



Call for Papers: The Politics of Jewish Studies (Workshop at the Heidelberg Center for Jewish Studies, March 2-4 2022, deadline for abstracts: December 1st 2021)

The field of Jewish Studies is intricately connected to political questions. Arguably the research field came into being as a political intervention since its earliest days: 200 years ago, the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* emerged in the context of German state formation and the Jewish struggle for political equality as citizens – ever since, the field has been shaped by more or less heated discussions between Jews and non-Jews, between Zionists and Diasporists, between the expectations of various Jewish communities and the homogenizing nation-building projects of the modern state. While the historiography of the research field is increasingly well-established, our workshop seeks to address the contemporary politics of Jewish Studies, with a special focus on the German context: What are the political expectations under which our research field is operating? To what extent is Jewish Studies (and Jewish Theology) involved in the staging of a “Jewish revival” in post-unification Germany? Should the research field entrench its focus on European Jewish history or open up to Middle East Studies, not least to explore the history of Middle Eastern Jewry? Should disciplinary fields such as Holocaust Studies, Israel Studies and Antisemitism Studies be tightly integrated into Jewish Studies or rather develop their own scholarly networks? Finally, given various attempts to deploy Jewish history for broader political interests, should the field withdraw into the ivory tower of pure philology – or rather strengthen its public visibility?

To discuss the politics and politicization of Jewish Studies in Germany and beyond, the Heidelberg Center for Jewish Studies (Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg) in cooperation with the Moses Mendelssohn Center for European Jewish Studies (Potsdam University) and the Institute of Islamic Studies (Freie Universität Berlin) invite papers by scholars and practitioners in the broader field of Jewish Studies (including museums, memorial centers and educational centers) for a 3-day workshop in Heidelberg on March 2-4 2022. The workshop is supported by the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation. Based on availability, funding will be provided for accommodation and transportation. The keynote speech at the workshop will be given by David N. Myers (UCLA).

The workshop will be held in a three-day format: On the first day, we will engage in reading and discussing core texts about the politics of Jewish Studies; on the second and third day, we will discuss papers submitted to the workshop. Papers by young scholars are especially encouraged.

The most promising contributions will be published in a special issue of a relevant journal in the field of Jewish Studies. We are especially interested in papers which explore the following topics:

- Politicization of Jewish Studies/Jewish History/Israel Studies
- Politics of diversification: Jewish Studies and Middle East Studies/Israel Studies/Holocaust Studies/Antisemitism Studies etc.
- Jewish Studies and majority/minority relations
- Jewish Studies and the politics of national memory (museums, memorial centers)

To apply for the workshop, please submit a short abstract (300 words) and a short CV (1-2 pages) with your most important publications until December 1st (contact: Johannes Becke, johannes.becke@hfjs.eu).

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