

International Relations and Diplomacy in the Post-Pandemic World - ABSTRACTS

Malgorzata Abassy & Agata Krzywdzińska - *Russian diplomacy in the light of verbal communication behaviour*

Abstract: The aim of the presented research is to enrich knowledge about diplomatic events analyzed from the point of view of political science and international relations with cultural aspects that reflect the clash not only the state interests in the international arena but also different mentalities and the resulting differences in perception and valuation of reality. Russia was chosen as the case study for several reasons. First of all, it is often perceived as a threatening, even autocratic partner, who, however, needs to be respected and accepted as it is. Secondly, the processes initiated after the collapse of the Soviet Union have not been completed yet, which means that Russia enters into diplomatic relations with countries that are mentally different but marked by the Soviet past in the terms of mentality. Thirdly, Vladimir Putin is consistently building his image, and therefore also the image of the state as a partner not inclined to compromise when the protection of superpower interests is at stake. The basic research hypothesis is as follows: semantically untranslatable keywords determine the course and outcome of Putin's and state's heads during diplomatic meetings. It is manifested as the types of building of communication situations and managing vertical and horizontal relations of communication and negotiation processes. The analyzes will include styles of positioning the partners of a diplomatic event through verbal behaviours and cases of a separate understanding the phenomena defined by the same word but with different semantic scope. The primary sources include protocols of diplomatic meeting that Putin held with the heads of states in 2014-2021. The research methods are content analyzes, text hermeneutics - mainly in the political and economic context, linguistic analysis and the method of communication types networks. We expect that studying the primary sources will reveal the diplomatic games that lead to a change in the balance of power through the skillful use of unconscious mechanisms, that can be detected in language communication behaviours and that are rooted in the Russian mentality

Cristina Capineri (in presence at Krakow conference), Daniele Pasquinucci, Antonello Romano - *The spatial convergences of diplomatic practice: nodes, networks and strategies*

The paper investigates the political geography of diplomatic institutions from a spatial point of view. Diplomacy is located geographically and produces the space and the place of diplomatic relationships. Drawing from data produced by the Global Diplomacy Index (Lowy Institute) from 2016 to 2019 for 61 countries, we analyse the distribution and the patterns of diplomatic institutions (embassies, consulates, etc.), as proxies of international relationships, to identify

spatial networks among countries which host and locate diplomatic institutions. By using indicators of the network analysis, we focus on the centrality and the emerging spatial communities of diplomatic representativeness. The analysis has identified quantitatively several communities and shows patterns which need further qualitative exploration. We suggest some political and economic factors which may explain the shape of diplomatic space. The analysis is innovative and still in progress both from the methodological and the thematic point of view.

Carmen Amado Mendes - *EU-China's Economic Relations*

Abstract: International relations and public diplomacy face many challenges in a pandemic and post-pandemic world. This presentation will take the European Union – China relations as one of the best-case studies to understand the transformation of the international system. Those challenges will be mainly analyzed from an economic and political perspective but also underlining cultural and historical dimensions in the Sino-European relationship.

When on 20 May the European Parliament passed a motion recommending a formal freeze on the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement for Investment (CAI), it brought an abrupt interruption, and possible final conclusion, to seven years of negotiations. Beyond the obvious question of ‘What comes next in EU-China trade relations?’, the questions of how China reacted to this abrupt and unexpected block to future negotiation, and whether the EU Parliament vote could have been foreseen, are important to consider. It will not be possible in the future to ‘return to the past’, or to improve cooperation in trade within the existing framework without increased transparency, and a realization that sustainable global trade will require China, as well as the EU, to make changes. While many of those in the EU Parliament who voted for the motion are positive towards developing a new framework, it is now perfectly clear that there is a resolve that it will not be at the price of fundamental European values.

Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova - *Health, Road, and Russia - Perspectives on Russian Involvement with China's Silk Health Road*

Abstract: As a supportive measure to BRI, China has harvested the COVID-19 momentum and made a play for the Silk Health Road -- and wants Russia to be on board with it. The cooperation in health is non-abrasive, yet has economic potential on two levels. First, the no-contact economy ushered in by COVID-19 is an opportunity for China's telecommunications and online commerce companies to gain a stronger foothold in Russia.¹ Second, the pandemic opens doors for China's high value-added medical sectors such as, medtech, biotech and pharma. From a

¹ Чжан, Вэйкан, "Специальный репортаж: Строительство Шелкового пути к здоровью -- как китайско-российские отношения укрепляются в ходе борьбы с COVID-19," Xinhua Russian, March 24, 2020, http://russian.news.cn/2020-03/24/c_138912130.htm

Chinese perspective, these arguments could work well for Russia, too, because it is easier to sell the public on the "equal partnership" message -- unlike in energy and infrastructure.

Still, Russia is not unquestionably on board with Beijing's plan: the Russian minister of foreign affairs Sergei Lavrov was not among the high-level officials who participated in the BRI conference "Belt and Road International Cooperation: Combating COVID-19 with Solidarity" in June, 2020, limiting himself to a written statement of support instead.²

The Health Silk Road, designed to breathe more life into BRI cooperation in the post-pandemic setting, also holds dual implications for the Sino-Russian "comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a New Era". On one hand, it could add value to the economic relationship by giving substance to innovative cooperation in IT, medtech, biotech and pharma, but on the other hand the multilateral setting robs Russia of exclusivity and importance and does not fully align with the Russian vision of connecting Eurasia. The paper aims to explore the official messaging surrounding the Health Silk Road in Russia and China, as well as to analyse the surrounding policies in order to establish the degree of the Russian buy-in.

Keywords: BRI, Health Silk Road, Russia, COVID-19

Joern-Carsten Gottwald, Niall Duggan - *Alternative Leadership: China and Global Finance in a Post-Pandemic World Order*

Abstract: The People's Republic of China (China; PRC) has become a global financial power. After decades of seclusion, the PRC joined the Bretton Woods system in the 1980s, kept a low profile and sought to build up expertise and develop a better understanding of global financial governance. Despite the increasingly far reaching economic and social reforms under Deng Xiaoping, its financial system was kept under tight control of the party-state. Its integration into global capital markets remained limited, and the issue of financial reforms remained heavily contested. The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, China's admission into the WTO in 2001 and the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 triggered domestic reforms yet left the priority of "control" over "opening up" widely intact. The integration of China into the global financial order proceeded much slower than many observers expected but gained dynamic under the leadership of Xi Jinping. Today, China challenges existing norms and standards, advances its interests, and creates new international institutions – without a full-flung opening of its domestic system. Over the last few years, China has followed a multi-faceted approach to establish itself in global financial institutions, the global currency system and as a leading innovator in financial technology (fintech). Building upon increasingly competitive, well protected domestic financial service providers, an ever better trained echelon of financial experts and an explicit policy of offering global leadership, China has become a driving force in the globalised financial order. This marks a fundamental change both in China's position and China's role in global finance.

² "Ministers of 'Belt and Road Initiative' issue joint statement on combating COVID-19," Emirates News Agency, June 20, 2020, <https://wam.ae/en/details/1395302850046>

Therefore, we apply a basic role theoretical approach to track the changes both in the concepts of the Chinese leadership (“National role conception”) and the resulting changes in China’s interactions with its most important counterparts (“national role”). We interpret China’s positioning towards the reform of the Bretton-Woods-system, the internationalisation of the RMB, the foundation of new multi-lateral development banks and the increased activities of Chinese actors who are developing, establishing and promoting new business models and new technologies in the area of financial services (FinTech) as steps towards offering an alternative leadership in global finance.

