

**Brian Klug  
Christina Späti  
Michel Dreyfus  
Jan Gerber**

**+ Panel Discussion**

**European Leo Baeck Institute  
Lecture Series  
London, 2016–17**

**The Legacy of the Left and Israel:  
1967–2017**

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## The Legacy of the Left and Israel: 1967-2017

This season's topic intends to discuss the complicated and multi-layered relationship of the European Left with Zionism and the State of Israel. We will examine this broad subject from a historical perspective and will shed light on the different debates in various European countries.

Lectures will be held at:  
German Historical Institute  
17 Bloomsbury Square  
London WC1A 2NJ.  
Places are strictly limited  
and must be reserved in  
advance by contacting the  
Leo Baeck Institute, London  
e: [info@leobaeck.co.uk](mailto:info@leobaeck.co.uk)  
t: +44 (0) 20 7882 5690.  
Admission is free.  
Lectures will begin promptly  
at 6.30pm. Latecomers may  
not be admitted.

**Dr Brian Klug**

University of Oxford, UK

**Denouncing Israel: Anti-colonialism  
or Antisemitism on the British Left?**

6.30pm, 24 November 2016

A significant part of the British left, especially since the June 1967 war, tends to denounce Israel as a state and Zionism as an idea. Ostensibly, these attitudes are grounded in the anti-colonialism and anti-racism which have been staple causes for the British left since the sun began to set on the Empire. These grounds, however, are called into question by those who detect the hidden hand of antisemitism at work. The lecture will examine key concepts and arguments in this controversy, seeking to bring the issues into sharper focus.

Brian Klug is Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy at St. Benet's Hall, Oxford, a member of the faculty of philosophy at the University of Oxford, and Honorary Fellow of the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations, University of Southampton. His most recent books are *Words of Fire: Selected Essays of Ahad Ha'am* (2015), *Being Jewish and Doing Justice* (2011) and *Offence: The Jewish Case* (2009).



### **Prof Christina Späti**

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

#### **The German-speaking Left and Israel: Legacies and Developments since 1948**

6.30pm, 8 December 2016

The positions and attitudes of the political left in Germany, Austria and Switzerland towards Israel have undergone many changes since 1948. If the 1950s and 1960s were characterized by a romanticizing, pro-Zionist alignment with Israel, mainly expressed by Social-democratic parties and trade unions, the rise of the New Left after 1968 considerably changed the perspectives on the Middle East conflict and eventually had an impact on wider sections of the political left. The lecture will also look into the various legacies, ranging from the Holocaust to Internationalism, which influenced this development.

Christina Späti is Associate Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. She received her PhD in 2003 with a thesis on the Swiss left and its positions on Israel and Zionism between 1967 and 1991. Her research focuses on processes of dealing with the National Socialist past, anti-Zionism, antisemitism and Orientalism, language politics in multilingual states, and 1968 in Western Europe, with a particular emphasis on Switzerland.



### **Dr Michel Dreyfus**

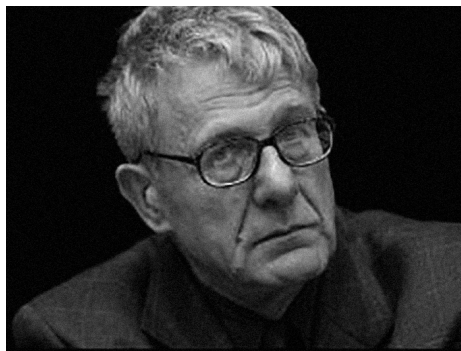
Centre d'Histoire Sociale du XXe Siècle,  
University of Paris, France

#### **The Two Lefts in France: Divisions over Zionism and Israel**

6.30pm, 26 January 2017

The Balfour Declaration (1917) boosted Zionism in France. Although the movement enjoyed the support of the Socialists in the inter-war period, it was denounced by the Communist Party (CP) and the ultra-left. The creation of the State of Israel marked the beginning of a new era. While support for Israel grew strongly among French socialists from 1954 due to their opposition to Nasser's politics in Algeria, the CP took a more critical stance. Post 1967 changes in the French-Israeli relationship left the left sharply divided: While the Socialists continue to support Israel unconditionally, the CP backs the Arab countries. This vigorous debate continues until today.

Michel Dreyfus is a Historian and Research Director at the CNRS (Centre d'histoire sociale du XXe siècle-Université de Paris 1). He has written about the Dreyfus Affair and published numerous books on the history of the French and the international labour movements. His work *L'antisémitisme à gauche. Histoire d'un paradoxe (1830-2009)* appeared in 2009 (2nd ed. 2011).



### **Dr Jan Gerber**

Simon Dubnow Institut Leipzig, Germany

#### **A Prague Trial: The People against Rudolf Slánský**

6.30pm, 16 February 2017

In November 1952, fourteen leading officials of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CCP), eleven of them Jews, were accused of participating in an alleged bourgeois, nationalist, Zionist conspiracy against the people's democracy. Eleven of them, including General Secretary Rudolf Slánský, were hanged. This biggest and most antisemitically charged show trial in the Eastern bloc can be seen as a consequence of the Soviet geopolitical turn in the Middle East – away from Israel towards the Arab countries. It was also a consequence of the pursuit of ethnic homogeneity within the CCP. What can be observed here is a resurfacing of the ethnic conflicts of the interwar period, albeit under different terms.

Jan Gerber is head of the research unit 'Politics' and of the research group 'A new History of the Labour Movement' at the Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture. His latest monograph about the left and Israel is *Ein Prozess in Prag. Das Volk gegen Rudolf Slánský und Genossen* (2016).



## Panel Discussion

6.30pm, 16 March 2017

**Nick Cohen**  
*The Observer and  
The Spectator*

Nick Cohen is a journalist, author and political commentator. He writes for *The Observer*, *The Spectator* and many other publications. He is the winner of the 2015 European press prize and the author of *You Can't Read This Book* and *What's Left* which was shortlisted for the Orwell Prize for political writing in 2008.



**Prof David Feldman**  
*Birkbeck University  
of London*

David Feldman is the Director of the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck, University of London where he also is a Professor of History. He has published widely on the history of Jews, migrants and minorities in British society. In 2016 he was a Vice-Chair of the Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry into antisemitism and other forms of racism in the Labour Party.



**Prof Christina Späti**  
*University of Fribourg,  
Switzerland*

Christina Späti is Associate Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. She received her PhD in 2003 with a thesis on the Swiss left and its positions on Israel and Zionism between 1967 and 1991. Her research focuses on processes of dealing with the National Socialist past, anti-Zionism, antisemitism and Orientalism, language politics in multilingual states, and 1968 in Western Europe, with a particular emphasis on Switzerland.

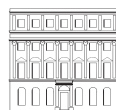


**Dr Peter Ullrich**  
*Technische Universität  
Berlin, Germany*

Peter Ullrich is a sociologist and head of the research unit Social Movements, Technology, Conflicts at the Centre for Technology and Society and fellow at the Centre for Research on Antisemitism (both Technische Universität Berlin). He is especially interested in public discourse and debates about antisemitism. Among his (German language) books are *The Left, Israel and Palestine* (2008) and *Germans, Leftists and the Middle East Conflict* (2013).



The European Leo Baeck Institute Lecture Series London, 2016–17 is organised by the Leo Baeck Institute London, in cooperation with the German Historical Institute London



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Leo Baeck Institute  
2nd Floor  
Arts Two Building  
Queen Mary  
University of London  
Mile End Road  
London E1 4NS  
t: +44 (0) 20 7882 5690  
www.leobaeck.co.uk

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