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Introduction

Fabrice Bensimon, Quentin Deluermoz and Jeanne Moisand

Introduction

In November 1964, a Centenary conference of the International Working Men's Association (IWMA) was organised in Paris under the aegis of the CNRS and the Commission internationale des mouvements sociaux et des structures sociales (International Commission for social movements and structures). The organisers, including Ernest Labrousse, had stressed the need for a comprehensive survey, and the conference lasted three days and brought together some 90 participants, including Jean Maitron, Arthur Lehning, Jean Dhondt, Asa Briggs and Marc Vuilleumier. The participants appeared in national delegations – a practice which would probably seem rather curious nowadays. At the same time, this retrospective look at the centenary conference is humbling, since many of its contributions have barely aged. Nearly 500 pages of the proceedings were published in 1968.¹ Indeed, the ground covered by this vast collective endeavour was considerable. It provided detailed investigation of the different countries affected by the development of the IWMA (France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Hungary, Russia, Austria, Bohemia, Poland...), in a wide-ranging survey. The institutions of the General Council in London, the nature of the First International's sections and the issue of membership were also addressed. A first summary was drawn, which highlighted the place of skilled artisans in the various struggles of the 1860s, and the unstable “mosaic-like” character of the International and its branches. In their conclusion, these works highlighted the gap between concrete achievements and aspirations, and thus realised the myth born out of the International – a myth which, according to the final report's author, Jean Dhondt, was no doubt of decisive historical importance in the history of the modern labour movement.

So why, in light of such an impressive pedigree, should we re-examine this organisational experiment, however original to the post-1848 world it may have been? There are a few arguments for this.

1 *La Première Internationale: l'institution, l'implantation, le rayonnement*, Paris, 16–18 Novembre 1964 (Paris, 1968).

For a start, research has continued, albeit at a less sustained pace, and with variations between countries. Few major revisions have been carried out for the Northern European area, even though, non-exhaustively, the following studies should be noted: for France, work on the benefits of the 1871 Commune, the many local studies dealing with “the terrible year” and those on political refugees;² for Germany, more cultural approaches on social-democracy and works on some of the movement’s key figures;³ for Switzerland, the research of Marc Vuilleumier and Marianne Enckell;⁴ for Belgium, studies by Daisy Devreese, Jean Puissant and Freddy Joris;⁵ for the United Kingdom, Henry Collins, Chimen Abramsky and, more recently, Margot Finn;⁶ for Spain, Josep Termes’s, Carlo Serrano’s and Clara Lida’s publications in the 1970s, and for Latin America, Carlos Rama’s.⁷ The United States has received a lot of attention,

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- 2 Marc César, Xavier Verdejo (eds.), *Regards sur la Commune de 1871 en France. Nouvelles approches et perspectives*, (forthcoming); Laure Godineau, “Retour d’exil. Les anciens communards au début de la Troisième République” (unpublished PhD diss., Paris I University, 2000); Paul Martinez, “Communard Refugees in Great Britain”, (unpublished PhD diss., Sussex University, 1981); Thomas C. Jones and Robert Tombs, “The French left in exile; *quarante-huitards* and *communards* in London, 1848–80”, in Debra Kelly and Martyn Cornick (eds.), *A History of the French in London: Liberty, Equality, Opportunity* (London, 2013), pp. 165–191; Michel Cordillot, *Utopistes et exilés du Nouveau monde: des Français aux Etats-Unis, de 1848 à la Commune* (Paris, 2013). On France, also see: Julian P.W. Archer, *The First International in France, 1864–1872: Its Origins, Theories and Impact* (Lanham, 1997).
 - 3 Jürgen Schmidt, *August Bebel. Kaiser der Arbeiter. Eine Biografie* (Zurich, 2013); Thomas Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie vom Vormärz bis zum Sozialistengesetz* (Bonn, 2000).
 - 4 Marc Vuilleumier, *Histoire et combats : mouvement ouvrier et socialisme en Suisse, 1864–1960* (Lausanne [etc.], 2012); Marianne Enckell, *La Fédération jurassienne : les origines de l’anarchisme en Suisse* (Lausanne, La Cité, 1971).
 - 5 Daisy Devreese (ed.), *Documents relatifs aux militants belges de l’Association internationale des travailleurs* (Louvain-Bruxelles, 1986).
 - 6 Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky, *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement. Years of the First International* (Londres, 1965); Margot Finn, *After Chartism. Class and Nation in English Radical Politics 1848–1874* (Cambridge, 1993). See also: Keith Robinson, “Karl Marx, the RWMA and London radicalism, 1864–72” (PhD., Manchester University, 1976).
 - 7 Clara E. Lida, *Anarquismo y revolución en la España del XIX* (Madrid, 1972); Carlos Serrano (ed.), *Actas de los Consejos y Comisión Federal de la Región Española (1870–1874)*, 2 vol. (Barcelona, 1969); Carlos Serrano (ed.), *Cartas, comunicaciones y circulares de la comisión federal de la Región española*, 7 vol. (Barcelona, 1972–1987); José A. Piqueras, Vicent Sanz Rosalén, “Introduction”, in *A Social History of Spanish Labour. New Perspectives and Class, Politics and Gender*, (New York, 2007), pp. 1–18; Josep Termes, *Anarquismo y sindicalismo en España (1864–1881)* (Barcelona, [1977] 2000); Carlos M. Rama, *Historia del movimiento obrero social latinoamericano contemporáneo* (Barcelona, 1976).

