

## Preface

Emotion is the keyword for understanding most of the processes that deserve the attention of social scientists and those with particular interest in social processes, including educators and political elites. This could at least be concluded from the articles that are presented in the current issue of *Politics, Culture & Socialization*, articles that are highly topical in the domain of political socialization and education, and of political psychology.

In their opening article, Trond Solhaug (Norwegian University for Science and Technology, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway) and Niels Nørgaard Kristensen (Aalborg University, Denmark), argue that, while identities sometimes play a decisive role, emotions fairly often are the trigger and the mechanism of political action. In their empirical study on “Political rationality: Young Danish and Norwegian immigrant citizens and their political reasoning” and equally in two other Scandinavian cases, emotions and personality are obviously seen as crucial. Carsten Ljunggren and Ingrid Unemar Öst (Örebro University, Sweden) concentrate on the epistemological and political debate concerned with “Teachers’ Dealings with Controversial Issues”. These authors distinguish between the following roles and discourses: ‘the debater’, ‘the tutor’, ‘the mediator’ and ‘the rejector’. Lars Monsen (Lillehammer University College, Norway) unravels the struggle for a participative Pupil role in Norwegian Schools. According to his article “Can Schools Educate For A Democratic Society?” student participation forms a powerful instrument for civic education. It is certainly interesting to see that these Scandinavian scholars’ politically correct studies can be traced back to classical studies in political socialization and education. An overview of a number of these classic studies is given by Dan German in his research note at the end of this issue of *Politics, Culture and Society*.

Some counter-weight to the “politically correct” visions of the Scandinavians is to be found in the article by *Bojan Todosijević* (Institute for Social Research, Belgrade, Serbia). What this scholar seems to say, in his article on “Pluralistic political intolerance: A comparison of Eastern and Western Europe” is that also the “politically correct” are suffering from prejudice and negative emotions. Socio-psychological variables are crucial factors affecting the target group selection for intolerance.

Rational arguments may be valuable, but they are not sufficient to explain social phenomena. This is also what *Domonkos Sik* (University of Debrecen, Hungary) demonstrates in his theoretical analysis of the special difficulties of civic socialization in post-socialist democracies (“Civic Socialization in Post-transition Condition”).

The journal *Politics, Culture and Socialization* has an international scope, but it wants to make even a bigger effort to include contributions from scholars around the world.

This journal is sponsored by the International Political Science Association (IPSA) Research Committee on ‘Political Socialization and Education’ (RC 21) (and equally by IPSA RC 29 on Psycho-politics). Two future Roundtable Conferences by the International Political Science Association (IPSA) Research Committees RC21 and RC29 will be organized at exciting locations, and will as we hope contribute to this aim.

The first Roundtable conference will take place in Moscow at Lomonosow Moscow State University (October 26-28, 2012). It is organized in cooperation with the Russian Political Science Association. The conference is hosted by Prof. Helen Shestopal, chair of Sociology and Psychology of Politics. Workshops deal with Political leadership, Political socialization, and Political attitudes. The best papers will very probably find their way to *Politics, Culture and Socialization*, in a special issue on the conference theme “Citizens and Leaders in a Comparative Perspective. What can political psychology and political socialization research tell us about recent trends and events?”

The second IPSA RC21-RC29 Roundtable Conference will be held in Xuzhou, China, at China University of Mining and Technology (September, 2013). The conference chair, Prof. Song Yingfa, will, at this occasion act as a guest-editor for a special issue of *Politics, Culture and Socialization* that focuses on China.

More information about these future activities at the websites [www.politicalsocialization.org](http://www.politicalsocialization.org) and [www.rc29.ipsa.org](http://www.rc29.ipsa.org). These sites also offer an overview of the RC21 and RC29 sessions at the upcoming General IPSA conference in Madrid (July 8-12). The five RC21 panels are entitled *Democracy and Education in the 21st Century* (Chair: Prof. Lars Mosen), *Democracy and Education in the 21st Century: Political Participation* (Chair: Prof. Ingo Juchler), *Inequalities in Political Knowledge: individual and contextual determinants* (Chair: Dr. Marta Fraile), *International political socialization and its effects* (Chair: Prof. Henk Dekker) and *Multiculturalism, Democracy and Political Socialization* (Chair: Dr. Trond Solhaug). The four RC29 panels are entitled: *Talking Politics: Politicians, Journalists, and the Public Debate* (Chair: Dr. Sonja Zmerli), *Psychological Bases of Political Attitudes and Behavior: A Cross-Cultural, Cross-National Examination* (Chair: Dr. Robert Gilbert), *Profiling Political Leaders and the Analysis of Political Leadership: Cross-Cultural Study of Personality and Behavior* (Chair: Prof. Ofer Feldman) and *Between Leaders and Followers: Psycho-Political Examination* (Chair: Prof. Shaul Kimhi). There is one Joint panel of RC21-RC29: *Political leadership: what are the explanations for successes or fiasco's?* (Chair: Prof. Christ'l Landtsheer) The good news is that both the RC21 and RC29 sessions were obviously highly attractive to you. The less good news, from which can be learned lessons for the future, is that the ten programmed sessions were not sufficient to host all the excellent paper submissions.

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Managing Editor of *Politics, Culture & Socialization*