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Type: **Panel**

Glory/Trauma: Affective Investments in the National Past

Wednesday, 17 June 2020 17:00 (1h 30m)

Recent years have been marked by the consolidation of conservative groups, which have mobilised 'traditional' values of autonomy and authenticity in service of addressing concerns about national identity. Central to this movement has been the appropriation and adaptation of national icons and institutions, imbued with historic affective associations. At international and micropolitical levels, this has led to the articulation of national Selfhood in terms that are deeply embedded in practices of commemoration and occlusion. Though dominant national narratives often rest on the subjective portrayal of past glories, competing narratives contest these efforts by revealing deep-rooted national traumas. Through contributions unified by their sustained attention to the affective resonance of vestiges of the past, this panel engages the politics of how we remember by exploring discourses of war and empire, and their connection to aesthetics and institutions. The papers unpack how emotional investments in the past act as interpretive vectors for navigating present anxieties relating to sovereignty, status, and self-esteem. In doing so, they demonstrate how narratives of the past constitute, reinforce and reimagine temporal, spatial, gendered and racialised political hierarchies. Engaging case studies from Britain and Japan, the contributions highlight the need for greater attention to be directed towards the affective draw of 'the past'.

Track Classification: Emotions in Politics and International Relations Working Group