

EINLADUNG

SIMON WIESENTHAL LECTURE

BRENDAN MCGEEVER

BOLSHEVIKS AND ANTISEMITISM

IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Donnerstag, 16. November 2017, 18.30 Uhr
Dachfoyer des Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchivs
1010 Wien, Minoritenplatz 1

WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)



Wiener Wiesenthal Institut
für Holocaust-Studien (VWI)

Rabensteig 3, 1010 Wien, Austria
www.vwi.ac.at | office@vwi.ac.at | +43 1 890 15 14

GEFÖRDERT VON:



The Bolsheviks came to power with the promise of building a world free of any forms of oppression. These sentiments were put to the test as a devastating wave of anti-Jewish violence broke out across the western borderlands of the former Russian empire. The pogroms posed fundamental questions of the revolutionary project, since they revealed the nature and extent of working class and peasant attachments to antisemitism. Based on archival materials, this talk will explore the significance of antisemitism in the Russian Revolution. It will examine how class politics could sometimes overlap with antisemitism, in the Red Army in particular.

In addition, the lecture will explore the as-yet untold history of how the Bolsheviks responded to the antisemitism that emerged within their own ranks. By bringing into focus the forms of individual and collective agency that actualised the Soviet response to antisemitism, the talk will challenge long-held assumptions about the Bolshevik record in this area. The lecture will reveal that the key agent in the Soviet response to antisemitism was not the Bolshevik party leadership, but a small grouping of non-Bolshevik Jewish socialists who coalesced around the peripheral apparatuses of the nascent Soviet state. Unlike well-known Jewish Communists such as Leon Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg, these non-Bolshevik Jewish radicals were comparatively less well traversed along the paths of assimilation. Their response to antisemitism was intimately bound up in specifically Jewish forms of revolutionary politics like Bundism and Marxist Zionism.

Brendan McGeever is Lecturer in the Sociology of Racialization and Antisemitism at Birkbeck, University of London. He is the author of *The Bolsheviks and Antisemitism in the Russian Revolution* (forthcoming in 2018). For the academic year 2017 – 2018, he will be the Acting Associate Director of the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck, University of London.

KOOPERATIONSPARTNER:



ÖSTERREICHISCHES
STAATSARCHIV

