



CALL FOR PAPERS

**THIRD YOUNG RESEARCHER'S
CONFERENCE (ONLINE)**

on

**TRAUMA AND MEMORY STUDIES:
RESPONSES FROM
THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

19-21 JANUARY 2024

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA
NEW DELHI**

IMPORTANT DATES:

**SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS:
30TH NOVEMBER 2023**

**INTIMATION OF ACCEPTED ABSTRACTS:
5TH DECEMBER 2023**

**SUBMISSION OF FULL LENGTH PAPERS:
5TH JANUARY 2024**

**FOR ANY OTHER QUERIES, WRITE TO US AT:
YRCJMI2023@GMAIL.COM**

**Call for Papers
Young Researchers' Conference**

on

Trauma and Memory Studies: Responses from the Global South

19-21st January 2024

**Department of English
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi**

Memory and Trauma Studies have emerged as a key paradigm in the field of humanities, social and cultural studies, especially towards the end of the 20th century. The intersections and interactions between these two fields have been employed by contemporary scholars to study human histories of war, atrocities, genocides, partition, displacement and discrimination. Building upon this enriched understanding of the intricate relationship between memory and trauma, scholars have extended their inquiries to explore the mechanisms through which societies and individuals navigate the aftermath of traumatic experiences. The exploration of coping strategies, memorialization practices, and the transmission of memory across generations has deepened our comprehension of how trauma reverberates through time and space. Central to this discourse is the recognition that memory and trauma are not static entities, but rather dynamic and evolving constructs. The ways in which societies remember, commemorate, and come to terms with their traumatic pasts are subject to a complex interplay of political, cultural, and social factors. The interdisciplinary nature of Memory and Trauma Studies allows for the examination of this process from multiple angles, such as artistic expressions, oral histories, or digital media.

In the Global South, where the legacies of colonialism, dictatorship, armed conflicts, and systemic injustices persist, Memory and Trauma Studies have provided a crucial framework for understanding the complexities of post-colonial and post-conflict societies. However, situated amidst such a diverse array of historical and political contexts, the theoretical frameworks emanating from Western scholarship often fall short in adequately encapsulating the intricate historical narratives pertaining to the realms of trauma and memory within the Global South. Western trauma theory often positions the Western, white subject as the universal subject of traumatic experience. This is exemplified by Steve Creps' critique of Cathy Caruth's analysis of the film 'Hiroshima, mon Amour'. Creps argues that Western critics employ neo-colonially exported Western psychiatric concepts to postcolonial regions without considering their suitability. This entanglement between the post-colonial scholarship and trauma theory calls for a 'decolonization' of the theory itself. Michael Rothberg in his essay 'Decolonizing Trauma Studies: A Response', questions the pertinence of the Euro-centric conceptualization of trauma theory to study the 'legacies of violence in the colonial/post-colonial world'. He calls for a reformation or an expansion of the contemporary conceptualizations within the literary trauma theory which remains stuck within Euro-American historical frameworks. Theorists like Jay Rajiva are also working on decolonising the field by tackling the eurocentric, monocultural bias of Trauma theory. In his work "Post-

colonial Parabola”, Jay Rajiva focuses on the need to represent decolonization as a traumatic event, along with identifying the challenges of situating the heterogeneity of postcolonial experience while developing new ways of representing it. As compared to the traditional trauma theory which is focused on isolated, individual and exceptional events, postcolonial trauma is not exceptional (or unusual) as it is woven into the political structure of a nation and expressed as a daily reality. It is characterized as the trauma of the everyday. Jay Rajiva thus focuses on the cross-cultural ethical engagement with postcolonial trauma.

