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Inhabiting Volatile Worlds

Abstract: This article proposes volatility as a term with which to approach some of the challenges that shape the current world. We develop this term as an analytical concept and perspective by thinking with people and ecologies from the margins, where uncertainty and rapid transformations have long been the order of the day. An approach focusing on volatility as a social and ecological condition provides an opportunity to consider what life in a radically uncertain world means and does to its inhabitants, which may offer useful lessons to those of us who are currently being forced to let go of their illusionary certainties. The article introduces a special issue elaborating volatility as a concept and perspective in various contexts and from different angles.

Keywords: volatility, crisis, marginality, uncertainty, flexibility

Volatility Beyond Crisis

We live in a world of crisis. Violent conflicts, large-scale illegalised migrations, climate change, political polarisation, mass extinctions, economic emergencies, growing inequalities, increasing pollution and a global pandemic drive home the fact that the comfortable certainties of order and progress on which the global economy and the entire Western narrative of development rely are dangerously deceptive. The heightened awareness of crises has prompted the unsettling question of what the 'new normal' may be, in the realisation that these emergencies will not give way to a situation where history has a particular direction and everyday predictability prevails.

In this special issue, we suspend the semantic opposition between normality and crisis (see Vigh 2008) in order to propose *volatility* as a term with which to approach some of the challenges that shape the current world. We develop this term as an analytical concept and perspective not primarily by scrutinising the failures of Western models and institutions in confronting these issues, but by thinking with people and ecologies from the margins, where uncertainty and rapid transformations have long been the order of the day (see Keller, this issue). We hold that an approach focusing on volatility as a social and ecological condition provides an opportunity to consider what life in a radically uncertain world means and does to its inhabitants (see Scoones 2021), which may offer useful lessons to those of us who are currently being forced to let go of their illusionary certainties about their future being predictable and amenable to human control.

So what does volatility mean? At the outset, it is necessary to shed any *a priori* assumption about volatility as something negative and inherently problematic. This



connotation itself is a product of the ideals of control and predictability that have underpinned hegemonic views of development and led to the historical marginalisation of volatility in much of the world. Volatility can be placed in a semantic space between *flexibility* and *crisis*: with ‘crisis’, it shares the sense of an unstable period with an uncertain outcome, and like ‘flexibility’, it refers to an ability to transform without breaking. We position volatility not as a means to an end, but as a way of life that includes both social and ecological circumstances and people’s agentic ways of dealing with and reproducing them.

Volatility refers to uncertain and potentially rapid transformations with palpable implications for social and ecological life. Thinking about and through volatility speaks against defining it narrowly, but we can delineate it against a number of similar terms that it is not. Unlike ‘crisis’, which describes a bounded period with a beginning and end, volatility is a permanent condition or potentiality. Unlike ‘chronic crisis’ (Vigh 2008), it has no reference to a normality from which crisis deviates. Unlike ‘variability’, it is not restricted to fluctuation between upper and lower limits. Unlike ‘change’, it does not implicitly refer to a stable baseline. Unlike ‘dynamics’, it cannot be forecasted and modelled. Finally, unlike ‘resilience’, it does not refer to a system in equilibrium that is being restored after external disturbance (see Krause 2022).

Not delineating volatility too narrowly may be productive, leaving room for multiple dimensions and experiences of volatility, and enabling a critical interrogation of attempts to establish technological control of the environment, and along with it, human futures. Deriving from the Latin word *volare*, which means ‘to fly’, and documented in the English language since the fourteenth century, volatile and volatility first referred to winged creatures like birds and butterflies. Their meaning has since developed, referring ever more broadly to dispositions that are so light and changeable that they may take flight at any moment, including those of moods, chemical substances, liquids and gases, stock markets and random-access memory on a computer (OED 2021). In general use today, volatility refers to material, psychological, economic and technical ephemerality, or lasting only for a short time.

Volatility is multidimensional and may occur at various scales (see Cullen, this issue). In fact, as we will suggest below, it is often in the intersections between different scales that volatilities abound. And yet, volatility is more than an external, political or ecological constraint. It can also be a way of life, not in the sense of a romantic anarchy, but perhaps akin to what Michael Taussig (2020) calls ‘the mastery of non-mastery’, which combines vulnerability and flexibility. Envisioned as an analytical, comparative concept, we cannot expect local languages to contain words that match volatility precisely, although we will show that people inhabiting otherwise very different socio-cultural worlds can easily speak about their surroundings as chronically volatile and demanding the ability to shift flexibly between strategies for getting by.

