**OVERVIEW of the various series, volumes, different sites of publication, and different languages of publication of The Communist International 1919 - 1940**

Marty Goodman director, Riazanov Library digital archive projects September 2023

Re: The English language versions of "The Communist International"

**Regarding Date of Publication:** For all of the "Old Series", and for much of the "New Series", and for most of volumes 3 thru 10, it was rare for the date of the issue to be printed in the issue. By 1935 / Volume 12, dates of publication were pretty much always printed in the issue. Often on the cover.

**Regarding languages of publication:** In the very first issue of the first ("old") series of "The Communist International", published in 1919, it is stated that this periodical is published simultaneously in Russian, German, English, and French. This announcement continues throughout the 30 issues of the "Old Series" (1919 - January 1924), and in the 23 issues of the "New Series" (1924 - mid 1926). I'm not sure when publication in Russian, German, and French ended. More on the publication in English follows.

**The "Old Series" 1919 - January 1924**

**(30 numbered issues. Some as dual number issues.)**

**(what I call "Volume 1", and what Greenwood Press calls "Series 1")**

The first 30 English language issues of The Communist International are most often referred to as "The Old Series". Because the NEXT batch of CI issues has PRINTED ON IT the term "New Series". I personally think it more appropriate to refer to this batch of 30 issues as "Volume 1". Up through combined number issue 16-17, these English language issues were printed in Soviet Russia.

In this series, the English language issues 7-8, 10, 14, 15, and 20 thru 23 appear, according to those who made the 1968 Greenwood Reprint, to be lost to history. These numbers were supplied in the Greenwood Press 1968 reprint as German language issues.

At the time of my writing this piece, I discovered that the Yivo archives held English language versions of issues 15 and of issues 18 thru 23 of "the Old Series of "The Communist International". I'm doing what I can to persuade them to provide digital images of them.

Sometime between issue 16-17 and issue 24 of this "Old Series", publication of the English language issues switched to London, by the CP GB's printing / publishing apparatus. If and when I get to see images of the missing English language issues held by Yivo, perhaps I can narrow down better when this shift in place of publication occurred.

**The "New Series" early 1924 - mid 1926**

**(23 numbered issues. Some as dual number issues.)**

**(what I call "Volume 2", and what Greenwood Press calls "Series 2")**

Beginning early 1924 and extending thru mid 1926, a new group of 23 numbered issues of The Communist International begins. This had printed on its spine, and elsewhere, the term "New Series". So is most commonly referred to as "The New Series". However, Greenwood Press in its 1968 reprint of this material refers to this series... and all issues that follow that... as "Series 2". I prefer to call the "New Series" "Volume 2". These, and all following issues up thru those of 1933 (more on 1934-1940, later) were printed in London.

**October - December 1926 Volume 3**

After "Number 23" of the "New Series" (what I call "Volume 2") of "The Communist International", in October of 1926, the physical format of the English language editions of The Communist International changed dramatically. They changed from being relatively fat book-like affairs of multiple groupings held together with staples and glue, with a color cover glued on, to being thin issues of white paper folded once, held together by staples going directly into the spine. No special cover was provided.

At this point the publishers of CI officially term the October thru December 1926 issues "Volume 3". This is my basis for using "Volume 1" for the "Old Series", and "Volume 2" for the "New Series". For after this yearly groupings of CI are mostly put into given "volumes", with some oddities of where the volume started and ended until 1931, when there became a one to one correspondence of volumes and a given year's issues.

**1927 Volume 4**

Volume 4 contains exclusively 1927 issues. Would our comrades putting out Communist International had decided to stick with that. Unfortunately, they didn't.

