022.

<sup>258</sup> Robert Jervis, 'Understanding Beliefs and Threat Inflation' in Trevor Thrall and Jane Cramer (eds), *American Foreign Policy and the Politics of Fear: Threat Inflation since 9/11* (Routledge 2009).  
<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

## The Pearl Harbor attack

In the morning of Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941, the Japanese army led a military airstrike against the US naval base located at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii<sup>260</sup>. The attack caused the destruction of 21 American ships, 180 aircrafts, and the death of 2,403 Americans. The Japanese government was hoping to discourage the US to engage in South-East Asia by shocking the nation<sup>261</sup>. Ironically, the US entered the war the next day and supported the allied efforts against Japan and its ally, Germany.

Pearl Harbor keeps coming back in the study of intelligence failure as a prime example of a surprise attack which could have been avoided as many signals had been intercepted prior to the strike<sup>262</sup>. As Dahl points out in his 2013 article, the scenario of a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had been used for war games as early as 1936<sup>263</sup> and recurrent reports and memos warned about the risk of such strikes. Moreover, other signals and clues should have raised the alarm about an impending attack, such as the sudden radio silence from the Japanese float or the many last minutes cables sent to the Japanese embassy which had been intercepted by US intelligence<sup>264</sup>.

There are numerous reasons why, despite the amount of data available, the Japanese attack was successful, among them the belief system of the decision makers can explain why warnings about

Pearl Harbor did not bear any fruits<sup>265</sup>. As described by Usó-Doménech and Nescolarde-Selva, “*belief systems are the stories we tell ourselves to define our personal sense of reality*”<sup>266</sup>. It is a process through which each human analyzes signs and data he or she may encounter. Often not rational, the mechanisms of integrating these signs into a particular belief system can lead to very different interpretations of said information<sup>267</sup>.

Hence, one important belief within the US apparatus was that because Japan could not realistically win a war with the US, there was no risk of an attack against US interests<sup>268</sup>. For instance, according to Prange, Goldstein, and Dillon, the two senior US officers in Hawaii had no trust in the scenario of an attack and thus focused their energy on different tasks rather than preparing the base for an airstrike<sup>269</sup>. Their belief was so strong that they joked about an alert which occurred a week before the attack<sup>270</sup>. Moreover, it turns out that decision makers in Washington were also convinced that Japan was on the verge of attacking the Soviet Union and dismissed the signals supporting the scenario of a strike on Pearl Harbor.

## Operation Barbarossa

On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1939, the German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop and his Soviet counterpart Molotov signed the “German-Soviet pact” of non-aggression

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<sup>260</sup> The Navy Department Library, ‘The Pearl Harbor Attack, 7 December 1941 - Overview’ (*Naval History and Heritage* 2 December 2020) <<https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/p/the-pearl-harbor-attack-7-december-1941.html>> accessed 13 May 2022.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>262</sup> Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford University Press 1962).

<sup>263</sup> Erik J Dahl, ‘Why Won’t They Listen? Comparing Receptivity toward Intelligence at Pearl Harbor and Midway’ (2013) 28 *Intelligence and National Security* 68.

<sup>264</sup> Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford University Press 1962).

<sup>265</sup> Erik J Dahl, ‘Why Won’t They Listen? Comparing Receptivity toward Intelligence at Pearl Harbor and Midway’ (2013) 28 *Intelligence and National Security* 68.

<sup>266</sup> JL Usó-Doménech and J Nescolarde-Selva, ‘What Are Belief Systems?’ (2015) 21 *Foundations of Science* 147 <<https://www.vub.be/CLEA/FOS/cfp/what-are-belief-systems.pdf>>.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>268</sup> Uri Bar-Joseph and Jack S Levy, ‘Conscious Action and Intelligence Failure’ (2009) 124 *Political Science Quarterly* 461.

<sup>269</sup> Gordon W Prange, *At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor* (Penguin Books 1991) 401.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid* 471.

between Germany and the Soviet Union<sup>271</sup>. Almost two years later, on June 22<sup>nd</sup> of 1941, the operation Barbarossa was launched by the German military to conquer the western side of the USSR in order to repopulate it with Germans and take control of its resources<sup>272</sup>. Opening the Eastern Front of World War II, the attack took the Soviet leadership by surprise<sup>273</sup> and led to the complete breakdown of Soviet communication system in the first few days of the war<sup>274</sup>. Ultimately, as for Pearl Harbor, the attack did not meet its end goal, as by January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1942, the Germans failed to take Moscow and the Soviet counteroffensive started.

Operation Barbarossa is another prime example of a surprise attack whom, despite the signals detected by the Soviet intelligence, was carried out successfully nonetheless<sup>275</sup>. Due to the specific nature of the Soviet state, a totalitarian regime whose leader Joseph Stalin was unquestionable and the final decision maker, debates and opposing views were rare and cautiously expressed<sup>276</sup>. Moreover, following the political purges, a good part of the Soviet elite (political, military or intelligence) had been deported or executed<sup>277</sup>. Hence Stalin was literally the sole authority, and no one could question his decisions. Despite many intelligence reports warning of the upcoming German offensive (as early as winter 1940)<sup>278</sup>, a letter from Winston Churchill<sup>279</sup>,

and the low efforts Germany made to hide troops moving toward the Soviet border, Stalin dismissed the idea of an attack and consequently the USSR failed to prepare to fight the invasion.

It is hard to know exactly what Stalin really believed in, some scholars made the hypothesis that the dictator was on the verge of launching a surprise attack himself against Germany<sup>280</sup>. Nevertheless, records are showing that he strongly pushed against the idea that Germany was on the verge of invading his country. He knew war would eventually break out between the USSR and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich, but he wanted to delay the hostilities as long as possible in order to finish the rearmament of his country<sup>281</sup>. Moreover, Stalin was extremely suspicious of deceptions that could push the Soviet Union in a war too early and thus reenact the debacle of the first World War<sup>282</sup>. Ultimately, Stalin might have convinced himself, through a process of confirmation bias (a tendency to favor information which are aligned with a pre-existing belief<sup>283</sup>), that Germany would not attack the USSR. To support this belief, he was inclined to trust Adolf Hitler who wrote him a letter promising “*on [his] honor as a head of state*” that no attack would occur<sup>284</sup>.

<sup>271</sup> David T Zabecki, *Germany at War 400 Years of Military History* (ABC-CLIO 2014).

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>273</sup> Barton Whaley, *Codeword BARBAROSSA* (Cambridge, Mass, Mit Press 1973).

<sup>274</sup> Amnon Sella, “‘Barbarossa’: Surprise Attack and Communication” (1978) 13 *Journal of Contemporary History* 555 <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/260209>> accessed 22 May 2022.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>276</sup> Alan Clark, *Barbarossa : The Russian German Conflict, 1941-45* (Cassell 2005).

<sup>277</sup> Jonathan Haslam, ‘Stalin and the German Invasion of Russia 1941: A Failure of Reasons of State?’ (2000) 76 *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 133 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2626201>> accessed 22 May 2022.

<sup>278</sup> Steve Nimmons, ‘Intelligence – Failure to Accept’ (April 2018)

<<https://www.nimmonsconsulting.com>> accessed 22 May 2022.

<sup>279</sup> Gabriel Gorodetsky, ‘Churchill’s Warning to Stalin: A Reappraisal’ (1986) 29 *The Historical Journal* 979 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2639366>> accessed 22 May 2022.

<sup>280</sup> V Sokolov, ‘Did Stalin Intend to Attack Hitler?’ (1998) 11 *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 113.

<sup>281</sup> Barton Whaley, *Codeword BARBAROSSA* (Cambridge, Mass, Mit Press 1973).

<sup>282</sup> Steve Nimmons, ‘Intelligence – Failure to Accept’ (April 2018) <<https://www.nimmonsconsulting.com>> accessed 22 May 2022.

<sup>283</sup> Raymond S Nickerson, ‘Confirmation Bias: A Ubiquitous Phenomenon in Many Guises.’ (1998) 2 *Review of General Psychology* 175.

<sup>284</sup> David E Murphy, *What Stalin Knew : The Enigma of Barbarossa* (Yale University Press 2005), 258.

## The Yom Kippur war

A third example of surprise attack which keeps coming back in the study of intelligence failure is the Yom Kippur War. In October 1973, the Fourth Arab Israeli War threatened the existence of the state of Israel whose security forces sustained heavy losses despite being better equipped<sup>285</sup>. Indeed, in the early days of the conflict, the Arab coalition launched an assault during the Yom Kippur celebrations. The Egyptian forces managed to cross the Suez Canal to invade the Sinai Peninsula, virtually unopposed<sup>286</sup>. As the same time, Syrian troops made progress of the Golan Heights and threatened Israeli territories<sup>287</sup>. For three days, Israel seemed unable to push back the aggressors and it took the entire military might of the Hebrew State, supported by the US, to fight off the coalition<sup>288</sup>. As a result, Israel lost almost 3,000 soldiers and around 9,000 soldiers were wounded<sup>289</sup>. Additionally, the Arab coalition managed to destroy around 400 tanks and 102 airplanes<sup>290</sup>.

The Yom Kippur war had a lasting impact on the Israeli society and its intelligence services<sup>291</sup>. Indeed, as for the two previous cases, almost all the information to predict the attack were at the disposal of the Israeli security forces<sup>292</sup>. Thanks to its technological superiority, Israel had eyes on every military movements and was able to intercept most signals from its enemies<sup>293</sup>. Moreover, in the hours preceding the attack, warnings were sent to Israel intelligence leaders<sup>294</sup>. The head of AMAN, the Israeli military intelligence service, failed in the analysis of

the estimates and reports which reached him and, as a result, was not able to properly notify the armed forces of the attack which led to the initial victories of the Arab coalition.

According to the official inquiry, the Agranat Commission of 1975, there are 3 reasons to explain why the surprise attack worked<sup>295</sup>: (1) a “*stubborn adherence*” to a conception that Egypt would not attack Israel without improving its air capabilities and that Syria would not make a move without Egyptian support, (2) the inability of military intelligence to provide advance warning in case of an attack, and (3) the dismissal of last-minute warnings of an impending invasion. Two of this points are clearly linked to the belief systems of the Israeli top officers<sup>296</sup>. The “*conception*” led to an emphasis on Egyptian war intentions which were believed to be real but dependent on the country’s abilities to match Israeli aviation. Thus, other signals were ignored or twisted to meet the accepted narrative<sup>297</sup>. The conception was so strong that the director of Military Intelligence, which was only one year into the job, had totally integrated its views and closed himself to any other ones<sup>298</sup>. Another striking example of the impact of this *conception* can be found in a report issued by the head of the *Egypt* branch in the research department, on October 5<sup>th</sup>, a day before the attack. Despite a long list of evidence supporting the scenario of an upcoming attack from Egypt, he concluded that the balance of power between Israel and Egypt was unchanged hence the likelihood of an

<sup>285</sup> Uri Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep : The Surprise of Yom Kippur and Its Sources* (State University Of New York Press 2005).

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>289</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, ‘Yom Kippur War’, *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2018) <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Yom-Kippur-War>> accessed 26 May 2022.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>291</sup> Arvid Norman, ‘Organizational Failure and Intelligence: A Framework for Understanding Intelligence Failure’ (Lund University 2020).

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>293</sup> Avi Shlaim, ‘Failures in National Intelligence Estimates: The Case of the Yom Kippur War’ (1976) 28 *World Politics* 348.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>295</sup> Center for Isreal Education, ‘Full Agranat Report Released’ (*CIE* January 2021) <<https://israeled.org/full-agranat-report-released/>> accessed 26 May 2022.

<sup>296</sup> Uri Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep : The Surprise of Yom Kippur and Its Sources* (State University Of New York Press 2005), 46.

<sup>297</sup> Avi Shlaim, ‘Failures in National Intelligence Estimates: The Case of the Yom Kippur War’ (1976) 28 *World Politics* 348.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

attack was close to zero<sup>299</sup>. The list of unheard warnings goes on and is proof that even with strong and detailed intelligence, if the target of the estimates has a belief system which adheres to a worldview in opposition with the conclusions of the analysts, then there is little chance to succeed in convincing said target.

### Conclusion

In their 2019 book, Chad Briggs and Miriam Matejova described a similar issue when trying to warn policymakers about the risks of natural disasters due to climate change. Despite sound and scientific evidence, leaders often ignored the recommendations because it did not fit their belief systems<sup>300</sup>. Without proposing a definitive

workaround, they conclude that the more precise and practical a warning is, the more likely it is to be efficient<sup>301</sup>. They also support the idea of drawing attention to the consequences of the risks by using past examples to improve the ability of decision-makers to grasp what could happen if they were to overlook such threats<sup>302</sup>.

Nevertheless, as always with the study of intelligence, one should remember that at the end of the day, it is up to the decision makers, whether they are law makers, military high-ranking officers or intelligence executives, to act on the information they have received. It is then a priority to work on the distribution part of the intelligence cycle to avoid relying on only one individual. Moreover, diversity of opinions should also be a standard at this level of a state defense apparatus.

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<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> Chad M Briggs and Miriam Matejova, *Disaster Security : Using Intelligence and Military Planning*

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<sup>301</sup> *Ibid* 82-84.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid* 180-181.

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## From Historical Trauma to Rehumanization

### ***Impacts of historical trauma and dehumanization on international relations: The Perspective of Political Psychology through Cultural Media.***

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"History has failed us, but no matter"— this is the first thesis statement of a Pachinko novel<sup>303</sup>, which encapsulates a psychological trauma from Korean and Japanese history. This trauma is not unique to Korean history, but is also applicable to other histories around the world. In this essay, I will identify group historical trauma through psychological and cultural aspects, which ultimately leads to effects on countries' diplomatic relations.

As a recent drama series, *Pachinko*, became popular around the world and gained more significance in acknowledging the hidden history of Korean culture. The literary and visual media describe Korea's deep-rooted emotional trauma: 恨 [한] "Han". Given the international popularity, the human psychological emotion represented in the TV series can be considered universal. Even though this word may be considered ambiguous to some and lacks a direct translation in many languages, the closest translation would be "trauma". It refers to a type of traumatic experience in the past that remains as psychological pain that scars and affects the present. Even though some people might think analyzing a fiction piece does not meet academic standards, yet, it seems it is important to look at trauma via various cultural outlets, like novels and TV series. These outlets incorporate human emotion effectively rather than just compiling historical facts. Therefore, this paper

will elaborate on viewing historical group trauma through cultural media such as literature, films and different forms of artworks from comparative cultures analyzed by psychological principles and how historical trauma can be acknowledged, ultimately finding a potential reconciliation model for a diplomatic discord.

