

Section III. Research Projects and Dissertations – Work in Progress.

III.1 Individual Projects.

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Representations and Practices of Revolutionary Internationalism in Early Soviet Society, 1917-1927. PhD Project.¹

When Bolshevik representative Iakov Sverdlov spoke to the Russian Constituent Assembly on January 18th 1918, his claim that the October Revolution “has kindled the fire of the Socialist revolution not only in Russia but in all countries” earned “Laughter on the Right”, as noted in the stenographic report.² Yet not the fact alone that all delegates still sang the “Internationale” after electing the Assembly’s head³ shows that internationalist motifs have been strong not only within Bolshevik ranks, but in revolutionary Russia in general.

Classical studies in Soviet history and in Bolshevik thought have emphasized the omnipresence of the idea of World Revolution in the Bolsheviks’ internal and foreign policy,⁴ even though this subject has been rarely dealt with in recent studies.⁵ However, most studies have the blind spot on the question how revolutionary internationalism⁶ influenced the perceptions and practices of Soviet citizens in the years before Stalinism. As for studies on the international Communist movement, they have dealt with the question of internationalism either through the history of institutions like the Communist International

¹ Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Thomas Welskopp (Bielefeld), Prof. Dr. Klaus Gestwa (Tübingen).

² James Bunyan, H. H. Fisher (eds.): *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1918. Documents and Materials*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1965³, p. 371.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

⁴ See: Robert Craig Nation: *War on War. Lenin, the Zimmerwald Left, and the Origins of Communist Internationalism*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1989; Edward Hallett Carr: *The Russian Revolution. From Lenin to Stalin 1917-1929*, London, Macmillan, 1979; Dietrich Geyer: *Sowjetrussland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung 1918-1932. // Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (1976), 1, pp. 2-37; Ossip K. Flechtheim: *Bolschewismus 1917-1967. Von der Weltrevolution zum Sowjetimperium*, Wien-Frankfurt-Zürich, Europa Verlag, 1967; Wolfgang Eichwede: *Revolution und internationale Politik. Zur kommunistischen Interpretation der kapitalistischen Welt 1921-1925*, Köln-Wien, Böhlau, 1971; and many more.

⁵ As a few exceptions, see: Jakov Drabkin: *The Idea of World Revolution and Its Transformations. // Mikhail Narinsky, Jürgen Rojahn (eds.): Centre and Periphery. The History of the Comintern in the Light of New Documents*, Amsterdam, IISG, 1996, pp. 46-55; Michael Löwy: *Internationalismus und Nationalismus. Kritische Essays zu Marxismus und "nationaler Frage"*. Mit einem Beitrag von Enzo Traverso, Köln, ISP, 1999; A. M. Dubrovskii: *Ideia mirovoi proletarskoi revoliutsii v ideologii bol'shevikov. 1917-1930-e gg. // Russkii sbornik*, Briansk, 2002, pp. 137-146; N. A. Strizhkova: *Perspektivy mirovoi revoliutsii v 1918-1924 gg. v predstavlenii zhurnalista D.I. Zaslavskogo. Po materialam dnevnika. // Aleksandr V. Golubev (ed.): Rossiia i mir glazami drug druga. Iz istorii vzaimovospriiatiia. Vypusk piaty, Moskva, IRI RAN, 2009, pp. 95-103.*

⁶ I use the term “revolutionary internationalism” according to the typology of internationalisms proposed by Fred Halliday (*Three Concepts of Internationalism. // International Affairs* 64 (1988), 2, pp. 187-198); for internationalism in the labour movement, see: Magaly Rodríguez García: *Introduction. Defining Labour Internationalism. // Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire / Belgisch tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* (2006), 4, pp. 957-960; F. L. van Holthoon, Marcel van der Linden (eds.): *Internationalism in the Labour Movement. 1830-1940*, New York, E.J. Brill, 1988. For a *Begriffsgeschichte* of internationalism, see: Peter Friedemann, Lucian Hölscher: *Internationale, International, Internationalismus. // Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck (eds.): Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland. III: H-Me*, Stuttgart, Klett-Cotta, 1982, pp. 367-397.

