



**International Conference**  
**Violence, Trauma, and Identity in Early Christianity**  
Erfurt (Augustinerkloster): 14 to 16 July, 2017

Max-Weber-Kolleg für Kultur- und sozialwissenschaftliche Studien  
Professur für Allgemeine Religionswissenschaft, Universität Erfurt  
Schwerpunkt Religion der Universität Erfurt

gefördert von der DFG

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The Christian faith traces its origins in an act of extreme violence. In the aftermath of the Jesus' execution, his followers were left to grapple with the implications of both the fact and the violent manner of his death. For some Christians, identification with the crucified Jesus meant a willingness to suffer violence, and even the active pursuit of death. Other Christians debated whether membership in the *ekklesia* prohibited them from fulfilling the grisly duties required of their occupations. While Christians in the first three centuries were more likely to find themselves on the receiving end of state-sanctioned violence, by the end of the fourth century, elite Christians were confronted by the dilemma of determining the conditions under which it might be legitimate to use state violence for their own ends.

This research conference aims to examine how early Christian experiences as victims and perpetrators of violence contributed to the construction of Christian identity(ies) in the first four centuries of the Christian era, through the reign of Theodosius. We are especially interested in exploring the relationship between Christian discourses on violence and three particular facets of early Christian identity:

- a) conceptions of the self as an ethical agent;
- b) strategies for coping with the experience of traumatic violence, both individual and corporate; and
- c) strategies for legitimizing the perpetration of violent acts.

Contributors will investigate the realities and imaginations of violence among early Christians, as well as their Pagan and Jewish contemporaries in the Greco-Roman world. Lectures will explore themes including martyrdom, persecution, and capital punishment, as well as those that extend the question to topics such as the extirpation of the passions, violence and war, trauma, and sacrifice.

Dr. Jenifer Otto / Prof. Dr. Katharina Waldner  
To register, please, contact: [katharina.waldner@uni-erfurt.de](mailto:katharina.waldner@uni-erfurt.de)

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## Program

### Friday, July 14th

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13:00	Arrival	
14:00	Jennifer Otto (Universität Erfurt) Katharina Waldner (Universität Erfurt)	Introduction

#### Session I Cultural Contexts - Semantics and Practices of Violence

14:30	Dirk Rohmann (University of Sheffield)	Attitudes on Violence in the Roman Empire: between Pagan and Christian Worlds
15.15	Coffee Break	
15.45	Cristiana Facchini (Università di Bologna)	Violence: Between Theory and Practice. Reading Early Rabbinic Sources
16.00	Markus Vinzent (King's College London /Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt)	The Beginnings of Christianity as Response to the Jewish Rebellion against the Romans
17.00	<i>Pfarrerin Dr. Irene Mildenberger (Augustinerpfarrerin, Erfurt)</i>	<i>Guided tour through the Augustinerkloster</i>
19.00	Dinner	

### Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup>

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#### Session II Violence and the (Re)construction of History

9:00	Eve-Marie Becker (Aarhus University)	Violence and War: How the Gospels reflect Contemporary History
9.45	Sivurgin Lárus Jónsson (Aarhus University)	The Martyrdom of James and James 5:6
10.30	Coffee Break	

### **Session III Theologies of Violence**

11.00	Jennifer Otto (Universität Erfurt)	Origen and the Ethics of Execution
11.45	Blossom Stefaniw (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle)	A Violent Salvation: stigma, discipline, and masculinity in the Teachings of Silvanus
12.30	lunch	

### **Session IV: Narrating the Trauma of Persecution**

14.30	Emiliano Urciuoli (Max-Weber-Kolleg, Erfurt)	Unoffered Pain: the sacrifice of sacrifice among supporters of martyrdom
15.15	Katharina Waldner (Universität Erfurt)	Trauma and Violence in Eusebius' Martyrs of Palestine
16.00	Coffee Break	
16.30	Gianna Zipp (Universität Mainz)	Gewalt der Christenverfolger in Laktanz' <i>De mortibus persecutorum</i>
18.30	Dinner	

### **Sunday, July 16th**

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### **Session V: Politics, Power, and Violence in Late Antiquity**

9:00	Elizabeth De Palma Digeser (University of California, Santa Barbara)	Collaboration and Identity after Persecution: Liminality and Religious Conflict
9:45	Mark Edwards (University of Oxford)	Constantine and Religious Violence
10:30	Coffee Break	
11:00	Jamie Wood (University of Lincoln)	The Bishop in his City: Contextualizing the Rhetoric of Religious Conflict in Fourth Century Hispania
11:45	Final Discussion	
13:00	Lunch	