

## ***Fear, Anxiety and Crisis in Europe: A Multidisciplinary Approach***

Call for papers for a collection of essays

Early scholarly analyses of anxiety are inextricably intertwined with times of crisis. Sigmund Freud's lecture XXV on anxiety is a seminal example. Delivered at the University of Vienna during the First World War as part of his introductory lectures on psychoanalysis (1915-1917, published in 1916-1917), in this piece Freud focused on a psychoanalytic study of the individual affective state of anxiety, which he defined as an emotional reaction to the perception of a potential threat or injury. Freud also distinguished between *Angst* (anxiety) and *Furcht* (fear) in that whereas the former focuses on the affective reaction, the latter focuses on the object that is the cause of this emotion. While the First World War is not explicitly mentioned in this lecture, Freud's historical context and private life, with his two sons serving in the Habsburg army, shaped his work, not only as reflected by his disillusionment with human nature that pervades his *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death* (1915), but also, it has been argued, in "broadening his understanding of human nature beyond sexual drive" (Górny 2016). Freud's study of fear and anxiety articulated at a time of crisis globally and, particularly, in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century is especially suitable when attempting to understand the dominant concern with such affective states and their interrelated individual and social dimensions in a contemporary global context. In this sense, since the turn of the twenty-first century, nearly a century after Freud's lecture on anxiety, media, political and academic discourses have been characterised by the pervasive presence of "crisis." Sociological analyses of the current epoch of late modernity often emphasise the intensification of speed and volume of spatially and temporally related factors as underlying causes of fear and anxiety. Hartmurt Rosa (2005), for example, has observed how what he terms "social acceleration" experienced at the structural and subjective levels, in which technological-technical acceleration plays a crucial role, helps to account for numerous socio-psychological pathologies, including anxiety, phobias and alienation. The subjective and generational perception of time running faster than in preceding epochs, and the consequent experience of anxiety or living in a time of crisis are certainly not new. However, what is ostensibly new in what Zygmunt Bauman (2000) has seminally termed "liquid modernity" is the manner in which technological development has enabled an increase in the speed, frequency and magnitude of transnational mobility of information, goods and people. Against a potentially positivist perception of these "new mobilities" (Sheller & Urry 2006), there is also the sense that current crises are often generated by the cumulative effect of the transnational spread and glocal experience of what sociologist Ulrich Beck (2004) identified as "global threats" and which, particularly since the turn of the twenty-first century with 9/11 marking a turning point, include global terrorism, financial crises, climate change – and to this list one cannot but feel compelled to include pandemics, such as the current Covid19 pandemic. Numerous scholarly analyses of these crises, unfolding in what has been referred to as our "age of anger" (Mishra 2017) or "age of anxiety" (Wachs & Schaff 2020), focus on the affective responses of societies when they perceive themselves to be under threat by an external entity, be it contamination, refugees or an unknown virus. Many of these studies are often conducted from within the borders of

separate disciplines. Such is the case of anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's insightful essay to map "the geography of anger" in the current context of globalisation, by considering the underlying reasons of the "fear of small numbers", of minority communities, experienced by the majority communities in nation-states (2006). In other instances, such as in the work of Zygmunt Bauman, Martha C. Nussbaum and Sara Ahmed, analyses of contemporary crises and affective responses invite the crossing of disciplinary boundaries so as to better apprehend why, after the hope that modernity would erase the darkness of earlier centuries, there is an overriding sense that "ours is, again, a time of fears" (Bauman 2006: 2). Such a complex question requires a complex, multilayered and multiperspectival response. That is why this collection invites submissions on examinations of contemporary crises and their affective responses produced either within the specialisation of specific disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences or with an explicit interdisciplinary perspective.

Submissions are welcome on any of the following themes, though not excluding other topics:

- Manifestations and conceptualisations of "othering" in times of crisis
- Border anxieties
- Social, spatial and psychological boundaries
- Fixity and fluidity in spatial and temporal boundaries
- Processes of inclusion and exclusion
- Political crisis and fear
- Refugee crisis as "crisis of solidarity"
- The racialisation of migrants in times of fear
- Objects of emotions and objects of feeling
- Distant suffering and mediation of crisis
- Discourses on crisis, trauma and anxiety
- Time, space and anxiety
- Technological-technical acceleration and socio-psychological pathologies
- Media representations of crisis

Submissions in English, including an abstract (max. 500 words, including five keywords), a short biographical note (max. 150 words) and a statement that this work has not been published and is not currently under review elsewhere, should be sent by 15 February 2021 to the editors, Carmen Zamorano Llena ([cza@du.se](mailto:cza@du.se)), Jonas Stier ([jonas.stier@mdh.se](mailto:jonas.stier@mdh.se)) and Billy Gray ([bgr@du.se](mailto:bgr@du.se)). Notification of the editorial decision will be sent to the authors by 15 March 2021 and complete essays in English (max. 7,500 words, including works cited) should be submitted by 15 September 2021. The collection of essays will be published by an international academic publishing house with peer-review system.

## Works Cited

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