(Comintern),⁷ or through the interaction between Western Communist parties among each other.⁸ Yet the question of the Comintern as an actor as well as a symbol not only throughout the world, but within its host country, Soviet Russia, has not yet received a re-examination under the conditions of the “archival revolution” – just as the question of the impact of the Communist movement as an international and internationalist one on practices and perceptions in Soviet society has remained an open one.⁹ This gap is truly remarkable, since the role of Soviet Russia as a “golden calf” and point of reference within the Communist movement is thoroughly analysed,¹⁰ but not so much the role of the Soviet Communist movement as an actor within the international Communist context.

In the years after the October revolution, internationalism was omnipresent not only in the leaders' minds, but also in Soviet public practices.¹¹ Uprisings, strikes and revolutions throughout the whole world occupied the front pages of state and party newspapers,¹² and were in the most prominent cases accompanied by large-scale campaigns. Schools, streets, factories, whole districts were named after foreign revolutionary leaders alive (e.g. Max Hoelz, André Marty, Clara Zetkin) or dead (most prominently Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht). An international socialist heritage of the past (Marx and Engels, the Paris Commune) obtained a solid place in the new festivity calendar and through it in public space and perception; the “Internationale”, old workers' movement hymn and anthem of the new revolutionary state until 1943, was not only played on the Kremlin's tower clock, but sung on every official or semi-official occasion.¹³ The Communist International was omnipresent as well, not only through its pompously performed “World Congresses”, but through slogans and inscriptions in everyday context.¹⁴ Last not least, the Soviet leaders, many of them just having returned from years of exile, could be perceived as personifications of the

⁷ Bernhard H. Bayerlein: Das neue Babylon. Strukturen und Netzwerke der Kommunistischen Internationale und ihre Klassifizierung. // *Jahrbuch für Historische Kommunismusforschung* (2004), pp. 181-270; Pierre Broué: Histoire de l'Internationale Communiste. 1919-1943, Paris, Fayard, 1997; Kevin McDermott, Jeremy Agnew: The Comintern. A History of the Comintern from Lenin to Stalin. 1919-1943, Basingstoke-London, Macmillan, 1996.

⁸ Joachim Schröder: Internationalismus nach dem Krieg. Die Beziehung zwischen deutschen und französischen Kommunisten 1918-1923, Essen, Klartext, 2007. Studies on internationalism as a control instrument of Soviet foreign policy are not directly relevant for this context, however for further reading on this subject, see: Jonathan C. Valdez: Internationalism and the Ideology of Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe, Cambridge e.a., Cambridge University Press, 2009²; Jan Foltzik: Der proletarische Internationalismus des sozialistischen Weltsystems. Die Mythologisierung des sowjetischen Führungsanspruchs. // *vorgänge. Zeitschrift für Bürgerrechte und Gesellschaftspolitik* 46 (2007), 1, pp. 115-124.

⁹ At least since the rather one-sided elaborations on this subject by Soviet historiography. See a.o. Leonid I. Iakovlev: Internatsional'naia solidarnost' trudiaschchikhsia zarubezhnykh stran s narodami Sovetskoi Rossii. 1917-1922, Moskva, Nauka, 1964; Iurii A. L'vunin: Bor'ba Kommunisticheskoi partii za ukreplenie internatsional'nykh svyazei rabocheho klassa SSSR. 1924-1928 gg., Moskva, Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1975; and various others.

¹⁰ Jerzy Holzer: Das einzige Vaterland des Proletariats – die Sowjetunion. Ob gut oder schlecht, sie ist mein Land! // *Jahrbuch für historische Kommunismusforschung* (2008), pp. 24-31; Geyer, Sowjetrussland, p.3.

¹¹ First impressions of this omnipresence are best found in diaries and memoirs of political figures who were not unconditionally on the side of the Bolsheviks but were „left enough” to take notice of such phenomena, e.g.: Alexander Berkman: The Bolshevik Myth. Diary 1920-22, New York, Boni & Liveright, 1925; Fedor I. Dan: Dva goda skitanii. 1919-1921, Berlin, Hermann, 1922; Vatslav Solskii: 1917 god v Zapadnoi oblasti i na Zapadnom fronte, Minsk, Tesei, 2004. First archival explorations by the author only have confirmed this impression.

