



Introductory Note by the Editors-in-Chief

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The present issue of *kritisk etnografi* – Swedish Journal of Anthropology, has as its theme *The Fear Among Us*, under the leadership of the guest editors, Dr. Anna Gustafsson and Associate Professor Eva-Maria Hardtmann, both Anthropologists from Stockholm University. While fear is a deeply personal emotion, it is also a social and cultural experience. In the words of Gustafsson and Hardtmann, the discipline of anthropology is well suited for understanding how certain groups of people and individuals are framed as dangerous within public discourse by looking at the forms such framing takes, its strategies, and its effects both on the particular groups of people involved, and on society as a whole. The special issue grew partly out of the work of a panel titled *Fear among Us: Constructing Dangerous Others* at the Annual Conference of the Swedish Anthropological Association (SANT) at Lund University, 22-23 April 2021.

Fear is both an individual and a social construction and experience, and anthropologists can situate constructions of fear and danger in relation to modes of Othering at a given time and place. The article by Kenneth Bo Nielsen, M. Sudhir Selvaraj and Alf Gunvald Nilsen focuses on the construction of “dangerous others” in India. They show how the ideology and politics of Hindu nationalism was always based on a discursive construction of “dangerous others” and particularly directed mostly against Muslims, but also to some extent against Christians. Per Ståhlberg’s article focuses on Ukraine, starting and ending with the ruins of the nuclear plant Chernobyl. He reflects on this site of a frightening nuclear disaster as an analogy with the current war: the danger that threatens to desolate large parts of Europe is also concealed within the country. In her article, Anna Gustafsson shows how older people have been constructed as social others during the COVID-19 pandemic; they came to be considered *at risk* for becoming seriously ill, and *a risk* for the spreading of the virus, and of burdening the health care system. Old people were made into a homogenous group, dangerous both to themselves and others. Eva-Maria Hardtmann portrays the prison abolition movement, a movement which has grown tremendously in the U.S. during the last few years. Through meeting ethnography from a conference in Montgomery, Alabama, she shows how prison abolitionists theoretically situate contemporary incarceration in the context of racism, slavery, and historical struggles, and concretely in practice too.

In the Bricolage section Jörgen Hellman publishes an article on new forms of diversity that is emerging in postmigration societies.

Since the journal was launched in August 2018 with the inaugural issue that dealt with *The Public Presence of Anthropology* (Vol 1, No 1, 2018) developed around Didier Fassin’s

Vega Symposium in 2016, we have worked hard to consolidate the journal's publication and dissemination. The second issue, which was also a double issue, was themed *Comparative Municipal Ethnographies* (Vol 2, No 1-2, 2019) and focused on the anthropology of local politics across the world. The first issue of 2020 inquired into *The Anthropology of Wellbeing in Troubled Times* (Vol 3, No 1, 2020), and was developed around Paul Stoller's 2013 Vega Symposium. The second issue of 2020 focused on ethnographic practices in applied contexts, *Putting Swedish Anthropology to Work* (Vol 3, No 2, 2020). Two issues were published in 2021. The first one was a *Varia* issue, and the second explored *The Social Life of Water* with Karsten Pearregaard and Paula Uimonen as guest editors. In 2022, *kritisk etnografi* was published as a double issue addressing the question, *Is Europe skilling for sustainable food?*, diligently developed by guest editors Maris Boyd Gillette and Cristina Grasseni. The first issue of 2023 was themed *The Future of Diversity*, and focused on Thomas Hylland Eriksen's Vega Symposium in 2022.

As Editors-in-Chief of *kritisk etnografi* – Swedish Journal of Anthropology, we welcome proposals for thematic issues, individual papers, and shorter pieces from colleagues at Swedish universities and beyond. To recall, *kritisk etnografi* is a scientific peer-reviewed open access journal, free of any charges, published by the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography (SSAG).

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