Volatile Lives

The fact that volatility may refer to so many different phenomena makes it a useful boundary object (Star and Griesemer 1989) for thinking about a range of uncertain

transformations. Rather than approaching the volatile materiality of water, sediments and ice as something separate from the volatile livelihoods of people shifting between a wide array of opportunities and professions from one season and year to the next, and separating these dynamics, in turn, from the volatile dynamics of people's residence, politics, traditions, the economy and the weather, the volatility framing allows us to consider them together (see Krause 2021). While we must remain cautious to what may be lost in translation with this catholic framing, we believe that the 'amphibious' – multi-domain and indeterminate – disposition of volatility make it a useful meeting place for what Casper Bruun Jensen and Atsuro Morita (2020) call 'sophisticated conjunctions'. Based on the insight that models attempting to integrate interdisciplinary insights on global change fail to account for 'the social' in anything but parody form, Jensen and Morita instead propose interdisciplinary collaborations along situated conjunctions where natural and social scientists as well as humanities scholars can meaningfully converse and contribute without a totalising framework.

In this collection, we frame volatility not as a set of external, environmental dynamics to which human societies must adapt. Instead, we propose volatility as a broader term, including a volatile way of life (Krause, this issue). This way of life is neither fixed nor fixable, but characterised by possibility, flexibility, responsiveness, openness, fluidity and 'attentionality' (Ingold 2017). Such characteristics must not be mistaken for romantic and comfortable routines, as they are entangled with precariousness and uncertainty, and perpetually negotiated through a transforming world unable to stick to a fixed plan (see Vigh 2009). Despite the fluidity of social relations, relationality is key: a volatile way of life does not centre on the individual, but is grounded in collectives, solidarity and care, among humans and non-humans, as uncertainties cannot be dealt with alone (Scoones and Stirling 2020). This is to say that the focus on unpredictability and transformation is not tantamount to opposing vulnerable individuals to hazardous environments; but the social relations that may exacerbate uncertainties or forge decent lives are central to volatility.

Understanding ways of life as themselves volatile acknowledges their hardships and challenges, but also their inherent hopes, opportunities and potentials. It also allows for imagining ways in which traditions can flourish in spite of evidently radical transformation in geographical, political or economic landscapes (see Simon, this issue). And it enables focusing on people's agency, not just for coping with fluctuations, but also for utilising, anticipating and 'owning' them. This agency is not reducible to the opportunity-seeking and benefit-maximising of the enterprising self as imagined by neoclassic economics and enforced through liberal capitalism. It may, on the contrary, involve a remarkable withdrawal of the self, a patient and ostensibly 'unresolved' disposition (see Day et al 1999). Waiting, stagnancy and recalcitrant obstacles belong to volatile life just as much as fast activity and flexible adaptation. And it is surely not an 'anything goes' flexibility, as all creative and improvisational practices are necessarily bound by their social and material environments (Hallam and Ingold 2007) that afford particular opportunities for flexibility but may preclude others. If a volatile way of life entails more than a functionalist adaptation to uncertain transformations, thus, it offers insights into the relations between the politics and lifeworlds of a precarious universe, where attempts at fixing, containing and controlling may ultimately have

long-term destructive effects, as opposed to dealing flexibly and constructively with indeterminacy, uncertainty and mobility as a normal condition.

Containing and Embracing Volatility

In speaking of volatility as a way of life, we do not want to suggest *a priori* that some lives are volatile whereas others are not. All lives have volatile elements. Nevertheless, volatilities may figure as something to contain and abate, or as something to embrace and go along with, and they are a matter of degree. Among the very same people, some volatile dynamics may be avoided, and others may be enjoyed. But there is a palpable difference in orientation, between a general acceptance of volatility, for better or for worse, and a general struggle against it. This difference can be illustrated by juxtaposing the economy of the shopping mall, a huge piece of infrastructure with a fixed, single purpose and limited flexibility, and that of the ‘twelve professions’ (Simon 2021), where people seize opportunities as they arise without overly committing to pursuing any of them. In the Senegalese Sine-Saloum Delta, people say that they have twelve professions to get by – no single vocation would suffice to make ends meet in an ever-transforming, fundamentally uncertain world. In the present collection this is evident, for example, in the contrast between the flexibility of Bengali char dwellers (Mukherjee, Lahiri-Dutt and Ghosh, this issue) and the rigidity of Australian settler infrastructures (Strang, this issue). Of course, the hardships of life on the chars make clear that this way of life is still challenging, and the char dwellers’ distinction between ordinary flux and catastrophic rupture is situated in more specific ways. But we get a sense of a direct relationship between, on the one hand, experiencing volatilities as problematic and, on the other hand, striving for control and containment.