¹² Just as an example, the title page of *Rabochii put'* (Smolensk) from December 7, 1920, carries following headlines: *The Red Front / The End of Balakhovich / For the Third International / Demands of the English Railroad Workers / Victory on the Labour Front / On the Dawn of Trade Relations with the West / Workers from America / Telephones in the Village* (Russian State Archive of Social and Political History [RGASPI], f. 17 op. 60 d. 12 l. 85). Of eight headlines, four are related to foreign matters, of which three directly refer to the international Communist movement.

¹³ Nadezhda A. Soboleva: Ocherki istorii rossiiskoi simvoliki. Ot tamgi do simbolov gosudarstvennogo suvereniteta, Moskva, Znak, 2006, p. 404; Orlando Figes, Boris I. Kolonitskii: Interpreting the Russian Revolution. The Language and Symbols of 1917, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999, p. 63ff.

¹⁴ Amongst other places, the Comintern often got mentioned on Red Army flags. For Isaac Babel, the typical Red Army flag of 1920 featured a star and “some inscription about the 3rd International” (Isaak Babel: Die Reiterarmee. Aus dem Russischen übersetzt, herausgegeben und kommentiert von Peter Urban, Berlin, Friedenauer Presse, 1994, p. 62); for an example of such a flag design, see Soboleva, Ocherki istorii rossiiskoi simvoliki, p. [224].

international socialist movement. All this directed the Soviet citizen, and even more the party member or sympathiser, to align himself to a context of international struggle. Revolutionary internationalism appeared as an offer for identification and as a field of political and cultural activity. But how could such a relatively arcane topic (compared to other central agendas of the Bolsheviks in Russia such as the call for bread, peace and land reform) enjoy such a public presence and apparently a powerful public response?

The aim of this project is not to analyse internationalism in Soviet society merely as a propaganda strategy declared failed and displaced by “Soviet patriotism” – this has already been done convincingly.¹⁵ It seems obvious that revolutionary internationalism, being a class-based and supra-national model of identity and mode of action, could not serve as a medium for the common patriotic narrative of Stalinism – even though it was not displaced completely, continuing to live on as a legitimizing propaganda figure until the end of the Soviet Union. However, my aim is to analyse internationalism and its ideological and practical manifestations in its own right when it was still potent – the time directly after the revolution until the second half of the 1920s.

This means, at first, to retrace the discourse of internationalism, proletarian solidarity and world revolution in the Soviet public, and its forms and ways of dissemination. This includes the analysis of form and function of internationalist motives in the Soviet press, posters, popular culture, the cinema or even children books. It goes without saying that the institutions that were designed to develop and disseminate these representations of internationalism have to be taken into account – the party’s *Agitprop*-Department, the Comintern’s press bureau, the Commissariat of Education’s *Gospolitprosvet* and others. At the same time, one has to keep in mind that especially in the first years after the revolution, Communist propaganda and its forms of dissemination have been only under very loose control, both in terms of organisational forms¹⁶ and content. A first analysis of press and archival materials after 1920 (when the organisational forms had been normalized and monopolized by the party) has shown that in terms of content, the centre’s guidelines for internationalist propaganda still remained rather vague and left much room for improvisation. A further question concerns the reaction from those exposed to internationalist content – as a central source for this, letters “from below” to Soviet press, institutions and leaders shall be assessed.¹⁷ Especially the feedback on political campaigns may be traced through those letters, which – in case of reader’s correspondence – were endorsed by the editors and yet often carried “unendorsed” content and thus remained unpublished.¹⁸

However, the project should not be restricted to merely retracing the Soviet internationalist discourse – while employing the approach of praxeologically enhanced cultural history, I am ultimately interested in showing the *usage* and *re-creation* of discourses through action,

¹⁵ David Brandenberger: Proletarian Internationalism, 'Soviet Patriotism' and the Rise of Russocentric Etatism During the Stalinist 1930s. // *Left History* 6 (2000), 2, pp. 80-100; A. M. Dubrovskii, E. P. Prudnikova: Ideinoe perevooruzhenie. Patriotizm i ideologija bol'shevikov. 1920-1940-e gg. // A. M. Dubrovskii (ed.): Otechestvennaja kul'tura i istoričeskaia mys' XVIII-XX vekov. Vol. III, Briansk, BGU, 2004, pp. 55-91.

