

Kasper Braskén

CREATING SPACES OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY: The Internationale Arbeiterhilfe (IAH) and Willi Münzenberg in Weimar Germany, 1921–1933

Abstract:

The aim of the paper is to introduce a new history of the Internationale Arbeiterhilfe (IAH, Workers' International Relief) with a special focus on the spaces of international solidarity that were created in Weimar Germany, 1921–1933. Münzenberg functioned as the IAH's primary leader and it launched, among others, international solidarity campaigns for the famine in Soviet Russia (1921); the "hunger in Germany" (1923–24); the national liberation of China (1925), the English miners strike (1926), for the ten year celebration of Soviet Russia (1927); and for hundreds of major strikes and lockouts in Germany and Europe (1924–1933). The IAH, further, organised major solidarity festivals such as the "International Solidarity Day" and several World Congresses for international solidarity in Germany. The paper seeks to introduce the IAH's campaigns and solidarity events as significant spaces of international solidarity that, among others, included the IAH's soup kitchens, children's camps, the streets during demonstrations, parks and other urban areas during rallies and festivals. Further, it highlights the role of Weimar cinemas and agitprop theatre venues as significant spaces of solidarity as the IAH distributed proletarian movies to Germany and organised a major tour of the German agitprop group Kolonne Links and the Russian group Blaue Bluse in Germany. In conclusion, the paper argues that the IAH's impact in Weimar Germany can not be measured through its membership numbers, but through the analysis of the events it organised and the spaces of international solidarity that it created. The paper is based on Braskéns forthcoming PhD research titled: *The Revival of International Solidarity: The Internationale Arbeiterhilfe, Willi Münzenberg and the Comintern in Weimar Germany, 1921–1933*.