Before starting to talk about trauma in more detail, it is important to address the current identity politics pattern first so that the process of dehumanization can be understood, which causes trauma. The historical trauma can come in various forms, but generally stems from a sentiment of hate experienced in the past. Even in modern days, this bias and prejudice can be seen through different forms. Politicians create discord or biased images related to a certain group through identity politics. Identity politics divides people's identity as a particular group to enhance their own group's unity excluding other groups by excluding other groups via differentiation. As forming the group unity, dehumanization is a common tactic used for reinforcement within groups unity. For example, the former U.S. President Trump often utilized hate speech towards certain groups, labeling them as having inhuman characteristics. In this regard, researcher Dr. Brené Brown points out that the dehumanization process always starts with language followed by false negative images placed upon

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<sup>303</sup> Lee, M. J., Lee, M. J., & Ikeda, M. (2020). *Pachinko*. Bungei Shunjū.

certain groups of people<sup>304</sup>. Moreover, David Smith<sup>305</sup> explains that dehumanization is a response to conflicting motives. Sometimes people want to harm others, which goes against our wiring as members of a social species to actually harm, kill, torture, or degrade other humans. Smith explains that there are very deep and natural inhibitions that prevent us from treating other people like animals, game, or dangerous predators. He writes, “*Dehumanization is a way of subverting those inhibitions*”. In other words, it is an act of relieving guilt and a means of justification for hurting others through dehumanization.

or filth, and can be understood as an active expression of disgust, depending on the context. First, referring to Nussbaum’s discussion, the characteristics of the disgust concept can be summarized into the following several elements.

Disgust is nothing but anxiety about pollution, and is triggered by the subject’s awareness of the boundary between the inside and the outside. In particular, some diseases, such as AIDS, which have a contagious effect, become objects of disgust, because the disease penetrates into the subject (through transmission) from outside the subject. Therefore, disgust is difficult to detect before the age of three, when the ego is formed, and it responds particularly sensitively to beings that internally shake the collective ego of heterosexual ‘civilization’, such as homosexuality and other sexual minorities. ‘Hate’ is fundamentally an emotion derived from the agitation of the ego boundary. What these boundary fluctuations fundamentally indicate are the indicators of animality or animal finitude in humans that ‘civilization’ could not sufficiently suppress. Civilization is regarded as advancing, and it seeks to move beyond animal finitude and the ‘weakness’ (or ugliness) that it reminds individuals of. Thus, treating humans as animals, or insects, burping, a runny nose, or other human excrement inflicts ‘shame’ and ‘disgust’ on humans.

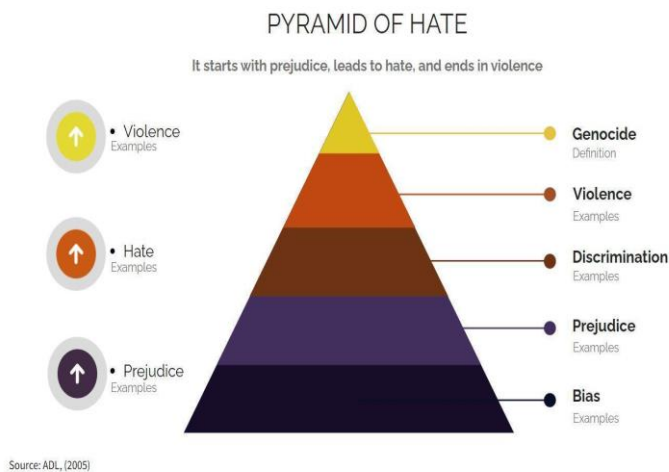


Figure 1. Pyramid of hate  
Source: ADL, (2005)

As dehumanization starts from biased language with aversive emotions, figure 1 shows degrees of violence aggravation. In this light, all forms of hate stem from a negative emotion; aversion. To simply put it, aversion refers to the feeling of dislike of someone. On the other hand, academically, hate and disgust accompany ambivalent emotions that cannot be encompassed by mere hate alone. A book written by Martha C. Nussbaum<sup>306</sup> elaborates the concept of disgust, which narrowly means the feeling of disgust

This type of hate politics through hate speech or expression towards a certain group who experienced historical discrimination can enhance their traumatic emotion and psychological pain through those languages. This is why current modern identity politics could easily stir/bring back to surface/provoke historical trauma in a certain society through a particular use of language. This can easily lead to actual diplomatic conflicts between countries in that historical group trauma can be triggered through the

<sup>304</sup> Brené Brown. (2021, October 28). *Dehumanizing always starts with language*. Brené Brown. Retrieved May 23, 2022, from <https://brenebrown.com/articles/2018/05/17/dehumanizing-always-starts-with-language/>.

<sup>305</sup> Smith, D. L. (2012). *Less than human: Why we demean, enslave, and exterminate others*. St. Martin's Griffin.

<sup>306</sup> Nussbaum, M. C. (2009). *Hiding from humanity: disgust, shame, and the law*. Princeton University Press.

remarks, which potentially causes a secondary victimization to the actual victim itself.

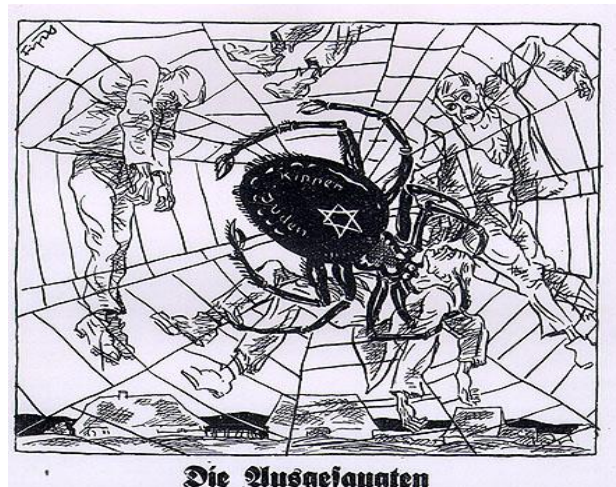
In this light, many cultural media have shown dehumanization, expression or language. For example, in *Pachinko*, this deep rooted humiliation is uncovered by scenes. One of scenes in the novel depicts the Koreans' sentiment when they faced discrimination from Japanese during their colonization. In episode four, there is a scene that shows the humiliation Han Geumja (Park Hye-Jin) has experienced in the past when signing a contract for selling the old Korean homeowner's property to a Japanese conglomerate.

Right before signing the contract to sell her property, her children and other characters who want to get the property for economic benefits said "mother, it is all in the past". However, she responded "the Japanese called us cockroaches. They said they had to throw it back into the ground." The statement clearly shows the plight of the Koreans living in Japan, enduring the dark period of Japanese colonial rule. Also, at the end of this conversation between Solomon and the houseowner, Solomon said "do not sell the property". Ultimately, the old lady burst into tears with a satisfying smile. The grandmother who has a property to sell, but refused to sell her house because of her past humiliation from Japan. It turned out that, eventually, the humiliation she suffered gave her strength to resist, and not to sell her property to the colonizer after another character asked her not to. In an economic sense, this decision is not reasonably understood.

According to historical records, when they set foot on Japanese soil due to colonial rule, the first Koreans from the ages of 2 to 4 who were born there were unable to return to their homeland due to Korean war, division, and livelihood problems, and were discriminated against and neglected. They dreamed of the day they would return to their homeland after liberation. However, a Korean war broke out in the

homeland where people thought they could return, and the land was divided. In this situation, Zainichi are Koreans and their descendants who came to live in Japan because Japan colonized Joseon<sup>307</sup>. Although Japan was the cause of the formation of Zainichi, it made him a foreigner by depriving Zainichi of their Japanese citizenship after the end of colonial rule. They also couldn't have pensions, medical insurance, and the right to vote, and were discriminated against about employment. Furthermore, they faced day to day verbal violation such as 'go back if you don't like discrimination', ridiculing them as 'kimchi' and 'cockroaches'<sup>308</sup>.

Usually, hatred politics utilize discrimination against one groups. Oftentimes, this discrimination incorporates dehumanization. One hypothesis is that dehumanization enables instrumental violence by weakening moral inhibitions that would otherwise restrain it, thus making perpetrators apathetic to victims' suffering.



**Figure 2.** "Sucked dry." Nazi propaganda attempted to dehumanize Jewish people

**Explanation:** The caricature suggests the Jews are sucking the economic life from Gentiles. It is one of numerous *Stürmer* cartoons comparing Jews to inhuman and unpleasant creatures. (February 1930).

Source: German Propaganda archive, <https://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/sturm28.htm>.

<sup>307</sup> Chapman, David. 2008. *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity*. New York: Routledge.

<sup>308</sup> Kim, B. (2011). "Blatant Discrimination Disappears, But ...": The Politics of Everyday

Exclusion in Contemporary Japan. *Asian Perspective*, 35(2), 287–308. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42704755>.



**Figure 3.** “Rats. Destroy them”, a 1940s poster from occupied Denmark.  
 Source: Philadelphia holocaust remembrance foundation <https://www.philaholocaustmemorial.org/antisemitism-explained/>.



**Figure 5.** A satirical cartoon, from the Punch, showing an Irishman depicted as an ape. Anti-Irish sentiments in Victorian Britain and 19th century United States stereotyped the Irish as violent and alcoholic.  
 Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monkeyirishman.jpg>.



**Figure 4.** “The worm”, “Where something is rotten, the Jew is the cause.”  
**Explanation:** The names in the background are those of Jews involved in major financial scandals. The apple is named “the German economy.” The worm is named “Jewish scandals.” (November 1931).  
 Source: German Propaganda archive, <https://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/sturm28.htm>.



**Figure 6.** A contrasting of the English woman (left) and the Irish woman looking like apes (right).  
 Source: <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2011/01/28/irish-apes-tactics-of-de-humanization/>.

Facing with those dehumanizations and actual discriminations for a long time in the past, a society's internalized psychological trauma can be transmitted through a country's culture. One example is Korean culture. Even though for many Asian countries, rice-based culture has significant meaning, in Korea rice and food hold deeper meaning because of the past war experience. In a various literature or artworks, the sensitive emotional trauma and grief from losing one's own nation has been depicted vividly than just quantitative historical records. As an example, in the aforementioned Pachinko novel, a bowl of rice, in particular, has symbolic meaning. With a little context, shortly after burying Kyunghye, the sister-in-law she'd been caring for, Sunja (youn yuh-jung) was dragged to the doorstep of a fellow Korean expat (Park Hye-Jin) by Solomon (Jin Ha), who hopes to convince this homeowner to sell her land to a large Japanese corporation. Sitting at the table of an unfamiliar compatriot, Sunja takes one spoonful of rice and her eyes widen, overcome with surprise. The homeowner understands immediately: "You taste it, don't you?" It is rice grown in their country. Solomon does not comprehend; he cannot taste the difference, having eaten so many bowls of white rice throughout his life. Sunja, however, is transported, and eventually her composure shatters by showing her tears. Here, in this unassuming bowl of rice from the motherland she left behind so many years ago, lies her entire past.

To refer to the historical records, in 1910, Japan gained full control of Korea. Many of Korea's land properties were taken over by Japanese merchants and corporations, who forced Korea's existing landowners and farmers into tenant farming. Korea eventually grew to supply almost 98 percent of Japanese rice imports, leaving little rice rations for themselves. During this time, Koreans subsisted off of barley, millet, and other imported cereal grains;

white rice was a luxury few could afford, reserved for weddings and funerals.

This kind of unresolved Korean sentiment towards Japan still leads a disputes in various area, the most recent dispute that exaggerate countries diplomatic relations is a trade dispute between the two<sup>309</sup> and other discriminations<sup>310</sup>. From the third party perspective, this dispute seems to have nothing to do with a historical fact and even this is unproductive for both parties. However, human's psychological trauma has often ignored over financial benefits.

Lastly, a possible avenue to address historical trauma is through rehumanization. This is a process of regaining their dignity as a human being. For instance, this rehumanization can be a form of resistance against injustice discrimination or an apology by being acknowledge their pain and suffering sincerely. As the drama has shown, one of the main characters called Solomon (Jin Ha), who hopes to convince an old homeowner to sell her land to a large Japanese corporation, danced freely after the negotiation. Even though he ended up not selling the house to the Japanese corporation and he lost their opportunity to gain financial benefits, somehow he felt liberated by his resistance action. The dance clearly implies the character's freedom and liberation, which was an expression of deep-rooted suppressed sentiment. Also, standing up against injustice made Solomon feel freedom and eventually "rehumanized". Nevertheless, the resistance has a limit in that it is not a sustainable or inclusive way for uniting both victims and perpetrators. In order to bring out the truth and fundamental reconciliation between the perpetrator and the victim, it is essential to unify the both parties. The exemplary case would be the Rwanda Gacaca trial<sup>311</sup>. The new court was introduced by the Rwandan government and a traditional customs court. The focus of this trial was

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<sup>309</sup> Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). *The japan-south korea trade dispute: What to know*. Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved May 24, 2022, from <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/japan-south-korea-trade-dispute-what-know>

<sup>310</sup> *Nike Japan ad on discrimination draws applause and outrage: The Asahi Shimbun: Breaking News, Japan news and analysis*. The Asahi Shimbun.

(2020, December 24). Retrieved May 24, 2022, from <https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/13993062>.

<sup>311</sup> Phil Clark, *The Gacaca courts, post-genocide justice and reconciliation in Rwanda: justice without lawyers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, 2010, 388 p.

'recovery of the community', not punishment of the perpetrators. In other words, they admitted the fact that they need to create a village where both parties can live together in a sustainable way. There was only one thing that this court required, a confession. If you confess your sins, you will not be punished. Instead, the village community imposes moral obligations on the perpetrators. To compensate the victim as much as possible. It's not about paying huge sums of financial reparation, instead providing a workforce or helping victims with their work or handing out some livestock. The solution chosen by Rwanda is to make efforts for the perpetrators and victims to live together from the village level. Thus, the first step to treat trauma is rehumanization with a

genuine human dignity and unified reconciliation from both parties.



**Figure 7. Rehumanization**  
Source: <http://unesco.sorbonneonu.fr/>.

# Answering the Kurdish Question in Syria: Identity, Negotiation and Conflict

Benedetta BENZONI

Page | 91

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A couple of years ago, Syrian Kurds unexpectedly found themselves in the blinding spotlight of Western media, centred in a heavily emotional narrative that covered everything from oppression to female empowerment. However, these accounts never went deeper than a surface-sweep aimed to satisfy the audience's appetite for tragedy. After a few months of fame, the "Kurdish issue" was largely tabled: the US seemed happy to let Russia handle the situation, and the international audience moved onto other stories.

Now the situation is changing. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has destroyed its credibility as a neutral mediator, ceding its spot to Turkey, and Erdogan is leaping at the chance for a *rapprochement* with Assad before the 2023 Turkish elections.<sup>312</sup> The Kurdish issue will soon be firmly back on the table. This paper aims to provide an analysis of the Syrian-Kurdish conflict that properly addresses its underlying psychological dynamics, in order to move beyond the outdated understanding of the conflict as purely military.

## Kurdish political identity

There are two components to the Kurdish political identity in Syria: the ethnonational one, and the civic one. They both need to be understood and

recognised in order to understand the opposition groups in the Syrian Northeast in their entirety.

Standing at 10% of the population, the Kurds are the largest minority ethnic group in Syria. They are mostly concentrated in the Northeast, bordering the predominantly-Kurdish regions in Iraq to the east and in Turkey to the north. The outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011 led to the rise of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a coalition of Kurdish groups, which swiftly established control of the region. The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) is now *de facto* autonomous and self-governed. It must be noted, however, that the strongly political element of the Kurdish identity in Syria did not fall from the sky in 2011.

When applying psychoanalysis to political conflict, Volkan argues that when a group perceives itself as being under attack, it sparks a process termed 'large group regression': the group develops a lower tolerance for anxiety and perceives a more rigid 'us/them' divide with other groups, particularly the perceived attacker.<sup>313</sup> Other research into collective identity highlights how it is sparked by "feeling aggrieved as a group" about "illegitimate injustice and inequality," and how the identity solidifies during power struggles with other groups.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> Menekse Tokyay, 'Ankara Considering Opportunities to Start Talks with Syria: Hurriyet', *Arab News*, 6 April 2022 <<https://arab.news/5gjfe>> [accessed 10 April 2022].

