

***MSF Intersectional Conference on Violence  
Barcelona 13th & 14th February 2020***



## AGENDA

***Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February***

### **Session 1**

**9:30-10** Welcome & Opening Addresses by Marta Cañas (OCBA Dir Gral) & Marc Biot (OCP Dir Ops)

**10-10:45** *“New evidence on mental health impact and needs in refugee populations that have experienced multiple traumatic events.”* **Neal Porter**

**10:45 -11:30** *“Reflexions on working with Victims of Torture”* **Pau Perez Sales**

**11.30-12:15** *“Recursive violence: The reproduction of torture experiences”* **Liyam Eloul**

**12:15 – 13h** *Discussion & Debate Session 1*

***13h- 14h Lunch***

## Session II

**14.00 – 14:45** *“The Global Rise of Organised Brutality”* **Sinisa Malesevik**

**14:45 -15:15** *“Can civilians play a role in restraining armed group’s violence? Findings from the occupation of Northern Mali in 2012”* **Yvan Guichaoua**

**15:15-16:00** *Discussion & Debate Session II*

## Session III

**16.00 -16:45** *“Dialogic models in global health: an anthropological perspective”* **Angel Martinez Hernaez**

**16:45-17:30** *“Health interventions for prisoners in State Prison Systems – Dilemmas in Tackling the Problem of health in prisons”* **Cristina Gares**

**17:30 – 18:00 – Q & A & Discussion Session III**

**18:00 – Tapas Mixer – Social Event – Typical Catalan/Spanish food, wine & minerals (same building)**

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February**

**Session I**

**10:00-11:00** *“Genocide and its Dynamics in Syria”* **Ugur Ungor**

**11:00-11:45** *“Besiegement and effects on populations in Syria (Damascus)”* **Mohamad Kanfash**

**11:45-13.00** *Discussion & Debate Session I*

**13:00–14h lunch**

**Session II**

**14-14:30** *“Sexual Violence – Beyond Human Rights – Practices of Struggle and Growth in Women”* **Deyanira Schurjin Benedetto**

**14.30 –15:00** *“Navigating beyond the dust: Why addressing domestic violence should be an integral part of any humanitarian intervention”* **Hadeel Qazaaz**

**15:00 – 15:45** *“Child Sexual Abuse – A social and health problem – Impact and approaches”* **Pilar Polo**

**15:45-16:30** *Discussion & Debate Session II*

**16:30** *Closing Wrap Up - Teresa Sancristoval & Catherine Vanoverloop*

## ***Talk Title Descriptions & Speaker Information***

## The Global Rise of Organised Brutality

*The two total wars of the early 20th century have usually been regarded as the most destructive conflicts ever fought on this planet. The scale of destruction and deaths caused by these two wars have occasionally been characterised as unusual and rather exceptional in world history. A number of scholars have interpreted the violence of this period as an aberration that goes against the long-term historical trends towards an ever more peaceful world. However, in this presentation I challenge such interpretations. I argue that the two total wars were not an exception, but were in fact a culmination of the long-term social dynamics of organised violence. I also focus on the transformation of organised violence in the contemporary world and aim to show how the proliferation of brutality is closely tied with the expansion of organisational and ideological powers and their ability to penetrate the networks of micro-solidarity.*



### **Siniša Malešević**

Siniša Malešević is a Full Professor and Chair of Sociology at the University College, Dublin. He is an elected member of the Royal Irish Academy and Academia Europaea. He is also a Senior Fellow and Associate Researcher, at CNAM, Paris, France. Previously he held research and teaching appointments at the Institute for International Relations (Zagreb), the Centre for the Study of Nationalism, CEU (Prague), NUI, Galway, the London School of Economics, the Institute for Human Sciences (Vienna), Université Libre de Bruxelles (Visiting Professor/Eric Remacle Chair in Conflict and Peace Studies) and Uppsala University. His recent books include *Grounded Nationalisms* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), *The Rise of Organised Brutality: A Historical Sociology of Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2017, American Sociological Association PWSC outstanding book award 2018), *Nation-States and Nationalisms* (Polity 2013); *The Sociology of War and Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2010, reprinted in 2012), *Identity as Ideology* (Palgrave, 2006), *The Sociology of Ethnicity* (Sage, 2004). He has also authored over 90 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters and his work has been translated into 12 languages.

## 1. New evidence on Mental Health impact and needs amongst refugee populations that have experienced multiple traumatic events.

