

Trumah 23

Israel-Studien in Deutschland / Israel Studies in Germany

Über lange Zeit war das Feld der Israel-Studien an deutschen Universitäten unterrepräsentiert. Dies änderte sich 2015 mit dem 50jährigen Jubiläum diplomatischer Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und dem Staat Israel. Im Umfeld dieses Jahrestages wurden an mehreren Universitäten Lehrstühle und Forschungszentren eingerichtet oder erweitert, die sich mit jüdischem Nationalismus und israelischer Staatlichkeit im Umfeld des Vorderen Orients beschäftigen.

Inhalt

Johannes Becke

Land and Redemption. The Zionist Project in Comparative Perspective

Based on the struggle over the occupied territories, the article makes the case for comparative and theory-guided approaches in the field of Israel Studies as an alternative to both nationalist and anti-nationalist claims to exceptionalism. Key elements of Israeli expansionism are traced back to the intellectual legacy of 19th century Italian irredentism, with a particular focus on the concepts of ‘unredeemed territories’ and ‘redemptive violence’.

Michael Brenner

“Mada’i be-mizrah ve-anokhi be-ma‘arav” – Reflections on Israel Studies in Germany

This article depicts the emergence of Israel Studies in present-day Germany against the background of past attempts to study Israel as part of Jewish Studies. It contrasts the rich offerings of German Studies in Israel with the modest beginnings of Israel Studies in Germany. Finally, the article sets out to characterize three future tasks of the field: consolidation, diversification, and relevance. It argues that Israel Studies, just as with any other modern approach to Middle Eastern Studies, is ultimately based on Western terms of scholarship.

Julie Grimmeisen

Im Angesicht des Feindes. Der Nahost Konflikt aus Gender Perspektive

In both national movements, Zionist as well as Palestinian, nationalized gender roles were closely tied to the aim of realizing one’s vision of a national homeland. A ‘masculine’ man – resolute, potent and possessing fighting skills – and a ‘feminine’ woman – fertile, beautiful and with equal rights – were seen as that which would revive the nation. By defining the national self, the dissociation to the ‘Other’, who stands outside the collective, is of inevitable importance. Throughout the violent development of the Middle East conflict, both parties saw the other side as personifying that ‘Other’ who poses an existential threat to one’s own national rights. Interestingly, the image of the German ‘Nazi’ came to play an important role in Israeli and Palestinian accusations of each other. This paper explores the conflict from a gender perspective and argues for a better understanding of the involved ‘enemies’ by evaluating gendered national images.

Jenny Hestermann

Beyond atonement – Remarks on the research paradigms in German-Israeli Relations

German-Israeli relations have been under the radar of researchers in the fields of Contemporary History and German-Jewish Studies for decades. The research literature in German and English can be analyzed according to three main paradigms: First, the ‘Great Man theory’, focusing on Adenauer, Ben Gurion and others who established and shaped these relations; second, the idea of a “moral foreign policy” as an alleged underlying motive on the German side; third, the question whether German-Israeli ties have become normalized or whether they still represent a ‘special relationship’. The article discusses these paradigms and points out research gaps, such as the Israeli perspective (based on archival material in Hebrew), the role of civil society, and the role of identity politics in German-Israeli relations.

Daniel Mahla

Yet Another ‘Special Relationship’? Some Reflections on Israeli-Polish and Israeli-German Relations

German politicians and public representatives like to emphasize the uniqueness of German-Israeli relations. This article reflects on such statements through a comparison with Polish-Israeli relations and their character.

German-Israeli and Polish Israeli relations, I argue, are intimately tied and interrelated, and a thorough analysis of such dynamics could enrich the study of interstate relations.

Dominik Peters

Die Palmach in Wort und Witz

The Myth of the *Palmach* did not only emerge out of the battlefields in Palestine, but was also developed by Chajim Chefer, Chajim Guri and Dan Ben-Amotz on their typewriters. To defend the Palmachs' challenged hegemony after the War of Independence this triumvirate headed out into the trenches once again. With the publication of the two central anthologies, „Jalqut ha-Kezavim“ (1956) and „Mishpahat ha-Palmach – Jalqut Alilot ve Semer“ (1976), they prolonged the *Zeitgeist* of their youth beyond its irreversible loss. They propagate the ethos and habitus of the *Palmach* – and had thus a formative influence on the Israeli (pop)cultural landscape until this very day.

Angelika Timm

Israelwissenschaften an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin – Erfahrungen eines multidisziplinären Experiments in Lehre und Forschung

In contrast to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) which failed to develop a field of Israel Studies, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) established a Department for Hebrew and Israel Studies at Humboldt University in Berlin, located at the Faculty of Asian and African Languages. The number of students who were trained in Hebrew and Israel Studies was limited (about 20 students were enrolled between 1968 and 1990), but the teaching staff was involved in critical reflection processes regarding the one-sidedness of East German foreign policy vis-à-vis the State of Israel in the final years of the GDR and the early years after reunification. Though the Israel Studies Program attracted a significant number of students after 1990, it was closed down in 1996 despite international objections. Nonetheless, the legacy of Israel Studies at Humboldt University could be relevant for the field's contemporary development in a reunited Germany.

Außerhalb des Schwerpunkts

Alexandra Aidler

„L'existence n'est pas un état“ – Technik, Gebot und Transzendenz bei Gabriel Marcel und Emmanuel Levinas

In his writings the renowned Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) repeatedly testifies to his indebtedness to the French thinker and playwright Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973). Despite this on-going philosophical acknowledgment, scholarship has only rarely attempted to examine the nature of this intellectual exchange. This article seeks to explore Levinas' phenomenological response to Marcel's dialogical reflections on the link between technics, commandment, and transcendence.

Hans Kruschwitz

Leopold Zunz' historisch-philologische (Re)konstruktion des politisch-religiösen Judentums

This article explores the interconnections of Leopold Zunz' sermons, scholarly works, and political speeches. It shows Zunz' ambition to conceptualize Jewish literary history in general and the tradition of Aggadah in particular as major roots of modern Europe's upcoming civil society and broader political life. The reformed rabbi he envisions can be understood as a modern intellectual *avant la lettre*.

