

*Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*, XXVII-1998, Dan Diner (ed), "Historische Migrationsforschung", Bleicher Verlag, Gerlingen, 1998.

Although Israel has only one German department, in Jerusalem, German studies are flourishing in this country. Not only has the Israeli University system just been enhanced by a new center devoted to this field (in Beer Sheva, under Professor Frank Stern), the Institute of German

History of Tel Aviv University has confirmed its dynamism and capabilities for in-depth work with the publication of the new *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*.

Complementing the broad range of works published by this Institute, this series stands out in a number of ways. First of all it provides a forum for both renowned historians and promising new researchers, and is the reflection of state-of-the-art research in extremely varied fields. In addition the reader interested in a fresh approach to German issues will find a source whose prime merit is to make Israeli texts or whole fields of study published in Hebrew available in German or English, and hence to a wider audience.

Furthermore, access to these texts is even more valuable in that the subjects dealt with are not necessarily limited to Germany. Each volume focuses on a specific theme concerning German studies (modern-day analyses of National Socialism, Germany and Russia, representations of Germany, etc.) yet the issues raised are often universal in scope. This is true for new women's history, upheavals in historiography, or as concerns this volume, historical research on migrations.

Another remarkable feature of this volume is that contrary to expectations the articles do not only deal with the Jewish features of migrations. This broader approach frees the editor from possible criticisms as regards a lack of perspective. The articles that deal with Jewish issues provide bases for advancing our knowledge of migratory phenomena in general. Although the juxtaposition of highly disparate topics may seem surprising at first glance, the choice of such a vast panorama shows itself indeed to be warranted. The introduction by Dan Diner, the director of the Institute and head of publications, argues in favor of this range of topics – despite the fact that the highly stimulating article on images of National Socialism among Germans in Palestine in the 1930s is only loosely connected to the issue of migration.

This collection of articles places the reader at the crossroads of several historical genres: general, social and economic history, demography, the

history of nationalisms. By doing so, it provides an up-to-date overview of the major motivations for migration. In his introduction Dan Diner defines the two main causes which apply to both individuals and isolated sectors of a population, as to larger groups of people. The first cause is economic and social, when people leave their country of origin for reasons of survival. This cause predominated until the end of the nineteenth century (Doron Niederland shows that Jews did not always emigrate for political reasons). The second reason is ethnic and religious, when populations leave their initial places of settlement because they have been expelled. This latter distinction applies obviously to the Jews. Tolerated in some places and rejected in others they have experienced the sufferings of migration for centuries (a tautology stressed here through numerous examples). The situation in Eastern Europe, where most of the migrants came from, is described in detail by Lloyd P. Gartner.

Expulsion first affected foreign Jews. The articles by Till van Rahden and Dieter Gosewinkel describe the German situation centuries ago which bear much in common with the treatment of foreign Jews in France at the start of the twentieth century and in particular during the period between the Wars. The problem arose once again after the Second World War in Western Europe as regards displaced persons (Frank Caestecker). The issue is once again relevant today with the arrival in Germany of Jews from Russia who are contributing to the reconstruction of a Jewish community in Germany that one day could become the Jewish community of Germany.

After 1933, the migration problem affected German Jews who suddenly became foreigners and had to leave the country (a euphemism employed by Dan Diner so as not to place the Holocaust as the focus of this volume). The ways in which these immigrants were accepted by host countries is described from a number of angles. Eran J. Rolnik examines the spread of psychoanalysis in Palestine as an example of the hesitant acceptance of the culture developed in the country of origin. This was followed by a rejection of this culture when Hebrew replaced German in Palestine, one outcome of Hitler's rise to power (Na'ama Sheffi). In a somewhat contradictory manner, these two fundamentally conflicting attitudes became the foundations for the Jewish cultural and national homeland in Palestine. This dual heritage – German and Jewish – can also be transmitted intact when all the values are taken into consideration in a third country (see Irmtrud Wojak on the case of German Jewish youth in Chili).

The articles as a whole in this volume of the *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* provide a contrasting picture of migrations. They are defined, and rightly so, as crises. In this respect, migrations in the past resurface many years later as unresolved issues that were either denied or

not envisaged as such when they took place (the case of Jewish-owned possessions is described in a brilliant essay by Ronald W. Zweig). The memory of these events prompts new crises that emerge and can coalesce with recent movements (see the articles by Rainer Munz and Rainer Ohliger or Barbara Dietz on the integration in West Germany of native Germans from East Germany which involves the issue of immigrants demanding recognition). These descriptions underscore the frightening comparisons between past and present dramas, when archaic notions return to haunt modern Europe; namely, recourse to ancient history to justify ethnic cleansing, or claims regarding demographic pressure as a prime mover of history.

On the other hand these migrations can be positive when experience leads to a flourishing of the community (advances in science, as discussed by Mitchell G. Ash) or the emergence of a new identity (the case for Israel). It is unfortunate that the examples of success and enhancement are not emphasized more in this volume, for example by stressing the importance of intellectual transfer produced by the migrations of the 1930s and 1940s.

Further, for a work covering a considerable span of history it would have been valuable to have a contemporary overview of German culture in Israel, the result of a migration intricately woven into German history whose traces are fading little by little from memory.

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