<sup>313</sup> Vamik D Volkan, *Psychoanalysis, International Relations, and Diplomacy: A Sourcebook on Large-Group Psychology*, 2018

<<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780429903649>> [accessed 10 April 2022].

<sup>314</sup> Bernd Simon and Bert Klandermans, 'Politicized Collective Identity: A Social Psychological Analysis.', *American Psychologist*, 56/4 (2001), 324.

It is blindingly clear that these processes have been, and are currently, at play among Kurdish populations in Syria, in that the conflict with the Syrian state has fuelled and solidified an independent Kurdish identity within the country. There is a long history of human rights abuses by the Syrian state against the Kurdish people: the state has notably banned the Kurdish language and stripped as many as half a million Kurds of Syrian citizenship, thus depriving them of the ability of going to school, finding a job, or leaving the country.

Since the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War and the attack of Turkish forces in Operation Peace Spring, Kurdish residents of the AANES describe their life as being “blood and ruin,” saying that attackers “stole my home, my livelihood, everything.” However, it is also clear that perceiving themselves as under attack has spurred resistance and group solidarity, as can be seen by a Kurdish woman showing off her rifles to a journalist while saying “we” (referring presumably to other Kurds) are ready to fight, and then describing the measures they take to feel “powerful.”<sup>315</sup>

Writings by YPG<sup>316</sup> fighters show the extremes of these feelings: one of them in particular writes at length about how being part of the Kurdish resistance makes him feel “part of a great network of solidarity expanding out in time and space,” and how he saw Kurds being moved to tears when the YPG took over their towns after years of state repression. The entire written piece by this particular fighter shows extreme pride at what the AANES embodies – “freedom, pride, and honour” – and then adds that for Kurds in the region, “to be alive, free, and Kurdish, [is] itself an act of resistance.”<sup>317</sup>

It’s clear, then, that being under attack is hardening Kurdish identity, and fuelling their ability and willingness to engage in political and military

struggle. The AANES continues to be a target for the Syrian state: its very existence threatens the regime’s credibility, especially since, as per a discussion with an employee of the Syrian Ministry of Culture, the regime continues to label the Kurds as “foreign forces.” On a more practical note, the Northeast is the main national producer of wheat and oil. With the Russian invasion of Ukraine threatening world wheat supplies, the international aid corridor into Syria subject to a potential Russian veto, and the country on the brink of famine, the Assad regime desperately needs access to the Northeast’s agricultural and natural resources. To the north, Turkey accuses the SDF of being allied with the (Turkish) Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK), and has alternated between attacking Kurdish forces directly or funding other groups to attack it on its behalf. Syrian Kurds are under attack from multiple fronts, but their ethnic identity is a factor in each conflict.

However, a critical part of the identity of mostly-Kurdish armed groups is also their purposeful, if inconsistent, distancing from ethnonationalist discourse. While Mazlum Kobane, the leader of the SDF, often makes reference to the ethnonationalist concept of Kurdistan<sup>318</sup> in public interviews, and discusses international cooperation between Kurds, the SDF leadership is careful to remain appealing to other ethnic groups. SDF leaders consciously chose to formally name the area they administer the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria – a fairly neutral name – rather than calling it Rojava, a name that designates broadly the same territory but which is inextricably linked to the Kurdish struggle.

Indeed, the AANES includes many Arab-majority (non-Kurdish) territories, and there is a visible effort for the AANES to permit the political involvement of any ethnicity. Kobane has repeatedly gone on the record to state that “including in the Arab majority

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<sup>315</sup> Amberin Zaman, ‘Syria’s Kurds Embrace Resilience, Beauty in Wake of Turkish Attack’, *Al Monitor*, 7 February 2020 <<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2020/02/syria-kurds-resilient-turkey-attack-qamishli.html>> [accessed 10 April 2022].

<sup>316</sup> The YPG is the Kurdish armed group that leads the SDF coalition.

<sup>317</sup> Matt Broomfield, ‘How a Revolution Really Feels: Rojava 8 Years On’, *Novara Media*, 2020 <<https://novaramedia.com/2020/07/17/how-a-revolution-really-feels-rojava-8-years-on/>> [accessed 10 April 2022].

<sup>318</sup> Kurdistan refers to the ensemble of all Kurdish-majority areas in the Middle East, which are currently split between Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria.

areas [...] the local people need to choose their own leaders, their own administration. This is of utmost importance to us.”<sup>319</sup> Various Syrian Kurdish exponents have also visited foreign parliaments in recent years, in a bid to drum up sympathy from the international community and to visibly align themselves with democratic countries.

The SDF has maintained a consistent political line of enthusiastic openness to negotiation with anyone, from Turkey to the Assad regime, and has signalled willingness to make concessions. Right now, it is under particular pressure to find a solution: despite the recent waiving of US sanctions,<sup>320</sup> poverty and unemployment are on the rise in the region. This comes in combination with a drought that is exacerbated by Turkish interference with the water supply; all of these factors are causing support for Daesh to grow,<sup>321</sup> at a time when the AANES lacks the resources to keep defeated Daesh members imprisoned.<sup>322</sup>

In their analysis of politicised collective identity, Bernd and Klandermans timidly propose that belligerent groups “may realize that neither party is strong enough to defeat the other and conclude that a power sharing arrangement might therefore be the best solution.”<sup>323</sup> However, this possibility will not materialise by itself, and must be accompanied by measures which counteract the continued politicisation of Kurdish identity in Syria. So far, the Syrian state has exclusively addressed the Kurdish

Question through repressive means, and after 2011 almost exclusively militarily. Over a decade later, it is abundantly clear that not only are the Syrian government’s armed forces not strong enough to reconquer the AANES, but that the complex web of emotions surrounding the conflict would make any military resolution insufficient anyway. The resolution to the Kurdish question must therefore take into account, firstly, that the Kurds’ will to fight is partly derived from the attacks it has faced from both the Syrian and Turkish state; secondly, that the stated preference of the SDF is to reach that resolution through diplomatic negotiations.

### What does this mean for potential negotiations?

Up until a few months ago, Russia was the mediator *par excellence* between the Kurds, Turkey, and the Assad regime. However, its invasion of Ukraine has completely overturned the existing dynamics. Where it was previously accepted as an intermediary by the US and Europe, now the Western axis is in open conflict with Russia and will seek to contrast its influence in the region, as signalled by the fact that the US has made an abrupt return to the Syrian diplomatic scene<sup>324</sup> by holding (limited) talks with the AANES leadership.<sup>325</sup> At the same time, Turkey’s enthusiastic willingness to export its newfound mediator status between Russia and Ukraine to other

<sup>319</sup> Amberin Zaman, ‘Syrian Kurdish Commander Says Russia Opposes Further Turkish Land Grabs’, *Al-Monitor*, 9 November 2021 <<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/11/syria-kurdish-commander-assured-washington-turkey-wont-invade-again>> [accessed 5 April 2022].

<sup>320</sup> Amberin Zaman, ‘Biden Administration to Announce Sanctions Waivers for Syrian Kurds, Sunni Opposition-Held Areas’, *Al-Monitor*, 7 March 2022 <<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/biden-administration-announce-sanctions-waivers-syrian-kurds-sunni-opposition>> [accessed 5 April 2022].

<sup>321</sup> ‘Three Years on, Syria Kurds Warn World Allowing IS to Rebuild’, *Al-Monitor*, 23 March 2022 <[https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/three-years-syria-](https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/three-years-syria-kurds-warn-world-allowing-rebuild)

[kurds-warn-world-allowing-rebuild](https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/three-years-syria-kurds-warn-world-allowing-rebuild)> [accessed 5 April 2022].

<sup>322</sup> ‘Clashes between ISIL and Kurds Kill Four in Syrian Camp’, *Al Jazeera*, 29 March 2022 <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/29/clashes-between-isil-and-kurds-kill-four-in-syrian-camp-monitor>> [accessed 5 April 2022].

<sup>323</sup> Simon and Klandermans, ‘Politicized Collective Identity’, 602.

<sup>324</sup> Karwan Faidhi Dri, ‘Top US Officials Discuss Range of Topics with Rojava Authorities’, *Rudaw* (14 March 2022) <<https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/140320223>> [accessed 5 April 2022].

<sup>325</sup> US State Department - Near Eastern Affairs [@StateDept\_NEA], ‘Status’, *Twitter*, 2022 <[https://twitter.com/statedept\\_nea/status/1503445207341318146](https://twitter.com/statedept_nea/status/1503445207341318146)> [accessed 5 April 2022].

parts of the world is not at all likely to be well-received by Syrian Kurds.

Third-party mediation between the Kurds and the Syrian state will end up being necessary, given the Syrian state's inability to achieve a military victory over the Kurds, but also its refusal to negotiate directly with them. Whichever nation or group ends up taking up the mantle will have to keep in mind the psychological dynamics that have led to Kurdish identity being so strong in Syria, because they will also affect negotiations.

In this article, I have discussed at length the creation of a politicised collective identity among Syrian Kurds. This dynamic is linked to the phenomenon of intergroup paranoia, which Kramer describes as "an extreme and historically contextualized form of distrust and suspicion."<sup>326</sup> One of its implications in negotiations is an "exaggerated perception of conspiracy," including the perception that third parties are collaborating with the aggressor to the group's detriment. In other words, despite the SDF's declared openness to negotiation, it will be critical to consider the role that Kurdish collective identity will play in the perceived fairness, and therefore the longevity, of the settlement.

### Conclusion

Historically, the Kurdish Question in Syria has been almost exclusively handled through repressive political measures and aggressive military tactics, with the Kurds perceiving themselves as constantly under threat. Now that the Assad regime's control of the country's Northeast is but a distant memory, and Kurdish resistance groups have ballooned into a capable military force and a fairly independent administration, it is clear that not only does aggression not work, but that if it continues, all it will do is solidify the Kurds' resolve to resist. Any solution that does not address the psychological tension between the Syrian Kurdish population and the Syrian State will not last long at all.

With the invasion of Ukraine, Russia is functionally out of the picture, Assad is even more isolated than normal, and the SDF remains ready to negotiate. Now is the chance for Western powers to jump in and take over where a solution has not been found for the past decades: if they intervene and take into account the psychological reasons for the conflict when trying to solve it, it could be a golden opportunity to reach stability in the Northeast.

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<sup>326</sup> Roderick Kramer, 'The "Dark Side" of Social Context: The Role of Intergroup Paranoia in

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Zaman, Amberin, 'Syrian Kurdish Commander Says Russia Opposes Further Turkish Land Grabs', *Al-Monitor*, 9 November 2021 <<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/11/syria-kurdish-commander-assured-washington-turkey-wont-invade-again>> [accessed 5 April 2022].

Zaman, Amberin, 'Syria's Kurds Embrace Resilience, Beauty in Wake of Turkish Attack', *Al Monitor*, 7 February 2020 <<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2020/02/syria-kurds-resilient-turkey-attack-qamishli.html>> [accessed 5 April 2022].

# Legitimacy and the Psychology of Exclusion Regarding Palestine in Normalization Deals Between Israel and Arab Countries

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The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is arguably one of the most visible and contentious conflicts in international politics. For decades, it is a problem that has been brought back to public attention time and time again, including after an outbreak of violence in May 2021 (256 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 26 in the West Bank, 10 Israelis were killed, and 3 foreign workers who were in Israel died)<sup>327</sup>. This crisis renewed conversations about the roots of the conflict as well as what a sustainable, lasting peace may look like for the region. Both Israel and Palestine struggle with establishing their national identity as more legitimate than the other, legitimacy here defined as "...a psychological property of an authority, institution, or social arrangement that leads those connected to it to believe that it is appropriate, proper, and just"<sup>328</sup>. Perceived legitimacy of a group in a social arrangement also dictates the perceived acceptability of their behaviors and actions, with those excluded from legitimacy being perceived as acting unacceptably or having unacceptable demands more often than groups with relatively higher levels of legitimacy<sup>329</sup>. In order to explore the psychological effects of legitimacy and exclusion on this conflict, this paper will analyze existing normalization deals in the foreign policy between

Arab countries and Israel in order to analyze to what extent regional trust breakdown has occurred as a result of U.S.-brokered normalization deals with Israel.

## Identity and Legitimacy as Important Psychological Factors Between Israel & Palestine

At its core, the psychological element of the conflict between Israel and Palestine is one of identity and legitimacy. Due to their own national, ethnic, and / or religious narratives, both peoples lay claim to the same land. This presents a zero-sum game between Israel and Palestine, in which the gain in territory or even the recognition of legitimate claims to territory by one party inherently diminishes the territory or legitimate claims to territory of the other. In other words, fulfillment of the other's national identity is experienced as the destruction of one's own national identity<sup>330</sup>. Understanding that this is a powerful feature of the conflict, it can be seen why it has been difficult to coordinate fruitful negotiations between the two parties; mutual delegitimization is essential to

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<sup>327</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - occupied Palestinian territory. 2022. *Protection of Civilians Report 24 - 31 May 2021*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.ochaopt.org/poc/24-31-may-2021>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>328</sup> Tyler, T., 2006. Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57(1), pp.375-400, pp. 375

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 386.

<sup>330</sup> Kelman, H., 1987. The Political Psychology of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: How Can We Overcome the Barriers to a Negotiated Solution?. *Political Psychology*, 8(3), pp.347-363, pp. 355.

each narrative<sup>331</sup>, and one does not have incentive to negotiate with those they view as illegitimate<sup>332</sup>.

While certain parallels can be drawn between the narratives that form the psychological basis of the Israeli and Palestinian national narratives, such as the idea of a diaspora or a historic struggle to attain basic rights, it would be intellectually dishonest not to recognize the major concrete differences between the perceived legitimacy of Israel and the perceived legitimacy of Palestine. Israel receives much material and political backing from the Western world, such as the \$3.3 billion given to Israel by the United States in the 2019 fiscal year, over 99% of which was for military funding<sup>333</sup>. Western support is a valuable legitimizing force, since many international institutions are heavily controlled by the West, in a phenomenon that can be described as Western hegemony. An example of this can be seen in how Palestine has had its petition for nationhood rejected by the United Nations, relegating it to observer status<sup>334</sup>. Though as of 2019 Palestine held recognition from 138 of 193 U.N. Member States (Israel is recognized by 164 Member States)<sup>335</sup>, the 2014 rejection of Palestinian membership fell short of just one vote in the Security Council, though the United States said it would have vetoed an approval of the petition anyways, making any level of approval null and void<sup>336</sup>.

This rhetoric of delegitimization, especially one so asymmetrically felt, discourages direct negotiations

between Israeli and Palestinian groups. Firstly, there is the aforementioned zero-sum game at play, in which the recognition of the other group as having legitimate claims to negotiate negates, to whatever extent, the claims of these nations for themselves<sup>337</sup>. And secondly, the imbalance of power in the situation exacerbates feelings of exclusion and delegitimization in different ways for both parties. Dominant groups in legitimacy hierarchies automatically have their claims and experiences taken more seriously than subordinate groups<sup>338</sup>. Because of this, even if dominant groups are aware of some injustice, if they feel that they are legitimately dominant they will continue to employ reasoning that legitimizes their dominance<sup>339</sup>. This is the experience of Israel and its allies. On the other hand, power to influence is incentive to negotiate. Delegitimized groups have more reasons to believe they will gain nothing from negotiation proceedings, and may even fear worsening their situation, in which case they will prefer the status-quo, even if it is generally considered to be unsustainable<sup>340</sup>. This is the experience of Palestine. Though this situation has often meant turning to mediation tactics, such as in the case of the 1993 Oslo Accords<sup>341</sup>. There has been a trend of Israel turning its attention away from legitimizing itself vis-à-vis Palestine, and seeking further legitimacy via normalization with countries that have been historically allied with Palestine.

