

International Conference

# Bewilderment as an Opportunity for Learning

6 July, 2013

Venue:

Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Seminar for Social Anthropology,  
Reichardtstr. 11, 06114 Halle (Saale), Germany

Organizers: PD Dr. Ralph Buchenhorst, Dr. Daniele Cantini, Dr. James Thompson

One of the most profound experiences of globalization is the permanently changing entanglement of different ontological and normative convictions, religious beliefs and political expectations in the context of the migration of human beings and the circulation of ideas and technologies. While these entanglements are sometimes irritatingly classified as “clashes”, we believe it more promising to understand them as an impetus for translation, focusing particularly on the epistemic value of the bewilderment that often goes along with these translations. Thus, this conference takes the German philosopher Bernhard Waldenfels’ expression of the “thorn of strangeness” (“Stachel des Fremden”) as a reference for discussion and holds the conviction that strangeness, alienation and bewilderment are neither exclusively a psychical or social construction nor an anthropological constant.

The conference’s general interest does not aim at streamlining possible conflicts arising from these entanglements, but rather wants to highlight contradictions and creative forces in the process of translation. It seeks to explore conditions and effects of bewilderment emerging from situations of disintegration with regard to our common structures of knowledge, web of beliefs and citizenship practices. As a projected outcome, we intend to open up future perspectives for research and action focusing on encounters with otherness as an important catalyst for self-reflection as well as the construction of identity. The event is open both to historical and contemporary topics and wants to approach its subject from a range of disciplines as diverse as Social Anthropology, Philosophy, Literary Studies, Sociology, Education Studies, Colonial Studies, Historiography, Law, Jewish and Middle Eastern studies.

## Contact

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## Conference registration

A conference registration is kindly requested by July 3, 2013 at the latest. Registration is required for everyone not presenting at the conference. Please contact:

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Conference program: <http://www.scm.uni-halle.de/news>