

How did the COVID-19 crisis shape the dispute between strategic disinformation campaigns and the EU's security apparatuses?

REIMAGINING THE INTERNATIONAL

Disinformation and power landscapes during COVID-19

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Current research on COVID-19 disinformation revolves around **four streams**:



Describing the problems created by the intersection of disinformation and COVID-19.



Outlining the dangers posed by disinformation to public health and democratic debates.



Exploring the adverse effects of counter-disinformation policies on freedom of expression.



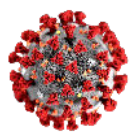
Reflexively critiquing the debate and the societal effects of related policies.

Two conceptual building blocks

ASSEMBLAGES

A mix of elements (e.g. agents, objects, rules, and institutions) brought together for a strategic purpose.

Example: Russia & China's Disinformation Structures during COVID-19



Russia and China's Strategic Disinformation Assemblages aimed to destabilise liberal democracies by spreading false narratives on the virus' origins and effectiveness of safety measures.

The spread of disinformation during COVID-19 became a "**core security problem**". The **EU's security assemblage** had to evolve to include this new threat.



Contestation



During COVID-19, the **EU's security public administrations** demanded to promote content from health agencies and delete false content on social media.

At the same time, the platforms kept monetising **disinformation & conspiracy theories** coming from China and Russia.

BORDERSCAPES

Non-territorial, mobile, and relational zones where contestation over epistemological orders takes place.

Example: Social Media as a Borderscape

Strategic disinformation and security assemblages challenge each other in borderscapes where dominant patterns of identity and difference, and of construction of the inside and outside, are negotiated.



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