

Research Project

Rezeption und Popularisierung von europäischem Gedankengut im judenspanischen Schrifttum (19./20. Jh.)

Third-party funded project

Project title Rezeption und Popularisierung von europäischem Gedankengut im judenspanischen Schrifttum (19./20. Jh.)

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Project start 01.07.2005

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Status Completed

Reception and popularization of European ideas in 19th and 20th-century Judeo-Spanish writing This project focuses on secular Judeo-Spanish writing by Sephardic Jews in the Ottoman Empire and its successor states. These texts both emerge from and develop a manifold cultural transfer that started around the middle of the 19th century, as a result of Ottoman reforms and the Empire's opening toward the West. At first, the French language and culture were particularly influential; later, direct and indirect interaction with German and Yiddish Ashkenazi culture became increasingly important. The main goal of this project is to analyze and describe the response to and distribution of ideas, ideals, and ideologies. The press and the emerging belletristic literature were important channels for the distribution of the new "civilizing" ideas. One of these channels will be studied in each of this project's two parts. The first part is a dissertation called „Die judenspanische Literatur im Schatten Europas“ („Judeo-Spanish literature in Europe's shadow“) by lic. phil. Manuela Cimeli. She will consider how literary texts with Jewish topics respond to, adapt, and develop ideas from the successive waves of the European Enlightenment. Such texts played a role in the construction of a new identity among "Oriental" Sephardic Jews, especially in the tension between other Jewish influences and the non-Jewish environment. The second part of this project is a text-linguistic study, „Análisis discursivo de las prácticas divulgativas en la prensa judeoespañola“ („The discourse of the distribution of knowledge in Judeo-Spanish journalism“), a habilitation project by Dr. des. Yvette Bürki. Her pragmatic approach will focus on the popularization of Western ideas in Sephardic newspapers and magazines. Her goal is to analyze the discursive means and strategies of knowledge distribution and the consolidation of new registers in written language.

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