Emilian Kavalski - *The end of China's Romance with Central and Eastern Europe*

Abstract: China’s cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) was viewed as a significant gain for Beijing’s outreach in Europe. It seemed to indicate China’s confidence and ability to wield global influence. Yet, the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that despite the affection which China lavished on the CEE countries, they were never really swayed. In fact, it seems that the 2019 pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong provided the real bifurcation point splitting the CEE states between those ideationally committed to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law and those looking for illiberal alternatives. The pandemic has consolidated this split and China has been deployed by both camps to justify their strategic choices. Thus, it is the contextual localization of China in domestic political debates – rather than what China necessarily does in the individual CEE states or globally – that informs CEE perceptions of China. The study suggests that the unrequited romance of China with the CEE region has important implications both for China’s public diplomacy and the post-pandemic trajectories of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Elena Korosteleva - *What makes communities resilient in post-pandemic world of complexity and change?*

Abstract: This article problematizes the necessity to rethink the world we live in today through the lens of resilience and complexity-thinking. Building the argument on the latter as a theoretical framework, we contend that in the context of change and complex life, in a post-pandemic world, challenges are most efficiently dealt with, at the source, ‘locally’, to make ‘the global’ more sustainable. Accordingly, the concept of resilience as self-governance is then advanced as an analytical tool to explore its constitutive elements – identity, ‘good life’, local coping strategies and support infrastructures, which if/when mobilized, can turn communities into ‘peoplehood’ in the face of adversity and crises. This conceptualization, we argue, explains what makes communities adapt and transform, when facing the post-pandemic world. This paper draw on case studies of Central Eurasia, spanning from Belarus in the west, to Azerbaijan in the south and Tajikistan in the east, to show that governability at any level, requires a substantive ‘local’ input to make ‘the global’ more enduring and resilient, in a complex post-pandemic world.

Paweł Laider - *Trust, transparency and surveillance in the post-pandemic world*

Trust and transparency are crucial values of a democratic state, especially when analyzed in relation with surveillance measures imposed by the government. Surveillance, defined as set of processes and practices for the collection, analysis, and application of information (Lyon 2015), is omnipresent in functioning of law enforcement and counterintelligence agencies, and has become even more significant since Snowden's affair, which revealed the scale of U.S. national security surveillance measures. As a result, the issue of uncontrolled collection of metadata of foreign and American nationals ignited the public debate and raised concerns over the use of new technologies in order to enhance the powers of governments, leading to social distrust and the need for greater transparency.

Before the debate brought concrete systemic or institutional reforms which would restore social trust and ensure transparency of government surveillance, the world had observed the outbreak of pandemic which determined the functioning the governments and societies. It soon turned out, that states decided to use surveillance measures in order to control the spread of the coronavirus thus expanding their powers in the name of security of the people. The national security rhetoric in the pre-pandemic era has been replaced by the health security arguments which, according to state authorities, justified their unprecedented interference into the privacy of citizens.

The analysis of the last decades of growing government surveillance leads to an observation that even when the 'times of emergency' officially had ended, the scope of government intrusion never decreased, leaving the authorities with vast powers of control over the society. The paper discusses how the pandemic surveillance may influence the scope of trust and transparency in the post-pandemic world, and, whether the term post-pandemic will ever occur considering the scale of governments' intrusion into people's lives. The author argues that the continuous and never-ending expansion of government surveillance leads to an illusion of transparency when confronted with the values of health, life, and security. But, at the same time, the activities undertaken by the governments produce both trust and distrust, as people, in times of emergency, are ready to sacrifice their freedoms in order to feel secure.

Piotr Łasak - *The role of the stimulation of the Polish economy after the COVID-19 pandemic. The threats for public finance*

Abstract: The banking sector plays important role in every economy. In the good times, it provides money circulation and capital accumulation. In the time of crisis, it may contribute to the occurrence of crisis. The banking sector can also play a very important role in overcoming

economic turmoil. Such a role is confirmed by the example of Poland, where the banking sector currently plays an important role in the implementation of anti-crisis shields, implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Banks operating in Poland very quickly adapted to the new circumstances and replaced the decline in loans with investments in treasury bonds. At the same time, the National Bank of Poland launched a policy of quantitative easing, which is additional security for the Polish banking sector. In the short term, the situation seems to be safe and the involvement of the banking sector ensures the stability of Polish public finances. The actions undertaken generate certain risks that may reveal themselves in the long term. The effectiveness of banks in stimulating the Polish economy will largely depend on the course of further stages of the pandemic.

