Empathy Neuroscience: Translational Relevance for Conflict Resolution

The British Academy, 7 & 8 March 2016

Convenors:

Professor Simon Baron-Cohen FBA, University of Cambridge, UK
Haifa Staiti, Gather Fellow, Seeds of Peace, Toronto, Canada
Dr Ahmad Abu-Akel, University of Birmingham, UK
Professor Ruth Feldman, Bar Ilan University, Israel and Yale University, USA
Professor Simone Shamay-Tsoory, Haifa University, Israel
Alex Gabbay, Film Director, London

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Monday, 7 March 2016

9.00 Registration and refreshments

9.20 SESSION I: Welcome and background to the Conference
(Chair: Professor Simon Baron-Cohen)

9.25 Opening remarks: Professor Nicholas Stern (Lord Stern of Brentford) FBA, FRS, President of the British Academy, and London School of Economics

9.35 Conference overview: Professor Simon Baron-Cohen, University of Cambridge, UK
Why a conference on empathy neuroscience and conflict resolution?

9.50 Contextual overview: Dr Ahmad Abu-Akel, University of Birmingham, UK
Historical and cultural overview to Israel and Palestine: the changing map

10.05 Comfort break

SESSION II: Latest research in empathy neuroscience
(Chair: Professor Simone Shamay-Tsoory)

10.10 Dr Emile Bruneau, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA
Aspects of empathy relevant to intergroup conflict

10.40 Professor Ruth Feldman, Bar-Ilan University, Israel and Yale University, USA
Attenuated brain response to pain of the Other in Israeli and Palestinian youth

11.10 Refreshments

11.40 Professor Bhismadev Chakrabarti, Reading University, UK
Reward pathways in the brain during empathy

12.10 Professor Dale Hay, Cardiff University, UK
The development of empathy: how can it be fostered or lost?

12.40 Open discussion of Sessions I and II

13.05 Close of Session II

13.10 Lunch
SESSION III: Relevance of empathy neuroscience to the Middle East conflict  
(Chair: Professor Ruth Feldman)

14.10  Professor Simone Shamay-Tsoory, Haifa University, Israel  
Empathy neuroscience and in-group/out-group effects among Israelis and Palestinians

14.40  Dr Ahmad Abu-Akel, University of Birmingham, UK  
Empathy neuroscience in the Middle-East: the importance of time and space

15.10  Nawal Musleh-Motut, Simon Fraser University, Canada  
Empathy & Beyond: Witnessing the Holocaust and the Nakba Through Photograph-based Storytelling

15.40  
Refreshments

16.10  Professor Sari Nusseibeh, Al-Quds University, Jerusalem  
The philosophy of empathy: a Palestinian perspective.

16.40  Open discussion of Session III

17.00  Close of first day

17.00  Drinks reception sponsored by

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Venue: Music Room, first floor (opposite the Auditorium)
Tuesday, 8 March 2016

9.00  Refreshments

SESSION IV: Translating empathy in clinical settings in the Middle East
(Chair: Haifa Staiti)

9.30  Professor James Leckman, Yale University, USA
The Middle East Child Psychiatry Consortium: doctors without borders

10.00 Dr Tawfiq Salman, Palestinian Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center, Bethlehem, Palestine
Recovering empathy post trauma: clinical evidence from Bethlehem

10.30 Dr Talma Hendler, Tel Aviv University
How threat related biases of empathic brain processing may accentuate the middle east conflict?

11.00  Refreshments

11.30 Dr Cairo Arafat, Save the Children, Ramallah, Palestine
Empathy in the Palestine-Israel conflict

12.00  Open discussion of Session IV

12.25 Close of Session IV

12.30  Lunch

SESSION V: Translating empathy in conflict resolution in the Middle East
(Chair: Professor Simon Baron-Cohen)

13.30 Professor Hillel Levine, Boston University/Centre for Conciliation, USA
The role of empathy in conciliation in Palestine and Israel

14.00 Matt Waldman, Associate Fellow, Chatham House, UK
The Missing Peace: Empathy as a Tool of Understanding in International Affairs

14.30 Haifa Staiti, Seeds of Peace and Ned Lazarus, The Israel Institute and Visiting Scholar, University of Maryland
Showcasing best practice: Social programs in fostering empathy between Israeli and Palestinian youth

15.15 Joana Osman, The Peace Factory
Getting to know each other – Peacebuilding with social media
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.45</td>
<td>Refreshments</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.15</td>
<td>Open discussion of the Conference</td>
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<td>16.45</td>
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<td>17.00</td>
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