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Document Version

Accepted author manuscript

[Link to publication record in Manchester Research Explorer](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Morgan, K. (2012). Comparative communist history and the “biographical turn”. *History Compass*, 10(6), 455-466.

Published in:

History Compass

Citing this paper

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Comparative communist history and the ‘biographical turn’

Kevin Morgan

University of Manchester M13 9PL UK

Correspondence: kevin.morgan@manchester.ac.uk

Short title: ‘Communist history and the “biographical turn”’

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Author biography

Kevin Morgan works on European labour movements and the European socialist tradition, particularly in Britain. He has published extensively in the field of communist politics and an interest in biography was already indicated in his second book *Harry Pollitt*, published in the Lives of the Left series (Manchester 1993). Subsequently he also published studies of the Labour Party leader Ramsay MacDonald (London 2006) and of the *Webbs and Soviet Communism* (London 2006). His *Workers of All Countries? Syndicalism, internationalism and the lost world of A.A. Purcell* will be published in 2012. The studies of the Webbs and Purcell complete a three part series 'Bolshevism and the British left', which has also resulted in articles in journals like *Past and Present* and *History of Political Thought*. Kevin's interest in comparative communist history has also been advanced through published collaborations with historians like Tauno Saarela, Marco Aurelio Santana and Norman LaPorte. In 1999-2001 he was principal research on the CPGB Biographical Project at the University of Manchester which resulted in the volume *Communists in British Society 1920-1991* (London 2006) as well as further journal articles in e.g., *Communisme* and *Social History*. Kevin is a former editor of *Socialist History* and a founding co-editor of *Twentieth Century Communism: a journal of comparative history*. He holds a BA and a PhD from the University of Manchester.

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Abstract

The historiography of European communism has enjoyed a new lease of life since the opening up of communist archives in the early 1990s. Major monographic studies now exist of most European communist parties in the period of the Communist International (1919-43). New perspectives have been provided on concepts like stalinism and stalinisation. A more recent body of work looks at the construction of communist identities and the communist politics of memory. This review article focuses on what has been described as the biographical turn in communist historiography. The currently prolific interest in biography of historians of communism may in part be regarded as a historiographical catching-up exercise; it allows the provision of a familiar genre of historical writing which was hitherto little explored due to lack of appropriate sources. While the value of conventional biography is recognised here, possibilities for further development are identified with more innovative conceptions of the biographical framework. These include comparative or collective biography, the political uses of biographical capital and the construction of communist life histories and ‘work upon the self’.

Comparative communist history and the 'biographical turn'

The historiography of international communism is one of multiple paradoxes. Few fields of research can have seemed so politicised, or so liable to descend into polemic; and yet the claim is advanced on all sides to be bringing its study merely routine tools of historical analysis. The significance of communism's sense of international discipline, focused on Moscow, has proved particular source of disputation; and yet it is those who see the communist party as a 'foreign national party' – in de Gaulle's words *un parti national étranger* – whose work is most often framed at a purely national level. Communism's founding claim was as agent and embodiment of humanity's future; and yet few movements can have developed so active a sense of collective memory, or been so fertile in the generation of history-writing and historians. There was, finally, no party in which the demands of the collective had such paramountcy, or seemed so unnegotiable; and yet it is as a generator of biography, of autobiography and of 'work upon the self' that communism increasingly figures in a growing academic literature. It is upon this 'biographical turn' in communist history that the overview presented here will focus.

Historical scholarship on European communism received a massive stimulus with the opening up of communist archives from the early 1990s. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was in this respect a decisive catalyst. For some quarter of a century after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, the Communist International or Comintern (1919-43) had served as a directing centre of the world revolutionary movement based in Moscow. Formed in most cases between 1918 and 1921, European communist parties were not conceived of as autonomous bodies, but as the national sections of a highly centralised international. Among the various practices which gave force to this conception was the provision of the Comintern in Moscow with an extensive documentation of the activities of the individual parties. The Comintern itself developed an obsession with record-keeping as a form of political control, and through its central subventions provided the couriers and stenographers that made possible the generation and transportation of archival materials on a scale without precedent for an international organisation of this type.