with works by Hubert Perrier, Michel Cordillot and, more recently, Timothy Messer-Kruse.⁸ Pithy syntheses have been written, such as those by Henryk Katz and Mathieu Léonard.⁹ Lastly, broader, transnational perspectives have been put forward, as with the proceedings of the conference organised in Amsterdam in September 1985 by Frits van Holthoon and Marcel van der Linden, locating the IWMA in the longer duration of labour internationalism, that is to say 1830–1940.¹⁰ To this list should be added the continuation of work started a long time ago, aiming to design reference tools or edit primary sources. Some of these are still being published, e.g. in the first section of the MEGA.¹¹ More recently, Marcello Musto has edited a sourcebook, including many texts published for the very first time in English, and a long, thoughtful introduction.¹² Readers will find greater details regarding each of these historiographies across this volume's contributions. It should be pointed out, however, that while studies became scarcer in the 1970–90s, the total over a 40-year period is sufficiently large to warrant an update.

However, the reasons for these updates are not only scholarly. Since 1964, the position of the First International in collective memory has deeply changed. Whereas fifty years ago, the IWMA was a controversial object, only a few specialists and political activists are now interested in it. Presumably, the acceleration of economic globalisation and the discourses that accompany it, the decline of socialist and communist ideals, and the flakiness of the trade union organisation have their part in this movement. The traditional political parties of the left, which usually belonged to Internationals when they were created a century or more ago, have moreover long renounced this filiation and are now purely

8 Hubert Perrier, "Idées et mouvement socialistes aux États-Unis, 1864–1890" (PhD., Paris 8 University, 1984); Michel Cordillot, *La Sociale en Amérique: dictionnaire biographique du mouvement social francophone aux États-Unis, 1848–1922* (Paris, 2002); Cordillot, *Utopistes et exilés du Nouveau monde*; Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Yankee International. Marxism and the American Tradition, 1848–1876* (Chapel Hill, 1998).

9 Henryk Katz, *The Emancipation of Labor: A History of the First International* (Westport, 1992); Mathieu Léonard, *L'émancipation des travailleurs: une histoire de la Première Internationale* (Paris, 2011). The bibliography on the IWMA in each country will be completed in the different chapters.

10 Frits Van Holthoon and Marcel van der Linden, *Internationalism in the Labour movement, 1830–1940* (Leiden, 1988).

11 MEGA (Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe) is the complete edition of the works of Marx and Engels, under the aegis of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (*Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften*). <http://mega.bbaw.de>.

12 Marcello Musto (ed.), *Workers Unite! The International 150 Years Later* (New York [etc.], 2014).

national parties, for which national anthems and flags have replaced “The Internationale” and the red flag. New protest movements which have emerged since the 1990s have sometimes attempted to do without trade unions and parties, and may therefore have reinforced this trend. At the same time, many assessments that are made today by protest movements were made in similar terms 150 years ago – as the economy is becoming global, so should struggles be. And undeniably, knowledge of the findings, achievements and failures of the pioneers of internationalist protest politics would be useful today. With this in mind, the First International should not be confused with the Second one (1889–1914), which was organised around national socialist parties that were sometimes large, and which set up relationships between their leaderships. Such was not the case of the IWMA which was founded before the development of these parties and which mostly gathered trade unions, associations, individual members and activists. It favoured various forms of solidarity among workers: from the coordination between unions to prevent the international circulation of strike breakers, to the support of political refugees.

So, in such a context, have new perspectives on labour history and new research in the field, since 1964, been fertile for the study of the IWMA? This is what the organisers of the conference which took place in June 2014 and resulted in this book have wondered.

