

## Call for Papers, EWIS, 2025, Krakow, 2-4 July 2025

### Between emotions and pragmatism – (in)gratitude in International Relations

Convenor:

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This workshop seeks to examine the significance of (in)gratitude in IR, both in history and contemporary events (e.g. the current Ukrainian-Russian war). The remarkable growth of emotion research in the humanities and social sciences has produced in-depth research in new areas and brought a new perspective on cognitive theory, called the “emotional turn,” which also impacted the study of IR. However, gratitude has been discussed relatively rarely. Interesting texts on gratitude as the basis of political commitments were published in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Klosko 1989; Walker 1988 & 1999). A promising perspective on analyzing gratitude in IR as a tool for building hierarchy was proposed by Ricardo (2019 & 2020). The historical role of gratitude was discussed by Pillar (2023) and Gerund (2024).

Gratitude has been defined as a virtuous emotion in response to receiving a certain benefit from an actor who is under no obligation to do so. Expressing gratitude is one of the most important gestures used to maintain interpersonal bonds, which are part of the principle of reciprocity. Gratitude builds and maintains interpersonal relationships at various levels – private, community, and international.

In IR, showing gratitude is never politically neutral, therefore it can be used as a soft power or diplomatic tool in pursuing certain political or economic interests. Moreover, expressions of gratitude function as a kind of imperative, an expected and necessary attitude. Failure to show gratitude can harm the relationship with the benefactor and put the ingrate at risk for international ostracism. Furthermore, it is worth to consider the asymmetry of political, economic, and military positions in the international arena when analyzing the issue of (in)gratitude in their relations.

The aim of this workshop is to systematize, summarize, and outline new perspectives for research on (in)gratitude in IR. Academic discourse on gratitude has so far been fragmented and scattered, and a consolidated discussion is needed to develop its theoretical, methodological, normative, and empirical dimensions. We invite contributions engaging with the following questions:

- How the existing interpretations of international relations between global actors, can be verified by taking into account (in)gratitude in these relations?
- How are the relations between global entities performed, in regards to the requirements and expectations of the partners in these relations with regard to gratitude?
- What is the multidimensional impact of gratitude as a triadic structure of emotion-virtue-debt in world politics, and especially how it shapes the decision-making process?
- Given the complex and multi-level nature of international relations, when, where and how was (in)gratitude expressed and who participated in it? It should be remembered that politicians and diplomats represent only one area of expressing gratitude, while many other actors are involved in creating political spectacles (NGOs, foundations, economic entities, artists, opinion leaders, teachers, ordinary citizens and their children);
- What is the role of gratitude as a key emotional and moral building block responsible for the functioning of the reciprocity principle in international relations?
- What methodological tools and strategies can be used when studying such a complex and interdisciplinary phenomenon as (in)gratitude in IR?
- What are the forms/gestures/words of gratitude, how have they evolved over time, and how have they affected international ties?

**Deadline: 11 February 2025**