Because of the movement's centralised command structure, many critical deliberations in any case took place in Moscow. The majority of communist parties also had some experience of illegality and political exile. Consequently, the leaders of Europe's most influential communist parties, which in different periods included those of Germany, Italy, France, Spain and Finland, all spent longer or shorter periods in the Soviet capital. To them it was also the workers' capital and the centre of the world revolution. Even where there was no such experience of illegality, as in the case of the relatively marginal British communist party, few records were retained domestically until the late 1930s. On the other hand, the Moscow files relating to the British party alone, along with its members and its ancillary movements, run into the thousands. It is easy to see why the opening up of these materials, which were kept with the central party archives in Moscow's former Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, was hailed as a historiographical watershed. Where individual communist parties or their successor bodies had not yet allowed use of their own archives, historians' access to the records held in Moscow had the further effect of encouraging them to do so. Communism's archival revolution was not therefore confined to the period of the Comintern itself, but extended to the post-war decades in which the key materials

were now retained domestically. The discussion here will nevertheless focus primarily on the period of the Comintern.

On their first gaining access to these materials, the immediate concern of most researchers was to try to settle old debates. On the one hand, there was enough new data to keep specialists occupied for the rest of their working lives. On the other hand, there were manifest opportunities for a form of shock revelation: for example, in connection with clandestine activities, Russian gold and the perennially enticing figure of the spy. At first there was a veritable race to take advantage of these opportunities, and academics no less than journalists rushed into print with findings of a notably shallow and sensationalist character. Probably there was most interest in such revelations in countries like France or Germany, in which communism had a continuing political presence or else a particular sensitivity in issues of national history and collective memory.

Another characteristic product was the provision. Even careful scholars seemed bogged down by the so-called centre-periphery debate. This hinged on the issue to which De Gaulle had alluded, of how far and in what ways communist parties were bound by 'orders from Moscow'.¹ For decades it had been a staple of Comintern historiography, its durability in part reflecting the absence of conclusive archival evidence with which to resolve it. In theory this was no longer the case, and a succession of substantial monographs now appeared on individual parties and their relations with Moscow. From among them, one may cite the work of Brigitte Studer and Andrew Thorpe on the Swiss and British communist parties respectively.² Both were works of exemplary scholarship; both stressed the importance of the new archives in allowing a reevaluation of the subject. What was nevertheless striking is how different their conclusions were. Where Studer stressed relations of subordination to the Comintern, Thorpe tended to emphasise the room that existed for negotiation and manoeuvre. As early as 1996, Kevin McDermott and Jeremy Agnew provided a valuable attempt at a synthesis at the level of the Comintern as a whole.³ It was nevertheless clear that the archives had by no means settled the old debates. For those so disposed to, there seemed material enough to pursue old scholarly or political agendas indefinitely.

A characteristic product of the new research was the provision of edited documentary histories. In the words of the most wide-ranging enterprise of this character, it was as if the 'annals' of communism were now being made available to a mass readership, sometimes with the authenticating stamp of facsimile reproductions. The best of such productions, while necessarily partial, were meticulously edited and within their limits were conscientious in attempting to represent the range of materials now accessible to historians. This was true, for example, of two excellent volumes on the South African communist party, whose Moscow connections had attracted considerable journalistic interest, and of several of the volumes on Soviet history in the 'Annals of communism' series.⁴ Given the vastness of the archives from which such compilations were drawn, the scope for tendentious selection was nevertheless clear. Among the worst examples were two volumes of the 'Annals' series devoted to the American communist party, whose 'secret world' was laid bare in the spirit and implicit vindication of Cold War McCarthyism.⁵