¹⁶ See: Ingo Grabowsky: *Agitprop in der Sowjetunion. Die Abteilung für Agitation und Propaganda 1920-1928*, Bochum-Freiburg, Projekt Verlag, 2004.

¹⁷ For a selection of such documents, see: A. V. Kvashonkin (ed.): *Pis'ma vo vlast' 1917-1927. Zaiavleniia, zhaloby, donosy, pis'ma v gosudarstvennye struktury i bol'shevistskim vozhdiam*, Moskva, ROSSPĖN, 1998; S. S. Kriukova (ed.): *Krest'ianskie istorii. Rossiiskaia derevnia 1920-kh godov v pis'makh i dokumentakh*, Moskva, ROSSPĖN, 2001.

¹⁸ For readers' correspondence, see: Matthew Lenoe: Letter-Writing and the State. Reader Correspondence with Newspapers as a Source for Early Soviet History. // *Cahiers du Monde Russe* (1999), 1-2, pp. 139-169; Sheila Fitzpatrick: Supplicants and Citizens. Public Letter-Writing in Soviet Russia in the 1930s. // *Slavic Review* (1996), 1, pp. 78-105.

because it is only through practices that a discourse can materialise.¹⁹ Not only does such an approach allow to observe a discourse in action, it also allows observing the creation of knowledge from a bottom-up perspective,²⁰ and reconciles the antagonism of cultural patterns and individual action.²¹ And in the specific Soviet case, it might help to reconcile the false polarity of “power” vs. “the people”, because the question the author poses is not how “the Bolsheviks” – polemically spoken – “manipulated” large parts of the population and “lured” them into believing communist dogmas,²² but rather what practices could develop on the basis of this particular dogma and how the dogma gets re-created, reshaped and enhanced within and through “practical knowledge” (Pierre Bourdieu).

In early Soviet society, through all social strata there was a diverse repertoire of practices to perform internationalism. They could be employed according to the degree of political involvement (pre-revolutionary *militant*, post-1917 party functionary, sympathiser, bystander) or the belonging to a social group (worker, peasant, employee), but could also be unrelated to any of these criteria. They could happen within or without the party or the mass organisations, and their degree of “spontaneity” and “straged-ness” could vary. Some have their direct roots in the workers’ movement tradition, some were “born” in Soviet Russia. Such practices, designed to enact a participation in a world-wide class struggle, could be (yet not limited to):

- Individual and collective writing, addressed either to “internationalist” institutions like the Comintern’s “World Congresses”, or to persons representing internationalism.²³ While considering these letters, in the sense of a “performatively enhanced understanding of text”,²⁴ as performative acts of empathizing with the world revolution, one also has to approach them on a semantic level to analyse whether the authors simply reproduce the templates offered to them by the press and agitation, and whether they fill these templates with specific meanings which were probably not intended by the agitation’s creators and multipliers. A good example is a greeting address from prison inmates in the Soviet province to the 1st World Congress of the Comintern, which relates communism’s abstract promise of liberation to the concrete hope for liberation from prison.²⁵
- Attending and/or organizing mass meetings and demonstrations for the internationalist cause, holding speeches on such occasions, composing meetings’ “resolutions”;

¹⁹ For the theoretical basis, see: Andreas Reckwitz: Towards a Theory of Social Practices. A Development in Culturalist Theorizing. // *European Journal of Social Theory* 5 (2002), 2, p. 243-263; Sven Reichardt: Praxeologische Geschichtswissenschaft. Eine Diskussionsanregung. // *Sozial.Geschichte* 22 (2007), 3, pp. 43-65; Karl H. Hörning, Julia Reuter (eds.): Doing Culture. Neue Positionen zum Verhältnis von Kultur und sozialer Praxis, Bielefeld, transcript, 2004.

²⁰ Comp.: Reichardt, Praxeologische Geschichtswissenschaft, p. 54.

