

Call for papers for 2024 European Workshops in International Studies

Workshop Title: Constructing Subjectivities after the Liberal Order: Managing Anxiety without Securitization of Identity?

Workshop Convenors:

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The uncertainties unleashed by what is often claimed to be the end of the post-Cold War liberal order are generating a widespread sense of anxiety and ontological insecurity across different scales, and a desire to re-articulate subjectivities within the context of a changing global order. This workshop invites participants to identify patterns and dynamics of identity formation, both those distinctive of the liberal order and how they are or may be changing into the future.

While several scholars, including the workshop convenors, have pointed to the potential for different forms of othering, the presumed breakdown of the liberal order seems to have further reinforced securitising practices and the articulation of 'maladaptive' ontological securities (Mitzen 2006). The dichotomous logics of us v them, which motivates populist politics, have legitimised further violence, for instance in Eastern Europe and the Middle East and towards migrants and minority groups. Yet focusing exclusively on the ongoing securitization of identities in IR scholarship may lead us into ignoring the struggles of many people in many places and across many scales to articulate different forms of identity and to deal with anxiety in productive and creative ways. It risks marginalising and excluding experiences of liminality and hybridity, of dialogical and heterological exchanges, of friendships across borders.

In this workshop, we propose to move beyond the duality of securitized versus non-securitized identities and identify a wider variety of ways in which identities are being constructed and negotiated in a complex world in flux. We may think of the encounters across different scales as "critical proximities". They include encounters of difference in local context between communities, in functional contexts that interlink subjects across a distance, and in temporal contexts that highlight responsibilities towards future generations and historical experiences.

Thus, this workshop invites theoretical and empirical papers that address the struggles for constructing subjectivity in a post-liberal order, around questions such as the following:

- What have been the dominant reference points of identity and how are they being re-framed?
- What are the dominant and socially accepted ways to establish distinctiveness and superiority and how are they changing?
- To what extent are patterns of Othering and their prevalence shifting?
- How may othering and hybridity be thought together?
- Are there changes in the way in which the links between past, present, and future are reimagined in identity narratives?
- How do actors turn anxieties not into practices of exclusion to form rigid ontological securities but confront them by embracing ambiguity and hybridity?