

FORSCHUNG – LEHRE – INFORMATIONEN

Zehn Thesen zur historischen Entwicklung der Chinastudien in Deutschland

Mechthild Leutner

Summary

The development of China Studies is highly dependent on politics: both in terms of its institutionalization and also of its content and methodology. The institutionalizing of Modern China Studies in Germany took root when the Seminar for Oriental Languages was founded at the University of Berlin in 1887. After the first debate about conceptualizing area studies started in 1912, an initial expansion of China Studies could be seen at universities during the Weimar Republic years. Persecution and emigration of sinologists during the Nazi era then marked a radical break. In the 1950s/1960s Germany experienced weak China Studies — with a focus on textual interpretation — before West Germany then started in the late 1960s to apply the United States model of Area Studies. With the liquidation of German Democratic Republic sinology in the early 1990s, a lot of professional knowledge and a whole theoretical direction were lost. Nowadays, globalization brings about a new set of challenges for China Studies — especially in terms of methods and perspectives.

Keywords: Moderne China-Studien in Deutschland, Emigration der Sinologen, während der NS-Zeit, China-Studien in der DDR

Mechthild Leutner ist emeritierte Professorin am Institut für Sinologie / Chinastudien an der Freien Universität Berlin. Ihre Forschungsgebiete sind moderne und gegenwärtige Geschichte Chinas, Chinesisch-Deutsche Beziehungen und die Geschichte der Sinologie in Deutschland.