**1928 Volume 5 and first two issues in Volume 6**

**1929 Volume 6 Number 3 thru Volume 6 Number 27.**

**1930 Volume 6 Number 28 thru the end of Volume 6 (number 31) (4 issues)**

**AND all 14 issues in Volume 7.**

**1931 - 1933 (inclusive) : Volumes 8, 9 and 10 / The matter of "for USA" and "for Great Britain" issues**

During these years, The Communist International continued to be published exclusively in London. Each year has a different volume number: 1931 = Volume 8, 1932 = Volume 9, and 1933 = Volume 10. However, my preliminary examination of the issues and research in the literature about these issues suggests that London printed two variant issues... one for sale in the USA, which had USA / New York City based advertisements and a New York City address on the front page, and one for sale in Great Britain. BOTH clearly stated they were printed at a London print shop on the LAST PAGE of the issues. But looking at the FRONT page, one might wrongly assume the "for the USA" issues were PRINTED in the USA. This, by the way, may be true of issues printed in the period of 1926 - 1930 as well. But I can't at this time confirm that.

One source I've read suggests there were differences in content in terms of articles included in the "for the USA" and "for Great Britain" issues of the same date and number, but as of my writing this piece, I've not found examples of that in this period. On the other hand, I've very few "for Great Britain" issues from this period.

**My Sources for THIS digital archive of "The Communist International":**

I live in the USA, and most of my sources for material to digitize come from the USA. I used the Greenwood Press series of 31 physical bound volumes of The Communist International for much of the early part of this archive (tho about 1/3 of such I was able to scan from original issues). In the later years, in particular after 1933, Greenwood Press reproduced in its volumes the issues of The Communist International printed in New York City by the CP USA.

**1934 - 1939 CI printed both in N Y City and in London:**

Starting February of 1934, "The Communist International" was printed in English BOTH in London by the CP GB and in New York City by the CP USA. The covers of corresponding issues had quite different art work. The page numbering was quite different. Advertisements were different. Sometimes one print house would combine issues where the other would not. As for important content... the articles... the two versions (NY City and London) appear, to the extent I can determine this from the relatively few issues of London-published versions I have, to have largely but not entirely the same articles. But... sometimes specific corresponding NY City and London issue numbers had entirely the same articles, sometimes MOSTLY the same articles, and sometimes the same article was printed in different numbered issues of New York and London versions of The Communist International.

**Volume Numbering oddity in the British-printed issues of The Communist International:**

The volume number for 1937 CI is 14, in both the American and British published versions. However, while the American CP USA managed to correctly determine that "15" follows "14", The British CP GB appeared to have trouble with the math there, and assigned "16" as the volume number for 1938. In the one other year that CI was published in Britain, 1939, they assigned to that year volume 17, compounding their previous error. Thus, for American CI issues, 1937, 1938, 1939, and 1940 are respectively volumes 14, 15, 16, and 17. But for British - printed CI issues, 1937, 1938 and 1939 (publication ceased in Britain in December of 1939), the corresponding volume numbers are 14, 16, and 17, respectively.

**Regarding the issues I have scanned for this digital archive of CI:**

I will be presenting here a COMPLETE run of CI New York City CP USA printed issues for 1934 - 1940. Largely scanned from original issues, with a few missing issues scanned from the Greenwood Press reprint. I will also be presenting here the small number of London / CP GB issues of The Communist International I've been able to lay hands on, to provide an at least somewhat (I hope) representative sample that illustrates similarities and differences between the two different CI publications.

In 1939 the CP GB stopped printing issues of The Communist International.

In New York City, the CP USA continued to print it, once a month, throughout 1940. But it no longer bore the description "Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International". Now, in the 1940 issues, instead, we find "Edited by Earl Browder".

**The final gasps / Two successors of "The Communist International in 1941 and 1942:**

In 1941 the CP USA printed two issues of "International Review" (April and June), which I provide in this archive, scanned from original issues. This is considered to be one of the two epilogues / sad last gasps of the once impressive "The Communist International". Later in 1941 and into 1942, the CP USA printed 5 issues of a publication titled "World Survey", which chroniclers of the radical left press see as the final vaguely "Communist International - like" successor to "The Communist International. Scans of all of these, which I made, are provided in the digital archive of "The Communist International we offer here on the Marxists Internet Archive site.

Moving further and further from any "commitment to world revolution", seeking to re-assure his allies in World War II, Stalin officially disbanded the Comintern in 1943.

So a great organization and a great publication ended. Not with a bang, but with a sad whine and whimper.

---marty

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