

## New Connectivities/New Disruptions: The Rearticulation of Space in a post-Covid World

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Covid-19 has simultaneously accelerated and transformed the dynamics of the global political system prompting a re-articulation and rewriting of space and connections, demanding intensive and extensive critical scrutiny.

This workshop will critically explore many of the rearticulations and transformations of space that have become evident in the post-Covid world, the political, social, ecological, economic, and geographic potentialities these rearticulations open – both for good and ill – and considers their implications for global (dis)order going forwards. Many of these tendencies pre-date the pandemic, nevertheless Covid-19 has served as facilitator, accelerator and signpost for dynamics that had previously largely been hidden under a semblance of normalcy.

At one level, there is a geopolitical dimension that sees the transformation of the unipolar system toward a multipolar one, based on regions and network. At another level, there is the geo-economic dimension, fragmenting, de-coupling and recoupling global value chains along new lines and priorities, focusing on security, sustainability and ethical consumption. Borders are selectively deepening, with practices of screening expanding spatially and temporarily.

Further transformations involve the distinction between private and public. Smart working, zoom and Teams connections impinge on the “home”, on the domestic, private space, blurring private/public distinctions and shifting borders, creating new forms of exclusion, control and discipline. People and spaces are both more connected and more fragmented.

Moreover, the pandemic has accelerated the emergence of a disruptive, authoritarian, and absolutist style of politics that has led to a series of spatial re-imaginaries across a variety of levels of analysis, reaching a new level of saliency with Donald Trump’s re-election.

At their most extreme, these new spatial imaginaries reinvent the distinctions between ‘friend’ and enemy,’ ‘inside’ and outside,’ and ‘self’ and ‘other’ incorporating historically, politically, culturally and economically instrumentalised narratives determining who enjoys a legitimate right to life and who does not.

The workshop will ask if this shift to a politics of absolutes reduces options for compromise, creating a world of absolutist spatial imaginaries considerably more dangerous than previous, less doctrinaire, historical periods.

We encourage contributions from scholars and practitioner keen to explore how axiomatic understandings of space and time in global politics were potentially permanently disrupted by the pandemic, and what may be emerging from these disruptions in response. Thus, in addition to the notion of crisis as disruptive break with the past, the workshop also aims to consider how the Covid pandemic has presented opportunities for key actors in global politics to rearticulate the understanding of space to reflect their political goals across a variety of levels of analysis from the individual to the global, across multiple areas of global governance and from the synchronic to the diachronic.

In addition to contributions from those working in politics and international relations, economics, sociology and cultural studies, we welcome contributions from scholars and practitioners in the fields of urban studies, architecture, art, health sciences.