

Call for participants

EASA Disaster and Crisis Anthropology Network (DICAN)

For quite some time now, disasters and crises have been the object of study of the social sciences at large, proving that such events are not “natural” or random, but rather the outcome of multiple and interacting social, cultural, political, economic and environmental processes. In order to understand the causes, effects and the ways of coping with risk, uncertainty and loss, it is necessary to go beyond the short time and mediatised perspective that always dominate when a disaster strikes or a crisis sets in. Anthropology seems to provide particularly suitable analytical tools to achieve this task. Historically speaking, anthropology has, with a few albeit notable exceptions, been rather modest in focusing analytically on crises and disasters as social phenomena, despite of the subject’s holistic approach. A possible reason for the relative historical scarcity of ethnography of crises and disasters was the traditional focus of the discipline on “states of equilibrium” or “everyday life.” For a long time, this focus precluded more elaborated interest in the disruptions of the “normal” flow of social life. In the 21st century, the studies of the critical and the extraordinary have multiplied at a quick pace. It has been argued that this has to do with the proper empirical expansion of the discipline and increased transdisciplinary communication, as much as with the understanding that classical anthropological problems can be found in contemporary societies. Whatever the reasons are, at the turn of the 21st century, the anthropology of disasters and crises is an expanding field worldwide, judging from the number of recently published ethnographic studies and others underway.

From the substantial work produced hitherto, it is clear that anthropology is particularly well suited to think the many dimensions of crises and disasters, given both its established and its thriving new research into the processes of sociality, subjectivity, temporality, spatiality and materiality that forge social life. Disasters and crises, as moments of rupture, are both good to think the social, the cultural, the political and the economic life with, and worthy objects of analyses in themselves. Taking stock of the fruitfulness and the promises of this emerging field of study, it seems timely **to reinforce and consolidate the anthropology of disasters and crises** within the larger subject of anthropology, by engaging all European anthropologists interested in this area in a network.

The **aim** of this network is thus to facilitate contacts between anthropologists in order to enable exchange, communication and focused discussions about the anthropological contributions to the study of crises and disasters.

Among the possible network **activities** are to arrange themed sessions at the EASA conferences and organise regular network meetings in the non-biennial conference years, to initiate joint publications and to establish a platform of interactive communication.

We invite expressions of interest in joining the network and we also encourage you to propose initiatives and particular topics of discussion.

Convenors:

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