



## PACS Continues to Social Distance

As we are responsibly social distancing and working remotely, we at PACS think it continues to be more important to highlight all of the interesting work that everyone in the PACS network is engaging in. Wolfgang Wagner wrote an article titled 'Party politics or (supra-)national interest? External relations votes in the European Parliament' which will be published in Foreign Policy Analysis. You can read an open source version [here](#). Marijn Hoijtink published an article titled 'Of Angels and Warriors: why it is time to reconsider the EU's military power ambitions' with Friends of Europe, which you can read [here](#). Rosanne Anholt and Wolfgang Wagner published a chapter 'Resilience in the European Union External Action' within the book Projecting Resilience Across the Mediterranean. Yarin Eski also recently published an article 'Customer is king: Promoting port policing, supporting hyper commercialism' with the International Journal of Research and Policy that you can read [here](#). Marina de Regt wrote an article for the Journal of Eastern African Studies called 'Agency in constrained circumstances: adolescent migrant sex works in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia' [here](#). Jan-Willem Van Prooijen, Mario Gollwitzer, and Peter Strelan also [published](#) 'When transgressors intend to cause harm: The empowering effects of revenge and forgiveness on victim well-being' with the British Journal of Psychology.

The Dutch Foundation for Peace Studies has also opened its call for their annual master thesis prize. We suggest that PACS members forward this to their best master thesis students. Find more information [here](#).

---

### Research Group Update: Violence and Climate: An Ecological Perspective

In 2018, the VUVereniging allocated seed money to three research projects in the area of peace and conflict studies. In this newsletter, we conclude our series of presenting the three research projects by introducing the research carried out by Prof. Dr. Paul van Lange and his colleagues, Prof. Dr. Hein Daanen and Prof. Dr. Wouter Botzen.

Science is always in transition. New theories, new methods, and innovative perspectives complement or replace others. Psychology is no exception. Indeed, we see now a strong growth of theory building on the basis of data collections from many countries, regions, and cities on all continents. As in other disciplines, this raises new questions in psychology. For example, do a country's levels of national wealth and democracy enhance happiness? Or do people who live in cultures where rice is produced differ from those in which the primary source of income is wheat? An even bigger puzzle is that many cultural features – happiness, creativity, aggression, and individualism – are unevenly distributed around the globe.

Recent research uncovered that happiness, as well as creativity and individualism, is higher in countries farther away from the equator – a phenomenon observed in both the Northern and Southern hemisphere. And indicators of aggression show an opposite pattern, as this is more common in countries closer to the equator. The authors do not explain this in terms of climatic determinism – that human cognition and behavior are directly influenced by climate. But instead, they raise this as a major scientific puzzle to be addressed in a new field called latitudinal psychology.

So, the question of causality remains. Why are happiness, creativity, individualism, discrimination and aggression unevenly distributed across space and place? And equally important, what determines this very consistent pattern? This gives rise to an ecological perspective, which seeks to understand human cognition and behavior in terms of key features of the natural and economic environment.

Such an ecological perspective is also important to the bigger puzzle in latitudinal psychology. For example, national wealth seems one of the most important variables that is closely associated with national differences in happiness, creativity, and the absence of aggressiveness. The presence of ecological risks – such as viruses or natural hazards – is also related to spatial differences in aggressiveness. Ecological perspectives highlight the threats and challenges that people face in their environment as causes for cultural features such as happiness, creativity, and aggressiveness.

Not all environments are created equal. An ecological perspective is growing as a new theoretical orientation in psychology, which is key to understanding universals and differences across the world. As psychology increasingly goes global – and crosses the borders of cultures, regions, and societies – psychology must get a grip on how and why culture shapes and influences human behavior, as well as what shapes culture. Such knowledge may also help us, especially those in Western societies, to better understand that not all populations are the same – and why some people seek refuge. This is important because we increasingly face a new ecology in which we become more interconnected with other groups, cultures, and societies. Indeed, the world is getting smaller and smaller.

### **Postponement of the PACS Conference, Other Events, and Reminders**

The originally scheduled PACS conference from 24-25 September 2020 has been postponed to 23-24 September 2021. The rector of the VU, Vinod Subramaniam, will open the conference, and the keynote will be given by Steven Pinker on 23 September 2021. We will have our four sections (1) Norm Violations and Punishment in International Politics; 2)

Transgenerational Transfer of Trauma: The role of religion in the construction of narratives of polarization or transformation in post-conflict generations; 3) The Social Ecology of Trust and Peace versus Distrust and Aggression and 4) The Distributed Work of Warfare: Technology, Expertise and the Legitimation of War).

On 24 September there will be a final plenary discussion on the state and future of peace and conflict studies with:

- Jolle Demmers: Professor of conflict studies at Utrecht University
- Hans van der Jagt: Strategy & Policy Advisor, Ministry of Defense
- Miriam Struyk: Director of Programs, PAX
- Jaap de Wilde: Professor of International Relations and Security Studies

The Sixth Biannual Conference of the International Humanitarian Studies Association was also [postponed](#).

If you know of any conferences or research that you want to be included in the next edition of the PACS Newsletter, please [send an email here](#) with information. PACS is particularly interested in webinars at this time of social distancing. If you were forwarded this email and are interested in staying apprised, please sign up below to ensure you continue to receive these emails!

---