For the 150th anniversary of the 1864 foundation of the IWMA, they invited historians working in the field to tackle the history of the IWMA, examining whether recent historiographic evolutions could be fruitful. Several aspects of the ways in which the new approaches may help re-write the history of the IWMA can therefore be highlighted.

Transnational Labour History

The first development which comes to mind is the emergence of a transnational and global labour and working-class resistance history, with research produced by various institutes across the world.¹³ This now-plentiful bibliography has made it possible to break from a largely Western-centric labour history, by bringing to the fore the vigour of social experiments in the rest of the world,

13 We are using “transnational” while speaking about the IWMA not for the sake of fashion but to insist on the flows and the links between the various branches, rather than the mere juxtaposition of national situations. The work of Amsterdam’s International Institute of Social History on the digitization of records and their promotion can be cited as an example of this.

the basic importance of indentured labour and the more complex geography of international migrations.¹⁴ In political terms, it has highlighted the role of piracies, the importance of entanglements at play in the age of revolutions (1750–1850), the existence of a liberal International in the 1820s–1830s, the flows of anarchist oppositions in the 1890s, and the sustained role of international organisations in the twentieth century.¹⁵ It is telling that the IWMA, an organisation centred on European workers, remains on the margins of these new fields.

In this sense, the present volume serves a variety of purposes. On the one hand, it intends to complete the IWMA's initial mapping, by adding geographic areas which have sometimes been neglected, such as imperial spaces, the United States and Latin America (Michel Cordillot, Horacio Tarcus, Antony Taylor). But it will also add to existing national analyses by juxtaposing analyses centred on countries, with studies of flows of people, ideas, technologies and money. The purpose is not to “construct” a fictional homogeneity, but to convey an impression of the actual spaces of exchanges and connections, with their plural polarities.¹⁶ This is the proposition which is put forward here on several occasions, for instance in the case of transatlantic networks in the

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- 14 For instance, to name but a few, Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World. Essays toward a Global Labour History* (Leiden, 2008); Alexandro Stanziani, *Labour, Coercion, and Economic Growth in Eurasia (17th–20th centuries)* (Leiden, 2012); Adam Mc Keown, “Global migrations 1846–1940” *Journal of World History*, vol. 15; n°2, (June 2004), pp. 159–189; Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (London, 2009), especially Chapters 1–2; Neville Kirk, “Transnational Labour History: Promise and Perils” in Leon Fink (ed.), *Workers Across the Americas: The Transnational Turn in Labour History* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 18–22; Charlotte Alston, “Introduction” in “Transnational Solidarities and the Identities of the Left, 1890–1990”, *European Review of History*, 21 (2014), 447–450.
- 15 Thus: Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, 2000); David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (eds.), *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760–1840* (New York, 2010); Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, William Max Nelson, (eds.) *The French Revolution in Global Perspective* (Ithaca, 2013); Sylvie Aprile, Jean-Claude Caron, Emmanuel Fureix (dir.), *La liberté guidant les peuples: les révolutions de 1830 en Europe* (Paris, 2013); Fernández Sebastián, Javier, *La Aurora de la libertad: los primeros liberalismos en el mundo iberoamericano* (Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2012). Clément Thibaud et al. (eds.), *L'Atlantique révolutionnaire. Une perspective ibéro-américaine* (Paris, 2013); Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (London [etc.], 2005). Steven Hirsch, Lucien Van der Walt, *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World, 1870–1940* (Leiden, 2010).
- 16 Following Pierre-Yves Saunier's propositions: “Introduction”, *Transnational History* (New-York [etc.], 2013), pp. 1–21; and “Circulations, connexions et espaces transnationaux”, *Genèses*, 57 (2004), pp. 110–126.

Hispanic world (Jeanne Moisand, Horacio Tarcus) and of the impact of the Paris Commune (Quentin Deluermoz, Albert Garcia Balañà). Another aspect is to shed light on the idiosyncrasies of local situations and of the specific horizons in which they unfold, in a perspective which articulates the local with the global – an essential concern if one wants to avoid reducing concrete experiences to simple copies of large-scale fluxes. Such richness is made obvious here, in most of the case studies focusing on a given space.

In this process – this is the second point – another landscape emerges, inviting the reader to rethink the very nature of the “organisation” referred to as the IWMA, in order to insist on entanglements between localities and struggles which were sometimes very different, interconnected by complex flows and appropriations. Many aspects are lacking from such an analysis, and a strictly global study would have sought to decentre our gazes further, through a large-scale comparison. But these early elements already constitute an invitation to fully reintegrate the IWMA into the field of studies on transnational labour, political organisations and resistances. It appears as a cornerstone which makes it possible to think about the reconfigurations at work, in modes of economic and political opposition, within the world of the 1860s.

