

NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

I. Institutional News

International Marx-Engels Foundation

Since early 1990, discussions concerning the continued publication of the *Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe* (*MEGA*) have been held in Amsterdam, Berlin and Moscow. They have involved representatives of the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam, the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (IML) in Moscow, the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic (AdW) in Berlin and the Karl Marx House of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (KMH) in Trier.

There was agreement that, in view of the status of the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the history of social science and the impact their ideas have had on world events, the publication of a complete critical edition of their collected works, manuscripts and correspondence must remain a priority for international research.

It was agreed that the IISH (which possesses the largest part of the Marx-Engels papers), the IML (which possesses a smaller part), the AdW and the KMH would make joint efforts to ensure that the publication of the *MEGA* is continued. To this end, the International Marx-Engels Foundation (IMEF) was set up on 2 October 1990. Based in Amsterdam, it will henceforward act as the publisher of the *MEGA*.

The board of the IMEF includes a representative from each of the founding institutions: E. J. Fischer (IISH), M. P. Mchedlov (IML), H. Pelger (KMH) and W. Schmidt (AdW). At its constituent meeting on 2 November 1990 in Amsterdam, the board decided, among other things, to: (a) establish a secretariat at the IISH under the direction of J. Rojahn; (b) establish an international editorial commission, which will eventually number ten to twelve members, but will initially consist of B. A. Bagaturiya (IML), J. Grandjonc (KMH), M. Hundt (AdW) and J. Rojahn (IISH); and (c) convene an international advisory board consisting of leading specialists in the field.

The address of the Foundation is: Cruquiusweg 31, 1019 AT Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Jürgen Rojahn

II. Announcements

The Socialist International during the First World War

The Second International was founded in 1889 as a kind of umbrella organization of the socialist labour movement. At first its only organ was the international socialist congress, held at intervals of two, three or four years. It was not until 1900 that the International Socialist Bureau (ISB) was set up. Its executive committee, composed of representatives of the Belgian Workers' Party, had its headquarters in Brussels. Camille Huysmans became its secretary in 1905.

After the turn of the century the International became increasingly concerned with the prevention of war. The extraordinary congress held in Basel cathedral in November 1912 may well have been the most impressive peace demonstration ever held. With its affiliated organizations numbering nearly three and a half million registered members, the International was seen as "a powerful force for the preservation of European peace" (Keir Hardie). But the hope that its mere existence would deter governments from contemplating the risk of war proved forlorn. Rather, at the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 the International itself became paralyzed. There were, however, repeated efforts, initiated particularly by socialists from the neutral countries, to bring the parties of the warring countries together in a joint action for peace. These efforts culminated in the convening of an international socialist conference in Stockholm in 1917. Reconstituted after the war, the Second International survived until 1923, when it was replaced by the social-democratic oriented Labour and Socialist International (LSI).

Interest in the history of the Second International began to revive in the 1960s. Accordingly a start was made with the publication of important source material from the period. Reprints appeared of public documents and minutes from the congresses held between 1889 and 1912 and between 1920 and 1922. Georges Haupt, who made important contributions in this field, published documents on the congress which had been planned for August 1914 in Vienna as well as the first part of minutes, resolutions and circulars from the ISB. And in 1980 Gerhard A. Ritter published a two-volume edition of documents on the attempts to restore the Second International after the war.

However, concerning the international activities of the socialist parties *during* the war, which had been such a fateful period for the labour movement, relatively little source material has been published. Apart from several studies which contained some relevant documents and a reprint of the material on the planned Stockholm conference published by Huysmans in 1918, there has only been a two-volume edition published by Horst Lademacher in 1967 on the "Zimmerwald movement" of the dissenting minorities within the socialist parties. A corresponding publication of documents on the efforts of the official party bodies to renew international cooperation has thus far been lacking.

This gap is to be filled with a compendium of source material on the history of the Second International during the First World War, which is being planned jointly by the Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (IISG) in Amsterdam, the Arbetarrörelsens Arkiv och Bibliotek (ARAB) in Stockholm, the Arbejderbevaegelsens Bibliotek og

Arkiv (ABA) in Copenhagen and the Camille Huysmans Archief (CHA) in Antwerp. The project will focus in particular on the efforts by socialists from the neutral countries and Huysmans to reactivate the International as an “instrument of peace” (in the words of Karl Kautsky).