### Recent Normalization Deals and Their Shortcomings

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<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>332</sup> Tyler. Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation. pp. 386

<sup>333</sup> Foreignassistance.gov. 2020. *U.S. Foreign Assistance By Country - Israel*. [online] Available at: <<https://foreignassistance.gov/cd/uga>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>334</sup> UN News. 2014. *UN Security Council Action on Palestinian Statehood Blocked*. [online] Available at: <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/12/487342-un-security-council-action-palestinian-statehood-blocked>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>335</sup> Worldpopulationreview.com. 2022. *Countries That Recognize Palestine 2022*. [online] Available at: <<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-that-recognize-palestine>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>336</sup> UN News. *UN Security Council Action on Palestinian Statehood Blocked*.

<sup>337</sup> Kelman. *The Political Psychology of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: How Can We Overcome the Barriers to a Negotiated Solution?*. pp. 355.

<sup>338</sup> Tyler. *Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation*. pp. 387.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 388.

<sup>340</sup> Kelman. *The Political Psychology of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: How Can We Overcome the Barriers to a Negotiated Solution?*. pp. 352.

<sup>341</sup> United Nations, 1993. *Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (The Oslo Accords)*. United National General Assembly Security Council.

The United States does not shy away from being labeled Israel's biggest ally, and this can be seen not only in how much foreign aid is given to Israel, but in how often the U.S. is willing to intervene on Israel's behalf to manage their foreign relations. In fact, bettering Israeli relations with its Arab neighbors was one of the main foreign policy goals of the Trump administration<sup>342</sup>, and an "ironclad commitment" to Israeli security remains a promise under the Biden administration as well<sup>343</sup>. A major recent development in Israeli-Arab relations came with the series of business normalization deals in 2020 beginning with the Abraham Accords, a deal which normalized relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates under American mediation<sup>344</sup>. Soon after, similar deals with Morocco and Bahrain were reached, while Sudan agreed to normalize but has yet to conclude a deal<sup>345</sup>.

These deals were notable for breaking decades of Arab agreement that they would not engage in relations with Israel while the Palestinian question remained unresolved, with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) calling the deals "another treacherous stab to the Palestinian cause"<sup>346</sup>. Though the official Abraham Accord documents of Bahrain, Morocco, and the U.A.E. explicitly mention the term "Israeli-Palestinian conflict"<sup>347</sup>, Palestine was not party to any of these deals or negotiations, and no concrete steps were outlined to include Palestine as a negotiating partner in the future. By

leveraging its power and influence on behalf of Israel, the United States has managed, to an extent, to decouple the problem of Israeli-Palestinian relations from the broader Israeli-Arab relations, which constitutes another major blow to the Arab League, a loose confederation of 22 Arab states whose founding principles include the "strong opposition to the emergence of a Jewish state on Palestinian territory"<sup>348</sup>. The successful brokering of these deals perpetuates the idea that the Palestinian question can further be decoupled from the Arab world in the future, which would take away what may be considered Palestine's largest legitimizing force in world politics.

### How Exclusion Leads to Trust-Breakdown that Hinders Negotiations

This situation, in which Palestine is excluded and pushed toward the periphery of Middle Eastern relations, is considered by many to be an unsustainable solution<sup>349</sup>. It is an attempt to circumvent, rather than address, the Palestinian question. To decouple the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the broader Israeli-Arab struggle is to place strain on Palestinian national identity, and can even be seen as a way to demonstrate the belief that some Israelis hold that Palestine is not distinct from other Arab countries, shifting the perspective that there is a nation seeking sovereignty to the idea that Palestinians could settle elsewhere (i.e. Jordan) and

<sup>342</sup> Trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov. 2022. *Foreign Policy*. [online] Available at: <<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/foreign-policy/>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>343</sup> Joe Biden for President: Official Campaign Website. 2020. *American Leadership: Joe Biden*. [online] Available at: <<https://joebiden.com/americanleadership/>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>344</sup> United States Department of State. 2021. *The Abraham Accords*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords/>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>345</sup> Aljazeera.com. 2022. *Israel to host US, Arab diplomats in 'Abraham Accords' summit*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/25/israel-to-host-historic-summit-of-us-arab-diplomats>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>346</sup> Aljazeera.com. 2020. *'Stab in the back': Palestinians condemn Israel-Bahrain deal*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/11/stab-in-the-back-palestinians-condemn-israel-bahrain-deal>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>347</sup> United States Department of State. *The Abraham Accords*.

<sup>348</sup> Masters, J. and Aly Sergie, M., 2020. *The Arab League*. [online] Council on Foreign Relations. Available at: <<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/arab-league>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

<sup>349</sup> Belkaïd, A., 2020. *Idylle entre les pays du Golfe et Israël*. [online] Le Monde diplomatique. Available at: <<https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2020/12/BELKAID/62564>> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

are simply invaders of Israeli territory<sup>350</sup>. Again, it should be noted that Israelis also have their legitimacy disparaged by Palestinians or pro-Palestine groups<sup>351</sup>, but it must be remembered that there is a major power imbalance between the two groups, and Israel still holds much more political and material power to reinforce its legitimacy than Palestine does.

It is important to note that the actions of states are ultimately enacted via individuals. Parties can be encouraged to negotiate with one another when their leaders exhibit more cognitive openness and complexity, meaning that new information is taken into account by these leaders in decision making, and that the leader is able to analyze a combination of dimensions in order to characterize situations<sup>352</sup>. For example, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who held office for two terms (1983-1984 and 1986-1992) was considered to be quite cognitively closed, believing that he was right on virtually every decision he had ever made, and considered any attack on Israeli policies as anti-Semitism<sup>353</sup>. Because Shamir did not recognize the PLO as legitimate negotiation partners, little progress was made. Later, more cognizant Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres on the other hand acknowledged the PLO as legitimate and were able to charter the 1993 Oslo Accords, creating a limited Palestinian Authority to govern the Gaza strip and the West Bank, Israeli evacuation from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, a joint Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee to implement these actions, and an invitation to Jordan and Egypt to cooperate with them as well<sup>354</sup>. A second Camp

David negotiation was held in 2000 (modeled after the famous 1978 Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel mediated by American President Jimmy Carter) under the mediation of President Bill Clinton, but ultimately ended without agreement and led to the Second Intifada of Palestine. It is proposed that, unlike with the first Camp David negotiations, the leaders made little effort to make each other more culturally aware of themselves, and this left a lot of psychological barriers of wariness and discomfort that the negotiators were unable to overcome<sup>355</sup>.

There is a strong interest for both Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate an end to their conflict, but no matter how strong this interest, it would be irrational for leaders of either group to enter into negotiations that may leave their national existence in doubt; they would naturally prefer the status quo to actively worsening their situation. For this reason, it is preferable that Israeli and Palestinian negotiators continue to employ mediating bodies to avoid more high-risk situations, but ultimately the establishment of a positive and lasting peace between Israel and Palestine must come from Israel and Palestine; not via proxy normalization deals that functionally go over the heads of Palestinian leaders in attempt to secure a more stable relationship with the Arab world. As long as the pursuit of one's national interests is defined by the delegitimization of the other's, there is no base for negotiations. It is only when parties engage in cognitively open and complex manners that grounds for accepting the other as negotiation partners can be explored.

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<sup>350</sup> Kelman. The Political Psychology of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: How Can We Overcome the Barriers to a Negotiated Solution?. pp. 355.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>352</sup> Ziv, G., 2011. Cognitive Structure and Foreign Policy Change: Israel's Decision to Talk to the PLO. *International Relations*, 25(4), pp.426-454. pp. 430

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 434.

<sup>354</sup> United Nations, 1993. *Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (The Oslo Accords)*. United National General Assembly Security Council.

<sup>355</sup> Yilmaz, I., 2005. *A Historical Analysis of the Failure of Camp David Summit 2000*. Master of Science. University of North Texas.

## How Emotions Shape the European Union

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Page | 100

On May 9th 1950, Robert Schuman proposed “*the pooling of coal and steel production (...) will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims.*” To this day, the Schuman declaration is still considered the founding piece of legislation to the post-World War II cooperation between France and Germany. While it was considered a breakthrough by many, including Konrad Adenauer, its success relies mostly on the emotional processes Robert Schuman used to promote European development. He managed to overcome an array of disparate and sore feelings, thus creating a new dynamic of trust amongst former foes-turned friends, which paved the way for the European Economic Community and subsequently the European Union (EU).

Today, this has become a common method, where emotions and feelings are at the centre stage of European development. The term ‘emotion’ would be differently described depending on if a linguist, scientist or marketing executive would be asked to define it. Linguists tend to believe that there is not one but several definitions of an emotion<sup>356</sup>. Studies of emotional discourses appear to be particularly flourishing in French research and some distinctions on the studies of emotional discourses can be borrowed from prominent academics. Raphael

Micheli<sup>357</sup>, for instance, distinguishes three distinct types of emotions: emotions that are expressed through language, that are implied, or that are argued for. As to feelings, they are usually defined as a conscious experience of emotional reactions and can also be triggered through language.

Ever since the Schuman declaration, the EU has followed a structural evolution in the European integration project or the *construction of Europe* (from the French ‘construction européenne’). The latter can be analysed through three main perspectives. First of all, the development of the EU is based on the growing reinforcement of a community spirit, the pursuits of an ‘ever closer union’. Second, EU development can be analysed through policy making. The policies that are implemented promote a hands-on evolution of the Union. Finally, European integration can also be included in the *construction of Europe* project, as the EU enlargement can be seen as healthy progress for the European integration.

This article opts to discuss the influence of emotions on the EU in its globality. To do so, it requires to understand why emotions are capitalised on at the EU level in the first place (First section); and what methods are used when it comes to manipulating emotions to justify policy-making (Section 2). Yet,

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<sup>356</sup> R. Micheli, « Avant-propos », in *Les émotions dans les discours. Modèle d'analyse, perspectives empiriques*. Louvain-la-Neuve, De Boeck Supérieur, « Champs linguistiques », 2014, p. 105-133. URL : <https://www.cairn.info/--9782801117385-page-105.htm>.

<sup>357</sup> R. Micheli, « Chapitre 4. L'émotion étayée », in *Les émotions dans les discours. Modèle d'analyse, perspectives empiriques*. Louvain-la-Neuve, De Boeck Supérieur, « Champs linguistiques », 2014, p. 105-133. URL : <https://www.cairn.info/--9782801117385-page-105.htm>.

while discourses stir up emotions, they can also become arguments, influencing the way the EU operates (Section 3).

### Why are emotions capitalised on at the EU level?

Emotions have long been used by EU civil servants, institutions and sympathisers of the European Union to promote a European 'sense of belonging'. The EU was built on the development of a sense of belonging, between peoples who decided to put their future in the hands of a common entity. Today, several schools of thoughts argue for or against this entity. For instance, while France took on the presidency of the European Council, the European flag was hoisted under the Arch of Triumph, a move that was met with discontent by figures all across the French political spectrum. Raised under the French republican building, the European flag was perceived by many as a European intrusion into the French nation for many.

While the political and legal concepts of a nation are extremely complex, if not disputed by some scholars, it conveys a sense of homogeneity, of a common culture. The European nation refers to a political movement in favour of the creation of a European nation or even a federal state. It is in the pursuits of such ideals that emotions are exploited at the EU level, with the aim of strengthening a desire to co-exist together. It finds an echo in the language used in major speeches, such as the State of the Union address, where a sheer number of references to the "us" can be found. For instance, on 15 September 2021, Ursula von der Leyen argued in front of the

European Parliament: "*we have done all this together [...] as a united Europe*"<sup>358</sup>. Although this is just one example, there are many others, with a burgeoning trend in recent years to intensify discourses promoting a unified Europe. Thus, on the theoretical level, the objectification of emotions<sup>359</sup> aims at combating the identity resentment among European people, while nourishing the feeling of belonging that the EU needs so badly.

Europeans' sense of belonging to the EU is vital for the latter, because without it, the EU is drained of any remaining legitimacy. It is generally accepted that the EU suffers from a serious legitimacy deficit<sup>360</sup>. The French-Dutch double 'no' vote in 2005 in response to the draft Constitutional Treaty, or more recently Brexit, have only served in highlighting this fact<sup>361</sup>. Although there are now diverse and varied forms of antagonism to the EU, the organisation is no longer at liberty to ignore the latter.

The Union hence struggles to justify its legitimacy. Strengthening the powers of the European Parliament, the most legitimate European actor democratically speaking, is regularly brought up, but it is no secret that the use of emotions through speeches will always have more of an impact on the population than addressing structural problems. The disinterest, or lack of interest, of Europeans in the EU translates into repeated efforts to rally the 'European public opinion' under the star-spangled flag.

The recent crises that the European continent has experienced have had a profound impact on the way in which European citizens conceive and conceptualise their relationship to the Union. More

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<sup>358</sup> U. von der Leyen, « 2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen », *European Commission*, Strasbourg, 15 September 2021. URL: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/ov/SPEECH\\_21\\_4701](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/ov/SPEECH_21_4701)

<sup>359</sup> It is important to note that in this context, the notion of "emotions" encompasses many feelings, such as anger, pride, expectation, that will depend on a person or another.

<sup>360</sup> M. Haller, « Quelle légitimité pour l'Union européenne ? », *Revue internationale des sciences sociales*, 2010/2 (n° 196), pp. 55-68. DOI :

10.3917/riss.196.0055. URL : <https://www.cairn.info/revue-internationale-des-sciences-sociales-2010-2-page-55.htm>

<sup>361</sup> F. Delmotte, « La légitimité de l'Union européenne, une affaire de bons sentiments ? Réflexions sur l'appartenance à la communauté politique », *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 2008/4 (Vol. 15), pp. 541-554. DOI : 10.3917/ripc.154.0541. URL : <https://www.cairn.info/revue-internationale-de-politique-comparee-2008-4-page-541.htm>

specifically, these crises have been instrumental in restoring to a renewed sense of meaning with regards to the European project, and therefore, its legitimacy<sup>362</sup>.

Nevertheless, whilst these feelings of belonging and legitimacy strengthen the construction of Europe, it is also necessary to reflect on the method, the discourse and the actions that produce these emotions.

### When the discourse stirs up emotions

Whilst the interweaving of emotions in argumentative discourses is clear, their use is varied.

First of all, and this is not limited to the EU, the creation of a sense of belonging is achieved through the crafting and embracing of symbols. In the political or religious spheres, their instrumental value is relatively unambiguous, in the sense that they play an important role in creating a sense of shared identity. For example, European symbols such as the European nationality, the Euro currency, the flag, or the European anthem, all aim to arouse powerful emotions of identification to a group and serve as a rallying mean for collective action. Thus, communities built by a collective action and preserved by a collective memory are more likely to be anchored in a lasting development<sup>363</sup>. Furthermore, symbols depict the reality of a community and their meanings remind those members of their purpose. Thus, European symbols play a major role in strengthening the European project and the population's identification to a set of norms and values<sup>364</sup>.

