

Publication

Zwanzig Jahre 9/11

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This special section on “Twenty Years Since 9/11” is based on pre- sentations given within the framework of a lecture series at the universities of Basel and Freiburg in fall 2021. Olmo Golz (Freiburg) produced additionally a series of podcast interviews with the invited speakers. The two organizers of the lecture series and also editors of this special issue were motivated by the question how – with the hindsight of twenty years – we might interpret the long- term consequences of 9/11: Mere signifier for underlying processes or real rupture? Without doubt 9/11 had direct effects on the fields of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies, example given: One of the two editors, Epkenhans, pursued in the 2000s a career in Central Asia because of 9/11. It is more debatable whether the twenty-year period of Western military presence in Afghanistan 2001–21 (that was not devoid of any legitimacy as the invasion of Iraq in 2003) will be more than an episode and whether the debacle of the hastened withdrawal in August 2021 will have long-term effects on the inter- national politics of humanitarian intervention. What can be taken for granted is that with Russia’s war on Ukraine since February 2022 the issue of Afghanistan has taken back seat in international politics.

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