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## **Loyalties Seminar: 18 November 2016**

### **Kellogg College, Oxford**

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The question of dual or contested loyalties has been a constant theme in the history of British communism. Recent research in this field has been enriched by the availability of MI5 files, Soviet archives and personal memoir. However, the question of the loyalties of British communists has a much wider significance, encompassing, for example, the dilemmas of intellectuals and changing personal and political identities. In the background have often been tensions between the freedom of the artist and writer and their political commitments, the internationalist and anti-fascist allegiances in the context of war and pacifism, and the effects of the Cold War on work and family life.

Given the breadth of the loyalties question, this one day seminar, funded by The Open University's Centre for Citizenship, Identities and Governance, was conceived with the idea of pushing out the boundaries of research to bring together historians, political scientists, intelligence experts and those working on biographical studies and life-writing. The seminar is intended to be a starting-point for further research and will focus initially on three main areas:

- War, intelligence and espionage
- British communists, the Popular Front and Spain in the 1930s
- Writers, Intellectuals, Artists

### **10.00-10.30: Coffee.**

### **10.30-11.15: Opening Plenary:**

Geoff Andrews, Tom Buchanan, Kevin Morgan

### **11.15-12.30: Popular Front, Britain and Spain in 1930s:**

Elinor Taylor: Popular Front Fiction

Richard Baxell: Comrades and Commissars

Sonia Boue: Felicia Browne

Meirian Jump: The Archives of the International Brigaders

### **12.30-1.30: Communists, Intelligence, Army**

Roderick Bailey: Communists in the Special Operations Executive

Hamish MacGibbon: Maverick Spy

Nicholas Jacobs. (Chair) Esmond Romilly and his Thälmann Battalion Group as seen by the Germans'

### **1.30-2.15: Lunch.**

### **2.15-3.15: Intellectuals and Writers (Post-War)**

Ben Harker: Monty Johnstone

Jane Bernal: Margot Heinemann

### **3.15: Tea**

### **3.30-4.30: MEMOIRS, PERSONAL STORIES, FAMILY HISTORIES.**

Nicholas Deakin: Middle Class Recruits to Communism in the 1930s

Lucy Gaster; Jack Gaster: Undivided Loyalty

Liz Dolan: Links in the Chain

Richard Waterborn: The Rebel Gentlewoman.

### **4.30: Close**

## Notes on Speakers

**Geoff Andrews** is Senior Lecturer in Politics at The Open University. He is the author of a wide range of books and articles on the history of political ideas and movements. His most recent book is *The Shadow Man* (2015), a political biography of James Klugmann. Earlier books on the history of the British left include *Endgames and New Times: the Final Years of British Communism* (2004). He has also written on the culture and politics of modern Italy.

**Roderick Bailey** is a historian at the University of Oxford and specialises in the Second World War, unconventional warfare, war and medicine, and intelligence. His books include studies of Allied support to resistance movements in Italy and the Balkans, and his PhD explored the alleged manipulation, by British communists, of Allied policy towards wartime resistance in Yugoslavia and Albania.

**Richard Baxell** is a British historian and the author of three books on the Spanish Civil War. He is currently the Chair of the International Brigade Memorial Trust and a Research Fellow at the Cañada Blanch Centre at LSE (where he earlier completed his PhD under Paul Preston).

**Jane Bernal** is currently researching a biography of her mother. Jane is a 'red nappy baby', daughter of Margot Heinemann and J.D.Bernal, the Marxist scientist. Until her retirement in 2013, Jane worked in the NHS as a Consultant Psychiatrist specialising in the care of people with intellectual disabilities. She was also Senior Lecturer at St Georges, University of London. She was a member of the CPGB until 1991, and was active in Marxists in Medicine and in the Medical Practitioners Union (then part of ASTMS).

**Sonia Boué** is a multiform artist working on themes of exile and displacement with a focus on the Spanish Civil War. She has just completed an Arts Council funded creative collaboration on Felicia Browne's engagement with

the Spanish conflict, with the support of Prof Tom Buchanan. All her work is research based.