The source material selected for publication comprises primarily (a) the correspondence of the executive committee of the ISB, which in late 1914 switched its headquarters to the neutral Netherlands; (b) hitherto unpublished documents concerning the Scandinavian-Dutch committee set up to prepare the Stockholm conference; and (c) the confidential correspondences of the party leaders involved. The material in question is scattered among various archives. The aim is therefore not only to make comprehensive source material available in printed form to a wider public, but also to bring together the scattered material so as to provide an overall view. Of particular importance in this regard are the collections of the four institutes which are cooperating on the project, in particular previously unpublished material from the papers of Camille Huysmans, Pieter J. Troelstra, Hjalmar Branting and Thorvald Stauning.

Currently the intention is to publish two volumes of around 800 pages each. The project’s editors will be Jürgen Rojahn for the IISG, who will act as coordinator, Martin Grass for ARAB, Uffe Jakobsen for ABA, Wim Geldolf and Diane’s Heren for CHA, and Agnes Blänsdorf (University of Kiel). Costs will be met primarily by the four institutes involved. The Fritz Thyssen Stiftung has agreed to sponsor Agnes Blänsdorf’s contribution.

Comments and information on relevant material which may be considered for publication should be directed to Jürgen Rojahn at the IISG (Cruquiusweg 31, 1019 AT Amsterdam, The Netherlands, tel. 020-6685866) or one of the other editors.

Consumer Cultures in Historical Perspective

The Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis invites applications for senior and postdoctoral fellowships from individuals engaged in research on topics related to “Consumer Cultures in Historical Perspective”. During the academic year 1991–1992, the work of the Center will focus on the development of habits of consumption in a global perspective. Applications are welcomed from all disciplines and regional specializations. The fellows’ projects need not be explicitly comparative. However, emphasis will be given to understanding varieties of consumer culture, and weekly seminars and conferences will be exploring how these have been shaped by diverse economic, political and cultural systems and the exchanges among these systems over time. Applicants need not be United States citizens.

For further information and fellowship applications, write to: Professor Rudolph Bell (Director) or Professor Victoria de Grazia (Project Leader), Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, 88 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, USA.

Memory and Multiculturalism

The Seventh International Oral History Conference will be devoted to “Memory

and Multiculturalism". The theme of the conference mirrors the increasing interest among oral historians for migrations and cultural contacts, as well as contemporary social trends towards multiculturalism on the one hand and towards forms of nationalism and localism on the other. The conference will deal with the use of oral sources in the study of subjects as, for instance: migrations and territorial mobility; nationalism and multi-ethnicity; geographical distribution of power; gender cultures and relationships; and generational cultures and relationships. A final program will be drafted on the basis of selected papers from among submitted proposals. While oral sources are central, the use of multiple sources and interdisciplinary methods will also be encouraged. One-page proposals in English or French should be sent within October 31, 1991 to: Valeria Di Piazza, Dipartimento di Filosofia e Scienze Sociali, Università degli Studi Siena, Via Roma 47, 53100 Siena, Italy. Fax 577.222668.

National Identity

The Social History Society of the United Kingdom will hold its annual conference in Glasgow on 4-6 January 1992. The theme is "National Identity", and the Society would like anyone wishing to give a paper to contact Dr David Vincent, at the Department of History, University of Keele, Keele, Staffordshire ST5 5BG, telephone 0782-621111. Booking details will be available in due course from Mrs Linda Persson, Centre for Social History, Lancaster University, Bailrigg, Lancaster LA1 4YG, Great Britain, telephone 0524-65201 ext. 2812/2806.

The Low Countries and the Americas

A conference will be held on "By Sea and by Air: Five Centuries of Interaction between The Low Countries and the Americas, 1492-1992", University of Leiden, 4-6 June, 1992. The conference will focus on three themes: the connections by sea and by air between the Low Countries and the Americas; the cultural and intellectual exchange (language, literature, art, ideas) between the Low Countries and the Americas; and the exchange of goods and crops between the Low Countries and the Americas. Proposals for papers should be directed to the conference secretary: Mrs S. Tabeling, Department of History, University of Leiden, P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.