Second of all, and as mentioned earlier, words can be used as a powerful tool for communication. Indeed, if language is restricted to its form, words always suggest more than the thought that generated them, triggering in those who listen to it an infinity of possible representations<sup>365</sup>. The emotions that arise from the speech are substantiated. Thus, our thoughts can very easily be influenced by ideas that the language will convey. For example, the use of a binary discourse such as "*In the deepest global economic crisis for decades, we chose to go it together with NextGenerationEU. And in the gravest planetary crisis of all time, again we chose to go it together with the European Green Deal*"<sup>366</sup> enabling the creation of feelings of belonging for the audience. Similarly, allusions to "great European values"<sup>367</sup>, be it democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, are regularly employed, which also serve to reinforce the feeling of belonging to a common entity. These linguistic figures of speech could not be summarised in such a short publication, yet they are of such importance that they ought to be mentioned.

Finally, European citizens identify themselves in certain European initiatives that can be perceived as directly benefiting them on a personal level, such as the Erasmus university exchange programmes. This type of initiative, at the very heart of the European project, reinforces the idea of shared community and therefore the legitimacy of the Union.

### The danger of emotions taking up the centre stage of the discourse

While emotions do tend to appear in discourse, emotions can in turn become an argument on which the discourse is based. The natural power that

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<sup>362</sup> T. Chopin, J-F. Jamet, «L'avenir du projet européen», *Question d'Europe*, 2016 (n°402). URL : <https://www.robert-schuman.eu/fr/doc/questions-d-europe/qe-402-fr.pdf>.

<sup>363</sup> E. S. Erel-koselleck, *The role and power of symbols in the identity formation of community members*, MSC thesis, Turkey, Graduate School Of Social Sciences Of Middle East Technical University, 2004, p60. URL : <https://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12605019/index.pdf>.

<sup>364</sup> J. Fornas, « Symbols and narratives of Europe: three ropes », *Semiotics of Political Communication*, March 2020 (n°6). URL : <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1532475/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

<sup>365</sup> J.-F. Fortier, « La pensée est-elle contenue dans le langage? », *Le Temps*, lundi 12 août 2013. URL : <https://www.letemps.ch/sciences/pensee-estelle-contenue-langage>.

<sup>366</sup> U. von der Leyen, « 2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen », *op. cit.*

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*

emotions release can be capitalised on to give a powerful direction to the discourse. When they ultimately become too powerful, the speaker finds itself forced to craft their discourse taking into account the emotional aspect if they hope to get their message across. While this observation is made in the context of an analysis at the European level, it is of course applicable to many other settings. There are plenty of examples, such as that of MEP Raphael Glucksman who, thanks to striking images and videos, managed to mobilise the European youth in favour of the Uighurs' condition in China; the shocking image of the dead Syrian child on the Turkish beach that led to a mobilisation of European NGOs and to an extent the EU agencies; and more recently the war in Ukraine, resulting in a surge of support from the populations which was partly reflected in European foreign policies. The support to the war efforts from the European population translated into the results of the Flash EU barometer n°506, with just over 60% of citizens surveyed "agreeing that the EU has been united in responding to the war"<sup>368</sup>.

Moreover, emotions do not only shape day-to-day policy making, but also the possibilities for certain states to join the EU-27. Özlem Terzi, in a research paper from 2021<sup>369</sup>, critically analyses the European Commission's enlargement strategy documents. She demonstrates that a state is more likely to join the EU, if historical considerations, as well as specific language elements such as "solidarity", "shared values/interest" or "threat perception" are present in

the EU official discourse, elements that give rise to a feeling of belonging. Her research explains how the 2004 enlargement is based on emotional considerations which never existed for Turkey. As for Ukraine, all the elements of language are present: "Ukraine has risen up in unity", "Ukrainian friends", "it will pave the way for Ukraine's future inside the European Union"<sup>370</sup>. Emotions ran so high that voices were raised in support of a reform that would allow Ukraine and other countries to integrate more closely into the European bloc<sup>371</sup> - a hot-blooded reaction in the generalized emotion generated by the war.

### Conclusions

While this article is only the foreword to a more complex discussion, it has highlighted the crucial aspect that emotions play in European political life. The legitimacy deficit that the EU suffers from, alongside the never-ending search for a feeling of belonging to this supranational organisation justifies the use of semantics to generate lacking emotions. The discourse thus creates emotions through rhetoric. It also happens that the opposite occurs, with emotions becoming in turn, the arguments justifying the evolution of European politics. To conclude, it is worth mentioning that the European politic integration finds off a strong emotional sense of identity and that the latter has for aim to become increasingly englobing.

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<sup>368</sup> European Union, "Flash Eurobarometer 506 EU's response to the war in Ukraine – April 2022", 2022. URL :

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/ebsm/api/public/deliverable/download?doc=true&deliverableId=81594>.

<sup>369</sup> Ö. Terzi, "Norms of belonging: emotion discourse as a factor in determining future "Europeans"", *Global Affairs*, 2021, 7:2, 139-155, DOI: [10.1080/23340460.2021.1927794](https://doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2021.1927794).

<sup>370</sup> U. von der Leyen "Speech by President von der Leyen at the EP Plenary on the social and economic consequences for the EU of the Russian war in Ukraine – reinforcing the EU's capacity to act" », *European Commission*, Strasbourg, 4 May 2022. URL:

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech\\_22\\_2785](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_22_2785).

<sup>371</sup> O. Noyan, « L'Allemagne soutient la proposition de 'communauté politique européenne' d'Emmanuel Macron », *Euractiv*, 10 May 2022. URL : <https://www.euractiv.fr/section/elargissement/news/lallemagne-soutient-la-proposition-de-%e2%80%89communaute-politique-europeenne-%e2%80%89-demmanuel-macron/>.

# Bridging Western and Islamic Psychology: Moving Towards an Understanding of Non-State Armed Actor Behavior

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Nuancing the relationship between psychology and diplomacy can promote more engaging bilateral and multilateral talks as the resort to war has, time again, shown its high physical, moral and economic consequences. In the context of armed groups, over 109 academic definitions exist mixing the factors that operationalize what constitutes behavior, motivations and objectives carried out in this role<sup>372</sup>. However, political history has been plagued with a systematic, immediate and instinctive illegitimation of this set of activities while constructive engagement has yet to uncover its resolutive potential. The most recent case is evidenced through the failure of uncovering alternatives over the triumphant belligerence that was seen in the August 2021 Taliban victory in Afghanistan.

Given numerous such outcomes of stalled, waning or failed diplomatic engagement due mostly to unforeseen misalignment, it is no coincidence that very few Islamic texts have been consulted alongside modern psychology in line with talks in the Middle East. In other fields, Islamic texts have been sourced to elaborate more effective cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), anger management techniques and other therapeutic interventions that are an example of culturally informed psychology<sup>373</sup>. Research has demonstrated the positive impact of such methods

on treatment recipients<sup>374</sup>. Yet, a more studied application of the discipline is absent in international relations, foregoing momentum towards a new wave of diplomatic practice.

Throughout the discussion, this paper aims to bridge the academic space between principles of modern and Islamic psychology towards a more comprehensive understanding of armed group behavior to open the political space for more constructive dialogue. Given this backdrop, this paper focuses its analysis on two psychological topics: 1) obedience and emotions, and 2) in-group versus out-group perception. As the approach focuses on the socio-cognitive perspective, environmental or biological factors will not be included in this analysis for brevity.

It stems therefore that previous contemporary scholarship on the topic could benefit from renewed attention. In 2004, research done by Dr. Randy Borum aimed to better understand armed group motivations and behavior<sup>375</sup>. More recent work by Carrie Al-Karam has called out the challenge in engaging constructively with Islamic psychology due to fragmented conceptual understandings under names such as Qur'anic Psychology, Islam and

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<sup>372</sup> Gregor, B., 'Definition of Terrorism Social and Political Effects', *Journal of Military and Veterans Health*, vol. 21, no.2, 2012, pp. 26-31.

<sup>373</sup> Haque, A. et al., 'Integrating Islamic Traditions in Modern Psychology: Research Trends in Last Ten

Years', *Journal of Muslim Mental Health*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2016, pp. 75-100.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> Borum, R., 'Psychology of Terrorism', Tampa: University of South Florida, 2004.

Psychology, or tazkiyat al-nafs<sup>376</sup> and lack of balance in areas studied under modern psychology<sup>377</sup>. This synergy between psychologists incorporating religious studies into training and the inverse has not yet spoken to the interdisciplinary nature of these fields, albeit the contributions from the Islamic worldview that are already be imbedded in the corpus of modern psychology.

Understanding to what extent psychology manuals, such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), embody a universal character can promote a more comprehensive discipline, particularly on developments to reduce armed group violence. As such, greater incorporation of Islamic perspectives can deliver more robust psychologic practice with wider application onto diplomacy, starting with the two identified areas below.

### Emotions and Obedience

According to Western psychology manuals, emotions of denial and projection promote defense mechanisms to relieve negative emotions. These can be described as unconsciously taking a reproachable party and placing such sentiments onto someone else now equally personified as blameworthy. If repressed, these emotions can even manifest through violent acts under the right conditions<sup>378</sup>. The same psychological processes that lead an individual unable to productively channel dissatisfaction, whether due to economic grievances or other factors, also have led to the prompt pursuit of violent alternatives deemed “next best”, despite outwardly destructive consequences.

These psychological underpinnings support the constructivist theory of emotion but reveal an incompleteness when taking into account unfolding

events. The reality of the formation of an armed group also entails unquestionable obedience to a higher authority through strict codes in addition to symbolic acts and rituals that build reassurance out of collective uncertainty<sup>379</sup>. There is also a witnessed negation of political legitimacy of heads of state through obedience-based religious texts that have introduced an appealing sense of confidence where vulnerabilities have otherwise weakened more scrupulous judgment. This has supported acting out of unquestionable loyalty to an idealized national vision beyond initial call to arms, making the incompleteness of Western understandings blatant. Thus, while emotional cues are a part of diplomatic negotiations,<sup>380</sup> a Western diplomat’s appraisal of an armed group’s justice reconciliation agenda ignores foundational Islamic texts whose psychological contributions have little been organically translated into widespread manuals or been recognized in Western thought patterns.

Aisha Utz aims to fill this gap through *Psychology from the Islamic Perspective* that covers an Islamic interpretation of emotions. It states that emotions can be either positive or negative and are afforded to us through Allah’s divine will. She continues by stating that those who follow Allah’s guidance will be rewarded through a reduction in negative emotions, such as fear or grievance. Under this interpretation, even these typically negative emotions can have a valuable, constructive purpose worthy of a cause<sup>381</sup>. Emotions can also be seen as a test from Allah, where success means channeling emotions in a pre-ordained direction. In this context, obedience acts as a guide to get closer to Allah following His emotional guidance. Already, such recognition can open a middle ground of previously unforeseeable space as a base for dialogue between conflicting parties.

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<sup>376</sup> Al-Karam, C., ‘Islamic Psychology: Towards a 21st Century Definition and Conceptual Framework’, *Journal of Islamic Ethics*, vol 2, 2018, pp. 97-109.

<sup>377</sup> Badri, M., *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists*, London: MWH London, 1979.

<sup>378</sup> Hoffman, L., ‘Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Populism’, *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, vol. 54, no. 2, 2018, pp. 266-289.

<sup>379</sup> Mercer, J., ‘Feeling Like a State: Social Emotion and Identity’, *International Theory*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2014, pp. 515-535.

<sup>380</sup> Wong, S., ‘Emotion and the Communication of Intention in face-to-face Diplomacy’, *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 22, (2016), pp. 144-167.

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*

More generally, Islamic psychology, defined as the study of the soul from which emotions, behavior and the mental processes are derived in the ultimate goal of true worship of Allah<sup>382</sup>, stipulates that emotional stressors are dealt with differently than as indicated by modern psychology. Specifically, predominance of European values in international law have laid the ground for frustrations when negotiating on Islamic terms. Recognition that Islamic fundamentals stipulate that the unseen world, including divine intervention, posits an influence on actions has little been further conceptualized. For a behavioral change to be voluntary and sustainable, arguments must be framed within the axioms accepted by the Islamic order.

Framing logic *within* the operational axioms of the Islamic order, however, does not mean having logic stems *from* its texts. For instance, subduing the notion of international law as an imported concept by instead prescribing how Islamic principles equally could have allowed for its formulation in a counterfactual scenario can foster better acceptance of dialogue when approached by way of like reasoning. By grounding arguments in axioms individually aligned with Islamic tenants that leave intact the concept of religion and family without foregoing Western principles, there is greater justification towards belief in the authenticity and credibility of the information conveyed.

### In-group versus out-group psychology

A second area of psychology whose understanding can strengthen diplomatic engagement with armed actors comes through culturally specific knowledge of in-group versus out-groups. Psychology manuals state that negative stereotyping of the out-group accentuates existing social dynamics of an in-group which, through increasing conformity and deindividuation of the out-group, can quickly result in violent behavior.

While most peace talks, from their onset, have begged the question of how more positive engagement can be supported often emphasizing economic gains or human rights, recognition that violent outcomes may be intended by armed groups often through the reconstruction and redeployment of religious texts requires rethinking of initial dialogue. In-group rituals and undermined aspirations by the out-group create an unquestionable sense of identity that becomes self-effacing to a point where individual attitudes can no longer be separated from newly ingrained group behavior<sup>383</sup>. In the context of Islamic collectivism, cultural conception of an in-group is constructed through but not limited to *nafs*, most closely similar to id, ego and superego; *'aqeedah*, seen as a path towards self-actualization; *eemân* and *tawheed*, or faith; *qalb*, the conceptions of the heart that are central to the Islamic framework; *qadr*, or divine destiny; the acting power of forces; Islamic conceptions of motivation; and *'aql*, or reasoning, among others.

Carefully deconstructing this knowledge within the Muslim paradigm opens up room for collaboration as to how each conception contributes to individual and group identity when dealing with conflict or stressors, expanding the explanatory power of psychology beyond current empirical methodologies. It is within our collective diplomatic mandate to constrictively enter into this type of engagement.

### Conclusion

Spanning from talks of talks to disarmament, demobilization and reconstruction (DDR), mobilizing the shared fabric of humanity between the two paradigms of psychology supports deeper diplomatic engagement. It does not risk transcending towards an argument for homologation of human thought or an eventual disregard of principals central to one or the other. Acknowledgment of these cognitive structures calls for a better informed inclusion of culturally sensitive psychological models towards a

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<sup>382</sup> Utz, A., *Psychology from the Islamic Perspective*, IIPH: International Islamic Publishing House, 2014.

<sup>383</sup> Mercer, J., 'Feeling Like a State: Social Emotion and Identity', *International Theory*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2014, pp. 515-535.

revived wave of bilateral or multi lateral diplomatic practice. While this paper has explored only two psychological avenues, it calls upon further elaboration of culturally relevant models of

psychology. With the naissance of traditional Muslim psychological texts preceding modern psychology by nearly a century, the intersectionality between the two fields must no longer be put to question.