In fact, some volatile dynamics, both social and ecological, can be understood as resistance against such governance attempts. Moreover, as things become more fixed – typically by the state or large enterprises – options are by definition lost. Flexibility, defined as uncommitted potential for change (Bateson 1972), is reduced when the complexity of infrastructure and social organisation grow and reliance on expert systems (Giddens 1990) reduce the possibilities of improvising. The very term ‘volatility’ may embody a tension between an acknowledgement of an unpredictable world and a desire to master, contain and order it. It is more specific and focused than the general Batesonian and post-Batesonian usage of flexibility, in that the emphasis is on the embeddedness of humanity in the wider environment. In this, volatility also differs from terms such as precarity, improvisational survivalism and informality. The fact that many inhabitants of volatile worlds do not themselves refer to their lives as ‘volatile’ may hint at an alternative way of relating to this unpredictability, which is by taking command of one’s own life, instead of the environment and other people. Volatile approaches to living, thus, would put energy into mastering the self rather than mastering the social and ecological world around. Very much unlike the neoliberal subject or the resilient actor, however, the emphasis is not on personal optimisation, income maximisation or risk reduction, but a much humbler stance towards a fundamentally uncontrollable world.

This contrast is particularly evident in colonial attempts to mould landscapes and their inhabitants into the image of the colonisers' home or an ideal world (on colonialism as 'terraforming', see Ghosh 2021). For example, colonial agents would describe monsoonal rivers as 'treacherous' because they did not conform to their image of temperate rivers from Europe. Rohan D'Souza (2002) has demonstrated how the British colonial administrators of what is today the state of Odisha, India, saw land as a resource, as it was the source of tax revenue, and proceeded to stabilise the region's rivers in order to stabilise land and taxes. As a result of turning a fluid into a fixed landscape, the region was transformed from a flood-dependent into a flood-vulnerable assemblage.

The friction between a volatile world and attempts at making it legible, productive, taxable and governable continues to haunt current state policies and development programmes to the extent that people, hydrologies and ecologies may turn increasingly volatile as a result of the 'infrastructural violence' (Rodgers and O'Neill 2012) performed in such attempts. Large-scale technologies aiming to control nature inevitably transform ecosystems and produce unintended consequences and instability. Time and again, it has been shown how limiting people's mobility impoverishes them, limiting animals' mobility endangers them and limiting water's mobility has ecological drawbacks. In this sense, a volatility approach can draw from the mobilities paradigm (Urry 2007), studying as much the conditions that enable mobilities as those that attempt to check them. In such contexts, volatile ways of life may be regarded as an 'art of not being governed' (Scott 2009), and volatile ecologies as 'feral proliferations' (Tsing et al 2019) refusing to be subsumed by modernist logics of production and governance.

There appears to be a scalar disconnect between volatile lifeworlds and the institutions that administrate them; connecting the two is a continual, and often frustrating, challenge. In fact, the multiplicity of scales intersecting in any given situation, from the family to the regional and national governments and bureaucracies, global capital and climate change, contribute to the situation's volatility. The labyrinthine interactions and exclusions among these scales, as well as the fact that the various scales are themselves always transforming, often make it impossible to pinpoint the causes of volatile dynamics and blur the identification of inroads for doing something about them (Eriksen, this issue). We can observe that abstraction, centralisation and disembedding of power and agency tend to create more volatility by generating additional forces that people have to negotiate alongside unpredictable water flows or animal movements. Rather than a victory over a volatile world, the modernist dream of up-scaling and efficiency may simply increase volatilities at many levels.