²¹ See: Glennys Young: Fetishizing the Soviet Collapse. Historical Rupture and the Historiography of (Early) Soviet Socialism. // *Russian Review* 66 (2007), 1, p. 95-122, here: p. 121-122. For the problem of structure and action, see e.g.: Thomas Welskopp: Der Mensch und die Verhältnisse. "Handeln" und "Struktur" bei Max Weber und Anthony Giddens. // Thomas Mergel, Thomas Welskopp (eds.): Geschichte zwischen Kultur und Gesellschaft. Beiträge zur Theoriedebatte, München, Beck, 1997, pp. 39-70.

²² This is – thus very simplified – the main point of Sergei Iarov’s study on forms of Communist persuasive practices in Petrograd (Konformizm v Sovetskoj Rossii. Petrograd 1917-1920-kh godov, Sankt-Peterburg, Evropeiskii Dom, 2006), which unearths fascinating material and brilliantly puts it into context, but remains caught within this bipolarity.

²³ For Soviet collective writing, see: Heike Winkel: Schreibversuche. Kollektive Vorlagen und individuelle Strategien in den "Briefen der Werktätigen". // Jurij Murašov, Georg Witte (eds.): Die Musen der Macht. Medien in der sowjetischen Kultur der 20er und 30er Jahre, München, Wilhelm Fink, 2003, pp. 59-79.

²⁴ Doris Bachmann-Medick: Cultural Turns. Neuorientierung in den Kulturwissenschaften, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Rowohlt, 2006, p. 106.

²⁵ Prison inmates from Vladimir to the VCIK, 12.3.1919. // RGASPI, f. 488 op. 1 d. 15 l. 13.

- Acts of ritualized communication with foreign “co-fighters”, such as exchange of flags and other workers’ movement artefacts,²⁶ reception foreign workers delegations,²⁷ maintaining institutionalized correspondence with foreign factory party cells;²⁸
- practices evoking symbolic presence, such as renaming factories and schools after foreign revolutionaries, or electing foreign Communist leaders as “honorary members” of the own factory/army unit/etc.;
- practices of commemoration – from the celebration of memorial occasions of the international workers’ movement, like the jubilee of the Paris Commune or the anniversaries of Marx’ and Engels’ deaths, to the remembrance cult of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, and local practices of dead foreign revolutionaries’ veneration²⁹;
- practical solidarity, like fundraising for foreign workers, organising help for political immigrants from the West, or even attempts to go abroad to push World Revolution forward.

These and other transnational practices could, as already mentioned, be performed either outside or within an institutional framework. While already in the early 1920s the trend went towards institutionalisation of internationalist practices, the question remains whether they could assume individual forms not only outside the institutions,³⁰ but also within them. The most prominent and long-lasting internationalist mass organisation was the International Red Aid, known in Russia as *Mezhdunarodnaja Organizatsiia Pomoshchi Bortsam Revoliutsii (MOPR)*. Founded in late 1922 by the 4th World Congress of the Comintern to raise awareness and help for imprisoned “fighters for revolution”, it was active in a multitude of countries, yet the peak of activity was in the Soviet Union – obviously not in terms of releasing prisoners, but in terms of fund- and awareness-raising on behalf of the “revolutionary cause” in foreign countries. Even though being a centralized organisation with a Central Committee in Moscow, with one of the declared central goals being bringing together the non-party masses and the party members,³¹ the various local branches all over the Soviet Union maintained relative autonomy (within the directives from the centre), releasing own press bulletins and organizing campaigns. It is an important question for the project whether and to what extent they could develop own practices of international solidarity, and the MOPR’s press and archival documentation will be the object of thorough studying.

While acknowledging the omnipresence of internationalism in Soviet public space, it should be kept in mind that to consider Soviet society as a thoroughly internationalist one would mean to be more apologetic than even Soviet historiography was. Even though large strata of the population were to a various degree involved in internationalist practices described

²⁶ The „export“ of flags, made by Soviet party collectives and dedicated to German workers, plays an overly prominent role in the correspondence of the German Representation (“Deutsche Vertretung”) at the Comintern’s Executive Committee (ECCI) (RGASPI, f. 495 op. 292 to 293); for the preparation of such a flag on the Soviet side, see e.g. City of Moscow Central Archive [CAGM], f. 2834 op. 1 d. 11 l. 9.