*Too often, humanitarian responders lack timely and rigorously collected data in which to develop responsive mental health interventions in the context of complex emergencies. CVT will share two types of data: First, data from representative surveys of refugee populations living in camps or settlements (4 locations, three countries) will reveal the scope/breadth of needs. Second, data from refugees receiving intensive trauma rehabilitation services at clinics specializing in care for refugee torture survivors reveals the depth/severity of traumatic experiences that are found in these populations. Integrating these sources provides evidence about exposure to violence and the psychosocial and physical harms likely caused by this exposure.*



### **Neal Porter**

Neal Porter is Director of International Services at the Center for Victims of Torture, where he has worked for the past 15 years. He oversees most of CVT's international operations, which include torture survivor rehabilitation programs in large scale humanitarian emergency contexts, technical assistance to other organizations that treat survivors of torture, humanitarian staff resiliency initiatives, and client-centered justice and accountability initiatives.

## 2. Reflections on working with Victims of Torture from a community and psychosocial perspective.

*In this talk, some of the principal dilemmas faced by organisations in the field working with survivors of extreme violence will be explored, citing several examples drawn from real experiences on the ground.*



### **Dr. Pau Perez Sales**

MD. PhD. Psychiatrist. Hospital La Paz. Director of SiR[a]. Network for Documentation and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims. Madrid. Has worked with human rights and community organizations in Latin America since the 1980's. Founder of the Community Action Group (GAC). Director, since 1997 of the Postdoctoral Degree on Psychosocial Work in Political Violence (Complutense University of Madrid). Consultant for WHO regarding IASC Guidelines. Author of 14 books and 70 academic papers on trauma, cultural psychiatry, psychotherapy, working in catastrophes and complex contexts, grieving process in working with relatives of people detained-disappeared, psychosocial work in exhumations and mass graves and torture.

Author of Psychological Torture. Definition, Evaluation and Measurement (Routledge, 2017). Technical advisor for the Spanish NPM, has provided regular training in documentation of torture and monitoring detention centers in México, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Palestine, Serbia among other places. Forensic experts before national and international courts. Former Chair of the Section of Psychological Consequences of Persecution and Torture – World Psychiatric Association. Editor in Chief of Torture Journal. Quarterly Journal on Prevention and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims.



### 3. Dialogic models in global health: an anthropological perspective

*The ethnographic method has been found to be an adequate instrument for global Health interventions. Nevertheless, its use contradicts certain intervention models, defined here as “monologic”, such as biomedical approaches. Some epistemological foundations for these models are the one-dimensional analysis of health/disease/care processes, the one-way communication and their hierarchical nature. In its place, a dialogic model based on the ethnographic method and organized from the criteria of multidimensionality, two-way communication and symmetry is proposed. Ethnography enables the effectiveness of interventions to be improved by providing an empirical basis for project design and allowing for social participation in health.*



#### **Angel Martínez-Hernández**

Angel Martínez-Hernández is a Distinguished Professor and is currently the Head of the Medical Anthropology Research Center at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Catalunya. His main research projects have focused on collective mental health, biomedical cultures, bio politics, anthropological theory, health policies in Europe and Latin America, and Amazonian cultures.

#### 4. Can civilians play a role in restraining armed group's violence? Findings from the occupation of Northern Mali in 2012

*The presentation will draw on a forthcoming article I have co-authored with my colleague Ferdaous Bouhlel. It will briefly review the recent findings in the field of conflict studies analysing restraint in political violence. Existing models tend to concentrate on the internal mechanisms to discipline combatants or the strategic uses of violence aimed at maximising political gains. My presentation will explore an alternative explanatory path, namely the role that socially-endorsed norms of violence and agency of civilians may play in curbing the uses of violence made by armed groups. My points will be illustrated by observations made during the occupation of Northern Mali by jihadist movements in 2012.*



#### **Yvan Guichaoua**

Yvan Guichaoua is a Lecturer in International Conflict Analysis at the Brussels School of international studies (university of Kent). He is a former teaching fellow at Yale University and research officer at the University of Oxford. He has been studying the dynamics of irregular armed groups in Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Niger since 2004. Since 2007, Yvan Guichaoua has been studying Tuareg recurring rebellions in Niger and Mali and the rise of Jihadism in the Sahel. His works pays close attention to the complex interactions between violent entrepreneurs and low level combatants shaping the success or failure of irregular armed groups as well as the forms of violence they perpetrate. His present research concerns interactions between insurgents, populations and foreign forces. Yvan Guichaoua is the author of numerous journal articles and book chapters and the editor of "Understanding Collective Political Violence" and co-editor of "The Developmental Challenges of Mining and Oil" (Palgrave-Macmillan).

Research interests: Political violence, Irregular armed groups' dynamics, 'Rebel governance', Irregular combatants' trajectories through war and peace.