Keywords: public finances, pandemic COVID-19, Polish banking sector.

Maximilian Mayer - *Towards Measuring Global Digital Dependence Structures*

Abstract: The magnitude of interdependence within the world economy and among countries has recently become viewed as a security issue, an economic and even an ethical problem. Technology and digital data are now a central terrain of geopolitics, driving how states redefine national security concerns and position themselves strategically. States can also “weaponize” economic and infrastructural interdependence, that is, governments implement access restrictions against third parties by using existing trade or technology dependencies. Events such as the corona pandemic have, in addition, led many politicians to recognize the vulnerability of their countries to supply shocks and the fragility of global just-in-time production networks. The resulting debates about regaining some measure of national autonomy is particularly lively in the field of cyber space and digital technologies where the central role of data is reshuffling the condition for growth, trade and industrial policies, while the distribution of capabilities is seen as most extremely unequal. China had a head start with implementing its own conception of information sovereignty, pushing for a selective fragmentation, but technological autonomy and digital sovereignty appear now to be commonsense ideas around the world. Related policy measures and goals are heatedly discussed within the political discourses in the US, Europe and in many other regions. However, the political emphasis on autonomy – or even on “autarky” – tends to ignore the sheer extent to which decades of neoliberal deregulation, trade and technology-driven globalization have created far-reaching and complex path-dependencies which are hardly reflected by calls of autonomy. In fact, the voices in favor of an US decoupling with China or the vehement urges for European technological autonomy are not supported by a sound empirical understanding of the global structural reality, that is, how much individual countries are indeed depending on international trade, imports and connectedness, relying on “foreign” digital technology components, products, services or infrastructures. Basic empirical data on digital dependence are thus required.

How to measure digital dependence in a more comprehensive way that goes beyond particular sectors or certain technologies such as 5G or semiconductors? The following introduces the newly established digital dependence index (DDI) and presents the results from a comparison of 24 countries from all major regions in terms of their software, hardware and IP dependencies. The overall picture that emerges from the DDI is striking: no country can economically prosper outside of a global interdependence structure and although some countries are less dependent than others, even the most autonomous are still highly sensitive foreign digital technologies. Most countries belong to the highly vulnerable group in which digital dependency even appears irreversible, at least in the light of usual political time scales. The comparison of data sets across 10 years suggests that this structure of high overall dependence is stable over space and time, as very few countries managed to become substantially more autonomous. The current debate about digital autonomy, then, needs to take into account more realistically the structural conditions under which economies, innovation, and even security operates in a digital world civilization today.

Richard Milner - *Europe's Place in the Post-Pandemic World: The Challenge of Transnational Democratization in the Wake of Covid-19*

Abstract: When the global pandemic - COVID-19 - struck, Europe was already in the midst of a constellation of economic, political and social crises. From the deepening of core/periphery tensions exacerbated by the response to the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone, to the prolonged refugee crisis triggered by the Syrian war and widespread instability in the Middle East, to the ongoing Brexit debacle and the associated resurgence of populist nationalism across the continent, Europe and the dream of integration now face a profoundly uncertain future. The EU finds itself at a juncture in the post-pandemic world, an inescapable dilemma between the continuation of the predominant mode of governance that has led up to this point of crisis, characterised by a technocratic form of fiscal integration, or a yet unrealized alternative. The present paper seeks to theoretically explore and specify what may constitute the latter. Taking cue from Antje Wiener's conceptual framework for analysing norm(ative) change in combination with James Bohman's theory of transnational democracy, a renewed European integration project based around the cosmopolitan principles of human rights and peaceful self-rule is proposed as an alternative path to the pre-pandemic trajectory. Although this reflects a counterfactual response to what is a concrete and urgent set of political problems, there is nonetheless a critical need to articulate the normative alternatives that reach beyond the present malaise. This approach, therefore, reconstructs the pandemic situation as a political opportunity structure, to embrace a politics of hope and rediscover the ambitious principles at the heart of the fragile transnational democratic experiment that is the European Union.

