

This International Conference is organised by the Institute of Culture Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the Center for Jewish Studies of the University of Graz and the Sussex Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies of the University of Sussex



#### VENUE

ÖAW | Theatersaal  
Sonnenfelsingasse 19  
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#### Registration required

[www.oeaw.ac.at/ikw/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungsdetails/israel-and-austria](http://www.oeaw.ac.at/ikw/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungsdetails/israel-and-austria)



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AUSTRIAN  
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16–17 NOVEMBER 2026  
AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
THEATERSAAL  
SONNENFELSGASSE 19  
1010 VIENNA



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# ISRAEL AND AUSTRIA

HISTORICAL LINKS AND FUTURE PATHWAYS

The ties between Palestine, Israel and Austria have been intricately woven, influenced by pivotal historical events, especially throughout the long 19th and short 20th century. This period includes the era preceding the establishment of both states, when Vienna was a hotbed for political Zionism. Diplomatic relations between Israel and Austria, established in the 1950s, were often fraught, shaped by Austria's approach to Nazi war crimes, its policies towards Holocaust survivors, and particularly its persistent refusal of restitution and compensation. Another critical dimension of Austrian-Israeli relations was Austria's 1955 declaration of neutrality and its subsequent efforts to maintain balanced relationships with Arab nations, which necessitated a cautious approach towards Israel. This neutrality policy occasionally strained relations with Israel, particularly during Bruno Kreisky's chancellorship (1970-1983). Also, since the 1970's Vienna was a hub of migration from USSR to Israel. The 1986 election of Kurt Waldheim as president, amid controversy over his wartime record, marked a further deterioration in relations, as did the political ascent of the FPÖ, a party founded by former National Socialists and led by Jörg Haider, especially during its governmental participation from 2000 to 2007. A significant shift occurred in recent years when the conservative government under Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, following Germany's precedent, declared solidarity with Israel to be a matter of Staatsräson. Overall, the relationship between Israel and Austria is one that has evolved from a complex and troubled past, moving towards a more cooperative and mutually respectful present, while still navigating the shadows of history.

# PROGRAM

MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER

09:00-09:30 **Welcome and Introduction**

09:30-11:00 **Imperial Legacies, Zionist Mobilisation, and Postwar Transit**

Chair: Gideon Reuveni | University of Sussex

**Barbara Haider Wilson** | Austrian Academy of Sciences

*The Habsburg Monarchy and the Holy Land: From the Times of Metternich to the First World War*

**Gabriele Anderl** | Vienna

*Zionist Organisations in Austria and the Arab Population of Palestine from the 1920s to the Beginnings of the Shoah: Positions and Blind Spots*

**Miri Nehari** | Habricha Legacy Association

*Reconstruction, Zionist Mobilization, and the Bricha Movement through Austria during 1945–1948*

11:00–11:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:30–13:00 **Diplomacy, Memory, and Political Ambivalence in Austrian-Israeli Relations**

Chair: Gerald Lamprecht | University of Graz/Austrian Academy of Sciences

**Noga Sagi-Kempinger** | The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*Cultural Diplomacy and Collective Memory in Austrian-Israeli Relations, 1950s–1970s*

**Gideon Reuveni** | University of Sussex

*The Austrian “Sonderweg”: Israel and the Boundaries of Holocaust Reparations, 1949–1959*

**Helga Embacher** | University of Salzburg

*“Like never before”: On the Ambivalence of Relations Between Israel and Austria under the Turquoise-FPÖ Coalition Government*

13:00–14:30 LUNCH

14:30–16:30 **Cultural Transfers between Vienna and Jerusalem**

Chair: Olaf Terpitz | University of Graz

**Friedemann Pestel** | Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg

*Combating “Alzheimer” with Mahler: The Vienna Philharmonic and Leonard Bernstein in Israel 1988*

**Gal Hertz** | Bezalel Academy for Arts and Design Jerusalem

*From Vienna to Jerusalem: Krausian Critical Legacy in Israel/Palestine*

## TUESDAY, 17<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER

**Etti Gordon Ginzburg** | Oranim College of Education - The English Department  
*Contested (Hi)Stories: Mira Lobe's I-Ha'Yeladim (1947), Insu Pu (1951), and the Negotiation of Israeli–Austrian National Tensions*