For the Comintern historian, as Studer and her collaborator Berthold Unfried put it, it felt like the beginning of history.⁶ The issue, however, was what sort of history. A few years before the opening of the archives Sheila Fitzpatrick had initiated a major controversy among historians of stalinism in Soviet Russia by launching a sort of unauthorised manifesto for a putative new cohort of 'revisionist' historians.⁷

Fitzpatrick did not, on the face of it, promote the claims of one set of historians against another. Instead, she made the case for historians qua historians entering a field which she claimed had been dominated by other disciplines – in particular, the political science of the ‘sovietologists’. Supporting Fitzpatrick, Gábor Rittersporn argued that a dispersed international cohort had come to adopt similar positions on Russian history largely independently, through the simple application of ‘ordinary historical methodology’ and ‘commonly used methods of historical research’ in a field hitherto closed to them.⁸

The ‘new’ social history was at this time in its most prolific phase, and what Fitzpatrick and Rittersporn brought more specifically to the subject were the insights of social and cultural history. It was a case, almost, of historiographical transfer, particularly apparent in Fitzpatrick’s brilliant but contestable application of the quintessentially ‘western’ notion of social mobility to a Soviet society undergoing the worst traumas of stalinism.⁹ Largely independently, as Rittersporn would have predicted, analogous claims were simultaneously being made by ‘new’ historians of communism internationally. Those in the USA, coming out of a productive labour history tradition, thus saw themselves as attempting to ‘bring the history of Communism in line with *history*’ – but history that was avowedly Thompsonian social history, after the example of E.P. Thompson’s classic *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963).¹⁰ Geoff Eley’s work on modern Germany was not that of a methodological conservative. **Nevertheless, Eley identified a similar weakness in the historiographies both of the USSR and of western communist parties which prompted him to a memorable paraphrase of the liberal historian G.M. Trevelyan.** Where Trevelyan in his *English Social History* had referred to a social history with the politics left out, Eley now complained of a communist history ‘with the communism left out’.¹¹ ‘Ordinary historical methodology’ was perhaps less self-evident than Rittersporn somewhat ingenuously suggested; and the similar claim of ‘traditionalist’ or conservative historians of western communist parties was also to bring to their study conventional scholarly methods ‘based on as much documentary material as possible’ and adhering to ‘normal scholarly standards’ in the uses made of it.¹²

Nobody visiting the newly opened archives – an ‘Ali Baba cave-system’¹³ – could complain of a lack of ‘as much documentary material as possible’. In this first phase of activity, the result, perhaps predictably, was what Studer and Unfried referred to as ‘a consolidation of the descriptive positivist approach’.¹⁴ Symptomatically, the first publication of any British historian using the archives bore the subtitle ‘filling in the blank spots’.¹⁵ Decision-making procedures within the communist movement had been notoriously opaque. Decisive interventions by the Comintern had often been denied or at least dissimulated, both by the parties themselves and by some of their historians. Episodes such as the introduction of the popular front in the mid-1930s and the Comintern’s collective volte-face over the war in 1939 had thus given rise to controversies that ultimately seemed as irresolvable as any exercise in counterfactuality. It was to these blank spots that historians turned as if compulsively. The result, according to Studer and Unfried, was as a ‘one-sided evaluation of ideology and politics, especially the limited focus on the particular “line” and its exponents, the countless changes in tactics, the “deviations”, the infighting and splits, the expulsions and resignations’.¹⁶