# Religions and States as Competing Psychologies

Magomed BELTOUEV

Page | 108

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Speaking of “religious psychology” as one factor among others within an otherwise “non-religious” field of international affairs is a faulty formulation based on a reductionist understanding of religion. This brief article aims to demonstrate it by underlying the fact that the modern nation-state itself constitutes a quasi-religious paradigm, a “psychology”, which naturally comes into conflict with religions such as Christianity or Islam.

## The context of a “post-Christian” secularized world

Many academics have pointed out the dependency of modern geopolitics towards “Westphalian” principles, which are formed from a reductive interpretation of the peace treaties signed in 1648<sup>384</sup>. These principles dictate not only the preeminence of the state in the world order (“there is nothing beyond the state and all states are equally sovereign”), but also the progressively implicit necessity for secularization. Religion, by successive processes<sup>385</sup>, has been privatized not only in the eyes of political institutions, but also in the minds of the people. This trajectory, which is resolutely European – Protestant Reformation in the XVIth century, Westphalian

treaties in 1648, French Revolution in 1789, French law on the Separation of the Churches and the State in 1905 – cannot hide the fact that most of the foundational ideas of “secularized” politics find their roots in religious thought patterns, which led Carl Schmitt to affirm:

All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development – in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver – but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts.<sup>386</sup>

The second part of this statement has found a striking illustration in Valentine Zuber's works<sup>387</sup>, whither she demonstrates that the doctrine of human rights and its political mobilization (more than its actual application) are consciously and unconsciously modeled after religious *modus operandi*, particularly Christian.

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<sup>384</sup> Reading famous early commentators of the treaties, such as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz or Jean-Jacques Rousseau, especially their projections for the future, is enough to understand that the “Westphalian sovereignty” formed later is a specific interpretation of the treaties themselves.

<sup>385</sup> Including the creation of “religion” as a reductionist concept: “religion” only exists in opposition to “non-religion”. Cf. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam,*

*Modernity*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2003.

<sup>386</sup> Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 2005, p 36-37.

<sup>387</sup> Valentine Zuber, *L'Origine religieuse des droits de l'Homme. Le christianisme face aux libertés modernes*, Geneva, Labor et Fides, 2017 and *Le Culte des droits de l'Homme*, Paris, Gallimard, 2014.

This paradox (the exclusion of religion being religious in nature) is tied to another: “post-religious” politics value individual aspirations and their collective public expression, yet seek to confine religion to the private sphere and tend to consider religious communities as potential threats. These paradoxes are superficially resolved by amputating religion of its mundane side, which is made easier in a western context by the specificities of Christianity, highlighted for example in *The Social Contract* (1764) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who lamented over the radical separation of the spiritual and the temporal :

Jesus came to set up on earth a spiritual kingdom, which, by separating the theological from the political system, made the State no longer one, and brought about the internal divisions which have never ceased to trouble Christian peoples. [...] this double power and conflict of jurisdiction have made all good polity impossible in Christian States; and men have never succeeded in finding out whether they were bound to obey the master or the priest.<sup>388</sup>

Moreover, western religious development from the period of the Renaissance (whose “humanism” carries deeply individualistic ideals) has been prone to sentimentalist tendencies, within both Catholic and Protestant currents (Quietism and Pietism respectively), which contributed to impose the idea of religion as a fundamentally intimate process that does not need nor should claim to directly influence the course of public affairs. In the same movement, religion has been excluded from the sciences for reasons well described by Alexandre Koyré<sup>389</sup>, and Christian apologists progressively shifted from metaphysical to moralistic and “faith-based”

arguments<sup>390</sup>. Sentimental, individual, irrational, religion progressively came to be seen as a mostly “emotional” factor, whose perceived political and scientific irrelevance would lead to inevitable withering in a modern, secularized environment.

### From one misunderstanding to another

It is therefore not surprising that western and westernized intellectuals and policy-makers alike tended to minimize the importance of religion in world politics, viewing it as a lax transnational affiliation and secondary component of an overarching conservatism. In the context of the end of the clash of “great (secular) ideologies” – the later years of the Cold War – several major events, for instance the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the Soviet-Afghan War, which began the same year, led to a forced reassessment of this view. The importance of religion as a mobilizing force could not be denied, and had to be explained by a system which long posited its irrelevance. The idea of a “return”, a “resurgence” or even a “revenge” of religion has been spread in the social sciences, especially in the 1990s and early 2000s, with major works bearing evocative titles such as Gilles Kepel’s *The Revenge of God* (1991), Samuel Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996) and Karen Armstrong’s *The Battle for God* (2000). The notion of a new world order centered on religious and civilizational conflicts rather than ideological, such as between the Western and Eastern blocs, took root.

It can be argued, however, that this transition did not prove itself to be as radical a paradigm-shift as it could have been. Peter L. Berger posited, in 1999, that “the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false” and that “the world today, with some exceptions [...] is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever”<sup>391</sup>. Delphine

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<sup>388</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, London, Everyman’s Library, 1913 p. 108.

<sup>389</sup> Cf. Alexandre Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1957.

<sup>390</sup> Classical metaphysics, after all, suffered the repeated blows of the philosophers up to Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Nietzsche in particular.

<sup>391</sup> Peter L. Berger (Ed.), *The Desecularization of the World : Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, Washington, Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999, p. 2.

Allès, more than twenty years later, while recognizing that, in the strictest sense, “religion never “left” the international scene after the treaties of Westphalia; nor did it “return” to it after the Iranian revolution of 1979”<sup>392</sup>, carefully explains what exactly led the international system to invest in the religious :

While many analysts sum up the “return of religion” to the intensification of its dissenting mobilizations, which are supposed to be enough to define and explain the phenomenon, confessionalization appears more as an effect of the *aporia* of an international system that has remained normatively anchored in its context of emergence, while it was transformed empirically as globalization occurred. As such, confessionalization appears to be the product of the inability of the dominant political structures to integrate the diversity of the mobilizations of the religious factor into a pattern consistent with the Westphalian narrative.<sup>393</sup>

While religion (re)gained a more significant place in world politics, it did not dismantle the foundations of the secular state, rather found itself grossly integrated within its conceptual framework, in a manner which can be summarized as such: religion either serves the state or threatens it. Indeed, when religion manifests itself in a transnational way or seeks to exist outside of the established political institutions, it is quickly deemed “destabilizing” and is easily assimilated to the most extreme forms of politico-religious mobilization, notably Islamist terrorism, whether it actually advocates the use of violence or not.

On the other side of the fence, the adoption of religious elements by states or international

organizations typically results in a limited set of standardized strategies that do not account for the diversity, richness and depth of the religious experience: inter-confessional or inter-civilizational “dialog”, promotion of “moderation” against “extremism”, emphasis on minorities, invocation of religious references from an identitarian perspective, cooptation of tightly controlled religious elites, etc. As a result, the “return” of religion did not restore ancient “divinely justified” political entities or produce a new form of religious state, but rather established a set of religious nationalisms<sup>394</sup> that subdue the spiritual to their own ends.

### The clash of psychologies

In both cases, political actors are guided by a misconception of religion’s profound nature, an “*aporia*” which leads us back to the paradoxes inherent to the secular system: in order to integrate or even simply tolerate religion, the state needs to minimize its scope. Yet, a religion is a complete, autonomous paradigm in itself which cannot be forced into another without betraying its essence. The relationship of subordination that the Westphalian order seeks to impose on religion tends to result in frustration and conflict, especially when considering the fact that, as explained before, the profane imitates the sacred and infringes on its domain. Thomas Carlyle’s definition of religion, which expands the restricted understanding of the notion that imposed itself in the post-Christian West, enables us to grasp this problematic:

It is well said, in every sense, that a man’s religion is the chief fact with regard to him. A man’s, or a nation of men’s. By religion I do not mean here the church-creed which he professes [...] But the thing a man does practically believe [...] the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital

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<sup>392</sup> Delphine Allès, *La Part des dieux. Religion et relations internationales*, Paris, CNRS Editions, 2021, p. 9.

Translation made by Magomed BELTOUEV.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Translation made by Magomed BELTOUEV.

<sup>394</sup> Cf. Olivier Da Lage (Ed.), *L’Essor des nationalismes religieux*, Paris, Demopolis, 2018.

relations to this mysterious Universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his *religion*; or, it may be, his mere skepticism and *no-religion*: the manner it is in which he feels himself to be spiritually related to the Unseen World or No-World; and I say, if you tell me what that is, you tell me to a very great extent what the man is, what the kind of things he will do is. Of a man or of a nation we inquire, therefore, first of all, What religion they had?<sup>395</sup>

In Thomas Carlyle's conception, a "religion" is something beyond mere outward affiliation or superficially held beliefs, it is the entire psychology of an individual or a group, in the widest sense, and informs every aspect of their being, from thought to action. Naturally, it determines their sociopolitical positioning. In this sense, a "secular worldview" can also constitute a religion. Wael Hallaq's developments in *The Impossible State*, spinning a similar thought, take things even further:

[The modern state] comes with its own arsenal of metaphysics and much else. It inherently produces certain distinctive effects that are political, social, economic, cultural, epistemic, and, no less, psychological, which is to say that the state fashions particular

knowledge systems that in turn determine and shape the landscape of individual and collective subjectivity and thus much of the meaning of its subjects' lives.<sup>396</sup>

Wael Hallaq explains that the relative failure of modern Islamist movements is largely due to their permeability to the modern state's erroneous self-description as a neutral and efficient tool of power that can theoretically accommodate various ideologies. In fact, the metaphysics of the state – "positivist anthropocentrism" – are in stark opposition to the metaphysics of Islam – "autonomy of the moral [under God's sovereignty]" – and "the two metaphysics, therefore, stand in an irreconcilable deadlock"<sup>397</sup>. As such, Wael Hallaq's demonstration leads to the conclusion that "Islamic state" is an oxymoron, as self-respecting Islamic governance cannot abide by the inherent principles of the modern state, especially its inability to sustain truly ethically and spiritually-oriented endeavors.

While it may be especially true for Islam, the problem of friction with the secular order is relatable to all religious traditions since the advent of a falsely axiomatic and universal model of the state<sup>398</sup>. Religions, as self-contained "psychologies", are natural competitors to the mindscape imposed by current world politics, and while they may mutually harness each other, their inherent incompatibilities result in various issues whose resolution lies, first of all, in acknowledgment.

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<sup>395</sup> Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, & the Heroic in History*, London, James Fraser, 1841, p 3-4.

<sup>396</sup> Wael Hallaq, *The Impossible State: Islam, Politics and Modernity's Moral Predicament*, New

York, Columbia University Press, 2013, pp. 155-156.

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>398</sup> Cf. Bertrand Badie, *The Imported State*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000.

# Psychology and soft power : why sports work as a link between these two concepts ?

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Page | 112

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Emotions play a key role in the connection between professional sports and people. Fans and more occasionally the general population get impacted by the storytelling of a whole competition or a single game in such a way that sports can be seen as a "fantastic tool of communication"<sup>399</sup>.

As a matter of fact, sports followers can exalt iconic sports figures as they would not do for anybody else. As Riordan Roet says, the simple fact of asking Brazilians to identify their legendary football players might lead you to "receive a highly emotional recitation"<sup>400</sup> of their names. On the other hand, states and world leaders pay more attention to the rising interest that surrounds sports. Over the last decades, countries from different areas have tried to build a diplomacy based on sports investments, organization and governance, all of this being linked to the concept of soft power<sup>401</sup>. Since one using it tries to - emotionally - affect their target, there is a narrow gap between this concept and psychology. Therefore, this article will try to answer the following question : to what extent emotions caused by sporting events determine the use of sports as a source of soft power by states ?

## The emotional dynamic of major events in sports

Emotions are highly relatable to sporting performances. From major tournaments to smaller events, fans and viewers reach lofty peaks of emotion as the competition progresses. Though, these emotions are not automatically positive in every situation and can damage the positive image of the game. Indeed, sports also lead to frustration depending on the final result. Players and fans are not always the best advocates for sportsmanship, regarding their emotional reactions to failure or anxiety.

All that being said, many factors determine a more positive effect of sports in society. First, it would be relevant to mention the relationship between the athletes and the general population. Sports can be considered as a show. In *La société du spectacle*, Guy Debord says that a show is not a series of images but a social relationship related to people who are filmed and then broadcasted<sup>402</sup>. Moreover, he also mentions the certain form of unity a show can create<sup>403</sup>. There is also a certain form of relationship between the athletes and the spectators while the

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<sup>399</sup> T. Côme and M. Raspaud, 'La diplomatie sportive, enjeu stratégique pour le Qatar', *CNRS Editions « Hermès, La Revue »*, vol. 2, no. 81, 2018, p. 169.

<sup>400</sup> R. Roet, *Brazil. What everyone needs to know*, Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 187.

<sup>401</sup> According to Joseph Nye, 'Soft power is the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one

wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment'. J. Nye, 'Public Diplomacy and Soft Power', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol.106, Public Diplomacy in a Changing World, 2008, p. 94.

<sup>402</sup> G. Debord., *La société du spectacle*, Paris, Gallimard, 1992, p. 16.

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

action is ongoing. Oftentimes, sporting venues are filled with a feeling of emotion that comes from the players themselves. Indeed, fans are handled by the action, especially when a player celebrates with joy their goal or match point. This shows the connection between active and passive participants since they do not play the same role in the 'show' and are relied on each other because of these emotions to some extent

Furthermore, people are fascinated by these astonishing achievements from athletes and in consequence admire them. Indeed, there are many cases of famous sportsmen and women who are considered as real icons. One of them is France's Zinedine Zidane. Known as the player that led the French national team to their first FIFA World Cup title in 1998, he consequently became a national hero and one of the favorite French celebrities. What is interesting to notice is that Zidane's popularity - positively - affected the general population which generally looked at him with approval. To put this in perspective, a single moment may have put Zidane into trouble in public's opinion. In 2006, France contested their second FIFA World Cup title against Italy in Berlin, Germany. As the game was underway, Zidane violently head-butted Marco Materazzi, an Italian defender, during the extra time and got sent off as a result. The aftermath could have been heavy going since France eventually lost the game. However, the general population forgave him almost immediately. Beyond Zidane's approval, the press could have played a significant role. Indeed, it appears that the media tried to clear his name right after the final by using evidence of his personal story and good values<sup>404</sup>. The narrative told by journalists led the French public opinion to switch their minds from the response they might have had.

Last but not least, it frankly appears that sports icons are more popular than their own political leaders. An

element to measure one's popularity and then to make a comparison with their head of state could be their number of followers in the different social media. As Pascal Boniface reminds us, if Cristiano Ronaldo had almost the same number of followers on Twitter as U.S. Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump in 2019, he had much more than the Portuguese Prime Minister at the time<sup>405</sup>. Being outclassed by sports icons, political leaders cannot ignore the numerous benefits they could get from sportsmen and women.

### Sports and influence : a means of expansion for states

The emotional dynamic that surrounds sports and champions is not overlooked by governments. This dynamic did not appear overnight. In the early twentieth century while fascism and national socialism were both increasing in Europe, political leaders understood that sports could help them demonstrate their ideological supremacy<sup>406</sup>. By the 1930s or so, many events were used to spread governments' propaganda by autocratic regimes. The second World Cup ever organized took place in Italy (1934). A decade after his assumption of power, Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini wanted to show the superiority of fascism over the rest of ideological streams. Two years later, his counterpart Adolf Hitler hosted in Germany both Winter and Summer Olympic Games.