Another History of the Debates Within the IWMA

Within this general framework, other dimensions should be underlined, such as the more intellectual and political issues. Before the 1964 conference, the historiography of the First International focused on the ideological debates which had resulted in its failure. The 1872 split at the Hague Congress, between one side which remained faithful to the London General Council, presented as Marxist, and another dissident side, presented as Bakuninist, was the focus of attention and informed narratives. Even Max Nettlau, as good a historian of the First International as could be, sought, above all, to establish the responsibilities for its failure, by proving the existence of adverse conspiracies.¹⁷ The 1964 conference marked a transition from a history of ideological struggles to a history of the IWMA's rank and file. This book extends this effort in several directions.

First, it restates the decisive role of popular political cultures, which were especially important among grassroots militants with little or no knowledge of Marx's and Bakunin's writings (Marianne Enckell). In this area, the new vistas, opened up by cultural and intellectual history approaches to politics,

17 Max Nettlau, *La Première internationale en Espagne (1868–1888)* (Dordrecht-Holland, 1969).

demonstrate how important the contexts in which the IWMA was born are: whether it be a well-established trade union and radical agitation in Britain (Detlev Mares), Belgium (Jean Puissant) and the United States (Michel Cordillot and Antony Taylor); a republican and working-class mobilization with occasional revolutionary leanings in France (Iorwerth Prothero), Spain (Albert Garcia Balañà) and Italy (Carl Levy); or social-democratic expansion in Germany (Jürgen Schmidt). Such anchorage in diverse European political cultures had practical as well as intellectual consequences for the young IWMA. The Internationalists' praxis was often deployed across various battlegrounds – political and trade union based, local and national. These struggles had their own demands and agendas: in 1865, for instance, no IWMA congress was organised because the franchise mobilisation in Britain absorbed all the General Council's energies (Detlev Mares).

The IWMA was rooted in the rebirth of democratic and labour-based political cultures of 1860s Europe. However, this does not mean that the decisive importance of some key socialist and anarchist thinkers in its history should be discounted. In this regard, this volume offers a historicised perspective on Proudhon's, Marx's and Bakunin's role within the IWMA. Proudhon provides a perfect illustration of the interplay between an author's work and a social movement: Proudhon died too early to operate within the IWMA, and his theories only inspired Internationalists insofar as they perceived them to mirror their own associational and cooperative practices (Samuel Hayat). Marx and Bakunin, who, for a long time, were united by the latter's admiration for the former, also sought to influence the ideas and behaviours of the working-class environments which surrounded them. Marx's efforts to promote his views among the London trade union leaders and, through them, to their personnel, had mixed results (Jürgen Herres). As for Bakunin, he dealt with less organised working class circles, such as those who formed the Jura Federation. The latter found in his theories a convenient tool for their fight against the established artisans of Geneva (Marianne Enckell and Marc Vuilleumier), who were both more conformist and more eager to integrate local politics. The men who relayed these thinkers' ideas appear just as important: for instance, Cafiero acted as a Bakuninist apostle in Italy, before providing the first translation of Marx's *Capital* in Italian, simplified and approved by the latter (Mathieu Léonard). Other intellectual currents proved very pervasive at the time the IWMA was founded, even though they subsequently sank into oblivion: this is the case of Positivism in Britain. It was indeed one of its representatives, Edward Beesly, who chaired the founding meeting of the IWMA on 28 September 1864 (Gregory Claeys) (See Figure 1.1).

Lastly, this volume examines debates which are less intellectual but more transversal, and which are present in many negotiations occurring at all levels

of the IWMA. The organisation of the International in economic terms, and the role of the General Council, regional federations and local sections, were debated especially vigorously: tougher rules on membership fees, imposed on the Spanish Regional Federation by the General Council, appear for instance as one of the reasons for the Hague split. Other debates focused on the role of trade unions and strikes. Where no consensus could be reached regarding the proliferation of such disputes or such organisations, the IWMA still operated as an echo chamber which amplified the late 1860s' European strike wave (Nicolas Delalande). Increased mechanisation also generated contradictory ideological stances. In the end, it was those who believed they could solve the problem through the appropriation of machinery by workers who prevailed, rather than those who claimed to revolutionise the way machinery was perceived (François Jarrige).