²⁷ For the foreign workers’ delegations to the Soviet Union, see a.o. Edgar Lersch: *Die auswärtige Kulturpolitik der Sowjetunion in ihren Auswirkungen auf Deutschland 1921-1929*, Frankfurt am Main, Lang, 1979; Concerning the discussion on the openness of Soviet society in the 1920s, see: Aleksandr V. Golubev: “Dobro pozhalovat’, ili postoronnim vkhod vospreshchen”. K voprosu o zakrytosti mezhoennogo sovetskogo obshchestva. // *Otechestvennaia istoriia* (2004), 4, pp. 32-53.

²⁸ RGASPI, f. 495 op. 25 d. 752ff.

²⁹ See, for example, a letter of a local party cell dated 3.8.1925, directed to the ECCI asking for information on a German Comintern delegate who died some years before in a small Russian town and whose grave the local communists now wanted to popularize among the local population (RGASPI, f. 495 op. 292 d. 19 l. 22).

³⁰ For this option, see: Kevin Murphy: *Revolution and Counterrevolution. Class Struggle in a Moscow Metal Factory*, New York, Berghahn, 2005, pp. 84-86.

³¹ See: *Pervyi sovetskii shef uznikov Zapada // MOPR. Organ Iсполnitel'nogo komiteta Mezhdunarodnoi organizatsii pomoshchi bortsam revoliutsii*, 1.5.1923, pp. 21-23. Outside the USSR, the International Red Aid was rather presenting itself as an organisation above party aims and boundaries.

above, those who were actively trying to implement internationalism into society were a relatively small group of communist activists (though not necessarily party members). They were confronted with potential incomprehension and opposition by a mostly peasant population that was largely concerned with local affairs rather than foreign matters, let alone solidarity with causes abroad.³² Moreover, internationalism had to co-exist – sometimes in conflict, sometimes in a crude symbiosis – with xenophobic and anti-Semitic moods and images.³³ All these obstacles, frictions and controversies were reflected upon by activists on various levels, and already in the early 1920s heated discussions over the possibilities and impossibilities of communicating internationalism to the “broad masses” took place in the party press as well as in internal meetings. The project shall not leave these aspects aside, but embed these frictions into the social background against which internationalist practices were enacted.

Also in a transnational sense, international solidarity in Soviet Russia was not performed in a vacuum, but took place against the background of a wave of revolutionary attempts in Europe and beyond.³⁴ Besides elaborating a typology of internationalist practices, the project's aim is to put them into context of this international history in order to reveal developments, continuities and ruptures. To achieve this perspective, it seems operable to take a selection of episodes of social unrest and potential social transformation occurring throughout the world from 1918 until the late 1920's, and using them as examples to trace their propagation and reception in Soviet Russia. This would allow holding the typology of internationalist practices against different constellations of Soviet society and worldwide Communist movement. As such world-revolutionary focal points, I am considering the German „November Revolution“ of 1918, the Bavarian and Hungarian Soviet Republics of 1919, the Soviet Republic of Gilan (1920-1921), the “German October” of 1923 and the coal miner strike in Great Britain in 1926. Each one of those events opens the view onto a new historical constellation, not only concerning the rise and decline of the revolutionary movements after WWI, but also concerning the increasing centralisation, bureaucratisation and standardisation of Soviet public discourse in general and agitation in particular.³⁵ By doing so, the shift from world revolution as goal of Soviet politics towards Stalin's „socialism in one country“ is also spotlighted, as well as the corresponding discourses of inner-party opposition, which to a large extent were led amongst the lines of the question of international revolution. Last but not least, through the inclusion of a revolutionary event outside Europe, i.e. the Soviet Republic of Gilan (North Persia),³⁶ one may be able to grasp the connection of internationalism and colonialism as corresponding discourses in anti-colonial propaganda (“Proletarians of all countries and all oppressed peoples of the world unite”)³⁷ as well as in

³² The struggle of the “local” against the “global” emerges especially in so-called “non-party assemblies” and similar occasions, where individuals not involved into the communist movement got directly exposed to internationalist content. See e.g.: Sergei V. Iarov (ed.): *Novgorodskaja zemlja v epokhu sotsial'nykh potriasenii 1918-1930*. Sbornik dokumentov, Sankt-Peterburg, Nestor-Istoriia, 2006, pp. 40-49.