These were not the only blank spots, however. The American historian Randi Storch showed how the Comintern archives could, for certain periods, be drawn upon to reconstruct in vivid detail communism’s local or regional milieux.¹⁷ Other

grassroots studies might bring out experiences of upheaval and political trauma. Thousands of European communists were transported to the USSR itself by forces of involuntary exile or a sense of political mission. For these, infighting and the pursuit of deviations took the form of Stalin's terror and the decimation of the Comintern apparatus. At leadership level parties like Germany's and Poland's were particularly badly affected. Finnish historian Kimmo Rentola observes that more Finnish communists fell victim to Stalin than to the ferocious white terror of the Finnish civil war, and that the safest place for them by the late 1930s was a Finnish jail.¹⁸ These issues could hardly be described as blank spots, unknown to historians until the archives became accessible. Access to the archives did, on the other hand, mean that the human cost of stalinism could be described with a depth and a precision not hitherto possible. A descriptive positivist approach might even be regarded as a moral and political necessity, and one of the most valuable volumes in the 'Annals of communism' series was William J. Chase's collection on the stalinist repression as it affected the Comintern.¹⁹

Perhaps there was a way here beyond the somewhat ailing and repetitive centre-periphery debate. The effectiveness of writing about the terror lay not so much in force of numbers; not at least in the European case, where communism's victims were numerically so much less significant than those of fascism.²⁰ It lay, rather, in exposing the human and political tragedies which numbers alone represent so inadequately. Studies like those of Francis Beckett and Barry McLoughlin, of the mere handful of stalinist victims from Britain and Ireland, are conceivably even the more compelling in showing how initially unremarkable political commitments descended into personal nightmare through the unimaginable scale and arbitrariness of Stalin's terror.²¹ In Beckett's case through four British women, and McLoughlin's through three Irish men, the enormity of the terror is thus conveyed through the life histories of those who experienced or perished in it. But these, of course, were also the methods used in reconstructing lives of commitment to communist ideals, maintained in some cases over decades of political activism, and in others until brutally terminated by fascism or other forms of anti-communist repression.²² Through the disaggregation of biography the diversity and complexity of the communist experience was more fully registered than perhaps by any other method.

Biography, indeed, was in some ways the most conspicuous of the blank spots that could now be filled with the aid of the archives. Prior to 1991 barely a handful prominent communist party leaders were provided with a satisfactory biography. As late as 1996 McDermott and Agnew listed hardly any such works in their extensive bibliography of secondary literature. Even as their book appeared, however, a number of major lives were underway. Annie Kriegel, the founder of the journal *Communisme*, was regarded by many as the doyenne of French communist historians, and a pioneer of the ethnographic approach to the communist 'people'. It was nevertheless only at the very close of a prolific career that she produced her first and only biography, of the Comintern emissary Eugen Fried, in 1997.²³ Four years later a conference on communist biography held in Manchester attracted some sixty paper-givers including the authors of several major studies either newly published or in progress. Among the subjects were Clara Zetkin, revered veteran of German social democracy and early Comintern figurehead; Waldeck Rochet, successor to Maurice Thorez as leader of the post-war French communist party; and the American industrial organiser and sometime presidential candidate William Z. Foster.²⁴ There was, indeed, already an excellent biography of Foster, making extensive use of the archives and appearing as early as 1994; as well as a first attempt by Gilbert Badia to retrieve a

more credible portrait of Zetkin from the constraints of official history-writing in East Germany.²⁵

The German-Polish communist Karl Radek, a victim of Stalin's second show trial in 1937, had, exceptionally been the focus of a serious scholarly study by Warren Lerner as early as 1970.²⁶ In embarking upon a new life, Jean-François Fayet, another participant in the Manchester conference, not only cited the greater documentation now available as its justification and rationale. He also suggested that most of the key differences of interpretation between the two biographers could be ascribed to these differences in the sources available to them. Fayet also underlined that the opening of the archives did not as yet mean unrestricted access – particularly for a figure whose fate went as close to the heart of the Soviet experience as Radek's did. Some key materials, like those held in the so-called Presidential Archive notably containing Stalin's archive, had yet to be made available. Others, having initially been made accessible, were subjected to renewed restrictions in 1994. Quite apart from subsequent decisions as to access, Fayet also noted the increasing circumspection with which records were being maintained by the 1930s, as Stalin tightened his grip on power in the USSR. Fayet's conjecture was that Stalin preferred that no full account be maintained of meetings with a figure of such doubtful political credentials as the sometime oppositionist Radek. Such frustrations are hardly exclusive to communism's historians, however. With due regard for all such caveats and constraints, Fayet's exhaustive research provides at least as rich a documentation as is normally available for comparable figures in other political movements, and the treatment provided lacks nothing in breadth or depth according to conventional criteria.²⁷