Volatile Temporalities

Another modernist imagination at odds with volatility is that of linear time and progress. Embracing a volatile world implies understanding the future not as produced by and amenable to current plans and practices, but as inherently uncertain and emergent. Inhabiting volatility therefore fundamentally disrupts the capitalist narrative of

discipline, accumulation and development. Since nothing can be fixed, planned and altered at scale, it implies an 'evacuation of the near future' (see Guyer 2007) or life in a 'chronic present' (Ley 2020). Of course, the future is of crucial importance in volatile contexts, too, but it is by necessity open-ended. For example, it is inherent in contested anticipation, patient waiting (Horisberger 2021) and copious preparations for uncertain times. Being prepared for what may come is strikingly different from planning what will happen. In volatile lifeworlds, sharing stories of the past may be the most appropriate way of preparing for the future (Legat 2012). Agency in these lifeworlds is therefore not limited to an ostensibly resolute, well-organised forging of futures, but often hinges on attentiveness, ongoing attunement, skilful improvisation and sometimes apparently doing nothing (Krause 2022).

Volatile temporalities are not chaotic, however, and many have rhythmic dynamics, like those of seasonal monsoon floods. Rhythm implies 'repetition with difference' (Lefebvre 2004) and therefore anticipation and suspense, as one period ends and the precise timing and qualities of the next are uncertain (You 1994). People may perceive unpredictable dynamics as rhythmic, for example understanding the rapid erosion of their riverbank as a typical phenomenon of the wet season, and anticipating less erosion in the upcoming dry season; or seeing the outbreak of a viral infection as the typical autumnal flu season, which will disappear after a few months. Thereby, they may develop a peaceful confidence that things will repeat eventually, where it is just not clear when and how exactly. Conversely, this temporal experience may also assure inhabitants of volatile worlds that all, good and bad, is transitory because neither beneficial nor problematic periods last forever.

Volatile temporalities can have different velocities, subsuming both spectacular events and long-lasting periods. It is often precisely the friction of slower and faster dynamics that may create volatility as an experiential phenomenon. But as an ongoing dynamic, it cannot be addressed by one-off, directed 'adaptation' measures. Its perpetuity, however, can not only be seen as a case of 'slow violence', but also as an example of 'slow hope' (Mauch 2019), a not-so-spectacular but significant pointer towards the possibility of an otherwise.

The Politics of Volatility

Volatility is political, both as a phenomenon and as a concept. In relation to other terms in the social science and humanities repertoire, what does it entail to call something 'volatile'? And what happens when we focus on this term beyond its negative and financial-market connotations? Developing a volatility approach must take care not to reproduce the biography of the resilience concept that also started off as a critical intervention but ended up potentially depoliticising vulnerabilities, blaming the victims of ecological and human-induced upheaval and playing into the agendas of neoliberal governance (Evans and Reid 2013). Volatility has the potential to resist this capture, not only through its inherent defiance of control, but also due to the strikingly un-neoliberal characteristics of volatile life, including its making do without maximising benefits. Volatility does not refer to a systemic equilibrium that is to be maintained,

and it does not lend itself to assigning responsibility to catastrophes on the victims. Nevertheless, we must also consider whose perspective we reproduce with this term, and for what purpose. Some people use terms that correspond to our sense of ‘volatility’, such as the Greenlandic terms *tamappoq* (‘fickle’) and *tamarlivoq* (‘always changing’) (Nuttall, this volume), others do not.

The rapid riverbank erosion, mentioned above, would be easily recognised as part of a ‘volatile’ environment by outside observers. To the inhabitants of riverside villages, for example in the Ayeyarwady Delta in Myanmar (Ivars 2020), such erosion can have devastating effects, but it does not register as a surprising catastrophe. Instead, they tend to anticipate not only possible erosion pathways but also the mirror process of alluvial accretion, through which land grows while it disappears elsewhere. Knowing that it is futile to battle the Ayeyarwady River, Burmese villagers spend much more effort in accessing and distributing new land than protecting erosion-prone areas. Thereby, they inhabit a volatile world without subscribing to the Western, hegemonic connotation of volatility as negative and to be avoided.

But this is part of our argument, and employing the term volatility provides a powerful bridge for linking wider concerns about a runaway, overheated world (Eriksen 2016, 2018; Stensrud and Eriksen 2019) to people’s experiences and lifeworlds. Explicitly discussing volatilities may contribute to de-stigmatising both unpredictable and unstable dynamics as not ‘failures’ in an ideally orderly world, and the people who live with and through them as not hopeless and underdeveloped but as proactive and creative in ways that are poorly understood within hegemonic discourses, and that may well provide guidance for our own dealings with an increasingly uncertain and rapidly transforming world. Therefore, a volatility approach, focusing on living with uncertainty as a source of multiplicity and hope, constitutes a critique of mainstream development that equates progress with growth and control (see Scoones and Stirling 2020; Scoones this issue). This also implies maintaining a critical stance towards the development industry’s discourses on volatility, framing it as a problem to be overcome, and engaging alternative framings in these conversations.

