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Milan, 6, October 1986

Dear Friends,

On september 2nd 1986 in the evening, during the 22nd Linz International Conference of working movement historians, a meeting, promoted by Brodolini Foundation of Milan, was held between the delegates of several institutes concerned with the international project of May Day history. The discussion was chiefly focused on two initiatives proposed by Brodolini Foundation: the compiling of national bibliographies on May Day history in each country and a "reprint" of the May Day beginning.

The bibliography

This work has a national nature and the institutes, or groups of institutes for a given country concerned with it, will settle autonomously its criteria and dimensions: chronological limits, materials taken into account (booklets, periodicals, publications strictly dealing with May Day iconographic and photographic material, a.s.o.), filing criteria, a.s.o. International collaboration spirit in this field should essentially express through the exchange of information on different initiatives foreseen or already carried out, news issues, statements, projects a.s.o.; it can take place in "May Day Bulletin" edited by Brodolini Foundation (a wide information has already appeared in Bulletin No.1

concerning the bibliography carried out in Italy; those who don't own this number may ask for it to Brodolini Foundation). During the meeting it was emphasized the opportunity to establish their belonging to a project of international bibliography on May Day at the issue of the different bibliographic works, with a common title in latin or in the national language.

The "reprint"

Basing on the discussion made during the meeting, the kind of the foreseen work was established more clearly, as regards the proposal framed in Bulletin No.1, as a documentary, illustrated volume on the beginning of May Day; on this point of view the initial definition of "reprint" doesn't seem entirely suitable. From the discussion, held during the meeting, it's possible to come to some common conclusions and to the consequent operative proposals of Brodolini Foundation.

a) Book structure

The volume, presenting in all its sections a choice of former time documents supported by captions and introduction, should result as follows:

- an introductory section concerning May Day genesis (about 30 pages), (precedents of the eight-hour work day fight, Chicago events, reactions they caused in Europe, resolution of Paris Congress of the Second International).
- a central section (450-500 pages) including the documentation concerning first May Day demonstrations of european working movement subdivided into national sections according to the pre-

sent political geography of Europe. On this purpose we will take into account the first two years of demonstrations, for the majority of european countries placed in 1890 and 1891, while for some others in 1893 and 1894.

- a supplement (about 40 pages) including an outline of the first May Day celebrations in the whole world and reproduction of images documenting the world-wide spread of demonstrations. Central part, devoted to Europe and divided into national sections, fulfils the main scientific aim of the book. It gives a documentation, whose spatial and temporal limits are clearly defined, dealing with a determinate and significant phase of working movement history, coinciding with the beginning of the Second International. Therefore it is a documentation concerning both extent and taking roots of working movement, as a working mass framed movement in a well-defined historical moment, and limits and differences existing in this taking roots. Image and cartography of a well-defined period of socialism will result from the central section. On the other hand introductory part as well as supplement will outline universal nature and courses of ideas and influences transmission, at international level, always present in the whole May Day history.

b) Volume edition and kinds of reproduced materials

This volume is an international collective work. Brodolini Foundation undertakes the whole volume edition (making-up, checks aiming to avoid repetitions if any, a.s.o.) and printing. Institutes or individual scholars supporting this initiative in the

different countries are quite responsible for their own national sections for choice of materials to reproduce as well as for introduction writing of the section and the captions accompanying each image.

Reproduced materials may be of different kinds: front pages or articles of the working movement press, generical political press, archival documentation on the demonstration course (circulars, reports, a.s.o.) particularly important items or item summaries of this Day in different places, songs, poetries, a.s.o., edited on May Day, posters or leaflets, illustrations published in newspapers and photos concerning the demonstrations course; different kinds of materials produced for May Day (picture post-cards, medals, badges, clocks a.s.o.).

As for the volume introductory part and supplement, Brodolini Foundation will undertake the task of collecting materials, and of their presentation, by consulting the institutes it can contact in the different continents, relying on the collaboration of the institutes concerned with the project, on their advices and suggestions and on the material finding.

Before giving the go-ahead to the volume a meeting will be held, open to all institutes and scholars who contributed to the work. During this meeting it will be possible to examine the whole of the volume (texts and reproduced materials) and to tackle ir-resolute problems.

c) Dimensions and outlines of national sections

At most 20 pages are foreseen for each national section and they may include a written introduction of about 3 pages as

well as photographic reproduction and captions. Taking into account that the UNIFORMAT(21cm x 29,7) is the one foreseen for the volume and that some reproductions will take a whole page to ascertain its legibility (for instance the reproduction of a whole newspaper page or of a rather wide article) we may foreseen for each section an average of 25 photographic reproductions of the different materials.