These two cases are intended to show the popular unity and the strength of their regimes. Impressive stadiums and fittings welcomed the athletes and the audience. Building new stadiums had two benefits for those who rule at the moment. On one hand, these stadiums could gather thousands of people, reuniting them as a single body. More, it had the function of « immuring » the « mob » and above all else, impressing foreign onlookers<sup>407</sup>. On the other hand,

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<sup>404</sup> P. Tétart, 'L'absolution médiatique d'une icône sportive ou notre impénitent besoin de héros. Lectures du coup de boule de Zidane', *Presses Universitaires de France « Ethnologie française »*, vol. 47, no. 4, 2017, pp. 730-731.

<sup>405</sup> P. Boniface, *Géopolitique du sport*, 2nd edn.,

Paris, Armand Colin, 2021, pp. 44-45.

<sup>406</sup> T. Côme and M. Raspaud, 'La diplomatie sportive, enjeu stratégique pour le Qatar', *CNRS Éditions « Hermès, La Revue »*, vol. 2, no. 81, 2018, p. 169.

<sup>407</sup> D. Bolz, *Les arènes totalitaires. Hitler, Mussolini*

it led to investments and job creations, which at some point bought social peace within the working class.

The organization of such a venue goes further and takes part in the nation-building process nowadays. Many third-world countries have been trying to rise up as developing nations with the help of sports, but Qatar is the most prominent stakeholder among them. The organization of the 2022 FIFA World Cup by Qatar is the pinnacle of the country's development policy. Years before the event, Qatar increased its financial participation in sports by acquiring French football club Paris Saint-Germain through Qatar Sports Investments (QSI). This strategy of investments allows Arab sovereign wealth funds to galvanize their soft power. According to Fabrice Argounès, the concept of soft power refers to "using attractiveness rather than coercion to get whatever one wants"<sup>408</sup>, the action of forcing by intimidation being in correlation with hard power. In addition, Joseph Nye says that soft power offsets the lack of military resources this type of countries have compared to Western powers (1990). These investments in Western economy, which means that the economic growth of these countries is bound to them, are a perfect complement to hard power<sup>409</sup>.

Nevertheless, football is not the only sport seen as a means of communication by developing countries. A good illustration of this is the involvement of Kazakhstan in cycling. After convincing results from some Kazakh cycling riders at the turn of the century, the power decided to build a cycling team in order to get its national icon Alexander Vinokourov to the top of the *Tour de France* rankings. This cycling team which was named after the capital city Astana, was not only created to win races but also to put Kazakhstan on the map as a long-term strategy. Since then, Kazakhstan amplified its involvement in 2013 with the organization of a new race, the Tour of

Almaty, in the country's largest city. The participation of the whole team, including Vincenzo Nibali the same year he won the *Tour de France*, reinforced the development of cycling in Kazakhstan. This "soft-diplomacy" also had a domestic function as it drew the local populations in. Generally speaking, cycling may have a positive impact on the general public which increases steadily despite the doping scandals that occurred in the 1990s and 2000s. The globalization of cycling is illustrated by the *Tour de France* which is broadcasted in 190 countries<sup>410</sup> around the globe. Emerging markets are the main target and Kazakhstan is one of them.

Sporting performances in major events can be an instrument of power and domination over others. The example of China gives evidence of the fierce competition that always takes place among world powers during major sporting events. While the twentieth century witnessed an intense fight between the United States and the Soviet Union at each and every edition of the Olympic Games, the twenty-first century is a field for a contest between the United States and the People's Republic of China. Dominated for a long-period by the Western World during what many historians call "the century of humiliation", China is now a self-assured superpower<sup>411</sup>. Since then, China has managed to play a key role in sports while their debuts were not convincing enough. This emergence, although it happened lately, assets China in sports world rankings. A good illustration of this is the indicative progress of China at the Olympic Games. Ranked eleventh in 1988 (Seoul), China eventually got ahead of the United States in 2008 (Beijing).

The last nation to deal with is Russia. Right after the 1917 revolution, Bolshevik leaders considered sports as a central element of their socio-economic model<sup>412</sup>. Seen as a means of propaganda during the

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*et les jeux du stade*, Paris, CNRS Éditions, 2008, p. 134.

<sup>408</sup> F. Argounès, *Théories de la puissance*, Paris, CNRS Éditions coll. Biblis, 2018, p. 47.

<sup>409</sup> T. Côme and M. Raspaud, 'La diplomatie sportive, enjeu stratégique pour le Qatar', *CNRS Éditions « Hermès, La Revue »*, vol. 2, no. 81, 2018,

p. 170.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid*, p. 152.

<sup>411</sup> 'Chine, l'hyperpuissance décomplexée', *L'Obs*, 30 July 2020, p. 1.

<sup>412</sup> L. Aubin, *La Sportokratia sous Vladimir Poutine. Une géopolitique du sport russe*, Paris, Bréal, 2021, p. 41.

entire Cold War, athletic performances have not been abandoned by Vladimir Putin. Further, the second president of the Russian Federation has spent billions of dollars in organizing the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games and the 2018 FIFA World Cup. This policy initially aimed at avoiding sanctions and developing tourism in Russia. Jean-Baptiste Guégan argues that the storytelling projected to the world was to get Russia back to the international stage<sup>413</sup>. Evidently, Vladimir Putin would make the most of it to reassure the international community of his regime. However, this strategy has had mixed outcomes because of the external elements that have impacted Russia since the mid-2010s. First, many Russian athletes were allegedly accused of being a part of a massive doping scandal. As a consequence, Russia couldn't participate at the following Olympic Games but only on behalf of the Russian Olympic Committee. In February 2022, the military invasion of Ukraine led to the marginalization of Russian teams and athletes. Then, the nation was erased from international sports, four years after a successful organization of the World Cup though.

### Conclusion

There is evidence that sports touch people's minds in so many ways. Indeed, emotions play an important role in sports, either on the actors or those who do not take part directly in the process. Thus, the significance of what is at stake leads world leaders to use sports as one of the tools powers use to communicate and manage its reputation. The symbolic value of sports leads countries to emphasize what they have not in common with others, that is to say their culture, ideology, economic strategy and so on and so forth. Superpowers see sports as a possibility of increasing their domination or taking the lead in a certain form of nation branding. Third-world countries, developing nations and recently independent states replace their lack of meaningful resources by a substantial involvement in clubs, sponsorship and in organizing major competitions. By and large, sports has a positive connotation psychologically speaking. This can be linked to Moïsi's culture of hope since it allows people to get both economic and social emancipation<sup>414</sup>.

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<sup>413</sup> J-B. Guégan, *Géopolitique du sport. Une autre explication du monde*, Paris, Bréal, 2017, p.282.

<sup>414</sup> "L'espoir aujourd'hui concerne l'émancipation

économique et sociale [...]" in D. Moïsi, *La géopolitique de l'émotion*, 2nd edn., Paris, Flammarion, 2015, p.70.

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# “Wise”, Discreet and Omnipresent: Japan’s Presence at UNESCO. A Study of How to Invest the Institution to Shine

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Since 1945, UNESCO has promoted values such as peace, universal justice and human rights. If six Culture Conventions were created to develop mutual understanding, States Parties soon found them useful in other ways<sup>415</sup>. By choosing each year a new property to inscribe on the 1972 Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage’s List, they are able to showcase a positive and controlled image of themselves, corresponding to UNESCO’s universal values.

Following the example of its Occidental allies, Japan began to use UNESCO’s programs as leveraging tools to enhance its Soft Power in the 1990s<sup>416</sup>. Specialists in the International studies like Fukushima Akiko have already proposed various analyses of Japan’s global engagement in the United Nations<sup>417</sup>. However, works regarding the State’s participation at UNESCO such as Akagawa Naoko’s and Chiara Bortolotto’s in the field of Heritage Studies were only focused on its role in debates

around the occidental concept of “authenticity” as defined by the 1972 Convention and the elaboration of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)<sup>418</sup>. Combined with a global perspective, a study of Japan’s attitude toward Soft Power through psychological lenses can suggest as to why and how a State can make use of UNESCO’s philosophy and activities to promote itself on the international stage.

## Matsuura Koichiro’s reflections as Director-General of UNESCO: an analysis

Japan’s engagement can be retraced thanks to the Organization’s digital library, which puts at disposal sources such as detailed reports, meeting minutes, information sheets, speeches and works about UNESCO<sup>419</sup>. One of them summarizes Japan’s actions since the end of the 1980s: *World Heritage. A Personal Reflection by the Director-General of UNESCO*. Its author, Matsuura Koichiro, presented

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<sup>415</sup> Each of them can be found on: UNESCO, *Legal Instruments – Culture* [website], [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13649&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=-471.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13649&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=-471.html) (accessed 2 may 2022).

<sup>416</sup> The concept Soft Power, as defined by Joseph S. Nye, designates the capacity of a State to shine through non-coercive means such as culture, political values and its international policy (*The Future of Power*, New York, PublicAffairs, 2011, p. 84).

<sup>417</sup> Fukushima A., *Japanese Foreign Policy – The Emerging Logic of Multilateralism*, Honsmills, Basingstoke, 1995.

<sup>418</sup> See Akagawa N., “Intangible Heritage and Embodiment: Japan’s influence on Global Heritage Discourse”, in Kockel U., Logan L., and Nic Craith M. (ed.), *A companion to Heritage Studies*, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2016 or Bortolotto C., “L’Unesco comme arène de traduction. La fabrique globale du patrimoine immatériel”, *Gradhiva*, no. 18, 2013, pp. 50-73, <https://journals.openedition.org/gradhiva/2708> (accessed 2 may 2022).

<sup>419</sup> UNESCO, UNESCO Digital Library [website], <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>, (accessed 2 may 2022).

his point of view as an actor from both sides: he shared his experience at UNESCO as chairman of the World Heritage Committee (1998-1999) and as Director-General (1999-2009), as a Japanese diplomat, who began his career in Ghana in the 1960s and a public officer in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) from the late 1970s to 1994<sup>420</sup>.

This book, published in English in 2009 after its success in Japan, is a special case, as Japanese diplomats' autobiographies and publications are seldom translated. Because it was first addressed to a Japanese public, Matsuura Koichiro mobilized professional and personal anecdotes to make his talk more didactic. For the same reason, he highlighted Japan's role in the cases he studied and explained general concepts with his own words<sup>421</sup>. As his status prevented him to take sides or letting political motivations influence his decisions, Matsuura Koichiro used his profound convictions, matching UNESCO's ideals, to examine his role and Japan's investment like any other State. His speech seems natural, less restricted by his duty of confidentiality and sensitive, even if his words were carefully chosen to avoid any ambiguity.

### A "Wise" strategy: financial support and expertise

Matsuura Koichiro used the term "Wise" to depict Japan's way to act while proposing the inscription of Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara on the World Heritage List in 1998. In fact, Japan took into account requirements from the World Heritage Committee, which it chaired between 1994 to 2000 to prepare its

application<sup>422</sup>. Rather than proposing their entry as individual properties, one application regrouping all was submitted.

Actually, "Wise" more broadly applies to Japan's management of its Soft Power, including its attitude toward UNESCO since its integration in 1951. Inconspicuous at first, Japan gradually became omnipresent in the late 1980s, after its occidental allies, such as the United States criticized its lack of engagement on the global stage. Prime minister Takeshita Noboru (1987-1989) addressed criticisms by elaborating a new international policy for Japan, taking into account constitutional imperatives which prohibited its participation in any conflict and thus Hard Power development<sup>423</sup>. Japan's interests, conceptualized through this program for "Peace and Prosperity", relying upon culture, dialogue and aid for development, eventually met UNESCO's constitutional goals and contemporary issues<sup>424</sup>. Since the 1970s, the Organization was facing a financial and bureaucratic crisis and intended to renew its strategy to protect cultural heritage. Back then, Japan's participation was secondary but UNESCO gladly welcomed its willingness to increase its contribution to culture.

Japanese involvement is mainly focused on expertise and financial backing. These two ways were chosen fittingly, as Japan can easily provide the resources necessary to the organization, thanks to its experience in Official Development Assistance policies<sup>425</sup>. They are generally combined together, as Matsuura Koichiro's case study shows. Following the collapse of the Taliban regime, UNESCO promised to help Afghanistan in the reconstruction of the

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<sup>420</sup> The Heritage Committee is the organ managing the 1972 Convention.

<sup>421</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage: a Personal Reflection by the Director-General of UNESCO*, Tokyo, Kodansha Publisher, 2009, [https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000024691\\_0?posInSet=1&queryId=5953101de09d484e-9fb3-c24f8b95f8c3](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000024691_0?posInSet=1&queryId=5953101de09d484e-9fb3-c24f8b95f8c3) (accessed 2 may 2022), p. 3.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134. The organ "rarely approved the separate inscription of individual properties that date from the same period and belong to the same category".

<sup>423</sup> Bouissou J.-M., « Déchiffrer « l'énigme » de la politique extérieure du Japon », *Etudes Internationales*, vol. 30, no. 1, 1999, p. 12.

<sup>424</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan. *Diplomatic Bluebook 1988. Japan's Diplomatic Activities*, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1988/1988-contents.htm#CONTENTS> (accessed 2 may 2022).

<sup>425</sup> Matsuura K., *La diplomatie japonaise à l'aube du XXIe siècle*, Aurillac, Publications orientalistes de France, 1998, pp. 115-117.

country<sup>426</sup>. One of its goals was the symbolic restoration of Heritage properties, particularly the two Buddha statues in Bamiyan, destroyed in March 2001. An expert team, mostly coming from the Japanese National Research Institute for Cultural Properties in Nara, which was related to the Japanese Government until 2001, was sent to examine the site and preparing the restoration using a survey of the valley made during the 1980s<sup>427</sup>. Furthermore, the Japanese government participated in the operation's funding through the MOFA, and indirectly through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of World Cultural Heritage. This organ was created and financed by the MOFA and provides UNESCO a sum dedicated to Heritage's conservation, preservation and valorization. Between 1989 and 2005, it participated in thirty-two programs<sup>428</sup>. In total, Japan contributed to Bamiyan's restoration budget up to 6,5 million dollars.

Another fund created in 1993 supported UNESCO's reflections regarding the emerging concept of ICH<sup>429</sup>. In addition to Japan's backing as a World Heritage Committee Member, the Funds-in-Trust was key to the elaboration of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This text is part of Matsuura Koichiro idea of a "six-conventions system", set up to protect each form of cultural heritage and cultural diversity, concepts at the center of his election campaign<sup>430</sup>.

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<sup>426</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage...*, Op. Cit., p. 218

<sup>427</sup> It depended of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Yamauchi K. et al., 2012. バーミヤン谷中心部の文化的景観：1970年代：ユネスコ文化遺産保存日本信託基金「バーミヤン遺跡保存事業 – *Cultural Landscape of the Central Part of the Bamiyan Valley in the 1970's: UNESCO/Japan Trust Fund project for the safeguarding of the Bamiyan*, Tokyo, Japan Center for International Cooperation in Conservation, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, 2012.

## Shining at UNESCO: Matsuura Koichiro's election issue

After integrating the World Heritage Committee, promoting Intangible Heritage and financing projects, the time came for Japan, which commonly stays cautious and discreet, to shine by stepping in front of UNESCO's scene, even if it meant taking some risks. An opportunity arose in the late 1990s with the approaching election of the Organization's new head. If in theory, the candidates' nationality didn't have anything to do with this process as the Director-General represented UNESCO, in fact, this nomination put the spotlight on their home state, which could greatly benefit Japan's Soft Power<sup>431</sup>.

