EDITORS' NOTE

sciendo

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In recent years, a global pandemic, climate change, clashes between democratic and illiberal social movements, and unprecedented armed conflicts have prompted reactions to crises from all fields. Renewed academic and popular interest in crises calls for closer analysis. Crisis is seen as "a category denoting a moment of truth" (Roitman 3), or as a conceptual rupture. Scholars such as Janet Roitman believe that crises are implicitly produced by norms, against which they coagulate, and consequently create the potential for change or progress (cf. Diner, Klein, Meiner and Veel). Others see the present as an impasse, characterized by the parallel normalizing of crisis and weakening of consensus, often by defeatist politics (Berlant; Nixon; Knowles). Many crises have evidenced the need for community building globally, but especially in the United States (Ghosh; Johnson et al.; Levitsky; Moyn; Sugrue and Zaloom).

At the American Studies Center in Timisoara, as members of a professional community that has recently been facing a crisis in the Humanities, both material and ideological, and is called upon to interpret crises, we have become increasingly aware of this phenomenon. Therefore, for this special issue, we welcomed articles that engage with the theme of "crisis" by focusing on contemporary or historical topics in American politics and society or literary, media, and academic discourses. Some of the essays address immediate and deep-seated crises, as well as responses to these crises, while others interrogate the term and discourses of crisis. We also welcomed articles about pedagogical approaches, enabling students and faculty to confront, analyze, and act.

The articles in this issue approach crises in various areas of American politics and culture. Some of the studies focus on crises as rendered in political culture and discourse. Gabriela Tucan and Dumitru Tucan take on a historical perspective on the politics of crisis, looking specifically at antisemitic reactions to the Great Depression. The events of January 6, 2021, a significant recent crisis, are analyzed by two of the studies in this issue. Mihai Murariu and Loredana

Bercuci's article examines the ideological foundations of Trumpism as reflected in a corpus of testimonies about January 6 in order to assess its potential for future (re)radicalization as an anti-globalist, sovereignist-nativist, totalist movement during a time of crisis. Eric Fure-Slocum's article moves beyond the theory of crisis and focuses on the challenges inherent in the teaching of the January 6 insurrection to Romanian students, his contribution being an example of how crises call for innovative practices in the classroom that build reflective learning communities and initiatives that traverse the walls between the academy and society. Similarly, Ronnie K. Stephens, in "Recovered History: Chicanx Representation in the Dual Credit Classroom," discusses the importance of recovered history and digital archives to introduce students to the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, a crucial aspect of American history that is not only conspicuously absent from most K–12 curricula but also has a pervasive influence on identity formation and current discussions.

Another set of articles focuses on social and cultural crises in discourse stemming from negotiations of underserved spaces. Steven Conn makes a convincing argument that the discourses about the "rural crisis" in the US distort what is happening in these diverse places that are often superficially labeled as "rural." Lemon Sam focuses on Barbara Kingsolver's novel Demon Copperhead *in the context of the opioid endemic in Southern Appalachia, stressing the importance of community when attempting to build resilience to crisis. Connor Robinson discusses the intersection of art and activism in the poetry of Bud Osborn as part of a space marked by social crisis – Vancouver's Downtown Eastside – proposing an avenue for approaching crisis outside academia.*

Sam's and Robinson's studies also highlight a concern with literary discourses of crisis, another focal point of this issue. As such, Sam's article is concerned with how literature translates social and medical discourses of crisis. Robinson investigates the potential of literary discourse to enact and produce social change. Aamir Aziz similarly discusses Arthur Miller's play, The Crucible*, as a symbol of American politics, which oscillates between absolutes such as "friend and enemy" and "good and evil" (Schmitt 26-27), dichotomies that usually precede or indicate a crisis. Dana Percec's article analyses campus novels in the context of*

the American college campus marked by gender and power dynamics, stressing how these novels are in dialogue with contemporary political discourse.

Ultimately, the main concern of this special issue is how to approach crises to teach resilience and proactive responses in light of unrest to our students. Conn, Murariu, Bercuci, Tucan and Tucan analyze crises in political discourse, gesturing towards theoretical approaches to the term that may be included in our curricula. Robinson, Aziz and Sam exemplify how art and literature, cornerstones of humanities research, can be used to strengthen responses in the aftermath of a crisis. Finally, Percec, Stephens, and Fure-Slocum analyze situations of crisis specifically tied to educational institutions, offering suggestions about how these may be approached pedagogically. What transpires from all these endeavors is the necessity of broadening the scope of traditional academic discourse to include approaches that sustain resilience even in times when our institutions themselves are in crisis.

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