The Emergence of an Internationalist Culture

The IWMA thus achieved a mixed synthesis of positions drawn from various grass-root labour and democratic movements. However, it truly engendered a new political culture: labour internationalism, some components of which are examined in this book. There were precedents: as far back as the early nineteenth century, the exchanges enabled by exile and international voluntary work created forms of Liberal, or white, Internationals. Some of their practices could be found in the IWMA, such as the creation of militant networks through exile and migrations.¹⁸ Even before the 1848 revolutions, London witnessed the formation of the first internationalist organisations such as the Fraternal Democrats (1845–48). It then welcomed all the defeated revolutionaries from the Continent (Fabrice Bensimon).

The expansion of “campaign-based” internationalism in the course of the 1860s gave these organisations new shared cultural references: the wars for Italian unity, the American Civil War, the crushed Polish national upheaval, the Irish national struggle and the first Cuban war of independence, all mobilised very wide support in democratic and labour opinions in Europe and the United States (Krzysztof Marchlewicz). They were symbols of a project of universal

18 Walter Bruyère-Ostells, *La grande armée de la liberté* (Paris, 2009). Gilles Pécout, “The international armed volunteers: pilgrims of a Transnational Risorgimento”, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 14, 4 (2009), pp. 413–426; Delphine Diaz, Jeanne Moisand, Romy Sanchez and Juan Luis Simal (eds.), *Exils entre les deux mondes. Migrations et espaces politiques atlantiques au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2015).

emancipation, and galvanised the support of IWMA militants. However, these national struggles represented potential bones of contention: in 1867, following an Irish national terrorist attack, some of the London IWMA leaders turned their backs on the Irish cause – which Marx supported – to preserve their hard-won respectability in the face of new voters (Detlev Mares). Their abolitionist stance in the United States and Cuba may also have appeared ambivalent. While it testified to the egalitarian aspirations of labour internationalism with respect to racial issues, at a time and in locations where abolitionism had to derive from resolute commitment, it can be objected that the defence of genuine equality with coloured workers reached some limits; for instance, in New York, the cigar-makers' union, set up by Germans who were very active in the local IWMA sections, was closed to Cuban cigar-makers, who were often black or mixed race workers.¹⁹ However, it must be restated that the American sections of the IWMA were among the few political organisations at the time to defend the principle of racial equality, and also to integrate black workers into their demonstrations.²⁰

The birth of labour internationalism also rested on some forms of cultural and material organisation, of which several instances feature in this book. For instance, international congresses, occurring yearly in the life of the International, were derived from models of learned sociability (See Figure 1.3). A crossover between these scientific congresses and those of the IWMA, the student congresses celebrated in Belgium in the late 1860s, also paved the way. They contributed to the training and networking of young continental radicals, and were also one of the origins of the setting up of the Belgian IWMA federation (Jean Puissant).

The press obviously played a very important role. Indeed, as several contributions show, it was an essential part of political cultures. In this respect, the volume is an invitation to keep up the task of documenting the IWMA, which was done to a very high standard in 1964. Congress reports and other documents from the Central Council and the IWMA congresses were published and widely used. This might not have been quite the case for the press, including the labour press. And yet, this type of media was booming at the time, and it remains largely uncharted territory, where historians will “lower down ..., here and there, a little bucket”.²¹ The digitisation of many periodicals from the period

19 Ad Knotter, “Transnational cigar-makers. Cross-border labour markets, strikes, and solidarity at the time of the First International (1864–1873)”, *International Review of Social History* 59 (2014) 409–442.

20 Philip Foner, *American Socialism and Black Americans. From the Age of Jackson to World War II* (Westport, Connecticut, 1977), pp. 36–42.

21 Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (London, 1918), preface.

may make it possible to renew this research even more, though one should remain cautious about the choices and selections that were made, often with various constraints. In the same perspective, the material culture of the IWMA – posters, drawings, etchings, flags, membership cards, faience, embroidery etc. – also remains to be investigated, as restated by Jean Puissant when he presented the photo of a banner from the Fayt section (Belgium), “Solidarity”, from around 1870 (see cover). In his study on Chartism, Malcom Chase thus showed how such material may be used, and there are many ongoing attempts to integrate them into labour history.²² Lastly, private correspondences may not have yielded all their results yet: they already crystallise a renewed interest, as shown by studies on Marx’s letters but also, here, on those of Johann Philipp Becker, of which there are several thousands (Jürgen Schmidt).