³³ A local party journalist in the Karelian province bitterly noted that there were people who did not perceive it as a paradox to wholeheartedly sing the “Internationale” and at the same time to curse at foreigners and national minorities (Mogikan: *K ozhivleniu partiinoi raboty*. // *Vestnik karel'sko-olonetskogo komiteta R.K.P.(B.)*, December 1920, N° 2, p. 3).

³⁴ For an overview, see: Chris Wrigley (ed.): *Challenges of Labour. Central and Western Europe. 1917-1920*, London-New York, Routledge, 1993.

³⁵ See: Grabowski, *Agitprop in der Sowjetunion*, p. 16f.

³⁶ See: Cosroe Chaqueri: *The Soviet Socialist Republic of Iran. 1920-1921. Birth of the Trauma*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995; Moisei A. Persits: *Zastenchiava intervetsiia. O sovetskom vtorzhenii v Iran i Bukharu v 1920-1921 gg.*, Moskva, Muravei-Gaid, 1999.

³⁷ This „anti-colonial update“ to proletarian internationalism was introduced by the Comintern at the Baku Congress in 1920. For the congress, see: Cosroe Chaqueri: *The Baku Congress*. // *Central Asian Survey* 2 (1983), 2, pp. 89-107; Stephen White: *Communism and the East. The Baku Congress. 1920*. // *Slavic Review* 33 (1974), pp. 492-514.

Bolshevik colonial practice (e.g. in Central Asia).³⁸ Further research will show if the world-revolutionary episodes named above are operable and whether it is really possible to consider the Soviet repercussion of these episodes detached from each other.

The preoccupation with internationalist representations and practices hopefully can enrich historiography in various aspects. In relation to “classical” communist studies and Comintern history, the results of this research may give new insights into the connection between Soviet inner policy and the policies of international communism. For example, one preliminary result of the undertaken research may be that the hasty foundation of the Communist International in March 1919³⁹ happened at least in parts owing to a necessity for the Bolsheviks to adhere to overdue propaganda promises, since the call for a “3rd International” dominated Soviet public discourse already in mid-1918.⁴⁰ Contributing a Soviet perspective to classical topics of communist studies is also possible concerning later episodes, like the abortive “German October” of 1923: While the meticulous planning of the German uprising by the Russian Communist Party is already well documented,⁴¹ the dimensions of the large-scale accompaniment of the anticipated “German events” by print and audiovisual agitation in the Soviet Union, planned with at least the same military precision as the uprising itself (only with more success), are less known. The same research gap applies to the attitudes of “ordinary” citizens towards the “German October”, which the unearthed reports of Bolshevik agitators from late 1923⁴² are able to shed a light on. Here we are already dealing with “new” communist studies, a cultural history of the Comintern and the communist movement, to which the illumination of representations and discourses concerning the Comintern, World Revolution, international solidarity and the communist movement might contribute new insights.

As for the dissertation’s contribution to Soviet history, the topic of internationalist representations and practices touches upon several central aspects. First of all, it is the one of sense-making and legitimisation of power. The relation of the Bolshevik elites as well as the “masses” towards the outside world oscillates between the joyous anticipation of World Revolution and the fear of a real and imagined “bourgeois-imperialist encirclement”. In this dichotomy, revolutionary internationalism plays a central role. Connected with this is also the relatively unexplored problem of Soviet everyday representations of the outside world.⁴³ Likewise, since the contrast between an internationalist and national Soviet policy was a crucial factor for the genesis of Stalinism, the results of the project could be useful for an analysis of Stalinism, even though the project is explicitly distancing itself from reducing the whole Early Soviet period to a pre-history of Stalinism.

³⁸ For the Bolsheviks’ relation to Central Asia and the local revolutionaries, see: Christian Teichmann: Cultivating the Periphery. Bolshevik Civilising Missions and ‘Colonialism’ in Soviet Central Asia. // *Comparativ* 19 (2009), 1, pp. 34-52; Adeeb Khalid: Backwardness and the Quest for Civilization. Early Soviet Central Asia in Comparative Perspective. // *Slavic Review* 65 (2006), 2, pp. 231-251; Henryk Szlajfer: From Empire to Empire. Russian versus Asian Revolutionaries. 1917-1920. // Richard L. Rudolph, David F. Good (eds.): Nationalism and Empire. The Habsburg Empire and the Soviet Union, New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1992, pp. 135-157.