Volatility, as we have pointed out, is not a ‘natural’ phenomenon but is co-produced by social, economic and political practices. While the volatile dynamics analysed in this issue cannot be reduced to the effects of volatile financial markets and their increasing reach into people’s lives, forms of volatility cultivated by capitalist enterprises for increasing their economic gains certainly intensify and add to existing volatilities. The volatilities that markets and investments induce tend to be backed by corporations that systematically shelter themselves from these same volatilities, for example by being headquartered in countries with suitable legislation. Governmental institutions, in turn, often attempt to limit unpredictability in the financial markets, administration and other control institutions, but they may also be motivated by a wish to make life more secure and predictable for citizens. However, these attempts tend to limit people’s options for dealing with an inherently dynamic and patchy world. The map fails to match the territory since it is by necessity a simplification and an abstraction. Governmental efforts to control this world, its waters, plants and animals, usually lead to unintentional consequences (Tsing et al 2019). Volatility, in this wider perspective, can be understood as the refusal of the world to be fixed. This resistance against

containment is not necessarily benign. The ‘emergent ecologies’ (Kirksey 2015) of volatile dynamics, even if facilitating new affordances, also displace others and thereby redistribute losses and gains.

While a widespread acceptance of the chronic volatility of human lives engaging with the environment may render modern bureaucratic politics difficult, as the absence of baselines and the complexity of interacting scales jeopardise planning, the formulation of claims and the assignment of responsibility, volatility remains a political term. Its politics inhere not only in its distributional aspects, but also in its ambivalence. It can be advantageous and problematic both for the periphery and the centre, and it underlines that these very categories exist at various scales. The extent to which people can benefit, for example, from ecological or financial volatility depends on their capacities, including norms and ideals, knowledge and skills, and economic and social assets. This does not mean that they have to be well off and have ample information about future developments, but that they possess the attitude, patience and means to weather difficulties and make use of opportunities.

It is certainly easier for an investment banker to buy volatile stocks than for a single mother to take a loan for cultivating a plot of alluvial land, as the former does not lose home and loved ones in case of failure. In order to thrive in a volatile world, people require options and the ability to negotiate and remain flexible between them (Nuttall 2012). As options and freedoms diminish, volatilities turn increasingly into problems. Also, as volatilities increase and intersect (Krause 2021) they can become overwhelming and erode options and freedoms. In a world in flux, relative velocities and intensities of transformation matter as they rub against each other and make politics not about effecting particular changes but about negotiating these frictions.

New Directions for Volatility

Our world of neoliberal globalisation is increasingly shaken by the proliferation of crises that signal the crumbling of its long-held illusions of control, stability and progress. This special issue proposes that close attention to volatile worlds and their inhabitants may harbour valuable lessons for the denizens of ‘risk society’ (Beck 1992) – a society that organises around the protection from hazards that it largely produces itself. It also suggests that understanding volatility may help to inhabit ‘liquid modernity’ (Bauman 2000) – an era, unlike the earlier, more ‘solid’ periods that aimed to minimise uncertainties and create order, characterised by the proliferation of possibilities at the expense of certainties. On the one hand, this can provide insights into the ‘arts of living on a damaged planet’ (Tsing et al 2017) and the processes by which volatile worlds are being undermined by foreclosing people’s options, mobility and freedom. On the other hand, it can illustrate how a volatile world requires different politics than those geared at fixing roles and territories, but instead politics based on uncertainty, multivocality and care.

Research focusing on volatile lifeworlds will necessarily be ‘messy’ (Law 2004; Pappagallo and Semplici 2020) as it attempts to come to terms with realities that often escape access, let alone codification (Krause 2018). It must be able to consider vola-

tilities at various scales, as well as the very volatility engendered by the articulation of different scales. And it must focus on people's agency, positionality and specific trajectories to explore what 'volatility' means from the inside, and how people generate continuities, routines and traditions in and with an uncertain world. We hope that research through a 'volatility' lens continues to generate insightful and useful conversations.