Main regional interests: Mali, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria

## 6. Health interventions for prisoners in State Prison Systems: Dilemmas in Tackling the Problem of health in prisons

*After a brief description of the work carried out by SIRECOVI in state prisons and framing the talk within the health structure within the Catalan prison system, I will go into depth on the different problems detected in the provision of health assistance to prisoners. As the talk evolves we will exemplify the problems broached by giving specific real case examples that have our team have been confronted with. Complaints and/or petitions on different health aspects and the lack of medical attention given to prisoners are one of the most recurrent themes for which our organisation is consulted. The lack of medical attention or the lack of speed of its provision by the medical profession, particularly when there has been a case of ill treatment, or a total absence of or lack of rigour in the taking of the medical history that attest to the injuries from ill treatment are examples of such complaints.*



### **Cristina Gares**

Cristina Gares: Master in Criminology and Sociology with Specialisation in legal and penal from the University of Barcelona. Her thesis was on the topic of Torture and other manifestations of Institutional Violence in the context of the state of Spain. From 2014, she has worked with the [Observatorio del Sistema Penal y los Derechos Humanos \(OSPDH\)](#) (Observatory of the Penal System and Human Rights of the University of Barcelona and with the [Coordinadora Para la Prevención y Denuncia de la Tortura \(CPDT\)](#) (Coordinator for the Prevention and Denouncing of Torture).

En 2015, under the direction of Dr Iñaki Rivera and together with other researchers linked to the deprivation of freedom and human rights, she began to develop SIRECOVI which stands for System for the Registration and Communication of Institutional Violence which has been active since 2016.

## 1. Genocide and its Dynamics in Syria

*Within a year, the Syrian uprising in March 2011 developed into a civil war that gradually escalated and within 9 years killed over half a million people, displaced half the country's pre-war population, devastated the economy, and destabilized the entire region. The Assad regime was responsible for the bulk of the violence against civilians, qualitatively and quantitatively. Its violent crackdown on the mass protests in Syria became more extensive and intensive throughout the first years of the conflict, but persecution and destruction of opposition civilians continued unabated. This presentation argues that the Assad regime is pursuing a large-scale strategy of targeted ('group-selective') mass murder that is most often seen in modern genocides. The presentation builds on the recent scholarship in genocide studies that has broadened the concept's limited scope to include social and political groups. This new perspective on genocide helps us understand how the regime targets specific categories of non-combatants as its perceived enemies, and how this murderous, categorical violence must be seen as part of an effort to reshape the country. This research is based on 8 years of ethnographic research including interviews with regime perpetrators, social media content, video clips, leaked documents, and testimonies of victims and other eye witnesses.*



### Ugur Ungor

Uğur Ümit Üngör is Professor of History at the University of Amsterdam and the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies. His main areas of interest are genocide and mass violence, with a particular focus on the modern and contemporary Middle East. He is an editor of the *Journal of Perpetrator Research*, and coordinator of the *Syrian Oral History Project*. His publications include *Genocide: New Perspectives on its Causes, Courses and Consequences* (Amsterdam University Press, 2016, ed.), *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (Continuum, 2011), and the award-winning *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950* (Oxford University Press, 2011). From 2014 to 2019, Üngör coordinated a Dutch Research Council-funded research project on paramilitarism, which led to the monograph *Paramilitarism: Mass Violence in the Shadow of the State* (Oxford University Press, 2020). He is currently working on its follow-up monograph *Shabbiha: Assad's Militias and Mass Violence in Syria* (forthcoming, 2020).

## 2. Starvation as a War Crime: The case for Eastern-Ghouta in Syria

*On December 6, 2019, the Assembly of State Parties to the International Criminal Court unanimously amended the Rome Statute to include the war-crime of starvation in a non-international armed conflict. The current scale of suffering and death as a result of the use of starvation is unprecedented in modern history, with a number of present conflicts embroiled in acute food insecurity that has threatened famine, or breached that threshold already. Yet recognition of the deliberate nature of famine, attribution of fault and accountability has remained, until now, elusive. The focus will be on the Syrian case and the use of starvation in the context of the Syrian conflict.*



### **Mohammad Kanfash**

Mohammad Kanfash is the founder and director of [Damaan Humanitarian Organization](#), a Dutch-Syrian organization that worked in the besieged areas around Damascus and is currently active in Idlib. Between 2008 and 2019, he worked for the UN refugee agency 'UNHCR' as a protection officer in Syria, Egypt and the Netherlands. Mohammad is currently working on two separate research projects including [starvation](#) in Syria and the restoration of the state in post-conflict Syria. He has guest lecturer in many Dutch universities and is a commentator in the Dutch media.