It is essential to follow a common outline, including data and well-defined information on a series of items, for the choice of different materials as well as for introduction writing, so that the different national sections, composing the working movement condition in each country, may be, at the same time, homogenous.

The items are as follows:

- organizations (political, unionist, a.s.o.) which undertake demonstrations initiative, different ideological trends, contrasts on the nature and the aims of demonstration.
- course of the most significant demonstrations in each country (processions, public meetings, secret meetings, trips into the country), places (cities, regions, a.s.o.), demonstrations number and number of people attending them, data on their social composition, on the presence of women and children, delegations to the Authorities, if any, or significant factor of procession way: incidents, arrests, criminal proceedings ensuing from them, if any, particularly important preventive measures, commanding classes or public opinion reactions;

- demonstrations image, materials, ornaments and behaviours which marked them: flags, bands, floats, songs, flowers, badges, post-cards a.s.o.

- other eventual particularities of May Day demonstrations in the different countries expressing their connection with the previous popular traditions, relationship between the working movement and the whole of society, geographic and climatic conditions a.s.o. As to the aforesaid items it is obviously necessary to make a clear-cut distinction between the two years taken into account on the inside of each section.

Captions sideways on different reproductions must include essential data on each piece which was presented: title and description of the object taken into account, reproduction source, extremely synthetic additional notes, if any, aiming to reconstruct dimensions, climate and issue of demonstrations.

For the preparation of the different national sections, and merely by way of exemple, we send you, under separate cover, the preliminary choices for the italian section.

At least we must take into account the possibility of some exception concerning the subdivision by national sections. For instance the existence of a common working group for May Day history between the institutes of Scandinavian countries must induce the concerned institutes to prefer a preparation of a common Scandinavian section on the inside of the volume, whose number of pages shall be proportionate to the number of interested countries.

d) Technical advices on materials reproduction

The different materials have to be reproduced in photocolour

(10x12 size) or diapositive if the original one is coloured (paintings, drawings, illustrations, postcards).

Other materials (newspapers pages, articles, posters) have to be reproduced by black-and-white photographs on glossy paper (18x24 size) or, for minor materials (postcards, coins, leftlets, a.s.o.) 10x12 size.

Anyway for the reproduction professional criteria are strictly recommendable: no second-hand materials got from illustrated texts or catalogues, only original one.

According with the previous indications each production must be provided with captions; please therefore send us the photographic reproduction and their captions with the same progressive number. (We are aware that some indications may seem schematic as well as pedantic, but we are sure you will understand our editorial need of homogeneity).

e) Accomplishment terms

According to the remarks stated during Linz meeting, July 1987 will be the last term for texts and reproductions sending to Brodolini Foundation of Milan. According to this term it will be possible to convene a definitive meeting, open to all the collaborators, during autumn 1987, to start the volume printing. Publication and distribution are therefore foreseen for the first semester of 1988.

f) Research and reproduction costs of materials and printing

Brodolini Foundation undertakes editing and printing costs of volume and foresees an international edition, in English, of five thousand copies. In this connection all the collaborators are kindly requested to send to Brodolini Foundation an English

version of their texts, introductions and captions. As for the research and reproduction costs of materials of the different national sections, they will be charged to the account of the institutes responsible for each section. As for the individual researchers only, reporting their impossibility to rely on an institute or university faculty, it may be possible to agree on a reimbursement of research and photographic reproduction costs. For the English international edition of the volume (500-600 pages with black-and-white or coloured photographic reproductions) unit cost was estimated at 13.000 - 14.000 Italian Liras a copy; therefore the different institutes are kindly requested to let us know, as soon as possible, how many copies they intend to book according to the aforesaid unit cost plus shipping charges. It is pointless to underline that it is absolutely necessary to have a certain number of booked copies as to recuperate the partial production costs of the volume.

Taking into account the proposal forwarded during Linz meeting, we estimated an additional cost for eventual national edition (for instance in Spanish or German) for the institutes which may undertake its expenses.

We must look into two hypothesis:

- 1) If this national edition too should be printed in Milan the additional cost charged to the account of the concerned institute should be estimated at 5 000 000 Italian Liras for the foreign language type-setting and redaction expenses plus the text plaques remaking as well as the cost of translation from English into national language, shipping of the national edition copies,

printing expenses for an eventual increase as regards to the total run of the five thousand foreseen copies (naturally in case of a general run increase of the volume unit cost will be probably reduced).

2) On the other hand it is also possible to obtain from Milan the doubles of photolitic equipment; on this basis the concerned institutes should publish the volume directly and in loco. This supply entails a foreseen cost of 2 000 000 Italian Liras.