On the opposite political side, there is also scope to further explore accommodation and repression policies on the part of ruling authorities, as well as the IWMA myth, feeding on a powerful conspiratorial imagination,²³ with unexpected effects: whilst it justified the implementation of police and judicial repression, it seems that the knowledge of the activities and idiom of the IWMA was, in some remote places, disseminated more effectively and quickly by the opposing press. Moreover, this myth probably played a role, in retrospect, giving a strong appearance of coherence to this labour internationalism.

Social Status and Gender Relations

Our last point regards the sociology of militants or, more accurately, of the different groups involved – to various extents – in the history of the IWMA and its development. Studies from the 1960s had already facilitated considerable progress in this respect, in particular by underlining the “high number” of skilled workers and artisans, with a wide range of specialisms, which also varied from one place to the next; their importance also accounted for the organisation’s richness and diversity. Most articles confirm this observation, adding new details here and there regarding specific groups of workers whose respective

22 Malcolm Chase, *Chartism. A New History* (Manchester, 2007). See also: Katrina Navickas, “That sash will hang you: political clothing and adornment in England, 1780–1840”, *Journal of British Studies*, 49, 3, (2010), pp. 540–565; Mark Nixon, Gordon Pentland and Matthew Roberts, “The Material Culture of Scottish Reform Politics, c.1820–c.1884”, *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 32 (2012), pp. 28–49.

23 Jean-Noël Tardy, *L'Âge des ombres: Complots, conspirations et sociétés secrètes au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2015).

labour market had become internationalised – for instance the cigar makers,²⁴ or the glassworkers, amongst others.²⁵ But, above all, these articles have extended the study of actors who had only been briefly discussed previously, or somewhat left aside.

Thus, the role of intellectuals, epitomised by Karl Marx's exemplary figure, has now been enriched (Jürgen Herres), and it is possible to grasp complex currents, such as British Positivism, which supported the International's project and contributed to its shaping (Gregory Claeys). Many actors belonging to the "middle classes" – although the term is disputed – played a crucial role, for instance lawyers, journalists and even doctors. No general rule can be discerned; it is the case, rather, that each scene had its own dynamic: a local journalist would command a great deal of respect in one place, whilst in another, workers would reject any intrusion "from above", thereby reinforcing the impression that the IWMA was very heterogeneous in its makeup. Other social groups neglected by historians appear here in sharper focus, amongst them, the peasantry, whose importance was rendered so visible by the global histories of anarchism initiated in 1980s.²⁶

Lastly, the place of women remained for a long time a poor relation in the history of the IWMA, as in so many nineteenth-century movements. The 1964 conference did not examine this point. The situation has begun to change, too tentatively, no doubt. Regarding the IWMA, Antje Schrupp has since written a PhD and several other pieces, which she summarises here.²⁷ Through the itineraries of four Internationalists – André Léo, Elisabeth Dimitrieff, Victoria Woodhull and Virginie Barbet – she shows the contradictions among various sections of an overwhelmingly male-dominated IWMA. The IWMA was one of the rare political organisations of its era admitting women. However, their aspirations to vote, to work, to occupy a full and complete place in political and trade union assemblies and associations, and even to love freely, clashed with a masculine – if not sexist – culture and with the ideal of the male breadwinner, which prevailed in many IWMA sections, for instance those marked by Proudhonism. Antony Taylor also discusses Victoria Woodhull, and several contributions discuss other women – even if this is a question which certainly calls for additional research. Extending the effort started in the 1960s, the sociology of

24 Knotter, "Transnational cigar-makers".

25 See: Marc Vuilleumier, "Les drapeaux de la Première Internationale en Suisse", *Cahiers d'histoire du mouvement ouvrier*, 31 (2015), pp. 22–44.

26 Jason Adams, *Non-Western Anarchisms. Rethinking the Global Context* (Johannesburg, 2003).

27 Antje Schrupp, *Nicht Marxistin und auch nicht Anarchistin. Frauen in der Ersten Internationale* (Königstein, 1999).

the IWMA has thus been augmented, reaching beyond the mere context of occupations, pointing to a wide range of local set-ups and hinting at the need to further interrogate the meanings of “worker” in this period.

Outline of the Volume

The contributions are gathered in three different parts.

