

Call for contributions to the CADAAD special issue and author's workshop 'Discourses of Covid-19 and the reconfiguration of the political'

Organized by the speakers of the discourse research group of the German Political Science Association (DVPW) Christiane Barnickel, Elena Dück and Amelie Kutter

The special issue "Discourses of Covid-19 and the reconfiguration of the political" to be published in the CADAAD Journal invites contributions that decipher what reconfigurations of the political have unfolded in and through the pandemic when looked at from a discourse perspective. Just as any other crisis debate, the debate about Covid-19 produced heroes, scapegoats and holders of extraordinary interpretive and political authority. At the same time, debates about Covid-19 appears to be specific in that they renegotiate, more radically than previous crises debates, what is admissible and acceptable between facts and fiction, freedom and repression, solidarity and social exclusion.

This special issue looks into how this renegotiation reconfigured the way we imagine and do politics. It raises the question how debates about Covid-19 challenged regimes of knowledge and shifted epistemic boundaries that used to constitute the political in our (democratic) societies. By focusing on 'the political', we aim to move beyond a mere understanding of 'politics' as procedures and processes of decision making and mine the specific contribution that discourse studies can make to the exploration of changing conceptions of the political.

Several authors have engaged in conceptualizations of the political from a discourse perspective – Jacques Rancière, Michel Foucault, Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, to name just a few. They share a focus on the construction of 'différence' (Mouffe 1996: 247), thus overcoming the essentialist notion of the political as propagated by Carl Schmitt. The special issue adopts this focus on the construction of différence. It reveals the political struggles and the reconfiguration of social and political identities underlying debates about Covid-19. If we understand the political as the struggle about the "normalized order" of the "ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying" (Rancière 1999: 29), a discourse perspective on the political not only helps to reconstruct these very political struggles but also to critically assess their entanglement with questions of power.

We welcome contributions from different discourse theoretical approaches and different disciplines that are grounded in or connected to theoretical or empirical considerations on the political and its reconfiguration in and through crisis discourse. Individual papers might be inspired by – but are not restricted to – considerations of discourse and the political as elaborated by, e.g., Michel Foucault, Chantal Mouffe & Ernesto Laclau or Jacques Rancière.

Contributions can address, but are not limited to, questions such as:

- How are social and political identities constructed in discourses on Covid-19? Which 'groups' are being constructed, what characteristics are attributed to them and which identities are ascribed to them?
- Who is constructed as legitimate speaker or interpretive authority in discourses on Covid-19 (and who is not)?
- How are struggles over discourse, power and knowledge organized?
- How are epistemic boundaries reconfigured? (How) do different logics (e.g. of the political and scientific) arena operate and how are different types of knowledge integrated? (How) are boundaries between (non-)knowledge, truth and truthiness shifted?
- What are the effects of the discursive struggles on the democratic political?

For all of the questions raised authors could also discuss

- Which discursive strategies and practices reconfigure the political in Covid-19 discourse and how?
- Which differences can be observed between
 - Different phases of the pandemic?
 - Different countries or discursive arenas and setting?
 - The Covid-19 crisis discourse and other (crisis) discourse? And what can we learn from Covid-19 crisis discourse with regards to the (reconfiguration of) the political?

Timeline and Guidelines

Abstracts of 150-200 words in English should be submitted to diskursforschung@dvpw.de no later than **19 December 2022**. Abstracts should point out what aspect or case of the (reconfiguration of) the political they will explore and what discourse approach is used. Submitters will be notified of acceptance within a few days after submission. Draft versions of accepted articles need to be submitted by 15 February 2023, to allow editors and other participants to read them in advance of the authors' workshop. The authors' workshop will take place online on the 23 and 24 February 2023.

At the authors' workshop 'Discourses of Covid-19 and the political', we will discuss both substantive and editorial issues of the submitted contributions. Articles should follow the CADAAD Journal guidelines [Guidelines \(https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/journals/cadaad/guidelines-update/\)](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/journals/cadaad/guidelines-update/) and be no longer than 8.000 words, excluding references.

Final versions of the contributions need to be submitted by **30 April 2023**.

Important Dates & Deadlines:

Abstract submission deadline: 19 December 2022

Notification by editors: 23 December 2022

Submission first draft: 15 February 2023

Authors' workshop (online): 23 and 24 February 2023

Submission of final version: 30 April 2023