Keywords: Europe; post-pandemic; crises; normative change; transnational democracy; cosmopolitanism.

Paulina Napierała - *Christian nationalism in the US and its response to COVID*

Abstract: Christian nationalism has been defined as “an ideology that idealizes and advocates a fusion of American civic life with a particular type of Christian identity and culture.” Currently, it is most often represented by the Religious Right, whose proponents are known for claiming that: “the United States was founded as a Christian nation,” “America holds a special place in God’s plan,” and “success of the United States is a reflection of divine will.” Many white evangelicals in the US are also susceptible to Christian nationalist idea that the U.S. is a Christian nation that should serve the interests of white Americans. Importantly, Christian nationalists’ belief in a special, divine protection over the US, as research indicates, has had a profound impact on the attitudes toward the COVID pandemic. The way conservative pastors prophesied God’s protection over the nation during the pandemic (citing America’s righteous support for the prolife agenda and politicians) influenced their followers’ behavior, including their attitude to the safety measures, masks requirements, social distancing and vaccination. Suspicion from religious conservatives regarding the COVID-19 vaccine is also built on the distrust of science, medicine and the global elite. While this is characteristic for other populist nationalisms, researchers suspect that COVID crisis might cause radicalization of such positions. The problem isn’t just that Christian nationalist beliefs will be a considerable barrier to herd immunity (also globally). Research suggests that nationalist reactions to COVID also intensify anti-government libertarianism, fuel xenophobic and anti-immigrant attitudes. In this paper I will discuss the results of several research studies accessing Christian nationalists’ attitudes towards the pandemic, safety measures (also in churches), as well as receptiveness to the racist and xenophobic views of COVID-19, expressions of prejudice presented by politicians and religious leaders - and their impact on American society, larger international community and diplomatic relations.

Francesco Olmastroni - *A comparative study of audience costs effects in democratic and electoral authoritarian regimes*

Abstract: Audience costs theory posits that country leaders would incur in public disapproval when making an external threat and then backing down. This theory has been extensively tested in the US context and, to a lesser extent, in other democratic regimes under the assumption that democratic leaders face the greatest punishment for foreign policy failures. However, it remains unknown whether authoritarian states generate audience costs as well. By means of new and original survey experiments, this article tries to fill this gap comparing audience costs effects in the US and two electoral authoritarian regimes, namely Russia and Turkey. In doing this, we explore whether different types of commitment lead to different audience costs, revealing the potential impact of both empty threats and unkept promises on presidential approval. Finally, we show that audience costs are moderated by the outcome of the crisis and that success matters when citizens evaluate the foreign policy conduct of their leaders.

Laura-Anca Parepa - *Competing patterns of economic diplomacy*

Abstract: Although many scholars agree that the 21st century is the "Asian Century", the most debated aspect is how this century will be. It was believed that promoting economic interdependence and integration in Asia will limit incentives for conflict and facilitate a stable and cooperative environment. Yet, China's rapid and ambitious march toward the status of global power and the recent shift of Japan toward a proactive leadership role in regional economic governance create new areas of competition and make the regional situation more complex. Both China and Japan are promoting different visions of regional integration, are actively engaged in reshaping or creating economic institutions and are competing in offering development support in Asia and beyond. In their endeavours, they have been widely making use and readjusting one of the non-military tools of their statecraft, specifically economic diplomacy. Using a comparative perspective, the article seeks to understand how competing patterns of economic diplomacy pursued by the two biggest Asian economies are transforming regional relations and the factors facilitating or impeding deeper cooperation. The paper concludes that the evolving dynamics in Asia might become detrimental to smaller economies to the extent to which China and Japan will promote restrictive and exclusory initiatives in making use of their economic diplomacy tools to alter the behaviour of other states.

