

# Review of: "Re-calling Magical Thinking: Different, yet Connected Views on Magical Thinking"

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**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper „Re-calling Magical Thinking: Different, yet Connected Views on Magical Thinking“ deals with an important topic and is based on the intriguing idea of the persistence of magical thinking in contemporary societies. It is anchored in the empirical observation of certain linkages between proclaimed COVID-19 mitigation strategies and measures (such as social distancing) and magical thinking. This is a highly valuable idea which, however, requires much more comprehensive elaboration. The paper exhibits severe flaws in terms of structure and lacks a proper dose of coherence, as well as scientific stringency. In my view, it would be much more advisable that the manuscript commences where it concludes. I found the concluding section the worthiest as it actually draws parallels between magical thinking and behaviour patterns specific to recent pandemics. This relation should be elaborated far more extensively by providing deeper empirical corroboration and theoretical arguments. Instead, in this version, which resembles a well-prepared ‘draft’ of an upcoming refined article, a reader is offered fragmented references to classical views on magical thinking, mostly from the domain of cultural anthropology.

I advise and encourage the author to rework the paper in detail, primarily by developing a more comprehensive empirical basis and theoretical arguments for grasping the connection between magical thinking and practices related to coping with COVID-19. Also, rendering the epistemological dimension of magical thought (also in relation to the scientific mode of thinking) would be relevant for the discussion. With regards to the topic, I think that consulting the works of Mary Douglas (for instance, ‘Purity and Danger’) would be helpful.

Particular attention should be devoted to the structure (mainly reaching a suitable level of coherence) of the article, as well as to the writing style, since the current ‘essay type’ of writing does not correspond to standards expected for scientific articles.