Matsuura Koichiro explained how Japan cleverly supported his application by promoting him on the international stage as chairman of Kyoto's twenty-second session of the World Heritage Committee in 1998. Circumstances were profitable, as the chairman is commonly chosen among the representatives from the State which hosts the session<sup>432</sup>. Once on the field, Matsuura Koichiro was able to prove himself as a reliable diplomat and a leader capable to face World Heritage issues. He explained for instance the importance of the Kakadu National Park in Australia case. The exploitation project of uranium deposits close to the site made the Committee consider transferring the property to the

<sup>428</sup> UNESCO, *Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the preservation of the World Cultural Heritage* [website], <https://whc.unesco.org/en/partners/277/> (accessed 2 may 2022).

<sup>429</sup> Permanent Delegation of Japan to UNESCO, *The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* [website], <https://www.unesco.emb-japan.go.jp/htm/jporalheritage.htm> (accessed 2 may 2002).

<sup>430</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage...*, Op. Cit., p. 301

<sup>431</sup> The application for the Director-General election are studied by UNESCO's executive board who selects one of them and propose it during the next General conference, when all the State party elect their new head.

<sup>432</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage...*, Op. Cit., pp. 166, 221.

List of Heritage in Danger<sup>433</sup>. However, the Australian Government didn't agree with this solution, considering it as a downgrade of its national property, but kept wanting to conduct this project<sup>434</sup>. The chairman then had to deal with both parties' goals and lead the negotiations. Six months later, the State finally agreed to lay down strict guidelines for the mines' exploitation. Matsuura Koichiro expressed his relief, and the Japanese government's as he evoked how any mishandling could have troubled his campaign<sup>435</sup>. Japan accepted to take the risk to support him because circumstances remained favorable despite this fact. It was able to keep a hand on the situation and to act when needed. The choice of Matsuura Koichiro, a personality in line with its foreign policy and who showed his capacities during his career in the Japanese foreign network and at the MOFA, was wisely made. After its election in 1999, Japan never rested on its laurels and kept assisting him with its traditional financial and expertise strategy.

### Criticism?

However, this assistance didn't stop Matsuura Koichiro from reproving some aspects of Japan's strategy at UNESCO as Director-General. While the State clearly focused its efforts on the promotion of World Heritage and ICH, he strongly encouraged the ratification of the 1954 Hague Convention. Even if it was part of UNESCO's six conventions system, the National Diet didn't ratify this text until 2007<sup>436</sup>. Matsuura also criticized the limits of Japanese bureaucracy that sometimes reduce the 1972 Convention's effectiveness on a national scale. He observed that the management of Japanese heritage properties located in different prefectures, such as

sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range, could be more effective if the subnational governments agreed to follow the same management plan, which is not always the case<sup>437</sup>.

Furthermore, Japan stepped aside from its discreet methods by employing more straightforward ones when needed. In 2006, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), advisory body for the World Heritage Committee, opposed to Iwami Ginzan Mines' inscription as a cultural landscape. Japan, who was part of the Committee back then, "vigorously lobbied other members" to accept this application even so<sup>438</sup>. This was possible because ICOMOS's opinion was only indicative: the final decision belonged to the Committee. The fear to lose its "top class" reputation while criticism of its omnipresence from other States such as China or India increased, is perhaps one of the reasons why Japan, which usually charted its actions so carefully, used straightforward methods despite UNESCO's willingness to promote dialogue and conciliation<sup>439</sup>.

Nevertheless, Matsuura Koichiro's judgements stayed considerate, as he always suggested possible solutions followed by encouragements. His vision of Japan, an essential ally that supported him until the end of his second mandate, clearly stayed positive. If Japan benefited from UNESCO's system since the 1990s, the State saw an opportunity in his election to increase its Soft Power, under the cover of common goals. Matsuura Koichiro reminded them in his introduction speech as Director-General in 1999: from then, he strived to act under the Japanese concept of "Wa", meaning harmony. Eventually, this philosophy became commonly used at UNESCO, showing how Japanese's way to think and influence spread up between 1999 and 2009<sup>440</sup>.

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<sup>433</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Convention, Kakadu National Park (website), <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/147/> (accessed may 2 2022). This list, secondary to the World Heritage List, was created to inform the international community about the problem threatening inscribed properties.

<sup>434</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage...*, Op. Cit., p. 224.

<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>436</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage...*, Op. Cit., p. 54.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>439</sup> Aygen Z., Logan W., "Heritage in the "Asian Century": Responding to Geopolitical Change", in Kockel U., Logan W., and Nic Craith M., *A companion to Heritage Studies*, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 413, 417.

<sup>440</sup> Matsuura K., *World heritage...*, Op. Cit., p. 20.

# Nation Branding: When States Use Psychology Through Marketing Tools

Jean-Michel HUET (interview with). Translated by Aude GREGORY-BILLET

Page | 121

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**To what extent, without taking into account communications techniques at this point, does marketing use psychology?**

Many elements of marketing use psychology. In particular through consumer buying behaviour. Indeed, marketing seeks to influence purchasing behaviour above all. This has a fairly important psychological dimension.

Typically, in marketing, three main factors are used to determine buying behaviour: a socio-cultural factor (culture, social class, opinion groups), personal (age, stage in a family life cycle, profession, personality, lifestyles and values) and psychological factors. This applies for both « B to B » and « B to C »<sup>441</sup>.

In this psychological aspect, there are five main spheres:

- Motivation (as shown with Maslow's pyramid of needs for example).
- The perception of the situation of the act of purchase. With selective attention, selective retention, subliminal perception, etc.
- Learning: the way in which I learned to buy this or that product.
- Emotions. What plays in both directions of the purchasing act (buyer and seller).
- Memory: do I remember a purchase, and in what configuration (what price I remember, etc.).

Then, when it comes to marketing techniques, there are two main areas that use psychology:

- Segmentation (of the customers, to associate different sales actions according to the segment); which includes a geographical, sociological and "psychographic" dimension. It includes what has been mentioned earlier but also other elements such as the proximity between the seller and the buyer - which will impact the relationship - ; the perception of risk - which is psychological (e.g. am I "risk averse" or not) -; and loyalty to a brand or a supplier.
- "Operational" marketing, with what is called the "4Ps"<sup>442</sup> (including communication, which is explained next) which includes price. Price is an element on which psychology plays a large part. It's not just a simple data. For example, "price preference" will induce an individual to have a preferred price. In this respect, psychology has established the existence of "indifference horizons" (which differ according to each product or service). It is only when the seller reaches a particular price level that the price will have an impact on the consumer's mind and that he will ask himself whether or not to consume. From then on, he will wonder "What is the reference price for me?", and obviously, "Do I exceed it?".

In psychology, there are two main reference prices: internal (from the memory : what memory do I have of the last time I made a similar purchase. It can be totally subjective, because memory can fail. For example, one can think "It seems to me that last time

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<sup>441</sup> "Business to Business" (i.e. "B to B", or "B2B"), and "Business to Consumer" (i.e. "B to C", or "B2C"), represent the architecture of business between, first, two companies, and second, a company and an individual.

<sup>442</sup> "4P", meaning "Product, Price, Place, Promotion", and also called "Marketing mix", is a model to plan business operations.

it was much more expensive") and external (and this is where we find all the marketing tools which point to the existence of sales, retail prices, discounts, etc.). There are also three other references : the "price-quality" ratio, the concept of "the more expensive, the better" (without necessarily being luxury), and the "prices finishing in 9" (e.g. we are more comfortable to pay something 39,99€ than 35€, because the 9 gives the impression of paying less).

### **To what extent does communication rely heavily on psychology?**

Psychology is one of the pillars of communication. This is not a recent observation. First of all, there is a cognitive element: my attention is drawn to an offer. Then there is an affective element: my interest, or even my desire, is aroused (we create an attraction or even a preference, and a conviction). Then generally a third stage: the way actions are taken, or the things bought.

Fear can, for example, be an element of communication to induce a purchase.

### **To what extent do States, through nation branding, adopt marketing activities initially developed by companies?**

#### **In particular, can you draw a distinction between activities that do not involve pure communication?**

First of all, it is worth noting that States use psychology beyond nation branding. Take for example Maslow's pyramid. For each stage of the need, the State has a responsibility:

- Basic physiological need (hunger or thirst): bringing water is a State responsibility for example.
- Need for security: one can mention the roles of the army, the justice system and the police.
- Need for belonging: it is linked with identity questions.
- Need for esteem: States can also address this point with rewards, prizes, education and diplomas, etc.

- Need for fulfilment: which is found in citizens, civil servants, etc. through the action of the State.

Besides, should we focus specifically on the major regalian domains of the state, a marketing approach can also be detected. Including diplomacy and defence. Diplomacy through communication, but also for the army. When taking a look at the army's recruitment campaigns, one might notice that the army seeks to recruit young talents.

The police also uses marketing. The State creates the image of a "product" with a police officer's costume, his equipment, his tools, etc. These elements participate in creating an image. A police officer fining a criminal offence, for example, can be seen as the "Price" element of the "4P" previously mentioned, since it can motivate someone to do or not to do a felony, crime, etc. (i.e. "Will I take the risk to commit an action punishable by law, therefore pay the consequences?"). As a cost of a service can motivate, or not, the action of buying the said service, therefore doing an activity. The "4P" also handle the issue of "Distribution" (here, called the "Place"): indeed, police stations are a physical place in which police services are done, distributed, displayed, etc.

Justice can also be analysed through this phenomenon. The communication, integrated in the "4Ps" as "Promotion", being here the law, the jurisprudence, etc.

Naturally, this exercise of considering a State's institution through a marketing lens involves deep reflection.

Moreover, taxes are obviously covered by marketing considerations: the fact that taxes can be questioned in our societies (e.g. some people wanting a more liberal lifestyle, with less levy and less redistribution) shows that there is also a willingness, or unwillingness, to pay, like we can find in an act of purchasing.

Finally, monetary sovereignty is also relevant, and is deeply linked to nation branding. The Franc used to be called the Franc for a specific reason, and so does the Euro. Currency is part of nation branding. A

strong currency, such as the dollar and the euro, has an impact on the image of a country (which is being stable, etc.). Even if it is not necessarily correlated. For example, the dollar didn't lose its safe-haven value when the United States faced internal political instabilities lately. However, the link can be made in other examples, such as the rouble. A few years ago, when the Egyptian pound collapsed, for example, it gave a negative image of the country, which made investors think twice before investing in the country. We can see here that nation branding and psychology are strongly related.

When discussing nation branding, two dimensions must be brought up: exporting a country's products, and attractiveness (trying to get other countries to invest in a country). France, for example, has "priority export families" (cultural and creative industries, etc.) that focus on these two approaches. For more than 100 years, France has also been equipped with "Foreign Trade Advisors"<sup>443</sup>. They have several missions, including promoting the attractiveness of the territory and how to sell internationally.

With globalisation, countries have found competitors in one another. States have thus made an increased use of marketing, as marketing is key in a non-monopolistic market situation. Indeed, different brands or services are provided depending on the country, as values are attached to what a country is promoting. In France, wine and champagne are being exported, since the notions of luxury and *art of living* are bound to the image of France, and therefore cherished in French nation-branding. Even if some other "new world" countries produce good wines, such as Australia, French wine will still be seen, in foreign consumers, among the best. German cars, for example, are linked to Germany's technological efficiency image. Here are some examples of psychology as a tool of nation branding. At the international level, France is perceived as an innovative country, regarding a technological point of view. The downside is that French products and services are perceived as more expensive, although this is not factually true. Once again, psychology

plays a key role. I actually recall an anecdote that is fairly representative of the consequences that a country's image has for its companies: a few years ago, I was in Mali, working for the French multinational telecommunications corporation Orange. The brand had just acquired the homegrown Malian telecommunication operator, Malitel and had "rebranded" it. To put it simply, Orange had bought Malitel, then renamed it Orange as well. It had kept the Malitel logo, except that it had put the colour orange on it. Its prices, on the other hand, had not changed at all for the same products. Prepaid cards cost the same for the same number of minutes available for telephone calls. However, after this "rebranding" operation, Orange International noticed that Malians were less keen on using the offers provided by the freshly rebranded Orange Mali, even though the offers were identical. It turned out that Malians, when they saw that the prices were identical, considered that the possible call duration had been reduced. This assumption was indeed inaccurate, and based on nothing but the impact of the French image associated with the brand. Malians thought like this: "If the brand is now French, then it must be of better quality, so more expensive. Therefore, if it is not more expensive, it means that the content of the offer must be diminished".

When it comes to promotion tools, let us not forget that embassies also have a role to play, as they convey an image. The economic and commercial services of embassies directly promote French offers. The international chambers of commerce also contribute to a country's image.

Public television channels also convey a country's image. Private channels too, but with a different approach: certainly, they are not directly under the influence of a State, but the choice of a State for freedom also encourages creativity in the society, and therefore the creation of content that will reflect this image of freedom. Moreover, this is a phenomenon that can be observed in all cultural creations: free painters will tend to create with more

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<sup>443</sup> Conseillers du Commerce extérieur de la France (CCE).

creativity, therefore will attract people more actively. In this respect, and to come back to the tools of foreign policy of the States, cultural institutes, such as the German "Goethe Institutes", the "French Institutes", etc., participate in a country's soft power.

When one thinks about Japan, what comes to mind ?  
When one thinks about Italy, what image comes to mind ?

As far as tourism is concerned, administrations invest a lot of money in advertising. Italy, for example, plays on the "*Dolce vita*" way of living.

**In the light of nation branding, what differences are there between States and companies when using marketing techniques? Could we expect, therefore, a similar use of psychology by States in marketing techniques?**

I do not believe that States aim at rivalling what companies do in terms of nation branding. States have funding capacities that are much greater than most companies (GAFAM companies are a counter-example). Financing Olympic Games or a world exhibition, for example, contributes to nation branding (because it enables the conveying of a positive image for the State), but amounts to billions or tens of billions of euros. Some events also require long term planning. Take for example the Cannes festival. It has been a recurring event for decades. How many companies could afford such an investment and exploit?

At the end of the day, States are blessed with only a limited number of competitors. The Germans can compete with the Americans and the Japanese, and that is about it. In theory, the 200 countries would make up 200 competitors. Yet, they do not have the same resources, the same values or the same offers. Whilst taking a closer look, one might notice that competition takes place in a cluster: big countries compete with one another on technology, while some African states compete for "Africa-experience tourism" for example.

Today, when Moderna is looking to produce vaccines in Africa, there are perhaps only three or four countries that can compete to receive investments, and nation branding will play a role in it.

Lastly, one should bear in mind that States have their own tools when it comes to nation branding. In international trades, for example, airlines play a significant role. Many airlines live on the support of a State. States also need them in a way, as they represent the power of projection of a country, and its international image. It usually translates in the airlines being named with that of their country.

Finally, let us be careful with the "New Public Management" concept. Whilst this concept can bring good things, it is not systematic either. States and companies remain very different by nature. For instance, a State is designed to finance unprofitable projects through taxes. They can also be transcendental: one can, for example, accept to die for one's country. Because countries feed their citizens with emotions, extreme love : patriotism. It is much rarer to hear someone say that they will die for their favourite brand. There is something in the brand-state that goes far beyond a classic company, even if companies have greater economic power than some states.





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