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International Workshop

– Call for applications –

## **Beyond Victimhood and Stigmatization: Trauma, Ruptured Memories and Agency in the Context of Global Migration**

**postponed to** 05 – 07 March 2021 Imshausen, Germany

Since the emergence of trauma disorders as PTSD in the DSM-III (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) in the 1980s<sup>1</sup>, trauma has been so broadly spread that one cannot separate it from many cultural and social phenomena. Recent studies on the topic have shown how unquestioned and, in Didier Fassin's words, how entrenched the concept of trauma is.<sup>2</sup> This untouchable-ness, following Fassin, is largely due to the focus on the victim rather than perpetrator in traumatology, which has changed our relationship to history.<sup>3</sup> Representations of the refugees and asylum seekers as traumatized masses in European media and politics, especially after the long summer of migration in 2015, raises a peculiar understanding of trauma. On the one hand they are understood as "an object of compassion"<sup>4</sup>, and on the other hand these images and narratives immediately mobilized numerous individuals and institutions. To both deconstruct the hegemonic narratives of trauma and to closely examine the different dimensions and aspects that are invoked under the sign of trauma, this workshop intends not to see trauma only as a historical construct, but also to discuss the analytical alternative concepts which include social dynamics as well as individual ones. In this regard, rupture<sup>5</sup> seems notable to discuss, not to replace trauma but to open up a broader analytical field.

Contributions may raise but are not limited to the following questions:

- How has trauma developed, represented and established itself as a concept in the context of global migration? How does it mobilize subjects and build discourses?
- Which subjectivities are produced and mobilized by trauma?
- How do people experience, share and deal with trauma and ruptured memories? How do they formulate and articulate their narratives of trauma and ruptured memories? What are the relations of trauma and rupture with subjectivity and agency?
- How do researchers and activists deal with trauma and rupture in their fields?

This workshop aims to bring together academics from different disciplinary backgrounds (cultural and social anthropology, psychology, sociology...) as well as activists and social workers, who are engaged in the field of migration and mental health. Together they will debate and discuss the topic at hand, in a non-linear and multi-dimensional approach. In order to

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<sup>1</sup> Rechtman, R. (2004) The rebirth of PTSD: the rise of a new paradigm in psychiatry. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 39, 913–915. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-004-0874-x>

<sup>2</sup> Fassin, Didier and Richard Rechtman (2009) *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton, N.J. [u.a.]: Princeton Univ. Press.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Behrouzan, Orkideh (2016) *Prozak diaries : psychiatry and generational memory in Iran*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.; Bistoën, Gregory (2016) *Trauma, Ethics and the Political Beyond PTSD. The Dislocations of the Real*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

achieve this goal, this workshop is strongly committed to include academics and activists from the Global South, or those with migration and refugee background. Applications are especially welcomed from early career academics (PhD students and postdoctoral researchers).

**Confirmed Keynote Speakers are:**

- Prof Shahram Khosravi  
*Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University*
- Dr. Orkideh Behrouzan  
*Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS University of London*

All local costs will be covered; travel allowances will be available. Kindly send your application (a two-page CV, a short letter of motivation including your relevant areas of interest and an abstract (250 words) of your input for the workshop) to [jelka.guenther@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:jelka.guenther@uni-goettingen.de) by **04.09.2020**.

The workshop is jointly hosted by the Centre for Global Migration Studies at the University of Göttingen and the Stiftung Adam von Trott, Imshausen e.V. The event is part of the project “Resistance – Democracy – Internationality”, a cooperation between the University of Göttingen and the Stiftung Adam von Trott, Imshausen e.V. It is sponsored by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.

For more information, please contact:

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