With some justification, James R. Barrett, the author of the first of the W.Z. Foster biographies, has referred to the 'biographical turn' in communist history that was evidenced by the Manchester conference.²⁸ A proliferation of biographical dictionaries was one clear manifestation of this. Major projects included those on German communism and the communist parties of Latin America.²⁹ There was also an important German-Russian project conceived at the level of the Comintern as a whole and combining print and CD-ROM format.³⁰ Outstanding for the quality of its individual entries was the *Komintern* project on the francophone countries. Indispensable as a work of reference, the resulting publication was prefaced by a series of introductory essays including a preliminary overview and synthesis of the Comintern context by one of the leading historians of French communism, Serge Wolikow.³¹ Nine years later a more expansive version of the essay was published as a monograph *L'Internationale communiste*, with the biographical dictionary provided in updated and expanded form in CD-ROM format.³² Since the opening of the archives Wolikow has contributed to a series of important historiographical initiatives, including the symposium *Le siècle des communismes*, perhaps the most successful attempt at a synoptic collaborative overview, and publications focusing on both the critical and practical aspects of the new archival challenges.³³ As well as providing what is certainly the most effective survey of strategy and organisation since the McDermott and Agnew volume, Wolikow's thematic chapters deal with key issues of culture and doctrine, including the communist conception of the nation on which he had previously co-edited yet another wide-ranging international symposium.³⁴

Another initiative, unthinkable twenty years earlier, was the launching in 2008 of a series of 'Communist Lives' under the editorship of Matthew Worley, well-known for his work on the sectarian 'Class Against Class' period.³⁵ Three volumes have appeared at the time of writing. The Italian Palmiro Togliatti was not only an important figure in the Comintern but key architect of Italy's post-war mass

communist party, or *partito nuovo*, which by the 1970s was the best supported in western Europe and controlled huge swathes of local and regional government. Togliatti's political skills and supple sense of statesmanship are brought out well in Aldo Agosti's imposing biography, whose scholarship has earned plaudits even from those dissenting from Agosti's generally sympathetic treatment.³⁶ Georgi Dimitrov, the hero of the Reichstag fire trial that followed the Nazis' accession to power in 1933, was a figure more than usually shrouded in myth, further compounded by his standing as the first leader of Bulgaria's post-war communist state. As secretary of the Comintern in its final years (1934-43), Dimitrov played a crucial legitimising public role for the International while overseeing its operations in the darkest years of the terror. Dimitrov's diary and correspondence from this period already provided the basis of two of the best volumes in the 'Annals of communism' series, but Marietta Stankova's biography also makes extensive use of Bulgarian archives in providing a convincing account of Dimitrov's formative years as a revolutionary.³⁷ Similarly, Geoffrey Swain draws on the Belgrade archives in his insightful and empathetic account of the Yugoslav leader Tito, who, of course, broke with Stalin during the Cold War, and whose reputation in the west has ebbed and flowed over the course of several biographies.³⁸ Other projected titles in the series include Maurice Thorez, Ernst Thälmann, Wladyslaw Gomułka and Imre Nagy.

