

Call for Papers, EWIS 2024, 3-5 July 2024, İstanbul

Ways of Seeing IR: Visuals and Emotions

Convenors:

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Although we live in a highly visualised world where we are surrounded by visuals, the International Relations (IR) discipline was blind to this realm for the most part. The study of visuals and emotions can be considered as a branch of Aesthetic Approaches and maintains its novelty in its contributions to International Relations. Bleiker (2015: 889)¹ interrogates the visual studies within IR and puts forward that studying visuals aims to “understand how images frame the conditions of possibility; how they influence what can and cannot be seen, thought and discussed; in short, how they delineate and shape the political.”

Visuals constitute an essential part of our postmodern everyday reality. Increasing access to visuals has rendered them preferable and widely spread. Every corner of our streets is filled with billboards, we are constantly facing visualised electronic devices and news are not simply a collection of words telling a story. Similarly, W. J. T. Mitchell (2013)² argues how people attach visuals to important events in their minds and remember the associated visuals. When one thinks of political events such as the Vietnam War, Abu Ghraib Prison, or Syrian refugees, the iconic images of these events are most likely to pop up in one’s mind.

Vision is an ability that the human eye is equipped with. Visuals, however, are not merely a result of sight – the act of seeing – but are also constructed in a certain way and constitute a form of representation and meaning. Visuals do not solely convey meaning and representation through vision, they hold the power to reach people’s feelings. This workshop gathers prospective contributors interested in the interplay between visuals and emotions. Hence, this workshop intends to locate visuals within the emotional turn of the discipline of IR and to reveal the emotional framing within the visuals of international politics. How and to what extent visuals and emotions are linked? Are visuals instrumentalised in any way to create emotions and vice versa? Is there a relation between visual communication and the emotional atmosphere towards international political events?

We welcome contributions from scholars at all stages in their career that explore themes including but not limited to:

- Digital media and IR
- Memes, comics, and cartoons
- Propaganda, emotions, and visuals
- Visual discourses or narratives
- Studies of everyday life
- Visuals, emotions, and crisis/conflict
- Visuals, race, and gender
- Visuals, emotions, and migration
- Visuals, emotions, and protests

¹Bleiker, R. (2015). Pluralist Methods for Visual Global Politics. *Millennium*, 43(3), 872-890. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829815583084>

² Mitchell, W. T. (2013). *Iconology: image, text, ideology*. University of Chicago Press.

The workshop will unite approximately 20 international scholars to question how we *see* international politics. We hope to convene a workshop that contains interdisciplinary approaches, methodological pluralism, and “Global” interrogations. We also highly encourage early career researchers to apply for this workshop. Furthermore, the emphasis on this year’s theme “The future yet to come: for a global politics of hope” is of significance in the selection process.