³⁹ See e.g.: Branko Lazitch, Milorad M. Drachkovitch: Lenin and the Comintern, Stanford, Hoover Inst. Press, 1972, p. 50ff.

⁴⁰ For example, see the greeting address of the 6th Congress of Moscow Railroad Workers’ Deputies (August 1918) to the striking Ukrainian railroad workers, carrying an appeal “to merge under the banners of the 3rd International into one worldwide family of labour” (State Archive of the Russian Federation [GARF], f. 1235 op. 93 d. 2 l. 138); a glimpse through the front pages of the “Pravda” only confirms this impression.

⁴¹ See: Bernhard H. Bayerlein, Leonid G. Babičenko, Fridrich I. Firsov, Aleksandr Ju. Vatin (eds.): Deutscher Oktober 1923. Ein Revolutionsplan und sein Scheitern, Berlin, Aufbau, 2003.

⁴² RGASPI, f. 17 op. 60 d. 460.

⁴³ Cf.: Donald J. Raleigh: Doing Soviet History. The Impact of the Archival Revolution. // *Russian Review* 61 (2001), pp. 16-24, here: p. 23; Covering both aspects, see recently: Aleksandr V. Golubev: “Esli mir obrushitsia na nashu Respubliku”. Sovetskoe obshchestvo i vnesniaia ugroza v 1920-1940-e gg., Moskva, Kuchkovo pole, 2008.

But perhaps the most important contribution this project might be able to make to historiography is by a re-evaluation of communism in Soviet Russia not only as a mode of rule, but as a social movement. Hermann Weber recently noted that while historiography on Communism as dictatorial rule and source of terror remains numerous, publications on Communism as a radical social movement are on the decline: "To evaluate the 'nature' of Communism, it is necessary to consider its history as a radical workers' movement as well as its ideology in general and the utopian elements within it in particular."⁴⁴ This is even more true for Soviet Russia, and it is the example of Soviet Russia where this appeal can be fulfilled without having to decide for the one or the other aspect: In Soviet Russia, we have the case of a radical social movement entangled in a dictatorial form of rule. Even though the conceptual and methodological repertoire of social movement research is to a large extent coined with the "new social movements" in mind, it is the recent chronological and thematic extension of the field that might make an approach towards Soviet Communism as a social movement feasible and profitable.⁴⁵ And if we consider Communism in Soviet Russia as a social movement, going beyond the leadership and even beyond the formal party membership criteria, then we can consider revolutionary internationalism not only as "an alternative and partly positive way of making sense of information about the world" for Soviet citizens,⁴⁶ but as a core element in the Russian Communist movement's discursive processes of frame elaboration,⁴⁷ and thus one of the corner stones not only of Communist ideology, but also of Communist activism.

⁴⁴ Hermann Weber: Zwischen Autobiographie und archivalischem Zeugnis. Quellenproblematik in der Kommunismusforschung. // Michael Buckmiller, Klaus Meschkat (eds.): Biographisches Handbuch zur Geschichte der Kommunistischen Internationale. Ein deutsch-russisches Forschungsprojekt, Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 2007, pp. 74-90, hier: pp. 89-90.

⁴⁵ For an application of social movement research methodology to movements outside the "new movements" spectrum, see: Sven Reichardt: Faschistische Kampfbünde. Gewalt und Gemeinschaft im italienischen Squadristum und in der deutschen SA, Köln, Böhlau, 2002, p. 19ff.

⁴⁶ Jeffrey Brooks: Official Xenophobia and Popular Cosmopolitanism in Early Soviet Russia. // *American Historical Review* (1992), 12, pp. 1431-1448, here: p. 1441.

⁴⁷ For the concept of "framing" in relation to social movements, see: David A. Snow: Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields. // David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi (eds.): *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Malden, Blackwell, 2004, S. 380-412.