

Brigitte Studer

*Travelling for the Global Revolution:
A New Perspective on the Communist International*

Monday, 11 October 2021, 17:40-19:10 (CEST)
CEU Auditorium and via Zoom

The Communist International or Comintern, founded in 1919, profoundly impregnated and shaped the 20th century. It was a historically unique political experiment, seeking to apply rational analysis and sophisticated and complex organization to the conception, preparation and execution of a global revolution. Its professional revolutionaries were dispatched to various locations over the world, most often in clandestinity, and operated in transnational networks with the aim to overthrow the capitalist and colonial order, thus threatening those in power. But traditionally, the history of the Comintern has been conceived as a narrative of a large, rather anonymous apparatus and its ultimate failure. The approach taken in this lecture is different, focusing on the individual agency and political practices of a heterogenous and extremely mobile group of revolutionaries. These women and men dedicated their life to the Comintern because their political interests converged with the emancipatory and internationalist goals of the international organization, at least for a certain time. For them, revolution meant work, revolution became a profession. And it became a way of life. The lecture examines what it meant to work in the global webs of the Communist International and what schemes these travelling revolutionaries used to cope with the difficulties they encountered when they tried to connect the global to the local.

Brigitte Studer was full professor of contemporary history at the University of Bern until 2020. She also has been teaching at the Universities of Geneva and Zurich and at Washington University (Saint-Louis/USA) and served as guest professor at the EHESS in Paris and Strathclyde University in Glasgow, and visiting fellow at the University of Vienna and London University. Her research focuses on gender history and is inspired by a social historical approach of political history. She has widely published on the history of international communism and the history of women's suffrage. Her most recent publications include: *Reisende der Weltrevolution. Eine Globalgeschichte der Kommunistischen Internationale* (Berlin: Suhrkamp TW, 2021, 2nd edition); *La conquête d'un droit. Le suffrage féminin en Suisse 1848-1971* (Neuchâtel: Livréo-Alphil 2021, 2nd edition); *Frauenstimmrecht. Historische und rechtliche Entwicklungen 1848-1971* (Zurich: Hier und Jetzt, 2021, with Judith Wyttenbach). In English: *The Transnational World of the Cominternians* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2015) and "1968 and the Formation of the Feminist Subject," *Twentieth Century Communism. A Journal of International History* 3/2011, p. 38-69. In November 2016, she co-edited a volume of the journal *Monde(s). Histoire, espaces, relations on transnational communism*.

All on-site participants are required to register for this event. In case you want to participate on-site, please contact Selin Çağatay (cagatays@ceu.edu).

Online participants are invited to attend [via this Zoom link](#) (Meeting ID: 928 7512 8182; Passcode: 466658).