While it certainly reflected the availability of appropriate sources, the implications of the new genre of communist biography arguably went beyond the filling in of blank spots. In a volume of biographical essays arising from the Manchester project a more radical case was advanced for the use of biographical methods. According to this view, approaching a social or political movement from the standpoint of its disaggregated members was not a way of approaching the same organisational textures as if through a microscope, but allowed a distinct and formative role to individual human agency and motivation.³⁹ Moreover, this is not just a question of the individual, but of the complexity of the social, as the focus on a discrete subject or category, like communism, becomes qualified and contextualised by the other influences, sequential or concurrent, which go to make up any particular life. Subtly disintegrative of more structured causation, the implications are nowhere more contentious than in the case of a communist movement whose proverbial conformism, intrusiveness and monolithicity were backed up by highly formalised codes of party discipline.

In the biographies so far cited, it must be acknowledged that any engagement with these questions is for the most part either implicit, or, in the case of a historian like Kriegel, would certainly have been rejected. As a well-established and hugely popular genre of writing, biography has its own conventions which very often are descriptive and positivistic. The emergence of a body of serious communist biography may in this respect be regarded as a sort of catching-up exercise with the provision of similar forms of narrative in other fields of historical research. Among the most monumental of these biographies, in length at least, is the late Nina Fishman's two-volume study of the British miners' leader Arthur Horner.⁴⁰ Interestingly, while making indirect use of the Comintern archives, the primary sources cited by Fishman are all in British archives and in most cases have been accessible for some years.⁴¹ In a warm appreciation Andrew Thorpe has argued that the biography is really three studies in one: of Horner, of his party, and of the industry he worked in – and thus, of course, of the complex interaction of the three.⁴² Nevertheless, despite the important insights that this offers, the construction of the narrative takes the form of a relatively conventional life-and-times approach. In this, as well as in its unusual length, it bears

the comparison suggested by Thorpe with Benjamin Disraeli's Victorian biographers Money Penny and Buckle, or with Michael Foot on the Labour politician Aneurin Bevan. Subliminally and sometimes not so subliminally, the implication is that the communist movement too produced figures of no less stature and complexity.

Such lives have been sorely lacking and one feels confident that the supply is now unlikely to dry up. Certainly, the continuing vitality of communist historiography would hardly be assisted by the absence of adequate published lives of national communist leaders like Thälmann, Thorez and Nagy. Nevertheless, something more than the filling in of biographical blank spots is also needed. 'Commonly used methods of historical research' are rightly liable to challenge, or to become re-invigorated, and one of the most promising features of the recent research on European communism is the development of more varied and innovative approaches to biography and life-history writing. Some of the broad possibilities can alone be identified here. One is the method of group or cohort biography, as effectively demonstrated by Catherine Epstein's collective portrait of German communists from the Weimar years to the demise of communism.⁴³ Another is the joint or family biography, brilliantly exemplified by Annette Wieviorka's account, not just of the communist leader Thorez, but his wife Jeanette Vermeesch and the relations between them.⁴⁴

In bringing a gendered perspective to the construction of communist careers with such different points of origin, in respectively the coalfields and the textile districts of the north of France, Wieviorka's may also be regarded as a form of comparative biography. This may also fruitfully take the form of transnational comparison; examples are the essays of Norman LaPorte and Kevin Morgan comparing Thälmann with Harry Pollitt as a way of exploring some of the broader social and cultural differences between the German and British communist parties.⁴⁵ In examining the utility or sometimes liability for such figures of diverse forms of biographical capital, such comparisons also raise issues to do with the construction of communist lives and life-histories. This approach has been especially fruitfully developed by scholars associated with Claude Pénetier and Bernard Pudal in France, and this too offers possibilities for transnational comparison.⁴⁶ There is obvious scope here for cross-fertilisation between the disciplines of history and literary studies, as effectively demonstrated in Gina Hermann's analysis of a group of five memoirs focusing on the communist experience in Spain.⁴⁷ The prolific autobiographical writings of Jorge Semprún, an exiled Spanish communist who spent the latter part of the war in the Buchenwald concentration camp, have attracted especially wide notice. According to Stephen Hopkins, whose comparative interest in radical constructions of autobiography extends beyond the communist movement itself, Semprún's writings offer particular insight into issues of national identity, democratic legitimacy and communist political commitments.⁴⁸

