

Crisis as potential for collective action

Crisis as potential for collective action: Violence and humanitarianism on the Polish-Ukrainian border

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The notion of crisis has evolved from a sudden, acute event to a broader disruption of stable historical narratives and the future. This article explores how the crisis surrounding the Russian invasion of Ukraine challenged the inevitability of Poland's membership in the West and threatened to catapult it back into a history of war and Russian domination. However, for Polish volunteers aiding Ukrainian refugees and the military, the crisis was also a temporality in which their actions took on outsize importance. By working on seemingly mundane tasks of provisioning and transport, they attempted to shape history and, in doing so, redefined the concept of humanitarianism in times of crisis. This article highlights how crisis can serve as a potential for collective action, blurring the distinction between individual and collective agency and redefining how people respond to crises.

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Odniesienia

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