**Ariane Sadjed** | Austrian Academy of Sciences – **Gabriele Anderl** | Vienna  
*From Transit to Community: Bukharan Jews in Vienna*

16:30–17:00 COFFEE BREAK

17:00–18:30 **Education, Holocaust Memory, and Austrian-Israeli Encounters**  
*Chair: Victoria Kumar | Bregenz*

**Rakefet Anzi** | Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
*Vienna as a Cultural Junction: Moshes Rath and the Transformation of Hebrew Education*

**Werner Dreier** | Bregenz  
*Learning and talking about the Holocaust – and about ourselves: Austrian educational Cooperation with Israel*

**Anita Haviv-Horiner** | Educational consultant and author  
*Between Memory and Reality: A Practitioner's Perspective on the Austria–Israel Nexus*

18:30–19:00 BREAK

19:00–20:30 **Podiumsdiskussion: Österreich-Israel nach dem 7. Oktober: Politik, Erinnerung und öffentliche Debatten**  
*Moderation: Erik Frey | Der Standard, Wien*

### Podium

**Irene Aue-Ben-David** | Jüdisches Museum Hohenems  
**Judith Weinmann-Stern** | Verein: Wien – Tel Aviv, Wien  
**Noam Zadoff** | Universität Innsbruck

20:30 RECEPTION

09:00–10:00 **Flight, Exile, and the Making of Austrian-Jewish Lives in Palestine/Israel**

*Chair: Johannes Feichtinger | Austrian Academy of Sciences*

**Victoria Kumar** | Bregenz  
*Land of Promise – Place of Refuge: Emigration and flight of Austrian Jews to Palestine 1920 to 1945*

**Teresa Marx** | University of Potsdam  
*Austrian-Jewish female emigrants' attitudes towards their former homeland after 1938 and their subsequent lives in Palestine/Israel*

10:00–10:30 COFFEE BREAK

10:30–12:00 **Commemoration, Exile Networks, and Holocaust Memory across Austria and Israel**  
*Chair: Ina Markova | Austrian Academy of Sciences*

**Éva Kovács** | Wiener Wiesenthal Institut für Holocaust-Studien, VWI / Eötvös Lóránt University – **Kinga Frojimovics** Wiener Wiesenthal Institut für Holocaust-Studien, VWI  
*Simon Wiesenthal's mausoleum in Jerusalem: Early commemoration plans of the Jewish Victims in Austria*

**Charlotte Carayol** | Université Bordeaux Montaigne/University of Vienna  
*“Keiner von uns Teilnehmer an der 100-Semester-Feier in 1966 wagten an ein so viel schöneres Israel sieben Jahre später zu denken!” Austrian Zionist Organizations in Exile and afterwards: International Networks, Collective Memory and Israeli Soft Power*

**Moran Pearl-Harpaz** | Bar Ilan University/Yad Vashem  
*After the Witness: Holocaust Memory, Hybrid Memorials, and Parallel Commemorative Trajectories in Austria and Israel*

12:00–13:30 LUNCH

13:30–14:30 **Austrian-Jewish Artistic Legacies in Israel**  
*Chair: Olaf Terpitz | University of Graz*

**Mirjam Rajner** | Bar-Ilan University  
*From Vienna to Jerusalem: Creating Jewish Art as an Agent of Peoplehood*

**Vera Kallenberg** | Ben-Gurion-University  
*Viennese-Jewish Women Artists in Israel: Nora Kronstein-Rosen (1925–2013) – Émigré, Sister, Painter*

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14:30–15:00 COFFEE BREAK

15:00–17:00 **Israel, Antisemitism, and Boycott Debates in Austria after October 7**

*Chair: Ljiljana Radonic | Austrian Academy of Sciences*

**Lea von der Hude** | Austrian Academy of Sciences

*Perceptions and Projections of Israel in Austria after October 7*

**Endora Cheng – Jean-Louis Rachamim Forrer** | University of Vienna

*Unpacking Boycott Narratives: Narrative Analysis of Contemporary Anti-Zionist Movements in Vienna*

**Elias Berner – Niklas Herrberg** | Austrian Academy of Sciences

*"Then the most beautiful songs are becoming meaningless": The Boycott of Israel as a Promise for Authenticity*

**Dieter J. Hecht** | Austrian Academy of Sciences

*Friendship with the State or the People? The Israeli-Austrian-Friendship-Association and its Members*

17:00–17:30 **Conclusion**