A further crucial field of research lies in what Pudal refers to as a form of communist biocracy. Through the collecting by the party apparatus of short autobiographies and biographical questionnaires, the construction of summary life histories was widely practised within all communist parties in the Comintern period. The systems of biographical control which resulted have again given rise to particularly interesting work in France, as notably represented in the *Autobiographies, autocritiques, aveux* collection.⁴⁹ Other important symposia, deriving much of their impetus from a Foucauldian theoretical framework, have focused on stalinist subjectivities and 'work upon the self'.⁵⁰ Finally, there is the work of collective biography or prosopography; for even the 'Communist Lives' series, whose stated

ambition is to extend to members as well as leaders, has hitherto only attracted contributions relating to the latter. In the potential uses of oral history, party autobiographies and more substantial representations of the self through life-history, a prosopographical method offers insight into the political cultures of stalinism which can scarcely be grasped by the use of more institutionalist methodologies.⁵¹

Unlike the centre-periphery debate, it really does feel as if research into these aspects of communist history is, if not quite at the beginning, a long way from being exhausted. These diverse applications of biographical or life-history methods are not the only ways of writing communist history. But as increasingly historians of the subject seek to move beyond the 'one-sided evaluation of ideology and politics', the biographical turn, defined in this expansive and open-ended way, offers one of the most fruitful ways forward. If communism was one of the quintessential political movements of the twentieth century, it was, after all, only because it attracted and retained recruits in such extraordinarily diverse social and political environments, at what personal costs and compensations historians are still only beginning to make fully clear.

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- ¹³ Studer and Unfried, 'At the beginning', 423.
- ¹⁴ Studer and Unfried, 'At the beginning', 421.
- ¹⁵ Johnstone, M., 'The CPGB, the Comintern and the war, 1939-1941: filling in the blank spots', *Science & Society*, 61 (1997), 27-45.
- ¹⁶ Studer and Unfried, 'At the beginning', 420.
- ¹⁷ Storch, R., *Red Chicago. American communism at its grassroots 1928-1935* (Champaign & Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Such an exercise was most feasible for the 'Class Against Class' period on which Storch focused, and in which the Moscow-bound traffic of archives reached a level that fell away enormously over the course of the 1930s.
- ¹⁸ Rentola in Pons, P. and Service, R. (eds.), *A Dictionary of Twentieth Century Communism* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), 168.
- ¹⁹ McDermott, K., 'Stalinist Terror in the Comintern: New Perspectives', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 30, 1 (1995), 111-30; Firsov, F. I., 'Dimitrov, the Comintern and Stalinist repression', in McLoughlin, B. and McDermott, K. (eds.), *Stalin's Terror: High Politics and Mass Repression in the Soviet Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 56–82; Chase, W. J., *Enemies within the Gates? The Comintern and Stalinist Repression, 1934-1939* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001).
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- ²⁴ For papers on these and other subjects presented at the conference, see Morgan, K, Cohen, G., and Flinn, A. (eds.), *Agents of the Revolution* (Berne: Peter Lang, 2005). For the published biographies see Puschnerat, T., *Clara Zetkin. Bürgerlichkeit und Marxismus* (Essen : Klartext Verlag, 2003); Barrett, J. R., *William Z. Foster and the Tragedy of American Radicalism* (Urbana, IL.: University of Illinois Press, 2000).
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- ⁴¹ The obvious accession is Horner's MI5 file, to which Fishman succeeded in gaining access. Despite the gradual release of the MI5 files over the past decade or so, it is proving a painfully slow and opaque process which will need to be measured in decades if not centuries rather than years.
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- ⁴⁴ Wiewiorka, A., *Maurice et Jeanette. Biographie du couple Thorez* (Paris: Fayard, 2010).
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