

Paradigm Shifts in European-Israeli Relations

Call for Papers.

Workshop 7th- 8th November 2021 (Heidelberg Center for Jewish Studies / Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg)

The Ben Gurion Chair for Israel and Middle East Studies at the Heidelberg Center for Jewish Studies (Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg) and the European Association of Israel Studies (EAIS), in cooperation with the Chair for Eastern European History at Heidelberg University, invite papers from PhD students and early career researchers for a workshop which will take place on the 7th and 8th of November in Heidelberg (pending current health restrictions, the workshop might have to take place in a virtual format). The workshop will allow young researchers to discuss their research projects with experts in the field and to connect with fellow young researchers working at the intersection of Israel Studies and European Studies.

The complicated relations between Israel and Europe date back to the earliest days of Zionism. On the one hand, European Jews sought a political alternative to discrimination and persecution in the European Diaspora; on the other hand, Zionism imagined the future Jewish State to be modern, Western and built on European role models. In the shadow of the Shoa, Israeli-European relations were slowly rebuilt. Previously, the nature of European-Israeli relations was closely connected to the debate over Israel's self-understanding, either as a "villa in the jungle" or as an integral part of the Middle East. However, in recent years, two crucial processes indicate a paradigmatic shift in European-Israeli relations. First, Eastern European states have begun to deepen their bilateral ties with Israel, often independently from the European Union. Second, Israel is increasingly seeking to build new alliances within the region, for instance in the framework of the "Abraham Accords". In addition, Israeli Jews with historical and cultural ties to the Middle East and North Africa (Mizrahim) are showing a growing self-confidence and an emerging willingness to understand themselves as part of the region.

Building on these developments and others, the workshop offers a platform for research on paradigmatic shifts in European-Israeli relations. We are interested in both crucial events (like the Six-Day War) and slow-moving change (like the emergence of new middle classes of Middle Eastern Jewish origin in Israel). As an interdisciplinary workshop, papers from History, Political Science, or related fields (for example, Cultural Studies or Migration Studies) may be submitted.

Format:

Sunday 7th: Afternoon welcome, keynote address, workshop dinner

Monday 8th: 9 am – 5 pm: Presentations and discussions

Pending financial grants, travel costs and accommodation may be provided.

The deadline for abstracts and a short biography is **July 25th**. Please send your materials and any workshop-related questions to Dr. Jenny Hestermann (jenny.hestermann@hfjs.eu).