English summaries

Marlen Oehler Brunnschweiler:
*Pictorial worlds with a defensive attitude: text-image-narratives
in the "Israelit. Wochenblatt für die Schweiz", 1929–1939*

Anxiety and uncertainty were reflected in the Swiss Jewish press during the second half of the interwar period (1929–1939). It became clear to many contemporaries that they were experiencing an unpredictable crisis. The lines of argumentation and the narrative structures found in Swiss Jewish newspapers were as multifaceted and diverse as the time period itself – in text *and* image. This article focuses on the pictorial language used in the most widely circulated Swiss Jewish weekly paper, the "Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz" (IW), between 1929 and 1939. The question addressed is: Does the analysis of individual text-image-narratives in the IW reveal either direct or *subtle defensive* attitudes expressed through iconographic messages? Are there messages that can only be identifyed if we look at the interplay between text and illustrations? Two text-image-narratives are scrutinised: The pictorial aspect of the first depicts a "new Jew" in Palestine, where a new home for a "new" Jewish people had been created. The Swiss Jewish paper adopts a defensive stance: It presents a "Jewish" alternative to the anti-Semitic contaminated regions of Europe and stages a powerful and proud Jewry. The second investigates a so-called "narrative of destruction". It focuses on text-image-narratives that describe the desintegration of Jewish life in Germany after 1933. An iconographic analysis shows that the two narratives and their defensive stance operate differently: The messages in the "narrative of destruction" can not be decoded solely from the denoted picture elements. Interplay between images and their text is essential in revealing a defensive point of view in the newspaper. For example, with the iconographic staging of a (still intact) monumental synagogue in Germany, the IW is able to narrate the centuries-old history of German Jewry and its sophisticated culture. Coupled with this image-narrative the textual reference to the destruction of the synagogue powerfully exposes the act as an incomparable cultural disgrace.

Heinz Roschewski:
Babij Jar and Switzerland

The case shows what a social-democratic newspaper reported at the end of 1943 about mass-extermination of Jews in Eastern Europe and how the press-monitoring reacted thereon. Whilst censorship classified the publication as propaganda with the help of horror-stories, it was still considered as highly important, to be published.

They proceeded that the report could be published because it was based on official soviet reports. This was seen differently by the appeal office and they confirmed the public admonition. The author confronts this restrictive admission of notices at the end with the also restrictive refugee-policy, which was subsequently justified as not having had any better information.

Sophie Käser:
The Swiss Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27 – Switzerland's Adoption of European Historical Politics. Or: How to Introduce a Place of Remembrance

In 2004, Switzerland introduced an annual Holocaust remembrance day. This commemoration is held every January 27 as part of a collective European 'lieu de mémoire', which evolved from the transformation of remembrance since the 1980s. The introduction of such a remembrance day shows the Swiss effort to fall into line with the European development. However, the question remains – who participates in the implementation of this commemoration in Switzerland and how is it realised? Is this Swiss Holocaust remembrance day an actual contribution to the European 'lieu de mémoire' or is it just a formal act of solidarity? This study will illustrate the cantons' involvement in the organisation of this remembrance day and present Geneva and Lucerne as examples of how this commemoration can be shaped and outlined. At the same time it will be argued that the Swiss participation in the European 'lieu de mémoire' is predominantly a formality and that the relevance of this commemoration as a national place of remembrace is limited.

Zsolt Keller:
The foundation of the state of Israel. Chronology of the events from a Swiss perspective

The proclamation and the history of the State of Israel became a main subject in the thinking and actions of the Jewish Communities in Switzerland. Official Switzerland behaved restrained in the question of recognizing Israel, waiting for the reactions of the surrounding states. In the background, however, a number of public authorities entertained unofficial contacts with Jewish and later to Israeli organizations. There were, however also anti-Semitic reactions in the areas of the Swiss administration costs. The Swiss Federation of Jewish communities (SIG) responded to the proclamation of Israel with joy, but also with restraint. The Jewish communities feared the accusation of "split loyalty".