This special issue provides a starting point for such conversations by publishing eight articles and an afterword that explicitly engage with volatility. Veronica Strang (this issue) contrasts settler colonial ways of fearing and attempting to control the Brisbane River in Australia with Indigenous ways of inhabiting the Brisbane River delta and with hydrologic dynamics exceeding settler control. She argues that, paradoxically, the river's volatility increases with settler colonial attempts at pacifying and subduing it. Ian Scoones (this issue) criticises mainstream development theory and practice for ignoring the inherent volatility in pastoral economies around the world. He proposes that instead of aiming to increase control in people's lives, development should build on pastoralists' sensible, flexible, collective and caring approaches to an uncertain and variable world. Jenia Mukherjee, Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt and Raktima Ghosh (this issue) illustrate how a major infrastructural intervention in the lower Ganga, the Farakka Barrage in the Indian state of West Bengal, has accelerated volatilities for the inhabitants of river islands in its vicinity. They demonstrate that for the people living on shifting alluvial islands, this volatility does not only spell vulnerability, but also enables viability through their skilful and tactical navigation of the unstable social and material landscape.

Sandro Simon (this issue) analyses the ways in which Serer Niominka inhabitants of the Senegalese Sine-Saloum Delta partially participate in shifting fisheries to produce somewhat continuous livelihoods in the context of stark economic and ecological fluctuations. He develops the term 'gleaning' to better understand the strategic marginality and limited involvement through which Serer Niominka navigate volatile opportunities. Beth Cullen (this issue) presents the perspectives of a fisher, a cook, a scientist and an environmental activist on hilsa fish in Bangladesh to elaborate how this fish responds to recent transformations in its habitat. She thereby shows how multi-scalar human attempts to stabilise particular volatilities create new more-than-human volatilities that people sense through relating with fish. Kirsten Keller (this issue) demonstrates how landscapes and inequalities intersect in Jakarta's informal settlements, characterised by water pollution, land subsidence and socio-economic marginalisation. Focusing on Asian green mussels that thrive in polluted waters, she traces the ambivalences of inhabiting these volatile places, stifled by deeply rooted disenfranchisement but simultaneously producing land and livelihoods on the edge of a sinking city.

Franz Krause (this issue) approaches volatilities in the lives of Dinjii Zhuh and Inuvialuit inhabitants of the Mackenzie Delta in what is today Canada as ambivalent dynamics that are sometimes avoided and at other times cultivated. He situates this ambivalence in people's knowledge that controlling one's social and ecological environment is neither possible nor desirable, and in their active refusal of settler colonial habits. Thomas Hylland Eriksen (this issue) juxtaposes a protest against a road bridge and a catastrophic mudslide in a residential neighbourhood, both in Norway,

to illustrate how structures and institutions intended to stabilise can in fact accentuate volatility. He approaches this paradox through the scalar gaps between standardised administrative procedures and fluid worlds, where ubiquitous growth in speed and convoluted governance structures increase risks and decrease accountability. Finally, Mark Nuttall's (this issue) afterword discusses the combined arguments of the individual contributions and contextualises them with his own research on historical lead mining in North Wales and current dynamics of climate change in West Greenland. Nuttall foregrounds the relationality of volatile dynamics, where abating particular volatilities can aggravate other volatilities, and some volatilities bear opportunities while others provide challenges for differently situated people. In all these contributions, volatility is a shorthand for the uncertain and potentially radical social, economic, material and ecological shifts that may or may not induce fear, cause crises and result in catastrophe, depending on societies' relations to a world ultimately beyond their control.

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Habiter des mondes volatiles

Résumé : Cet article propose la volatilité comme un terme permettant d'aborder certains défis qui façonnent le monde actuel. Nous développons ce terme en tant que concept analytique et perspective en réfléchissant avec les populations et les écosystèmes en marge, où l'incertitude et les transformations rapides sont depuis longtemps à l'ordre du jour. Une approche axée sur la volatilité en tant que condition sociale et écologique permet d'examiner ce que signifie de vivre dans un monde radicalement incertain, notamment pour ses habitants - une approche qui peut donner des leçons utiles à ceux d'entre nous qui sont actuellement contraints de se défaire de leurs certitudes illusives. L'article introduit un numéro spécial qui élabore la volatilité comme concept et perspective dans divers contextes et sous différents angles.

Mots clés : volatilité, crise, marginalité, incertitude, flexibilité