Śławomir Raszewski - *International Economic Relations in the era of pandemics: how has disruption transformed international energy, and what it means for the international economy and politics?*

Abstract: The Covid-19 pandemic crisis has 'shaken and stirred' international economic relations. While we are, by all means, still in a crisis today, the transformation of key sectors, such as international energy, is set to have profound effects on the future world economy. Drawing on key developments and selected International Political Economy (IPE) theory, this paper aims to discuss ways in which international energy has been disrupted, and the effects that this disruption has had on key consuming and producing regions, with ramifications for emerging international economic and political relations. Vulnerabilities of the existing economic system have long been discussed and evaluated in expert and academic communities. In particular, the challenges concerning patterns of energy dependence have been well documented and have, for too long, demanded measures to address them through not-so-easy to implement sustainable energy policies that are socially-acceptable, equitable and stability-oriented. In the aftermath of the pandemic crisis, we are witnessing an acceleration of deep decarbonisation policies, some of which have a chance of succeeding. Equally, the burden of climate policies is likely to be shared with a wider spectrum of players as advances in technology are set to provide new tools to manage consumers' behaviour, thus changing our thinking about energy security, poverty, risk and development.

Yoichiro Sato - *Japan's Strategic Indo-Pacific Vision*

Abstract: This presentation will critically illustrate and explain divergence of Japan's Indo-Pacific strategy from the U.S. version through the lens of asymmetrical alliance system in Asia. It explores continuity and changes in the Japanese strategy in the changing global power context. I argue that the continuity in Japan's geopolitical security interests urges continuous engagement of the United States in regional security affairs in the Indo-Pacific, whereas the dynamically changing geoeconomics interests tailors the Japanese strategy to concurrently emphasize openness and economic integration of the broader Indo-Pacific region. The Japanese effort to balance the two potential conflicting objectives requires careful alliance management, in which Japan's "dues" in terms of military and economic contributions to meet U.S. demands are constantly being negotiated. Japan has found networking of the existing bilateral alliances of the United States and forming new alignments around the core alliance with the United States is key to embed the U.S. commitment to the regional security. Likewise, Japan has worked on fostering regional economic openness and integration to improve the terms of its bargains with the two biggest trade partners—China and the United States. I will support these arguments with empirical evidence of Japan's policy initiatives.

Juliette Schwak - *Exporting K- quarantine: Korea's promotion of its COVID management strategy*

Abstract: Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Korea has been one of the few countries to limit the spread of the disease without imposing strict lockdown measures. Many state leaders have turned to the Moon government to ask for help in dealing with the health crisis. Korea's efficient response is due to a combination of factors: geographical and demographic specificities of the COVID epidemic in Korea, the institutional memory built after the MERS crisis in 2015, cultural and political economic factors, including collectivist attitudes, state-business cooperation, civil society involvement and nationalist mobilization. Despite this complexity of factors, the Korean government has expressed its formula for fighting the disease as 'trace, test and treat' (TTT). This TTT approach relies heavily on contact tracing technologies and mass testing schemes, including drive-through testing facilities. The Moon government is currently devising a strategy to export this approach through the 'K-Quarantine' model. This takes the form of global exhibitions planned for 2021, of the export of tests and of the initiative to have ISO standardize the Korean model of epidemic management. This research shows that the export of 'K-Quarantine' fits Moon Jae-in's strategy to make Korea a technological leader and responds to a longer preoccupation of Korean administrations with exporting Korea's economic development experience. 'K-quarantine' also corresponds to both a commercial strategy to secure markets for Korea's health industries, and the decades-old concern with securing the country's national competitiveness, for both material and ontological reasons. This research will also discuss how Korea positions itself vis-à-vis Taiwan and New Zealand, its main competitors in the export of public health models due to their own successful management of the COVID pandemic.

David O'Brien & Melissa Shani Brown - *Infectious Extremism: The biopolitical repercussions in China in the wake of Covid-19*

Abstract: Sean Roberts (2018) offers a biopolitical reading of the use of internment to deal with ethnic tension in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. He identifies in official discourses the ways in which extremism and separatism is likened to a disease from which the 'normal, healthy' population needs to be 'quarantined'. Rather than framing such threats as ideological attacks upon a political order, the danger is presented as a threat to the general population, and one which conversely situates part of that population as culpable for posing this threat. This enables the Chinese Communist Party to situate itself as the pastoral guardian of the general population, responsible for keeping them safe by any measures.