Organisation and Debates

First, this volume deals with the IWMA as an organisation, and with its activities as such. The IWMA was a meeting place for positions drawn from the bases of various labour and democratic movements. These different opinions didn't merge. However, the IWMA truly gave birth to a new political culture, as mentioned above, that of labour internationalism. This part explores the organisations that preceded the IWMA, and underlines the central role played by London. The confusion between the General Council of the IWMA and its British federation remained throughout the life of the Association (Detlev Mares). Karl Marx thought that the world's centre of capitalism, the one that was most likely to provoke the spark of a world revolution, could not be dealt with as an ordinary national federation. The organisation emerged in the context of large strike waves; something Iorwerth Prothero underlines in his comparative study of France and Britain. These conditions played an important part in many of the debates which took place within the IWMA and its branches: the support for these movements, and the nature of financial structures, meant support for the organisation and its actions (Nicolas Delalande), and the central issue of mechanisation where those who wished to appropriate the machines prevailed, though not without dispute (François Jarrige). Quentin Deluermoz reassesses the multi-faceted impact of the 1871 Paris Commune on the IWMA.

Global Causes and Local Struggles

Second, the volume reviews the activities of local sections, studying both their local roots and their connections with transnational political cultures: Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland (Krzysztof Marchlewicz), Russia (Woodford McClellan), Spain and Hispanic America, Italy (Carl Levy), and the United States. To take just a few examples, Marc Vuilleumier addresses the specificities of the artisan culture in Switzerland. Woodford McClellan and Krzysztof Marchlewicz examine exiles, Russian and Polish ones respectively, thus contributing to a focus on Eastern Europe, although these sections were made of exiles in Switzerland and Britain. The role of European exiles in

the Atlantic extension of the IWMA is then studied by Horacio Tarcus, Michel Cordillot and Antony Taylor. Their anchorage in diverse European political cultures and the mobilities of their actors had obvious practical, as well as intellectual consequences for the young IWMA.

The IWMA also had small groups in the Netherlands, Denmark, Portugal, Ireland and Austria-Hungary, which are not dealt with here.²⁸ However, some papers contribute to our knowledge of the IWMA beyond its traditional boundaries. Horacio Tarcus reconsiders what we know about the IWMA in Latin America, while Jeanne Moisan focuses on little-known transatlantic networks in the Spanish Empire, between Spain and Cuba.

Actors and Ideologies

Third, the volume addresses the part played by some personalities and the “ideologies” that were constructed on the basis of their thinking. Jürgen Herres argues that the roles attributed to Marx in the IWMA were sometimes anachronistic and he proposes to historicise Marx once again. Samuel Hayat puts in context another trend of thought: “Proudhonism”, for which he shows the rooting in the French workers’ practices of the period. The part played by some thinkers, who had been forgotten, despite their crucial importance when the IWMA was founded, is recalled – in particular the Positivists and Edward Beesly (Gregory Claeys). Antje Schrupp then focuses on four female thinkers of the International, who were active in France and the USA, while questioning the links between feminism and internationalism. Marianne Enckell then deals with Bakunin, whose activity in Switzerland she recontextualises within the conflicts of local workers. Mathieu Léonard finally proposes a contrasted portrait of Carlo Cafiero, a fervid supporter of Marx, who later shifted to Bakunin’s side, before eventually proposing the first Italian translation of *Capital*. In each case, chapters reaffirm the decisive role of some popular political cultures which were especially important among grassroots militants with little or no knowledge of Marx’s and Bakunin’s writings (Marianne Enckell).

28 See: Jacques Giele, *De Eerste Internationale in Nederland. Een onderzoek naar het ontstaan van de Nederlandse arbeidersbeweging van 1868 tot 1876* (Nijmegen, 1973); Jens Engberg (ed.), *Den Internationale Arbejderforening for Danmark*, 2 vols. (Copenhague, 1985 and 1992); Sean Daly, *Ireland and the First International* (Cork, 1984); Herbert Steiner, “Die Internationale Arbeiter Association und die österreichische Arbeiterbewegung”, *Archiv für Sozial Geschichte*, vol IV (Hannover 1964), pp. 447–513; Carlos Da Fonseca, *A Origem da 1.a Internacional em Lisboa* (Lisbonne, 1978); Bernhard Bayerlein, “La Première Internationale au Portugal, vue à travers la correspondance internationale, particulièrement celle avec le Conseil général”, Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, *Utopie et socialisme au Portugal au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1982), pp. 479–534.

In the end, the overall assessment outlined here is an invitation to rediscover this landmark experiment, refocus our attention and carry on with research. While it is intended as more than just a – necessarily incomplete – survey of works completed in the last fifty years, each unturned stone suggests what may be started in the years to come. We also hope that readers will find in the present contributions both clear historiographical surveys and original research. They may also – in these days of multifaceted nationalistic withdrawal – find here something of the hope of the men and women of 1864, who believed “the International Union [would] be the human race”.

