

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers and Authors

Dear Friends

We are happy to present you with issue no. 27/28 of the International Newsletter of Communist Studies (INCS). Due to an unforeseeable workload related to other projects and technical problems with our old website, this is a double issue, covering the years 2014 and 2015. We apologise to our authors for the massive delay and hope you will enjoy this issue and continue to cooperate with us.

With the help of the Institute for Social Movements and the University Library of the Ruhr University Bochum, the International Newsletter has restarted to gain momentum. We can present this issue on our new website, based on the much more sophisticated and comfortable open-source "Open Journal Systems" publishing platform. Thanks to this, all contributions are accessible individually, as it has been a long wish of our contributors (while we alternatively still provide a single-PDF version of the issue). Also, it is now possible to browse all contributions by a single author. Please feel free to explore our new website at:

<http://incs.ub.rub.de>

The website already features all back issues until 2010. Older issues will be added in the following months. Moreover, some of the Newsletter sections, such as the list of relevant websites and the list of periodicals, will be transferred permanently onto our website so that they can be updated more often and be more accessible for Internet users.

The current issue features 342 pages full of news on the recent development of communist studies and archives, project reports, an unprecedented amount of 17 reviews, review essays on Ernst Thälmann and GDR history, studies on female fighters in CivilWar Spain and left communist files in the FSB archives, and the bibliography for the years 2013-2014, listing 975 book publications and 1204 journal articles. The International Newsletter is still and by far the most complete bibliographical reference for new publications in the field of global communist studies. Nevertheless, we still need to ensure better coverage of new publications from some parts of the world, particularly from Asia and Africa.

We are glad to present you with another Newsletter issue in the 23rd year after its foundation, as an independent and unsalaried project. Since the very beginning, the Newsletter has aimed to bridge the gap between archives and research as well as between university-based and independent scholarship. Just as the initial impulse for the first issue of the Newsletter in 1993 was to draw attention to the opening and preservation of communist archives in the East and West, we still aim to champion and document the accessibility of the global archives of communism. Moreover, we continue to regard the opening of the archives as the essential precondition for a new phase of fundamental research in communist studies – a necessary global field of research, aimed at overcoming attempts at re-nationalising history. Paradoxically, while the interest and productivity in this field continues to be high, the degree of academic institutionalisation of Communist Studies remains rather low – a situation that threatens free, independent and fundamental research. Thus it is even more important to stress that in order to deliver a useful research platform, to provide input for achieving

coverage of the field on a global scale, and to strive towards a stronger institutionalisation, we depend on the contributions and input of our readers and correspondents.

Issue no. 29 (2016) of the International Newsletter will be published in winter 2016. We are looking forward to receiving any sort of relevant information and contributions from our readers before 31 August, 2016: news on archives and institutions, project presentations, announcements of new publications, bibliographic items from the years 2015-2016, suggestions for book reviews, and proposals for articles on aspects of communist history. For the latter, we would ask you to get in touch as soon as possible, so we can evaluate the proposals and give you enough time to complete your manuscripts.

We hope you will find the new issue of the International Newsletter useful for your research,

All the very best,

The Editors,

Bernhard H. Bayerlein and Gleb J. Albert (Bochum-Zürich, 1 June 2016)

PS: We still have a limited stock of printed International Newsletter editions from 1993-1998. Libraries and research institutions are welcome to request copies to be shipped to them free of charge.