



Ca' Foscari University of
Venice
Department of Asian and
North African Studies

PhD Symposium on Fragile Selves

March 2nd-4th, 2022

Since the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic, the concept of fragility has entered our lives in a much more prominent way. Our social relations and our daily habits have become fragmented and our 'normality' seems now to be hanging in a suspended and uncertain temporality. We realized how porous the borders of our identities are have become porous and our definition of the self has become fragile and unstable. The idea of fragility - and the broadly related concepts of vulnerability and care - have, however, been part of academic discourses and debates long before the current pandemic. Fragility and the self, have been discussed from political, literary, social, artistic and historical perspectives that engaged with these concepts from both the theoretical and the empirical.

In this symposium, we would like to bridge the various ways in which 'fragility' is both described, conceptualized and discussed in different contexts and fields and across times and spaces. We invite scholars from around the world to submit abstracts that discuss and analyse the concept of fragility and its relation to the self from various perspectives. The abstracts could look at how fragility and the self are framed and constructed in political, social, cultural and literary discourses.

Suggested perspectives include, but are not limited to:

- *Fragile selves in/and migration;*
- *Fragile selves in/and minorities;*
- *Fragile selves in/and the processes of nation-building and identity construction;*
- *Fragile selves and gender; and*
- *Fragile selves and environmental collapse or destruction.*

Keynote speakers and participants

- Prof. **Rey Chow**, Duke University
Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Professor in the Humanities
- Prof. **Dawn Chatty**, Oxford University
Professor of Anthropology and Forced Migration
- Prof. **Victoria Philips**, Columbia University
Cold War Studies, Gender and Cold War, Cultural Diplomacy

Abstracts dealing with fragile selves outside the scholarly tradition of Europe and North America by PhD candidates, post-doc and early career researchers are particularly welcome. We accept abstracts written in English, but we will do our best to provide linguistic support if

a candidate does not feel comfortable with English. We plan to publish a selection of the papers in an edited volume.

Please submit an abstract (max 300 words) and a short bio (max 150 words) via e-mail to fragile.selves@unive.it.

A committee consisting of PhD candidates from the Department of Asian and North African Studies will select the abstracts and organize the conference programme. The finalized program will be announced by early December 2021.

Important dates

Call for Papers: 5 October 2021

Deadline for Submission: 30 November 2021

Notification of Acceptance: 15 January 2022

Symposium Time: 2-4 March 2022