

Cultural Voices of a Fragmented Nation: War, Trauma, and Remembrance in Contemporary Iraq

International Symposium
Marburg December 11—13, 2008



Centrum für Nah- und Mittelost-Studien
Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies
مركز الدراسات الشرق أوسطية

Venue Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies · Philipps-Universität Marburg
Hörsaal 00A26 · Deutschhausstr. 12 · 35032 Marburg

11 Dec 2008
Thursday

8:00 p.m.

Keynote Speech
Iraq Revisited –
The Challenge of
Rewriting Iraqi History
Hala Fattah, Amman

Presentation of the Symposium
“Cultural Voices of a Fragmented
Nation: War, Trauma, and Remem-
brance in Contemporary Iraq”

Due to the dramatic events that have shaken Iraq over the past half century, the country's literati and artists have been forced to work under problematic conditions or go into exile—a worldwide Iraqi Diaspora being the consequence. For several decades the Iraqi cultural scene was driven by the ideological gap that existed between those who stayed and those who emigrated; since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003 it has been replaced by other antagonisms and dividing lines. The aim of the symposium is to confront the diverse positions and discourses developed in Iraq and in Diaspora societies so as to outline the characteristic tensions and antagonisms that have emerged from the special circumstances of recent Iraqi history. Our main question will be: What kind of intellectual, literary and artistic means did contemporary Iraqi authors employ in dealing with the ongoing fragmentation and destruction of their country and society? If “trauma is the impossibility of narration,” as Aleida Assmann says, then what is the role of literature and arts in a daily life shaped by mortal danger, political persecution and ethnic religious expulsion? How can art cope with war, violence, trauma and the absence of “normality”?

12 Dec 2008
Friday

9:30—9:45 a.m.

Opening Address

The Art
of Surviving

Chair: Sinan Antoon
9:45—10:30 a.m.
Nadje al-Ali,
SOAS London
Narrating the Nation,
Trauma & War:
Representing Iraqi
Women's Memories

10:30—11:15 a.m.
Fakhri Khalik,
Frankfurt

Trauma, Affect,
and Changing Family
Structures in Iraq

11:15—11:45 a.m.
Coffee break

11:45 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Rashad Salim,
London
Greater and Lesser
Trauma; Iraq: History,
Art and the Cognition/
Denial of the Obvious

The Poetics of
Trauma

Chair: Friederike Pannewick
3:00—3:45 p.m.
Sinan Antoon,
New York University /
EUME Berlin
Fellow of Europe in the Middle East—
The Middle East in Europe 2008/09

Echoes of Future Night-
mares: On the Late Poems
of Sargon Boulos

3:45—4:30 p.m.
Stephan Milich,
CNMS Marburg
Haunting Memories
and the Poetics of Trauma
in Contemporary
Iraqi Exile Poetry

4:30—5:00 p.m.
Coffee break

5:00—5:45 p.m.
Leslie Tramontini,
CNMS Marburg
Trauma and Violence
in Iraqi War Poetry of the
1980s

8:00—9:00 p.m.
Reading
Sinan Antoon:
I'jaam. An Iraqi Rhapsody
(Arabic/English)

13 Dec 2008
Saturday

Trauma, Memory,
and Modernity

Chair: Leslie Tramontini
9:30—10:15 a.m.
Haytham Bahooora,
New York University
Writing Women's
Bodies: Space, Gender,
and the Production
of Literary Modernism
in 1950s Baghdad

10:15—11:00 a.m.
Hartmut Fähndrich,
Universität Zürich
Coming to Grips with
Wounds. Some Recent
Iraqi Novels

11:00—11:30 a.m.
Coffee break

11:30 a.m.—12:15 p.m.
Amel Mahmoud,
Universität Bayreuth
Stream of Consciousness
and the Ceaseless Visit
of a Traumatic Past:
An Exploration of this
Theme in ‘Love Poem
with Rhyme Letter Zed’
by Abd A. al-Rawdan
and ‘Leaves of Eggplants’
by Abdul Sattar Nassir

Iraqi Culture(s) be-
tween Exile and Home

Chair: Stephan Milich

2:15—3:00 p.m.
Christiane Schlote,
Universität Bern
Theatre in Times
of War: Iraq
and Political Drama

3:00—3:30 p.m.
Coffee break

3:30—4:15 p.m.
Andreas Pflitsch,
Otto-Friedrich-Universität
Bamberg
Violence from a Distance.
Trauma in Iraqi-German
Literature

Participants
are asked to register
at the following
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For more information
please visit:
www.uni-marburg.de/cnms/arabistik
www.eume-berlin.de

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Sinan Antoon (New York/Berlin)
Nadje al-Ali (London)
Fakhri Khalik (Frankfurt)
Rashad Salim (London)
Friederike Pannewick (Marburg)
Stephan Milich (Marburg)
Leslie Tramontini (Marburg)
Haytham Bahooora (New York)
Hartmut Fähndrich (Zürich)
Amel Mahmoud (Bayreuth)
Christiane Schlote (Bern)
Andreas Pflitsch (Bamberg)

The international symposium **Cultural Voices of a Fragmented Nation: War, Trauma, and Remembrance in Contemporary Iraq** is part of the research field ‘Travelling Traditions. Comparative Perspectives on Near Eastern Literatures’ within ‘**Europe in the Middle East – The Middle East in Europe**’, a research program of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

The symposium is organized in cooperation with the **Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies**, Philipps-Universität Marburg (CNMS). It is convened by Professor Dr. Friederike Pannewick and Stephan Milich (CNMS, Marburg).

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