For several years before Covid, concerns were being raised about what was happening in Xinjiang and how it was being justified, *vis a vis* social stability, economic development etc. China's response to Covid more generally entailed the expanding of some of these measures particularly as regards surveillance, and media censorship to the rest of the country.

Despite widespread condemnation of this, with Covid many western countries have themselves engaged in large scale quarantining and curtailing of civil liberties, likewise around concern for the health of the population. While many of these restrictions appear justified by the public health emergency, there also appears to be far more openness to ideas of media censorship, even in contexts where both the free press and freedom of expression are celebrated and enshrined as fundamental liberties.

This paper argues that this poses serious questions for the post-Covid world, both as regards diplomatic international condemnation of authoritarianism or human rights abuses, as well as public perceptions of the justification of censorship and political violence.

István Tarrósy & Hajer Trabelsi - *Even Braver New World? Geopolitical Implications of COVID-19 and How the World Order is Reshaping*

Abstract: The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has not only shed light on the creaking status of healthcare systems across the world and the vulnerabilities of the global economy, but also exacerbated geopolitical tensions and aggravated existing acute challenges. Among others, it has drawn attention to the limited effectiveness of international institutions. After a brief critical overview, the paper examines the daunting economic, environmental and geopolitical challenges the globe has been facing in a growingly 'US vs. China' setting. The core consideration of this analysis is to critically study both the role of China and the US – as two global (super)powers – in the global battle against the transnational pandemic. The coronavirus significance in expediting the shifts in the balance of power and reshaping the existing world system is also studied given the state of disorder and turbulence that permeates the world during COVID-19 and beyond.

Hanako Umezawa - *ASEAN way of coping with COVID-19: challenges for ASEAN centrality in the post-pandemic region*

Abstract: COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the greatest challenges for the mankind in the contemporary world. The pandemic has been declared as an endangerment to international peace and security by the UN Security Council, as well as many countries and regional organisations across the world, including ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and its member states. Beyond its detrimental effect on public health, COVID-19 has been testing the advantages and disadvantages of “ASEAN Way” of regional cooperation in dealing with the pandemic, while representing the geopolitical complexity ASEAN has been faced with the constant intervention by major powers within and beyond the region. This article overviews ASEAN’s response to the pandemic based on its previous experiences with epidemics, while highlighting the challenge for the ASEAN centrality in the region, as the US and China have been offering pandemic assistance to consolidate their influence. It aims to identify ASEAN’s role in dealing with non-traditional security issues, as well as the way to maintain its position as a central institution in the region amid the intensified great power rivalry.

Key words: ASEAN Way; pandemics; non-traditional security; multilateralism; geopolitics

Śławomir Wyciślak - *System perspective on tensions between autonomy and control in post pandemic world*

Abstract: The measures implemented to control the widespread of Covid 19 pandemics are claimed to limit agents autonomy in the re-designed systems. Digital technologies unlocking the opportunity to monitor agents gave unprecedented potential to control. Agents in the systems can be identified, located in real time mode which can limit their freedom and discretion to schedule work, make decisions, and choose methods for design and innovation. The goal of the conceptual article is to discuss how tensions between control and autonomy will impact post pandemic system resilience. The questions that will be addressed are as follow:

- What are the reinforcing and balancing loops amongst autonomy and control ? How they are related to tensions ? What are the patterns emerging because of reinforcing and balancing loops amongst autonomy and control ?
- How reinforcing and balancing loops between autonomy and control can impact system resilience?
- How to create resilient system using tensions between control and autonomy?

Control: A controller’s attempts to influence a controllee to act according to the controller’s objectives (Goldbach et al. 2018, p. 273)

Autonomy: The extent to which individuals perceive that the platform allows them freedom and discretion to schedule work, make decisions, and choose methods for design and innovation (Ye and Kankanhalli 2018, p. 166).