

# BETWEEN POLITICS AND HEALING: UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA IN CONFLICTS AND RECENT VIOLENT TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

20-21 November 2014

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE



EXCELLENT  
Funded through the German  
Excellence Initiative



## INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

### BETWEEN POLITICS AND HEALING: UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA IN CONFLICTS AND RECENT VIOLENT TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Until recently, research into trauma has mainly focused on cases in 'Western' countries, taking as its point of reference everyday realities and key events in the modern history of Europe and North America. This conference, however, will explore which forms and kinds of traumas have developed in post-colonial societies and by which means they can be examined in a more adequate manner.

More specifically, the conference aims to explore a number of different representations, narratives, images and meanings of traumatic situations and events in Middle Eastern countries, Europe and South Africa. Since trauma is also linked to politics and can ensue legal claims, trauma analysis in the cultural and social studies does not only have to critically scrutinize its conceptual assumptions, but also the political implications that are at work in each specific context.

Central questions to be addressed in the conference are: What visual and narrative representations of trauma can be found in cultural, social, political, psychological and religious discourse? What are the potentials as well as the limitations and pitfalls of trauma as an analytical concept not only for the study of cultural production, but also for the political and social sciences dealing with specific contexts in which trauma is relevant? What reactions to the shocks brought about by the rising violence and further radicalization and fragmentation of society are to be observed? Not only psychological research into trauma but also literature, theatre, film and cultural scholarship, with its work of interpreting and creating understanding, are faced with the task of throwing light on these often concealed mechanisms, forms of expression, and consequences of trauma.

#### ORGANIZED BY

Dr. Stephan Milich and Fabian Heerbaart  
Institute of Oriental Studies  
<http://orient.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de>

#### IN COOPERATION WITH

Competence Area IV  
Global South Studies Center

#### VENUE:

Gartensaal Schloss Wahn  
Burgallee 2  
51147 Köln-Porz-Wahn  
<http://www.schloss-wahn.com/anfahrt.html>

For registration, please contact: [smilich@uni-koeln.de](mailto:smilich@uni-koeln.de)



CULTURES  
AND SOCIETIES  
IN TRANSITION

# BETWEEN POLITICS AND HEALING: UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA IN CONFLICTS AND RECENT VIOLENT TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER

- 1:00 Opening Address (Stephan Milich)
- Panel I: Psychological Trauma in Visual and Performing Arts  
Chair: Fabian Heerbaart
- 1:15 Keynote Speech  
Nora Amin (Cairo): Trauma and the Rites of Passage
- 2:00 – 2:45 Anne Rohrbach (Bremen): Playback Theatre: Beyond Postcolonial Approaches to Trauma Response in Occupied Palestine
- 2:45 – 3:15 Coffee Break
- Chair: Stephan Milich
- 3:15 – 4:00 Karin Mlodoch (Berlin): Women Anfal Survivors in Kurdistan-Iraq between Suffering and Survivors' Pride - the Limits of the Psychological Concepts of Trauma and "Healing"
- 4:00 – 4:45 Barbara Hofner (Cologne): Trauma-Therapy as Cross-Cultural Therapy. Toward Traumatic Growth
- 4:45 – 5:00 Coffee Break
- 5:00 – 5:45 Fabian Heerbaart (Cologne): Revolution, Martyrdom and Trauma: Perspectives from Cairene Artists



FRIDAY, 21 NOVEMBER

- Panel II: Trauma in Literature and Filming  
Chair: Felix Lang (Marburg)
- 09.30 – 10.15 Michela Borzaga (Vienna): Theorising Trauma Through the South African Laboratory: Questions of Affinity and Time
- 10:15 – 11:00 Ihab Saloul (Amsterdam): Trauma Theory, Nostalgia and Active Memory
- 11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break
- Chair: Amin Farzanefar
- 11:30 – 12:30 Wiam Simav Bedirxan (Istanbul/Homs): Before the last Bullet: Daily Life, War and Resistance in Syria
- 12:30 – 2:00 Lunch (Catering)
- 2:00 – 2:45 Stephan Milich (Cologne): Traumatized Life in Contemporary Arabic Literature and Film
- Panel III: Outlooks: The Effects of Traumatic Situations on Society  
Chair: Stephan Milich
- 2:45 – 3:30 Jamal Sobeh (Aachen): A Trauma-Oriented Neuropsychological Perspective with Cultural Sensitivity: Psychosocial Intervention with Syrian Children
- 3:30 – 4:00 Coffee Break
- 4:00 Final Discussion: What are the Effects of Traumatic Situations on Society?  
Ideas for a Future Conference on Trauma from a Trans-Regional perspective
- 7:00 p.m. Reading and Discussion  
„A Song Waiting To Be Sung“  
Poetry Reading and Discussion with Nora Amin, Stephan Milich and Martina Sabra (in Arabic, English and German)
- Venue: Zentralbibliothek der Stadtbibliothek  
Josef-Haubrich-Hof 1, 50676 Köln