### 3. Recursive violence: The reproduction of torture experiences

*The experience of interpersonal trauma, and torture in particular, sets up survival pathways in the brain that trigger arousal responses: Fight, flight, freeze. Often, particularly in male survivors, the fight response that is elicited by reminders of the torture event results in perpetration of violence on others. This may occur in the context of detention, community, or family. Using examples from the Eritrean military as well as Iraqi and Syrian refugees, among others, the speaker will explore the implications for treatment.*



#### **Liyam Eloul**

Liyam Eloul is a psychologist specialized in MHPSS responses to displacement and complex emergencies. Ms. Eloul has worked internationally in urban and camp settings with the UN, INGOs and local NGOs across the MENA region and in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as with refugee's post-resettlement in the USA. Ms. Eloul received her Master's degree in International Disaster Psychology from the University of Denver, her post-graduate diploma in Psychosocial Interventions for Refugees and Forced Migrants from the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies at the American University in Cairo, and her Bachelor of Arts in Cultural Psychology from Queen's University, Ontario. Ms. Eloul is currently the Clinical Advisor for Ethiopia programming with the Center for Victims of Torture.

#### 4. Sexual Violence – Beyond Human Rights – Practices of Struggle and Growth in Women



##### **Deyanira Schurjin Benedetto**

Theater researcher, playwright, poet, teacher of feminist theater and thinker of sociopolitical action. She is the daughter of the painter and writer Victoria Benedetto and the director and playwright Hillyer Schurjin who were subjected to reprisals in the military regime of Argentina. Deyanira studied Integral Dramatic Arts at the School of the Argentine Actors Association (1995-1998) and participated in many different workshops and seminars, as well as theatre productions in different companies, both in Buenos Aires and in Madrid. For a time, she stayed away from the artistic scene, questioning the way participation was framed in it as a form of submission, as well as being aware of the hegemonic production of knowledge and culture. Since then, she has sought to explore, analyse and investigate the creation of new theatrical expressions and formats, placing emphasis on the female as a political-social subject, and on the application of feminist theories to theatre research in all its aspects. She is also an accomplished trainer in the Prevention of Gender Violence. Co-author of the book "Culture of Violation", notes on the culture of rape from decolonial and counterhegemonic feminisms. Since 2016, she is part of the "Women in Scene" project, a theater and political research group, focusing on speech and practice in a transversal feminism (gender-race-class).

## 5. Navigating beyond the dust: Why addressing domestic violence should be an integral part of any humanitarian intervention

*When a conflict erupts or a disaster hits a community, it only adds to the inequality, burden and challenges that the community suffers from. Gender-based violence (GBV) and specifically domestic violence is one of the main challenges of societies that suffer from inequality and marginalization. Global estimates published by WHO indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. For many years humanitarian workers focused on the immediate relief and ignored/ did not notice to symptoms of domestic violence / or did not how to deal with them. Worse than that in some cases humanitarian support adds to the levels of GBV in a community because of the shift of power that happened due to women of vulnerable groups having more access survival resources.*

*This presentation will address: What is domestic violence and how it affects humanitarian actions? Why is it can be a humanitarian response? What are the main responsibilities/ actions of different humanitarian actors (institutional and in the community)? The presentation will build on experiences from the Middle East where cultural appropriation is usually used to stop any interventions in that field.*



### **Dr. Hadeel Qazzaz**

She was born in Gaza Shati refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, she is a specialist in gender and development with more than 20 year of experience. She started with a Bachelor in Computer Science in Abu Dies, Al-Quds University in Jerusalem and some years after, she received her Ed.D. in Policy and Planning of Adult & Continuing Education, School of Education, University of Leeds. She has worked extensively in the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia, and Canada in areas of gender democracy, democratization processes, integrity, and poverty alleviation. She has worked with international organizations, academic institutions, and local governments. She is an activist in the Palestinian women's movement and active member in the Palestinian civil society movement. She is involved in different types of cultural dialogue and exchange including dialogue between Europe and the Middle East. Currently, she is the Regional Gender Coordinator for Middle East and North Africa in Oxfam International.



## 6. Child Sexual Abuse – A social and health problem – Impact and approaches.

This talk will address the problem of child sexual abuse and the consequences that it has whilst at the same time exploring ways of intervening to minimise the negative consequences.



### **Pilar Polo**

Pilar Polo is a Psychologist and Head of Institutional Relations at the Fundació Vicki Bernadet (entity working in the integral attention, prevention and sensitization against the sexual abuse of minors committed in the family and the child's trusted environment). Pilar Polo collaborates as a professor on Masters and Postgraduate courses and provides training related to child sexual abuse, sexual violence and family violence. Pilar Polo is the tutor of Practicum of the Faculty of Psychology (University of Barcelona), the Inter-University Master in Social Psychology, the Postgraduate in Forensic Psychology and the Degree in Criminology. Pilar Polo collaborates with the SAC program, for sex offenders in the prisons of Catalonia and with the Monitoring Committee of the Framework Protocol of severe ill-treatment and child sexual abuse in Catalonia.