During Linz meeting it was often underlined the opportunity of a publication, given up to May Day history, which should exceed the limits of the foreseen documentary volume and attest to the world-wide dimension of the demonstration. Although Brodolini Foundation shares the opportunity of this initiative it does'nt believe to be presently in a position to put forward a proposal on it. Nevertheless institutes and individual scholars who should stand up for this subject are invited to utilize "May Day Bulletin" as a means to make known their proposals and discussions contributions.

At the closing of this long letter it seems necessary to underline another two items:

- It is important that institutes and individual scholars, to whom we proposed to contribute to the documentary illustrated volume on May Day beginning, should reply to our letter as soon as possible in order to acquaint us with their informal agreement and availability to share the initiative.

- Issue of "May Day Bulletin" No.2 is foreseen for January 1987. Bulletin has an international circulation between all people concerned with "May Day" project. So all the participants to the initiatives and researches on May Day history might contribute to Bulletin through a timely communication of news (publications, if any, meetings or seminars, exhibitions, sources finding or organization, working projects) remarks, proposals, a.s.o., in order that it should hold its task of an information and connexion instrument.

With my kindest regards
for Brodolini Foundation

Andrea Panaccione

TÜRKİYE SOSYAL TARİH ARAŞTIRMA VAKFI
TÜSTAV

Marburg, 30 10 '86

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Dear Friend,

I was anxious as to the outcome of the discussion on the approach to the May Day project and the corresponding content of the planned international collective publication. The conversations that I had with some colleagues following the 12th September meeting on this issue, had given the hope that a common understanding could be reached between the non-European and European viewpoints.

In your letter dated 6. October, you state your final proposal, which, as far as I understand, does not differ from the very first one and at the same time you call for different proposals to be communicated via the May Day Bulletin. Below I summarize my proposal, which I believe conveys the standpoint of some other colleagues from the so called "Third World countries" in particular and non-European countries in general, in the form of a note for your information. If you find it meaningful, you can use this note for the benefit of further discussions.

The idea underlying this proposal is that the significance of the 1st of May and the unity of the struggle of the working class of all countries are one and the same. I am aware that further discussions on this subject are only meaningful, and the attendant intellectual and material "burdens" justifiable, if and only if this identity continues to be an indispensable component of our conception of May Day.

"(1) May Day which has originated outside of Europe, and for decades has become the banner of working masses outside of Europe at least as much as in Europe, should be dealt with on a world-wide scale. One should not insist on maintaining a certain homogeneity, by imposing geographical or chronological boundaries, when the very nature of the subject matter conflicts with such a homogeneity.

(2) It is understandable that the most easily realizable part of the project is that relating to Europe, since most of the institutions participating in the project are from Europe themselves and since the scientific and technical problems are easier to solve within these geographical boundaries. Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked that the section on Europe, however important it may be, can not but a part of the whole project and publication. A "supplement" on May Day in countries outside of Europe, falls short of making up for this crucial lack.

(3) This shortcoming can only be met, under existing conditions, with a second volume, while the first incorporates the initial proposal of the Brodolini Foundation. If the first May Day demonstrations in

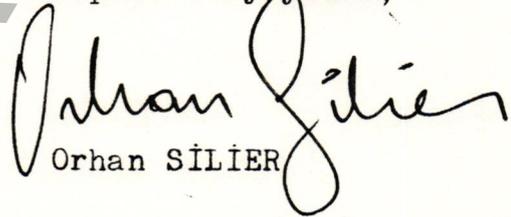
different countries are arranged in chronological order with no upper limit set on the year of celebration, this would mean, naturally, that the first volume would cover predominantly European countries.

(4) In order to include in the second volume as many different countries as possible it might be useful to get in touch with relevant organizations in the respective countries and/or to make a division of work between the institutes already taking part in the project. It is my belief that, if this part of the project is accorded due importance, the pooled human and financial resources of these institutes will be quite sufficient to prepare an adequate summary for each of the greater part of the remaining countries.

(5) Such a publication would constitute a concrete example of moving away from the oft mentioned Euro-centrism in working class historiography. I believe that 1st of May is the most convenient subject for such a step. Moreover, the resulting publication would be a lot more attractive commercially than just another reworking of well known material, in as much as it brings to light new information. In this way, the Brodolini Foundation will have the distinction of having coordinated an extremely valuable contribution to the international history of the 1st of May."

Hoping to hear you,

respectively yours,


Orhan SİLIER

TÜRKİYE SOSYAL TÜRSTAV TARİH ANKARA