The thrust of works on Memory and Trauma Studies have been largely on national/international cataclysmic events such as Partition (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) and Holocaust to name a few. Some examples of creative works that have emerged from these cataclysmic events which have this inherent focus on the individual traumas and memories of central characters involved are Attia Hossain’s *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961) or Nayanika Mookherjee’s *The Spectral Wound: Sexual Violence, Public Memories, and the Bangladesh War of 1971*. The partition also laid bare gendered vulnerabilities. When one looks at autobiographies, memoirs and other forms of nonfiction that emerge from areas such as Kashmir, the North East, Punjab and Bengal, they narrativize individual instances of memory and trauma. The latest example of this is a book by Farah Bashir titled *Rumours of Spring* (2021). To contest the Eurocentric exclusivity which stands culpable for shadowing the universal application of trauma studies, it is incumbent that we cater to more accounts from the Global South- be it the complex history of violence, slavery, racism or marginalization in the Caribbean, the issues of internal displacement, Civil War and natural disaster in Sri Lanka, or the historical and transgenerational repercussions faced by the Africans.

The works of Sri Lankan Tamil Poet Cheran are marked by the shrieks of resistance, anger, and grief that lend a unique perspective on the suffering faced by Sri Lankan Tamils during the extensive civil war.

The Anthologies- *Two Times Removed Volumes I and II* (2021-22) by Tiara Jade Chutkhan is another important recent work which highlights the nuances of Indo-Caribbean identity, intergenerational memory and trauma.

Works like *Traumatic Storytelling and Memory in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Performing Signs of Injury* (2019) by Christopher J. Colvin and *Trauma, Memory, and Narrative in the Contemporary South African Novel* (2012) edited by Ewald Mengel and Michela Borzaga also focus on the complex relation between trauma, memory and narrative. These works see trauma as a consequence of an historical condition – in the case of South Africa, that of colonialism, and, more specifically, of apartheid.

This Call for Papers invites scholars and researchers to probe into the ongoing negotiations between dominant historical narratives and marginalized voices, with a focus on the Global South. This conference strives to look into how memory and trauma actualizes in the psychological, social, cultural, historical, philosophical, religious, economic, political and other aspects. A regional focus will help us unveil the disparities and imbalances in terms of the representation of suffering in the Global South- South Asian, Caribbean, African and the Arab world. In a world shaped by diverse historical narratives, the Global South stands as a repository of unique experiences, memories and struggles. Therefore, there exists a pressing need to unearth a novel analytical framework that can comprehensively emphasize on the years of violence and identity politics unique to the Global South.

Topics could include but may not be limited to:

- Regional Representation: Conflict and Protest Literature in the Global South
- War and Post-war Atrocities in the Global South
- Decolonizing Trauma theory
- Re/Presentations of Trauma and Memory in Popular Culture in the Global South
- Digitizing Trauma and Memory in the Global South
- Reading the Global North from the Global South
- Theorizing the Other: Experiences of the marginalized communities in the Global South
- Contextualizing the disenfranchised in the Global South: Women and Children
- Trauma, Memory and Multilingualism in the Global South
- Bearing Witness: Perpetrators, Survivors and Bystanders in the Global South
- Institutionalizing Memory and Trauma in the Global South
- Memory Activism in the Global South
- Narratives and Representations in the Global South: Retellings, Censorships and Contestations
- Resilience, Neuro-plasticity and Coping Mechanism in the Global South
- Indigenous ways of Healing: the Global South perspective
- Memory traces and Memory entanglements in the Global South
- Trans-cultural/ Trans-national/ Trans-generational perspectives and Migrant trauma
- Post-Pandemic Trauma and Trauma of the everyday in the context of the Global South

Important Dates:

Submission of Abstracts: 30th November, 2023

Intimation of Accepted Abstracts: 5th December, 2023

Submission of Full-Length papers: 5th January, 2024

Guidelines for Abstract and Paper Submission:

We invite abstracts of about 300 words along with a short bio-note of 100 words to be sent via email to ycrcjmi2023jmi@gmail.com on or before 30th November, 2023. Full-length papers of accepted abstracts, of 4500-6000 words, in citation style MLA 9th Edition, should reach the same on or before 5th January, 2024.

Selected papers will be published in a collection of conference proceedings with a leading international publisher. For further queries and submissions, kindly write to us at ycrcjmi2023@gmail.com

Organizers:

Prof. Simi Malhotra, Head, Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi (JMI)

Somya Charan Pahadi, PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, JMI

Sango Bidani, PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, JMI

Farhana Tasnim, PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, JMI

Sheikh Sana Assad, PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, JMI