Shelley Berlowitz:
Report on work in progress: Collective memories in dialogue

Underlying the conflict between Israel and Palestine is a power struggle of antago-
nistic and traumatic collective memories. In my PhD thesis I analyse how collective
memory influences and informs dialogues between peace activists of both sides.
Interviews with Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian participants of two dialogical settings
– *grassroot* dialogue groups during the first Intifada at the end of the 1980s and
feminist cooperation in the framework of the Jerusalem Link during the 1990s – dis-
play differing perspectives: there is a great gap in their perceptions of continuity and
ruptures in history and in their emotional references to the conflict. The question of
participation of Jewish settlers in the dialogue groups exemplifies this gap: while
for the Palestinians the settlers stand for the ongoing expropriation and seizure of
their land, for many Israelis they are reminiscent of the pre-state zionist pioneers.
Similar issues also come up when treating the conflict historiographically: historians
of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tend to be more familiar and sensitive to one or the
other side of the conflict. Reflection of one's own background and confrontation
and dialogue with sources, documents and literature from a different perspective is
indispensable for understanding the conflict. The blind spots of collective memory
can only be illuminated by confronting the memories and the narratives of those
who partake of a different collective memory.

Roland Merk:
*Writing after the Nakba: The Expulsion, a Documentary Drama on the Nakba in
Four Fragments*

In arabic the word "Nakba" means catastrophe. It is the catastrophe of an entire
people and comprises the expulsion of approximately 750,000 Palestinians from their
homeland immediately before and during the Israel-Arab war of 1948. However, the
awareness of the fate of the Palestinians since 1948 in German speaking literature is
scant. Even though the new Israeli historians have refuted the official narrative of the
events during the war of 1948 and have therefore affirmed the Palestinian historio-
graphy of the forced eviction of the Palestinian population, a historically comprehen-
sible taboo dominates the German speaking literature and German literature in par-
ticular – a taboo not existent in other European literatures. The author of "The Ex-
pulsion" – a documentary play in four fragments dwelling upon the Nakba – pleads
for the recognition of the Nakba as the basis for reconciliation. For the German speak-
ing literature facing the Middle East conflict this means to call for a "post Nakba
writing", in order to develop a liability and an awareness, which is able to think of
both the unequaled catastrophes of either peoples, Jews and Palestinians alike.

Jonathan Kreutner:
Remembering the Holocaust and Views on / Looking at Israel in Switzerland

The long-standing anti-Jewish attitude of the church as well as modern anti-Semi-tism in Europe account for the fact that Israel as a Jewish state has to be viewed in the context of the Holocaust. After 1945, anti-Semitic patterns received new frames of reference. For the first few decades after the Second World War, raising the issues of the Holocaust was systematically omitted, as a new mode of excluding the Jews. Israel served as the object of projection for any possible anti-Semitic ideas. This analysis is true for Switzerland as well, even if memory was constructed differently in the first years after the war. The perception of the role of Switzerland during the Holocaust changed only at the end of the seventies when Switzerland was claimed to share – though peripherally – responsibility of the national socialist crimes, and in the mid-nineties during the debate about the dormant accounts. This development got political and academic circles to start grappling with the history and presence of anti-Semitism in Switzerland. For the broader public the demythol-ogising of the recent Swiss history led to a defence reaction against the Jews, who had allegedly broken the tabu (of Swiss heroism during the Second World War).

Georg Kreis:
Discusions on Israel: a critique of the critique of the critique

Israel critique is, like anti-Semitism, a compact fighting word / discursive weapon, often used for polemical ends. Accordingly it needs to be concretised with a clearly defined content and its use needs to be approached analytically. Its relation to anti-Semitism, as well as the respective contexts in which it is used, require clarification. This article sketches the cycles of Israel critique and subjects Israel critique to further critique. How should the allegations be interpreted that critique of Israel is unbalanced, that it takes insufficient account of history and that it employs unequal measures? It is crucial to the author that Israel critique is not discredited by irrelevant (and biased) arguments and that neither national nor religious memberships curtail our findings.