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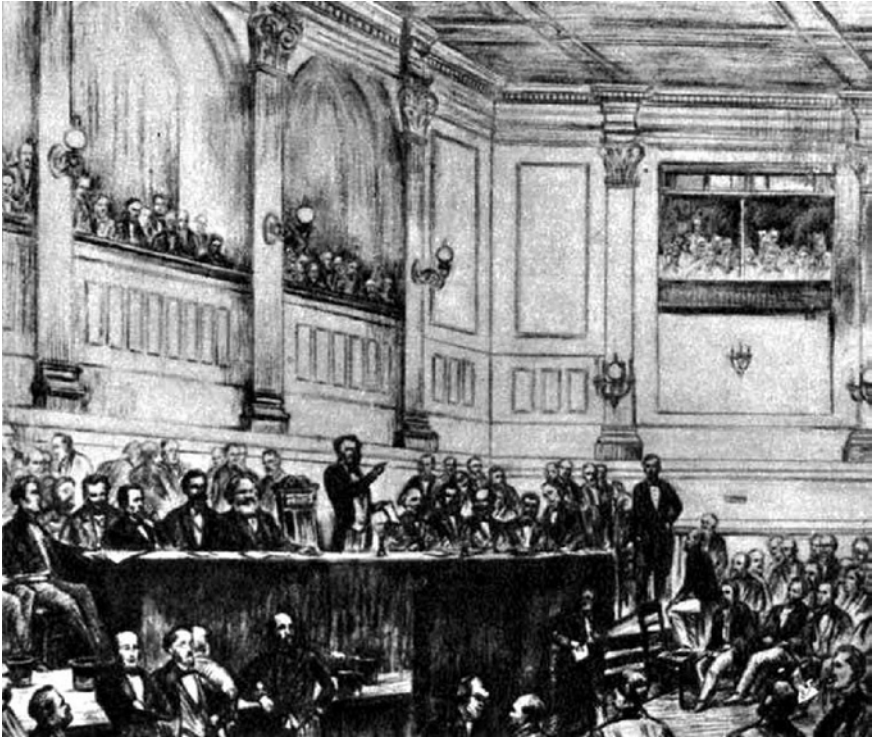


FIGURE 1.1 *Foundation meeting of the IWMA. St Martin's Hall, London, 28 September 1864.*
PRIVATE COLLECTION.

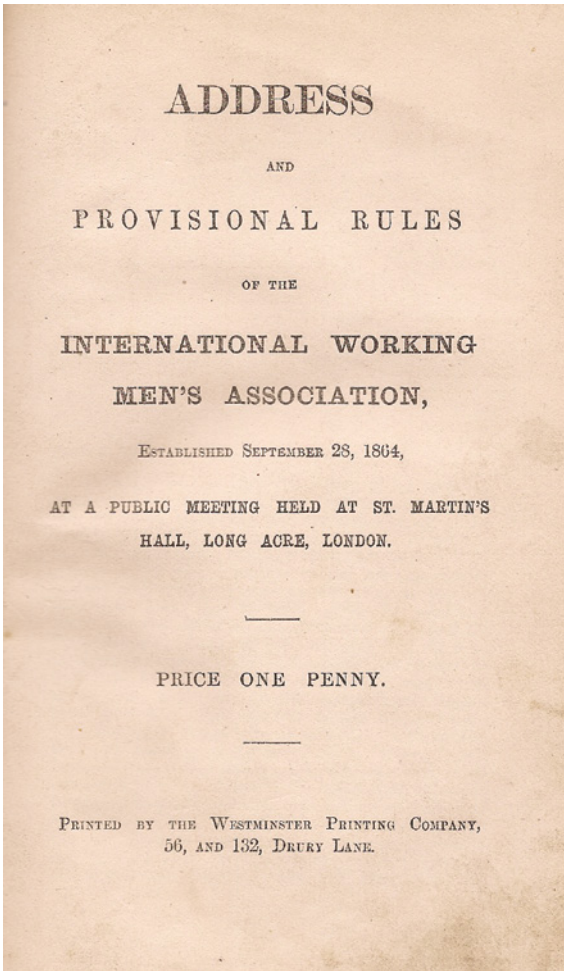


FIGURE 1.2 *Address and Provisional Rules of the IWMA, 28 September 1864 (front page)*. Address and Provisional Rules of the IWMA, Westminster Printing Company, London, 1864. PRIVATE COLLECTION OF MICHEL CORDILLOT.



FIGURE 1.3 *Delegates to the Geneva Conference 1866.*