**Tom Buchanan** is Professor of Modern British and European History at the University of Oxford, and Director of Studies in History and Politics at OUDCE. He is the author of five books including *East Wind: China and the British Left: 1925-1976* (OUP, 2012). Three of his books and numerous articles have been on British involvement in the Spanish Civil War, including *Britain and the Spanish Civil War* (CUP, 1997).

**Nicholas Deakin** read modern history at Oxford University and took a doctorate at the University of Sussex. He worked as a civil servant and in local government and from 1980 to 1998 was Professor of Social Policy and Administration at the University of Birmingham. He chaired the Commission on the future of the Voluntary Sector in 1995-6, and was visiting professor at the University of Warwick and London School of Economics. He has published widely on social policy and the welfare state.

**Elizabeth Dolan** was born in Sheffield in 1945. Her parents belonged to the 1930s generation of undergraduate communists. After a degree in French at St. Hugh's College, Oxford, she trained as a nursery and infant teacher, working with under-fives in maintained primary schools in London and Essex. She joined the National Union of Teachers as a student, was for several years a local branch secretary and remains active as a retired member.

**Lucy Gaster**, born in 1940, was brought up in a Communist household. Her parents, Jack Gaster and Maire Lynd, who joined the CPGB in the 1930s, were active in and committed to the Party throughout her childhood (and beyond). She had a varied career in policy research and, in the 1980s, as a local government manager.

**Ben Harker** is Lecturer in Twentieth-century British Literature at the University of Manchester. He is the author of *Class Act: The Cultural and Political Life of Ewan MacColl* (2007) and the co-editor of *British Communism: A Documentary History* (2011). An editor of the journals *Key Words: A Journal of*

*Cultural Materialism and Twentieth Century Communism*, he is currently an AHRC Leadership Fellow for a project entitled 'Wars of Position: Communism and Civil Society.'

**Nicholas Jacobs** studied in Paris, Freiburg, Hamburg and Warwick; worked in London in publishing, including for Lawrence and Wishart and for his own company, Libris, specializing in German literature. He is a freelance reviewer, translator and teacher at U3A (German literature).

**Meirian Jump** is Archivist & Library Manager at the Marx Memorial Library. She previously worked for Artists Antony Gormley and Barry Flanagan and studied history at Oxford University and Queen Mary at undergraduate and postgraduate level respectively. She has a research interest the Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship, particularly in relation to the role of archives and collective memory.

**Hamish MacGibbon** was born in 1936 in the month when the Spanish Civil War started and his parents joined the Communist Party. Following National Service, and a degree in history at Cambridge, he spent 25 years at Heinemann where he published school and academic books, and then ran his publishing company for two decades. He was a Labour councillor for Camden in the late 1960s. His memoir about his father, *Maverick Spy*, will be published spring 2017.

**Kevin Morgan** is Professor of Politics and Contemporary History at the University of Manchester and an editor of the journal *Twentieth Century Communism*. He has published widely on communism and the British labour movement, including studies of Harry Pollitt, Ramsay MacDonald and the Webbs. His latest book is *International Communism and the Cult of the Individual: leaders, tribunes and martyrs under Lenin and Stalin* (forthcoming early 2017).

**Elinor Taylor** is postdoctoral fellow in English at the University of Westminster. She is the author of a forthcoming monograph, *The Popular Front Novel in Britain* (Brill 2017), and of articles published or forthcoming in *Key Words: A Journal of Cultural Materialism and Twentieth Century Communism*. She has

also written for *Radical Philosophy*, the *TLS* and *Socialist History*, and is a member of the executive committee of the Raymond Williams Society.

**Richard Waterborn** grew up in South Devon where he attended Dartington Hall School. He studied Human Sciences at Queen's College, Oxford and Applied Psychology at University College Cork. He moved to Ireland and co-founded the Irish Environmental Organisation Earthwatch. He now lives in Spain where he works as a healer & therapist and aspiring author.

The seminar will take place in the **Mawby Room**, Kellogg College, Oxford, 62 Banbury Road, Oxford. OX2 6PN

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